

FREE RESERVE DRILL PAY CALCULATORS NOW AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS ON-LINE

Reservists can now calculate their drill pay by using free calculators available on the Internet.

To find their drill pay amount, members select their pay grade, their minimum time in service, and the number of drill periods (one drill period is at least four hours) they have attended.

Typically, one drill weekend includes four drill periods. The pay rates shown are as of 1 Jan. 2003.

The calculator may be found at <www.military.com>. Click on "Reserve Pay Calculator" located under the "Pay and Money Link."

NAVY GIVES APPROVAL TO WEARING OF STATE DEPARTMENT MEDAL FOR HEROISM

The Secretary of the Navy has approved the wearing of the Department of State Medal for Heroism. The approval came in a letter of 18 Jun. 2003, from the SecNav. The Marine Corps has issued similar authority in MarAdmin Number 404/03.

No retroactive date has been established for the award. Each service is issuing its own procedures for establishing authorization for wearing the medal.

Questions regarding entitlement to the non-military award can be addressed to the Department of State; Bureau of Human Resources; Office of Performance Evaluations; 2401 E. Street NW, Room H-720; Washington, DC 20520; Attn: Department Awards Officer.

CEREMONIAL BUGLE IS APPROVED FOR USE AT MILITARY FUNERALS

The Department of Defense has approved using the ceremonial bugle as an alternative to the recorded version of "Taps" played on a stereo machine at military funerals.

The ceremonial bugle consists of a small cone-shaped device inserted deep into the bell of a regular bugle that plays an exceptionally high-quality rendition of "Taps" that is virtually indistinguishable from a live bugler.

After a six-month test in which 50 prototype bugles were distributed to military units and other authorized providers of funeral honors, results

showed that the system is reliable and was endorsed by more than 96 percent of the families surveyed.

The ceremonial bugle will be offered to families as an alternative to the pre-recorded "Taps" played on a stereo player but will not be used as a substitute for a live bugler when one is available. Live buglers will continue to play at veterans' funerals whenever available.

TRICARE FOR NON-MOBILIZED RESERVE MEMBERS RECEIVES BIPARTISAN SUPPORT

Five Senators have pledged support for an amendment for the FY2004 Defense Authorization Act which would allow drilling members – but not those mobilized – of the National Guard and Reserve to buy into TRICARE by paying a yearly cost share.

Those supporting the amendment are Sens. Tom Daschle (D-SD), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Mike DeWine (R-OH), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), and Hillary Clinton (D-NY).

Officers would pay \$380 per person or \$610 per family. Enlisted members would pay \$330 per person or \$560 per family.

The provision would also authorize the Defense Department to contribute toward civilian employer-sponsored health premiums for deployed Reservists.

RESERVE COMPONENTS ARE CALLED "ESSENTIAL" TO WAR ON TERRORISM

The National Guard and Reserve have been absolutely essential to the War on Terrorism, the Commander of the U.S. Central Command told the Senate Appropriations Committee during a hearing on a supplemental funding request for Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We couldn't get the job done without them," GEN John Abizaid said. "It isn't a matter of 'nice to have,' it's a matter of 'must have.'"

But GEN Richard B. Myers, USAF, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the committee that such heavy reliance on the Reserve Components – which has a large percentage of the military's combat service support capabilities – "doesn't posture us very well for the 21st century security environment we're going into."

GEN Myers said Secretary of Defense

Donald H. Rumsfeld has ordered a rebalancing of the Force to provide a better mix of capabilities between the Active and Reserve Components. "Because it's inevitable (that) if we're going to send an Active ground component . . . into a situation, there's going to be a Reserve piece that goes with it," the general said. "And that may be fine for some situations, but probably not all."

The Defense Department's goal is to accomplish the rebalancing within the next two years.

FORE AND AFT:

Thirty tons of steel from New York's former World Trade Center became a part of the amphibious transport dock *New York* when it was melted down at a Louisiana foundry and poured into the mold to cast the ship's bow stem MGYSGT Benjamin H. Butler, USMC (Ret) has become the Legislative Director of the National Association of United Services. He replaces CAPT Marshall Hanson, USNR (Ret) who has been named the Naval Services Director of the Reserve Officers Association

Most respondents to a September on-line poll by *Navy Times* believe the greater workload placed on Reservists and National Guard members in the War on Terrorism warrants an overhaul of their pay and benefits package

As of 17 September, there were 87,604 Naval Reservists in the Selected Reserve; 151,807 in the Ready Reserve; and 4,749 Naval Reservists on active duty The United States will close its Roosevelt Roads Naval Station in eastern Puerto Rico within the next six months Customer satisfaction continues to rise as commissary shoppers gave high marks – a 4.42 overall score out of a possible 5.0 – in the latest commissary customer service survey, Defense Commissary Agency officials have announced. ♫

