

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on DIMS, Plan My Move and Military INSTALLATIONS

DIMS

1. How do I register for the Defense Installation Messaging Service (DIMS) so that I may update my file?

You must have a CAC card to register for DIMS. The URL is <https://apps.mhf.dod.mil/dims>. For new registrants, follow the “First Time Users” instructions to apply. After your application has been approved you will receive an email notification, then you may begin sending messages through DIMS. If you have problems, contact the Help Desk at 1-888-363-6431 (1-888-DoDMHF1).

2. What if my CAC changes?

If your CAC Card changes at your installation or at a new location, you need to go to <https://sso.mhf.dod.mil/pls/cssso/f?p=202> select “authenticate” and go through the “Update CAC/ECA Certificate” process.

3. What if I have more than one Digital Certificate (ECA) on my computer?

Most people have more than one ECA on their computers at work. Make sure you remember and note which certificate is for DIMS and which is for your email.

4. What should I do if I find inaccurate information, missing information, or I have a desire to change or add new information to my installation’s topics, contacts, major unit listings or photos?

You should contact the Editors to make changes using the Defense Installation Messaging Service (DIMS) <https://apps.mhf.dod.mil/DIMS>. You need a Common Access Card to log onto DIMS. You need only register once and then you will have continuous access. Be specific in your request and the Editors will make changes for you. Please follow the Content Manual instructions when requesting changes. If the Editors have questions, they will contact you through DIMS, through email or through a commercial phone number, if you provide one in your DIMS message.

5. Why must I indicate the changes to my information for the Editors? Can’t the new information automatically overwrite the old information?

The content management systems that support PMM/MI are not designed for automatic load and overwrite. The purpose of having Editors is to look at the information before it is published and presented to the public. The Editors are looking for mistakes or incomplete information. They will contact you with questions.

6. How do I highlight changes for the Editors?

The Editors prefer you copy your article(s), contact(s), major unit listings into a Word document and use Track Changes (see Newsletter on Track Changes posted under Newsletter on DIMS) in Word to make the changes. Do not accept the changes that you made in the document. Attach the Word document to a DIMS message and the Editors will make the changes. You may also just note your changes in another color font or highlight using the highlight function in Word. It is imperative that you indicate current content and what you want it changed to (new content). If the Editors cannot see the changes, they will return the content to you through DIMS.

7. What if it is a minor change?

Please just type the change into the message box in DIMS indicating where the change is to be made and the old and new text.

8. Should I send one contact change at a time?

No, please do not send one contact at a time, if you are updating multiple contacts. Copy your contacts from the “Contact Information” tab in DIMS, paste them into a Word document and make the updates using Track Changes or other means of highlighting.

9. Can I make my contact changes in Excel?

Yes, but this is not the preferred method and if you do, you must show which cells have been changed using color or highlighting. Excel documents take 4 times longer to post than do changes submitted in Word.

10. How do I know my message has been completed?

The DIMS Editors will send one of two messages after they review your request. If they do not have any clarification questions, they will send you a completed email. No action is required on your part. If they have a clarification question, you will receive an email message that looks like this:

**** This is an automated message from the Defense Installation Messaging System (DIMS). Please do not reply to this email. ****

A Defense Installation Messaging System (DIMS) message was sent to you from linda.rothleder@mhf.dod.mil. To view this message in DIMS, click on the link below.
https://apps.mhf.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=106:1::NO::P1_ID:2059

Thank you for using the Defense Installation Messaging System (DIMS).
MC&FP PSG Support Services

You must click the link and answer the message. All open messages will be closed after 15 working days.

It is your responsibility to check the Editor's work and make sure that the changes have been made to your satisfaction.

11. What if I try to attach a file and it doesn't work?

The DIMS system limits the name of files to 85 characters per name of file. If the attachment isn't working check what you have named your attachment and, perhaps, rename or save it to your desktop to send.

12. Why am I required to certify that my content is complete and current quarterly?

This requirement has been placed on you by OSD and your Services. The Editors keep track of your certifications and review your files to see that indeed they are current and complete.

13. What if I get a Plan My Move Quality Assurance review matrix?

When you receive a comprehensive review performed by the Editors, you have 45 days to make the appropriate updates or note on the Matrix in the Installation Response column why a requirement doesn't apply to you. The updates are sent through DIMS. They are not made on the Matrix itself. The Matrix is sent back through DIMS after you have completed your updates. The Editors keep track of the returned Matrix and report to OSD and Headquarters quarterly. The returned Matrix provides an audit trail for your installation and it is to your advantage to return it to us.

