

Securing military gear



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Importance of Securing Items The definition of sensitive items is anything that considered classified or a mission essential item. They range anywhere from protective wear, maps, patrol routes, nods (night vision goggles) or simply your weapon. The meaning of securing your sensitive items mainly is maintaining accountability for opsec (operation security), mission success and a soldiers overall readiness. If an item is lost and the enemy gets his/her hands on that item it could compromise the mission at hand or give them intelligence on the items we as soldiers use each day.

Using habits and exercising the securing of sensitive items will make it possible for the soldier and his or her team to operate at the top performance. Operational security is process that denied valuable information to an enemy. If an enemy were to obtain the presented it could be used against our forces. Not securing sensitive items increases the risk of loss by being intercepted by unauthorized personnel.

Every soldier must maintain accountability and positive control of all sensitive material to allow full use by them and anyone involved with the mission at hand while still maintaining operational security. Operational security can be compromised through the loss of sensitive items due to loss of equipment used for operational planning, or items used for support missions. Also depending on the type of sensitive item that is being classified it could fall under a different level of security as it is deemed so by the U.

S. Government. The levels included in the term classified are restricted (public disclosure could have undesirable effects or do some harm), confidential (unauthorized disclosure could damage national security

example would be compromising information that indicates the strength of armed forces or disclosure of technical information about weapons), secret (unauthorized disclosure could seriously damage national security) and top secret (unauthorized disclosure could immensely put national security in immediate danger).

Simply this means some things are more valuable than others, either because they cost more money or they hold a very importance in what they may do or what how they may help in the time of war on the battle field. In the military it is instilled in our heads that our weapon is the most valuable thing you will ever have. You train with it, you eat with it, you sleep with it, you use it to protect yourself and your battle buddies and you take care of it like it was your wife or child. In the end it becomes part of you and you cannot foresee yourself without it.

Your weapon is considered a sensitive item because if it ends up in the enemies' possession, it could possibly be used against you and your comrades. The United States has shed too many tears and money these past ten years that they do not need to shed any more due to negligence and not properly handling or maintaining positive control of sensitive items. Keeping track of where your weapon is or having it on you at all times will help in preventing from losing your weapon and or someone taking it from you. Now weapons are not the only things that are considered to be sensitive items.

There are multiple things that are considered sensitive like your identification card. Your military identification card holds a ton of information not only about oneself but also about one self's family. If your military

identification card is found by an enemy it can cause a lot of harm to you.

Luckily with the new identification card out, your social security number is no longer on the back of it, which is better because now they will not be able to use it to hack into your bank accounts or any other information.

Also, if you lose your ID, you give the enemy ability to pose as you and get on to military installations causing the COB or base to be at risk for terrorist attacks. The importance of securing all sensitive equipment and items cannot be stressed enough. The reason is simply to keep very important high cost valued items and equipment accounted for so people all around you do not have to deal with the consequences of the lost item or equipment. Also every sensitive item or equipment is high dollar valued so if you lose it you will be hurting money wise by losing a grand or more easily right on the spot.

And after that you can possibly do jail time from six months to a year and sure there will be rank taken away or something along those lines. You might even get an article fifteen after all that or maybe when you have to pay for the lost sensitive equipment or item so these should be a main priority to maintain and know where they are at all times and are accounted for either battle buddy or maybe CQ desk or the CP if they're not personally on you. Weapons are essential to keep intact because without your weapon you cannot defend yourself.

If you lose any part of your weapon it causes you to lose protection for yourself. Then your team will lose protection from you if you're needed, which in turn the platoon suffers from one person not being able to protect themselves from danger causes the whole company and eventually unit to lose a key

piece of protection. Loss of ear pro is also another item not to lose if out on the battle field it can cause permanent hearing loss. Eye pro will protect your eyes from any debris from hitting your eyes during battle.

A platoon counts on every piece of equipment used to make the mission smoother and able to accomplish if a piece of equipment comes up missing then the unit as a whole suffers. When a person misplaces a weapon a base the whole base will close down until that weapon is found it is a very serious thing to lose which makes it a very sensitive item. There are multiple pieces on an M4 which is a gas operated air cooled magazine fed selective fire shouldered fired weapon with a telescoping stock, a shorted variant of the M16A2 rifle the M4 has a 14. in barrel, allowing its user to better operate in close quarters combat, the M4 has selective fire options including semi-automatic and three round burst while the M4 has the capability to fire fully automatic instead of three round burst , the carbine is also capable of mounting an M203 grenade launcher which has a nine inch barrel as opposed to the standard 12 inch barrel of the M203 used on the M16 series.

