

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER
US AIR FORCES IN EUROPE (USAFE)**



**ARMY IN EUROPE REG 550-33/
CINCUSNAVEUR INSTRUCTION 5840.17C/
USAFE INSTRUCTION 51-710**

11 MARCH 2004

Law

**REGULATIONS ON PERSONAL PROPERTY,
LOCAL CURRENCY, AND MOTOR VEHICLES
FOR U.S. PERSONNEL IN THE UNITED
KINGDOM**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This instruction implements AFD 51-7, *International Law*. It establishes prohibitions concerning the disposition of duty-free personal property, the possession of excess quantities of tobacco, liquor and gasoline, and the acquisition and disposition of local currency except as provided in this regulation. It outlines requirements concerning the registration of firearms, and licensing of drivers and provides a basis for punitive action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) for US Air Force military personnel or administrative action, to include possible revocation of all duty-free privileges for military and civilian personnel. This regulation applies to United States Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air National Guard Units of the United States, and personnel according to paragraph **1.1**. **Certain provisions of this instruction are punitive.** Violations of the specific prohibitions in paragraphs and related subparagraphs **2.2.**, **3.1.1.**, **3.2.1.**, **3.3.**, **4.1.**, **4.2.1.**, **4.2.2.**, **4.2.4.**, the last sentence of **6.1.2.**, **6.1.3.**, **6.2.1.**, and **6.2.4.** of this instruction by military personnel may result in prosecution under Article 92(1) and, or Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). Civilian personnel are subject to disciplinary action (including loss of logistic support privileges) for violations of these paragraphs according to applicable service regulations on civilian misconduct and adverse administrative actions. Civilians may also be subject to criminal prosecution by the host nation for violation of host nation laws. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with AFMAN 37-123, Management of Records, and disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule (RDS).

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

Changes in United Kingdom law and modifications and amendments to bilateral international agreements between the United States and the United Kingdom required changes to paragraph **4.** and subordinate

paragraphs on control of firearms and paragraph 5.2. on gasoline and kerosene. This instruction supersedes all previous regulations on this topic.

1. General.

1.1. **Applicability.** This directive applies to all US military personnel, Department of Defense civilian personnel, and their dependents in the UK. US military personnel and their dependents assigned or attached to US diplomatic and consular offices in the UK also will be governed by directives published by their chief of diplomatic mission or consular office.

1.2. **Background.** The importation and sale of personal property and the acquisition, importation, operation, and sale of motor vehicles is controlled by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Status of Forces Agreement (NATO SOFA), bilateral implementing agreements, applicable local law, and US military directives

1.3. **Definition of Terms.** As referred to in this publication, the following terms shall have the meaning indicated:

1.3.1. **Authorized Person.** Those personnel and their dependents listed in paragraph 1.1. who are stationed in or are on official duty in the UK unless otherwise specifically excluded by a provision of this regulation.

1.3.2. **Authorized Agencies.** Activities operated and controlled by the US Forces including non-appropriated fund activities.

1.3.3. **Authorized Banks.** Financial institutions, including military banking facilities, authorized by the UK to exchange currency.

1.3.4. **Military Finance Offices.** Accounting and finance offices, including disbursing offices and disbursing agent offices, operated by the US military forces.

1.3.5. **US Dollars or Dollar Instruments.** Lawful currency of the US including paper and coins, US Treasury checks, personal checks, traveler's checks, bank drafts, money orders, postal orders, or any other negotiable instruments expressed in US dollar amounts.

1.3.6. **UK Sterling or Sterling Instruments.** Lawful currency of the UK including paper and coins, personal checks, money orders, or any other negotiable instruments expressed in UK pound sterling amounts or lesser amounts of lawful currency of the UK

1.3.7. **United Kingdom.** The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (including England, Scotland and Wales), herein abbreviated as UK.

1.4. Implementation.

1.4.1. The Commander, Third Air Force (3 AF) is responsible for reviewing the provisions of this directive annually. Submit recommended changes to this directive to HQ USAFE/JAI after coordination with other local US service commanders and the Chief of the US Diplomatic Mission to the UK.

