MEMORANDUM FOR

Commanders, MEDCOM Major Subordinate Commands
Directors, OTSG/MEDCOM OneStaff

SUBJECT: Holiday Safety Message

1. The holidays are a time to be with our loved ones and reflect on what we hold dear. Please be mindful of those spending the holidays alone and those who are in need. This time of year can be especially stressful and having a battle buddy to help a fellow Soldier through difficult times is a priceless gift. The Military Crisis Hotline is a resource for anyone who may need help at any time (1-800-273-8255; http://veteranscrisisline.net/ActiveDuty.aspx).

2. Many will choose to travel the Nation's highways to gather with friends and family. Holiday automobile travel, weather conditions, and other seasonal factors drastically increase risks. Soldiers must complete a TRIPS report prior to going on leave/pass/TOY. Our expectation is for leaders to know the details of their Soldiers' holiday plans and critically assess their travel plans to ensure sufficient time is taken to cover the intended travel distance. Leaders should apply risk management and engaged leadership to help guide Soldiers to smart decisions and not accept unnecessary risks. Below are a few driving related focus areas for holiday briefings:
   - Use a designated driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party
   - Ensure each and every person in the vehicle is properly buckled up
   - Put that cell phone away; distracted driving causes one-quarter of all vehicle accidents
   - Make sure the vehicle is properly maintained, and keep an emergency kit with you
   - Be prepared for heavy traffic, and potentially heavy snow or ice

3. The Combat Readiness/Safety Center website offers resources such as feature articles, posters and videos themed on seasonal topics to enhance your accident reduction efforts. Get to the “Ready or Not” seasonal safety campaign at https://safety.army.mil. Cold weather injury prevention tools are available at the following Public Health Center website: http://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/discond/cip/Pages/default.aspx.

4. As 2016 draws to a close, CSM Ecker and I extend to each of you and your Families our warmest wishes for a safe and joyous holiday season. We are very proud of you, and deeply appreciate your selflessness, professionalism, and dedication to the MEDCOM mission. Please remain vigilant over the holidays – if you see something – say something! Army Safe is Army Strong.

One Team...One Purpose!
Conserving the Fighting Strength!

GERALD C. ECKER
CSM, USA
Command Sergeant Major, USAMEDCOM

NADJA Y. WEST
Lieutenant General, US Army
The Surgeon General and
Commanding General, USAMEDCOM