



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES COMMAND
1777 HARDEE AVENUE, SW
FORT MCPHERSON, GEORGIA 30330-1062

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

APR 20 2009

AFPE

**MEMORANDUM FOR HEADQUARTERS AND MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS
REPORTING DIRECTLY TO FORSCOM**

SUBJECT: Suicide Investigation Policy

1. References:

- a. Army Regulation (AR) 15-6, Procedures for Investigating Officers and Boards of Officers, 2 Oct 06.
- b. AR 600-8-4, Line of Duty Policy, Procedures, and Investigations, 4 Sep 08.

2. Policy. Commanders will conduct an informal AR 15-6 investigation into every suspected suicide of a Soldier assigned to Forces Command (FORSCOM).

a. The appointing authority for these investigations is the decedent's General Court Martial Convening Authority (GCMCA). In cases where the decedent's GCMCA is not a FORSCOM officer, the appointing authority is the first general officer in the chain of command exercising Training and Readiness Authority (TRA) over the decedent's unit.

b. Commanders are encouraged to use the same investigating officer to conduct both the informal AR 15-6 investigation and the formal line of duty investigation (LODI) required by AR 600-8-4 whenever possible.

c. Appointment of the investigating officer shall be made as soon as the appointing authority has reason to suspect a suicide has occurred.

3. Coordinating Instructions.

- a. Appointing authorities will ensure that investigating officers:
 - (1) Receive a legal briefing prior to commencing the investigation.
 - (2) Contact the servicing Criminal Investigation Division (CID) office to obtain relevant information, to include preliminary reports. The investigating

AFPE

SUBJECT: Suicide Investigation Policy

officer will coordinate with CID to prevent the AR 15-6 investigation from interfering with any aspect of a concurrent criminal investigation.

(3) Coordinate any contact with the primary next of kin (PNOK) with the relevant casualty assistance officer and CID casualty liaison officer. The investigating officer will contact the PNOK only when necessary to resolve an important aspect of the investigation.

(4) Receive copies of any relevant serious incident report, OPREP-3, serious or sensitive incident or other initial reports.

b. Appointing authorities may designate subject matter experts to assist investigating officers, as necessary.

4. Scope of Investigation.

a. The purpose of the AR 15-6 investigation is to identify the circumstances, methods, and contributing factors surrounding a suicide event. The investigation will examine the decedent's behavior prior to the event, actions by the chain of command, and potential improvements to the unit or installation suicide prevention plan.

b. The completed investigation must provide clear, relevant, and practical recommendations designed to prevent future occurrences of suicide.

c. A list of questions that the investigation must answer is found at enclosure 1. The appointing authority and investigating officer may supplement this list as necessary.

5. Disposition of Investigation.

a. Once an investigation has been approved, the appointing authority will electronically mail a copy of the EXSUM (enclosure 2), including findings, recommendations and answers to the 20 questions found at enclosure 1 of the policy to the FORSCOM G-1, Strategic Integration Cell at: forscomg1sid@conus.army.mil. Additionally, as the status of an investigation changes, but not less than every two weeks, an email update on the progress and projected benchmarks for the review and approval will be submitted to same email address forscomg1sid@conus.army.mil using the format at enclosure 3.

AFPE

SUBJECT: Suicide Investigation Policy

b. The appointing authority is not required to send copies of the exhibits or supporting evidence along with the Executive Summary. Although there is no requirement to send a copy of the complete investigation to FORSCOM Headquarters, appointing authorities must ensure that each investigation is thorough, complete, and containing enough factual evidence to support the investigation's findings and recommendations. Appointing authorities are advised that a copy of the complete investigation must be made available upon request.

c. Appointing authorities will also provide a copy of the above referenced EXSUM to the unit's General Court Martial Convening Authority when that individual is not a FORSCOM asset. The decision to include the exhibits and supporting evidence in this copy is at the appointing authority's discretion.

6. This Policy Memo supersedes and consolidates FORSCOM Policy Memo CG-09-01 dated 23 Jan 09.

3 Encls

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles C. Campbell", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

CHARLES C. CAMPBELL
General, USA
Commanding