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19-01

June 2019
SAFETY BULLETIN

ACTIVITY: SWIMMING
SOLDIER DROWNING - FATALITY



From 14 OCT 2017 until present the U.S. Army has experienced 12 drowning fatalities. A USAREUR coalition Soldier drowned on 3 JUN 2019. USAREUR lost a Soldier to a swimming mishap on 6 AUG 2018; Soldiers off duty were swimming at a local recreational area with lifeguards. The Soldiers swam to a large inflatable 30-40 meters from shore. After arriving at the inflatable, the Soldier was tired and unable to climb onto the inflatable. After a moments rest, the group swam back to shore. Noticing that the Soldier was having some difficulty swimming, another Soldier attempted to assist him in getting back to shore. The Soldier slipped below the water and the other Soldier was unable to assist further and yelled for help. Local nationals, lifeguards, and Soldiers assisted in the search. The Soldier was recovered, brought to shore, and CPR was started. Emergency Medical Services were called, arrived on scene, administered aide, and transported the Soldier to hospital care. The service member succumbed to water inhalation related complications and died. It is unknown if alcohol consumption contributed to this fatality.

HAZARDS	CONTROLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drowning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Swim in supervised areas only with LIFEGUARDS ON DUTY (AE CIR 190-24) ◇ Obey all rules and posted signs. ◇ Never swim alone. Never leave children unattended near water. ◇ Wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) if you're unsure of swimming ability. Learn how to swim; take a swimming course. ◇ Never mix alcohol and swimming. Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance, and coordination, affects your swimming and diving skills.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ STOP swimming and get out of the water at the first indication of bad weather. I.e., thunderstorm or lightning. ◇ Conduct Risk Management and continuously monitor the weather and make adjustments as necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot Weather Injury (sun burn) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Avoid sun exposure during the hottest hours of the day; (10:00 - 1600 hrs). ◇ Drink water! Stay hydrated. Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine. ◇ Apply sunscreen with an Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15. ◇ Cover exposed skin and wear a hat. ◇ Wear sunglasses with ultraviolet (UV) protective lenses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Ensure you have adequate rest prior to swimming. ◇ When swimming in the ocean understand rip tides. Swim parallel with the shore to escape a rip tide.



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