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DENVER, COLORADO 80211

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Commander  
Air Reserve Personnel Center  
7300 East First Avenue  
Denver, Colorado 80280

Dear Sir:

During a review of pay and allowances of Air Force Reserve officers ordered to extended active duty, we observed that the Air Reserve Personnel Center (ARPC) was preparing certain Special Orders in a manner that allowed pay and allowances to start 1 day earlier than we believe was necessary to comply with governing Executive orders. Also, many Special Orders did not contain a specific date for reservists to report to their first duty station. A specific reporting date is essential to determining when entitlement to pay begins. The details of these two problems follow:

SPECIAL ORDERS ALLOWED PAY AND ALLOWANCES TO START 1 DAY EARLIER THAN NECESSARY

Executive Order No. 10153, August 17, 1950, as amended by Executive Order No. 10649, December 23, 1955, contemplates that the time required to perform travel from a member's home to the first duty station is to be included as active duty. The Executive Order provides that, when travel by private conveyance is authorized, the travel time included as active duty shall be computed on the basis of 1 day for each 300 miles traveled, and 1 day for each fraction of 300 miles in excess of 150 miles. The effective date of pay and allowances, therefore, is the date a reservist would be required to begin travel to arrive at his first duty station on the desired reporting date.

When reservists were ordered to report to their first duty station on a specific day, but not earlier than 0500 and not later than 1600, 2000, or 2400, the ARPC considered that day as a day of duty rather than a day of travel. This had the effect of allowing reservists to depart from their home--and to establish the starting date of pay and allowances--1 day earlier than would be required had the reporting

day of travel. For example, if a reservist who lives 300 miles from his first duty station was ordered to report not later than 2000, he would be allowed 2 days prior to the reporting date for travel. In our opinion, starting travel 1 day prior to the reporting date would allow him sufficient time to report by 2000 on the reporting date.

Using the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center's Computer Assisted Search Technique, we obtained a sample of 190 pay accounts of reservists ordered to active duty during the period September through December 1975. Of the 190 orders, 59 contained reporting times such as "not earlier than 0800 and not later than 1600." The practice of regarding the day of reporting a day of duty rather than a day of travel resulted in beginning pay and allowances 1 day earlier than was necessary in 45 of the 59 cases. At the 95 percent confidence level, we estimate that about 1,035 reservists were ordered to active duty during September through December 1975, and that between \$4,700 and \$7,700 in excess pay and allowances was paid to reservists during the 4-month period. We were informed by the Procurement Division that 4,594 reservists were ordered to active duty during calendar year 1975.

In a letter to the Commander, ARPC, dated December 30, 1966, we reported that it had been the policy of the ARPC to consider the reporting date to the first duty station as a day of duty rather than a day of travel, even though, generally, the reservists were not required to report on or before a specific hour of the day. This policy, we pointed out, resulted in establishing an effective date of duty 1 day earlier than was necessary to comply with the 300-mile-a-day provisions of the Executive orders.

As a result of our 1966 review, the ARPC issued instructions specifying that the day of reporting would be considered a day of travel unless the reporting time was prior to 0900 on that day. Since then the order writing format has been changed for certain conditions and reservists were ordered to report between certain hours on a given day. With this change, apparently, personnel responsible for writing orders again started to consider the day of reporting as a day of duty.

We believe that it is reasonable to consider the day of reporting to the first duty station as a day of travel when a reservist is not required to report until late in the afternoon or evening (such as 1600, 2000, 2400), since there appears to be no duty to be performed on that day other than reporting in. Our view is supported by AFR 10-7, Section E, relating to how Special Orders are

to be written. Paragraph 2-16e, contains an example showing the effective date of duty as November 10, 1974, based on 5 days authorized travel time and a requirement to report not earlier than 0800 and not later than 1600 November 11, 1974. This example considers November 11 as a day of travel.

The Chief and Assistant Chief of the Procurement Division, ARPC, agreed with our view. Accordingly, on August 17, 1976, they issued instructions, to personnel responsible for preparing orders, directing that the day of reporting to the first duty station will be counted as a day of travel unless the required reporting time is "not later than" 1200.

SPECIAL ORDERS DID NOT CONTAIN SPECIFIC DATES FOR REPORTING TO THE FIRST DUTY STATION

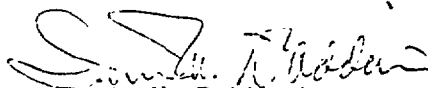
About 32 percent of the 190 Special Orders sampled instructed reservists to report to their first duty station "not later than" a certain date as distinguished from a specific reporting date. Orders written this way make it difficult to apply provisions of the Department of Defense Military Pay and Allowance Entitlements Manual (DODPM) when reservists travel by commercial airline and report to their first duty station earlier than necessary. The DODPM provides that allowable travel time--and consequently the effective date of active-duty-pay--will be based on the latest airline schedules which would permit arrival at the duty station on the reporting dates stated in the orders. Field personnel responsible for determining allowable travel time and the effective date of duty interpret the DODPM in different ways--some compute travel time for arrival on the "not later than" date and others compute travel time for the actual date of arrival.

In view of the administrative difficulties in determining the effective date of duty when orders do not contain a specific date for reporting to the first duty station, we discussed the problem with the Chief of the Procurement Division. To eliminate the problem, on August 17, 1976, he issued instructions specifying that orders should designate a "report on" date instead of a "report not later than" date.

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In view of the actions already taken by the ARPC, we are making no recommendations at this time. We plan, however, to review these conditions at a later date to determine whether the actions taken have been effective.

Sincerely yours,

  
Irwin M. D'Addario  
Regional Manager

cc: Air Force Audit Agency Office,  
AFAPC