



## Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

[www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm](http://www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm)

### Reducing POV Accidents

Year after year, soldiers continue to be injured and killed in POV accidents. Last year was no exception 124 soldiers were killed in car, truck, and motorcycle accidents.

The dangers of POV travel are greatly heightened during the holiday periods because more people are on the highways, they speed, they drink and drive, and they tend to extend themselves and drive fatigued. Most Army POV accidents involve one or more of these factors. For example, Army accident records show that speeding is a factor in many fatal POV accidents. This includes not only exceeding the posted limit but also driving too fast for conditions. The posted speed limit isn't necessarily a safe speed. Road and weather conditions, time of day, and the amount and type of traffic all affect safe speed. Slower speeds give drivers more time to react, and the lower the speed, the lower the crash forces in the event an accident is unavoidable.

Drinking and driving is still a frequent cause of POV accidents. Soldiers aged 17 to 25 are most often involved in these accidents. Most of these young soldiers are new to driving and new to drinking - a deadly combination.

Alcohol not only slows reaction time, it also affects a person's judgment. Drinking drivers tend to become reckless. They lose their ability to recognize hazards. They become a threat to themselves, their passengers, and other people on the road.

If drinking is in your plans, appoint a designated driver. Remember, if you must drink, don't drive; if you must drive, don't drink.

Safety belts are the most effective prevention against injuries in an accident. Wearing safety belts not only makes good sense, it's required by Army regulations. AR 385-55 requires soldiers driving or riding in a POV to wear safety belts at all times, both on and off the installation; all civilians, including visitors, are required to wear safety belts while operating or riding in a POV on the installation; and DA civilians are required to wear safety belts off the installation when the vehicle they are operating or riding in is used for official business