



June 29, 2015

Senior Leaders,

A series of recent private motor vehicle (PMV) mishaps resulting in Soldier fatalities greatly concerns me. Up until about two weeks ago, the Army was on a record pace to reduce Soldier deaths due to PMV mishaps. Most notably, we had nearly half the number of motorcycle fatalities this year compared to last year. It's clear to me that your emphasis on PMV safety and engagement with Soldiers makes all the difference.

Even though we did very well early on this year in reducing total mishaps, what is most concerning is that over half of our 45 off-duty PMV mishaps involving fatalities also included some form of indiscipline. The two most deadly factors are speeding and failure to wear a seatbelt. Over the last few weeks, we lost nine Soldiers to off-duty driving mishaps. Of these recent nine fatalities, six involved indiscipline. Five of the nine were behind the wheel of a PMV-4 (car, truck, or SUV). Indiscipline was a factor in four of those mishaps; two involved excessive speed, one Soldier was not wearing a seatbelt and was partially ejected, and one failed to obey posted warning signs. The remaining four mishaps occurred while Soldiers were riding a motorcycle. Of the four, two were due to indiscipline - alcohol and not wearing a helmet.

As we enter the peak of the summer, you know the risk of motor vehicle mishaps increases as Soldiers enjoy time outdoors and spend more time on the road. I'm asking you to double down on your efforts to engage our Soldiers on the importance of driving and operating their PMVs in a safe and responsible manner. We can stem the tide on this increase with direct leader engagement and by reminding our Soldiers of the life shattering consequences of being involved in a PMV accident. Encourage your Leaders and Soldiers to take advantage of every opportunity to spend time with Family and friends this summer, but I ask you to reinforce the message that proper behavior, discipline, and risk management extends to their off-duty time. Our Army depends on them to return safely and ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

Army Safe is Army Strong.

Raymond T. Odierno
General, 38th Chief of Staff
United States Army

The Strength of our Nation is our Army
The Strength of our Army is our Soldiers
The Strength of our Soldiers is our Families
This is what makes us "Army Strong"

