

*The Diego  
Garcia Welcome  
Aboard Guide*



**Welcome  
to  
*Diego Garcia***

The “Footprint of freedom”

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**CAPT Richard A. Skiff  
U.S. Navy Support  
Facility Diego Garcia  
Commanding  
Officer**

**CDR Christopher Atkinson  
U.S. Navy Support Facility  
Diego Garcia  
Executive Officer**

## ***Congratulations!***

**You have been selected to join one of the Navy's finest operational commands anywhere in the world: Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory. If you are looking for a professional challenge, a close-knit team, unbelievable recreational facilities and exquisite natural beauty, then you are coming to the perfect place.**

**If you are coming aboard on PCS orders, you will be assigned a sponsor who will be able to provide you specific answers to questions you may have concerning your arrival and subsequent tour on "The Footprint of Freedom." Be sure to establish contact with your sponsor.**

**Diego Garcia is continuously experiencing growth and change. Living and working conditions are outstanding and we all work hard to keep them that way. There are a vast number of recreational opportunities and we are constantly expanding facilities to make life more comfortable.**

**On behalf of everyone on Diego Garcia, I hope you have a safe and pleasant journey during your tour. We are looking forward to having you as part of the Diego Garcia team. You will be an important member of one of the most strategically located commands in the Navy and we look forward to meeting you. Again, welcome to Diego Garcia. "The Navy's best kept secret."**



## ***Welcome to Diego Garcia!***

Welcome to the atoll of Diego Garcia, British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), the “Footprint of Freedom!” This lush, tropical paradise, located seven degrees south of the equator is the largest of more than 60 islands that make up the Chagos Archipelago with an international population consisting primarily of Filipino and Mauritius contractors, British forces and the U.S. military.

From the air, Diego Garcia takes on the rough outline of a footprint on the ocean surface giving it the nickname “Footprint of Freedom.” The island stretches about 38 miles tip to tip with an area of 6,720 acres. Average elevation is four feet above sea level with maximum elevation of 22 feet. The lagoon varies in depth from 10 to 100 feet.

Since Diego Garcia is in the southern hemisphere, the seasons are reversed compared to the U.S. and change very little with year-round temperatures in the high 80s during the day and lows at night in the 70s. It rains often with a normal year measuring more than 100 inches, most occurring during the summer months of December and January.

Shallow reefs surround the island on the ocean side and are scattered inside the lagoon. The waters surrounding Diego Garcia are home to a vast variety of sea life, with more than 700 species recorded. Some of the world’s finest snorkeling and ocean sports are available.

Wildlife on the island consists mainly of coconut, land and warrior crabs; small lizards and geckos; feral donkeys; a myriad of tropical birds and many insects. All residents make every effort to maintain the ecological integrity of Diego Garcia, as a result- all life forms on island, including live shellfish, are protected by British law.

Entry into Diego Garcia is restricted requiring area clearance by U.S. Navy Support Facility Diego Garcia. Only active duty, unaccompanied military personnel, or authorized contractors can be assigned to the island. Active duty military couples are not allowed concurrent assignments to Diego Garcia.

## *Diego Garcia, A British Territory*

As a British Territory, all civilian and military personnel residing on the island come under [British Indian Ocean Territory \(BIOT\)](#) law and administration. These laws differ from those in the United States so attending island indoctrination is required upon arrival.

The British personnel consist of Royal Navy and Royal Marines who provide security, customs, policing for the island and the Chagos Archipelago. The Commanding Officer, Headquarters British Forces BIOT, is a Royal Navy Commander. As the British Representative (Brit Rep), he represents the British Foreign Commonwealth Office for this territory. To that end, he fulfills a number of functions that include magistrate and registrar of marriages.



The Brit Rep and his team take a great deal of interest in conservation issues. Diego Garcia and the other islands within the Chagos Archipelago are largely unspoiled and will remain so. On



Diego Garcia, the East Point Plantation area remains completely untouched since the days of the early copra plantation. Development and construction are not permitted in this area and so it serves as a beautiful retreat. Please remember that entrance to the plantation is restricted and therefore requires a pass from the BIOT Police Station.

The British wish you an enjoyable stay on Diego Garcia.

On your arrival, please familiarize yourself with the BIOT rules and regulations and try to preserve the island as the tropical paradise that it is.

## *Transferring to Diego Garcia*

Read your orders, completely! Service members are not authorized excess baggage. Free baggage allowance is two pieces of checked baggage (each piece not to exceed 62 linear inches or 70 pounds), one carry on bag (not to exceed 45 linear inches) and one purse or laptop. You cannot pay for extra baggage in Yokota or Singapore.



If you are transferring PCS (greater than 180 days) you are entitled to a household goods shipment. Officers are authorized up to 1,000 pounds and enlisted personnel are authorized up to 500 pounds. Your shipment will take about 6 to 8 weeks to arrive on island so plan accordingly. Schedule your household goods shipment using the [move.mil](http://move.mil) website. Also see your orders for more information.

**\*\*Most importantly, email your sponsor with your travel arrangements. Your sponsor can make your travels smooth and worry free. To contact your sponsor email [DGCommandsponsor@fe.navy.mil](mailto:DGCommandsponsor@fe.navy.mil)\*\***

### *Japan*

If scheduled to fly from Narita (Tokyo) to Diego Garcia by Air Mobility Command (AMC) aircraft, you will spend the night at Yokota Air Force Base. Locate the Department of Defense information booth in the Narita International Terminal to arrange transportation to and from lodging at Yokota. The bus to Yokota costs \$25 U.S. and leaves every two hours. Be sure to check the timetable after you get through Customs. Once arriving in Yokota, it is recommended that you check for availability at the *Kanto Lodge*. The cost is about \$39.00 U.S. per night and the Kanto Lodge provides a free shuttle to the AMC terminal (not a 24-hour service so check times). If there are no rooms available at the Kanto Lodge, you will be issued a Statement of Non-Availability and authorized to stay in town. Average cost for rooms in town is \$125.00 U.S. Make sure to keep this statement and all receipts so you can be reimbursed on travel claims. Also upon arriving at Yokota, contact the AMC terminal to confirm flight times.

