

Conditions of Employment

All you need to know
or where to find out



Telecom Australia

About This Booklet

Use this booklet as a handy guide to Telecom Australia and the entitlements and conditions of employment it provides to its staff. Some of those terms and conditions which are more complex or subject to frequent change are dealt with in general terms. Should you require more detailed information use the references given throughout this booklet. If you are unsure about your entitlements or other matters affecting your employment, your supervisor or staff clerk is available to assist you.

This booklet was prepared as a result of discussion at the Telecom Consultative Council, a body constituted by representatives of Telecom Australia and representatives of staff organisations.

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Documentation

Telecommunications Act 1975

The Australian Telecommunications Commission (Telecom Australia) was established by Act of Parliament on 1 July 1975.

The functions of Telecom Australia are to plan, install and operate telecommunications services within Australia, in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

There are seven Commissioners each of whom is appointed by the Governor-General, and they are responsible for the functioning of Telecom Australia.

Actual duties are carried out by staff who are in the service of Telecom Australia. The Act also specifies the basic conditions of employment, such as terms of appointment, rights of appeal and disciplinary procedures.

Telecommunications Regulations

These are made by the Governor-General for the purpose of carrying out or giving effect to parts of the Act. For example, the procedures relating to Appeal Boards are included in the Regulations.

Postal and Telecommunications Commission (Transitional Provisions) Act 1975

This is an act which covers the transitional period following the formation of Telecom Australia and Australia Post from the Postmaster-General's Department. Among other things, this Act seeks to protect the interests of staff who, as former employees of the Postmaster-General's Department, belonged to the Australian Public Service.

Telecom Staff By-Laws

Telecom Salaries By-Laws

These By-Laws state many of the terms and conditions of employment in the service of Telecom Australia. Most of the entitlements explained in this booklet are covered by these By-Laws.

Administrative Orders

These clarify and expand the terms and conditions of employment which are covered in the documents described above. They also summarise other conditions of employment, for example, long service leave and maternity leave, which are set by other Acts or Determinations and which are not covered by the Telecommunications Act or By-Laws.

The Act, Regulations, By-Laws, and Administrative Orders have been widely distributed throughout Telecom Australia in one loose leaf volume. You have access to them through your staff clerk or supervisor and you should refer to them if you want more detailed information.

Personnel and Industrial Relations Departments – Guidelines and Procedures

This is an instructional and procedural manual designed to assist management, staff clerks and appropriate staff in the application of terms and conditions of service. They are especially practical because they use examples and are written in a straightforward way.

Award Handbook

This contains Awards made in the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission which prescribe rates of pay, allowances and conditions of employment. This publication is to be used in conjunction with the Acts and By-Laws and if there is any conflict between these provisions the award conditions take precedence. One particular award referred to in this handbook is the Telecom Employees' (General Conditions of Employment) Award.

Rates of Pay Manual

This contains details of the rates of pay applicable to all staff of Telecom Australia.

Qualifications Handbook

This contains details of the positions for which special qualifications are mandatory and the particulars of such qualifications.

Officers and Employees

You are called an officer if you have been permanently appointed to the Service of Telecom Australia.

If you are temporary, you are called an employee.

You should be aware of these terms whenever you read official documents such as the Act and By-Laws. Unlike the Australian Public Service, there are no Staff Divisions (i.e. Third or Fourth Division) in Telecom Australia.

The section below refers only to the conditions of appointment. Generally, there are no similar requirements in order to be engaged as an employee.

APPOINTMENT

A person does not have to be an Australian citizen in order to be appointed, but must have permission to reside permanently in Australia — Administration Order 6/A/6.

Appointment to Telecom Australia depends on good health and good character, and most requirements are subject to a probationary period of service. Generally speaking, for most positions, applicants must satisfy Telecom Australia, educational or trade qualifications.

After working for at least six months confirmation of your appointment may be made. This depends on passing a medical examination and on satisfactory reports by your supervisor. The probationary period may be extended by up to six months, for example, the Medical Officer may wish to observe a particular medical condition for a longer time. The maximum probationary period is 12 months.

Telecom Australia may annul an appointment on medical or other grounds, such as unsatisfactory conduct, at any time during probation. If this is done, Section 40(6) of the Act requires a probationer to be notified in writing of the reasons. There is no right of appeal against the annulment of a probationary appointment.

Medical Examination

An appointment will be made for you to visit the Commonwealth Medical Officer, either before or soon after your appointment. The medical Officer will advise Telecom Australia on the state of your health and physical fitness. If this examination is satisfactory and you have not suffered from undue ill health during the probationary period, your appointment will be confirmed, subject to the fulfilment of the other conditions. The examination is also used to determine your medical classification for Superannuation purposes (see the section on Superannuation).

You should be aware that regard is had to any sick leave availed of during the probationary period.

Supervisor's Report

Your supervisor is required to report on your conduct, diligence, and efficiency before confirmation of your appointment can take place. It is expected that your supervisor will discuss with you any matters found unsatisfactory.

Trainees Probationary Period

If you have been appointed to an "in-training" position your probationary period will be determined by the length of training or study being undertaken and will generally be consistent with the following:

- 6 months - if the course is of 6 months duration or a lesser period.
- The length of the course - if the course is between 6 months but not more than 12 months duration.
- 12 months - if the course is of 12 months or longer duration.

Commencement as an Officer

Your period of service as an officer dates from the time you started work permanently for Telecom Australia, not the date of confirmation which is normally at least six months later. If you were an employee before appointment, then the effective date of commencement for permanent service is normally the date of your appointment.

Recognition of Prior Service

If you were previously employed in either a temporary or permanent capacity with an "approved public employer" you may be given credit for recreation and/or sick leave provided you started duty as an officer with Telecom Australia on the next working day after leaving the public employer. Approved public employers are those listed in Appendix D to the Staff By-Laws and includes Australian and State Public Services. Staff By-Law 134, Administrative Order 6/B/2.

