

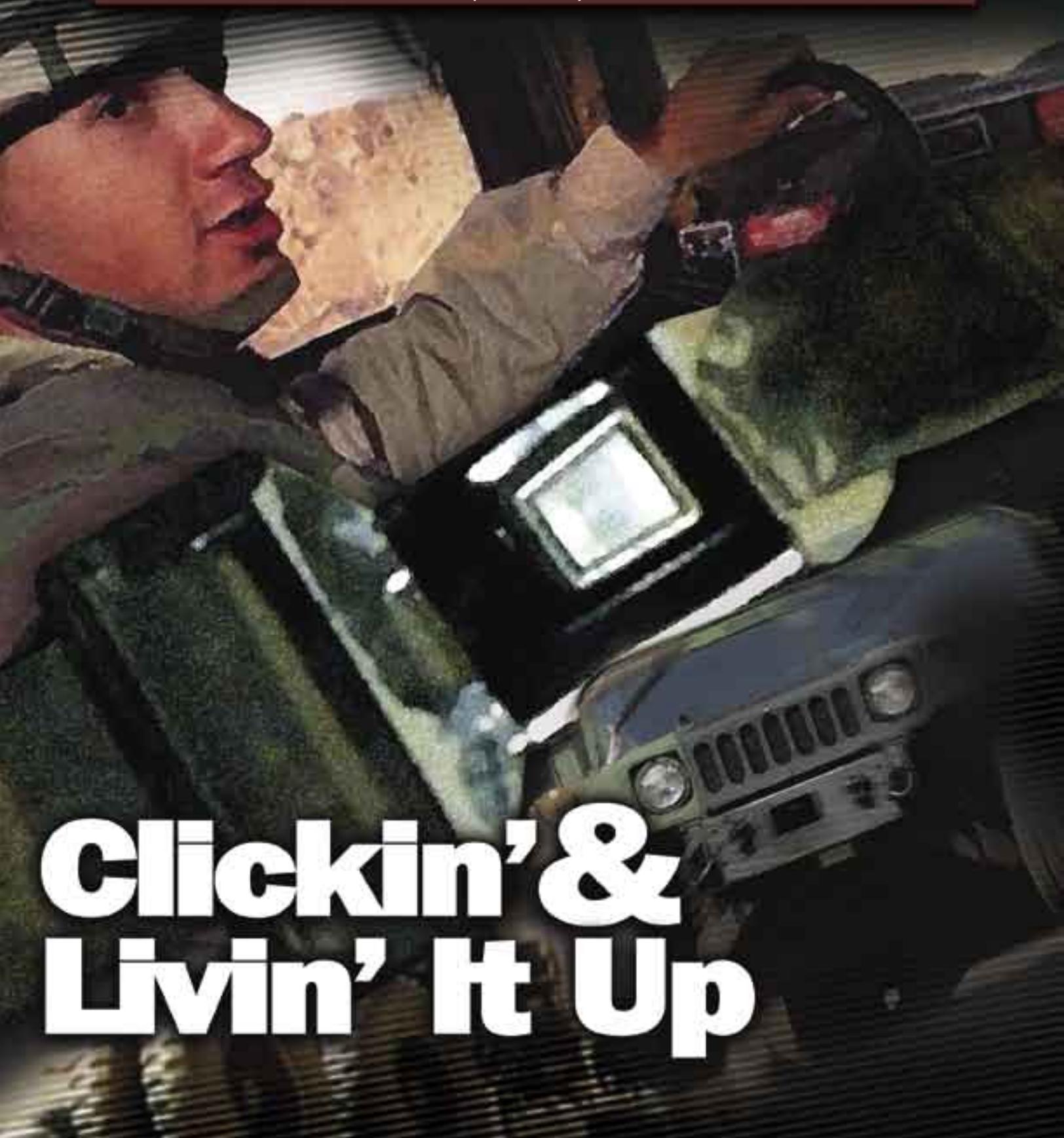
ARMY GROUND RISK-MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Countermeasure

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Clickin' & Livin' It Up

ARMY GROUND RISK-MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

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Rollover Poster



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Why Should I Wear My Seatbelt?

