



Department of Defense **INSTRUCTION**

NUMBER 7280.03

August 20, 2007

USD(P&R)

SUBJECT: Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus (FLPB)

- References:**
- (a) DoD Instruction 7280.3, "Special Pay for Foreign Language Proficiency," February 23, 2000 (hereby canceled)
 - (b) Sections 303a and 316 of title 37, United States Code
 - (c) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, "Approval to Change Department of Defense Instruction 7280.3," November 30, 2005 (hereby canceled)
 - (d) Joint Publication 1-02, "Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms," as amended
 - (e) through (i), see Enclosure 1

1. PURPOSE

This Instruction:

- 1.1. Reissues Reference (a) to update policy and implement the changes under section 316 of Reference (b).
- 1.2. Cancels Reference (c).

2. APPLICABILITY

This Instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense (hereafter collectively referred to as the "DoD Components").

3. DEFINITIONS

Terms used in this Instruction are defined in Enclosure 2; Reference (d); and section 101(a) of title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.) (Reference (e)).

4. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

4.1. The Defense Language Program will significantly increase foreign language capability across the Department of Defense per DoD Directive (DoDD) 5160.41E (Reference (f)).

4.2. FLPB will provide an incentive for increased strategic language capability throughout the Department of Defense. It will:

4.2.1. Encourage Service members with foreign language proficiency to self-identify and sustain proficiency.

4.2.2. Provide Service members an incentive to acquire and/or improve foreign language skills.

4.2.3. Provide Service members whose military specialty requires a foreign language an incentive to expand their proficiency to other foreign languages and dialects.

4.2.4. Create a cadre of language professionals operating at the highest levels of proficiency according to the Federal Government Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) rating scale (Reference (g)) in languages of strategic importance to the Department of Defense (Reference (f)).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) shall:

5.1.1. Provide overall policy guidance for the administration and payment of FLPB.

5.1.2. Annually publish a Strategic Language List (SLL) in accordance with DoDD 5124.02 (Reference (h)) and in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)).

5.1.3. In coordination with the Military Departments, determine and publish a list containing those languages to be considered dominant in the force for the purposes of paying FLPB.

5.1.4. Serve as the final authority for the use of measurement tools other than those within the Defense Language Proficiency Testing (DLPT) System to certify foreign language proficiency for purposes of paying FLPB.

5.2. The Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Plans (DUSD(Plans)), under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P&R), shall:

5.2.1. Consistent with subparagraph 5.1.3., annually publish a list of foreign languages that the USD(P&R) has determined to be considered dominant in the force (References (f) and (h)).

5.2.2. In coordination with the Military Departments, annually publish a list of DoD-approved foreign languages (not on the lists described under subparagraphs 5.1.2. or 5.2.1.) for which the Military Departments may require a capability, and for the purpose of paying FLPB (References (b), (f), and (h)).

5.2.3. Serve as USD(P&R) designee to:

5.2.3.1. Recommend guidance, in addition to that provided in paragraph 6.3., for recertifying Service members due to extenuating circumstances, as needed.

5.2.3.2. Approve requests to pay FLPB for foreign languages not on the SLL or other DoD-approved language list as described under subparagraphs 5.2.1. and 5.2.2.

5.3. The USD(P) shall, in coordination with USD(P&R), annually prepare the SLL.

5.4. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

5.4.1. Consistent with paragraphs 6.2. and 6.3., annually certify Service members' level of foreign language proficiency.

5.4.2. Consistent with paragraph 6.5., pay FLPB to Service members with proficiency in at least two of the three language modalities of reading, listening, and speaking (Reference (g)), with respect to foreign languages identified on the SLL.

5.4.3. Implement FLPB programs in accordance with this Instruction and forward copies of applicable Military Department implementing instructions and regulations to the USD(P&R).

