

# WHEN WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW CAN HURT

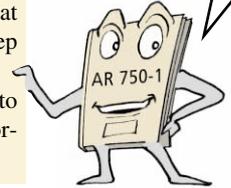


It's just plain bad business when information is available that can prevent damage to equipment and injury to personnel—and you haven't seen it.

Sad to say, many maintenance facilities and the soldiers that work in them either never see the information found in safety-of-use messages (SOUM), don't understand what they're supposed to do with the information, or don't keep track of whether the messages are being followed.

SOUMs direct you to do something to avoid danger to crew and damage to equipment. And an SOUM's importance comes right out of AR 750-1.

"COMMANDERS AT ALL LEVELS WILL ENSURE PROMPT COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS DICTATED BY SAFETY-OF-USE MESSAGES."



SOUMs pertain to any defect or hazardous condition, actual or potential, where a high or medium safety risk condition has been determined according to AR 385-16, *System Safety Engineering and Management*, that can cause death or serious injury to personnel or damage to equipment. These messages are classified into three categories.

## HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF THE VARIOUS TYPES OF SOUMS AND WHAT THEY REQUIRE

### Deadline SOUM

Orders to cease operations and use of a specific model, series or design of equipment, or to cease performance of certain tasks.

### Technical SOUM

Guidance that requires actions or inspections that, if the hazardous situation is present, will deadline the equipment.

### Operational SOUM

Guidance that changes operating procedures or imposes limits on the use of equipment.

## HERE'S HOW TO GET SOUMS



SOUMs should come through regular chain of command routes. If they don't, contact your DS unit, Logistics Assistance Office (LAO) or Safety Office. Make sure **someone** sends you SOUMs every time they get them.

NOTE THAT AR 750-6, *GROUND SAFETY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM, COVERS PROCEDURES FOR ISSUE, COMPLIANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF GROUND-BASED EQUIPMENT SOUMS...*

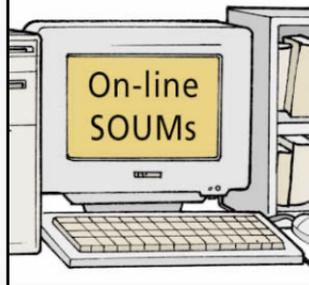
...AND AR 95-3, *AVIATION: GENERAL PROVISIONS, TRAINING, STANDARDIZATION AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, COVERS THE SAME INFORMATION FOR AIRCRAFT.*



If your unit has Internet access, SOUMs can be viewed at <https://aeps2.ria.army.mil/>. This site is password protected. If your unit does not have a password, get one at this site: <http://aeps.ria.army.mil/>. Once you have the password and enter the site, type in Safety of Use messages in the SEARCH box and go from there.

You can also contact the headquarters that sends the SOUMs, asking that your unit be included as a specific addressee for SOUMs in the future.

<https://aeps2.ria.army.mil/>



WHAT ABOUT  
**HOW TO  
HANDLE  
SOUMS?**



Many times SOUMs don't get into the right hands locally because the recipients don't know to whom to give them for action. The best thing to do is to officially designate one person or office to clear all SOUMs that come in. In addition to giving a copy to whomever will complete the action, the designee must also give a copy to the unit commander.

Noting AR 750-1 again, commanders must get all SOUMs so they will know about the problems, and what must be done to comply with the messages. Commanders can't make sure their equipment is good to go if they're not aware of all problems.

Because SOUMs have varying lifespans, there must be some kind of file system to keep them on record. File copies should be kept at the receiving office and at the action level.

At the unit level, you might consider a file folder on each type of equipment with a note or memo in the folder. Or you could make a small pencil note in the Remarks block of each DD Form 314 or on the Scheduled Services Report, DA Form 5986-E, used in ULLS.

Either way, be sure to include the command issuing the SOUM and the SOUM's number. Then new unit personnel can track what's happened to equipment previously.

WHATEVER  
METHOD YOU USE  
TO GET, USE AND  
HANDLE SOUMS,  
BE SURE TO  
FOLLOW THE  
INFO IN THE  
MESSAGES. IT  
CAN PREVENT  
EQUIPMENT  
DAMAGE AND  
MAYBE SAVE  
A LIFE.



PS END