

Check Your Stuff Before They Wreck Your Stuff!

by CPT Dan O'Connor

The summer PCS-move season is upon us. There are certain steps you can and should take now to make sure that any claim you file against your Transportation Service Provider (TSP) is paid in full.

One important way to protect yourself is by substantiating the condition of your property on your household goods inventory. If the mover lists pre-existing damage (PED) codes on the inventory like "SC," meaning that item has scratches, you should ask the mover to remove the code if it is incorrect. If you do not take notice of the code and do not note an exception, the TSP will likely deny your claim if the movers scratch your property, citing PED as the reason for the denial.



Here are some other ways you can protect yourself:

- Take photos or video of your household goods just prior to the mover packing them. This way, you can demonstrate that your TV was working because it was on when you filmed it, and you can also show that there were no visible scratches or other PED.
- Note exceptions to the TSP's codes on the inventory itself. You can write on the inventory, in the area provided for "exceptions," that the TV is not scratched, so that the TSP knows that you do not agree with their assessment. This can be helpful if you end up transferring your claim from the TSP to a Military Claims Office (MCO), because it shows you had a valid basis for disagreeing with the TSP's denial of your claim.
- Call or visit the Kaiserslautern Claims Office in Room 112 of Building 3210 on Kleber Kaserne. We can help answer any claims-related questions you may have before you PCS.

When it comes to shipping your POV, special rules apply. Double check your Vehicle Inspection & Shipping Form (VISF) at drop-off to make sure any PED listed by the shipper is not exaggerated, and be extra vigilant when checking your POV for damage when you pick it up. Failure to note obvious loss or damage before you depart the Vehicle Processing Center (VPC) can result in denial of your claim. Failure to return to the VPC within a few hours to note any loss or damage that was not obvious at pick-up can have the same effect. Here are some other tips for vehicles:

- Give your vehicle a hard look; open and shut the doors, hood, and trunk, to make sure nothing is amiss. If you notice loss or damage, list it as an exception on the back of the VISF before you depart the VPC.
- Pick up your vehicle in the morning. That way, you can have it washed so you can identify any damage that was not visible at pick-up and can make it back to the VPC the same day to report it.
- Do not settle on the spot unless you are 100% sure that you will be satisfied with the settlement. If you accept an on-the-spot payment upon receiving your vehicle, you cannot later go back to the MCO to request more money because your claim is considered settled in full.

If you have further questions about these or other claims-related issues, call the Kaiserslautern Claims Office at DSN 483-8855/8856 or Civilian 0631-411-8855/8856, or visit the office and consult with our claims experts.

Travel safe and ship smart!

Editor's Note: CPT O'Connor serves as the Claims Judge Advocate for the Kaiserslautern Legal Services Center.