

Welcome to the 65th Air Base Group!



Welcome to the 65th Air Base Group at Lajes Field, a stunning location on the picturesque island of Terceira in the Azores, Portugal. This enchanting locale is renowned for its bullfights, vibrant painted tiles, and the charming sight of cows leisurely strolling through the streets. You are about to embark on a truly beautiful assignment.

Terceira is one of the nine inhabited islands of the Azores Archipelago and is located in the North Atlantic Ocean, about 2,300 miles east of Washington, DC, and about 900 miles west of Lisbon, Portugal. Lajes Field, known as the “crossroads of the Atlantic,” provides an essential mid-Atlantic link for US and Allied Forces to Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Terceira was the third island discovered by the Portuguese, giving the island its name, which means “Third.” Terceira has beautiful hills, and water is everywhere. The island’s locals are warm, friendly, and eager to try to speak English with you, but enjoy your effort to speak Portuguese.

We are very proud as Team 6-5 and our commitment to enabling expeditionary movement of warfighters, warplanes, and global communications to Combatant Commanders supporting joint, coalition, and NATO operations--promoting regional partnerships. We conduct our operations and take care of our team with pride. Our team is composed of United States military and civilian personnel, as well as Portuguese local nationals. As our guest, you are now a member of “Team Lajes.” We hope you find this information helpful.

What you want and need to know

Lajes Field is a beautiful assignment. There are hills and water everywhere you look! There is a lot to do outdoors, an array of amazing food, and some of the best cheese and wine in the world.

Living on Terceira has its perks. Locally produced items, such as meat, wine, crafted goods, and services, are relatively affordable. The locals are amiable and willing to overcome language barriers to assist us. However, it's worth noting that shipping items such as clothing, shoes, furniture, etc., to the island can result in higher costs akin to prices on the mainland.

Before Departure:

To call Lajes Field from a DSN from another DSN: 314 - 535 - (last 4 of DSN number)

To call commercial from Europe: 00351 - 295 - 57 - (last 4 of DSN number)

To call commercial from the US: 011 - 351 - 295 - 57 - (last 4 of DSN number)

Temporary Base Access Requirements:

Your sponsor will arrange for a temporary base pass. Before your arrival, you will be asked for your Full Name, passport number, and country of issue. This pass is a crucial step in gaining access to the base and should be secured before you arrive.

After you arrive at Lajes, a permanent Base Access Pass request will be completed at Pass & ID.

You MUST be in uniform for this appointment and have your CAC.

Email and Shared Drive Access

Your sponsor will request that you complete a DD Form 2875 to access the Email and shared drive. You must provide the following training certificates:

- Information Awareness Training
- Records Management User Training <https://lms-jets.cce.af.mil/moodle/enrol/index.php?id=14532>
- Privacy Act https://dl.cyber.mil/trn/online/disa_pii_v40_final_web/launch.html

For questions, contact 65 ABS/SCXK Knowledge Operations 65ABS.SCXKKnowledgeOperations@us.af.mil

Uniforms

There is **no** military clothing sales store on the island. You must bring extra uniform items, especially if you are promoting during your tour. You must bring all uniforms, including OCPs, Service Dress and/or Semi-Formal, and AF PT gear.

Note 1: Mess Dress is optional.

Note 2: You are encouraged to pack a uniform in your carry-on bag; luggage is often misplaced en route to Terceira Island.

Where to Live

All personnel at Lajes Field live off-base on the local economy. You can drive from one side of the island to another in about 45 minutes (depending on cow traffic), and nothing is “far away.”

Housing Office

The Housing Office staff will assist you at every step of the house-hunting process, ensuring it is beneficial and efficient. This process includes scheduling viewing appointments. The housing office also helps you if there is a language barrier; however, most landlords speak English. You can look on www.homes.mil to see what is available. You are authorized 30 days in lodging. However, suppose you are actively searching for a house or awaiting a housing inspection. In that case, you can stay longer if space is available. Furniture is provided by the housing office (i.e., tables, beds, transformers, etc.) The M&FRC offers a small loan closet with dish kits and other small appliances.

