



# **Terms and Conditions of NATO Civilian Employment**

**at**

**HQ Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, Norfolk, USA**

**and**

**Supreme Allied Commander Transformation/Staff Element  
Europe, Mons, BE**

**HQ SACT/SACT SEE**

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## **1. Introduction**

- a. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) links Europe and North America in a unique defence and security alliance. Today, 'the Alliance' as it is known is engaged in a broad range of activities designed to promote international cooperation and to confront the new security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Allied Command Transformation is NATO's agent for change, leading the continuous improvement of Alliance capabilities to uphold NATO's global security interests.
- b. As a NATO international civilian employed by Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation Allied Command Transformation, Staff Element Europe (HQ SACT/SACT SEE) you could expect to be involved in a variety of functions - supporting the Commander in the day to day activities of the Headquarters together with military and civilian experts and officials drawn from the NATO member nations.
- c. Most of the information provided hereunder has been extracted from the North Atlantic Council approved *NATO Civilian Personnel Regulations*, commonly referred to as the NCPRs or the Staff Rules, which govern matters affecting civilian staff administration.
- d. The information should be considered as a guideline; in case of discrepancies with the NCPRs it is the latter which are binding.

## **2. Recruitment formalities**

- a. Appointments to NATO Civilian positions are subject to administrative formalities, which include obtaining a security clearance and a medical examination.

### **2.1 Contracts**

- a. HQ SACT/SACT SEE usually offers a definite duration contract of three years.
- b. The first six months of a definite duration contract is a probationary period.
- c. Staff who are seconded from their national administrations normally receive definite duration contracts (seconded).

## **3. Salary and allowances**

- a. In accordance with an international agreement, known as the Paris Protocol, basic salaries and allowances are generally exempt from income tax.
- b. Staff members are recruited at pay step one of the post's grade. Through the NATO Performance Management System (NPMS) and subject to good performance, higher steps are awarded in subsequent years. Annual adjustments are normally applied to all steps in respect of changes in salary purchasing power and the cost of living. Staff Members will be remunerated using the Single Salary Spine rates.

i. **Basic salary** is the salary applicable to the grade of the post. The Single Salary Spine scales applicable in Belgium and the United States are available for consultation at Annex III, however it should be noted that the basic salaries are subject to various possible additions or deductions according to the individual situation of the staff member.

ii. **Pension and insurances:** A mandatory **deduction** of approximately 17% (USA) and 12% (Belgium) is made for contributions to the NATO Defined Contribution Pension Scheme and to the NATO Group Insurance for medical, invalidity, dental and life insurances (also see 4 and 5 below).

iii. **Allowances** are paid under certain conditions (depending on the personal circumstances and family situation of the staff member) and on production of the relevant documents, but may be subject to deductions in cases where the staff member or his/her household is receiving allowances of the same nature. Some of the various types of allowance are listed below.

### 3.1 Installation allowance

- a. An installation allowance is payable on arrival if the staff member's established physical residence is more than 100 km (60 miles) from the HQ SACT/SACT SEE Headquarters for an appointment of at least one year, and who can prove and confirm by submitting the appropriate documentation that they have in fact moved their residence into the vicinity of the Headquarters to take up duty.
- b. The amount of the allowance paid depends on whether or not the staff member is entitled to expatriation allowance or not. A supplement is also payable for changing geographical zone or mobility and for eligible dependents.
- c. A staff member who resigns within one year of their appointment or who transfers to a different duty station shall pay back the installation allowance on a pro rata basis for the time remaining to reach twelve months.
- d. In the case the Organization terminates the appointment within the year, the staff member shall not pay back the allowance unless the termination is as a result of disciplinary action, in which case the staff member shall reimburse the totality of the allowance.

