

PATCH TOWN HALL QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES  
24 JUL 2024

Directorate of Public Works (DPW) and Housing

**Q1: What is the plan for updating the resident handbook (Housing)? We hear its in the works but it has been awhile. The smoking policy is contradictory. It says you can smoke on a balcony but not under windows. By default, balconies not on the top floor are under someone's windows. With the requirement to vent homes and lack of central air, it leads to a lot of second-hand smoke in homes that don't want it.**

A1: It has been in the works for a while, and we apologize for not being able to tackle this sooner. The current target is end of summer/ early fall. The smoking policy is sensitive. The current policy from Installation Management Command-Europe (IMCOM-Europe) is to permit smoking on balconies. We recognize health concerns but also don't want to impede on resident's private lives. There is no one size solution to support both smokers and non-smokers.

**Q2: I want to double-up on skatepark idea. I don't know how I could help get some steam behind that, but I would love to help if possible.**

A2: Community interests have shifted in recent years from more/newer playgrounds, basketball courts, and most recently a skatepark. The USAG recognizes there is a need for more recreational activities for teens and preteens. We would like to ensure; however, we get it right. We have one location available near the col-de-sac at the end of Vermont St and will start researching the possibility of a skatepark.

**Q3: Can we get an update on the parking situation on Patch as it relates to construction activities?**

A3: We will see 82 spots come back to the Patch community by the end of Sep 2024. Currently, we are projecting 20 parking spots returning to use in the next couple weeks IVO Bldgs 2317 and 2358. By the end of Sept, approx. 15 additional spots will return to use (impacts of the Sewer project completion). Lastly, approximately 47 parking spots will return to use when the Bldg. 2337 project and demobilization is completed by 30 Sept.

**Q4: What can we do to improve the traffic situation at the K&K gate. It is especially problematic during morning and afternoon rush hours.**

A4: A project has been funded to install a traffic circle inside of K&K gate. We expect that work to take place in the coming weeks.

We were recently able to reopen the K&K gate ahead of schedule following the early completion of construction work on force protection upgrades.

**Q5: What is the plan to support charging of electric vehicles on post?**

A5: IMCOM-Europe is working with IMCOM-HQ on implementation guidance for the European theater. As soon we receive that, we will implement. We have also inquired about options in the interim and are awaiting that feedback.

**Q6: It appears information regarding self-help services is outdated on the website. Can this be addressed?**

A6: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. In reviewing info on the website versus what is on the app, we found different information on each platform. We will work to address this.

**Q7: One of the gazabos near an apartment building that is undergoing renovation no longer has electricity. Is it possible to address this?**

A7: We have submitted a work order to reconnect electricity. We will monitor this until it is complete.

Directorate of Family & MWR (DFMWR)

**Q8: How does the garrison plan to address the lack of “wrap-around” childcare for universal Pre-K program offered by DoDEA schools. This is directly impacting dual military families and families with working spouses.**

A8: We recognize our communities need for before and after school care for families looking to enroll their children in DODEA's Universal Pre-K program. However, due to continual staff shortages and space limitations within our facilities, we are unable to meet this supplemental need. While we endeavor to meet the totality of our communities' childcare requirements, our Family and MWR Child Development Centers primary mission is to provide full-time care. We currently focused on addressing our waiting list of 150+ with 90 preschoolers and 60+ toddlers awaiting full-time care.

**Q9: CDC's currently offer part-time care in the mornings. Is there any way this can be shifted to the afternoons to accommodate those who might want to send their kids to Universal Pre-K?**

A9: Many of the same staff that support the part-time care offerings in the morning help out at the School Age Centers (SACs) in the afternoon. We don't have enough staff currently to offer a part-time afternoon care solution.

**Q10: What is the process to qualify to offer in-home childcare? We are aware of the shortage and want to help. Who do we contact and how do we get started?**

A10: CYS is interested in bringing Family Child Care (FCC) back to the Stuttgart Community. Previous providers have been very successful here.

Individuals who are interested in offering FCC in their home are required to:

- live on post
- successfully obtain all background check clearances
- complete required training and inspections prior to receiving their Garrison certificate to operate.

CYS assists Providers with this entire process and can also provide some furniture and toys to help get a program started. Interested providers should contact Ms. Terra Hendrickson at 09641-70596-7464 or [terra.j.hendrickson.naf@army.mil](mailto:terra.j.hendrickson.naf@army.mil) for more information.

