



Maintaining Situational Awareness in Safety Programs

Since taking this position, rarely a month goes by when I don't receive feedback on what I've written. That's a good thing and I appreciate your input and ideas. Command sergeants major exist to ensure information, concerns and ideas of all Soldiers are shared with those appointed over us and those we supervise.

Two-way communication and the exchange of ideas between us will facilitate a safer environment for our Army. Hopefully, you're exchanging safety best practices within formations, installations and units the same way you share mission information. Another way to support safety within your organization is to discuss accidents occurring in similar units, whether on or off your installation. Often, the difference between a Class A accident (\$1 million or loss of life) and a Class D accident (\$2,000 or more but less than \$20,000) is inches and seconds. For one reason or another, units are often reluctant to talk about or report accidents. This means other units are not able to benefit from the lessons learned. Awareness and understanding of what caused a Class D for one rotation or unit has the potential to prevent a future Class A.

The road to success in safety is well traveled; however, it is often rough and generally includes a detour through the school of hard knocks. Reporting and publicizing accidents, however difficult it may be, will reduce future accidents and the hard knocks you and others suffer while traveling this road. Sharing accident information for others to learn from will not reduce Army accidents overall, but will educate and strengthen the safety culture we are attempting to foster. Report your accidents and ensure they make it into the Risk Management Information System (RMIS). Doing so allows others to properly plan, train and execute future missions with knowledge of the risks associated with an activity. Army Materiel Command (AMC) and the leadership of our Combat Training Centers (CTC) will tell you it is not uncommon to see units suffer the same types of incidents, rotation after rotation. Whether on a deployment or CTC rotation, sharing information and lessons learned will enable others to take precautions and not make the same mistakes.

There are several methods in place to provide and promote situational awareness of accidents in our Army. Three such tools available to Leaders are Preliminary Loss Reports (PLRs), "Got Risk?" and *Knowledge* magazine. PLRs are usually produced within 48 hours of an accident and contain the who, what, when and where of an accident, as well as recommended discussions for your formation. To receive PLRs via e-mail, visit the USACRC homepage to subscribe. "Got Risk?" is a brief synopsis of PLRs that occurred during a one-week time frame. Generally sent to battalion commanders, "Got Risk?" also affords squad Leaders the opportunity to discuss the incidents with their troops. Generally, each one contains an incident that young Leaders can relate to on a personal level. Often, both PLRs and "Got Risk?" are strategically placed in bathrooms for troops' and visitors' reading pleasure. Lastly, *Knowledge* magazine was developed in response to the continuing safety cultural transformation occurring Armywide. With a distribution of 68,000 subscribers, *Knowledge* supports our Army and the way we fight.

These tools, as with all USACRC products, enable units to become more predictive and proactive through a growing understanding and identification of accident trends. Take the time to visit the USACRC Web site at <https://crc.army.mil> and share information with others. The life you save may be an old friend or even your own. The enemy, "Risk", can be defeated. Don't keep accidents a secret, beat risk by maintaining open, two-way communication and sharing ideas, both up and down the chain of command.

Army Safe is Army Strong!

Tod L. Glidewell
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center