



COMMANDER'S CALL TOPICS

NOTE: This product has embedded hyperlinks and is best viewed online.

12—16 June 2017

Priority Topic

of the
Week

12 – 16 June

Blended Retirement System Comparison Calculator Released

The official DoD comparison calculator is the only calculator endorsed by DoD for supporting a service member's Blended Retirement System opt-in decision.

- The official Department of Defense (DOD) [Blended Retirement System \(BRS\) Comparison Calculator](#) has been released. This comprehensive tool, in combination with the mandatory BRS [Opt-In Course](#), will assist eligible Airmen and their families make an informed decision about whether or not to elect the new retirement system.

What is BRS?

- BRS is the new, Congressionally-mandated retirement system for service members entering the military on or after Jan. 1, 2018.
- All members serving as of Dec. 31, 2017, are grandfathered under the legacy retirement system. No one currently serving will be switched automatically to BRS.
- Though grandfathered under the legacy retirement system, active-duty Airmen with fewer than 12 years from their pay entry base date, and Reserve Airmen who have accrued fewer than 4,320 retirement points as of Dec. 31, 2017, will have the option to opt into BRS.
- All Airmen who enter the military on or after Jan. 1, 2018 will be automatically enrolled in BRS.
- *The decision to opt-In is personal and irrevocable. It is vital eligible Airmen fully understand BRS before electing to opt-In.*

BRS Comparison Calculator

- The calculator will provide an individualized, side-by-side comparison of the retirement systems.
- To receive the full benefit of the calculator, eligible Airmen are encouraged to take the mandatory BRS Opt-In Course before attempting to use the calculator.
- Airmen may adjust 12 inputs reflecting their personal situation and planning assumptions to see how changes to their career and savings will impact retirement benefits over the long term.
- The calculator provides personalized estimates based on an Airmen's individual information, career progression, pay and bonuses and retirement options.
- With a simple click, Airmen may change inputs and recalculate as many times as they wish.
- Although Airmen may use any calculator they feel aids their decision-making process, officials caution about using other online calculators because this is the only one validated to comply with all DOD and BRS policies and accuracy.
- The calculator was designed for use by the Total Force — active duty, National Guard and Reserve Airmen. Once an Airman selects their component, all of the follow-on questions will be pertinent to them.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

- The TSP is a defined contribution retirement savings and investment plan which offers savings and tax benefits similar to 401(k) plans in the private sector.
- TSP is an integral part of BRS and Airmen must contribute to receive government matching funds.
- Currently, Airmen may contribute to TSP; however, it is not by law, part of their retirement.
- The default TSP rate of comparison in the BRS calculator is set to 7 percent and is based off the TSP "C" Fund rate. The 10-year average of the TSP "C" Fund as of December 2016 was 7.36 percent. Likewise, the "C" Fund is designed to mirror the portfolio, risk and return of the Standard and Poor 500 which is the standard by which most investment funds are compared.
- Airmen have access to the historical TSP returns in the BRS calculator and may change their default rate to meet their risk tolerance and predicted future rate of return.

SEE PAGE 2 for more BRS information.

<p style="text-align: center;">Blended Retirement System Comparison Calculator Released (con't)</p>	<p><u>Opt-In Decision</u> The BRS opt-In/election window is open Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2018. The opt-In decision is a personal one, made only by the Airman. BEFORE making the decision to opt-In, eligible Airmen must educate themselves, run the BRS retirement calculator with a variety of scenarios, and discuss retirement options with those who will be impacted by the decision. Airmen may get free, personal support from an accredited personal financial counselor or manager through their installation's Military and Family Support Center. REMEMBER: The decision to opt-In is personal and irrevocable. It is vital eligible Airmen fully understand the BRS before electing to opt-In. To access the BRS Comparison Calculator, see DOD Military Compensation. For more BRS information, see AFPC.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Personnel Topics of Interest</p>	<p>Significant changes to Aviation Bonus Program (AFPC) International Affairs added to Voluntary Limited Period of Active Duty program (AFPC) Applications/physicals for enlisted RPA pilot selection board due NLT Nov. 15 (AFPC) Join Spouse assignment consideration keeps mil-to-mil couples together (AFPC) 2017 Sijan leadership award nominations due NLT Aug. 31 (AFPC)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">June and July Observances</p>	<p>LGBT Pride Month (SAF/PA) Independence Day (SAF/PA) (The SAF/PA site requires a CAC to access.)</p>
<p>Commander's Call Topic Archive: http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/CommandersCallTopics.aspx Commander's Call Topics is published weekly by SAF/PA to ensure leaders at all levels remain current on issues concerning Airmen and families. Requests for information to be included in future editions should be sent to SAF/PAX via email. Submissions should include: 1) 1-2 sentence synopsis of the issue 2) hyperlink to further details 3) a POC name and contact information.</p> <p>*Only submissions that pertain to the majority of Airmen or specifically to command leadership teams will be considered. Local or limited-interest items will not be included.</p>	