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Press Release

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Fuel card slated to replace coupons in Germany

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HEIDELBERG, Germany –The Army and Air Force Exchange Service, in cooperation with officials from IMCOM-Europe and USAREUR, recently announced that it is working with the German government to replace fuel coupons with a fuel-card system in fiscal year 2008.

“The German Treasury Department requested that the U.S. Forces replace the current paper-based fuel coupon system to decrease the volume of tax fraud” said Lt. Col. Carol McKinney, U.S. Army Europe provost marshal chief of law enforcement.

The fuel-purchase program was discussed with U.S. military commanders in Germany last week during the U.S. Army European Command’s Quality of Life Conference in Garmisch, Germany. AAFES officials explained how fuel cards will make purchasing and ration control of tax- and duty-free fuel at ESSO and AAFES gas stations easier, faster and more convenient.

“AAFES has coordinated the fuel-card project with U.S. Forces' key staff agencies to ensure that the design complies with the status of forces agreement and the requirements of the German Treasury Department” said Wess Bryan, Fuel Card Program manager for AAFES. “During this process, customer input from authorized U.S. forces personnel has helped us make sure that the fuel card best supports customer needs.”

The fuel card will resemble a prepaid debit card that authorized customers will be able to use for fuel at ESSO and AAFES gas stations throughout Germany, Bryan said. Fuel cards will be issued for use only with a specific vehicle. A maximum of three fuel cards will be issued for a vehicle. No more than five drivers will be authorized to purchase fuel for that vehicle.

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Fuel Card

Now nearing the end of the planning phase, the fuel-card program is expected to take 10 to 12 months to develop. Testing is scheduled to start in September. The German government must then approve the fuel-card system before it can be implemented. AAFES expects the first group of cards to be mailed to eligible personnel in March 2008.

“Once implemented, the automated fuel card program will allow authorized personnel to purchase tax- and duty-free gasoline in Germany,” McKinney said. “At the same time, the fuel card program will provide a more efficient method to prevent tax-fraud.”

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The U.S. Army Installation Management Command, Europe Region (IMCOM-Europe) is one of six regional offices created Oct. 24, 2006, (formerly known as Installation Management Agency) as part of an Army-wide initiative to focus management of Army installations around the world under one organization. IMCOM-Europe is responsible for all facets of support for U.S. Army Soldiers and families in Europe from drivers' licenses to child care to force protection. As the landlord for all U.S. Army facilities in Europe, IMCOM-Europe is responsible for infrastructure and continuing the Army's strong commitment to environmental protection. Its higher headquarters is located in Arlington, Va.