Plan My Move

1. Will there be an opportunity to add those installations that were not migrated from SITES and an opportunity to add all new installations?

Yes, in order to be included in the MilitaryINSTALLATIONS and Plan My Move applications you must make a request through your Service headquarter's chain of command. New installations can be either major or smaller. There are Content Manuals available for both types of installations. A smaller installation has a location overview, photos, contacts that are applicable and major unit listings. A major installation has articles in all topics as well as the rest of the information.

2. Why is Plan My Move a 3-month calendar?

Three months was chosen as an average for the standard calendar. PMM has a customize calendar function which allows a user to create a personal calendar with user specific tasks of any length from a month to years. This is stored and private to the individual user. It is available whenever a user signs onto Plan My Move.

3. What information am I required to update for a complete file?

You are required to write articles, supply complete contacts, photos and major unit listings according to the Content Manual which is downloadable from DIMS.

4. May I link emails and websites in my articles?

You may link websites, but please limit to 3 per article. You can no longer link email addresses in articles. All emails must be contained in the contacts.

5. What information is required for a complete contact?

A contact needs to have all elements as described in the Content Manual. These include:

- A complete physical address
- If you have a physical address you may also send a mailing address
- Phone and fax numbers – both commercial and DSN
- Emails and websites
- Hours of Operation

Incomplete contacts are a major problem in our database. Care should be taken to ensure you have all required information.

6. Are there formatting rules for articles?

Yes, there are rules outlined in the Content Manual. Here are a few highlights:

- Use civilian time e.g. 8:00 a.m.
- No parentheses for phone numbers, write phone numbers 301-384-5696
- Overseas phone numbers must be written as if dialed from the States 011-49-75-6879
- Use DSN area codes even in the U.S. The U.S. area code is 312. Example 312-356-8766
Please note that the 312 has been added to most US DSN numbers, please do not request that this be removed
- Do not use elaborate formatting, color, etc., the system will not support. The Editors will format according to our standards.

7. *What should be included in Major Unit Listings?*

You should **not** include descriptions, addresses or names of individuals. You should provide a commercial and DSN phone and fax numbers. If the unit has a website, that may be included as well.

8. *Can I add custom topics?*

Not at this time. This is under consideration for future development. You may, however, add installation specific information to most of the topics. See the Content Manual for information that should be added as installation specific and for topics where installation information is **not** allowed.

9. *Does PMM/MI contain a photo gallery and is it limited to a certain number of photos?*

Yes, the photos that were in SITES have been migrated. You can submit new or change a photo through DIMS. There is no limit to the number of photos you may have in your installation file. However, use your discretion in the number of photos as they do take up space on the hard drive. One photo of a golf course is plenty, three is overkill. Make sure to include a caption with each photo you send. If you send photos with faces of people, make sure you have a release or that it is a stock Public Affairs photo.

Photos must be sent one at a time. You cannot zip together attachments to a DIMS message. Photos must be in one of the following formats:

- Format: JPEG/JPG (preferred) or GIF files only.
- File Size: No larger than 100KB per image.
- Maximum Image Size: 640x480 pixels (total pixel size no larger than 307,200 pixels). If you have trouble resizing photos contact the Help Desk for assistance.
- Scanned Photo dpi: If you are scanning printed photos, scan them at 300dpi. Use 4x5 or 4x6 photos for best results.

PDF, PowerPoint and Word files do not work and will be returned.

MilitaryINSTALLATIONS

1. Should I contact you if my installation is mapping incorrectly in MilitaryINSTALLATIONS?

Yes, please let us know by sending a message through DIMS. Be very specific about what is being displayed and what needs to be changed. Use some of the commercial mapping programs available on the internet and try to provide better cross street coordinates for your location. You may also provide latitude and longitude coordinates for a location. Our geospatial database does not contain mapping data for all installations in MI.

2. Are MilitaryINSTALLATIONS and Plan My Move available to the public?

Yes, these applications are not protected by a login requirement. Ease of access to information and resources is a primary objective of MilitaryINSTALLATIONS and Plan My Move.

3. MI has maps and building numbers of my installation that are unavailable to the public, should I be concerned about security?

No, MI information has been approved by the DoD Security Office for publication on the web.

4. Are the contacts in the MI Directories the same as those that appear on the pages with the articles in Plan My Move?

Yes, these are the same contacts. Both programs use the same database. When you send corrections and updates through DIMS, please note if the correction is in a contact or in an article.