



DoD INSTRUCTION 1340.27

MILITARY FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILL PROFICIENCY BONUSES

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Approved by:	Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr., Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive (DoDD) 5124.02, this issuance:

- Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for paying foreign language proficiency bonuses (FLPBs) and Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC) foreign language skill proficiency bonuses (SPBs) pursuant to Section 353(b) of Title 37, United States Code (U.S.C.).
- Establishes a revised FLPB payment table that provides greater flexibility to the Secretaries of the Military Departments in paying FLPBs to select Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC) Service members who are certified proficient in a foreign language or dialect and use that critical skill in performing their duties.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION	4
1.1. Applicability.	4
1.2. Policy.	4
SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES	6
2.1. Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)).	6
2.2. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness (ASD(R)).	6
2.3. DoD SLA.	6
2.4. Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense (USD(C)/CFO).	7
2.5. ASD(SO/LIC)).	7
2.6. Secretaries of the Military Departments.	7
2.7. CDRUSSOCOM.	8
SECTION 3: PROCEDURES	9
3.1. FLPB.	9
a. Eligibility for Payment.	9
b. Approved DoD Certification Method Associated with FLPBs.	9
c. Annual Certification Expiration Date Calculation of Foreign Language or Dialect Proficiency.	10
d. Waiver of Proficiency Recertification Interrupted by a Contingency Operation.	10
e. Exceptions to Recertification of Foreign Language or Dialect Proficiency Regarding Attendance at a SLTE.	11
f. Annual DLP Test (DLPT) Recertification of ILR Skill Level 3–Proficient Personnel in All Required Modalities Exception.	11
g. Waiver of Certification and Certification Duration.	12
h. Maximum Amounts and Payment Methods.	12
i. Written Agreement.	12
j. FLPB Pay Table.	12
k. Lump-Sum Bonus to Formally Certify Self-Assessed Proficiency.	16
l. Additional RC FLPB Eligibility Considerations.	16
m. Non-Monetary Incentives.	17
n. FLPB ETP Procedures.	18
o. Relationship to Other Pays and Allowances.	18
p. FLPB Repayment.	18
3.2. SROTC SPB.	19
a. Eligibility, Amount, and Written Agreement Requirements.	19
b. Certification of Proficiency and Waiver.	20
c. Satisfactory Course Completion Criteria for SROTC SPB Payment.	20
d. SROTC SPB ETP Procedures.	21
e. Relationship to Other Pays and Allowances.	22
f. SROTC SPB Repayment.	22
GLOSSARY	23
G.1. Acronyms.	23
G.2. Definitions.	24

REFERENCES 28

TABLES

Table 1. FLPB Monthly Payment Calculated by Critical Skill Modality Proficiency. 13
Table 2. SROTC SPB: Grade Determination in Meeting the Satisfactory Completion Requirement. 21

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

a. This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD.

b. This issuance does not apply to:

(1) The U.S. Coast Guard Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP) Program.

(2) Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System employees eligible for FLPP, pursuant to Section 1596 of Title 10, U.S.C.

(3) DoD civilian employees eligible for FLPP, pursuant to Section 1596a of Title 10, U.S.C.

1.2. POLICY.

a. The Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) Program develops and maintains foreign language and dialect capabilities to meet mission requirements across the DoD in accordance with DoDD 5160.41E; DoD Instructions (DoDIs) 1315.20, 5160.70, and 5160.71; and this issuance.

b. FLPB awards increase strategic foreign language and dialect readiness throughout the DoD. FLPB:

(1) Provides the Services with a flexible mechanism to invest in the capabilities needed to meet Service and Department LREC strategic priorities.

(2) Incentivizes Service members to gain, sustain, and increase foreign language and dialect proficiency throughout their careers.

(3) Incentivizes Service members whose military occupations require knowing a foreign language or dialect to expand their skills, capabilities, and readiness to other foreign languages and dialects.

(4) Increases the number of language professionals operating at proficiency levels 2+ and higher, as defined by the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) rating scale, which is widely used by the Federal Government to determine proficiency in foreign languages and dialects of strategic importance to the DoD and Military Services.

c. SROTC SPB:

(1) May be paid at the discretion of the Secretaries of the Military Departments to incentivize their SROTC cadets and midshipmen to develop initial LREC capabilities during their undergraduate studies and pre-commissioning service.

(2) Is designed to incentivize SROTC cadets and midshipmen in the development of future officers to increase LREC readiness to better communicate, interact, and work with people of other cultures.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS (USD(P&R)).

The USD(P&R):

- a. In accordance with DoDD 5124.02, provides overall compensation policy guidance for FLPB and SROTC SPBs.
- b. Designates the Defense Language and National Security Education Office, in the Department of Defense Human Resources Activity, as the office of primary responsibility for administering FLPB and SROTC SPB policy.

2.2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR READINESS (ASD(R)).

Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P&R), the ASD(R):

- a. In accordance with DoDD 5124.11, approves or disapproves FLPB or SROTC SPB exception to policy (ETP) requests submitted by a Secretary of a Military Department or their designee, or the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD(SO/LIC)).
- b. Oversees the DoD Senior Language Authority (SLA) and, on occasion, may be designated the DoD SLA.
- c. Provides LREC policy direction to the Director, Defense Language and National Security Education Office in the Department of Defense Human Resources Activity.

2.3. DOD SLA.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the ASD(R), the DoD SLA:

- a. Is designated in writing by the USD(P&R) to oversee department issues relevant to managing the Defense LREC Program, in accordance with DoDD 5160.41E; DoDIs 1315.20, 5160.70, and 5160.71; and this issuance.
- b. Considers Secretary of a Military Department's, or their designee's, and ASD(SO/LIC)'s FLPB or SROTC SPB ETP requests. Provides analysis, evaluation, and recommendation for adjudicating the ETP and forwards it to the ASD(R) for approval or disapproval.

2.4. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER)/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (USD(C)/CFO).