### *Singapore*

If you are flying via AMC aircraft, you will arrive at Paya Lebar Royal Singapore Air Force Base. Customs will check for passports; however, PCS personnel only need orders and their military identification. If your flight is leaving that day, the delay is normally 4 hours or less. If you do not leave before 2000 the AMC representatives will make arrangements for you to stay at the [Navy Gateway Inns & Suites](#).

If you are flying commercial, you will arrive at Changi International Airport. Customs will check for passports; however PCS personnel only need orders and their military identification.

If your connecting flight is leaving that day, SATO Singapore can arrange transportation to Paya Lebar Royal Singapore Air Force Base, where you will catch the AMC flight to Diego Garcia. If you arrive at Changi after 2000, you will be spending at least one night in Singapore. Call the [Navy Gateway Inns & Suites](#) 257-0256 to see if a room is available. The cost will be approximately \$120.00 U.S. per night.

The average cost of a room in Singapore is \$125.00 U.S. or more. The cost of a cab is around \$25 Singapore, which is roughly equal to \$40.00 U.S. If for some reason the Navy Gateway Inn & Suites is full, you will be authorized to obtain a room in town. The Navy Gateway Inn & Suites will provide a Statement of Non-Availability. *Ensure you keep this statement and all receipts to include in your travel claim upon arrival at Diego Garcia.* You can also make hotel arrangements at Changi Airport and some hotels provide shuttle services from the Airport to the hotel free of charge. The next morning you can call Mr. Theo (Sato Rep) and he can take you to the Paya Lebar AMC terminal.

*Note: Paya Lebar will most likely be closed when you arrive at Changi airport. DO NOT get a taxi to Paya Lebar until the next day. The base closes at 1900 and you will not be allowed to enter the base after these hours. Paya Lebar is approximately a 15-20 minute drive from Changi airport.*

Important numbers to keep on hand:

Mr. Theo @ 9430-2886 or 9738-2378!  
Singapore Navy Gateway In Suites (Hotel) - 6752-8245  
CSD (Local PSD) - 6750-2507  
SATO - 6750-2622  
CLWP Battle Watch Officer -9672-2594 (Manned 24/7/365)  
American Embassy-6476-9100  
CMC - 9672-2641

### ***Traveling From Norfolk***

Personnel traveling via the East Coast rotator will fly out of the Norfolk AMC terminal of Naval Station Norfolk. The approximate 32 hour flight will fly through Lajes Field, in the Azores of Portugal; onto Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy; then onto Chania Airport in Crete, Greece; to the Kingdom of Bahrain's International Airport, through Muscat International Airport in Oman, before arriving on Diego Garcia.

*Note: The likelihood of an overnight layover is highly improbable, however it can happen. Should you encounter and overnight layover via this route, accommodations will be arranged through the airline carrier.*

**\*\* MEMBER COMING TO DIEGO GARCIA MUST COMPLETE AN OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENT SUITABILITY SCREENING IAW OPNAVINST 1300.14D, BUMEDINST 1300.2A AND MILPERSMAN 1300-300(SERIES) WITHIN 15 DAYS OF RECEIPT OF YOUR ORDERS.**

## ***Things to do BEFORE you PCS to Diego Garcia***

1. Take care of all possible medical and dental problems that may not have been taken care of during your overseas screening. You will probably want an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses. Since our supplies are very limited, you should obtain a one-year supply of prescription medicines. Talk with your sponsor regarding availability of medicines at the Clinic.

2. Purchase any uniform items you may need. The Ship's Store has only a limited stock of items. You may order uniform items from the [Uniform Support Center](#). Delivery time is 2-3 weeks minimum. You will need to bring a full seabag. You may need your blues and possibly medals/ribbons depending on the event.



3. Change your current mailing address on all bills, catalogs, magazines, etc. Sometimes mail is slow in leaving and arriving on island. Take this into account for any bills that may have specific due dates. Look into paying your bills online or via direct debit.

4. Ensure all of your financial affairs are in order.

5. Set up temporary guardianship for minor family members if necessary.

6. Provide necessary Powers-of-Attorney (consult the Legal Office) for items such as real estate, automobiles, taxes, litigation, etc., that may arise while you are on island.

7. Ensure you have a current and valid will.

8. Register to vote and request an absentee ballot for any elections you will miss. NSF also has a Voting Assistance Officer to provide absentee ballot requests.

9. Ensure your relatives know how to contact their local Red Cross in case of emergency. Provide them with your Social Security Number, rank, rate, and the name of this command (there are many different Navy commands on the island).

10. Keep in contact with your sponsor at all times. Let them know your travel arrangements, arrival times, and any other information that may be needed to assist you with your trip.

11. Be sure to have a current ID card. You will not be allowed to board any military aircraft with an expired ID.

12. Ensure your driver license will not expire while on-island. You will not be permitted to drive on an expired or “extended” driver license

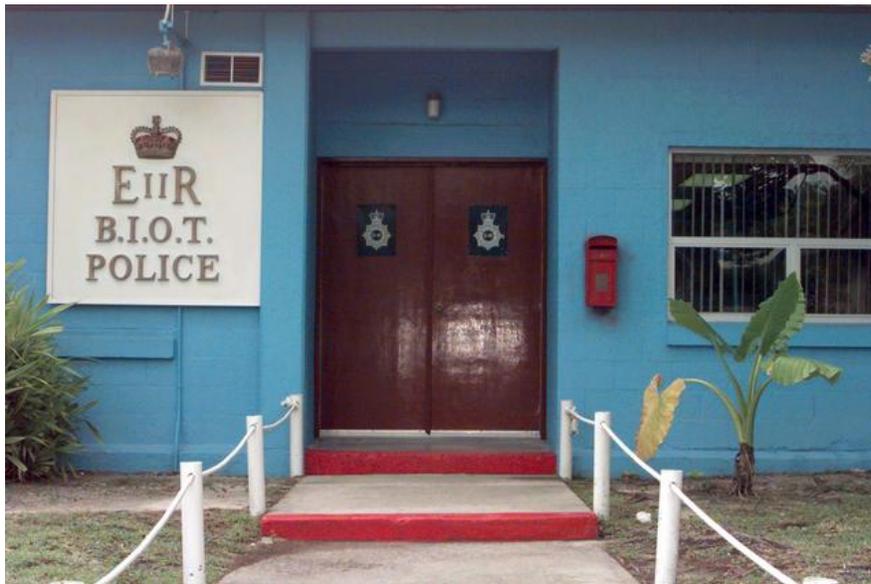
13. Our address:

