

DECISION

**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548

FILE: B-215449

DATE: December 26, 1984

~~MATTER OF~~ Robert B. Mellen**DIGEST:**

An employee of the Air Force qualified for payment of post differential while on extended detail in Saudi Arabia. Since post differential is based on a percentage of basic pay, the post differential payment after acquiring eligibility is computed on the basis of the days entitled to basic pay rather than on the basis of every calendar day.

Mr. Robert B. Mellen, a civilian employee of the Department of the Air Force, requests reconsideration of our Claims Group's denial of his claim for post differential allowance for weekends and non-workdays during a period of extended detail in a foreign area. Post differential payments are based on a percentage of an employee's basic pay and are paid in that amount for periods of eligibility. Since payments are not made on a calendar day basis denial of Mr. Mellen's claim is sustained.

Mr. Mellen was assigned to temporary duty in Saudi Arabia during the period April 16 through July 4, 1980. After the qualifying 42 days, he became eligible for payment of the foreign post differential beginning with the 43rd day until the end of his detail. He was paid the post differential at the prescribed rate of 20 percent of his base pay.

Mr. Mellen claims additional payment based on the post differential allowance being computed for each day on detail subsequent to meeting eligibility requirements. He contends that the living conditions, physical hardship, or unhealthy conditions for which the post differential is paid exist on weekends and non-workdays and thus he should be paid on an every day basis. Also, he believes that the Standardized Regulations (Government Civilian, Foreign Areas) do not require that the amount of differential payable be computed by multiplying the applicable differential rate by the basic compensation actually paid on the dates for which differential is payable.

A post differential may be granted on the basis of conditions of environment which differ substantially from

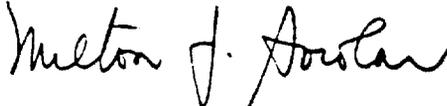
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conditions of environment in the continental United States and warrant additional pay as a recruitment and retention incentive. A post differential may be granted to an employee officially stationed in the United States who is on extended detail in a foreign area. A post differential may not exceed 25 percent of the rate of basic pay. 5 U.S.C. § 5925.

Post differential is additional compensation paid at rates of 10, 15, 20, or 25 percent of basic compensation to employees stationed at or on extended detail to specified foreign posts. Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas), § 511a. Since the differential is payable in a percentage of the basic compensation it is computed on the basis of the employee's entitlement to such compensation and not on the basis of a formula related to calendar days. As in the case of the computation of maximum post differentials the amount of an employee's entitlement must be related to his or her entitlement to basic compensation. See Frank H. Denton, 57 Comp. Gen. 299 (1978).

Since Mr. Mellen was paid the post differential allowance based on his basic compensation entitlement during his period of eligibility, he is not entitled to an additional payment. Accordingly, the action of our Claims Group denying additional payment of post differential is sustained.

for 
Comptroller General
of the United States