



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

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DEC 5 1973



The Honorable Les Aspin
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Aspin:

As you requested on May 18, 1973, we reviewed the frequency of parachute jumps made by members of the Army's 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions for 6 months during fiscal year 1973. Parachutists in these divisions comprise approximately 55 percent of the Army members receiving parachute pay. In addition, we reviewed the Army's practice for designating certain positions in nonairborne units as parachute duty positions. We examined individual parachute jump records and pay records and held discussions with Army officials.

BACKGROUND

The law (37 U.S.C. 301) provides for incentive pay of \$110 a month to officers and \$55 a month to enlisted personnel required, by orders, to make parachute jumps as an essential part of their military duty. Executive Order 11157, dated June 22, 1964, requires that, to be entitled to parachute duty pay, a member make a minimum of one parachute jump during any 3 consecutive months.

In fiscal year 1973, the Department of Defense obligated for parachute pay about \$26 million, of which \$24.7 million was for the Army.

A summary of authorized Army parachute duty positions and members receiving parachute pay, based on Army records, follows.

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<u>Type of unit</u>	<u>Authorized positions</u>	<u>Estimated number of members receiving parachute pay</u>		
		<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Total</u>
Airborne	33,747	26,441	3,617	30,058
Nonairborne	1,930	806	349	1,155
Members classified as missing in action	-	72	13	85
In transit	-	438	81	519
Total	<u>35,677</u>	<u>27,757</u>	<u>4,060</u>	<u>31,817</u>

FREQUENCY OF PARACHUTE JUMPS

We estimate that about 6,500 parachutists (37 percent) of the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions were making the minimum number of jumps required to draw parachute pay. The remaining 11,200 parachutists (63 percent) were making more than the minimum number of jumps. We based these estimates on the jump records of 377 members of the 82d Airborne Division and 303 members of the 101st Airborne Division between December 1972 and May 1973 and between January and June 1973, respectively. We selected those records by generally accepted sampling techniques.

82d Airborne Division

The 82d Airborne Division is a tactical unit comprised of infantry, combat-support and combat-service units. In May 1973, the 82d Division had an assigned strength of about 15,400 members, of which about 14,100 were drawing parachute duty pay. Division officials said that members not drawing parachute pay were primarily new members who had not completed refresher courses and who had not made the jumps necessary to qualify for parachute pay; pilots and flight-crew members; and members who, voluntarily or for physical reasons, were no longer parachutists but who had not yet been reassigned.

The jump records of members of this division showed:

<u>Type of unit</u>	Total members receiving parachute pay	Records sampled	<u>Sample results</u>	
			Members making minimum number of jumps	Members making more than minimum number of jumps
Combat	8,945	227	31%	69%
Combat support	3,156	89	33	67
Combat service	<u>2,051</u>	<u>61</u>	61	39
Total	<u>14,152</u>	<u>377</u>	36	64

Members of combat units (primarily infantry companies) and combat-support units (primarily artillery, military police, signal, and engineering units) made more jumps than did members of combat-service units. The combat-service units include administrative, quartermaster, maintenance, medical, and similar units. Of the members in our sample, 36 percent made the minimum number of jumps required and received parachute pay continuously during the period or during the lesser period of their assignment to the division and 64 percent made more than two jumps; about 32 percent made four or more jumps.

About 73 percent of the jumps made by members in our sample were classified as tactical jumps and about 27 percent were classified as administrative or nontactical jumps. Tactical jumps are generally defined as jumps by members equipped with full field gear and weapons and involve unit assemblies or field exercises upon landing. Administrative or nontactical jumps generally do not involve unit assemblies or field exercises and the members may not be equipped with full field gear and weapons.

Division officials stated that the division's goal was to have each member of a combat or combat-support unit make one jump a month and to have each member of a combat-service unit make one jump each quarter. During calendar year 1972, division members made about 79,000 jumps, or an average 5.6 jumps each. We estimate that, for the division to have

achieved its goal in 1972, about 74,000 additional jumps would have been required. Budgetary constraints limiting the availability of aircraft and units and unfavorable weather conditions were cited as reasons precluding the division's achieving its goal.

101st Airborne Division

The 101st Airborne Division is a tactical unit comprised of infantry, combat-support, and combat-service units. In May 1973 the division had an assigned strength of 16,041 members, of which 3,610 were parachutists assigned to the division's 3,787 authorized parachute duty positions. Only one division brigade is designated as airborne.

The jump records of members of this division showed:

<u>Type of unit</u>	Total members receiving parachute pay	Records sampled	<u>Sample results</u>	
			Members making minimum number of jumps	Members making more than minimum number of jumps
Combat	2,598	218	37%	63%
Combat support	684	59	44	56
Combat service	<u>328</u>	<u>26</u>	69	31
Total	<u>3,610</u>	<u>303</u>	41	59

Members of combat and combat-support units made more jumps than did members of combat-service units. Of the members in our sample, 41 percent made the minimum number of jumps required and 30 percent made three or more jumps. About 96 percent of the jumps made by members in our sample were classified as tactical jumps and about 4 percent were classified as administrative or nontactical jumps.