Confirm with your sponsor which post office box will be yours, otherwise, the official command address is:

First Name, Last Name  
NAVSUPPFAC Diego Garcia  
PSC 466 Box 2  
FPO AP 96595

### ***Travel Notes***

No clothing, hats, or belt buckles with slogans or insignia that may draw attention to your status as an American Citizen/military member may be worn. Profanity, maliciousness, or any other negative behavior that may bring discredit to yourself or the United States are prohibited and may be punished as the Uniform Code of Military Justice allows.



### ***Customs***

Diego Garcia is subject to British Customs and Immigration Controls. A strict control is maintained on the importation of drugs and related items, weapons (includes: knives with blades exceeding three inches, spear guns, firearms and explosives) and pornography (print, video, or digital). Severe penalties are awarded for violation of British Customs laws.

As a matter of routine, all medication (including aspirin and vitamins) will be confiscated and inspected. You should identify all medications to ensure their return.

In accordance with regulations, no type of attire with degrading or obscene comments may be worn, or brought to, Diego Garcia. This includes pictures, phrases or slogans depicting drug paraphernalia, anti-war slogans, ethnic slurs, or having sexual connotations. Publications that depict biker/hippie culture or mercenary magazines will be confiscated, as will all obscene publications. All videotapes brought into Diego Garcia will be retained by British Customs for screening and returned within 10 days if approved. Prohibited materials will be burned.

When clearing customs, you must have in your possession your orders and your military ID card.

## ***Items to bring***

### ***Passports***

It is recommended that all personnel attached to Diego Garcia obtain a [U.S. Personal Passport](#) prior to their arrival for duty. While you are authorized to use a [Military Passport \(maroon cover\)](#) while traveling on official business to some countries in the PACOM AOR, it is not recognized by some nations in S.E. Asia. Also; a Military Passport cannot be used for recreational travel. Since Singapore now requires a passport for all U.S. military not traveling on orders, you must have a personal passport in order to take [Environmental Morale Leave \(EML\)](#). You should obtain a personal passport (blue cover) before leaving the United States.

### ***Uniforms***

- Officer/CPO: Navy Working Uniform (NWU), service dress white; summer white; service khaki; summer and winter dinner dress (0-4 & above, optional for others); dress blues, and flight suit (officers in a flight status)
- E6 and below: Expect to bring a full seabag to include but not limited to the Navy Working Uniform (NWU), Navy Service Uniform, service dress white and blues.

Note: Winter Service Dress uniforms are suggested for all hands in the event of a TAD/TDY or other departure from the island to an area other than a summer/tropical climate or for special events held on the island.

### ***Civilian Clothes***

Shorts and T-shirts with sandals or sneakers are the most popular civilian attire on the island. You may want to consider bringing some dress clothes (shirts with collars and dress pants) for special events, church, or just going out to the clubs.

Note: The Ship's Store has a limited selection of clothing, shoes, undergarments, and sportswear but items may be ordered online as well.

### ***Sports/Leisure Equipment***

Bicycle with helmet, baseball/softball gear, snorkel gear, fishing equipment, bowling ball, roller skates/blades, golf clubs, personal weightlifting gear, rackets (tennis/racquetball), sports shoes, beach/lounge chairs, beach blanket. Although the gym does loan equipment, it is better to bring your own if you play a lot of sports.

### ***Personal Items***

Computer, board games, reading materials, magazine subscriptions, MP3 player/CD player or stereo, CD's, DVD's, preferred brands of hygiene goods, some dishes, glasses, and silverware. Many DVD titles (including new releases) are available for purchase or rental at the Ship's Store. You are strongly encouraged to bring a sturdy umbrella. It rains often and the rain is usually heavy. Sunscreen and Sunglasses that provide UV protection are also encouraged.

## *Life on Diego Garcia*

### ***BEQ/BOQ***

Sailors E-6 and below do not share rooms. Each room comes equipped with a large refrigerator, microwave, telephone, television, VCR/DVD player, alarm clock, iron and a private shower. Officers and Chiefs also have their own rooms, which include kitchenettes. You will be issued linens (sheets, pillow-cases, pillow, blanket, and comforter). Most of the BEQ/BOQs are two- or three-story buildings. The rooms all



open up to the outdoor walkway/balcony. Military ID (CAC) cards serve as room keys. The BEQ/BOQs have grills and picnic tables outside and are free to be used by anyone. All rooms have TVs, VCRs & DVD players. Smoking is not permitted in the BEQ/BOQ rooms or outside the doorway. There are designated smoking areas at the ends of each BEQ/BOQ floor.

