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Personnel

**AVIATOR CONTINUATION PAY
(ACP) PROGRAM**

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This instruction sets eligibility requirements and governs aviator bonus programs for all active duty United States Air Force officers as described in Title 37, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 301b, Special pay: aviation career officers extending period of active duty. This instruction does not apply to US Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) units, Air National Guard (ANG), or Medical Service Corps officers. This instruction implements Air Force Policy Directive 36-30, *Military Entitlements* and is in compliance with Department of Defense Instruction 7730.57, *Aviation Career Incentive Act of 1974 and Required Annual Report*.

This publication requires the collecting and maintaining of information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974. Title 37, U.S.C., Section 301b, authorizes collection and maintenance of information. System of Records Notice T7340, *Defense Joint Military Pay System-Active Component*, applies. A Privacy Act Statement is printed on the ACP Agreement. Refer to **Attachment 1** for glossary.

Any organization may supplement this publication which must be approved and reviewed by the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR). Major commands (MAJCOM), field operating agencies (FOA), and direct reporting units (DRU) must send one copy of their published and or posted supplement to the OPR at HQ AFPC/DPAOT, 550 C Street West, Suite 31, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4733 and a courtesy copy to HQ AFPC/DPDXI, 550 C Street West, Suite 48, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4750. Other organizations send one copy of each published and or posted supplement to the next higher headquarters.

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SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This document has been substantially revised and must be completely reviewed. The major revision in this instruction is the inclusion of the Air Force Audit Agency recommendation, with concurrence of AF/A1P, to require aviators to complete Voluntary Return to Active Duty (VRAD) and Inter-Service Transfer (IST) Programs active duty service commitments (ADSC) before being eligible to receive ACP. Additionally, this publication streamlines the previous instruction, updates office symbols throughout the publication, and defers many program specifics to the current year's Aviator Continuation Pay (ACP) implementation message. This version also makes minor changes to recoupment issues regarding involuntary separations.

Chapter 1

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

1.1. ACP Entry Eligibility:

1.1.1. To be eligible to enter into an ACP agreement, a rated officer must:

1.1.1.1. Have completed the active duty service commitment (ADSC) for initial qualification training for the aviation specialty in which the officer is currently qualified and eligible for ACP. In addition, those rated officers under Voluntary Return to Active Duty (VRAD), Inter-Service Transfer (IST) and Air Reserve Component (ARC) accession programs must have completed the associated accessions ADSCs (such as permanent change of station, refresher/requalification/ difference training) incurred. No other ADSCs affect ACP eligibility.

1.1.1.2. Be qualified for operational flying duty IAW AFI 11-401, *Flight Management* and AFI 11-402, *Aviation and Parachutist Service, Aeronautical Ratings and Badges*.

1.1.1.3. Be entitled to aviation career incentive pay (ACIP) under Title 37, U.S.C., Section 301a, *Incentive pay: aviation career*.

1.1.1.4. Be in a grade below O-7.

1.1.1.5. Have no less than six and no more than 24 years of total aviation service.

1.1.1.6. Meet all other eligibility criteria specified in the Air Force's current active duty fiscal year (FY) implementation plan.

1.1.1.7. Hold and maintain a valid security clearance (minimum of SECRET).

1.1.2. Modifications to existing agreements will be at the discretion of the Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF).

1.1.3. Eligibility for IST officers, ARC accessions, and recall aviators will be addressed IAW the current active duty FY implementation plan on a case-by-case basis.

1.2. ADSC for ACP. HQ AFPC/DPAOT, in coordination with HQ AFPC/DPSCM, will ensure each officer entering an ACP agreement has his/her ADSC updated based on the terms of the individual agreement. ACP agreement lengths are established in conjunction with each FY's approved ACP program. Specific agreement/ADSC lengths will be addressed in the implementation messages.

1.2.1. When an officer's ACP is suspended or terminated, ADSCs associated with the member's ACP agreement will not be automatically relieved or shortened. An officer whose ACP entitlement/eligibility terminates prior to the completion of the ACP ADSC may request a waiver to that ACP ADSC from SECAF, but only as part of submitting a request for separation or retirement (see AFI 36-3207, *Separating Commissioned Officers*, and AFI 36-3203, *Service Retirements*).

1.2.2. An ACP ADSC does not guarantee a participating officer will be retained on active duty. The Air Force retains authority to separate a rated officer before the expiration of an ACP ADSC, IAW AFI 36-3206, *Administrative Discharge Procedures for Commissioned Officers*.

