

STRAUSBERG, GERMANY
German Army Command
GE-35

(Last Updated March 2026)

Support Organization
HHC BDE, AFNORTH BN, USANATO BDE

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To our newest members of the US ARMY NATO Brigade

We want 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 to provide ready & resilient Soldiers to NATO, maintain our joint and multinational partnerships, and enhance the Alliance. Including administrative control for the MPEP and SON personnel expands our 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 as awards, DD Forms 93, SGLV, leave and passes, SRB updates, MEDPROS updates, FVAP, and all other HR-related actions. Our mission is to ensure individual Soldier and Family Readiness through administrative; HR, logistics, operations, and communications support.

You can find out more about 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, USAREUR-AF runs the program. The USAREUR-AF Program Manager is responsible for establishing and closing positions, coordinating agreements with DOS and partner nations units, accepting nominations for replacements, making decisions on extensions and curtailment of tours, setting rating schemes, approving duty descriptions, and conducting program assessment.

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 German Army Headquarters (Kommando Heer - KdoH) is located approx. 1 hour east of Berlin in Strausberg, Germany. KdoH has been stationed at the historic von-Hardenberg Kaserne since 2013. The German Army staff consist of approximately 850 personnel who support the German Chief of Army and the Commander of the German Field Army. More information can be found at [Stab des Inspektors des Heeres](#).

2. PARTNER NATION UNIT'S POC

The current POC for the unit is listed below. The POC handles all the administration needs and will be the primary during unit in-processing. He only speaks German with a small amount of English.

Stabsfeldwebel
IntZusArb
+49 3341 58 4554

3. MPEP DUTY DESCRIPTION

Serves as the Country Desk Officer (CDO) of U.S./Canadian Bilateral Cooperation to the German Army Headquarters in Strausberg, Germany. Principal responsibilities consisting of serving as U.S./Canadian Army Subject Matter Expert to the German Army Commander; facilitating the establishment of policy between the U.S./Canada and German Army, and managing Multi-/ Bilateral Army Cooperation with communication and daily operations conducted in the German Language. Duties include planning, coordinating, and executing the U.S. and German Army Staff Talks, Steering Committee Meetings, USAREUR-AF German Partnership Working Groups; in coordination with the U.S. Department of State, Headquarters Department of the Army, and German Ministry of Defense. Facilitates senior-level agreements, and coordinates senior general officer level Key Leader Engagements. Prepares correspondence, read-ahead materials, background papers, and briefings for the German General Staff and German Ministry of Defense leaders.

4. IN-PROCESSING

USANATO Brigade will help you with in-process actions; these 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 at usarmy.sembach.hq-usanato-bde.list.mpep-sonsv2@army.mil.

Send your travel plans to USANATO Brigade POCs. You will report directly to your Partner Nation duty station. Once you arrive at your Partner Nation unit, you must contact the USANATO Brigade to inform them of your arrival.

5. FINANCE

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

6. GARRISON SUPPORT

Grafenwoehr is the closest Garrison, roughly 4.5 hours away, but does not provide MPEP support. Clay Kaserne in Wiesbaden and Sembach are roughly 6.5 hours away and are the primary support garrisons for MPEPs as your orders are to USAREUR-AF (Wiesbaden) with collateral duty to NATO BDE (Sembach). Also, your senior rater for the MPEP position is at Wiesbaden.

7. MEDICAL/DENTAL

You must complete all PHA and dental requirements 30 days before arriving at the unit.

During your MPEP/SON tour, dental care will be obtained in the local economy. 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 healthcare 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, you will not be guaranteed to talk to an English-speaking receptionist or nurse. ISOS can provide live translations during your appointment via telephone if coordinated before your visit.

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

When specialty care is unavailable in the local community, ISOS will refer Soldiers and Family Members to the most appropriate Military Treatment Facility.

8. EFMP

Health care for exceptional family members is difficult to obtain and potentially unavailable or substandard. EFMP issues can result in the service member conducting an unaccompanied tour or terminating the assignment. Initiate an EFMP travel screening packet for your dependents as soon as you receive your orders at <https://efmp.army.mil>.

9. SCHOOLS

The Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP) will provide educational support for you because there are no DoDEA schools in and around your duty location. Look at the NDSP Orientation guide for the latest information on the program, which will help with navigating the registration process. Then review the guidance on the website regarding Initial Registration, and when ready to apply for the program, go to the Student Online Registration Portal to start the application process.