### ***Communicating***

- Telephone: The commercial/private phone system is operated by [Cable & Wireless](#), the local British phone company. Phone cards must be purchased to call off the island. Phone cards (FonePlus) come in increments of \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100 and may be purchased at [Cable & Wireless](#) (Stateside phone cards will not work). All payments are in cash only. If you are active duty, you will be issued a FonePlus card within days of your arrival. MWR adds \$20 to each active duty FonePlus card at the beginning of each month. You can also use the \$20 towards your internet bill if you opt not to take the phone card each month. Phone calls range from 55 to 88 cents a minute depending on time of day. Your friends and family can also call you.
- Internet: If you have a computer, bring it along. Another way to keep in touch with the folks back home is e-mail or skype. Private Internet access is available through [Cable & Wireless](#). All payments are to be made in cash. You can purchase a DSL modem on island if you do not have one (many detaching staff sell theirs at a significantly reduced price). FonePlus cards may also be used in several wireless hotspots around the island to connect wirelessly to the internet with your personal laptop. There are also Internet Café computers free of charge at several locations for personal use.
- Postal Mail: If you want to send a card/letter home by mail, Diego Garcia is home to the only U.S. Post Office in the Indian Ocean. The average time for mail to and from the States is about 8 - 10 days, but may be more than 3 weeks. Off-island postage rates are the same as in the States. Cash only. There is a British Post Office (at Cable & Wireless) on island as well, using BIOT stamps. First class letter postage costs 97 cents. Delivery time is similar to U.S. Post Office.

| <b>INTERNET PACKAGES</b>  |                  |   |                  |   |                  |
|---|------------------|---|------------------|---|------------------|
| <b>Horizon Premier<br/>256 kbit/s</b>   | <b>Cost</b>      | <b>Horizon Classic<br/>128 kbit/s</b>   | <b>Cost</b>      | <b>Horizon Budget<br/>128 kbit/s</b>  | <b>Cost</b>      |
| <b>8 GB</b>   | \$176/month      | <b>3 GB</b>   | \$87/month       | <b>1 GB</b>   | \$54/month       |
| <b>Daily rate</b>   | \$9/day          | <b>Daily rate</b>   | \$6/day          | <b>Daily rate</b>   | \$4.50/day       |
| <b>Additional<br/>Volume per 100<br/>MB used above 8<br/>GB</b>   | \$6.60/100<br>MB | <b>Additional<br/>Volume per 100<br/>MB used above 3<br/>GB</b>   | \$6.60/100<br>MB | <b>Additional<br/>Volume per 100<br/>MB used above<br/>1 GB</b>   | \$6.60/100<br>MB |
| <b>Deposit:<br/>Payable at sign-<br/>up refundable if<br/>no breach in<br/>terms &amp;<br/>conditions</b> | \$176.00         | <b>Deposit:<br/>Payable at sign-<br/>up refundable if<br/>no breach in<br/>terms &amp;<br/>conditions</b> | \$87             | <b>Deposit:<br/>Payable at sign-<br/>up refundable if<br/>no breach in<br/>terms &amp;<br/>conditions</b> | \$54             |
| <b>Registration Fee</b>   | \$33             | <b>ADSL<br/>Modem/Router</b>  | \$66             | <b>Filter/splitters</b>   | \$8              |

### ***Education***

The Navy College Office on island is ready to help you with all your learning needs. They can help you get a degree or take a standardized test such as CLEP, ACT, or SAT. City University, Trident University International, and a number of other colleges offer distance education programs to aid in completing your degree. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of your off-duty time on DGAR in pursuing higher educational courses.

### ***Finances***

- Checks: Navy Federal Credit Union has a branch on the island open to all active duty military personnel and Navy DOD civilians. The bank can handle most transactions and loan procedures, but does not handle cash. They can, however, issue you a draft from your account that you can take to the Community Bank where you can cash checks up to \$500 per day for a fee of \$1. You do not have to have an account with them. The Turner Club and the Officer's Club have cash cages available where individuals can cash personal checks up to \$100 per day. Individuals are issued a check-cashing card by MWR and are required to have it with them to cash a check. It can take up to four weeks for a check to clear, so balance accurately. You may also cash a check for up to \$25 with a purchase in the Ship's Store. If at any time a member bounces a check, his or her check cashing privileges with MWR will be removed.
- ATM: There are two automatic tellers (ATMs) on the island. One is located in the Chagos Inn (Billeting) and the other is in the AMC Terminal (withdrawal charges may apply).
- Cash, Checks, or ATM, Credit Card: Cash is required at most establishments on the island. Checks are accepted in the Ship's Store and may be cashed as indicated above. MasterCard, and VISA are accepted in the Ship's Store and Post Office. Discover and American Express are not accepted on-island.
- All transaction on-island are in U.S. dollars.

### *Island Shopping*

The only stores on the island are the Ship's Store and the gift shop. Although the Ship's Store is sponsored by the Navy Exchange it does not accept Exchange or Star credit cards. It carries a limited supply of electronic equipment, sporting gear, personal items, gifts, clothing, uniforms, and is Diego Garcia's only grocery store. Although small, it carries a variety of food items to meet most of your needs. It also



offers a catalog order center where you can call in or fax a uniform order to the [Uniform Support Center](#) and have it delivered to you. This does require a credit card. MasterCard and VISA only, are accepted for purchases at the store as well as cash or personal check. The store is also home to the Video Rental Store, which receives the latest and greatest new releases from the States. It has a good variety of old and new movies and a generous supply of Play Station, Xbox 360, and Nintendo Wii games.

### *Newspaper*

The [Tropical Times](#) is the local island military news/events newspaper. Produced by the NSF Public Affairs Office, it is published every Friday and is distributed to various places around base including the Galley, Peacekeeper Inn, Ship's Store, Billeting, Library, and is also available on the NSF Intranet and e-mail. It contains the Galley menu for the week, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) events, movie schedule, and other useful information.

### *Movies*

The MWR department runs an outdoor, covered movie theater. Movies are shown daily at 2000 and are free of charge. On Friday and Saturday, movies are also shown at 2200. Although we don't get the newest movies right away there is a good selection. A variety of snacks and drinks are sold at the Main Outdoor Theater (MOT) and popcorn is free.

### *Pay and Allowances*

Members are not entitled to COLA or single BAH while stationed on DGAR. Pay is not tax free, even if you pass through a tax-free zone on your way here. However, personnel sent into a tax-free zone on TAD orders will be awarded tax-free pay. **All E-6 and below personnel will receive a meal pass upon arriving to the island.** All E-7 and above will receive commuted rations. Although this is type 3 duty, you do not receive sea pay. Individuals who are married or have dependants still receive their regular entitlements. Everyone receives Hardship Duty Pay, which is \$150 a month and is listed as "HDP Location" on the LES. Of course, those entitled to Family Separation Allowance will also receive their entitlement, which is currently \$250.00 per month.

