MARCH 1998

Leader's Guide
To using the POV Toolbox

Every 72 hours a soldier is killed in a POV Accident

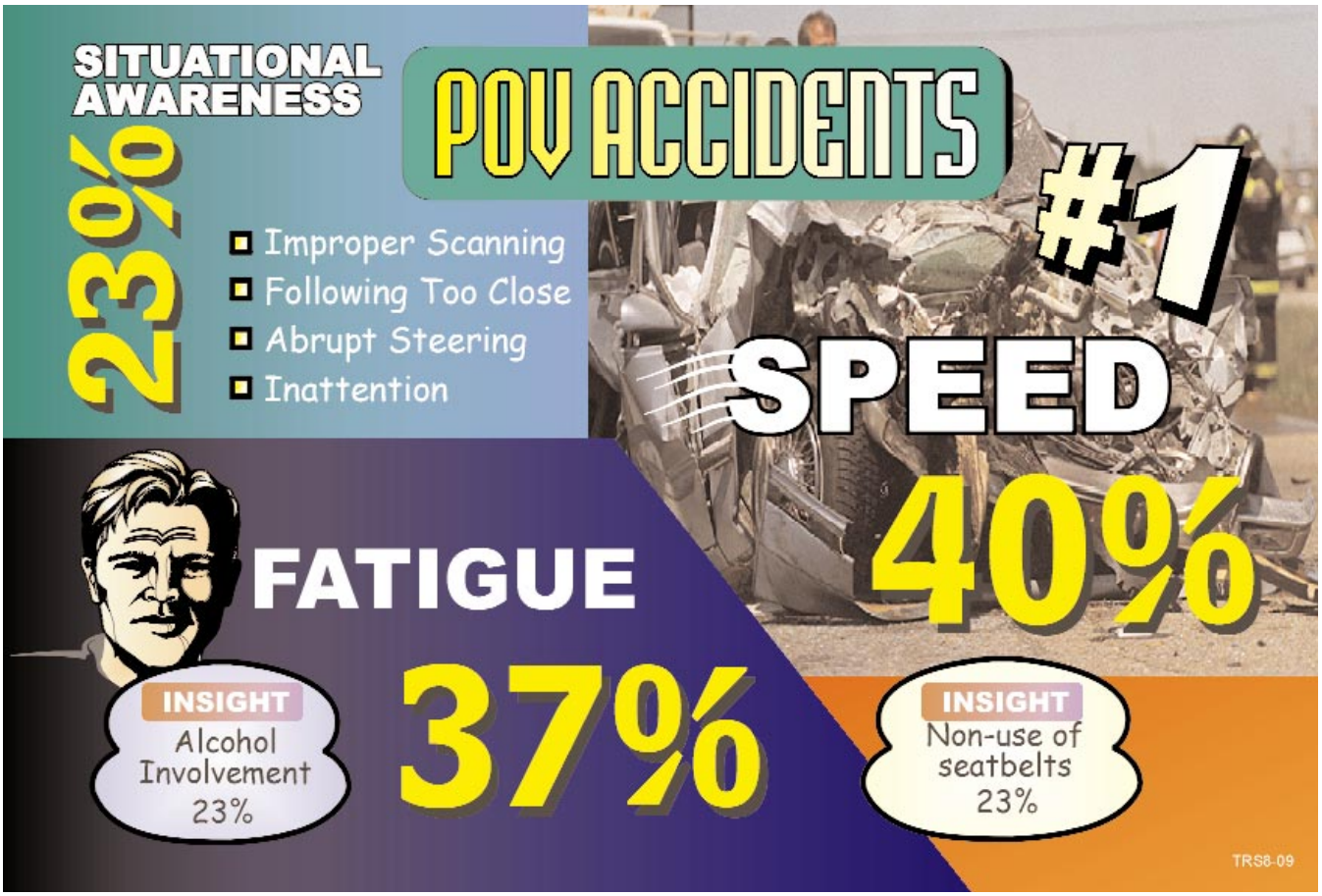
U.S. ARMY SAFETY CENTER

Privately Owned Vehicle
RISK MANAGEMENT
TOOLBOX

Introduction

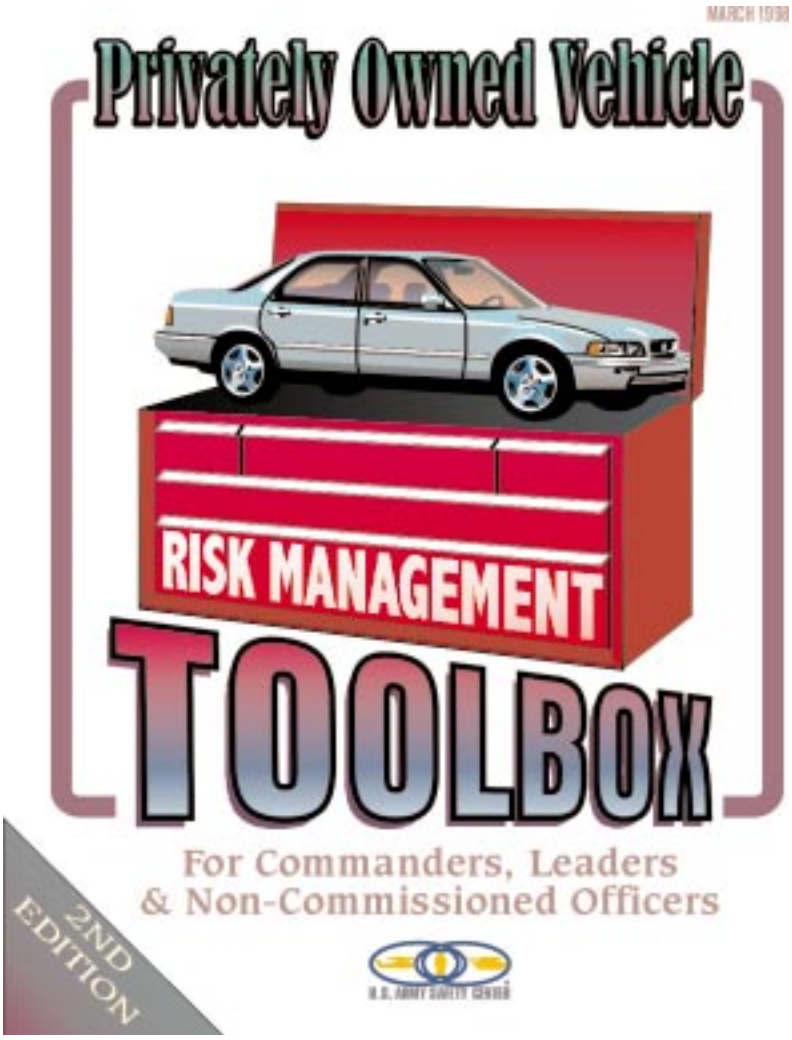
Excuse me friend. I need a few minutes of your time. Yeah, yeah I know that you're busy, but what I want to talk about is directly related to what you're getting ready to do. You see it really doesn't matter what you are getting ready to do. What I have to say in these few pages is important enough that I think it is O.K. for me to ask you to take a few minutes and read this booklet.

Our soldiers are dying in POV accidents. That is not exactly news to anybody, is it? They are your soldiers, they are your drivers, mechanics, nurses, clerks and crewmembers. When there is a hole in the formation where a missing soldier is supposed to be standing, the hole is right next to you. I don't need a degree in psychology to know that these losses affect you in a lot of ways and you don't like any of them.



So, what can we do about it? What can we (the Army) do to help you keep these soldiers from killing themselves? Is there a magic formula that I can tell you that will give you special super powers to use in order to protect your soldiers? Nope! Can't do it! If such a thing were possible, I would have done it already and not be taking up your valuable time right now. We just have to work with what we've got.

There are a lot of tools available for you to use in your fight to keep soldiers safe. But the best tool in the world is absolutely worthless if you don't know anything about it. If you have never heard of it, then a great tool can't help you. In the same way, a great tool that you know about is still worthless if you don't know how to use it.



