



**GENERAL INFORMATION
ON
ENTITLEMENTS
&
BENEFITS
FOR INTERNATIONAL STAFF**

May 2009



CONTENTS

I. SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES	1
1. SALARY	1
2. POST ADJUSTMENT.....	2
3. MOBILITY AND HARDSHIP ALLOWANCE	2
4. ASSIGNMENT GRANT	5
5. DEPENDENCY ALLOWANCE.....	9
6. EDUCATION GRANT	10
7. RENTAL SUBSIDY AND DEDUCTION	11
II. SOCIAL SECURITY	12
8. UN MUTUAL INSURANCE SOCIETY AGAINST SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT	12
9. GPAFI.....	14
10. AETNA.....	14
11. PENSION FUND.....	15
12. APPENDIX D.....	16
13. COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OR OR DAMAGE TO PERSONAL EFFECTS	16
III. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS	16
14. ANNUAL LEAVE	16
15. SICK LEAVE	17
16. FAMILY LEAVE OPTION	17
17. MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE.....	18
18. HOME LEAVE.....	19
19. FAMILY VISIT	20
IV. TRAVEL AND RELATED ENTITLEMENTS	20
20. TRAVEL.....	20
21. RELOCATION GRANT FOR SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL EFFECTS.....	20
22. SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL EFFECTS	22
V. ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AT DESIGNATED DUTY STATIONS ..	23
23. SPECIAL OPERATIONS AREA (SOA)	23
24. HOUSING MAINTENANCE ELEMENT (HOME)	24
25. SPECIAL OPERATIONAL LIVING ALLOWANCE RATE (SOLAR).....	25
26. REST & RECUPERATION POLICY (R&R).....	25
27. HAZARD ALLOWANCE.....	26

First issued by Policy Section, DHRM 2005.

This circular is intended solely for information and general guidance of UNHCR staff members. The UN Staff Regulations and Rules constitutes the authoritative text establishing the rights and obligations of UN staff members, and no further or different expectancies should be inferred.

I. SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES

1. SALARY

- i. Staff in the Field Service, Professional and higher categories are recruited internationally and are paid on the basis of salary scales, expressed as gross and net base salaries, applied uniformly, world-wide, by all organisations in the common system. The gross base salary is subject to a staff assessment, which is similar to an income tax. By deducting staff assessment at either the single rate (for staff members without dependants) or at the dependent rate (for staff members with a dependent spouse or a dependent child), a net salary is obtained. Whether or not a spouse or child is accorded dependent status will be determined by the United Nations definition of dependency. If, in addition to staff assessment, United Nations emoluments are subject to a national income tax by the country of a staff member's nationality or residence, the United Nations will generally refund such national income tax due on his/her United Nations emoluments.
- ii. Within grade salary increments are awarded annually, according to established salary scales, on the basis of satisfactory service.

- iii. If assigned to New York or elsewhere in the USA, salaries and allowances are payable 100 per cent in US dollars. If the staff member is assigned to Geneva or Vienna, salaries and allowances are paid in the local currency.

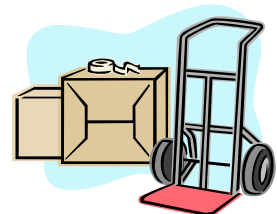
2. POST ADJUSTMENT



- i. Post Adjustment is a non-pensionable amount, which is added to the base salary in order to preserve equivalent standards of living at different locations. It is paid at the single or dependency rate, but it is not subject to staff assessment, and can vary from month to month.
- ii. DSA is payable in lieu of Post Adjustment for an initial assignment for a period of less than six months and may be discontinued upon extension beyond six months and replaced by the payment of Post Adjustment.

