



Office of Surety, Safety and Environment (SSE)

The SSE Elucidator

“Elucidate”: to give clarity through explanation and analysis.

May 2005 Newsletter



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Safety Awareness for the Individual Soldier Top Priority

Fact! 42,000 people die on America’s highways each year. **Fact!** There are more than 2,300,000 disabling injuries as a result of a collision. **Fact!** ONE out of every NINE licensed drivers will have a collision THIS YEAR! Pretty sobering statistics.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has called upon the Services to achieve a 50 % reduction in accidents, and BG Joe Smith, Director of Army Safety at the USA Combat Readiness Center, Ft. Rucker, AL has made it his

POV Accidents Major Culprit in Growing Fatality Statistics

Over the last ten years privately owned vehicles (POVs) have accounted for more than half of accidental deaths in the Army. Army motor vehicle (AMV), Army combat vehicle (ACV), and POV accidents comprised 64 % of all fatalities in FY 04. Death by personal injury and fire/explosion accounted for only 32 % of all Army fatalities in 2004. It’s not just combat!

goal, too. Since World War I, more than half (55%) of Army fatalities are attributable to accidents, not the enemy.

How important is it to view tactical and accidental risks together? Consider that for FY03 and FY04, the Army suffered 1,155 fatalities, with 46% (530) due to accidents. Historically, the data is even worse: During all conflicts since the Spanish-American War, about 55% of Army deaths were due to accidents. Hence, losses from mishaps have degraded combat power on par with losses from enemy action. Yet many Soldiers still suffer from tunnel vision, focusing on one source of risk and discounting others.

More effective risk management requires a cultural change. We must move beyond compartmentalized thinking that stresses the “big operation” and main movements. We must recognize that tactical or accidental, bad results are the same: Dead is dead, and every loss decreases combat power. This is the notion of **composite risk management**, and it is at the heart of a cultural change. Statistically, the Army clearly sees the whole problem and can acknowledge the need for composite risk management.

Composite risk management, then, combines such sources into a holistic assessment of exposure. Summarized succinctly from the standpoint of the Soldier, composite risk asks, “What’s going to kill me and my buddies?” This simple, results-oriented view depicts a transformed mindset that realizes the enemy and tactical operations are not the sole concern, but there is also potential for fatal mishaps due to the environment, systems issues, and human error.

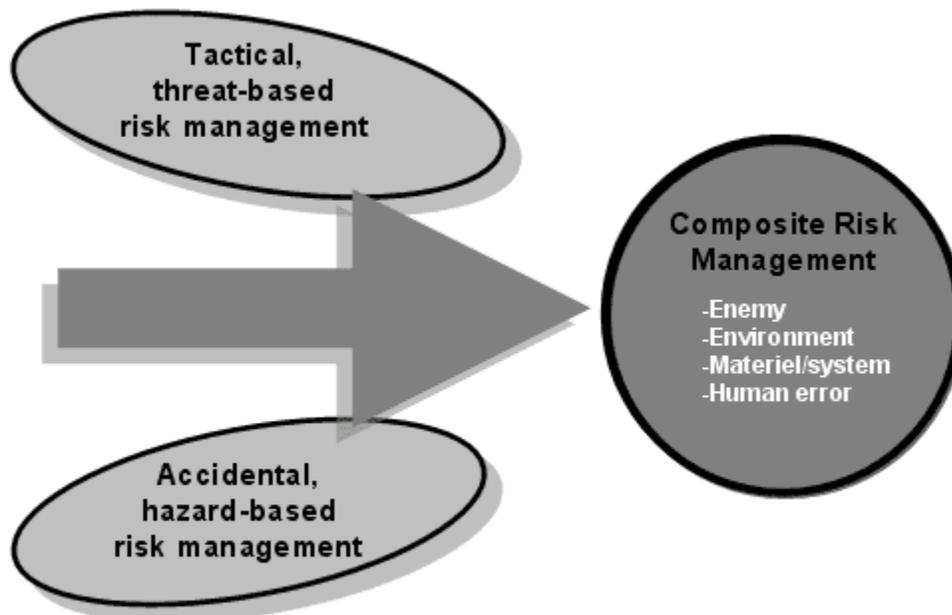


Figure 1. Composite Risk Management

Soldiers returning from battle understand how deadly combat can be. Back on U.S. soil, however, they face a less obvious but equally treacherous enemy – motor vehicle crashes – that kills the equivalent of a company of Soldiers each year.

The Army Soldier most likely to die in a motor vehicle crash is a male between the ages of 19 and 24 – also a high-risk group in the general population. However, officials are seeing an increase in aggressive and distracted driving-related fatalities among female Soldiers, according to J.T. Coleman, Command Information Manager, U.S. Army Safety Center. According to the Army, a statistically higher number of crashes occur in the last six to 12 hours of a three-day pass, when a sleep-deprived Soldier who's just spent the last 2 ½ days celebrating may be driving aggressively to get back to base in time for formation. Furthermore, many Soldiers who've endured a war environment come home feeling invincible. “A Soldier who's survived rocket-propelled grenades and has shrapnel in his body and a Purple Heart doesn't want to hear that he could die if he drives his car too fast or doesn't wear a seat belt,” observed Coleman.