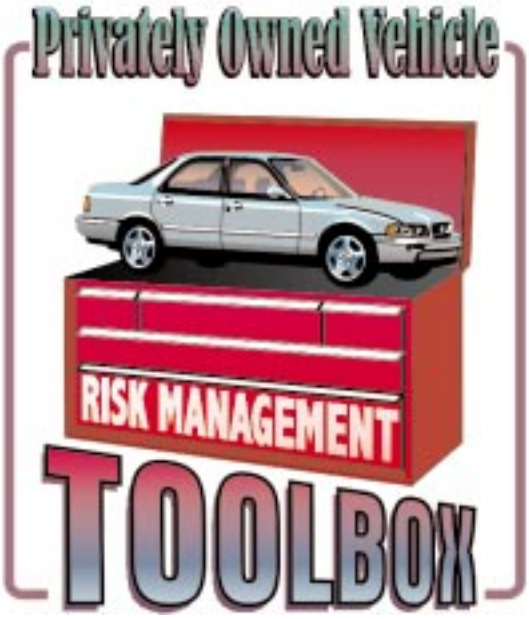
I want to show you the POV Toolbox. This is a collection of tools for reducing the risk of operating a POV. Take a quick look at the Table of Contents and you can see what some of these tools are. You can't implement all of these tools at your level, but there are some things that you can use or modify to fit your situation. My goal is simply to show

you some of the things in this toolbox. I also want to show you how to look at a situation and figure out what actions you can take to reduce the risk to your soldiers. We can't make certified accident investigators out of everybody, but we can show you how to look at a situation and pick out the factors that are present that just might cause an accident. Most things don't happen purely by chance. In most POV accidents, there was something that could have been done to prevent the accident.

Yes, I know how easy it is to look back and figure out how you could have prevented an accident. What I want you to be able to do is to look at your current situation and apply some of the same kind of analysis to figure out what cause factors are present. When you can do that, then you can use some tools in the POV Toolbox, or just use some good common sense, to take an active role in preventing the accident from ever occurring. Turn our hindsight into your foresight.

There are three things in this booklet. The first is a series of vignettes that are drawn together from the facts of different accidents. They are similar to accidents that have happened in recent memory. The second thing is a series of scenarios that show a situation that you could find yourself in. They are not great works of fiction; there is no need to alert the Pulitzer Prize Committee. They are simply something for you to think about. You might not be in this situation, but you might experience something like the situation. The third thing is a series of slides that you can use to present this same subject to your soldiers or to anybody else who will listen … we'll take all the help we can get.

Vignettes



VIGNETTE #1

What Could We Have Done?

Three soldiers, PFC X, PFC Y and PV1 Z, were returning home from a night on the town. It was 0130 21 August 19XX. The three had been celebrating their return from a 10 day Field Training Exercise. They had returned from the field at 1800 the previous afternoon. The commander had released the unit at 1900 after a quick check to verify the accountability of all of the unit's sensitive items. X,Y and Z quickly got cleaned up and headed out to "make up for lost party time." Each of the three drank at least six 12 ounce beers before midnight. At approximately 0100 they decided they would return to their quarters on the post. At 0130, PFC X was driving approximately 65 mph on a two lane, non-divided highway. PFC X fell asleep at the wheel and the vehicle crossed the oncoming lane of traffic, missing a tractor-trailer truck headed in the opposite direction and struck the concrete abutment that supported an interstate overpass. PFC X was killed when the left front wheel was driven through the floor and into the passenger compartment. PFC Y was killed when he was ejected from the vehicle and impacted the concrete wall supporting the overpass. PV1 Z was killed when he exited the vehicle and the combination of alcohol and traumatic shock left him so disoriented that he stepped into the road and was struck by a passing car.

CAUSE FACTORS

FATIGUE
ALCOHOL
NON-USE OF SEATBELTS
SPEED

POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS (from the POV Toolbox)

TAXI CARD: Soldiers have a card with phone numbers for one free taxi ride home.

DESIGNATED DRIVER: One person agrees not to consume alcoholic beverages.

CHAIN OF COMMAND CALLING CARD: Soldiers have unit phone numbers for guaranteed no retribution ride home.