5.5. The Commandant of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) must, in the absence of a DLPT System test, review and certify any non-DLPT System test to be used to determine foreign language proficiency in languages approved for payment of FLPB. Any certification of a non-DLPT System test must be submitted to and approved by USD(P&R) or his or her designee prior to use.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. FLPB Payment Procedures

6.1.1. Eligibility. FLPB is authorized for a Service member who meets the following criteria:

6.1.1.1. Consistent with paragraphs 6.2. and 6.3., the Secretary of the Military Department concerned has certified that the Service member is proficient in a foreign language identified on any DoD-approved foreign language list as described under subparagraphs 5.1.2., 5.2.1., or 5.2.2.; and

6.1.1.2. The Service member meets at least one of the following conditions:

6.1.1.2.1. Is qualified in a military career specialty requiring proficiency in a foreign language.

6.1.1.2.2. Has received training, under regulations prescribed by the Military Secretary concerned, designed to develop proficiency in a foreign language.

6.1.1.2.3. Is assigned to military duties requiring proficiency in a foreign language.

6.1.1.2.4. Is proficient in a foreign language for which the Military Secretary concerned has identified a critical need.

6.2. Certification of Foreign Language Proficiency

6.2.1. The DLPT System shall be used to assess Service members' foreign language proficiency. In the absence of a DLPT, a non-DLPT may be used if it has been certified by the Commandant of DLIFLC and approved by the USD(P&R) or his or her designee.

6.2.2. Certification of Service members' language proficiency shall expire at the end of the 1-year period beginning on the first day of the first month after the certification date, unless recertified as outlined in paragraph 6.3.

6.2.3. Service members must test annually in each language for which they are receiving FLPB in order to continue receiving FLPB, unless they are recertified under the conditions stipulated in subparagraph 6.3. The Military Secretary concerned may retest Service members no earlier than 6 calendar months from the last administration of a test in that foreign language or upon completion of a significant language education or training event in that foreign language.

6.2.4. Service members must be certified as proficient in any combination of two of the three modalities (reading, listening, and speaking (Reference(g))) in order to draw FLPB.

6.3. Recertification of Foreign Language Proficiency. The Military Secretary concerned may elect to recertify Service members' foreign language proficiency using their last recorded DLPT scores when:

6.3.1. Service members are assigned to duty in connection with a contingency operation or assigned outside the continental United States to a location where web-delivered testing facilities are not available and/or accessible. In such cases, Service members shall complete the certification requirements provided under paragraph 6.2. in the foreign language for which they

receive FLPB not later than the end of the 180-day period beginning on the date they are released from the duty assignment.

6.3.2. Service members whose certification in the foreign language for which they receive FLPB expires while attending a significant education or training event in which the DLPT is required for course completion. In such cases, Service members' next 1-year certification period shall begin when they test and/or immediately upon completion of the significant education or training event.

6.4. Reserve Component (RC) Members. In order to receive FLPB, an RC member must meet the eligibility and certification requirements found in paragraphs 6.1. and 6.2. or 6.3., and must fulfill minimum annual service requirements for retirement eligibility under section 12732 of Reference (e), unless waived by the Military Secretary concerned.

6.5. Amount and Method of Payment

6.5.1. Based on the procedures described under paragraph 6.1., payment of FLPB shall not exceed \$12,000 per 1-year certification period and shall be paid in monthly installments or in a lump sum during the certification period. The monthly rate shall not exceed \$500 per month for a single language, or \$1,000 per month for any combination of languages. Unless otherwise stated in subparagraph 6.5.3., Service members must attain a minimum of ILR 2/2 or higher in any two modalities in FLPB-approved languages in order to receive FLPB.

6.5.2. DoD rates for specific proficiency skill levels are divided into three payment categories (A, B, and/or C) of FLPB-approved languages, as shown in Table T1. Service members must be determined proficient, as provided under subparagraph 6.2.4., and may have skill levels in any combination of the reading, listening, and speaking modalities. To receive the maximum monthly payment allowed in any payment category, Service members must acquire proficiency in all three modalities or attain an ILR skill level 4 or above in any two modalities. FLPB is provided in addition to any other pay or allowance payable to a Service member pursuant to any other provision of law.

6.5.3. The Military Secretary concerned:

6.5.3.1. Shall submit a waiver request to the DUSD(Plans) for approval to pay Service members a bonus for foreign languages that are not identified on the SLL or other DoD-approved language list.

