



**Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving Safety Awareness**

As Americans, we will soon celebrate two long holiday weekends – Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving. On Veteran's Day, we honor those men and women who selflessly served-and continue to serve-our country around the world and defend our freedom. On Thanksgiving, we remember and celebrate our Nation's countless blessings.

These long holidays provide a time to relax and recharge. At the same time, it is not a reason to throw caution to the wind. Soldiers must consider the risks associated with their plans. First-line supervisors must verify their Soldiers' off-duty activities and discuss ways to mitigate risks. I expect these discussions to include personal responsibility, alcohol use, indiscipline, the importance and benefits of using the "Buddy System", and adherence to our established readiness recall.

Chain-of-command intervention makes all the difference. Leaders must prepare their personnel for the hazards of off-duty activities and reinforce our standards of conduct. Excessive alcohol consumption, road safety conditions, fall sports activities, domestic violence, and suicidal behavior continue to be areas of concern. All of us must do our duty; intervene in the lives of our people and make a difference. Engaged leadership, self-discipline, and risk management support the safety process and can ensure that the joy of this holiday period is not marred by accidents or misconduct.

As we transition into the fall and winter season, we must focus on conducting operations in a cold weather environment and continue our efforts towards accident prevention. Thank you for your hard work and tireless support of our mission here in the Republic of Korea.

***Pacific Victors!***

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