WIND DOWN TIME: Soldiers returning from extended field training after 1800 will not be released until 0600 the following day.

STRIP MAPS: Soldiers have strip maps that show the safest routes to travel (interstate highways vs rural roads for example). Maps also show dangerous areas to avoid.

HOTEL/MOTEL DISCOUNTS: Soldiers are aware of any local lodging that offers a service member discount.

VIGNETTE #2

Two young soldiers had spent the weekend at the beach, swimming, playing volleyball, dancing and generally unwinding through strenuous physical exertion. They enjoyed themselves so much that they lost track of the time and stayed beyond their pre-planned departure time. They finally left late Sunday night to return the 250 miles back to their post. Both knew that the police were too busy on the interstate to bother with patrolling the two lane back road which they planned to use as their route home. The State Police would later say the accident happened at approximately 0230, less than 20 miles from the gate of the installation. Both soldiers were killed upon ejection from the car, neither was wearing a seatbelt. Investigators believe that the driver was traveling at a very high rate of speed down the straight two lane road when he apparently fell asleep, veering off the highway and rolling the vehicle several times after striking a tree with a glancing blow.

CAUSE FACTORS

FATIGUE
NON-USE OF SEATBELTS
SPEED
WEATHER (DARKNESS)

POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS

LEAVE/PASS FORM (DA Form 31) STATEMENT

PRE-TRIP CHECKLIST

PRE-WEEKEND BRIEFING

POV SAFETY QUIZ

VIGNETTE #3

A soldier was killed when the driver of an oncoming vehicle fell asleep, crossed the double yellow line of a two lane road and came into her lane. The soldier drove on to the shoulder of the road in an effort to avoid the oncoming vehicle, but she was unable to avoid a head-on collision. The soldier was returning from a three day pass. She had started her trip late in the evening in an effort to avoid the summer heat. She had been visiting her sister, who lived about 200 miles away from the soldier's post. The soldier was certain she had given herself plenty of time to make the trip and still be present for the 0600 PT formation on Monday morning.

CAUSE FACTORS

FATIGUE
NON-USE OF SEATBELTS
SPEED

POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS (from the POV Toolbox)

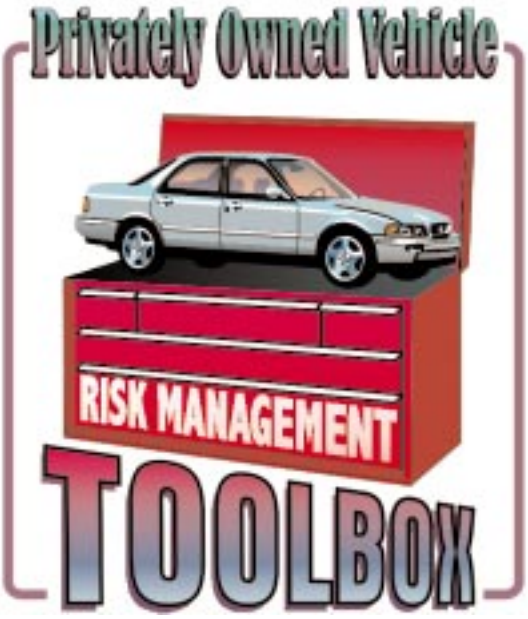
LEADER'S COUNSELING

LEAVE/PASS FORM (DA Form 31) STATEMENT

PRE-TRIP CHECKLIST

PRE-WEEKEND BRIEFING

Scenarios



SCENARIOS FOR YOUR ANALYSIS

On the following pages you will find several scenarios. These are intended to be practical exercises to let you practice using some of the tools in the POV Toolbox.

Read the scenario and try and imagine yourself in that situation. What are some of the factors that you can identify that increase the possibility that there will be a POV accident? What actions can you take that will reduce the possibility that one of the soldiers in the scenario will be involved in a POV accident?

SCENARIO #1

The Long Weekend
What Can We Do?