The USD(C)/CFO, through the Financial Management Policy and Reporting Directorate, issues regulations regarding military pay policy and procedures for paying FLPB and SROTC SPBs pursuant to Section 353(b) of Title 37, U.S.C.; and in accordance with Chapters 2, 19, 57, 58, and 59 of Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R; and this issuance.

2.5. ASD(SO/LIC)).

Pursuant to Sections 138(b)(2) and 167(f) of Title 10, U.S.C., the May 5, 2021 Secretary of Defense Memorandum, and the September 9, 2021 Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum and in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, as appropriate, the ASD(SO/LIC):

- a. Exercises authority, direction, and control of all special operations-peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces (SOF), including FLPB policy and resources.
- b. Endorses the Commander, United States Special Operations Command (CDRUSSOCOM) ETPs on SOF FLPB policy.

2.6. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments:

- a. Implement FLPB and SROTC SPB procedures pursuant to Section 353(b) of Title 37, U.S.C. and in accordance with Chapters 2, 19, 57, 58, and 59 of Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R and this issuance.
- b. In accordance with DoDD 5100.01, coordinate with ASD(SO/LIC) and CDRUSSOCOM on Military Department personnel management policy and plans relating to FLPB compensation issues pertaining to all SOF personnel. This coordination must not interfere with the Title 10, U.S.C. authorities of the Military Departments or Services.
- c. In accordance with the January 16, 2009 Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, identify to CDRUSSOCOM all SOF-only FLPB costs exceeding the Military Departments' existing FLPB policy.
- d. May submit FLPB ETP or SROTC SPB ETP requests, first coordinated with the other Secretaries of the Military Departments, to the ASD(R) and the ASD(SO/LIC), if SOF applicable, via the DoD SLA.
- e. Identify, program, and budget for suitable fiscal offsets that can affect new payments.

2.7. CDRUSSOCOM.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the ASD(SO/LIC) for special-operations peculiar administration; through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff pursuant to Sections 167 and 138 of Title 10, U.S.C.; and in accordance with DoDDs 5100.01 and 5111.10 and DoDI 3305.06, the CDRUSSOCOM:

- a. Coordinates with the Military Service Chiefs and the Secretaries of the Military Departments on personnel management policy and plans relating to FLPB compensation issues involving SOF personnel. This coordination must not interfere with the Title 10, U.S.C. authorities of the Military Departments or Services.
- b. Coordinates with the Secretaries of the Military Departments regarding FLPB issues associated with SOF personnel.
- c. Is responsible for CDRUSSOCOM-directed SOF FLPB costs explicitly associated with CDRUSSOCOM's military end strength in excess of the Military Departments' existing FLPB policy in accordance with the January 16, 2009 Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum.
- d. May coordinate and submit SOF FLPB ETP requests with the Secretaries of the Military Departments via the ASD(SO/LIC) and the DoD SLA.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

3.1. FLPB.

a. Eligibility for Payment.

The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may pay FLPB, pursuant to Section 353(b) of Title 37, U.S.C., to a Service member who is:

- (1) Entitled to basic pay pursuant to Section 204 of Title 37, U.S.C.;
- (2) A member of the National Guard who is not a Reserve of the Army or the Air Force, who is participating in full-time training, training duty with pay, or other full-time duty, provided by law, including participation in exercises or the performance of duty under Sections 10302, 10305, 10502, or 12402 of Title 10, U.S.C., or Sections 503, 504, 505 or 506 of Title 32, U.S.C.; or
- (3) Entitled to compensation pursuant to Section 206 of Title 37, U.S.C. (See Chapter 58, Paragraphs 580201 and 580402, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14R for Service-specific instructions and other criteria (other than drill pay) that satisfies qualifying compensation pursuant to Section 206 of Title 37, U.S.C.); or
- (4) Determined to have and is maintaining certified foreign language or dialect proficiency pursuant to Section 353(b)(1)(B) of Title 37, U.S.C. in a skill the Secretary of the Military Department designates critical.
- (5) A critical language skill is:
 - (a) Required by any Service language-related career field or military specialty, designated by a Secretary of the Military Department, where the Service member's primary duties require an ILR skill level 2+ or higher level (ILR skill level 2 and higher for SOF personnel, but only if the Service has those SOF language requirements) of proficiency in a foreign language that directly supports the national defense strategy or Service-specific language-related missions.
 - (b) A foreign language on the DoD or Service Strategic Language List or any foreign language for which the Secretary of the Military Department has language-designated requirements.

b. Approved DoD Certification Method Associated with FLPBs.

The Secretary of the Military Department must use the DoD-approved Defense Language Proficiency (DLP) System of tests in accordance with DoDI 5160.71 to certify their Service members proficient in foreign language or dialect proficiency for FLPB payment. The Commandant, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and DoD SLA may submit other non-DoD developed language proficiency tests for approval that, if approved, become part

of the DLP System of tests for FLPB payment purposes. (See Paragraph 3.1.f. for an authorized exception).

c. Annual Certification Expiration Date Calculation of Foreign Language or Dialect Proficiency.

(1) Pursuant to Section 353(d)(2) of Title 37, U.S.C., the certification of a Service member's foreign language or dialect proficiency must expire 1-year from the first day of the first month beginning on or after the certification date, unless they are recertified or excepted. (See Paragraphs 3.1.d. through 3.1.g. for authorized exceptions and a waiver to recertification).

(a) For example, if a Service member certifies proficient for a FLPB payment on January 2, 2021, their recertification date is calculated to be February 1, 2022. First, the 1-year calculation is applied to reach January 2, 2022. The first day of the first month beginning on or after January 2, 2022 is February 1, 2022.

(b) In the event that FLPB eligibility requires two or more modalities, the test date of the last modality received should be used to calculate the start payment date and the recertification (stop payment) date for FLPB. All testing should be completed within a consecutive 30-day period. For example, a Service member scores an L2+ on January 2, 2022 and an S2 on January 31, 2022. The effective FLPB start date would be January 31, 2022.