1.2.3. Rated officers twice non-selected for major or lieutenant colonel, who are offered and accept selective continuation on active duty, and are subsequently either under an ACP agreement or enter an

agreement at some future point, may not voluntarily separate or retire sooner than the ADSC associated with the ACP agreement. However, mandatory retirement/separation takes precedence over the ACP ADSC.

1.3. Payment Schedules. ACP rates/payment schedules will be IAW the authorized ACP rates and agreement effective dates as outlined in applicable FY program implementation messages. ACP payments are taxable and subject to withholding of applicable federal and state income taxes.

1.4. Recommending Disapproval for ACP Agreements:

1.4.1. ACP supervisors (see terms) will sign all agreements and recommend either approval or disapproval. In the event a recommendation for disapproval of an ACP agreement is received by HQ AFPC, final disposition will be made by HQ AFPC/CC.

1.4.2. ACP supervisors will recommend disapproval for officers who:

1.4.2.1. Are awaiting an operational flying disqualification resulting from a Flying Evaluation Board (FEB).

1.4.2.2. Are awaiting involuntary separation under AFI 36-3206 or dismissal under Uniform Code of Military Justice proceedings.

1.4.2.3. Have a documented record of substandard performance or conduct which, in the ACP supervisor's opinion, renders them poor candidates for retention under the terms of an ACP agreement.

1.4.2.4. Are awaiting/undergoing investigation into military or civil offenses which could result in punitive action or suspension/revocation/permanent disqualification of security clearance.

1.4.3. If any of the conditions in paragraph **1.4.2.** change, the officer may reapply for ACP if still eligible under FY implementation message criteria.

1.5. Approving ACP Agreements:

1.5.1. HQ AFPC/DPAOT is the approval authority for ACP agreements. An ACP agreement, once signed by the member, recommended for approval and signed by the ACP supervisor/commander, and received and accepted by HQ AFPC/DPAOT IAW applicable policies, procedures, and guidance, becomes legally binding and deemed accepted by the SECAF.

1.6. Terminating, Suspending, or Recouping ACP:

1.6.1. ACP payments terminate early if an officer:

1.6.1.1. Is permanently disqualified from aviation service IAW AFI 11-401 and/or AFI 11-402.

1.6.1.2. Separates from Active Duty (either voluntarily or involuntarily) for any reason (including retirement) authorized under any provision of law.

1.6.1.3. Is dismissed or discharged for cause.

1.6.1.4. Has their security clearance permanently revoked.

1.6.2. ACP payments are suspended when an officer is suspended from aviation service IAW AFI 11-401 and/or AFI 11-402 or when their security clearance is temporarily suspended or reduced below

SECRET. If suspension from aviation service or valid security clearance (minimum of SECRET) is lifted prior to the ACP ADSC, payments will resume on a pro-rated basis with no change to the annual payment date. Treatment of the withheld ACP payments will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

1.6.3. ACP is recouped:

1.6.3.1. In accordance with **Table 1.1.**, Aviator Continuation Pay Recoupment, for officers who fail to complete active duty aviation service.

1.6.3.2. If ACP is improperly paid through an administrative/records error.

1.6.3.3. On a pro-rated basis if an officer fails to maintain a valid security clearance (minimum of SECRET).

Table 1.1. Aviator Continuation Pay Recoupment.

	A	B	C	D	E
R U L E	If the reason for failure to complete active duty aviation service is:	and the effective date of the disqualification or separation is:	then the next scheduled payment is:	and future anniversary payments are:	and any unearned portion of the bonus already paid is:
1	Voluntary (See note 1.)	after next anniversary payment	prorated for remaining aviation service	not paid	recouped
		before the next anniversary payment	not paid	not paid	recouped
2	Involuntary (See note 2.)	after next anniversary payment	prorated for remaining aviation service	not paid	not recouped
		before the next anniversary payment	not paid	not paid	not recouped
3	Involuntary (See note 3.)	after the next anniversary payment	not paid	not paid	recouped
		before the next anniversary payment	not paid	not paid	recouped
4	Death (See note 4.)	immediate	not paid	lump sum	not recouped

NOTES:

