PCS INFORMATION

Contact your sponsor early and start asking questions well in advance of your transfer. We can provide the latest information and get you started!

INTRODUCTION:

Alice Springs is 580 meters above sea level and is located 1529km from Adelaide and 1490 km from Darwin and has an approximate population of 28,000. As a desert town, Alice Springs experiences long dry summers with the occasional rainstorm. Temperatures in the summer months can reach highs of 45C. Common sense along with the precautions of sunblock, hats and eye protection are all important. At the height of the summer months, early morning or late afternoon may be more comfortable for some people than the winter months with temperatures dropping below zero at night and averaging 10-18C during the day.

UNIFORMS:

BRING YOUR UNIFORMS! We are restricted from wearing our military uniforms while stationed in Alice Springs, except on special occasions. You will wear civilian clothes at work and will be given a civilian clothing allowance, but there are some occasions that will require you to be in uniform such as reenlistment and promotion ceremonies and other special occasions. You may also find yourself on a TAD trip back to the states where you will be required to be in uniform, so all personnel are required to bring a full seabag.

SCHEDULE:

There are four crews that essentially work 4 on 4 off (12 hr watches).

SCHOOLS:

Alice Springs offers several primary and secondary public and private education schools. Most of the private schools are operated by Christian church organizations providing education in the context of a religious direction. Private school enrollment may be difficult depending on availability so it is recommended to contact the school before you PCS. Membership in the sponsoring church is not a requirement; however, church member families may be given preference. Tuition for private schools in most cases is fully funded.

HOUSING:

Housing is distributed throughout the town and intermingled with the local population. Your family size will determine the type of home assigned. There are several different styles of homes ranging from two bedroom flats to five bedroom homes. All of the homes are fully furnished to include major appliances. Window treatments are installed.
and there is carpeting, wood, or tile flooring in the living areas and bedrooms. All master bedrooms are equipped with a queen-size bed and all other bedrooms include a single bed. You are permitted to ship your own bed with your HHG’s for your master bedroom if you choose, however it is recommended that you ship as little as your own furniture as possible since your HHG weight allowance will be reduced. You may want to consider bringing pictures, decorations, small appliances, kitchenware, bedding, towels and patio furniture. To accommodate American style electrical devices, electrical transformers are provided in the homes as built-in units for the kitchen and individual units that can be used for any room. The transformers output with an American-style outlet.

The tap water, while very heavy in minerals, is safe to drink. However, some people do not like the taste of it and choose to use bottled or filtered water instead.

In-Town Housing (ITH) will provide you with a survival kit to use while you wait for your household goods to arrive. If you are single there is a Sailor survival kit available for the length of your tour. If you require this kit, talk to your sponsor.

POV:

The Northern Territory is the only state which allows left-handed vehicles to be imported, registered, and insured. If you own a vehicle, you should consider shipping it. There are several factors listed below that you should be aware of when making a determination to ship or not. Scroll down for specific information about motorcycles. Cost of insuring left-hand drive vehicles, especially “unique to the U.S. only” models are at times expensive to insure. Make, model, and parts availability are factored in to the cost of the vehicle.

U.S. manufactured vehicles (GM, Ford, Chrysler etc.) may have extremely limited parts availability in Australia. Shipping a replacement part would probably be the only option and the APO has weight and size restrictions that must be followed. Factory warranties may not cover your vehicle outside of the U.S.

U.S. full size pickup trucks and SUVs commonly have larger tires than trucks used in Australia. Finding a replacement tire can be difficult and if found, is very expensive. Also, fuel costs are much higher than in the U.S. and these vehicles will normally be expensive to drive on a daily basis.

Vehicles that generally do not have problems with parts availability or major problems with Northern territory vehicle inspections are made by Toyota, Mazda, Jeep, Nissan, Daewoo, Kia, Mitsubishi, Hyundai, Honda and others. Check with your sponsor and for parts and mechanical service availability for your vehicle.

Vehicles bought locally can be expensive and unable to be imported into the U.S. At the end of your tour, it may be difficult to sell your vehicle. If you ship your vehicle and it becomes unfit for shipping out of the country (ex. Catastrophic accident), you will be subject to an import duty assessed to all vehicles not assembled in Australia, which is approximately $16,000 for new cars.

