

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY

(Last Updated 2023)

Support Organization HHC BDE, USANATO BDE

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To our newest members of the US ARMY NATO Brigade

We would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your family. We are excited to add you to the USANATO Brigade team.

Our mission is to conduct individual training, logistics, human resources, and service-specific support at 38 locations in 21 countries in order to provide ready & resilient Soldiers to NATO, maintain our joint and multinational partnerships, and enhance the Alliance. The inclusion of administrative control for the MPEP and SON personnel expands our current mission to support the security cooperation among allied nations to one additional country and 43 new locations. USANATO Brigade will conduct Routine Admin Support and UCMJ actions such awards, DD Forms 93, SGLV, leave and passes, SRB updates, MEDPROS updates, FVAP, and all other HR related actions through the G5 IOD section. Their mission is to ensure individual Soldier and Family Readiness through administrative, HR, logistics, operations, and communications support. They receive direct guidance from Brigade leadership.

You can find out more about us and our team at <https://www.usanato.army.mil/About-Us/Leadership/>. If you have additional questions, feel free to contact us at +49-(0) 611-143-549-5302

Although USANATO Brigade manages the support for the MPEP and SON population, the program is run from USAREUR-AF. The USAREUR-AF Program Manager exercises the responsibility of establishing and closing positions, coordinates agreements with DOS and partner nations units, accepts nominations for replacements, makes decisions on extensions and curtailments of tours, sets rating schemes, approves duty descriptions, and conducts program assessment.

For questions about the program please email USAREUR's PM at lee.s.fennema.civ@army.mil

Again, welcome to the Brigade and we look forward to supporting you and your operations with our partner nations.

Warm Regards

1. QUICK HISTORY OF THE UNIT AND MISSION

The Royal Military Academy in Brussels, Belgium is the sole military academy for Belgian Defense. As a student of other nations, you will be attending courses under the Defense College in the third cycle, Advanced Staff Course (ASTC). The third cycle is an ILE equivalent course and consists of one academic year of training. ASTC is considered a “master after master” course meaning you will receive a master’s degree if you already hold a master’s degree. The official languages of the course are French and Dutch. However, most of the lessons are in English and most assignments can be requested to be written in English. When French or Dutch is utilized, a translation is provided to the other language (Dutch to French or vice versa). The main blocks of the course are Management and Leadership, World Politics, Joint Operations, Security and Defense, Land Component, Maritime Component, and Air Component. The class is made up of about 30 officers of whom roughly 60% will be Belgian and 40% will be international officers.

2. PARTNER NATION UNIT’S POC (ASTC Course Director)

Lt Kol Bogaert, Kurt
+32 496 081050
kurt.bogaert@mil.be

3. SON DUTY DESCRIPTION

Your primary responsibility is to be a student and successfully complete ASTC. Each block has a required assignment which consists of either group or individual work. The culminating assignment is a research paper on the topic of your choice within one of the blocks. You will receive guidance on the research paper within the first couple of weeks of the course. The Royal Military Academy (RMA) provides all course materials, including a computer and monitor to you. Additionally, the RMA will provide you a dorm room, regardless of if you choose to live at the academy or on the economy.

4. CASUALTY:

Provide the staff duty number to your supervisor to contact us if you were to be seriously injured, hospitalized, or become a fatal casualty.

5. IN-PROCESSING

USANATO Brigade will help you in-process. Most of the in-processing actions will be done virtually. DO NOT go on TDY for in-processing without the explicit approval of the USANATO Brigade regardless of what your PCS orders state. For information on in-processing action contact the USANATO Brigade G5 at usarmy.sembach.hq-usanato-bde.list.mpep-sons@army.mil.

Send your travel plans to G5 IOD USANATO Brigade POCs. You will report directly to your Partner Nation duty station. Once you arrive at your Partner Nation unit, you will contact the G5 IOD USANATO Brigade. We will send a memo to your resourcing unit asking them to arrive you in the system. We do not have access to arrive you.

6. FINANCE:

Travel reimbursement takes longer than usual for MPEP and SONs. In some cases it can take from 60 to 90 days. Make sure your GTCC is put in VIP status by your current S8 and that your limit is increased to at least \$10,000. Ensure to stop your BAH/OHA before departing your current unit to avoid incurring a debt for overpayment. Three (3) months advanced pay is highly recommended, to be paid by the losing finance office IAW DOD Pay Manual, Table 4-1-1, Rule 7.

7. GARRISON SUPPORT

US Army Garrison Benelux – Zaventem, Belgium is the closest Army Installation. Housing, finance, legal, DEERS, CYS, PX, Post Office, Library, and other services are provided at the garrison. The medical and dental facility is located next to the school at the USAG Annex in Sterrebeek. Chievres

Air Base is about a one hour drive from Brussels with additional support provided, particularly for vehicle compliance requirements, a Commissary, a full PX, and furniture loans. Additionally, the U.S. Embassy in Brussels provides valuable resources. As a member of the mission, you have the ability to process vehicle registration, proof of residency (required for banking), and Belgian ID Card applications through the embassy.