SFC JOHN TEMPLE
Accident Investigator
U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center

I've been assigned to the Army Combat Readiness Center (CRC) for about 3 years. Before I came to the CRC, you wouldn't catch me wearing my seatbelt in an Army vehicle. I had all kinds of excuses: I'll need to get out of the vehicle fast if we're ambushed. The seatbelt restricts my movement. Wearing a seatbelt is like planning for an accident. If my time is up, I guess it's up (although you wouldn't catch me without my body armor!). And wearing a seatbelt just isn't cool. I look back now and realize how lucky I was then. I've seen too many dead Soldiers as an accident investigator—Soldiers that most likely would be alive today if they'd worn their

seatbelts.

A few months ago I was investigating a Stryker rollover that killed two Soldiers. The driver lost control of the Stryker, and he and another Soldier in the vehicle's rear were ejected and crushed. A Stryker from the same brigade gave me a ride to the accident site, and as I put on my seatbelt one of the Soldiers in the back said, "You don't need that. We never wear them." I couldn't believe what I was hearing! There we were, driving to the site where two Soldiers died because they weren't wearing their seatbelts, and someone told



me I didn't need mine. It just didn't seem logical.

How do Soldiers develop this mindset? For starters, they pick up bad habits from leaders who say it's okay not to wear seatbelts. And what kind of message is sent if a leader tells their Soldiers to wear seatbelts, but doesn't enforce the rule or wear their own?

Here's an example. A former squad leader once told me I shouldn't wear my seatbelt because he knew someone that would've been killed if they'd been wearing theirs. That person was speeding and lost control of his car, which ran off the road and hit a telephone pole. He was ejected from the car and survived, but his neck was cut all the way across. A doctor told him that if he'd been wearing his seatbelt, he would've been killed when the car hit the pole.

Restrain Yourself

Inertia is an object's tendency to keep moving until something else works against this motion. To put it another way, inertia is every object's resistance to changing its speed and direction of travel. Things naturally want to keep going. Anything that is in the vehicle, including the driver and passengers, has its own inertia, which is separate from the vehicle's inertia. The car accelerates

riders to its speed. Imagine that you're coasting at a steady 50 miles per hour. Your speed and the vehicle's speed are pretty much equal, so you feel like you and the car are moving as a single unit.

But if the car were to crash into a telephone pole, it would be obvious that your inertia and the vehicle's were absolutely independent. The force of the pole would bring

the vehicle to an abrupt stop, but your speed would remain the same. Without a seatbelt, you would either slam into the steering wheel at 50 miles per hour or go flying through the windshield at 50 miles per hour. Just as the pole slowed the vehicle down, the dashboard, windshield or the road would slow you down by exerting a tremendous amount of force.

When you break it down, this guy was VERY lucky. His car rolled one time, he was ejected at 80 mph, and his head was almost cut off. His body barely missed hitting two trees and the telephone pole, and he just happened to land in an area where he could survive. The chances of surviving that accident were very low with or without a seatbelt. Although that driver survived without his seatbelt, statistics prove you have a much greater chance of living through an accident if you wear yours.

The Soldiers in the following accidents probably would've survived if they'd worn their seatbelts. Keep in mind most of these accidents occurred in theater, where the enemy—not accidents—is typically seen as the biggest threat.

- A Soldier lost control of his HMMWV at 70 mph. The vehicle rolled three times off a 20-foot embankment. The driver wore his seatbelt and walked away, but his passenger was killed. The passenger was not wearing his seatbelt.

- A HMMWV was cut off by a civilian truck and subsequently collided with the vehicle. The passenger, a lieutenant colonel, was not wearing his seatbelt and was

killed. The driver wore his seatbelt and survived.

- A Soldier lost control of his 5-ton truck on an icy highway. Both Soldiers were killed when the truck ran off the roadway. Neither Soldier was wearing their seatbelt.

- One Soldier was killed and another was injured when they were ejected from their HMMWV. The driver swerved the HMMWV to avoid hitting the open door of a civilian vehicle. The deceased Soldier was run over by the vehicle behind the HMMWV.

There are many more accidents like these in the CRC database. In nearly every one, the occupants would've survived if they'd had on their seatbelts. Your fellow Soldiers and your family are counting on you to do everything possible to survive the enemy and accidental threats of combat. Buckle up and stay alive. Don't let an excuse for not wearing your seatbelt keep you from making it home. 