### 3.2 Expatriation allowance

- a. An expatriation allowance is paid to all staff members who, at the time of their appointment, are not nationals of the host country and who have not been continuously resident in the host country for at least one year. The rate is 10% of the basic salary and will be calculated on the first step in the grade of recruitment.
- b. In years 6 through 10, the allowance shall be reduced by 2% per year to reach 0% in year 10.
- c. Where staff members have been employed by another NATO body or by another Co-ordinated Organization before taking up duty with NATO or in the event of officials of other international organizations or members of the administrations or armed forces of the country of

origin taking up duty with NATO, without changing country, the previous service in the country will be taken into account in determining the application of the above mentioned reduction.

### 3.3 Family allowances

a. **Basic Family Allowance.** Eligible staff members will receive a set monthly payment. For married staff members the eligibility to the allowance and the monthly payment depend on whether or not the spouse is working and how much he/she earns.

For staff members who are eligible for the expatriation allowance and who take up duty from within the same geographical zone of the duty station, the basic amount and the additional amount shall be paid monthly and reduced after five years by one fifth per year to reach zero the tenth year. For staff member who are eligible for the expatriation allowance and who take up duty from outside the same geographical zone of the duty station, the basic amount and the additional amount shall be paid for the duration of the staff member's employment in the host country. For staff members who are not eligible for the expatriation allowance, the basic amount shall be paid monthly, for a period of up to five consecutive years

b. **Dependent Child Supplement.** Payable to eligible staff member subject to the age of the child and certain conditions (0 to 18 years old, and from 18 to 22 years old if the child is in full-time education);

c. **Supplement for disabled and dependent parent.** This additional allowance may be granted to staff members who have legal or other obligations to provide main and continuing support to ascendants and other close relatives by blood or marriage.

d. **Supplement for Disabled or Severely Disabled Child.** This additional allowance may be payable to staff members with a dependent child who, regardless of age, is medically certified as suffering from a disability.

### 3.4 Education allowance

a. An education allowance for each dependent child who is in full-time study and who is less than 22 years of age is normally paid to staff members entitled to the expatriation allowance. If the dependent child has performed compulsory military service, payment of this allowance may be extended beyond age 22.

b. Further information on Education Allowance is to be found in Annex I of this brochure.

## 4. Life and medical insurance

a. Approximately 9% (USA) and 4% (Belgium) of staff members' gross emoluments is deducted at source for combined Group medical, invalidity and life insurances, which gives the following cover:

i. reimbursement of approximately 90% of costs incurred for medical and dental treatment, eye care and invalidity, within certain limits;

ii. reimbursement of 100% of costs incurred for medical treatment which is a direct result of an accident on duty or occupational illnesses;

- iii. reimbursement of 100% of costs incurred for the medical treatment of serious illnesses with prior approval of Allianz Worldwide Care (the present insurers of the Organization);
  - iv. in the case of death, a lump sum, amounting to a minimum of one year 's emoluments for staff not in receipt of household allowance/basic family allowance; three year's emoluments for staff in receipt of household allowance;
  - v. other benefits, such as payment of salary for a maximum period of 24 months in the case of long illness;
  - vi. in the case of invalidity, a disablement pension calculated according to the degree of invalidity.
  - vii. reimbursement as described above for spouses and dependent children, under certain conditions (e.g. that these expenses are not already covered by another insurance)
- b. Staff members will also have the option to opt for a top-up cover to the NATO Base cover through "Affinity Products" which can be purchased on an individual basis/need.

*Note : The group insurance policy is the subject of an annual contract which can be modified at any time. It is obligatory for all staff to contribute to the system, regardless of whether they already have health or life insurance coverage from another source.*

## **5. Pension scheme**

- a. If you are a serving NATO civilian, your current arrangements concerning your pension will continue on transferring to HQ SACT/SACT SEE. If the effective date of your NATO civilian appointment is after 1 July 2005 and you have not previously worked for NATO or one of the Coordinated Organizations, you are a member of the **Defined Contribution Pension Scheme (DPCS)**.
- b. An account is opened for each member of the Scheme and is credited each month with cash contributions by you (8%) and by NATO (12%) which will be invested in order to build up a sum, with which you will be able to buy a pension upon retirement.
- c. The investment scheme offers a range of equity, bond and 'cash' investment options into which your holdings can be placed.
- d. If you leave NATO without having contributed to the scheme for 6 years, NATO will pay your holdings as a tax-exempt lump sum, or they will transfer your holdings to another pension scheme, or you can become a passive member of the scheme. If you leave NATO having contributed to the scheme for more than 6 years, a number of further options are available to you. Specific questions regarding these options should be directed to the HQ SACT Civilian Human Resources Office.

