



9 January 2009

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday and Lunar New Year – Holiday Safety

1. In January, we will celebrate two holidays. From 17-20 January we will celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday and we will observe Lunar New Year (Seol-Nal) from 24-26 January. As we prepare to enjoy these long weekend holidays, we must remain vigilant.
2. To minimize the risk of accidents, Servicemembers, civilians, and family members should be alert to their surroundings and exercise good safety practices in all activities. Leaders should reinforce the need for subordinates to use safety principles and common sense practices. Excessive alcohol consumption, road safety conditions, and winter recreational activities continue to be areas of concern. Additionally, many Koreans will be on the roadways during Lunar New Year visiting relatives and friends. USFK personnel need to be aware that traveling by POV is extremely difficult due to massive traffic jams on freeways and major rural routes.
3. First-line leaders must create a verbal contract with their subordinates to act responsibly by conducting *Under the Oak Tree Counseling*. Leaders must be present and watchful while ensuring their suicide prevention program is fully engaged. Identify high-risk personnel and provide counseling where it will do the most good. We all need to take care of each other and use the "buddy system," especially when patronizing off-post establishments. First-line supervisors make the difference.
4. Our goal remains No Loss of Life at any time. I am convinced that your personal involvement and the chain of command's concern for our Servicemembers, civilian employees, and family members will make a difference over these holiday weekends. Our combined involvement will continue to save lives.
5. We go together!

WALTER L. SHARP
General, US Army
Commander

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