If you plan to drive in Alice Springs, you have to obtain an Australian NT driver’s license within 90 days of arrival. Minimum driving age is 16 and a half. To obtain a driver’s license, you will need a valid U.S. license. The cost of the license is $24.00 AUD.

Australian insurance companies base their rates on your record of claims for the last 5 years. Bring a letter from your U.S. insurer describing your record of claims or claim-free driving. Without such a statement, you will be placed in a high-risk category and comprehensive coverage can be expensive. Insurance rates increase periodically. Registration costs for private vehicles average about $500 which includes compulsory third-party insurance. (TPI covers only injury to other party and does not cover damages to other car.) Annual registration is required for every vehicle, which may or may not include an annual inspection. A 30 day, restricted registration is available for left-handed vehicles to allow time for modification of lights, mirrors, etc.

To register your car, you need:

1. A current NT license or proof of residency.
2. Proof of ownership or receipt of person selling vehicle.
3. New vehicles and vehicles transferring to the NT must have a compliance check done at the MVR. Bring inspection report.
4. If importing your vehicle, provide importation papers and a copy of the SOFA. (Site provides a copy of the SOFA.)
INTERNET SERVICES:

Most ISPs in the Alice Springs use ADSL. The most popular being Telstra, however there are many other providers available as well and are usually recommended over Telstra. Some other ISPs include TPG, Dodo, and Internode.

TELEVISION:

Digital free-to-air television is available to every home. The free-to-air stations cover most of the popular TV shows. Be aware the TV broadcast in Australia is DVB-T not the U.S. standard ATSC.

Alice Springs has satellite television which is provided by AUSTAR (www.austar.com.au). The usual channels can be found (including Discovery, News, Sports, Movies, Nickelodeon etc) and for an additional fee you can get channels in HD.

AFN is available as well. Talk to your sponsor and let them know you're interested. An AFN representative will provide you with the necessary equipment and set it up for you as well.

EDUCATION IN ALICE SPRINGS

PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Government primary and secondary schools request voluntary contributions to the school councils, to provide a variety of facilities and activities. While uniforms are not compulsory in public schools, most primary schools do have a uniform and children are expected to wear it. Uniforms can be purchased locally through school clothing shops or retail outlets, and second hand uniforms are available through school clothing pools.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS:

Most private schools are church-sponsored, although membership in the sponsoring church is not a requirement for admission. It can be difficult to enrol children in private schools, as waiting lists may be long. While you may place you child’s name on a waiting list, or pre-enroll, students are not accepted until after the interview process.

Some of the private schools provide educational facilities from kindergarten through 12th grade, but private school fees can be expensive. All private schools in Alice Springs are co-educational and uniforms are required.

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Education in Alice Springs is geared toward mainstream students; therefore opportunities for children with learning disabilities or for gifted children are somewhat limited. However there are some schools that do have dedicated classes with extra qualified teachers and aides to help those with learning disabilities. Parents contemplating a transfer to NIOD Alice Springs are encouraged to discuss their children's special needs directly with potential schools or contact the NT Education Department to determine if the town has programs that will accommodate any special assistance your child may require.

ADULT EDUCATION:

There is a variety of schools to choose from such as, University of Maryland University College (UMUC), American Military University (AMU) and Embry-Riddle. While serving overseas, students can take a single course or many courses leading to a certificate, associates or bachelors etc.

Due to the remoteness of Alice Springs, few face-to-face courses are available. Distance Education provides many courses and a very flexible schedule with on-line courses. Occasionally courses are available from Charles Darwin University.
DAY CARE:

Day care facilities in Alice Springs are very limited. There are day care facilities in town but they are all normally full with waiting lists ranging from 1 to 3 months. Also, all of the day care facilities only provide services for normal working hours during the week. Services after these hours, during the weekend, and on Aussie holidays are normally not available.

MEDICAL SERVICES:

Medical service is available to all American employees and their eligible dependents. Comprehensive and ongoing primary medical care services are at both the In-Town medical clinic and at the Facility medical clinic. The extent of the services provided is dependent on the training and experience of the Facility Medical Officer assigned to the Facility at the time; this may include care in the areas of general internal medicine, paediatrics, obstetrics/gynaecology and all other areas of family practice. Emergency medical care, including after-hours care, is provided to an extent considering available resources. The clinics offer walk-in service or you may setup an appointment.

