

Staff Handbook

Chapter 12

Pay

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Chapter 12

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PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Timing of Payment

12001 Staff employed on very short term contracts (ie less than 3 months duration) may be paid weekly, at the discretion of their local management unit. All other employees are monthly paid. All staff are paid in arrears, by credit transfer to a bank or building society account.

12002 For monthly paid staff, payday is the last working day of the calendar month. Where the last day of a month falls on a weekend or public holiday, payment will be made on the last working day immediately before the weekend or holiday. For weekly paid staff, payday is Thursday. Should your pay not arrive on time, you should contact HR Operations, Silvan House. If you leave the Commission, any pay/arrears due to you after leaving will be automatically issued to the last bank/building society used by the pay system.

12003 For employees working the same working patterns and hours from month to month, monthly gross pay is calculated by dividing the annual rate of pay by 12. Payment for part months (e.g. when an individual starts or finishes work mid month) is detailed in paragraph 12006.

New Entrants

12004 If you join the Commission early in the month, you will normally be paid at the end of that month. If you start work with the Commission towards the end of the month, it may not be possible to include you in the payroll for that month.

12005 If you have been unemployed or not previously paid monthly, mid-monthly advances may be paid for up to 3 months to help you adjust. A request for mid-monthly pay must be received by HR Operations in the first 7 days of the first month in which it is required. Future payments will be made as normal at the end of each month. Advice can be obtained from HR Operations.

12006 Payment of mid-monthly advances will normally be made on or about the 15th of the month. Each mid-monthly advance will be recovered from your salary at the end of the month in which the advance was made.

Payment for Part Months (starting/leaving the Commission)

12007 Where pay has to be made for a period of time other than a complete month, the following is how it will be calculated for both full time and part time staff on a fixed monthly salary:

- a. a pro rata calculation will be used based on the number of days worked up to the effective date of departure related to the number of calendar days in the month in question e.g. if you resign from the Commission on 21 May, your salary for that month will be calculated as 21/31 of your monthly pay;
- b. payment for untaken annual leave at the time of resignation will only be made in exceptional circumstances, where an individual has been prevented from taking the leave by management. Cash compensation for full-time staff will be calculated using the 'daily rate' based on annual salary divided by 260 (i.e. excluding weekends). Refer to Chapter 10 for further information on untaken leave.
- c. staff whose date of retirement or discharge falls on a non-working date and who are:
 - retiring on age grounds on their birthday, on a date specially significant for pension purposes, or on a date chosen by the Commission; or

- retiring on ill-health grounds; or
- being discharged;

may receive payment up to that date.

Changing your Bank/Building Society Account

12008 If you wish to change your account, you should submit the 'Change of Bank Details' form (available on the [HR Intranet](#) site) to HR Operations by the 7th of the month. You should not, however, close your existing bank account before a new one has been opened for the receipt of credit transfer.

ADVANCES OF SALARY

Advances for Purchases

12009 Interest free advances of pay are available to you, to assist with :

- purchase of a season ticket for travel;
- purchase of sports/health equipment (including a bicycle);
- payment of health/fitness/sports club membership; and
- purchase of IT equipment.

Guidance and an application form are available in Non-Pay Guidance Note 6 on the [HR Intranet site](#).

Advances Prior to Annual leave

12010 Advances of salary are available on request, prior to taking annual leave. Application form, C210, is available on the [HR Intranet](#) site or from HR Operations. The form should be returned to HR Operations in the month before that in which you require payment e.g. if an advance is required in end-September salary your application form should be received in HR Operations by the end of August. The conditions of the advance are detailed on the application form.

Christmas Advances

12011 You may apply for an advance of salary at Christmas. Application forms (C213) are available on the [HR Intranet](#) site or from HR Operations. The conditions of the advance are detailed on the application form and the procedures and dates for claiming are publicised prior to the festive period.

Emergency Advances

12012 If you discover that your pay has not been credited to your bank/ building society account please notify HR Operations immediately. HR Operations will seek to find the cause for the delay and arrange to overcome it. If this is not immediately possible they will make arrangements for payment by the most suitable means available. In any case where an emergency advance results in you receiving double payment, for whatever reason, you will be required to repay the full amount of "overpayment" without delay.