The division's goal for members' jumps was the same as that of the 82d Division. During fiscal year 1973, 101st Division members made about 17,400 jumps, or an average

5.4 jumps each. We estimate that, for the division to have achieved its goal in 1973, about 23,000 additional jumps would have been required. Budgetary constraints limiting the availability of aircraft was stated as the primary reason precluding the division's achieving its goal.

PARACHUTE PAY RECEIVED BY
MEMBERS ASSIGNED TO NONAIRBORNE UNITS

Army regulations provide that (1) only commanders of major Army commands approve parachute duty positions in non-airborne units and (2) only positions requiring parachute duty as an inherent and essential part of military duties be approved in nonairborne units. As of August 1, 1973, there were 1,930 authorized parachute duty positions in the following types of nonairborne units.

<u>Type of unit</u>	<u>Positions</u>
U.S. Military Academy	17
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College	12
Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) instructor groups	268
Various supply depots	33
Various Reserve and National Guard advisory groups	70
Military advisor groups	57
Other units (79) with parachute duty positions	<u>1,473</u>
Total	<u>1,930</u>

Army officials could not readily obtain for us the number of members assigned to nonairborne units who were receiving parachute pay. Since nonairborne units are widely dispersed, it was not feasible for us to ascertain the number of jumps made by all members assigned to these parachute duty positions. However, we did review the Army's justification for authorizing parachute pay for the 268 positions assigned to ROTC units. We were told that these positions were authorized in December 1971 after a study was made at the request of the Office of the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army. The study concluded that it was both desirable

and feasible to place one Special Forces noncommissioned officer--a parachutist rating is a prerequisite for Special Forces members--at each senior ROTC detachment, because it would:

"Add distinction and elan to ROTC units."

"Provide the detachments with a high degree of technical and soldiering expertise in the training of Ranger and counter-guerrilla units."

"Provide a base for wide utilization of Special Forces personnel."

We could not reconcile the above rationale for authorizing parachute pay for ROTC positions with Army Regulations 37-125 which state that "Designation of position in a non-airborne unit as a parachute position will be accomplished when it is determined that parachute jumping is an inherent and essential part of the duties of the position." That regulation further provides that parachute duty positions not be approved to permit incumbents to maintain proficiency or to keep abreast of airborne matters.

Army officials said that 149 of the 268 authorized parachute duty positions in ROTC detachments were filled by Special Forces personnel during the 1972-73 school year. The pay records showed that in May 1973 at least 105 members assigned to ROTC detachments received parachute duty pay totaling about \$5,775. If all 268 authorized parachute duty positions had been filled by parachutists, the annual cost would have been \$176,880.

Revalidation of parachute duty positions
in nonairborne units

After our review the Army surveyed parachute duty positions in nonairborne units. This survey showed that some positions were designated as parachute duty positions although parachute jumping was not an inherent and essential part of the positions' duties. Additionally, some units rotated airborne personnel into parachute positions for

several months or less so that the parachute duty pay could be spread among two or more individuals. To stop this practice, the Army, by letter dated September 25, 1973, required revalidation of all parachute positions in nonairborne units, in accordance with the following policies.

- A position which requires the assignment of a member with airborne experience but which does not require parachute jumps as an essential part of his duties will be identified. Parachute pay will not be authorized.
- A position which requires the member to make parachute jumps as an inherent and essential part of his duties will continue to be identified.
- A member assigned to a designated parachute position will normally remain in the designated position for an extended period. Rotation of personnel through a parachute position for several months or less solely so as to spread the entitlement is prohibited.

Parachute pay to members assigned to parachute duty positions in nonairborne units will end August 31, 1974, unless the positions have been revalidated in accordance with the above policies.

Effective implementation of this directive should correct the deficiency noted in authorizing parachute duty pay for positions in nonairborne units.

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As requested by your staff, we are enclosing a comparison of data based on our statistical sample of officers and enlisted members assigned to the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions receiving parachute pay.

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We do not plan to distribute this report further unless you agree or publicly announce its contents. We trust this information satisfies your needs.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James B. Stewart". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosure

COMPARISON OF DATA BASED ON STATISTICAL SAMPLE
OF ENLISTED AND OFFICER MEMBERS OF
THE 82d AND 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISIONS
RECEIVING PARACHUTE PAY

Type of member	Total number of members receiving jump pay	Sample results					Projection	
		Records sampled	Members making minimum number of jumps	Members making more than minimum number of jumps	Tactical jumps	Non-tactical jumps	Estimated number of members making minimum number of jumps	Estimated number of members making more than minimum number of jumps
82d Division:								
Officer	936	27	19%	81%	68%	32%	178	758
Enlisted	13,216	350	38	62	73	27	5,022	8,194
101st Division:								
Officer	305	20	35	65	89	11	107	198
Enlisted	3,305	283	41	59	97	3	1,355	1,950

BEST DOCUMENT AVAILABLE