CAMP DARBY

Issue 5 FINANCE NEWSLETTER Feb 2002

Bravo Detachment, 208th FB, Camp Darby, Italy

NEW LES KEEPS SOLDIERS CURRENT ON TSP AND RETIREMENT!

This year is bringing a change to soldiers with a new **L**eave and **E**arning **S**tatement (LES) that will give soldiers some additional information pertaining to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and retirement information. "It will be a great help for us and for the soldiers because the soldiers will no longer have to call us to find out that information and it will save them time. "said Staff Sergeant Osmar Molina, Chief of Military Pay, D/208th FB.

RETIREMENT: There will also be two blocks that will advise service members of their retirement status. The Date Initially Entered Military Service (DIEMS) is used to establish which retirement plan a service member is under. The retirement plan varies depending on when the SM came into the service. The three plans are Final Pay, High-3, or REDUX. The information in these blocks comes from the personnel command. DFAS is not responsible for the accuracy of this information but a service member can go to their servicing personnel office and make changes if the information is incorrect.

SAN PIERO A GRADO (PISA)

PROUDLY SERVING OUR MILITARY COMMUNITY

- ARMY
- AIR FORCE
- DRMO
- ILO
- CARABINIERI
- DODDS
- DECA-COMM / MED
- AAFES
- RCO
- CHPMM-E
- 510TH POSTAL

COMBAT ZONE TAX EXCLUSION (CZTE):

The Assistant Secretary of Defense signed a memorandum dated January 22, 2002 authorizing **C**ombat **Z**one **T**ax **E**xclusion (CZTE) for those soldiers deployed to Incirlik Air base, Turkey in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom. This entitlement is retroactive to September 21, 2001, which will require an amended W2 for qualifying personnel.

ENLISTED BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR SUBSISTANCE (BAS):

Effective 01 January, 2002, there are only two types of enlisted Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS). Type (S) which is the new monthly STANDARD BAS and Type (R) which is Rations Not Available (RNA).

Inside This Issue

1 Soldiers on the move!

2 DoD Travel card payment time-line

3 Frequent Flyer benefits for DoD employees

4 E/MSS now includes Travel Information

5 TSP designation--Where are your funds going?

Bravo Blaze, Keep the fire burning!!!

Travel Issues

➢ FREQUENT FLYER BENEFITS FOR DOD EMPLOYEES: Department of Defense employees on official travel may now keep the frequent flyers miles they accrue on flights paid for by the government.

This change comes after the signing of the 2002 Defense Authorization Act by President George W. Bush in late December. The act contains a provision allowing civilian and military federal employees to retain frequent flyer miles and other promotional benefits earned while on official travel for their personal use.

There are some catches though. Travelers must still use the lowest-costing travel option on official business. Scheduling flights with a particular airline to earn more miles at greater cost to the government is prohibited.

If you have any questions about this new program you can contact the Vicenza legal office at DSN 634-8484.

➢ GOV TRAVEL CARD DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS: Cardholders with an account balance MORE than 90 days past due will receive a due process letter stating that their net pay will automatically be reduced by up to 15% of the disposable income to pay the undisputed delinquent balance. **Protect your account and make all payments promptly**. Bank of America (BOA) debt collections for non-payment started to be deducted in December 2001. The first debts should appear on soldier's LES as a miscellaneous debt. Questions on collections be directed to Bank of America. It is crucial that you understand the billing timeline for your gov travel card. Page 4 of this newsletter gives an illustration of the delinquency timeline. Contact BOA at 800-863-5258 or P.O. Box 53139, Phoenix, AZ, 85072-3139. DFAS-IN is without authority to adjudicate, negotiate, resolve or cancel these debts.

➢ TRAVEL RE-IMBURSEMENTS: Travelers can now check the status of their travel settlement using the following:

a. Employee/ Member Self Service (EMSS), website below. **b.** Website--URL below
c. Email: DFAS is now sending an email message to travelers AKO account.