1.4.2. US military commanders are authorized to issue supplementary instructions when considered necessary or desirable to disseminate more detailed guidance or to impose additional restrictions. No supplement may be issued which will relax restrictions or procedures of this regulation.

In turn, nothing in this regulation is intended to conflict with or relax policies and procedures established in directives, which may be applicable to respective members of the services. Supplements to this regulation should be coordinated among senior component commanders in country.

2. Currency.

2.1. Medium of Exchange:

2.1.1. The medium of exchange for all transactions shall be either UK sterling currency and UK sterling instruments or US dollar currency and US dollar instruments.

2.1.2. Non-appropriated fund clubs and messes may accept UK sterling currency in payment for meals, beverages and service charges only, under directives prescribed by the senior US commander in the UK having responsibility for the activity.

2.2. Currency Exchange.

2.2.1. Except insofar as UK currency may be paid out to authorized personnel as change in the course of transactions conducted by them in dollar currency or instruments, for example, with automobile or other insurance agencies, shops, department stores, hotels, landlords, public houses, and taxi operators; US dollar currency or dollar instruments will be exchanged into UK sterling currency by authorized activities only as indicated below.

2.2.1.1. For Authorized Personnel. Only by military finance offices, military banking facilities, conversion points operated by authorized agencies, and by UK commercial banks.

2.2.1.2. For Non-appropriated Fund Activities. Non-appropriated fund facilities will secure all UK sterling currency from military banking facilities (MBF). When there is no established MBF on the installation, such currency can be secured from military finance offices. Emergency requirements can be satisfied from military finance offices only if MBFs cannot meet such emergency needs.

2.2.2. UK Sterling Currency may be exchanged into US dollar currency or US dollar instruments only under the following conditions:

2.2.2.1. For Authorized Personnel Traveling on Temporary Duty Orders at Government Expense When departing the UK. UK sterling currency may be repurchased by military finance offices if the sterling currency was originally purchased from a military finance office. Amounts repurchased must be reasonable, taking into account the duration of time in the country and normal living expenses, and may not in any case exceed 100 pounds sterling per individual. A prerequisite for the repurchase of UK sterling currency is display of competent travel orders.

2.2.2.2. For Personnel Afloat. Upon returning afloat, an individual may request the disbursing officer to exchange UK sterling currency into US dollar currency. The exchange shall not exceed the amount of sterling currency purchased before going ashore, as evidenced by the disbursing officer's records.

2.2.2.3. For Authorized Personnel Who Are Departing the UK on Permanent Reassignment or in a "Home Leave and Return" Order Status. Military finance offices are authorized to exchange an amount not to exceed the equivalent of the individual's total salary and allowances paid at the duty station for 2 biweekly pay periods or 1 month's pay (depending on the

procedures under which the individual is paid) or 100 pounds sterling per traveler (100 pounds for the authorized person and 100 pounds for each dependent traveling with the authorized person), whichever is the lesser amount.

2.2.2.4. For Dependents of DOD Personnel When Ordered to Safehaven Area Under Emergency Evacuation. Military finance offices are authorized to convert foreign currency into US dollar currency, in the amounts which the finance officer considers reasonable, for dependents evacuated to the UK as a safe haven. There are no restrictions on the type or kind of foreign currency, which may be exchanged under these conditions.

2.2.2.4.1. These restrictions do not preclude authorized personnel from exchanging UK sterling currency or sterling instruments derived from legitimate business transactions (property sales, insurance settlements, refunds, etc.) into US dollar currency or dollar instruments through UK commercial banking channels. When requested, military banking facilities will assist authorized personnel in obtaining conversion of such sterling into US dollar currency or dollar instruments.

2.2.3. Except as provided by 2.2.2.4. above, military finance offices are prohibited from exchanging any currency other than US dollars or UK sterling. Authorized personnel may obtain or dispose of foreign currencies other than UK sterling through authorized commercial banks and authorized travel agents.

