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VOL 7 FEBRUARY 2013

OFFICIAL SAFETY MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. ARMY

LAST RIDE



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SAFETY FEATURES



MEASURING UP

One of the perennial questions in safety is, "How do we measure what we're doing?" Too often, the only metric we have available is how many Soldiers died in accidents during any particular period. We've gotten into the habit of looking at those numbers and attributing our safety programs' success or failure to them. This isn't necessarily a bad thing; we obviously want the arrow pointing downward on accidental deaths. But, I don't believe it's enough to quantify what we do every day with only a single figure — safety is much bigger and more complex than that.

In my mind, metrics should be about accountability, not simply numbers. Getting your unit to 100 percent on training requirements or mandated inspections is a noble goal, but it never falls to a single person or event to do it. We must hold our leaders to task in meeting stated metrics, not just the safety officer and not merely against the number of fatalities to accidents. The same is true for developing metrics; every leader should be involved in the process, and honestly, Soldiers should be too. Talking to your troops will give you a good idea of reasonable goals, and then, based on your experience and judgment, you can dial up the "hard" in the process. Simply making a command decision to reduce accidents by whatever percentage won't make a workable goal or create an environment where your Soldiers buy in to safety through their own participation in risk management. Properly developed, safety metrics can be part of your unit's safety culture, provide incentive and inspire achievement.

Our Army has been in flux for nearly 12 years, but now is the time to buckle down and make safety a lifestyle so we're prepared for the next

war. These long years of combat have taught us just how important safety is for our Soldiers and mission success, and we don't need to go back to the days of inaction followed by reaction. We're much better as a force at pragmatic, proactive approaches to safety, and while metrics have been part of that success, it's the people behind them who have really made the difference. Leaders looking out for Soldiers and Soldiers looking out for each other have turned the tide against accidental fatalities, and they should be the authority on grading your safety performance. Talk, ask questions, listen and put their ideas into action — the best metric you can meet is having a fully engaged unit.

Spring is on our doorstep, so make sure your Soldiers are ready for the risk. Motorcycle and driver's training, water safety and responsible drinking are all hot topics for the upcoming season. Schedule a safety stand-down or other dedicated time to discuss hazards and risk management with your Soldiers before the fun begins, and get their ideas on metrics for a successful seasonal safety campaign. Whether it's starting a Motorcycle Mentorship Program to train new riders or

reviving a unit designated driver program, there are many positive ways to influence and measure your formation's safety culture. Soldier participation in these initiatives is a great indicator of success!

I welcome your ideas on safety metrics and how we can better help you and your Soldiers meet your goals. Also, remember to look for the Army Safe Spring Campaign, to be released later this month at <https://safety.army.mil>. The first step in helping your Soldiers operationalize safety, both on and off duty, is arming them with the information they need to make smart decisions. Check out the campaign, and please let me know your suggestions for future topics.

Thank you for all you do every day, and remember to always play it safe!◀

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TIMOTHY J. EDENS
Brigadier General, USA
Director of Army Safety



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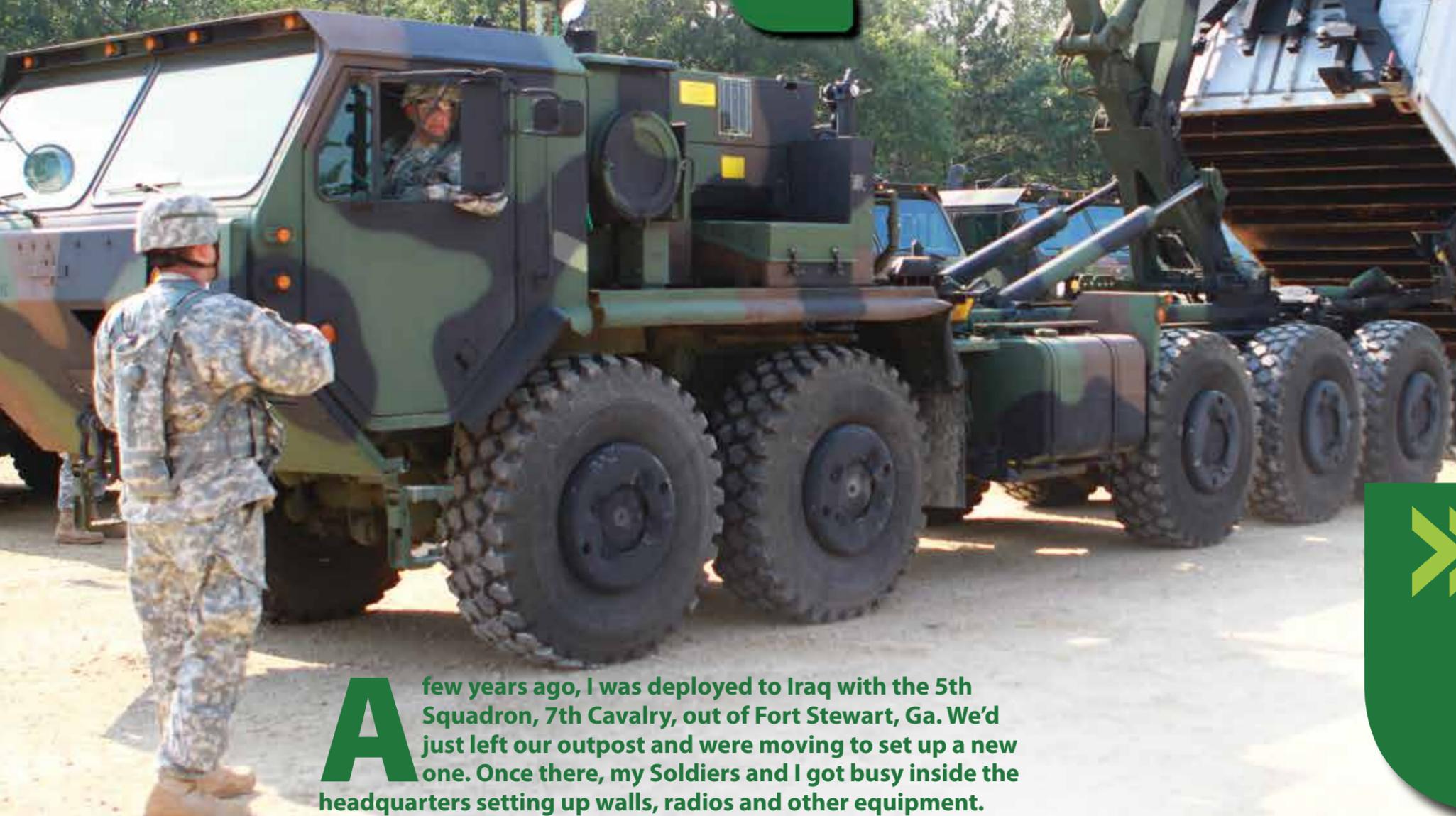
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PINNED by a PLS

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209th Aviation Support Battalion
Schofield Barracks, Hawaii



A few years ago, I was deployed to Iraq with the 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry, out of Fort Stewart, Ga. We'd just left our outpost and were moving to set up a new one. Once there, my Soldiers and I got busy inside the headquarters setting up walls, radios and other equipment.

When our first palletized loading systems showed up, they dropped off their first CONEX next to us. A second PLS then showed up and, while we were outside taking a break, we could hear it backing up. Suddenly, we heard Soldiers yelling for the PLS to stop. My only thought was, "This can't be good."

The second PLS was backing up the first CONEX, trying to get as

close to it as possible. The noncommissioned officer that was ground guiding it was directly behind the PLS instead of off to the side. Since the driver couldn't see her, he kept backing up and pinned the NCO between the pintle hook and CONEX. He didn't know he had pinned her and kept backing up. Finally, someone got his attention and yelled for him to pull forward. Once he did, several of our NCOs raced in to check on the ground guide. She suffered serious injuries and was medically evacuated out of theater.

