

aff

army families federation





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Here to help you with all your rebasing questions.

ARE YOU READY FOR REBASING?

The plan for all major units to rebase from Germany by September 2019 has been in place for a few years now, and the Army teams, both in Germany and the UK, have been working hard to make the process as smooth as possible for soldiers and their families. However, we recognise that the prospect of moving could still be intimidating, particularly if you have not lived in the UK for a number of years – or perhaps not lived there at all.

Information is readily available from HIVE, command and the unit you're going to, but this AFF booklet is designed to give you a few ideas about the specifics, like how to get a school place for your children, how to access health and dental care and what sort of additional costs you might have to budget for when back in the UK.

We recently had a very successful roadshow in Germany, which helped us discover more about the specific questions you have regarding rebasing - you'll find a section dedicated to those questions, and their answers, at the back of this booklet.

You'll still need to look out for the information and guidance provided by HQ BFG and your soldier's unit, but the advice contained in this document will give you a good starting point for the areas that will be very different in the UK compared to Germany, and the early steps that you can take to make the whole rebasing experience as simple as possible.

We have AFF team members all over the UK, as well as in Germany. We also have specialists in areas like education, health and additional needs, Foreign & Commonwealth families, employment and money matters.

So, we can provide you with advice and support on many of the questions that you may have about life as an Army family in the UK.

Moving to Cyprus?

We can also help if you are moving to another overseas location. We have AFF team members across the world, wherever there are significant numbers of Army families. If you are heading to Cyprus, contact our Regional Manager Cyprus rmcyprus@aff.org.uk or look at our Cyprus page on the AFF website.

aff.org.uk



Army Families Federation (AFF)
Army&You Magazine



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REBASING

Current information from command tells us:

Most elements of 35 Engineer Regt will be moving in summer 2018.

All other units in British Forces Germany (BFG) will move during 2019, with the majority of moves happening between June and September 2019.

You may have medical, welfare or educational reasons for wanting to move early; you should talk to your welfare team about this as soon as possible. If you would like to find out more about Early Mover Status (EMS), there is more information in the education section of this booklet and in JSP 752 chapter 7.

Once you know your destination, pick up a location overview for your new area from the HIVE. These booklets provide useful contact numbers as well as information about:

- Service Family Accommodation (SFA) at your new location
- Medical and dental services
- Schools and other education and childcare facilities
- Libraries, community centres, leisure & entertainment facilities

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EDUCATION

Service families can get support and guidance on all aspects of a child's education from the Children's Education and Advisory Service (CEAS) via their helpline +44 (0)1980 618244, or email DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.uk.

Whether you are moving to the UK or another overseas posting, they will be able to help.

The Schools Admissions Code 2014, and School Admissions Appeals Code 2012, are important documents and are available on the gov.uk website.

Families with children due to start their first year of primary or secondary school in September 2018 or 2019 can request **early allocation** of SFA in line with the admissions deadlines.

Mid-January – FS2 or Reception year of primary school (4-5 year olds)

End October – Year 7 – First year of secondary school (11-12 year olds)

In **Scotland**, the admissions deadline for Primary 1 is in November each year for starting school the following August. If you are moving to Scotland, there is a DCYP booklet available; contact them on the number above or look at the education section of our website.

Moving to **Wales**? The Welsh Government has produced a very helpful guide: 'Supporting Service Children in Education in Wales - SSCE Cymru -

Guidance for Schools and Parents'. To find out more, visit www.sscecymru.co.uk

Good news - If you do not have an address for your SFA by the admission deadline, you can still apply through the Local Authority (LA) using the unit address.

Early Mover Status (EMS) is a facility for families who wish to move up to 12 months early. It's very useful if, for example, you want your child to start in their new school for the beginning of the exam course in Year 10, or you are joining a unit that is about to move again as part of rebasing, and want to avoid two moves in quick succession.

