

Customs News Release

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POV Transfers in Germany

By Astrid Glockner, Customs Translator/Operations Specialist, U.S. Army Customs Agency – Europe (USACA-E)

Wiesbaden, Germany – Do you desire to buy a new car and sell the old one? Maybe you are about to PCS from Germany and don't want to take your current vehicle with you? Or maybe the vehicle has broken down and the cost for repairs are higher than what the car is worth? For whatever reason you decide to get rid of your car in Germany, you need to take a few things into account due to your SOFA status.

If you want to transfer a USAREUR-AF-plated vehicle to a person without SOFA status you generally need a "Permit to Transfer" (AEA Form 550-175B) due to its special tax status. This form is available at any U.S. Forces customs field office in Germany serving your garrison.

It is essential to get a "Permit to Transfer" (AEA Form 550-175B) **before** you sell, donate or transfer a car in any other way to a German car dealer, junkyard or any person who is not privileged under NATO SOFA. Please note: This applies even if the vehicle was in an accident, and you did not receive any money for it!

Without such a permit processed through U.S. and German customs - you will eventually be unable to clear vehicle registration when it is time to PCS. Another issue you may face is Customs authorities requiring you to prove the disposition of the vehicle, which may be very difficult if the car was scrapped or sold without following proper procedures. With the lack of documents and proof of Customs clearance, you may be identified in a Law Enforcement Report and could face disciplinary action. Additionally, you could even face a hefty tax demand, and possible fines from German customs authorities.

AEA Regulation 550-175 requires you to accompany the non-SOFA status recipient when customs-clearing the vehicle. This is also in your own best interest: While the person taking ownership of your car is obliged to clear German customs, be aware that by law, you can be held liable to pay the German taxes and duties in the case of the buyer failing to do so. To make things easier, you may want to refer them to the online guidance available in English and German on the US Forces Customs webpage (see QR code) to help with the procedure. For more information on how to properly sell or transfer your car or other personal property in Germany the resources are available online, in AEA Regulation 550-175, or by visiting your local U.S. Forces customs field office in Germany.