PAY BAND STRUCTURE AND THE PAY SYSTEM

Equal Pay

12013 The law relating to gender discrimination in pay is rooted in both European law and UK statute. This legislation makes gender discrimination in pay and conditions of service unlawful. **Appendix 1** sets out the Commission's policy on equal pay.

Pay Bands

12014 Jobs within the Forestry Commission below the Senior Staff Group are graded (ie allocated to Pay Bands) by job weight, which is determined using an analytical Job Evaluation & Grading System (JEGS). The Cabinet Office is responsible for the design and 'integrity' of JEGS. The aim of job evaluation is to provide a systematic, fair and consistent means of measuring the relative quality of jobs in an organisation. Job Evaluation measures jobs, not job holders. It does not measure performance, loading (i.e. the volume of work) or determine pay within a Pay Band.

12015 There are eight Pay Bands below the Senior Staff Group, two of which have 'shadow' operational pay bands (see para 12017). The current salary ranges and intermediate steps in each pay band are shown on the HR Intranet site.

Operational Pay

12016 Operational pay is paid in Pay Bands 6A and 5, where there are clear operational working conditions attached to specific jobs that make it necessary. Operational jobs are those directly concerned with managing activities in the forest (including work within FC forests or with private sector landowners). Operational pay is higher than the non-operational equivalent to reflect a contractual requirement to work longer operational hours, agree greater flexibility in working hour arrangements and to be on call or work rotas. This pay lead is paid in lieu of overtime payments and on-call allowance. Non-operational pay reflects lower contractual hours and staff in receipt of it are eligible to receive overtime payments in respect of additional authorised time (over and above conditioned hours) spent working or travelling on business.

12017 The effect on pay of moves between operational and non-operational posts is set out in **Appendix 2**.

Starting Pay On Recruitment

12018 Candidates who are successful in an open recruitment competition will have their starting pay assessed as specified in the regulations applicable to the competition. However, existing FC staff who are successful at open competitions for posts above their substantive pay band may have their starting pay assessed according to the rules for starting pay on promotion if this is more favourable.

12019 On initial appointment to the Forestry Commission new recruits will normally enter the pay band at the band minimum. Where someone has exceptional qualifications and/or experience directly relevant to the work of the post, starting pay on appointment may be above the minimum. Higher starting pay will be determined by the recruitment board, but will not exceed the maximum of the Pay Band.

Starting Pay On Promotion

12020 From the date of promotion, the individual will be paid the rate appropriate to the higher pay band. This is calculated as a 10% pay increase on basic salary rounded up to the next step in the higher pay band if required. Separate arrangements are in place for promotions between non-operational and operational Pay Bands and these are set out in **Appendix 2**.

12021 Staff who move to an external post on secondment, which attracts a higher salary, will not retain the higher salary on return to the FC. However, the time spent away from the FC will count towards their 'progression' up the FC pay scale on return.

Recruitment and Retention Allowance (RRA)

12022 RRA is a temporary addition to basic salary paid to address specific significant recruitment and retention difficulties. Payment of RRA is approved by management at Senior Staff Group level after a case has been made which shows why an additional payment has to be made. Further information on RRA is given in **Appendix 3**.

Temporary Responsibility Allowance (TRA)

12023 TRA is a temporary addition to basic salary paid to recognise the undertaking of additional responsibilities, for example when an employee covers for an absent colleague or temporarily fills a vacant post at a higher Pay Band level. Further information on TRA is contained in **Appendix 4**.

Other Allowances

12024 A number of other allowances may be paid where appropriate:

- Tool
- Dog
- Ferret
- On call

12025 Some staff retain reserved rights to allowances which were abolished in 1994 for new staff, e.g. ADP allowances and Typing Allowances. The terms on which those reserved rights are held were notified to individual staff when the allowances were abolished and include provision for them to be withdrawn on transfer to a non-qualifying post.

Treatment of Allowances on Promotion

12026 The terms applying to the payment of any allowance will be notified in writing when the allowance is initially paid. Allowances do not reckon in the calculation for starting pay on promotion and, if payment is not appropriate in the new post, they will be withdrawn.