6.5.3.2. May authorize FLPB at either Payments A, B, or C rates for DoD-approved languages not on the SLL and where there is a need to ensure sufficient numbers of proficient personnel to accomplish DoD Component-specific missions.

6.5.3.3. May, in the case of foreign languages considered dominant in the force as outlined in subparagraph 5.2.1., limit payment of FLPB to those Service members whose duties require proficiency in such languages or as determined by the Military Secretary concerned.

Table T1. DoD Bonus Rates for Foreign Language Proficiency

Proficiency in any combination of the reading, listening, and speaking modality	Payment A For foreign languages on the SLL (Immediate Investment)	Payment B For foreign languages on the SLL (Strategic Stronghold)	Payment C For other DoD-approved foreign languages not on the SLL
SKILL LEVELS	MONTHLY PAY	MONTHLY PAY	MONTHLY PAY
1/1	\$ 100.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 25.00
2/2	\$ 200.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 125.00
2/2+	\$ 250.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 150.00
2+/2+ or 2/3	\$ 300.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 175.00
2+/3	\$ 350.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 200.00
3/3	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 275.00
3/3/3 or 4/4	\$ 500.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00

6.5.3.4. May authorize the payment of FLPB to Service members whose duties require an ILR skill below level 2 in the listening and reading or speaking modalities.

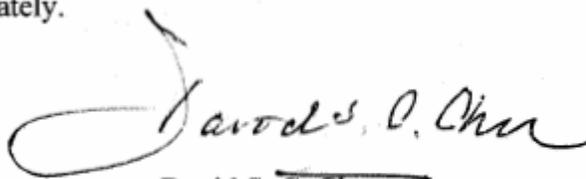
6.6. Recoupment of Bonus

6.6.1. A Service member who receives FLPB, but does not satisfy the eligibility and certification requirements specified in Section 6, shall repay to the United States any unearned amount of the FLPB, consistent with Reference (b).

6.6.2. An obligation to repay the FLPB is a debt owed to the United States. A discharge in bankruptcy under title 11, U.S.C. (Reference (i)) does not discharge a Service member from such debt, if the discharge order is entered less than 5 years after the date of the termination of the agreement or contract on which the debt is based or, in the absence of such an agreement or contract, the date of the termination of the service on which the debt is based.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Instruction is effective immediately.



David S. C. Chu
Under Secretary of Defense
for Personnel and Readiness

Enclosures – 2

- E1. References, continued
- E2. Definitions

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES, continued

- (e) Sections 101(a) and 12732 of title 10, United States Code
- (f) DoD Directive 5160.41E, “Defense Language Program (DLP),” October 21, 2005
- (g) Interagency Language Roundtable Skill Level Descriptions¹
- (h) DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)),” October 17, 2006
- (i) Title 11, United States Code

¹ Available at <http://www.govtilr.org/>

E2. ENCLOSURE 2

DEFINITIONS

E.1. Certification of Foreign Language Proficiency. A Service member's foreign language capability indicated by Defense Language Proficiency Training (DLPT) or approved non-DLPT System test results.

E2.2. Contingency Operation. See Reference (d).

E2.3. Defense Language Proficiency Testing (DLPT) System. The DoD standardized testing system that consists of:

E2.3.1. DLPT I through IV, pencil and paper tests.

E2.3.2. DLPT IV and DLPT V, computer-based/web-delivered test.

E2.3.3. Oral Proficiency Interview.

E2.3.4. Defense Language Reading Proficiency Test.

E2.3.5. Defense Language Proficiency 2-Skill Interview and 3-Skill Interview.

E2.4. Strategic Language List. The list of foreign languages, published annually, in which the Department of Defense has determined a critical need to meet current and projected requirements. The list includes Immediate Investment and Stronghold languages.

E2.5. Language Dominant in the Force. A foreign language in which there is an adequate number of Service members with foreign language proficiency.

E2.6. Language Professional. See Reference (d).

E2.7. Language Proficiency. The ability of an individual to carry out assigned tasks in reading, listening, and/or speaking. The U.S. Government bases its assessment of language proficiency on the standards in Reference (g).

E2.8. RC Members. See Reference (d).

E2.9. Secretary Concerned. See section 101(a) of Reference (e).