

RAF Salalah is a large base camp of approximately 300 service personnel. As it was built for a much smaller number structure accommodation is restricted and tends to be overcrowded. The accommodation available to the rank structure of this team is as follows:

Officers One fan-cooled room for Surgeon and Anaesthetist - this is a reserved room. Shared fan-cooled room for Resus Officer - reserved room.

Serjeants All Sgts at present have got single fan-cooled rooms, but on arrival were all sharing overcrowded rooms, as situations improve the tendency is to give them single rooms on account of variable hours of work.

Junior ranks 5 in number are in a billet 14ft x 20ft which is fan-cooled - this is reserved accommodation.

On arrival new teams have to take whatever is available until old team departs. If sick quarters and wards are empty they usually stay there for the night.

Food The three messes provide a wide variety of food ranging from UK type food to curry. Fresh vegetables and fruit are available in sufficient quantities.

Entertainment Numerous clubs exist in the base, but essentially there are three main sports. Swimming - there is a fine 25yd x 10yd pool on camp. Football - numerous hard ground pitches. Volley ball - there are five courts scattered about the base. There is also an open air cinema which shows 4 up-to-date films a week.

Beaches There are two good town beaches, these are out of bounds during the monsoon season but are safe on other occasions.

Work The present set up of the EST is as follows. The Resuscitation room and operating theatre are housed in the same Twynam and are air conditioned. Adjoining this block are two wards, one of nine beds and one of four beds. At present plans are at foot to place Xray and Laboratory facilities on concrete bases adjacent to Resuscitation Ward, this should be well under way when new team arrives. Apart from the team personnel we have 1 RAF SRN and an SRN/SEN from BMH Dhakolia.

The team also have beds to transfer patients to at Um al Gharwif (HQ SAP). This unit is about 2 miles from the RAF base and not approachable after dark without escort, the present incumbent regiment have a very good medical officer who assists this team during reception of heavy casualties.

In Salalah there is the local hospital where the team works three out-patients sessions and three operating sessions each week, these are variable and depend on the amount of work in base area. At present there is no surgeon or anaesthetist in the hospital so this team is relatively busy in a consultant and operative capacity, things may change for the better during the next teams tour.

The town of Salalah is a sprawling town with a large palace court compound containing the suk or native shopping centre, very little available, more of a picture postcard value. Care-free trips around town are not encouraged due to the political situation which at present exists.

When leaving camp to go either down to the hospital or town an armed guard is required and long trousers must be worn.

Our mode of transport at present consists of a very old Land Rover, property of the Sultan and serviced by his garage in the town, it would not pass the three or ten year test! We also have an old Army ambulance serviced and maintained by BAPT. One or both are usually off the road for some part of the week.

Clothes Dress is at the discretion of OC FST. Normal round base and unit consists of bare buff and desert boots or open sandals, when visiting other units shirts, berets or hats are worn.

Dress in the Officers Mess during the day is working dress, in the evening slacks, shirt(long sleeved) tie, cravat.

In the Sgts Mess the same rules apply but short sleeve shirts may be worn.

In the Airsons Mess dress is casual.

The camp sports a tailor where incoming units can get renovations done to OGs for nothing provided they receive a supporting authorisation from Sub Stores in the base, this is easy to obtain, otherwise they pay and its not cheap. Desert cord slacks are also available on request for about £3 a pair but with adequate OG slacks are not really suitable as uniform.

The outgoing team should be in possession of 4 pairs of Mens Green shirts, 4 pairs of slacks OG, 4 pairs of Shorts OD, 3 pairs of light cotton stockings if available. As regards footwear, 2 pairs of desert boots for everyday wear are far more serviceable and practical than DMS Boots, the latter require heavy socks and the tendency to foot rot increases in this climate accordingly. Desert boots should be obtained in UK prior to departure as there are no facilities for getting them en route. No authority exists in this base for the RAF to issue them to Army personnel, and the size number available here if such authority is forthcoming is very limited. 58 pattern webbing is not required, the only serviceable item from this would be a web belt, holster, waterbottle (doubles as a mug for Junior ranks) knife, fork and spoon (no mess tins) also for Junior ranks. Maroon hose tops are neither serviceable nor practical. Flip flops and shorts are ideal for theatre and ward staff.

For off duty wear I would suggest each member requires 2/3 pairs of cotton/terylene type slacks, 4 pairs of long sleeved shirts, 3 pairs of terry toweling type shirt short sleeved, 3 pairs of shorts (sports type), swimming trunks, 2 large bath towels, 2 hand towels. Toilet essentials, any member with Gillette Techmatic razor to bring supply of refills as none exist in NAAFI, aerosol type shaving foam is also non existent(allowed by air). 4 pairs of cotton type socks, basket ball type boots or PT shoes for sports use. Flip flops are also ideal for round camp and swimming pool wear, there are only available in limited numbers in NAAFI and should be purchased in UK prior to departure. For evening wear shoes or desert boots.

Shops NAAFI exists in a limited sort of way, certain items are cheaper than in UK, viz cameras and electrical equipment. The cost of films and cassettes are practically the same as UK prices. The Junior ranks find that the cost of minerals, beer and snacks are the same and in some cases slightly more expensive than in UK.

Beer and minerals in Officers and Sgts Mess are also about the same as in UK. Spirits are very much cheaper and approximate to BAOR prices.

Banks Other ranks can on arrival make arrangements to be paid by the paymaster of BATT, but this is not always convenient and I would suggest that any member with a UK cheque book bring it as NAAFI will cash medical team cheques.

Officers are advised to bring their UK cheque books and bank cards with them as the NAAFI or Adjutant will cash them.

Each member should also leave UK with about £15 in hand as overnight stops in Cyprus and Masirah can occur.

Religion A base church exists and RC and C of E chaplains visit about once every month for a few days.

Other A breakdown of the climatological conditions from 1942 to date has been forwarded. The incoming team will be here for a month and a half of the monsoon season. The monsoon conditions here consist of a humid muggy atmosphere rather than a continuous down-pour, though occasional heavy rain does occur. Drying of clothes is a problem during this period. Ideal footwear is desert boots, flip flops or open sandals.

The cool season here is from October to January when pullovers are required in evenings.

As overnight stops exist a bag containing toilet essentials and change of shirt is desirable.

Laundry There is a Dhobi which gives a reasonable service. Laundry is collected and delivered from both Officers and Sgts Messes, Junior ranks fetch and carry their own.

Miscellaneous Sunglasses/clip ons and torches should be acquired prior to departure from UK. Uvistat cream is possibly the best anti-sunburn cream for all skins and should be obtained from each mess unit.