



FSMA Frequently Asked Questions 2

Voluntary Retrenchment

1 How many VRs will be offered? / Is there a limit on the number of VRs that will be offered?

Because there are many things that affect how many employees will be declared excess it is difficult to give an accurate number.

The size of the workforce needed to meet the minimum regulatory requirements (at each establishment but also as a whole) will determine number of VRs offered.

2 Will all FSMA's who indicated that they want a VR be offered a VR?

While we will work with you to meet your preference for a VR, this may not always be possible.

VRs may be offered where there are employees that are declared excess to requirements of the department. Adequate staffing levels must be maintained under the AAO arrangements at transitioning establishments and some staff may have to remain in their current position even if they would prefer a VR. However, we will continue to look for opportunities to meet your preference for a VR even if we can't offer one immediately.

3 When will VRs be offered?

VRs may be offered to employees after appropriate discussions have been held and the employee indicates they wish to be offered a VR; Operational requirements, location and or personal circumstances where individuals have expressed a preference will be taken into consideration.

Most VRs will be offered as traditional establishments transition to AAOs where the number of FSMA positions need to be reduced.

However, an employee at an AAO establishment who wants to be voluntarily retrenched may be offered a VR where an employee at a traditional establishment prefers redeployment to that establishment. See question 7.

4 Will I be offered a VR if I have an open compensation claim?

The department is obligated to provide injured or ill employees with rehabilitation support and suitable employment to ensure they make a safe and durable return to work. Generally, the department will not offer a redundancy to an employee who has an accepted and open workers' compensation claim.

Where employees identify as part of this category and wish to pursue a discussion about their eligibility for a VR, this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

5 Why can't the department offer me a VR now?

After establishments advise their transition to AAO date, staff will be notified and advised in writing if they are likely to become excess. After this we will hold discussions with you to discuss options for resolving the situation, including potential offers of voluntary redundancy.

Where it's possible to progress a VR without impacting operational requirements we will, noting there are obligations and timeframes set out in Part 6 REDEPLOYMENT, REDUCTION AND RETRENCHMENT of the MIEA, which is given effect under clause 7 of the subsection 24(3) Public Service (Terms and Conditions of Employment) (Meat Inspectors) Determination 2020.

6 Can I get a dollar estimate of the severance benefit and payments I would get if I took a VR?

If you are advised in writing that you are likely to become excess, you will receive an estimate of your VR severance benefit.

The department may also seek and provide you with your superannuation benefit if you are a member of either PSS or CSS superannuation funds, and if you give us permission to do so.

Your AD will ask for your permission to seek this information and pass it on to Workplace Relations who will action the request and provide the information to you.

The department is not able to seek superannuation estimates for members of OTE or choice funds, including PSSAP. If you are in one of these funds you will need to approach your superannuation fund for advice.

Estimates provided by the department are for information only – providing you with an estimate is not an offer or guarantee of an offer of voluntary redundancy.

Requests may need to be prioritised depending on demand.

If you are impacted by the superannuation review, please be advised the department is prioritising the review of your figures. You will be advised in writing once your review is complete. From this point you will be able to get a super estimate.

7 When will employees who work in AAO establishments, and have indicated a preference for a VR, be offered a VR?

Employees who work in AAO establishments may be offered a VR in instances where an excess employee at a traditional establishment elects for redeployment or job swaps. These may be progressed immediately and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with individuals' preferences and operational requirements.

8 What is the timeframe for the VR process?

Employees may have up to 1 month to consider an offer of VR, once/if that offer is made in writing.

9 What is the timeframe for accelerated separation?

Employees may have up to 14 days to consider of an offer of accelerated separation, once/if that offer is made in writing.

If you want more information on Part 6 REDEPLOYMENT, REDUCTION AND RETRENCHMENT of the MIEA or have any questions please contact s11C(1)(a) from the Workplace Relations Team on s11C(1)(a) [@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:s11C(1)(a)@agriculture.gov.au) or 02 6272 s11C(1)(a) or s11C(1)(a) .