

The WLA model was the workhorse of military motorcycles during World War II. Harley-Davidson produced more than 90,000 WLAs for the war effort.



Photo courtesy Harley-Davidson Motor Company Archives. Copyright H-D

Two Wheels Serving America

Since WWII, Harley-Davidson has treated U.S. service members especially well.
The company still does.

By Leslie Rigoulot

Harley. You don't even have to use the full name, Harley-Davidson Motor Company. Just Harley is enough to get the adrenaline going for a motorcycle enthusiast. And let's face reality—most military folks are adrenaline junkies or they wouldn't have the courage to put themselves on the front line to defend our country and our freedom. Adrenaline becomes very useful in combat situations and realizing that troops are accustomed to a certain level of risk-taking is essential to keeping them alive on the battlefield and at home.

Harley earned their stripes a long time ago. After WWII, two young combat veterans launched a business so that military personnel serving overseas could get a great deal on an American made car or motorcycle. The Overseas Military Sales Corporation (OMSC) was founded on this principle. Instead of facing the hassle of trying to secure transportation when they came back to the States, OMSC would conduct the transaction for their new car or motorcycle while they were still deployed. Their new vehicle would be ready for delivery at their local dealership when they returned home. This served military

personnel stationed overseas very well. But the operations of our military have evolved, and now, the implementation of online marketing and digital kiosks in conjunction with face-to-face selling, has ensured that the overseas military community will continue to purchase many new Harleys through this special military program.

Along the way, OMSC was contracted by AAFES to handle their on-base buying program overseas, and in the process, has become the largest single retailer of cars, trucks and Harley-Davidson motorcycles to U.S. military personnel, including National Guard and Reserves, who are assigned overseas for 30 days or more. The Military Advantage Program, through on-base Exchange New Car Sales (ENCS) locations, provides a unique opportunity that continues to offer great deals with no-hassle pricing, backed with 100% price protection and a Lowest Price Guarantee. Customers also have the ability to custom order colors and options at a fixed price before they head back to CONUS, even if they won't be returning for another year. And, if military orders change, the vehicle will be held at no additional charge. Soldiers serving in the Middle East will also receive an extended warranty for the same amount of time as their deployment.

It's no doubt that the overseas military community has one of the sweetest deals when it comes to buying Harleys. However, with so many military personnel taking advantage of their privilege to buy, and ride a Harley through this program, the military has placed an emphasis on safety. As said by Army Lt. General Rick Lynch, commander the 3rd Corps at Fort Hood, Texas when he organized a 60-mile ride in 2008 to emphasize motorcycle safety..."It's ridiculous to have survived the fields of battle and combat to then come home and die on the highways

and byways of Central Texas."

OMSC shares that concern and wants their customers to learn to ride safely and continues to do its part by sponsoring their Cycle Safe Program. Cycle Safe is an informative program that highlights the principles of safe riding and encourages new riders to take an accredited hands-on training course to learn how to ride. Upon completion of the course, these new riders will also receive up to a \$200 reimbursement of the motorcycle training course fee from OMSC if taken within 6 months before or after deployment, as long as they purchase and take delivery of a motorcycle through Exchange New Car Sales.

To find out more about the Exchange New Car Sales overseas buying program or the safety programs sponsored by ENCS, visit www.encs.com. 

