



4 October 2004



October Safety

Here in Europe, summer is over and winter will be here before we know it. Our Winter Safety Campaign is now underway. As part of this campaign, I directed your attention toward local traffic hazards and seasonal risks. Below are some hazards unique to the month of October.

The fall harvest season is here. This means we can expect to encounter a lot of farm equipment on the road. When driving in areas where farming is common, keep the following in mind:

- Harvest vehicles are large and slow, and the temptation to pass them under less than ideal conditions is great. Following these vehicles too closely can limit your field of vision. When attempting to pass a large harvest vehicle, keep your distance so that you can see oncoming traffic, and be patient. Pass only when you have a clear view and enough time to do so safely.
- Harvest time means that we can expect more dirt on the road than usual. Dirt and mud make the road slippery and can cover windshields and headlights. To help avoid accidents when driving under these conditions, slow down and increase your following distance. Be especially careful on curves and at intersections. Ensure your car has enough windshield-washer fluid, and periodically clean your headlights to remove dirt and grime.

The harvest season is also a time for harvest festivals. If you plan to participate in local fests, enjoy yourself, but be careful. Remember that alcohol impairs your judgment, coordination, and ability to react quickly. Never get behind the wheel after drinking alcohol. Use public transportation or arrange for a designated driver to get you home safely.

As winter approaches in Europe, the days seem to get shorter, and soon we will be commuting in the dark. Now is the time to have our vehicle lights checked. Free Vehicle Lighting Campaign inspections may be available at AAFES garages or garages in the host-nation community. Take advantage of this opportunity now to prepare for those dark mornings and evenings.

For those not deployed, enjoy the great fall weather and be sure to take advantage of the many opportunities our beautiful host nations have to offer. Get out and mingle with some of the most delightful people in the world. As you recharge yourself and prepare for winter, keep up the good work in preventing injuries and fatalities. I am extremely proud of you, and I want you take care of yourselves. Continue to be safe as we execute with excellence, Any Mission, Anywhere!

B. B. BELL
General, USA
Commanding

ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!

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