### *Taking Leave*

Environmental Morale Leave (EML) is authorized while on Diego Garcia. This is not Basket Leave. You will be charged leave. It is your responsibility of the member to ensure an adequate leave balance before coming to DGAR. If you do not have a proper amount of leave to take for your EML (at least 14 days), leave will be denied while you are attached to DGAR.

### *Personal Services*

- Beauty Shop: The Beauty Shop offers a variety of services including hair styling, manicures, pedicures, facials, etc. for free or low cost.
- Haircuts: Haircuts in the Barber Shop are free.
- Laundry Service: Uniform cleaning and pressing is free. Additionally, up to 5 personal collared shirts and slacks per week will be cleaned and pressed for free.
- Massage Service. Massages are performed by professional masseuse by appointment for \$20 an hour.
- Photo Shop. Print your photos for low cost.
- Tailor Service: Uniform tailoring is free. Additionally, up to 5 personal items per week can be tailored, mended, etc. for free.

**\*While not required, a tip is strongly encouraged.** The contract workers are paid low wages and work very hard. They are very gracious and tips are greatly appreciated.

### *Dining*

- The Officer's Club is open to all officers, senior OG civilians, senior mariners, and senior contractors. It sits at the tip of the island on Eclipse Point and has a beautiful view of both the Indian Ocean and the lagoon and offers a full service menu. The club offers daily specials including Mongolian BBQ, Wings, and Build Your Own Pizza nights. The O'Club also offers an all hands brunch on Sunday.
- The Chief Petty Officer's Club is open to military personnel E7-E9 and offers a fine menu to patrons including burgers, ribs, and pizza. The club offers daily specials including Mongolian BBQ, Wings, and Build Your Own Pizza nights. CPO Home Delivery is available to **all hands** and your food can be delivered to any building in the downtown area.
- The Island Room is the club predominantly used by E6 and below. Located in the Turner Complex, it is also the site for large all-island parties, dinners, and special events.



- The Food Court is located in the Turner Complex. Restaurants include Always Delicious (sub sandwiches, wraps), Hot Stuff Pizza, and C-Street Café (baked goods and Starbucks® Coffee).
- The Peacekeeper Inn located in the Turner Complex, carries a full menu of favorites including fried chicken, spaghetti, burgers, and sandwiches. The restaurant has daily specials including steak, seafood, and the highly popular Mongolian BBQ night.
- Mean Gene's is available if you are looking for something a little quicker. Located downtown across from the tennis courts, it is DGAR's answer to fast food.
- The Passenger Terminal Snack Bar accommodates those incoming and outgoing passengers with a variety of sandwiches and drinks.
- The United Seaman's Service Center is located at the edge of the downtown area and offers a variety of menu items, as well as daily specials. This Merchant Mariner facility can also accommodate large groups for special functions. It is open to all hands.
- As always, there is the Consolidated Dining Facility (CDF), affectionately known as the Galley, for active duty service members assigned to downtown and select tenant commands. Serving three meals a day, they offer a variety of food. If you are not receiving BAS or Per Diem, you will be issued a meal card. If you are receiving compensation for food, the CDF is still the economical choice of eateries. Currently, breakfast is \$2.65 and lunch and dinner are \$4.55. In addition to the regular menus, the CDF has a salad bar, speed line, and desert bar.

### ***Religious Ministries***

There are a number of services to accommodate religious needs. The command religious ministries in Diego Garcia are uniquely diverse in order to accommodate various faith groups. Although it is generally Navy in its total force, there is a great presence of Air Force personnel supporting joint military operations. The Chapel is staffed by two chaplains, a Religious



Program Specialist and a secretary, who are available to help people from all faith groups to achieve the fullness of their spiritual life, staff the chapel. Chaplains are also available for confidential counseling. There are many positions available for those who wish to volunteer, such as musicians, choir members, ushers, lay readers, lay Eucharistic ministers, scripture readers, and more. Other religious ministries on the island include the BOSCO Contractor's-Sacred Heart Catholic Chapel, Island Thrift Store, Christian

Fellowship and Bible Study group (CFBS), and other religious support groups. Some of the religious faiths that worship here on the island are Church of Christ, Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormon), Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Islamic to name a few. All of these religious ministries work together to co-sponsor religious activities and mutually support one another to give you the widest variety of religious ministry.

### ***Transportation on DGAR***

Since personally owned vehicles are not allowed on the atoll, the primary means of transportation are buses, bicycles, and old-fashioned foot power. Buses travel at regular interval throughout the inhabited areas of the island. Base taxis and government work vehicles also travel DGAR but are for official use only. All buildings in the “Downtown” area are within walking distance of the BEQ/BOQ. Bicycles are very popular but there are certain rules you need to know. Bells or horns are required on bikes and a front white and rear red light are mandatory when riding after dark. Helmets with the chin strap strapped are required when riding at all times. The BIOT police will issue a hefty fine to anyone riding without a helmet. Spare parts are in short supply on the island so you might want to prepare for some of the more common needs. The MWR Bicycle Repair shop provides services free of charge including getting your bike ready to ride after it arrives on island!

### ***Recreation***

- The gym is open 0500 - 2300 and includes basketball courts, combination volleyball/basketball court, Nautilus fitness center, a free-weight room, a cardio room with treadmills, stationary bikes and cross trainers, locker rooms and an equipment issue center.
- Outdoor activities:  
Located next to the gym are two lighted softball fields, six lighted tennis courts, and six horseshoes pits. There are volleyball courts located at Jake’s Place, the Short Pier, the CPO Club, and the BEQ areas. A lighted softball field, two lighted basketball courts, two lighted volleyball courts and two lighted tennis courts are located at the Fleet Recreation Center.
- Golf: The Coral Sands Golf Course located in Sea Breeze Village. The 9-hole golf course has full sets of clubs for use, but there is a nominal fee for each bucket of balls on the driving range.
- Bowling: Diego Garcia has its own four-lane bowling alley. Located next to the Turner Complex, it is fully equipped with lockers and a snack bar.