If the In-Town or Facility clinic refers you to a health provider in town, you MUST contact TRICARE prior to making/going to any appointments outside the clinic. Once TRICARE gets authorization, they will contact you with the okay to make the appointment and will likely provide contact information for specific approved health providers in town. Once you make the appointment, let TRICARE know when and where so they can send a guarantee of payment to the provider. Failure to do so may result in you having to pay the bill.

Also, if you get blood drawn or any other pathological testing from the In-Town or Facility clinics that need to go to a lab, ensure the clinic puts the TRICARE billing address (TRICARE, International SOS, PO Box 4561, Sydney, NSW, 2001) on the referral from to the lab. This way, any late notices will go directly to TRICARE instead of you.

DENTAL SERVICES

Dental services are covered by MetLife. The sponsor should ensure their dependents’ information is current in DEERS by visiting the AFPC website as well as checking with metlife.com/tricare to verify enrollments, benefits, and coverage. If you have Other Heath Insurance (OHI), please remember to file with them first, then TRICARE.

If you travel out of your designated TRICARE region (Australia) for more than 30 days, you need to transfer your enrolment to the region in which you are travelling. You are only covered for urgent, emergent, and medical necessary care while out of the area. Do not wait to get back to the U.S, for example to set up a routine appointment. It will not be covered. For prescriptions, you pay out of pocket and file a claim when you get back. Active duty members must use a TRICARE listed dentist and notify TRICARE International SOS after making any dental appointments. This is to ensure the plan covers the desired dental procedure. The dental facility will file the charge and claims with TRICARE and are reimbursed those charges. As of February 2013, the only TRICARE listed dental office in Alice Springs is Alice Springs Dental Surgery, located at 2 Larapinta Drive.

Services for family members, however, must be settled by the member/member’s family at the time of the dental appointment, and then file a reimbursement claim directly with MetLife.

Claim forms can be either obtained through the MetLife website www.metlife.com/tricare or through the medical clinic here on site. The sponsor can bring the claim form and paid bill in to the medical clinic for faxing. Upon receipt, MetLife adjudicates the claim and sends payment to either the member’s APO or Navy/site APO. You can setup an account at www.metlife.com/tricare to check the status of your claims.

If your family members are in need of orthodontic care, contact the medical clinic BEFORE you set up any appointments. The clinic will provide a briefing, a list of approved dentists, and appropriate forms.
Electricity in Australia is 240 volt, 50Hz. Appliances wired for 220/240 volt ‘two phase’ will not operate on Australian ‘single phase’ systems. Most American small appliances (110 volt) will provide satisfactory service when used with a transformer but may run slower since Australian current is 50Hz.

If you have doubts whether an appliance is suitable to bring to Australia, look at the information plate. If it states 110/220 volt and 50/60Hz, then it will work without alteration other than a plug adaptor. If it states 110 volt, 50/60Hz, then it will give acceptable performance with a transformer. Lamps normally only require a replacement of the bulb to 220v, 50Hz and of course a plug adapter. Plug adapters can be purchased in most electronics stores or department stores.

ACTIVITIES

Alice Springs is very sports and outdoor oriented as a community. There are all sorts of sporting teams, from Aussie Rules Football, Rugby, Netball, Basketball and Softball to Ten Pin Bowling, Volleyball, Tennis, Swimming, Badminton and even Inline Hockey. People like to go camping, hiking, fossicking for gemstones etc. The area is packed with beautiful gorges and rock formations, waterholes and natural bushland. A magnificent walking track – The Larapinta Walking Trail – extends approximately 220km from Alice Springs to the West. There is also an excellent fully sealed bicycle track from Alice to Simpsons Gap which meanders through bush along the base of the MacDonnell Ranges.

SPORT AND RECREATION:

Alice Springs locals are very keen on their sport and the town has some excellent sporting facilities. If you are interested in a particular sport, club, organization, youth group or association, it will be more than likely represented in Alice Springs. You can find a number of organizations listed under CLUBS in the Yellow pages.

Public parks, playgrounds and sports ovals are located throughout the town. There is an 18-hole golf course as well as public tennis courts and an outdoor swimming center which is open 7 days a week. The Alice Springs Aquatic Centre and Leisure Center has a heated indoor 8 lane 25m lap pool with disabled ramp access, as well as a beach front leisure pool with toddler area, spa, lazy river and 4 lane 20m learn to swim section.

