ARMY GROUND RISK-MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Countermeasure

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Severe Weather

Countermeasure
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CONTENTS

features

U.S. ARMY SAFETY CENTER

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DASAF'S CORNER
From the Director of Army Safety

Think Outside the Slot—Expand Our Peripheral Vision

The common perception I hear as I travel around the Army is that risk management isn't "sexy." Junior leaders—the people who really make the difference—often see risk management as a hindrance rather than a combat multiplier. To these leaders risk management exists only in the Army and is just one more layer of bureaucracy to overcome.

This misconception could not be further from the truth. Risk management is a major growth industry worldwide. As industry leaders realize the benefits a safe work environment can have on morale and productivity, people who specialize in risk mitigation have become in high demand. In fact, the Army's 5-Step Risk Management Model has been implemented by many organizations. One of those organizations is the Hanauma Bay, HI, Ocean Safety and Rescue Team.

Hanauma Bay is one of the world's most spectacular vacation locations and sits at the southern end of Oahu, 30 minutes from downtown Honolulu. The bay is a mecca for tourists and hosts thousands each day from around the globe. The snorkeling in the bay is second to none; however, for many swimmers it is their first experience with a powerful ocean tide, and that presents significant hazards. Those hazards became painfully obvious during 2002 when 12 swimmers drowned in the bay. This sparked a wave of public and political pressure for drastic changes.

DASAF'S CORNER
From the Director of Army Safety

Hanauma Bay's Ocean Safety and Rescue Team's answer was to implement the Army's risk management process.

With support from U.S. Army Pacific Command safety professionals, the team began taking a hard look at the hazards. Identifying the hazards proved easy, but the assessment process was harder. The team painstakingly researched the accidents, looking at a host of factors including age, sex, swimming experience, and medical pre-conditions. However, none of these provided any consistent trends. The drownings almost always occurred in chest-deep water, but were evenly distributed throughout the bay. The breakthrough came when the team went beyond analyzing the accidents and started looking at the near misses. As they looked at the locations where swimmers were rescued from drowning, they saw a pattern. The "slot"—a snorkeling area with a strong undertow—had the greatest number of rescues, but no fatalities. The team members had highlighted the slot as their highest risk area and were doing several things to protect swimmers there. However, because the lifeguards were so fixated on watching swimmers in the slot, they were missing distressed swimmers in other areas of the bay.

By analyzing the near-miss data, the team realized it had a model for success that could be learned from and built upon. The team presented its data on fatalities and near misses to public officials. As a result, the team gained funding for an additional guard tower to focus on the dangerous areas east of the slot. Additional control measures included a safety briefing for all swimmers on the bay's danger spots, and better communication between lifeguards and rescue crews. Lastly, a supervisor was hired to implement the controls and supervise the bay's safety team.

The changes in the Hanauma Bay safety program produced immediate results. During 2003 there were two fatalities, a huge drop from the previous year's 12. The team attributed its success to the Army's risk management program. As it turns out, risk management *is* pretty sexy when it saves lives—and not just at Hanauma Bay.

Hanauma Bay's safety team was taking

care of the slot, their area of highest risk, but not paying attention to lower risk areas. I believe many units approach risk management the same way. Let's use convoy operations as an example.

In the large convoys I saw in Operation Iraqi Freedom, risks were identified in detail and control measures were implemented according to Field Manual 55-30. There were multiple briefings and rehearsals, and leaders were always present. However, what about those four-vehicle convoys traveling short distances? What level of detail is given to identifying their risks and developing appropriate control measures? What level of leadership leads the convoy? What level of leadership approves the plan? Does the leader approve the plan in person after being back-briefed and reviewing the contingency plans, or is the plan approved over the radio because it is a "simple" mission? Do the Soldiers even receive a safety briefing?

Fortunately, we are not losing many Soldiers to accidents in large convoys. We have identified those convoys as high risk and are successfully preventing accidents. However, we are losing Soldiers in small convoys on simple missions. Great leaders pay attention to their near misses and identify all risks—not just the highest ones—and implement control measures for all missions.

As an Army, we must begin looking hard at our near misses if we are to get our arms around all risk sources. In military schools we are taught to "prepare for the next war, not the last one." Studying near misses allows us to identify and prevent accidents *before* they occur. Look closely at your formations and other units like yours for near misses. Share your near-miss stories with our readers by sending them to joey@safetycenter.army.mil so we can all learn from them. If it saves just one life, it will be some of the most valuable five minutes you ever spent.

Thank you for what you do every day to keep our Soldiers safe.

Keep your leader lights on!

Joe Smith

BG Joseph A. Smith

Zapped and Zinged

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Managing Editor

It was late afternoon and except for the other guys like me who were on 24-hour duty, the HAWK missile site was deserted. The skies had been overcast all day (no surprise for Germany), and it had rained during evening chow. I had finished dinner and was relaxing in my bunk when my buddy, SP4 Terry VanVleck, came in and grabbed me.

"Bob, you've got to see this!"

