



14 June 2004



### Fourth of July Holiday Safety

1. Our great Nation was founded 228 years ago by people of tremendous vision. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our country and honor those who defend the freedoms on which it is based, we must also take time to “meet under the oak tree” and discuss ways to keep our celebrations safe.
2. Whether they will be traveling, taking part in recreational activities, or simply relaxing at home over the Fourth of July weekend, Soldiers must consider the risks associated with their plans. Supervisors must be aware of these plans and ensure Soldiers take steps to reduce risks.
3. Everyone should review the USAREUR Summer Safety Campaign on the USAREUR homepage for information on how to be safe over the holiday weekend. In addition, **every Soldier must watch the 48-minute “Be Safe!” video by 3 July**. This video is also on the USAREUR homepage under Safety. Specific areas of concern are as follows:
  - **Traveling.** We have lost six USAREUR Soldiers to POV crashes since last October. During the same period last year, we lost only one. These tragedies could have been prevented by taking the proper safety measures. People who intend to travel by POV should ensure they get enough rest and take frequent breaks along the way, drive defensively, adjust their driving according to road and weather conditions, and never drive at excessive speed or after drinking alcoholic beverages. Other means of transportation, such as trains, should be considered instead of using a POV to drive long distances.
  - **Water Sports.** Every year in the European military community, someone drowns or is severely injured in an accident while taking part in water sports. More than half of all fatalities in or on the water are alcohol-related. Key to preventing accidents are safety awareness, swimming only in authorized areas, swimming with a “buddy,” and avoiding alcohol consumption.
  - **Recreational Activities.** Those who plan to participate in a recreational activity must be aware of the hazards associated with that activity and the precautions they should take to avoid injury. Overconfidence in one’s abilities and failure to use proper protective gear can lead to injury or death.
4. Our safety programs ensured that no Soldiers were lost over the long Memorial Day weekend. Let “no loss of life” be the end state for this upcoming holiday weekend as well.

B. B. BELL  
General, USA  
Commanding

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