



21-065



Privately Owned Weapons Mishap Claims One Soldier's Life

A Private First Class assigned to Fort Stewart, Georgia, died in a privately owned weapons (POW) mishap 9 May 2021 in Savannah, Georgia, at 0159 local. The Soldier was reportedly seen by others in the barracks playing with and loading his POW after consuming alcohol. While en route to get food with another Soldier, he unintentionally discharged the weapon and was struck by a round. The Soldier driving called 911, and emergency medical services personnel arrived and pronounced the wounded Soldier dead at the scene. The Criminal Investigation Division initial report states the gunshot was not intentional, and the incident remains under investigation.

Since FY16, the Army has lost an average of four Soldiers a year to POW mishaps. This tragedy was the fourth POW fatality of FY21.

In addition to never mixing alcohol with firearms, you can manage your risk with POWs if you always THINK weapons safety!

Treat every weapon as if it is loaded.

Handle every weapon with care.

Identify the target before you fire.

Never point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.

Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

The USACRC website contains numerous resources to address POW safety:

<https://safety.army.mil/OFF-DUTY/Privately-Owned-Weapons>

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>.

