

### **What is SOFA Status & Individual Logistical Support (ILS) Privileges?**

As Members of the U.S. Forces assigned to Germany, you fall under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). This entitles you to tax and duty free status or what we call ILS. This is for you and your authorized dependents that reside with you. ILS privileges allow active duty military, DOD civilians, approved contractors and their family members to utilize Commissary, AAFES, APO, VAT Office, & MWR facilities.

### **What do I need to know about my Rations Card?**

1) Rations Cards are for the **sole use of the individual for which it is issued.** Allowing others to use, or purchasing rationed items for others is illegal.

2) Rations Cards **MUST** be typed or stamped. Hand written Rations Cards are not authorized and cannot be accepted at Military Sales Facilities.

### **What items are rationed and how do I buy them?**

Rationed items are tobacco, coffee and alcohol. You must be in possession of a valid Rations Card to purchase these items within Military Retail Facilities

### **Is there a rationed items purchase limit?**

Yes – The limits of rationed items that can be purchased in a given month are as follows:

Cigarettes: 4 Cartons (not to include individual packs, see rations card)

Coffee: 5 pounds of grounds/beans or 20 ounces of instant.

Alcohol: Not to exceed 6 liters.

### **Customs Forms:**

#### **AE Form 550-175A, Import / Export Certificate:**

If you wish to import personal property to a German mailing address or a port of entry you must obtain an Import Certificate from a U.S. Army Customs Agency (USACA) Field Office. Examples of this would be if you ship a vehicle or household goods over from the U.S. at your own expense.

#### **AE Form 550-175B, Permit to Transfer:**

If you wish to sell or otherwise transfer personal property which you imported duty-free or purchased tax-free to a local national or anyone that does NOT have ILS, such as vehicles and personally owned firearms, you must obtain a Permit to Transfer from a USACA Field Office.

**AE Form 550-175C/D:** If you wish to have your family or friends visiting from the U.S. drive your POV you must first obtain this form. Bring a copy of the passport, International Driver's License and the dates of the visit of your guest to the USACA-E office.

**AE Form 550-175L, POL Authorization for Rental Vehicles:** In order to obtain a Fuel Ration Card for a rental vehicle you must bring a valid Commercial German rental contract (name of authorized person/s must be annotated on contract). German Vehicle Registration (Green Form), your Military ID card, and your USAREUR License, and assignment orders to a USACA Office or Directorate of Emergency Services (MP Station). You will be issued an AE Form 550-175L, you will then proceed to the AAFES Customer Service Counter in the PX, or the Shoppette in Illesheim. The amount of fuel you will be authorized is based on the length of your rental agreement

### **Use of the Individual Tax-Relief Program Value-added Tax (VAT):**

This is a program designed to provide tax relief for the purchase of goods and services in local German communities. Keep in mind that VAT percentages may vary based on material, services or other goods being purchased. Generally speaking it is 19% for most products. It is 7% for food, books, and transportation services. German merchants must agree to participate in the tax-relief program. Goods and services purchased with a VAT form are for the **SOLE** use of authorized personnel. The VAT kiosk is located in the Main PX breezeway, directly between the Beauty Salon and Alterations/cleaners.

**Typical Customs Violations:** USACA-E investigates all ILS violations associated with Black-market activities, abuse of privileges and illegal transfers. Black-marketing defined is the illegal transfer of U.S. tax and duty-free goods, including rationed items, to individuals not authorized logistic support, for profit, or personal gain. Illegal transfer defined is the illegal transfer of U.S. tax and duty-free goods including rationed items to individuals not authorized logistic support. Substantiated offenses could result in UCMJ action and affect your security clearance, if you have one.

**ESSO/ AAFES Fuel Ration Card:**

Permanent Fuel Ration Cards are issued for vehicles registered in the USAREUR Vehicle Registration System. Temporary Fuel Ration Cards are issued for rental vehicles. Your ESSO fuel ration card can only be used for the vehicle it is assigned to. It is not transferable between vehicles. This also includes unused fuel rations. Keep in mind that using a Fuel Ration Card to refuel a vehicle in which the fuel card is not assigned to, or transferring tax and duty-free fuel to a non ILS ID card holder is illegal.

**Individual Tax-Relief Program Value-added Tax (VAT):** You cannot use your VAT privileges in any of the following instances: to purchase real estate or to make additions to real estate; to purchase vehicles for the purpose of registering them in the German system; or to purchase goods or services for ineligible persons.

**Military Postal Facilities and APOs:**

It is illegal to import or export the following items through the Military Postal Service (MPS):

- (a) Alcoholic beverages.
- (b) Animals or plants.
- (c) Cheese and cheese products.
- (d) Cigarettes and other tobacco products (including Vaping Products).
- (e) **Coffee and coffee products.**
- (f) Meat and meat products.
- (g) **Medication (including vitamins and nutritional supplements).**
- (h) Milk and milk products.

It is also illegal to use a Military Postal Facility and APO for personal profit, gain, or commercial enterprise. Offenses will result in revocation of your APO privileges.

**After the fact- illegal transfer of POVs:**

Transferring your POV to non -ILS, non-ID card holder, regardless of the value or if it is considered junk or failed to pass a safety inspections is illegal.

**U.S. Forces Sales Facilities:** All items purchased in U.S. retail facilities are tax and duty free and solely for the personal use or consumption of authorized personnel. Use of facilities by non-ILS, non-ID card holders is prohibited.

**USACA Investigations office, investigates all Black Market and Customs related offenses in order to preserve everyone's ILS. Offenses can result in the revocation of your tax and duty-free privileges and possible UCMJ action.**

# ALL THINGS CUSTOMS



**U.S. Customs Field Office Ansbach**

**Customer Service**

**DSN Phone: 587-5352 / 5353**

**CIV Phone: 0964170-587-5352 / 5353**

**We are on Bismarck Kaserne**

**BLDG# 5843-C Room# 286**

**Hours of Operation**

**MONDAY-FRIDAY**

**0800-1600 HRS**

**Closed on US Holidays**



<https://www.europeafrica.army.mil/customs/>