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Letters from War

Tactical Movement

DVD Now Available

The Army Combat Readiness Center recently released "Tactical Movement," the third DVD in its Letters from War series. The DVD features interviews with active-duty and Reserve Component Soldiers in theater as well as contractors, a transportation battalion commander, maintenance NCOs, truckmasters, convoy live-fire trainers, heavy wheel mechanics, and one Soldier who took rollover drills to heart and survived an accident.

Topics covered include Composite Risk Management; rehearsals; convoy live-fire tactics, techniques, and procedures; up-armored HMMWV safety tips; and two special features: "I Survived a HMMWV Rollover" and "Getting Ready to Roll: A Right-seat Ride." An "additional resources" folder contains useful reference tools such as field manuals, PowerPoint presentations,

and training support packages.

To order this two-disc set or any of the Letters from War series DVDs, go to <http://dodimagery.afis.osd.mil/davis/> and type in "Letters from War" or "tactical movement" as a keyword search. Then select the DVD you want and add it to the shopping cart. If you need more than one copy, ask for extra copies in the "comments" box. Please remember this product is restricted in release for official use only.

We'll announce upcoming DVDs in upcoming issues of *Countermeasure*. Future topics include "Medical," "The Joint IED Defeat Task Force UNCUT," and "Fort to Port." Please give us feedback—we genuinely want to know if we're on the right track! For more information contact Rebecca Nolin at (334) 255-2067, DSN 558-2067, or by e-mail at video@safetycenter.army.mil.

On A Roll To Die

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editor's note: Rollover accidents in Army Motor Vehicles are killing Soldiers at an alarming rate, both in theater and at home. In many of these accidents, the deceased Soldiers chose not to wear their seatbelts and were ejected from the vehicle. However, this is not an "Army problem"—all branches of the military are suffering these same type accidents. The article below was published in the Winter 2005 issue of Ground Warrior, the Marine Corps ground safety magazine. Read on for some "déjà vu," and remember that their mistakes are the same ones killing our Soldiers today.

"We always wear seatbelts, except when we're in a tactical training environment," one NCO said following a HMMWV rollover. "My Marines always obey the speed limit, but it doesn't really apply when training on a fire-and-movement range," a senior NCO said about another HMMWV accident. Following yet another HMMWV rollover, another NCO said, "I've never seen any of my Marines driving recklessly."

Many Marines are aware that motor vehicle mishaps

cause most accidental fatalities and property damage, both on and off duty. Several HMMWV rollovers over the past 5 years resulted in numerous deaths, dismemberment injuries, and destruction. The following is a quick glimpse at three of those accidents.

In the first accident, an NCO was driving some mechanics back to the motor pool from the field. The driver seemed to believe that General Motors had built a vehicle that was "unrollable." He set out to prove his point by fishtailing the vehicle while accelerating down a sloping dirt road. The driver's side rear wheel caught a ditch, and the vehicle slid sideways before going airborne more than 50 feet. Both the driver and truck commander (TC) were ejected as the vehicle corkscrewed through the air. Only the two mechanics in the back seat had enough sense to buckle their seatbelts. When the vehicle landed one mechanic

got out, kissed the ground, and began first aid on his comrades. The TC suffered an avulsion from his wrist to his elbow, and the driver suffered permanent brain damage.

The second accident involved a platoon conducting a rehearsal for a fire-and-movement exercise. A senior NCO thought the exercise was moving too slowly and directed the Marines to pick up their pace. While retrograding from a forward firing position to a rear one, a HMMWV attempted a 110-degree turn into the position. The driver lost control in the turn, and the vehicle slid almost broadside down the road. As the truck left the roadway, the tires dug into



soft sand and “bit,” causing a slow roll. The HMMWV came to rest on its roof, killing the .50-caliber gunner in the turret. The driver, who had limited experience on unimproved roads, exceeded the speed limit for a gravel road.

In the final accident, a

very wet roads.

Directly related to the road condition is another factor: speed. These three Marines drove well above both the established speed limit and safe speed for the road or training area. The drivers clearly were hot-dogging in two of these accidents.

“Perhaps most importantly, seatbelt use played a major role in who walked away from these accidents and who didn’t.”

corporal of the guard decided to drive the duty HMMWV while making rounds. The unlicensed corporal lost control of the vehicle on a dirt and gravel road while driving well over the speed limit. The corporal and the other occupants were ejected and injured, one fatally.