2.3. Import and Export of Currency.

2.3.1. US dollar currency and UK sterling currency or sterling instruments may not be imported into or exported from the UK except as authorized by laws and regulation of the Government of the UK.

3. Personal Property.

3.1. Importation of Household Goods and Baggage.

3.1.1. Authorized persons may import household goods and baggage free of customs duty, providing it is for the sole use of the authorized person or family members.

3.1.2. The importation will be made under the provisions of applicable service directives. The authorized person will personally execute DD Form 1434, **United Kingdom (UK) Customs Declaration for the Importation of Personal Effects of U. S. Forces/Civilian Personnel on Duty in the UK**. This form will be used only for personal property (household goods and unaccompanied baggage) imported into the UK in connection with a permanent change of station.

3.2. Sale of Personal Property.

3.2.1. An authorized person or agency shall not sell, barter, mortgage or transfer personal property imported into the United Kingdom free of import duty or purchased or acquired free of purchase tax to non-authorized persons or agencies save to the extent that such transactions are authorized by agreement with HM Customs & Excise.

3.2.2. In disposing of personal property, regardless of origin, undignified sales practices such as auctions or "fire sales" and the advertising thereof will be avoided.

3.3. Exportation of Personal Property.

3.3.1. Personal property imported into the UK free of excise duty or acquired free of purchase tax (from an exchange or other facility having excise or purchase tax exemptions), will be exported from the UK upon termination of the authorized person's duty in the UK unless it earlier has been sold, donated, or otherwise transferred to an authorized person or activity or in accordance with [3.2.1.](#)

3.3.2. Personal property will not be abandoned in the UK except as authorized by UK law.

4. Control of Firearms.

4.1. Importation and Registration of Firearms.

4.1.1. All privately owned handguns are prohibited in the United Kingdom. Privately owned automatic and semi-automatic rifles are also prohibited. Other rifles may be imported but will require the owner to obtain a Firearms Certificate that will severely limit where and how they may be used. Shotguns may be imported but repeating shotguns will be treated as "firearms" and will require a Firearms Certificate unless they have a magazine, which has been permanently altered or "plugged" to hold no more than two cartridges. All shotguns must have a barrel of at least 24 inches in length or they will be prohibited. The owner of the shotgun (single shot or holding less than two cartridges) will be required to procure a Shotgun Certificate. Firearms and Shotgun Certificates will specify where and how the weapons will be stored and how, if at all, they may be used. UK Firearms and Shotgun certificates are obtained from local UK police authorities.

4.1.2. A person wishing to import a permitted firearm or If the relevant Firearms or Shotgun Certificate has not been procured, a person entering the UK must deposit any firearms, which may require Firearms, or Shotgun Certificates with the first customs officer encountered. The owner should obtain a receipt, which describes the firearms and identifies the Customs Office. Normally, customs officials may detain for inspection accompanied baggage containing firearms.

4.1.3. Upon arrival at a permanent duty station, the firearms owner will obtain approval of the unit commander for the acquisition of firearms and, if appropriate, ammunition. Thereafter the owner will present such approval to the local UK police authorities in order to receive the appropriate certificate. Before firearms are used for hunting a game license must be procured. This can be done at a UK Post Office.

4.1.4. Because of the prohibition of certain weapons (which may subject weapons to confiscation and destruction) and the severe control of all others as well as the inevitable expenses involved, it is not recommended that privately owned firearms be imported into the United Kingdom.

4.2. Exportation of Firearms.

4.2.1. No firearms or ammunition may be taken outside the UK either permanently or temporarily, unless an export license is obtained. Application for an export license will be made to:

Department of Trade and Industry

Export Control Organization

3-4 Abbey Orchard Street

London SW1P 2HT

4.2.2. If firearms are to be included in household goods or hold baggage, the export license must be presented to the removal agent before the actual packing. If carried with personal baggage, firearms must be presented to appropriate UK customs authorities along with the proper document.

4.2.3. One who takes firearms or ammunition outside the UK temporarily will, in addition to the foregoing requirements, ensure compliance with the laws of the country into which the firearm is taken.

