

ASPIRE DEFENCE

SERVICE STANDARDS FOR WATER & WASTE WATER

Version for Local DIO Offices Responsible for Service Family Accommodation

We are committed to provide an excellent service to our customers. This document provides details of our special services and our service standards. If you require any further information, please contact the Aspire Helpdesk using the contact details below.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Vulnerable Customers

We pay special attention to the needs of vulnerable customers, such as the disabled, chronically ill or the elderly. In order to ensure we are able to provide appropriate assistance, we maintain a register of vulnerable customers.

If you think any SFA residents should be included in this register, please contact the Aspire Helpdesk.

INTRODUCTION

In July 2006 Aspire Defence took over responsibility for operating and maintaining the water mains and foul sewers serving Service Family Accommodation properties, which were previously the direct responsibility of the MoD. This document describes the levels of service which we will provide in operating and maintaining these mains and sewers and includes arrangements for payment of compensation if we do not achieve them. The standards and compensation payments apply only to the responsibilities of Aspire Defence. Where the fault is outside our responsibility, for example a water supply interruption to the Garrison or a problem within your own property, these standards and compensation payments will not apply.

SERVICE STANDARDS

Water & Wastewater Standard 1 – Water Quality

We will supply SFA properties with water which is safe and of a high quality, and meets the applicable legal standards. We regularly test the water to ensure that quality is maintained. Water supplies are occasionally affected by burst pipes or essential maintenance work. This can disturb sediment in the pipes resulting in brown discolouration. Alternatively, air can be trapped in our mains, resulting in a cloudy white appearance. Whilst unsightly, these are not harmful and will normally clear quickly. If SFA residents have concerns over the quality, taste or smell of the water, Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) local office should

phone the Aspire Helpdesk. We will ask you a few simple questions to identify the cause of your concerns and provide you with as much information as possible to reassure you about your water quality. If you feel that we have not properly addressed your concerns, please write to the Aspire Helpdesk and we will respond in accordance with Standard 6.

In the unlikely event that there is a possibility of water in SFA properties being contaminated, we will take urgent action to rectify the problem. We will inform residents immediately and tell them what precautions they should take, such as boiling your water. Where we advise you to boil your water, a boil notice will normally be delivered to you. Occasionally, particularly where large numbers of properties are involved, we will also use mobile loudspeakers or other means of communication to keep you informed.

Water & Wastewater Standard 2 – Water Supply Restoration

We will give notice of planned interruptions and guarantee to restore the water supply within the time stated. We will give 48 hours notice in writing to DIO local office if a planned interruption is going to last more than four hours. If there is an unplanned interruption, for example when a water main bursts, we will put the water supply back on within 12 hours of being told about the problem. Some larger mains can be more difficult to mend quickly, but we guarantee to fix them within 48 hours. We will inform you when the supply will be back on as soon as we can set a time.

If we fail to meet these standards, we will automatically pay you £20. For each additional 24 hours that the supply is unavailable, we will pay you a further £10.

Water & Wastewater Standard 3 – Water Pressure

We aim to maintain water pressure so that the pressure does not fall below our normal standard of 10 metres head.

If the water pressure at the point our pipe enters an SFA property, for example at the kitchen tap, falls below seven metres static head, in other words, 70% of our normal minimum level of service DIO local offices can claim £25. As a guide, the kitchen tap should be able to fill a 4.5 litre/one gallon bucket in 30 seconds with all the other taps and appliances turned off.

To qualify for a payment the SFA property must have experienced loss of pressure twice in a 28-day period, on each occasion lasting more than one hour. DIO local offices can only make one claim per property in any year.

This guarantee does not apply if the low pressure was caused by work which we must do to the water supply network, including planned maintenance and repairs.

We may not know about these low pressure incidents, so DIO local offices have to make a claim for payment under this standard.

Water & Wastewater Standard 4 – Sewer Flooding

We aim to maintain the main sewer system to ensure that blockages do not occur. However, very occasionally, for example ground subsidence or fatty content in the effluent may cause the sewers to block and overflow.

If the sewer outside an SFA property overflows and effluent gets inside the building, we will make a payment of £250 to DIO local offices, and provide a clean up service.

Where effluent overflows from the sewer into an SFA property, but not inside the building, DIO local offices can claim a payment if the SFA property experiences actual loss, damage or serious loss of amenity up to a maximum of £200. Only one payment per SFA property will be made in any year in respect of external flooding.

This guarantee does not apply if the flooding was caused by exceptional weather conditions or problems with your internal pipe work.

We may not know about these flooding incidents, DIO local offices have to make a claim for payment under this standard.

Water & Wastewater Standard 5 – Appointments

Should we need to visit an SFA property, or should you request a visit from us for any reason, you will be offered an appointment during the morning or afternoon.

We will ensure that any of our staff entering an SFA property carry proper identification.

If we fail to make or keep an appointment we will arrange for DIO local offices to receive a £20 payment.

Water & Wastewater Standard 6 – Responding to Complaints

If you have a complaint regarding any other aspect of our operation and maintenance of the water mains and foul sewers serving SFA properties, please make this in writing to the Aspire Helpdesk. We will investigate and provide you with a written reply within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. If we fail to make a substantive response within this time period, we will pay you £10.

PAYMENTS UNDER THESE STANDARDS

Automatic Payments

We aim to notify you direct of failures in respect of Standard 2 (Water Supply Restoration), Standard 5 (Appointments) and Standard 6 (Responding to Complaints), and, as long as we have DIO local office details, to make the appropriate payment to you by cheque within 10 working days of becoming aware of the failure. If we fail to make the payment within this timescale, please notify the Aspire Helpdesk, and we will arrange for you to receive an additional £10.

Making a Claim for Payment

You have to notify us of failures in respect of Standard 3 (Water Pressure) and Standard 4 (Sewer Flooding). If you wish to make a claim under these Standards, please telephone the Aspire Helpdesk for details of how to apply. We will verify the failure, and if it falls within our responsibility, we will make the appropriate payment to DIO local offices by cheque within 20 working days. If we fail to make the payment within this timescale, please notify the Aspire Helpdesk, and we will arrange for the DIO local offices to receive an additional £20.

BILLING QUERIES

The MoD will continue to bill for water and foul sewerage services. You should continue to make payments and raise any billing queries with the same MoD office as before. Please only send non billing and technical queries such as the above to the Aspire Helpdesk.

HOW TO CONTACT US

By Telephone:

Aspire Helpdesk: 01980 885103

By Letter:

Aspire Defence Services Ltd
C/O MUJV Business Support
Aspire Business Centre
Ordnance Road
Tidworth
SP9 7QD

LIABILITY

Any payments we make under these Standards do not affect your legal rights. If we make a payment it does not mean that Aspire Defence or the MoD accept any legal liability