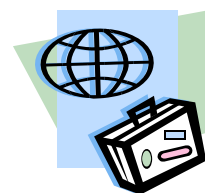
3. MOBILITY AND HARDSHIP ALLOWANCE

- i. Mobility and Hardship Allowance: Duty stations are classified category H and A to E according to the degree of difficulty in terms of seven different factors: health, climate, education, housing, isolation, local conditions (food, public services) and security. This allowance is designed to compensate for



hardship conditions and to encourage mobility. It is comprised of three elements: hardship, mobility, and non-removal of household goods. Entitlements are based on the following:

- ii. The **hardship** part of the allowance, which reflects the varying degree of hardship at different duty stations, is payable from the first assignment to duty stations classified as categories B - E.
- iii. The **mobility** part of the allowance is payable to staff members who have at least five years of continuous service in the UN Common System and takes into account the number and category of previous assignments. In duty stations classified as categories A – E, the mobility element is payable from the second assignment and at duty stations classified as category H, the mobility element is payable from the fourth assignment and only if staff members have had two or more assignment at duty stations as categories A – E.
- iv. If a staff member has less than five years of continuous service in the UN common system he/she is not entitled to the mobility element.
- v. If a staff member has more than five years of continuous service but have not previously served on two



or more assignments in A-E duty station and he/she is assigned to an H category duty station, the staff member will only be entitled to receive the non-removal element of the mobility and hardship allowance at the H level.

- vi. Lifting of a mission area will only affect the hardship element (i.e. change of duty station category). There will be no additional lateral move on the matrix in respect of the mobility element.
- vii. A temporary reassignment of less than one year will affect the hardship element only and the staff member will remain at the present position on the matrix. Should the staff member complete one full year in the new duty station, the temporary reassignment will count as one additional lateral move on the matrix in respect of the mobility element retroactively to the date of temporary reassignment. The next review date for mobility & hardship and non-removal element will be one year after the date of a temporary reassignment.
- viii. The **non-removal of household goods** part is payable to compensate a staff member who, on reassignment to a duty station, was not given an entitlement to removal costs at that duty station in accordance with Staff Rule 107.27.

- ix. The Mobility and Hardship Allowance (MHA) will be adjusted in accordance with the category of the country of assignment. The designation of duty station categories is subject to change.

4. ASSIGNMENT GRANT




- i. The Assignment Grant is intended to cover costs incurred by the staff member and his/her family members as a result of appointment/reassignment. The grant is composed of the following elements:


- Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) portion
- Lump-sum portion

- ii. DSA portion: Upon arrival at the duty station, the staff member is paid an amount equal to 30 days of DSA at the rate applicable at the time of arrival. Each eligible family member, whose travel to the duty station is paid for by UNHCR, will receive an amount equal to 30 days of half of the DSA at the rate applicable at the time of their arrival. The DSA portion of the Assignment Grant is payable either in local currency or US Dollars.

- iii. Please note that in order for family members to receive the DSA portion of the assignment grant, they must travel to the duty station at least six months prior to the standard

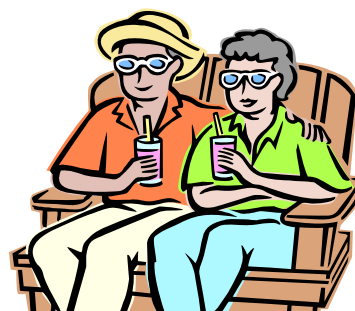
assignment length (SAL) expiry or expiration of appointment or separation from service.

- iv. If the DSA rate changes during the period covered by the DSA portion of the Assignment Grant (30 days following the date of arrival at the duty station), the amount of the grant will be adjusted on the basis of the revised rate.
- v. In the event that a staff member is obliged to make continued use of hotel accommodation at the (A-E) duty station or administrative place of assignment (APA), for more than 30 days, an extended payment of the DSA portion may be made under the provisions of the Staff Rules up to a maximum of 60 days (i.e. a total period not exceeding 90 days). 
- vi. Should this be the case, the UN Designated Official (normally the UNDP Resident Representative) should certify that circumstances justify such a payment before any payment may be made. The UNHCR office is authorised to pay this amount locally without prior authorisation from Headquarters. The amount of the grant during the extended period shall be based on actual room costs **up to 60 per cent** of the applicable rate.

- vii. Lump-sum portion: The lump sum portion of an assignment grant which consists of the net base salary plus post adjustment applicable on the effective date of appointment/reassignment is payable in convertible currency (except in Geneva where all emoluments are paid in local currency).
- viii. A one-month lump sum is payable (a) upon appointment or reassignment to a new duty station when the expected SAL is one year or more but less than three years; b) pro-rated if temporarily reassigned for 6 months or more. 
- ix. For staff being assigned to H Duty Stations, the lump sum portion of an Assignment Grant is one month's salary plus post adjustment but it is not payable if the staff member is entitled to full removal of household goods at that duty station.
- x. Upon request, payment of up to 80% of the lump sum portion may be authorised three months in advance of travel to the new duty station. If the reassignment does not materialize, the amount will be automatically deducted from the staff member's salary in one installment.