## **6. Privileges and immunities**

### **6.1 Identity card (or Special Residence Permit)**

- a. Non-US NATO civilian staff members are required to obtain NATO-6 visas for themselves and their dependents prior to entering the United States. The HQ SACT Civilian Human Resources Manager will provide the necessary letter and guidance to apply for a visa.
- b. For service within SACT SEE in Belgium, newcomers coming from non EU countries are not required to obtain a visa, as these NATO employees have a special status covered by the Paris Protocol. However, Belgian law requires for all citizens, whatever their nationality, to be registered in the commune where they live and to carry an identity card. The passes and permits office on the SHAPE compound has an office which deals specifically with issues concerning Privileges and Immunities. Through this Office, newly recruited expatriates are able to obtain a '*Special Residence Permit*' for themselves and their dependants living under the same roof, provided by the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## 6.2 Spouse's employment

In the USA, spouses and dependent children of staff members of Albanian, Belgian, British, Canadian, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, French, German, Lithuanian, Spanish or Norwegian, nationality may apply for an employment authorization document '*work permit*'. Further information can be found in the [NATO Dependent Employment Authorization Document Policy and Guidelines for Processing](#) which can be found under [www.act.nato.int/newcomers-legal](http://www.act.nato.int/newcomers-legal) (note: due to the specific content on this site this is password protected. The password is: @PTSGuides . **This password should not be divulged to any outside party.**). Spouses and dependent children of any other nationality are not eligible to work in the United States.

## 6.3 Permanent Residency

Staff members who have completed a total of 15 years in NATO-6 visa status and who retire from the Organisation may be eligible to apply for adjustment to US lawful permanent resident status (Green Card), subject to compliance with any existing US programme/regulations at the time of retirement and application.\*

Staff members whose dependent children have NATO-6 visa status and have lived/been present in the United States for at least 7 years between the ages of 5 and 21 may be eligible to apply for adjustment to US lawful permanent resident status (Green Card), subject to compliance with existing US programme/regulations at time of eligibility and application.\*

\*Neither HQ SACT nor NATO generally have any influence nor control over US immigration regulations, programmes, policies, etc., which are subject to change at the discretion of the US government.

## 7. Taking up duty

### 7.1 Travel and removal expenses

- a. Staff whose established physical residence at the time of their appointment is 100 km (60 miles) radius or more from HQ SACT/SACT SEE are reimbursed for their travel and removal

expenses when taking up their duties and on departure from the Headquarters. The travel expenses for the spouse and dependent children and removal expenses on joining the Headquarters can only be reimbursed after satisfactory completion of the probationary period. However, an advance against the payment of part of the removal expenses may be, and is normally authorised. Those who leave within their first year are not entitled to the reimbursement of their travel expenses and removal expenses on departure.

b. Further information on removals is to be found in Annex II of this brochure.

## **7.2 Welcoming**

a. The SACT NATO Civilian Human Resources Team is responsible to ensure that all new members of the staff receive help and assistance to settle into their new environment. When new staff members are recruited from outside the host country, they receive general information on living in the United States/Belgium, as well as information concerning housing and schools, in advance of their arrival through their assigned sponsor. The Civilian Human Resources Manager arranges for a sponsor to provide guidance during the newcomer's settling-in period, and for attendance at an induction course, given several times per year to inform the latest recruits about various aspects of working at HQ SACT/SACT SEE/STRE. The Arrivals and Staff Guide which can be found under [www.act.nato.int/newcomers-legal](http://www.act.nato.int/newcomers-legal), (See para 6.2) is an invaluable source of information and offers material to assist with the relocation to your new NATO appointment.