Recognition of prior service for Long Service Leave purposes is also provided for under the Long Service Leave Act which allows service with an approved employer to be recognised provided the period between commencing with Telecom Australia and ceasing with the approved employer is 12 months or less. A list of approved employers for this purpose is contained in Appendix C to the Staff By-Laws.

Provision also exists for service with the Defence Forces to be recognised for sick leave purposes provided the officer or employee commences duty with Telecom Australia within two months of discharge. Persons in this category may be credited with one week on full pay and two weeks on half pay for each year of service with the Defence Forces.

Persons who immediately before appointment to Telecom Australia were employed in the Australian Public Service retain all their existing and accruing rights. Regulation 4.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Most positions within Telecom Australia require the performance of specified duties. For example, the duties of clerical/administrative and engineering positions are outlined in Duty Statements. The duties of other positions may be described in special Determinations relevant to the particular type of work.

OUTSIDE EMPLOMENT

Before you engage in outside employment you must seek permission. The main factor which is considered in the examination of such applications is the possible effect on your duties within Telecom Australia. These provisions also apply if you wish to work during recreation leave, long service leave or leave without pay. (See also the part of this book on leave without pay) Staff By-Law 21. Administrative Orders 14/D/-.

SUMMARY OF APPEAL RIGHTS

As an officer employed by Telecom Australia, you have certain appeal rights. These are summarised in the table on the next page.

APPEALS AGAINST INSTRUCTIONS

Staff By-Law 15

If you believe you have grounds of complaint arising out of a direct official instruction, or other cause, you may have a right of appeal under the terms of Staff By-Law 15. Such an appeal should be submitted through your supervisor to the State Manager (or the General Manager — Personnel for Headquarters staff). However you shall as far as possible carry out the instruction given until otherwise directed by the proper authority. Guidelines are available which cover By-Law 15 in greater detail and which give examples of cases coming within the scope of the By-Law.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the State Manager or General Manager — Personnel you may request that your appeal be forwarded to the Chief General Manager for consideration and if the appeal is still disallowed, it will be referred to the Commission for determination.

Summary of Main Appeal Rights

Nature of Appeal	Appeal or Review	Page
1 Complaint against official instructions.	As outlined in the section of this booklet on Staff By-Law 15 Appeals	6
2 Compulsory transfer or retirement on grounds of invalidity.	Review Tribunal	10
3 Selection for training course: Where a promotion is involved.	Promotions Appeal Board	11
4 Provisional promotion In all cases.	Promotions Appeal Board	13
5 Temporary transfer to a higher position.	Promotions Appeal Board	15
6 Discipline.	Disciplinary Appeal Board	16
7 Deferred salary increment.	i. Personnel Department (Headquarter) ii. Personnel and Industrial Relations Department (States)	17 17
8 Medical re-examination for Superannuation.	Commissioner for Superannuation	23
9 Compensation payment.	Commissioner for Employee' Compensation	34

Separations

RESIGNATION

An officer or employee may resign at any time. Notice of resignation should be in writing and preferably given two weeks in advance. You should state in your letter the actual date you intend to resign. Administrative Orders 6/N/-, 13/C/4,5.

Withdrawal of Resignation

You may withdraw a resignation at any time before it comes into effect. Normally a resignation is effective on the date you cease duty. Administrative Order 6/N/2.

Fares on Resignation

An officer or employee who resigns while employed away from the normal place of work is entitled to an allowance to cover fares back to headquarters. This provision does not apply to staff normally engaged with camping parties.

RETIREMENT

Age Retirement

An officer or employee may retire at any time after reaching 60 years of age, but most retire before their 65th birthday. In exceptional circumstances Telecom Australia may retain the services of staff beyond their 65th birthday. Staff By-Law 146(2) describes conditions under which removal costs may be paid for an officer or employee who retires or is retired. Administrative Orders 6/O/5,6, 13/A/5.

Retirement of Officers on the Grounds of Redundancy, Inefficiency or Invalidity

Section 55 of the Telecommunications Act enables Telecom Australia to retire or transfer staff from areas where there may be an excess of officers. Redundancy payments may be payable in such circumstances.

Section 56 of the Act enables Telecom Australia to retire or transfer an officer on the grounds of illness or inefficiency. An officer is given the opportunity of submitting a written statement of reasons why such action should not proceed. Administration Order 6/O/1,2.

Officers may apply for a review of any decision made by Telecom Australia under Section 55 of the Act. This right is guaranteed by the Act and the application is made to a Review Tribunal whose structure is similar to a Promotions Appeal Board. Telecommunications Regulations 31 to 35.

Telecommunications Regulation 33 requires an officer who wishes a review to apply in writing within 14 days of receiving notice of a decision. The application should be addressed to the Chairman, Promotions Appeal Board for the State concerned. A Review Tribunal may only make recommendations to Telecom Australia.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES OF EMPLOYEES

Generally speaking Telecom Australia may terminate the services of an employee at any time. One week's notice would normally be given. Staff By-Law 156, Administrative Order 13/C/1.

Promotions

The movement of an officer from one position to another position which has a higher maximum salary is a promotion.

The selection of an officer for promotion is based upon efficiency. Only in certain isolated instances is seniority the main criterion. However, where qualifications are prescribed, it is necessary for you to have obtained this qualification before your relative efficiency can be assessed.

The Gazette

The Commonwealth of Australia Gazette is issued every Thursday and is circulated to all work areas for your information. It lists vacancies and

promotions in the Australian Public Service and Telecom Australia and Australia Post. General information on how to apply for advertised positions can be found in the preamble prior to the Commissions' entries. You must apply for a position within a specified period, usually 2 weeks, after its notice in the Gazette.

Each position advertised has a brief description of the responsibilities involved and of the qualifications needed. Under each State heading you will find a telephone number to use if you want a duty statement.

Entry and Advancement —The Consolidated Gazette

The full conditions of entry and advancement to positions in Telecom Australia are published in a Consolidated Gazette. Any amendments and new conditions of entry and advancement are notified in the weekly gazette as they occur.

