



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

AFZX-CG

NOV 16 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Command Policy Memorandum CG-02 – Command Safety Policy

1. In FY 2005 the Army experienced 302 Soldier deaths due to accidents. Of these 302 deaths, FORSCOM units experienced 106 fatalities in CONUS and 54 accident-related fatalities in deployed units. Fort Polk experienced 3 accident-related fatalities in FY 2005. Some of these 302 fatalities occurred when Soldiers were doing the right thing and they were, regrettably, victims. However, a good number of these are the result of either indiscipline by the individual Soldier or a failure in leadership.
2. In theater, in our most dangerous environment, we have a much lower accident rate -- why is that? I am convinced it is because, in combat, our junior leaders are directly involved in the actions of their Soldiers. In these combat situations, the squad leader has ownership, responsibility, and accountability for everything his or her Soldiers do or fail to do. This tells us that when we put our junior leaders in charge, give them the responsibility and hold them accountable -- they and their Soldiers perform superbly and produce positive results. If we trust our junior leaders to lead Soldiers on a combat patrol or to lead them through the door on a raid, we must trust them to do the right thing in leading our Soldiers to make responsible, safe choices when off duty.
3. Attached is a memorandum from the Chief of Staff of the Army on safety containing some specific guidance on incorporating risk management into the performance evaluation system. Leaders need to read it and capture his guidance and intent. My OER support form reflects this emphasis on safety and will be disseminated two levels down, to the lieutenant colonel/battalion commander level.
4. My intent for our JRTC and Fort Polk Safety program is to put our junior leaders in charge of influencing our Soldiers to make responsible safety choices. I want leaders to empower first-line supervisors and give them the responsibility to identify at-risk Soldiers and to allow these junior leaders to take prudent steps to mitigate accidents. Simply put: Squad leaders are in charge of safety. This in no way removes senior leaders or the chain of command from oversight and supervision. Just like in combat, we will develop plans and supervise preparation and ensure standards are met, but the squad leader will lead his or her Soldiers "through the door."

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5. Specific guidance:

a. Squad leaders will give safety briefings and personally engage their Soldiers prior to releasing them. Company-sized formations will break down into squad-sized huddles with adequate time for our first line leaders to personally engage every Soldier and review information and approve off-duty plans.

b. Squad leaders are empowered to approve or modify their Soldiers' plans for off-duty.


c. When a Soldier has an accident or a discipline infraction, especially alcohol or vehicle-related, the squad leader will be involved. The squad leader will accompany that Soldier to see the chain of command; the squad leader will be responsible for preparing any command-directed additional training and the squad leader will be with and supervise their Soldier during any additional training.

d. Require all leaders, especially Squad leaders, to incorporate Composite Risk Management (CRM) in all mission planning and execution.

e. Challenge your junior leaders to identify and focus on their high-risk Soldiers.

6. I expect our great JRTC and Fort Polk leaders to take this intent and run with it. I expect you to set your squad leaders up for success by reviewing and approving their plans -- just like you would do in combat -- and then let them execute.

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DANIEL P. BOLGER
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:
A+

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE

CSA Sends:

In March 2003, the Secretary of Defense challenged the Services to reduce accidents by 50% by the end of FY05. Our target was 101 mishap fatalities, but we actually suffered 302 Soldier deaths due to accidents. These losses represent a significant impact on our combat power, and many could have been prevented with good leadership.

In the most dangerous environments - those in theater - we have a much reduced accident rate relative to the exposure levels. This is due to involved, engaged leaders who properly plan and then closely supervise their Soldiers' missions. Leaders are the key to preventing unnecessary loss. In recognition of this fact, we are strengthening the performance evaluation system on leader responsibility for risk management.

All leaders will include safety programs and tasks in their evaluation report support forms and counseling sessions. An excellent example is "Effectively incorporating Composite Risk Management (CRM) in all mission planning and execution to include; Quarterly Training Briefs (QTBs) and Quarterly Safety Council meetings." Open and continuous communication between Soldiers and leaders on this critical topic will work to achieve that mission. Leaders at all levels must lead the way in changing behavior to reduce accidents.

All senior raters will pass their support forms down two levels. For example: Division commanders will pass their support forms with safety objectives down to battalion commanders who will pass their support forms with safety objectives down to platoon leaders. The Noncommissioned Officers' (NCO) chain of supervision is linked in a similar fashion through their rating officials. Regular counseling in support of military evaluation systems is an already established requirement and practice. An oversight process for this requirement is in place as part of the evaluation counseling.

We can't afford to let this become a "check the box" requirement. Leaders must determine how their unit and Soldiers "fit" into programs and campaigns organized and promoted by The Combat Readiness Center. Leaders should take these broad agendas and translate them into specific tasks and objectives suitable for their unit and mission. This safety accountability focus at the leader level, and counseling to see it placed squarely into all officer and NCO development, is vital to preserving our most precious resource, the Soldier.

GEN Schoomaker

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE