On Safety Culture

Our safety plans, goals, and objectives are designed to transform MEDCOM safety culture from compliance driven into a culture where safety is instinctive and intuitive to all missions and operations. A safety culture is a dynamic organizational environment in which the collective values, attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge regarding safety are consistently practiced. It is reflected in the sum total of our decisions, procedures, and actions every day. We must ensure that everything we do is moving us closer to world-class safety performance. If you are not actively promoting safety, you are part of the problem – there is no middle ground.

On Leader Engagement

Safety is a commander's program. But, it is everyone's business to help the commander and to take responsibility for not just passively reporting a hazard or violation up the chain, but rather taking positive immediate action to correct hazards and violations. Never just walk by. For example, personnel passing by no smoking signs with smokers should feel comfortable in directly confronting and correcting these safety violators. This is preferable and more effective than engaging a massive hazard reporting system for staff response to a simple (no smoking) violation that can and should be corrected on the spot. Safety, like management controls and EEO, are standard rating elements for all personnel. Safety is everyone's business. Leaders' safety responsibilities are outlined in AR 385-10, *The Army Safety Program*.

The Army Readiness Assessment Program (ARAP) is a web-based survey instrument run by the US Army Combat Readiness Center/Safety Center that provides Commanders with a comprehensive evaluation of their unit safety climate. The survey was originally created for Battalion level Commanders, but has since been modified to apply to headquarters and staff organizations. ARAP provides leaders with data on their organization's readiness posture through five segments:

- Process Auditing—assesses the processes used to identify hazards and correct problems.
- Reward Systems—assesses the unit's program of rewards and discipline to reinforce proper behavior and correct risky actions.
- Quality Control—places emphasis on high standards of performance.
- Risk Management—assesses the health of the unit processes.
- Command and Control—assesses leadership, communication, and policies as they relate to Composite Risk Management.

On Off-Duty Losses

Off-duty injuries and accidents continue to rob our Army's capabilities. In fact, most MEDCOM fatalities in recent years have occurred away from the workplace. We recognize that it's a tall order to promote safety off-duty, but we cannot afford to overlook this critical piece of our total loss prevention program.

On Motor Vehicle Safety

The Army is making steady progress in reducing privately operated vehicle (POV) fatalities compared to recent years. We must not be satisfied until we have completely eradicated motor vehicle fatalities. The Army Traffic Safety Training Program (ATSTP) is a cornerstone element of the Army "Driving as a Life Skill" initiative. ATSTP consists of the online Accident Avoidance Course and a tiered series of POV and motorcycle courses targeted to at-risk audiences. More information on ATSTP may be found at https://crc.army.mil/DrivingPOV/default.asp?iChannel=27&nChannel=DrivingPOV.

Insist that Soldiers use the Army's Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS) when departing on leave or pass to evaluate and eliminate risk from their travel plans. Most importantly, we must make certain leaders and supervisors at all levels are actively engaged to recognize and correct risky behavior. Subsequent investigation of most Army POV deaths usually reveals that someone was aware of a problem behavior but chose not to act. Access TRiPS at the following CRC website: https://crcapps2.crc.army.mil/ako_auth/TRiPS/default.aspx.

TRiPS is a mission planning tool and the Soldier's drive is the mission. Will this program prevent accidents? That is the goal. This assessment is designed to reinforce common sense driving, such as staying alert, not drinking, getting adequate sleep, wearing seatbelts, and slowing down. It also includes true accident stories that happened to real Soldiers while driving home on leave.

On Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP)

Workers taken out of the fight due to preventable injuries and illnesses are a significant drain on the Army. Costs include direct medical and salary compensation costs as well as indirect lost productivity costs. We need our people to be safe, healthy and productive. The Army's bill for worker's compensation was nearly $180M last year. Our contribution to that total was just under 10 percent, approximately $17.5M.