Household Goods Shipment

When it comes to shipping your household goods, service members are authorized 2,500 pounds or 25 percent of the HHG weight allowance (whichever is greater). Civilian employees are authorized at 4,500 pounds. Please get in touch with your local TMO HHG/PAX Section for any additional information and be sure to ask for a copy of the country instructions pertaining to Lajes AB. They will guide you through the process, including what items are allowed, how to pack them, and the necessary paperwork.

Before shipping your HHG please be aware of these Prohibited Items:

Personal Firearms (Household goods carriers are not licensed to carry firearms), Antifreeze, Compounds, Camphor oil, Combustible fluid cleaners, Chlorinated hydrocarbons in decorative lamps, Corrosive Liquids, Batteries with acid, Disinfectants dyes, Flame retardant compounds, Sulfuric acid iron/steel rust preventing compound, Paint related materials iron/steel rust removing compound, Muriatic acid, Nitric acid, Photographic acids, Explosives, Ammunition, Black Powder, Blasting caps, Dynamite or similar explosives, Explosive auto alarms, Firework, Fuse lighters, Igniters, Primers, Propellants, Signal flares, Smokeless powder, Souvenir explosives (war item), Spear guns w/charged heads, Toy Propellants or smoke device, Flammables, Acetone Adhesives (glues, cements), Ammonia, Charcoal briquettes, Cleaning fluids, Denatured alcohol, Enamel, Gasoline, Insecticides, Kerosene, Lighter fluids/Lighter liquors (any single container exceeding 1 gallon), Matches, Wood oil stains, Paint or Varnish remover, Propane tanks (non-purged), Other gas used for cooking or heating, Shellac, Liquid shoe polish, Plastic solvents, Stains, Turpentine, Varnish, Wood filler, Compressed Gases, Engine starting fluids, Fire extinguishers, Construction gases (welding), Scuba tanks, Aerosol cans containing a flammable gas, Flammable liquids containing a toxic substance/containing a corrosive substance.

If you have questions, please contact the Post Office at 314-535-1246/5168 or email the org box Lajes Field/TMO Office (65lrs.lajes.tmo@us.af.mil)

Cell Phone/Internet

When it comes to cell phone and internet services, you have several options. You can contact your US phone carrier for international service options and conduct a cost estimate. If you want to convert to a local provider, ensure your phone is unlocked (contact your current provider to verify). Pre-paid SIM cards are available at MEO starting at around €10.00 a month, and you may add cell service to the internet/cable plan. **Force Support Offers free WiFi in several on-base buildings.** Two prominent companies provide WiFi, cable TV, and phone packages for off-base internet service. Some locations also offer fiber optic connections. We recommend exploring these options and choosing the one that best suits your needs and budget.

Post Office (T-324)

The average mail delivery time is 1-6 weeks!

1. Your sponsor can request a mail receptacle up to 30 days before arrival (orders are required).
2. If you are PCSing from another APO location, you can send uniforms and pro gear required for official duty by MPS. **Mailing other items with a PCS, besides pro gear (household goods), requires postage to be paid at the outbound Post Office. **
3. Your mail receptacle is authorized for individual use only. Any mail not addressed to the receptacle owner will be returned to the sender.
4. Certain mailing restrictions apply to APOs. Don't hesitate to contact the post office for guidance on what you can and cannot ship to an overseas location.

If you have questions, please contact the Post Office at 314-535-1203/1207 or email the org box Lajes ABS/Post Office (65cs.postoffice@us.af.mil).

In-Processing

Most facilities are within walking distance, and checklist tasks can be accomplished quickly. Many offices are one person deep (**consider lunch times before visiting**), so there is more flexibility and time to accomplish in-processing.

