

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED



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Information & Guidance Handbook for Service Families Accommodation



**Defence
Infrastructure
Organisation**

Issue04, Jan 2021



Babcock Inter
www.babcock.co.uk
0800 888 4

babcock

Foreword

Babcock Support Services GmbH (BSSG) and Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) have produced this to help you, the Service Families Accommodation (SFA) occupant, understand the processes and procedures involved with the maintenance of your SFA.

It gives comprehensive guidance about what you should do in an emergency, who you can contact for general maintenance and repairs and the timeframes in which you can expect work to be undertaken.

The booklet gives practical advice on a range of issues that may affect you or your SFA; from German rules and regulations regarding snow and ice clearance, to tips that may help you reduce your energy usage. It also explains how condensation and mould can affect your home and sets out some things you can do to rectify or alleviate the problem.

This booklet explains the complaints process and we recommend that, should you have an issue with your SFA, you follow Babcock's guidelines closely

Babcock Support Services GmbH (BSSG) have been contracted by Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) to deliver maintenance and repairs to all MOD assets and estates in British Forces Germany (BFG).

BSSG CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE (CCC) HELPDESK

Babcock provides a 24/7 response service for all building property repair and maintenance requirements. This is supported by a centralised Helpdesk in the UK through which you can report all repair and maintenance requests.

All out of hours emergencies can be reported using the same number.

Contact us:

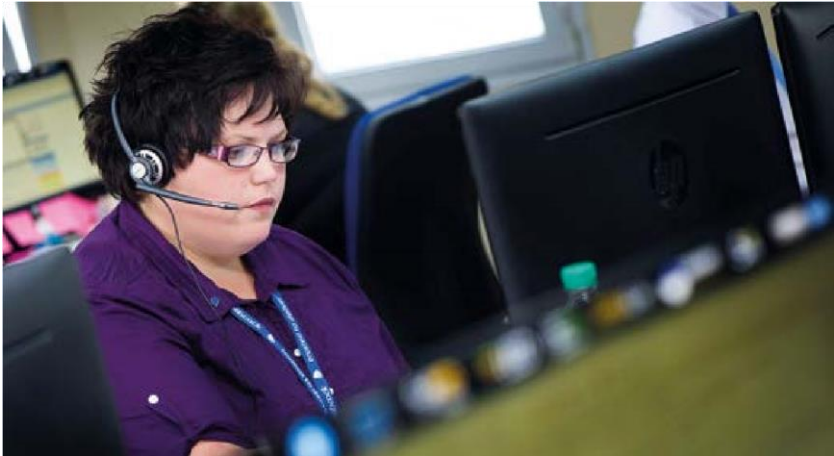
Call the Customer Contact Centre Helpdesk on:

German free phone – [0800 888 4242](tel:08008884242)

Report your fault via our web portal at – <https://bssg.babcockinternational.com/>

Via e-mail, mail us at – BSSGHelp@babcockinternational.com

The Helpdesk agents log all requests with a category, depending on the urgency of the issue. These categories are as follows:



Emergency

Where there is imminent danger to health, life or building if no immediate action is taken Babcock will attend to make safe.

Urgent

Where work needs to be completed swiftly to prevent further damage to property or put right a controllable health risk

Routine

Where work is necessary to prevent further damage and restore normal working order

Our delivery teams will respond to these as per timeframes below:

Emergency core hours - 45 minutes

Emergency Out of Hours - 3 hours

Urgent - 5 working days

Routine - 20 working days



FAULT REPORTING IN SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION

Help us to help you:

The accurate description of both location and fault is essential when reporting faults to the BSSG Technical Service Centre (Helpdesk).

To assist us in sending the correct engineer to the correct location please apply the 5 W's principle:

Where, What, Why, When and Who Where

Address / Building number / Flat number / etc.

Room Description – Living Room / Bedroom 1 / Bedroom 2 / Bathroom / Kitchen... etc.

Area – Corridor / Stairwell / Cellar / Attic / 1st Floor / 2nd Floor

Location of POC – if the key is with a neighbour –

Remember, the neighbour has to attend with the tradesman.

What

Exact description of fault – example:

Windowpane cracked

Window lock broken

Window does not close

Brickwork around the window loose

Window frame cracked / loose

If you simply put Window broken, we do not know which trade to send.

