

ARMY GROUND RISK MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Countermeasure

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**WEAPONS HANDLING
ACCIDENTS**
still Killing-Injuring Soldiers



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Readiness and Safety are Inseparable



As we enter this Thanksgiving season, reflecting upon recent events gives us an even greater appreciation for the fact that we have the opportunity to live in and defend the greatest country in the world. In the midst of our pain and anger, let us not forget the families and friends of our fallen comrades. Let us also pause to give special thanks for those who so willingly serve our nation with a level of devoted service unparalleled in any other profession. We truly are a magnificent Army.

For more than 220 years, the finest men and women in the world have faithfully fulfilled the Army's non-negotiable contract with the American people: to fight and win our Nation's wars. Those of us who wear the uniform today will do so again. This time, it is a war of a different kind, on a different front, facing an adversary whose acts of terrorism have left us bloodied in our own homeland—but with an unshakeable resolve that these despicable acts of war will not go unpunished. The United States Army is ready to do its part.

Now more than ever, it's imperative that leaders and soldiers alike fully understand that readiness and safety are inseparable. We must stay focused on the tasks at hand. We must continue to ensure that safety and risk management are completely integrated into every mission and operation we execute. History tells us that in every major conflict, with the exception of Korea, we lost more soldiers to accidents than to enemy action. We cannot allow that to happen this time. The loss of a single soldier in a preventable accident represents a serious drain on our readiness.

The same 5-step risk management process, that we adopted as our principal risk-reduction tool and integrated into the Army in the 1990s, will continue to serve us well as we answer our Nation's call. We must diligently guard against reverting to a mindset of "This is war, and accidents are the cost of doing business." The risk management standard is also non-negotiable: an informed risk decision made at the appropriate level applies in combat as well. I challenge each of you to ensure that we continue to identify hazards to the fullest extent possible, that they are properly assessed, that risks in all missions are reduced to the lowest possible level, and that informed decisions are made at the appropriate level of command when accepting residual risks.

We are now engaged in what our Commander in Chief has declared the first war of the 21st century. Implicit within our warfighting mission is the requirement to do so with minimal losses. We're trained; we're ready. Now, let's find the strength, discipline, wisdom, and the skill to effectively use every available risk management technique and resource, that can help us ensure the safety of all who are answering the call, to avenge what many are labeling as the darkest day in American history. 🇺🇸

— BG James E. Simmons



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Weapons Handling Accidents Killing-Injuring Soldiers



During the last 3 years, 11 soldiers were killed and 112 others were injured because of improper weapons handling or improper misfire procedures. More than half of the accidents involved privately owned weapons, and almost all the rest involved either personally assigned military weapons, the M60 machine gun, or the M2 .50-caliber machine gun.

- A soldier was cleaning a .22-caliber handgun, but he didn't clear it first. During the cleaning process, he dropped the weapon onto the floor. When the weapon hit the floor, the bullet struck the soldier in the shoulder.

- A PFC was running down a wet, grassy slope with his M14A1 rifle locked to the rear and a round in the magazine. He slipped and fell backward, causing the round to chamber and discharge simultaneously. The soldier was shot approximately one-half inch above the middle toe on his left foot, shattering all bones on his second and third toes. He now has permanent nerve damage.

- While target practicing at a civilian range, an SFC attempted to clear a live round lodged in the chamber of his .45-caliber pistol without dropping the magazine. He held the pistol with his right hand, and his left hand was placed on top of the slide just forward of the ejection port. His hand slid forward with the slide of

the barrel and continued off the front of the weapon so that the last three fingers of the left hand were past the barrel. The weapon discharged, penetrating three fingertips on the left hand. (Soldier subsequently had three fingers amputated.)

Failure to treat weapons as if they were loaded was a major factor in many weapons accidents. For example:

- A soldier was at a friend's house and began playing with a revolver. The soldier pulled the trigger. The weapon didn't fire because the hammer struck an empty cylinder. The soldier continued playing with the revolver, assuming it was not loaded. The second time the soldier pulled the trigger, the gun fired—killing himself.

Weapons are not toys, and leaders must never allow soldiers to kid around with weapons. Horseplay should not be tolerated. NCOs and other leaders should ensure soldiers know not to ever point a weapon at anyone—even if it's not loaded. A case in point is the following accident that happened a few years ago:

- A soldier was part of a team performing guard duty at an air defense site. During a guard change, the soldier pointed out that the guard he was relieving had a magazine in his weapon and the weapon was not on safe. The guard told him it was all right because there was no bullet in the chamber. The guard then pointed



the rifle at the relief soldier and pulled the trigger. The weapon discharged, and the bullet struck the soldier in the throat. He died the next day.

The Army has strict rules concerning when weapons may be loaded. Soldiers who load weapons without authorization are headed for an accident. Unit leaders, especially NCOs, should routinely check to ensure that weapons are never stored or transported loaded, that magazines are not placed in weapons until just prior to firing, and that weapons are kept on safe until it is time to fire. Most of the rules that apply to military weapons apply to privately owned weapons as well. Leaders should ensure soldiers know the rules apply equally to all weapons.

Even in combat, weapons should remain on safe unless there is an immediate enemy threat. Otherwise, they could become the enemy. For example:

- An infantry unit was conducting a live-fire exercise. Nobody noticed that a sleeping soldier had a magazine in his weapon. He moved just as he woke up, and his weapon discharged, killing a nearby soldier and seriously injuring another. This unit failed to conduct 100 percent accountability of ammo.

Leaders are responsible for machine gun safety, not just individuals

Almost all the accidents involving M60 and .50-caliber

machine guns were the result of poor supervision and poor training, both of which are leadership responsibilities. Most .50-caliber machine gun accidents happened because the headspace and timing were not set properly, causing a round to explode in the chamber. Accidents involving the M60 machine gun were almost all caused by failure to follow proper misfire procedures. These accidents are so similar that they read like duplicate reports. Most say: "The soldier opened the feed tray cover too soon after a misfire; the chambered round cooked off, throwing particles into the soldier's face."

Leaders need to ensure that soldiers are trained in operating crew-served weapons. The soldiers need to know how to set the headspace and timing on the .50-caliber machine gun and the required waiting times of the M60 machine gun misfires. Finally, leaders need to ensure that time is allowed for these procedures, and that they are performed properly.

