

WHAT ARE THE FSDs? WHY DO WE HAVE THEM?

If factors like standard of living, health care, education, security, quality and costs of goods and services at posts were identical to Canada, chances are the terms and conditions of your employment would be much the same as for other public servants who work in Canada. Unlike your counterparts, you have agreed to serve in foreign environments - dissimilar in varying degrees to Canada - where conditions are often determined by circumstances you and your employer are powerless to change. Because your employer would like you to stay rotational, he is aware that something more than just your pay and usual benefits must be provided. On the one hand, he undertakes to try and minimize or offset the deficiencies you may encounter away from Canada. On the other, he understands that you need various financial and other incentives to serve abroad because even under the most favourable conditions, an employee is bound to make special sacrifices and encounter personal disadvantages.

Your collective bargaining unit and management both recognize the importance that comparability* and incentive-inducement* have for maintaining a good working relationship and encouraging employees to serve abroad. However, they are equally aware that these principles are not without limitations. That is why analysis and evaluation of the intent, substance and application of the Directives is an actively ongoing process which culminates every three years in joint consultations with the Treasury Board* in the National Joint Council*. Your copy of the FSDs is actually the end-product of these consultations. The statements, procedures, provisions, rules and instructions which form the text are a consensus on the most equitable means of responding to many of the conditions that are unique to rotational employment.

Together with your collective agreement, the FSDs form a contract with your employer which sets the limits on your mutual expectations, responsibilities, obligations and rights. Like any other contract, differences of opinion as to interpretation or application will sometimes occur. If you don't understand something, ask about it. Most conflicts can and should be resolved by obtaining clarification from post administration or from the relevant section in headquarters. (See Appendix B). The Allowance Policy section (APRA) can be consulted in more complex cases. Of course, if you have difficulty with the application or interpretation of a Directive you have the right to present a grievance under the NJC redress procedure. Your collective bargaining unit or the Staff Relations section (APRS) will explain the correct procedure to be followed.

An explanation of terms denoted by an asterisk (*) will be found in the Glossary.