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ARMY GROUND RISK MANAGEMENT PUBLICATION

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Saves
Soldiers**

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PLUS: 1999 GROUND SAFETY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

ARMY GROUND RISK-MANAGEMENT PUBLICATION COUNTERMEASURE

The Official Safety Magazine for Army Ground Risk-Management

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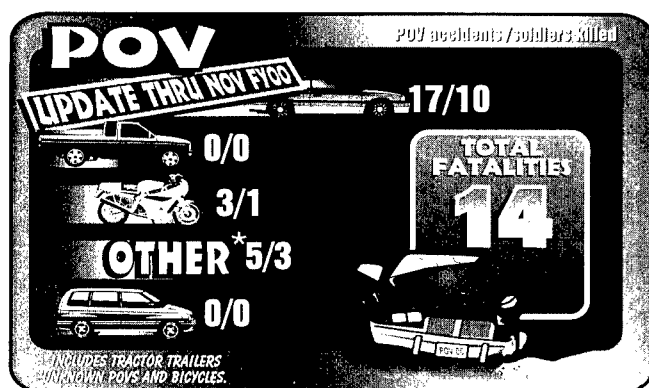
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Gene M. LaCoste

Gene M. LaCoste
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
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From the Editor

Reducing Accidents in the New Millennium

Today's Army faces tough challenges in the upcoming years. Soldiers are deployed to all corners of the world and executing more missions than ever before. The presence of well-trained, well-led, and well-equipped soldiers conducting real-world missions is a critical challenge that can be overcome by one thing – “proactive leadership.” There is no need to look for magical solutions or a silver bullet. The answer is simple – look to competent and dedicated NCOs and officers. They are the professionals who have the right stuff to keep us mission-focused and who know the safety aspects associated with soldiering in the next millennium. We must continue to employ proper risk management and put safety at the forefront in everything we do. Only then can we reduce accidents and save our soldiers.

You will see in our “FY99 Ground Safety Performance Review” on page 4 that the number of soldiers lost and injured by unsafe acts and conditions is too high. While the figures are essential in measuring accident trends, often their full meaning is missing – all result in the loss of a soldier.

Take note of the article “Radioactive Material...Common, but DEADLY” on page 6. Just thinking about radiation scares people. Visions of mushroom clouds and nuclear power plant meltdowns come to mind. The way to keep installations uncontaminated and soldiers at work is following standing operating procedures.

Also in this issue on page 9, “Know Your Simulators!” defines the difference between an M110 and an M115A2. Good information to remember!

On page 3, we have included an article on “Suicide Prevention.” I know there is some debate on covering this topic in a safety publication, but the issue is about leaders taking care of soldiers and keeping them safe. By helping soldiers deal with problems in their lives more effectively, the Army's readiness improves.

As we move into the 21st century, let's ensure that the safety and health of our soldiers are paramount... That's the best way to manage the challenges of the new millennium.

Mission First, Safety Always!

Paula

Suicide Prevention

Suicide is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States, with 31,204 deaths recorded in 1995. Tragically, this approximates to around one death every seventeen minutes. Moreover, there are more suicides than homicides each year in the United States. Two-thirds of all suicides were committed with firearms. The second most common method was hanging, third was poisoning. No one is excluded; people of all ranks, sexes, and races commit suicide.

People usually attempt suicide to block unbearable emotional pain, which is caused by a wide variety of problems. It is often a cry for help. Not everyone shows the common signs of suicide, but almost all suicide victims have experienced some kind of loss, separation, divorce, or financial problems. There is one primary factor that leads to suicide, and that is stress.

Stress may come from loneliness, a heavy workload, finances, or relationship problems. In the military, stress can come from working conditions, deployments, friends rotating out of a unit, or change of mission.

A suicide victim is often so distressed that he is unable to see that he has other options. He often feels terribly isolated and because of his distress, he may not think of anyone that he can turn to, furthering this isolation.

Most suicidal people give warning signs in the hope that they will be rescued, because they are intent on stopping their emotional pain, not on dying. Some warning signs include: appearing depressed (sad or tearful), abusing drugs/alcohol, talking about wanting to die, showing changes in behavior/appearance, or giving away possessions.

A soldier's buddy is the most effective first-line of defense for detecting and preventing a suicide from occurring. If a soldier sees changes in his buddy, such as not caring anymore, regressing, or risk-taking, he needs to take the time to ask his friend if everything is okay and if he would like to talk. More specifically, ask your friend, "Are you feeling so bad that you're considering suicide?" or "Have you ever felt like just throwing it all away?"

Unit commanders need to be able to recognize when a soldier is at risk for suicide. A key to suicide prevention is positive leadership, careful listening, and a deep concern for soldiers who are at increased risk. Talking about the feelings surrounding suicide promotes understanding and can greatly reduce the immediate distress of a suicidal person.