USEFUL TRAVEL WEBSITES

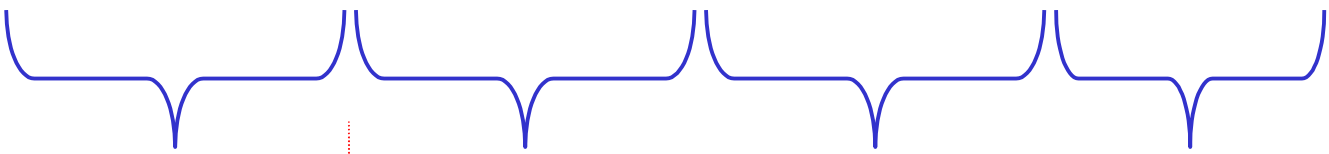
JFTR/JTR TRAVEL REGS	www.dtic.mil/perdiem/pdrates.html
E/MSS SITE	https://emss.dfas.mil/emss.htm
TRAVEL PAYMENT STATUS SITE	https://portal.ssg.gunter.af.mil/tpq2/SSNquery.cfm
PER DIEM RATES	www.dtic.mil/perdiem/pdrates.html
DTOD—OFFICIAL DISTANCES	http://128.190.151.4/
SATO ON-LINE	www.satotravel.com/usareur
GOV TRAVEL CARD WEBSITE	http://www.dfas.mil/money/travel/

➢ MONTHLY TRAVEL TIP : With the new travel system, you need to only submit 4 copies of your TDY settlement instead of 5 copies, as previously required.

DOD TRAVEL CARD PROGRAM DELINQUENCY TIME-LINE

26 April 2001

Statement Billing	Payment Due date	2d Statement Billing	2d Payment Due date	3d Statement Billing	3d Payment Due date	4th Statement Billing	4th Payment Due date
11 Jan	5 Feb	11 Feb	5 Mar	11 Mar	5 Apr	11 Apr	5 May



1st 30 Days

CURRENT

2d 30 Days

1 – 30 Days Past Due

3d 30 Days

31 – 60 Days Delinquent

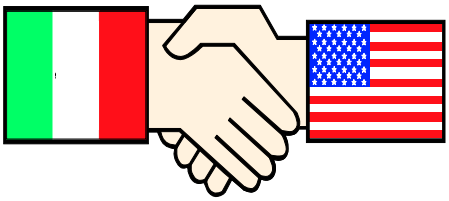
60+ since initial billing

4th 30 Days

61 - 90 Days Delinquent

APC Visibility

EAGLS Spreadsheet reflects 1-30 days, 31-60 days, 61-90 days, etc., - it does not show current accounts



Local National Pay Issues:

LN Pay statements will be ready for pick-up Tuesday, 26 February at the finance Pay cage.

MS. CINZIA MASTALLI

For the month of February, 2002 we want to recognize a very special local national employee. Ms. Mastalli always provides our office outstanding support and we appreciate it very much!.

Here at Finance, we enjoy a special working relationship with all the Local National Italian employees at Camp Darby. We work very closely with many agencies, too numerous to list here. We also process TDY travel vouchers for a large number of LNs. One particular agency that continually provides finance with superior support is the Camp Darby legal office and we appreciate it.

CALENDAR

- **Payday** **1**
- **Midmo Cutoff** **5**
- **Midmo NPA distro** **12**
- **Midmonth Payday** **15**
- **USAREUR Tng Hol** **15**
- **Presidents Day** **18**
- **EOM cutoff** **19**
- **LES Distro** **25**

FISCAL YEAR 2002 MILITARY PAYDAYS

FEB 2002----------01 MAR

MAR 2002----------01 APR

APR 2002----------01 MAY

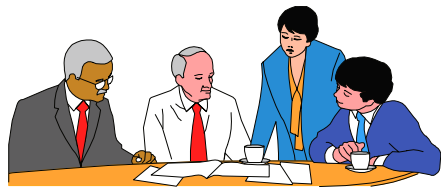
MAY 2002----------31 MAY

JUN 2002----------01 JUL

JUL 2002----------01 AUG

AUG 2002----------30 AUG

SEP 2002----------01 OCT



CIVILIAN HOSTILE FIRE PAY?

Hostile Fire Pay applies ONLY to employees on duty in the United States during hostile fire or imminent danger. This is in accordance with the FY 2002 National Defense Authorization Act, Title VI, Compensation and Other Personnel Benefits; Section 622, Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay.

Therefore, Hostile Fire Pay is not authorized for Federal employees deployed to the Balkans. For more info go to the CHRMA web site at: http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil/

Late Breaking News

Military Report.com

www.militaryreport.com

JAN 22, ISSUE

- Low mortgage interest rates for service members
- GI Bill increase benefits
- Changes make travel/moves less costly for service members.

