

DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL INSTRUCTION NO 6/2004

15 November 2004

Note: These instructions are of a permanent nature and remain in force until cancelled. They should be reviewed by the sponsor every three years and repromulgated only where a significant change of content is necessary. Publications can be accessed on the Defence Intranet at <http://defweb.cbr.defence.gov.au/home/documents/departme.htm>

PROCEDURES FOR THE PROVISION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNICAL OFFICE EQUIPMENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

AIM

1. The aim of this instruction is to provide procedures for the provision of specialised office equipment under the Defence Assistive Technology Program (DATP). The DATP replaces the Technical Equipment for Disabled Commonwealth Employees Program (TEDCEP).
2. DATP exists to ensure that Australian Public Service Defence employees with special requirements, arising from disabilities and/or medical conditions, are provided with the technical office equipment that would assist them in performing their work duties. The definition of disability is very broad. It includes someone with more than one disability or who has total, partial, temporary or permanent disability.
3. Where it is necessary to change some feature or design of work or to acquire some specific office equipment, Defence will provide a reasonable adjustment to assist the employee. Some typical examples of equipment are telephone typewriters with printers for employees with hearing impairments, and voice synthesisers and computers with a screen facility for employees with visual impairments. However, there is a broad range of technical assistive office equipment and aids available for different requirements and situations, and all reasonable requests will be considered.

POLICY

4. Defence is committed to ensuring that employees with disabilities:
 - a. are not unlawfully discriminated against in relation to employment;
 - b. have access to programs, equipment, services, buildings and facilities necessary for them to undertake their tasks, and ensures that barriers are removed from their full participation in the work place; and
 - c. that its policy complies with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, the Public Service Commissioner's Directions 1999, and the Commonwealth Disability Strategy 2000.
5. Defence agrees to consider any request for a reasonable adjustment which relates to specific disability, does not have a negative impact on other Defence employees and does not cause an unjustifiable hardship to Defence.

ROLE OF THE REHABILITATION CASE MANAGER

6. The role of the Rehabilitation Case Manager (RCM) is as a source of support information and coordination of assessment for the DATP applicant and their work area during the application process. The RCM is available in the Corporate Service Infrastructure Group in each region. The list of RCMs can be found on the Defence Personnel Executive web site, under Civilian Rehabilitation and Compensation. The RCM will coordinate the process of acquiring the workplace assessment required to make an application for funding under the DATP. RCMs are not subject matter experts and cannot conduct the workplace assessment.

PROCEDURE

Funding

7. The DATP fund will be managed and administered centrally by the Defence Equity Organisation (DEO). The expenditure delegate is the Director DEO.

Application process

8. Defence employees who have a specific requirement for assistive office equipment, or their supervisors, should lodge a request for funding with their regional RCM. The applicant needs to provide details of their disability or condition, duties performed and type of equipment required. The request must be supported by a medical practitioner's certificate and recommendation. The applicant's supervisor is required to endorse the application. A standard pro forma detailing required information is in [annex A](#).

9. The RCM will arrange a workplace assessment for recommendations on appropriate equipment or workplace modifications in consultation with the applicant and their work area. The workplace assessment will be conducted by an occupational therapist and/or audiologist (for hearing impairments) or orthoptist (for vision impairments). The assessment must accompany any application for funding. The assessment should include comparisons of equipment, assembly or installation requirements, training, availability of maintenance and delivery options. Applications will not be considered without these supporting assessments.

10. The RCM will advise the applicant of the outcome of the assessment by the RCM and, if supportive of the provision of equipment, the RCM will provide a submission to the DATP expenditure delegate on behalf of the applicant.

11. If the outcome of the assessment is unfavourable, applicants may seek a review in writing from the Director-General Career Management Policy, R1-1-C021, Department of Defence, Canberra, ACT 2600.

12. If the applicant remains dissatisfied after this review they may seek further review by the Complaints Resolution Agency in line with the *Public Service Act 1999*.

13. Applications for provision of aids such as wheelchairs and hearing aids will not be considered—as provision of these kinds of aids attracts reportable fringe benefits on behalf of applicants. Additionally, ergonomic workstation assessments and provision of ergonomic office equipment do not fall under this policy. This kind of assessment and equipment is the responsibility of the originating Group or Service under the occupational health and safety provisions of *Defence Safety Manual (SAFETYMAN)* volume 1, part 7, chapter 9—'Prevention and Management of Occupational overuse syndrome'.

Procurement

14. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of the assessment by the RCM and, if favourable, the RCM will make a submission to the DATP expenditure delegate on behalf of the applicant seeking approval to purchase the equipment. When approval has been given, the RCM will advise the applicant and request the local purchasing officer to purchase the equipment.

15. Once approval for purchase of the recommended equipment has been received, the RCM will advise the applicant. Prior to purchasing the equipment the RCM should ensure that Defence does not already hold the equipment in storage. This can be checked locally through the asset registry. A central database of DATP granted equipment will also be maintained by the DEO. If the item is not available from the equipment pool, the RCM will request that the local purchasing officer arrange purchase of the equipment.