(2) Pursuant to Section 353(d)(1) of Title 37, U.S.C., Service members receiving FLPB must recertify annually in the foreign language or dialect for which they are receiving a FLPB. (See exceptions and a waiver in Paragraphs 3.1.d. through 3.1.g.). The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may retest Service members no earlier than 300 calendar days from the last test administration in that foreign language or dialect unless the Service member has completed a significant language training event (SLTE) (at least 150 hours of instruction or other significant events defined by the Secretaries of the Military Departments) in that foreign language or dialect.

d. Waiver of Proficiency Recertification Interrupted by a Contingency Operation.

(1) Notwithstanding Paragraph 3.1.c. and in accordance with Section 636(a) of Public Law 102-190, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned may waive the annual certification requirement and pay a FLPB to a Service member who:

- (a) Is assigned to duty in connection with a contingency operation.
- (b) Is unable to schedule or complete the certification test because of that assignment.
- (c) Except for the lack of such certification, satisfies the eligibility requirements cited in Paragraphs 3.1.a. through 3.1.c.

(2) The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may treat the date the Service member was assigned to duty in connection with the contingency operation as equivalent to a recertification date.

(3) In the case of a Service member whose certification expires during such a contingency operation, the Secretary of the Military Department must authorize the Service member a 180-day period after returning as a mandatory grace period to recertify for an FLPB.

(4) If a Service member fails to obtain the required certification by the end of the 180-day period, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned may require the Service member to repay some or all of the FLPB in accordance with Paragraph 3.1.p.

(5) Service members who receive a wound, injury, or illness in the line of duty while serving in a combat operation or a combat zone, in a hostile fire area, or while exposed to a hostile fire event and is hospitalized may continue to receive an FLPB pursuant to Section 372 of Title 37, U.S.C.

e. Exceptions to Recertification of Foreign Language or Dialect Proficiency Regarding Attendance at a SLTE.

In the case of Service members whose certification expires while they are attending an SLTE, their next 1-year certification period begins when they successfully retest after they complete the SLTE as follows:

(1) The Service member's FLPB continues until they are able to complete the recertification requirements of Paragraph 3.1.c. Further FLPB entitlement is based on the modality proficiency test scores resulting from that event.

(2) If a Service member has an additional (e.g., second language) foreign language recertification date that will expire during the Service member's primary SLTE, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned may either:

(a) Require the Service member to recertify in that additional foreign language before the primary SLTE begins; or

(b) Extend the certification periods for each language not associated with the SLTE to a recertification date up to 45 calendar days after the SLTE graduation date.

(3) To the maximum extent possible, the SLTE should be uninterrupted to give the Service member the greatest opportunity for SLTE success.

f. Annual DLP Test (DLPT) Recertification of ILR Skill Level 3–Proficient Personnel in All Required Modalities Exception.

This ILR skill level 3 (and higher) exception applies to all the modalities-to which the Service member is being paid FLPB, otherwise the exception does not apply.

(1) If applicable, at the end of the Service member's 1-year annual recertification date, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned must recertify the Service member proficiency levels pursuant to Section 353(d)(1) of Title 37, U.S.C., which cites that FLPB payment proficiency is subject to annual recertification by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned. For individuals who are initially certified by a DLPT or oral proficiency

interview (OPI) as proficient at levels L3, R3 or S3 or higher, the Secretaries of the Military Departments may extend certification for up to 24 months.

(2) The Secretaries of the Military Departments must require recertification when necessary and establish a process to document and track a Service member's extended certification.

g. Waiver of Certification and Certification Duration.

Pursuant to Section 353(d)(3) of Title 37, U.S.C., notwithstanding the annual certification requirement of Section 353(d)(1) of Title 37, U.S.C., and the normal 1-year certification duration in accordance with Section 353(d)(2) of Title 37, U.S.C., the Secretary of the Military Department concerned may waive either or both provisions under circumstances they identify in their Service FLPB regulation.

h. Maximum Amounts and Payment Methods.

Pursuant to Section 353(c)(2) of Title 37, U.S.C., FLPB payments must not exceed the \$12,000 legislative limit per 1-year certification period and must be paid in either:

- (1) Monthly installments, in amounts that in the aggregate do not exceed \$1000; or
- (2) A lump sum at the beginning of the certification period.

i. Written Agreement.

Pursuant to Section 353(e)(2) of Title 37, U.S.C., the Secretary of the Military Department concerned and the Service member must make a written agreement regarding FLPB. The agreement must:

- (1) Specify the amount of FLPB awarded, the period for which the FLPB must be paid, and the certification or recertification necessary for FLPB payment.
- (2) Include a provision discussing repayment of unearned FLPB if the Service member does not satisfy the eligibility and certification requirements for the length of the written agreement. (See Paragraph 3.1.p and Chapter 2, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R.)

j. FLPB Pay Table.

(1) Table 1 incorporates must-pay and may-pay FLPB policies for the Secretary of the Military Department concerned to calculate and pay one monthly payment of FLPB based on the Service member's critical skill of possessing certified proficiency at and above ILR skill level 2+ (or 2 for SOF), by modality skill. Specifically, Table 1 is grouped by ILR skill level–proficiencies (from 1 to 4 or higher) and modalities (L, R, and S). Table 1 allows the Secretary of Military Department to calculate a single FLPB monthly payment, not to exceed \$1000, for any possible ILR skill level proficiency (except ILR skill 0 and 0+) and any single modality or combination of modalities (except for the writing modality) associated with critical skill requirements.

(2) Table 1 Implementation Issues.

(a) Both the current military pay system and the Secretaries of the Military Departments may encounter Table 1 implementation issues upon publication of this instruction.

(b) To ensure the continuity of FLPB payments to eligible Service members, this instruction reauthorizes the existing FLPB pay table rates contained in Chapter 19, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R, which remain in effect for setting FLPB amounts for 1-year certification periods until the Secretaries of the Military Departments implement Table 1 in an authorized military pay system.

