



HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA

UNIT #16237
APO AP 08206-5237

FKCS

SUBJECT: Reduction of Post Hardship Differential

APR 15 2016

Dear USFK Civilian Employees:

This week, it was brought to my attention that effective 3 April 2016, U.S. government civilians stationed in the Republic of Korea outside of the Seoul Metropolitan Area who are entitled to Post Hardship Differential will no longer receive it. I am very concerned about the effect this will have on you and your families. We are already working with DoD and Department of State officials, and will immediately inform you when there are updates.

Post Hardship Differential is determined by a questionnaire managed by the DoS and administered by local installations. It is an allowance meant to compensate employees for service at places in foreign areas where conditions of environment differ substantially from conditions of environment in the continental United States. Post Hardship Differential has remained at 5% of basic compensation for locations outside of the Seoul Metropolitan Area for the last several years. However, as a result of the latest DoS review, the rate was reduced to 0% for all U.S. government civilians in Korea as of 3 April 2016. The rate change starts in the 3-16 April pay period and those who were eligible for Post Hardship Differential will see the loss on their 22 April 2016 LES.

Installations outside of Seoul Metropolitan Area will be submitting new questionnaires to DoS to try and reinstate Post Hardship Differential where it is warranted. I have communicated with senior commanders in the Republic of Korea on the importance of completing these questionnaires quickly. We expect to have our questionnaires reviewed by DoS and the results known by mid-June.

I want you to know that I sincerely appreciate your efforts and contributions to our mission. I feel very strongly about protecting your pay, so I will work this issue as a priority. If you have concerns or questions related to Post Hardship Differential, please contact your chain of command and your Civilian Personnel Office.

Again, thank you for your selfless, dedicated, and professional service to our Nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Vandal".

Thomas S. Vandal
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Chief of Staff