It is very important that if you claim **Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA)** for any of your children, you remain within the eligibility rules for accompanied service, so check this out first before making any plans.

There is admissions and appeals information on the education pages of our website, but useful things to know include:

- Make copies of everything you send to the LA or admissions authority and ask them for notification by email as well as by post, as things can go astray between moves.
- LAs usually co-ordinate admissions for all Reception year, Year 3 for junior schools and Year 7 children, but otherwise, they usually only allocate places for maintained schools. Other



schools, such as academies and faith schools, have their own admissions authorities. Contact these schools directly.

- Having applied, you will receive a place allocation letter. This should give details of the place you have been allocated, your right to appeal and the date by which to let them know that you wish to do this. You must stick to this timeline if you wish to appeal.
- If you do want to appeal, include things like background and where you have moved from, reason for the appeal, the impact on your child by going to your choice of school and a summary. It is important to explain why this school is best for your child rather than why the allocated school is not.

School transport

With an increasing demand on school places, you may find that your child's school place may not be in the nearest school.

Below is an outline of the free home-to-school transport entitlement from the Department for Education (DfE) that covers England and Wales. Scotland's regulations are similar, and in Northern Ireland (NI), the ages are divided at the end of primary school.

- The general walking distance measurement is two miles for children aged under eight, and three miles for children aged eight and over (apart from NI).

- This distance is not the shortest distance travelled by road but the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety and may include footpaths and bridleways; so the LA's admissions team and their school transport team may quote different distances!
- Children should be able to reach school able to benefit from the school day without strains or stresses from the journey and in reasonable safety and comfort.
- If you chose the nearest school and you have been allocated a school further away, you may be eligible for free transport for your child.
- Check your LA website for more details and if you have an issue with the LA's decision, you should contact the LA school transport team and they will assess each case individually.

Education & Childcare Specialist
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HOUSING

When you move back to the UK, you will normally expect to see an increase in the charges that you will pay for Service Family Accommodation (SFA).

SFA charges in overseas locations are lower than for similar properties in the UK, and in BFG, can often be much lower. Bear in mind that UK SFA will normally be smaller with no cellar or useable attic space for storage.

Overseas postings, including BFG, are also exempt from Contribution in Lieu of Council Tax (CILOCT), so you will need to factor this charge into your monthly outgoings back in the UK as well.

As an example, this table compares the charges for highest grade houses - Band A (UK) and Grade 2 (BFG) – plus the CILOCT charge in UK.

Type	2017/18 CAAS Band A UK Per day	2017/18 BFG Equivalent (Grade 2) Per day	CILOCT (current rates) Per day
I	25.94	18.31	6.37
II	23.39	16.51	6.11
III	20.63	14.60	5.81
IV	15.57	11.28	4.91
V	12.24	9.30	4.42
D	11.74	8.41	4.02
C	9.94	7.38	3.82
B	8.53	6.53	3.49
A	6.40	4.99	2.89

Accommodation charges in the UK are now calculated using the Combined Accommodation Assessment Score (CAAS). There are nine bands for charging and all SFA in the UK have been placed in one of these bands BUT there is a transition process for this.

Not all SFA have reached their final band, so when you are allocated your SFA, you should be told the final band and the current transition band. However, be aware that if improvements are carried out during the void period prior to you moving in (e.g. new kitchen, bathroom, boiler etc.), then the band will go straight to the final band.

It might be helpful, for budgeting, to assume that you will automatically have to pay the final band for your SFA – you may then be pleasantly surprised when you receive your banding letter after you have moved in.

CAAS doesn't use the same criteria as the old 4 Tier Grading so, for example, the condition of paintwork or carpets is no longer considered. Bear in mind that, currently, nothing can fail on age alone, for example, your kitchen would need to be over 20 years old AND in need of major repair or replacement in order to fail. All the guidance is in JSP 464, but it is complex, so please do contact the AFF Housing Specialist if you have any questions.