- Fishing is a popular activity in Diego Garcia. Whether it is trolling for Yellowfin Tuna and Wahoo to bottom fishing for Grouper Sea Bass or Red Snapper, to a relaxing day of casting from the shore, you'll probably not find a better place to fish in the world.
- Swimming Pool: The 25-meter swimming pool is located near the base gym pool

that has marked swimming lanes for exercise and a free swim area with a diving board.

- The Marina rents powerboats, sailboats, canoes, windsurfers and kayaks. Free classes are offered on a regular basis and are required for powerboats and sailboats. Rented boats are not allowed outside the lagoon, however you can charter a deep-sea fishing excursion aboard a beautiful Boston Whaler or smaller Ocean Master. The Marina even has fishing poles to rent on your way to that fresh tuna dinner.
- Parks: Diego Garcia has many parks at which to picnic with a small group or a whole command. All parks have covered dining tables/areas and BBQs so fire up the grill and have some fun.
- In addition to all these leisure activities, MWR regularly host sports tournaments, races, contests, fishing competitions, island wide picnics and DGAR's famous monthly Full Moon Platoon 5K run/walk for all island residents with free T-shirts to everyone who completes the distance. MWR has many leagues that form throughout the year from bowling and basketball to softball and volleyball.
- Live Entertainment: The clubs regularly provide live entertainment and the base often invites entertainers for special engagements. Always a favorite, DGAR Idol is a fun gathering in the Fil-Mau Club most Friday nights.
- Don't be shy, get involved.



## ***TV/Radio***

- **TV:** AFN Diego Garcia here on DGAR is one of several world-wide overseas branches of the Defense Media Activity headquartered in Ft. Meade, Maryland. The main DMA branch is responsible for Navy-wide products, All Hands Update and All Hands Magazine. Our local station operates one AM (1485) and two FM (99.1 and 101.9) radio stations, which broadcasts twelve hours of live shows Monday through Friday and additionally eight hours on Saturday from 0800-1400. The eight AFN network television stations are taken directly from the Armed Forces Radio & Television Service (AFRTS) satellite feed from the broadcast center at March AFB in Riverside, California and provides music, news and entertainment 24 hours daily. AFN Diego Garcia provides a wide variety of information and entertainment products to island wide personnel to include all Active Duty, DOD civilians, and contract employees stationed on island. Check out AFN Diego Garcia on Facebook and Youtube for the latest local stories and information on AFN news and programming.
  
- **Radio:** Our primary radio station is Power 99 (FM 99.1). The radio schedule is:
  - Morning Mayhem, Weekdays from 0600-1000. A blend of the top songs currently on the U.S. top-40, urban and modern rock charts.
  - Afternoon Mash-Up, Weekdays from 1000-1400. U.S. top-40, Adult Contemporary and urban charts.
  - Afternoon Wind Down, Weekdays from 1400-1800. Just like the morning show with a blend of the top songs currently on the U.S. top-40, and modern rock charts.

All DJ's are happy to take requests, as long as the songs are within the show's format. The radio studio phone number is 370-3699. 101.9 is a satellite-fed station playing a variety of music from back home. If you are into talk radio, or you are an avid sports fan, switch to AM 1485.

All programming on AFRTS is obtained for free from TV studios and networks as a thank you for your military service overseas. That means they don't run stateside commercials. However, since shows are actually less than 30 or 60 minutes (they are actually 22 or 45 minutes of actual program), the commercial breaks are filled with public service announcements. This is where you will see much of your daily Diego Garcia information.

## ***Words of Caution***

### ***Bike safety***

When bicycling on the island, you must wear an approved bike helmet with the chin strap strapped at all times. Horns or bells are required on all bicycles. Also, when riding at night, you must have working front white and rear red lights turned on at all times.

### ***Jogging***

Joggers running along DG-1, our only “highway,” must use the asphalt walking/jogging trail. For your protection, when jogging between sunset and sunrise, follow these rules: wear light colored clothing; always wear reflective rope on your front and back, use the jogging trail and yield the right of way to moving vehicles at all intersections. Use of “walking-type” personal listening devices is prohibited for pedestrians, joggers, and cyclists. There are miles of jogging trails available on Diego Garcia including jungle trails.

### ***Shelling***

Shell collecting is permitted on Diego Garcia as long as the shell is uninhabited. Coral may be collected for display purposes but cannot be taken off the island since harmful bacteria is difficult to kill and may pose an environmental risk in the States.

### ***SCUBA Diving, Snorkeling and Spear Fishing***

British environmental protection laws prohibit spear fishing in the waters of Diego Garcia. Snorkeling and Scuba Diving is permitted and offers an excellent way to see the fabulous marine life and beautiful coral formations in the lagoon. Due to prevailing winds disturbing the water from June through September, snorkeling is usually best from October through May. There are more than 700 varieties of fish in our water. Fins, mask, and snorkel may be checked-out at the Marina or purchased from the Ship's Store.

### ***Sunbathing***

Some of the world's best tans can be obtained on Diego Garcia. Because of our location about seven degrees south of the equator, caution must be taken to prevent sunburn when you first arrive or if you are prone to sunburn. As a general rule, do not stay out in the sun for more than 15-30 minutes at a time until you have adapted to the direct glare of our equatorial zone sun. Also, use liberal amounts of sun protection (a bottle of sunscreen is recommended as part of your travel gear to the island). Sunglasses that provide UV protection are encouraged.

### ***Restricted Zone***

The eastern half of the island is off limits. No personnel are permitted past the "GEODDS Gate" without a pass from the British Representative. This side of the island is a controlled area with no construction sites. It remains much as it was in the late

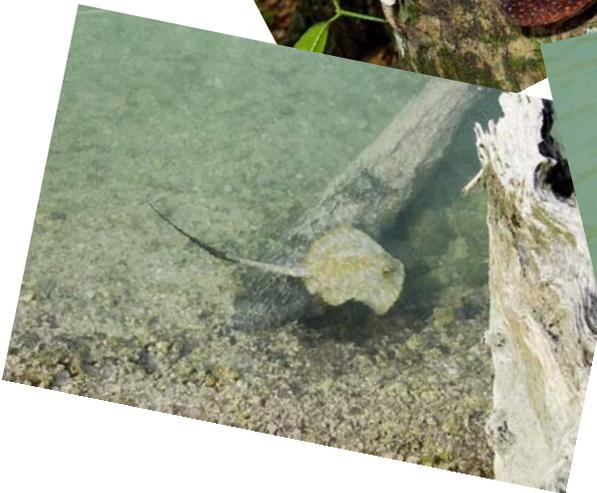


1800s and early 1900s. The remains of what was once a coconut plantation are located on the East side of the island at East Point. The British Representative issues a limited number of passes to visit and explore the plantation ruins on weekends.