8. MEDICAL/DENTAL

You are required to complete all PHA and dental requirements 30 days prior to arriving to the unit.

During your MPEP/SON tour, dental care will be obtained at the local economy through. Family members will receive dental care through enrollment in the TRICARE Overseas Dental Program managed by United Concordia.

For Medical care you will enroll in TRICARE Overseas Program Prime Remote which provides health care through International SOS.

Website: <http://www.tricare.mil/PLANS/HealthPlans/TPRO.aspx>

Phone number: +44-20-8762-8384

Soldiers and family members will be referred to local health care providers by International SOS. International SOS maintains a list of local hospitals, clinics, and providers who speak English. However, once you arrive at your scheduled appointment, it will not be guaranteed that you will be speaking to an English-speaking receptionist or nurse. ISOS can provide live translations during your appointment, via telephone, if coordinated prior to your visit.

When required PHA can be accomplished online and over the phone using the VIPRR clinic. Once you call ISOS and discuss the available options for care or by directly requesting VH thru ISOS, care can be arranged. For more information contact Virtual Health Care Coordinators (+49 (0)6371-9464-4600) for assistance.

In certain instances when specialty care is not found in the local community, ISOS will refer Soldiers and Family Members to the most appropriate Military Treatment Facility where the needed specialty care can best be provided; which, may be Landstuhl Military Medical Center but not in all cases.

9. EFMP:

Health care for exceptional family members is difficult to obtain, and potentially unavailable or substandard. EFMP issues can result in the service member being required to perform an unaccompanied tour and/or termination of the assignment.

10. SCHOOLS

The Brussels American School is located in the USAG-Benelux Sterrebeek Annex. The school teaches K-12th with additional CYS capacity for after school care and younger children.

If service member has school-aged children, he/she must inform the USAREUR MPEP Coordinator in order to receive guidance concerning dependent schooling options and registration instructions. Prior to arrival, service members with dependent school-aged children must register with DoDEA@NDSP.Admin.Europe@hq.dodea.edu and obtain pre-authorization before seeking schools for their children. Service members will be financially liable for any school fees, tuitions, and other costs not authorized by DoDEA.or call CIV 571-372-5863/1897 DSN 312-372-5863/1897.

11. HOUSING

There is no Government Quarters/Housing available. Families must reside in private housing. Many of the local quarters may be smaller than what some Americans are accustomed, however, there is suitable housing available. The housing office in USAG-Benelux will process your request to reside on the economy, lease agreement, realtor fee and other documents. Please contact the following personnel when you arrive to anticipate their administrative requirements.

You will find housing without closets, yet the overall living quarters are comfortable and accommodating. Having a positive outlook and considering ways to adapt to a completely different culture will enable you to overcome this cultural differences. Many electrical appliances you currently own cannot be used on the European 220 voltage systems. However, most smart devices like cellphones, laptops and tablets can be plugged in to the wall via an adapter. Additionally, other 120v appliances will require a step-down transformer, which you can purchase after you arrive. It will be possible to order transformers via amazon and have them delivered to your new APO. Please see the mail information regarding timeliness and size restrictions. Other host nation online retailers may be a good option to obtain compatible electronic devices or transformers. The Furniture Management Office (FMO) lending is available through the Chievres Air Base.

Service members will only be paid Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) and Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) based on the duty location with locality code specified in this order. Duty locations not listed will be paid at the "Other Rate" locality code specified in the Defense Travel Management Office (DTMO). For more information regarding entitlements, visit:

<http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/index.cfm>.

12. PASSPORTS/VISA

Family members traveling overseas are required to have passports. "No-fee passports" can be obtained at Government expense. The application process may take 4 to 6 weeks, so, you should begin the passport application process as soon as you receive your travel orders.

You must obtain a No-fee official (red) passport. Your dependents require a "No-Fee" (blue) passport. VISAs are not required for entry into Germany.

1. No-fee official (red) passport. Application for "No-fee" Passport, DD Form 1056, will include the following information for official passport: BLOCK 11: United Kingdom; BLOCK 12, MPEP participant; BLOCK 17: Traveler is a MPEP in PCS status and the traveler will visit: Afghanistan, Brunei, Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Malawi, Malaysia, Morocco and Kenya during their tour of duty. Traveler requires a no-fee (red) passport.

2. Dependents "No-Fee" (blue) passport. The application will include the following information: BLOCK 11: United Kingdom; BLOCK 12: MPEP participant; Block 17; Visa not required.