Why

Cause of damage:

Wilful

Accidental

Wear & tear Unknown

When

There are four 2 hour slots available

Monday to Thursday:	08:00 hrs – 10:00 hrs
	10:00 hrs – 12:00 hrs
	12:00 hrs – 14:00 hrs
	14:00 hrs – 16:00 hrs
Friday:	08:00 hrs – 10:00 hrs
	10:00 hrs – 12:00 hrs

Our tradesman will not call the occupant before attending

Who

Name & Telephone / mobile number of POC (The agent should repeat your name and numbers to ensure we have the accurate information)

Please advise the CCC Helpdesk if your telephone/mobile number changes.

BABCOCK INFORMATION CARD

Occupants of Service Families accommodation may find a Babcock information card in their letterbox. (Example on next page)

These cards are posted when either the tradesman turns up with an appointment but the occupant is not at home, or when Babcock was unable to contact the occupant to arrange an appointment and the tradesman tried to visit without prior appointment.

In some cases, where the tradesmen are unable to explain to the occupant why the work has not been completed during attendance, the tradesman will tick one of the boxes on the card and pass it to the occupant. The cards are printed in English on the front and the back of the card shows the German translation.



If you find such card in your letterbox, please contact the customer helpline under the number shown on the card.

EXAMPLE BABCOCK INFORMATION CARD



A BSSG operative called today to investigate the fault reported on the Work Order number noted at the bottom of this card. Unfortunately, we found no-one at home. Please contact our Customer Helpline on the number below to schedule an appointment.

The repair cannot be carried out as the technician requires clarification that he/she has authority to do so. As this clarification request is sent electronically, the repair will be made safe and suspended until authority to proceed has been given. Please contact our Customer Helpline on the number below should you require further information.

The work has been suspended as the technician requires additional materials or assistance to complete the repair. When the technician can complete the work he/she will return. If access cannot be gained at that time, you will receive a card with further instructions to arrange a fixed appointment.

We have repaired the requested works and will proceed to close this order. Should you have any queries on this repair please contact our Customer Helpline on the number below.

Work order number.
Customer Helpline 0800 888 4242

COMPLAINT PROCESS



Complaint Handling

Babcock are committed to providing a consistent, fair and confidential complaint handling process to resolve issues raised by our customers.

Complaints will be responded to within one working day by one of our Site Team

The Babcock complaint handling process is fully supported by the Babcock Senior Management

Your feedback on any aspect of Babcock's service

delivery will be very welcome on: Free phone 0800

888 4242 or report feedback at

<https://bssg.babcockinternational.com>

Informing you of progress

Customers will be informed about the progress of their complaint within seven days of it being logged with the TSC (earlier if possible)

Please contact the Helpdesk to find out at what stage your request is.




Definition of a complaint

We define a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction or grievance reported to our Customer Contact Centre (Helpdesk)



How to complain

You can call our Customer Contact Center in confidence on **0800 888 4242** From 07.00 hrs to 19.00 hrs to log your complaint. You can also log a complaint via the web portal. All complaints will be recorded on our Management Information System, we will record the full details of your complaint and ensure you are given a unique reference number.



We will endeavour to fully conclude our activities within fourteen days of receiving your complaint.

We will also inform you of where you can take further action should you not be satisfied with your response.

In all cases we will endeavour to resolve a customer concern in the most direct manner.

Feedback on complaints process

Babcock always welcomes your feedback on how we have handled your complaint and are keen to include any lessons learnt into our operating process.

PREVENTING MOULD AND CONDENSATION

Many occupants report problems with mould and condensation in their quarter to the Babcock Technical Service Centre. Cooking, washing and drying clothes indoors produces water vapour which can only be seen when tiny drops of water (or condensation) appear on colder surfaces such as walls, windows and ceilings.

Mould spores are, like water vapour, invisible to the naked eye but are always present in the atmosphere; both inside and outside the house. They can only be seen once they land on a surface on which they can exist and multiply.

The presence of excessive moisture in the air and on surfaces is the main reason for mould growth.

Usually the first indication of a problem is water vapour condensing on windows and other cooler surfaces such as walls and ceilings. The second indication is small mould patches growing on surfaces. To rectify these problems, the occupant must take certain steps to eliminate the causes of condensation.

FOUR STEPS TO REDUCING CONDENSATION

1. Produce less Moisture

When cooking, either cover pans or use an extractor fan if you have one.
Do not dry clothes on radiators, whenever possible dry them outdoors.
Indoors, use a drying room or clothes horse.
Vent tumble-driers to the outside, never into your quarter.