xi. In cases where a staff member does not complete the period of service in respect of which the Assignment Grant has been paid, the grant will be adjusted proportionately and recovery will be made.

xii. Where both spouses are staff members in the UN common system and are assigned to the same duty station, each spouse will be entitled to the full DSA portion of the



assignment grant. However, only one lump sum portion will be payable, normally to the spouse whose lump sum yields the higher amount even if the travel has taken place at different times.

xiii. If a spouse is in receipt of the higher salary and post adjustment has already been assigned to the duty station and has received the lump sum portion of the assignment grant, no further payment of the lump sum is payable.

xiv. If a spouse is in receipt of the lower salary and post adjustment has already been assigned to the duty station, then the staff member will receive only the difference between the amount already paid to the spouse and the staff member's entitlement to the lump sum portion of the assignment grant.

5. DEPENDENCY ALLOWANCE



- i. The United Nations determines dependency status based on its own internal guidelines. A staff member with a dependent spouse or child receives a base net salary at the “dependent rate”. A dependent spouse as defined in the Staff Rules 103.24(a), a domestic partner or a common law spouse, as defined under specific conditions is one whose occupational earnings, if any, do not exceed the lowest entry level of the General Service gross salary scales for the duty station where the spouse is employed, provided that this salary is not less than the equivalent than the gross salary of a G.2 step 1 in New York.
- ii. However, if the spouse and/or children do not reside with the staff member at the duty station, evidence of financial support will be required in order to authorise relevant allowances.
- iii. For recognised dependants (other than spouse or first dependent child), the dependency allowance is paid at the following rates:
 - for each dependant child \$2,686 net per year
 - for one secondary dependant i.e. dependant parent, brother or sister (but

only if the staff member's spouse is not dependent \$940 net per year

- iv. In respect of the first dependant child of a staff member without a dependent spouse, the staff member will receive base salary at the "dependent rate".
- v. If the staff member or his/her spouse receives similar benefits under national laws, the dependency allowance for children is reduced proportionally in order to avoid duplication of benefits and to achieve equality among staff members.
- vi. Special assistance is available to staff with disabled dependants. The allowance for a disabled child is twice the normal amount.

6. EDUCATION GRANT



- i. Education Grant is available to internationally recruited staff who reside and serve outside their home country or country of permanent residence. Education Grant is payable from primary level (i.e. for children aged five at start of school year or reaching five within three months of start of the school year), until end of scholastic year in which child completes fourth year of post-secondary studies or is awarded first recognised degree, whichever is earlier, but in no case beyond age 25.

- ii. Special Education Grant in respect of a disabled child is available to staff of all categories holding an appointment of six months or longer or who have completed six months of continuous service regardless of whether or not they are serving in their home country. Special Education Grant, subject to certification from Medical Service is payable from the date on which special teaching or training is required, up to the year when the child is awarded the first recognised post-secondary degree or up to the end of calendar year in which child reaches age 28.

7. RENTAL SUBSIDY AND DEDUCTION

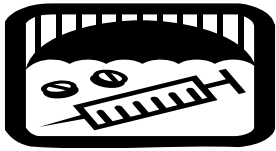


- i. A rental subsidy is paid as part of the post adjustment system for the purpose of ensuring a greater degree of equity and alleviating hardships by subsidizing the rental cost for those staff members whose rented accommodations are of a reasonable standard but which cost significantly more than the average for the duty station.
- ii. If the new duty station is not a capital city and educational/health facilities are inadequate, the staff member may install his/her family in another capital city of the country. In this case, the staff member may be entitled to a **combined rental subsidy**.

- iii. Conversely, a rental deduction is made from the remuneration of staff members who are provided free of charge with housing by an organisation of the UN System, the Government or a related institution, or at rents lower than the average for the duty station.