Entitlement

If you have children who are over 18 and under 23 and in full time education, they will be counted as part of your entitlement. If you have a child over 18 and not in full time education they will no longer count towards your SFA allocation entitlement. Policy says that, where possible, you should be offered the same type of SFA as you are currently in, however, this is dependent on availability, and during unit moves this may not be possible. Let welfare know so that this can be considered in the allocation process.

Move-in

There are details of the march-in process in the UK under CarillionAmey (CA) on the CA website. They tell you what you should expect your Accommodation Officer (AO) to do at the move-in appointment and what your responsibilities are.

You must go round the house and look at everything carefully – turn on the heating and cooker, check the radiators are heating up, make sure the SFA is clean, check in cupboards, make sure all taps turn on and off etc. If there are any issues, ensure that the AO has noted them on the move-in paperwork (double check they are **all** listed before you sign) and CA then have 24 hours to rectify the issues.

- Unit moves tend to be very busy, so make sure you turn up on time to your appointment and, if you can, leave the children with a friend until the AO has left, so that you can concentrate on the SFA.

Other costs in the UK

In BFG, payment for **fuel and light** is deducted on a monthly basis from your soldier's wage. In the UK, you will have a choice of energy provider, but will pay the provider directly. Shop around and look at comparison websites to get the best deal.

It is hugely important that you have **contents insurance for your belongings**, but you should also take out **liability insurance** in case of a fire/flood, which is deemed to be your fault (DIO currently recommends £20,000 coverage). Most Forces specific insurers will provide this – for more details, visit the SIIAP home page www.siiap.org/home.

Remember that you may not be able to transfer your existing insurance to the UK, so check if this is possible and make sure that you have insurance in place for your return so that you are not left with a gap in coverage. It is advisable to take out separate **removals insurance** so that your belongings are adequately covered during the move.

Repairs

CarillionAmey (CA) are the contracted repairs and maintenance providers for all UK SFA and there are slightly different time scales for response times etc. than in BFG – all information can be found on the CA website www.carillionamey.org.uk.

If you have any concerns over the level of service, there is a complaints process, which should be followed at all times. DIO also offers a compensation scheme of high street vouchers for missed appointments and failed move-ins – for details, see the housing pages on the AFF website. You have to apply within 14 days of the missed appointment or move-in.



MONEY MATTERS

There are quite a lot of things to think about concerning your family finances when moving back to the UK. Here are some of the key things to bear in mind:

- Local Overseas Allowance (LOA) is not part of your soldier's salary and will cease on posting back to UK.
- If you have children with you in BFG, you'll receive Kindergeld from the German 'Familienkasse' in addition to UK child benefit. When you leave BFG, your Kindergeld payments will cease.
- Disturbance Expense is paid when you move, but remember that, if you are returning to the UK, you will receive the standard (and not enhanced) rate. As of 1st April 2017, that would be £1,041.
- You should factor in the cost of running a car in the UK, as fuel will be much more expensive. Insurance may also be more expensive, and car tax rules changed in April 2017. It is advisable to check the gov.uk website to find out how you may be affected. One change is that all vehicles costing £40,000 (OTR) or more will be liable to pay a £310 annual supplement for the first five years on top of the Standard Rate tax.
- In BFG you will not have paid for a TV license, but in the UK you will need this.

National Insurance (NI)

If you are a spouse who has accompanied their soldier overseas, you should check your NI record on the gov.uk website, as you may be entitled to NI credits for your period overseas.

Class 1 NI credits are to help people posted overseas after April 2010. The class 1 credits help towards your State Pension, bereavement benefits and some other benefits such as Jobseeker's Allowance. Armed Forces spouses who are on an accompanied assignment outside the UK can apply for NI credits when they are with their spouse or partner on such an assignment. NI credits should be claimed no more than four months before the confirmed end date of your accompanied assignment outside the UK and no later than the end of the tax year after the end of the assignment. You will need to use the MOD CA1 form which should be validated by the UWO. You can obtain this form from your UWO, HIVE or download it via our website.

Class 3 NI credits have recently been introduced and are to help people posted overseas prior to 2010. If you have already claimed Class 1 credits there is no need to claim again. Class 3 credits count towards your State Pension and bereavement benefits only and are for Armed Forces spouses posted overseas between 6 April 1975 – 6 April 2010. You can apply for the new Class 3 NI credits anytime from 6 April 2016.

Sources of advice

A series of 'top tips' offering Service personnel practical advice on financial issues has been produced by the Government and representative bodies from the financial sector. Find out more on the gov.uk website under 'financial top tips for Service personnel'.

The Defence Discount Service is the only official MOD discount service for the Armed Forces, veterans and Defence community. It provides discounts both online and on the high street. The discount card, which can be used in stores, restaurants and venues, is available to help you obtain Armed Forces discounts.

You can use the following websites to help you calculate whether you are claiming the benefits you are entitled to: www.entitledto.co.uk www.turn2us.org.uk

The Money Advice Service is a free and impartial advice service set up by the Government, you will find advice about work and benefits as well as great tools to help with budgeting and saving www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk

The Royal British Legion's Money Force website also provides you with ways of managing your money www.moneyforce.org.uk.

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

There are opportunities in BFG to get qualifications and experience:

- The Army Education Centre in Paderborn (41AEC) runs a wide range of courses, both vocational and non-vocational, for military personnel and their families. Full details of current courses and contact details for the AEC can be found on BFGnet.de.
- Being overseas doesn't have to be a barrier to studying, and for British citizens, Student Finance funding is still available to you, but you must use your BFPO address to apply.
- Volunteer experience can impress prospective employers, so record your activities.

Having a good CV is essential, no matter what kind of employment you are seeking. If you are an Army spouse who may have a chequered career history or postings-induced career breaks, it's even more important that your CV makes you stand out from the crowd. AFF's website has links to a range of organisations that are available to help you.

When you return to the UK from BFG, you may be asked by prospective employers to provide a '**Good Conduct Certificate**' for the period covering your stay in Germany. These are provided by the Service Police Crime Bureau (SPCB) in UK. Their contact details can be found in the employment section of BFGnet.de or contact etam@aff.org for further details. If you do not get a Good Conduct Certificate before returning to the UK, you may delay the chances of getting a job for up to 40 working days.

If you are returning to the UK and seeking employment, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has agreed that spouses and children (up to 21 years) are exempt from the three-month residence rule, which means you can apply for Jobseekers allowance straight away.

If you are looking at restarting your career, or going out to work for the first time, then the RBLI LifeWorks employability workshops could be perfect for you. The programme, delivered in partnership with the MOD, is a vocational assessment and employability course. www.wearelifeworks.org.uk

If you cannot find a course in your area, it may also be possible to receive support on a 1-1 basis over the telephone.

Recruit for Spouses is an independent organisation designed specifically to recruit the spouses of Service men and women. Recruit for spouses can help with CV writing, interview techniques and they can introduce you to businesses who support the military community. To find out more, visit www.recruitforspouses.co.uk.

The University of Wolverhampton business start-up programme, Supporting the Unsung Hero (www.wlv.ac.uk) has been developed specifically for Service dependants offering support to start and maintain a business. The 10-month programme aims to equip participants with transferable skills and the ability to start a business regardless of location, whether you want to go it alone, or start a business with other people.



**Employment, Training,
Money & Allowances Specialist**
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HEALTHCARE & ADDITIONAL NEEDS

During your posting in BFG, primary healthcare is provided by the Medical Centres in your station area. When you return to the UK, your medical needs are met by the NHS. Not all garrison medical and dental services take families, and medical services are not uniform across the UK. You may well need to register with a local GP and it is very likely that you will need to register your family with either an NHS or private dentist.