(c) Following full implementation of Table 1 by the Secretary of a Military Department, the Military Department must cease use of Chapter 19, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R FLPB pay table rates and commence use of Table 1 for setting FLPB amounts upon certification or recertification by a member. Monthly FLPB rates set prior to or during the transition remain in effect until reset following recertification. Chapter 19 will be updated to conform to this instruction following full implementation of Table 1 by the Military Departments.

(d) The Secretaries of the Military Departments must implement Table 1 as soon as possible, but not later than 6 months following the effective date of this instruction.

Table 1. FLPB Monthly Payment Calculated by Critical Skill Modality Proficiency.^{1,4}

ILR Skill– Level Proficiency	Listening (L) \$/month ²	Reading (R) \$/month	Speaking (S) \$/month
1	0 or 50 ³	0 or 50 ³	0 or 50 ³
1+	0, 50, or 80 ³	0, 50, or 80 ³	0, 50, or 80 ³
2	0, 50, or 100 ³	0, 50, or 100 ³	100
2+	200	200	200
3	300	300	300
3+	350	350	350
4 or higher	400	400	400
¹ FLPB payment for multiple foreign languages or dialects and ILR skill levels at the rates depicted in this table may not exceed \$12,000 per individual during or for a 12-month period.			
² Includes participatory listening proficiency measured by the Two-Skill OPI (TSOPI), passive listening proficiency measured by a standard DLPT, or an inferred listening proficiency awarded from a two-score OPI (2SOPI) in accordance with the November 25, 2019, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Memorandum.			
³ Choose only one amount from the two or three depicted to pay FLPB.			
⁴ If three modalities are attained, the aggregate FLPB installment payable for a month cannot exceed \$1,000.			

(3) The Secretary of the Military Department must pay FLPB to their Service members serving in language professional career fields that require Service members to have certified foreign language proficiency at and above ILR skill level L2+, R2+, or S2 to perform their

primary language-related duties. Applicable DoD or Service instructions establish required FLPB-related modalities associated with these career fields. For example, Army Regulation 11- 6 requires all Army Cryptologic Language Analysts (CLAs) to test proficient in the L and R modalities only (note S is not required).

(a) Must-pay language professional career fields or military specialties include Service:

1. CLAs.
2. Foreign area officers (FAOs).
3. Defense Threat Reduction Agency interpreters and translators.
4. Other select Service language professional career fields or military specialties designated by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.

(b) Additionally, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned must pay:

1. Service SOF personnel at and above ILR skill level 2 (but only if the Service has documented SOF language requirements at ILR skill level 2). The applicable Service FLPB instruction establishes required FLPB payable modalities associated with SOF personnel.

2. All Service members who are ILR skill level S2 proficient or above in their primary language and have speaking as a required modality associated with their primary language-related duties.

(4) For all other Service members with a certified foreign language proficiency below ILR skill level L2+, R2+, or S2 who are not designated as a must-pay FLPB recipient in Paragraph 3.1.i.(3), the Secretary of the Military Department may or may not pay FLPB. This “may or may not pay” policy allows the Secretary concerned to target their FLPB budget dollars to incentivize their linguists to achieve higher proficiencies in their critical skills.

(a) If paid at ILR skill levels 1 or 1+ in any modality or at ILR skill level 2 in listening or reading, the Secretary of the Military Department may choose to pay only one of the monthly modality FLPB dollar amounts depicted in Table 1. For example, an L1+ modality and proficiency combination may either be calculated at one of the three payment amounts depicted for L1+ (\$0, \$50 or \$80).

(b) The Secretary of the Military Department has discretion to pay or not pay FLPB to their Service members who have additional or multiple certified foreign language or dialect proficiencies.

(c) FLPB payment calculation for a certified S2 or higher score, to any Service member whose required modalities do not include speaking, is at the Secretary of the Military Department’s discretion.

(5) Pay table calculation and must pay, may pay or may not pay examples:

(a) The Secretary of the Military Department has discretion to calculate a monthly FLPB payment for one, two or three skill modalities associated with the Service member's certified language proficiency in those modalities (L, R, and/or S) that the Service Secretary determines are critical to performing their language-related duties. In Table 1, ILR skill levels with a single dollar amount depicted are "must pay" and 2 or 3 dollars amounts depicted are "may or may not pay" FLPB policies for the Secretary of the Military Department.

(b) A CLA scores L2+/R3 on a DLPT. The Secretary of the Military Department "must pay" FLPB for L2+(\$300) and R2+(\$300). Testing and payment of FLPB for S1-S5 is at the discretion of the Secretary of the Military Department.

(c) Another CLA scores L2/R2 on a DLPT. The Secretary of the Military Department "may or may not pay" FLPB for L2 (at \$0, \$50 or \$100) and R2 (at \$0, \$50 or \$100) in accordance with Service FLPB policy. Testing and payment of FLPB for S1-S5 is at the discretion of the Secretary of the Military Department.

(d) Similarly, a FAO scores L2/R2 on a DLPT and an S1+ on an OPI. The Secretary of the Military Department "may or may not pay" FLPB for L2 (at \$0, \$50 or \$100) and R2 (at \$0, \$50 or \$100) in accordance with Service FLPB policy. In accordance with DoDI 1315.20, FAOs must take an OPI every 2 years. The S2 is "must pay" at \$100.

(e) A linguist scores L1/R1+ on a Very Low Range DLPT and an L1+/S1+ on a 2SOPI. Because of Note 2 in Table 1, the linguist's scores are now L1+ (inferred listening from the 2SOPI)/R1+/S1+. The linguist requires L and S proficiency as part of their military duties, so the Secretary of the Military Department "may or may not pay" FLPB for L1+ (at \$0, \$50 or \$80) and S1+ (at \$0, \$50 or \$80). FLPB payment for the R1+ (at \$0, \$50 or \$80) is at the discretion of the Secretary of the Military Department.