General Provisions

Applicants for a vacancy may be called for interview by the area concerned and are assessed on relative efficiency. Upon request your supervisor will provide you with a copy of the comments made about you in a promotion write-up. Promotion of a small number of positions is based on the senior efficient officer available, under Section 47(2) of the Act. Staff By-Law 13B list these positions which may change from time to time.

An officer of either the Postal or Telecommunications Commissions may freely apply for a permanent transfer or promotion between Telecom Australia and Australia Post. This entitlement is provided by Section 20 of the Transitional Provisions Act, but ceases on 30 June 1980.

Officers who were employed in the Postmaster-General's Department immediately before the formation of Telecom Australia on 1 July 1975 may apply for vacancies in the Australian Public Service. Telecommunications Regulation 5.

Before going on long term leave you may lodge a general application for any suitable vacancies which may come up during your absence. Administrative Order 6/G/9.

Objections to Promotion

You may apply through your supervisor for permission to decline a promotion. This will not prejudice your future promotional opportunities. Staff By-Law 139 and 140.

Efficiency

Guidelines for the definition of efficiency are given in the Administrative Orders 6/Q/1-7. Special qualification and aptitude are the key factors when the efficiency of an officer is being determined for a particular position. Special qualifications may be obtained from training courses, for example, or experience in a similar type of work. Aptitude refers to the personal qualities required for the particular job.

Seniority

Seniority is defined in Staff By-Law 138A and Administrative Order 6/P/1. It normally dates from commencement of full-time (either temporary or permanent) service in Telecom Australia, and may include prior service with the Public Service.

Appeals against Provisional Promotions

Under Section 51 of the Telecommunications Act, promotions are provisional and are subject to appeal. You may appeal against a promotion within 21 days of its notification in the Gazette, even though you may not have been an applicant for the position.

Information concerning the lodgement of appeals with the Promotions Appeal Board is published each week in the preamble to the Telecom Australia' entries in the Gazette.

Except for a few positions listed in Staff By-Law 136 where the senior efficient officer is selected for promotion, grounds of appeal can be either:

- i. Superior efficiency; or
- ii. Equal efficiency and seniority

You should be aware that appeals are nearly always decided on efficiency. Try and find out as much as possible about the job and if special qualification or experience is needed. Unless you are familiar with the duties of the relevant positions you should obtain and study the duty statement before deciding to lodge an appeal. You should be satisfied that you are able to perform the duties more efficiently than the provisional promote. If you are in doubt, or would like advice, discuss the matter with your supervisor, a personnel officer or your union representative.

Appeals are heard by a Promotions Appeal Board consisting of an independent chairman appointed by the Minister, an officer nominated by Telecom Australia and an officer nominated by the staff organisation covering the designation of the position in question. These nominees do not represent Telecom Australia or staff organisation in any way. Their role is to review the selection process and reach a decision. Each member of the Appeal Board has equal voting rights.

The decision of the Appeal Board is final. Boards are formed in each State, but where more than one State is involved in an appeal, reports are forwarded to a Central Promotions Appeal Board. Upon request your supervisor will provide you with a copy of comments made about you in Telecom Australia's statement to the Promotions Appeal Board. Telecommunications Regulations 6-14.

Protective Appeals

If you are provisionally promoted you may lodge a protective appeal against one or more officers. Then, in the case of a successful appeal against your provisional promotion, these protective appeals will be determined.

If your provisional promotion is eventually confirmed, the protective appeals you may have lodged become inoperative.

Salary on Promotion

If your promotion is confirmed (or your appeal upheld), it is normally dated from the issue date of the Gazette in which the provisional promotion was notified. Your higher salary will be paid only after confirmation, but it will be back-dated. Administrative Order 6/1/3, 6/1/5.

Transfers

The movement of an officer to another position is a transfer if there is no promotion involved. Transfers may be permanent or temporary, may involve higher duties and may be between different locations.

The permanent transfer of an officer to a vacant position is not subject to appeal by any other officer.

TEMORARY TRANSFERS – HIGHER DUTIES

It is sometimes necessary to select an officer to fill a temporarily vacant position. If the selected officer has a lower classification than the position, that officer is said to be acting on higher duties and is entitled to an allowance. Staff By-Law 97.

The most efficient available officer should be selected for higher duties. The criteria for selection is the same as for promotion. Staff By-Law 136. Administrative Orders 6/H/3, 6/Q/7.

Appeals

The selection of an officer to temporarily perform the duties of a higher office is subject to appeal on the grounds of efficiency or equal efficiency and seniority. These appeals are heard in the same way as are appeals against promotion. Any period of higher duties is subject to appeal. Administrative Order 6/H.4(b).

An appeal against temporary transfer to a higher position may be lodged before or after the period of acting starts, but before that period ends. It is in an officer's own interests to lodge this type of appeal as early as possible because efficiency is gained before the lodgement of the appeal is taken into account by the Promotions Appeal Board. Administrative Order 6/H/4(a).

Availability

To be eligible for temporary transfer an officer must be available for release from his or her position. This also applies to officers who wish to lodge appeals. If Telecom Australia considers an officer unavailable that officer has a right of appeal under Staff By-Law 15 against that decision. Availability is not a matter for determination by the Promotions Appeal Board. See "Appeals against instructions". Administrative Order 6/H/4(c).

Discipline and Disciplinary Appeals

If an officer or employee is found guilty of misconduct (as defined under Section 58 of the Act), Telecom Australia may charge that person and upon investigation of the charge may reprimand, fine, temporarily reduce salary, transfer or dismiss the person.

The charge is sent to the officer/employee, stating the alleged offence. The officer/employee is given the opportunity of submitting a written statement within 7 days and elaborating orally if so desired. At the end of this time Telecom Australia delegate inquires into the case and, if proven, imposes an appropriate penalty. Pending this enquiry, the officer being charged may be suspended from duty or transferred. Salary is not usually payable during suspension but will be reimbursed if the suspension is lifted.

