

SAFETY ALERT



AFZF-GA-SAFE

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



3 July 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Motorcycle Accident/Permanent Disability – Safety Alert 02-08

1. The III Corps motorcycle carnage continues. Recently a III Corps soldier at Fort Carson suffered a career-ending injury as the result of a motorcycle accident. This NCO was operating his motorcycle on a public roadway. An automobile operator forced the motorcycle out of its traffic lane. This caused the motorcycle to collide with a parked vehicle, resulting in the soldier suffering severe right leg and foot injuries, and facial lacerations and contusions. As the result of his injuries, his right foot had to be amputated. There were no records found that the NCO had attended required motorcycle safety training. Additionally, the NCO did not wear a helmet.

2. This is the third serious motorcycle accident this fiscal year. The other two accidents claimed the lives of two III Corps soldiers. This soldier will be medically retired due to his permanent disability. It is alarming that all three of these victims were NCOs—leaders. Eleven other POV accidents resulted in the deaths of sixteen III Corps soldiers this fiscal year. Our POV death rate is soaring. Lives are being destroyed and families ruined. As our accident rates reveal, POV and motorcycle operations are high risk. With the longer and warmer days of summer, this season has an increased risk for all POV operations.

3. With this increased risk for motorcyclists, commanders and leaders must be fully engaged in motorcycle accident prevention. Leaders must identify all motorcyclists. Motorcyclists must attend an Army-approved motorcycle safety training course. All III Corps installations offer this training. A recent survey of a unit parking area revealed that only 20% of the motorcycles displayed the required motorcycle safety decal required to operate on post. This tells me that leaders are not fulfilling their leadership responsibilities. Motorcycle training is only the beginning of motorcycle accident prevention. The continued engagement by first-line supervisors with subordinates is the best action to end this needless loss of life and limb due the reckless operation of motorcycles.

4. I'd like to share one III Corps MSC commander's motorcycle safety program: He linked his motorcycle safety policy to the III Corps Summer Safety Campaign. This is, of course, required. However, he declared that all motorcyclists are high risk. His motorcyclists attend monthly safety classes. This MSC commander personally briefs all motorcyclists. Unit commanders ensure that all motorcyclists attend motorcycle safety course, register vehicles on post, and wear the required safety equipment. These actions are required to be verified by battalion commanders. His policy states that those failing to adhere to his standard may be found "not in line of duty," if involved in an accident. Additionally, he personally makes eye-to-eye contact with all new motorcyclists and coaches/mentors them. This is one commander's approach to preventing motorcycle accidents. There are other methods. Review your motorcycle safety programs. See what you can do to protect our soldiers.

5. We must maximize our accident prevention efforts. Make this time count. This is not an area to take short cuts. Help me reverse this adverse trend and protect our soldiers.

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B. B. BELL
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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