All of these accidents could have been prevented if the leaders involved had just ensured that their personnel followed procedures. Soldiers are told repeatedly to always treat weapons as if they are loaded, to properly clear their weapons after firing, and to perform the proper procedures when firing a machine gun. However, it's up to unit leaders to enforce these standards—anything less is unacceptable! 

Weapons Safety-Important In Training

Okay, look. Let's take a minute and talk about this.

I'm not going to quote a bunch of regulations and throw statistics at you. I'm just going to tell you about some things that have actually happened to some of our guys, and hopefully give you some ideas to help prevent you from making the same mistakes.

It's real easy to blame the folks that had the accident, but you know what? It could happen to us too. About 99 percent of us have done some amazingly stupid things in our careers, and the other 1 percent are liars. As we talk about these things, take a hard look at yourself and at your soldiers. Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

All of the following stories are from actual Army accidents.

- A soldier was loading an M249 squad automatic weapon (SAW). The squad members were in a squad wedge formation. The soldier let his bolt ride forward, which caused his weapon to fire, and the bullet struck him in his foot.

The root cause of this accident is pretty easy to spot, isn't it? Maybe, maybe not. You would be shocked to find out how many people are unaware that the M249 SAW fires from the open bolt. Many soldiers are only familiar with the M16. If you try to chamber a round in a weapon that fires from the open bolt, the results can get real exciting, real quick.

Here's a sad one.

- While performing guard duty with an M249 Automatic Rifle at a local civilian school, the soldier failed to properly handle his weapon by squeezing the trigger to check if the weapon was on safe. The soldier discharged three rounds, damaging one HMMWV and fatally injuring a 6-year-old boy.

Come on now! Weapons handling is and should be our No. 1 skill. How can we allow a soldier to develop such bad habits? Don't get all "Holier than Thou." Someone in your unit has the same bad habits. Find him or her and get it fixed.

How about this one--

- While participating in a blank fire exercise, the soldier inadvertently inserted a magazine left over from a live-fire range that had been conducted approximately two months before. The first round blew off his blank adapter; the next round struck and killed another member of his unit.

Brass and ammo checks. They must be done. Make it policy in your unit that everyone gets checked. Everybody, even experienced soldiers, can get a case of C.R.S. (can't remember stuff), from time to time. If you get into the habit of checking everybody, to include the commander, you can avoid the misconception that you are treating soldiers like children, or that they cannot be trusted.

Another piece of this particular puzzle is



M249



M60



M240

○ **These weapons fire from an open bolt.**

○ **Potential for accidental discharge, while conducting operations can be higher, especially during movement.**

○ **Attempting to manually chamber a round will result in a discharge.**

weapons familiarization. This soldier did not realize that he had fired live rounds until after the MEDEVAC had departed with the victim, and he cleared his rifle. A properly trained soldier probably would have noticed the different weight/sound/feel of firing live rounds, and most certainly would have noticed his blank adapter getting blown off. The M16 series rifle is the U.S. Army's primary weapons platform. You should be as familiar with it as you are with your battle-dress uniform (BDU).

Here is something that you may not have considered.

- The unit was conducting Basic Rifle Marksmanship training. The NCO "rodding" the firers onto the range was utilizing a cleaning rod. After completing the first firing order, he realized that he was missing a rod section. Range cadre took action by having all firers tilt their rifles, so that the muzzle was angled downward. No rod sections fell out, so they assumed that it was safe to proceed. The rod section was discovered after the first round was fired. The upper receiver disintegrated, completely destroying the M16; but, fortunately, without causing injury to the firer.

A rifle is called a rifle because it has rifling in the bore. This causes the projectile to spin, thereby stabilizing the trajectory. Think about this for just a moment. If it causes a bullet to spin, what effect is it having on a rod comprised of sections that are screwed together? Get with your installation range control facility and they will provide you with instructions on how to locally manufacture approved clearing rods.

What about privately owned weapons?

- The soldier had recently purchased a new handgun. His previous handgun featured a magazine disconnect, which rendered the weapon unable to fire when the magazine was removed from the weapon. While demonstrating this feature to his spouse, the soldier removed the magazine, placed the muzzle to his head, and pulled the trigger. His new handgun was not equipped with a magazine disconnect. The weapon discharged, killing the soldier.

Never take anything for granted, and treat every weapon as if it were loaded.

And one more.

- The soldier had just purchased a new handgun two days before. While at home and off-duty, he was showing it to his friends. While spinning it on his finger, the pistol discharged, striking one of his friends and killing him.

Let's work on "positive habit transfer." If you can get your soldiers trained to be safety conscious on-duty, it will potentially carry over to their off-duty time as well.

Here's the trap. Since it says U.S. Army on our chest, we automatically know everything about every weapons system ever made. Hardly! You must consider each individual weapon as an entirely separate entity and educate yourself accordingly.

As a general rule of thumb, if you have not qualified in a particular weapons system, and if you cannot satisfactorily perform the basic CTT tasks associated with that system (load, unload, reduce a stoppage, as well as clear, disassemble, reassemble, and perform functions check), then you have no business carrying that weapon. Break out the manuals and talk to your NCOs.

I haven't covered everything here, but if I accomplished nothing else, I hope I made you think. That's a step in the right direction.

Get smart on weapons handling and save a life. It may be your own. 

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The GUNFIGHT

He looked in the mirror and saw a young cowboy with dark hair, steely-blue eyes, and a day's growth of beard covering his face. His Stetson™ was slightly tilted downward to cast a shadow, and he had wide shoulders with a narrow waist. To complete the picture, he wore a black gun belt with a silver buckle and bullets in each loop; the holster was tied down a few inches above his right knee.

The final piece was a Colt .45 with mother-of-pearl handles (no shell under the hammer of the weapon for safety purposes; however, he believed the gun had to be loaded to get the full feel of the weight whenever he would fast-draw). The Nike™ tennis shoes looked way out of place, a thought which brought a smile to his face. If only he could have been born 150 years ago.... Oh, well, 2001 was interesting and exciting too.