3. It is the Service member's responsibility to process the passport at his/her current duty station prior to PCS. DO NOT PCS to the United Kingdom without a US no-fee passport. Service members will comply with requirements for the country as set forth in the DoD Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG). AR 1-40 and 630-5 implement the FCG and furnish supplemental U.S. Army requirements. Check the passport and visa website to obtain updated information for passport and/or visa requirements: www.fcg.pentagon.mil/fcg.cfm.

Tourist passports are needed for personal travel in Europe. You may apply for tourist passports on arrival, but for convenience it is recommended that you apply for the tourist passport while you're still residing in the United States. You can find more information on tourist passports from your local personnel services detachment, passport office nearest you, or from the U.S. State Departments official website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

13. POSTAL SERVICES

A PO Box can be set up through the post office located at USAG-Benelux.

14. BANKING

USANATO Brigade can send you the form you need to do a direct deposit to a foreign bank.

Internet, cellular and TV providers, utilities and contract-based services require a host nation bank account for payment. The local currency is Euro. Your sponsor may be able to recommend financial institutions that provide convenient branch and ATM locations. Please remember that conversion fees apply to your transactions when transferring dollars to the local currency or at point of sale (if paying in USD). Many people make the mistake of calculating the equivalent currency when looking at the price of a good or service, but vendors and banks offer different conversion rates that is not equal to a simple conversion. Banks often provide more competitive conversion rates, so it may be best to transfer USD to local currency within your account to avoid excessive transaction fees or conversion rates at the point of sale. It will be important to know your bank's International Bank Account Number (IBAN) or SWIFT number, as this information will almost always be needed when paying bills, tickets or contract services online.

15. VEHICLES REGISTRATION

Most US vehicles must undergo major changes or additions to the vehicle lights, specifically the headlights, turn signals, white front park lights, and rear fog lights. The cost of the light conversion on some newer model POVS can be expensive or nearly impossible to convert. Recommend owners with newer model vehicles check with US vehicle dealership about the light conversion prior to shipping vehicle. Contact the embassy to confirm that you will receive Diplomatic (CD) license plates. This will save you a lot of time, effort, and money going through the conversion and registration process.

16. DRIVER'S LICENSE

License: To legally operate your POV, you will need to apply for, and purchase an international driver's license. Many U.S. personnel accomplish this through AAA.

17. VEHICLE PROCESSING CENTER - VPC:

You will pick up your vehicle at Chievres Air Base. You will need copies of your inspection forms and receipt received from the shipping center.

18. TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation office located on USAG Benelux. The arrival of Household Goods (HHG) will be coordinated through this office. Your sponsor will assist you in working with transportation personnel to ensure the delivery of your HHGs after you find a home. Once your housing contract is complete you can track your move at: <http://www.move.mil/> website. Upon notification of a shipment's arrival, you must schedule a delivery date and be at your quarters on that date to accept delivery. HHG shipments for newcomers to your location should not include Personally Owned Firearms (POF). Host nation law is to absolutely minimize the import of weapons. The need to have a weapon must be proven by the local authorities and there is no guarantee request will be approved. Newcomers will not have the option to store POFs in the unit arms room due to the limited available space or prohibition of POFs in your orders.

19. IT SUPPORT

Government Computers are not always available and are not normally required to conduct day-to-day work activities. The Partner nation that you are assigned will issue you a work Computer. The USANATO Brigade G5 in coordination with the G6 will process NIPR account requests and issue (as

availability allows) NIPR computers. In some cases, you may get a special CAC reader that allows you to use your personal tablet or phone to read encrypted emails. VPN access can also be requested if needed.

20. REASSIGNMENTS

MPEP/SON program funding only DIRECTLY supports requirements to enable the exchange program. This is a centralized Army funding for program management of worldwide exchanges and Schools of Other Nations program. In general – mandatory admin requirements, medical TDY, program management, MPEP conference, etc.

What is not funded by HQDA is the following (exceptions may apply on case-by-case basis):

TDY trips for conference, training, exercises, site visits, and other travel conducted for the benefit of the partner nation is not funded by the MPEP program and should be covered by the partner nation.

DA PHOTOS:

MILPER MSG 20-209 announces the elimination of Department of Army (DA) Photos, and race, ethnicity and gender identification data for officer, warrant officer, and enlisted DA Centralized Selection Boards and DA 640-30 states: Soldiers assigned to areas where photographic facilities are not available or conditions prevent them from being photographed are temporarily exempt from the requirements of this paragraph. These Soldiers will be photographed within 90 days after reassignment to an area where photographic facilities are available.

MITIGATION STRATEGY: During U'Rs next MPEP conference schedule your DA Photo in advance; take advantage of TDY and Leave periods near a DA Photo Lab.