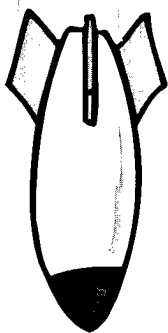
Commanders must take every case seriously. Commanders can't ignore any soldier. If someone tells you that they feel suicidal, above all, listen to them. Then listen some more. Try to make yourself available to hear about how they feel. Refer them to someone equipped to help them most effectively, such as a unit chaplain.

They are trained in this area and can provide valuable

advice, counseling, and spiritual guidance. If they appear acutely suicidal and won't talk, you may need to get them to a hospital emergency department.

We must protect our soldiers and their family members. And by helping soldiers deal with problems in their lives more effectively, the Army hopes to improve readiness and quality of life, and protect its most important resource—the Soldier! ♦

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STRESS

Editor's Note: Soldiers need to understand that they will not be punished if they are referred to mental health or if they decide to go on their own merit.

FY99 Ground Safety Performance

The Army's Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 safety performance was similar to that of FY98. There were 445 privately owned vehicle (POV) accidents in FY99, down from 455 the previous year. Military vehicle accidents increased from 277 in FY98 to 298 in FY99. We experienced a total of 1396 personnel injury accidents in FY99, compared to 1391 the year before. Army accidents claimed 184 soldiers in FY99, an increase of 15 from FY98.

Privately Owned Vehicle (POV)

Of the 184 fatalities last year, 124 were due to POV accidents. Privately owned vehicles remain the number one killer of soldiers. Excessive speed, driver fatigue, traffic law violations, alcohol, lack of driver skill, or a combination of these factors generally causes POV accidents. Each of these factors demonstrates poor discipline on the driver's part. Leaders must instill a sense of discipline in their soldiers that

extends to their off-duty activities. If vehicle occupants fail to wear their seatbelts (or helmets if on a motorcycle), the risk of severe injury or death is drastically increased. We must enforce off-duty risk management.

As leaders,

what can we do to reduce the number of POV accidents? We can refer to existing resources such as the POV Toolbox, 2nd Edition (available on the Safety Center web page <http://safety.army.mil>); require soldiers to attend defensive driving courses; inspect soldiers' automobiles and motorcycles to ensure they are mechanically sound (a checklist is available in the POV Toolbox); make on-the-spot corrections of obvious traffic offenders; and finally, we can set the example.

Army Military Vehicle (AMV)

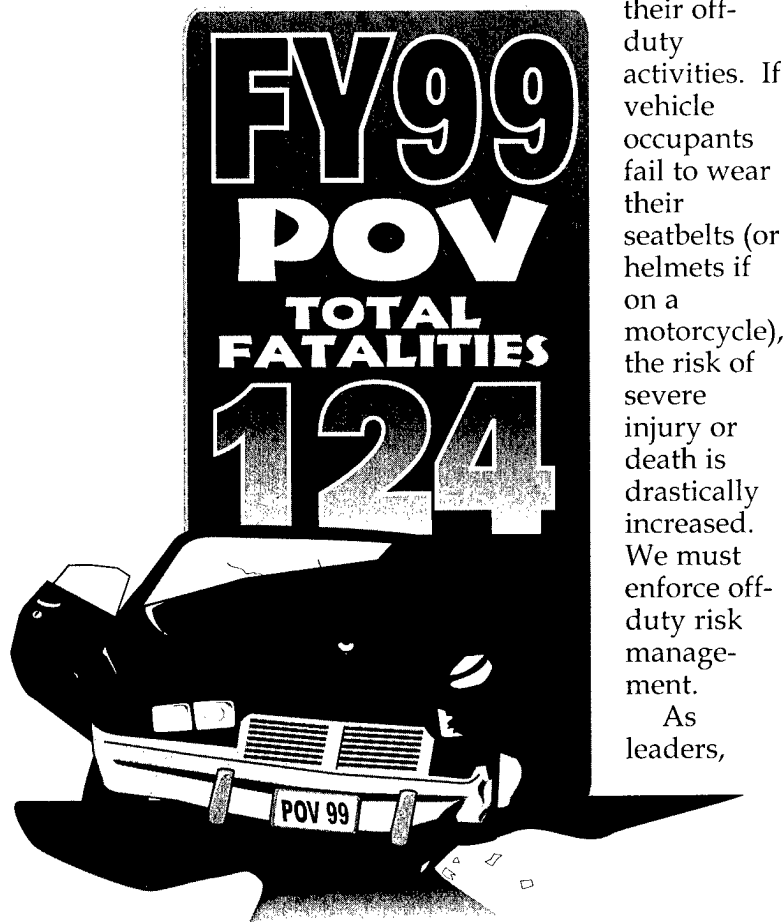
There were 222 AMV accidents in FY99, resulting in 6 fatalities. The majority of these accidents occurred in government vehicles, such as sedans, vans, and buses. Light tactical vehicles, such as the HMMWV, HEMTT, and M915 were closely behind this category. Mistakes made with light tactical vehicles are the same mistakes occurring in POV accidents — failure to stay alert, failure to take appropriate precautions for adverse weather conditions, and excessive speed. This indicates that soldiers are practicing the same habits and thought processes in the unit AMV as they do in their own POV.

