



Defence  
Infrastructure  
Organisation

#### Gas safety inspections

DIO has a statutory legal requirement to carry out gas safety inspections in SFA properties - but it's in the interest of your own family's safety to allow access to your home to ensure these vital checks can take place.

Failure to allow access for the inspections is a serious breach of your licence to occupy so if you fail to permit access when an appointment has been arranged, a revised Yellow safety warning will now be issued. If you fail to permit access at the next appointment a revised Red safety warning will be issued, at which point DIO may contact your Chain of Command in an effort to gain access.

To ensure the safety of your family and neighbours, please do not ignore these safety warnings and let the engineers do this vital job.

#### HASC Christmas closure times

The Housing Allocations Service Centre (HASC) will close its telephone lines at 12:00 hrs on Thursday 19 December and reopen at 08:30 hrs on 6 January 2014. In addition, Move In and Move Out appointments will not be available during this period.

Whilst DIO Ops Accn staff will not be taking calls or appointments during this period, some staff will remain in the HASC and some local Housing staff will continue undertaking other housing duties. As usual, the repair and maintenance helpdesks will remain open for the duration of this period.

DIO Ops Accn communications

# Home front

October / November 2013

Information for Service families from DIO Operations Accommodation



## New play park opens at Tidworth

DIO has worked with MODern Housing Solutions (MHS) to deliver a fantastic new play park facility in Tidworth which can be enjoyed by children of all ages. It is the latest of three such facilities installed in the Tidworth and Bulford area as part of DIO's two year £650,000 play park spend.

Garrison Commander, Col James Denny MBE who officially opened the park, said: "The Tidworth play park is a fantastic facility for the young people of Tidworth. It is already proving to be incredibly popular. On behalf of the families I would like to thank the staff of DIO and MHS for providing the play park"

Brigadier Martin Boswell, Head DIO Operations Accommodation, said: "I am delighted that parents and children in Tidworth will be able to enjoy this fabulous new facility. We consulted the Garrison and it was decided that there was a real need for a central park that would give the military community a real focal point for parents and children of all age groups."

## New process for taking charges for SFA/SSFA damages and deficiencies direct from pay

When Service personnel move out of UK Service Family Accommodation (SFA) or Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA), charges may be payable for damages or deficiencies that are not classed as fair wear and tear, or because customers have failed to prepare the property to the correct standard, for example cleanliness. Charges are necessary as every instance of damage or failure to prepare a property to the correct standard means that the MOD incurs costs to prepare the property to a suitable standard for the next Service family.

As some customers fail to pay these charges within an acceptable period, a process for taking charges for damages and deficiencies direct from pay was introduced on 1 October 2013, which will apply to serving personnel only. This change, which will be managed by DIO staff, will make the process more efficient, and aims to reduce the amount of money owed to the MOD by individuals. It is important to note that there is a dispute resolution process, and, in line with other deductions from pay, a payment plan may be required if these charges and other deductions exceed a set percentage of pay.

Service personnel and their families can often take steps to avoid charges in the first place. As well as treating your Service property with respect and avoiding damage, families moving out of SFA/SSFA should ensure that they prepare their home to the required Move Out standard – including cleanliness, reporting or repairing minor damage where appropriate and removing rubbish/personal possessions. A range of guidance and information is available on the SFA website at [www.gov.uk/defence-infrastructure-organisation-service-family-accommodation#moving-out](http://www.gov.uk/defence-infrastructure-organisation-service-family-accommodation#moving-out) which includes information about the Pre-Move Out Advisory Visit. For SSFA, during your occupancy you should raise any issues immediately with the MOD contractor to ensure remedial action, if appropriate, is completed.

SFA customers in England and Wales may also wish to consider the Pre-Payment Cleaning Scheme (PPCS), which is the only cleaning scheme that can guarantee that your property will meet the Move Out standard. Details about how to get a no obligation quote can be provided at the pre move out visit. In addition, customers in Scotland who are interested in using a PPCS should contact the HASC team responsible for Scotland.

**More...** Further details, including the dispute resolution process, can be found in [DIN 2013DIN01-188](#) (MOD systems only) and on the SFA website at [www.gov.uk/dio/sfa](http://www.gov.uk/dio/sfa)

### REPAIRS

England and Wales  
0800 707 6000

Scotland  
0800 328 6337

Northern Ireland  
0800 030 4651

### ALLOCATIONS

Housing Allocations  
Service Centre (HASC)

The best way to contact the HASC is by email – contact details are available at [www.gov.uk/defence-infrastructure-organisation-service-family-accommodation#points-of-contact](http://www.gov.uk/defence-infrastructure-organisation-service-family-accommodation#points-of-contact)

Please do not contact the HASC until at least 15 working days after you have submitted your application.  
0800 169 6322  
Mil 95410 8000

### APPLY

To apply for SFA:

<http://apps01.domis.rmil.uk/e1132/>

MOD systems only

INFORMATION [www.gov.uk/dio/sfa](http://www.gov.uk/dio/sfa)

## Changes to assessing garage charges

The measurements for assessing garage charges have been changed in [JSP754](#) and the latest amendments were effective from 1 October 2013.

Those personnel currently being charged sub-standard charges will retain 'Grandfather Rights' and revised/increased charges will not to be applied. However, new height criteria will be used for all new garage and car port assessments.

In summary:

- Sub-Standard Garages.** Sub-standard charges will be raised for garages that measure less than 4.3 metres in length and/or 2.3 metres in width (internal measurements) and/or less than 1.85 clearance height at entrance.
- Below Standard Garages.** Below-standard charges will be raised against garages that have been formally deemed by DIO to be of such insubstantial construction that it offers little or no security.
- Sub-Standard Purpose-Built Carports.** Sub-standard charges will be raised for carports that measure less than 4.3 metres in length and/or 2.3 metres in width (internal measurements) and/or less than 1.85 metres clearance height at entrance.

Customers should note that they have 3 months, from the date of their occupation, in which to challenge garage charges in writing. Any change in charges arising from a successful challenge will be backdated to the date of first occupancy.