With that said there are many parts on the weapon that are very crucial to making the weapon function which are as follows, the carbine gas tube, weld spring, delta ring, barrel indexing pin, barrel extension, barrel nut, M4 barrel, the thermoset hand guard, charging handle latch toll pin, charging handle latch, charging handle latch spring, charging handle, firing pin, bolt carrier key screw, bold carrier key, firing pin retaining pin, cam pin, bolt carrier, extractor pin, ejector roll pin, ejector spring, bolt gas rings, bolt, extractor spring, extractor spring insert, extractor, ejector, carbine buffer spring, six position carbine receiver extension, buffer assembly, pin butt stock slide

lock, lock pin spring, telestock latch, lock pin nut, roll pin, receiver extension nut, collar butt stock tube lock, buffer retainer, buffer retainer spring, takedown pin spring, takedown pin detent, takedown pin, safety detent, safety detent spring, pistol grip, lock washer, pistol grip screw, lower receiver, hammer and trigger pins, magazine catch button, magazine catch spring, trigger guard pivot roll pin, trigger guard, hammer with j pin, hammer spring, safety selector lever, bolt catch, bolt catch roll pin, bolt catch plunger, bolt catch spring, magazine catch, pivot pin detent, pivot pin spring, pivot pin, disconnect or spring, disconnect or, trigger spring, magazine follower, magazine box assembly, magazine floor, magazine spring, hand guard cap, front sight post, front sight detent, front sight detent spring, gas roll pin, front sight base with bayonet lug, barrel subassembly, front sight taper pins, front sling swivel, front sling swivel, front sling swivel rivet, index screw, index elevation, knob elevation, elevation spring, rear sight elevation spring pin, forward assist plunger, pawl spring pin, pawl detent, pawl spring, forward assist pawl, forward assist spring, forward assist spring pin, ejection port cover pin, ejection port cover spring, ejection port cover, ball bearing, index spring, rear sight windage knob pin, rear sight windage knob, rear sight windage screw, rear sight base, rear sight helical spring, rear sight ball bearing, rear sight aperture, rear sight flat spring, rear sight ball bearing, rear sight helical spring, thumb nut assembly, clamping bar, cross bolt, carry handled-forged, upper receiver, ring retaining cover. This is all in the M4 and if one of these pieces is missing then the whole weapon system will fail.

Another sensitive item is the PVS 14 night vision goggles which includes the following parts, battery cartridge, single AA battery cap, single AA battery housing assembly, battery housing assembly, switch knob assembly, purge screw, purge o ring, neck cord, eyepiece lens assembly, lock ring eyepiece, tube retainer, light pipe, monocular housing with or without government markings, lock ring objective, objective lens with preformed packing, lens cover objective, eyecup, shuttered eye guard, retaining ring or eyepiece assembly adapter, demist shield, head mount assembly, sacrificial window, light interference filter, PASGT helmet mount, compass magnetic, hard case, soft case, lens paper, carry strap, camera adapter, image tube MX11769, variable gain knob (Dual Battery Housing), variable gain knob assembly (single battery housing), small arms or weaver weapon mount, facemask assembly, head/helmet mount adapter, MICH/ ACH clip for helmet mount, snap ring, eyepiece focus ring, indicator plate, eyepiece slotted sleeve, lens cell assembly, eyepiece o ring, close focus stop, set screw, objective of ring, monocular housing with government markings, screws, performed packing, small arms mounting adapter, tethering cord, elevation strap, neck pad, slide strap, brow pad thin, brow pad thick, brow pad medium, chin strap, operators manual, strap assembly, facemask frame assembly, brow pad assembly, left cheek pad, right cheek pad, chin cup, ACVC front bracket assembly, GOI ground helmet mount, ACVC helmet mount, RBR helmet mount, MICH helmet mount, kit front bracket ACH/CVC long screw ? n, kit front bracket ACH/CVC short screw. Again those are all parts of the PVS 14's that are crucial for proper use. Another weapon used a lot in the military is the M240B which is a medium, belt fed, air cooled, gas operated, crew served, and fully automatic machine gun, fired from the open bolt position.

