



Independence Day 2025

On July 2nd, 1776, the Continental Congress voted in favor of independence, and two days later, delegates from the 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence. From 1776 to the present day, we celebrate July 4th as the birth of American independence. As we celebrate our nation's birthday and proudly carry on the words of John Adams — "Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more" — let us not forget how fortunate we are to have the freedom that has been entrusted to us all. Thank you for your service to this great country and everything you do to protect the liberties our forefathers worked so hard to secure.

However, with all the summer vacations, celebrations, and free time, we also face higher risks as Soldiers are more likely to engage in activities that increase their exposure to off-duty hazards. In FY24, we lost 84 Soldiers to off-duty mishaps, and 36% (35) of those fatalities occurred in the final four months of the fiscal year (June through September), and 27 of the 35 fatalities (77%) were private motor vehicle mishaps, either motorcycle or automobile. While you enjoy time off for the holiday weekend and the rest of the summer, remember to make risk management an integral part of your plans — on the road, on the water, and everywhere in between.

As you plan your summer activities, the USACRC is here to help. The 2025 Off-Duty Safety Awareness Presentation is now available and includes ready-to-use safety briefs, including speaker notes, on topics such as private motor vehicles and water safety. Although you can use the presentation and speaker notes as is, you can also add or delete slides and modify the notes to suit your presentation style or to reflect what is happening in your unit. Safety Shorts, another tool available and accessible via the new Safety Brief Tools tab on the website, are one-slide briefings featuring quick video clips and safety tips for various topics, including motorcycle, open water, and grilling safety. They are accessible via a smartphone or tablet with no CAC required. These tools and additional resources are available on our website:

www.safety.army.mil.

We hope you enjoy this well-deserved break and wish each of you a very happy and safe Fourth of July. BE ALL YOU CAN BE - Readiness Through Safety!

Jean Pierre Alcedo
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Commanding