



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

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ARNG-HRF

01 OCT 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR The Adjutants General of all States, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Commanding General of the District of Columbia

SUBJECT: Suicide Investigation Policy Amendment

1. References.

a. Army Regulation (AR) 15-6, Procedures for Investigating Officers and Boards of Officers, 10 February 2006.

b. AR 600-8-4, Line of Duty Policy Procedures and Investigations, para 2-3 c (3), 4 September 2008.

c. AR 600-63, Army Health Promotion, 7 September 2010.

d. Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-24, Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention, 7 September 2010.

e. Memorandum, NGB-SFSS, 5 May 2009, subject: Suicide Investigation Policy (enclosure).

2. The investigation of ARNG suicides continues to remain a priority as we seek to better understand why Soldiers are dying by suicide. The information gleaned from the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA) report and from AR 15-6 investigations allows the ARNG and Army Suicide Prevention Task Force to craft better policies and programs in the hope of stemming future suicides.

3. The VCSA's 37-Line Report is the initial report submitted to the Soldier Family Support and Services Division (ARNG-HRF). This report should be submitted no later than 5 days following the submission of the Serious Incident Report. In cases where a lack of information exists, units should send the case information they have within the 5-day time frame and amend the original VCSA report at a later date.

4. The time frame for AR 15-6 investigations remains the same IAW the DARNG Suicide Investigation Policy memorandum dated 5 May 2009. In order to better standardize the AR 15-6 investigation process as it relates to suicide, the following procedural changes and documents will comprise a completed AR 15-6 investigation sent to ARNG-HRF.

a. The appointing authority for all AR 15-6 investigations for suspected and confirmed suicides is the Adjutant General. This authority will not be delegated. The letter of appointment should be included in the final packet.

ARNG-HRF

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b. All statements taken from military personnel will be captured on Department of the Army (DA) Form 2823 (Sworn Statement). If a witness is suspected of criminal offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, other federal law, or state law, the investigating officer (IO) will advise that witness of his or her rights against self-incrimination. In such cases, a DA Form 3881 (Rights Warning Procedure/Waiver Certificate) will be completed.

c. A completed DA Form 1574 (Report of Proceedings by Investigating Officer/Board of Officers) will serve as the base product of the investigation. The Adjutant General will concur/non-concur with the findings and recommendations of the IO in Section VIII.

5. All suicides are listed as "pending" until a civilian or military coroner issues a death certificate. It is imperative that ARNG-HRF receives the final adjudicated death certificate as soon as it is issued. State Suicide Prevention Program Managers are responsible for forwarding this information to ARNG-HRF. Final determination on whether a case is considered a suicide is based on the coroner's ruling.

6. Concurrent with the VCSA report and AR 15-6 investigation processes, units will conduct formal line of duty (LOD) investigations when a Soldier is suspected or is confirmed to have died by suicide. These LOD investigations are mandatory for any Soldier who is in a Title-10 or Title-32 status.

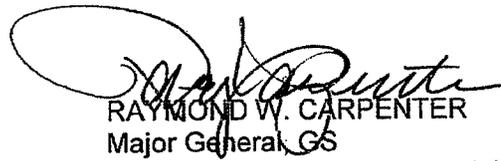
7. In cases where a suicide occurs when a Soldier is in a non-duty status and there are contributing factors caused by deployment (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder, total brain injury, or depression), an LOD investigation should also be initiated. The LOD investigation does not replace the existing requirement to conduct the AR 15-6 investigation.

8. The point of contact is LTC Reginald Barnes, Branch Chief, Soldier and Family Support Division, at DSN 329-7573, 703-601-7573 or reggie.barnes@us.army.mil.

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2. Suicide Reporting Process Map



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