If you are receiving ongoing treatment and have any concerns about the continuity of this when you rebase, contact AFF's Health & Additional Needs Specialist. Waiting lists in BFG do not equate to the UK system, and there are differences between the NHS systems in England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland.

If you have a child with additional needs, you should be aware that MOD schools overseas follow the English National Curriculum and the Special Educational Needs (SEND) Code of Practice where possible; however, the MOD does not undertake statutory assessments of children's SEND or produce Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). Please contact us at additionalneeds@aff.org.uk if you have any additional needs related questions.

You and your family are moving

You as Service personnel will be provided with healthcare at your new military Medical Centre **BUT** your family may not...

Does any member of your family have a specific health need?
On medication?
On a waiting list?

YES

Discuss these health issues directly with your Medical Officer and ask for a copy of their medical records before moving/posting

NO

Does the military Medical Centre at your new location offer a families practice?

YES

NO

YOU MUST
Register with a Local GP and dentist informing them of any specific health issues that your family may have

SCOTLAND
via
NHS Scotland
www.nhs24.com/findlocal

NORTHERN IRELAND
via
Northern Ireland - Health & Social Care
www.nidirect.gov.uk/your-local-doctor-gp

WALES
via
NHS Direct Wales
www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/localservices

ENGLAND
via
NHS Choices
www.nhs.uk/Service-Search

FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH

To enter the UK as a Commonwealth spouse **you will need a valid UK visa**. There is no requirement to have any particular length of time left on the visa, but if it is due to expire shortly after you arrive in the UK, then you should speak to your unit about renewing it in Germany instead.

If you do need to renew your visa before you travel, then make sure you leave plenty of time to do this - applications can take up to three months to be processed. Check on the AFF F&C webpages to see what kind of visa you are eligible for, and what requirements you need to meet.

If you don't have a valid UK visa, **speak to your unit as soon as possible**. Units will refund visa renewals, but will not refund the cost of a visa if it has expired or if you have never had one.

You may be eligible to apply for **citizenship** prior to moving - this is usually possible if your soldier is British and you have taken the English language and Life in the UK tests. However, this application can take up to six months to process, and you will then need to attend a ceremony and apply for a British passport, so it is not recommended that you go down this route unless you have plenty of time. You will also need to apply for citizenship for any children born in Germany as soon as possible after birth.

European Economic Area spouses

If you are an EEA spouse, you are able to enter the UK without requiring a UK visa until **29 March 2019**. After this date you will need to apply for a visa within UK immigration rules - what you are eligible for will

depend on how long you have been in the UK. What we don't know yet is whether spouses who have been on accompanied overseas assignments (in Germany and elsewhere) will be able to count their time out of the UK as residence.

The current proposals for Brexit are (in very simple terms):

- Anyone who has already been living in the UK for five years by the cut-off date will be eligible to apply for indefinite leave.
- Those who entered the UK prior to the cut-off date will be able to apply for limited leave until they have been in the UK for five years.
- Those who enter the UK after the cut-off date will have to apply under UK immigration rules. This is likely to be the Armed Forces rules, which are already in place for all other Foreign & Commonwealth soldiers.

Keep up-to-date with the latest information about Brexit by visiting the AFF F&C webpages.

Further information about the process can be found in the winter 17 edition of Army&You magazine and on the AFF website, as well as on the UK Visas and Immigration page of the www.gov.uk website.

BR



EXIT

GERMANY ROADSHOW

Q&As

As mentioned at the beginning of this booklet, we recently held a roadshow in Paderborn and made a note of any questions raised. These questions are answered in this section.

Q: I am currently in a federal quarter. No families will be moving into my quarter when I leave in summer 2019 due to drawdown. Will the march-out standards still be the same?

A: A single standard for theatre closure will be agreed. This process will involve consultation with the Operational Chain of Command. Once agreed, this will be communicated centrally.