He took off the gun belt with the Colt still in the holster, the leather safety latch buttoned down over the hammer of the gun to keep it from slipping out of the holster, and hung the whole thing over his bedpost. He would unload the gun and lock it in his gun cabinet in just a bit. His hat went over the top of the bedpost, making the whole scene look very western.

As he went down the stairs to the living room, he spotted his wife trying to move furniture again.

She looked up, "I bet you were practicing your 'fast draw' again. You're good enough to beat Charlie now, John; you'll take first place at the rodeo."

"I hope so, but Charlie is super quick and so accurate. He didn't miss a single target last year."

"You missed only one yourself."

"Yeah, I know, but that was enough. Where's Johnny? With Kit, right?" John asked as he pushed and lifted the couch to the desired spot, knowing it would probably be moved a few more times before his wife was

finished redecorating.

"Yes, he and Kit are out in the woods. For a pair of 7-year-olds, they sure have developed a strong friendship. Charlie sure does love his son, and Kit just thinks the world of his dad—just like you and Johnny."

In the woods behind the house, the two boys were in a heated discussion.

"He will too, Kit! Just you wait and see! My dad can beat your dad any day, anytime!" shouted a very irate little boy.

"He didn't last year, did he? And he won't this year!" shouted Kit right back.

"Oh, yeah? Wanna bet?"

"Sure! Just name it!"

Across the shaded lawn from Johnny's house stood Kit's house. The boys' parents had been friends and neighbors for many years, and the families were very close. Kit's dad, Charlie, was in his garage doing some "gunslinging" practice of his own. He would stand with his feet a little less than shoulder width apart. As his right hand streaked towards the handle of his Colt .45 six-shooter, he slid his left leg a little further out, which brought the gun into a natural firing position. His shoulders were slightly hunched, and his upper torso was leaning forward.

But drawing the gun was only part of the contest; the more difficult part was shooting targets as quickly and as accurately as they appeared. He dry fired, using his left hand to cup and steady his right hand, then he quickly reloaded from the bullets in his gun belt. There! Ready for the next targets. Maybe a little faster than last year. John-boy better watch out or he will be second best again this year!

Charlie took off his gun belt and hung it from a hook in his garage. He usually kept it under lock and key, but he was practicing so much every day that locking and unlocking the gun cabinet got to be a bit old. Besides, no one ever entered "his garage" unless he was in there.

Still arguing in the small wooded area behind the houses, Kit and Johnny finally decided they were wasting a beautiful play day.

“Let’s quit fighting and have some fun,” said Johnny.

“Okay. Do you want to toss the football or go skating?” In-line skating was one of their favorite things to do.

“Ahh, I don’t know; we did that this morning. Let’s see if we can get some cookies at your place and some soda at mine,” said Johnny. The boys went over to Kit’s house first.

In the meantime, Kit’s parents were next door with Johnny’s folks. Of course, the rodeo and the gunslinging contest came up in conversation. Though not as boisterous as the boys, the two men were just as intense within the boundaries of friendly needling. Kit and Johnny happened by just as Charlie was explaining how badly he was going to beat John this year. For young Johnny, this was the last straw. He wasn’t going to listen to this kind of stuff anymore.

“That’s it! I’m going inside, and I’m going to watch TV. Are you coming or not?” he asked Kit. At Kit’s nod, they both went inside.

“Wait here; I want to show you something.”

A few minutes later, Johnny came into the newly arranged living room (which really hadn’t changed too much), wearing his dad’s Stetson™ and gun belt with the Colt .45 still in its holster. The belt, of course, was too big and kept slipping down whenever Johnny didn’t hold it tightly.

“Wow, Johnny, that looks great!” exclaimed an admiring Kit. “But funny, too,” he laughed, as the gun belt hit the floor, “I know, let’s use our gun belts and your dad’s gun!”

“No way! You get your own gun and meet me in the woods in 10 minutes, you dirty sidewinder, you!”

“I’ll be there, and we’ll see who the better man is, you varmint, you!” shouted Kit, fully into the game now. He knew just where his dad had been hanging his gun belt in the garage; it would be a piece of cake to get the Colt.

Ten minutes later in the woods, Johnny and Kit squared off, the Colt .45s just barely staying in their smaller holsters.

“Okay, here’s the rules,” said Johnny. “We get 10 feet apart, and on the count of three, we draw. Did you make sure your gun is unloaded?”

“Yeah, Dad was dry firing, so I know there’re no bullets in his gun. How ‘bout you?”

“You gotta be kidding! My dad is always telling me ‘It’s the unloaded gun that kills.’”

Johnny rolled his eyes and grasped his throat to dramatize the point. “He wouldn’t allow a loaded gun in the house. Are you ready?”

Both boys held their arms out to the side, hands above the handles of their guns, just like they had seen their dads do many times.

“Okay, one...two...three...”

The sound of the gunshots broke up the good-humored argument between the two old friends. They glanced at each other and began to run toward the woods. Both families would be in mourning that night and for a lifetime of days and nights to come. Many “why’s” would be asked, and each parent would agonize over his carelessness.

Weapons must be treated with respect—which means they must be kept under tight control, locked up in cabinets that little folks can’t get into. They shouldn’t be left hanging from gun belts on top of beds, or anywhere little hands could find them. Ammunition should be separated from the weapon for an extra degree of safety.

There is no excuse for not protecting children who love to emulate their heroes. And you are heroes to your children, whether you know it or not. You set the examples they follow. For instance, you may insist your children wear their seatbelts, but if *you* don’t, they won’t when they are adults—because they want to be just like you.

Lock up things that can harm or kill your sons and daughters. 

There is no excuse for not protecting children who love to emulate their heroes. And you are heroes to your children, whether you know it or not.

—Adapted from Torch Magazine

Traumatic Stress Symptoms are

With the recent terrorist attacks on America, emotions have run high for the Nation's workers. People have experienced a range of uncomfortable feelings during this time. As an occupational health and safety professional, gaining an understanding of the effects of traumatic stress and grief can be an effective tool in providing a work environment that is both supportive to employees and business. This article provides a summary of helpful guidelines and authoritative web links on managing/recovering from traumatic events.