Army Combat Vehicle (ACV)

There were 76 ACV accidents this past fiscal year, resulting in 11 fatalities. The majority of accidents occurred in the M2/M3 Bradley, followed closely by the M1 Abrams tank and M113. The most common hazards were excessive speed and failure to stay alert or attentive to what was happening (a loss of situational awareness).

In both wheeled and tracked vehicles, the common fault is leadership failure. Leaders must ensure soldiers are properly trained to operate vehicles. Ensure drivers' training programs are conducted in accordance with AR 600-55 and the TRADOC standardized tracked and wheeled vehicle driving training programs. Make sure drivers know the proper procedures to execute in the event of a rollover or loss of a track. The difference between life and death in a rollover can be the split-second decision by the driver on what to do when he realizes that something is wrong.

Leaders must supervise drivers. Assistant drivers or vehicle commanders are critical



during moves. Too often, young drivers are left on their own. Some leaders fail to require crewmen to wear seatbelts. On multiple occasions, we have found accident vehicles with seatbelts taped nicely into tight, out-of-the-way rolls. This might be pretty, but it prevents the crew from actually wearing the belts.

Leaders can prevent many Army vehicle accidents by simply supervising soldiers during preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) and vehicle operations. Properly conducted PMCS checks can identify problems before they happen. Supervisors at all levels need to ensure that crews perform these checks by the book, and at the proper times as required by the tech manuals. Don't settle for a pencil-whipped "no change" PMCS—make sure the soldiers actually use the book, follow the checklists, and report the shortcomings or deficiencies. Don't let your soldiers use an unsafe vehicle for a mission. By the way, if you don't ensure the required part is placed on a valid requisition, and then properly tracked until arrival and installation, then a PMCS is a waste of time and effort.

Personnel Injury

Twenty-three soldiers died as a result of personnel injury accidents in FY99. Combat soldiering injuries led in this category, with tactical parachuting one of the top accident producers. Sports injuries ranked second to combat soldiering injuries. These accidents include drowning and off-duty recreational accidents not involving POVs. Leadership failure was a causation factor; however, individual failure to obey applicable rules, laws, or common sense contributed to most of these accidents (in other words—a lack of self discipline).

Leaders need to provide soldiers with a safe environment to perform their missions. This includes supervising them to ensure they perform their jobs correctly, and properly preparing for training missions. Leaders need to use all of the steps of the risk management process to properly identify and mitigate hazards in and around work areas. This includes selection of training areas, use of proper safety equipment during high-risk training events, and adherence to published standards for task execution.

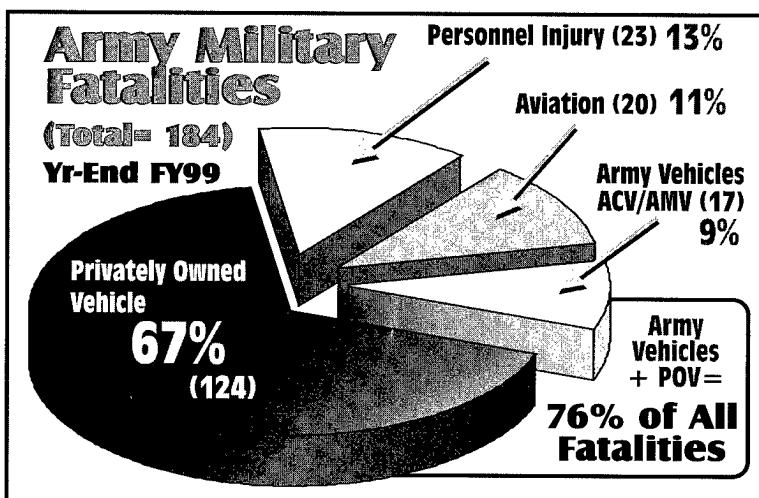
We must also emphasize to our soldiers the need to remain safe during

off-duty hours. Rock climbing, skiing, and recreational swimming can be just as dangerous as any military training exercise. Soldiers need to know the hazards associated with these activities to prevent injury or death to themselves or their family members. We can help them make informed off-duty decisions by training them on the risk management process. The steps apply to both on-duty and off-duty events.

