



IN THE KNOW: 1st MAW Resource Tool

Buying a Vehicle from a Private Owner

Buying a vehicle from a private owner, otherwise known as a “Title Transfer”, is a multi-step process requiring both buyer and seller to be present throughout the process, having the correct paperwork, and knowing your way around Camp Foster.

Step 1: Find a seller and agree on a price.

Step 2: Obtain a Letter of Attorney (LOA) and get it notarized (stamped). You can accomplish this at the Joint Service Vehicle Registration Office (JSVRO) at Bldg 5638 on Camp Foster.

*This is the key piece of documentation for the title transfer.

NOTE: To obtain an LOA, the buyer must present SOFA License and Military ID. First time buyers must present a copy of PCS Orders to Okinawa. There can be no lien on the vehicle you are buying. Seller must present SOFA License, Military ID and all vehicle paperwork - Japanese Compulsory Insurance (JCI) policy MUST BE CURRENT OR YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE AN LOA / Property Damage Insurance (PDI) CAN BE EXPIRED AND STILL RECEIVE AN LOA BUT IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED AS THE VEHICLE CANNOT BE DRIVEN WITHOUT A CURRENT PDI POLICY. Current Road Tax receipt, Base registration paperwork.

Step 3: After getting the LOA stamped, both buyer and seller proceed to the SELLER’s insurance company to complete the title transfer. The insurance company will take the stamped LOA, all vehicle paperwork and the title transfer fee payment. Most insurance companies will charge between \$30 and \$35 dollars and this fee can be paid either in yen or dollars.

NOTE: The buyer must purchase a Property Damage Insurance (PDI) policy before the title transfer can be completed. This can usually be paid in yen, dollars, or with a credit card. The policy can be purchased at any insurance company, but for convenience and an English-speaking staff, many people use ACE or AIU. Both companies have agents / offices located on most military installations here on Okinawa.

Step 4: Once the transfer is complete, both buyer and seller will receive a Certificate of Transfer (Form 21). For the buyer, this serves as temporary title/registration. For the seller, the Certificate of Transfer serves as proof that the vehicle has been sold. **Seller should take Certificate of Transfer back to the JSVRO to ensure vehicle is removed from their name in the system.**

Step 5: After about a week, the buyer will return to the insurance company to pick up the new paperwork for the vehicle, now in the buyer’s name.

Disclaimer: This information is compiled from local Okinawa websites and is intended as a quick reference guide only. III MEF does not imply ownership of this information nor endorsement of any particular insurance company. For further details, contact the Joint Services Vehicle Registration Office at 645-7481 or visit them at <http://www.mcbbutler.marines.mil/BaseInformation/VehicleRegistration.asp>