

Case Summary
Office of the Judge Advocate General

DEFENDANT: SPR Rawnsley

TYPE OF PROCEEDING: Defence Force Magistrate

DATE OF TRIAL: 11 September 2025

VENUE: Robertson Barracks, NT

Charges and plea

	Statement of Offence	Plea
Charge 1	DFDA, s. 61(3) and Criminal Code 1995, s. 135.2(1) Obtaining a financial advantage	Not Guilty
Alternative to Charge 1	DFDA, s. 56(4) Recklessly making false or misleading statement in relation to application for benefit	Guilty

Pre-Trial: Closed hearing and non-publication orders

Application made:	No
Determination:	Not Applicable

Trial: Facts and legal principles

Nil, as the case proceeded by way of a guilty plea.

Findings

	Finding
Charge 1	Not Applicable
Alternative to Charge 1	Guilty

Sentencing: Facts and legal principles

During the relevant period of 06 Dec 22 to 09 Mar 24, the offender had not authorised Living In Meal (LIM) deductions to be taken from his fortnightly pay. On 300 occasions the offender made a false statement by representing that they were entitled to select the meal payment option of ‘PSS Fortnightly Meal Deductions’, being a LIM selection. This resulted in the offender receiving a benefit of \$2,240.75 in meals.

In all of the circumstances, the Prosecuting Officer conceded that the punishments of imprisonment and dismissal were not warranted or appropriate.

In mitigation of punishment, the Defending Officer concentrated his submissions on the very early plea of guilty, the offender’s young age and limited time in service, his genuine remorse, otherwise good character and the fact that he had fully reimbursed the Commonwealth prior to sentence.

Taking all matters into account, the DFM held that the minimum punishment required to satisfy the principles of general deterrence and maintenance of discipline and good order was a wholly suspended period of detention.

- *This summary is not intended to be a substitute for the reasons of the Service tribunal or to be used in any later consideration of the tribunal’s reasons.*

Punishments and orders

Charge 1	Not Applicable
Alternative to Charge 1	Detention for 30 days, (30 days suspended).

Outcome on automatic review

The Reviewing Authority's decision on automatic review was handed down on 29 September 2025.

	Conviction	Punishments / Orders
Charge 1	Not applicable	Not applicable
Alternative to Charge 1	Upheld	Upheld

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