



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES, Director

Subject: Global War on Terrorism Medals to Recognize Veterans' Service

I am pleased to inform you that the Defense Department recently announced final approval of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary and Service Medals. These medals were authorized by President Bush a year ago with the issuance of Executive Order 13289. These medals recognize the outstanding work being done by our Armed Forces, both here and abroad, in combating the global scourge of terrorism. It is now our mission to ensure that these brave men and women, and especially our disabled veterans, are afforded every right and opportunity owed to them under the veterans' preference laws.

Receipt of the expeditionary medal is qualifying for veterans' preference, provided the individual is otherwise eligible. Receipt of the service medal is qualifying for a Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA).

- **The Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal** will be awarded to those service members who deployed overseas for service in the Global War on Terrorism operations on or after September 11, 2001, and to a future date to be determined by the Secretary of Defense. Initial award of this medal is limited to personnel deployed abroad in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The area of eligibility encompasses the United States Central Command area (less the lower horn of Africa); Middle East; eastern Turkey, Philippines; Diego Garcia; and all air spaces above the land and adjacent water areas.

To be entitled to this medal, service members must be assigned, attached or mobilized to a unit participating in designated operations for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days in the area of eligibility, or meet one of the following criteria:

1. be engaged in actual combat against the enemy and under circumstances involving grave danger of death or serious bodily injury from enemy action regardless of time in the area of eligibility;
2. while participating in the designated operation, regardless of time, be killed, wounded or injured requiring medical evacuation from the area of eligibility; or
3. be a regularly-assigned crew member flying sorties into, out of, within, or over the area of eligibility in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom and/or

Iraqi Freedom. Each day that one or more sorties are flown in accordance with these criteria counts as one day toward the 30 or 60-day requirement.

Under no circumstances are personnel whose service was exclusively in the United States eligible for the expeditionary medal.

- **The Global War on Terrorism Service Medal** will be awarded to those who participated in or served in support of Global War on Terrorism operations on or after September 11, 2001, and to a future date determined by the Secretary of Defense. Initial award of the service medal will be limited to airport security operations and service members who support Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle, and Iraqi Freedom.

Each combat commander has the authority to approve award of these medals for personnel deployed within their theater of operation. Only one award of the expeditionary medal and service medal may be authorized for any individual. While personnel may receive both medals if they meet the eligibility criteria, the qualifying period of service for one award cannot be used to justify eligibility for the other.

Each military department will prescribe appropriate regulations for processing, awarding and wearing of the medals for their service members, to include application procedures for veterans, retirees, and next-of-kin.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers
Human Resources Directors