An officer/employee may appeal against a disciplinary measure or against the severity of the punishment. The appeal must be lodged in writing to the Disciplinary Appeal Board, stating the grounds of the appeal, within 14 days of receiving notice of a decision. Details of appeal rights are forwarded to an officer/employee immediately a charge has been found sustained.

Appeals are heard by a Disciplinary Appeal Board in each State, which consists of a Chairman, a Telecom Australia nominee and a person nominated by a staff organisation. These people will not previously have been involved with the case in any way. Section 62 and 63 of the Act and Regulations 15 to 30.

If, at any time after the Appeal has been heard, new evidence comes to light which could change the decision, a request may be made to Telecom Australia for a review of the findings. Section 64.

An officer/employee who commits an offence against the laws of Australia may be suspended from duty without pay. Pay would be reimbursed if the suspension is later removed.

Pay

You are paid fortnightly on every second Thursday. You may receive your salary by direct payment into a bank account, in cash or, in certain circumstances by cheque. Your salary depends on the duties you are performing and, in some cases, your age and qualifications, as well as on any allowances you may be entitled to receive. Rates of pay for most designations may be found in the schedule attached to the Rates of Pay manual.

If you are away on pay day your pay will usually be held for you at the Paymaster's Office until the next Thursday morning. To be paid after this time you must make a formal request through your staff clerk. You may authorise someone else to collect your pay for you by completing and signing an "Order to Pay Agent" from which your agent must hand to the Pay Officer. Responsibility to transmit the pay is then transferred to your agent.

Deductions From Pay

Income Tax and Superannuation (if you are a contributor) are automatically deducted from your pay. You may also arrange to have other deductions made, e.g. union subscriptions, hospital and medical benefit contributions, life assurance premiums, payment to credit co-operatives and subscriptions to the Australian Post-Tel Institute, payment for war service homes, etc. Details of your deductions will be advised to you periodically by way of a notice in your pay envelope.

Pay Advice Slip

Your pay envelope includes an advice slip which sets out the details of your fortnightly pay. You should become familiar with the information contained on the pay slip as it has details of wage adjustments and deductions.

If you have any query about your pay you should contact your staff clerk.

Increments

Most positions in Telecom Australia have a range of salary levels associated with them and an officer is usually appointed, engaged or promoted to the lowest salary level. Subject to a satisfactory conduct, diligence, and efficiency report you may be granted an increment to the next salary level after at least 12 months' service.

If the report is unsatisfactory the increment may be deferred for periods of 3 to 6 months at a time. If there is a chance that this could happen you would be advised beforehand. You may appeal against a decision to defer a pay increment. This appeal should be forwarded within 7 days to the Personnel and Industrial Relations Department, through your Branch or Section. Salaries By-Laws 11-13. Administrative Orders 4/B/-.

These provisions do not apply to officers whose salaries depend on age; in these cases increments are automatic.

Employees are granted increments under similar conditions as apply to officers. Administrative Orders 13/B/1.

Allowances

Higher Duty Payments — Officers Only

If you perform the whole of the duties of a higher position you may be paid an allowance to bring your salary up to the minimum level of the higher position for at least the minimum period specified (Staff By-Law 97(3)). If you are only part performing part of the duties or accepting part of the responsibility, the allowance will be adjusted accordingly.

If you perform higher duties for more than 12 months you may be entitled to an allowance increment, and you will also be required to pay superannuation based on the higher salary. Staff By-Law 97(6).

The higher duty allowance will also be paid while on recreation leave, sick leave, and special leave provided you would have continued to act but for that absence.

The allowance will also be paid whilst on Long Service Leave if you have acted in the position continuously for at least 12 months. Staff By-Law 97(1). Administrative Order 7/A/9.

Transfer Allowance

If you are transferred or promoted to another location which requires you to shift your place of residency, Telecom Australia may pay your own and your family's removal costs. Expenses which may be covered, in part or

in full, include legal fees and any losses on the sale of a house. Reimbursement of Capital loss on sale of house applies only to officers or employees who have been notified by Telecom Australia:

- a. that they are being compulsorily moved from one locality and transferred to another locality; or
- b. that the position occupied is being transferred from one locality to another.

Staff By-Law 144 states the general eligibility conditions for transfer allowances; specific details can be found in Section 9 of the Administrative Orders. Different conditions apply for voluntary transfers.

These allowances may also be available to an officer who is appointed to a position.

In the case of an officer who is having difficulties finding or settling into accommodation at the new location, an allowance may be granted to cover part of board and lodging costs. Staff By-Law 113, Administrative Order 9/1/-.

In all cases you should contact the Staff Movements section in the General Personnel Services Branch for details of these allowances. If your transfer or promotion is interstate, apply to the State you are going to. You should never presume that you have an automatic entitlement to the above allowances.

District Allowance

Officers and employees working in localities which are isolated or which have extreme climates are paid a district allowance.

The amount paid depends on the grading of the district, which is listed in Appendix B to the Administrative Orders, and person with dependents receive a higher allowance. Staff By-Laws 98-102, Administrative Orders 8/G/-.

Married Minors Allowance

A married male officer or employee, who is under 21 years of age and who occupies a position where salary depends on age, is paid an allowance which brings his salary up to the adult rate of a labourer. The person concerned must produce his marriage certificate when claiming the allowance. Salaries By-Law 14, Administrative Orders 8/A/-.

Living Away From Home Allowance

Staff By-Law 114 provides for an allowance to be paid to officers and employees who, by reason of their employment, are required to live away from home. The allowance is an assistance for board and lodging conditions only, and will be sufficient to raise gross pay to the level of the National Minimum Wage. Apprentices who are in receipt of an allowance from the National Apprenticeship Scheme may claim for an additional allowance to make up the difference.

A junior officer under 18 years of age and who is receiving less than the adult rate of pay, may be assisted with the cost of fares for travel to another town to visit parents. Staff By-Law 96.