This weapon has so many items that are easy to be unsecured and if not every piece it can cause many malfunction the following are all parts of the M240B that make this weapon work smoothly; barrel assembly, cover assembly, butt stock and buffer assembly, receiver assembly, trigger housing assembly, driving spring rod assembly, bolt and operating rod assembly.

These are just a couple sensitive items that the military frequently uses that need to be accounted for at all times. Not only does not securing your sensitive items mean your jeopardizing your protection and mission readiness but it also cost a ton of money. In 2009 CBS had a report that over one billion dollars of military equipment tractor trailers, tank recovery vehicles, crates of machine guns and rocket propelled grenades are just very few of the items left in Iraq. The report details a massive failure in government procurement revealing little accountability for the billions of dollars spent purchasing military hardware for the Iraqi security forces.

For example, according to the report, the military could not account for 12,712 out of 13,508 weapons, including pistols, assault rifles, rocket propelled grenade launchers and machine guns. So as you see it affects not only the military but the United States in general. This means if unsecured gear is taken or not accounted for we are hurting the economy we live in. When a piece of equipment is unsecured it can cause that weapon to malfunction causing serious injury or death. As in the M240 bravo if the spring guide is missing a crucial piece and is not in right because something was not secured or left somewhere it may end up flying out from tremendous pressure and cause serious injury or death.

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When securing your gear it needs to be in a safe place either watched by someone trustworthy or locked away to where it can not be damaged or stolen. Every piece of equipment used serves a purpose in the military, for example the M4 is more used for close quarters combat but can be used at a distance, and the PVS 14's are you for night to see with infrared settings. There is also the PEQ 15 which is a laser with multiple settings that attaches to several types of weapon systems. Just to stress how expensive these items are, here is a price list for some sensitive items. The PEQ 15 brand new cost around \$1934. 18, the PVS 14 cost around \$3395 brand new. Just alone there is roughly \$5000 in just two items.

When in combat and the heat of the battle it may be tough keep track of all sensitive items when moving fast, rolling, and jumping from cover to cover. The best way to make sure you have all sensitive items in tacked is by using tie downs. Which means taking 550 cord or some type of strong string and tie the item to yourself or the weapon. For example the peq 15 would attach to the upper part of the hand rail on the weapon system or on the left side hand rail like it would on a M240B. The PVS 14 would tie down to a D clip and then be attached to yourself when not mounted to the helmet (ACH). When it is mounted to D clip would clip onto the head band around the helmet to insure if the goggles where to fall off they would not hit the ground and be damaged or otherwise lost.

Another good reason for tie downs are that if a soldier would be shooting in the heat of battle at night time using a PEQ 15 and he did not have it tied down it would eventually blow the laser off the weapon, making it hard for him to point out targets and making him a sitting duck leading to disaster.

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The item needs to be tied down properly and not just a little knot here tied off and then another to the item its being attached too. The item needs to be carefully tied down tightly and very securely to the item it is being attached to. When making sure the item is secured in a safe place or being watched by you or someone else is aware of the weather condition or the place it is in.

For example make sure that if the weather is bad like raining and or snowing you will have the weapon or item covered so it will not get destroyed. This doesn't just include items that are like technology it also includes wet weather gear, cold weather gear, ponchos, and other things such as bags ruck sacks even as little as paper and a pen. If you miss a notebook with what you think doesn't have much valuable information it may be just enough information such a range card or some route you've chosen to take that the enemy can use against you. Something as small as a weapon description and how much ammo you have left can jeopardize the mission immensely.

Just like when fighting in war and you use an AT4 make sure you break off the sights to make in not able to use just like that you would want to destroy the paper you write important stuff on immediately after your done using it. When securing items its especially important to clean your weapon to avoid malfunctions. When in any type of training environment the weapon will get carbon build up and not function correctly if not cleaned after each session it is fired. Main parts that need special focus on the M4 is the bolt assembly and the star chamber it's the two main parts that get the most carbon build up. On the M240B the bolt is also a main part in keeping the weapon clean.

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The best way to clean the weapon before storing it away is putting a heavy coat of CLP which is an oil that breaks down the carbon build up on the weapon system. After a few hours or so the CLP will have broken down the weapon and the most part can be wiped off. After that you can use anything sharp such as a dental pick or knife to chip off the chunks of carbon that the CLP couldn't get off. The weapon should be broken down and every piece accounted for. The best way to make sure you miss not one piece when moving the weapon is to put it completely back together. It is highly recommended to not take the bolt apart in the field to avoid losing tiny parts within the weapon.