Alice Springs also is host to the biennial Master’s Games usually held in October every other year. The Master’s Games attracts people over 30 who enjoy competition in over 30 different activities. For more information on this event please see www.alicespringsmasters.com.au

Alice Springs has a lot to offer for active athletic people. Below are just a few of the offerings in our busy desert town. Feel free to e-mail, call, or “like” these facebook pages. Sport is one of the best ways to get out and make some new friends in Alice!

AS Triathlon Club
http://www.alicespringstriathlonclub.com/

AS Cycling Club
http://www.alicesprings.cycling.org.au/

AS Running and Walking Club

AS Desert Dolphins (Swim Masters)

And for all Sports related new in Alice, go to the following FB page:
https://www.facebook.com/AliceSportsNews

The Alice Springs branch of Sport and Recreation is located in the Leichardt building on the corner of Leichardt and Gregory Terrace – Ph: (08) 8951 6422. Please see www.alicesprings.nt.gov.au/alice-springs-community/sport
ENTERTAINMENT VENUES AND NIGHTLIFE:

The Araluen Cultural Centre offers entertainment featuring musicals, plays and artistic presentations by touring performing groups, ballets, and individual artists.

The Alice Springs cinema is located in the town center and offers all the newest releases including films in 3D. It is located on the Todd mall right next to Todd Tavern.

Alice Springs offers a range of different venues to enjoy a drink, food and even some live music if you so desire. The Lasseter’s Casino transitions into a nightclub after 10pm. Monte’s Bar and Lounge on the Corner of Gap Road and Sturt Terrace offers a great outside and inside sitting area with a vast selection of international and Australian beers, wine and spirits. The Rock Bar and Bojangles are located next door to each other on Todd Street and also offer live music, drinks, and food all nights of the week with the Rock Bar showcasing some of Alice’s greatest musical talent.

Annie’s Backpackers on Traeger Avenue offers an alternative scene with beer and DJs and of course international backpackers.

The Todd Tavern at the end of the Todd mall next to the cinemas, offers a great bistro and music with open mic nights on Mondays. The Gap hotel located at the end of Gap Road has karaoke, a beautiful outside area with a pool and kids play area as well as great bistro and beer.

The local clubs where membership is on offer include the Gillen Club on Milner Road and East Side club on Undoolya Road are a great place for families with fantastic facilities to entertain the kiddies whilst the parents enjoy a nice wine and meal.

And there is the Casino where you can gamble at the tables, play the slots, watch sports and enjoy dining both inside and outside the deck.

SHOPPING:

Shopping in the Alice consists of a number of different options and you are able to find all that you will need when here in the outback of Australia.

Target is a variety store where you can get anything from homewares, electrical appliances, haberdashery, clothes, toys and DVDs. The Alice Springs Target store is located in the Alice Plaza shopping centre and parking is available both outside and underground just off Wills Terrace opposite the Todd Tavern and the cinemas.

K-mart is another variety store but offers a larger range of items including photo printing, garden and home hardware supplies, a good book and stationary selection and most household items in bulk including toilet paper and washing powder. Kmart is located on Bath Street and parking is available under weather protecting sails.
Todd-Mall markets are a local tradition and held in the Todd Mall every second Sunday in the cooler months and Thursday nights in the hotter months. The local newspaper, the Advocate and local businesses including Gloria Jeans coffee shop will advertise the dates and days these markets will be held. These markets are a great place to pick up local vegetable and fruit produce, locally made arts and crafts and tasty meals of everything from fresh made mango smoothies to Thai and Indian cuisine. When the night time markets arrive so does the local music talent with live music including reggae and salsa.

Harvey Norman

Harvey Norman is Australia’s largest Electrical, computer and homeware chain store and offers everything from televisions, coffee machines, vacuum cleaners, beds and linen, outside furniture, computers and sound systems. Harvey Norman’s aim is to supply everything you need to outfit your home. They also have a photo printing service. This megastore is located on Colson Street off the Stuart Highway. It’s also located within an abundance of other homeware stores including Barbeque Galore and Fantastic Furniture.