For me, this situation was hard because, as Soldiers, we know the right way to do our jobs. On the flip side, we also know the wrong way. Sometimes we take shortcuts because we either want to get the mission completed quickly so we can move on to another

task or so we can get home.

I learned some non-negotiable ground-guiding procedures that terrible day. It's my hope that you'll heed my advice and won't have to watch a comrade be nearly crushed to death.

- Always have two ground guides when backing vehicles and equipment. Ensure there's one in the front just off to the side, while the other is off to the side to the rear of the vehicle/equipment.
- Only one ground guide gives signals to the operator. Be sure everyone involved (the operator and ground guides) understands who gives the signals and who receives the signals before any movement is done.
- If sight between the operator and the ground guide making the signal is lost, the operator must stop the vehicle until the signal is again visible or the confusion is cleared up.

I believe in following these simple steps so accidents like the one I witnessed won't happen again. To me, the accident was sad because the NCO's career was over the second she stepped behind the PLS. Always make sure you are doing your job as an NCO and lead by example. Never take shortcuts just to finish sooner. It's better to be late and safe than injured or dead.◀



FROM THE GROUND DIRECTORATE

Leaders and supervisors must preserve and protect their Soldiers by enforcing the fundamentals of ground-guiding procedures. Make sure everyone understands the requirements in Army Regulation 385-10, Chapter 11, Prevention of Motor Vehicle Accidents; Training Circular 21-305-20, Manual for the Wheeled Vehicle Operator; and the basic signals to guide vehicle and equipment operators as outlined in Field Manual 21-60, Visual Signals.

DANGER

IN A CROWDED SKY

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 DANIEL HORN
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Fort Riley, Kan.



It was a cool spring day in Alaska, and my OH-58D squadron was participating in the Air Force's Red Flag operation. Our task was to help certify new Joint Terminal Attack Controllers for the Air Force. We were to fly as a Scout Weapons Team from our airfield to the range operated by the Air Force. Although it was just 20 minutes as the crow flies from our airfield, we rarely operated in this range due to the high use by the Air Force. Prior to this operation, we had conducted a range familiarization flight with communication checks with the controllers.

The range sits in a valley surrounded by 1,500-foot-tall foothills with deep valleys pouring into the range, which is set up to mimic an enemy airfield. During a training scenario, adversary forces were conducting man-portable air defense operations as enemy air defense artillery. The controllers were going to call in German Panavia Tornado jet fighter bombers to make gun runs on the airfield. Our job was to follow up with Hellfire missiles and close-air attacks. Then the controllers would call in F-16s to attack with a simulated joint direct attack munitions drop, followed by A-10 Thunderbolts making gun runs with their 30 mm cannons.

We had removed our doors and were conducting nap-of-the-earth (very low altitude) flights into the target range. Range control cleared

us into the range and instructed us to contact the controllers.

Everything went smoothly as we contacted the controllers and were directed to set up an over-watch position. We flew in behind a ridgeline that ran parallel to the enemy airfield and began to observe. I listened as the German pilots checked in and received their target coordinates for their engagement. We slewed our mast-mounted sight to the position and saw their target was an aircraft hangar. The controllers called us and asked for a good target description, and I replied with, "I have an aircraft hangar, three aircraft parked outside and several SA-6 missile platforms surrounding the hangar." The German pilots called the target and concurred with our observation. Then controllers cleared the Tornados hot, advising them to

attack the airfield from east to west according to how the airfield was laid out. The Tornados came down and conducted their simulated runs, destroying the hangar along with four of the SA-6 missiles. We were then asked to engage the other two SA-6s from behind the ridge with Hellfires. Quickly going through the checklist with my left-seat pilot, we were locked onto the target, met all of the constraints and destroyed the other two missiles. Everything went flawless. It was a textbook engagement.

Next it was the F-16's and A-10's turn to come in. We were asked to move five miles to the north to clear us from the F-16's JDAM drop. We were south of the target at the time and relayed to the controllers that we didn't want to fly over the engagement area. Instead, we would move two ridgelines over

and hold south of the target in a deep valley, one of six or seven that fed into the range. We relayed the coordinates and were given a green light to move there. En route to our holding position, we listened to the F-16s check in and acknowledge the target. The pilots called the time of flight for the bombs and released their simulated ordnance.

Our first mistake was assuming the A-10s would make the same gun runs as the Tornados. We listened as the A-10s were cleared hot to engage from west to east. This caused me to pause and think about how our valley was south of the target, but the ridge turned and fed into the airfield from the west. "OK," I thought, "that's different but shouldn't be a problem. The A-10s would just come straight in from the west and engage."

When we turned and crossed

over the ridge into the valley, I suddenly saw four A-10s at my altitude and closing at more than 300 knots. I immediately screamed over the radio to the controllers that we had another A-10 flight coming into the range. We descended as much as we could, considering we were only 100 feet above the trees. The controllers replied that no other A-10s were in the area. I listened to the A-10s call, "Knock it off — knock it off — knock it off!" The A-10s flew over us and

almost caused us to have a midair collision with the A-10s. The A-10s had several avenues of approach to the airfield. No one anticipated they would use our valley to approach from the south and then turn east to attack

“Our **LACK** of situational **AWARENESS**, coupled with no **DEFINED** engagement **LINE**, almost **CAUSED** us to have a midair **COLLISION WITH** the **A-10s.**”

climbed straight up into the sky. We all wondered, "Where did these guys come from?" We thought it was another flight of A-10s and that they'd caused the aircraft we were expecting to call off their engagement. However, that is not what happened.

They were our A-10s and had picked our valley to use for their approach to the airfield.

Our lack of situational awareness, coupled with no defined engagement line,

the airfield. The A-10s weren't given a hard deck for this mission, which meant they could attack from down in the weeds where we were. All of these factors contributed to a close call.

The margin for error can be quite small when sharing the sky with fast movers. When pilots — whether they are in jets or helicopters — start improvising, the sky can quickly turn into a scary place. And when aircraft surprise each other in the same piece of sky at the same moment, the results can be catastrophic.◀

ARE YOU READY?

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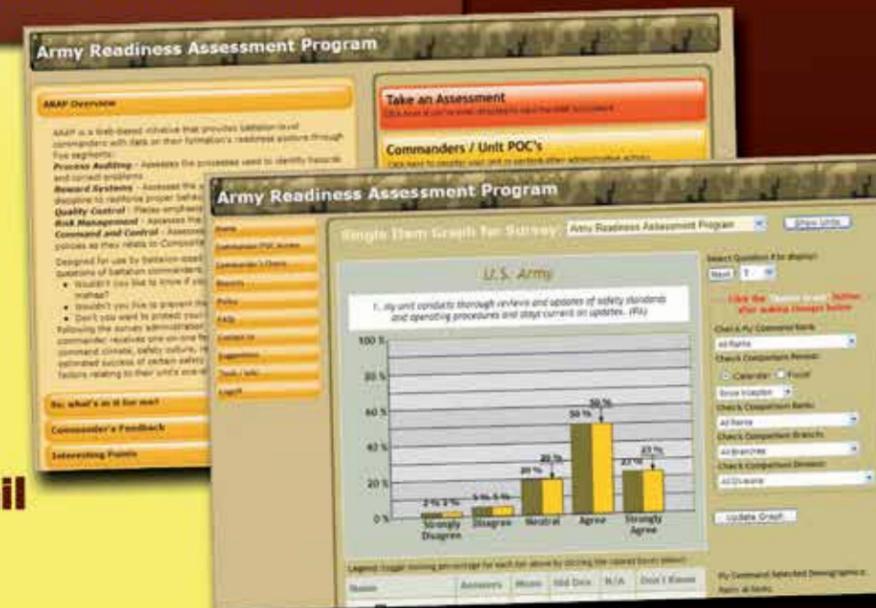
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YELLOW MEANS

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 JUSTIN THOMPSON
C Company, 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment
Fort Wainwright, Alaska



How many times have you approached a traffic light just as it turned yellow and said to yourself, “I can make it”? As you punch the gas and fly through the intersection, you look up and see the light change to red. With a devious grin, you praise your great driving skills. I’ll be the first to admit that I’ve done this countless times with no thought of the danger I might avoid if I would have just slowed down and stopped. However, an accident I wasn’t even involved in forever changed my thinking.