Traumatic-stress symptoms may occur after an individual has experienced a sudden, overwhelming, catastrophic and shocking event, such as a natural disaster, dangerous accident, or terrorist attack. Such events, like those witnessed on September 11, 2001, may cause some, none, or all of the feelings listed below:

- **Feelings of shock and denial (usually first response after traumatic event).**
- **Fear and anxiety (common responses associated with a dangerous situation).**
- **Depression.**
- **Irritability.**
- **Grief and sadness-feelings of hopelessness and despair, which may result in a loss of interest in normal daily activities.**

All these feelings are natural responses to abnormal events. However, people process emotions differently, and the intensity, frequency, and duration of these feelings vary considerably between individuals. Some people may experience intense, prolonged feelings of sadness, while others may have a delayed reaction to the event. Sights, smells and sounds associated with traumatic events may also trigger fear, anxiety, and other feelings on a periodic basis.

After a traumatic event, people may re-experience the trauma through nightmares, flashbacks, and unwanted thoughts. Individuals may also have an increased arousal level, causing jittery and jumpy nerves. A prolonged arousal level can lead to impatience and irritability, and may also interrupt normal sleep patterns. The arousal activity is the effect of the "Fight or Flight"

reaction--our body's automatic response system that prepares the body to "fight" or "flee" from perceived attack, harm, or threat to our survival.

Other common human reactions caused by traumatic events include:

- **Avoidance of situations that are associated with the trauma.**
- **Anger.**
- **Guilt and shame-people may blame themselves for actions they took or didn't take to survive.**
- **Increased use of alcohol or other substances.**

In light of the Nation's unfolding events, we can expect a continued impact on our workforce. Understanding the signs and symptoms that employees may face during these troublesome times will prepare you to go about the business of managing people and projects, while providing a supportive working environment. These additional steps can aid you in this process:

Provide an environment that fosters open communication

Especially during chaotic times, employees may feel a



and Grief in the Workplace

greater sense of comfort if you, as a leader/manager, acknowledge their concerns and listen to them. You do not have to say anything deep. Listening is very powerful and comforting.

Avoid keeping a stiff upper lip

If you feel comfortable, you may wish to share your natural feelings—as this shows employees you care (and are human). If you prefer not to express your feelings, that is okay as well, but be aware that others may feel the need to talk about a traumatic situation repeatedly. Employees should not be discouraged from sharing their thoughts with others, as this may aid in the recovery process.

Recovery rates

There is no standard recovery timeframe. Recognize that people recover from traumatic events at different rates. “Don’t expect employees to snap out of it.”

This advice by the University of Michigan’s Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (<http://www.umich.edu/~hrra/griefandloss/managers.html>) reminds

managers that grieving is a process that takes time.

Employee assistance plan

If you have an employee assistance plan (EAP), inform employees that professional counseling services are available. Let employees know that EAP services are designed to aid employees in their recovery. There are often misperceptions about EAP services. Employees may believe that such services are used by only very ill or mentally disturbed people.

Get involved

People who have not been directly affected by the terrorist attacks may feel a sense of helplessness. Provide employees resources and information on ways to help the victims or assist relief organizations.

Refresh/review disaster policies

It’s a good idea to review your disaster planning procedures with your employees. This step will give you and your employees a greater sense of control by providing realistic expectations and a managed approach to handling a disaster.

Get back to the daily routine

For many people, getting back to a daily routine aids in the recovery process. As a manager, you can set the example. In doing so, proceed with sensitivity, and respect the fact that others may not be ready to dive into their daily activities.

For more information and resources on specific guidelines to manage grief and the symptoms of traumatic stress, visit the following web sites:

<http://www.opm.gov/ehs/traugdpg.htm>

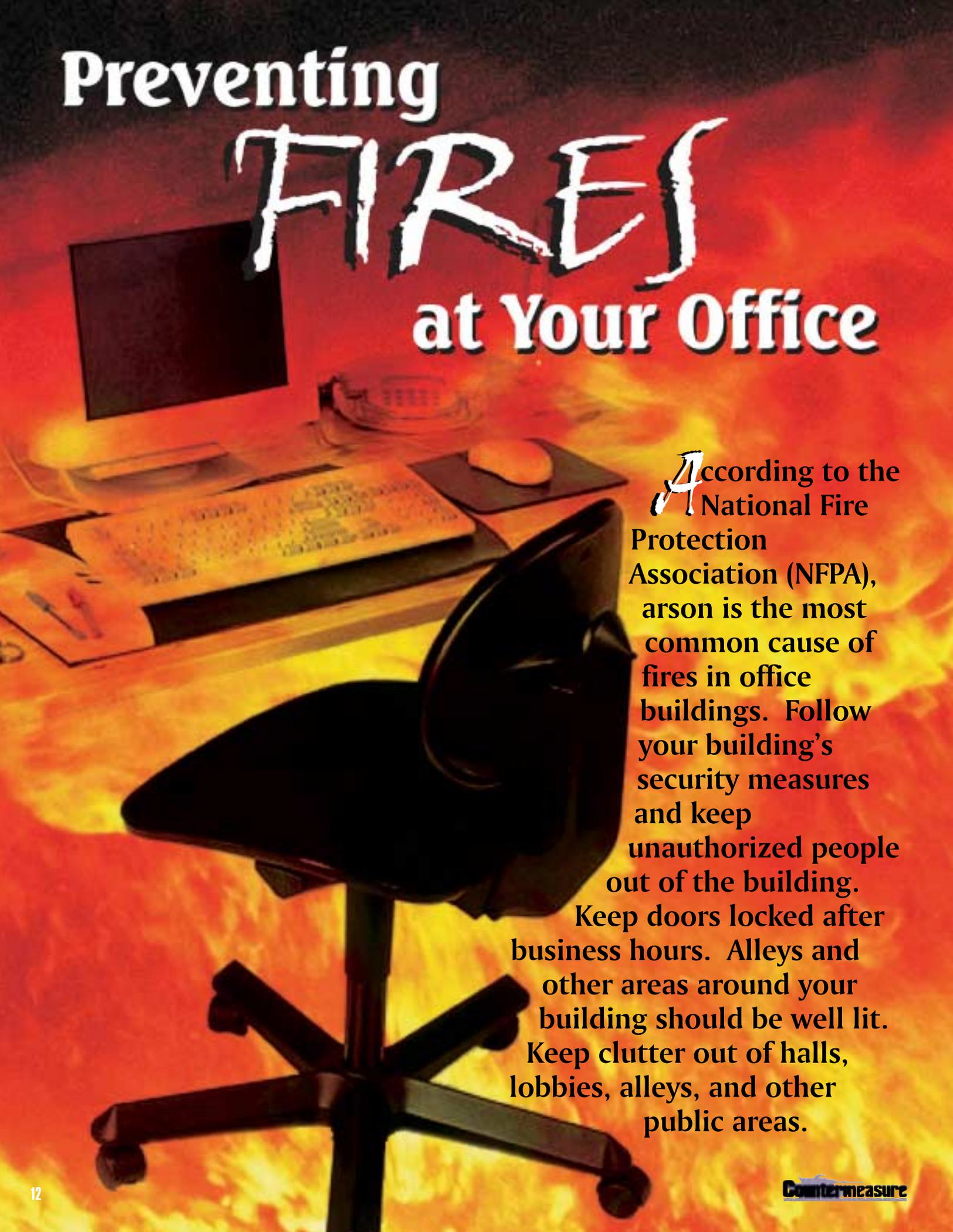
http://www.ncptsd.org/facts/disasters/fs_phases_disaster.html

