



Safe AMV operations key to mission success

U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

A properly maintained and safely operated Army Motor Vehicle is a critical component of a larger task: mission accomplishment.

Winter or summer, Soldiers and leaders must focus on keeping AMVs in service and ensuring safe operations to complete the mission, said Richard Scott, a safety and occupational health specialist with the Ground Task Force at the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center.

“Getting to the fight with all your equipment is critical. If some combat forces can’t get to the fight, the unit becomes less capable of achieving their mission, and it puts the remaining forces at increased risk,” he explained. “The same is true with maintenance and support personnel who may not be available to support the warfighter because their vehicle became disabled over a maintenance issue or was damaged in a non-combat related driving accident and they didn’t make it to the fight.”

While not making it to the fight is a serious problem, dealing with malfunctioning or wrecked vehicles becomes more dangerous during contact with the enemy.

“There’s no good time for a vehicle to malfunction,” Scott said. “If it breaks down while you’re in contact, Soldiers may have to exit the vehicle to effect repairs and that increases their exposure to enemy fire.”

During the fall and winter months, it becomes increasingly important to ensure tires, brakes, windshield wipers and headlights are in good working order on all AMVs. Additionally, leaders must make sure all operators read their AMV manuals and have the appropriate training, time and equipment to set the conditions for AMV mission success.

“Leaders must ensure each vehicle has the emergency equipment and basic issue items for cold weather,” Scott said. “Technical manuals provide specific guidance for each type of vehicle, telling the leader and operator what equipment is required, and what to do and check before, during and after cold weather operations. Not knowing the vehicle and exceeding the AMV’s limitation is an open invitation for an accident.”

Knowing the vehicle and having the right equipment are only part of the risk management solution for keeping AMV operators safe during cold weather driving. Safe operations while moving are also important.

Maintenance issues in theater benefit from modern practices and a mature maintenance system. However, an AMV out of service because of a maintenance issue or one that's wrecked due to unsafe driving are both out of the fight.

"Over the past few years, the Army has received new test equipment that helps mechanics troubleshoot problems quickly and efficiently, which leads to fewer mechanical problems. But unsafe driving habits that cause a wreck and take an AMV out of the fight will hurt the best maintenance program in the world," Scott said.

More information on AMV safety and many other fall and winter safety topics is available online at <https://safety.army.mil> under the Fall/Winter Safety Campaign tab.

-30-

When driving AMVs:

- Avoid unnecessary talking and never text while driving. Have a passenger read maps or manuals when required.
- Always enforce mandatory seat belt use.
- Avoid complacency and remain vigilant.
- Comply with published vehicle procedures.