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Many German traffic fines increase significantly in February

By Robert Szostek

U.S. Army Europe Office of the Provost Marshal Public Affairs Office

MANNHEIM, Germany -- Officials with the U.S. Army Europe Office of the Provost Marshal want to remind USAREUR drivers that fines for many traffic violations in Germany increased significantly Feb. 1.

Fines for speeding, reckless driving and tailgating all have gone up, said OPM officials, while fines for dangerous overtaking, right-of-way violations and driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol were doubled.



Failure to stop at a red traffic light now costs between 90 and 360 euro, compared to the "old fine" of 50 to 200 euro, OPM officials said.

According to information on the German Transport Ministry Web site, the increase in fines aims to improve road safety, but there was no intent to increase all fines. For example, fines for parking offenses were not increased.

“Up to now, the fines in Germany were rather low compared with other European countries,” said Lt. Col. Lon Walker, the OPM's chief of law enforcement operations. Great Britain and countries such as the Netherlands and Sweden, all of which are highly rated for road safety performance, had fines for dangerous driving offenses considerably higher than those in Germany.

OPM officials said German highway police have a large fleet of fast unmarked vehicles with video cameras discreetly mounted front and back to follow and film reckless drivers and speeders.

When an offender has been identified, police will flash blue lights, overtake the vehicle waving a red and white signal disk and escort the offending vehicle to the nearest parking area. A folding electronic display is often installed in the back window of these police cars that displays the words, “STOPP, POLIZEI” or “POLIZEI FOLGEN” when the police want you to follow them.

A complete list of new fines, in English, can be found at the German Transport Ministry Web site at www.bmvbs.de/en/artikel-,1872.970156/Schedule-of-Fines.htm



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