### *Water safety*

- Swimming is only allowed on the lagoon side of the island. Due to strong currents and a large population of aggressive sharks, **NO SWIMMING IS ALLOWED ON THE OCEAN SIDE OF DIEGO GARCIA**. You will be arrested if caught swimming in the ocean. You may enter the ocean to explore but no deeper than your knees.
- Swimming, snorkeling, sailing, and windsurfing in the lagoon all involve possible contact with harmful marine life. When snorkeling or swimming around coral growths, never reach into holes in coral heads as these are potential homes for moray eels. Also, when snorkeling around coral heads, be sure to wear gloves (fire coral is not uncommon in our waters and causes severe pain if accidentally touched).
- Swimming in the lagoon at night is **NOT** permitted.
- The coral on Diego Garcia is sharp and cuts are painful and must be medically cleaned to ensure all coral is removed from the wound. Infection may result from improperly cleaned coral cuts.

### *Wildlife*



All wildlife on the island is protected under British law. Any detected harm, mistreatment, or harassment of any of the island's animals will result in punitive action. This includes all crabs. Fishing is permitted in designated areas.

## *Island Commands*

### **U.S. Navy Support Facility**

NAVSUPPFAC Diego Garcia is the host command on the island

### **Headquarters, British Forces BIOT**

BIOT is responsible for law and order on Diego Garcia as The United Kingdom owns the island.

## *Island Partner Commands*

### *Navy Commands*

#### **Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Far East (PWD)**

NAVFAC Far East is a single facilities command serving Navy, Marine Corps, and other DOD activities in the Far East Region. NAVFAC is committed to providing best-value facility solutions and services to Navy and Marine Corps bases at Misawa, Atsugi, Yokosuka, Iwakuni, Sasebo, Okinawa, Diego Garcia, Chinhae Korea, Singapore, and elsewhere throughout the Far East.

#### **Fleet Logistics Center Yokosuka (FLCY)**

The Supply Department currently is split between two commands:

- NSF Supply functions include Ship's store, Food service division, Billeting division, and Fuel division.
- FLCY Supply functions include Stock Control and Post Office.

#### **Maritime Preposition Ships, Squadron TWO**

A logistics component under the Military Sealift Command that supplies equipment in support of operations under the command of COMPSRON TWO. These ships provide supplies and equipment for initial support to deploying forces.

#### **Military Sealift Command Office (MSCO)**

MSCO provides logistical support to the COMPSRON TWO ships forward deployed to Diego Garcia which ensures the readiness of ships in the MSC Prepositioning Program in the Indian Ocean. The squadron's mission is to transport vital equipment and supplies to a designated area of operations in support of combatant commanders worldwide.

#### **Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Pacific Det (NCTSFE DET)**

Manages, operates, and maintains telecommunications systems and facilities for the Navy and Defense Information Systems Agency. Provides telecommunications support to fleet, joint and allied forces in the Indian Ocean Theater.

#### **Armed Forces Network (AFN)**

As Diego Garcia's American Forces Network outlet, NMC operates cable television and radio services in support of command information and entertainment as part of the worldwide Armed Forces Radio and Television Services (AFRTS).

**Branch Health Clinic (BHC), Diego Garcia**

BHC Diego Garcia is a detachment of U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka, Japan and provides routine and urgent care to Diego Garcia residents.

**Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Detachment 7 (Seabees)**

Homeported in Gulfport Mississippi, the Seabees provide construction support for numerous projects on the island. Members of the Det are on-island for 6 month tours.

**Personnel Support Detachment Diego Garcia (PSD)**

The PSD Provides personnel and pay support for all Navy personnel.

**Naval Munitions Command, East Asia Division Detachment Okinawa Annex Diego Garcia (NMC EAD DET OKI AND DGAR)**

NMC EAD DET includes issues, receipts, stowage, and transshipment of ordnance for supported tenant and fleet commanders located in Diego Garcia and throughout the Indian Ocean and Arabian Gulf Areas of Operation. Additional capabilities also include routine maintenance and upkeep for both magazines and inert storage areas and, on a more limited basis, assembly/disassembly and maintenance for specific classes of munitions.

*Air Force Commands*

**Air Force Space Command Detachment 2, 21<sup>st</sup> Space Surveillance Squadron (AFSCP GEODSS)**

An Air Force Space Command unit that conducts deep space surveillance using the only Ground based Electro-Optical Deep Space Surveillance System (GEODSS) in the southern Hemisphere.

**Air Force Space Command Detachment 1, 21<sup>st</sup> Space Operations Squadron (ARTS GPS)**

One of nine remote tracking stations comprising the Air Force Satellite Control Network, this command provides telemetry, tracking and commanding of DoD satellites.

**Air Mobility Command Detachment 1, 730<sup>th</sup> AMS (AMC)**

The AMC Provides passenger and cargo air movement supporting Diego Garcia and Indian Ocean operations.

**Pacific Air Force Detachments and rotations including 36<sup>th</sup> Air Expeditionary Wing (PACAF)**

PACAF maintains a Southwest Asia forward operating location under PACOM. Provides facilities, munitions, vehicles, aerospace ground equipment, communications, bare base assets and aviation fuel to sustain contingency and wartime sortie operations.