JAN 15, ISSUE

- Air Force legal office ready for tax season.
- VA home loan ceiling raised.

Military Pay

➢ COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE (COLA) UPDATE: Effective, July 1, 1999, COLA policy change was implemented (separate determination for mess availability and COLA). If a member (officer or enlisted) is assigned to single government quarters (i.e. barracks or BEQ) and a mess is available with or without charge, **the member would receive the barracks rate COLA or 47 percent of the single rate**. The intent is that no longer would payment of 100 percent COLA be based solely on the fact that a member is drawing BAS. The installation commander or his or her designee is responsible for determining if a mess is available even though BAS has been authorized or the member is not authorized to use the mess in all circumstances. In the case of enlisted members, a mess is generally available at each installation and the determination for 100 percent COLA must be based on the ability for use of the mess (even though rations are authorized).

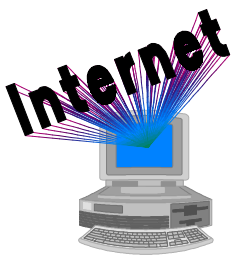
Note: For COLA purposes, if the member purchases meals, or receives meals at no cost at a government mess, then mess is available. Neither service policy regarding mess availability nor receipt of any amount of BAS by the member has any effect on the reality of the government mess being available.

POC: MSG Cacal at 384-6915 or e-mail cacald@208fb.hqusareur.army.mil
CPT Johnson at 384-6967 or e-mail johnsonm@266fb.hqusareur.army.mil

➢ OFFICER CLOTHING ALLOWANCE: The National Defense Authorization Act for 2002 has changed Section 416(b) of Title 37 to allow an officer to receive both the $400 initial and the $200 additional upon entry on active duty. This is a retroactive change effective October 1, 2000. Commissioned/appointed officers/warrant officers commissioned between October 1, 2000 and now are also entitled to receive both allowances.

➢ LUMP SUM PAYMENTS, TAX CHANGE: Effective 01 January, 2001, the federal tax for supplemental payments has decreased from 27.5% to 27%.

➢ TRICARE DENTAL INSURANCE: Effective January, 2002, Tricare Dental Premiums increased 3.5%. For more information logon to WWW.UCCI.COM or contact United Concordia.



ON THE WEB

DFAS	http://www.dfas.mil/
266th FINCOM	https://www.266fc.hqusareur.army.mil
THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP)	http://www.tsp.gov
BAH RATES	http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/bah.html
OHA & COLA SEARCH	http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/rateinfo.html
E/MSS LES ON-LINE	https://emss.dfas.mil/emss.htm
FINANCE REGULATIONS	http://131.84.1.34/comptroller/fmr/

MONEY MATTERS

➢ **Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Funds designation:** You decided to sign up for the **T**hrift **S**aving **P**lan (TSP) but you are not sure which fund your money is being invested in or how to select the fund that you want. Once the TSP Board receives soldiers' contributions, the soldier will receive a welcome letter and a Personal Identification Number (PIN), so that any allocations can then be made on-line. Initially, the contributions will go into the G Fund. You can invest any portion of your account in the five TSP investment funds:

Fund Types:	**Performance:**	
· Government Securities Investment (G) Fund	1991-2000	6.80%
· Fixed income Index Investment (F) Fund	1991-2000	7.96%
· Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund	1991-2000	17.46%
· Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund	1991-2000	15.87%
· International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund	1991-2000	8.23%

Employee/Member Self Service (E/MSS) will allow soldiers, once enrolled, to start or change percentages of bonus pay and cancel basic pay contributions at anytime during the year.

The Open season for the TSP closed 31 January, 2002. If you are undecided and did not enroll during the initial open season, you will have another opportunity later this year. For more information about the program visit the TSP web site: **WWW.TSP.GOV**

➢ SAVINGS DEPOSIT PROGRAM: All soldiers assigned to operation OJF/TTF may participate in the program. Soldier can contribute up to $10,000 of their un-allotted pay and allowances (EOM Pay) and earn 10% Annum compounded quarterly. Active duty soldiers can contribute by allotment or cash; reserve soldiers can contribute by making cash deposits. For more info go to: https://144.170.213.77/

➢ INVEST IN STOCKS: Now is the time to take stock of your financial future! Check out the 266th FINCOM's Financial Readiness Improvement Program at https://www.266fc.hqusareur.army.mil and learn more about investing in stocks.

