

# FATALITY



AFZF-GA-SAFE

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD  
1001 761ST TANK BATTALION AVENUE  
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5000



06 March 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Fatigue Causes POV Fatal Accident - Fatality Memo 03-11

1. On Tuesday morning, another III Corps soldier lost his life in a POV accident. He was fatigued and wasn't wearing a seat belt. The soldier was released Tuesday morning from all night duty. An hour later, as he drove home, his vehicle drifted off the road and struck a concrete support pillar. The soldier died several hours later after extensive surgery. Although the accident is attributed to fatigue, the fatality may be a result of not wearing a seat belt. Sadly, the soldier may have survived the accident had he taken a few seconds to fasten his seat belt.

2. Historically, fatigue and not wearing a seat belt are two of the four most common causative factors for POV fatalities. The other two are excessive speed and alcohol. Leaders and soldiers must intervene to break this tragic cycle. Ensure soldiers get adequate rest before long trips or after working extended hours and emphasize the proven value of seat belts.

3. Over the last 12 days, accidents claimed the lives of three soldiers, two DA Civilians, one dependent, and three other civilians. Additionally, two soldiers remain hospitalized, one was not wearing a seatbelt and was ejected from his vehicle. He is paralyzed from the neck down. A seat belt may have spared him from his injuries. To highlight the importance of seat belts, I am considering tough measures that will increase seat belt use. I will staff my ideas directly with commanders. If you have ideas that will save soldiers lives related to seat belts, send them up the chain of command.

4. Our Corps has lost ten soldiers and two DA Civilians in fatal POV accidents in FY03. This adverse trend must be reversed. Tell your soldiers that failure to wear a seatbelt on Fort Hood is punishable by a monetary fine in Federal Magistrates court, and similar fines are given at installations in other states where III Corps units reside. Also, continue to emphasize POV accident prevention initiatives such as the ones outlined in the POV Toolbox at <http://safety.army.mil/home.html>. Have your leaders review your own POV accident prevention efforts and take appropriate action to correct risky soldier behavior. Focus on and emphasize the four common POV fatality causative factors. Fatigue must always be a consideration for POV risk assessments. Risk assessments are especially valuable now, as our soldiers may want to attempt long trips home over a short period before deploying. We must all do our part to ensure the safety of all III Corps soldiers, family members, and civilians. Although an enormous task, it can be accomplished but will require significant effort by every member of our III Corps Team. We must succeed at this mission!

**ENSURE WIDEST DISSEMINATION AND POST ON BULLETIN BOARDS**

  
THOMAS F. METZ  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION: A

# FATALITY