



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
RESERVE FORCES POLICY BOARD

5109 Leesburg Pike, Suite 501  
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Austin:

The Reserve Forces Policy Board (RFPB) met on September 13, 2023 and voted on two proposals with significant positive impact on Reserve Component (RC) recruiting and retention.

1. Increase the Service Secretaries' discretionary reimbursement cap for inactive duty training (IDT) travel expenses from \$500 to \$1500.
2. Create an online ASVAB Career Exploration Program (CEP) option.

IDT Travel Reimbursement. On July 18, 2023, the Military Advisory Panel (MAP) unanimously approved a proposal to increase the IDT travel reimbursement cap authorized in the Joint Travel Regulations from \$500 to \$1500. The OSD Comptroller non-concurred in Oct 2023, citing budgetary concerns. However, the proposal is an increased authorization, not an obligation, designed to provide Service Secretaries more latitude within their own budgets. Increased travel costs in pace with inflation are a significant factor in RC recruiting and retention.

ASVAB CEP Modernization. The 2020 Report of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, "encourages the [DoD] to pursue efforts to implement an online version of the ASVAB CEP." Military Department recruiting experts supported this recommendation at the May 2023 RFPB meeting. An online and at-home ASVAB CEP allows individuals to match their skills, abilities, and interests with rewarding and fulfilling career paths, including a military service option. An online format would significantly increase test participation and limit in-person proctored testing.

The RFPB is a federal advisory committee established in law to provide you with independent advice and recommendations on strategies, policies, and practices designed to improve and enhance the capabilities, efficiency, and effectiveness of the RC. As required by the Federal Advisory Committee Act, these recommendations were deliberated and approved in an open, public session. Consistent with the Act, a copy of this recommendation will be posted to the RFPB website at <https://rfpb.defense.gov>.

If you have questions or would like additional information, I can be reached directly at (703) 942-5770 or by email at [apunaro@punarogroup.com](mailto:apunaro@punarogroup.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnold L. Punaro", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Arnold L. Punaro  
MajGen, USMCR (Ret)  
Chairman