

SUBJ: DRIVING DRUNK AND/OR DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

1. THE COAST GUARD IS EXPERIENCING A STEADILY CHILLING INCREASE

IN THE NUMBER OF ALCOHOL RELATED MOTOR VEHICLE INCIDENTS. LANTAREA PERSONNEL ARE NEEDLESSLY ENDANGERING THEMSELVES AND OTHERS. WHILE WE DO AN OUTSTANDING JOB PROTECTING OTHERS WITH OUR ON-DUTY MULTI-MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENTS, OUR OFF-DUTY DRIVING

IS NOT AS COMMENDABLE.

2. EXAMPLES OF RECENT ALCOHOL RELATED MOTOR VEHICLE INCIDENTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

A. A MEMBER HAD BEEN DRINKING AND WAS TRAVELING LATE AT NIGHT AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. HE STRUCK ANOTHER VEHICLE HEAD-ON. HE RECEIVED SEVERE INJURIES THAT WILL REQUIRE MONTHS OF REHABILITATION BEFORE HE CAN WALK AGAIN. THE CIVILIAN DRIVER OF THE OTHER CAR WAS NOT AS LUCKY. HE WAS PRONOUNCED DEAD ON ARRIVAL AT THE LOCAL HOSPITAL.

B. TWO MEMBERS LEFT THE BARRACKS ONE EVENING TO GET MORE LIQUOR AND USED A GOVERNMENT VEHICLE FOR TRANSPORTATION. AFTER PURCHASING ALCOHOL THEY DROVE THROUGH A RED LIGHT, STRUCK A VAN, FLED THE SCENE AND FINALLY CRASHED INTO THE FOUNDATION OF A HOUSE. THE TWO SUFFERED ONLY MINOR INJURIES.

C. A MEMBER WAS ARRESTED FOR DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED AFTER CRASHING INTO A TREE AND TWO POLICE VANS.

D. A MEMBER WAS RETURNING TO HIS UNIT AFTER A NIGHT OF DRINKING.

HE LOST CONTROL OF HIS VEHICLE AND IT FLIPPED OVER. LUCKILY, HE

SUFFERED ONLY MINOR INJURIES.

E. A MEMBER LEFT A FRIEND'S HOUSE AFTER DRINKING. HE LOST CONTROL OF HIS CAR AND ROLLED IT OVER INTO A DITCH. STATE POLICE

FILED CHARGES OF DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED AFTER FINDING A BLOOD

ALCOHOL LEVEL OF .19%, OVER TWICE THE LEGAL LIMIT.

F. AND FINALLY, A MEMBER WAS TRAVELING AT SPEEDS IN EXCESS OF 100 MPH, LOST CONTROL WHILE TRYING TO PASS ANOTHER VEHICLE, CROSSED THE CENTER MEDIAN AND HIT ANOTHER VEHICLE HEAD-ON. RESULTS? A 57 YEAR-OLD FEMALE WAS KILLED AND HER 29 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER CRITICALLY INJURED. HER 4 YEAR OLD GRANDSON, WHO WAS STRAPPED IN A CAR SEAT IN THE BACK, RECEIVED MINOR INJURIES. THE MEMBER IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION WITH SEVERE BRAIN TRAUMA. NOT SURPRISINGLY, HIS BAC REVEALED HE WAS DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED.

3. THESE ARE ONLY A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE TRAGIC AND UNNECESSARY EVENTS OUR MEMBERS HAVE CAUSED BY DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL. IN JUST A FEW SECONDS, THEY HAVE CHANGED THE LIVES OF OUR MEMBERS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND INNOCENT BYSTANDERS FOREVER. THESE TRAGEDIES ARE PREVENTABLE. THEY DO NOT HAVE TO HAPPEN.

4. IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY AND DUTY TO EMPLOY ALL AVAILABLE INTERVENTIONS NECESSARY TO ELIMINATE THE PRIMARY CAUSE, DRINKING AND DRIVING. MEMBERS DISPLAYING TRAITS AND TENDENCIES ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOL ABUSE MUST BE REFERRED FOR ALCOHOL SCREENING. MEMBERS WHO FEEL THEY HAVE AN

ALCOHOL PROBLEM MUST SEEK HELP THROUGH SELF-REFERRAL BEFORE AN INCIDENT OCCURS. MEMBERS MAY SEEK HELP THROUGH UNIT CDARS, SUPERVISORS, PRIMARY CARE MANAGERS, SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION SPECIALISTS (SAPS), OR THROUGH THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP). FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT CWO2 SHAWN MCELROY, ADDICTIVE PROGRAMS REPRESENTATIVE AT 757-628-4370 OR SMCELROY@MLCA.USCG.MIL <mailto:SMCELROY@MLCA.USCG.MIL>.

5. COAST GUARD RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE MLCA SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION TEAM ATLANTIC (SAPTA) 757-856-2087, THE MLCA KSE MOTOR VEHICLE TRAINING TEAMS 757-628-4392, THE MLCA KSE WEB SITE AT HYPERLINK "<http://cgweb.lant.uscg.mil/KDIV/kseHomePage.htm> " <http://cgweb.lant.uscg.mil/KDIV/kseHomePage.htm> AND FROM THE WORK-LIFE HEALTH PROMOTION MANAGERS LOCATED AT THE ISCS. ALSO AVAILABLE ARE VIDEOS, LECTURES AND LESSON PLANS.

6. LET ME END WITH THIS COMMENT FROM THE INVESTIGATING OINC OF THE DEADLY MISHAP DESCRIBED ABOVE: "BECAUSE A YOUNG KID WITH A FAST CAR DID SOMETHING STUPID, THERE IS NOW A SON WITHOUT A MOTHER, A HUSBAND WITHOUT A WIFE, CHILDREN WITHOUT A GRANDMOTHER, A BROTHER WITHOUT A SISTER, AND A MOTHER WITHOUT HER DAUGHTER - ALL BECAUSE A COASTIE WANTED TO GET DRUNK AND DRIVE FAST. WAKE UP EVERYONE, DRUNK DRIVERS KILL PEOPLE."

7. INTERNET RELEASE IS NOT AUTHORIZED

8. VADM V.S. CREA, SENDS.

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