It was about 9 p.m. and still sunny due to Alaska’s unique solar schedule. My wife, 2-year-old daughter and I were on our way home from the hardware store after purchasing materials for my weekend project — a swing set. We were all a bit tired, and I was looking forward to parking the truck and enjoying the rest of the evening at home.

As we approached a traffic light, it turned from green to yellow. I judged my distance from the light and the speed I was traveling and figured I could safely make it through. For some reason, though, I pressed the brake pedal and came to a stop just as the light turned red. While stopped, I noticed a semi-truck hauling two cargo trailers heading south on the overpass ahead. After the light turned green, I merged onto the highway behind the semi, which was now about a quarter of a mile ahead.

This highway is the main artery in Alaska, running to Anchorage in the south, Fairbanks in the north and the Canadian border to the east. Needless to say, there was

usually a lot of large truck traffic on it, especially late in the day. After merging, the road gradually turns to the left and then back to the right, making a lazy “S” shape. Trees line both sides of the road, which makes these turns “blind.” Due to that fact, passing is prohibited along this portion of the road.

I lost sight of the semi around the first turn for just a second. When I saw the truck again, it was at a dead stop, with debris and smoke everywhere.

The accident involved only two vehicles — the semi, which was heading south, and a northbound sedan. The driver of the semi was traveling the speed limit and not breaking any other traffic laws. The sedan, however, was attempting to pass another vehicle through a blind turn at more than 80 mph. It collided with the semi with such force that the driver, an 18-year-old girl with only a learner’s permit, was liquefied under the dash. Her 21-year-old passenger — who I later learned was a private first class in a ground unit on base — suffered traumatic head injuries and died at the scene. The driver of the semi suffered a broken arm and ribs and was transported to the hospital for non-life-threatening injuries.

The accident scene was horrific. Most of us have seen videos of accidents on safety stand-down days, but this was different. I stopped, got out and ran to the vehicles in an attempt to render any type of aid I could. After checking the status of the occupants, a fire started under the sedan. I put it out with a fire extinguisher I’d grabbed from the semi. After that, there was nothing more I could do except hold the injured sedan passenger so he would know a Soldier was there and would not leave him. He took his last breath three minutes before emergency response

personnel arrived on the scene.

After I got home, I had some time to reflect on the accident. I realized that had I not stopped at that yellow light, my truck, with my wife and daughter in it, would have been in front of the semi. When the sedan collided with us, we would have undoubtedly been sandwiched between the two vehicles. I don’t see how there would have been any way we could have survived.

This experience left me with some important lessons learned:

- You never know what is coming around the corner. In the scout community, we say, “Never run to the sound of gunfire.” Take it slow, gather information, assess the situation and then formulate a course of action.
- Focus on the now and plan for the future. Pay attention to your surroundings, but also think one step ahead. That way, when disaster strikes, you’ll have a plan. Even if it isn’t a good plan, at least you’ll have a place to start.
- A wise man once said, “Go slow to go fast.” Had I been in a rush to get home and gone through that light, or had the driver of the sedan not been in a rush to get to her destination, there would have been no story.
- Pick the best person for the job, and never train while under fire. Had the licensed private been driving, not the unlicensed teenager, there may have been another outcome.
- Follow the rules. The rules are there to protect us and others from injury, death and damage to equipment. Never think you are getting one over on “the man” if you break the rules and don’t get caught. You are only cheating yourself out of precious time. ⏪

Forecast for HAZARDOUS Conditions

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Winter driving can be a hazardous task for Soldiers, especially in regions susceptible to a lot of snow. Severe weather can make road conditions unpredictable and treacherous. Even in southern locations, where winters are usually mild, unusual freezing temperatures or unexpected snow and ice may bring driving surprises. In addition to inclement weather, Soldiers are faced with fewer hours of daylight during these months. If proper techniques aren't applied and Soldiers don't exercise caution, winter driving could quickly turn into a tragedy.

It's important drivers prepare themselves and their vehicles for any conditions they may encounter. For most, driving in adverse weather usually takes longer and requires more attention to detail. Before a Soldier gets behind the wheel to perform an assigned mission, they should apply the risk management process described in Field Manual 5-19 and conduct preventive maintenance checks and services.

The threats Soldiers face during winter depend on specific situations and how well they are trained on proper driving techniques. Therefore, leaders should stress Soldiers attend driver's training. A well-trained driver will be able to apply winter driving skills and be aware of how cold weather affects a vehicle before, during and after an operation in order to avoid an accident from occurring.

An important fact to remember is vehicles don't stop as fast on ice or snow-covered pavement. When preparing to stop, drivers should allow for more time and slow down earlier than usual, especially when driving behind other vehicles. They should also maintain a greater distance between vehicles. Slowing down when following vehicles, in turns or just driving on straight roads will give drivers more time to react in the event of unexpected stops.

Drivers and TCs need to be deliberate in all driving actions. When turning the vehicle, drivers should release the gas pedal slowly and avoid fast, jerky movements. When a pedal needs to be pushed — gas or brake — it needs to be done easily and steady. Road conditions must be observed and weather reports obtained before

the mission starts. Even when it's not snowing, the road could ice up in places where there's moisture. This will happen more during the overnight hours when it's colder.

Soldiers also need to apply defensive driving techniques meticulously during the winter months and be alert for other motorists making mistakes on the road. Drivers should approach intersections cautiously to avoid skidding. Rearview mirrors need to be monitored for other vehicles that are traveling too close for the road conditions.

If a driver starts sliding, they should not panic or step on the brakes, which could send the vehicle into a skid. Simply let your foot off the gas pedal and steer the vehicle into the skid. For example, if driving straight and the rear of the vehicle starts sliding left and the front to the right, the driver should steer the vehicle to the left. If the vehicle corrects itself, straighten the wheel. Sometimes a driver will overcorrect, and the vehicle will slide the other way. If this happens, steer again in the opposite direction.

Because winter weather can affect visibility and stopping distances, here are a few tips

that Soldiers should apply when driving in adverse conditions:

- Ensure all service drive lights and reflective devices are clean and unobstructed.
- Allow extra time for your mission and reduce speed.
- Increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front and be certain you can stop within the distance you can see to be clear.
- If visibility is seriously reduced by fog, use headlights and/or fog lights.
- Remember to turn high beams off when they are no longer needed, as they can be a distraction to other drivers.
- Remember the obvious — snow can be seen, but ice isn't always visible.
- Avoid sudden braking, accelerating too quickly and harsh steering in slippery conditions.
- Keep the windshield clear of snow, and check from time to time that there is not a buildup of snow on the lights.
- Take precautions when crossing intersections when snow and ice are present.◀

▶▶ DID YOU KNOW?

Through proper training, the Army will see accident reductions in our formations. With valuable information and resources accessible in the Driver's Training Toolbox, every Soldier has the tools needed to complete the mission safely. Visit <https://safety.army.mil/drivertrainingtoolbox> and get started today. An AKO login is required.