Creating a New Century of Savings U.S. SAVINGS BONDS

Buy Bonds

www.savingsbonds.gov

I BONDS = 4.40%

Current Rates: (through Apr. 2002)

EE BONDS = 4.07%

New rates will be posted on May 1, 2002

Soldiers on the Move

Just PCS'd to Europe?

If your duty assignment location is anywhere *South of the Alps* to include Italy, Turkey, Greece, Spain, or Portugal, B Det, 208th FB will be responsible for your military pay, travel, and finance issues. We consider it a privilege to be able to provide finance support to you.

Overseas Entitlements you need to be aware of.

Temporary **L**odging **A**llowance (TLA): *payable while residing in temporary quarters prior to your receipt of permanent housing. Paid with your normal pay in your LES.*

- **O**verseas **H**ousing **A**llowance (OHA). *For economy type quarters--not Government housing.*
- **M**oving **I**n **H**ousing **A**llowance (MIHA). *Payable in conjunction with OHA for misc expenses. This is a one time payment paid in your LES.*
- **A**dvance **S**tation **H**ousing **A**llowance (ASHA). *For moving in deposits required for economy quarters (OHA contracts only).*
- **C**ost **o**f **L**iving **A**llowance (COLA). *To offset expense of living in Europe.*
- Tri-care Dental Insurance: *Not needed while stationed in Europe.*
- Valued Added Tax (VAT): *You may be tax exempt for some purchases on the economy.*

Deploying Soon?

Your tour in Europe could very possibly include a rotation to one of several deployment locations to include Bosnia, Hungary, Croatia, Macedonia, or Kosovo. In the event you are required to deploy to one of these locations referred to as "down range" it is very important that you understand your pay entitlements.

Deployment Entitlements:

- **H**ostile **F**ire **P**ay/Imminent Danger Pay: *payable at $150 per month if location is authorized.*
- **C**ombat **Z**one **T**ax **E**xclusion (CZTE). *Some designated location offer tax exemption.*
- **F**amily **S**eparation **A**llowance (FSA). *Payable at the rate of $100 per month if you qualify.*
- Per Diem: *Standard is $3.50 per day.*
- **S**pecial **L**eave **A**ccrual: *You may qualify to carry more than the normal 60 days into next FY.*
- **S**aving **D**eposit **P**rogram (SDP): *You may be able to earn a guaranteed 10% on money you deposit while deployed.*

The 266th FINCOM has an excellent web site that will provide you information on each one of this topics

www.266fc.hqusareur.army.mil

PCSing back to the States?

You have successfully completed your European tour and now it is time to PCS back to the United States. Some of the entitlements that you have become accustom to receiving will no longer be paid upon your return to CONUS. Here are some things you should know.

- **B**asic **A**llowance for **H**ousing (BAH): *Once you terminate your lease or government quarters, you will be entitled to BAH II (table rate) until you arrive at your new duty station--will be updated there.*
- COLA: *Your overseas COLA terminates immediately upon your return to CONUS.*
- **T**emporary **L**odging **E**xpense (TLE): *Upon arrival in CONUS, you may be entitled to TLE for some expenses incurred during your PCS. Claim this on your travel voucher while in-processing.*
- **T**emporary **L**odging **A**llowance (TLA): *payable while residing in temporary quarters prior to your Departure. Paid with your normal pay in your LES.*
- MIHA Paint: *If you entered into an OHA contract requiring you to paint your economy quarters, you may be entitled to re-imbursement. Your local housing office can assist.*

POINTS OF CONTACT

BRAVO DETACHMENT, 208TH FINANCE BATTALION
UNIT 31401, BOX 50
APO AE 09630

VICENZA, ITALY

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Information current as of date of publication.

Newsletter POC: This newsletter is a publication of Bravo Detachment, 208th Finance Battalion. The information contained herein is for the benefit of our Camp Darby community. We hope that you find the information useful and informative. If you have any suggestions or comments, contact SFC Tom Fowler, at DSN 633-7516 or email charles.fowler@darby.setaf.army.mil

MPS

COMMANDER
B DET, 208TH FB
UNIT 31401, BOX 50
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Feedback Form

Please take a few minutes to provide suggestions as to how we may improve our service to you.

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