2. Wipe Away Excess Moisture

Wipe away any condensation that has collected on the windows and window sills every morning. Just opening the window is not enough to remove excess moisture naturally.

3. Ventilate to Remove Moisture

Once the condensation has been wiped away, all windows should be opened wide. After approximately 10 minutes the windows should be closed completely. Leaving windows on tilt during the winter months actually hinders the process of removing moisture from the air.



While using the bathroom, windows and doors should be closed. After finishing in the bathroom, condensation and any excess water should be wiped away and the window should be opened wide for approximately 10 minutes. Extractor fans (where fitted) should be checked and cleaned regularly.

The same applies to the kitchen.

A small gap has to be left between furniture and walls throughout the house; this will allow the air to circulate freely around the room.

4. Heat Your Home a Little More



Set your heating to a low background temperature during the day and night including the bedrooms, kitchen and bathrooms. Radiators should normally be set between 2 and 3 to provide the optimum room temperature, which helps to prevent condensation forming on the walls and ceilings.

SNOW AND ICE CLEARANCE

Householders are responsible for clearing snow and ice on all footpaths adjoining their property. German law states that this has to be done Mon - Fri by 07.00 hrs in the morning and by 09.00 hrs at the weekend and kept clear until 22.00 hrs.

If you are physically unable or for any questions regarding snow and ice clearance on your property please contact your Housing Estate Manager and/ or Unit Welfare Office.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

It is the householders' responsibility to keep their garden tidy during occupancy and also to hand it back in good condition.

Where requests for Grounds Maintenance are passed to the Helpdesk, such as cutting trees, shrubs or bushes, this will be treated as additional works and will require approval from the authorities (DIO). This may take some time. In accordance with German conservation law, it is not always possible to carry out certain works, (cutting trees, shrubs or bushes) depending on the bird nesting season.

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Once approved, the work can be carried out, however it may not be approved for varying reasons.



HIRED ESTATE

The properties leased by the MOD from private Landlords are usually referred to as 'Hirings'.

If you are not sure if you live in a Hiring, speak to your Housing Estate Manager and he will be able to give you this information.

With the hired properties, we may have to ask the Landlords to carry out certain repairs, which are deemed to be the Landlord's responsibility.

IF YOU SMELL GAS



If you smell gas anywhere in, or immediately outside your Married Quarter, do not touch any electrical fittings, switches or plugs. If you are in a flat, notify other occupants - do not telephone or ring door bells!

Get yourself and other family members/occupants out of the building as quickly as possible. Only when the building is vacant should a call be made to the Helpdesk, once you are a safe distance (100m) away from the building!

0800 888 4242

Helpdesk operators will immediately notify the relevant authorities.

PRE-PLANNED MAINTENANCE IN SFAS

Babcock is responsible for carrying out several mandatory inspections within all BFG Housing Estates. These are a legal requirement and have to be completed within set timeframes. Included in these inspections are, for example, annual boiler inspections and four yearly electrical checks.

Wherever possible we will try to make appointments either through our Helpdesk or via the HSOs. Where we are unable to make an appointment, we will leave a card in your post - box, asking you to contact the Helpdesk or our site team for an appointment. Please see pages 8 and 9 for further information regarding Babcock information and appointment cards.

These pre-planned maintenance checks are a legal requirement, and must be carried out to ensure the continued safety of you and your family, so please ensure that you make the appointment and that someone will be available at the appointment time. Thank you.

ADAPTERS



Travel adaptors, such as those for multi-country use, are not suitable to be constantly used especially for appliances that require an earth connection and, as the name implies, are really for travel use. They may only be used with double insulated appliances; these will be marked with a CE symbol.

WARNING: Travel adaptors if permanently used, can damage electrical appliances and are a fire hazard.

All electrical adaptors used within residential accommodation must be fit for purpose and safe to use. UK 3 pin to German 2 pin adaptors connected to appliances that have a high amperage rating; for example, kettles, washing machines, dish-washers and tumble dryers must therefore at least be clearly marked '13 Amp' (this equates to a max of 3 Kw at 230V) and be earthed on both sides. Such adaptors, which are available from all main NAAFI shops, can normally also be used for most types of household appliances unless otherwise stated in the manufacturer's instructions. Adaptors which do not show the amperage are not to be used under any circumstances. It is best practice to have all adaptors showing ratings and rated as described above, thus allowing flexibility of use and reducing risk.



