



Advice for Service Personnel who Leave Their Vehicle in the UK whilst on Operations



Service personnel who are posted overseas on operations leave behind their personal possessions. These possessions may include a motor vehicle which is subject to Road Tax, Insurance and MOT. By law contact must be made at least once a year with the DVLA through either renewal of tax or SORN¹ declaration. The owner cannot change the address on form V5C (the log book) to their BFPO address as the address used must be a UK land address with a valid postcode.

If you are going on operations and you own a vehicle you have the following options:

- Carry on as normal
- Declare vehicle as 'Off the Road'
- Leave the vehicle with a family member or friend

Carry on as Normal

Keep the vehicle registered at your current home address. You, the owner, should continue to keep your vehicle insured, taxed and with a valid MOT. Mail from DVLA will continue to be sent to this address, including the tax reminder form, V11, which will automatically be sent 2 weeks before the current tax expires. If the vehicle is due an MOT while away you will need to ask a friend or relative to take the appropriate action. If the tax is due for renewal you can do this online but you will need the code printed on the V11 form. On receipt the new tax disc will need to be placed in/on the vehicle. Also, your insurance company should be notified of the change in circumstances which may affect your premiums.

Declare Vehicle as 'Off the Road'

If you do not intend to tax your vehicle you should keep it **OFF** the road and tell the DVLA. There is no longer the option to do nothing when your tax expires. Motorists who fail to tax their vehicles once their tax disc has expired, who do not have a SORN, can be identified by DVLA's computer database and automatically sent a penalty fine. As car tax can only be purchased with a valid insurance and MOT certificate, ensuring cars are taxed also ensures they are safe.

You can register your car as off the road using a SORN declaration and claim back any Road Tax which has been paid on the vehicle (complete months only). This means the vehicle cannot be used or kept on a public highway - including public car parks. To do this you can either:

¹ SORN – Statutory Off Road Notification

- complete and submit form V14 to the DVLA by post (if claiming outstanding tax back the tax disc must also be returned) or;
- complete and submit form V11 (tax reminder form) which contains a section to declare a vehicle as off the road (SORN) and post to DVLA or;
- complete and submit form V890 on the internet to declare SORN (using a code from form V11).

A SORN declaration is for a maximum of 12 months. If you wish to use the vehicle on return to the UK (including on R&R), you must ensure that the vehicle has a valid MOT, insurance and road tax before use.

Leave the Vehicle with Family Member or Friend

You can leave the vehicle in the care of a member of the family or a friend. You can decide whether to register the care as SORN, as above, or continue to keep the vehicle taxed, insured and with a current MOT.

If the vehicle is to be used by family/friends then it must be taxed and have a current MOT. Your family members/friends may have their own vehicle insurance cover which allows them to drive the vehicle, although this would usually be a third-party only cover. You may wish to add the family member/friend to your own insurance policy in order for them to drive the vehicle, especially if fully comprehensive insurance is required. You should advise your insurance company of the change in circumstances which is likely to affect your insurance premiums.

In order for correspondence from DVLA (such as the tax reminder form V11) to be sent to the family member's/friend's address for action if required you may wish to change the address on form V5C (the log book). By changing the address to a 'care of' address, but leaving the keeper's name as yours, the number of registered keepers of the vehicle would not be increased, so will not affect the value of the vehicle. You can still choose to renew your Road Tax online, but will need the code on the V11 form.

SUMMARY

- **Decide what you want to do – Keep your vehicle on the road (still drivable) or off the road (SORN)**
- **Return the appropriate paperwork to DVLA by post or via the internet**
- **Inform other interested parties**