1. Includes rated officers who separate from active duty under early release programs, are released for training in other competitive categories such as medicine or law, or decline to continue serving after being twice non-selected for promotion to major or lieutenant colonel and offered continuation on active duty. (Although declination to continue serving on active duty in this situation precipitates an involuntary separation or retirement action, the action to decline continuation is voluntary and precludes an individual officer from completing aviation service established by the ACP agreement.)
2. Rule 2 includes medical grounding and disability retirements or separations, separation due to promotion non-selection when not offered continuation, or reduction-in-force (RIF) actions including Selective Early Retirement Board actions. Medically disqualified/grounded rated officers who voluntarily retire or separate prior to the fulfillment of the ACP ADSC will have unearned portions of the monies already paid recouped.
3. Rule 3 includes involuntary separations, retirements, and loss of aviation qualification for reasons other than rule 2. Rated officers twice non-selected for promotion who have entered into ACP agreements and are subsequently retired prior to the agreement termination date because of statutory limits will have all ACP payments in excess of the statutory retirement date recouped.
4. If a rated active duty officer who is not subjected to a regulatory/statutory recouplement dies on active duty while serving under an ACP agreement, and the death is determined to be in the line of duty, a lump sum in the total amount of payments remaining unpaid under the agreement at the time of death will be included in the final settlement of the officer's military pay account.

Chapter 2

APPLYING FOR ACP

2.1. Participating Rated Officers. Participating rated officers should:

2.1.1. Review this AFI, applicable implementation message guidance, and any instructions located on AFPC's ACP and Assignment Management System (AMS) websites.

2.1.1.1. Eligible rated officers' ACP agreement options are normally available for viewing on HQ AFPC's ACP Agreement site of the AMS web page. If unable to access the AMS web page, follow the links via the AFPC RightNow web (<http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil>).

2.1.1.2. Eligible rated officers can review their agreement options at any time after the release of the HQ AF FY ACP Announcement and the HQ AFPC FY ACP Program Implementation messages through 2400 hours Central Daylight Savings Time (CDT) on 30 Sep of that year by logging onto the AMS web.

2.1.2. Ensure they meet all eligibility criteria for ACP and that their records are current and accurate.

2.1.2.1. Officers can determine eligibility via the current FY implementation message posted on the AFPC ACP website.

2.1.2.2. The availability of agreement options on the AMS website does not necessarily mean the officer is entitled to the agreement options listed.

2.1.2.2.1. Officers must still meet all eligibility requirements at the time they enter into an ACP agreement.

2.1.2.2.2. The current/applicable FY implementation messages take precedence over all other guidance and information available, including this AFI and the HQ AFPC ACP website on the AMS web page.

2.1.2.2.3. ACP agreements are only valid when all eligibility requirements are met. In a case where personnel records are inaccurate and an ACP agreement is accepted, the validity of the agreement is determined by the correct personnel data on the effective date of the agreement. If later determined that an agreement is/was invalid, recoupment will be required.

2.1.2.2.4. If an officer believes he/she is erroneously identified as not eligible for ACP, he/she should notify HQ AFPC/DPAOT by the Case Management System (CMS) accessible through their supporting Financial Services Office (FSO) or Military Personnel Flight (MPF).

2.1.3. Meet with their ACP supervisor to review records, ACP options, and career plans. ACP supervisors are an important resource to assist the officer in making informed and objective career decisions.

2.1.4. Inform their ACP supervisor once deciding to accept (or decline) an ACP agreement, and establish a plan for signing and processing it.

2.1.4.1. The application website remains available for application submission as long as all eligibility requirements remain met; however, members must take care to fully understand how effective dates are computed and applied IAW the current fiscal year implementation instructions. Once a draft agreement is built, the member has exactly thirty calendar days (to the minute) to

click the “accept agreement” button on the website or the draft expires and the member must submit a new application. If an application is submitted after the member’s initial eligibility date, the effective date of the agreement will be affected.

2.1.4.2. Upon acceptance, print, sign (legible first name, middle initial, and last name), and date the completed ACP agreement IAW instructions located on the ACP website and on the AMS web pages. The ACP supervisor is responsible for countersigning (with legible first name, middle initial, and last name) the agreement and recommending approval/disapproval. Signatures imply understanding and compliance with the terms and conditions of the agreement, and that applicable federal law and Department of Defense and Air Force guidance, directives, regulations, and instructions and the requirements found in them pertaining to ACP and as applicable are incorporated in the agreement.

2.1.4.3. Receipt of the agreement via fax or other appropriate methods at HQ AFPC under the rules/policies set forth in the implementations messages and this AFI binds the aviator to the terms of the agreement.

2.1.4.4. Members shall keep a copy of the signed agreement for their records.

2.1.4.5. If the ACP supervisor recommends disapproval of an officer’s request to enter into an ACP agreement, the officer has 10 duty days to respond to the supervisor as described in paragraph [2.2.4](#).