It is 1330 on a Thursday afternoon. You are looking forward to the weekend because this has been a stressful time. Your unit has been working extra hours to prepare for integration of some new equipment. The preparations are going well, and as a reward, the commander has arranged to have the upcoming Monday declared a Training Holiday. Everyone is anxious for the three days off. You overhear some of your soldiers discussing another member of your section, SGT Yadda. The conversation centers around rumors that SGT Yadda has been verbally abusing his wife and is beginning to lose his temper more quickly than he had in the past. He has been late for work twice in the past month, and his appearance and grooming are not up to the extremely high standards that he usually maintains. The Military Police have stopped SGT Yadda and issued a citation for failing to use a car seat when transporting his 18-month-old daughter.

Later that day, SGT Yadda asks to speak with you. He tells you that he will be leaving the area for the three day weekend. He says that he will be going to visit friends at another city that is 400 miles away. His wife and daughter will be going with him.

CAUSE FACTORS_____

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POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS (from the POV Toolbox)

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SCENARIO #2

The Quick Trip Home
What Can We Do?

Specialist Jones finished washing his assigned HMMWV and headed to the barracks to shower and head out for the weekend. He was still mad at the gate guard for embarrassing him by yelling out, "Hey Jones, fasten your seat belt", when he drove in from dispatch. After last week's episode, that's all the platoon sergeant needed to hear. His thoughts turned to tonight's long drive back to East Frog Ferry, seeing Mom and Dad and, of course, Cindy. He was really anticipating a great time at the big party tomorrow night. He visualized the 360-mile drive ahead of him and silently cursed the rain as it began falling. Pulling away from the drive—thru window of the fast food joint, he didn't bother to re-buckle his seatbelt. So what, he thought, if I had a wreck and overturned, I might get trapped inside like in that TV movie I saw. Besides, no gate guards here to hassle me. Finishing his burger, fries and chocolate shake, Jones entered the interstate on-ramp. Noting the time at 1900, he figured about four hours to the Frog Ferry exit at 75 mph, then another 60 miles of two lane should get him home before midnight. "I've done this a million times. Helmsman, prepare for warp speed." The rain was falling harder as it got later, and the visibility was really poor. About 2130 he saw he had only gone about 70 miles due to heavy, slow-moving traffic. But it was thinning out some, although the rain didn't let up. A few calculations and he figured that he was about an hour and 20 minutes behind schedule. He eased his foot down on the gas and set the cruise control on 80 mph. He leaned back in the seat, still full from his stop at local burger bar and beginning to get really sleepy. After all, it had been a long time since he had gotten up for PT that morning at 0500.

CAUSE FACTORS_____

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POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS (from the POV Toolbox)_____

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SCENARIO #3

The Barbecue at the Lake
What Can We Do?

Your unit has just returned from a two-month deployment and everyone is anxious to get home. Your soldiers are especially looking forward to their return. The deployment has been very difficult. Your soldiers were frequently called on to perform missions that are not normally part of your area of responsibility. SPC Rock, one of your single soldiers, is planning to have a big barbecue at Lake Swanny (about 50 miles from your homestation). Many junior enlisted soldiers have said they would attend. PVT Hudson, another one of your soldiers, has recently been the subject of many "party-time war stories." His peers often talk of his drunken escapades. PVT Hudson has never been in trouble with the police and has always been a hard worker. Every time you give him a task, he gets it done without flaw. You have noted, however, that PVT Hudson is interested in NASCAR racing and you have heard rumors that he has gotten several speeding tickets off post. This information is unconfirmed though because your unit does not receive information from the local police departments. You have not mentioned this subject in any of your routine performance counseling sessions with PVT Hudson.

CAUSE FACTORS_____

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POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS (from the POV Toolbox)

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SCENARIO TALKING POINTS

SCENARIO #1: The Long Weekend

CAUSE FACTORS

Job Related Stress
Personal Problems
Fatigue
History of Non-Compliance with Infant Car Seat Use

POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS

Counseling
Leave/Pass Form (DA 31) Statement
Pre-Trip Checklist
Pre-weekend briefing

SCENARIO #2: The Quick Trip Home

CAUSE FACTORS

Fatigue
Excessive speed
Adverse weather
Non-use of seatbelt

POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS

Leader counseling (known risk taker)
Leave/Pass Form (DA 31) Statement
Wind down time
Pre-trip checklist
Pre-weekend briefing