Several things can happen if the weapon is not cleaned and put together properly. For example if a soldier has went out on a mission and got into a fire fight and shot off several hundred rounds, then comes back to his or her crew and just lays the weapon down without cleaning it could have negative effects for next time use. Some things can happen when the weapon has not been cleaned. These are just a few of the common things that happen. The weapon could double feed multiple times which is when 2 rounds try to feed into the chamber at the same time. Another thing is that the bolt could stick and not completely feed the round into the chamber causing another double feed.

Carbon build up can also cause the firing pin to not come out when taking the weapon apart and it could get stuck from carbon building up too much on within the bolt itself causing the entire bolt to become difficult to take the bolt apart to clean it. If not cleaned the weapon could get so bad it would be impossible to fire and the weapon will eventually become unserviceable and

have to be completely replaced. Not only will the soldier be without a weapon but in another scenario if the soldier had not cleaned the weapon after a fire fight and proceeds on another mission the results could be deadly. If a soldier went out on a mission before cleaning his or weapon and the soldier went out and another fire fight broke out the weapon could malfunction and that soldier would have nothing to defend their self against enemy forces.

Not only would it could it be dangerous on the battlefield, but the government would now have to replace the weapon if it got so bad that the weapon can no longer be used due to so much carbon build up. An M4 cost about \$1200 brand new. So not only could it put a soldiers life in danger but it can also cost a lot of money in getting the soldier a new weapon. Of course theres more to than just a dirty weapon like the magazine not seated right or the magazine could be messed up but in most cases the malfunctions are caused by carbon build up in the weapon. This ties into to securing your items because it has to do with maintaining your gear just as you do in securing your weapon. Securing your gear also helps in keeping your personal items with you like your cell phone and other items not military related.

When packing your ruck sack up be sure to tighten it up and so if anyone were to get into it you would know right away. Securing your items is not only helping the soldiers command on the headache of paper work but it also helps in keeping your personal items from getting stolen. Unfortunately there are people out there that will steal peoples gear and personal items. It's especially important to secure items on a regular basis to instill good habits for non-military life. When going leave it is crucial to secure items in a place

locked up to wear no one will get to them. There has been increased reports of stolen items and being sold on posts throughout the army. That is why its very important to keep secured items locked up.

There are many important reasons to be checking your gear constantly to keep proper army issued gear accountability as an United States army Infantryman in the United States army. It is the United States army Infantryman responsibility to always have proper army issued gear accountability at all times. Whenever you have a pause through your patrols, raids, or movements the United States army Infantryman always want to take a quick check to make sure that you have your army issued gear as well as everything else that you or your team of United States army Infantryman came with. It is your job to take responsibility and check yourself as well as your other United States army Infantryman.

Proper army issued gear accountability can range from the most important pieces of army issued gear such as your rifle all the way down to your tourniquet. You always want to have serialized army issued gear such as your night vision goggles dummy corded to your body. If your Marine Corps issued gear that can be dummy corded is dummy corded to you, will have a lot less chance to loose any of your gear or anything else you are carrying with you. In case that a United States Marine Infantryman is moving or running, even if your Marine Corps issued gear comes absent from the pouch or pocket you are carrying them in they will not come completely off your body.

Any serialized army issued gear that the United States army Infantryman is carrying on that United States army's body needs to always be dummy corded to that United States army Infantryman or even attached to the United States army Infantryman's flak jacket. That also includes dummy cording the issued army issued gear that is attached to that United States army Infantryman's rifle directly to the United States army Infantryman's rifle such as your ACOG RCO, AN/PEQ 15, and your surefire. The army has adopted a system of serializing gear in order to keep records of where it's gear is issued. The units and individual soldiers to whom this gear is issued are held accountable for maintaining them. Losing a piece of gear could have repercussions ranging from payment for lost property to legal action. In addition to these are other consequences.

There is a quote by Benjamin Franklin that reads, 'time is money.' In the armed services, a loss of time could mean a loss of life. When not in a combat environment, time spent looking for lost gear detracts from training. An improperly trained soldier in a combat situation could cost lives. Apart from a loss of training time, a soldier without the gear he was trained to use is not very useful. In the Rifleman's Creed, there is a verse that states, 'my rifle without me is useless; without my rifle, I am useless.' This verse illustrates why it is important to know where one's gear is at all times. Aside from creating an ineffective soldier, lost gear can potentially corrupt a soldier's character.