WATER MANAGEMENT

If your property is empty for 3 days or more, then on returning to the property, the hot and cold taps throughout the house (including showers and outlets) should be run fully for a minimum of 5 minutes. This will help to reduce any risk of Legionella building up in the water system.

Remove and clean any removable tap ends, shower heads and outlet nozzles with disinfectant or boiling water at least monthly. Shower heads should be used on a regular basis, or flushed at least once per week.

Ensure any taps which are not frequently used are also flushed regularly (i.e. outside taps and toilets etc.)

The above points, regarding taps are standard advice for low use or minimum use taps.

ASBESTOS



Many SFA are older properties and may have some asbestos, which was used in the original build. This has been inspected and should have labels indicating where asbestos may have been used. Please do not cover these labels, paint over them or remove them.

Please do not drill, screw or hammer nails into anything marked as potentially containing asbestos.

Damage to any asbestos containing material must be reported immediately to the HEM and any contact or exposure must be prevented.

ENERGY SAVING TIPS AND TRICKS

Turn it off

Try to be aware of unnecessary lights left on, and appliances left plugged in or on standby. Some items can still use energy when plugged in, even if the appliance has been turned off.

Nearly all electrical and electronic appliances can safely be turned off or unplugged without upsetting their systems. Some satellite and digital TV recorders may need to be left plugged in so they can keep track of any programmes you want to record – but check the instructions on any appliances you aren't sure about.

A typical household could save between €40 and €80 a year just by remembering to turn off appliances left on standby.

Lighten your load

Have you changed all your light bulbs for low-energy ones? Even the halogen spots? You can now get LED spotlights that are bright enough to replace halogens, as well as regular energy saving bulbs ('compact fluorescent lamps' or CFLs) for pretty much everything else. They come in a variety of shapes, sizes and fittings. They last up to 10 times longer than ordinary bulbs, and using one can save you around €50 over the lifetime of the bulb.

If the average household replaced all their remaining old-fashioned bulbs with CFLs and all their halogens with LEDs it would not cost you very much but save you around €45 a year.

ENERGY SAVING TIPS AND TRICKS

Be careful in the kitchen



You can save over €40 - €50 per year just by being careful how you use your kitchen appliances. The following tips can help you reach this saving:

- Set your washing machine to wash at lower temperatures, 30°C - 40°C.
- Using a bowl to wash up rather than leaving the hot tap running.
- Don't fill your kettle right up every time – just boil the amount of water you need.
- When boiling vegetables use just enough water to keep them covered.
- Use the kettle to boil water for cooking, instead of heating a pan on the stove. Not only will this be more efficient, but it generally takes less time too.
- Always use the right size of pan for your cooking ring and put a lid on it. This will help save energy as it will cook quicker.
- Make sure the gas flame only heats the bottom of the pan. This will help save gas and also stops the handle from getting hot and burning your hand.
- Make sure taps are fully turned off after use. This will help save both water and heating.
-

INFORMATION ON HEATING ISSUES IN YOUR SFA

Should you experience heating issues please report this to the Helpdesk. All work requests will be reviewed on an individual basis and requests will be prioritised accordingly, subject to other factors, (time of year etc.) It is possible that you may have to wait until the next working day until an engineer will attend.

Try to keep your radiators clear. If at all possible, do not put a large sofa in front of a radiator as it will absorb most of the heat.

The bleeding of air out of radiators in houses is the responsibility of the occupant. A radiator will need bleeding if it feels much cooler at the top of the radiator than at the bottom. If you are not sure how to do this, the Housing Estate Manager will be able to advise you.

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If you live in a block of flats we advise you against bleeding your own radiators as the boiler will have to be refilled. In this case please contact the helpdesk and state that you live in a block of flats and they will make an appointment for a Babcock engineer to attend.



IF YOU LOCK YOURSELF OUT



If you lock yourself out of your home after working hours, or for some other reason are unable to get in please contact your Unit Guardroom, who hold a list of local locksmiths; the call-out will be at your expense. Babcock Support Services GmbH is unable to respond in these cases. In the case of broken or bent keys, or where it is not your fault, please call the Helpdesk.



