



OIL & NATURAL GAS COMMISSION (B.O.P.) KARMACHARI SANGHATANA

AFFILIATED TO - PETROLIUM & GAS WORKERS' FEDERATION OF INDIA

Reg. No. (By - II - 8268)

Tel. : 2659 9775

Flat No.102. 1st Floor, Acme Harmony-I, Poonam Nagar, Off JV Link Road, Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 093.

REF. : ONGC/KS/2.2.7/20

DATE : 10/03/2015

To,

The Hon. Minister of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprise,
Govt. of India,
New Delhi.

The Hon. Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas,
Govt. of India,
New Delhi.

Subject : Request to revise pending non revision of Hard Duty Allowance for miniscule 3000 offshore going employees in ONGC, Mumbai Region.

Respected

ONGC employees are paid **Hard Duty Allowance** for working at offshore installations at Offshore. It would be crucial to mention here that working at offshore is hazardous and also very difficult as persons have to stay away from families while working for prolonged working hours at a stretch (**12 hrs. work schedule-which gets extended frequent due to work exigencies**). The allowance at present limited to 33% of the pre-revised basic (instead of post - revised basic) as an incentive to lure the best of talent to work in adverse conditions and remote areas in the nation's economic interest, gets defeated.

During the last wage revision the amount was not revised and the same has stagnated for the past seventeen years. This has led to a piquant situation where the incentive is not adequate to lure talent to work at these installations given the fact that the new age economy with air conditioned offices offers better working conditions and comfort for the talented youth of the country. The oil installations at sea are operated by combination of rugged and technology driven equipment which require men of caliber to keep them in operation on a perpetual basis. The non-revision of the **Hard Duty Allowance** amount commensurate to the new basic levels has been a great disincentive, which needs to be urgently reviewed to ensure uninterrupted supply of talent to keep intact the nation's economic interests.



All other allowances being equal between office and site posted personnel, the non – revision of hard duty payable to offshore going personnel has led to deep resentment in the work force, which if unaddressed will lead to loss of talented manpower endangering the safety and maintainability of these cost intensive national assets, which will in turn cripple the economy in the long run.

At present DPE contends that the payment of 50% perks and 25% other allowances will continue to remain the upper limit, thereby placing an effectively a 23% cut in **Hard Duty Allowance** for offshore personnel. It has been insisting on maintaining the maximum allowances admissible. ONGC authorities' efforts to convince the concerned ministerial authorities have not been fruitful till date, thereby further deepening the resentment on resolving an issue that is so much close to the hearts of offshore personnel.

The maximum limits have been equally applied to land and offshore as well personnel working in all downstream companies which are located in better areas and people live with their families. Offshore going personnel working at sea (a miniscule community of 3000 personnel, including staff and officers) need to work out of civilisation leaving their families to fend for themselves in their absence. Living and working out of civilisation is itself a very harsh situation that adversely effects the psychology and behavior of humans and warrants their need to change their behavior patterns to suit their living situations that dramatically vary every fourteen days. Every rainy season, offshore personnel are exposed to weather vagaries like cyclones which leave a trail of destruction many a times, apart from exponentially increasing the hardships and associated hazards. Offshore personnel at Mumbai High have never been evacuated during any cyclone and even bore the brunt of the 1996 cyclone which ripped apart critical facilities and immobilized many installations for a fortnight. Offshore personnel put up a brave front and stayed on at offshore. Staying away from families further increases the stress associated with the long working hours at sea. It is precisely these types of hardships that are sought to be redressed by **Hard Duty Allowance** payment.

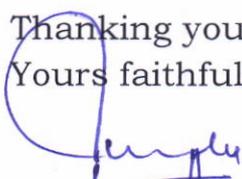
The hard duty allowance needs to be considered favourably and be enhanced as a one off exception to offshore personnel as they are uniquely and untiringly contributing in exploiting the natural resources of the economy to benefit the nation.

Two decades ago, the then **Hon'ble MOS P&NG Mr. Ajit Kumar Panja** had visited an offshore installation and saw for himself the rigorous of offshore duties, even Graduate Engineers working hand to hand with staff in operations and suo-moto accorded consent to exempt the entire Hard Duty payment from Income tax (which at that given point of time was a maximum of Rs 1100/- per month) in appreciation of the dedicated services being rendered to the nation in a place that was not only far away from human civilization but also away from their families. However, till date, neither has any authority reviewed nor considered the valid demand for an enhancement in the exemption levels of hard duty allowances from Rs. 1100 per month to match the current levels of payment. This denial of raising the exemption levels has further curtailed the effective hard duty allowance paid to employees by a further 30% (tax liability).

Summing up the denial of DPE to grant a one off exemption with the IT authorities refusal to raise the tax exemption levels of hard duty exempted from tax, the effective hard duty with the passage of time has been reduced to a miniscule amount that cannot be termed as an incentive to work in an offshore location.

DPE needs to re-consider its decision, as the **Hard Duty Allowance** was already and existing allowance, and hence needs to be paid on post revised basic instead of pre-revised basic w.e.f 1.1.2007.

Thanking you,
Yours faithfully,


(Pradeep Mayekar)
General Secretary



Cory to :

1. Secretary, HI&PE, Udyog Bhavan, New Delhi.
2. Secretary, P&NG, Shastri Bhavan, New delhi.
3. C & MD, ONGC, Jeevan Bharati-II, New Delhi.
4. Director – T&FS, ONGC, Jeevan Bharati-II, New Delhi.
5. Director – Finance, ONGC, Jeevan Bharati-II, New Delhi.
6. Director – Offshore, ONGC, Jeevan Bharati-II, New Delhi.
7. Director – HR, ONGC, Jeevan Bharati-II, New Delhi.
8. Director – Exploration, ONGC, Jeevan Bharati-II, New Delhi.

9. Director – Onshore, ONGC, Jeevan Bharati-II, New Delhi.
10. ED - Chief ER, ONGC, Green Building, Dehradun, Uttaranchal.
11. ED - CDS, ONGC, 11 High, Sion, Mumbai : 400 017.
12. GGM – HRO, ONGC, WOU, NSE, BKC, Bandra (E), Mum. : 400 051.
13. Asset Managers - MH-Asset/N&H/B&S ONGC, V.B, Mum : 400 051.
14. GGM - HDS, ONGC, WOU, 11 High, Sion, Mumbai : 400 017.
15. GM HR I/c IR, ONGC, WOU, NSE, BKC, Bandra (E), Mum. : 51.
16. DGM - I/c IR, ONGC, Green Building, Dehradun, Uttaranchal
17. CLC, Shramshakti Bhavan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi : 110001.