Rock City Music is a complete music store handling all aspects of entertainment, supplying all forms of musical equipment, providing sound systems, and managing of a number of entertainers. It contains such manufacturers as Fender, Yamaha, Pearl and Gibson/Epiphone.
Grocery shopping in the Alice ranges from your two major grocery stores of Coles located on Bath Street or Railway Terrace and Woolworths located in the Yeperenye Shopping Centre amongst a number of other variety stores including a butcher, bakery, Leonards Chicken Store and others. Most suburbs of Alice have their local IGA corner store including Flynn Drive, Larapinta Drive and East side offering bread, milk, and any many other items that may have been forgotten during the major weekly shop. Keep in mind that some products are not very common here in Australia and may need to be shipped in, such as graham, crackers, certain pie fillings, and certain sodas (e.g., A&W Root Beer and Mountain Dew). Civic Video in town stocks many American products like sodas and Hershey chocolate bars.

Milner’s Meats located on Milner Street and offers come of Alice Springs’s best meat range and fresh seafood, flown in weekly. Milner’s offers everything you may need to fulfill your needs and are more than happy to order in speciality items and prepare special occasion orders. Head here for your Thanksgiving Turkeys!

Pets ‘R’ Us offers a wide range of accessories for dogs, cats, fish, birds, and many other pets. If they don’t have what you need, they will be happy to place a special order for you if it’s possible.
The Penny Farthing Bike Shop has a wealth of experience focused on providing Alice Springs with products designed to fit all cyclists from the professional track, road and dirt riders to family relaxation and the casual cruisers. The range of bikes, accessories, and clothing ranges consists of an exciting diversification based on top brand names such as Apollo, Avanti, Raleigh, Free Agent, BMX, Gary Fisher, Look, Raceline, Redline, Specialized, Sinitesi, and Trek to the little league recreation bikes.

Mitre 10 is one of Australia’s leading hardware and home improvement companies. They offer quick and easy shopping for DIY projects, plant and garden supplies, tools, and much more. They can also provide advice on products, projects, and services.

OTHER:

At the Reptile Center you can visit frilled neck lizards, Thorny devils, huge Monitor lizards, large pythons and venomous snakes at the Northern Territory’s largest reptile display. A saltwater crocodile exhibit provides view below water level for a close up experience.
Alice Springs Cultural Precinct is home to some of the most interesting and cultural and historical attractions in Alice Springs. It encompasses performing and visual arts, the natural history of the region, Aboriginal culture and the more recent European settlement. The cultural Precinct includes the Araluen Centre and Galleries, Namatjira Gallery, Grand Circle Yepereny Sculpture, Museum of Central Australia, the Strehlow Research Center, Central Australian Aviation Museum, and Territory Craft and Memorial Cemetery. A walking tour around the Precinct provides a fascinating glimpse of the history of Central Australia, and of some of the local identities who helped to build both the town of Alice Springs and the Northern Territory.

Designed to move well beyond the boundaries of traditional zoo, botanic gardens and museums, the parks has adopted a holistic “habitat-based and story driven” approach. Discover the desert in its entirety; the landscapes, animals and plants, and their traditional use and management by aboriginal people. View rare and endangered animals, including marsupials, such as the bilby and mala, on display in the world’s most spectacular desert nocturnal house.
ALICE SPRINGS COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

Outdoor Clubs/Groups:

- **American Boy Scouts**: John Barton- Boy Scouts age 7-17 years

- **Outback Scouts**: Girl and boy scouts combined. Children are engaged in crafts, hikes, and community involvement. [http://www.outbackscouts.com](http://www.outbackscouts.com)

- **Alice Springs Girl Guides**: Australian version of girl scouts. Activities include crafts, hikes, community involvement and they even sell cookies! [http://guidesasp.org.au/default.htm](http://guidesasp.org.au/default.htm)

- **Alice Springs Field and Naturalist Club**: People of all ages are welcome who have an interest in the natural history of Alice Springs. And Australia. [http://www.alicefieldnaturalists.org.au](http://www.alicefieldnaturalists.org.au)

- **Central Australian Rough Riders**: Mountain biking group for all ages, including “Dusty Demons,” which is a cycling group for kids up to age 13. [http://centralaustralianroughriders.asn.au/](http://centralaustralianroughriders.asn.au/)

- **Astronomy Club**: asasinc@ozemail.com.au


- **Outback 4WD Club**: A 4WD Club travelling to scenic areas of central Australia off the beaten path. Go to areas not usually open to the general public. [http://outback4wd.com.au](http://outback4wd.com.au)

Central Craft/Clubs at Araluen:

- **Fibre Friends**: People of all ages who are interested in a variety of fibre activities: knitting, sewing, felting. Meets every Friday at 9:30.