NDSP Orientation guide: <http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/ndspOrientation.cfm>

Initial Registration: <http://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/procedures/index.cfm>

Student Online Registration Portal: <https://registration.dodea.edu/NDSP/>

10. HOUSING

Finding a lease in Germany can be simple or complicated. Don't expect to drive around a neighborhood and see signs for rent. You will have to search online and contact the realtors or landlords directly. Alternatively, you can hire a realtor as well. In this case, they get paid when you sign a lease. It's usually a one-time fee of about 3.2% of the monthly rent. Some good websites can help with your search CHECK24.DE is an excellent place to start.

There might be a housing scarcity in/around your destination. In some cases, multiple families will be competing for the same apartment or house. Additionally, since your duty location will be away from an American base, most landlords and realtors won't understand the process and might be apprehensive. It can take up to 60 days to find housing, as potential landlords do not like to have short-term rental contracts (two or three years). Most landlords would prefer five plus, even 10-year rental contracts. As such, possibly say something along the following, "I am working on a project with the Bundeswehr and don't know exactly when the project will be complete."

Another note of importance is that it is customary for Europeans to move with their kitchens (appliances

and cabinets), ceiling light fixtures, and clothing closets. You can request (on loan) appliances, closets, and other items through your housing rep. Be aware that a three month security deposit is standard, which can reach €7,000.

Service members will only be paid Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) and Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) based on the duty location with the locality code of Berlin specified in your orders. For more information regarding entitlements, visit <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/index.cfm>.

11. 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.

MPEPs 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 an official passport: BLOCK 11: Germany; BLOCK 12, MPEP participant; BLOCK 17: Traveler is an MPEP in PCS status, and the traveler will visit: Germany

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

3. Service members must process their passports at their current duty station before PCS. DO NOT PCS to Germany without a US no-fee passport. Service members will comply with requirements for the country as outlined 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 for updated passport and visa requirements information:

www.fcg.pentagon.mil/fcg.cfm.

Tourist passports are for personal travel in Europe. You can find more information on tourist passports from your local personnel services detachment, the passport office nearest you, or the U.S. State Department's official website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

12. POSTAL SERVICES

You will be able to get an APO/DPO mailbox at the Berlin Embassy. You can also get an APO mailbox at Wiesbaden or Sembach, which will make vehicle registration easy when picking up your shipped vehicle.

13. BANKING/CONTRACTS

You must have a bank account with a German IBAN. This is required to rent a property, sign up for utilities, or obtain a German phone contract. Commerzbank is the recommended bank to use as they will work with U.S. Service members to easily establish an account without already having a German residence and phone number (which are normal requirements to open an account). Also, the U.S. Embassy has a Commerzbank desk in the embassy that can assist with your banking needs.

Commerzbank POC:

Frau Claudia Schuberth

+49 30 844 165 192

Claudia.schuberth@commerzbank.com

It is easier to get your cell phone contract near a military post where providers are comfortable with US military personnel. If you go on the local economy, providers will ask for resident documents you will not have, but they may work with you to establish a contract. Once you establish a customer number with a provider, local branches add services through that contract.

14. VEHICLE REGISTRATION

Registration/Inspections. Exchange officers typically have their vehicles shipped to Grafenwöhr as it is the closest VPC to Berlin. It is highly recommended to have the vehicle shipped to Wiesbaden as it is easier to access via train or flights and there are no other services that Grafenwöhr will provide the Service Member. Wherever you receive your vehicle, that is where vehicle registration and safety inspections will occur. Recommendation is to have your vehicle shipped to the Wiesbaden VPC (info in Para 16) and conduct registration and safety inspections through the USAG-Wiesbaden Vehicle Registration Office. Vehicles can be registered for 1 or 2 years.

(1) Insurance. Exchange officers will need overseas insurance through their current insurance companies, if offered. GEICO and USAA both offer comprehensive vehicle insurance programs that are user-friendly. It is also possible to obtain insurance on the local market, but research should be conducted beforehand.

(2) Repairs. Berlin has multiple repair shops that work on German vehicles but repairs on American vehicles are difficult.

(3) Fuel. After your vehicle is registered, you can obtain a pre-paid ESSO gas card from the customer service desk in the PX. This card allows the service member to purchase gas at ESSO service stations at a significantly reduced price (no tax). It will cut your gas prices almost in half. There are multiple ESSO gas stations located in Berlin that accept the Military ESSO cards. Exchange officers can add credit to their ESSO Card over the phone by calling 0800-181-9945 or by visiting the following website: <https://odin.aafes.com/esso/>.