<http://web.vet.cornell.edu/public/petloss/ekr.htm>

<http://www.umich.edu/~hrra/griefandloss/managers.html>

<http://helping.apa.org/index.html> 

—Courtesy of Peter P. Greaney, MD, Board-Certified Occupational Physician and President, WorkCare and Pactox, Specialists to Occupational Medicine and Industry (<http://www.pactox.com/>) and Osh.Net E-mail bulletin (29 Sep 01)



Preventing

FIRES

at Your Office

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), arson is the most common cause of fires in office buildings. Follow your building's security measures and keep unauthorized people out of the building.

Keep doors locked after business hours. Alleys and other areas around your building should be well lit. Keep clutter out of halls, lobbies, alleys, and other public areas.

Here are some tips from the NFPA on preventing fires in your office or work place.

Housekeeping

Keep waste paper, empty boxes, dirty rags, cleaning supplies, and other combustibles out of exits, storage areas, and stairways.

Wiring

Replace cracked, frayed, or damaged electrical cords. Never run extension cords across doorways where people can step on them, or where chairs or other furniture can pinch or run over them. Don't plug extension cords into each other, and avoid plugging more than one extension cord into an outlet. Don't use extension cords in place of permanent wiring.

Equipment and appliances

Leave space for air to circulate around heaters and other heat-producing equipment, such as copy machines, coffeemakers, and computers. Keep appliances away from anything that might catch fire. Don't stack books or papers on computer monitors.

Before a Fire Breaks Out

What employees should do—

- Count the doors or desks between your work areas and the nearest exit. During a fire, you may have to find your way out in the dark.
- Learn the location of alternative exits from all work areas.
- Know the location of the nearest fire alarm, and learn how to use it.
- Post the fire department's emergency phone number on or near all telephones.
- Be sure that someone in authority knows about anyone with a disability that could delay their escape.

What employers should do—

- Post building evacuation plans, and discuss them during new-employee orientation.
- Conduct regular fire drills.
- Include disabled employees in the planning process for fire emergencies.

What to do when a fire strikes—

- Sound the alarm and call the fire department, no matter how small the fire appears to be.
- Leave the area quickly, closing doors as you go to contain the fire and smoke.
- If you encounter smoke or flames during your escape, use an alternative exit. Heat and smoke rise, leaving cleaner air near the floor. If you must exit through smoke, crawl on your hands and knees, keeping your head 12 to 20 inches above the floor.

- Test doors before opening them. While kneeling or crouching at the door, reach up as high as you can and touch the door, the knob, and the space between the door and its frame with the back of your hand. If the door is warm, use another escape route. If it is cool, open it slowly. Be prepared to close it quickly if you see smoke or flames.

- Follow directions given by fire and security personnel. Once outside, move away from the building, out of the way of

firefighters. Remain outside until a firefighter says you can go back in.

- If you work in a high-rise building, check your fire plan. Some require workers in areas not directly involved in the fire to remain in the building until otherwise instructed by firefighters.
- One hundred percent accountability of personnel. It is important to have a predetermined rally point outside the building in order to get quick accountability and to ensure no one was left behind.

Portable fire extinguishers

Most portable fire extinguishers are good only for fighting small, contained fires, such as a fire in a wastebasket. Be sure someone has called the fire department and that everyone has left the area before fighting a small fire. It is dangerous to fight a grease or electrical fire with an extinguisher that contains water. If you don't know how to operate a fire extinguisher, learn! 

—Adapted from *Ashore Magazine* and the Naval Safety Center

In the event of a fire, a speedy response depends on how well people have prepared for emergencies. Here are some things employees and employers should do before a fire strikes.

An Accident Wa

All forms of tobacco use have ill effects on an individual's health, and smoking remains the leading cause of death and disability in the United States. Most people realize that smoking is associated with cancer, heart disease, stroke, and many respiratory diseases; however, young soldiers think this association involves only older people, and many feel invulnerable to these problems.

Current research on smoking finds interesting associations linking smoking to a wide variety of other unhealthy states. One of these is the relationship between smoking and injuries.

A year 2000 study on basic trainees at Fort Jackson shows that there is an increased likelihood of injury for both male and female soldiers if those soldiers smoked before they came in the Army. Current policy does not allow recruits to smoke in basic training, which makes the association with injury even more surprising. In other words, the liability associated with smoking can still be measured up to eight weeks after cessation of smoking.

In the study at Fort Jackson, men who had been smokers before coming into the Army were more than 3 times as likely to sustain an injury that resulted in time lost from basic training

than their non-smoking counterparts. The likelihood of injury among women who had been smokers was twice that of non-smokers. The finding that smoking is an independent risk factor for injury has been reported in at least eight other studies. It has also been found that older smokers in the military have reduced aerobic capacity that impacts their ability to do long-term physical work.

Some people might ask how smoking can be related to injuries. The link between smoking and injury still needs to be determined. One possible explanation is the known effects of tobacco weakens the immune system and decreases the effectiveness of



Nothing to Happen

wound healing, thereby making an individual more susceptible to injury during rigorous activity like basic training.