Travelling Allowance

This may be paid to staff whose duties require them to be away overnight from their headquarters, and is in addition to the actual fare. The allowance is paid on a daily basis, but if it is insufficient to cover actual expenses, a claim may be made for these on return to headquarters.

A different rate is paid for temporary stays at one place for more than 21 days. This rate is determined in Appendix F of the Administrative Orders. Staff By-Laws 82-87, Administrative Orders 8/C/-.

Vehicle Allowance

Staff who have been authorised to use their private vehicles for official business may be paid an allowance based on distance travelled. Staff By-Law 103-110, Administrative Orders, Section 11.

Staff may be entitled to receive the allowance if, because of a public transport stoppage, they find it necessary to drive to work in a private vehicle. Administrative Order 10/C/7.

Transport Allowance

Generally, it is the responsibility of staff to make their own arrangements in getting to and from work. However, for isolated places of employment, with restricted or no public transport, a transport allowance may be paid. This can be either a private vehicle allowance or part payment of taxi fares. Administrative Orders 8/I/-.

Functional Allowances

These are paid to staff who may be required to carry out tasks outside their normal duties or in adverse conditions. For example, linesmen who are required to drive trucks or operate mechanical aids are entitled to a functional allowance. Installation and maintenance staff working in conditions which are particularly dirty, wet, cramped, etc, are also paid special rates. These are established from time to time by relevant Determinations. Salaries By-Law 8, Administrative Orders 7/C/-, 7/F/-.

First Aid Allowances

Where it is considered appropriate by Telecom Australia, suitably qualified persons may be appointed as First Aid Attendants and receive an appropriate allowance and be re-imbursed for the cost of obtaining this qualification. The conditions of payment and qualifications required are set out in Administrative Orders 14/H/1-4.

Penalty Payments

Overtime

The conditions under which overtime is worked and the penalty payments applicable are quite detailed. If you are required to work overtime your staff clerk will be able to give you further information as to the conditions of payment. Refer to Staff By-Laws 70-75, Administrative Orders 12/A/-.

Overtime Meal Allowance

This is paid if, because of overtime, you are unable to have your normal meal at home. Conditions of payment of the allowance are covered in Staff By-Law 73, Administrative Orders 12/D/- and in Arbitration Awards.

Emergency Duty

Staff who are recalled to duty for emergency purposes, after having ceased work for the day, will be paid overtime at the rate of double time. This may include travelling time and the minimum payment will be for 2 hours (3 hours on Sundays). These conditions only apply to staff who are eligible for overtime payments. Administrative Orders 12/B/-.

Excess Travelling Time

Staff who are travelling daily to a temporary location, (other than where travelling allowance is payable) may be paid for any additional travelling time involved. The payment is generally only allowed for staff on salaries below a certain fixed level. Staff By-Law 74, Administrative Orders 12/E/-.

Excess Fares

When a officer or employee is required by Telecom Australia to travel at extra cost to perform duty at a place other than their usual station which does not involve an absence from their usual place of residence overnight, the staff member may be paid the difference between the cost of fares to the temporary station and the cost of fares to the usual station. Staff By-Law 90, Administrative Orders 10/C/-.

Superannuation

Superannuation Act 1976

Contributions to the superannuation scheme receive certain benefits, by way of a pension or, in certain circumstances, a lump sum payment or both at the end of their service.

The description given here is intended mainly for new contributors in the scheme introduced on 1 July 1976. If you were a contributor to the superseded scheme you should refer to more detailed documents for carry-over conditions.

Membership of the Scheme

All officers appointed to Telecom Australia are required to contribute, depending on the results of a medical examination.

Employees may apply to contribute if they have been employed continuously for one year and are likely to continue for a further 3 years.

Medical Examinations

As a new contributor you must undergo a medical examination. This is usually the same examination which is carried out for appointment.

As a result of this examination, the Australian Government Retirement Benefits Office may issue you with a Benefit Classification Certificate if it is considered that you have a medical condition which might prevent you from continuing to work until you reach retirement age.

If this is done you will still contribute to the scheme in the normal way, but you will be paid reduced benefits in the event of invalidity retirement caused by the relevant medical condition.

You may apply at any time to have a Benefit Classification Certificate varied or revoked; this will usually involve another medical examination. However, if you complete either 30 years or contributory service or retire on account of age, the certificate will no longer remain in force.

Contributions

The basic contributions which must be paid is 5% of your actual salary (that is, before taxes or other deductions).

You also have the choice of paying supplementary contributions of either an additional 1%, 2%, 3%, 4% or 5%. You may choose to make or vary supplementary contributions at any time, but if you reduce them you must wait 12 months before you may apply to have them increased again.

The salary to be used for superannuation purposes is the actual salary you are paid on a permanent basis, including permanent allowances. Your higher duties allowance will be deemed to count for superannuation pur-

poses if you have acted continuously for 6 months and it is certified that you will continue to act for a total period of 12 months or if you have acted for 12 months.

Contributions are based on the salary you are receiving on your birthday, and will be adjusted then, once a year.

These contributions are deducted from your pay and go into the Superannuation Fund. This money is invested and the income derived from it goes back into the Fund. Your share in the Fund includes all your contributions plus interest, but you cannot withdraw any of it until the end of your contributory service.

Leave of Absence Without Pay

If the period of leave without pay is more than 12 weeks, you will usually not be permitted to pay contributions and the leave would not count as contributory service.

Any leave of less than 12 weeks requires you to contribute at your usual rate.

If death or invalidity retirement occurs during a period of leave without pay when contributions are not permitted a reduced pension would be payable. Each case is assessed on its merits and exact details can be obtained from the Australian Government Retirement Benefits Office.

Benefits

These depend on when and how you cease to be employed.

1. Age Retirement at 65.

You will receive both the benefits in paragraph (a) and (b):

- a. The standard Age Pension, which depends on your final salary and length of contributory service. For example, if you work for 30 years the pension will be 50% of your final salary.
- b. You may choose either to have the whole of your contributions, including interest from 1 July 1976, paid to you (this is referred to as the lump sum payment), or to receive an additional pension, which is based on the amount of your contributions over the years.

