

# Sar-EI Australia

## HANDBOOK

July 2010

A big thanks to Jack Bordan of Sar-EI Canada for sharing the wisdom below with us.

### IMPORTANT SECURITY MESSAGE

The IDF has recently discovered that many soldiers are posting pictures on Facebook and other websites that contain sensitive and classified military information. The IDF is beginning to closely monitor all such websites and will be taking strong actions against soldiers who post such pictures, including court-martialing the soldiers. We at Sar-EI welcome our volunteers' pictures, articles and publicity about Sar-EI, but we ask you to **refrain from taking pictures of anything which you might even think may be classified or sensitive. This includes mentioning the names and specific locations of bases.**

Obviously we cannot "court-martial" our volunteers, but we CAN and WILL reject volunteers for future programs if they disobey the rules. Please tell your fellow volunteers and if you happen to see something on a website which should not be there, please tell the person who posted it, or tell us.

## **Before you leave :**

**Travel light! Avoid taking more than one checkable suitcase and a carry-on. You'll be carrying your own luggage, and likely be living out of your suitcase, on the base. You'll be issued uniforms as work clothes, but your other garments are your own responsibility. DON'T TAKE VALUABLES.**

### **Documents**

You must have three copies of the picture page of your passport, your medical certificate, and proof of medical insurance coverage, as well as a list of your prescribed medications.

A record of charge-card numbers, safely stowed away from the originals will be helpful if you lose the Real ones.

### **Army issue on base**

You'll be issued the following:

- A uniform - shirt, trousers, cap, belt, and  
A blue Sar-El shoulder "flash".

- In winter you'll also get a sweater and parka, army boots, only if the work-site requires them.

- Bring closed-toe shoes that you can work in.

- Blankets or sleeping bag, and generally narrow sheets, (see below)

- Pillows, likely, but not always, (see below)

## **Packing check-list**

### **See the **Packing List** in the Downloads Section**

#### **Essentials. You must bring the following:**

- your own underwear, T-shirts, handkerchiefs, and any clothes that you wish to wear after work and off the base. (Women need skirts on Shabbat, in Orthodox areas.)

- closed-toe shoes, suitable for work site.

- in winter - rainwear, and waterproof footwear.

- in spring and summer - sun hat.

- a robe for getting to and from the showers; they may not be very close to your bunk.

- towels and soap; washcloths for a first-dry are useful, since they'll dry more quickly than a wet towel, particularly in a damp winter environment.

- thongs, plastic or rubber type sandals for use in the shower.

- toiletries; prescription medications with copy of generic prescription; medical devices (e.g. CPAP with extension cord and plug), Tylenol, Band-Aids, and Imodium may be useful too; sunblock; insect repellent; spare eyeglasses with prescription, sun glasses.

- To be safe, consider bringing a pair of cot-sized or single sheets, pillow case and small pillow, since some bases may not supply sheets & pillows. You will be issued blankets or a sleeping bag.

#### **Optional, for convenience (see also Laundry)**

- work gloves, rubber or plastic gloves, may be useful. Scotch tape can be handy too.

- if you use a hair-dryer or electric razor, remember that Israel uses 220 volts, Your Australian appliances will work in Israel. The plug prongs are different too. Buy one for Israel. A small mirror can be useful; there are usually no electric outlets in the washrooms

- a small lock for your locker, if you get one. Combination locks are cheap and you won't lose the key.

- a small flashlight, an inexpensive camera, and perhaps a small portable radio .

- ear plugs for yourself, and if you snore, (who doesn't?) for your barrack-mates.

- In spring and summer - shorts, bathing suit, sandals.

## **Laundry.**

You'll usually get clean uniforms as needed but you are on your own for other laundry. So easy wash-and-wear clothes are essential. Some bases have a washing machine and dryer, but most do not. Laundry detergent is almost essential too; clothespins and string for clothesline can be useful, if you don't find some already on the base. . (Optionally some experienced Sar-Elniks carry a small plastic container as a laundry basin. That's not as crazy as it sounds. It doesn't weigh much and can be filled with socks, underwear etc. in your luggage. And it's cheap enough to leave behind if you don't want to carry it back home.)

## **Insurance.**

**You must have proof of adequate medical insurance. Sar-El provides no hospital/medical insurance for volunteers.** Review your out-of-country insurance, and if necessary, buy appropriate extra coverage. **Australian Medicare does not cover Israel.**

You must have access to sufficient funds to cover medical emergencies, since your insurance may not pay up front. Check with your insurance provider on their payment arrangements for service in Israel.

## **Money.**

Credit cards, particularly VISA, Mastercard and Amex are widely accepted. Most volunteers don't bother with traveller's cheques, using automatic teller machines (ATMs) instead. Most banks accept Australian ATM cards affiliated with PLUS or CIRRUS systems; insert your card and the screen message appears in English if that's the "language of your card" back home. You withdraw money from your Australian account, in shekels, and your account is automatically debited in Australian dollars at a correct exchange rate and with a service charge. The other advantage is that ATMs are "open" when banks are closed.

## **Telephones**

**Many bases no longer have pay phones, since Israelis are heavy cell phone users. Don't ask your madricha (see below) to use her cell phone. It's advisable to rent your own.**

Bring your Australian phone and buy a SIM card to insert it into your phone.

Israeli pay phones, when available, use Telecards and other similar cards that you can buy at the airport and sometimes more cheaply at the base canteen. Remember that many bases don't have pay phones.

To call Australia dial 061 followed by the area code and the number. This works for both Telecard and cell-phone calls.

## **Arrival at Ben Gurion Airport. New Terminal 3**

While waiting for your luggage you can and buy Israeli currency, shekels, at the airport bank branch, or ATM (see Money). (Get enough for your first weekend off the base, because you may not be able to visit a bank or ATM before Shabbat.)

**If you arrive during normal working hours on the prescribed Sunday or Monday, you will be met at the meeting place in the Arrivals hall at the chairs to the right of the "fountain" as you face exit #2.** There will usually be a Sar-El representative nearby, currency exchange and ATM.

If you are early, you can wait at the chairs. If you are not met, phone the Program Coordinator

(052-821-9945) to make the arrangements for assignment to a base.

**If you arrive before a scheduled start date to join Sar-El in Israel, you must phone the Program coordinator to confirm your arrival and the arrangements for joining. Follow the instructions that you were given in Australia.**

**On base.**

Each volunteer group has a madricha or madrich. She/he is a soldier assigned as your guide, mentor, and translator, to act as liaison with the base commander and arrange for uniforms, work, evening activities, trips, etc.

**Work assignment.**

Remember that you've contracted with Sar-El to put in a full day's work. If a particular job is beyond your ability, ask your madricha to arrange a change. The odds are that your request will be satisfied.

**Evening activities. You are expected to attend activities arranged by your madricha. You may not leave the base without permission from your madricha. She/he is responsible for your security; please cooperate.**

**Weekends.**

Plan on leaving the base on weekends. You are responsible for your accommodation, off-base, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. On request, your madricha will advise you about reservations at a hostel, or a hotel. Be sure to ask for a Sar-El discount. Beit Oded, the Sar-El hostel in Tel Aviv/Yafo may be available at no charge.

Other Soldiers Hostels are in:

Tiberias tel: 72-2702180

Eilat tel: 72-2702260

Haifa tel: 72-2702170

Jerusalem tel: 72-2702248

**Tours.**

The program will likely include some guided tours during the work week. Your madricha may have some information on commercial tour guides for special weekend tours, at reasonable cost. You are responsible for personal expenses on weekends.

**Your contact address in Israel.**

c/o Sar-El, 111 Jerusalem Blvd, Tel Aviv/Yafo, 68151, Israel

Telephone:

Pamela Lazarus, Program coordinator

If dialed in Israel 052-8219945

If dialed from Australia +972-52-8219945

Sar-El office in Tel Aviv/Yafo 03-5267513

FAX to office, from Australia: +972-3-5267513

Beit Oded (Sar-El hostel): 03-569-2848

in Yafo at 5 Jerusalem Blvd. near the NOGA Theatre; entrance on Segula (side street)

**Departure from Israel.**

Check with your airline to confirm your flight time. You may get help from your madricha, but you are responsible for your own arrangements, particularly if you are staying on after your "tour of duty".

**Words to remember.**

*savlanoot (patience), balagan (confusion), g'mi-shoot (flexibility)*

So ne-see-ah to-va and l'hitra-ot!

We'd like to hear from you when you return; please call or email.

## GLOSSARY of SIGNS On The BASE

<b>Near the gate</b>	<i>al yahd ha-shar</i>	welcome
	<i>b'rookh-eem ha-ba-eem</i>	go in peace
	<i>t'sayt-khem l'shalom</i>	base (camp)
	<i>mah-kha-neh</i>	
<b>In the mess hall</b>	<i>b'khe-der okh-el</i>	entrance
	<i>k'nee-sah</i>	exit
	<i>y'tzee-ah</i>	dairy [blue dishes, usually]
	<i>kha-lah-vee</i>	meat [orange dishes, usually]
	<i>bah-sah-ree</i>	keep kosher
	<i>sh'mor ahl ha-kash-root</i>	no smoking on shabbat
	<i>ah-sohr l'ah-shen b'shabat</i>	
<b>On the base</b>	<b>b'bah-sees</b>	fire
	<i>esh</i>	warning
	<i>ahz-hah-rah</i>	by order
	<i>bif-koo-dah</i>	careful
	<i>z'hee-root</i>	electricity
	<i>khash-mahl</i>	barracks (male soldiers)
	<i>mi-goo-ray kha-yah-leem</i>	barracks (female soldiers)
	<i>mi-goo-ray kha-yah-lot</i>	stop
	<i>ah-tzor</i>	

Sar-El Australia

[www.sarelaustralia.org](http://www.sarelaustralia.org)

Make the most of your Sar-El experience.