16. Value for public money must be assured when purchasing any equipment. Three quotes should be obtained for the required equipment but where this is not possible, the application to the DATP expenditure delegate should include an explanation. In addition, training, delivery and installation cost should be included in the quote where applicable.

17. Equipment will be delivered according to local establishment receipting procedures. The RCM will arrange the delivery of the item by the supplier to the applicant. Upon receipt the assets control officer of the applicant's work area must register the item on ROMAN in accordance with Defence Reference Book 48—*Accounting Manual*, chapter 2—'Physical and Intangible Assets Policies'.

18. To ensure effective use of the equipment provided to employees with disabilities, the RCM will liaise with the equipment supplier and the applicant for necessary assembly and training to be provided at the time of delivery.

Use of equipment

19. The equipment is to be used for work purposes only. The DATP policy does not have a provision for private use of any supplied equipment. Any unauthorised or private use of the equipment will lead to a review of the recipient's right to use the equipment. The same principle applies to software unless permission is granted by the applicant's supervisor for private usage in exceptional circumstance. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

20. The recipient is responsible for the appropriate use of equipment. The equipment is to be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The recipient is liable for costs associated with repair or replacement where equipment has been damaged as a result of misuse or abuse.

21. Recipients of equipment should contact the RCM to arrange necessary repairs and/or maintenance resulting from normal use. These will be funded through the DATP allocation. Where equipment is beyond economical repair, the recipient should discuss replacement with the RCM who in turn will contact the DEO. When the equipment is beyond economical repair, the RCM is to contact the local assets control officer to arrange for disposal of the equipment.

Relocation of equipment

22. If a recipient of equipment is transferred or promoted within the Department, the equipment may also be relocated providing that it can be used effectively in the new location. This is particularly important with items such as voice recognition software and its associated hardware as the recipient has trained the software to meet their particular needs in order to perform their work tasks.

23. Where recipients of equipment intend to relocate, they need to advise the RCM in writing two weeks prior to relocation. The RCM is to assist in arranging another workplace assessment if necessary. The asset transfer is to be annotated on the ROMAN asset register accordingly.

Recipient ceases duty with Defence

24. Equipment will always remain the property of Defence whether the recipient retires, resigns, is retrenched or moves to another Government department. In these cases the equipment must be returned to the regional RCM for suitable storage and reallocation.

25. Alternatively, the equipment may be transferred out of Defence with the recipient to other Commonwealth bodies, upon the negotiation and payment of a suitable transfer fee based on the depreciated value of the equipment. This fee is to be paid by the receiving department. The local assets control officer will conduct such negotiations and proceeds are to be credited to Defence Revenue.

26. Under either of these circumstances, the local assets control officer is to be notified by the RCM and the assets register is to be annotated accordingly.

27. Under no circumstances can equipment be given or donated to the recipient for private use. This may constitute fraud and is a misappropriation of Defence property, which may result in legal action being taken against the parties involved in the transaction.



D.S.M. ROCHE
Brigadier
Director-General Career Management Policy

Annex:

- A. [Submission for funding—purchase of equipment/services under the Defence Assistive Technology Program](#)

DISTRIBUTION: SDL 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9A, 12, 14

CONTACT OFFICER: Deputy Director Policy
Defence Equity Organisation
R1-1-C091
Department of Defence
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Telephone: (02) 6265 5588

EARLIER DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL INSTRUCTION CANCELLED: 5/2004

SUBMISSION FOR FUNDING—PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT/SERVICES UNDER THE DEFENCE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

TO: DATP Coordinator

Fax: (02) 6265 1799

DETAILS

Applicant's name:

Applicant's Group/Section:

Applicant's location:

BACKGROUND

Nature of Disability:

Brief Job Description:

.....

.....

CONSIDERATIONS

Equipment required:

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ASSESSMENT

Has Medical Practitioner's certificate been provided?

(Please circle one) **Yes** **No**

If no please state reasons:

Has an occupational therapist conducted a workplace assessment and provided recommendations?

(Please circle one) **Yes** **No**

If no please state reasons:

Has an audiologist conducted a hearing assessment and provided recommendations?

(Please circle one) **Yes** **No**

If no please state reasons:

Has an orthopist conducted a visual assessment and provided recommendations?

(Please circle one) **Yes** **No**

If no please state reasons:

Have three equipment quotes been obtained and attached to this form? **Yes** **No**

If no please state reasons:

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

Name or Description:

Cost of equipment:

Any training/installation requirements:

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Supplier's Name and Address:

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SUPERVISOR

Is application endorsed?

.....
Supervisor's Signature

.....
Date

Name:

Position:

Contact number:

REHABILITATION CASE MANAGER

.....
RCM's Signature

.....
Date

Name:

Position:

Contact number:

Please ensure that copies of all relevant quotes, medical/professional assessment, associated paperwork and any additional comments are attached to this submission.