15. DRIVER'S LICENSE

Exchange officers receive their USAREUR-AF driver's license through whichever installation their vehicle is shipped to, but it is recommended to use the USAG-Wiesbaden Licensing Office. Licenses must be renewed every three years. To obtain a driver's license, see the requirements listed in the following article:

https://www.army.mil/article/246544/obtaining_a_certificate_of_license_in_wiesbaden

16. VEHICLE PROCESSING CENTER - VPC

Mainz-Kastel Storage-Station
Ludwig-Wolker-Strasse 10 Building 4013
Mainz Kastel, Hessen, Germany
55252

phone Local: [+49 6134 6019144](tel:+4961346019144)
phone Toll-Free: [0800 – CARSHIP](tel:0800-CARSHIP)
Fax: [phone +49 6134 5679774](tel:+4961345679774)
email: Wiesbaden.VPC@ialpov.us

17. TRANSPORTATION

MPEP HHG can be tricky as your duty station is Berlin. The Sembach and Wiesbaden offices are close enough to be within the radius for delivery. Make sure your shipment location has the end destination of your home in Berlin and the landing site in Germany closest to Berlin.

18. IT SUPPORT

Government Computers are not provided. You will need to use the remote desktop application on your personal computer to access your NIPR account. The USANATO Brigade G9, in coordination with the G6, will process NIPR account requests. The Bundeswehr will issue you a computer and email account for daily business.

19. REASSIGNMENTS

USANATO Brigade will contact you 180 days from your departure date to provide you with guidance. They will put you in contact with the MPD representative that will issue your orders. You will have to draft your own award and provide the draft to your Senior Rater as they might not have specifics on your significant accomplishments.

20. TDY

DO NOT GO ON TDY WITHOUT USANATO BDE AUTHORIZATION PRIOR TO THE TRIP!
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 the 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 a case-by-case basis):

TDY trips for conferences, 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.

21. 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 USAREUR-AFs next MPEP conference, schedule your DA Photo in advance or take advantage of TDY and Leave periods near a DA Photo Lab.

22. MEDICAL READINESS

AR-40-502 Ch 4-17 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 unavailable.

MITIGATION STRATEGY: Delayed PHAs will be accomplished at the earliest opportunity in conjunction with 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 allowed.

23. 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.

24. WHO IS MY RATER AND SENIOR RATER?

Your rater will be a German supervisor within the International Cooperation Section. Your Senior rater will be one of the USAREUR-AF DCGs. Recommend that you contact the MPEP Program Manager in USAREUR-AF G3 IOD. They manage the Rating Scheme. The PM is Mr. Todd Scattini.

25. SENIOR RATER VISITS: This will not justify TDY funding.

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

26. OER

Your OER will be processed outside of the official EES process. You will submit a request for a Foreign Rater ID number through the NATO BDE G9 to HRC. You must do both your OER Support form and OER on your desktop as EES will not allow you to create the OER or support form with a Foreign Rater ID. Once complete, your Senior Rater will submit the signed OER directly to HRC. For Complete the Record OERs needed for promotion boards, start the process of obtaining the Foreign Rater ID at least three (3) months prior to the Thru date as it can take up to six weeks to get the number. Also, sign and submit as soon as possible as after the Senior submits to HRC, it can take them a few weeks to get it uploaded and accepted in EES.

27. CLEARANCE

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

28. LEAVE REQUESTS

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

AT level I 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 / 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>

29. 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. They 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.

30. 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).

31. UCMJ

UCMJ authority falls under USANATO Brigade.

32. THINGS I WISH I KNEW BEFORE ARRIVING:

Be familiar with and comply with provisions of AR 614-10, U.S. Army Personnel Exchange Program with Armies of Other Nations and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the U.S. Army and the German Army.

I wish I had done the Anti-Terrorism Level 1, Cyber Awareness, CTIP and SERE prior to departing old PDS. The USANATO Brigade team requires these certificates but there is limited connectivity to .mil sites without the remote desktop connection.

Conduct AFT before departing old PDS. AFT's are provided at Sembach, Germany once a year and you may not always be able to attend AFT events due to competing priorities.

Must have a recent DA Photo uploaded on DAPMIS prior to departing losing command. There is no way to take photos at new PDS.

Reach out to current MPEP early and often. Ping them for everything, even if it is in the guide as local regulations change.