



MILITARY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
9800 Goethe Road
Sacramento, California 95827-3561

NGCA-TAG

27 October 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR Servicemembers, California National Guard

SUBJECT: Bonus and Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) Incentive Debts

1. Accountability and Soldier care have been my highest priorities since I was sworn in as The Adjutant General in 2011. I pledged to build a leadership team that would stand up with integrity for the men and women who volunteer to risk their lives for our state and nation, and advocate relentlessly on their behalf.
2. It is my responsibility to do everything within my power to eliminate or reduce the debts owed by Soldiers who unknowingly received improper Army incentives between 2004 and 2010. If you have watched the news this week, you know the American people feel the same way.
3. Thousands of honorable Soldiers who enlisted or extended their service in good faith during a time of war fell victim to a fraud committed by individuals who had chosen to shun their oath and live outside the Army values. More than 100 of those individuals have been punished. However, the requirement to recoup those incentive payments, some of which were spent a decade ago, has brought hardships to many of our Citizen Soldiers and retired veterans who signed up for incentives based on misinformation about their eligibility.
4. Preventing any further harm to those Soldiers and their families, and restoring their trust in the organization they once fought for, is a sacred task. It is one, however, that I cannot achieve alone.
5. The Soldier Incentives and Assistance Center (SIAC) has helped hundreds of Soldiers who have had their debts forgiven or have corrected their records to enable them to comply with the terms of their incentive contracts. Unfortunately, more than 4,000 Soldiers with errors in their incentive packets have not had the same opportunity because the Cal Guard's SIAC has been unable to contact them. Therefore, I need every commander to engage your troops – even those who no longer serve in the Guard – and make sure they contact the SIAC at 855-751-4087 or www.CalGuard.ca.gov/G1/Pages/Incentives-Task-Force.aspx if they have received or signed up for an incentive. Until Congress and the Pentagon fully resolve the issue, we can best help troops through the SIAC.

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6. I have been working directly with California's Congressional Delegation every year since 2013 to push for legislation that would waive or alleviate these incentive debts for Soldiers. Support in Congress for these measures has never been stronger than it is right now. In fact, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced yesterday that the Pentagon would suspend all efforts to recoup these incentives until he is satisfied the process has been adequately improved for Soldiers seeking debt relief. Every Soldier and every commander needs to act now to ensure we take advantage of this respite.

7. I made a commitment to you in 2011 to provide the best possible training, support and overall care for all of our Soldiers and Airmen. I intend to keep that promise, which means I cannot rest until our National Guard families attain peace of mind on this issue. We will find financial relief for affected families wherever possible, and we will continue the tremendous gains we have made in the past five years to improve accountability through checks and balances within our organization, thereby preventing any similar or other fraud.

8. I am proud of the California National Guard that we have grown to become, and I know that resolving this issue for our families is key to continuing our progress. Thank you all for your service, your dedication, and your continued focus on our state and federal missions.

9. Commanders will support, disseminate and post this memorandum prominently.


DAVID S. BALDWIN
Major General
The Adjutant General