



20-081



Off-Duty Sports, Recreation and Physical Training Mishap Claims One Soldier's Life

A Captain assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, died in an off-duty hiking mishap 4 September 2020 in Big Heart Lake, Washington, at 1230 local. The Soldier was hiking with a group of other Soldiers when he slipped on loose rocks and tumbled down a slope, striking several other rocks on the way toward a lake below. He did not resurface. A nearby hiker used a handheld satellite communicator device that allows GPS messaging to emergency services to report the incident. King County search and rescue personnel received the message and launched a team of hikers to investigate the site. Rescue and recovery efforts were hampered by fog, delaying their response until the following day, when they recovered the Soldier's body and made positive identification.

Since FY16, the Army has lost an average of 12 Soldiers a year to off-duty sports, recreation and physical training mishaps. This tragedy was the second fatal off-duty sports, recreation and physical training mishap of FY20 and below the number of fatalities from this time last year.

PLRs are intended to be used as an engagement tool for leaders to discuss the hazards and trends impacting Soldier safety and readiness. The PLR contains only basic information but provides sufficient background to allow leaders an opportunity to communicate risk at the Soldier level. More detailed information on this and other Army mishaps can be found on the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center website at <https://safety.army.mil/lessonslearned>.

To access current U.S. Army accident statistics and reports, visit <https://safety.army.mil/STATISTICS>.

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Additional U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center PLR resources can be found on the USACRC website at <https://safety.army.mil/PLR>.

