



## Coalition reinforces safety

By Spc. Mary Rose

MNC-I PAO

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – The Multi National Corps – Iraq recently implemented a safety program that encourages unit personnel to conduct risk management training within 30 days of a unit’s transfer of authority.

In fiscal year 2004, Coalition forces lost 107 troops to military vehicle related accidents in Iraq. Since the start of the 2005 fiscal year the Coalition lost 48 troops to vehicle accidents, according to MNC-I safety reports.

The increase in accidents is attributed to the number of Soldiers in the country and increased traffic they create, according to David R. Martin, MNC-I safety manager.

The training will enable units to evaluate tactics, techniques and procedures so drivers will focus on safety while driving, which might help reduce or prevent accidents, according to the MNC-I safety policy.

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Photo by Spc. Jeremy D. Crisp

### **Soldiers on Look-out**

Staff Sgt. Shawn E. James (left), a platoon sergeant, and Sgt. Paulo L. Burnside (right), a team leader, both with Company A, 1st Battalion, 303rd Armor Regiment, Kent, Wash., discuss the validity of an Iraqi contractor’s weapons permit during a traffic control point stop Feb. 4 outside Camp Victory, Iraq.

## Increased interest for service members’ savings plan

By Pvt. Matthew Clifton

MNC-I PAO

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq — Service members stationed at Camp Victory, Iraq, who have at least 30 days in the theater of operation, can participate in a savings program with a special interest rate during the time they are deployed.

The savings deposit program is a special program designed for service members stationed in combat zones to earn a guaranteed 10 percent annual interest rate on money deposited, up to the sum of \$10,000.

Accounts can be opened by using a check, a money order, cash or setting up an allotment at finance. Monthly contributions to your account cannot exceed your net pay.

“The savings deposit program is set up for service members to have a way to save money and earn a higher rate of interest than usual,” said Master Sgt. Barbara A. Gironda, noncommissioned officer in charge of Detachment D, 15th Finance Battalion, at Camp Victory.

Service members can deposit money into an account at finance by using cash, check, money orders or allotments, Gironda said. However, only active Army service members or activated reserve

component and National Guard soldiers may deposit money into the program through allotment.

Service members depositing money through allotment will see the transaction noted on their leave and earnings statement, she said.

After trying both methods of depositing money into the program, Gironda said allotment is the easiest.

Troops depositing money into the program through cash, check or money order will be given a cash collection voucher as a record of the deposit, Gironda said.

Service members participating in the savings program will earn 2.5 percent interest quarterly and 10 percent annually. Many people make the mistake of thinking the 10 percent interest is compounded quarterly.

“To get the most out of the program you should start depositing money as soon as possible after you get in country,” Gironda said. “You can deposit all of your un-allotted net pay.”

Deposited money will collect interest for 90 days after redeployment, Gironda said.

To collect deposited money contact DFAS, and they will deposit the money through an electronic funds transfer, Gironda said.

## Voices of Victory:

What were you most surprised about when you came to Camp Victory?



**"All the palaces and lakes on the camp."**

Sgt. Darren Kentz,  
307th Psychological  
Operations Company,  
7th Psyop Group



**"How much money was invested in the place. It could've been a resort back in the states."**

Lt. Col. David Bullard  
Command Group,  
Multi-National Force – Iraq, G4  
Department of the Army



**"I've been here for a while now, but I'm always surprised at how quickly stuff changes."**

Staff Sgt. Karen Collins  
44th Medical Command,  
XVIII Airborne Corps

## Operating Hours

### Coalition Cafe

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Dinner 5:30 - 9 p.m.

### Sports Oasis

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Dinner 5:30 - 9 p.m.  
Midnight Dining 11:30 p.m. - 1 a.m.

### Shopette

Everyday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

### Camp Liberty Post Exchange

Everyday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

### Fitness Center

Open 24 Hours

### Chapel

#### Sunday:

Protestant Worship 7 a.m.  
Protestant Worship 9 a.m.  
Catholic Mass 10:30 a.m.  
Gospel Service Noon  
Mormon (LDS) 2 p.m.  
Episcopal 4 p.m.  
Full Life Service 6 p.m.

#### Saturday:

7th Day Adventist 11 a.m.  
Catholic Mass 8 p.m.

## Hometown news greetings

Be a hometown star and send a greeting to your family, friends and loved ones. The MNC-I Public Affairs Office wants to put you on T.V. We will be videotaping shout-outs on Saturday outside the Camp Victory shopette from 2 - 3 p.m. Be a hometown star and shout it out loud.

## SAFETY

The safety policy also states that the program will help ensure every Soldier assigned or attached to a unit will be trained on how to react during vehicle rollovers and convoy operations.

The training will emphasize the need to wear seatbelts, pre-mission planning, vehicle readiness, vehicle speed and communication within the vehicle.

With each rotation coming into the country, there have been increases in vehicle accidents. "With (the current rotation), there is an even greater increase," Martin said.

"The main cause of our accidents is speed and driving too fast for the road conditions. The leading factor in fatalities is people not using seatbelts," he said.

The MNC-I safety policy requires every occupant in a vehicle sitting in a seat to be wearing a seatbelt.

"I think that when new Soldiers come in and we do the left-seat and right-seat transition, sometimes they may not be as familiar with the terrain," Martin said.

There is anxiety that goes along with being in a combat environment and trying to expect the unexpected, he said.

"The tendency is that they drive a little faster. I don't know why we're having so much trouble with the seatbelts."

Martin referred to a recent incident when a Soldier was the only one in a vehicle when it collided with another military vehicle. He was ejected from the vehicle because he wasn't wearing his seatbelt. The Soldier died of neck and head injuries.

"If a Soldier is wearing a seatbelt, he is

much more likely to stay conscious and be able to get himself out of the vehicle, versus flying around in a vehicle and having the chance of being knocked unconscious," Martin said.

He also stated that accidents have been attributed to up-armored vehicles.

"Back home we're not accustomed to driving a vehicle that weighs so much. The increased weight of the up-armored vehicle makes it handle differently," Martin said.

"The roads are not designed for the size of our vehicles. While driving down these little narrow canal roads, drivers pull over to the edge to let other vehicles get by. When they pull over, the road breaks away and the vehicle rolls down into the canal," Martin said.

Even though some of the accidents have been attributed to up-armored vehicles, Soldiers still need them. "Having the up-armor on the vehicle saves lives; there is no question about that," Martin said.

Learning how to drive the heavier vehicle is important and takes time.

There is a period of time when Soldiers become comfortable with the vehicle, Martin said. During the first 90 to 120 days, situational awareness needs to be very high. "The risk factor goes up during this period," he said.

The MNC-I command has urged unit leaders and Soldiers alike to evaluate their safety procedures while driving.

"Safety and risk assessment is every Soldier's business. We have lost too many Soldiers to preventable accidents. This must cease," said Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis E. Carey, command sergeant major, MNC-I.

**MNC-I Commanding General:** Lt. Gen. John R. Vines **MNC-I Production Chief:** Sgt. Mark St.Clair  
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