

Resource document

WinterTactical

Ground Guiding

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Narrative:

Each year, Soldiers and Civilians are seriously injured and killed in ground guiding accidents and safety officials agree that most of these types of accidents are preventable.

Ground guiding is a task that almost every Soldier performs and when it's not executed safely, Soldiers lives are in jeopardy.

Ground guides assist equipment operators in identifying potential hazards, obstacles and personnel that they may not otherwise see. However, when personnel do not follow proper ground guiding procedures, the consequences can be fatal.

Key Messages:

- Efficient vehicle operations as well as any ground operations, and the safety of Soldiers depend on clear and accurate communication among ground personnel and through the use of arm and hand signals
- Moving large pieces of equipment and vehicles, especially in tight places, requires a properly trained and positioned ground guide.
- Safety is about protecting our Soldiers, equipment, and Army resources, whether in garrison or on the battlefield.

Talking points:

- Leaders must enforce training and integrate risk management into all phases of operations to mitigate hazards while conducting vehicle operations.
- Ground guides are a vehicle operator's eyes when maneuvering equipment, especially in areas of limited visibility.
- For standardized visual signals, leaders and Soldiers should be familiar with FM 21-60 and GTA 17-02-091, Visual Signals Armor Fighting Vehicle.

Tips:

Ground guiding procedures must be included in a unit's training and utilized to ensure personnel and equipment are maneuvered safely. Keep the following tips in mind when conducting ground-guiding operations:

- Ensure drivers understand they must immediately stop if they lose site of the ground guide or if they don't understand a hand signal.
- Make sure everyone understands the basic signals to control vehicle drivers (don't forget about flashlight signals) from FM 21-60, Visual Signals.
- Position front ground guides to the left front of vehicles. Never allow a ground guide

to walk directly in the vehicle's path. Ground guides and drivers must understand this.

- When using two ground guides, they must maintain visual contact with each other. The front ground guide must stop the vehicle if he or she loses sight of the rear ground guide.
- Ensure the ground guide, not the vehicle commander, is in charge of the vehicle. Whenever the vehicle is under the control of a ground guide, the only command the vehicle commander should issue to the driver is "stop."

Army Regulation 385-10, The Army Safety Program, provides detailed guidance on safe motor vehicle operation. Chapter 11-4 outlines the requirements of using a ground guide. It states:

h. Ground guides. Ground guides are required when wheeled and tracked vehicles are backed, or when moved within an assembly area or motor pool.

(1) Ground guides will be properly trained in accordance with FM 21–60, Visual Signals; TC 21–305-20, Manual for the Wheeled Vehicle Operator and TC 21–306, Tracked Combat Vehicle Driver Training.

AR 385-10, Chap. 11–10. Army combat vehicle safety guidelines

d. Bivouac and assembly areas.

(4) Operators will move ACVs in motor pools, parking areas, cantonments, assembly, and sleeping areas only when a dismounted ground guide assists. When visibility is reduced, guides will use flashlights to direct vehicles. The TC or VC, driver, and dismounted ground guide will maintain visual contact at all times.

Historical Reference:

<https://safety.army.mil/>

<https://safety.army.mil/multimedia/CAMPAIGNSINITIATIVES/KnowtheSigns/tabid/2369/Default.aspx>

<https://safety.army.mil/drivertrainingtoolbox/> (AKO log in required)