Pay on Reversion/Downgrading

12027 On voluntary reversion or downgrading to a lower pay band an individual's pay will be calculated by taking their salary in the higher pay band, dividing by 1.10 and then placing him/her on the pay point immediately below the resulting figure. If the transfer is from an operational to non-operational pay band the salary will first be converted to the same step on the equivalent non-operational pay band before the divisor is applied.

Pay on Re-employment to a Lower Pay Band (after Resignation)

12028 You may apply to be re-employed in a lower pay band to that held on resignation. Starting pay on re-employment is discretionary but may be to a point in the new pay band which reflects previous experience in any higher pay band. Higher starting pay may be awarded by the Recruitment Board to reflect any exceptional relevant experience gained during the period (see 12019).

Pay on Reinstatement to Same Pay Band

12029 An individual who has resigned his/her permanent appointment or who has been prematurely retired for reasons other than inefficiency or misconduct and who wishes to return to a similar job may seek reinstatement to their previous pay band within a 5-year period following resignation. There is no right to reinstatement. Starting pay will be calculated as follows:

- a. on reinstatement to the same pay band, an individual may re-enter at the point reached at the date of resignation, adjusted for any subsequent changes to the pay band salaries, if applicable. Higher starting pay may be awarded to reflect any exceptional relevant experience gained during the break in employment.

b. if an individual is re-employed to a lower pay band under para 12028 and, within 3 years of re-employment, is re-appointed to their former pay band, starting pay will be calculated as in a.

Reinstatement outwith the 5-year period is subject to management discretion and the applicant may be required to compete in an open competition.

Overtime/Travelling Time Payments

12030 Information on eligibility for overtime and travelling time, and the rates payable, are set out in Chapter 11 of the Staff Handbook.

Changes

12031 The salary range for each Pay Band may be reviewed from time to time by examining salaries and salary movements for similar jobs in other Government departments and organisations. The value of allowances, etc may also be reviewed from time to time.

12032 Any changes to the Pay Bands, salary ranges, allowances or other aspects of the pay system are negotiated with the Trade Unions recognised for collective bargaining purposes. All changes to the pay system are announced in Pay Notices, which are available on the [HR Intranet](#) site.

Salary Exchange (also known as Salary Sacrifice)

12033 The Commission provides certain employee benefits under Salary Exchange arrangements. This means that the employee agrees to accept part of their remuneration as a benefit, rather than as cash. For eligible benefits, the employee will not pay Income Tax and/or National Insurance on the amount exchanged. Further information is available on the Benefits & Discounts page of the HR intranet site.

12034 -12050 Unallocated.

DEDUCTIONS FROM PAY

Overpayments of Salary

12051 Every employee has a responsibility to check their payslips and to contact HR Operations if any under or over payments are made.

12052 Very occasionally mistakes can happen in your pay calculation, for example if HR is not notified in time of a significant change that affects your pay. The Commission reserves the right to make deductions from pay where, for any reason, there has been an overpayment in excess of your entitlement. For this reason, you will have been deemed to have checked every payment and to be aware of any overpayments.

12053 Where an overpayment has occurred, you will be notified of the amount, which will normally be reversed automatically on the next pay date. However, where the overpayment is substantial and it is agreed that it is impractical to recover the full amount in one month, you will be notified of the proposed deductions in advance and invited to make any representations you wish about the matter, including the frequency and amount of deductions.

Deductions under Statutory Authority

12054 Deductions from pay are made under statutory authority for Income Tax, National Insurance, the PCSPS Widow's and Children's pension scheme and, if appropriate, other superannuation contributions. The Forestry Commission may also receive an order from a court, local authority, or the Child Support Agency to make deductions from your salary to pay for a debt or fine incurred by you. We will deduct all statutory deductions and recoveries from your pay prior to payment.

Voluntary Deductions & Giving to Charity

12055 Deductions may be made from pay free of charge for the payment of premiums or subscriptions to some organisations. Advice should be sought from HR Operations.

12056 'Give As You Earn' is a scheme which allows you to make a monthly contribution from your salary to any charity you choose. Further information and a Charity Selection form are available on the [HR Intranet](#) site or by contacting HR Operations.

12057-12070 Unallocated.