(f) Another linguist scores an L2/S2 on a 2SOPI. S2 is a "must pay" FLPB calculation requirement, so FLPB for the S2 is \$100. The L2 is a "may or may not pay" at \$0, \$50, or \$80.

(g) A FAO scores L2/R2 on a DLPT and an S3 on an OPI. The FAOs scores are now L2/R2/S3. For the L2 and R2, the Secretary of the Military Department "may pay" \$0, \$50 or \$100 for each L2 and R2 modality. In this example, the Secretary of the Military Department options to pay FLPB at \$100 for both the L2 and R2 (or \$200). Additionally, the S3 is "must pay" at \$300, so this FAO's total FLPB is \$500 per month.

(6) Additional payment considerations:

(a) For Service members who have a combination of must-pay and may-pay ILR skill proficiencies and modalities (e.g., L2+ (must pay) and R2 (may pay)), the Secretary of the Military Department must pay for the L2+ but may pay or not pay for the R2. If the R2 is not calculated in the monthly payment by the Secretary concerned, the Service member would only receive a monthly FLPB payment for the L2+ alone.

(b) Pursuant to Section 353(c)(2) of Title 37, U.S.C., the Secretary of the Military Department concerned may not vary the criteria or rates for FLPB paid for officers and enlisted members.

(c) For FLPB considerations that this policy does not specifically mention, the Secretary of the Military Department has the discretion to develop and institute Service-specific FLPB policies in accordance with guidance in Section 353(b) of Title 37, U.S.C. and Chapters 2, 19, 57, and 58, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R or this issuance.

k. Lump-Sum Bonus to Formally Certify Self-Assessed Proficiency.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments may develop a FLPB lump-sum incentive, pursuant to Section 353(c)(2) of Title 37, U.S.C. and this issuance to encourage Service members to formally certify their self-assessed foreign language proficiency through the DLP System of tests.

l. Additional RC FLPB Eligibility Considerations.

The Secretary of the Military Department must pay FLPB in a similar eligibility fashion to both their AC and RC Service members. To receive FLPB, the RC Service member must:

(1) Meet the eligibility and proficiency requirements in Paragraphs 3.1.b and 3.1.c. through 3.1.i.

(2) Fulfill minimum annual service requirements for retirement eligibility pursuant to Section 12732 of Title 10, U.S.C., unless waived by the Secretary of their Military Department concerned. RC Service members must earn at least 50 retirement points, regardless of authorized RC participation activity, in each full anniversary year to have that year counted toward verification of the total years of qualifying service for non-regular retired pay and FLPB payment.

(a) A partial qualifying year is any period less than 12 full months during which the RC Service member earns a prorated share of the required 50 retirement points and earns an identical prorated share (or smaller percentage of full FLPB annual payment) of FLPB.

(b) RC Service members who perform a partial qualifying year of less than 12 full months and earn fewer than 50 retirement points in a year must have their FLPB prorated at 2 percent for each retirement point fewer than 50 points.

(c) For example, an RC Service member who is certified L2+/R2+ (12 x \$200 for L2+ and 12 x \$200 for R2+ = \$4,800) proficient in a Service-approved foreign language or dialect receives an annual FLPB of \$4,800 for earning 50 retirement points in an anniversary year—the same as the L2+/R2+ AC member who was certified proficient for a full year. If another RC Service member certified L2+/R2+ in the same language, modalities, and proficiency as the previous RC Service member (L2+/R2+ for \$4,800) in this paragraph, but collects only 25 points in their service year, the latter RC Service member would receive \$2,400 FLPB because they collected 25 out of 50 retirement points, and would be entitled to 25/50 or one half the annual FLPB of \$4,800 in this paragraph's example.

(3) The sum total of FLPB paid to RC Service members who are in good standing and have not been determined as unsatisfactory performers in the previous 12 months must equal the annual FLPB paid to an AC member with the same certified language proficiency.

(a) For RC Service members, the requirement to attain 50 points during a separation year is waived for an RC FLPB calculation if the Service member separates before 12 months in the anniversary year. In such a case, the RC Service member must be paid the standard FLPB monthly allotment for months in good standing, with the final month prorated if separation happens before the last day of the month.

(b) RC Service members in a separation year who fall from a good standing status must have their FLPB ended in the month in which they fell from that status. The exception to the 50-point standard in a separation year is an RC Service member who serves the entire anniversary year. In such a case, the individual must earn 50 points to collect the final month of FLPB before separation.

(4) Members of the Ready Reserve who are transferred to the Standby Reserve, in accordance with DoDIs 1200.07 and 1304.31, will have their bonus suspended during this period and will not be entitled to any future bonus payments while in the Standby Reserve. This suspension period may not exceed 1 year. In cases with unusual and extenuating circumstances, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned may grant a one-time suspension up to 3 years on a case-by-case basis. If a member is transferred back to the Ready Reserve with the same skill for which they had previously contracted, they may be reinstated in the bonus program.

(a) To qualify, Service members must extend their term of service, or service obligation, to serve the original bonus agreement period.

(b) Subsequent payment entitlement will resume on the adjusted anniversary date of satisfactory and creditable Reserve service. The date must be adjusted for the period spent in the Standby Reserve.

(c) Failure to report after a suspension period or not meeting reinstatement criteria in accordance with the bonus agreement will result in bonus termination and repayment of any unearned bonus money. See Paragraph 3.1.p. for additional information.

m. Non-Monetary Incentives.

The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may also use non-monetary and recognition incentives to encourage sustained and professional-level foreign language proficiency. Such non-monetary incentives may include college credit for qualifying DLPT scores; enlisted advancement points; favorable officer promotion board guidance; special liberty; uniform badges; Service medals or ribbons; flag officer/general officer, or senior executive service letters of commendation; and establishing enlisted and officer professional military education requirements based on foreign language proficiency certification.

n. FLPB ETP Procedures.