## **8. Human resources development**

### **8.1 Staff appraisal**

a. HQ SACT/SACT SEE is applying a performance management system. Staff Appraisals occur annually with a formal report, an evaluation of future work-related goals and objectives, through which additional training requirements are identified and facilitated.

### **8.2 Training and development**

a. The training and development of military and civilian staff is given a high priority within HQ SACT/SACT SEE and NATO. Various opportunities are available, including courses to improve IT skills, language skills (Rosetta Stone) management techniques as well as catering for professional development. Career development is encouraged and supported through the HQ SACT Civilian Human Resources Manager, and Headquarters Staff Training Branch.

## **9. Hours of work**

a. The primary business hours for HQ SACT are 0730 to 1630 Monday through Friday. However, Branch Heads can determine if there are flexible arrival and departure times for work days. All personnel can access the Headquarters at will on any work day between 0600 and 1900, provided they have the proper security badges. Please also note that HQ SACT is closed during weekends and on HQ SACT Official Holidays.



## **10. Leave**

- a. **Annual leave** amounts to 30 days per annum, i.e. 2.5 working days per month, (over and above national holidays of the host nation and additional holidays granted by the Chief of Staff at his discretion). After the probationary period, annual leave is cumulative and may be taken in advance after approval by the staff member's supervisor/rating officer.
- b. Members of the staff eligible for the payment of expatriation allowance, with the exception of staff members who, at the time of their recruitment, were nationals of the country in which they are serving and of no other country, shall be entitled as from the date of completion of every 2 years' service to paid home leave. After the completion of the first period of 2 years' service, the duration of this leave shall be 8 working days plus travel time both ways calculated on the basis of the most rapid and economical means of public transport. After the completion of 4 years' service, the duration of this leave shall be 3 working days plus travel time both ways using the most rapid and economical means of public transport. After the completion of 6 years' service and thereafter, only the travel costs both ways are reimbursable using the most rapid and economical means of public transport.

## **11. Facilities at HQ SACT/SACT SEE**

### **11.1 Banking**

- a. The HQ SACT salary is paid into a local bank account of the staff member's choice. (See information on banking in the Arrivals and Staff Guide (see para 6.2)).
- b. For staff in SACT SEE, salary is paid into a local bank account of the staff member's choice. The bank located within the main SHAPE building 101 is a Belgian national bank, providing service in French/English and has ATM machines located on the SHAPE compound. An account may be opened there if desired, after taking up duties.

*(For expatriate staff members, up to 50% of their emoluments can be paid into a bank account in their home country, if they so wish.)*

### **11.2 Other facilities:**

- a. Please see the Arrivals and Staff Guide (See para 6.2) for a list of facilities in and around HQ SACT.
- b. Please see the 'SHAPE-online' internet-site <https://www.shape2day.com/community> for a list of other facilities in and around SACT SEE.

## **12. Transport**

- a. Public transportation in the USA is limited to buses and for those in Norfolk there is a limited light rail transport system, however, most people do not use it for day-to-day transportation due to the fact that although the service is there, unlike public transportation in Europe, it does not necessarily provide broad connectivity between home and the workplace.

b. Public transportation in the Mons area has a regular bus service ([www.infotec.be](http://www.infotec.be)) from SHAPE Casteau to Mons, Soignies and the surrounding area. The rail service ([www.sncb.be](http://www.sncb.be)) from Mons to Brussels is fast and reliable.

