Questions and Answers
Regarding DoS Mail Services to
Military Retirees and Employees of DoD Contractors

Q: Why can’t I continue to receive my mail at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate?
A: These postal facilities now are Department of State (DoS) run and funded. The DoS has previously informed the DoD that it will not continue to provide mail services for military retirees and employees of DoD contractors at postal facilities located at embassies or consulates without reimbursement from DoD. It was determined that there is no legal authority for the DoD to reimburse DoS for these services.

Q: Why can’t DoD or DoS keep performing this function?
A: Mail services at DoS facilities are performed by DoS employees. DoS will not continue to provide mail services to military retirees and employees of DoD contractors without reimbursement from DoD. DoD has no legal authority to reimburse DoS for these services.

Q: Why was DoD able to provide mail services to military retirees and employees of DoD contractors at DoS facilities in the past and now is unable to provide these same services?
A: These postal facility operations now are DoS run and funded. When DoD historically operated and funded postal operations at embassies, it was able to provide limited mail services at those facilities to retirees on space-available basis because it could absorb the added operational costs (just as it does at overseas military installations). DoD no longer has the ability to internally absorb these additive marginal costs at embassies because it no longer funds the operation of those facilities and does not have any ability to transfer funds to DoS for a service that isn’t being provided to or for DoD.

Q: When will my mail service end?
A: Mail service at the DoS embassy or consulate will end on December 31, 2009.

Q: When was the decision to transition the responsibility from DoD to DoS?
A: The decision was made in 2006 to begin transitioning responsibility as DoS was already providing mail services to DoD employees and military retirees. Recently, the DoS requested reimbursement for military retiree mail services. However, it was determined that there is no legal authority for DoD to reimburse DoS for these services.

Q: What should I do to continue to receive my mail from CONUS?
A: You should complete a change of address form and return it to the post office located at the Embassy or Consulate as soon as possible. Additionally, you should immediately notify family, friends, Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), businesses, magazines subscriptions, etc, of your new, international mailing address.
Q: What will happen to my prescriptions being mailed from TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy?
A: TRICARE will continue to process prescriptions through December 1, 2009, to allow delivery prior to December 31, 2009. At that point, you will need to get your prescriptions filled locally and file a claim with TRICARE, which reimburses 75% of your expense after deductible is met. You can visit www.TRICARE4u.com website for additional information. More information can be found on the TRICARE notice.

Q: Does this end military postal service for all military retirees living overseas?
A: No, this affects only those retirees being serviced by a U.S. embassy or consulate. Those retirees living near an APO/FPO military facility are not affected. Likewise, those overseas retirees currently not authorized military postal service due to existing legal restrictions such as a Status of Forces Agreement are not affected.

Q: What are the alternative options to retirees living overseas?
A: Retirees may seek mail support at nearby DoD installations or they may use the host nation’s international mail system.

Q: How many military retirees are affected by this?
A: We estimate this will affect about 4,800 military retirees living overseas. Some of these retirees, however, may elect to use an APO/FPO military facility nearby.

Q: Will I lose my benefits as a military retiree if I also work for the embassy?
A: No, you will retain your mailing privileges as a DOS employee using the Diplomatic Pouch system.