4.2.4. One who takes firearms from the UK on permanent change of station will, in addition to fulfilling the above applicable requirements, notify the local UK police and the security police firearms registration office of such removal.

4.2.5. The Gun Control Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-618) imposed very strict requirements concerning introduction of privately owned firearms and ammunition into the United States. These restrictions are applicable to all military and civilian personnel serving with the Armed Forces overseas. As a general rule, any persons subject to this regulation who intend to ship or otherwise introduce privately owned firearms or ammunition into the United States must first obtain either a certificate from their commanding officer or a permit from the US Treasury Department, whichever is appropriate. Individual services' directives contain detailed instructions concerning introduction of privately owned firearms and ammunition into the United States.

4.3. **Other Applicable Directives.** Personnel must also comply with applicable service directives (reference paragraph 1.4.2.).

5. Sensitive Items:

5.1. Tobacco and Alcoholic Beverages:

5.1.1. The monthly tobacco ration for authorized persons 18 years of age or older is four cartons of cigarettes or 100 cigars or 16 pocket tins or 2 pounds of smoking tobacco. Other conditions and restrictions of entitlement are established in directives of the respective commanders in the UK.

5.1.2. The monthly rationed allowance per authorized US military personnel and civilian employees 18 years of age and over is:

5.1.2.1. Four bottles (1 liter or less) of rationed hard liquor per sponsor.

5.1.2.2. Two bottles of rationed hard liquor per spouse of sponsor, if residing with sponsor in UK.

5.1.3. Wine and beer are not rationed, but may only be purchased by persons authorized ration privileges.

5.1.4. Dependents, who are not spouses of authorized persons, are not entitled to purchase alcohol at US Force outlets.

5.2. Gasoline and Kerosene:

5.2.1. Tax-free gasoline is available in the UK for members of the US Armed Forces, US civilian employees of US military departments, including non-appropriated fund activities, and US civilians accompanying and serving exclusively with US Force. Entitled US personnel (and their spouses) may be issued with a 3AF Form 435, **Certificate of Eligibility, Motor Fuel**, which is

their authority to purchase tax free motor fuel through Army Air Forces Exchange Service (AAFES) and Navy Exchange sources.

5.2.2. Tax Free motor fuel for the US Force is not rationed in the United Kingdom. Third Air Force Instruction 34-201 contains the control procedures applicable for tax free motor fuel in the UK.

6. Operation and Control of Motor Vehicles:

6.1. Concession Vehicles:

6.1.1. A concession vehicle is a vehicle imported free of import duty or purchased free of UK purchase tax. Single persons and married personnel not accompanied by dependents are authorized one concession vehicle. Married personnel accompanied by their dependents are entitled to two concession vehicles. While a maximum of two concession vehicles may be in the possession of an authorized person at one time, no limit is placed on the number of concession vehicles which may be acquired in succession, provided the following requirements are met:

6.1.1.1. The application for a second or replacement vehicle must be approved by the sponsor's unit commander.

6.1.1.2. The purchaser agrees to keep possession of the second or replacement vehicle for a minimum of 6 months.

6.1.2. Disposal of a concession vehicle will be subject to any directives, which may be issued by the senior US military commander of the owner's service in the UK. In no case will a concession vehicle be abandoned.

6.1.3. A concession vehicle may be disposed of only by export; sale to an authorized person; scrapped after payment of UK customs and excise duty; scrapped as a total loss under a contract of insurance; accepted by a US forces marketing and redistribution center if the vehicle has been in the UK for 2 years and owned by the current owner for 6 months; or sale on the open market after payment of all customs and excise duty. (If the title to a motor vehicle is transferred to an insurer because of a theft, liability for UK import duties and taxes may arise. Such potential liability should be included in the insurance coverage).

6.1.4. The 3AFI 31-204, *Control of Concession Vehicles*, contains more detailed procedures pertaining to concession vehicles.