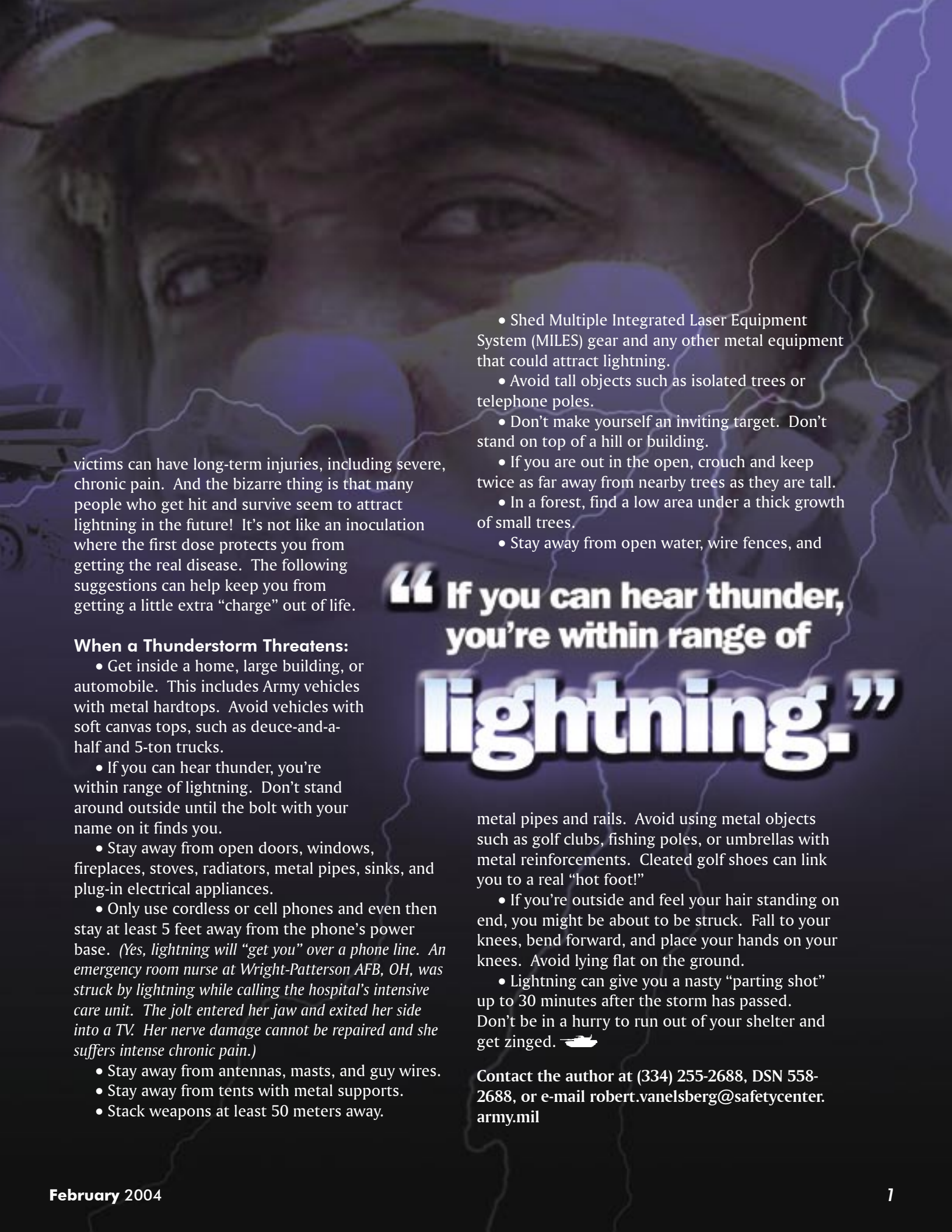
I wasn't anxious to go out into the cold, still-drizzly weather, but Terry wouldn't have bugged me unless it was something important. Reluctantly, I got my boots back on and followed him out the door. We trudged across the site and then up the berm where we had our continuous wave acquisition radar (CWAR). Terry, who was a maintainer for the system, opened an access panel on the side of the radar. I looked inside—it was toast! Shaking his head, Terry looked at me and said, "It took a lightning hit during dinner."

I thought, "Whew, I'm glad I wasn't out here doing system checks when this happened!" I also decided right then and there that I was going to pay a lot more attention to the weather when I was outside working with the radars.

Fortunately, the Army's only loss that afternoon was a radar—not a Soldier. But do Soldiers get nailed by lightning while working? You betcha! During the last two fiscal years 10 Soldiers have been struck by lightning. Let's take a brief look at their experiences:

- Lightning struck some trees near where eight Soldiers were underneath a tarp trying to get out of the rain. The lightning traveled across the ground, injuring all eight Soldiers and causing three to be hospitalized.
- Two Soldiers were returning from safety duties on a drop zone when they saw the truck assigned to pick up the deployment bags stuck in the mud. The Soldiers went to get a POV to pull the truck out of the mud. One Soldier was struck by lightning as he walked across the tarmac. He stopped breathing and his heart stopped beating. An Army civilian revived him, but the Soldier had to be hospitalized for six days.
- An operational detachment was firing as storm clouds and light rain moved into the range area. The detachment had stopped firing to set up another target scenario. The detachment's chain of command halted the training because of lightning moving into the area. The detachment requested a cold time from range control to wait out the storm, and then advised they would not be monitoring their radios during the bad weather. As they were breaking down their radios lightning struck nearby, hitting a Soldier in the head. The Soldier was dazed but coherent and recognized what had happened. He was taken to the post hospital and kept overnight.