In conclusion, we have identified the main reason that led to accidents in FY99—leadership failure. Leadership involvement is imperative, particularly at the squad leader or first-line supervisor level. Small unit leaders with boots on the ground have the most access to soldiers on a daily basis. They must ensure that soldiers do their jobs safely; that means training, supervising, and enforcing standards.

LEADERS SAVE SOLDIERS! ♦

POC: MAJ Monroe B. Harden, USASC Ground Systems and Accident Investigations, DSN 558-3261 (334-255-3261), hardenm@safety-emh1.army.mil



FY99 Performance at a Glance

Total Army Military Accidents	3-Yr Avg	FY98	FY99
Ground & Aviation	2,422	2,334	2,364
Costs (Millions)	\$179.1	\$193.7	\$255.4
Ground (A-C)	3-Yr Avg	FY98	FY99
Personnel Injury	1,430	1,391	1,396
POV	453	455	445
Military Vehicle	311	277	298
Aviation (Flight Accidents)	3-Yr Avg	FY98	FY99
Class A	11 [1.09]	12 [1.35]	18 [1.97]
Class A-C	85 [8.72]	84 [9.43]	103 [11.28]

Radioactive Material... Common, but DEADLY!

The Army uses many items that contain radioactive material. Examples include the M43 chemical agent detector (americium-241); lensatic compasses, gunner's quadrants, aiming post lights, and collimators (tritium); Abrams armor packages (uranium-238, also called "depleted uranium"), lens coatings in thermal optics (thorium-232), and radiation, detection, indication, and computation (RADIAC) check sources (krypton-85 among others). It is a long list.

The Army designs these items so that they do not expose soldiers to significant

amounts of radiation even under tough conditions. The Army and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) have many regulations that keep them under tight control from the time they enter our inventory until they leave it.

It should not be a surprise that some foreign military equipment also contains radioactive material. We could have a problem if we bring back such equipment and do not put it under the same fixed controls that we have for our own equipment. This can happen if the soldier or unit does not know that the equipment contains radioactive

material or that Federal and Army regulations take effect the moment the soldier or unit takes custody of any equipment containing radioactive material.

Foreign equipment can come into Army custody as individual or unit war trophies put on display in orderly rooms, in front of Army Reserve Centers or National Guard Armories, or in Army museums. Intelligence units gather foreign equipment and bring it back for exploitation and reverse engineering. Recently, inspectors have found unknown radioactive material in all of these places and more.

Regardless of how the Army gets it, this radioactive material comes under the jurisdiction of Federal, Army, and sometimes State (especially for Army National Guard units) radiation safety regulations. Even if it is classified, the NRC may need to know about it. The NRC has the capability to handle classified radioactive material.

You should suspect that radioactive material is in foreign military equipment in the same places where we use it. This can be gauges and dials in military vehicles and aircraft, markings on



These soldiers are preparing to set up the M8A1 Chemical Agent Alarm System, which includes the M43A1 Chemical Agent Detector containing the radiation source (Americium-241).

dials and switches in radios and radar sets, and inside night aiming devices and chemical agent monitors.

The U.S. Army National Ground Intelligence Center has published the *Identification Guide for Radioactive Sources in Foreign Material* with pictures of many items of foreign military equipment that contain radioactive material. Call (804) 980-7719 or DSN 934-7719 for more information about this manual.

Your unit's RADIAC equipment can give a positive indication of radioactive material sometimes, but not every time!

As you know from your NBC training, alpha and beta particles may not penetrate the surface of the foreign equipment or the window of your detector, and so you may not detect these types of radiation even when it is present. This is especially true for tritium. You cannot detect tritium with any of your TOE RADIAC equipment. Your RADIAC instrument can tell if radioactive material is present, but do not trust it to tell you if radioactive

material is NOT there, unless you know for sure what type of radioactive material is there and that the instrument is capable of detecting it.

You can get help in detecting suspected radioactive material from several places. The installation radiation safety officer is a good person to ask. If your local Army hospital has a nuclear medicine clinic, then it also has a fully qualified radiation safety officer who has the experience and probably the equipment to detect and measure just about any kind of radioactive material you might have.

If you discover that you have radioactive material, what happens next depends on how much and what type you have, where it is, and how important it is to you to keep it. Be sure to keep your MACOM radiation safety staff officer fully informed if you find any

radioactive material.

First of all, you cannot allow the public to have access to radioactive material. You must secure it immediately from unauthorized access and use, and in such a manner that radiation exposure is minimized. This means, for example, you must remove radioactive dials and gauges from any vehicles on public display or otherwise prevent access to material.

If there is a chance of radioactive contamination, you must clean it up or prevent access to the area until you can

get it cleaned. See AR 11-9, The Army Radiation Safety Program, for radioactive waste disposal regulations.