SCENARIO #3: The Barbecue at the Lake

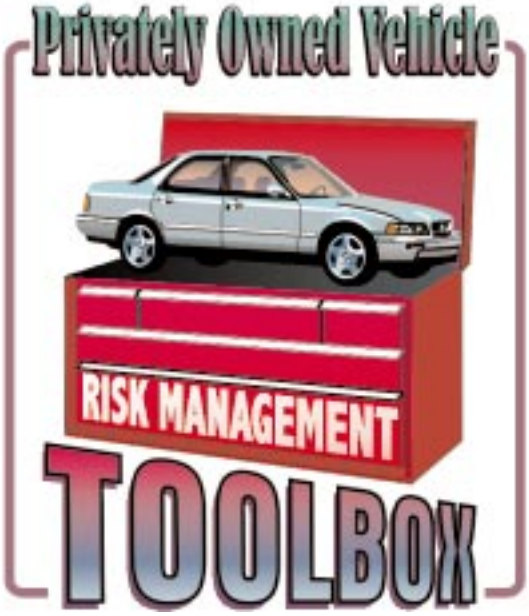
CAUSE FACTORS

Alcohol Consumption
Identified High—Risk Soldier
Distance from Base to Lake

POSSIBLE PREVENTION METHODS

Designated Driver/Unit Transportation
Strip Map
Leader counseling (known risk taker)

Presentation Aids



VIGNETTE #1 THREE SOLDIERS

Three young soldiers returning from a night of "partying". Their unit had been released at 1900 that day after a long FTX. By midnight, each soldier had consumed at least six 12-oz beers. Driver of the car was speeding. At approximately 0130 the driver fell asleep and lost control of the car. The vehicle struck the concrete supports of a highway overpass at approximately 65 mph. All three died.

None of the soldiers was wearing a seatbelt.

VIGNETTE #1 THREE SOLDIERS

CAUSE FACTORS

FATIGUE

ALCOHOL

NON-USE OF SEATBELTS

SPEED

VIGNETTE #1 THREE SOLDIERS

PREVENTION METHODS

TAXI CARD

DESIGNATED DRIVER

CHAIN OF COMMAND CALLING CARD

WIND-DOWN TIME

VIGNETTE #2 AT THE BEACH

Two young soldiers spent the day at the beach. They swam, played volleyball and spent a lot of time in the sun. They left late on Sunday night to drive the 250 miles back to their post. Their plan was to use a seldom traveled two-lane road where they felt comfortable exceeding the speed limit. Less than 20 miles from post, the driver fell asleep and the vehicle left the highway and struck a tree causing it to roll over several times. Both soldiers were ejected from the vehicle and killed.

Neither was wearing a seatbelt.

VIGNETTE #2 AT THE BEACH

CAUSE FACTORS

FATIGUE

NON-USE OF SEATBELTS

SPEED

WEATHER (DARKNESS)

VIGNETTE #2 AT THE BEACH

PREVENTION METHODS

LEAVE/PASS FORM STATEMENT

PRE-TRIP CHECKLIST

PRE-WEEKEND BRIEFING

POV SAFETY QUIZ

VIGNETTE #3 ONE TIRED SOLDIER

A young soldier was returning to her post late one summer night. It was approximately 0200. She had started this trip late in the afternoon to avoid the summer heat. She had been visiting her sister who lived 200 miles away. The soldier was awake, but still could not avoid a collision when an oncoming vehicle crossed the double yellow line and entered her lane. The soldier was wearing her PT uniform so that she would not have to change in order to make her 0600 formation.

VIGNETTE #3 ONE TIRED SOLDIER

CAUSE FACTORS

FATIGUE

NON-USE OF SEATBELTS

SPEED

TIME OF TRAVEL

VIGNETTE #3 ONE TIRED SOLDIER

PREVENTION METHODS

LEAVE/PASS FORM STATEMENT

PRE-TRIP CHECKLIST

PRE-WEEKEND BRIEFING

LEADER'S COUNSELING

U.S. ARMY SAFETY CENTER