PAY IT FORWARD

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 5 RALPH H. CROSS IV
U.S. Army Pacific Safety Office
Fort Shafter, Hawaii

A few weeks ago, I went out to the garage with my son to sharpen a lawnmower blade. Without even thinking about it, I grabbed two sets of safety goggles and face shields for us to wear while I used the bench grinder on the blade.

That made me think — would I have done that 20 or 25 years ago, while I was still young in my Army career? Would it have been almost instinctive to take the proper safety precautions? I don't think so. I didn't know as much about safety as I do now. I didn't know how many people got hurt doing a simple task like using a bench grinder. And I didn't know how many injuries could have been prevented with the knowledge of basic safety precautions. But I do now.

This "safety sense" has been drilled into my head for 29 years. Sure, it was a slow start. I didn't always make smart choices right off the bat. But gradually I started to see the light. I saw pictures of preventable injuries that left people disabled for life. I heard statistics about the number of people killed or injured doing dumb things and how many lives are saved each year by something as simple as seat belts.

I used to resent the seemingly constant barrage

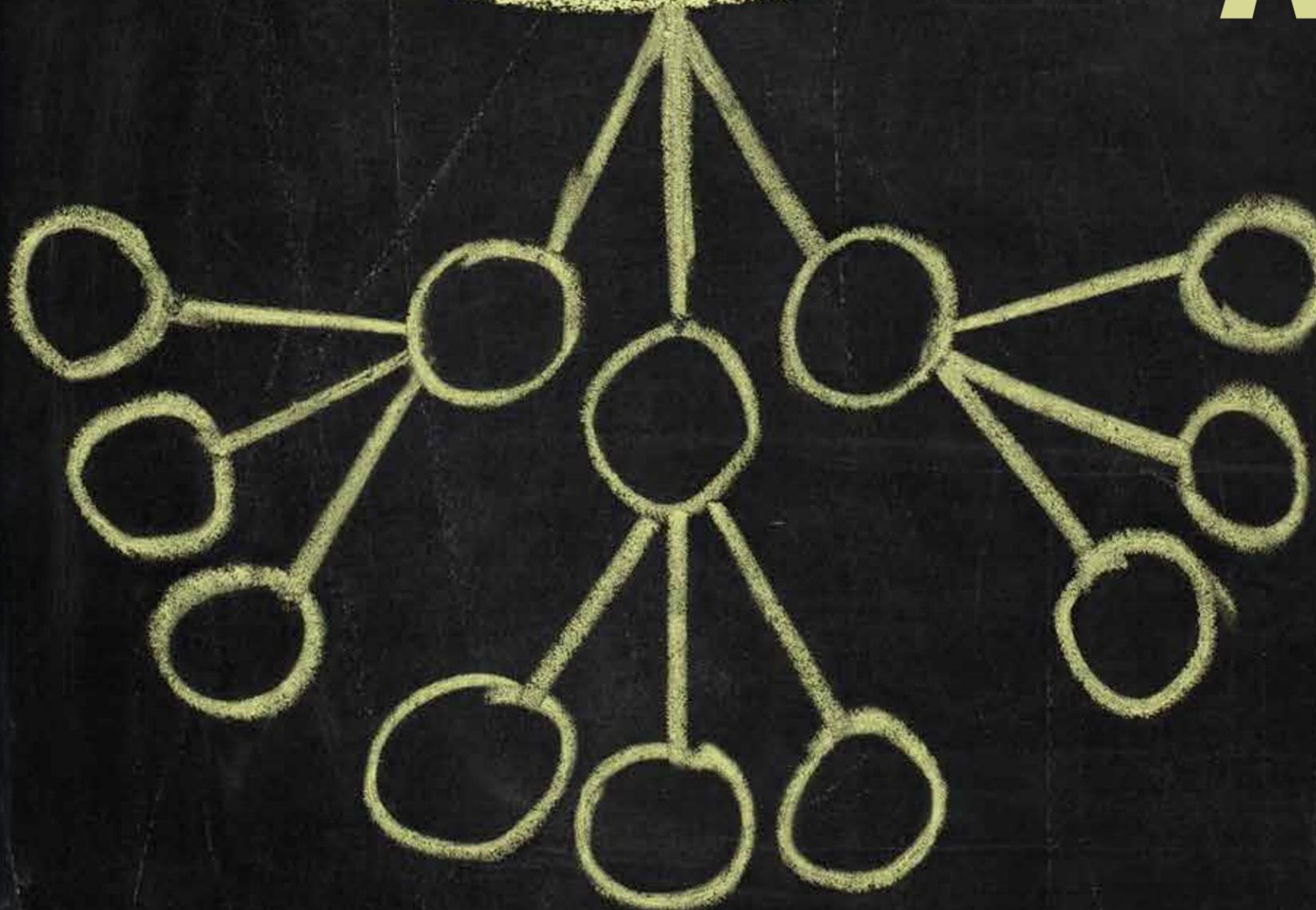
of safety lectures. However, when I noticed the change that came about in my own thinking because of the Army Safety Program, I realized just how effective it has been. And it's not just me. The program has been effective in almost every Soldier's thinking. When you compare the Army population with a demographically similar civilian population, our accident and injury numbers are way lower. Far fewer 18- to 25-year-old male Soldiers die in car accidents than do their civilian counterparts.

We're doing something right. You may not get much credit for it, but your attitude and discipline are making a big difference. You're staying alive — and doing it in record numbers. Sure, there have been a few bumps in the road, and not everybody seems to get the message. But overall, we're doing a great job of not dying or getting hurt.

The importance of our success

cannot be overstated. Our success can be measured in cold, hard cash. It can be measured in the combat effectiveness of a unit. But most of all, it can be measured in the fewer letters commanders have to write to grieving parents and spouses. Your life is important on so many levels, and you seem to understand that.

Our success doesn't mean we can let down our guard and put safety on a back burner. There are new, young Soldiers joining our ranks every day. These young men and women haven't been brought up to understand the importance and effectiveness of a safety sense. You have. Pass it on. Pay it forward. ◀



Everyone on the Same Page?

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 MATTHEW D. RUSSELL
159th Combat Aviation Brigade
Fort Campbell, Ky.

I was stationed at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., in the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade when I had an incident during a day training mission I'll never forget.

My unit had recently received our UH-60s back from reset and it was my first pilot in command flight after revalidating in the national airspace system. As PC, I would be conducting four hours of continuation training with two pilots — two hours day flight with one, and two hours of night vision goggles with the other. I had been properly briefed and approved for my single-ship mission and was performing a brief with my crew before heading out to the aircraft for preflight.

Before proceeding to the aircraft, I was informed that another aircraft conducting a readiness level progression flight wanted to integrate formation flight into their tasks. They asked if they could join with my aircraft to accomplish that task. We were once again briefed and approved for multiship and the requirements for the air

mission commander and set out to complete the mission. We then sat down as a flight and briefed the routes of flight (off the reservation) and contingencies. However, when it came to actions on eastbound Blue Route R-3005, we opted to fly the route as published. My aircraft would be Chalk 1 so the other aircraft, as Chalk 2, could conduct formation flight training. I thought nothing of it at the time and proceeded with my preflight and crew brief at the aircraft. Once the flight was up on radios, we confirmed our actions and set out to complete our training.

Everything went smoothly until reaching KP-26 just east of Red Route. KP-26 is almost a 90-degree left-hand bend in a dirt road with no identifiable terrain features. About a kilometer away

was another significant turn to the right. While most aviators do not fly the route precisely as published — meaning they would

ease around the turns rather than doing them aggressively — this day we flew the exact route.

I wasn't prepared when my pilot suddenly turned aggressively to the left, banking more than 45 degrees at 100 knots indicated airspeed. I looked out the green house and saw the belly of Chalk 2 less than two rotor disks away.