While all of these Soldiers survived, lightning



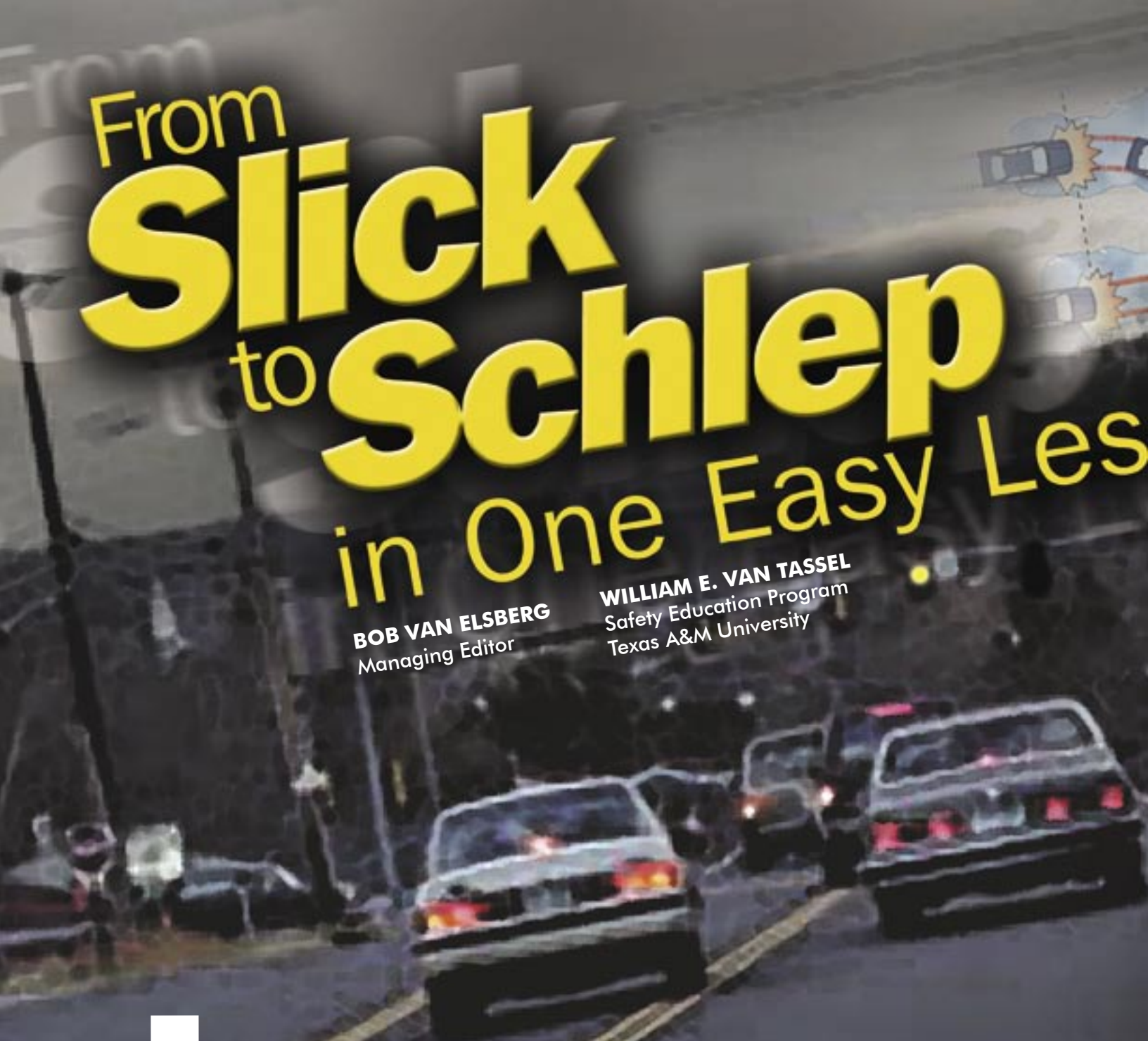
victims can have long-term injuries, including severe, chronic pain. And the bizarre thing is that many people who get hit and survive seem to attract lightning in the future! It's not like an inoculation where the first dose protects you from getting the real disease. The following suggestions can help keep you from getting a little extra "charge" out of life.

When a Thunderstorm Threatens:

- Get inside a home, large building, or automobile. This includes Army vehicles with metal hardtops. Avoid vehicles with soft canvas tops, such as deuce-and-a-half and 5-ton trucks.
- If you can hear thunder, you're within range of lightning. Don't stand around outside until the bolt with your name on it finds you.
- Stay away from open doors, windows, fireplaces, stoves, radiators, metal pipes, sinks, and plug-in electrical appliances.
- Only use cordless or cell phones and even then stay at least 5 feet away from the phone's power base. *(Yes, lightning will "get you" over a phone line. An emergency room nurse at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, was struck by lightning while calling the hospital's intensive care unit. The jolt entered her jaw and exited her side into a TV. Her nerve damage cannot be repaired and she suffers intense chronic pain.)*
- Stay away from antennas, masts, and guy wires.
- Stay away from tents with metal supports.
- Stack weapons at least 50 meters away.
- Shed Multiple Integrated Laser Equipment System (MILES) gear and any other metal equipment that could attract lightning.
- Avoid tall objects such as isolated trees or telephone poles.
- Don't make yourself an inviting target. Don't stand on top of a hill or building.
- If you are out in the open, crouch and keep twice as far away from nearby trees as they are tall.
- In a forest, find a low area under a thick growth of small trees.
- Stay away from open water, wire fences, and metal pipes and rails. Avoid using metal objects such as golf clubs, fishing poles, or umbrellas with metal reinforcements. Cleated golf shoes can link you to a real "hot foot!"
- If you're outside and feel your hair standing on end, you might be about to be struck. Fall to your knees, bend forward, and place your hands on your knees. Avoid lying flat on the ground.
- Lightning can give you a nasty "parting shot" up to 30 minutes after the storm has passed. Don't be in a hurry to run out of your shelter and get zinged.

"If you can hear thunder, you're within range of lightning."

Contact the author at (334) 255-2688, DSN 558-2688, or e-mail robert.vanelsberg@safetycenter.army.mil



From Slick to Schlep in One Easy Les

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Managing Editor

WILLIAM E. VAN TASSEL
Safety Education Program
Texas A&M University

It was raining lightly as I headed home for lunch in my compact pickup. My truck drove like a sports car and I just knew I could handle any situation on the road. After all, I was a slick driver—an "ace of the asphalt," a "prince of the pavement," a "boy with a toy." Actually, I was about to be in deep "doo-doo."

As I drove down the road I checked out the stoplight at the intersection ahead. This was one of those "l-o-n-g" lights. You know—the kind where you can leisurely tune through the entire AM and FM bands. I did not want to be that delayed.

