



IMCOM-Europe

RETIREE

BULLETIN



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The Director, IMCOM-Europe, has determined that publication of this bulletin is necessary in the transaction of public business as required by law. Use of funds for printing this bulletin was approved by IMCOM-Europe on 1 December 2008 in accordance with AR 25-30. The purpose of this bulletin is to provide information and guidance on laws, regulations, and policy affecting retirees and their Family members or survivors in Europe.

The views and opinions expressed in this bulletin are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army, USAREUR, or IMCOM-Europe.

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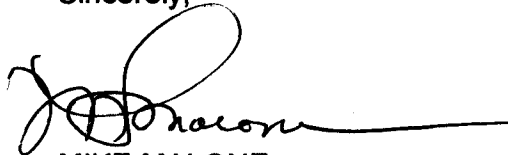
Chief, Theater Personnel

Services Support Branch

Dear Retirees, Family Members, and Annuitants:

We are in the last stage of helping retirees, annuitants, and survivors correct their correspondence mailing address so that they can stay current on benefits, issues, and other information that concerns them. We ask that you take the time to ensure your address, including the postal code, is correct in MyPay. If you use an address in the host-nation community, please annotate the country in which you live. For APO addressees, ensure your address has the correct APO and CMR or unit designation listed exactly as provided by the postal personnel (do not add anything else to the address). If you are not sure what to do, please complete the attached form and mail it to either DFAS-Cleveland or to the undersigned and we will enter the information for you. All addresses without a correct mailing address will be deleted from the bulletin mailing list after this edition.

Sincerely,



MIKE MALONE

IMCOM-Europe RSO



IMCOM-EUROPE RETIREE BULLETIN



December 2009

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Transformation of DFAS-Cleveland

Since January 2002, the Retired and Annuity (R&A) Pay Program has been outsourced to a private contractor. Beginning in early 2010, however, R&A pay operations will once again be performed by Department of Defense (DOD) personnel.

Recent Federal legislation has led the DOD to survey all contracted programs and select any that could be returned to and operated by the Government (specifically those that have been performed by the Government within the last 10 years). A recently conducted business case analysis by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) determined that the R&A Program would be suitable for such a purpose. DFAS hopes that this decision will result in a more securely managed processing environment that may surpass the current level of quality and efficiency of service to our Nation's military retirees, and potentially save the Government \$20 million in the near future.

DFAS and its current R&A contractor will provide a seamless transition of functions back to the Government starting in February 2010.

The DFAS-Cleveland website provides more information (<http://www.dfas.mil/>).

Retirees Living in Germany Benefit From New Arrangements Reached With the *Bundesministerium der Finanzen* (Federal Ministry of Finance)

Retired Servicemembers who live in Germany as ordinary residents can benefit from new arrangements with the German Government regarding duties charged on purchases made in American military exchange and commissary facilities, and packages received through U.S. Forces post offices.

Rula Strumpen, Host Nation Customs Policy Branch, Office of the Provost Marshal (OPM), United States Army Europe, said the arrangements, which took effect 1 November 2009, put

into law benefits which had been agreed to previously but for which no law existed.

Ms. Strumpen said the concession, meaning the authorization for retired military personnel to shop at U.S. Forces sales facilities—which applies also to surviving dependents, retired Reservists, 100-percent disabled veterans, and unaccompanied dependents whose sponsor is serving in a restricted tour area—granted by the *Bundesministerium der Finanzen* (BMF) (Federal Ministry of Finance) Customs Department during the past 50 years now has the force of law. She added that “this is a great benefit” and that “the ruling applies not only to U.S. Forces personnel, but also to the personnel of the other Sending States Forces in Germany.”

Ms. Strumpen explained that in 1964, the *BMF* Customs Department granted an exception to retired military personnel who live in Germany or visit Germany for at least 30 days but are not covered by the Status of Forces Agreement and Supplementary Agreement for Germany. The exception allowed them and their accompanying dependents to shop in Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) and Defense Commissary Agency (DECA) facilities. However, because of the European Community Customs Code, this ruling was always subject to revocation.