Chalk 2's pilot applied aft-left cyclic and I watched as the aircraft ballooned away from me. Due to the evasive maneuver by Chalk 2's pilot, the PC — sitting in the left seat — couldn't see anything of what had just happened. Chalk 2 then conducted a 360-degree turn, reacquired us and continued the flight. Fortunately, both aircraft and crews landed safely, having dodged a near miss, and were still around to gain some lessons learned.

Just as driving accidents often happen close to home, many aviation accidents occur while training in our own backyard. Continuation training has the potential to involve toxic levels of complacency. Every flight, we go out to the aircraft, perform a preflight and run down a crew brief. Aircrews tend to focus on who is flying together, what mission is being performed and if they're familiar with where they'll be flying. While all these factors

come into play, for something as routine as a continuation training flight, most assume nothing could possibly go wrong. Unfortunately, this complacency — and the assumptions that came with it — is what nearly did in my aircraft and Chalk 2.

My largest takeaway from this incident was not to take anything for granted. More accidents happen during routine missions than nonstandard ones. Ensure you are conducting detailed briefings, especially for flights in which personnel have not flown together. Stay alert to identify possible hazards — even on missions that seem routine. Consider their potential consequences and plan ahead so as not to be the next entry in the statistics column. Complacency doesn't always result in a lesson learned that you can later talk about. Sometimes it results in a catastrophe. «

LAST RIDE

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 PATRICK MAGILL
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It was early spring and the weather was just starting to warm up. My friend, Ronnie, and I decided it was a good day to go four wheeling, so we planned to meet later in the desert a few miles behind my house. Since Ronnie was bringing his girlfriend, I decided to invite someone too so I wouldn't be a third wheel. Although I wasn't acquainted with any of my neighbors, I went next door and asked a girl if she wanted to come with us. Surprisingly, she said she would love to go. Everything was set; I would pick her up and we would drive to our riding spot on my Yamaha Rhino side-by-side off-road vehicle.

Once at our riding spot, I began going up and down some steep hills. My neighbor loved it; she was having a blast. We were the only ones out there, so Ronnie and I took turns driving since neither of the girls had ever been on a Rhino. Ronnie didn't have that much driving experience on the Rhino, and when he made a sharp turn on a hill, I

got a little scared because these vehicles have a tendency to roll over. I thought about telling him to take it easy on the turns, but I didn't want to call him out in front of his girlfriend.

Ronnie continued to go up and down the hill and then flew right past me as he and his girlfriend laughed. When he tried to turn the Rhino again, it overturned and slammed

onto its side. The laughter was replaced with screams, and I heard Ronnie yelling my name.

I ran over to them as fast as I could and — surprisingly — lifted up the Rhino back onto its wheels by the roll bar. I then looked at Ronnie's girlfriend and saw that her arm was bleeding profusely. I started to panic. By this time, my neighbor had also reached the Rhino. She immediately grabbed Ronnie's girlfriend's arm and put pressure on her injury. She told me she was a nurse and that Ronnie's girlfriend had an arterial bleed. She said if we didn't get her to the hospital quickly, she would die.



I hopped into the Rhino and tried to start it, but it wouldn't crank. I then tried calling 911, but my cellphone didn't have any service. Fortunately, I was finally able to start the Rhino. With my neighbor still applying pressure to Ronnie's girlfriend's arm, we all got onto the Rhino and I drove us through the desert to the nearest hospital.

I came out on a newly constructed road that led me right to the hospital. Only about four minutes had passed by the time we reached the emergency entrance, and Ronnie's girlfriend was going into shock. We were all covered in blood as we kicked on the door, screaming for the hospital staff to let us into the emergency

room. Luckily, staff members recognized my neighbor and opened the door for us.

Ronnie's girlfriend was flown to the nearest Level I trauma

hospital, where doctors performed emergency surgery. She remained in intensive care for the next two days. At first, we were worried she may lose her arm; but that

fortunately wasn't the case. The doctors did tell us that if it wasn't for my neighbor's quick thinking, Ronnie's girlfriend might have bled out within two to three minutes.

This accident gave Ronnie and me a new perspective on life and just how fragile it can be. One moment we were all having fun and laughing; the next moment, one of us nearly lost her life. Before participating in any off-roading activities, make sure you have the proper training and personal protective equipment. Without it, your next ride could be your last.◀◀



ROV SAFETY RULES

1. Always fasten your seat belt, wear a helmet and other protective gear and keep all parts of your body inside the ROV.
2. Avoid paved surfaces. ROVs are designed to be operated off-highway.
3. Drive only in designated areas, at a safe speed, and use care when turning and crossing slopes.
4. Never drive or ride under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
5. Never drive an ROV unless you're 16 or older and have a valid driver's license. ROVs are not toys.
6. Never carry more passengers than the ROV is designed for, and never allow a passenger who is too small to sit in a passenger seat to ride in the ROV.
7. Read and follow the operator's manual and warning labels.

For additional information, visit <http://www.rohva.org/> or the USACR/Safety Center website at <https://safety.army.mil>.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Yamaha Rhino is a side-by-side recreational off-highway vehicle, or ROV. There are significant differences between ROVs and traditional four-wheeled all-terrain vehicles. Visit <https://safety.army.mil/povmotorcyclesafety> for more information.

The Whys and Hows of Accident Reporting

TRACEY RUSSELL
Ground Directorate
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

While serving as a first sergeant years ago, I was frustrated when an accident report submitted to the U.S. Army Safety Center was returned to me for additional information. Unfortunately, because the accident occurred off duty and my Soldier had been rendered unconscious, I couldn't provide any additional information.

What I now realize is even more unfortunate — I didn't understand why the Safety Center was "wasting my time" looking for the information when I had other "more important" issues to deal with in a company of more than 400 Soldiers. As a safety and occupational health specialist currently working at what is now the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center, I have a new perspective on accident reporting, a topic that was sadly missing from my educational experiences as a noncommissioned officer.

While I was very well versed in Army Regulation 600-20, Army Command Policy, and AR 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia, along with many other regulations and Department of the Army pamphlets relevant to my

position, I was ignorant of the fact that the 385 series of publications that cover Army safety even existed. I only submitted the previously mentioned accident report because my organization's civilian safety professional told me to, without educating me on the "hows" and "whys" of accident reporting. Because I didn't know the requirements to report accidents contained in AR 385-10, the Army Safety Program, and DA PAM 385-40, Army Accident Investigations and Reporting, I failed to report several accidents in accordance with those publications.

So what is an Army accident and why should you report it? An Army accident by definition is an unplanned event, or series of events, which results in one or more of the following:

- Occupational illness to Army military or civilian personnel
- Injury to on-duty Army civilian personnel
- Injury to Army military personnel (on or off duty)
- Damage to Army property
- Damage to public or private property and/or injury or illness to non-Army personnel caused by Army operations

The most important part of the previous question is the why. While Soldiers injuring themselves performing maintenance in the motor pool or playing sports or suffering a heat injury during a training exercise may seem like insignificant, isolated events, these individual incidents may be prevalent across the Army. By accurately reporting accidents in a

timely manner, you allow us to identify trends and take action to prevent future occurrences. Shared information regarding accidents has led to improved policies, procedures and equipment that protect the lives and limbs of our Soldiers.

While the actual number of accidents or injuries that really occurred is unknown due to failure to report or delays in reporting, in fiscal 2012 alone, more than 2,000 Soldiers were injured in accidents reported to the USACR/Safety Center. Some of those Soldiers are now permanently disabled, and 161 lost their lives — all to preventable accidents. Those 161 Soldiers are now gone from our formations forever and will never return home to their families and loved ones. There is nothing sadder than seeing a Soldier survive a deployment to a combat zone only to return home and be killed in an accident that could have been prevented.