I was going 45 mph downhill and figured I could just make it through the intersection—maybe on a yellow—before the light turned red. I might have made it too, except a more cautious driver stopped in front of me. No sweat. That's why my truck had wide tires and power-assisted brakes.

I stomped on the brake and the truck suddenly attempted to "swap ends!" Funny how driving gains a whole new perspective when you're traveling sideways in the fast lane. I got off the brakes and steered out of the slide. Stopping a hair's breadth from the car, I wondered if the driver had watched all this in his rearview mirror or had been blissfully ignorant of my antics. I sat there with my fingers trembling on the wheel. I'd gone from slick to schlep in just one "easy" lesson. ("*Schlep*"—Yiddish for "one who moves awkwardly." I fit that description!)

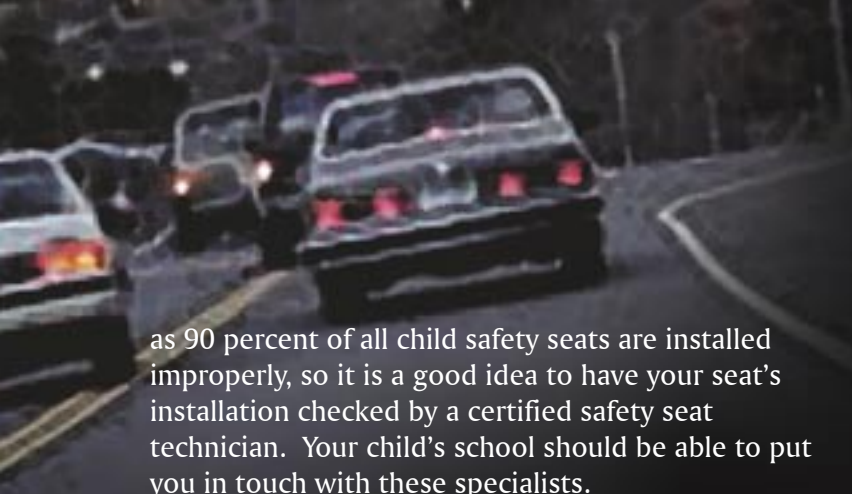
There is a lot to learning how to "navigate" a rain-slicked road safely. Mr. William E. Van Tassel, a 20-year veteran of competitive racing and a POV safety instructor for the Army Safety Center, offers the following tips:

• If your vehicle has an anti-lock brake system (ABS), test it to become familiar with how it works. This system was designed to help you steer during emergency braking conditions, but you need to understand the system's unique characteristics. For instance, the brake pedal typically pulsates and some systems also make strange noises. While these are normal, they often cause drivers to think something is wrong and let off the brakes. To use ABS properly, you should keep firm pressure on the pedal until your vehicle either stops or you steer clear of the problem.

• Before you get into an emergency situation, go out to a safe location (a large empty parking lot, for example) on a rainy day and hit the brakes *hard* until the ABS engages. Get used to the way it works and feels so you won't be caught off guard in an emergency situation. You can tell if your vehicle has ABS by watching the dash lights. All ABS-equipped vehicles have an ABS light that illuminates briefly as the vehicle is started.

• Tires are vital to your safety. Whether or not you can steer, brake, or accelerate effectively depends on your tires performing properly. First, ensure your tires have enough tread. If you stick a penny into your tread and can see Lincoln's head, you need to replace your tires. Having adequate tire tread will help divert water from under the tires in rainy conditions, and will also enhance traction in snowy and icy conditions. Next, check the air pressure of each tire to make sure it is inflated to the recommended pressure. The maximum pressure, shown on the tire's sidewall, and the vehicle manufacturer's recommended tire pressure, normally shown on a decal inside the driver's door frame, don't always match. The vehicle manufacturer's recommended pressures are based on what will provide optimum handling and comfort when driving. Checking the pressures at least monthly is one of the most important things you can do to protect your family. Easy-to-use tire pressure gauges can be purchased for as little as $1.

• Use occupant protection. The simplest and most effective method to reduce injuries during a crash is to be properly restrained, so make it a habit. For adults, this means using the vehicle's seatbelts. For children, this means using the appropriate child safety seat. As many



as 90 percent of all child safety seats are installed improperly, so it is a good idea to have your seat's installation checked by a certified safety seat technician. Your child's school should be able to put you in touch with these specialists.

• Brake early and smoothly. In slick conditions, effectively slowing a vehicle becomes more challenging. During braking, your vehicle's weight transfers toward the front, reducing the weight over the rear tires and increasing the probability of skidding. Instead of moving your entire leg when pushing on the brake pedal, lock your heel into the floor and use your ankle as the pivot point. Place the ball of your foot on the pedal and gently apply pressure on the brake as if you were squeezing the water out of a sponge. If you still go into a rear-wheel skid, take these steps:

– Keep your eyes on target! Make sure you *continue* to look in the direction you want to go. Your hands and feet will automatically do what's necessary to steer the car in that direction.

– Gently ease up on the brakes. This transfers weight back toward the rear where it is needed.

– Don't automatically hit the brakes. Many people make the mistake of "going for the brake" in every emergency. If you're skidding, braking harder will only make things worse.

– Avoid distractions. When the weather turns bad, turn your radio down or off, and turn off your cell phone's ringer. Take a deep breath, relax your hands on the steering wheel, and focus on maintaining control and avoiding more careless drivers.

Contact Mr. Van Elsberg at (334) 255-2688, DSN 558-2688, or e-mail robert.vanelsberg@safetycenter.army.mil; contact Mr. Van Tassel at (979) 845-8832, or e-mail wvantassel@hlkn.tamu.edu

A Wild Truck Ride!

