SAFETY ALERT

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
6661 WARRIOR TRAIL, BUILDING 350
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5339

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

AFZX-SA

MAR 0 8 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Motor Vehicle Accident Involving a Fatigued Driver -- Safety Alert 05-06

1. An accident recently occurred at 0800 on LA Highway 171 involving a fatigued Soldier. He departed Fort Polk at 0030 to visit a Lake Charles nightclub. During the Soldier's return trip, he became sleepy. He pulled over for a short time and continued to drive. Soon after resuming the drive, he fell asleep. The vehicle crossed the median, crashed into a ditch and flipped. All occupants wore seatbelts, alcohol was not involved, and there were no serious injuries.

2. **What were the driving mistakes?**

a. The driver had been awake for at least 24 hours and was fatigued. Overconfident, he continued to drive after a short rest stop.

b. The Soldier elected to drive at a time when an accident was most likely to occur.

3. **Lessons Learned:**

a. Prior to driving any distance, drivers must have adequate sleep. When feeling tired, a driver must pull over to a safe area and rest.

b. Leaders must reinforce the use of seatbelts and the negative effects of fatigue during POV safety briefs, stressing that most accidents occur between 2300 and 0600. Soldiers should avoid driving at these times.

4. This is the second such incident in recent months. This Soldier is fortunate to have survived. In the previous incident, our community endured a Soldier's death due to driving while fatigued. Leaders at all levels must take immediate steps to stop this disconcerting trend now.

ENSURE WIDEST DISSEMINATION, BRIEF TO ALL SOLDIERS, AND POST ON BULLETIN BOARDS!

MICHAEL D. BARBERO
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:
A +

SAFETY ALERT

SAFETY ALERT

SAFETY ALERT