If you want to get rid of the radioactive material, also refer to AR 11-9. You have only one option—you must use the Department of Defense Executive Agency for Low Level Radioactive Waste Disposal. Call them at (309) 782-2067 or DSN 793-2067 for guidance and assistance. They also may be able to help

you with decontamination if the project is small.

If you want to keep the radioactive material, you will probably have to have a NRC license or an Army radiation authorization to assure that everything is legal and that the radioactive material is under proper control. See AR 11-9 for application instructions.

In summary, you have a problem once you discover that the foreign equipment you possess contains radioactive material. What you must do next is keep it from becoming a major problem for you and for the Army. Your installation and MACOM radiation safety officers are there to help you. Be sure to contact them. ♦

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**Be sure to
keep your
MACOM
radiation safety
staff officer
fully informed
if you find any
radioactive
material.**

Written by accident investigators to provide major lessons learned from recent centralized accident investigations.

Investigators' Forum

SIMULATORS ARE FOR REAL!

Realism is a factor that units should build into every training scenario. To achieve this objective, units may employ the use of pyrotechnics to create an environment similar to the one expected in combat. However, sometimes units forget that pyrotechnics use requires trained individuals. In preparation for any training, units should incorporate the use of risk management to help conduct operations in a safe manner. This level of detail was overlooked by a leader that did not know how to employ a simulator device, but decided to attempt to make it work anyway, and in the process sustained serious injuries.

Background

A unit was in the field preparing for a battalion-level training exercise. As part of the scenario, the battalion decided to include an aggressor force to evaluate the various sections reacting to an attack. The aggressor officer in charge (OIC) was identified and he in turn detailed various soldiers from the unit to be part of this group.

In preparation for the event, the battalion requested blank ammunition and pyrotechnics that included simulators to support the aggressor force. As the exercise was about to start, the aggressor OIC arrived at the field ammunition site to pick up the ammunition assigned to the aggressor force. One of the items provided to the OIC was a Simulator, Flash Artillery, M110. The aggressor OIC, not sure on how to use the simulator, decided not to accept the simulator. Another OIC was then asked if he knew how to use the simulator, and he replied that he didn't.

It is suspected that this action sparked the curiosity of the OIC who decided to ask around if anyone knew how to employ the simulator. After getting

various responses from "I don't know" to "I think it uses gasoline" to "It needs a battery," none of them conclusive, the OIC decided to figure out how to employ the simulator.

Accident

Since no one around the site knew how to employ the simulator, it was assumed that it would act like another pyrotechnic device, the Simulator Projectile Ground Burst, M115A2. The M115A2 simulator has a pull cord that once activated provides a whistle sound and a delay effect that allows the user to throw the item prior to its detonation. Since the OIC had heard from other soldiers that a battery was needed to activate the simulator, he borrowed one from the platoon sergeant to make the device work. When the OIC connected the lead wires to the simulator, it instantly detonated at a short distance from his body causing serious injuries to his face and lacerations to his body.

Circumstances

The circumstances that led to this accident were a result of individual, leadership, and training failures. These failures were the result of various factors—one of them overconfidence on the part of the OIC.

■ **Individual Failure.** The OIC, knowing that he was not trained on the use of this particular simulator, decided to attempt to make it work. Even after having received a negative response from soldiers around him on its use, he was sure he could figure out how to employ the simulator. A reference on how to properly employ the simulator should have been present in case no one was familiar with how to operate this device.

■ **Leader Failure.** No one at the site decided to make an on-the-spot correction to prevent this unsafe act.

Neither the aggressor OIC nor the platoon sergeant took corrective action to prevent this accident from happening. In fact, all soldiers in the area knew the OIC intended to make the device work and that he did not know how to use it; but **no one** took any action to prevent it.

Leaders failed to ensure that someone knew how to use the simulator. The battalion had requested the device, but no one present was familiar with how to use it. As per TM 9-1370-207-10, this device requires that gasoline be added to the simulator prior to its employment; that at least a 50-yard safety zone be established; and primarily that it is not intended for use while holding in your hand. Luckily in this case, the simulator did not have any gasoline in it, but the blast and fragment effects caused serious injuries to the platoon leader.

■ **Training Failure.** The battalion did not have any trained soldiers to properly employ pyrotechnics. As per DA PAM 385-64, para 2-5, "Munitions and/or explosives will be handled only by trained personnel who understand the hazards and risks involved in the operation." Leaders did not ensure that all safety precautions for the employment of pyrotechnic devices were followed.

