



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

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Resource document

Tactical Deployment safety

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Narrative:

For nearly 12 years, Soldiers and civilians have deployed in support of Overseas Contingency Operations. As units ramp up for deployment, sustain operations and then redeploy, there's an increased potential for accidents to happen.

Historically, during conflict, individuals frequently abandoned safety in an effort to establish "combat posture." Unfortunately, abandoning safety often sacrificed combat power, making the Army its own worst enemy by needlessly injuring personnel and damaging equipment.

It's imperative that leaders and Soldiers at all levels understand that doing things safety is a combat multiplier.

Key Messages:

- Deployment operations encompass a myriad of moving pieces and parts, literally. From personnel, equipment and supplies, when a unit deploys, it's a massive logistical effort and it's important that Soldiers don't abandon safety while completing their missions.
- In the fight against accidental fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.
- Safety is about protecting Soldiers, equipment and Army resources, whether in garrison or on the battlefield. Leaders and Soldiers alike must understand that doing things safely is a combat multiplier.

Talking points:

- Leaders must facilitate training and integrate risk management into all phases of operations to mitigate hazards. Risk management is one of the most powerful tools a command can use to achieve mission success.

- Safety is such a constant part of a Soldier's life they sometimes get complacent. Leaders need to engage their Soldiers and talk about the decisions they make and why they make them.
- Soldiers need to take personal responsibility for their actions and be held accountable before an accident occurs.

Tips:

The USACR/Safety Center has a reference guide designed to assist safety professionals in advising their commands in preparing and maintaining accident prevention programs before, during and after a deployment. The Deployment Guide for Brigade Combat Team Safety Professionals is a compilation of resources, existing tools, lessons learned, tactics, techniques and procedures and other useful information from Army safety professionals. While developed for BCT safety professionals, the deployment guide is available for use by anyone.

Below are excerpts from The Deployment Guide for BCT Professionals. To view the guide in its entirety, visit <https://safety.army.mil/deploymentguide> (AKO log in required).

**Note – Information from the deployment guide does not supersede existing regulations or policies, nor does it negate the need for personnel to be properly trained and knowledgeable of regulatory and safety standards.*

Pre-deployment:

Key components of a successful operation are prior planning and training.

- Before deploying, safety professionals should take some refresher courses, and put together checklists, standard operating procedures/guidance, posters and contact lists. Prior planning will set the stage for a successful and safe deployment.
- Although not limited to, safety professionals need to consider taking refresher training in key areas such as fire prevention, electrical safety, weapons handling/range safety, ammunition and explosives handling and storage, construction safety, field sanitation and traffic safety.
- Individuals should find out as much as possible about the environmental and cultural hazards for the deployment area. A good way to accomplish this is to contact the current BCTSP for the area.
- Safety professionals can assist their units in conducting pre-deployment training. This training should include topics such as driver/crew training, deployment area critters, hot and cold weather injury prevention, food and water consumption, fatigue, radiation safety and laser injury prevention.

Rail, port and cargo:

From personnel, equipment and supplies, when a unit deploys, it's a massive logistical effort.

- Safety professionals need to ensure all equipment operators are properly licensed. Both operators and ground guides must know standard ground guiding procedures.
- Personnel should avoid placing themselves between objects where they can become pinned or get pinched. Safety professionals should instruct Soldiers to never drive or walk under suspended loads and under or between rail cars.
- Soldier should always be equipped with personal protective equipment that's appropriate for any rail, port or cargo-loading mission. At a minimum this includes reflective vest, helmet/hard hat, hearing protection and gloves.

During deployment:

One of the first things a safety professional should do upon arrival to an operating base is introduce him/herself to the forward operating base mayor and the project manager for the contract that provides support throughout the FOB. Knowing these key individuals will pay huge dividends should any problems surface.

- BCT safety professionals should perform safety inspections around the FOB and combat outposts within the unit's area of responsibility. Locations such as living areas, latrine and shower facilities, burn pits, construction sites and indoor/outdoor PT and sports areas should be inspected routinely.
- Using ground guides is a good way to ensure vehicles are not traveling too fast for high-risk or heavily populated areas. Ground guides also assist operators in identifying potential ground hazards, obstacles and personnel that they may not see.
- Historically, operating or riding in a military vehicle is the leading cause of on-duty serious injuries. The USACR/Safety Center's Driver's Training Toolbox provides tools and information to aid in establishing and maintaining an effective driver's training program. This tool is an all-encompassing access point for regulations, training support packages, SOPs and more designed to enhance any driver's training program.
- Topping the list of weapons safety issues are negligent discharges. These mishaps are often the result of inadequate training, overconfidence complacency and indiscipline. The USACR/Safety Range & Weapons Safety Toolbox is a collection of resources that units can use to establish and maintain an effective range and weapons safety-training program.
- Most ammunition and explosives accidents are preventable. Failure to follow proper handling procedure and Soldiers not wearing the proper PPE are common mistakes. The USACR/Safety Center's explosive safety webpage contains publications, posters, videos, bulletins and related links pertaining to ammunition and explosive safety.
- Lasers systems are a part of a Soldier's life on the battlefield and in training. Proper education is essential to Soldiers understanding the hazards of misusing these tools.
- Accident reporting – timely and accurate accident reporting is critical any time a mishap occurs.

Re-deployment:

In previous year's, Army accidents typically spiked 60-90 days before and after re-deployment. This is no longer the case however; leaders, Soldiers, safety professionals and family members shouldn't let their guard down.

- Leaders must remain engaged with their Soldiers and battle buddies need to continue to look out for each other at home station.
- Safety professionals can coordinate with the rear-detachment to set up a re-deployment workshop prior to the unit's return. Topics to consider include off-duty safety, private motor vehicles including motorcycles, privately owned weapons safety and more.

Historical Reference:

<https://safety.army.mil/>

<https://safety.army.mil/deploymentguide> (AKO log in required)

http://www.apd.army.mil/pdf/r385_10.pdf

http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_a/pdf/fm3_35.pdf

<https://safety.army.mil/groundsafety/SAFETYPROGRAMS/TacticalSafety/tabid/655/Default.aspx>

<https://safety.army.mil/drivertrainingtoolbox/>

<https://safety.army.mil/rangeweaponssafety/>