

D6 Sends: Safety  
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As Commanding General of IMCOM, the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management and the co-chair of the Services and Infrastructure Core Enterprise, my installation management and safety responsibilities extend beyond the boundaries of IMCOM. My Commander's Intent is to provide the facilities, programs and services required to support Army readiness, sustain the all-volunteer force and provide the infrastructure for current and future mission requirements. Safety is key to accomplishing my intent. It involves the prevention of material loss, but the focus is really on saving lives. Each loss, whether in combat or in the garrison, has an impact on our force.

In September I spoke at the Army Senior Safety Tactical Symposium. It was my opportunity to say "thank you" to almost 500 safety professionals for the work they do to keep Soldiers, Civilians and Families safe. Their work impacts the conditions in which we train, work, live and play, both on duty and off duty. This includes driver training, home safety, child and family safety, weather conditions assessment, fire prevention, hazardous material handling, and weapons and range safety, to name just a few ways in which their work touches our daily lives.

I thanked them for their continuing diligence, their continuing efforts to monitor trends and address issues to prevent loss. A recent example was a six-month Army-wide fire safety campaign in 2009. The campaign was launched to reverse the increasing number of military housing and facility fires, and succeeded in netting more than \$20 million in cost avoidance in the second half of the year. An ongoing example is a motor vehicle and motorcycle traffic safety program that is contributing to a downward trend in accidental fatalities. We are at the lowest level in more than seven years, and other military services are looking at our model.

So we can point to examples of how our Safety Program is working. However, as I said to the safety professionals, for whose work I am truly grateful, we can never become complacent or act as if what we are doing is good enough, as long as we are still losing lives through senseless, preventable accidents.

Everyone is a safety officer. Everyone has an obligation to look out for themselves and the Soldiers, Civilians and Families around them. The requirements are in place—we have The Army Safety Program, AR 385-10 and IMCOM's Safety Program Regulation—so we need to make sure we act on them. In order to improve our safety efforts, there are six things I ask us all to consider:

First, we will not cut corners or funds to save money at the expense of our Safety Program. It is fundamentally unwise to do so. Why would we want to negatively affect a program that saves lives? Rather than cutting corners to save money, we should put money toward the right resources in order to improve the Safety Program. In doing so, we will have a positive impact in keeping the Army Family in tact.

Second, when we allocate resources for Safety Programs, we need to make sure to reach all members of the Army Family, not just active duty Soldiers. Funds need to be allocated for our Safety Programs to reach Soldiers of all components, retirees, Civilians and all their Families. Only by reaching every member of our communities can we instill a culture that puts safety first – a culture that protects our Army Family and keeps the Army mission ready.

Third, everyone must support the Senior Commanders as they are responsible for the life of every Soldier, Civilian and Family member on their installation. Everyone must embrace the Safety Program and be actively involved. While the Commander is the one ultimately responsible for mission accomplishment and the safety of people and resources assigned to him or her, all of us must know the Safety Program and carry it out to standard. The Safety Program is the Commander's program and all of us are safety officers.

Fourth, I have been a motorcycle driver my entire adult life and have never had a motorcycle accident. I firmly believe that it is not a matter of luck, but preparation. I drive my motorcycle only if I have the right frame of mind, the right protective equipment and a planned route.

Many people label motorcycles as unsafe. However, it is not the motorcycle that is unsafe, it is the driver. That is why leaders need to make sure the appropriate safety training is available prior to a new rider driving a motorcycle. It is not smart for an untrained motorcycle driver to drive his or her new motorcycle on post in order to learn how to operate it properly. Motorcycle driving simulators are necessary and should be made available at every IMCOM installation.

Fifth, the Installation Management Campaign Plan 2.0 is being launched this month at the Garrison Commanders' Conference in San Antonio. The plan's Line of Effort on Safety charges commanders and other leaders to lead the way in changing behavior to prevent accidents, and to empower Soldiers, Civilians and Families at all levels to speak up when they see someone ignoring safety rules or doing something risky. Safety is everyone's business, and it is our responsibility to ensure safe performance in all we do. Everyone will be held accountable for accident prevention. The LOE calls for providing effective POV safety programs; heightening safety awareness; employing hazard control measures; requiring and promoting safe, healthy practices; and support for the Senior Commander.

Sixth, I challenge all of you to look at the IMCP's Safety LOE and ask yourselves, "What are we missing?" I often mention the 80 percent solution as being good enough to proceed, but this LOE is an instance when we need to keep aiming for 100 percent. We cannot be satisfied as long as we have a single accident. If safety requirements are not adequate, we will improve them. If we are doing something ineffective out there, we will stop. But if no one tells me, we cannot correct the issue. I need your input.

When we think about the Safety Program, we should not focus on saving money. We should not concentrate our efforts on finding different ways to reduce costs, but on how to make our Safety Program better. It is about saving the lives of our Army Family. That is the passion every individual must pursue. When you practice safety and teach others about safety, you are saving lives – and I cannot think of a higher calling.