How far have we come?

Since the Army first published AR 600-63, *Army Health Promotion*, in November 1987, and took an active stand to discourage tobacco use, how far have we come? In 1980, soldiers who smoked made up 54 percent of the Army. In 1998, this number was reduced to 31 percent. Although this represents significant progress, in 1999, only 23 percent of the adult population smoked in the United States. The Army is still higher than the national norm.

Currently smoking in the Army is actively

discouraged. The research that shows how smoking impacts readiness makes smoking a command issue. All soldiers and their family members should be given support in efforts to stop tobacco use. Most Army posts have active tobacco cessation programs with medications available to assist the smoker in their efforts to quit. Seek assistance at your post health promotion center or call the community health nursing office.

By the time this issue goes to press, the Army will have already released the new clinical practice guidelines for smoking cessation. The guidelines are located on the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) quality management website <http://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/qmo/smoke/tabac/index.htm>.

We should all be willing to assist those among us who need encouragement and support in their efforts to stop smoking.

Not surprisingly, research results show that smoking poses short-term, as well as long-term effects on the health of our soldiers throughout their life, thereby having a negative effect on readiness.

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The Missing Link

This is the final article that addresses child passenger safety restraint systems and the establishment of an installation Child Passenger Safety Training Program.

A privately owned vehicle (POV) prevention program is normally made up of several prevention programs that are linked to one another. These programs must include more than just conducting POV inspections, or giving safety briefings before leaves or long weekends. They should be tailored to the installation and include awareness of seatbelt usage and child passenger safety seat enforcement.

The child passenger safety seat program must include the effective dissemination of information through education and training. This information should include awareness of child passenger safety. On average, one out of five people do not know what type of restraint system is in their POV, or how these systems protect the occupants in the event of an accident.

An immediate and professionally implemented child safety seat program is necessary at every Army installation. Command leadership is the forerunner of all safety programs, and this includes the child passenger safety program. This program must be a part of the installation's POV Accident Prevention Program.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has developed a Child Safety Training Program that provides the basics for an effective installation program. The NHTSA provides a 32-hour course that teaches attendees about the relationship between child safety seats and injuries and deaths, the periodic recall of child care safety seats, and the proper way to install the child safety seat. Attendees that finish the course and receive a passing score on the final examination will complete the

requirements for certification as child passenger safety technicians.

Once certified, the technician can conduct check-up events and inspect child safety seats for recall, damage, and/or proper installation. The technician can also provide classes on child passenger safety training, as well as awareness training to others on the installation.

A certified child passenger safety technician can manage the installation's Child Passenger Safety Training Program from the installation safety office, with direction and oversight from the installation Commander and Command Sergeant Major.

Volunteers who have been selected from organizations on the installation also receive training and certification. The child development services office must be an active player in this program, and ensure that it is integrated with other child protection programs like the family child care program. Coordination should be done with the provost marshal's office to ensure that it is incorporated into the traffic safety plan, and training is made available to military police personnel. Coordination should also be made with off-post law enforcement agencies and organizations, so that fitting stations can be set-up in areas where our families live and shop. This allows families a convenient way to have their child seat checked and gather updated information.

Initial contact should be made with the state office for highway safety and the state/regional NHTSA offices to coordinate for the training and certification of post personnel. Temporary duty (TDY) for this training can be funded through

AIRBAGS AND CHILDREN DON'T MIX.

Accident statistics show that children are safer if they are properly restrained in a rear seat. Another reason to restrain children properly, on every trip, is that air bags are more common in motor vehicles. Air bags have to inflate very quickly, faster than a person can blink an eye, and with great force. Air bags are designed to restrain adults. Serious injury, and even death, can result for children—especially for the young child who is up against, or close to, an air bag when it inflates.



behavior is a difficult task. Education and message development must include efforts to correct inappropriate actions. Unintentional injuries and accidents are predictable results of specific actions. We can identify their causes and take action to avoid them through injury prevention education and programs.

POCs: MSG Glenn Davis, NCOIC Maneuver Support Center Installation Safety Branch and Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician, Fort Leonard Wood, MO, 573-596-0116, davisg@wood.army.mil and Fred E. Fanning, CSP, Maneuver Support Center Safety Director, Fort Leonard Wood, MO, fanningf@wood.army.mil

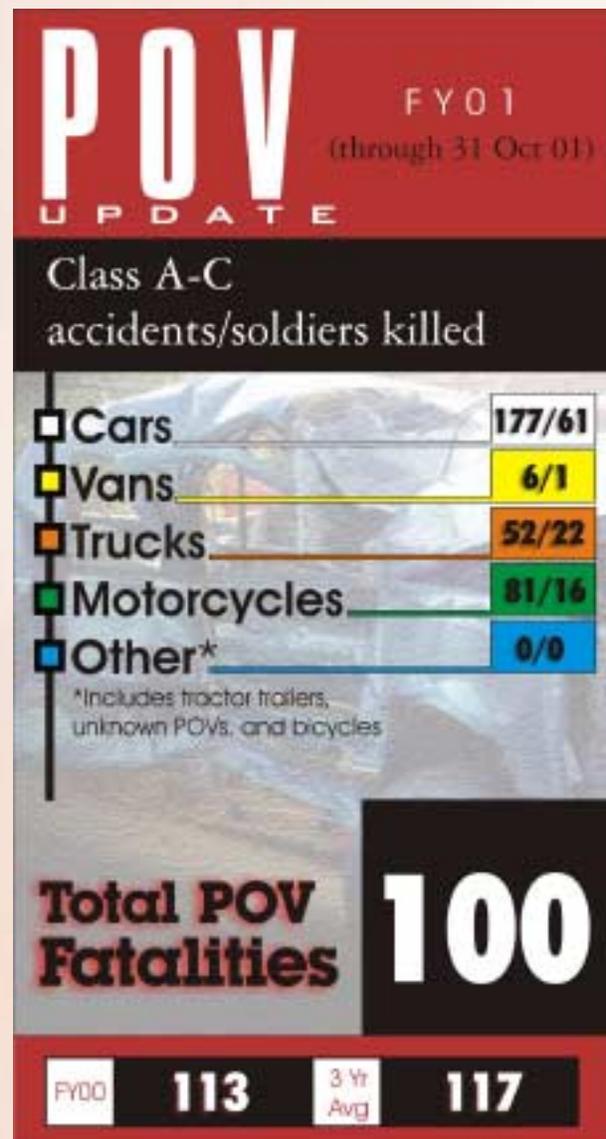
the installation's safety office or the installation Commander's office. Upon return, the certified technicians work under the direction of the program manager in the installation safety office. A plan is developed that will run the program for approximately one year.