It is a well known fact that soldiers never lie, cheat, or steal. Equally infamous is the saying, 'gear adrift is gear a-gift.' A once lost, but now found piece of gear with value ranging from thousands to tens of thousands

of dollars is tempting for any man. Hording or selling such gear would cause a moral dilemma for anyone. None-the-less, the recovered gear is government property. Not returning it to the proper authorities could result in legal action if caught. In order to prevent the former, or any other, consequence of lost gear from occurring we must always keep accountability of our serialized gear. This involves always returning gear to its original resting place.

The responsibility of each soldier in each section of the company is to make sure that every single piece of equipment is locked away and secured according to whatever guidelines that the chain of command has given in accordance with the company SOP. With saying that there should never be an issue with any soldier leaving any equipment unsecure if everyone follows the simple soldiering skill that was taught in basic training. The rules of accountability are taught to every soldier from the first day that they are inserted into the army. The rule is simple, leave no equipment unsecured. From the first day of basic training, soldiers are taught accountability of their equipment. When you arrive at basic training, you are issued all of your equipment and it is your responsibility to maintain control and know where your equipment is at all times.

Regardless what training you are doing or how big the mission is, you must maintain accountability for your equipment, devices and all important military items. Accountability has an effect on you and your units overall mission readiness and performance in all situations whether they are minor or critical. Accountability also effects the tasks and assignments success do to lack of poor communication or lack of equipment , there are

responsibilities that can not be achieved. Maintaining the correct resources and the proper control of your equipment greatly improves your chance of mission success and reduces your chances of mission failure significantly on and off the battlefield.

Without equipment the mission can not be completed, there for accountability is of the up most importance. Units who practice good accountability are the units that achieve the most success as it has been proven thru out time. Losing any piece of military equipment is a sever mistake that should never be made. Some things are a lot more important than others and need to be kept secure at all times. Losing a sensitive item can cause problems for a lot of people; the soldier who lost it, that soldiers team leader, squad leader, and the unit in as whole. It also puts the security of the post in danger and causes a threat. The soldier that lost the sensitive item depending on the item will have possibly made himself mission incapable.

Also he could be putting himself at risk of United Sates Code of Military Justice action and possibly being discharged from the United States Army with a less than honorable discharge or a dishonorable discharge. A dishonorable discharge from the United States Army would pretty much ruin any chance a soldier has of getting a well paid job after his time in service. If a soldier loses any type of sensitive item and the item is not found or reclaimed then the soldier will be responsible for the paying the United States Army back for the lost equipment which can cost a whole lot of money. The soldier that lost the sensitive item's team leader will be responsible for ensuring that the soldier knows what his mistake was and will

ensure that his corrective training is assigned and completed in a timely manner.

The team leader will also have to deal the fact that his soldier may now be mission incapable which will put the team leader's team mission incapable. With a team out of operation in a squad it will put a strain on the rest of the teams and cause the platoon to be less than one hundred percent prepared for any situation that may arise. A squad leader that is in charge of the soldier who lost the sensitive item will now have to deal with all the problems that may arise from the situation. To lose a sensitive item can be detrimental to the readiness of your unit in times of war or training. The consequences of losing sensitive items vary from item to item according to its value and importance.

In times of war losing a sensitive item such as a loaded SINCGARS radio or an ANCD you have just given your enemy the ability to intercept all secure radio transmissions between any two operators in your area and you could have charges of treason brought against you for which the maximum punishment is death. This should be the worst of your worries, if the enemy knows your location or plans then you have just put all the troops in your area, on your frequency, in danger of a surprise attack. Could you live with the knowledge that you are responsible for the death of your team, squad, platoon, unit, or your own battle buddy or best friend? I think not. There are many other punishments such as life in prison. To lose a sensitive item can also be a violation of the army values. It violates the values of Duty and Integrity. It violates duty because without the proper equipment you cannot perform your duties.

You also let down your platoon and/ or squad by not knowing where your items are. It violates the integrity of yourself by letting your platoon down. Your platoon counts on you to make sure you know where all your items are. The definition of Accountability in the Military is the obligation imposed by law or lawful order or regulation on an officer or other person for keeping accurate record of property, documents, or funds. The person having this obligation may or may not have actual possession of the property, documents, or funds. Accountability is concerned primarily with records, while responsibility is concerned primarily with custody, care, and safekeeping.