



U.S. ARMY OKINAWA

★ TORII STATION ★



CLAIMS

• 652-4332 / 4742 • BUILDING 218, ROOM 222 •

Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving a U.S. Army Vehicle and Private Property

In Okinawa, traffic accidents occur daily. If you are involved in an accident with your personal vehicle, you must notify your automobile insurance company **within 72 hours**. If you are involved in a traffic accident with a U.S. Army vehicle, **you and your supervisor must complete Standard Form (SF) 91 (Motor Vehicle Accident Report)**ⁱ and submit it to the motor transportation officer for your unit. **If there is damage to private property or a private party damaged the U.S. Army vehicle, you must submit a completed copy of the SF 91 to the Army Claims Office on Torii Station.** The Army Claims Office is on Torii Station, Building 218, Room 222 (Please call 315-652-4742).

The Army Claims Office must identify and interview witnesses to the accident. A claim may be filed against the U.S. Army (tort claim) by a private party, and it is essential to get the facts while all the information is available and before parties or witnesses leave Okinawa or the U.S. Army. If the claim involves a local national, the Okinawa Defense Bureau, Ministry of Defense, Government of Japan will often be involved. The longer it takes to receive the SF 91 and process the claim, the more resources the Army expends involving supervisors and commanders. Delays create bad relations with Japan as we need to timely process claims under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA).

Another reason to complete and submit the SF 91 quickly is that the U.S. Army may have a claim (affirmative claim) against the other driver or owner. Japanese law assigns accident fault on comparative negligence. It is very unusual in Japan to find one party 100 percent at fault in a traffic accident unless one of the vehicles is stopped or parked. Even when a car is parked, if it were to be illegally parked, there may be some fault assessed to the owner of the parked vehicle. When the government is not 100 percent at fault, the Army can collect a percentage of the damage based on comparative fault. If the Army were, for example, 40 percent at fault, it has a potential claim against the other party for 60 percent of the damage to the U.S. Army vehicle.

As mentioned above, both the operator of the vehicle and the operator's supervisor must complete the SF 91.ⁱⁱ The vehicle operator completes Sections I thru IX. The operator's supervisor fills out section X, items 73 thru 83, and an accident investigator fills out Sections XI thru XIII (for bodily injury, fatality, and/or damage exceeding \$500.00).

For more information on filing a claim or completing an SF 91, visit or call the Army Claims Office.

ⁱ If the accident involves only U.S. Army vehicles, there is no need to give a copy of the SF 91 to the Claims Office.

ⁱⁱ **SF 91 was revised in September of 2020. Please be sure to use the current version.** See <https://www.gsa.gov/forms-library/motor-vehicle-accident-crash-report>