



Families First Newsletter

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Welcome to DIO's monthly newsletter designed to provide families living in SFA with useful updates and information on their homes.

Introducing Sebastian O'Hara, Operations Director South

Dear Families,

I am honoured to step into the Operations Director South role and to have the opportunity to drive meaningful improvements directly benefit the families we serve. My primary focus is to enhance performance to achieve the best possible outcomes. By challenging conventional practices and embracing innovative solutions, I am committed to strengthening our service delivery and making a tangible difference and I've been overjoyed to see how much everyone in the system cares about delivering the best possible service.



A bit about me, I have been in the civil service since 2013, and I've held various roles across the Home Office, Department for Health and Social Care as well as HM Revenue and Customs. All of these roles have helped me to gain valuable insight and exposed me to a full spectrum of operational delivery.

One of my key priorities is to consider how we can do things differently to achieve greater efficiency. Over time, processes can become complex, creating barriers to service delivery, despite the will of the people working in these areas and their passion for succeeding. My focus will be on identifying areas where improvements can be made, ensuring our operations remain as streamlined as possible. I intend to engage closely with DIO and industry partners teams, and the families we support to gain a well-rounded understanding of current challenges and implement solutions driving meaningful change. I've begun to do this by visiting several estates across the UK and meeting with Service Personnel and their families at the SFA Roadshows to listen first hand to their experiences of SFA.

I believe collaboration is also essential to success, working as one team across DIO and our industry partners with shared objectives and high standards. A strong foundation of accountability, transparent communication, and proactive problem-solving is fundamental to achieving this, and I look forward to strengthening these relationships to enhance service delivery.

Outside of my professional responsibilities, maintaining an active lifestyle is important to me, giving me a mindset of continuous improvement and discipline. I am a keen follower of rugby league and a dedicated supporter of Derby County, embracing both the triumphs and challenges.

New Families Hub

The new Families Hub is an information portal to help navigate Service family life. It signposts helpful support, guidance and useful organisations and is for all Armed Forces (Regular and Reserve) personnel and families – from the moment you enter the Forces, through to when you leave.

We recognise the significant role that Service families play in the Armed Forces community, and the unique pressures that can come with Service life, particularly in times of deployment and separation.

To address these challenges, you can find a wide range of family friendly policies, useful information, support and guidance in areas such as:

- Finance and money
- Housing
- Health and wellbeing
- Childcare and education
- Partner and family support
- Transition to civilian life

To access Families Hub, [click here](#).

HCDC Report Response

Last month, the House of Commons Defence Committee (HCDC) published its report following an inquiry into Service accommodation that took place last year. This outlined several recommendations made by the Committee that we have considered carefully.

HCDC has now published [our response to the report](#) which outlines the steps we are taking to improve our service to you.

DIO remains committed to improving the quality of housing for you and your families and we will continue to work closely with our suppliers to deliver against the actions outlined.

JPA downtime

For your awareness, Defence Business Services is migrating from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) to the cloud.

As a result, JPA and all associated apps and interfaces will need to have a period of downtime. This may result in a delay in responding to certain requests such as applying for SFA.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused during this delay, you can still request services during the downtime and should you need anything further please contact Pinnacle help desk on 0800 031 8628

Sewage notice

Should you notice a sewerage spillage or leak, please report it directly to the Pinnacle Helpdesk on 0800 031 8628 and follow Option 1 to Repairs.

Useful links

[Contact Pinnacle](#)
[Make a request for compensation](#)
[Reporting damp and mould](#)
[Join the SFA Defence Connect page](#)
[Forces Help to Buy is here to stay](#)



Defence
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SFA ROADSHOW 2025



Your opportunity to ask questions about your SFA to senior leaders from DIO, Pinnacle, Amey and VIVO. Share your experiences, your ideas and hear updates about what the future of SFA looks like.

Have your say, on SFA!

4 MAR * BRIZEN NORTON

1PM & 5.30PM

3 APR * BOSCOMBE DOWN

1PM

3 APR * YEOVILTON

5.30PM

21 MAY * COLCHESTER

11AM & 6PM

18 JUN * NORTHOLT

1.30PM

18 JUN * NORTHWOOD

5.30PM

16 JUL * CULDROSE

1PM

16 JUL * ST MAWGAN

6PM

17 JUL * PLYMOUTH

1PM & 5.30PM

15 SEP * CLYDE

1PM & 5.30PM

23 OCT * CHEPSTOW

12.30 PM

23 OCT * IMJIN

5.30PM

24 NOV * KENDREW

1PM

24 NOV * WITTERING

5.30PM