MARK-TIME PAY

12071 "Mark-time Pay" is a pay calculation which allows an employee to retain their current pay when changes in circumstances (other than downgrading on poor performance, disciplinary or on voluntary grounds) would otherwise result in a reduction in pay to a new substantive rate. An example of such a change is where it has been agreed that an allowance which should be withdrawn will be retained on a mark-time basis. In such cases, staff will retain the pay in payment on the day before the change occurs, though no further increases will be applied to the amount. The difference between the individual's 'appropriate' rate of substantive pay and the retained rate of pay will be known as mark-time pay.

12072 The value of the mark-time pay (the difference between the individual's appropriate rate of substantive pay and the retained rate of pay) will be gradually eroded by subsequent increases to the substantive pay such as pay awards or pay progression. The retained pay is not increased until substantive pay overtakes it, at which point the normal pay arrangements will apply.

12073 The following limitations should be noted:

- a. an individual's mark-time rate of pay will not exceed the maximum of the new pay band except where formal pay protection arrangements apply;
- b. a back-dated increase may be applied to mark-time pay provided that the pay increase was promulgated before the date of the change in individual circumstances (even though the increase may not have been implemented before that date);
- c. the mark-time rate of pay will not include any retrospective increase promulgated on or after the date of the change in circumstances, even if the former pay rate attracts arrears of pay for the prior period.

12074 - 12099 Unallocated.

SENIOR STAFF GROUP PAY

12100 The Commission's Senior Staff Group operates by analogy with the Senior Civil Service in the Home Civil Service. Senior Civil Service pay is monitored by the Senior Salaries Review Board (SSRB), which makes recommendations to the Government on the structure of the pay system, the range of salaries for each senior Pay Band and the size of each year's pay award.

Job Evaluation and Placement of Senior Staff into Pay Bands

12101 The starting point for determining senior staff's pay is the senior pay band in which the individual's post is placed. Senior posts in the Commission are evaluated using Job Evaluation for Senior Posts (JESP) and the JESP score determines the Pay Band. The current JESP score for each senior post is available on the HR Intranet site. Any senior post which undergoes a significant change in responsibilities will be re-evaluated.

Senior Pay System

12102 Details of the Senior Staff Group Pay Ranges and the current Senior Staff Group Pay Strategy are available on the HR Intranet site.

Performance

12103 The performance assessment on senior staff in the Commission follow the performance management system for the Senior Civil Service, which is designed by Cabinet Office. In line with Government policy, performance is the principal factor in determining annual pay awards for senior staff. Guidance can be found on the HR Intranet site.

July 2009

EQUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Forestry Commission is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment. We believe it is in the Commission's interest and good business practice that pay is awarded fairly and equitably.

A right to equal pay between men and women free of gender bias is a fundamental principle of European Community law and is conferred by United Kingdom legislation. UK statute requires that male and female staff must receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent and for work of equal value.

In order to achieve equal pay for employees doing equal work it is important that we design and operate a pay system that is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from gender bias.

The Commission uses an analytical job evaluation system to assess the quality of jobs and determine their place in the Commission's grading structure.

Action to implement policy

In order to put our commitment to equal pay into practice we will:

- regularly review our pay practices for all our employees, including those not in permanent, full time jobs and those who are absent on maternity leave;
- carry out regular monitoring of the impact of our pay and performance appraisal/practices;
- inform staff of how these practices work and how their own pay is arrived at (eg through the Staff Handbook and Staff Pay Notices);
- discuss and agree changes to pay policy with trade union representatives, where appropriate.

We intend, through the above action, to avoid unfair discrimination and to reward fairly the skills, experience and potential of all staff.