It should be noted that pet cleaning and a minimum cleaning requirement will be needed.

Q: What is being done to make sure that the infrastructure at the rebasing locations is on track to receive an influx of Service Personnel (SP) and their families in 2019?

A: Over £1bn is being invested in infrastructure in and around the Salisbury Plain area. This will boost the local economy and provide about 2,500 bed spaces for single soldiers, just over 1,300 new homes for Service families and the construction, conversion or refurbishment of nearly 250 other buildings such as offices, garages, workshops and mess facilities.

Works within bases is underway, with the main construction programme running through to 2020. For the Service family homes, work commenced in 2017.

The Army Basing Team has been liaising with Wiltshire Council since 2012 to prepare and plan for the extra troops and their families. The infrastructure will be built in time for 2019. It's a huge undertaking, but the plans are progressing well. The Army Basing Team are working closely with Wiltshire Council, other government departments, local service providers, industry and NHS England to ensure critical infrastructure including new Service family homes and single living accommodation, education and health provision is in place in time for the moves.

Q: Is there a plan in place to improve the waiting times at the VLO on Normandy Barracks or explore other options to improve the system? As drawdown happens it is surely just going to get busier.

A: The VLO on Normandy Barracks has, since the start of 2017, experienced a high turnover of staff. The delay in recruiting and training new staff has had a knock on effect to waiting times; this recruitment is now nearly complete. Planning is underway for the drawdown of BFG and the 'VLO service to the end' is included in that planning.

Q: Will BFG be employing more DELS to ensure that Station facilities are fully staffed to the end?

A: Locally Engaged Civilian (LEC) posts that arise are generally advertised initially as dependant opportunities (unless specialist skills are required e.g. German language). Only if they are not filled by dependants, will they then be re-categorised as Directly Employed Labour (DEL). However, as we progress towards final drawdown, it is anticipated that more military appointees may choose to serve in Germany on an unaccompanied basis; if this proves to be the case, then there will be fewer dependants available to fill LEC posts. In mitigation of this risk, some business units may in future look at the relative split of dependant and DEL posts in order to ensure continuity of service.

Q: When Paderborn Labour Support Unit (LSU) no longer exists, how do I get a reference for future employment?

A: Under current planning assumptions there will be a small, residual LSU remaining in Germany. This LSU will remain the first point of contact for any LEC-related employment queries after Paderborn LSU has closed.

Q: Why does a soldier pay more than an officer under the Married Quarter Cleaning Scheme (MQCS) for the same size quarter?

A: The charges are contractually set by DIO and the MQCS provider. DIO has reviewed the contract so that like-for-like soldier and officer's SFA attract the same charges for cleaning; these new charges came into effect in January 2018.

GERMANY ROADSHOW

Q&As

Q: Are there any plans to reduce the opening hours at any of the Med Centres in BFG? I have heard that Gutersloh may be reducing their hours and some clinics being held in Bielefeld.

A: Whilst some minor changes to opening hours have been introduced in Gutersloh, there are currently no plans to reduce the current provision. There are no changes anticipated for 2018 and as draw down plans develop, any proposed alterations to the current service will be disseminated widely.

Q: I recently contacted the Home Office for some immigration advice. They wouldn't speak to me until I had entered my card details to pay for the call. Would it be possible to have a qualified person available in BFG to give immigration advice? UWOs can deal with the process but are not approved to give advice.

A: HQ BFG does have a point of contact for all immigration matters, Rachel Wilson (BFG-HQ-G1-OpsPers-CSBSO2@mod.uk). Rachel is also linked to the UWO teams, who should be your first point of contact to assist with your queries.

Q: Are BFBS staying in Germany until the end?

A: On current scheduling, BFBS are planning to deliver services in line with the drawdown of BFG.

Q: Students at Kings who hold a full driving license are entitled to buy tax free cars, but pupils who are at boarding school cannot. Why is this?