2. Age Retirement between 60 and 65

You will receive reduced benefits, similar to those in (a) and (b) above. For example, if you retire at 60 after 30 years of contributory service, you

get a standard pension 45% of your final salary. You may also choose one of the options in (b).

3. *Retrenchment*

The pension paid here depends on the years of contributory service. The reduced pension described in 2 is further reduced by 5% for each year short of age 60. Alternatively, you may receive a lump sum of 3½ times your accumulated basic contributions plus a refund of any supplementary contributions you have paid.

4. *Invalidity Retirement*

- a. If there is no benefit Classification Certificate in force, the benefits payable depend on the length of your prospective service. Prospective service means the number of years of service you would normally serve before age 60.
 - i. If your prospective service is 30 years or more, the benefit is a pension of 70% of your final salary plus a refund of supplementary contributions or, 50% of your final salary plus a lump sum repayment of all your contributions.
 - ii. If your prospective service is less than 30 years, the pension is reduced accordingly.
- b. If you have been issued with a Benefit Classification Certificate, your pension is reduced, again depending on the length of your contributory service. However, if the condition which caused the retirement is not related to the condition or conditions named on the Benefit Classification Certificate, a full pension is payable.

4. *Death*

a. Contributor with Dependents

On the death of a contributor the spouse is entitled to 67% of the pension which would have been paid if that officer had retired due to invalidity (Section 4 above). The spouse may choose to receive a lump sum instead of that part of the pension which is derived from the officer's contributions plus interest.

The pension does not stop on re-marriage, or if the spouse is financially independent.

Section (3) of the Superannuation Act defines a spouse, including married partners and certain de-facto relationships.

If the contributor has dependent children the spouse's pension is increased by 11% for each child, to a maximum of 33% for 3 or more children.

b. Contributor without Spouse or Dependent Children

If there are no dependents, the personal representative of the deceased officer will receive a refund of all contributions plus interest.

c. Pensioner with Dependents

On the death of a pensioner the spouse will receive 67% of the pension which was being paid to the pensioner, but special conditions apply for marriage after retirement.

4. *Resignation*

On resignation a contributor is refunded all contributions, plus interest which has accumulated since 1 July 1976.

4. *Pension Increases*

The Telecom Australia financed part of your pension will be increased each year by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index.

Leave

RECREATION LEAVE

Officers

On 1 January each year, officers are credited with 4 weeks recreation leave on full pay, exclusive of public holidays. Some areas operate a roster system whereby you are allocated a specific period in which you must avail of your leave. In other areas, you may apply for recreation leave at any time when it is not likely to cause staffing difficulties. Recreation leave

should be used in the year it becomes due in one or several shorter periods, although in special circumstances approval may be given to defer recreation leave credits in the next year.

If you have recently been appointed you are credited with a pro rata leave on the 1 January following your date of employment. For example, if you complete two months service before 1 January, you will then be entitled to 2/12 of your full recreation leave credit. If, immediately before appointment, you were on the temporary staff this pro rata leave is calculated from the date of your last leave credit. Staff By-Law 31.

Recreation leave salary may be paid in advance, but only when a pay day occurs during your absence. You are also entitled to a leave bonus, the value of which is determined by an Award. You may first request this payment when taking recreation leave of at least a week, but the bonus will still be paid at some stage, however you take leave.

If you fall ill while on recreation leave you may claim to have any period of a day or more deducted from your sick leave credits, provided you have a medical certificate. The period will be recredited as recreation leave. Administrative Order 5/C/9.

Staff in isolated areas listed in Appendix A of the Administrative Orders may be granted several extra days and seven-day shift workers may have an additional week. Specific details are to be found in the Award covering Telecom staff.

Approval may be given for the following types of leave to be taken during recreation leave, in which case extra leave credits will be allowed: special, study, examination, bereavement and jury service.

Employees

The recreation leave entitlement for employees is 4 weeks on full pay, exclusive of public holidays, seven-day shift workers may have an additional week. This leave is credited on each anniversary of the date you were employed. If you work for less than a year you will be paid on a pro-rata basis for recreation leave for each completed month of service. Staff By-Laws 153-154.

SICK LEAVE

Officers

Immediately you are appointed as an officer you will receive sick leave credits of 2 weeks on full pay and 2 weeks on half pay. After each 12 months service you will be credited with a further 2 weeks on full pay and 2 weeks on half pay. Sick leave credits not used in one year add on to next year's credit, the accrual date being the anniversary of the date you commenced work.

Apart from a total of 5 days each year, applications to obtain sick leave with pay need to be supported by a medical certificate. These 5 days are still part of your sick leave credit. However, the maximum number of consecutive days that may be granted with pay without the production of certificates is 3.

If at any time during your first 10 years of permanent service you use up all your sick leave credits on full pay, you are allowed to anticipate your next year's credit. Officers with more than 10 years of service may be eligible to convert half pay sick leave credits to full pay. Your staff clerk will be able to supply more information.

The maximum period of continuous absence on account of illness is 70 weeks, of which only 52 weeks may be sick leave with pay. Absences of more than 13 weeks require a medical examination by the Commonwealth Medical Officer before further sick leave is approved. In such cases a certificate of fitness must be obtained from a Commonwealth Medical Officer before an officer may resume duty.

If you become sick while on recreation leave or long service leave you may apply for sick leave. Sick leave is not available for officers on leave without pay or for any illness occurring as a result of misconduct. Absences due to visits to dentists, opticians, physiotherapists, X-ray clinics, etc., are deducted from sick leave credits.

Employees

In the first 12 months of continuous service an employee on a 5 day week is granted sick leave at the following rate:

- after 44 working days service, 2 days sick leave;
- for each subsequent period of 22 working days, 1 day sick leave;
- subject to a maximum of 5 days sick leave.

In addition, an employee may be granted up to 20 days of sick leave without pay in the first year. Any leave in excess of this does not count for service.

