

## **337th Air Support Flight – Australia**

**Congratulations** on your assignment selection to Australia. We are the 337<sup>th</sup> Air Support Flight and as the designated Department of Defense support agency in Australia, we are here to provide administrative, finance, transportation, TRICARE, education and legal support during your tour Down Under.

Before you travel, we highly encourage you to review the following links:

U.S. Department of State: Destination Information:  
<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country.html>

U.S. Department of State: Traveler's Checklist: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips\\_1232.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html)

U.S. Department of State: Consular Information Sheets (Australia):  
<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country/australia.html>

DoD Foreign Clearance Guide: <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/>

Australian Government Department of Agriculture Declaration instructions:  
<http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/travel/cant-take>

### **TRANSPORTATION**

To assist you in coordinating your inbound transportation requirements, the 337th transportation section of MSgt Goncalves and SSgt Roach will get in contact with you shortly. Their e-mail address is 337asuf.lgt@us.af.mil or they may be reached at DSN: 315-366-5681. Shipping HHG and/or a POV to Australia can be a complicated and lengthy process. Due to strict customs and quarantine requirements, personnel may incur significant financial liability should established policies not be met. Please do not delay initiating this process or corresponding directly with our transportation personnel. The shipping of pets can also incur significant out-of-pocket costs (\$2,500-\$5,000+ average), so please ensure you mention any plans to ship a pet.

### **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

All personnel and dependents not specifically assigned to a diplomatic position at the US Embassy will serve under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the US and Australia, so you will not require a visa to leave the CONUS or enter Australia, but you will require official (for military members) and no-fee (for dependents) passports. Your official and no-fee passport must contain a SOFA Stamp (endorsement). Please note that family members not eligible to receive a US passport (i.e. - non-US citizens) will not receive a US SOFA endorsement in their native country's passport but will retain all the rights of a dependent under the SOFA while in-country.

Please reference the DoD Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG) for specific entry requirements. If you think you may travel on leave to a third country, it is recommended you obtain a standard leisure travel passport (at your own cost) as official passports are only to be used to enter/exit countries for official travel.

## **AIRPORT DELAYS**

Sometimes people encounter problems at their departure airport and are told they require a visa. Insist that you do not require a visa because of your SOFA status and request the airport staff refers to the airline industry's Transportation Information Manual (TIM) which explains your entry requirements in detail. It is also advisable to speak to a duty manager if the desk staff is unaware of the requirements. I have attached a copy of a "Notice to the Airlines" memo from our legal office. I recommend you hand-carry the memo with you along with your orders when you start your travels to Australia. You might find it helpful at the airport. Finally, if you supply copies of passports, for you and all command sponsored dependents traveling to Australia, to our legal office, they can enter your information into the Australian immigration database as a Special Purpose Travel Authority (SPTA).

The SPTA system can greatly reduce confusion and delays at most airport check-in counters. If you have any further questions concerning the SOFA or entry requirements, please contact Lt Col Welling or MSgt Brown from our Legal Office at 337asuf.ja@us.af.mil or DSN 315-366-5687/5679.

## **ORDERS**

I request you fax or email me a copy of your PCS order with amendment(s), if any, and a copy of your travel itinerary once received. All USN Personnel please include your full SSN with your orders.

## **EDUCATION**

The 337 ASUF operates as the School Liaison Office (SLO) for the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Non-DoD School Program (NDSP) in Australia.

Entitlements vary slightly between DoD organizations. Please contact TSgt Tibbetts at Makenzie.Tibbetts@us.af.mil or DSN 315-366-5682 for information on enrollment requirements, funding entitlements with the NDSP or general education questions.

## **MAIL**

Most U.S. Postal services in Australia have transitioned from APO to DPO services. The main impact this switch has on inbounds is that HHG and HHE are no longer authorized for mailing to DPO addresses. Please be advised that any HHG or HHE items mailed to a DPO address will be rejected and may be returned to sender. The only locations authorized to mail HHG and HHE are Sydney AMT (assigned under Det 4 or 735 AMS) and Alice Springs, as these posts remain under the APO system. Only those inbounds assigned to Det 4, 735 AMS and Alice Springs are authorized to ship HHG or HHE through APO.

APO Mailing System (Sydney AMT--Det 4 or 735 AMS & Alice Springs)

The size of the APO office is very small and they are not set-up for long term storage of inbound personal property. With this being said, we request that you limit the number of boxes mailed to the items in which you will actually need upon arrival in Australia. We also request that boxes are not shipped until you are within 30 days of arrival. If you need to ship them earlier, coordinate with your sponsor to have the items mailed to the sponsor's APO address (your sponsor will have to store the items until your arrival).

Due to Australia's delicate environment they have compiled a listing of items that are restricted from mailing. Please view the list at <http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/mail/cant-mail>

Lastly, you may be able to claim the basic postage (not insurance, premium shipping or packing costs) on any boxes you mail. The TMO section will give you further information on submitting the claims.

### **INPROCESSING**

For proper coordination with outside agencies and Embassy entrance approval you **MUST** notify the 337th ASUF of your arrival, via sending your travel Itinerary, NLT 72hrs before departing your duty station.

### **MILITARY & DEPENDENT ID CARDS**

The 337th Air Support Flight has a DEERS machine in order to make ID cards. Unless you and/or your dependents ID cards will expire prior to your arrival, we are able to assist you with all DEERS and ID card related activities.

### **CONTACT INFO**

Finally, I also request a commercial e-mail address just in case we need to contact you when you depart your current duty station and you're on leave or en route. Please don't hesitate to call or send me an e-mail if you have any enquiries. Cheers!