These three accidents share several common factors. All involved HMMWVs—vehicles that, despite their relatively low center of gravity, can and do roll over frequently. The three accidents also occurred on unimproved roads. Drivers must understand that HMMWV tires grip sand and gravel only about half as well as asphalt or concrete, much like regular tires on snowy or

Tactical vehicles are not personal recreational vehicles and should be treated with respect. Vehicle commanders must brief vehicle speeds and other safety control measures whether their troops are conducting combat operations in theater or administrative movements on base. When a driver exceeds the speed limit, they place their life and the lives of their occupants on the line, not to mention their careers.

Leaders must carefully plan and brief safety considerations for HMMWVs with turrets. Drivers MUST obey the speed limit in these vehicles and take extra precautions to prevent collisions or

rollovers. A gunner in a turret doesn’t stand a chance if the vehicle lands on top of him. In addition, leaders must account for a lack of experienced drivers when planning and executing training. Two of the drivers above were inexperienced, and one wasn’t licensed at all.

Perhaps most importantly, seatbelt use played a major role in who walked away from these accidents and who didn’t. When a vehicle rolls, the unrestrained occupants most likely will be ejected. One of these drivers was ejected and almost died, while two of his passengers were belted in and escaped the accident unharmed.

The bottom line is always buckle up and treat HMMWVs for what they are—powerful military machines that can be lethal if they’re mishandled. Take care of yourself and your comrades, and remember that arriving alive depends on you when you’re in the driver’s seat. 

Reprinted with permission from the Winter 2005 Ground Warrior, www.safetycenter.navy.mil.

Danger Lurks in Combat's Shadow

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more than one million mines reportedly remain emplaced throughout Kosovo. During the war, any and all manner of explosive devices were used to kill combatants on both sides. Combat action in our operational theaters, especially Iraq and Afghanistan, proves the emplaced explosive is a very efficient “soldier”—one that needs no food, clothing, or shelter.

These explosives come in several forms: as a

conventional ground-emplaced mine; as air-dropped, hand-thrown, or artillery- or shoulder-fired explosive ordnance; or what's recently become known as the improvised explosive device (IED). We might term IEDs as “unconventional” weapons since they aren't produced in factories. Basically, IEDs are “jerrybuilt” devices constructed from a hodgepodge of materials including pieces from conventional munitions, civilian electronics, readily available scrap materials, and lethal explosives.

Every Soldier should be able to identify these types of weapons. Conventional mines generally are made of metal, wood, or plastic and resemble common shapes. These mines might look like a hubcap or soda bottle, or even a wooden shoebox. Plastic anti-personnel mines designed to look like leaves also have been found in various areas.

When dropped, explosive ordnance might or might not explode. These “duds” fall into the category of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and might detonate at any time. These explosives

could lie on the ground for months or even years and still be triggered by an unsuspecting Soldier. UXO includes hand grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, bombs, artillery shells, and any launched or dropped-on-target explosive.

The above weapons are relatively easy to identify compared to IEDs, which don't look like



traditional military munitions. IEDs commonly are concealed and disguised as part of the natural landscape, such as in a collection of stones on the roadside or brush along a highway. They might even be attached surreptitiously to the underside of a military vehicle. These “homemade” bombs can be activated remotely with an electronic trigger device by someone standing 100 meters away. Others might be triggered by tripwire or a simple clock mechanism set to detonate at a preset time.

To successfully counter these threats, we must know where to expect them. Maintain situational awareness at all times, especially while crossing frequently used intersections, bypasses, fording sites, and culverts. Be cautious when passing key logistical points such as water, fuel, or food facilities; abandoned buildings; ditches; and debris strewn along the roadside. Look for signs of road repair including new construction or patching. Also be vigilant for more direct evidence such as craters, tripwires or cables stretched across the road, or even shrapnel strewn about the area. Areas the locals conspicuously avoid are another subtle—but

nevertheless reliable—sign of an explosives site. And don’t forget about dead animals or people, both of which have been rigged with explosives in the past.

There are specific rules for

branches, sticks, or twigs at every approach to the site.