This program must include training, awareness, and fitting of the child safety seat. It is best if an installation can have a certified child passenger safety technician with the installation safety office, child development services, family child care, child development centers, and public safety offices (military police and firefighters).

Training should be conducted for family child care providers, child development center personnel, selected hospital personnel, and new parents. Additional training can be provided for young mothers at the local high schools and the county health departments.

Safety awareness material should be provided to all personnel affiliated with the installation. Check-up events should be held once each quarter and should include on- and off-post locations. The focus should be to educate soldiers, their families, and civilian employees. The program should serve as a resource and be conducted at their convenience.

A key element of this program is the dissemination of updated and accurate information to help change existing behavior patterns. However, even if the correct information is made available, changing an individual's



Leaders Make A Difference

POV

Lieutenant General B.B. Bell, Commander of III Corps and Fort Hood, is one leader who is making a difference in ensuring the safety of his soldiers and civilians. In a recent memo reinforcing traffic safety, General Bell outlined aggressive measures to address the disturbing fact that a young soldier was killed as she was walking onto the installation.

This attention by General Bell not only influences his soldiers to maintain high situational awareness, but encourages discipline to follow the law. The key to stopping accidents is proactive leadership. General Bell's brand of caring leadership deserves special recognition. Thank you, Sir.

FATALITY



III ARMORED CORPS
FORT HOOD, TEXAS

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5056



III ARMORED CORPS
FORT HOOD, TEXAS

AFZF-GA-SAFE 13 September 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Pedestrian, Vehicle, and Personnel Safety – Fatality Memo 01-01

1. A pedestrian Fort Hood soldier attempted to cross a busy highway on foot this morning at approximately 0700 hours in order to enter the reservation during the current increased force protection posture. An automobile struck the pedestrian soldier, resulting in fatal injuries to the pedestrian. Since the incident is still under investigation, contributing factors are not identified yet. However, in view of the raised THREATCON level causing some personnel to resort to bicycling and walking to work, I want to reinforce some safety measures that your soldiers/civilians should be made aware of:

- a. Until we rescind or change the staggered work schedule for our soldiers and civilians, commands/activities should comply as much as possible. The staggered schedule is designed to keep vehicle and personnel exposure on roads and highways to a minimum as much as possible.
- b. Pedestrian should walk against the traffic when possible in order to see approaching traffic. Pedestrians should use crosswalks and sidewalks when available. Texas law requires that pedestrians who cross roadways yield to traffic on the roadway where crosswalks or traffic control devices are not present. However, pedestrians should not assume that traffic will yield at crosswalks; therefore, they must be cognizant of traffic when crossing at crosswalks. Other locations to cross are where traffic control devices for pedestrians are present at intersections or crosswalks. Vehicles must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.
- c. Bicycle riders that operate on roadways and who are moving slower than the other traffic must ride as near as practical to the right curb/edge of the roadway, unless making a left turn or riding on a multi-lane one-way road (TX law). Bicycles should not be used to carry more personnel than the bicycle was designed for, nor carry large objects that prevent keeping both hands on handle bars. Bicycle riders must wear appropriate safety gear (reflective vest and helmet) and are required to use front lamps and rear reflectors at night.
- d. Vehicle operators should maintain constant situational awareness of pedestrians, and bicycle/motorcycle operators. U-turns on divided roadways should not be attempted, except at designated entrance and exit ramps. Motorists who drop soldiers off near the installation gates are at risk when they make U-turns against opposite traffic.

2. Commanders and leaders must stress individual and POV safety at every opportunity; soldiers must be made aware of the life and death responsibilities they assume every time they enter traffic situations. This memo will be posted on unit bulletin boards for a minimum of six months.



B. B. BELL
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Commanding

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Recap of Selected 4QFY01 Safety Messages

The following is a list of selected safety of use messages (SOUMs) and ground precautionary messages (GPMs), issued by Army Tank-Automotive Command (TACOM) and Communications and Electronics Command (CECOM). Complete copies are available on the Army Electronic Product Support Bulletin Board via the Internet web site <http://aeprs.ria.army.mil/>.

- MSG, 252030ZJul01, subject; TACOM No. SOUM-01-017, Operational, Concerning troop seat assembly (reference TM9-2320-307-24P, Sep00, pages 18-30, figure 18-17 (no part number), used on M1117 Armored Security Vehicle (ASV), NSN 2320-01-437-6957, LIN A93374. Summary: A recent ASV accident investigation indicated that there is a potential problem with the rear seat and restrain installation. The seat is designed to be easily removable with two hinge-type pins at the front of the seat and a latch mechanism at the rear. These mounting provisions may not be able to withstand the forces that will be imposed on the structure when the vehicle is involved in a collision/rollover. The passenger restraint system for this seat location also relies on these mounting provisions to be effective. If the seat does not stay secured during a crash, the occupant will not have an effective restraint system and may not be properly secured to the vehicle. POC: Keith J. Barthlow, DSN 786-8545 (810-574-8545), barthlok@tacom.army.mil

