



PHASING OUT OF TRAINEE OFFICER RANK

1.0 Preamble

1.1 Warrant Officer rank

- 1.1.1 For many years the Warrant Officer rank has been criticised as having neither responsibilities nor effective duties and has been regarded, in some areas, as a rank used to "park" people for whom no other ready solution presents itself.
- 1.1.2 At its inception, the Warrant Officer rank was described as a "Senior NCO on Squadron Staff" and was positioned between the Squadron Sergeant (highest Cadet rank) and the Squadron's Officers (who hold a League Warrant).
- 1.1.3 Effectively, Warrant Officers were adult NCO's who assisted and understudied the Squadron's Officers in their duties and performed the role of instructors.

1.2 Trainee Officer rank

- 1.2.1 In contrast, the Trainee Officer rank was introduced much later.
- 1.2.2 It is currently designed to be used as the rank of those wishing to complete their Officer Development Program (ODP), and thereby secure an Officer Warrant allowing them to be promoted to Second Officer, by:
 - 1.2.2.1 Those joining as adult uniformed League members;
 - 1.2.2.2 Those transferring from Associate Membership; and
 - 1.2.2.3 Those Cadets who have reached eighteen years of age.

1.3 Issues to be Addressed

- 1.3.1 It has been frequently raised, that the rank of Warrant Officer is now seen as significantly inferior to that of Trainee Officer when, in fact:
 - 1.3.1.1 Most holders of the former rank have often given many years of service to the League (and have a great deal of experience); whilst
 - 1.3.1.2 Many holders of the latter rank are very new to the League and have neither comparable length of service nor a similar degree of experience.
- 1.3.2 In addition, there has been an inconsistency between Groups in how Warrant Officers and Trainee Officers are regarded, appointed, utilised and progressed.

1.4 Solution to the Issues

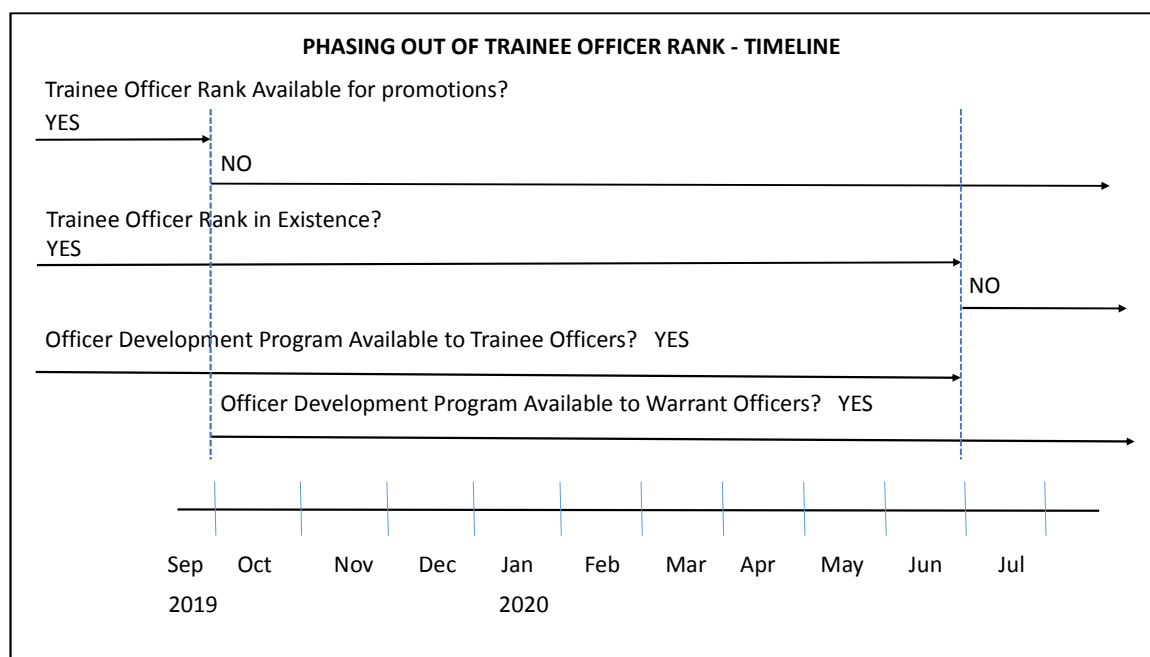
- 1.4.1 An initial solution to address these issues, was to consider standardising the customs and courtesies applying to both ranks in order to afford them equal significance.
- 1.4.2 However, it was determined that, as there was no overarching need for two separate ranks, the most straight forward solution to these issues would be the merger of the Warrant Officer and Trainee Officer ranks into one.
- 1.4.3 The option of deleting the Warrant Officer rank was considered but, due its longer time of existence and more general nature, it was concluded that the Trainee Officer rank was more appropriate to discontinue.

2.0 **Phasing Out of Trainee Officer Rank**

- 2.1 From the effective dates mentioned below, the rank of Trainee Officer will be discontinued.
- 2.2 Subsequently, regardless of the origin of a uniformed adult member, that member will initially be given the rank of Warrant Officer.
- 2.3 Warrant Officer will, therefore, be the optimum rank to undertake the Officer Development Program.

3.0 **Effective Dates**

- 3.1 This change affects the following people effective **1 October 2019**:
 - 3.1.1 All adults joining the organisation with League Membership;
 - 3.1.2 All members transferring from Associate Membership to League Membership; and
 - 3.1.3 All Cadets, reaching the age of eighteen years, opting to remain League Members.
- 3.2 This change affects the following people effective **1 July 2020**:
 - 3.2.1 Existing Trainee Officers (as at 30 September 2019) who have not successfully completed the Officer Development Program by 30 June 2020.
- 3.3 Individual Groups may, at the discretion of the Group Executive Commissioner, implement the changes, i.e. appoint Warrant Officers instead of Trainee Officers, from the date of promulgation of this FRO, instead of awaiting the formal commencement date.
- 3.4 The following diagram shows a summary of the timelines involved.



4.0 **Changes to the AAL Manual**

- 4.1 There are a number of amendments to the AAL Manual surrounding this change.
- 4.2 Amendments have been made, to the following Sections AAL Manual, which prevent the promotion of new Trainee Officers, and allow participation in the ODP to Warrant Officers, from 1 October 2019:
 - 4.2.1 Section 6 – Promotion, Appointment and Leave;
 - 4.2.2 Section 8 – Squadron Administration; and
 - 4.2.3 Section 23 – Training.

- 4.3 Further amendments will be made, to fully remove references to the rank, once the last Trainee Officer has been promoted to Warrant Officer (no later than 30 June 2020):
- 4.3.1 Section 7 – Rank, Appointment Insignia and Duties of Appointments;
 - 4.3.2 Section 8 – Squadron Administration;
 - 4.3.3 Section 10 – Ceremonial Drill;
 - 4.3.4 Section 12 – Section Drill;
 - 4.3.5 Section 13 – Flag Drill;
 - 4.3.6 Section 16 – Education, Air Activities, Field Proficiency Badges and Syllabi;
 - 4.3.7 Section 18 – Uniforms;
 - 4.3.8 Section 20 – Bands; and
 - 4.3.9 Section 23 – Training.
- 4.4 Changes to Training and Education materials will be effected in time for the date on which the rank of Trainee Officer is fully phased out.

**Issued for and on behalf of the
Council of the Australian Air League Inc.**



Comr Ray King, MSA
Operations Commissioner