The threat is clear—we face not man, but his shadow. Mines, UXO, and IEDs are designed to catch Soldiers unaware and maim or destroy

“These explosives could lie on the ground for months or even years and still be triggered by an unsuspecting Soldier.”

dealing with explosives sites. Never approach a suspected explosive ordnance item, and avoid the area where the ordnance is located. Don’t move or disturb the ordnance, and never transmit radio signals near explosives. Immediately report the location and suspected ordnance type to your higher headquarters. Also be certain to clearly mark the area and indicate the explosives threat. One marking method is to stretch colored tape across the site entrance. The tape should be placed one meter above the ground, if possible, to make it easily discernable from the surrounding landscape. Piled rocks may also be used if no tape is available. To more clearly indicate a life-threatening hazard, emplace crossed

them. And, long after the battle has been engaged and decided, these devices will remain a deadly threat to our Soldiers. Explosives are serious business, so be vigilant, be aware, and make it home safe! 🚫

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It Was an Easy Range

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It was 0900, and the unit moved to a range to conduct room clearing in several buildings on a military operations in urban terrain facility. The buildings were constructed with 2" x 4", 2" x 8", 2" x 10", and 6" x 6" lumber, and ¼"- to ¾"- plywood sheeting. The facility included both single room/single story and multiple room/multiple story buildings. Adjacent rooms were not visible through the plywood walls.

The buildings paralleled both sides of the mock city's main street and were laid out over several city blocks. The range was designed to allow units to develop close quarter combat and maneuver scenarios and to enhance fighting ability in urban terrain. These scenarios included clearing single

The Soldiers were instructed to conduct two blank fires to show they were safe to fire live. This procedure was important because they would clear rooms with two teams. Alpha Team would clear a room, then Bravo Team would leapfrog and clear the next room. The squad received a safety briefing and began the exercise around noon.

The first blank fire went well. The second was different from the first, and the squad missed one of the rooms. The company



fire live. When everyone was ready, they moved back to load the live ammunition while the other squad conducted their blank fires. Soon everyone was ready, and the squad received the go-ahead from the platoon leader. Everything was going well, and all but three rooms were cleared.

Alpha Team moved into the fourth room and began engaging the targets. Suddenly, someone yelled "MEDIC!" Everyone stopped firing and walked out of the room to find that a member of Bravo Team was shot. One of Alpha Team's bullets—fired from the room they were clearing—passed through the plywood wall and

“Suddenly, someone yelled “MEDIC!” Everyone stopped firing and walked out of the room to find that a member of Bravo Team was shot.”

rooms with maneuvering elements while clearing multiple buildings throughout the city and using support-by-fire positions.

commander gave an after-action report and said that although the squad made tactical errors, they were safe. The squad got the ok to

struck the Bravo Team Soldier. He was directly behind one of the targets engaged by Alpha Team.

On that day the Army lost a Soldier, a mother lost a son, and this unit's Soldiers lost a friend. Why? This exercise was considered an "easy" range. However, mistakes were made—the same mistakes seen every day on ranges across the Army. On this range, those mistakes added up and a Soldier was shot in a preventable accident. Learn from this unit's mistakes and prevent an accident on your range.

- The scenario was changed from the one approved by the battalion commander and range control. Soldiers occupied a room that was not on the scenario or the range contract. This change put the Soldiers downrange behind a target, which was on a wall in another room. The two teams could not see each other.

- No one conducted a walk-through on the range before firing. Instead, the unit went straight to blank fires. A walk-through is important because it gives the leadership and Soldiers a chance to talk about their actions! Sometimes leaders are reluctant to conduct a walk-through because the

Soldiers will see the targets, just as they would in a blank fire. However, the walk-through's slower pace allows Soldiers to talk about what will happen and identify the scenario's potential hazards.

“On that day the Army lost a Soldier, a mother lost a son, and this unit's Soldiers lost a friend. Why? This exercise was considered an “easy” range.”

It is important to remember this was a training event to make the unit ready for combat. We train as we fight; however, we must train at the appropriate level before we run at a combat pace.

- The range safety officer (RSO) and officer in charge (OIC) were performing multiple functions on the range. It is important for the RSO and OIC to perform only the functions specified in Army Regulation (AR) 385-63. This guidance removes the RSO and OIC from all other responsibilities and allows them to ensure safety throughout the range.

- The unit's RSO and OIC were not trained. This is a big problem throughout the Army. Units are sending

their RSOs and OICs to range control for certification. However, range control does not train RSOs and OICs, nor is it their responsibility; range control only familiarizes them on installation policies

and procedures. The unit is responsible for training RSOs and OICs in accordance with AR 385-63.

