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Safety

Leaders Guide to Accident Prevention in Physical Training Running Formations

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Summary. This pamphlet provides standard accident-prevention guidelines for leaders to use when planning physical training running formations.

Summary of Change. In addition to making several administrative changes throughout the pamphlet, this revision changes [appendix A](#) to list risk assessments rather than safety standards for running formations.

Applicability. This pamphlet applies to U.S. Army elements and regionally allocated forces stationed or training within the USAREUR area of operations.

Records Management. Records created as a result of processes prescribed by this pamphlet must be identified, maintained, and disposed of according to AR 25-400-2. Record titles and descriptions are available in the Army Records Information Management System at <https://www.arims.army.mil>.

Suggested Improvements. The proponent of this pamphlet is the Safety Division, Office of the Chief of Staff, HQ USAREUR (mil 537-3092). Users may suggest improvements to this pamphlet by sending an e-mail message to the Safety Division at usarmy.wiesbaden.usareur.list.safety-office-mbx.

Distribution. This pamphlet is available only electronically and is posted in the Army in Europe Library & Publishing System at <http://www.eur.army.mil/aepubs/>.

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1. PURPOSE

This pamphlet identifies types and causes of accidents that frequently occur during physical training (PT) running formations and provides ways for leaders to help prevent these accidents.

2. REFERENCES

a. Publications.

- (1) AR 25-400-2, The Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS).
- (2) AR 385-10, The Army Safety Program.
- (3) TB MED 507, Heat Stress Control and Heat Casualty Management.
- (4) TB MED 508, Prevention and Management of Cold-Weather Injuries.
- (5) [AE Regulation 385-55](#), Prevention of Motor-Vehicle Accidents.

b. Form. DD Form 2977, Deliberate Risk Assessment Worksheet.

3. EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Army in Europe
AR	Army regulation
DD	Department of Defense
mil	military
PT	physical training
SOP	standing operating procedure
TB MED	technical bulletin – medical
U.S.	United States
USAREUR	United States Army Europe

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

a. Accidents that cause injuries can also seriously affect mission accomplishment. In the Army in Europe, an average of 1 workday is lost every 3 days because of a PT running-formation injury. These injuries cost the Army millions of dollars and thousands of lost workhours every year. Since not all PT-related injuries are reported through the accident-reporting system, the number of injuries may be higher than statistics show.

b. Leaders are encouraged to use the risk-management process to determine hazards associated with PT running formations. Risk management is not a science that provides leaders with a precise course of action for every scenario; nor is it just common sense or something routine that leaders have always done. Instead, risk management is a subjective evaluation of hazards based on a consideration of the factors that can affect safety and mission accomplishment. To manage the risks involved with formation running, leaders will do the following:

(1) Determine if a proposed formation run falls within acceptable risk limits. This is done by identifying and measuring risks, assigning values to the risks, combining the values, and deciding which precautions are appropriate.

(2) Take the appropriate action, when time and flexibility permit, to reduce risk. With little or no effect on the mission, leaders can reduce risk if they reduce or eliminate hazards.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

a. Different missions involve different elements that can affect safety. The Deliberate Risk Assessment Worksheet (DD Form 2977) lists elements that may affect the safety of running in PT formation. Leaders will use this worksheet to assess overall risks.

b. No established rules exist for assessing risks. Leaders have flexibility to plan and execute PT running formations to reduce the probability and severity of accidents.

6. HAZARD CONTROL

Commanders should ensure the following measures are taken to eliminate or reduce hazards of running in formation:

a. If possible, eliminate the hazard or substitute a less hazardous alternative.

b. Contain or reduce the risk so that it has little effect on the formation run.

c. Change the operating procedures to lower exposure to the risk in relation to the importance of the formation run.

d. Train and motivate personnel to recognize, avoid, and control hazards.

e. Brief leaders and personnel on potential hazards and their acceptable risk level.

APPENDIX A RUNNING FORMATION RISK ASSESSMENTS

The following tables will help leaders conduct risk assessments before conducting a physical training (PT) running formation:

- a. [Table A-1](#) lists causes of injuries and preventive measures.
- b. [Table A-2](#) lists traffic and visibility hazards and preventive measures.
- c. [Table A-3](#) lists causes of slips, trips, and falls, and preventive measures.
- d. [Table A-4](#) lists causes of improper running-formation procedures and preventive measures.

Table A-1 Causes of Injuries and Preventive Measures		
Injury	Hazards	Preventive Measures
Animal bites	Uncontrolled dogs or rabid animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish guidelines for selecting routes. ● Check the route before running. Select safe routes. ● Instruct Soldiers not to try to outrun dogs, but to slow down to a walk and leave the area. Do not make sudden moves or stare at the dog. ● Inform the military police or the local police of dogs that are a continual problem.
Blisters and infections	Running in improper or poorly fitted boots or shoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emphasize the importance of wearing good running boots or shoes.
Cardio-vascular	Participation by individuals who have had heart attacks or who have inherent heart problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that Soldiers who have a profile of heart problems are medically released from exercise. ● Provide progressive physical training.
Cold	Concealing early frostbite and other cold-weather injury symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide training for Soldiers on early frostbite and cold-weather symptoms. ● Develop and enforce reporting procedures for Soldiers with cold-weather symptoms.
	Wearing a PT uniform not suited to cold-weather conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use wind-chill index (TB MED 507). ● Specify appropriate PT uniform for cold-weather conditions. ● Provide first-aid training and refresher training for Soldiers.
Heat	Dehydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure Soldiers increase fluid intake and get enough rest. Soldiers should not drink alcoholic beverages the night before the run. ● Provide training for Soldiers on water use and procedures for dropping out of formation.