A: Standing Orders BFG 3213, PARA 202 states that an 'Entitled Person' has to have a reasonable expectation to be present in Germany for a minimum of 183 days within the qualifying year. It is reasonable to assume that any dependent child over the age of 18 who is attending a boarding school located outside of Germany is not going to meet this requirement.

Q: What support is being offered to soldiers with German families who are choosing to keep their permanent residence in Germany but remain serving with the Army?

A: We are currently engaging with Army HQ to state the case to review the allowances for those

soldiers wishing to keep their residence and families in Germany once they are rebased to the UK.

Q: How can the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) support my family and do they have the necessary resources?

A: CEAS provides advice and assistance on all school place issues faced by Service families. It is the start-point for advice on boarding school and allocates Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) casework numbers as well as boarding information packs. CEAS also assists Service families to obtain school places within local authority areas when families move on assignment.

Q: What is the Service Pupil Premium and how do I ensure my child's school receives it?

A: The Service Pupil Premium was introduced by the Department for Education in 2011. It is aimed at providing pastoral support to Service children in recognition of the specific challenges they face.

Every year in January, a school will take a census of how many Service pupils they have on roll, and £300 (at the time of writing) per pupil will be allocated. It is entirely a decision for the school with regards to how the money is spent. It isn't intended to benefit individual children or provide learning support, but is instead a resource to support our children in challenging times. The funding is typically used for such things as nurture or INtouch (formerly e-bluey) clubs for example. The link below provides further information in relation to the Service Pupil Premium. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium/service-pupil-premium-what-you-need-to-know

Q: What options are available with regard to schooling in general and especially for children entering/in critical stages of their education?

A: All BFG schools will remain open and retain their current provision until summer 2019; King's School is expecting to deliver a full curriculum at GCSE and A Level at this time.

Parents who are returning to UK and have children starting Years 10 and 12 in September 2018 should consider carefully the choices open to them as it

will be extremely difficult to 'match up courses' with schools in the UK. Your child may be required to repeat some coursework, and possibly drop some subjects to give them the best opportunity to do well if they transfer to a UK school for Years 11 or 13.

Other options that you might wish to consider are boarding or using the Early Mover Scheme. For more information about boarding, you should contact CEAS (DCYP-CEAS-ENQUIRIES@mod.uk).

The Early Mover Scheme allows families that will be part of a 2019 unit move to the UK to leave BFG in the summer of 2018 to start a critical stage of education; the serving spouse would remain with the unit and re-join their family in the UK in summer 2019. For details of the Early Mover Scheme, you should contact your Unit Welfare Officer.

Q: With our unit (1 PWRR) now moving to Cyprus and not Bulford as per the rebasing announcement in 2013, is there the option to have a funded family move back to the UK if a family decide married unaccompanied is the best option for them?

A: There is not a definitive yes or no answer as individual circumstances may affect the outcome to each case. Normally, entitled Service Personnel (SP) will receive publicly funded removals and/or storage upon permanent assignment to a new duty station, or on an authorised mid-assignment move. In this case, the publically funded move would be from Germany to Cyprus. In order for a family to receive a funded move to the UK where the SP has an assignment to the UK, one of the following circumstances would have to apply:

- The SP being entitled to a move using the Over 37 provision. The SP would have to be aged 37 or over, be serving at, or about to serve at, a duty station more than 50 miles from the property that qualifies them as a homeowner/householder and not already received the benefits of the Final Tour of Duty (FTOD) package. SP may take this option at, or within the 6 months after, one of the following events:
 - A change of PStat Cat to 1 or 2
 - A permanent assignment or permanent change of location due to unit move
 - On reaching the age of 37 during a tour of duty

