

U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER



# Weapons and Range Safety



# Terminal Learning Objective

**Action:** Recommend safety control measures for weapon handling in garrison and tactical environments.

**Conditions:** Given scenarios involving weapon mishaps.

**Standards:** A minimum of two feasible and plausible recommendations based on the Composite Risk Management process must be provided.

# References

- AR 385-10, *The Army Safety Program*, 23 August 2007
- AR 385-63, *Range Safety*, 19 June 2003
- DA Pam 385-63, *Range Safety*, 10 April 2003
- FM 3-22-9, *Rifle Marksmanship M16A1, M16A2/3, M16A4, and M4 Carbine*, April 2003
- FM 5-19, *Composite Risk Management*, August 2006

# Lesson Data

- Classroom Safety Requirements: None
- Lesson Risk Assessment Level: Low
- Environmental Considerations: None
- Evaluation: You will be evaluated on your participation during class and your responses based on given scenarios

# Overview

- Weapons handling (avoiding negligent discharges)
- Range safety



# Enabling Learning Objective A

**Action:** Recommend safety control measures for preventing the negligent discharge of weapons.

**Conditions:** Given scenarios involving negligent discharge mishaps.

**Standards:** A minimum of two feasible and plausible recommendations based on the Composite Risk Management process must be provided.

# What is Negligent Discharge?

## **Negligent Discharge**

The discharging of a weapon without intending to discharge the weapon.

**USACR/SC**

# Negligent Discharge Why be Concerned?

- Accidental shootings cause . . . . .
  - Waste
  - Damage
  - Injuries
  - Death!





# One Example of Negligent Discharge



Carelessness leading to the loss of life  
of a Soldier sitting in his tent

## Disturbing Trend

Army accidents have revealed a disturbing trend:

Our Soldiers are being killed and injured by Soldiers and improper weapons handling!!

# What are Contributing Factors?



# Negligent Discharge Contributing Factors

- Individual errors
- Ineffective supervision
- Situational circumstances

# Individual Errors

- Failure to follow procedures (lack of self-discipline or adherence to standard)
- Complacency / over-confidence
- Inattentiveness / lack of muzzle awareness
- Insufficient training

# Individual Errors

*Continued*

- Taking shortcuts and trading safety and standards for speed and execution
- Negligence / carelessness / irresponsibility
- Improper or inadequate clearing

# Ineffective Supervision

- Failure to enforce standards
- Inadequate weapon training
- Failure to be involved with and overseeing Soldiers' activities
- Recommending shortcuts and trading safety and standards for speed and execution

# Situational Circumstances

- Many negligent discharges occur in fixed structures (tents/buildings)
- Service members cleaning or doing functions checks
- Potential for accidental discharge while conducting operations is much higher, especially during movement



# Scenario 1 OEF/OIF

- While cleaning personal weapons Service Member (SM) 1 failed to maintain muzzle awareness and conducted a 9MM function check using magazine with live rounds.
- Consequently, the slide of the 9MM went forward discharging a round, which went through the SM 1's left hand, and then struck SM 2 sitting on the floor in the lower left back.

# Scenario 1 OEF/OIF

*Continued*

- SM 1 received a minor wound
- SM 2 received a critical injury and later died of his wound

## Scenario 2 OEF/OIF

- While riding in the vehicle, Soldier placed the weapon across his lap with the muzzle pointing towards the door instead of between his legs with the muzzle pointed toward the floor.
- He prepared to exit the vehicle and weapon discharged resulting in injury to his arm and leg.



What are measures for controlling / preventing negligent discharges?

# Composite Risk Management 5-Step Process



# Preventing Negligent Discharges

- **Everyone has the responsibility for safety**
  - Individuals
  - Supervisors (all levels)
  - Leaders (formal and informal)

# Leaders and Supervisors “Must”

- Apply Composite Risk Management (CRM) process to all situations
- Be trained on all weapons within the unit
- Be involved and engaged in the oversight of safety
- Ensure weapons discipline is maintained
- Refrain from trading safety for shortcuts

# Leaders and Supervisors

## “Must”

*Continued*

- Train Soldiers to recognize weapon status
  - Red – round in chamber & on safe
  - Amber – magazine in chamber or rounds in feed tray but no rounds chambered, weapons on safe
  - Green – weapons cleared and on safe



# Leaders and Supervisors

## “Must”

*Continued*

- Do spot checks for Soldier compliance to standards
- Ask questions and have Soldiers “back brief”
- Ensure weapon preventive maintenance, checks and services (PMCS) are conducted at least monthly

## Additional Control Measures: Education and Training

- Ensure Soldiers are qualified and proficient with weapons
  - Annual range qualification focuses on target engagement
  - Proficiency includes all tasks associated with target engagement

## Additional Control Measures: Education and Training

*Continued*

- Conduct weapon classes
  - Familiarization training
  - Proper clearing procedures
- Conduct periodic re-enforcement training
- Cross-training Soldiers, make sure they become proficient with all unit's weapons

## Additional Control Measures: Education and Training

*Continued*

For proficiency train:

- Clearing procedures
- Loading / unloading procedures
- Immediate action
- Remedial action, in addition to:

## Additional Control Measures: Education and Training

*Continued*

For proficiency train:

- PMCS
- Disassembly / reassembly
- Functions check
- Weapons maintenance

## Additional Control Measures: Publications and Notifications

- Issue Theater level guidance
- Establish and enforce weapons clearing Standing Operating Procedure (SOP)

# Other Control Measures

- Provide weapons clearing barrels / portable containers
- Have trained leadership/supervision at clearing points and during weapons maintenance
- Conduct weapons and ammunition checks
- Discuss and apply lessons learned



Clearing Barrel



Supervision

# Control Measures



On-the-Spot Corrections



"Bullet Stop" Portable Clearing Barrel



# Avoid Negligent Discharge

## T.H.I.N.K

- **T**reat every weapon as if it's loaded
- **H**andle every weapon with care
- **I**dentify the target before you fire
- **N**ever point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot
- **K**eeep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire

# Check on Learning

- Name two control measures that supervisors and leaders should implement to help ensure safe weapon handling.
- After returning from a mission, you notice a Soldier's weapon has not be cleared – what should you do?