## 12.1 Vehicle registration

a. For staff arriving at HQ SACT, please refer to the extensive information on this topic provided in the Arrivals and Staff Guide (see para 6.2).

b. For newcomers to SACT SEE (please see the SHAPE Newcomers Guide on the SHAPE internet site under “Newcomers” ([www.shape2day.com](http://www.shape2day.com)), you are required to report to the Vehicle Registration Office as part of the checking-in process. Expatriate staff members can obtain the necessary Belgian/SHAPE registration number plates through this Office. You will need to bring all documents usually needed in your home country concerning your car. A Vehicle Registration guide containing all relevant formalities is available at this Office. A copy of the Belgian Highway Code can be purchased at most bookstalls.

## 13. Housing and schools

### 13.1 Housing

a. Although there is no housing service at HQ SACT, the Civilian Human Resources Manager and your assigned sponsor can provide advice on short-term accommodation options, as well as the availability of rental accommodation advertised on local bulletin boards. Further information may be obtained from websites such as [zillow.com](http://zillow.com) or [trulia.com](http://trulia.com) the local press ([www.pilotonline.com](http://www.pilotonline.com) under “classifieds” on top right side of the page).

b. In the vicinity of SACT SEE, furnished and unfurnished accommodation is fairly plentiful. Popular websites include [www.immoweb.be](http://www.immoweb.be). There is also a weekly newspaper called “Vlan” which is published in the various communes of Belgium containing advertisements of accommodation for sale or for rent. This weekly newspaper can be viewed on the internet [www.vlan.be](http://www.vlan.be). The SHAPE Housing Office provides support to NATO civilian personnel arriving to Mons. Several rental properties are advertised on a notice board, and appointments to view can be arranged through a computerized reservation system. SHAPE Housing Office provides a full and bi-lingual assistance to prepare rental agreements, ‘march-in/march-out’ of rental properties.

### 13.2 Schools

a. For staff arriving at HQ SACT, please refer to the extensive information on this topic included in the Arrivals and Staff Guide (see para 6.2).

b. For staff arriving at SACT SEE, there is no special ‘NATO school’. Access to the SHAPE International School or the Canadian School (which offers bilingual (French/English) classes from 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade) may be possible; the American High School 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade and the Belgian Secondary School system may offer further opportunities. Several international schools exist in the Brussels area.

#### **14. Staff Association**

- a. There is a Staff Association to which all staff members belong, and which is represented by an elected Staff Association Committee whose function is to provide a channel of communication between the appropriate administrative authorities and the staff.

#### **15. Summary**

- a. This guide to the terms and conditions of NATO civilian employment in HQ SACT/SACT SEE is intended as a guide only, and does not guarantee any entitlement or right to an allowance. Each candidate selected for interview will be provided with a personalised guide as to the likely allowances and benefits, based upon their personal circumstances and subject to appropriate documentation.

## **Annex I - Education allowance - summary of main provisions**

### **1. Introduction**

a. The education allowance reimburses 70% of admissible educational expenditure up to a ceiling of 2.5 the annual amount of the Dependent Child Supplement (DCS) for the duty country of the staff member or for the country of which the staff member or his/her spouse is a national. *The place of education shall determine the calculation of the ceiling when it is located in one of the above countries; where the place of education is not located in one of these countries, the ceiling shall be defined with reference to the annual amount of the DCS in force in the duty country of the staff member.*

Please also see para 3.b. as regards scholarships, grants, etc.

b. Exceptionally, in cases of excessively high educational expenditure which is incurred for imperative educational reasons, reimbursement may be increased up to 90% of admissible educational expenses, and up to a ceiling of 6 times the annual amount of the dependent children allowance for the duty country of the staff member or for the country of which the staff member or his/her spouse is a national, see also para a. above

c. Increased reimbursement may also be made if fees for education are charged at the higher level to NATO staff, by virtue of their employment with the Organisation, than to residents of the country in question whatever the level of fees.

d. Intermediate ceilings apply to amounts claimed for board and lodgings - in other words, such expenditure is capped before the 70% or higher ceiling is applied.