## ***Frequently Asked Questions:***

### ***Can my family visit if I'm permanent party on Diego Garcia?***

Access to Diego Garcia is limited to official visitors and mission essential personnel only. Personnel travelling to Diego Garcia require country clearance, which is approved by the U.S. Navy Support Facility, Diego Garcia, command officer. Family members are not authorized to travel to Diego Garcia; this includes, but is not limited to dependants and spouses. At no time is Leave travel to Diego Garcia authorized. However, personnel assigned to deployed ships, squadrons, carriers and amphibious groups who are going on Leave may transit through Diego Garcia to connect with follow-on flights. No other travel layovers, stopovers, Leave or circuitous travel are authorized. For the most up-to-date travel requirements and restrictions visit the Diego Garcia General Entry Requirements at <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/docs/print/DG.cfm>.

### ***Is there anything I cannot bring to the island?***

Yes, below is a brief list of what cannot be brought to the territory:

- Any goods or material of any description containing or consisting of any species of living plant, animal or insect not indigenous to the territory.
- All drugs and controlled substances, including equipment used for weighing, processing or administering of drugs.
- All knives and weapons including catapults, spear guns or diving knives.

**NOTE:** Any knife with a fixed blade or a blade bigger than 3" will be confiscated. Merchant seamen are to declare work knives.

- Firearms of any kind, including guns, air-gun or other lethal barreled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or object can be discharged..
- All types of explosives, including fireworks, empty shells and cartridge casings.
- Pornographic magazines or videos are to be declared. Any materials outside the standards set by British Law will be destroyed.
- No more than 200 cigarettes, 100 cigarillos, 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco for the personal use and is contained in the baggage accompanying a person arriving in the Territory.

**NOTE:** Visit the U.S. Navy Support Facility, Diego Garcia Web site for a full list of contraband.

### ***Is there anything I cannot take off the island?***

- Yes, below is a brief list of what cannot be taken from the territory:
- Wild animals, whether alive or dead.
- Seashells whether alive or dead.
- Coral, whether alive or dead.
- Wild birds' nests, birds' eggs or turtles' eggs.
- Flora, coral or seashells specified under the Wild Life Protection Regulations, 1984.

**NOTE:** In this section any reference to a seashell, coral, nest or eggs includes a reference to a part thereof.

Exporting any of these items is prohibited, unless written permission has been granted only by British Commissioner's Representative.

### ***Can I ship my Personally Owned Vehicle (POV) to Diego Garcia?***

No. Anyone whose job requires them to travel long distances will have access to a vehicle for travel. Otherwise, taxi and bus services are available seven days a week for any travel requiring a vehicle, and are free of charge.

**NOTE:** Barracks, base galley, base gym and most MWR facilities are all within walking distance in or around the downtown area. Residents either walk or ride bicycles to traverse in and around the island.

***Will my mobile phone work in this region?***

No. Commercial mobile phone providers based in the United States are not accessible at this location. However, Cable & Wireless offers mobile phones, pagers and calling cards for international phone calls. Visit their Web site <http://www.cw.com/> to see a list of their services and rates.

***What would I do if I forgot to pack anything for this tour?***

The Ship's Store sells commonly-used products such as soap, assorted snacks, laundry detergent and even some cookware. It even sells video games and rents DVDs. And, the internet is available for online shopping to order anything not sold in the Ship's store.

***Where can I find out more information about Diego Garcia?***

Visit our official CNIC website at <http://www.cnic.navy.mil/DiegoGarcia/index.htm> or look for us on Facebook.

## ***One Island***

***Strategically located in the middle of the Indian Ocean  
Operationally invaluable  
Environmentally pristine***

## ***One Team***

***U.S. Navy, Air Force, Army, Merchant Seaman, Civilian,  
Contract employees, and U.K. military, working in unison to...***

***Enhance quality of life  
Preserve the environment  
Ensure mission success***

## ***One Mission***

***Support...***

***For the strategically essential missions of our deployed units  
For the readiness of our organic strategic deterrence capabilities  
For the needs of our Sailors, soldiers, airmen, Marines,  
merchant seaman, and civilian contract employees***



**ONE ISLAND, ONE TEAM, ONE MISSION**

## *Diego Garcia New Arrival's Checklist*

|                                      |  |                                   |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Orders                               |  | MILITARY Passport                 |  |
| Medical/Dental Records               |  | NON-military Passport             |  |
| Year-supply of special prescriptions |  | Updated Power(s) of Attorney      |  |
| Primary and back-up eyewear          |  | All Military Uniforms             |  |
| Updated ID card                      |  | \$200 cash for travel to Diego    |  |
| Special-order uniform items          |  | Updated ATM card                  |  |
| Change address to DG address         |  | Valid/current Will                |  |
| Set up temporary guardianship        |  | Register to vote in local elec.   |  |
| <b>Personal Items:</b>               |  | <b>Proper Civilian Attire:</b>    |  |
| Laptop                               |  | Shorts                            |  |
| Tablet                               |  | Conservative T-shirts             |  |
| Reading materials                    |  | Sandals                           |  |
| Board games                          |  | Dress slacks/dress                |  |
| Stereo/portable music device         |  | Collared-shirts                   |  |
| CD/DVDs                              |  | Swim wear                         |  |
| Black Umbrella                       |  | Beach attire                      |  |
| Sunscreen                            |  | <b>Sports/Leisure Equipment:</b>  |  |
| Kitchen Items/Spices                 |  | Softball glove/bat/cleats         |  |
| Coffee Maker                         |  | Boxing gloves                     |  |
| Room Decorations                     |  | Bicycle/ helmet/gloves            |  |
| Stationary/Cards                     |  | Rollerblades/skates/helmet        |  |
| Black Sunglasses                     |  | Bike lights                       |  |
| Workout supplements                  |  | Snorkel Gear (mask, fins, gloves) |  |
| Vitamins/minerals                    |  | Water Shoes                       |  |
| Wireless router (optional)           |  | Soccer Gear                       |  |
| <b>Barracks Room</b>                 |  | Tennis Gear                       |  |
| Comforter set (full/twin)            |  | Racquet ball gear                 |  |
| Room Décor                           |  | Fishing equipment                 |  |
| Extra Pillows                        |  |                                   |  |

