

## Defence Policy on the Provision of Cooking Facilities in Living in Accommodation

### Introduction

1. Prior to the creation of the Infrastructure Division (ID), the Services adopted a variety of approaches to the issue of cooking and related activities in Living in Accommodation (LIA). These measures ranged from ordering that occupants did not smoke, cook, etc in their rooms, to providing varying levels of cooking facilities, generally when an accommodation block is upgraded. The measures were largely ineffectual and resulted in a significant number of fire alarms as a result of cooking and smoking residue.

### Aim

2. The aim of this chapter is to standardise the level of fit out and the facilities to be provided in kitchenettes in Defence LIA and detail the responsibilities of ID and DCS, in relation to the provision of those facilities and associated services.

### Execution

3. Defence Living In Accommodation (LIA) shall be provided with one common room with "kitchenette" for every four sole occupancy units (SOU), **when programmed upgrades of LIA are carried out**. The common rooms shall have the following minimum standard of communal cooking facilities:

- a. work bench with splash board and storage under;
- b. vinyl floor covering in front of work bench;
- c. single sink with dish draining area and hot and cold running water;
- d. boiling water unit;
- e. convection microwave (minimum 27 litre);
- f. fridge (minimum 300 litre);
- g. two double GPO power outlets; and
- h. extraction fan.

These minimum facilities shall be provided in existing common rooms, or common rooms constructed for the purpose, unless the majority of LIA on a base has been constructed to the new Defence standard of a kitchenette within each Sole Occupancy Unit (SOU). On those bases, if a facility to be refurbished is suitable (ie, SOU's of a suitable size and configuration), the refurbishment shall aim to standardise the level of accommodation provided by installing the kitchenettes within the SOUs.

4. Lighting, ventilation and sound attenuation (including separation of waste pipes) shall be in accordance with the requirements of the BCA.

### Responsibilities

5. The following responsibilities apply to accommodation where the required cooking facilities have not yet been provided, or the existing facilities do not include a hygienic preparation/cooking area, including extraction fan for the removal of steam and cooking odours:

- a. **ID is responsible for:**
  - i. The provision and installation of signs stating "Cooking in this facility is not permitted until appropriate cooking facilities are installed to meet health and safety requirements"; and
  - ii. The programming, funding and installation of kitchenettes.
- b. **DCS is responsible for:**
  - i. Repair/replacement of fridges and microwaves;
  - ii. The regular disposal of food scraps from the waste bins provided;
  - iii. Introducing an inspection program to monitor compliance with the policy in facilities where the kitchenettes are yet to be provided; and
  - iv. Ensuring that health standards are being maintained in kitchenettes, as part of DCS facilities management practices.
- c. **Tenants are responsible for:**
  - i. Maintaining health and safety standards.

6. Infrastructure Manual policy is to retro-fit smoke detection in Defence LIA, to meet the "landlord" duty of care obligations under Common Law, in recognition of changed community standards. **The kitchenettes shall be provided only after the smoke detection system in these facilities has been upgraded to the LIA Defence performance specification for smoke detection in LIA This upgrade is being implemented progressively as other works occur and as funds become available.**

7. ID Regions should program for the upgrades and bid for funds through Account Group 75, noting existing programmed

upgrades and facilities identified for disposal/demolition.

8. Once the smoke detection system has been updated to mitigate false alarms and the communal facilities have been installed, DCS have agreed to introduce an inspection program of the communal areas to ensure that health standards are maintained.

**Outcomes**

9. This policy creates a recognised standard of cooking facilities to be provided for existing Defence LIA and removes the ambiguity of local approaches to the management of cooking in LIA.

10. False alarms caused by cooking (and smoking, candles, incense, etc) within SOUs would be successfully managed by the Defence performance specification for the smoke detection system. This would remove the requirement to ban these activities within the privacy of an occupants room, something which has proven to be difficult to police and the legality of which is questionable.

11. The removal of the factors which encourage occupants to ignore fire alarms or disable smoke detectors supports the Defence performance approach to LIA with non-conforming construction.

**Sponsor:** A/DDA