When we add in the more than 4,000 members of our civilian workforce that were injured on the job and the equipment that was damaged or destroyed in these accidents, the cost to the Army is staggering. Lost lives, decreased mission readiness, millions of dollars worth of medical treatments, worker's compensation benefits and equipment costs vastly reduce our already diminishing resources. These are costs that we cannot and should not be willing to pay.

As the old adage goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The next time an accident occurs in your organization, take the time to investigate the circumstances and report it. Appropriate action can prevent a similar occurrence near and far. ◀

ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT CLASSES

Accident classes are used to determine the appropriate investigative and reporting procedures. Accident classes are as follows:

a. Class A accident. An Army accident in which the resulting total cost of property damage is \$2 million or more; an Army aircraft is destroyed, missing, or abandoned; or an injury and/or occupational illness results in a fatality or permanent total disability. Note that unmanned aircraft system (UAS) accidents are classified based on the cost to repair or replace the UAS. A destroyed, missing, or abandoned UAS will not constitute a Class A accident unless replacement or repair cost is \$2 million or more.

b. Class B accident. An Army accident in which the resulting total cost of property damage is \$500,000 or more but less than \$2 million, an injury and/or occupational illness results in permanent partial disability, or when three or more personnel are hospitalized as in-patients as the result of a single occurrence.

c. Class C accident. An Army accident in which the resulting total cost of property damage is \$50,000 or more but less than \$500,000, a nonfatal injury or occupational illness that causes one or more days away from work or training beyond the day or shift on which it occurred or disability at any time (that does not meet the definition of Class A or Class B and is a day(s) away from work case).

d. Class D accident. An Army accident in which the resulting total cost of property damage is \$2,000 or more but less than \$50,000, a nonfatal injury or illness resulting in restricted work, transfer to another job, medical treatment greater than first aid, needle stick injuries, and cuts from sharps that are contaminated from another person's blood or other potentially infectious material, medical removal under medical surveillance requirements of an OSHA standard, occupational hearing loss, or a work-related tuberculosis case.

e. Class E aviation accident. An Army accident in which the resulting total cost of property damage is less than \$2,000.

f. Class F aviation incident. Recordable incidents are confined to aircraft turbine engine damage because of unavoidable internal or external foreign object damage, where that is the only damage (does not include installed aircraft auxiliary power units). These incidents will be reported using DA Form 2397-AB (Abbreviated Aviation Accident Report); check "F" in the "Accident Classification" block.

For more information on accident investigation and reporting and the Army Safety Program, visit http://www.apd.army.mil/pdffiles/r385_10.pdf to review AR 385-10 or visit <https://safety.army.mil/accidentreporting/>.

SPEAK UP and LIVE

CAPT. DAVID DANIELS
Aviation Captain's Career Course
Fort Rucker, Ala.

I had a steep learning curve as a young Longbow pilot during my first deployment to Afghanistan. Like many young aviators, I assumed the experienced pilot on the controls knew exactly what he was doing and didn't need my input. But what I learned was a far more accurate truth. I found out through a couple of experiences that when you're in the aircraft, you've got a voice. And you'd better be ready to use it regardless of your hour level or experience.

During a large-scale night air assault, my aircraft and five others were parked in a forward arming and refueling point. After refueling, my pilot in command called to reposition to another area to set up for departure. He picked up our aircraft and began making a pedal turn, which caused me some concern since a Chinook was also repositioning at the same time, preparing to launch. My worry was that power and maneuvering restrictions would deny us the altitude needed to make the turn without contacting the pad, other aircraft or concrete rocket bunkers. Still, I was certain the experienced combat veteran in the back seat was more than capable of executing the turn.

Ninety degrees through the pedal turn, the Chinook's rotor wash hit us, causing us to either strike the ground or a rocket

bunker. At first, I thought we'd hit a bunker with the stabilator. We immediately landed the aircraft and the PC got out and inspected the Apache for damage. There was no damage to the aircraft; only our tail wheel had contacted the ground. When the PC got back in the aircraft, I told him I thought we might have been too low to execute the pedal turn under the conditions. He was adamant that if I had a concern I should have spoken up. He reminded me I was also a capable pilot and speaking up is vital to crew coordination. The lesson learned was no matter how many hours an individual in the cockpit may have, there's no harm in crosschecking, challenging and verifying what the aircraft or crewmember is doing.

About a month later, I was flying with another experienced PC on a night air assault mission. We

were making our approach to an obscure FARP when I noticed the PC's approach was slightly right of the FARP pads. From my previous experience, I learned it never hurts to ask. Using positive communication, I asked if he was aware he was on a vector to land to the right of the pads. He assured me he could see a chem light marking the pump and fire extinguisher.

At about 50 feet, I realized the chem light he was referring to was attached to the helmet of the refueler walking out to the pump. Advising the pilot to come left and that his visual references weren't accurate, we were able to correct our approach before getting too close to the ground. After landing on the pad, the PC confirmed his visual reference was off and acknowledged everyone is capable of making mistakes,

especially during nighttime combat operations.

As professional aviators, Army pilots should always communicate their concerns as effectively as possible in every situation. Piloting an aircraft is extremely taxing and requires a great deal of communication. There's a reason why there are two rated aviators in the cockpit from takeoff to landing. No matter how experienced or skilled pilots may be, they're still capable of making mistakes. The ability to communicate positively to validate what the aircraft and crew are doing is essential to safely accomplishing the mission. And, after all, when human lives and expensive aircraft are at stake, isn't maintaining the safest possible operating environment essential? «

Cruising to a

CRASH

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 RYAN LOFRANCO
160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment
Fort Campbell, Ky.

It had been a great day at the Atlanta Supercross. Three first-timers and I had driven five hours from Clarksville, Tenn., for the evening show and were determined to have as much fun as possible. We arrived early so we could spend plenty of time in the pits admiring the finely tuned machinery. Unfortunately, all good things must come to an end, and soon it was time for the long trip home. While we didn't know it at the time, the return trip would provide nearly as much excitement as the races.

We knew the trip home would take a while due to traffic leaving the stadium, so we prepped for driving shifts. The plan called for the pair up front to remain awake while the other two slept in the back. Two hours into the trip, the excitement of the race had worn off, and first team was ready for a shift change. We pulled into a gas station for some refreshments and I then jumped into the driver's seat while

the other sleeper rode shotgun. About an hour into our shift, we ran into a big thunderstorm that drastically reduced our speed. I continued driving at a slower pace, which further added time to our trip. My co-pilot started nodding off as we ran out of topics to discuss, so two hours after we had departed on this leg, I pulled over to swap out drivers. After more refreshments and a crew change, I

was asleep in the back in no time. When the rain finally subsided, the driver set the cruise control and relaxed a bit. Everything was going smoothly when the bottom dropped out of the clouds again. The vehicle hydroplaned momentarily when we drove through some standing water, so the driver decided to turn off the cruise control. Out of habit, he tapped the brakes to disengage, which put the car into

an uncontrolled spin though the median and down a grassy divide. Luckily, there was no concrete culvert, and the rain had made the grass slippery enough to slide on without the tires sinking into the ground and flipping the car. Additionally, our plan to rotate drivers allowed us to have alert personnel at the controls to respond to the situation properly. For us in the backseat, all we could do was

hold on and brace for an impact. Thankfully, the impact never came, and we came to rest in a lane that had no oncoming traffic. Shaken but uninjured, we drove to the next exit, where we poured out of the car to check for damage. Fortunately for us, the car sustained no damage, just an accumulation of wet grass and a covering of loamy wet soil. Needless to say, we were no longer drowsy, so we decided to carry

on and make the rest of the drive as a team to make it home safely. As we drove, we discussed our near miss. We determined that the driver should have manually disengaged the cruise control with the "cancel" switch/button the moment the rain started. As we found out, even tapping the brakes on a rain-slicked road can send you into a spin.◀

Furious Flames

RETIRED MASTER SGT. ALBERT BUTLER
Midway, Ga.