This unit is a very good unit that simply labeled a range as easy and let some important decisions slip under the radar. No matter how routine or easy a range might seem, apply the five steps of the risk management process and follow all unit and Army polices. You just might save a life! 

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Missing Something?

CW4(RET) MIKE CRONRATH

a few years ago I made a bad decision and ended up with a blank space between my left-hand pinky and middle fingers. I'd just finished unloading some office chairs from a 5-ton truck at an airfield and got impatient while waiting on my buddy to help me down. We'd used a hydraulic lift on the truck's back end to lower the chairs to the ground, and he was rolling the chairs inside the hangar. Instead of waiting on my buddy to get back and lower me to the ground using the lift, I decided to jump off the back—a 4 ½-foot fall.

After all, I was wasting time!

I put my hand on the

truck's steel side rail and jumped. Then I felt a tug on my left ring finger. I thought I'd merely cut my hand, so I was slightly amazed to discover my finger missing. Actually, it was ripped from my body! The skin was gone from the top of my hand, exposing the muscle, and blood was flowing from the wound. A small piece of bone that used to be the middle part of my finger was jutting from the mess and broken off about halfway down.

There's nothing like the irrational fear of bleeding to death to get you moving! I grabbed what remained of my hand and ran inside the hangar for help. I was so distraught I didn't look for my missing finger. Fortunately, I was a medic in a MEDEVAC company, and my fellow medics knew what to do. They immediately tended to my hand and found my mangled finger, which they put on ice. I then was flown to a local Army medical center that had the capability to reattach my finger.

I was in the hospital for the next month and granted an additional 30



days convalescent leave. The doctors tried their best to save my finger, but the blood vessels and nerve endings were too torn and distorted. Even with the best medical care possible, I had no hope of keeping my finger.

A small piece of protruding metal caught my wedding ring that day and tore off my finger as I jumped to the ground. Is this type of accident common? You bet! From the beginning of Fiscal Year 2003 to January 2005, 145 finger-related Class B and C injuries were reported throughout the Army. The vast majority of these were pinching or degloving accidents similar to mine. Amputations and injuries caused by fans were the second-leading cause, followed by weapons accidents. We have dangerous jobs and confront hazards every day, whether it's on the battlefield, in the motor pool, or in the office. And we need every complete hand we can get! Keep the following tips in mind to protect your hands and fingers:

- Don't wear jewelry. Remove all jewelry that could catch on equipment or pose an electrical hazard. An Army poster popular a few years ago carried the caption,

"Take off the ring, not the finger." I wish I'd taken that advice! I've worn my wedding ring—which was recovered along with my finger—on my dog tags for the past several years. (A note about dog tags:

physically "locked out" of operation (i.e., energy removed from the item) and properly tagged. There are very few exceptions to this rule, and those exceptions must be made clear in written

"Then I felt a tug on my left ring finger. I thought I'd merely cut my hand, so I was slightly amazed to discover my finger missing. Actually, it was ripped from my body!"

Don't wear them if you're working around live electrical components.)

- Don't put any part of your body between hard objects. Many Soldiers put themselves in compromising positions while backing up vehicles to docks, trailers, or fences. Think about what you're doing and use proper ground guide procedures. Use a two-person lift when required, and never stick your hands where you can't see them.

- Use lockout/tagout. If this term makes no sense to you, find your unit safety officer or NCO and ask them to explain it. In 1989 the Occupational Safety and Health Administration mandated that all equipment being serviced must be

policy.

My accident doesn't have to be yours. After an extremely painful skin graft, a waiver, and several weeks on "hold" status, I was granted the privilege of going to flight school. Now I'm an instructor pilot and grateful for the opportunity to show my scars to student pilots. Make sure you integrate safety into every task you perform. It just might save your fingers, or even your life! 

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the July 2001 Countermeasure. Accident statistics were updated to reflect current trends.

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Your Training, Your Way

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You asked, and the Combat Readiness Center (CRC) delivered. In response to numerous requests throughout the Army, a new Commander's Safety Course (CSC) recently was released through the CRC's Combat Readiness University. These two innovative tools streamline risk management and safety training on the Internet and enable Soldiers to complete courses from their own desks, at their own pace.

