

UNCLASSIFIED
MESSAGE PRECEDENCE
TO: PRIORITY
FROM: SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
TO: ALDODACT
SUBJECT: SAFE SUMMER SEASON
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HAGEL HAS APPROVED THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO ALL
DOD ACTIVITIES.
MAY 2, 2013

THE SUMMER MONTHS ARE OFTEN A HIGH POINT OF OUR YEAR AS WE TAKE A WELL-DESERVED VACATION AND SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS. THE SUMMER ALLOWS FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO RELAX AND REFRESH. HOWEVER, MANY OF THE ACTIVITIES WE PURSUE DURING OUR VACATION TIME PUT US AT RISK FOR ACCIDENTS THAT HAVE POTENTIALLY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.

AS YOU DRIVE TO AND FROM VACATION DESTINATIONS, REMEMBER THAT 81 PERCENT OF THE NON-COMBAT FATALITIES IN 2012 TOTAL TOOK PLACE OVER THE SUMMER. LAST SUMMER, 80 SERVICE MEMBERS DIED IN MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISIONS; 27 IN 4-WHEEL VEHICLES, 47 WHILE RIDING MOTORCYCLES, 4 WERE PEDESTRIANS, AND 2 WERE BICYCLISTS. THESE FATALITIES OCCURRED IN SPITE OF STATE LAWS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD) POLICIES REQUIRING THE USE OF SEATBELTS WHILE IN A CAR AND PROTECTIVE GEAR WHILE RIDING MOTORCYCLES AND BICYCLES. AN UNTOLD NUMBER OF DEATHS RESULTED FROM FATIGUE - DEATHS PREVENTABLE BY PROPER TRIP PLANNING AND FATIGUE MANAGEMENT WHILE DRIVING. ALL MILITARY LEADERS MUST EMPHASIZE HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR EVERYONE IN OUR DOD COMMUNITY TO FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS WHILE TRAVELING ON OUR NATION'S ROADS.

SOME OF YOU WILL ENJOY WATER ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SWIMMING, SNORKELING, SCUBA DIVING, OR WATER SKIING. SADLY, SIX SERVICE MEMBERS DIED WHILE PARTICIPATING IN WATER-RELATED ACTIVITIES LAST SUMMER. IT IS IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW SWIMMING AREA RULES AND TO BE AWARE OF THE HIDDEN DANGERS INHERENT IN PARTICIPATING IN WATER ACTIVITIES.

ALCOHOL IS ALL TOO OFTEN A COMPONENT IN THESE TRAGIC ACCIDENTS. RECOGNIZE THE RISKS AND MAKE GOOD DECISIONS. WE ALL KNOW THAT ALCOHOL, EVEN IN SMALL QUANTITIES, IMPAIRS OUR DECISION-MAKING AND IS OFTEN A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN MANY ACCIDENTS. SO BEFORE TAKING OUR FIRST SIP, WE NEED TO REMEMBER NEVER TO DRINK AND DRIVE. PLAN AHEAD AND ALWAYS THINK BEFORE ACTING.

WE ALL MUST DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO BE SAFER THIS SUMMER. EACH OF US MUST DO OUR PART TO KEEP EVERYONE AROUND US SAFE OFF-DUTY, AS WE DO ON-DUTY. FUNDAMENTAL MILITARY LESSONS OF WORKING TOGETHER, EXERCISING LEADERSHIP, FOCUSING ON THE MISSION, AND HAVING THE COURAGE TO SAY NO TO A RISKY SITUATION ARE ALL ESSENTIAL TO ENJOYING THE SUMMER AND RETURNING TO YOUR UNITS.

I WANT TO THANK EACH OF YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THIS NATION. YOU SERVE SO THAT ALL AMERICANS CAN BE SAFE AND FREE. I WISH EACH OF YOU A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE SUMMER.

//CHUCK HAGEL//