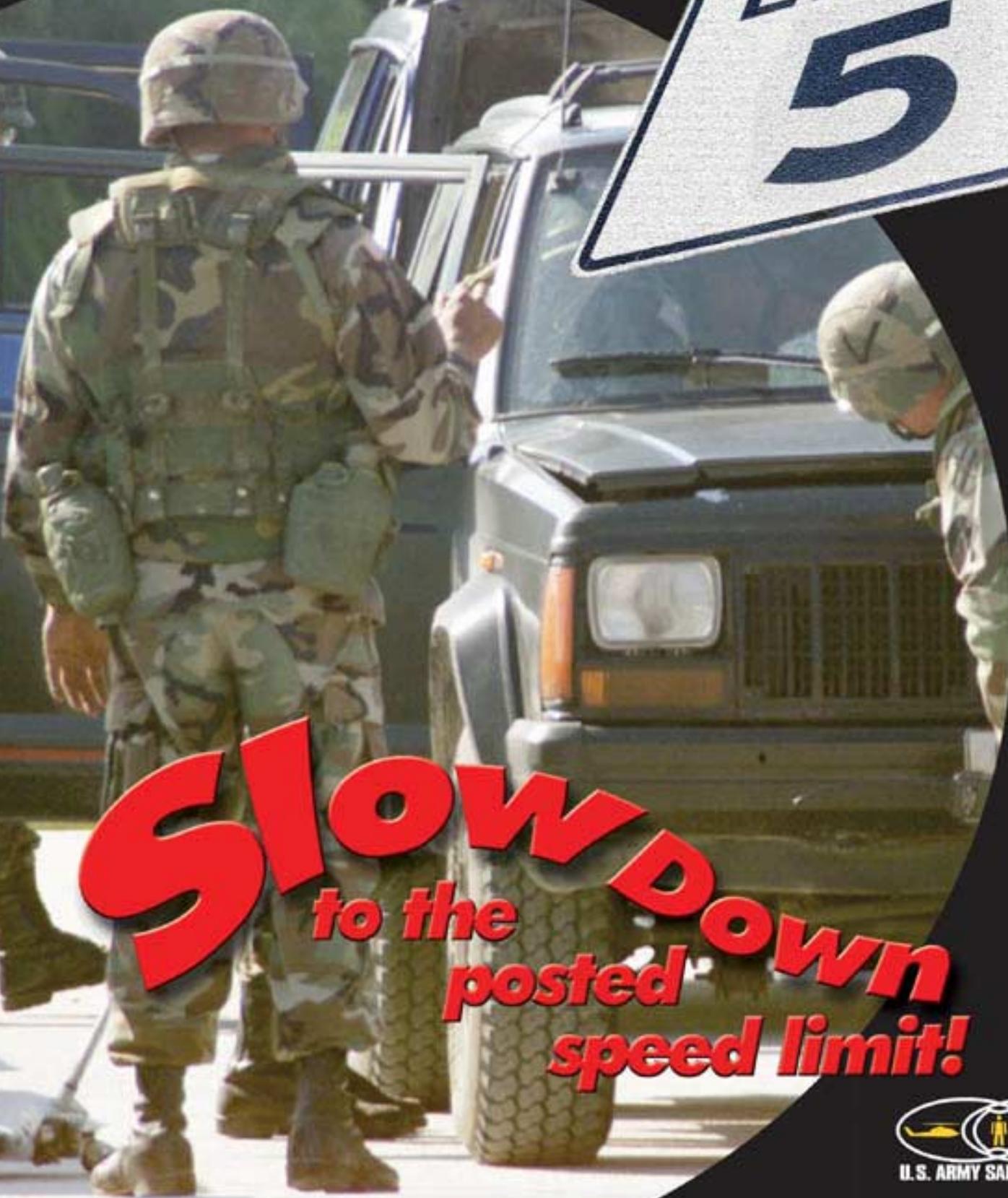
- MSG, 031500zJul01, subject: TACOM No. GPM-01-022, Vehicles affected the vibratory rollers model CS433C, NSN 3895-01-456-2734 and 3895-01-456-2733; and model CS563D, NSN 3895-01-456-2735. Summary: This message corrects the NSNs of the affected vehicles listed in the subject line of GPM 01-021. Caterpillar, the manufacturer of the vibratory roller, has sent TACOM a safety recall notice for the ratchet puller (come-along), NSN 5120-01-275-2286, vendor: Ingersoll-Rand, part numbers: P6-H, P15H and P15D3H. The ratchet puller is contained in the unique tool sets fielded with the vibratory rollers (model Nos: CS433C and CS563D). The swage crimping on the pulling cable may not have a proper pressure.

The ratchet pullers could fail and drop the load unexpectedly. POC: Raymond J. Bayma, DSN 786-8019 (810-574-8019), baymar@tacom.army.mil.

- MSG, 131844ZJul01, subject: TACOM No. GPM 01-023, Item affected: Handheld fire extinguishers, NSN 4210-01-388-7854, Armored Vehicle Launched Bridge (AVLB), M60A1, L43664, NSN 5420-00-889-2020, AVLB, M48A5, L43664, NSN 5420-01-076-6096. Summary: AVLB technical manual procedures require update to address mandatory change from Halon to CO2 extinguishers. A MAM-97-005 required all AVLB vehicles to change from Halon handheld fire extinguishers to the CO2 portable fire extinguishers. The change to CO2 fire extinguishers requires a change to TM5-5420-202-10, M-60A1 Launcher and TM5-5420-226-10, M48A5 Launcher to ensure that the AVLB crew evacuates the vehicle before using the CO2 fire extinguisher. In the event of an AVLB crew area fire, if the CO2 fire extinguisher was used before the crew was evacuated, there is a risk that the crew could become unconscious and result in crew death due to asphyxiation. POC: Ralph Allen, DSN 786-7228 (810-574-7228).

- MSG, 18Sep01, subject: TACOM No. GPM-01-025, M1082, 2.5-ton LMTV trailer, NSN 2330-01-449-1775, M1095, 5-ton MTV trailer, NSN 2330-01-449-1776. Users are attempting to use the FMTV trailers outside of what is presently verified as acceptable. The 2.5-ton LMTV and 5-ton MTV trailer can be loaded only with general cargo; i.e., tents, nets, concertina wire, tools, spare tire, spare parts, etc., and/or ammunition until further notice. The only kit that may be applied to the trailers is the tarp and bow kit until further notice. This is necessary until the installation and testing of various kits and the transport of certain payloads are complete. Loading cargo other than general or ammunition and use of kits other than the tarp and bow will generate unknown results that may result in injury to soldiers or damage to equipment since they have not completed testing. POC: Garth Aegerter, DSN 786-6984 (810-574 6984), aegertege@tacom.army.mil/.

**Protect their safety while
they protect yours -**



Slow Down
*to the
posted
speed limit!*



U.S. ARMY SAFETY CENTER