FROST PRECAUTIONS

If you are planning to leave your property empty (even just overnight) during winter:

- Leave your heating on for at least an hour a day while you are away from home. In severe weather, or if severe weather is forecast, you should always leave your heating on day and night at your usual temperature setting – whether you are at home or not.
- If it is very cold consider opening your loft trap door. This allows warm air from other parts of the house to circulate in the loft and will help prevent pipes freezing.



Ask a friend or relative to visit your home every day while you are away. This will mean that, if you do suffer a burst pipe, it will be detected as soon as possible, and the damage caused will be minimised.

If a pipe has burst, turn off the water at the main stopcock, switch off your central heating and any other water heating installations, open all the taps to drain the system, and call the Helpdesk on [0800 888 4242](tel:08008884242). Be sure that repairs are completed before you turn anything back on.

WHAT NOT TO FLUSH

No matter what it says on the packaging, most of our personal healthcare and beauty products must never be disposed of down the toilet. Many of these products don't break down like toilet paper does. Instead they collect in our sewers to form blockages.

The results are costly maintenance, repairs, flooding and environmental pollution.

Which products should not be flushed?

Manufacturers are developing ever more innovative brands of toilet paper, biodegradable sanitary towels and wipes. These are frequently disposed of down the toilet and into the sewerage system, and once they are flushed, it's easy to forget about them. There are practical concerns about the suitability of disposing of many of so-called 'flushable products' into public and private drainage and sewerage networks.

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Most products should be treated as municipal solid waste, which goes in a bag into the bin, and not as flushable waste. Even dental floss is unsuitable for flushing - it can collect in filters during the treatment process and cause machinery to break down.



Domestic drainage pipes are typically 10cm (4") in diameter and are simply not designed to carry this type of waste, so they can easily become blocked. The main sewers also suffer blockages as waste builds up under ground. There may also be discharges into the environment via storm overflows at times of very heavy rainfall.

Disposal of unsuitable products, combined with fats, oils, grease and food waste poured down the sink causes thousands of homes and gardens to be flooded each year. Cooking fat should not be flushed in to the drainage system. Accumulations of fat will block sewage pipes and prevent proper treatment at the sewage plant. To dispose of fat, it should be allowed to solidify, wrapped up and placed in the general waste bin. Similarly, cooking oils should be bottled and disposed of in the waste bin.



CELLAR WARNING

The MOD has a duty to inform all SFA licensee's of the potential for water damage to personal possessions stored in cellars, through water ingress or flooding. The licensee on move in will have signed a waiver acknowledging that they have been advised and that they are responsible for taking reasonable precautions to protect their possessions and Defence Accommodation Stores if you chose to store them in the cellar.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is responsible for carpets in my SFA?

Carpets are provided through the Defence Accommodation Store (DAS), a separate department of DIO and occupants should contact their Housing Estate Manager for carpet enquiries. Babcock will make safe where there is a trip hazard.

Who is responsible for pest control?

The Housing Estate Managers have the numbers available for pest control and this should be booked through them.

Who does the Waste Removal for SFA Estates?

This is done by the Stadt through a contractor. Babcock is only responsible for Waste Management on Technical Estates and Barrack Sites.

Who is responsible for maintenance of free standing furniture such as wardrobes, bed side tables etc.?

DIO Defence Accommodation Stores are responsible for such furniture. Please contact your Housing Estate Manager.

Can I request to have my light bulbs changed?

Changing of light bulbs is the occupants' responsibility, unless it is an encased light that requires specialist tools to remove, ie a neon striplight or if the light is not accessible.

What is a 'SON'?

This is a Statement of Need which is required where minor new works other than normal repairs are requested (i.e. fitting additional shelves etc.). This has to be processed by the Housing Estate Manager, who will forward it for approval.

Using the Web Portal, can I report multiple faults under one fault number?

Yes, it is possible to report several requests under one number.

Do I have to keep a record of my reference number?

It is easier for the Babcock Helpdesk agents and the Customer Care Officers to track your works order, if you have the reference number that was given to you on the phone or via the Web Portal. This reference number will also help to speed the process up if you have any queries or complaints.

Can my spouse get into trouble if I log a complaint?

Not at all. All complaints are handled with strict confidentiality. Babcock is contracted by the MOD but is not in any way part of the military chain of command.



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Notes

Notes



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FOR ALL MAINTENANCE REQUESTS

Web

<http://bssghelp.babcock.co.uk>

E Mail

bssghelp@babcockinternational.com

Freephone

0800 888 4242



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