

INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Use of Army Non-Tactical Vehicles (NTVs) and Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs)

1. Purpose. To explain the legal restrictions on the use of Army NTVs and SUVs.
2. Reference. Department of Defense (DoD) Directive 4500.36, *Management, Acquisition, and Use of Motor Vehicles*, 10 April 1985; Army Regulation 58-1, *Management, Acquisition, and Use of Motor Vehicles*, 28 January 2000; Secretary of the Army Travel Policy, 26 March 2003.
3. Discussion.

- a. The use of Army NTVs, defined as all sedans, station wagons, vans, and buses, is restricted to official purposes only. The use of Army SUVs, defined as a relatively new class of vehicle with four-wheel drive and off-road capability, is restricted to official purposes only, closely monitored, and authorized for only limited situations as outlined in Paragraph 5 below. Official purposes do not include transportation to private social functions or for personal errands or side trips.

- b. Military members who willfully use or authorize the use of a NTV or SUV for a non-official purpose may be disciplined under the UCMJ. DOD civilian personnel who willfully use or authorize the use of a NTV or SUV for a non-official purpose can be subject to disciplinary actions as circumstances warrant. **The Garrison Commander is responsible to monitor and correct abuse of this policy.** Prudent use of government resources is the responsibility of all Army employees

4. Authorized Use of NTVs.

- a. Official Events. The use of an Army NTV must be essential to the successful completion of a DoD function, activity, action, or operation, and consistent with the purpose for which the vehicle was acquired. Commanders, with advice from judge advocates, determine what constitutes an official event and approve NTV use within the parameters allowed by regulation and policy. Official events do not include hail and farewell dinners or military balls.

- b. Official Ceremonies. Generally, NTVs may be used by government employees, either military or civilian personnel, actively participating in official ceremonies (e.g., changes of command, parades, promotions, retirements, unit activations/deactivations, funerals, military field demonstrations, parades and similar events) or for senior military or civilian officials attending such official ceremonies. NTVs, however, are not authorized for officials who attend official ceremonies in their personal capacity. Attendance in a personal capacity occurs if an official attends a ceremony simply as an invited guest (not participating in or not the most senior official at the ceremony) or attends a ceremony solely because of a friendship, family tie, or prior professional relationship.

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c. Authorized Activities. NTVs may be used to support authorized activities such as installation sponsored athletic teams or morale, welfare, and recreation groups; patient therapeutic programs; and chaplain programs when it has been determined by the commander that failure to provide such service would have an adverse effect on the morale of service members, family members, and DOD civilians. Transportation may be provided to or from an appointment scheduled by the Army that requires a soldier's attendance versus a doctor's appointment made by the soldier (i.e., records checks, physical, dental, or hospital outpatient appointments).

d. Transportation to an Employee's Residence. NTVs are not authorized to transport government employees between their home and their place of duty or employment. All transportation to official after-hours ceremonies or events must begin and end at the employee's normal place of duty. This does not, however, preclude movement of groups of enlisted soldiers between troop billets and duty areas when the commander determines that such movement is incident to the performance of duty. Any exception to this policy must be authorized by the Secretary of the Army, in writing, before the transportation begins.

e. Personal Errands or Side Trips. NTVs are not authorized for personal errands or side trips unless the rules for temporary duty (TDY) status apply (see Paragraph f). For example, a government employee, not on TDY status, is not authorized to drive a NTV to a bank to cash a personal check or to the dry cleaners to pick-up drying cleaning even if the bank or dry cleaners is on the exact route to or from a location/event where use of the NTV is authorized and no additional mileage or usage to the NTV is incurred. NTVs cannot be used for transportation or be parked at commissaries, post exchanges (PXs) (including all concessions), bowling alleys, officer and non-commissioned officer clubs, unless that employee is on official government business or TDY. In addition, NTVs cannot be used to transport personnel to pickup or deliver items or supplies that are required for any unofficial functions or activities such as office coffee funds or office luncheons.

f. Employees on TDY status. For employees on TDY status use of a NTV is authorized for transportation between locations where the person's presence is required for official business and their temporary lodging. Further, in the absence of regularly scheduled public transportation, or where its use is impractical, an employee on TDY status may operate a NTV between places of business or lodging and eating establishments, drugstores, barber shops, places of worship, and similar places required for the comfort or health of the member, and which foster the continued efficient performance of Army business. Using a NTV to travel to or from commercial entertainment facilities (eg: professional sports, concerts etc.) is not authorized.

g. Transportation of a Spouse. Spouses of government employees are only authorized transportation in a NTV when accompanying their employee spouse in the NTV, the use of which is for an official purpose, and there is space available. Using a larger or additional NTV to transport a spouse is not authorized.

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5. Authorized Use of SUVs. Rules concerning the authorized use of NTVs also apply to use of SUVs with the following additional restrictions. SUVs will not be acquired or used to enhance the comfort or prestige of any individual, regardless of grade or rank. The smallest, most fuel-efficient vehicle capable of meeting mission requirements must be used. Were a Class II sedan or light duty pickup truck meets mission requirements a larger and more prestigious SUV will not be used, except for special requirements (i.e., inclement weather or off-road use). SUVs will also not be used exclusively as a passenger-carrying vehicle when a sedan, van, carryall, bus, taxi, privately owned vehicle (reimbursable), or public transportation would meet mission requirements. MACOM Commanders are the approval authority for all requests to use high-end SUVs or any SUV with a maximum gross weight equal to or greater than 5,000 pounds.

6. If you have any questions whether use of a NTV or SUV is permissible under Army Regulation or SA Policy, please contact the Administrative and Civil Law Division, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate (OSJA) at 526-0618.