Conclusion

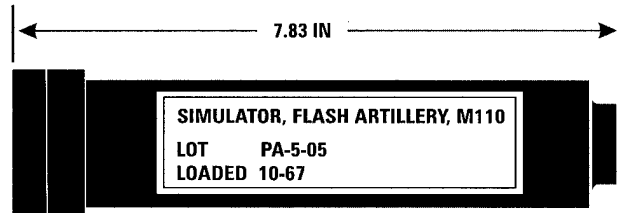
The reason why this accident happened was a result of poor judgement on the part of the OIC. His overconfidence in his abilities allowed him to conduct this unsafe act. Had the leaders and soldiers around him made an on-the-spot correction, this accident would not have happened.

Leaders at all levels must encourage the use of risk management to ensure that all possible hazards are recognized and that control measures are implemented to minimize their risk. Had a risk assessment been done on this operation, it would have been found that no one knew how to employ the simulator and that the improper use of pyrotechnics can cause serious injuries or death.

The result of this tragic event left the OIC with a possible permanent injury. Leaders and soldiers should be reminded of the dangers posed by the improper use of ammunition items. And remember... **Simulators are for real.** ♦

POC: USASC Ground Systems and Accident Investigations Division, DSN 558-3562 (334-255-3562)

Know Your Simulators!



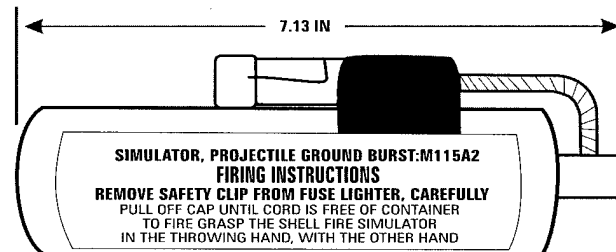
Simulator, Flash, Artillery: M110

USE: Effect battle conditions. Decoy in forward combat areas.

DESCRIPTION: Inner and outer container made of black plastic. Shipped with a commercial squib S93. Uses gasoline in filler hole. Needs a locally fabricated firing tube for discharging of simulator.

FUNCTIONING: Electrically activated. Electric squib ignites pyrotechnic charge and gasoline. **No audible signal. Instantaneous detonation.**

DODAC: 1370-L596



Simulator, Projectile Ground Burst: M115A2

USE: Effect battle noises and effects.

DESCRIPTION: Cylindrical paper tube, white. Contains a photoflash charge and a whistle assembly. Has a label giving firing instructions attached to the outside of simulator.

FUNCTIONING: Hand-thrown device. Safety fuse provides 6 to 10 second delay. Whistle composition lasts 2 to 4 seconds. **Audible signal. Delayed detonation.**

DODAC: 1370-L594

Remember that these simulators are not interchangeable, do not have the same use, and are not employed in the same manner.

NCO Corner

Leadership and Accident Prevention

The Army functions as a team. When any member of that team is lost because of an accident, the entire team suffers. Accidents have a human cost—the lives of soldiers, family members, units, and friends are affected by this tragic occurrence. Accidents also have a tangible price—the reduction of unit readiness. And accidents do not stop when we go to war. The record shows that in combat, the Army suffers more losses to accidents than to enemy action. NCOs, as leaders,

can have a positive influence on this statistic if they choose to do so.

For instance,

in one mishap, a platoon was moving to a firing point in extreme dust and dark conditions. During the movement, an M548A1 ammunition carrier hit an embankment. The sleeping soldier in the right front seat did not have his seatbelt buckled and was thrown from the vehicle when his door flew open. He consequently died from chest injuries.