- The SP could relocate their family to the UK in advance of the SP under the Early Mover Scheme (EMS) rules if the SP is in receipt of a subsequent assignment order to a UK unit from Cyprus after the unit move has taken place. EMS does not apply if the SP and family do not have any intention to serve accompanied at the new duty station (i.e. Cyprus)
- Under the FTOD package, an SP could apply to have their family moved to the UK in advance of the SP's impending termination of service
- Where moves are not covered above, casework must be submitted to PACCC for authorisation of Relocation allowances and DE as appropriate

As stated, each case will be different and so SP must obtain advice from their own Admin Office at the earliest opportunity to discuss their own specific circumstances. If you require any further information, please contact G1 Branch HQ BFG. All enquiries should be made to the group mailbox: BFG-HQ-G1-OpsPers-0GpMailbox@mod.uk

Q: Is WhatsApp an approved way of communication? It is constant throughout evenings and weekends, which means it's very hard to enjoy family time.

A: WhatsApp is not a recognised platform for OFFICIAL communications.

WhatsApp is a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) platform, which offers end-to-end encryption, it is recommended for private communications because it is relatively safe compared to other platforms and other methods of communicating, but should not be used for official business.

Q: I live in Bad Lippspringe and I have noticed a large number of properties being handed back or being left empty. What is the likelihood that families in SSFA (private landlord owned properties) where I live, and elsewhere, will be moved out of their accommodation prior to the moves back to UK?

A: The current use of leased SFA, known as substitute SFA (SSFA), has a lease agreement that enables the owner/landlord to view or request the property back at any stage during the lease agreement. Currently, in Bad Lippspringe, owners

GERMANY ROADSHOW

Q&As

are beginning to request their properties back for either personal or commercial use.

Prior to any announcement or decision to manage move a family, every avenue will have been investigated to reduce or negate mid-tour moves. Families with less than six months in theatre will not be subject to managed moves, unless their property is uneconomical to repair (completely failed in some aspect of Health and Safety) or if welfare reasons apply.

Q: What is the official policy that landlords should adhere to if they wish to bring potential buyers to view my house?

A: All landlord requests for viewings are notified to DIO. Within the lease agreement and 'licence to occupy', occupants are required to provide access to their property for statutory checks, repairs and or viewings. All viewings and visits from external agencies will be pre-arranged by the housing team in advance, at an agreed time suitable to all. Landlord agreed viewings will have a Housing Estate Manager (HEM) present to ensure visitors are managed within the agreed time and quantity. The HEM is there to ensure discussions don't break out within the property and questions are neither posed nor answered by the visitor to the occupant.

All non-organised/cold callers are to be refused access; the attempt to gain access without a pre-arranged agreed visit/viewing is to be reported to the Housing Department or HEM. If they refuse to leave the property, or are within the boundaries of the property, then the civil police and RMP are to be called.

Q: On what basis is housing allocated?

A: Other Rank (OR) soldiers are allocated housing by family size, while for officers this is done by rank; UKBC and UKBT's/contractors are allocated by family size. It should be noted that all allocations are tempered by availability of type in the location of preference (three areas supplied on 1132). If no houses/flats to entitlement are available in the preferred areas, the whole of BFG is reviewed for availability. If no houses/flats to entitlement exist within BFG, then Housing will allocate one grade above entitlement, to ensure an occupant is not

disadvantaged due to non-availability - they will pay for their actual entitlement type and not the allocated type.

Federal First strategy exists within allocations to ensure as many of the federally provided core stock are utilised, this enables substitute SFA to be released early or when requested. By utilising

federal stock, it negates mid-tour managed moves and the requirement for viewings.

It should be noted that, within the regulations, there is no difference between a flat and a house – all are identified as dwelling units and by their actual type, which is size and numbers of bedrooms.



army families federation

Army Families Federation is a charitable incorporated organisation registered in England and Wales with registered charity number 1176393 and a charity registered in Scotland, having its principal office at IDL 414, Floor 1, Zone 6, Ramillies Building, Marlborough Lines, Monxton Road, Andover SP11 8HJ

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