18 October 2006

Two Soldiers Die After Being Struck by Train

1. USAREUR has suffered yet another needless tragedy. Two of our Soldiers died last Saturday night after being struck by a train. The Soldiers had just spent the evening enjoying the camaraderie of fellow Soldiers at a barbeque. They were struck shortly after leaving the gathering. They were 21 and 22 years old. Their deaths represent the second and third fatalities involving trains this year.

2. Tragedies such as these are preventable. Leaders must ensure all Soldiers understand the dangers associated with trains in Europe. These trains are typically fast and quiet, and can kill those who get too close. In addition, we must all make a personal commitment to act responsibly and avoid unsafe behavior. Complacency kills. If we do not practice continuous, deliberate risk management, our everyday activities can lead to injury or death.

3. We also have a personal responsibility for the lives of our fellow Soldiers. When we see someone behaving irresponsibly, we must have the courage to step in and intervene. Our actions can make the difference between life and death.

4. Every tragic loss to preventable accidents hurts families, lowers unit morale, disrupts unit cohesiveness, and reduces mission readiness. I therefore want all leaders to direct their energy toward preventing these accidents. We can and must prevent these tragedies through effective leadership and supervision. Our goal remains *No Loss of Life*. To achieve this goal, we must act responsibly, avoid unnecessary risks, and take care of one another.

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