Ms. Strumpen said that the new Forces Customs Ordinance codifies that privilege and allows retirees to shop for nonrationed items in AAFES and DECA facilities in Germany, and pay German customs a flat rate of duty of 17.5 percent for goods that cost less than the equivalent of €50 per item. For purchases of items with a single-item sales price of the equivalent of €50 and more, German customs will apply the 19 percent value-added tax plus the customs tariff for the item. Ms. Strumpen explained that German customs personnel will determine the final rate. A list of the tariff rates used to determine duty rates for specific items is available at http://www.zolltarifnummern.de/2009_en/ and at www.ezt-online.de. The euro rate German customs uses to calculate the

value of items is available at www.zoll.de. German customs will use the euro rate applicable for the month the purchases were made.

Bill Johnson, Director of the USAREUR OPM Customs Executive Agency, advised that retirees must still report purchases monthly to local German customs offices and register annually with United States Forces Customs, Europe, offices. Retirees cannot shop unless they have been issued the so-called "pink card" by a German customs office.

Another benefit for retirees is that the *BMF* Customs Department agreed retirees can use the U.S. Forces Postal System and receive packages in Germany up to a value equivalent to €22 without paying taxes or duties. Ms. Strumpfen added that efforts are currently being made with the *BMF* Customs Department to work out procedures for declaring parcels to German Customs authorities. Mr. Johnson added that the 16-ounce DOD-mandated weight restriction when using the U.S. Forces postal system has not changed.

"Our job is to facilitate procedures to support U.S. personnel," Ms. Strumpfen said. She added that the *BMF* Customs Department has been willing to come to these arrangements because they appreciate the continuing partnership with the USAREUR OPM as the Customs Executive Agent for the U.S. Forces. Ms. Strumpfen said this is also proven by the fact that Germany is the only European Union member State that grants customs benefits to U.S. retirees codified by statute.

Mr. Johnson advised that USAREUR customs officials take part in community retiree open houses and preretirement briefings to help educate U.S. personnel about customs policy and procedures. He recommended that retirees who have questions visit their local retirement services or military customs offices.

(Source: USAREUR Public Affairs Office News Release, 2009-11-30-1)

Retiree and Annuitant Correspondence Mailing Address—Is Yours Correct?

The IMCOM-Europe Retiree Bulletin is published twice yearly and mailed to more than 8,000 retirees, annuitants, and survivors in the IMCOM-Europe area of responsibility. About 50 percent of the bulletins must be sorted manually because of information missing in the mailing address. The most common errors for addresses are the failure to include the host-nation city postal code or country name; and also retirees unnecessarily include country names in APO addresses. All host-nation addresses should have a postal code (if the country you live in uses a postal code system) and the complete street address along with the country name. APO addresses should not include a country name and should not be entered as a foreign address.

Recording a correct mailing address is the retiree's responsibility. To correct your address, go to the MyPay website, then *Your Military Retiree Pay Account, Pay Changes, and Correspondence Address*. The first screen is the U.S. address. This screen should be used to enter APO addresses. APO addresses are not foreign addresses in MyPay.

For APO Addresses: Under *Home Address Items*, complete the items as follows: Street 1: Enter the unit name; Street 2: Enter the CMR and box number or unit number; Street 3: Enter any additional information if needed; City: Enter *APO*; State: Enter *AE*; ZIP: Enter your nine-digit APO number. Then save the information. Do not include your name with the address (the system already knows your name).