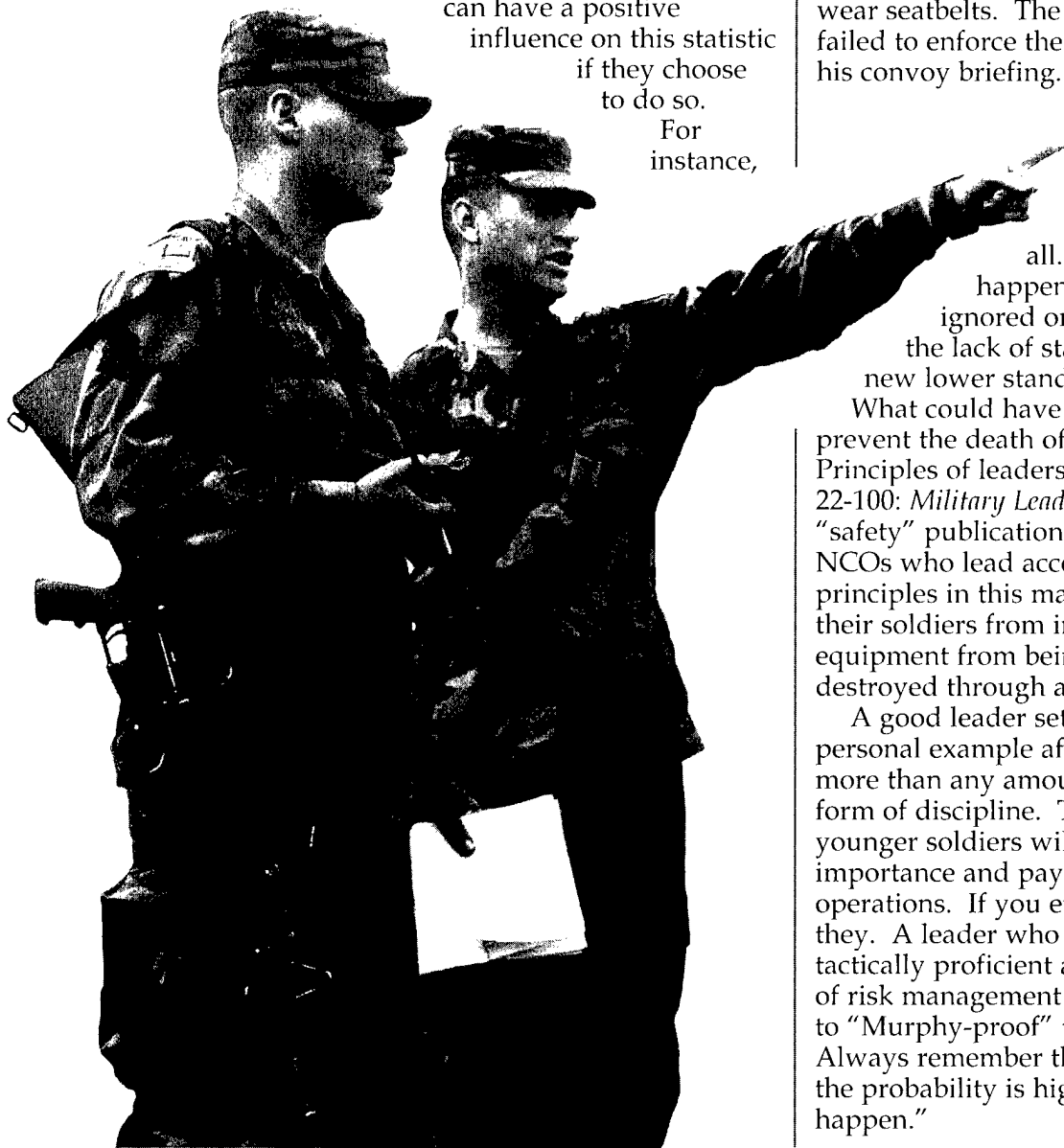
In this case, the unit chain of command put little emphasis on the AR 385-55 requirement for occupants of all vehicles, including tactical vehicles, to wear seatbelts. The platoon leader also failed to enforce the use of seatbelts in his convoy briefing. In fact, many ammo

carriers in the battalion did not have serviceable seatbelts, and some had none at all. As can easily

happen when standards are ignored or loosely enforced, the lack of standards became the new lower standard.

What could have been done to prevent the death of this soldier? Principles of leadership are listed in FM 22-100: *Military Leadership*. It is not a "safety" publication, but officers and NCOs who lead according to the principles in this manual will protect their soldiers from injury and their equipment from being damaged or destroyed through accidents.

A good leader sets the example. Your personal example affects your soldiers more than any amount of instruction or form of discipline. This is where the younger soldiers will learn the importance and payoffs of safe daily operations. If you enforce safety, so will they. A leader who is technically and tactically proficient applies the principles of risk management before the mission to "Murphy-proof" the operation. Always remember that "if it can happen, the probability is high that it will happen."



The platoons involved in this accident were driving through an area with numerous dry creek beds with steep sides (terrain). The jolt that threw the passenger out of the vehicle happened when the driver drove into an embankment due to degraded visibility. Use of seatbelts (aside from complying with AR 385-55) would have prevented this soldier from losing his life.

The knowledgeable leader knows and adheres to the limitations of equipment, regulations, SOPs, and doctrine; therefore, he ensures that his soldiers do the same. The leader knows his soldiers and looks out for their well being. This means having a thorough knowledge of their level of training and capabilities, as well as weaknesses so he can provide appropriate training where it is necessary and intercede to prevent human-error accidents.

A skilled leader ensures that subordinates understand the task, provides supervision, and is not satisfied until the mission is safely and effectively completed. By developing a sense of responsibility for his soldiers, a unit leader can ensure that his soldiers will follow the standards even when he is not around.

It is also worthwhile reviewing what FM 22-100 says about the ethical decision-making process. Regardless of the source of pressure to act unethically, a leader usually knows in his heart the right thing to do. This is where the leader has to perform accordingly to what he knows is right. In other words, he uses his gut feeling to identify something that doesn't appear to be right. The simpler, faster way of doing things is not necessarily the safest.