TRANSFERS BETWEEN OPERATIONAL AND NON-OPERATIONAL POSTS

1. Special arrangements are applied for staff transferring between operational and non-operational posts.

Level Transfer

Operational to Non-Operational Moves: Pay Bands 5 and 6a

2. Staff transferring from an operational post in Pay Bands 5 or 6a to a non-operational post at the same level will be considered to be undertaking a 'tour of duty'. A tour of duty will normally last up to 5 years. In some circumstances it may be slightly shorter or it may be extended by two to three months without penalty to the individual, where there is difficulty identifying a suitable post.
3. Staff transferring from an operational post to a non-operational post at the same pay band level (e.g. Pay Band 5(Op) to 5) will transfer at their existing operational salary. For the duration of their tour of duty, they will continue to receive pay increases and will thus retain their operational pay lead.
4. Towards the end of the 5-year period, they will be expected to transfer back to an operational post and a suitable post will be offered. A suitable post will be one in the same pay band as the one currently occupied, in a part of the country or a part of the Forestry Commission which takes account of the individual's preference. This clearly places the responsibility on management to ensure appropriate forward planning, although individuals may make views known to their managers or to HR Operations at any time.
5. If the individual chooses to remain in the non-operational post, they will lose the pay lead at that point and will be moved onto a pay point in the non-operational pay band equivalent to their position in relation to the maximum which they were on in the operational band. They will become subject to non-operational conditioned hours terms, with eligibility for payment of approved overtime/travelling time.

Non-Operational to Operational Moves: Pay Bands 5 and 6a

6. Staff transferring from a non-operational post to an operational post in Pay Band 5 or 6a will become eligible for operational pay, linked to the appropriate increase in hours. If promoted into one of these bands they will receive a 10% increase in basic salary, plus 17.5% in recognition of the operational working conditions. If the resulting salary is below the minimum or between steps, the salary will be increased to the next step. From the effective date of promotion/transfer, the person will be employed on an operational contract (full-time 44 hours net of lunch breaks) with no entitlement to overtime. Staff on level transfer into an operational post at Pay Bands 5 or 6a will be subject to the same arrangements, excluding the 10% promotion increase.

Promotion

Operational Pay Bands 6a to 5

7. Staff promoted from Pay Band 6a(Op) into Pay Band 5(Op) will receive a 10% increase in basic salary. If the resulting salary is below the minimum or between steps in the higher pay band, the salary will be increased to the next step.

Operational to Non-Operational: Pay Bands 1 to 4

8. Staff promoted from Pay Band 5(Op) or Pay Band 6a(Op) to any post in Pay Bands 1-4 will move across on their existing operational salary. If that salary is below the minimum or between steps in the higher pay band, the salary will be increased to the next step. They will receive the balance of a 10% increase as a non-consolidated, non-pensionable lump sum.
9. From the effective date of promotion, he/she will be employed on a non-operational contract basis, working 37 hours (net of lunch breaks) per week for full time staff. If they are moving into a post in Pay Bands 3 or 4 they will have entitlement to approved overtime/travelling time payments in accordance with the rules which are set out in Staff Handbook Chapter 11. Different arrangements for working excess hours apply to staff in Pay Band 2. Staff should acquaint themselves with these before claims are submitted.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ALLOWANCE

1. Temporary additions to basic salary may be paid to address specific circumstances in which posts in any pay band are affected by significant recruitment and/or retention difficulties. These additions, comprising individual sums in individual circumstances, are called Recruitment and Retention Allowance (RRA). RRA may, in appropriate circumstances, be payable in addition to Higher Starting Salary.
2. For any individual, RRA plus any other existing pay allowances may total up to a maximum value of £10,000 per annum. The RRA will be paid in addition to basic salary, including payment above the maximum of the pay band where appropriate, and will be pensionable. RRA will be paid monthly, with salary, and will not reckon for overtime or for starting pay on promotion. The allowance will be paid pro-rata to part-time staff.
3. Responsibility for approving payment of RRA lies with a Senior Staff Group Manager. Proposals to pay RRA for one or more specific posts may be submitted for approval to these senior managers at any time. Proposals must identify the posts affected and should provide as much information as possible about the recruitment and/or retention difficulties being experienced, including details of remuneration packages being paid for comparable jobs by other relevant employers.
4. Proposals that are approved will be notified to HR Operations for implementation. This will include issuing a written amendment to terms and conditions to each individual, making clear the terms on which RRA is payable and on which it may be withdrawn.
5. The RRA will be withdrawn immediately following receipt of an overall 'not fully effective' mark for at least one review period (i.e. covering at least 6 months) or as the overall mark for the year, where the correct procedures for monitoring and supporting poor performance (set out in PM12) have been followed.
6. The withdrawn RRA payment will be re-instated once the performance has been raised to 'Good Performer' level, documented fully in PMS. The payment will be re-instated with effect from the date on which the improved performance is recorded in PMS.
7. Any proposal to withdraw or reinstate RRA must be confirmed by the appropriate approving officer (see para. 3).
8. Any RRA in payment must be reviewed by the appropriate approving manager at annual intervals. The review will consider whether the market forces in effect at that time justify the continued payment of the Allowance. Three months written notice, including supporting evidence, will be given of any proposals to reduce or withdraw the Allowance in payment to any individual because of changes in justification arising from the review.
9. If an individual in receipt of RRA moves into another post that also qualifies for RRA, they will retain the allowance. If an individual in receipt of RRA moves voluntarily to a post that does not qualify for RRA (including moves on promotion) the Allowance will cease and will be withdrawn immediately.
10. HR will, for equal pay purposes, monitor the payment of RRA.