For Foreign Addresses: Click on *Enter Foreign Address* under *Home Address Items* and complete the items as follows: Street 1: Enter the correct spelling of your street and house or apartment number; Street 2: Enter your postal code here: Enter the four- or five-digit postal zip code (for example, the code for Germany would be 55555; for Belgium would

be 1020; for the United Kingdom would be a combination of letters and numbers (KY001UJ)); Street 3: Enter any additional information if needed; City: Enter the correct spelling of the town (for some countries, you must put the regional two-letter postal code after the city or town [for example, Rome (RM)]); State: Not used; Zip: Not used; Country: Using the drop-down menu, select the country in which you live. The list currently does not include all towns and cities. If your town or city is not listed, you must complete the attached form and either mail or fax it to DFAS to the address or fax number indicated on the form.

As a one-time exception, you can mail the completed form to this office and we will be more than happy to assist you in making the address change. We are working with MyPay to correct the address problem. Our address is as follows:

HNLFOA
(IMEU-HMT-RSO)
Friedrichsfelder Landstrasse
Kilbourne Kaserne
68723 Schwetzingen
GERMANY

NOTE: Do not put the country code before the postal code. Also, do not combine APO and host-nation address information (for example, Hauptstrasse 1, APO AE 09033; or Unit 09000, Box 0001, Heidelberg). Bulletins sent to such addresses will be returned as undeliverable.

German addresses that have the old four-digit postal code or "West Germany" in the country block must be updated.

Effective with the June 2010 issue of the bulletin, we will no longer send issues to an invalid mailing addresses. The address must include the four- or five-digit postal code and region information if required by the country. We currently have an approximate return rate of 18 percent because of incorrect addresses. The rate would be around 45 to 50 percent if we did not manually screen and correct addresses.

For retirees and annuitants who are also DOD civilian employees, changing your civilian address in MyPay will not change your retiree address.

If you are like a lot of retirees or annuitants and do not have, need, or want a computer, we would like to help you correct your address. Attached to this bulletin is a form letter for requesting that your correspondence address be changed by DFAS-Cleveland. Please complete the form and mail it to DFAS-Cleveland at the address provided. You may also fax it to the number provided or return it to the address below. DFAS will then enter it in the system for you.

DFAS-Cleveland addresses and telephone numbers for mail-handling operations are as follows:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Retirement Pay
P.O. Box 7130
London, KY 40742-7130
Telephone: 800-321-1080
 216-522-5955
Fax: 800-469-6559

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Annuitant Pay
P.O. Box 7131
London, KY 40742-7131
Telephone: 800-321-1080
 216-522-5955
Fax: 800-982-8459

NOTES: "800" numbers are not toll-free when calling from Europe. You must dial "001" instead of "1" to call from Europe. Ensure that the last four digits of your social security number (SSN) and signature are on all faxed pages. Addresses may also be changed on-line through the MyPay website at <http://www.dfas.mil>.

The IMCOM-Europe Retiree Bulletin is now reaching most retired Soldiers in Europe. If

you are not receiving it, please go to the MyPay website to verify your address on file at DFAS.

There are currently more than 300 APO addresses in the system in which the APO has closed. There are another 350 "combination" addresses that are invalid. Help us clean up the system so that we can keep you informed of events and benefits that affect you.

USAG Heidelberg and USAG Grafenwöhr Held Successful RADs

The United States Army Garrison (USAG) Heidelberg and USAG Grafenwöhr held successful retiree appreciation days (RADs) in October 2009. USAG Heidelberg conducted its RAD on 17 October 2009, and the event was attended by approximately 225 retirees and annuitants with their Family members. USAG Grafenwöhr conducted its RAD on 24 October 2009, with approximately 150 retirees and annuitants showing up for the event. Medical and dental services were a big draw. The DFAS-Cleveland retiree pay representative conducted more than 110 one-on-one audits at the 2 events. Both USAGs indicated that planning is already underway for next year's events and they look forward to seeing you there. (In Heidelberg, more dental screenings and cleanings were available than takers.)