MEDICAL READINESS - AR-40-502 Ch 4-17 b.

b. Soldiers in isolated areas. The commander concerned for those Soldiers stationed in isolated areas may delay PHAs; for example, Army attachés, military missions, and military assistance advisory groups, where medical facilities are not available.

MITIGATION STRATEGY: Delayed PHAs will be accomplished at the earliest opportunity in conjunction Conferences, with leave, temporary duty, or when the individual concerned is assigned or attached to a military installation with a medical facility. Medical examination of such individuals for retirement purposes may not be delayed AND medical TDY is allow.

WEAPONS EXEMPTION - AR 350-1 para F-7 (7) (d):

Exemptions from weapons qualifications are as follows: Individuals in duty positions not assigned individual weapons.

MITIGATION STRATEGY: None needed.

SENIOR RATER VISITS: This will not justify TDY funding.

MITIGATION STRATEGY: During the upcoming Conferences you will be able to meet your Senior Rater depending on their availability. In the meantime, the use of 365 TEAMS is encouraged where possible.

21. CLEARANCE

The NATO Secret, SF86 renewals, and other clearances are process by USANATO Bde G2. If fingerprints are required and embassy does not provide this service, the Service member may have to travel on TDY.

22. LEAVE REQUESTS:

You will need the certificates below IOT request leave. Recommend you complete these training before departing current PDS. You may not have the connectivity needed once you arrive to new

PDS.

AT level Certificate
SERE Certificate
STEP (proof of enrollment)

Information about STEP:

Even if SMs are going back to CONUS, they must enroll in STEP for the country that they are assigned to. This allows for them to receive current events/updates (i.e. Do Not travel update / COVID information / demonstration / places to avoid, etc.) from the US embassy of that particular country while they are in the USA.

<https://step.state.gov/STEP/Index.aspx>

Information about SERE:

Got to course catalog: Course Number: A-US1329 SERE 100.2 Level A SERE Education and Training in Support of the Code of Conduct

<https://jkodirect.jten.mil/Atlas2/page/desktop/DesktopHome.jsf>

23. WHICH PATCH WILL I WEAR?

You will wear the patch of your resourcing unit. For example, if you are assigned to 82nd AD you will wear that patch. You are not allowed to wear a foreign patch.

24. WHO IS MY RATER AND SENIOR RATER?

Recommend that you contact the MPEP Program Manager in U'R G5. They manage the Rating Scheme. The PM is Mr. Lee S. Fennema and his emails address is lee.s.fennema.civ@army.mil

25. HOW DO I SELF-NOMINATE FOR MY JOINT EXPERIENCE CREDIT?

To self-nominate for a joint experience, submit your request through the MilConnect website at the following link: <https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect/>

Once you are fully logged in, you will click on the "Correspondence/Documentation" tab and then on the JQS (Joint Qualification System) link from the drop-down menu. After you submit your joint experience summary, you must go back in and attach the required supporting documents. All experiences require supporting documentation. We will not action your request until we receive the required documents. Be sure to put a valid email address that you check REGULARLY after submitting an experience. HRC will send you an email with the status of your packet and if it is missing any documentation. There is a limited amount of time for you to submit corrections, so do not delay and get your information together to give you the best chance for an approved experience.

When should I self-nominate for my joint experience credit? Is there a deadline? An officer performing a joint experience in a non-JDAL assignment must submit their joint experience via the self-nomination web site within 12 months (365 days) of completing that joint experience.

Submissions received after this deadline are not eligible for consideration by the joint panel. You must be complete with your joint experience before submitting a request. Submissions while still serving in the experience are not authorized.

Don't worry about adding JDAL billets.

26. CIVILIAN CLOTHING ALLOWANCE & REQUIRED MILITARY UNIFORMS:

IAW AR 700-84, Service members not directed to dress in civilian clothing more than half the time when performing duty are NOT eligible for civilian clothing allowance.

Service member is to bring a set of Army Service Uniform (ASU), Army Combat Uniform (ACU), Mess Dress, and Army Physical Fitness Uniform(s) (APFU).

27. UCMJ

UCMJ authority falls under USANATO Brigade

28. THINGS I WISH I KNEW BEFORE ARRIVING:

You are in a unique environment, but vast resources exist between the student detachment, the embassy, USAG-Benelux, and NATO. Use all of these resources when you in-process and in-process all of them.

It takes time to set up housing, banking, and vehicle registration. The bureaucracy is slow, but do not fight the system just come prepared to take care of yourself and your family with what you have for at least 30-60 days. Rely on your sponsor, the embassy, and USAG-Benelux to help you through these processes.

Reach out to the RMA early. They will be on summer break during PCS timeframe and communication will be difficult until about two weeks before the course begins.

The duty uniform for the course is the Class B dress uniform. The Class A dress uniform is often required when general officers and ambassadors are visiting or briefing.