



Take 5

For Safety



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER

4905 5th Ave. Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363
Comm. (334) 255-3770 Fax (334) 255-2266
<https://safety.army.mil>

PMCS for mission success

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 MARC ASSUMPCAO
Ground Task Force
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

A properly maintained and safely operated Army combat vehicle or Army motor vehicle can be considered the Army's first line of defense. Getting to the fight with all necessary equipment is critical; if Soldiers don't have a way to travel, the unit is less capable of achieving its mission and forces on the front line are put at greater risk. Cold weather adds another layer of complexity to already challenging conditions for vehicle crews – especially in theater – and it's vital that Leaders and Soldiers focus on preventive maintenance checks and services to keep their equipment fully mission capable and safe on the road.

First-line supervisors are key in establishing effective PMCS programs and ensuring their Soldiers drive in accordance with published standards. Attention to detail is important for both Leaders and Soldiers throughout the year, but driving in wintry conditions can be particularly dangerous. Following safe driving practices and using safe equipment can help prevent accidents and save lives, so be prepared to beat the cold!

Tips for maintaining and driving ACVs and AMVs during winter include:

- Perform PMCS before, during and after vehicle operations.
- Stay alert. Other drivers may fail to use their headlights, reduce their speed or adhere to other appropriate rules of the road.
- Take it slow! You'll need additional time and stopping distance on icy roads. The recommended following distance on ice-covered surfaces is at least three times greater than the usual interval between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you.
- Apply your brakes early to allow enough time for stopping. If your vehicle is equipped with antilock brakes, simply press the pedal down and hold it. In vehicles without antilock brakes, gently pump the pedal to bring the vehicle to a stop without skidding.
- Check road conditions along the entire route and know the difference between conditions. Vehicle operations might start out as GREEN or AMBER but be RED further along.

- Keep headlights clear. Brush snow off all headlights and taillights, and use low beams so the vehicle is more visible to other drivers.
- Check tires and chains, and ensure your crews are trained to properly install snow tires. Inspect tires regularly, checking tread depth and tire pressure.
- Ensure windshield wipers are serviceable and the rubber lip is not torn.
- Check the windshield washer fluid reservoir regularly and refill as necessary. Debris from winter roads can be especially grimy.
- Ensure the vehicle battery is fully charged and in good condition.

For more information on PMCS and other vehicle-related topics, visit <https://safety.army.mil/drivertrainingtoolbox/>.

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