II. SOCIAL SECURITY

8. UN MUTUAL INSURANCE SOCIETY AGAINST SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT

- i. In order to ensure adequate medical insurance during the assignment, the staff member  may wish to enrol in the United Nations Staff Mutual Insurance Society against Sickness and Accident (UNSMIS). Participation in the UNSMIS is obligatory unless the staff member submits evidence of worldwide medical insurance coverage. If this is not the case, the Organization shall not be responsible for any medical expenses incurred by the staff member or the family.
- ii. The following are considered:
 - a) As protected persons:
 - a dependent spouse for UN purposes
 - a child under the age of 21 years considered as a dependant for UN purposes

Premiums – for protected persons

- Category A: staff member only – 2.5% of net salary and post adjustment
- Category B: staff member + 1 dependent – 3.8% of net salary and post adjustment
- Category C: staff member + more than 1 dependant – 4.2% of net salary and post adjustment

b) As specially protected persons

- a non-dependent spouse for UN purposes
- unmarried children over 21 and under 30 years of age in full-time attendance at a school or university, and not in full-time regular employment
- a secondary dependent i.e. a father, mother, brother or sister

Premiums – for specially protected persons:

- Non-dependent spouse:
CHF350 per month
- Non-dependent child (18-24 years):
CHF130 per month
- Non-dependent child (25-29 years):
CHF200 per month
- Secondary dependant:
CHF500 per month

iii. These rules apply to all staff members appointed by the Secretary-General and govern the compensation awarded in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to

the performance of official duties on behalf of the United Nations. No compensation shall be awarded when such death, injury or illness was occasioned by wilful misconduct of the staff member. Claims for compensation under these rules must be submitted within four months of death, injury or onset of illness.

- iv. A staff member assigned to New York has a choice of retaining insurance coverage with the Geneva Staff Mutual Insurance Society against Sickness and Accident (UNSMIS) or enrolling with insurance providers under the UN Headquarters medical scheme, which apparently is more advantageous

9. GPAFI

- i. This is an optional and complementary insurance which covers that portion of the medical costs not reimbursed by the UN Sickness Insurance Society, after a deduction of 10%.

10. AETNA

- i. AETNA Group Life Insurance: Staff members may wish to participate in the Group Life Plan.

11. PENSION FUND

- i. Staff members holding an appointment of six months or longer become participants in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. Service prior to the commencement of participation performed with the United Nations, or with any other member organization of the Pension Fund may be made pensionable under certain conditions. Contributions to the Pension Fund are deducted at source at the rate of 7.9% of the pensionable remuneration, in accordance with a scale established for that purpose. The Organization contributes at twice the rate of the participant's contribution.
- ii. The Fund provides disability, retirement and survivors' benefits as well as lump-sum withdrawal settlements. The conditions for entitlement to a benefit, as well as the determination of the amount of the benefit, are governed by the Regulations of the Fund, and are based on the length of contributory service, the amount of the final average remuneration and the age on separation. Survivors' benefits are paid to spouses and children who fall within the definitions outlined in the Regulations.

12. APPENDIX D

- i. These rules apply to all staff members appointed by the Secretary-General and govern the compensation awarded in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of the United Nations. No compensation shall be awarded when such death, injury or illness was occasioned by wilful misconduct of the staff member. Death, injury or illness of a staff member shall be deemed to be attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of the United Nations.

13. COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OR OR DAMAGE TO PERSONAL EFFECTS

- i. Reasonable compensation may be paid to staff members in the event of loss or damage to their personal effects determined to be directly attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of the United Nations.

III. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

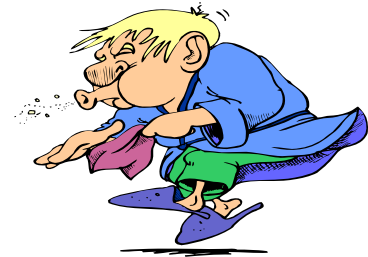
14. ANNUAL LEAVE

- i. Annual Leave accrues at the rate of 2.5 working days per month or 30 working days per year. Annual Leave may be accumulated, but no more than 60 days of leave may be carried forward beyond 31 March of each year. Accrued annual leave up to a maximum

of 60 days may be paid upon separation from service. Annual leave is subject to exigencies of service and may be taken only when authorised by the appropriate supervisor.

15. SICK LEAVE

- i. Staff members unable to work due to illness or injury may be granted sick leave.



The limits on sick leave entitlements vary according to the appointment status of the staff member in line with the Staff Rules. A certificate from a qualified medical practitioner is required for any absence for more than three consecutive days and this should be provided not later than the end of the fourth working day of absence.

