FATALITY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5056

AFZF-GA-SAFE

4 March 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: POV Accident Prevention --Fatality Memo 02-06

1. Less than two weekends ago, I signed one of these *Red Hash* safety grams when we lost our sixth Corps soldier for the fiscal year due to a tragic, preventable POV accident. Sadly, III Corps lost one more soldier yesterday in a horrific POV crash. This most recent accident occurred when the soldier, driving by himself, returned from leave and failed to navigate a left hand curve. His front right tire went off the road and it appears he attempted to bring the car back onto the road. Apparently he over corrected, causing the vehicle to spin into the opposite lane where it was struck broadside by an oncoming vehicle. The soldier was killed on impact. The accident happened during the hours of darkness, less than two hours from his destination. While the details of this incident are still under investigation, let us look closer at the seven III Corps fatalities that we experienced so far this fiscal year.

2. A review of the seven fatalities reflects some common factors that soldiers and leaders must focus on:

a. All seven died during the hours of darkness on weekends - four were killed during long holiday weekend "celebrations."

b. Five died because of reckless driving (speeding, drinking, not wearing seat belts, and/or fatigued).

c. Two fatalities occurred while on leave in conjunction with long weekends.

3. These factors show that POV accidents are preventable if we exercise discipline, care, and correct actions. Every leader, especially our first-line supervisors, can positively affect soldiers' lives by executing decisive "contracts" with their subordinates regarding their planned off-duty activities, especially on weekends and holidays. As I mentioned previously, our first-line leaders must be charged with taking actions to safeguard the soldiers by impacting on or denying unsafe off-duty activities. One item of the leader's contract must be a *Pre-Trip Individual Assessment For Leaders* for soldiers going on leave. The assessment walks the leaders and their soldier through distance and time considerations that are critical for evaluating leave plans. Additionally, I want leaders to perform a POV inspection check prior to soldiers going on leave (in addition to the semi-annual POV inspections outlined in the III Corps Phantom Six Policy, G1-01-05, subject: POV Accident Prevention Program.) The pre-trip assessment and policy memo are available on the Corps G1 public folder.

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B. B. BELL
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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