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About five years ago, I was a motor transport operator in a medium truck company. Wearing your seatbelt wasn't an option—it was standard operating procedure. We were convoying from our home station to Fort Polk, LA, for a rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center. It was a long drive—two days, in fact—with a lot of rest stops and slow-moving traffic. Driving 30 or more M915 semi-trucks down the interstate can be a tedious journey, one that tends to dull your senses as well as your situational awareness.

After we got off the interstate we traveled down a two-lane country road, where the vehicles spread out and got separated. Several civilian vehicles became intermixed in the convoy. I was driving the second-to-last truck, with the last truck following about 500 meters behind me. As we struggled to catch up with the convoy, I remember driving by a side street where a car was waiting to turn into our lane. It looked like the driver was going to turn in front of my truck, but decided at the last minute to wait. I passed this vehicle without any problems, but the truck behind me wasn't so lucky—the car pulled out right in front of it. The truck was running bobtail (no trailer), which made it almost impossible to stop the truck quickly. The Soldier slammed onto his brakes to avoid a collision, but lost control. The truck swerved and skidded, went into a ditch on the side of the road, and then flipped onto its roof.

It was a violent accident, but the Soldier received only a few bruises and a hurt ego. His seatbelt worked properly and kept a bad accident from possibly being a disastrous one. The truck was a total loss. However, because the Soldier took the extra few seconds to put on his seatbelt, the Army lost only a truck—something that can be replaced.

Take the time to protect yourself and your passengers when you're driving a tactical vehicle or POV by making sure everyone is buckled up. The Army can buy a replacement truck, but it can't buy a replacement "you." And your Army and your family need you!

Contact the author via e-mail at anthony-pankuch@us.army.mil

Can Concertina Wire Really Destroy a HMMWV?

Anonymous

There is nothing like being deployed to a theater of war to experience all the "normal" things war can bring: rain, cold, dust, wind, storms, and the occasional enemy troop. One thing most of us probably wouldn't think about is concertina wire—that pesky, really sharp stuff used to section off critical areas. One of the worst places to encounter it is on a narrow road where vehicles, pedestrians, flying dust, and high winds make for an already precarious situation.

On one particular mission, I was driving a HMMWV on a main road when I came to a highly congested area. The dust was blowing, there were Soldiers waiting to go to sick call at a local hospital, and several vehicles were waiting to pass a detail putting concertina wire around a perimeter. I had to wait with everyone else for my turn to pass.

Once the area was clear I drove through the bottleneck, but failed to notice a huge strand of concertina wire in my path. I knew I had driven over something, but I just kept going. After all, a HMMWV can run over *anything* and not be fazed, right?

It wasn't long before I heard a metallic sound coming from underneath the truck. I stopped to check the noise and found concertina wire wrapped around the front drive axle. "No big deal," I said to myself. "I'll get it fixed as soon as I finish the mission."

Unfortunately, I never finished the mission. The wire punctured both front tires, flattening the right front. The wire also destroyed the left and right front constant velocity (CV) boots and ruined the right-front CV joint. Although it sounded like a lot of damage, the motor pool personnel originally thought it would be a simple fix. That is, until they got the HMMWV up on jack stands. Before it was over, mechanics had to use bolt cutters to remove the concertina wire, and also replace both CV boots and the damaged CV joint.

I was foolish in thinking my HMMWV was indestructible. Sure, HMMWVs are tough, but so is concertina wire. I should have never driven over something I couldn't recognize. Luckily it wasn't something worse and I'm here to tell this story. However, those motor pool guys probably won't forget me anytime soon.

Be careful when you're in an operational environment, especially when you're deployed overseas. There are many hazards on foreign roads, and nothing is indestructible—not even a HMMWV!

A Leap Into the Twilight Z

CPT MARK FALSANI
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Spangdahlem AB

Imagine a man with a snowboard eyeing a closed ski run. Imagine that man ignoring the "Closed" sign, lifting the rope, strapping on his snowboard and pushing off. As he streaks down the mountain at better than a mile-a-minute, little does he know that he is about to take a leap into "The Twilight Zone."

And so our story begins …

It was early in the season, right after Christmas, and our snowboarder, Kevin, was at Okemo, VT, for a giant slalom race. On the slopes, giant snowmaking machines steadily sprayed new powder to cover the snow that had thawed the previous day and then refrozen that night. It was a day or two before the race and Kevin was on his board getting ready for the competition. As he rode up the lift, he spotted a run no one had been on yet. The snow was smooth, which meant no bumping and vibrating down a rutted-up run. That's something that could get hairy on a race board when you're on one edge trying to turn at 65 mph.

He knew the mountain well. He knew where to get on the run and where it dumped out. Getting off the lift, he ducked under the rope, strapped on his board and raged downhill. He was about halfway down the run when his goggles suddenly glazed over. It was the snow machines! He'd run into the powder they were spraying and it was freezing on his goggles, turning his world into an opaque blur. Unable to stop, he a hit bump and then hurtled into the sky.

He was off balance when he launched. With a horrendous thud he crashed onto the snow, landing on his back. The impact knocked him senseless. When the ski patrol finally found him, they couldn't believe he wasn't dead.

The ski patrol had measured where his tracks stopped and started again and he'd flown 150 feet. Although he was still breathing, he'd broken several vertebrae. He'd also hit his head hard enough to have a mild concussion. Had he not been wearing his helmet, it could have been A LOT worse.

Kevin had to cool it for the rest of the season but, with rehabilitation, was able to get on his board again the next year. You can chalk that up to his helmet. The snow wasn't soft as he barreled down the mountain at 65 mph. If he'd crashed without his nugget cover, it would have been like dumping a bike on the autobahn without a helmet—really dumb!

Nugget covers (helmets) aren't "optional." You can't take part in competitions without one. In fact, in some cases, it's a good idea to go a bit further and wear motocross-style body armor. Also, taping your wrists can help protect them from injury should you wipeout and put your hands out to break the fall.