6.2. Operation of Vehicles:

6.2.1. All motor vehicles operated by US forces personnel in the UK will be registered as required by British law. In addition, all concession vehicles will be registered with the appropriate US military authority.

6.2.2. United Kingdom law requires vehicles to be covered by unlimited personal liability insurance (third party liability).

6.2.3. United Kingdom law requires the payment of an annual road tax (currently, £160) and an annual inspection of all vehicles 3 years old or older. There is an initial 12-month exemption from the road tax on imported vehicles, and new vehicles of UK manufacture.

6.2.4. No person will display on his or her vehicles a service insignia, emblem, sticker, or plate that is not required by UK law, or authorized by US military authority.

6.2.5. British law requires that vehicles manufactured in 1964 or thereafter will have permanently installed at least a safety harness-type seat belt for the driver and a safety harness-type seat belt for the front seat passenger. A safety harness-type seat belt is defined as a combination lap and shoulder belt or a diagonal shoulder belt for the driver and front seat passenger. A lap belt alone is insufficient.

6.2.6. Vehicles less than three years old at the time of importation must be submitted for a US Force Single Vehicle Approval Test prior to registration on base and use on British roads. Vehicles over three years old must be submitted for a Ministry of Transport (MOT) Test prior to registration and use.

6.3. Drivers' Licenses:

6.3.1. Members of the US forces or civilian component and their dependents may operate a motor vehicle in the UK with a valid international or state driver's license or a US forces driving permit. Members of the US Air Force are required to obtain a USAFE Driving Permit in accordance with USAFEI 31-204 and installations instructions.

6.3.2. UK law provides that other persons and visitors may drive in the UK with a valid US license for a period of 12 months following the person's entry into the UK. After the 12-month period, a UK license should be obtained.

6.4. Responsibilities of Command :

6.4.1. The senior US commander of each military service in the UK is authorized to issue directives affecting military and civilian personnel under the senior US commander's command or supervision with respect to, but not limited to, the following:

6.4.1.1. Issuance of US Forces driving permits, which are recognized by the government.

6.4.1.2. Administratively suspending or revoking US Forces driving permits according to applicable directives and international agreements.

6.4.1.3. Administratively suspending or revoking the privilege of operating motor vehicles on US installations.

6.4.1.4. Requiring the annual inspection of motor vehicles operated on military installations.

6.4.1.5. Requiring the maintenance of minimum insurance coverage, both public liability and property damage, required by UK law on motor vehicles operated on military installations.

7. UK Law and International Agreements.

7.1. Compliance With US Forces Directives, UK Laws, and International Agreements:

7.1.1. In addition to US personnel in the UK being subject to laws of the UK of general application, US personnel also will comply with US Forces directives and international agreements that affect them while in the UK.

JAMES R. WISE, Colonel, USAF
Staff Judge Advocate

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND ACRONYMS*****References***

Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Regarding the Status of Their Forces, signed 19 June 1951 (NATO Status of Forces Agreement). (4 UST 1792; 199 UNTS 64) (BGB1 1961, II, 1138, 1190)

EUCOM Directive 45-7, Country Regulations, 17 Dec 1997, HQ USEUCOM, Unit 30400, Box 1000, APO AE 09128. Last visited, 11 Sep 00, at <http://www.eucom.mil/publications/ed/ED45-7.PDF>.

Gun Control Act of 1968 (Public Law 90- 618), 18 USC Section 921 et seq., Last visited, 2 Oct 00, at <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/18/ch44.html>.

DD Form 1434, United Kingdom (UK) Customs Declaration, Aug 1998, Last visited, 11 Sep 00, at <http://web1.whs.osd.mil/forms/DD1434.FRL>

Abbreviations and Acronyms

3AF—Third Air Force

MBF—military banking facility

NATO—North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NATO SOFA—North Atlantic Treaty Organization Status of Forces Agreement

POV—Privately owned vehicle

SAO—Security Assistance Organization

UCMJ—Uniform Code of Military Justice

USCR—United States Country Representative

USEUCOM—United States European Command

UK—United Kingdom