It was the end of a long Friday evening out with some friends. After a night of partying, my normal routine was to come home and cook something before hitting the sack. This night was no different, and after putting some food on the stove, I decided to lie down for a minute until it was done cooking.

The next thing I remember is waking up in a smoke-filled room to the sound of wailing sirens and someone banging on my door. As I stumbled to the door, I noticed a burning pot on the kitchen stove. Suddenly, a firefighter rushed through the door and quickly extinguished the flames.

How could I have forgotten I had food on the stove? And what happened to the smoke alarm? Well, the smoke alarm activated; however, because of the amount of alcohol I drank, I slept through it. Thankfully, a neighbor notified the fire department.

A majority of fatal home fires happen at night when people are asleep. Contrary to popular belief, the smell of smoke may not wake a sleeping person. In fact, the poisonous gases and smoke produced by a fire can numb the senses and put you into a deeper sleep.

Inexpensive household smoke alarms issue an audible signal, alerting you to a fire. The sound of the alarm gives you time

to escape and cuts your risk of dying in a home fire nearly in half. They save so many lives that most states have laws requiring them in private homes.

The National Fire Protection Association reports that almost two-thirds of home fire deaths from 2005-2009 resulted from fires in homes with either no or a nonworking smoke alarm.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, alcohol use and the resulting impairment may be the strongest independent factor for death from fire. One study found that intoxication contributed to an estimated 40 percent of deaths due to residential fires. By altering one's cognitive, physiological and motor functions, alcohol increases the chance of starting a serious fire while, at the same time, reduces the chance of survival from a fire or burn injury.

The best ending to a night of partying may be to ensure you have

something prepared that doesn't require cooking, or have food on hand that can be heated in a microwave. Personally, I'd rather wake up and nurse a hangover than a burn injury.

Smoke Alarm Safety

According to the NFPA, smoke alarms are an important part of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you an early warning so you can get outside quickly. Here are some tips from the NFPA that may just save your life:

- Install smoke alarms inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Larger homes may need additional smoke alarms to provide enough protection.
- For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms so when one sounds, they all sound.
- An ionization smoke alarm is generally

more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection, both types of alarms or combination ionization and photoelectric alarms (also known as dual-sensor alarms) are recommended.

- Smoke alarms should be installed away from the kitchen to prevent false alarms. Generally, they should be at least 10 feet from a cooking appliance.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.
- Smoke alarms should be tested at least once a month and batteries replaced at least once a year.

Visit the NFPA website at www.nfpa.org/education for more information on how to keep you and your loved ones protected against fires. ◀

The VALUE of a THOROUGH Crew BRIEF

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 ALLEN JONES
B Company, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment
Ohio National Guard
Columbus, Ohio

My crew and I were on a routine instrument flight rules training mission. Our flight profile was 80 knots indicated airspeed at roughly 300 feet, followed by a climb to 3,000 feet and accelerating to a planned airspeed of 120 KIAS. My co-pilot, Warrant Officer Jeff Davis, was flying the aircraft and monitoring the instruments.

I was backing up Jeff as we climbed when we suddenly heard a loud bang and felt our Black Hawk yaw to the right. We immediately got two master caution lights and the Number 1 GEN CAUTION light. At the time, I was a young pilot with 24 hours of pilot-in-command time and 450 hours total time. My first concern, even before I noticed the caution lights, was that we might lose control. I didn't know what caused the loud bang, but assumed that whatever caused it also caused the yaw.

Jeff announced the right yaw

was uncommanded and his master caution light was illuminated. I also announced that I had a master caution light and asked Jeff if he could maintain control of the aircraft. He answered, "Yes," and I told him to continue with the last clearance given. I briefly monitored my instruments to ensure Jeff was continuing to the assigned altitude and heading.

Once I was comfortable we weren't descending toward terrain or obstacles, I started concentrating inside the cockpit to diagnose the master caution lights. Ultimately, only the Number

1 GEN CAUTION light remained on, so we continued as directed by air traffic control. I went through the emergency procedure used for a Number 1 GEN CAUTION light and then backed myself up with the checklist. Once I determined the Number 1 generator had indeed failed, I called tower. I informed the air traffic controller that we had experienced a generator failure, but at this point it didn't seem to be affecting our aircraft.

I asked that they provide vectors for the ILS 23 (instrument landing system 23) approach back to the airport. They immediately

switched us to approach control for vectors back to the airport. We executed the approach successfully and landed safely.

As it turned out, the failure we experienced was relatively minor in the grand scheme of things. However, it was still a situation requiring emergency procedures to be performed according to the operator's manual. My co-pilot acted exactly how I expected him to and performed the necessary actions to ensure this remained a relatively uneventful failure.

I attribute the effectiveness of our actions in the cockpit to a very thorough crew briefing. During that briefing, I stated that in the event of an emergency under instrument meteorological conditions, the pilot on the controls would continue to fly the aircraft and maintain the last assigned heading and altitude

given by air traffic control. The pilot not on the controls would serve as a backup and diagnose the emergency at hand. Once the emergency was identified, we would perform the required emergency procedures, backing up our actions with the checklist.

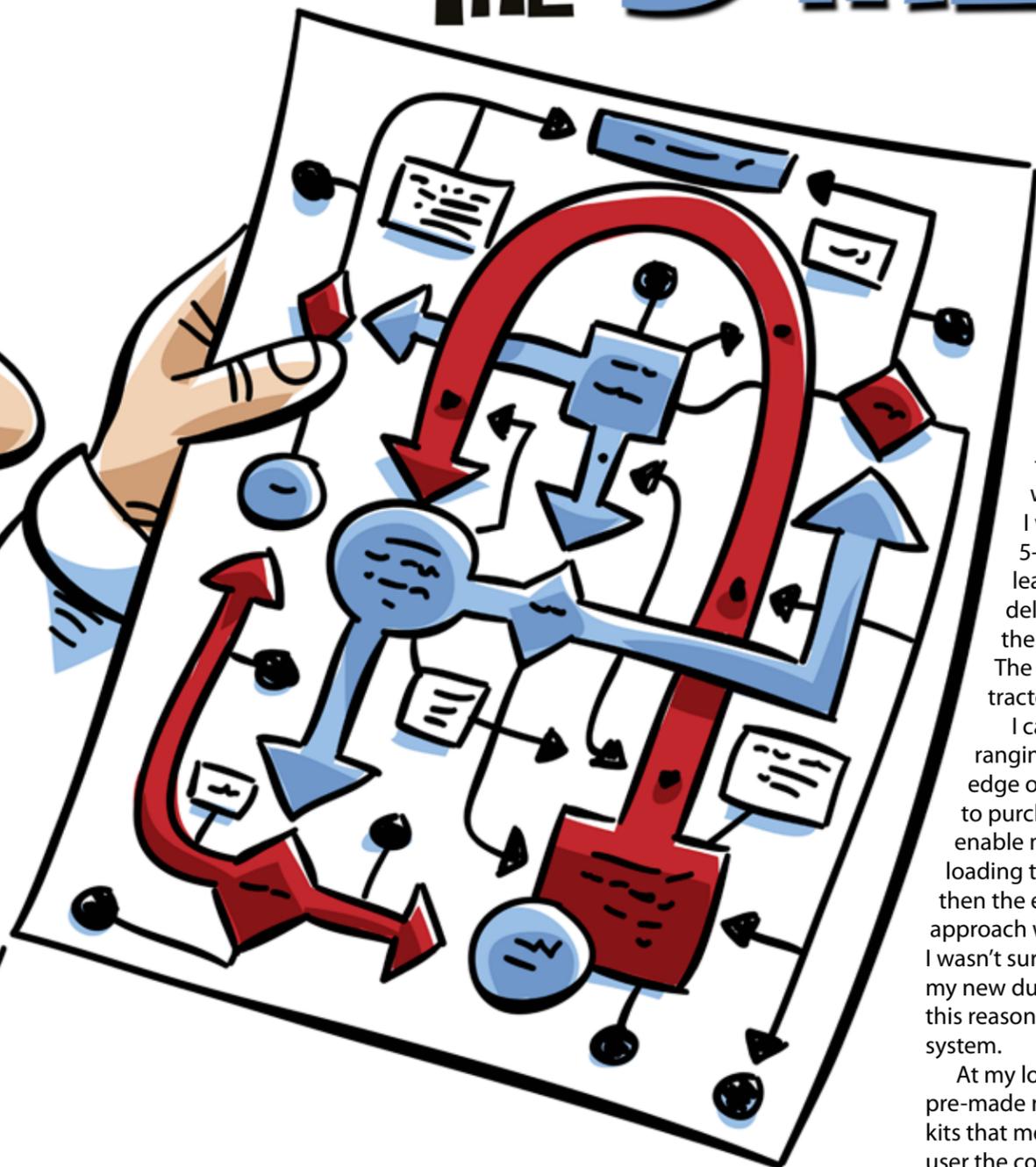
I credit our success as a crew to this simple but concise portion of the briefing. Had I not explained to Jeff what I expected from him,