For FLPB issues that cannot be resolved at the Service or CDRUSSOCOM SLA level, the Service or CDRUSSOCOM SLAs may act for the Secretary of the Military Department or the ASD(SO/LIC), respectively, and may submit a FLPB ETP request to the ASD(R) via the DoD SLA.

(1) Service or CDRUSSOCOM SLAs should forward with their requests applicable Service or CDRUSSOCOM legal office determinations and cost estimates resulting from an ASD(R) ETP approval.

(2) In accordance with this issuance and DoDI 5160.70, upon FLPB ETP receipt, the DoD SLA must consider the ETP request and forward a recommendation to the ASD(R) for approval or disapproval.

(3) To implement approved ETP results, the ASD(R) must send ASD(R) approval correspondence to the Secretaries of the Military Departments and ASD(SO/LIC), if SOF applicable; the Office of the USD(C)/CFO; and the Office of the Deputy Chief Financial Officer to issue an interim change to Chapters 2, 19, 57, or 58 of Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R implementing the approved ETP.

o. Relationship to Other Pays and Allowances.

Pursuant to Section 353(h) of Title 37, U.S.C., a Service member:

(1) May receive a SPB in addition to any other pay and allowances to which they are entitled.

(2) May not be paid more than one FLPB payment in any month for the same period of service and skill. In Table 1, completely different critical skill(s) are being calculated for the one monthly payment.

(3) May not receive dual compensation for coincident circumstances involving the performance of hazardous duties and SPB duties during the same service period in the same career field or skill. However, based on a September 6, 2011 email legal determination by the Defense Human Resources Activity General Counsel, in response to an inquiry from the Deputy Director of the 11th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, the determination concluded that Service members may receive FLPB and a hazardous duty pay simultaneously if the FLPB would be paid regardless of duty location. Since foreign language proficiency and hazardous duty pays involve different skills (e.g., mental interpretation or translation versus physical activity), even when performed during the same service period, they may be paid simultaneously.

p. FLPB Repayment.

Pursuant to Sections 353(g) and 373 of Title 37, U.S.C., a Service member:

(1) Must, except as noted in Paragraph 3.1.p.(2), repay to the United States any unearned FLPB portion if they fail to maintain certified foreign language or dialect proficiency.

(2) Must not receive any unpaid FLPB after they fail to maintain the certified proficiency for which the FLPB was received. (See Chapter 2, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R for those specific conditions when the Secretary of the Military Department may not seek FLPB repayment.)

3.2. SROTC SPB.

a. Eligibility, Amount, and Written Agreement Requirements.

(1) Eligibility.

(a) A cadet or midshipman who is contracted in the SROTC program may receive an SROTC SPB even if they are in the first year of the 4-year course under the program.

(b) SROTC SPB must not be paid retroactively for courses completed at another institution if a newly contracted cadet or midshipman transfers from that institution to a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)-affiliated college or university or ROTC consortium.

(c) Cadets or midshipmen who take the college level examination program test, distance learning, or online courses to receive college credit for foreign language or cultural studies classes cannot receive SROTC SPB.

(2) Amount.

(a) An SROTC SPB must not exceed \$3,000 for each 12-month period following a qualifying academic period in which a cadet or midshipman satisfactorily completes a study course to develop an SROTC SPB skill.

(b) The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may change the start and end dates of this 12-month period to accommodate different schedules for their ROTC-affiliated colleges or universities or ROTC consortiums, provided the newly defined 12-month period reflects at least 365 consecutive days.

(c) The SROTC SPB for a qualifying course(s) or immersion training must be paid only in a lump sum payment following the satisfactory completion of that course or immersion training.

(d) The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may establish Service-specific SROTC SPB policies for:

1. SROTC SPB course payment rates to accommodate the semester and quarter credit hour systems.

2. Graduated SROTC SPB rates for different categories of languages of interest to the Service or by course levels (e.g., 100 (freshman), 200 (sophomore), 300 (junior), or 400 (senior)) to encourage higher-level participation and further skill development.

(e) Any SROTC SPB payments for summer language immersion or study abroad programs, combined with any previous SPB payments for that academic year, must not exceed the 12-month (full academic year) SROTC SPB entitlement (summer immersion payment plus previous SPB payments) limit of \$3,000.

(3) Written Agreement Requirement.

The Secretary of the Military Department concerned must require a contracted cadet or midshipman to sign a written agreement, pursuant to Section 353(e)(2) of Title 37, U.S.C. The written agreement must specify, at a minimum:

(a) The required status of the cadet or midshipman as a contracted ROTC student while participating in an SROTC SPB course of study.

(b) The amount of the SROTC SPB.

(c) The academic period(s) in which the SROTC SPB must be paid.

(d) The required SROTC SPB course of study or language-related event.

(e) That the cadet or midshipman must be paid retroactively after the satisfactory completion of an SROTC SPB course.

(f) That the cadet or midshipman may be subject to the repayment provisions of Sections 353(g) and 373 of Title 37, U.S.C.; Chapter 2, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R; and any additional stipulations identified by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.

b. Certification of Proficiency and Waiver.

Pursuant to Section 353(d)(3) of Title 37, U.S.C., the USD(P&R) may waive the annual proficiency certification requirement for an SROTC SPB. The USD(P&R) waives this requirement if a contracted cadet or midshipman satisfactorily completes an SROTC SPB course of study or language-related event in accordance with Paragraph 3.2.a. Normally, the contracted cadet or midshipman must satisfactorily complete the course of study or language-related event during the qualifying academic period or year preceding the SPB payment. The professors of Military Science, Naval Science, or Aerospace Science may waive the next academic term provision on a case-by-case basis.

c. Satisfactory Course Completion Criteria for SROTC SPB Payment.

(1) To ensure a proficiency standard applies equally across all SROTC SPB courses of study, a contracted cadet or midshipman who attains a letter grade of “B” or higher must be considered to have demonstrated the requisite knowledge and proficiency in the SROTC SPB course of study to warrant the SPB.