The Army has developed the Army Safety Campaign Plan as the comprehensive framework for all safety and accident prevention measures as well as a risk assessment tool called the Army Safety Management Information System - 1 POV. Under this system, all Soldiers planning a trip must participate in a self-assessment process with two levels of leadership that analyzes Soldiers' travel plans and behaviors against an existing database and provides the degree of risk associated with that travel, effective control measures and examples of recent crashes that fit the profile of the trip the Soldier is taking.

This information is provided to the Soldier's first-line supervisor and that supervisor is expected to review this information and discuss the hazards, risks, and control measures with the Soldier. This open exchange of information will help to educate young, unaware Soldiers of the potential hazards they may encounter on our nation's highways

Elucidator readers are encouraged to browse the Army Combat Readiness Center website at <https://crc.army.mil/home>. There you will find under the “media & pubs” link a series of memos from the Safety Director called “Safety Sends”, which briefly outline accident statistics and emerging issues of the week.

Online Defensive Driving Courses

The National Safety Council sponsors a well-thought-out and inexpensive online defensive driving course. Visit it at www.TheDefensiveDrivingSchool.com. This program is the first National Safety Council driver training program to be available online to the general public. It costs less than \$45 and group purchases are available. Based on the content of the eight-hour classroom program, taken by over 55 million people, this online version will teach you the skills you need to learn how to drive defensively, while actually cutting the average student's learning time in half. In fact, this course is so effective that many insurance companies provide discounts to their customers who have completed the course and have been issued a certificate of completion. Incentive enough?

Online Commander's Safety Course

The Commander's Safety Course is designed to educate both commanders and other leaders on how to better manage their unit safety programs. The course is focused on the integration of

Army safety and risk management into all operations to protect Soldiers, prevent equipment damage or loss, and, ultimately, successfully accomplish the mission while conserving resources. Leaders must perform continual assessments of their formations and teach or coach the principles of risk management to overcome the experience-to-knowledge gap. This course is designed to assist the Commander with this effort and to maintain safety awareness.

As of January 2004, the course is mandatory for company commanders prior to assuming command. Additionally, battalion and brigade level command designees must complete the course prior to attending the Fort Leavenworth pre-command course. The course is also recommended for senior NCOs and others in safety critical positions.

The course provides a resource navigator tool that contains links to most of the Uniformed Resource Locator links for safety information throughout Department of Defense. Another tool provides assistance in completing risk assessments and organizing the risk management process for operations. Additionally, these tools can be downloaded for practical use in daily operations.

It is not necessary to wait for selection for command or be directed to take the course. Eligible Soldiers and civilians may register for the course at any time. It is available online 24/7.

Upon successful completion of the course registrants will be awarded 12 credit hours. Army Training and Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS) will be notified after each module is successfully completed and completion of the entire course. This information will then be entered on the appropriate records for tracking purposes.

TO REGISTER FOR THE ONLINE COMMANDER'S SAFETY COURSE:

Visit the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS) website at <https://www.atrrs.army.mil> and choose the SELF DEVELOPMENT area. Choose COMMANDER'S SAFETY COURSE, complete all the registration information and submit. Don't be concerned that it mentions "correspondence course". This course is completely on-line. Shortly after you register, you will receive an enrollment notification with instructions about course website location. Go to the course site, log in as directed, and take the course.

The Army Safety Center has more information about this course at: <https://safety.army.mil/pages/media/pubs/cm/commandersonline.html>



Announcements:

Just a reminder that there will be an **Introductory Risk Communication Workshop** (Course length is 3 days) on 16-18 August 2005 in Seattle, WA. This course is designed to provide the participant with a basic understanding of the concepts, principles, and process of effective risk communication, including building strategic stakeholder relationships that provide the framework for discussion of complex risk issues. For more information visit <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/risk/>

Finally, the Academy of Certified Hazardous Materials Managers (ACHMM) will hold its 19th annual conference in St. Louis, MO on September 25-29, 2005. More information is available on the ACHMM website at <http://www2.kuce.org/achmm/>.

The Elucidator
Office of Surety, Safety and Environment (SSE)
U.S. Army Medical Research Materiel Command
504 Scott Street
Fort Detrick, MD 21702-5012



SSE Staff Contact Information: <https://mrmc.detrack.army.mil>

Cliff Wendel, Chief SSE
Phone: 301-619-8313
Email: cliff.Wendel@amedd.army.mil

Carol Hyde, Safety Officer
Phone: 301-619-8806
Email: carol.hyde@amedd.army.mil

JoLane Souris, Environmental Officer
Phone: 301-619-2004
Email: jolane.souris@medd.army.mil

Maj. Charles Asowata, Asst. BACTO
Phone: 301-619-7202
Email: charles.asowata@amedd.army.mil

Cavelle Williams, Safety Protocol Review
Phone: 301-619-6035
Email: cavelle.williams@amedd.army.mil

Sara Nally
Phone: 301-619-6246
Email: sara.nally@amedd.army.mil

Do you have an announcement, comment or topic you would like to see in the next newsletter? Please feel free to contact Eric Hjertberg, Universe Technologies, Inc. (UNITEC) at 301-695-0982 or ehjertberg@unitec-md.com.