

DFMWR Gets 'Smart' with New Sustainable Fleet Vehicles

Story and photo by Anneliesa Barta, Sustainable Fort Carson

The "Smart Cars" now traveling the streets of Fort Carson are a new addition to the post's administrative vehicle fleet. The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation chose the microcars because they are one of the cleanest and most environmentally-friendly vehicles on the road today.

Kimberly Van Treadway, DFMWR chief of supplies and services, extensively researched the Smart Car to ensure it was a viable vehicle for Fort Carson. This purchase was driven by her commitment to green



Antonio Gonzales, DFMWR fleet manager, gets ready to roll in one of the directorate's new Smart Cars.

procurement and cost-effective environmental sustainability. "We needed vehicles for use in and around the installation and these vehicles offered the best value, both for today and the future" she said. There are many environmental benefits to Smart Cars, which cost the DFMWR approximately \$13,000 each. The entire car is 95 percent recyclable, and is Environmental protection Agency-classified as an ultra-low emissions vehicle. Smart Cars use less gasoline than most vehicles and are listed by the EPA as achieving 33 miles per gallon in the city and 41 mpg on the highway.

Of the several varieties of Smart Cars available in the United States, the DFMWR opted for the "Pure Coupe" model. Five Pure Coupes, in white, red and black, are available for use on-demand to DFMWR employees. With a two passenger capacity and cargo room, they are sized just right for business use on- and off-post. The car's 70 horsepower three cylinder engine achieves a top speed of 90 mph. The DFMWR ordered power windows, air conditioning and a central locking system to ensure its employees' comfort.

According to the manufacturer, Smart Car safety features include a racing car roll-cage for crash compatibility with larger passenger cars, four air bags, a four-wheel anti-lock break system, and electronic stability control. Plastic panels around the safety cage are interchangeable and come in a variety of colors, making for low-cost repair expenses and allowing for multi-color design options.

Smart Cars originated in Europe approximately 13 years ago, when the chief executive officer of a watch maker joined forces with the maker of luxury cars. Envisioned as a city runabout, Smart Cars were designed for the highly congested cities of Europe. However, prompted by high gas prices and a growing interest in energy efficiency, U.S. consumers are now demanding vehicles like Smart Cars, which have been available in the United States since January 2008. Electric and four-passenger capacity Smart Car models are in currently in the design and planning stages.

Fort Carson has long been a Sustainability leader in the region as well as among military installations nationwide. The DFMWR's acquisition of smart cars meets Fort Carson's definition of a sustainably procured product. The "cost" of the cars was considered not only for its out of pocket operational costs during DFMWR's ownership, but also the environmental costs of the raw materials used and of its ultimate disposal. At the end of their lifecycle, Smart Cars can be recycled.