(2) The Secretary of the Military Department may not lower the letter grade of “B” minimum proficiency standard.

(3) If a corequisite language laboratory is part of the SROTC SPB course, the cadet or midshipman also must receive a similar grade of “B” (3.0 grade point average (GPA)), “Credit Earned (CR),” or better.

(4) See Table 2 for those course grades and explanations that meet the SPB course satisfactory completion requirement.

d. SROTC SPB ETP Procedures.

Acting for the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, the Service SLAs may submit an SROTC SPB ETP to the ASD(R) via the DoD SLA.

(1) Service SLAs should forward with their requests applicable Service legal office determinations and cost estimates or savings resulting from ASD(R) approval.

Table 2. SROTC SPB: Grade Determination in Meeting the Satisfactory Completion Requirement.

Grade	Grade Explanation	Satisfactory Completion
A	Excellent to Very Good: comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; 4.0 GPA quality points	Yes ¹
AU	Audit	No
B	Good: moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; 3.0 GPA quality points	Yes ¹
C	Satisfactory: reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; 2.0 GPA quality points	No ¹
CR	Credit Earned (work A+ to C-)	Yes (A+ to B), No (B- to C-) ¹
D	Marginal: minimum knowledge and understanding of subject matter; 1.0 GPA quality point	No ²
F	Fail: unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; 0 quality points	No
I	Incomplete	No, conditional
NC	No Credit	No
NE	No Entry (work below C-)	No
P	Pass (work A+ to C-)	Yes (A+ to B), No (B- to D-) ¹
W	Withdrawal	No
WF	Withdrawal Failing	No
WP	Withdrawal Passing	No
WU	Withdrawal Unauthorized	No

¹ A letter grade of “B” or better for satisfactory completion standard.

² A letter grade of D constitutes a Pass in some Pass/Fail courses but does not count as satisfactory completion.

(2) In accordance with this issuance and DoDI 5160.70, upon receipt of a SROTC SPB ETP, the DoD SLA must decide on the ETP request and forward a recommendation to the ASD(R) for approval or disapproval.

(3) To implement approved ETP results, the ASD(R) must send an ASD(R)-signed correspondence to the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Office of the USD(C)/CFO, Office of the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, to issue an interim change to Chapter 59, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R, to implement the approved ETP.

e. Relationship to Other Pays and Allowances.

See Section 353(b)(2) of Title 37 U.S.C. regarding entitlement to an ROTC monthly subsistence allowance (or ROTC stipend) and Chapter 59, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R for all SROTC cadet and midshipman pay and allowance information and limitations.

f. SROTC SPB Repayment.

The obligation to repay the SROTC SPB may be a debt owed to the United States, but must not be recouped pursuant to Section 2005(d)(3) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(1) A contracted cadet or midshipman may be subject to the repayment provisions of Sections 353(g) and 373 of Title 37, U.S.C., and Chapter 2, Volume 7A of DoD 7000.14-R if the cadet or midshipman receives an SROTC SPB but does not satisfy the eligibility and certification or waiver requirements specified in this section. Such SROTC SPB repayment occurrences may be few as the cadet or midshipman is not paid the SROTC SPB until all the written agreement requirements are completed.

(2) Pursuant to Section 2005(d)(3) of Title 10, U.S.C., SROTC SPB payments must not be calculated in the cost of advanced education when the Secretary of the Military Department exercises their written agreement option to seek reimbursement of the cost of a former student's advanced education.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
2SOPI	two-score oral proficiency interview
AC	Active Component
ASD(R)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness
ASD(SO/LIC)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict
CDRUSSOCOM	Commander, United States Special Operations Command
CLA	cryptologic language analyst
DLP	defense language proficiency
DLPT	defense language proficiency test
DoDD	DoD directive
DoDI	DoD instruction
ETP	exception to policy
FAO	foreign area officer
FLPB	foreign language proficiency bonus
FLPP	foreign language proficiency pay
GPA	grade point average
ILR	Interagency Language Roundtable
L	listening modality
LREC	language, regional expertise, and culture
OPI	oral proficiency interview
R	reading modality
RC	Reserve Component
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
S	speaking modality
SLA	senior language authority
SLTE	significant language training event
SOF	special operations forces
SPB	skill proficiency bonus
SROTC	Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps

ACRONYM	MEANING
TSOPI	two-skill oral proficiency interview
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(C)/CFO	Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

TERM	DEFINITION
2SOPI	Unlike the standard one skill, speaking score only OPI, awards a speaking skill score and an inferred listening score at all ILR skill levels. The inferred listening score is the same as the Service member's speaking skill score (e.g., L2 (inferred, not actively evaluated / score awarded)/S2 (actively evaluated / skill awarded). The use of the 2SOPI by the Secretaries of the Military Departments allows them greater discretion to authorize a FLPB payment for two modalities and to incentivize the priority of becoming proficient in speaking in certain career fields where speaking communication is a mission readiness and success enabler.
AC	Defined in DoDI 1200.07.
academic period	For an SROTC cadet or midshipman, a quarter, trimester, semester, or other course length of academics for which course credit and SROTC SPB may be awarded, including summer language immersion programs.
academic year	The annual period (365 consecutive days) during which the cadet or midshipman attends an ROTC-affiliated college or university or ROTC consortium of institutions. In the case of ROTC summer language immersion programs, this includes the summer months culminating in a 12-month period established and recognized by that specific ROTC-affiliated college or university or ROTC consortium of institutions.