In our civilian workforce alone, we experienced more than 1,065 claims for injuries and illnesses in fiscal year 2006 that corresponded to 9,184 lost workdays. That is equivalent to 35 full-time civilian employees on the payroll who were not able to work for the entire year because of preventable workplace accidents. We need to make a concerted effort to reduce these injuries and illnesses. One method to do this is through implementation of OSHA's VPP. I am fully committed to the VPP and look forward to reaping its benefits in the months and years ahead. This program is the vehicle that will complete our transformation from a regulation and compliance driven organization into one with a world-class safety culture. The key requirements to achieve VPP star status include leadership commitment, employee involvement, process measurement and continuous improvement. VPP is similar to The Joint Commission accreditation for hospitals. It is non-prescriptive and is a badge of excellence from OSHA for a commander's safety program. For those of you already in VPP, give it your best efforts and I guarantee you will be amazed at the results. Share your lessons learned with your fellow Leaders who will soon follow in your path. I want this program to reach a critical mass within the command because it will change how we value our people. More information is available about how to sign up for and participate in VPP on the website: http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/index.html .

On Loss Reduction

Accidental injuries are costly and unacceptable impediments to Army missions, readiness, morale, and resources. I strongly believe accidents can be prevented, and that all safety hazards can be either eliminated or controlled. Operationally, accidents are defined as any unplanned event that results in a loss. Losses may be direct or indirect and include but are not limited to property, material, productivity, and even public trust. Floods, lightening strikes, power surges, and the like are typical unplanned events. We can and must plan to prevent losses regardless of where the fault may or may not originate. To fix blame on human behavior, material failure or nature is not very satisfying or productive. What is satisfying is preventing loss from unplanned events regardless of where the fault lies.

As we continue to support the Global War on Terrorism and the transformation of our Army, reducing avoidable losses becomes even more important. Simply stated, we cannot afford unnecessary losses due to preventable mishaps. I want all commanders to have a very simple strategic safety plan of continuously evaluating and identifying their top 3 accident causes. Then continuously update and implement their own courses of action to outright prevent their top 3 and/or reduce their impact. For example, the wearing of a seat belt, a well known safety standard, may not prevent an accident. But, complying with this and similar safety standards invariably mitigates the severity of accidental injuries.

On Composite Risk Management

Composite risk management in the Army is a step-by-step process intended to preserve combat power and resources. MEDCOM leaders must incorporate composite risk management into the planning and execution of all missions. We must be proactive about safety and create a command climate that embraces composite risk management across the entire spectrum of our on-duty as well as off-duty activities.

Safety is everyone's business and it is our responsibility to encourage safe performance in all we do. The entire chain of command must be committed and engaged. Everyone must be held accountable for accident prevention. Our Soldiers, Civilian employees and Family members expect and deserve our commitment to safety and risk reduction. It is our responsibility!

I expect leaders to identify risks inherent to their operations. Then we must implement appropriate countermeasures, taking no unnecessary risks. We must capitalize on our collective experiences to make sound decisions that mitigate risk. Composite Risk Management (CRM) teaches how to think, not what to think. It challenges us to be smart about managing risk. For more on CRM go to this CRC website: https://crc.army.mil/RiskManagement/.

On Safety Support Services

We must not lose sight of the fact that we have two responsibilities in support of the Army Safety Program: improving our own safety posture and providing safe work environments/guidelines to our customers.
I am committed to protecting not only our own Soldiers and Civilians, but also all workers including contractors, volunteers, and visitors in our facilities. I am dedicated to providing a safe and healthful work environment for all people and operations.

On Patient Safety

The Medical Command Patient Safety Center is dedicated to provide quality patient care, achieve positive outcomes, and improve patient safety. Our Patient Safety Center has designed and implemented safer healthcare systems which focus on the prevention of human errors. Patient Safety Center goals include: design evidence-based medical and dental systems and processes that promote a culture of safety; encourage system accountability through creditable and thorough analysis of patient safety events; and promote a culture of safety through team behaviors and communications.

On Professional Development

A world-class safety culture is only attainable with unwavering leadership and expert program management at all levels of command. The Army Medical Command will recruit, develop, and retain a cadre of dedicated and knowledgeable safety staff professionals. We will provide them with the resources and tools to be successful change agents for a more intuitive and integrated safety culture.

US Army Medical Command
Safety Management Office
2050 Worth Road, Suite 14
Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-6014
(210) 221-6838 or DSN 471-6838

http://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/medcomsafety

COMMANDER'S SAFETY PHILOSOPHY

U.S. Army
Medical Command

ERIC B. SCHOOMAKER
Lieutenant General, MC
Commanding