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**U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS CENTER**

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## **Personal Risk Management Key to Preventing Holiday Loss**

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FORT RUCKER, Ala. — As the calendar year comes to an end, the Army expects an increase in Soldier travel as families and friends gather during the holiday season. The increased amount of travel and extended leave period makes it an important time to address risk management and personal risks. Senior Army leaders are making safety a priority during the upcoming holiday leave period, with first-line supervisors the primary target of a communications campaign designed to engage junior Soldiers on the hazards of the season.

According to mishap data gathered by the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center (USACRC) over a five-year period, holiday leave, which typically happens just before Thanksgiving through the first week after New Year's Day, is the second-deadliest time of year for off-duty Soldier mishaps, with the Army losing approximately 11 Soldiers each year.

More recent analysis revealed a significant bump in Soldier fatalities around Veterans Day weekend, so the USACRC is releasing its annual Soldier Holiday Leave Campaign earlier to help mitigate those personal risks during the holiday weekend.

The FY21-22 Soldier holiday leave period was the safest in years, with only four off-duty Soldier fatalities. "Although we're talking about relatively low numbers, it's an indicator that leaders who take an active role in their Soldiers' off-duty, holiday leave activities can bring about positive results that reduce injury and save lives," said Command Sgt. Major James Light, USACRC.

Campaign products will help leaders build and manage top-quality seasonal safety programs geared toward their unique needs. Data from the Army Readiness Assessment Program shows that units that prioritize risk management and implement an effective safety culture experience fewer off-duty mishaps. Soldiers, civilians, and family members may also use campaign tools to help minimize risk and prevent mishaps. The campaign kit will include posters, feature articles, videos, and public service announcements focusing on timely safety topics like safe driving in wintry conditions, resiliency, cold weather injuries, home safety, and much more.

"We achieved some great success from a statistical perspective as we closed out FY22 with 67 off-duty Soldier fatalities — the lowest in Army history," said Light. "Unfortunately, numbers themselves don't tell the tragic stories of friends, loved ones and battle buddies left behind. We have to double-down our loss prevention efforts until that number is zero. First-line leaders can help ensure their

Soldiers stay safe. We should never underestimate the impact and influence sound leadership has when a Soldier is away on leave or away from his or her unit.”

The campaign is available on the USACRC’s website at <https://safety.army.mil>, as well as the organization’s social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The campaign, scheduled to run through January, will provide a gradual release of tools and products focusing on important, season-appropriate safety topics.

The USACRC preserves Army readiness through analysis, training, and the development of systems that prevent accidental loss of our people and resources.