

# Safety Alert



## MND-N MRAP Accident OIF SA-014



MND-N recently had an Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) accident that killed two Soldiers. This event emphasizes the need to wear seatbelts and practice rollover drills, both during the day and at night.

**Accident Synopsis:** While returning from a night mission, the Vehicle Commander (VC) of a MRAP vehicle (Caiman variant) failed to judge the distance between his vehicle and the soft shoulder of the road during a turn while crossing a dirt-covered culvert over an irrigation canal. The VC cleared the driver to turn even though there was inadequate room, contrary to the guidance contained in ARs 600-55 and 385-10. The VC believed the vehicle had greater than actual clearance and he did not identify the soft shoulder as a hazard. As a result, the driver turned too early and the MRAP rolled into the canal. The VC and a passenger drowned when they were unable to egress the MRAP with the other occupants. The other Soldiers received injuries varying from serious to minor. The vehicle received \$78K in damages. It is suspected that the accident was a result of the VCs inexperience.

During the investigation it was discovered that the Unit only conducted rollover drills during the day and only using the rear exit. Because this accident happened at night the vehicle occupants had difficulty orienting themselves in the vehicle, finding the emergency exits, and two became caught on items in the vehicle. Consideration should be given to the loss of situational awareness during a rollover or IED attack.

The investigation also discovered that personnel had difficulty exiting the vehicle while wearing the OTV. Personnel should consider immediately removing these bulky items depending on the tactical threat. Additionally, all Soldiers should be wearing the RFI issued cutter on their OTV.

This accident and the death of these Soldiers should server as a reminder that seatbelts save lives and that roll-over drills can and do save lives. Drills should be practiced during the day and at night under total darkness. Units should consider practicing drills using the HMMWV trainer know as HEAT.