The new CSC is not an updated version of the previous course. Rather, it is a completely new curriculum with a different structure, focus, and feel. The original intent, however, is the same: to teach commanders and other leaders better management skills for their unit safety programs. The CSC's goal is to integrate Army safety and risk management into all operations to protect Soldiers, prevent equipment damage or loss, and facilitate successful mission accomplishment while conserving resources. The new CSC—which takes about 9 hours to complete—capitalizes on interactivity

and application through the use of scenarios and real-world situations.

Who should take the CSC? Completion of the CSC is required for all company-grade officers before they assume command. Brigade- and battalion-level command designees must complete the CSC before attending the

The CSC is the first course offered through the Combat Readiness University.

To access the CSC and other Combat Readiness University courses, navigate to the login page and follow the enrollment instructions using your Army Knowledge Online username and password. You must complete



Fort Leavenworth, KS, Pre-Command Course.

What is the Combat Readiness University? Available on the Web at <https://safetylms.army.mil>, the Combat Readiness University is a powerful online tool that stores, delivers, and tracks training for registered users. This training includes online courses and resident and distributed learning provided by or through the CRC.

a short registration page for initial entry, and all personal information will be stored in the system upon completion of this page. You then will be directed to log in a second time. The CSC is also available through the Reimer Digital Library, found on the Army Distance Learning Web site at <https://www.aimsrdl.atsc.army.mil/cgi-win/AccpLogon.exe>.

Before registering on the

Combat Readiness University Web site, please ensure your computer meets the following minimum system requirements:

- Navigator or Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher.
- Acrobat Reader. If Acrobat Reader is not installed on your computer, download a free copy off the Web at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

- Flash Player 7.0. If this version of Flash Player is not installed on your computer, download a free copy off the Web at http://www.macromedia.com/shockwave/download/download.cgi?P1_Prod_Version=ShockwaveFlash.

If you are unable to download either Acrobat Reader or Flash Player 7.0, contact your local system administrator. It also is recommended that you use a broadband connection to access the CSC and other training materials on the Combat Readiness University Web site. This type connection should be readily available at work or at your local distance learning training facility.

When registration is complete, you will be assigned a primary user group based upon the reason for your initial visit. The current

user groups are broken down as follows:

- CSC
- Additional Duty Safety Course
- Aviation Safety Officer Course
- CP-12 Safety and Occupational Health Course

“The new CSC is not an updated version of the previous course. Rather, it is a completely new curriculum with a different structure, focus, and feel.”

- Advanced Skills Driver Training
- Mobile Training Team
- CRC personnel
- Other

Online course content may be accessed immediately. However, resident course reservations must be made through the Army Training Requirements and Resources System in accordance with current scheduling procedures. Resident course students also will be placed in a class-specific user group and receive materials relevant to their current training phase. Students—even those in resident courses—will take most (if not all) of their exams online and get the results immediately. When

finished, both online and resident course students can print their own certificates of completion.

The CRC occasionally will ask for your feedback through the Combat Readiness University survey tool. This tool is important because, with your input, we will shape future

content to best meet the Army's needs. Remember, it's your system. We look forward to your visit and to serving you! 

Editor's note: Be sure to check out the 2005 CP-12 joint intern safety training schedule on the CRC's Web site at <https://safety.army.mil>. Click on the "Training" button at the top of the page, then "CP-12 Training Schedule (2005)."

For additional information on the CSC, contact Mr. Wright at (334) 255-1389, DSN 558-1389, or by e-mail at don.wright@safetycenter.army.mil. Questions and comments regarding the Combat Readiness University should be directed to Kevin Zemetis at (334) 255-3262, DSN 558-3262, or by e-mail at kevin.zemetis@safetycenter.army.mil.

That's Not The Way We Do It!

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I was traveling in a convoy from Balad to Al Asad, Iraq, when we encountered another convoy traveling the same route. We were on a four-lane divided highway that had a median in the middle. The drive was uneventful until a vehicle from the other convoy pulled into the median to make a U-turn. The driver stopped and looked for oncoming traffic. He didn't notice any oncoming vehicles, so he pulled into the lane. What he didn't see, however, was the civilian vehicle traveling in the wrong lane on the wrong side of the highway.

The Soldier's vehicle crashed into the small Iraqi car, and the impact caused the car to roll numerous times. Several of the passengers were ejected and suffered serious injuries. The Soldier wasn't injured, and his vehicle suffered very little damage.

