

# VETERANS & MILITARY FAMILIES MONTHLY NEWS

## JULY 2012

Good afternoon and thank you for reading. We look forward to working with all of you to continue to grow the newsletter. We appreciate your involvement.

Remember, we have two online sources where you can read and offer comments on the current and previous editions of the newsletter. The newsletter is posted on Facebook through the group called "Veterans and Military Families Monthly News." Check it out and join the group. The second source for the online version of the newsletter is the website [www.scribd.com](http://www.scribd.com). This online source for the newsletter works in the same fashion as the Facebook page.

Please let us know what you think, or if you have any questions about the online sources. We want to build the online presence as a way to reach out to more people.

As always, thank you very much for reading. Our hope is to continue to expand the newsletter. For that, we need your input. So, again, if anyone has any suggestions for topics to cover or wants to write their own piece, we will gladly try to work it in. We hope you enjoy, and please share your feedback with us. Thank you very much!



## REVIEW: CHANGE GUARD, RESERVE PAY

From: [www.military.com](http://www.military.com)

Jul 02, 2012

Associated Press | By: Lolita C. Baldor From: Hank Fuhs

WASHINGTON -- America's citizen soldiers, who train in their hometowns for a weekend a month and two weeks a year, receive more money for one day of training at home than their fellow National Guard and Reserve members earn for a day serving in the war zone.

Pentagon officials defended the pay discrepancy as incentive for National Guard and reservists who give up their weekends and must be ready on a moment's notice to serve. But it's one of many problems in the complex Guard and Reserve compensation system detailed in a new Pentagon review that recommends changes to make the salaries and benefits more equitable across the board.

The study noted that Guard members and reservists get two days' pay for each day of weekend training -- totaling four days' pay for the weekend every month. In contrast, when they are called up to active duty and are deployed overseas to Afghanistan, they get a day's pay for a day's work. As an example, an officer in the reserves or the Guard could get \$407 for a day of weekend duty, but get \$269 for a day on active duty, or \$318 for a day deployed to Afghanistan. Enlisted members could get \$171 for a day of weekend duty, \$134 for a day on active duty and \$161 for a day deployed to war.

The Defense Department will consider the preliminary recommendations made in the review.

Solving the issue, however, is tricky because defense officials realize that one remedy would be cutting the pay that Guard and Reserve receive for weekend training at home.

"That's a sensitive issue, because you're affecting what people receive," said Thomas Bush, who directed the recent review of military compensation, which included the pay problem.

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Veterans Radio is dedicated to all of the men and women who have served or are currently serving in the armed forces of the United States of America. Our mission is to provide all veterans with a voice, to give them a forum where they are able to discuss their issues...and tell their stories. You can listen to the show on: WDEO (990-AM Ann Arbor/Detroit), WMAX (1440-AM, Saginaw), WDEO-FM (99.5 FM, Naples FL), KAGY (1510-AM Port Sulfur/New Orleans LA), KIXW (960-AM, Apple Valley CA) and KMRC (1430-AM Morgan City, LA). Or, listen to our Webcast and archives at: [www.veteransradio.net](http://www.veteransradio.net).

*We would like to express our appreciation to all of the fighting men and women in the United States Military. Thank you for your service to this county.*

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Grand Rapids, MI 49525

# Stand Up For Veterans - They Stood Up For US

-The DAV

Bush noted that when troops -- including Guard and Reserve members -- go to war on active duty, they get additional hostile fire pay and their salaries are tax free. But even considering those additional benefits, he said, "a day on weekend training is more money."

"It doesn't make sense," he said. "It would make more sense, I think, to have a more uniform pay schedule, like the active duty has."

Pete Duffy, the acting legislative director for the National Guard Association of the U.S., said changing or reducing pay for weekend warriors would face heavy opposition around the country.

"It's an incentive for National Guard and Reserve members to serve," he said, adding that when members have weekend duty, most also have regular jobs, so they end up working 12 days without a day off.

Support and benefits for the Guard and Reserve have grown in recent years, after a backlash -- particularly from Congress members and state leaders -- during the early years of the Iraq war. Officials were furious that some Guard units were being sent to combat with equipment that was often hand-me-downs from active-duty brigades.

There also was a push made to beef up enticements for people to join the Guard, as the U.S. military struggled to meet the demands of both wars. The Pentagon increasingly had to tap National Guard brigades to meet the escalating demand for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, even as combat deployments were extended to 15 months and enlistment standards were lowered to meet recruiting goals.

Reservists also were activated for the war, sent overseas to fill specific expertise gaps or called to fill in at bases in the United States.

The review also recommended allowing Guard members and reservists to begin collecting their military retirement on the 30th anniversary of their service, as long as they have worked the equivalent of 20 years of service. Currently, reservists who serve 20 years can't begin collecting their retirement pay until age 60.

The Guard and Reserve pay and benefits system has evolved over the decades into what the Pentagon review called convoluted, confusing, and frustrating. It confounds the servicemembers as well as their commanders who have to request troops for missions and determine their duty status. That status governs their pay and benefits, but can often change monthly.

According to the review, Guard and Reserve members can be called up under as many as 30 different duty statuses, making the system difficult to administer and nearly impossible for troops to navigate and understand. The review recommends paring that down to just six different classifications.

Very broadly, reservists can be called to active duty for federal missions such as the Iraq and Afghanistan wars; or they can train and perform missions under the authority of their state, such as for forest fires or hurricanes.

There are seven reserve components in the U.S. military: The Army Guard and Reserve, the Air Guard and Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve and the Coast Guard Reserve. They total more than 1.1 million members, with an operating budget of nearly \$50 billion.

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## IN CLOSING

Thank you to everyone for all the help you have given us so far. We have been able to reach more people with your help. However we are always in need of new ideas and articles. If you have anything you would like to share, any questions, or have an article idea, please let me know. You can contact us anytime at [mhauser@migop.org](mailto:mhauser@migop.org)

Sincerely,

Matthew X. Hauser & Lt. Col. Hank Fuhs

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