Finally, raging down a closed run can have some very unpleasant consequences. You can get your ticket ripped, not to mention being fined or arrested. If you're in deep snow, it could be much worse—you could get buried. Also, if you crash and need immediate medical help it's going to take longer because you're not where you're supposed to be.

You only come up on the weekends. Do you really think you know more about the mountain than the ski patrol and the people working the slopes? Trust them and help them do their job by staying off the closed trails. Don't follow Kevin's example and end up taking a leap into "The Twilight Zone."

Reprinted courtesy *Road & Rec*, Winter 2003

Snowboarding Safety tips:

- The best way to become a good snowboarder is to take lessons from a qualified instructor.
- The key to successful snowboarding is control. To have it, you must be aware of your technique, the terrain, and the skiers and snowboarders around you.
- Be aware of the snow conditions and how they can change. As conditions turn firm, the snowboarding gets hard and fast. Begin a run slowly.
- Snowboarding requires a mental and physical presence.
- If you find yourself on a slope that exceeds your ability level, sit down and dig the heel side of the board into the snow to slow you as you come down the run.
- The all-important warm-up run prepares you mentally and physically for the day ahead.
- Drink plenty of water. Be careful not to become dehydrated.
- Curb alcohol consumption. Snowboarding does not mix well with alcohol or drugs.
- Know your limits. Learn to snowboard smoothly and in control. Stop before you become fatigued and, most of all, have fun.
- Follow the seven safety rules listed below:

1. Always stay in control.
2. People ahead of you have the right of way.
3. Stop in a safe place for yourself and others.
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging, look uphill and yield.
5. Use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
6. Observe signs and warnings, and keep off closed trails.
7. Know how to use the lifts safely.

(Information provided by the National Safety Council)

HERE'S JOEY!

It was one of those days you never quite forget. You know, a "Duh! What was I thinking!" moment. But there I was, a young private first class on my way to annual training.

I guess I was moving a bit too slowly because my motor sergeant told me to get in the deuce-and-a-half and get going. Anyone who's ever done it knows driving one of these things isn't exactly easy, and towing a trailer doesn't help the situation much either. But I was youthful and optimistic, and I didn't worry too much about this particular trip.

For you to really get the picture, I have to tell you how much stuff we were hauling. There was a 10 KW generator in the deuce along with the number one common and parts load list parts. Among other items, the trailer contained the section's computer, publications, and camouflage netting. While the motor sergeant and two other NCOs hooked up the trailer, I hopped in behind the steering wheel. One of the NCOs who had just hooked up the trailer jumped in the passenger seat, and off we went.

For the first 10 miles everything *seemed* to be going fine—that is, until a civilian van drove up beside me and the driver motioned for me to pull over. As I slowed down and moved to the shoulder, the van stopped in front of me. I hit the deuce's brakes, but nothing much happened! After some furious pumping, I finally stopped the deuce just inches from the van's back bumper.

The van's driver walked up and told me I had lost my trailer about two miles back. This was certainly news to me. I never felt it go! But sure enough, when I walked to the back of the deuce, the trailer was gone! As it turned out, it had come loose and coasted across three lanes of traffic, finally stopping on the freeway's left-hand shoulder. The trailer tongue was sitting on the ground.

After thanking the man, we drove to the next exit and turned around to retrieve the trailer. When we got there, we discovered the trailer had ripped the safety chains and intervehicular cable in half, not to mention the connection for the air brakes. We backed up to the trailer and tried to lift the tongue and hook it into the pintle—NOT! We tried raising the tongue with the jack, but it wouldn't raise it high enough. Finally, we put pieces of wood under the jack so it could lift the tongue high enough to hook onto the pintle.

Fortunately, our runaway trailer didn't cause an accident—but it could have! And wouldn't you know, all this happened because no one checked the cotter pin. I really didn't have anyone to blame but myself. It's always the driver's responsibility to make sure a trailer is hooked up properly. I certainly learned my lesson!

Adapted from an e-mail sent by SSG Kathy Diaz, Tool and Parts Attendant, Minnesota Army National Guard

LESSONS LEARNED

Mr. Don Wren, a safety engineer with U.S. Army Safety Center, pointed out three lessons learned from this incident.

- ***First, as the author observed, ALWAYS make sure the pintle hook is locked and the cotter pin is in place before towing.***

- ***Second, make sure you use trailer chains strong enough to support the trailer. Check the TM for the correct set.***

- ***Finally, use glad hands for the air brake connection between the truck and the trailer. These will automatically disconnect if the trailer separates from the tow vehicle, leaving the tow vehicle's air brake system intact.***

How Close is Too Close?

PEGGY ADAMS
Ground Technical Quality Assurance
U.S. Army Safety Center

Following another vehicle too closely can have deadly consequences for yourself and others on the road. One such fatal accident occurred overseas during a cold, dark winter's evening.

A local national driver had lost control of his car, which spun, struck a guardrail, and came to rest at a 40-degree angle in the left lane. The driver and his passenger then got out of the vehicle and walked around to its front to inspect the damage.

At that time, two Soldiers and their battalion commander were traveling on the same highway in a military van going the same direction. The van was traveling about 73 mph when the driver, a specialist, noticed a truck several cars in front of him putting on its emergency flashers. The truck began moving from the left lane to the emergency lane on the far right. Seeing the flashers, the specialist slowed down. A car passed the truck then swerved back to the right, cutting off the truck. The driver ahead of the specialist immediately slammed onto his brakes and swerved to avoid the vehicles ahead of him. The specialist hit his brakes and swerved to the left, but couldn't avoid striking the rear of the car, causing it to spin clockwise 45 degrees and slide into the right lane. The van continued to the left and struck the local national (mentioned earlier) and his car, which was still stopped in the left lane. The local national was fatally injured.