Why did the accident happen? It might be obvious the wrong-way driver caused the collision. After all, that Soldier did all the "right" things according to American standards. But the Soldier didn't know wrong-way drivers are very common in Iraq and Kuwait. Like many other Soldiers deployed to foreign countries, the Soldier

simply wasn't aware of local driving practices.

During redeployment operations a few months later, I attended a driving class in Kuwait. I was getting licensed to drive a civilian vehicle from the transportation motor pool to check on things at our port. We learned a lot in that class about local traffic laws and local driving practices. For example, local drivers commonly run traffic lights. As mentioned above, they often travel the wrong way on highways. Local drivers also frequently leave broken-down vehicles where they break down—even in the middle of the highway. I saw all these situations and more as I traveled to and from the port, and even had a few close calls.

I was heading south on a six-lane divided highway when a small pickup truck loaded with unsecured wood entered the highway. I changed lanes to pass the truck when, suddenly, a large piece of wood fell and bounced off the road's surface. Fortunately my vehicle had cleared the truck and I was safe, but the wood would've hit me had I not changed lanes. A little farther down the same highway, another vehicle was

abandoned in the middle lane of traffic. On another trip I was heading south in the southbound lane when I saw a vehicle heading north in the same lane.

These are just a few examples of how doing



the right thing isn't always enough to ensure your safety. Soldiers in theater must "keep their heads on a swivel," be constantly aware of their environment, and stay focused on what is happening around them. We can't expect people in foreign lands to drive like we do in the United States. Pay attention during your local cultures training and familiarize yourself with all local practices. It could save your life! 🚗

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■ Soldier was killed when a hand grenade detonated in the equipment kit he was repacking. The Soldier lost an arm and a leg in the initial explosion and died 4 days later.



Class A

■ Soldier was killed when the M1A2 tank he was riding in overturned en route to a refueling operation. No other details were reported.



Class A

■ One Soldier was killed and two others were injured when their up-armored HMMWV overturned during a day convoy operation. The deceased Soldier was serving as the truck's gunner. No other details were reported.

■ Soldier was killed when the 5-ton truck he was riding in ran off the roadway and overturned into an irrigation canal. The Soldier—who was serving as the truck commander—was trapped in the truck following the rollover and drowned.

■ Soldier suffered fatal injuries when the HMMWV he was riding in crashed into a parked M1A1 tank on a bridge. The Soldier was serving as the truck commander. The tank's infrared flashers were activated at the time of the accident. The degree of injury to the other Soldiers was not reported.

■ One Soldier was killed and seven others were injured when their HMMWV rolled off a 20-foot embankment into a ditch during a night combat patrol. No other details were reported.

■ Soldier was killed when the M1117 armored security vehicle he was riding in was struck by a POV at an intersection. The M1117, which was stopped at the intersection, overturned several times. The Soldier was serving as the M1117's gunner.

Class B (Damage)

■ An M88A2 recovery vehicle and M1A2 tank suffered Class B damage when the M88A2's driver lost control of the vehicle on a sloping tank trail. The M88A2 was towing the M1A2. The driver suffered minor injuries.

Class C

■ Soldier suffered a cracked skull when the M113A3 armored personnel carrier he was riding in crashed through a brick wall. The vehicle was part of a convoy when it began wandering off course into oncoming traffic. The driver attempted to steer out of the drift, but the vehicle lurched to the right and hit the wall. The injured Soldier was serving as the vehicle commander and was ejected from the vehicle. His combat vehicle crewmember



helmet came off before he hit the ground, leading to the head injury. The accident was caused by mechanical failure.



Class A

■ Soldier was killed when a hand grenade detonated in the equipment kit he was repacking. The Soldier lost an arm and a leg in the initial explosion and died 4 days later.

■ A foreign national service member was killed when Soldiers manning a traffic control point were engaged by a presumed enemy element. The Soldiers returned fire and fatally struck the foreign national service member. Three additional foreign nationals were injured.

Class B

■ Three Soldiers suffered third-degree burns, shrapnel injuries, and hearing loss when a container exploded at a maintenance shop. The Soldiers had removed the container from a MILVAN and opened it, at which time the explosion occurred. The container's contents were not reported.

Class C

■ Soldier's index finger was lacerated when a generator fell on it. The Soldier was helping lift the generator into a HMMWV when it came down on his finger.

We are
Losing
a
Soldier
every
9 nine
hours

Are MY daily activities
going to help reduce
losses and turn the
arrow **DOWN**?

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



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