You must be in uniform and bring PCS documents provided by the losing base. *Right Start is a MANDATORY appointment and should be attended within the first 30 days of arrival - schedule with the M&FRC office. (765ABS.FSF.MFRC@us.af.mil)

Finance (T-100)

The Finance Office offers one-on-one service for all your financial needs. Once you arrive, you will want to visit them as soon as possible to complete your travel voucher. Completing your travel voucher will ensure you are paid timely for your travel expenses and can also be used to update some of your military pay entitlements.

Most common allowances:

- **Cost of Living Allowance (COLA).** A non-taxable allowance designed to offset the higher overseas prices of non-housing goods and services. This allowance will fluctuate with the Dollar-to-euro exchange.
- **Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA).** OHA is paid to service members living in private housing at overseas duty stations for rent and utilities.
- **Move-In Housing Allowance (MIHA).** A one-time entitlement paid for move-in housing expenses.
- **Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA).** TLA is to reimburse a member for lodging and meals partially.
- Visit the DTMO website for current rates. [Click here](#)

The currency used off-base is the Euro. Currency on-base is often US Dollars or credit/debit cards.

Please contact the Finance Office if you plan to have your dependents visit. The length of their stay may affect your Family Separation Allowance* and your housing entitlements**.

*DODFMR Vol 7A, 270302. A. FSA-R. Credit continues to accrue while the member's dependents visit at or near the member's Permanent Duty Station (PDS) for three continuous months. Facts clearly must show that the dependents are merely visiting (not changing residence) and that the visit is temporary and not intended to exceed three months.

**AFMAN 65-116V1, 26.28.1.3. Dependents Visit member receiving FSH-O/FSH-B. Suppose a member is visited at the PDS by all dependents. In that case, the member must certify their arrival date, purpose, and expected length of visit. After they depart, the member must certify the date of departure and, if more than three months from their arrival, the reason for the visit extension.

**Per JTR 100601, 3. FSH-O or FSH-B continues uninterrupted while a Service member's dependent visits at or near the Service member's PDS, but not to exceed 90 continuous days. Circumstances must clearly show that the dependent is not changing residence and that the visit is temporary and not intended to exceed 90 days.

Special Financial related considerations:

- There are **NO** US banking facilities.
- There is **NO** cashier cage on-base
- There is **NO** check cashing at any facilities
- There **ARE** two (2) Euros-only ATMs on-base that charge an exchange rate/fee (check with your financial institution for specific rates). Some financial institutions specialize in military banking and international transfer needs (convenience might have a cost.)

Rent Payment Options

5. Pay with cash from the ATM (see above).
6. Consider using an international transfer app such as Wise. They offer lower fees and can allow you to make an electronic transfer from your US bank account to your landlord.
7. Open a Portuguese Bank Account. Opening a Portuguese bank account can be challenging and will require considerable paperwork to get an account in the Azores. It could take six weeks or more, and you'll need some help from the locals to smooth the process unless you speak Portuguese.
8. Make a Euro Transfer from your financial institution. Ask your financial institution if they offer this service and consider the transfer fees and exchange rates they used to make payments.

Automobile

POV shipment to Lajes is authorized. The roads, streets, and parking areas are much narrower than in the US, which is typical in European countries. Parking is typically on the street; keep this in mind if shipping a larger vehicle (i.e., truck, SUV). However, having a reliable vehicle is crucial because all personnel live off base. Automatic cars are rare - you'll probably have to learn to drive a standard while you are here!

Diesel Fuel is only available off-base. The POV delivery timeline is around (8-10 weeks), and vehicle pick-up is on-base, scheduled with 65 LRS. For vehicle pick up, please get in touch with the Vehicle Processing Center (VPC) at DSN: 314-535-3317

Bldg-T605 Room#1 office

Building-T607 VPV

Primary Email: paulo.sousa.pt@us.af.mil

Alternate Email: luís.sousa.pt@us.af.mil

If you purchase a U-Plated vehicle (imported by US personnel), please make an appointment with the Pass and Registration office to complete a bill of sale. Both the buyer and seller (or POA) must be present. You must go to the Automobile Registry Office in the Court House, Largo Conde da Praia da Vitória, to purchase a P-Plated vehicle. Both buyer and seller must be present, and you must bring your ID, Portuguese tax identification number, and cash for the registration fee. The average cost of an 'island bomb' is around \$2,000 – but car standards are very different from US standards, and some vehicles are very old.