2.2. Supervisors. ACP supervisors are the rated officer’s primary contact for ACP questions and will:

2.2.1. Review this AFI, applicable implementation message guidance, and any instructions located on HQ AFPC’s ACP website and on the AMS web page before counseling eligible rated officers on the ACP program. Ensure each eligible rated officer also reviews all applicable information.

2.2.2. Counsel each eligible rated officer on the ACP program, including ACP agreement terms and amounts, associated ADSCs, and ACP effective dates. Supervisors play a crucial role in providing their subordinates objective ACP career counseling and must make themselves readily available to discuss.

2.2.3. After the member signs the agreement, countersign, date, and provide a recommendation for approval/disapproval. Ensure the member processes approved agreements IAW current fiscal year implementation instructions (this will include faxing the completed original to HQ AFPC/DPAOT). Process recommendations for disapproval IAW paragraph [2.2.4](#).

2.2.4. Processing Agreements Recommended for Disapproval. If the ACP supervisor recommends an eligible rated officer not be permitted to enter into an ACP agreement:

2.2.4.1. Complete the agreement circling “Disapproval.”

2.2.4.2. Prepare a memorandum providing the rationale for disapproval (see [Attachment 2](#)) and attach supporting documents.

2.2.4.3. Have the affected individual acknowledge notification of the disapproval by endorsing the memorandum. Counsel disapproved officers that they may submit rebuttals within 10 duty days.

2.2.4.4. Give the individual a copy of the agreement and memorandum. Keep the original memorandum pending any rebuttals.

2.2.4.5. Forward the disapproval package to the wing commander or equivalent after receiving the officer's rebuttal memorandum, or after 10 duty days, whichever occurs first.

2.3. Wing Commander or Equivalent. Ensure ACP disapprovals are in the Air Force's best interest. If the wing commander or equivalent overturns the recommendation for disapproval, return the package to the supervisor for processing as an acceptance. Otherwise, endorse the memorandum recommending disapproval and forward the package to HQ AFPC/DPAOT for final disposition. HQ AFPC/CC will render a final determination.

2.4. MAJCOM Director of Personnel (A1). Designate a MAJCOM ACP point of contact and review this AFI, applicable implementation guidance, and any instructions located on AFPC's ACP website, and on the AMS web page and forward ACP announcements to the field when notified by AFPC of communications regarding current ACP program policies and procedure changes.

2.5. Field Operating Agencies (FOA), Direct Reporting Units (DRU), Joint Staffs, and HHQs. ACP applications for officers at these agencies as well as all personnel outside normal AF reporting channels are available via the AMS web. For these personnel, the ACP supervisor remains responsible for all requirements of paragraph 2.2. and countersigning the ACP agreements. Exceptions to this will be handled through HQ AFPC/DPAOT on a case-by-case basis.

2.6. Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC). HQ AFPC/CC has overall responsibility for implementing and administering the ACP program. HQ AFPC/DPAOT is the OPR and will:

2.6.1. Coordinate and monitor program developments.

2.6.1.1. Communicate current ACP program policies and procedures to the field and notify them of ACP policy changes via message and the internet.

2.6.1.2. Maintain an accurate database of ACP program information.

2.6.1.3. Assist Air Staff in the collection of accurate ACP program statistics.

2.6.1.4. Provide a forum for answering questions and resolving implementation issues as they arise.

2.6.2. Ensure accurate agreement and payment information on each participating officer is provided to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS).

2.6.3. Review records of participating officers as required to determine continued eligibility.

2.6.4. Retain the capability to manually implement the program.

2.6.5. Retain source documents until archived.

2.7. Headquarters Air Force (HQ AF). HQ AF/A1PP (Military Force Shaping Policy) has overall responsibility for development and oversight of the ACP Program, including waiver authority. HQ AF/A1PPR (Rated Force Policy) is the OPR and will ensure compliance with DODI 7730.57.