TEMPORARY RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE

1. Staff who take on the additional duties and responsibilities of a post in a higher pay band, on a temporary basis, will receive a Temporary Responsibility Allowance (TRA). The Allowance will be paid in addition to basic salary, including payment above the maximum of the pay band, where appropriate. It will be paid monthly, with salary, and will be pensionable. It will reckon for overtime and travelling time (for staff in Non-Operational pay bands) but not for starting pay on promotion.
2. To be eligible, staff must take on the full range of responsibilities of the post in the higher pay band for a period of at least 2 working weeks. However, in exceptional situations where there is a need to always have a responsible person in charge of a unit, e.g. in situations where a specific security role is required to be carried out at a particular pay band level, or where cover is required for Health and Safety reasons, periods of at least one working day will qualify for TRA. The Allowance will not normally be paid for periods of greater than 6 months. Any proposals for periods of temporary responsibility beyond 6 months will be agreed with HR Operations, who will consult the Trade Union Side.
3. Circumstances in which the Allowance may be paid may include covering for a colleague in a higher pay band who is absent on maternity leave or medium/long term sick leave, providing cover while arrangements are made to permanently fill a higher level post or completing a short term project. The individual must discuss and agree a Forward Job Plan for the period in the higher post with their Confirming Officer.
4. HR Operations will monitor the duration of the temporary responsibility and will bring cases approaching the threshold to the attention of the appropriate manager. HR Operations will also monitor the posts being temporarily filled and the jobholders awarded Temporary Responsibility Allowance, to ensure that the limit on the duration is adhered to.
5. Responsibility for approving payment of the Allowance will rest with the individual's Confirming Officer, who will ensure that the cost centre has adequate funding to cover the full cost. The Allowance will be paid for all of the time between the start date and the end date, including weekends, public/privilege holidays, and any periods of annual leave, sick leave or special paid leave. Where, however, a period of absence by the individual in receipt of the Allowance is long enough to lead management to wish to make other arrangements to cover the work of the post (e.g. where he/she goes off on longer term sick leave), the period of temporary responsibility may be brought to an end.
6. The amount of the Allowance will be 10% of the individual's salary. Part-time staff will receive the allowance pro-rata. Staff who are given temporary responsibility for a job in a higher pay band will be guaranteed that their substantive salary plus the TRA will equal no less than the minimum salary for the higher pay band. If necessary, the amount of the TRA will be increased to equal the difference between the higher pay band minimum and the individual's substantive salary.
7. Staff in a non-operational pay band given temporary responsibility for a job in an operational pay band will receive 10% of their substantive (i.e. non-operational) salary. These staff will be expected to work the hours associated with the operational post, for which the normal arrangements for overtime, time off in lieu and on-call allowances will apply (see Staff Handbook Chapter 11). Where a person's salary plus 10% is less than the minimum of the operational pay band they will receive the pro rata difference between their salary and the operational pay band minimum. They will not be eligible for overtime or TOIL.
8. Staff in an operational pay band given temporary responsibility for a job in a non-operational pay band will receive 10% of their substantive (i.e. operational) salary, but will not be eligible for overtime payments. These staff will be expected to continue to work the hours associated with their rate of operational pay, if required.
9. Although any period of temporary responsibility should be short term, there may be odd occasions when an individual receives an end-of-year performance assessment where much of the year was spent on TRA. Working a period of TRA does not mean that you will 'automatically' be assessed as a 'Top Performer' for that year, even if you received a TP for the previous year in your substantive Pay Band. Your performance and personal contribution to your unit over the whole year will be taken into account and you will be freshly assessed and benchmarked for the current year, taking all factors into account.