USAG Benelux RAD Conducted on 20 October 2009

USAG Benelux conducted its second RAD on Tuesday, 20 October 2009, which included local USAG services. This year, a DFAS-Cleveland representative was present to conduct one-on-one audits of retiree and annuitant accounts and answer pay questions. The representative saw 28 people. The Retirement Services Officer (RSO) indicated that more people were serviced at this RAD than the last in USAG Benelux. He has already started working on the next event, which usually takes place every 2 years.

USAG Wiesbaden Held Retiree Health Day

USAG Wiesbaden held a Retiree Health Day on 4 November 2009 at the Wiesbaden Airfield Health Clinic. More than 140 people attended the event. In addition to medical services available, USAG agencies also provided assistance and information to retirees and their Families. The Federal Benefits Unit, Frankfurt, answered questions on social security and Veterans' Administration issues.

RADs Planned for 2010

The following Retiree Appreciation Days are currently planned for 2010:

Ansbach: 17 April 2010, Bismarck Kaserne.

Stuttgart: 24 April 2010, location to be determined.

Heidelberg: 16 October 2010, Patrick Henry Village Pavilion.

Grafenwöhr: 22 October 2010, building 244.

Schweinfurt: 23 October 2010, Conn Barracks, building 40.

Vicenza: 28 October 2010, Golden Lion.

Benelux: 30 October 2010, SHAPE.

Times for the beginning of most events are from 0830 to 0900 and will end at approximately 1400 to 1500.

Always check with your local RSO before any event to ensure the location, times, and date have not changed because of military priorities.

DFAS Representative Visits for 2010

A representative from DFAS-Cleveland will travel to Europe to help retirees and annuitants with pay issues and provide one-on-one audits of their pay records.

Below is the tentative schedule:

- 17 Apr 10:** Ansbach - at the RAD.
- 19 Apr 10:** Schweinfurt - location to be determined.
- 20 Apr 10:** Bamberg - RSO Office, building 2970.
- 21 Apr 10:** Hohenfels - USAG CPF.
- 22 Apr 10:** Garmisch - Artillery Kaserne, building 203, RSO Office.
- 24 Apr 10:** Stuttgart - at the RAD.

- 16 Oct 10:** Heidelberg - at the RAD.
- 18 Oct 10:** Kaiserslautern - Kleber Kaserne, building 3245, room 6.
- 19 Oct 10:** Baumholder - location to be determined.
- 20 Oct 10:** Spangdahlem - building 307.
- 21 Oct 10:** Schinnen - Headquarters Building, RSO Office.
- 22 Oct 10:** Grafenwöhr - at the RAD.
- 23 Oct 10:** Schweinfurt - at the RAD (tentative).
- 25 Oct 10:** Ramstein AFB - Across from the ID card office.
- 26 Oct 10:** Wiesbaden - building 1023W, RSO Office, room 106.
- 28 Oct 10:** Vicenza - at the RAD.
- 30 Oct 10:** Benelux - at the RAD.

A more firm schedule of the dates in October 2010 will be published in the June 2010 issue of the bulletin. Please remember to check with your local RSO office for possible location and date changes due to military priorities.

Removal of SSNs From DOD ID Cards

SSNs will no longer be printed on ID cards and should not be relied on as a unique ID number. This change is being made by the DOD to protect the identify information of cardholders. Changes to ID cards will occur when the cardholder's expired cards are renewed. The removal of SSNs will occur in three phrases, all of which will occur on ID-card renewal.

Phase One: Remove dependent SSNs (beginning end of 2008).

Phase Two: Remove printed SSNs from all cards (beginning end of 2009).

Phase Three: Remove SSNs embedded in bar-codes (beginning end of 2012).
Frequently Asked Questions:

Who is affected? All DOD ID cardholders.

Should I go now? No. Go when you need to renew your card.

If you are a retiree who has a card with an indefinite expiration date and wish to replace your card with one without an SSN, the earliest you may do so is January 2010.