**Table A-1
Causes of Injuries and Preventive Measures—Continued**

Injury	Hazards	Preventive Measures
Heat (Cont)	Disregarding temperatures and acclimatization standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure Soldiers use the wet-bulb globe temperature index (TB MED 507). ● Ensure Soldiers follow procedures to adapt to local weather conditions. Identify newly assigned Soldiers and provide separate training until they adapt to local weather conditions. A 14-day period to adapt to local weather conditions should be allowed before newly assigned Soldiers participate in runs longer than 3 miles.
	Wearing a PT uniform not suited to hot-weather conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specify appropriate PT uniform for hot-weather conditions. ● Provide first-aid training and refresher training for Soldiers.
Muscle and skeletal	Improper running techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct warm-up and stretching exercises before running.
	Improper warm up and cool down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct cool-down and stretching exercises after running. Cool-down and stretching exercises should be similar to warm-up exercises.
Sprains and strains	Running on rough or rutted terrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish guidelines for selecting routes. ● Check the route before running. Select safe routes. ● Inform lead runners of potential obstacles and instruct them to call out warnings to other runners. ● Adjust running speed to route and weather conditions. ● Provide first-aid training and refresher training for Soldiers.
Stress fractures	Concealing injuries until aggravated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide training for Soldiers on stress-fracture symptoms. ● Develop and enforce procedures for Soldiers to report injuries.
	Running with improper technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide training for Soldiers on proper running technique.
	Running in new or improper boots or shoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emphasize the importance of wearing good running boots or shoes and breaking them in before regular PT running.
	Running on hard surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish guidelines for selecting routes. Avoid running on hard surfaces.

Table A-2 Traffic and Visibility Hazards and Preventive Measures	
Hazard	Preventive Measures
Selecting unsafe routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish guidelines for selecting routes. Specify requirements for determining on- and off post routes. (Do not select routes that cross public roads.) • Check the route before running. Identify potential hazards, such as blind spots, construction sites, curves, and heavy traffic. Select the safest route possible. Check the route the same time of day as the planned formation run. • Erect barricades to divert traffic on U.S.-controlled installations. (Conduct formation runs within installation boundaries as much as possible.)
Running in bad weather (failure to see or to be seen)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust running speed to weather conditions, such as dust, mud, rain, and wind. Avoid running in formation on icy or snow-packed roads. • When road conditions are other than “green” (AE Reg 385-55), running formations should be limited to U.S.-controlled installations or canceled. • Instruct Soldiers to wear light-colored clothing. • Ensure road guards wear reflective vests and carry either flashlights or lighted batons during periods of limited visibility. Front road guards should carry light devices pointing forward. Rear guards should carry light devices pointing rearward. • Provide training to road guards on how to alert oncoming traffic to the formation.
Running in the dark or during dawn and dusk; wearing dark clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure road guards wear reflective vests and carry either flashlights or lighted batons. Front road guards should carry light devices pointing forward. Rear road guards should carry light devices pointing rearward. • Instruct Soldiers to wear light-colored clothing.

Table A-3 Causes of Slips, Trips, and Falls, and Preventive Measures	
Hazards	Preventive Measures
Running on poor surfaces, such as rough or rutted terrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish guidelines for selecting routes. • Check the route before running. Identify irregular surfaces, holes, and other hazards. Select safe routes. • Inform lead runners of potential obstacles and instruct them to call out warnings to other runners.
Running too fast for conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust running speed to route and weather conditions. • Instruct lead runners to slow down and shorten strides on wet surfaces. • Emphasize importance of wearing good running boots and shoes.
Inattention (Soldiers not watching where they are running)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct Soldiers to pay attention to obstacles and hazards and to call out warnings to other runners.

**Table A-4
Causes of Improper Running-Formation Procedures and Preventive Measures**

Hazards	Preventive Measures
Lack of written running-formation procedures and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a standing operating procedure (SOP) for formation runs, and ensure Soldiers read and understand the SOP. Enforce procedures.
Failure to follow procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and publicize policy for motor vehicles passing troops running in formation on U.S.-controlled installations. Post speed-limit and other signs to alert drivers of running formations. Enforce policy and publicize host-nation traffic laws for running in formation on U.S.-controlled installations. <p>NOTE: U.S. personnel are not authorized to direct local traffic off post.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the unit SOP includes running-formation standards, such as road-guard requirements and procedures, including use of reflective vests and flashlights or lighted batons during hours of darkness and limited visibility. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four road guards are recommended for running formations: two in the front and two in the rear, or one in the front and three in the rear (one guard stays with the formation and the other two secure side roads. Road guards should run about 20 meters ahead of and behind the formation. Road-guard duties should include stopping traffic at intersections on U.S.-controlled installations and alerting oncoming traffic to the formation. • Keep formation size at three abreast with not more than one Soldier positioned on the left to call cadence. The caller should wear a reflective vest and carry a flashlight or lighted baton. • Establish procedures for dropouts and stragglers. Dropouts and stragglers should leave the road immediately and run or walk on the sidewalk, or cross the street or road when it is clear and run or walk against traffic. • Ensure running formations run on the right side of traffic in the same direction as the flow of traffic. Formations of fewer than five Soldiers should run on sidewalks and against traffic.