**Q11: Can the gym at the old Patch on Panzer school be made available for recreational use?**

A11: We are currently using that building for sports programs and other events. Additionally, we plan to start renovations at the facility toward the end of the year.

**Q12: Are classes available for teen-agers who want to learn about using fitness equipment at the gyms?**

A12: CYS Sports can offer this program to community teens at the Panzer Gym. We offered this class in the past, but couldn't sustain the numbers to continue the program.

**Q13: Can Outdoor Rec (ODR) carry dunk tanks?**

A13: We will look into this.

Directorate of Emergency Services (DES)

**Q14: I live on the top floor of a stairwell unit and worry about how I will escape the building in the event of fire. Can the garrison provide rope ladders for residents to use?**

A14: The buildings in Germany, including those on post, are constructed much differently than those in the U.S. The doors are far more resistant to fire and the building materials don't burn as easily. Sprinklers have been installed in all housing units as an additional mitigating measure.

In the event of fire, we recommend you close doors to protect yourself from the fire and wait on firefighters to rescue you or put the fire out. The doors will protect you. They are built that well.

## DoDEA

### **Q15: Please address the heat issue at Patch Elementary School and what is being done to prevent heat-related issues from prior years?**

A15: Since August 2023, DoDEA has undertaken significant efforts to mitigate the effects of warm summer days at the start of the school year, particularly at Patch Elementary School. A key feature of Patch ES is its air ventilation system. DoDEA facilities have been closely monitoring this system, collaborating with the service provider, and engaging with the contractor to ensure optimal performance. The system continuously exchanges indoor air with fresh outdoor air. Over the spring and summer months, we have worked to lower the intake of cool air.

In May, DoDEA partnered with the Industrial Health team from DPW to verify that the system sensors were accurately reporting temperatures to the main control. This test confirmed the system's proper functionality and the accuracy of temperature readings. For the upcoming school year, the target temperature during warmer months is set at 19 degrees Celsius (66.2 Fahrenheit) to optimize the intake of cooler evening air.

Additional measures include the deployment of more efficient, semi-industrial tabletop and standing fans to all neighborhoods. Staff and faculty will be encouraged to close the rolladens during the warmest parts of the day. DoDEA is also exploring the possibility of setting rolladens on a timer. In accordance with DoDEA Administrative Instruction 6055.01, Safety Program (4.3.b), which provides guidance for operations during heat, a new DoDEA Europe Memorandum states that if outdoor temperatures are forecasted to exceed 85 degrees Fahrenheit, DoDEA will coordinate with the Garrison Commander's office to determine the status of school hours. This memo was presented at the spring IAC and mentioned at the CLIF on Wednesday, July 10, 2024.

During back-to-school communications, principals will share information from both sources with faculty, staff, and the community. As part of regular back-to-school preparations, the Garrison Safety Office will conduct walkthrough inspections prior to the beginning of the school year.

**Q16: How and at what grade level are students being introduced to information aimed at preventing self-harm? Our student said a recent discussion on that subject was upsetting in that too much information may have been shared on methods of self-harm rather than symptoms that might lead one to seek help. We would like to better understand the process for sharing this information and the age-level where this is being done.**

A16: Thank you for raising this important concern. To understand how and at what grade level students are introduced to self-harm prevention information, we recommend speaking directly with our school counselors and administrators. They can provide detailed insights into the curriculum, the age-appropriate methods used, and the specific content shared with students. Additionally, they can address any concerns you may have about the recent discussion and ensure that the information is presented in a supportive and sensitive manner. Your feedback is valuable in helping us improve our approach to this critical topic.

**Q17: The website for Patch Elementary School lists vacancies for both the principal and assistant principal positions. Is this accurate or is the website out-of-date? How do parents know who to contact at the school?**

A17: Patch Elementary School is currently undergoing leadership transitions. Official communications will be disseminated to the school community via the DoDEA SIS (Aspen) parent portal email during the first week of August. Ms. Guth will be responsible for opening the school for faculty and staff. We are in the process of filling both her position and the principal position. The anticipated start date for the new principal will coincide with Ms. Guth's tenure.

For any inquiries, the main school number is listed under contacts on the school webpage and in the Weekly Round-Up (the school newsletter). Current staff members are available to assist with questions or direct callers to the appropriate point of contact. We apologize for any confusion caused by the website.