2.8. Prescribed and Adopted Forms :

2.8.1. Prescribed Form: This publication does not prescribe a form.

2.8.2. Adopted Forms: This publication adopts AF Form 847, Recommendation for Change of Publication.

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Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower and Personnel

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

Title 37, U.S.C., Section 301a, *Incentive pay: aviator career*

Title 37, U.S.C., Section 301b, *Special pay: aviation career officers extending period of active duty*

DoDI 7730.57, *Aviation Career Incentive Act of 1974 and Required Annual Report*

System of Records Notice T7340, *Defense Joint Military Pay System - Active Component*

AFPD 36-30, *Military Entitlements*

AFI 11-401, *Flight Management*

AFI 11-402, *Aviation and Parachutist Service, Aeronautical Ratings and Badges*

AFI 36-2107, *Active Duty Service Commitments*

AFI 36-3203, *Service Retirements*

AFI 36-3206, *Administrative Discharge Procedures for Commissioned Officers*

AFI 36-3207, *Separating Commissioned Officers*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

A1—Director of Personnel

ACIP—Aviation Career Incentive Pay

ACP—Aviator Continuation Pay

ADSC—Active Duty Service Commitment

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFPC—Air Force Personnel Center

AFPD—Air Force Policy Directive

AFRC—Air Force Reserve Command

AMS—Assignment Management System

ANG—Air National Guard

ARC—Air Reserve Component

CMS—Case Management System

CDT—Central Daylight Savings Time

DFAS—Defense Finance and Accounting Service

DOS—Date of Separation

DRU—Direct Reporting Unit

FEB—Flying Evaluation Board
FOA—Field Operating Agencies
FSO—Finance Service Office
FY—Fiscal Year
IST—Inter-Service Transfer
JUMPS—Joint Uniform Military Pay System
MAJCOM—Major Command
MPF—Military Personnel Flight
OPR—Office of Primary Responsibility
POC—Point of Contact
RDS—Records Disposition Schedule
RIF—Reduction in Force
SECAF—Secretary of the Air Force
UCMJ—Uniform Code of Military Justice
VRAD—Voluntary Recall to Active Duty

Terms

ACP Agreement—The aviator's legal contract for aviator continuation pay (ACP) once received and approved by HQ AFPC/DPAOT.

ACP Approval Authority—HQ AFPC/DPAOT is the approval authority for ACP agreements.

ACP Disapproval Authority—The final disapproval authority is AFPC/CC. HQ AFPC/DPAOT will review the disapproval package and forward to AFPC/CC for final disposition.

ACP Supervisor—The individual responsible for counseling ACP-eligible officers and recommending approval/disapproval. This is normally the unit commander. For officers assigned to a wing (wing staff, command post, etc.), but outside a squadron, the operations group commander is the ACP supervisor. For officers not in a squadron or wing (for example, MAJCOM headquarters, military schools, or joint and exchange positions), the first USAF field grade officer or USAF civilian equivalent in the officer's chain of command is the ACP supervisor.

ACP Effective Date—The date an ACP agreement begins and the date from which pay amounts are computed.

ACP Eligibility Date—The date an officer is first eligible in a FY to enter into an ACP agreement.

Aviation Service Date—The effective date of the initial aeronautical order to perform aviation service.

Recalled Aviator—Any officer who has recently joined or returned to active duty from the ARC or from a non-military status.

Attachment 2**SAMPLE AVIATOR CONTINUATION PAY DISAPPROVAL MEMORANDUM**

MEMORANDUM FOR (ELIGIBLE AVIATOR) (date)

FROM: (ACP Supervisor)

SUBJECT: Notification for Recommended Disapproval of Aviator Continuation Pay (ACP)

1. I recommend disapproval of your ACP based on (explain the reasons here). A copy of this memorandum will be attached to your agreement and forwarded through the wing commander (or equivalent) to HQ AFPC/DPAOT for processing.

2. You may write a rebuttal to accompany this recommendation. You must submit your rebuttal to me within 10 duty days from the date you endorse this memorandum. If you submit a rebuttal that convinces me to change my recommendation, the second and third endorsements below will not be used.

3. Sign and date acknowledging receipt of this memorandum. Indicate in your endorsement if you will submit a rebuttal.

(signature)

(Name, Grade of ACP supervisor)

1st Ind (functional address symbol of eligible aviator) (date)

TO: (ACP Supervisor)

I acknowledge receipt of your notification of recommended disapproval of ACP. I (will)(will not) submit a written rebuttal.

(signature)

(Name, Grade of eligible officer)

2nd Ind (ACP Supervisor) (date)

TO: (wing commander or equivalent)

I have/have not received rebuttal comments from the member. Recommend disapproval.

(signature)

(Name, Grade of ACP supervisor)

3rd Ind (wing commander or equivalent) (date)

TO: HQ AFPC/DPAOT

Recommend disapproval.

(signature)

(Name, Grade of wing commander or equivalent)