

Diego Garcia Site Survey Report
Relevant Issues for NOAA P-3 Deployment

Prepared by Jim Moore, NCAR/EOL
15 March 2011

We asked some general questions about support for AOC and the NOAA P-3 during the November-December 2011 time frame for DYNAMO. There should be no major problems with an AOC deployment in Diego Garcia (DGAR). The primary point of contact (POC) for support air operations in DGAR is:

LT Joshua Jeffery
DGAR Air Operations
011-246-370-3300
joshua.jeffery@fe.navy.mil

Any email communications with Diego Garcia should also be copied to:

LCDR Ian Hildreth
Ian.Hildreth@fe.navy.mil

LCDR Hildreth has been our primary contact on DGAR for the last several months and has helped us with logistics and approvals for our recent site survey trip, meetings on island and other details. He will remain our general POC for DYNAMO support in DGAR. Please make sure he is copied on any other communications with other DGAR personnel.

It should be noted that the standard period of service of US military personnel is no more than one year. There is continuous turn over of military staff on the island. It is likely that some of the staff we are dealing with now will not be around in the fall when we deploy.

Some general comments follow:

- Ample ramp space is available
- There is no hangar space available
- The availability of stands, power carts, etc. should be clarified with the POC.
- There is no maintenance support on base
- There was no obvious office space available at the airport. However, it would be a question for the POC to see if there is space somewhere. Distance from the Navy Inn to the Airport is only about 10 minutes so a room at the Inn could be a possibility. Simply remove the furniture and add desks and chairs. Rooms are reasonable price at \$43/day. We did not check on monthly room rates.
- Fuel is not a problem as long as JP-5 will work on the P-3.
- You will need to purchase local cell phones/phone cards

- Prior permission for NOAA and any other group to come to DGAR is required and will be handled through the POC.
- There is no commercial shipping process (e.g. FedEx, DHL). Use USPS and it takes 7-10 days if you are lucky.
- Getting spare parts to DGAR during the deployment could take approximately 2-3 weeks, once the equipment reaches Singapore. Working with the POC may reduce the length of time using the Navy supply system.
- Medical facilities are available for minor issues. More major conditions require evacuation off the island.
- Bring all medications with you. There is no pharmacy on DGAR.
- It will be necessary to set up a purchase order for aircraft support and payment. The financial POC on DGAR is Ms. Anne Hammett (anne.hammett@fe.navy.mil).
- Customs formalities are handled by the British and all visitors to DGAR are subject to their regulations
- Lodging is available at the Navy Gateway Inns and Suites (dg.ngis@fe.navy.mil) Commercial phone number is 011 246 370 4830. They are willing to take reservations several months in advance for rooms. The rooms are quite comfortable and clean.
- There is Internet on DGAR but it is quite slow (128K DSL). It is free in the Navy Inn rooms. It works for email as long as no big (i.e. more than .5MB or so) are sent. Otherwise, expect to spend a lot of time waiting. All off island commercial internet communications are via satellite at a fixed rate. There is an Internet Service provider (Cable and Wireless) that can offer some modest wider bandwidth on the island but the uplink bandwidth to the rest of the world via satellite is still fixed.

Travel to DGAR can be through Singapore (the route we used) or via the U.S. Coast on a military transport leaving Virginia Beach. Be aware that the charge for civilian round trip ticketing from Singapore to DGAR is \$1445 each way. Military flights can be picked up in Yokota, and Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Access to DGAR by Non U.S. citizens is handled on a case-by-case basis. The list of possible nations that I gave to DGAR POC did not raise any immediate issues. But it is important to note that all non-military visitors (U.S. and non U.S. Civilians, Federal employees, etc.) are subject to the application and approval of a Country Clearance Request (APACS) and Force Protection Plan. In addition to these documents, an official Travel Order with name and address of the agency to which airline tickets can be charged must be present at the Air Mobility Command (AMC) Office at Paya Lebar Military Airport in Singapore, if that is the route you choose to come to the island.

Once civilians are on DGAR, they do have access to all public facilities available for military personnel. This includes galleys (cafeteria), clubs, recreation (pool, gymnasium), the Navy Inn and Suites and on-base medical facilities.

LT Jeffery is expecting a call/email from AOC in the near future to discuss details of the support. It is my impression that advanced planning and approval details should be started as soon as possible.

A **critical** first step in the approval is required. It is important that the P-3 group (and everyone coming to DGAR) prepare a complete list of all staff (AOC, Civilian other Feds--everyone) who might be coming to DGAR as part of the DYNAMO deployment. This list has to be vetted and approved by the British authorities prior to any approval of the project and arrival of staff on island. The Navy Base XO (CDR James Musgraves (james.musgraves@fe.navy.mil)) actually recommended that all support issues (including the list noted here) come through the US State Dept. who will route it through the British structure as required. We will be working with NOAA, ONR and NSF to figure out our best routing for this information.

Internet connectivity is available on the island but is very slow. It is basically a 128Kbps DSL line. Free Internet is available in hotel rooms at the Navy Lodge. This connectivity will only allow small document transfers. As noted above, it is unclear whether the aircrew could have an office and Internet connection at the airport. It is something to be discussed with the POC.