### **2. Eligibility**

a. With certain specific exceptions, payment of education allowance is restricted to staff who are entitled to the expatriation allowance and who receive DCS allowance for the child in question. The child must be aged younger than 22 and, if above the age of 18, must be in full-time education. Please note that a child reaching the age of 22 during the academic year will remain dependent until the end of the academic year.

b. Entitlement to the education allowance begins when the child commences the mandatory primary school cycle in the country of education, and ends when the child ceases full-time studies, or at the end of the month in which payment of the DCS ceases, whichever is sooner.

c. Payment of the DCS, and hence, of the education allowance, may be extended beyond the age of 22 if the child has performed compulsory military service.

d. It is important to note that the children's expatriation allowance is discontinued when a claim for education allowance is submitted. It is therefore not worth claiming the education allowance unless the reimbursement will exceed the amount that would be received under children's expatriation allowance.

### **3. Items covered by the allowance**

a. Depending on the specific circumstances of their child's education, and subject to the provision of the necessary evidence of expenditure and the application of specific ceilings, staff may be able to claim for some or all of the following items:

- Registration fees
- Tuition fees
- Examination fees
- Exchange program fees
- Medical insurance if they are compulsory part of the academic fees
- Tuition fees for private lessons or special courses and activities under certain conditions
- Accommodation and/or meals
- Daily expenses on travel and other educational ancillary costs.

b. Any financial contribution (e.g. scholarships, grants, remuneration from an apprenticeship or vocational training) received from any source towards the child's education is deducted from the allowance received.

c. HQ SACT will, in principle, pay two round trips per year between the school or college and the duty location with the purpose to allow the child to travel from the place of study to join the family.

## Annex II - Removals – useful information

1. Transportation is to be by land or sea, as applicable, and by the most economic means.
2. Payment of expenses incurred in removal of household goods and personal effects will be made according to weight or volume within the following maximum limits (including packing):

Grade	With dependants		Without dependants	
	Kg	m3	Kg	m3
Unclassified	7,000	66	5,000	47
SSS categories	6,000	57	4,000	38

3. To these figures shall be added 500 kg or 5 m3 per child or recognized dependant residing in the household.
4. Members will be contacted by the NATO contract company NEDVAN to organize your removals. The Organization will pay, according to the provisions of paragraph 1 above, for two consignments of household effects to the place of employment and for two consignments from the place of employment provided that the total weight and volume transported do not exceed the maximum limits set out in paragraph 2 above. The entitlement to removal shall normally lapse if not claimed within three years of joining or within two years of leaving the Organization. Warehousing or other storage costs, other than those directly incidental to normal transportation expenses, shall not be admitted.
5. The Organization will not pay for the removal of motor vehicles, boats, trailers or animals.
6. Members of the staff shall not be entitled to the payment of their removal expenses if the expenses are reimbursable by a government or other authority.

## Annex III - Salary scales 2023 – Single Salary Spine

Basic Monthly Salary NATO Grade	US\$ Monthly	€uro Monthly
NG 24	17615.91	13364.65
NG 23	16106.93	12219.83
NG 22	13600.33	10318.15
NG 20	11714.64	8887.53
NG 17	10090.40	7655.27
NG 15	8187.65	6211.72
NG 11	6384.47	4843.70
NG 14	7486.30	5679.62
NG 12	6577.93	4990.47
NG 10	5779.78	4384.94
NG 8	5129.26	3891.41
NG 5	4643.45	3522.84
NG 2	4288.15	3253.29
NG 21	12435.32	9434.29
NG 19	10926.45	8289.56
NG 18	10396.114	7887.23
NG 16	8352.22	6336.57
NG 13	6777.25	5141.69

**NB:**

- ***The NATO salary is net of income tax. For US staff members a Tax Reimbursement Agreement is applicable.***
- ***It should be noted that the basic salaries are subject to various possible additions or deductions according to the situation of the staff member (family status, place of residence at time of appointment, etc.).***

(\*) NATO is associated for salaries and pensions with a group of other International Organizations called the Coordinated Organizations and comprising the Council of Europe, European Space Agency, OECD, Western European Union and the European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasts.