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Demonstrations, road restrictions during NATO summit call for care, planning

HEIDELBERG, Germany – U.S. Army Europe safety and security officials are warning servicemembers, civilian employees and family members to be alert for possible demonstrations and clogged or closed roadways during the NATO Summit and Easter holiday weekend.

Antiterrorism and force protection officials said 15-25,000 anti-NATO demonstrators -- many of whom are also anti-American and police officials believe could turn violent -- are expected to protest April 1-5 in and around the conference's locations in Baden-Baden and Kehl, Germany and Strasbourg, France.

German and French police will restrict vehicle and pedestrian movement in and around these cities for the duration of the summit, particularly around train stations and rail lines and possibly roadside rest areas, within several miles of each city.

In addition to the possible protests, many roadways near the summit sites may be restricted or closed, including:

Possible restrictions on Autobahn 5, April 3 from 3-5 p.m.

On April 4, traffic on Autobahn 5 will be stopped several times and the Baden-Baden exit will be closed from 7:30 to 9 a.m.

Federal Roads (Bundesstrassen) B500 and B36 in the Baden-Baden area will be closed from noon April 3 until 10 a.m. April 4.

Officials recommend that motorists traveling toward Switzerland use Autobahn 6 from Kreuz Walldorf to Kreuz Weinsberg, and then travel on Autobahn 81 towards Singen and Switzerland.

Southbound travelers can also take Autobahn A81 to the Geisingen exit, travel through the Black Forest to Freiburg on B31 and get back onto Autobahn 5.

In France, there will be major traffic disruptions around Strasbourg. Officials recommend that travelers avoid the city and travel via Saarbruecken, Germany or Metz and Nancy, France, to their destinations in France.

In addition to the summit meetings, this weekend marks the start of Easter holiday vacation in 10 German states. Travelers can expect to see more traffic on most autobahns and federal roadways.



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