



July 2008

We all hear about the positive impact engaged leadership at all echelons makes toward protecting our Soldiers, Civilians and Families and decreasing accidental loss. But who provides that leadership? Who are the Leaders in our Army responsible for taking accountability for safety? Your answer is “me.”

Every member of our Army team is a Leader. Each person makes a difference in preventing accidents, engaging in safety practices both on and off duty, and mentoring and bridging the gaps in knowledge for others by sharing their experiences. But the key to success in decreasing accident losses remains “engagement” – each one of you stepping up, engaging and sharing from the lowest level to the top.

Engagement means your personal involvement – stepping in wherever and whenever the situation calls for it. It can be as simple as just asking the right question at the right time. For instance, seeing your Family member head out the door to ride a motorcycle without all the proper protective equipment – “Don't you need all your PPE?” Or watching your buddies put together a spur-of-the-moment road trip – “Have you thought this through? Which one of you is taking responsibility for ensuring a safe ride back for all of you?” How many times have you heard someone, upon learning of a tragic accident, say out loud, “I knew something like that was going to happen. Why didn't somebody do something?” You are that somebody and you can do something!

That's how an individual Leader makes a difference. But why make such a commitment? Think that is a “no-brainer” question, as well? Our Army codified our commitment to the team through the Soldier's Creed. As you well know, within the Creed are four very powerful sentences which are further described as the “Warrior Ethos.” The last line of the “Warrior Ethos” states, “I will never leave a fallen comrade.” But when is a comrade fallen? Obviously, we have fallen comrades on the mountains above the Shahi-Kot Valley and in the streets of Fallujah. But don't we also have fallen comrades in the bars of Itaewon, in our own formations and even inside their own homes? Aren't these comrades also worthy of our engagement?

So, we remain committed to our comrades by engaging and remaining engaged at every level required. Only together can we reduce accidental losses to their lowest levels yet. This year, we are on our way to achieving that goal. This is the result of each one of you stepping up every day and actively honoring your sworn commitment to your comrades.

By exercising ownership of our Army, we enter into a culture that strives to continuously reduce our accidental losses to levels never before achieved, where we truly operate as a “Band of Brothers.”

Thank you for all you do to keep our Soldiers, Families and Civilians safe. Remain engaged and continue supporting safety transformation, changing the safety climate throughout the Army and sharing lessons learned to prevent the next loss. You make the difference.

Army Safe is Army Strong!

WILLIAM H. FORRESTER
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
Commanding