In making risk decisions, leaders need to apply the rules of risk management. The risk management cycle revolves around processes that are already in place such as the decision-making and problem-solving processes. Once risk management has been integrated into all facets of an operation, all unnecessary risk has been eliminated, and steps have been taken to ensure risk decisions are made at the proper level. The benefits of conducting the operation still have to be weighed against the potential costs. Some costs can be put into numbers: I have a 0.0001 percent chance of losing a vehicle that cost the Army \$60,000. But it is impossible to quantify the life of the soldier in that vehicle. When calculating risk, we should also be weighing the human costs.

NOTE: The term "leader" refers to commanders, personnel in the chain of command (team, squad, section, platoon leader), and staff members having personnel supervisory responsibility. ♦

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Supervision: The Short Course

There are five steps to the risk-management process:

1. Identify hazards.
2. Assess hazards to determine risks.
3. Develop controls and make risk decisions.
4. Implement controls.
5. Supervise and evaluate.

Step 5, supervision, not only covers the first four steps, it goes beyond them. It's not just making sure people do their jobs. It includes following up during and after an action to make sure that all went according to plan. It involves rehearsing and reevaluating the plan, and making adjustments as required by accommodating the unforeseen. It also involves making sure those lessons learned are saved for future use. Supervision includes ensuring—

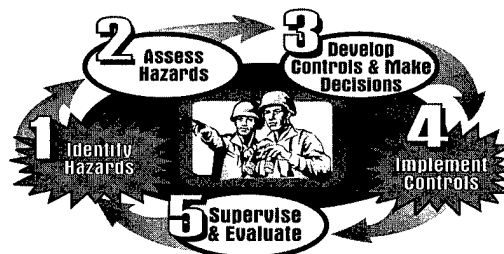
- You control, direct, evaluate, coordinate and plan the efforts of subordinates so that you can ensure the task is accomplished.

- The efficient use of materiel and equipment along with the effectiveness of operational procedures.

- Goals are established, along with a means of evaluating whether the goals are met.

- Orders are understood.

- Most importantly, you care about your soldiers and the mission. ♦



You Make the Call

"You Make the Call" is a regular feature in Countermeasure. The purpose is to educate, stimulate thought, and exchange information that will expand understanding and application of risk management in training and operational environments. All you have to do is read the synopsis below and write down what you consider to be the best way to handle the situation. Send your answers to U.S. Army Safety Center, Bldg. 4905, 5th Ave., ATTN: Countermeasure, Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363, e-mail countermeasure@safety-emh1.army.mil or fax 334-255-9528. We'll select the best answer from those submitted and the winner will receive a Safety Center coin and a letter of congratulations from the Director of Army Safety. All winning entries will be published in a future issue.

You are in a light infantry unit conducting an exfiltration exercise on foot. It is dark and your squad may have to cross a stream approximately 30 meters wide and 15 feet deep to reach the tactical assembly area (TAA). The exercise scenario calls for an exfiltration back to the TAA by foot and over heavily wooded terrain.

However, there is a time constraint. If the squad does not make it to the objective prior to 2300, the return to the TAA will be delayed and the squad will have to cross the stream to make it back on time for the prearranged helicopter exfiltration. If the squad does not return to the TAA at the prearranged time, the squad will have to remain on site until the next day and walk to friendly lines a distance of approximately 15 miles.

The squad leader knows that every operation in the exercise was late in reaching the objective. It appears that to be on the safe side, the crossing

of the stream will ensure that the squad is at the TAA on time. Walking through the heavily wooded terrain could be difficult and time-consuming at night. The squad leader must now decide how to approach the very likely event that the squad will have to cross the stream at night to meet their designated exfiltration time.

What will you do?

As a squad leader, identify the hazards associated with this mission based on the information provided. How would you minimize the risks associated with these hazards? Identify control measures that you would implement to ensure a safe mission completion. ♦

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Fort Leonard Wood Civilian Submits Best Answer

Thank you for responding to the October issue of "You Make the Call." As you recall in the October issue, a mechanized field artillery battalion received a FRAGO to displace from point A to point B at night with very little crew rest and you had to decide what was the best way to handle the situation. All answers were excellent; however Mr. Ed Pyatt submitted the best response. Congratulations, Mr. Pyatt! You will receive a Safety Center coin and a letter of congratulations from the Director of Army Safety for the following answer.

Any sleep is better than no sleep and the move will be made in the dark either way, so answer #2 is the most reasonable solution. If the 3 hours estimated by the XO includes the hot refuel and the set up for firing, depart at 0300 for the new location. If not, attempt a refuel in place with one man per vehicle performing the refueling who is

not a driver or TC. He can rest during the move. Conduct a leader's briefing, feed, and bed them down. ♦

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