# Range Safety

**AR 385-63, Range Safety**  
**DA Pam 385-63, Range Safety**

# Enabling Learning Objective B

**Action:** Identify control measures for safe range operations.

**Conditions:** Given scenarios involving range mishaps.

**Standards:** A minimum of two feasible and plausible recommendations based on the Composite Risk Management process must be identified.

# Range Safety Certification Program

- Must be established for firing exercises and maneuver operations
- Normally implemented at battalion or equivalent level
- Will be integrated into organizational training

**DA Pam 385-63 PG 7**

# Range Safety Certification Program

*Continued*

- Used to train and qualify personnel in the duties for firing exercises and maneuver operations
  - Officer-in-Charge (OIC)
  - Range Safety Officer (RSO )
- Battalion Commanders will certify, in writing, OIC and RSO to range control

**DA Pam 385-63 PG 7**

# Range Safety Certification Program

*Continued*

- Battalion Commanders must ensure OIC and RSO
  - Are certified in writing
  - Meet the appointment grade requirements IAW DA Pam 385-63, Range Safety
  - Are competent and properly instructed in the performance of their duties
  - Are knowledgeable of the weapon systems and safe ammunition handling and use

# Range Officer-in-Charge (OIC)

- Must receive range safety briefing
  - Provided by installation range control organization
  - On the use of the training complex as part of certification
- Will be certified in the weapon systems for which they are responsible



# Range Officer-in-Charge (OIC)

*Continued*

- Responsible for the overall operation of the range before, during, and after live firing
- Ensures the overall safe conduct of training and proper use of the installation training complex
- OICs will be certified in the weapon systems for which they are responsible

# Range Safety Officer (RSO)

- Responsible for the safe operation of the range
- Required to conduct a safety orientation before each scheduled live-fire exercise
- Ensures that all personnel comply with the safety regulations and procedures
- Ensures that a brass and ammunition check is made before the unit leaves the range

# Range Safety Officer (RSO)

*Continued*

- Ensures that a dry-fire exercise is conducted
- Ensures that all weapons are clear and safe before firers leave the firing line
- Ensures that all weapons are clear and safe before firers leave the firing line
- The RSO **WILL NOT** be assigned any other duties

# RSO Assistant / Lane Safety/Coach

- Is assigned to EACH LANE to observe and evaluate the Soldier's performance
- Ensures:
  - Soldiers are acquiring the proper target
  - Muzzle awareness is maintained
  - Weapon remains on safe until time to engage the target

# NCOIC

- Assists the OIC and RSO as required
- For example, supervising personnel who are supporting the live-fire exercise

# Unit Armor

- The unit armorer repairs the weapons to include replacing parts, as required

# Ammunition Detail

- Responsible and accountable for all ammunition
  - Break down
  - Issue
  - Receive

# Medical Personnel

- Provides medical support as required
- Performs first aid on all injuries that may occur during range operations
  - Medic can be a certified combat Life safer for stationary ranges
  - A medical vehicle will be on standby for evaluations at all times



# Radio Transmitter Operator (RTO)

- Monitors all radio communications with Range Control
- Notifies the OIC of radio transmissions pertaining to his/her operation

# Range Uniform Requirements

- Kevlar / helmet
- Body armor with plates
- Hearing protection
- Eye protection

# Check on Learning

- QUESTION: Name two control measures that should be in place to help prevent death or injury to our Soldiers that results from negligent discharge.
- QUESTION: With those two in mind, name at least two more.

# Check on Learning

- QUESTION: What control measures should be emplaced to ensure safe Range Operations?

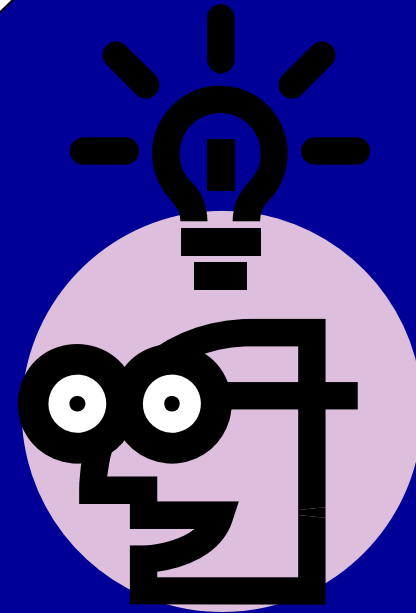
# Summary

- Weapons handling (avoiding negligent discharges)
- Range safety

# In Conclusion . . . .

- **T**reat every weapon as if it's loaded
- **H**andle every weapon with care
- **I**dentify the target before you fire
- **N**ever point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot
- **K**eep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire

**Remember!**



**Help save lives of our Soldiers!**