

31 July 2024

PCS rejects pay offer for DE&S staff.

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Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) have published what they describe as the “best and final offer” for DE&S members and whilst pay talks were conducted in good faith, PCS negotiators felt the offer falls well short of the PCS national pay claim which was submitted in February.

The PCS Defence Sector group met on 8 July to review the “best and final offer” and unanimously rejected it. Civil service pay has fallen far below the salaries received in the 1970s and 1980s and since 2010 median annual pay has fallen between 15% and 38% depending on grade. Half of this pay erosion has been since 2010. Even to restore pay to 2020 levels this would require pay awards of between 11% and 27% depending on grade, due to shocking levels of inflation. The PCS Defence group does not believe the current offer comes close to restoring this erosion of pay or create a wage that low earners can live on. The PCS claim for a minimum pay award equates to £15 an hour, something the offer still fails to meet.

The employer still continues to allocate large sums to non-consolidated pay awards and does this disproportionately so that higher earners gain more for a box 3 than lower earners get from a box 1 marking. If the objective is to motivate staff and improve performance this will clearly have a negative effect. The PCS position is that this money should be moved to consolidated pay and pension payments to help combat the cost-of-living crisis and give staff more certainty whilst their living standards have dropped.

There was no movement from the employer on additional annual leave or a review of the working week to improve on more flexible ways of working with the benefit of new technology.

There is a caveat within the pay offer that allows us to revisit should the treasury pay remit offer be an improvement on the DE&S offer. It's been announced that the pay remit is for pay awards up to 5% so we will be seeking to reconvene with DE&S as soon as possible.