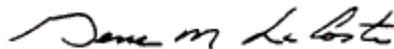


SAFETY ALERT

In a series of recent accidents, U.S. Army Safety Center investigators have noted an increase in leaders failing to enforce standards defined in unit SOPs, gunnery manuals, or operator manuals. Identified acts of noncompliance include supervisors allowing operations with untrained/uncertified crews or fewer crewmen than required.

For weapon systems to function as designed, crews must be trained. For reasons such as personnel turbulence, short-notice deployments, or simply a lack of assigned crewmen, units sometimes find themselves without enough trained, qualified, and certified crews to operate assigned systems. Unqualified crews and reduced-personnel crews cannot accomplish every task to the standards defined in the system operators or gunnery manuals. Shortcuts can lead to errors, which often result in death, personnel injury, and equipment damage.

Commanders are required to certify all crews as proficient in mandatory tasks for all major weapons systems prior to the execution of live-fire gunnery. Before authorizing a deviation from established procedures or standards, commanders must first determine if the benefits of executing the mission outside of published procedures or standards outweigh the risks involved. If so, hazards associated with the deviation must be identified. Control measures to mitigate the associated risks must then be developed and implemented. Finally, commanders must decide that the training benefit of continuing the mission with these controls in place outweighs the residual risks. In all cases, commanders and leaders must provide the supervision necessary to ensure that sound risk management decisions are made and then enforce identified control measures.



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