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Provost Marshal, customs officials outline penalties for fuel card users who exceed ration limits

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

MANNHEIM, Germany – The recently introduced Army and Air Force Exchange Service fuel card system eliminates the need for authorized U.S. personnel in Europe to buy and fill out gas coupons for their fuel purchases. Officials with the U.S. Army Europe Office of the Provost Marshal said the automated features of the system also make it much easier for customs investigators to check when people pump gas without authorization or go over their fuel ration limit.



“Since the use of the fuel card began earlier this year, customs investigators have been able to identify some suspected fuel ration violators,” said Fred Evans, chief of customs services and investigations at the USAREUR OPM. To boost the enforcement effort against fuel ration abuse, U.S. Forces Customs-Europe has set up a special fuel violation task force.

Using the fuel card database, investigators receive daily reports on several kinds of violations and can see when and where fuel was pumped. PMO officials said people who exceed their monthly fuel ration limit make up nearly 65 percent of the 1,500 violations uncovered to date.

People who go over their ration allowance will receive up to two warning letters, officials explained. Customs personnel will also send the letters to violators’ commanders or civilian supervisors. Subsequent violations may result in an official military police report documenting a police investigation of possible unlawful activity.

“In an effort to protect duty and tax-free gas privileges, U.S. Forces Customs is strictly enforcing compliance,” Evans went on. “We will identify each and every violator and take the necessary action to prevent abuse.”

In addition to penalties under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and administrative action, anyone abusing the system may also face German fines and penalties that result in a German police record, PMO officials said. Sustained abuse could eventually result in violators losing their tax-free fuel privileges and having to buy gas at economy prices.

“Fuel card holders have a responsibility to know their fuel ration balance before pumping gas,” Evans added.

This can be done in several ways.

“You can check the receipt you get from the gas station,” Evans explained. “Down at the bottom of the receipt, the number of remaining liters of fuel for that month is shown.” Additionally, fuel card holders can call the AAFES 0800 number printed on the card, check their balance online, or ask an AAFES associate to check on the ration allowance left for that month.

Eligible fuel card holders who have to drive very long distances between their homes and workplaces can apply to get extra fuel rations.

Fuel purchase policies for eligible AAFES patrons in Europe, including information on violations and procedures for requesting supplemental fuel rations can be found in Army in Europe Regulation 600-17 (Retail Sales of Motor Fuel to Individuals in Germany), available online at www.hqusareur.army.mil/rmv/regulations/aer600-17.pdf.



www.hqusareur.army.mil