and without him executing the actions as briefed, confusion would have reigned in the cockpit. And that's not good. A little confusion inside the aircraft can lead to a deadly collision with the ground. By staying calm and following our crew brief, we landed the aircraft safely, ensuring both it and we survived to fly another day.◀

“ I CREDIT our SUCCESS as a CREW to this simple but concise portion of the BRIEFING. Had I not EXPLAINED to Jeff what I expected from him, and without him EXECUTING the ACTIONS as BRIEFED, confusion would have reigned in the cockpit. ”

READ THE DIRECTIONS

LT. COL. WILLIAM S. WYNN
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.



On my last permanent change of station move from Atlanta to Fort Rucker, Ala., I faced a common sense versus monetary dilemma. We'd gone over our weight allowance for the move, so I decided to personally transport some items, including our 2006 John Deere LA115 lawn tractor, rather than pay an additional fee. However, this created a new problem — where was I going to put a 450-pound, 69-inch-long, 52-inch-wide tractor?

When we originally purchased the tractor, the store loaned me a trailer, which made transport easy. However, I was already carrying a golf cart on a 5- by 9-foot U-Haul trailer, which didn't leave any room for the tractor. After some deliberation, I figured it would just fit in the back of my Honda Ridgeline pickup. The trick, however, was how to get the tractor into the truck bed.

I came up with a few courses of action, ranging from backing the tailgate to the edge of a ditch so I could load the tractor, to purchasing or building ramps that would enable me to drive the tractor into the bed. If loading the tractor were the only requirement, then the easiest and most cost-effective approach would be the ditch method. However, I wasn't sure I would be able to find a location at my new duty assignment to unload the tractor. For this reason, I opted to load the tractor with a ramp system.

At my local hardware store, I found several pre-made ramp systems and build-it-yourself kits that met my requirements. Each offered the user the convenience of fast and safe equipment loading that could be completed by one person.

In the end, I elected to purchase a ramp that was a little more expensive than I would have preferred. However, it would easily reach the truck bed from the ground without creating an uncomfortable angle as well as carry the combined weight of the tractor and me.

I went home and read the included safety and operating instructions. By taking the time to do this, I learned there are several safety precautions and steps to take to prevent the ramp from falling off the bed or the tractor rolling off the ramp and toppling over onto the driver. I thought just using ramps would be safe enough. But I have to tell you that when I was in the middle of driving my tractor into the truck bed — about four feet in the air, halfway from the ground to the truck bed — I was glad I took the time to read the directions and follow the instructions.

In the end, after a minor personal expense, I safely loaded, transported and unloaded the tractor from the bed of my truck and kept our freight weight on the moving truck down to the prescribed limit. Most of all, I gained a new appreciation for taking the time to use the right tools for the job.◀

Editor's note: Information published in the accident briefs section is based on preliminary loss reports submitted by units and is subject to change. For more information on selected accident briefs, email usarmy.rucker.hqda-secarmy.list.safe-knowledge@mail.mil.

AVIATION



CLASS C

The crew contacted tower on their third landing attempt in dust conditions. The forward main rotor blades struck a mounted MK19 40 mm launcher system, resulting in ignition of some of the cartridges. The aircraft and tower sustained explosion damage.

CLASS B

The aircraft's landing gear contacted a berm during approach in brownout conditions to an unimproved landing zone. As a result, the gear partially separated from the aircraft and damaged the left-rear part of the fuselage.

FIXED-WING



CLASS A

The aircraft struck a deer while taxiing after landing, causing damage to the left propeller.

UAS



CLASS A

The system experienced an engine failure during a manual transfer of fuel operation. The

engine could not be restarted and the system crashed and was destroyed.



CLASS C

The system was launched with the arresting gear hook in the down position, which then caught the runway arresting cable during takeoff. After an emergency shutdown, the air vehicle exited the runway upon landing and was damaged.



CLASS A

The crew experienced an engine RPM/temperature spike during flight and again during return for landing. During emergency landing, the system experienced an engine failure and crashed on the forward operating base.

CLASS C

The contract crew experienced generator and ignition FAIL warnings during approach to land. The system crashed off base, but was recovered with damage.



CLASS C

The UAS struck a persistent



threat detection system tether wire during flight training and was destroyed.

GROUND

Explosive/Fire

CLASS A

A Soldier was killed and two others injured from an explosion in an ammo holding area. The Soldiers were moving ammo when the incident occurred.



Personnel Injury

CLASS B

A Soldier severed two fingers while handling a fire axe in his unit's maintenance area.

ATV

CLASS A

A Soldier died when the GOV ATV he was operating overturned. He was participating in ATV mobility training and driving up an incline when the ATV flipped.

DRIVING

PMV-4

A Soldier was fatally injured when the float he was riding during a parade was struck by a train at a railroad crossing.

A Soldier suffered a permanent total disability injury when he was struck by a vehicle while loading his boat onto a trailer. Both of the Soldier's legs were surgically amputated below the knee.

A Soldier was killed when his vehicle was struck by a train as he attempted to drive through a railroad crossing while the warning arms were lowered.

A Soldier died when he fell out of the back of a pickup and was struck by another vehicle.

A Soldier suffered a permanent total disability and three others were injured when their vehicle entered a median and overturned multiple times.

PMV-2

CLASS A

A Soldier died when the motorcycle he was operating struck the rear end of a vehicle that entered his path. The Soldier, who had borrowed the motorcycle from another Soldier, was thrown into oncoming traffic and struck by an approaching vehicle.

A Soldier died when he was thrown from his motorcycle after striking and killing a pedestrian who was crossing an intersection.

A Soldier died after he lost control of his motorcycle and was thrown to the ground, striking a vehicle parked on the roadside. The Soldier was wearing a helmet.

A Soldier was killed when his motorcycle was struck by a vehicle that entered his path



in a left-hand turn. The Soldier was reportedly not wearing any personal protective equipment.

A Soldier died of injuries he suffered when his motorcycle was cut off and struck by an RV that entered his lane during a turn. The Soldier was wearing PPE and had recently completed the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's Experienced RiderCourse.

A Soldier died when he overcorrected his motorcycle and struck a guardrail.

The signs are all around.

It's up to **YOU** to recognize and act on them.

Training, Discipline and Standards

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formation. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.

KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT

know the

signs

DO WHAT'S RIGHT



U.S. ARMY
ARMY STRONG



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER
<https://safety.army.mil>