Car rental is available at monthly rates, but prices increase during the tourist season. You can rent a car online, at the airport, or downtown Praia da Vitória. CAUTION: Most companies do not offer refunds for early returns. We recommend you contact the A&FRC office before making a car-buying decision. An unofficial Facebook group (Official Lajes Island Bombs) is available. Be aware that similar websites were created to take advantage of Americans.

Driver's License Requirements

You are required to get a local driver's license by completing registration with M&FRC. The following info is required: First and last name, State and license #, Expiration date, DEROS date, & Motorcycle Rider (yes or no). (765ABS.FSF.MFRC@us.af.mil)

A Legal Office Memo is required if the license is expired or will expire while a member is assigned to Lajes.

Motorcycles

Using motorcycles or ATVs as a primary mode of transport is not recommended, as rain is often unpredictable. Motorcycle Riders must Complete the Basic Riders Course (BRC), get an endorsement on the license, complete the initial CCs brief, update the MUSTT account, and wear all their PPE.

Note: All motorcycle safety training requirements must be completed before arrival at Lajes (Not available on the island)

Vehicle Registration DSN: 314-535-4786

Imported Vehicles:

- US driver's license/ Lajes Form 13 (local Driver's License)
- Proof of insurance for Portugal
- Vehicle shipping documents (AF 733)
- You will have up to 60 days to get your vehicle inspected

US Vehicles purchased here:

- Valid US & Local Driver's License (LF Form 13)
- Valid CAC card/CCI (Personal Base ID)
- Valid Inspection
- Proof of insurance for Portugal
- Pass & ID. Vehicle Registration

P-Plated Vehicles:

- Valid US & Local Driver's License (LF Form 13)
- Valid CAC Card/CCI (Personal Base ID)
- Valid Inspection
- Proof of insurance for Portugal
- Livrete (Portuguese Title)

Specific Local Vehicle Inspection Requirements

- Rear fog light
- Trucks and large SUVs must have reflective tape
- After-market tinted windows are NOT authorized on front driver and passenger windows. Removal is at owner's expense.

Car Insurance

Insurance is typically inexpensive, but you MUST specify that you are in the Azores and not on mainland Portugal. Local insurance companies are available for "P-plated" vehicles. USAA and GEICO offer international policies.

Fitness Center (T-333)

It offers a fantastic ocean view and full services in a vast facility. The staff can register you for 24/7 CAC access, and you will have free WiFi and a selection of outdoor recreation equipment, like bikes, golf clubs, or tents, to sign out for free!

TORC (Top of the Rock Commons) (T-121)

The TORC is at the heart of Lajes activities. This multi-functional facility offers quality-of-life programs and services and is the only restaurant on base. The TORC is the place for live events, themed parties, classic gaming tournaments, cooking workshops, and other events. They also host Armed Forces Entertainment shows. Active Duty personnel can book off-island trips and other adventures through the Recharge for Resiliency (R4R) program. A contract travel agency provides services for all your personal traveling needs. Additionally, we offer free video gaming systems, a movie theater, free WiFi, a small library, a community center, computers, and more.

Laundry & Dry Cleaners (T-207)

A unique service providing low-cost laundry and dry-cleaning services.

AAFES Shoppette, Commissary, and Barber Shop

Expectation management is critical! We have limited AAFES facilities at Lajes. There is a small shoppette and gas station with two unleaded gas pumps. For the size of the base, the commissary provides great service and meets most nutritional needs. Other needs can be supplemented by purchasing from the local economy or shopping online.

Off-base Food & Shopping

The local food is fantastic! Grocery shopping is easy off base. They have many of the same items that any local grocery store or convenience market would carry. Also, the meat, bread, and wine quality is terrific. You can also find clothing, small appliances, and anything else you want or need.