After 12 months of service, employees are granted sick leave credits of 4 weeks full pay and 4 weeks on half, less any sick leave with pay taken during the first year. For each subsequent year sick leave credits accumulate at the rate of 2 weeks on full pay and 2 weeks on half pay. Apart from a total of 9 days each year, applications to obtain sick leave with pay need to be supported by a medical certificate. However, a maximum of 3 consecutive days with pay will be approved without the production of a certificate.

Employees with at least 10 years service may be eligible to convert half pay sick leave credits to full pay credits where full pay credits have been exhausted.

War Service Sick Leave

Australian ex-servicemen and women who are suffering from war-caused disabilities may be eligible for extra sick leave credits in addition to their normal sick leave entitlements. Details may be obtained from staff clerks.

SPECIAL LEAVE

Officers

If you have good reason, e.g. sickness in your immediate family, shifting furniture to a new address, you may be granted up to 3 days of special leave in each year of service. Your staff clerk will be able to tell you if you are eligible for this leave. It is not sufficient to merely state your reason as “urgent private business”. Staff By-Law 64.

If you have exhausted your special leave credits, any further applications for special leave will be deducted from your recreation leave credits, up to a maximum of 3 days. Any further applications will be treated as leave without pay. Staff By-Law 65.

Employees

If you are an employee with more than 12 months service you may be granted up to 3 days of special leave. You may also have up to 3 days of leave to be deducted from your next recreation leave credits, provided

you have completed enough service to cover the period of leave involved. Administrative Order 13/H/1.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Officers

Leave without pay is granted under certain conditions which may offset all types of leave, pay increments and superannuation. If you intend to apply for leave without pay you should enquire about these conditions. Permission must be sought before an officer may engage in outside employment during leave without pay. If the period of leave is less than 12 weeks you are required to keep paying superannuation; periods of more than one week will not normally count as service.

Employees

Leave without pay may be granted to employees, but the period involved will not normally count as service.

Candidates at Elections

An officer or employee who wishes to contest a State or Commonwealth Government election must resign from service before doing so. If they resign within 1 month of the closing date for nominations, fails to be elected and applies to resume duties with Telecom Australia within 2 months after the declaration of the result of the election, they will be reappointed to the same classification. The period of absence will be considered as leave without pay and will count as service for all purposes. Sections 41,42.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE

Full-time staff are entitled to three calendar months long service leave after ten years service. For each additional year of service, long service leave accrues at the rate of 3/10 of a month. A calendar month includes public holidays and weekends (e.g. 15 March to 14 April). Administrative Orders 5/1/-

Part-time staff are also entitled to long service leave after ten years of service, and the actual extent of leave is determined by the number of hours worked during the ten year period. For example, if a person had

been employed for 50% of the normal hours, then that person is entitled to 50% of the leave that would accrue to a full-time staff member.

At least ten years service needs to be completed before any benefits are due, except for staff who have completed twelve months service and who cease employment due to ill-health, retrenchment or age retirement. Long service leave need not be taken all in one period, although it will normally not be approved for periods of less than half a month. Provision also exists for long service leave to be taken on half pay.

If you have worked with a Government Authority within one year of commencing with Telecom Australia, you may apply to have the service recognised for long service leave purposes.

MATERNITY LEAVE

Conditions for maternity leave are covered in the Administrative Orders 5/1/-. Female officers and employees of Telecom Australia are entitled to 12 weeks maternity leave on full pay. All female cleaners and part-time employees who work 24 or more hours per week on not less than 4 days in the week are also eligible.

The Act specifies that in the actual or possible pregnancy of a woman shall not be a ground for discrimination against her. That is, a pregnant woman should not be disadvantaged in her employment.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Bereavement leave of up to 3 days may be granted to an officer or employee on the occasion of the death of a member of the immediate family. This leave is independent of all other paid leave and is not limited in the number of times it may be granted in any one year. Administrative Order 5/D/1.

JURY SERVICE LEAVE

Officers and employees summoned for jury service are granted leave with pay for the time involved. Fees received for the jury service must be paid to Telecom Australia, except that claims may be made for direct expenses, such as meals or travel not otherwise necessary or for jury service after hours. Staff By-Law 24, Administrative Order 5/F/4.

Some States may be exempted from Jury Service.

WITNESS LEAVE

Government witnesses are granted leave with pay, under the same conditions as for jury service. Witnesses on behalf of others will be granted leave without pay or recreation leave, and all fees may be retained. Staff By-Law 25, Administrative Orders 5/F/1-3.

LEAVE FOR BLOOD DONORS

If you wish to donate blood you will be given leave with pay for the period involved. Administrative Order 5/C/22.

LEAVE TO ATTEND TRADE UNION COURSES

Representatives of staff organisations may be granted leave with pay to attend courses associated with labour relations. Staff By-Law 69A.

DEFENCE LEAVE

Officers and employees belonging to the Citizen Defence Forces may be granted leave with pay to attend training camps and full-time courses of instruction. The maximum period of leave varies slightly between the forces — e.g. for the Citizen Military Forces, 14 days of leave per year are available to attend the annual training camp and up to 10 days per year to take part in one course of instruction. Cadets may also be granted leave on full pay of up to 12 days per year to attend the Annual Camp and up to 12 days for one course of instruction.

Applications for Defence Leave should be supported by an official military notice requiring your attendance at camp or school. Staff By-Laws 53-61, Administrative Orders 5/E/-.

Assistance with Studies

This is available for staff who wish to further their career with Telecom Australia. Approved students may apply for study leave and for reimbursement of fees. Approval to undertake part-time study depends on satisfactory conduct, diligence and efficiency reports. In some cases staff may be sponsored to attend external training courses in order to obtain special skills relating to their work.

Study Leave

If you are studying part-time in an approved course of a university, technical college or college of advanced education, you may be granted up to 5 hours of study leave per week. This is to enable you to attend essential lectures or to do practical work, but where extensive travel is involved a further maximum of 3 hours leave per week may be granted. If extra time is still needed, then, subject to the needs of your work area, you may be granted leave without pay. Staff By-Law 66.