- **Lace and Spinning Group**: Meets on the 2nd (10-3pm) & the 4th (1-3pm) Saturday of the month.

- **Watercolor Group**: Meets every Monday 10-1pm. $1 for members, $3 for non-members.

- **Sewing Group**: Meets alternate Wednesday nights 6-9 pm. Free for members, $12 for non-members

Volunteering:

- **RDA (Riding for the Disabled)**: RDA Alice Springs is a busy and personalized center providing horse-riding and husbandry for riders with disability, disadvantaged and able-bodied riders. [http://rda.org.au/rdant.aspx](http://rda.org.au/rdant.aspx) (Info for Alice Springs is at the bottom of the website)


- **Reptile Center**: Volunteers needed for cleaning and caring of animals. Contact the reptile center at 8952 8900 or just stop by!

- **Alice Springs Girl Guides**: Always need volunteers to be girl guide leaders. Phone #: 0415 418 452

- **Alice Springs Boy Scouts**: Always need volunteers as well!

- **Royal Flying Doctor Service**: Go to the volunteer section and type in your location. [www.flyingdoctor.org.au](http://www.flyingdoctor.org.au)


Town Council Community Directory: This directory has a variety of volunteer and club opportunities in the Alice Springs area. [http://www.alicesprings.nt.gov.au/directory](http://www.alicesprings.nt.gov.au/directory)
Another extensive resource of volunteer activities is www.dosomethingnearyou.com.au

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND SCHOOL TERMS

2013 Northern Territory Public Holidays

New Years Day: Tuesday, 1 January
Australia Day: Saturday, 26 January
Easter – Good Friday: Friday, 29 March
Easter Monday: Monday, 1 April
ANZAC Day: Thursday, 25 April
May Day: Monday, 6 May
Queen’s Birthday: Monday, 10 June
Picnic Day: Monday, 5 August
Christmas Day: Wednesday, 25 December
Boxing Day: Thursday, 26 December

2014 Northern Territory Public Holidays

New Years Day: Wednesday, 1 January
Australia Day: Sunday, 26 January
Easter – Good Friday: Friday, 29 March
Easter Monday: Monday, 1 April
ANZAC Day: Friday, 25 April
May Day: Monday, 6 May
Queen’s Birthday Monday, 10 June
Picnic Day Monday, 4 August
Christmas Day: Thursday, 25 December
Boxing Day: Friday, 26 December
2013 Northern Territory School Terms

Term 1  
Friday 25 January – Friday 5 April (for urban schools only)  
(Students resume Tuesday 29 January) (for urban schools only)

Tuesday 29 January – Friday 5 April (for remote schools only)  
(Students resume Wednesday 30 January) (for remote schools only)

Term break  
Monday 8 April – Friday 12 April

Term 2  
Monday 15 April – Friday 21 June

Semester break  
Monday 22 June – Friday 19 July

Term break  
Monday 8 April – Friday 12 April

Term 4  
Monday 12 July – Thursday 11 December (for urban schools only)  
Monday 12 July – Friday 13 December (for remote schools only)

2014 Northern Territory School Terms

Term 1  
Friday 24 January – Friday 4 April (for urban schools only)  
(Students resume Tuesday 28 January) (for urban schools only)

Tuesday 28 January – Friday 4 April (for remote schools only)  
(Students resume Wednesday 29 January) (for remote schools only)

Term break  
Monday 7 April – Friday 11 April

Term 2  
Monday 14 April – Friday 20 June

Semester break  
Monday 23 June – Friday 18 July

Term break  
Monday 7 April – Friday 11 April

Term 3  
Monday 21 July – Friday 26 September  
(Students resume Tuesday 22 July)

Term break  
Monday 29 September – Friday 3 October

Term 4  
Monday 6 October – Thursday 11 December (for urban schools only)  
Monday 6 October – Friday 12 December (for remote schools only)