Medical Care (T-333)

Two Independent Duty Medical Technicians (IDMT) advise and assist with medical care at Lajes Field. The IDMTs will triage your condition and treat or refer you off base for care. In short, if you have a severe injury, you will get seen by a doctor or medically evacuated to the closest Military Treatment Facility (Ramstein). A local nurse and a medical translator will assist you during local healthcare provider or hospital visits. For sick calls or less severe conditions, care is provided in-house. There is a local dentist that can perform check-ups and other dental work.

Please ensure all IMR requirements are current before you arrive at Lajes, preferably within 60 days of arrival. This includes HIV testing, flu shots, PHA, dental, optometry, immunizations, and occupational health-related requirements. Testing such as audiograms must be done before arrival if needed for your job. Please remember that most of these tests cannot be accomplished at Lajes.

Medications

Ensure you bring all prescription medications with you. You are encouraged to get a few months' supply of all current medications. Resources are limited, and it is imperative to have all your medicines before arrival.

Dependents and TRICARE

The Medical Aid Station is not responsible for caring for visiting dependents and is not authorized to render care to dependents. IDMTs have limited resources and capabilities. Please coordinate visits via International. Contact your local TRICARE representative before scheduling visits to the island to get a better understanding of how they will be covered.

Visitors

Visitors can be on the island for up to 90 consecutive days. The easiest route is from Boston to TER for Terceira Island or to Ponta Delgado (PDL), on the neighboring island of Sao Miguel. There are some flights direct to Lajes Field (TER) weekly. You might have to search for a flight from BOS to TER or PDL. Searches from the departure airport might not show a flight. So, in essence, you have to fly to BOS and then fly BOS to TER/PDL, and it must be booked this way (baggage will be re-checked).

Note: A notarized letter allowing your spouse or guardian to **depart** Portugal with your child/children is a Portugal customs requirement. The process is simple, but you may consider contacting the Legal Office in advance for details and availability. Please follow all international travel guidance from your State of residence.

Bringing Family Members to Lajes Field

Lajes Field is an unaccompanied tour for all military and US civilians. However, many personnel choose to bring family members at their own cost. You are required to request a Dependent Visa Exemption to keep family members in Portugal for more than 90 days! Please check the current requirements at:

<https://www.lajesfss.com/websiteimages/newcomers/BringingFamilyToLajes1Oct20.pdf>

Pets

Dogs and cats are not subject to quarantine. However, new EU regulations came into effect on 3 July 2004. These regulations require dogs and cats to enter the EU and come from the United States. Most non-EU members state that the pet must be identifiable (microchip or tattoo) and have a health certificate, including proof of rabies vaccination, obtained at least 30 days before entry into Portugal but at most 120 days. More detailed information is available on the EU webpage at: https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/carry/animal-plant/index_en.htm

Please get in touch with your local TMO office for more up-to-date information.

Important Phone Numbers

- BDOC: 011-351-295-573-222; From Europe: 00351-295-573-222
- Emergency (Off base): 295-571-911 (On base is 911)
- POLAND (Political Advisor): 011-351-963-835-056; From Europe 00351-963-835-056
- First Sergeant: 011-351-964-565-917; From Europe 00351-964-565-917
- Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC): 011-351-966-677-266; From Europe 00351-966-677-266
- Referral Management Nurse: Medical Liaison: 011-351-961-379-617
- Lajes Chaplain: 011-351-964-335-471
- Lajes JAG: 011-351-964-078-882
- Lajes Military Family Life Counselor (MFLC): 011-351-967-435-590
- Lajes PAX & Personal Property Office (TMO): 011-351-295-575-168

Finally,

Welcome again! Please visit the Lajes Field, Azores Facebook page “Lajes Field, Azores” for information. If you would like to know a little more about us, please feel free to browse the 765th Air Base Squadron Force Support Flight web page at <http://www.lajesfss.com/>