It is definitely not a good idea to stand on the highway after dark. However, allowing more following space would have given the specialist a better chance of avoiding the accident.

To protect yourself, use the 3-second rule in your POV. To begin, find a stationary object on the side of the road. After the rear bumper of the vehicle in front of you passes the stationary object, begin counting "one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three." If you don't make it to "one thousand three," you're too close. Should an emergency happen on the road in front of you, you probably won't be able to stop in time. Don't put yourself or others in a hazardous position. Keep your distance!

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POV UPDATE

FY04 through December 2003

Class A-C accidents/soldiers killed

Cars	24/18
Vans	0/0
Trucks	7/3
Motorcycles	8/1
Other*	2/0

*Includes tractor trailers, unknown POVs, and bicycles

Total POV Fatalities 22

FY03 23 | 3-Yr Avg 23

ARAS Accident Reporting Made Easy

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Staff Editor

When an accident happens the last thing anyone wants to think about is paperwork—you know, those pages-long accident reports that seem to go on and on. But that paperwork is vital in the fight to prevent future accidents in our Army. To answer that need, the U.S. Army Safety Center (USASC) is in the process of developing an automated, user-friendly reporting system available at the touch of a button—the Accident Reporting Automation System, or ARAS.

The first of several ARAS phases to be released over the next 2 years was deployed in early January 2004 and provides a much-needed alternative to the cumbersome paper reports used in the past. Through ARAS, the Abbreviated Ground Accident Report (AGAR) and Abbreviated Aviation Accident Report (AAAR) can now be completed online through the USASC's Web site. These forms are available anytime you need them, and they also come with built-in help! A few features include:

- Built-in logic making the forms intuitive, which will help guide you through the accident reporting process—NO MORE CODE BOOKS! The drop-down menus found throughout the system allow you to select *needed* information, reducing the amount of time spent filling out unnecessary sections.
- An error-checking code to help you input accident data and reduce erroneous or incomplete data submissions. The electronic forms help with dates, times, and cost information, thereby saving time from being spent on needless corrections.
- A complete Help menu system for technical and accident reporting questions and concerns.
- An overview tutorial to assist you in navigating the appropriate Web pages.
- Army Knowledge Online (AKO) authentication, which means you won't have to remember another user name and password. After initial registration, the system remembers your name and even what page you worked on last in a particular report. Also, each of your active reports is displayed every time you log on, making file management of multiple reports much easier.
- Total electronic staffing of accident reports, so there's no need to print, fax, or mail paper copies. Once you submit the completed report, your supervisor will be notified via e-mail and asked to review the information.

Since this is a first-phase version, the system currently is available only for Class C and D on-duty ground accidents, and Class D, E, and F on-duty aviation accidents. However, forms for all accident classifications should be released in the near future. The ARAS forms can be accessed directly at **http://safety.army.mil/aras_public/intro_aras.html** or from the USASC home page, **http://safety.army.mil/home.html**.

Remember that ARAS is an official Department of Defense automated system developed to capture legitimate Army accident data. Practice sessions are not permitted—all data submitted on the site should involve actual Army accident cases. A developmental test site is available, however, to allow you the opportunity to become familiar with the automated forms and test the approval process. The test site can be found at **http://safety.army.mil/araswebforms/index.asp**.

The USASC team is excited to bring you this new technology. It's now easier than ever to report this vital data. Get on the test site and try ARAS out. We think you'll like it!

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The "Write" Stuff

Want to be a famous writer? The following tips will help you become the next best thing: a contributor to *Countermeasure*!

Perhaps you've never written an article before. Don't let that scare you! It can be surprisingly easy, and the results are rewarding. By sharing your knowledge, you can make a valuable contribution to your fellow Soldiers. Whether your story is a long feature or a simple tip, it just might save someone's life or an expensive piece of equipment.

Countermeasure is the Army's only ground safety risk management publication. It provides vital information on all areas of Army operations, including tracked and wheeled vehicles, tactical parachuting, range operations, and POV and motorcycle safety. A popular feature is the "Dear Joey" column, where Soldiers share their stories of lessons learned or questions.

Getting Started

The first thing you need to do is decide what you want to say, and then just let it flow as if you are talking to a friend. Here are some tips:

- Write about your personal experiences. After all, you were there! Who knows better than you what it was like!
- Keep it simple, direct, and easy to understand. Avoid terms that might be unfamiliar to your readers and explain ALL acronyms.
- Write in Microsoft Word and double-space your articles. Most stories run one to two pages (about 500 and 1,000 words). Four pages is the longest we will print.
- Remember that each issue of *Countermeasure* is planned three months in advance. So, make sure your article will still be relevant and interesting several months down the road.
- We love photos, so "if you've got 'em, send 'em." They'll make your story more effective.

Graphics

Good images help the reader understand what happened. It's important that photographs be clear and sharp. Photographs in JPEG or TIF files need to be at least 300 dpi, however, 5 x 7 color prints, negatives, and 35mm slides are also acceptable.

Photograph Soldiers or equipment in action—avoid boring static or posed photos. Be sure the photographs do not show any safety violations (i.e., a Soldier performing maintenance while wearing a watch or ring, or a Soldier outdoors without proper headgear). Good photographs may also be used for a poster or front or back cover.

Submissions by mail must include a printed manuscript with the text on a 3.5-inch disk. If you send photos, please include captions to describe what's happening in the picture(s). Mail your story to: U.S. Army Safety Center, ATTN: *Countermeasure*, Bldg. 4905, 5th Ave, Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363.