16. FAMILY LEAVE OPTION

- i. Family leave is an option designed to allow staff to officially absent themselves to attend to family-related emergencies and/or obligations, without using existing annual and/or special leave provisions. No exhaustive listing of “family-related situations” has been established, but typically it would include absences to provide parental or familiar support in cases such as:
- ii. Illness, child-care or scholastic requirements of a staff member’s child;

- iii. Illness or death of a spouse, partner or close relative (whether or not officially recognised as dependent);
- iv. Accompanying a spouse or child on medical evacuation;
- v. Staff may take EITHER seven working days of uncertified sick leave for family-related reasons OR seven working days of normal uncertified sick leave OR any combination of the two, but always up to a total maximum of seven working days in any one calendar year. There is no possibility to any carry-over any unutilised uncertified sick leave balance from one calendar year to the next. Nor will uncertified sick leave be authorised during any period of previously approved leave. The staff member's annual balance of uncertified sick leave will be reduced according to the number of days' absence.

17. MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE



- i. Maternity leave: Staff members may be entitled to maternity leave with full pay, normally commencing six weeks prior to the anticipated date of delivery and extending for a total period of 16 weeks.
- ii. Paternity leave: Staff members may be entitled to one paternity leave per year and

maximum duration of four weeks for staff members assigned to Headquarters and family duty stations, and up to a maximum duration of eight weeks for those staff assigned to non-family duty stations.

18. HOME LEAVE

- i. Home Leave is available to internationally recruited staff who reside and serve outside their home country or country of permanent residence subject to established criteria.
- ii. If a staff member is assigned to a duty station (C, D & E) with a 12-month home leave cycle, the staff member will accumulate two home leave points per month as from the date of appointment/reassignment and one point per month for duty stations (H, A & B) with a 24-month home leave cycle. Staff member's who are in-between assignments, will accumulate only one point per month irrespective of the classification of the duty station.



19. FAMILY VISIT

- i. In the event that the staff member's family does not join him/her at the new duty station, the staff member may be entitled to Family Visit Travel in accordance with the Staff Rules.



IV. TRAVEL AND RELATED ENTITLEMENTS

20. TRAVEL

- i. A staff member and eligible family members are entitled to travel from the place of recruitment or previous duty station to the new duty station by air, at the least costly airfare structure regularly available, with first class accompanied baggage allowance.
- ii. If the total duration of the flights exceed nine hours the staff member will be entitled to travel by the class immediately below first class, with first class accompanied baggage allowance.



21. RELOCATION GRANT FOR SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL EFFECTS

- i. If the staff member does not wish to utilise the standard shipment, there is a lump sum payment known as "Relocation Grant". This

option is not applicable to Junior Professional Officers (JPO's).

- ii. The relocation grant is deemed to cover all shipping and related costs including the 100 kilos authorised in and out of a Special Operations Area, insurance for loss or damage to personal effects, and customs charges or fees. It is also intended to meet all costs associated with arrangements under the existing Staff Rules, such as insurance, advance shipment, air shipment, split shipment, storage of personal effects etc.
- iii. The organisation will not be responsible for any delays in the arrival of personal effects additional expenses that may be incurred, or liabilities that may arise as a result of the exercise of the lump sum option. The entitlement is as follows:

Staff member without a spouse or dependent child – US\$ 10,000.

Staff member with a spouse and/or dependent child(ren) travelling to duty station – US\$ 15,000.

Representatives/Chiefs of Mission (both incoming and outgoing) – US\$ 15,000.

- iv. The Relocation Grant is payable only once for the duration of the staff member's assignment. Any change in the staff member's



family status after the lump sum has been paid will not give rise to additional payment at the same duty station. Should the eligible family member travel separately, the additional US\$ 5,000 will only be paid upon the actual travel, on condition that the travel is at least six months prior to the expiry of the staff member's SAL.

22. SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL EFFECTS

Normal shipment entitlements:

<u>Entitlement</u>	<u>Weight*</u>	<u>Mode of transport</u>	<u>Insurance coverage</u>
PERSONAL EFFECTS			
staff member:	1'000 kgs *	<u>SURFACE OR HALF BY AIRFREIGHT</u>	US\$ 16'000.00
1 st dependent:	500 kgs. = 1'500 kgs		US\$ 24'000.00
2nd dependent:	300 kgs. = 1'800 kgs		US\$ 28'800.00
3 rd dependent:	300 kgs. = 2'100 kgs		US\$ 33'600.00
(no limit on number of dependents)			
* Representative & Chief of Mission	2,000 kgs		US\$ 32,000.00


- i. If a staff member combines Home Leave with reassignment to a duty station classified as H, A or B, he/she will be entitled to 50 kilos by surface or half by airfreight of unaccompanied personal baggage per traveller each leg. For duty stations classified C, D or E, staff member is authorised an additional shipment of 50 kilos by surface or half by airfreight of unaccompanied personal baggage per traveller each leg. This entitlement can be accumulated and used fully or partially on

either the outward or return leg. In both cases, the unaccompanied baggage may be converted into 10 kilos of accompanied excess baggage per person. This shipment entitlement is also applicable for family visit travel and education grant travel (unless the staff member opts for the lump sum). The Organization does not provide insurance for shipments in connection with Home Leave travel.

- ii. In duty stations with special entitlements, a staff member is also entitled to additional annual shipment entitlements as per ST/IC/2008/51.


V. ADDITIONAL BENEFITS AT DESIGNATED DUTY STATIONS

23. SPECIAL OPERATIONS AREA (SOA)

- i. Staff members serving on mission status in a Special Operations Area (SOA) are cautioned that dependants will not be allowed to travel to locations in the mission area. The Organisation holds no liability for unauthorised travel of family members to the SOA, nor can be held responsible for their safety or well-being. 
- ii. In addition, the Organisation accepts no liability for claims for loss or damage to

personal effects over and above the 100 kilos authorised to be shipped to the mission area unless a prior request has been submitted to PAS. **In this respect the Travel Authorisation (PT8) issued must clearly indicate that the shipment in excess of the 100 kilos is exceptionally authorised.** Please refer to paragraph 18 of IOM/12-FOM/12/2004 (SOLAR).

24. HOUSING MAINTENANCE ELEMENT (HOME)

- i. If in the interest of the family's welfare, for educational or medical reasons certified by the Medical Service,  relative either to a dependant spouse or dependant children, the staff member may wish to apply for HOME.
- ii. Should HOME be authorised, the Organisation would not pay travel expenses for any of the eligible family members to join the staff member at the new duty station, nor will the staff member receive the DSA portion of the Assignment Grant in their respect. However, home leave, family visit and/or education grant travel may be exercised as per the relevant staff rules. If the family are installed at the duty station at a later date, payment of HOME would be automatically discontinued effective the date of their arrival.

25. SPECIAL OPERATIONAL LIVING ALLOWANCE RATE (SOLAR)

- i. If the staff member is assigned to an Administrative Place of Assignment (APA) and on mission status in a Special Operations Area (SOA), the staff member is entitled to receive a monthly SOLAR allowance applicable to the SOA. This represents the Organisation's sole contribution towards meeting living expenses in the operational area and replaces all other payments that may previously have applied in such situations, e.g. MSA/DSA, reimbursement for double or retained accommodation, and the Living Allowance payable under the Mental Health Travel Scheme. This allowance is periodically reviewed and is subject to change and/or discontinuation.



26. REST & RECUPERATION POLICY (R&R)

- i. The Rest & Recuperation Policy (R&R) is intended for staff members serving in Field locations where the work environment is characterised as extremely stressful, insecure, isolated, or lacking the most basic and essential commodities. The policy is specifically designed for such exceptional and extraordinary circumstances, and is not to be considered as a compensation element for the



hardship level or security rating of a duty station. Various special packages and incentives already exist within the system to alleviate the hardship and inconveniences of staff resulting from expatriation, family separation, work-related stress and ill health.

27. HAZARD ALLOWANCE



- i. In countries which have been designated as a hazardous area by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), a temporary non-pensionable allowance is paid to international staff amounting to US\$1,365 **per complete calendar month** spent in the hazardous area, including official holidays and weekends. For periods of less than one calendar month, the allowance is calculated on the basis of US\$45 per day. The allowance will be paid locally in the Field, normally **in US dollars**. The allowance is not payable during periods of annual or sick leave, medical evacuation, or official travel or mission **outside** the hazardous area. The allowance is periodically reviewed by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), on the recommendation of the UN Security Co-ordinator in New York, and is subject to change and/or discontinuation.



**DHRM
POLICY SECTION**