TERM	DEFINITION
career field	CLAs, foreign area officers, human intelligence collectors, interpreters and translators, foreign language instructors, counterintelligence collectors, or any language-related career field as determined by the Secretary of the Military Department.
contingency operation	Defined in the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.
contracted cadet or midshipman	A college student who makes a written agreement with their Military Service to accept a commission as an officer through ROTC and a defined military service obligation. These cadets or midshipmen are also entitled to a monthly subsistence allowance and may be eligible for SROTC SPB payments when satisfactorily completing an SROTC SPB course of study.
dialect	A variety of a foreign language that is spoken by a group in a particular area or of a social group or class. It can have a different accents, pronunciations, vocabulary, and grammatical structures.
DLP System of tests	Defined in DoDI 5160.71.
dual compensation	The restriction from receiving two or more different special or incentive pays for the same service period in the same career field for the same skill.
foreign language	Any language other than English.
foreign language proficiency certification	A Service member's foreign language capability, measured by the Federal Government ILR scale, certified by the DLP System of tests or approved non-DLP System of tests results.
good standing	An RC term describing the current status of an RC member's broad spectrum of annual participation to accumulate the annual requirement of 50 points, pursuant to Section 12732 of Title 10, U.S.C.
language immersion program	A method of teaching a foreign language that uses the target foreign language as a teaching tool, surrounding or "immersing" students in the foreign language. In-class activities, such as math, science, social studies, and history, and those outside of the class, such as meals or everyday tasks, are conducted in the target foreign language and, for maximum immersion effect, may be conducted in an overseas (study abroad) host country environment.

TERM	DEFINITION
language professional	Defined in DoDD 5160.41E.
language proficiency	An individual's ability to carry out their primary duties in L, R, and S modalities in a foreign language. The U.S. Government bases its language proficiency assessment on the Federal Government ILR rating scale standards. A linguist's certified language proficiency is depicted in an L2+/R2+/S2 format. The modality may be listed as a capital letter followed by the appropriate ILR skill level for that modality. It can also be depicted without the modality letter shown. For example, a 2+/2+/2 is an ILR skill level 2+ in Listening and Reading and an ILR skill level 2 is Speaking.
military specialty	For the Army and Marine Corps, military occupation specialty. For the Air Force, Air Force specialty code. For the Navy, enlisted rating and community; Navy enlisted classification code; officer designator and community; and Navy officer billet classification code.
OPI	Usually a telephone examination between the Service member and one or two interviewers in which the answers to the interviewers' questions determine the Service member's speaking proficiency in the target foreign language (including English) or dialect. See definitions of 2SOPI and TSOPI, variants of the OPI.
qualifying academic period	An academic period in which a student satisfactorily completes a course of study intended to develop an SROTC SPB skill, which is the prerequisite for SROTC SPB payment during any succeeding academic period(s).
RC Service member	A Service member with the Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air National Guard, or the Air Force Reserve.
satisfactory completion	Achieving a grade of "B" (3.0 GPA) or better, including a grade of "CR," in which the CR equals grades of "A+" to "B" in the SROTC SPB course. If a corequisite language laboratory is part of the SROTC SPB course, the cadet or midshipman must also receive a similar grade of "B" (3.0 GPA), "CR," or better.

TERM	DEFINITION
self-assessed	The act or process of analyzing and evaluating one's foreign language proficiency based on previous living experiences or K–12 and undergraduate or graduate education. Such an evaluation does not coincide with the Federal Government ILR standard unless the Service member has been formally assessed through the DLP System of tests.
SLTE	Defined in DoDI 5160.71.
SROTC	A college scholarship program, leading to a commission in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, or Air Force (the Coast Guard has no official ROTC program). The mission of the Services SROTC programs is producing commissioned officers in the quality, quantity, and academic disciplines necessary to meet AC and RC officer requirements. It is possible to participate in the SROTC program without receiving a scholarship.
SROTC SPB skill	A certified letter grade in a foreign language, cultural, or cross-cultural study designated as critical by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.
TSOPI	This test is currently under development by the Commandant, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, and, when fielded, must provide the Service member with a speaking skill score and an active, participatory listening skill score. These skill scores may or may not be the same (e.g., L2 (actively evaluated)/S2 (actively evaluated) or L1+ (actively evaluated)/S2 (actively evaluated)). The potential for dissimilar L/S modality ILR skill TSOPI scores and the participatory listening skill score awarded is what differentiates the TSOPI from the 2SOPI.
waiver	Defined in Section 353(d)(3) of Title 37, U.S.C.

REFERENCES

- Army Regulation 11-6, “Army Foreign Language Program,” February 18, 2016
- Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Education and Training) Memorandum, “Foreign Language Testing-Interim Guidance Regarding Assignment of Two Modality Scores of the Oral Proficiency Interview,” November 25, 2019¹
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Managing Military Personnel Resources of the United States Special Operations Command,” January 16, 2009¹
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Update Regarding the Organizational Role of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict,” September 9, 2021
- DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 7A, “Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation: Military Pay Policy - Active Duty and Reserve Pay,” current edition
- DoD Directive 5100.01, “Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Major Components,” December 21, 2010, as amended
- DoD Directive 5111.10, “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict,” May 5, 2021
- DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)),” June 23, 2008
- DoD Directive 5124.11, “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness (ASD(R)),” September 6, 2019
- DoD Directive 5160.41E, “Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) Program,” August 21, 2015, as amended
- DoD Instruction 1200.07, “Screening the Ready Reserve,” January 22, 2021
- DoD Instruction 1304.31, “Enlisted Bonus Programs,” November 5, 2020
- DoD Instruction 1315.20, “Management of Department of Defense (DoD) Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs,” September 28, 2007
- DoD Instruction 3305.06, “Special Operations Forces (SOF) Foreign Language Policy,” November 19, 2008, as amended
- DoD Instruction 5160.70, “Management of the Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) Program,” December 30, 2016
- DoD Instruction 5160.71, “DoD Language Testing Program,” January 26, 2009, as amended
- General Counsel, Defense Human Resources Activity, Legal Determination, “Potential Conflict Between Sections 353(h) and 351 of Title 10, (sic) U.S.C.,” September 6, 2011¹
- Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” current edition
- Public Law 102-190, Section 636(a), “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993,” December 5, 1991

¹ Contact Director, Defense Language and National Security Education Office for document

Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Organizational Role of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict,” May 5, 2021

United States Code, Title 10

United States Code, Title 32

United States Code, Title 37