



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
65TH AIR BASE WING (USAFE)  
LAJES FIELD AZORES PORTUGAL

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**Lajes Field Transition Information**

- Department of Defense officials announced Dec. 13, 2012, that Lajes Field will transition from an air base wing to an air base group with a reduction of more than 400 military personnel and 500 family members by the end of fiscal year 2014.
- The 65 ABW will remain a fully-functioning air base wing until Summer 2014.
- Approximately 160 U.S. Air Force personnel and DoD civilians will remain at Lajes Field after the transition.
- Lajes Field remains an important location providing base and en-route support for the Department of Defense, allied nations and other authorized aircraft transiting to and from the United States.

**Current Situation**

- 65th Air Base Wing and Headquarters Azores Air Zone officials work together during the planning of the Lajes Field transition.
- 65 ABW and HAAZ officials intend to retain as many Azorean local national jobs as possible.
- 65 ABW actively supports the U.S. Embassy – Lisbon’s plans to work with the Portuguese government and local community to mitigate the transition’s economic impact.

### **Employment Positions**

- The new air base group mission requirements will determine which U.S. and Portuguese job positions remain after the transition.
- United States Air Forces in Europe planning officials are finalizing the air base group’s unit manning document, based on mission requirements.
- Every required position within the newly formed 65th Air Base Group, for which Portuguese employees qualify, will be filled by Portuguese local nationals.
- 65 ABW officials expect all Portuguese employees to continue working through 2013. Employee reductions are scheduled to begin in 2014, and must be complete by Summer 2014.
- The number of appropriated funds and non-appropriate funds Portuguese employees are still being determined.
- For any position reductions, labor agreement rules regarding personnel will be followed throughout the process.

## **Operations & Airfield Impact**

- 65 ABW officials are working to ensure that Lajes airfield's viability remains intact despite the wing's transition to a group.

## **For Families**

- U.S. families will remain at Lajes Field until Summer 2014. Families will move from Lajes Field through natural attrition based on the permanent change of station cycle.
- After September 30, 2014, we anticipate there will be no families stationed at Lajes Field, as families will no longer be command sponsored (afforded medical care, housing, education, etc.).
- Airmen and families with DEROS' after September 30, 2014 will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
  - If an active duty member's position is eliminated by the reduction of forces at Lajes Field and their DEROS is after September 30, 2014, the member and family may have their DEROS curtailed and be PCS'd earlier than the DEROS.
  - If an active duty member is currently assigned or projected for an assignment at Lajes Field and the member's DEROS is after September 30, 2014, then member may be allowed to complete an Early Return of Dependents package. Or, if the member already has a projected assignment, their family may be allowed to move to the next duty station in advance of the member's DEROS.
- During the 2013-2014 school year, the Lajes Field DoDDS school is committed to providing the best educational environment and experience possible despite the coming transition. As a result of the transition, at the end of the 2013-2014 school year, the

DoDDS school is scheduled to close in June 2014. For detailed information about our DoDDS school, view their website at [www.laje-ehs.eu.dodea.edu/](http://www.laje-ehs.eu.dodea.edu/).

### **Base Support**

- AAFES Exchange & DECA Commissary – As we near the 65th Air Base Wing transition to an air base group in Summer/Fall 2014, the Exchange and Commissary will be incrementally streamlining their stock to avoid dramatic over-stock once families have departed Lajes, and Airmen, U.S. civilian, and local national employee numbers are reduced. To accomplish the streamlining of stock, the Exchange and Commissary stores have begun adjusting merchandise selections accordingly. For example, the stores may reduce the number of brands of shampoo or toilet paper from 10 brands to five brands. In effect, local stores will still offer the same types of products, but fewer brands. Local AAFES & DECA management are continuously anticipating customer needs while optimizing Lajes Field store assortments. 65 ABW officials and Lajes Field AAFES & DECA management remain committed to meeting current and future customer shopping needs.
- If you have questions concerning the Lajes Field AAFES Exchange, please contact Carrie Cammel or Peter Santiago at 535-1124.
- If you have questions concerning the Lajes Field DECA Commissary, please contact Teresa De Jesus at 535-6124.