Other (USAREUR/AF, schools, health clinic, LRC)

**Q18: Why are [AE Pubs](#) no longer available publicly? Several of them are critically important during in-processing when .mil access may not be available?**

A18: US Army Europe and Africa operates the site. Some of the regulations outline internal processes to the Army in theatre that may not necessarily be suitable for world-wide public consumption. That said, they will take another look at what regs are/aren't being made public and adjust as needed.

**Q19: Is it possible for the Dental Clinic to start using their Facebook page again? It's not been active in a while.**

A19: The Dental Clinic is working to gain access to the account due to a change in personnel. If they are unable to gain access, they will activate a new page.

**Q20: Can a Commissary rep give insight as to why prices are higher than shopping at the grocery stores on the economy. Not everyone understands that they have to work through companies approved to do business and that can increase prices on some of our favorite familiar items. Also, our commissary does have many items that are local.**

A20: The items that are being sold on the economy are locally sourced items that do not have to be shipped from the US and have that extra cost factor.

All of the items sold at the commissaries has to be from an approved source or contracted company, that is handled at the HQ level. They do offer some local items from time to time to help supplement items that may not be available from the US (But these have to be done on special contracts). Local deals are made from time to time but are not available all the time.

The commissary contracting team works to get the best price possible for their patrons, but some companies have set prices and the commissaries have to adjust with those prices. Some companies offer items discounted (which they try to ensure make it to the store and are available).

**Q21: Can an Exchange rep give insight as to why we are losing so many companies, most recently the nail salon, and what are they doing to bring these services back.**

A21: Charley's was run directly by the Exchange; it closed due to minimal patronage and customer traffic. Sehne Bakery and the Nail Salon are vendor partners who are able to cancel their contracts at any time. Sehne closed due to financial reasons of their own. However the Exchange was able to negotiate the Patch location to remain open until we can source another vendor. The Nail Salon closed due to minimal customer traffic as well, she decided to not renew her contract.

Charley's will be replaced by Panda Express. We are currently working with to backfill the space Sehne vacated. Regarding the nail salon, we haven't been able to source a vendor due to lack of interest in opening on the installation but there are plans for that space.

No other businesses have shuttered, but when contractors decide to end their business relationships with the Exchange, they normally have a plan in place they are working to backfill.

**Q22: There is so much misinformation shared in the facebook groups here, and even though there is the App and Command Sponsors, many newcomers have no idea about them, and are not getting good info before arriving. Is it possible to create an "Indoc brief" that can be sent electronically to newcomers, posted on the USAG Stuttgart website and App?**

A22: The garrison Public Affairs Office publishes a [PCS issue of the Stuttgart Citizen](#) annually that provides almost the same information that would be present in an "Indoc brief." That information is also available online at StuttgartCitizen.com.

**Q23: This is our 4th overseas location, and the only one that does not require the Member and Spouse to attend mandatory INDOC briefings upon arriving, that covers not only getting all of the paperwork completed, but also the culture shock and local customs side, and the mental health side of adjusting to an overseas tour. It really is a disservice to not have an Indoc program set up to help newcomers. Especially since this is a joint service base, it would be beneficial to bring all services in line with how this Army post operates vs other services we come from.**

A23: The garrison has little authority in determining how members of the DoD community in Stuttgart spend their time; that is ultimately guided by the sponsor's command or organization. The garrison and other partner organizations provide information on the subjects identified in your question, but it falls to the individual commands and organizations to ensure service members and employees are allotted time to attend briefings or otherwise access the information.

Additionally, [Army Community Service \(ACS\)](#) offers official sponsor training and host-nation orientation on a routine schedule. The garrison's Central Processing Facility conducts routine in- and out-processing briefs also on a routine schedule which is open to spouses and other interested family members.

**Q24: Being a joint base, and made up of military, DOD, and Contractors, can there be more clearly stated what offices, clinics, schools, services each can use, and why can Contractors not utilize most of the services offered, especially the off post housing services. It would be beneficial to have a more clear outline of this, as many DOD aren't even aware of which services they can use.**

A24: Many services in the community that might technically be available to community members are limited due to the resources that are available and other factors. For contractors, the services available vary widely depending on the terms of individual contracts negotiated. We try to publicize the limitations to the extent we are aware so community members can plan accordingly.