For more information regarding the SSN reduction plan, visit <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/smartcard>.

(Source: Defense Manpower Data Center website)

Medicare Part B

Retirees and eligible Family members must sign up and have their social security Medicare Part B information put into the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) to be eligible for TRICARE for Life by age 65, regardless of whether or not they are retired or still working. **No Medicare Part B equals no TRICARE for Life.** The military medical activities will not see or treat you. The cost of the monthly premiums is currently \$96.40 for individuals filing "married, filing jointly" on their taxes with income of \$170,000 or less and for other individuals with income of \$85,000 or less. More information for individuals whose income is more is available below and at <http://www.ssa.gov>.

(Source: United States Social Security Administration website)

Medicare Part B Costs in 2010

The Medicare Part B cost for 2010 will remain the same for most beneficiaries at \$96.40 per person, per month. New enrollees will pay

\$110.50 per month. Individuals whose income is more than \$85,000 if filing individual, and income more than \$170,000 if filing married, joint, will pay more in 2010.

| Your Yearly Income in 2008 | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| File Individual Tax Return | File Joint Tax Return | You Pay a Premium of |
| \$85,000-\$107,00 | \$170,001-\$214,000 | \$154.70 |
| \$107,001-\$160,000 | \$214,001-\$320,000 | \$221.00 |
| \$160,001-\$214,000 | \$320,001-\$428,000 | \$287.30 |
| Above \$214,000 | Above \$428,000 | \$353.60 |

TRICARE Claims Must Be Filed Within 1 Year

All bills and claims must reach the TRICARE claims center no later than 12 months after the first day you receive care. Claims for inpatient services must be received no later than 12 months after the day you leave the hospital. Claims are filed by completing DD Form 2642.

(Source: United States Army Medical Activity, Heidelberg)

Who is Your Arrears Beneficiary?

This area continues to be a major problem at DFAS-Cleveland.

Who have you designated as your arrears beneficiary for your last month of retirement

pay? We do not know on which day we will die; therefore, you should ensure that information on your arrears beneficiary is current. Contact your local RSO about completing DD Form 2894 (Designation of Beneficiary Information).

Retiree's Last Month Pay

The month a retiree dies, his or her last-month check will be recouped by DFAS either from the bank or the spouse and the retiree will have his or her account audited and then closed. There are many cases where monies are not returned; therefore, the annuitant payments of the Survivor Benefit Plan are not started because the retiree's account cannot be closed out.

Retiree Bulletin by E-Mail

If you wish to receive the Retiree Bulletin by e-mail, please go to https://aepubs.army.mil/ae/public/aepubs_main.asp, click on *Retiree*, provide the information requested in the pop-up window, and click on *Submit*. This is a one-time registration. Once you subscribe, all future Retiree Bulletins will be sent to you automatically by e-mail. If you change your e-mail address, you must register again.

Looking for an RSO

If you live outside Belgium, Germany, Italy, or the Netherlands and need to contact an RSO, contact the IMCOM-Europe RSO, at DSN (314) 379-6080 or civilian 0049-(0)6202-80-6080.

IMCOM-Europe RSOs

GERMANY

ANSBACH

USAG Ansbach
(RSO)
Unit 28614
APO AE 09177-8614
Tel. 49-0981-183-3301
rsoansbach@eur.army.mil

BAMBERG

USAG Bamberg
(RSO)
Unit 27535
APO AE 09139-7535
Tel. 49-0951-300-7514
rsobamberg@eur.army.mil

BAUMHOLDER

USAG Baumholder
(RSO)
Unit 23746
APO AE 09034-3746
Tel. 49-06783-6-6080
rsobaumholder@eur.army.mil

GRAFENWÖHR

USAG Grafenwöhr
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Tel. 49-09641-83-8814
imae-graf.rso@eur.army.mil

HEIDELBERG

USAG Heidelberg
(RSO)
Unit 29245
APO AE 09102-9245
Tel. 49-06221-57-8399
rsohd@eur.army.mil

