

# SAFETY ALERT



AFZF-GA-SAFE

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



11 April 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: HMMWV Rollover Accident - Safety Alert 03-02

1. Recently a HMMWV rollover accident occurred where a leader failed to follow established standards. Several unsafe conditions were in place leading up to the accident that involved two III Corps soldiers. The driver, a sergeant, was speeding on an improved road when another vehicle came off a tank trail onto the road in front of him. The sergeant swerved to avoid the collision, lost control on a patch of gravel and skidded 135 feet until the vehicle slid off the left side of the road. Upon leaving the road, the HMMWV's wheels dug into the dirt causing the vehicle to roll one time, landing back on its wheels about 40 feet from where it left the road.
2. Luckily, neither of the two soldiers were seriously injured. The sergeant, although not wearing his seat belt, was fortunately not thrown out during the rollover sequence. Probably the rollover survivability design of the HMMWV saved his life. He was lucky because statistics show that unbelted vehicle occupants are normally thrown out during high-speed rollovers. The sergeant's passenger, a junior soldier, wore his seat belt in accordance with the standard.
3. There are several lessons derived from this incident. Foremost, leaders should be role models for their soldiers, enforcing and personally complying with established standards. Tasks done to standard are inherently safe as safety is engineered into all our standards. Second, good driving habits are critical, not only for POV operations, but also when operating military vehicles. For that reason, leaders must continuously emphasize the life-saving value of seat belts and driving at a safe speed.
4. I cannot overstate the fact that leaders who don't follow established standards transfer bad habits to their soldiers. There is no better example of the benefit of training to and following standards than the accomplishments our Army is achieving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. We need everybody's commitment - from soldiers, leaders, and commanders - to train to standard so we can fight to standard when called upon.



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*Thomas F. Metz*

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Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

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