Employees who expect to be appointed to Telecom Australia before the end of their studies may also be eligible for study leave.

Examination Leave

Leave with pay of up to 1 week in each year may be granted to officers and employees to sit for examinations. These examinations may be associated with an approved course of part-time study or may be for advancement in Telecom Australia. This leave is not available for study or preparation purposes before an examination. Staff By-Law 66.

Reimbursement of Fees

Officers may apply for a refund of compulsory fees associated with the subjects passed each year in an approved course of study. Such courses will normally refer directly to an officer's career and duties in Telecom Australia. Graduation fees and book expenses are not reimbursed. Staff By-Laws 121-125.

Scholarship and Study Awards

Suitable applicants may be granted scholarships in order to complete the final year of a three year or final two years of a four year degree or diploma

course full time. Postgraduate study awards are also available. Act, Section 106, Administrative Orders 14/A/-.

Accidents and Compensation

If you are injured while on duty or contract an industrial disease (e.g. dermatitis which is due to the nature of your employment, you are entitled to claim compensation. You should submit a careful report to your supervisor, but before you lodge a claim you should have the personnel officer explain the conditions under which compensation is payable. These conditions are determined under the Compensation (Australian Government Employees) Act 1971 and the Australian Telecommunications Commission Employees (General Conditions of Employment) Award 1975.

Under certain circumstances (e.g. accidents due to faulty Telecom Australia equipment) compensation may be paid for damage to personal effects. Staff are also covered while travelling between work and home or while on approved study leave.

Compensation matters are determined by delegates of the Commissioner of Employees' Compensation and where a person is dissatisfied with a determination they have the right to apply for a reconsideration of for a review by tribunal. Claimants for compensation are advised of these rights in detail.

Clothing and Personal Effects – Loss or Damage

Staff who incur loss or damage to their clothing or personal effects may be entitled to payment in respect of the loss or damage where:

- i The staff member was protecting or endeavouring to protect the property of Telecom Australia from loss or damage, or,
- ii the loss or damage was caused by a fault or defect in goods or other property belonging to Telecom Australia, or
- iii the loss or damage was resultant from an act or omission of another person employed by Telecom Australia, or
- iv the loss or damage is otherwise attributable to the person's employment with Telecom Australia.

However, staff are reminded that they have a responsibility to exercise proper care during the performance of their duties and that, where appropriate, where uniforms and protective clothing and equipment are provided, they should be used to avoid unnecessary loss or damage to personal effects. Staff By-Law 81.

Staff Welfare Services

Telecom Australia has Staff Welfare Officers, who are trained personal counsellors, to help you with any welfare problems of a personal nature.

Staff Welfare Officers are available to discuss any problems with you and if required refer you to an organisation providing specialised service.

Interviews are confidential.

If you require the services of a Staff Welfare Officer you may approach the Welfare unit either in person or by telephone, or alternatively your supervisor may assist you in making arrangements to see a Staff Welfare Officer. There is no need for your supervisor or any other person to know the reason for your visit.

Staff Suggestions

Telecom Australia is always seeking suggestions which will improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Through the Staff Suggestions Scheme you can put forward your ideas and receive recognition for constructive thinking which benefits Telecom Australia and your fellow employees. Your idea may propose a way of improving procedures, developing new equipment or modifying existing equipment; it may suggest a change in the way things are being done; or it may offer a new application of an old idea. Suggestions dealing with safety are always welcome.

Awards are paid for most adopted suggestions, but it is important to remember that you need to suggest something that is not normally expected of you in your day to day work. Other factors taken into account when assessing awards are the extent to which efficiency in Telecom Australia is improved, savings made and the degree of ingenuity or research displayed.

Forward your suggestions postage free to:

Freepost 13
Executive Officer
Staff Suggestions Board
Telecom Australia
199 William Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

Discrimination in Employment

Discrimination in employment means the unequal treatment of persons for reasons other than those necessary to the job. Under a convention of the International Labour Organisation, Australia is committed to no discrimination in employment on grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, marital status, national extraction or social origin.

Telecom Australia has a policy of equality in employment for all people employed or seeking employment.

Cases of alleged discrimination may be submitted to the Discrimination Sub-committee of the Telecom Consultative Council and will be investigated by a committee comprising a representative of Telecom Australia and a federal official of the Union/Staff Association covering the employee concerned.

Staff Organisations

Telecom Australia encourages your membership of the staff organisations which covers your area of employment. Staff organisations represent your interests in many ways, for example at Conciliation and Arbitration hearings, and in the representation of grievances to management. Staff association nominees are included on Promotion and Disciplinary Appeal Boards and the Review Tribunal.

TELECOM CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

The Consultative Council is a joint staff-management body which meets twice yearly to consider matters of general interest to the staff of Telecom Australia.

The Council consists of seventeen members, ten of whom are representatives of staff organisations and unions, and seven, including the Chairman, are nominated by the Commission. The Council provides an opportunity for negotiation and consultation between management and staff organisations in all important issues except pay matters. The Council may appoint Sub-committees to investigate matters between meetings of the Council.

TELECOM CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

The API is the staff club of Telecom Australia and Australia Post. Any staff member may join the API upon payment of the prescribed subscription. The services and activities provided for the benefit of members and their families are listed below, although the range offered may vary between States.

The API provides the following services and facilities:

- Sporting and recreation (casual and competition)
- Hobbies
- Cultural activities
- Libraries
- Educational services
- Social activities, including dinner dances, excursions, theatre nights, etc.

- There are a variety of sporting, social and cultural clubs which are part of the API, including the Retired Officers Club.

The API also provides a wide range of commercial services including:

- Purchasing (some States have a store with a variety of shopping facilities while others provide a referral service to other suppliers).
- Travel services
- Credit Co-operatives
- Insurance
- Legal advice
- Financial counselling
- Holiday homes

The API has branches in all areas of Australia and the local officers of these branches will be able to provide more detailed information on the activities of the API.

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