We love e-mail because it's the quickest way to get your story to us. Just e-mail your story and any images to **countermeasure@safetycenter.army.mil** or **joey@safetycenter.army.mil**. Remember to include your rank, name, unit, address, and office telephone number (commercial and DSN). Also, please add a brief biography about yourself to help our readers get to know you.

Help us make *Countermeasure* an outstanding publication. After all, it's *your* magazine!

For more information, contact Bob Van Elsberg, *Countermeasure* Managing Editor, (334) 255-2688, DSN 558-2688, e-mail robert.vanelsberg@safety center.army.mil; or Julie Shelley, Staff Editor, (334) 255-1218, DSN 558-1218, e-mail julie.shelley@ safetycenter.army.mil.

ACCIDENT BRIEFS

Information based on preliminary reports of ground accidents.

AMV

Class A

■ One Soldier was killed and five Soldiers were injured when the HMMWV they were riding in struck a 5,000-gallon water trailer.

■ Two Soldiers were killed and one Soldier was injured when a civilian dump truck overturned onto their HMMWV.

Personnel Injury

Class A

■ Marine was killed while conducting an Army joint free-fall parachute operation. No other details were provided.

■ Army contractor suffered fatal injuries after being hit by a launched simulator. The simulator diverted from its flight path and struck the contractor.

■ Soldier died after collapsing during a 5-mile unit PT run. The Soldier had run about 4 miles when he collapsed.

■ Soldier collapsed and died after completing PT. No other details were provided.

■ Soldier collapsed and died while taking the APFT. No other details were provided.

■ Civilian truck driver suffered fatal injuries when he was struck by a forklift driven by a Department of the Army civilian. The driver was offloading the truck at the time of the accident.

■ Soldier drowned while swimming alone. The Soldier was found floating on the water's surface.

■ Soldier choked to death on a piece of hard candy. The Soldier was swimming with the hard candy in his mouth when he began to choke. The Soldier was pulled from the water, but efforts to revive him were unsuccessful.

■ Soldier was crushed to death by a tree limb. The Soldier was sawing a limb off a tree in his back yard and realized his child was in the path of the falling limb. The Soldier was able to save his child.

Class B

■ Soldier's middle finger was amputated when he attempted to exit a 5-ton truck from its rear gate. The Soldier had been installing bows on the 5-ton and grabbed a hinge seat support while stepping off the vehicle, causing the injury.

■ Soldier's foot was amputated after suffering a gunshot wound. The Soldier was getting out of bed when his hand and foot contacted a shotgun lying on the floor, causing it to discharge.

■ Soldier's big toe was partially amputated by a gunshot wound. The Soldier was cleaning his privately owned shotgun, but did not set the safety switch or clear the weapon. The Soldier dropped the shotgun, causing it to discharge and strike him in the foot.

POV

Class A

■ Soldier died after being struck by civilian vehicle. The Soldier was changing a tire on his vehicle when the other car crossed four lanes of traffic and hit him.

■ Soldier was killed when he was ejected from his sport utility vehicle on an interstate. The Soldier apparently lost control of the vehicle and overcorrected, causing the accident.

■ One Soldier was killed and two other Soldiers were injured when their vehicle overturned. The driver, who suffered fractures to his neck, attempted to make a turn at a high speed and lost control of the vehicle, causing it to roll several times. The deceased Soldier was not wearing his seatbelt and was ejected through the car's sunroof. The second passenger suffered cuts and lacerations. It was not reported if the driver and other passenger were wearing seatbelts. The Soldiers were on post and returning from the PX when the accident occurred.

■ Soldier suffered fatal injuries after being thrown from his motorcycle. The motorcycle hit a ditch, throwing the Soldier into a tree.

■ Soldier died when his vehicle overturned and burst into flames. No other details were provided.

■ Soldier suffered a permanent total disability when her motorcycle collided with a civilian septic truck.

■ Soldier was killed after being ejected from his vehicle. The Soldier apparently lost control of the vehicle, causing it to overturn.

■ Soldier suffered fatal injuries when his vehicle left the roadway and struck a tree. The Soldier was on PCS leave at the time of the accident. The Soldier was wearing his seatbelt.

ARMY GROUND RISK MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Countermeasure Readership Survey

We need your feedback to keep this magazine helpful. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey and return it using the pre-addressed mailer on the back or fax it to Mr. Robert Van Elsberg, 334-255-3003.

1. Name (optional)_____
_____**Rank/Grade**_____

2. Duty Status (Active, Reserve, Guard, Civilian, Other)_____

3. What is your—
Branch?_____
MOS or civilian specialty?_____
Job title?_____
Duty location?_____

4. How often do you read *Countermeasure*?
__Every month
__Rarely
__Occasionally

5. When do you usually receive *Countermeasure*?
__In the month it's dated
__After the month it's dated

6. How do you use the information in *Countermeasure*?
__In safety meetings
__In reading file
__To keep informed
__On bulletin boards
__In unit safety publications
__Other (specify in comments section)

7. Are there any kinds of stories you would like added to *Countermeasure*?
_____
_____
_____
_____
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_____

8. Have the articles ever helped you avoid an accident? Explain.
_____
_____
_____
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9. Use the scale below to rate how useful these articles are to you.

None = 1, Low = 2, Medium = 3, High = 4

__DASAF's Corner
__Saved by the Belt/Helmet
__I Was There Stories
__Dear Joey (lessons learned)
__Seasonal articles
__Maintenance
__Munitions safety
__Accident Briefs
__Accident reviews
__Posters
__POV safety
__Other (specify)_____

10. Rate the overall quality of *Countermeasure*.

Poor = 1, Fair = 2, Good = 3, Exceptional = 4

__Content
__Layout
__Accuracy
__Appearance
__Effectively covers topic
__Choice of topics
__Illustrations
__Credibility
__Readability
__Interest to soldiers

11. Comments/suggestions to improve *Countermeasure*. _____

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_____
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