KAISERSLAUTERN

USAG Kaiserslautern
(RSO)
Unit 23152
APO AE 09227-3152
Tel. 49-0631-411-7333
rsokl@eur.army.mil

MANNHEIM

USAG Mannheim
(RSO)
Unit 29901
APO AE 09086-9901
Tel. 49-0621-730-3371
rsoma@eur.army.mil

SCHWEINFURT

USAG Schweinfurt
(RSO)
CMR 457
APO AE 09033
Tel. 49-09721-96-8812
rso.schweinfurt@eur.army.mil

STUTTGART

USAG Stuttgart
(RSO)
Unit 30401
APO AE 09107-0401
Tel. 49-07031-15-3442
usag-s.rsc@eur.army.mil

WIESBADEN

USAG Wiesbaden
(RSO)
Unit 29623
APO AE 09096-9623
Tel. 49-0611-705-5334
rsowiesbaden@eur.army.mil

BELGIUM

USAG Benelux
US NATO/SHAPE SUPT GP
(RSO)
CMR 451
APO AE 09708
Tel. 32-65-44-6238
rso.usagbenelux@eur.army.mil

THE NETHERLANDS

USAG Schinnen
(RSO)
Unit 21602
APO AE 09703-1602
Tel. 31-46-443-7320
rso.schinnen@eur.army.mil

ITALY/AFRICA/MIDEAST

USAG Vicenza
(RSO)
Unit 31401
APO AE 09630-1401
Tel. 39-0444-71-7672
rsovicenza@eur.army.mil

IMCOM-EUROPE/OUT OF SECTOR

HNLFOA
(IMEU-HMT-RSO)
Unit 29055
APO AE 09081-9055
Tel. 49-06202-80-6029
rsoae@eur.army.mil

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

I REQUEST THAT MY DFAS RETIREE CORRESPONDENCE MAILING ADDRESS BE CHANGED:

OLD ADDRESS

NEW ADDRESS

(NAME)
(PLEASE PRINT IN BLOCK LETTERS)

(NAME)
(PLEASE PRINT IN BLOCK LETTERS)

(STREET 1)

(STREET 1)

(STREET 2)

(STREET 2)
(HOST-NATION ADDRESS POSTAL CODE)

(STREET 3)

(STREET 3)

CITY

CITY (APO ADDRESSES, ENTER *APO*)

STATE

STATE (APO ADDRESS, ENTER *AE*)
HOST-NATION ADDRESS NOT USED

ZIP CODE

ZIP CODE (APO ADDRESS, ENTER APO NUMBER)
HOST-NATION ADDRESS NOT USED

COUNTRY (HOST-NATION ADDRESS ONLY)

COUNTRY (HOST-NATION ADDRESS ONLY)

YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER AND SIGNATURE ARE REQUIRED

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

SIGNATURE

Retirees mail to:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Retired Pay
P.O. Box 7130
London, KY 40742-7130 or
Fax: 1-800-469-6559

Annuitants mail to:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U.S. Military Annuitant Pay
P.O. Box 7131
London, KY 40742-7131 or
Fax: 1-800-982-8459

AUTHORITY: Privacy Act of 1974, 5 USC 552a, Executive Order 9397

PURPOSE: Your social security number and the other information requested will allow DFAS-Cleveland to change your current correspondence mailing address. This collection of information is authorized by Title 31 of the United States Code. Your social security number is requested to ensure the accurate identification and retention of records pertaining to you and to distinguish you from other DOD recipients.

ROUTINE USES: This information may also be disclosed to a court, congressional committee, or another Government agency as authorized by Federal law.

DISCLOSURE IS VOLUNTARY: Although providing the requested information is voluntary, failure to provide any part of the requested information will prevent DFAS-Cleveland from making the requested address change.

LEAVE BLANK