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U.S. Army Europe officials outline rules for allowing guests to drive USAREUR-plated private vehicles in Germany

By Robert Szostek

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

MANNHEIM, Germany – One advantage of being stationed in Europe is that friends and family can visit and get that real Old World travel experience. They can also share the burden of driving if you go off on trips with them. But you must get customs approval first if you want to let them drive your U.S. Army Europe-plated car on their own excursions.



“Just go to your local military customs office and fill out the application form,” said Bill Johnson, director of the USAREUR Customs Executive Agency. “If you want to have the paperwork ready when your relatives or friends arrive, you should bring along clear copies of their passports and Stateside or international driver’s licenses,” he added.

Two things to remember, customs officials said, are that guests cannot be residents in Germany or dependents of the servicemember they are visiting. It is also important to make sure guests are covered by their hosts' automobile insurance policies.

Guests can use this exception to policy to drive a USAREUR-registered privately owned vehicle in Germany for up to 90 days after entering the European Union. The authorization document must be in the car when guests use a vehicle independently, along with their passports, the vehicle registration, proof of insurance and the guests' international driver's licenses (or official translations of their licenses).

“Driving in Germany is tax- and duty-free for U.S. forces personnel and their dependents,” Johnson explained, which is why the customs authorization is required for guests.

But he warned that this exception to policy does not let your guests buy gas at Army and Air Force Exchange Service gas stations or use your AAFES fuel card. Visitors to Germany who rent a car may not use AAFES gas stations or fuel cards as well.

For more information visit any military customs office in Germany, call the Customs Hot Line 381-7610 or 0621-7307610, or visit the customs Web site at www.hqusareur.army.mil/opm/custom3.htm.



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