OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY AND LOGISTICS
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Payment of Professional Credentialing Expenses for Military Members

References: (a) Title 10 U.S.C. Section 2015, "Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials"
(b) USD (P&R) policy memorandum, "Payment of Credentialing Expenses for Military Members," February 12, 2007
(c) USD (P&R) policy memorandum, "Payment of Credentialing Expenses for Military Members," November 13, 2008

This memorandum implements Department of Defense (DoD) policy and guidance for discretionary programs for the payment of professional credentialing expenses to military members that include state-imposed and professional licenses, courses and examinations leading to credentialing, certifications and renewals, and other expenses consistent with those authorized in reference (a). This memorandum supersedes references (b) and (c).

The Department of Defense recently assessed the Department of the Navy's credentialing pilot program and concluded that it offers substantial benefits to the individual, the Department of Defense, and the Nation. Service members enjoy personal benefits that include improved job performance and recognition as well as better job prospects in the civil sector upon eventual transition. Several aspects of credentialing also benefit the Department of Defense and the Nation. First, professional credentials provide clear, objective evidence of an individual's competence that can help identify appropriate Service members for specific duties. Secondly, credentialing encourages

continued professional education which provides improved capabilities and readiness in our military force. Finally, many Service members; for example IT professionals, police officers, detectives, and lawyers, must routinely interact with their civilian counterparts. Independent and common credentialing fosters increased trust and cooperation between these civil and military sectors of society.

It is DoD policy that the Military Departments may pay for professional credentialing of Service members as part of the members' continued professional education and enhancement of skills and capabilities. The payment for credentialing is authorized if the preponderance of the Service members' current or prior assigned duties is covered by the credential, and the credential has been approved for those assigned duties. Credentials tied to the members' prior duties should have relevance or applicability to current or future needs of the members' command or Service. Military Departments may also pay for course work in preparation of a certification or license. Courses are those that are part of an identified course of study leading to a professional certificate or license. Once the Service member has obtained the certification or license, the Military Department may pay for the fees required for renewal or maintenance of the certification or license. Paying expenses of Service members to obtain professional credentials that are a prerequisite for appointment in the Armed Forces is not authorized. Paying for credentialing solely as a component of accession, retention, recruiting, transition programs, or to acquire an educational degree is not authorized. This payment authority has no expiration date.

At their discretion, the Military Departments are authorized to implement or continue credentialing programs. The following parameters apply to such programs:

- Should include Reserve component positions,
- Should encompass all military occupational skills that align to civilian or industry certification or licensure,
- Should use nationally recognized credentialing agencies to the maximum extent possible,
- Should reduce duplicative training in Service Schools,
- Must set out criteria to determine the amount to be pre-paid or reimbursed and those skills or components of the credentialing process (instruction, exams, renewals, professional membership, etc.) that are authorized for funding,
- Must establish reasonable additional military service obligations or minimum remaining time-in-service required for payment of credentials, certificates, examinations, and renewals,
- Must establish reasonable repayment policy for Service members who fail to satisfy military service obligations,

- Must include procedures to avoid duplicating the benefits such as those provided by other programs (GI Bill and Tuition Assistance),
- Should establish procedures to ensure Service members who fail a credentialing exam or certification do not receive payments for subsequent attempts at that same exam or certification. Failure of credentialing exams or certifications should not exclude members from receiving funding for other approved credentialing exams or certifications, and
- Should provide for the fees required for renewal or maintenance of the certification or license if the Service member attains the credential through other funding means.

Military Departments desiring to utilize this authority for the first time shall provide their credentialing programs to the USD (P&R) for review but may implement upon receipt of this policy. Those Military Departments utilizing this authority will provide the USD (P&R) an assessment report not later than November 30 of even numbered years. The report will address, at a minimum, those areas listed on the attachment. The authority provided herein may only be used to pay for credentialing expenses incurred after the date of this memorandum.

This memorandum is issued pursuant to the Responsibilities and Functions of the USD (P&R) as contained in DoDD 5124.02 para 6.3, and is effective immediately. Secretaries of the Military Departments may further delegate in writing authorities to authorize payments consistent with this policy.

Gail H. McGinn
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Plans)
Performing the Duties of the
Under Secretary of Defense
(Personnel and Readiness)

Attachment:
As stated

cc:
DUSD (Readiness)
DUSD (Program Integration)
DUSD (Military Community and Family Policy)
DUSD (Military Personnel Policy)

AREAS TO ADDRESS IN THE BIENNIAL ASSESSMENT OF CREDENTIALING IMPLEMENTATION

- Describe methodologies used to determine those skills eligible to receive funding for credentialing.
- Comment on the possession of credentials as they relate to baseline individual proficiency, performance of collective tasks, and personnel management such as promotion and retention.
- Quantify/qualify the assessment of program effectiveness.
- Compile and review funds expended per fiscal year and the number of participants by component (Active or Reserve) in the various categories, such as education pre-exam, credentialing exam, continuing education, and renewals.
- Compile a listing of funded credentialing activities per fiscal year.
- Comment on the decision criteria (accreditation standards, membership, endorsements, etc.) for selecting appropriate entities / societies / agencies that were used for credentialing for specific skills.
- Comment on DoD or Service related policies and practices that may require modification to support credentialing.
- Inform the Department of systems development, organizational overhead or structure created or enhanced to manage credentialing, if any.
- Provide similar assessments on the above for the Reserve Component if significantly different than the active component.