

CHAPTER 23

MALFUNCTIONS REPORTING AND DUTIES OF THE MALFUNCTION OFFICER

The investigation of personnel, parachutes, and equipment malfunctions receives the highest priority and is secondary in priority only to medical aid for the injured. It supersedes all other aspects of the operation to include ground tactical play. Prompt and accurate investigations and reporting could save lives and equipment. The report provides data to determine if a system or procedural training change is necessary to prevent future occurrences. The MO is subordinate to the DZSO and is a member of the drop zone support team. Any assistance required by the MO must pass through the DZSO/DZST, who controls the DZ.

23-1. MALFUNCTION OFFICER DUTIES AND EQUIPMENT

The unit that provides air items normally provides the MO.

a. **MO Duties.** The duties of the MO include the following:

(1) **On the DZ.** As a member of the DZST, he must be present on the DZ or extraction zone during all personnel and equipment drops. He tags equipment and initiates reports.

(2) **Equipment.** The MO has the following equipment during duty performance:

(a) Radio for communication with the DZ command post.

(b) A camera to take photographs of malfunctioned equipment, injured personnel, or incidents. Photographic equipment is essential for the proper performance of MO duties. Pictures of malfunctions assist in investigations.

(c) Binoculars (daytime) or night vision devices (nighttime).

(d) Transportation to move around the DZ.

(3) **MO actions.** The MO performs the following actions if a malfunction occurs:

(a) Conducts an on-site investigation of the cause(s) of the malfunction.

(b) Photographs the malfunctioned equipment, or the malfunction as it happens, and the malfunction site that show possible cause(s) of the malfunction.

(c) Secures, identifies, tags, and numbers airdrop equipment involved in the malfunction incident.

(d) Prepares and submits required reports.

b. **Partial Malfunction.** In the event of a partial malfunction, the MO does the following:

(1) Records the number and type of malfunction (see AR 59-4).

(2) Obtains a statement(s) from the parachutist(s) to include name, unit, stick number, previous jump experience, type of aircraft, and details of the malfunction.

NOTE: The investigation should not interfere with the jump activities planned by the tactical unit during mass tactical personnel jumps. If warranted, the MO performs any subsequent investigations from this information.

c. **Total Malfunction.** In the event of a total malfunction, the MO does the following:

(1) **No injuries.** The MO obtains statements from the parachutists and JM if a total malfunction occurs during personnel jumps where there are no injuries. He gathers additional statements from ground observers, other parachutists, and aircraft personnel to determine the cause.

(2) **Serious injuries or death.** If serious injuries or death occurs during a parachute jump, the MO requests that the DZSO place the impact site off limits and post a guard. This action should not interfere with medical support.

d. **MO Actions if Serious Injuries or Death Occurs.** The MO photographs the parachutist, the impact site, and any obvious defects in the equipment (including any damage caused by the impact). He then performs the following:

(1) **Preservation of equipment.** If the parachute harness must be removed from the individual, records where the parachute harness or component was cut. Medical personnel dictate the method of removal of the parachute harness.

(2) **Parachute log record.** Takes immediate possession of the parachute log record and limits access to this document to appointed investigation officers.

(3) **Preservation of clothing and equipment removed by medical personnel.** Requests that medical personnel secure and preserve all parachutist clothing and equipment that is removed from the impact site.

(4) **Preservation of items left on DZ.** Assumes responsibility for all items and personal equipment to include the parachutist's weapon.

(5) **Statements.** Takes statements from the preceding parachutists, subsequent parachutists, PJM and AJM, ground observers, and other parachutists or aircraft personnel able to provide facts.

(6) **Other personnel statements.** Records the name and unit of any personnel who observed the incident, even if information is not new to the investigation.

(7) **Jump manifest.** Secures a copy of the jump manifest. Reconstitutes the jump stick from personnel present, if required.

(8) **Equipment examination on DZ.** Conducts a detailed, component-by-component examination of all equipment after the parachutist has been evacuated.

(9) **Impact site sketch.** Sketches the impact site in relation to the DZ and marks the impact location of the parachutist and equipment.

(10) **Notification of DACO.** Requests the DZSO/DZSTL notify the DACO so the aircrew can inspect the aircraft for any defects or damage that may have caused or contributed to the malfunction. Requests DACO ensure segregation and identification of parachute deployment bags from those of other aircraft.

(11) **D-bag.** Obtains the deployment bag serial number from the parachute log record. Retrieves and secures the deployment bag with the parachute assembly until the investigation is completed.

(12) **Care of parachute.** Ensures the parachute is loosely rolled, tagged, and bagged when completing the on-site investigation; does not remove parachute entanglements.

(13) **Secures equipment.** Secures equipment as follows:

(a) Ensures evacuation of all equipment to an area where it is subjected to rigger inspection IAW TM 10-1670 series for type parachute involved.

(b) Ensures the DZSO/DZST signs for any organizational and personal clothing, weapons, and equipment believed *not* to be the probable cause of the malfunction. This equipment is returned to the jumper's unit, and the unit should preserve the equipment until the investigation is complete.

23-2. MALFUNCTION OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES DURING INVESTIGATIONS

The depth of any investigation varies according to the severity of the malfunction and resultant injuries. In cases apparently not involving death or serious injury, the MO conducts the on-site investigation solely to prevent future occurrences.

a. **MO Follow-On Investigation.** In cases involving death or serious injury, the MO conducts a follow-on investigation according to service directives. His investigative notes, insights, reports, and physical evidence are available to these investigations.

b. **Confidentiality of Investigation.** During the investigation, the MO gathers items of information and evidence that are sensitive in nature. He ensures that the information pertaining to the investigation is given to personnel only on a need-to-know basis. It is important that the MO exercise care so neither the rights of involved personnel are compromised nor the government is placed in an unfavorable position.

23-3. REPORTING DATA

All data gathered by the MO must pass through the DZSO/DZSTL before being transmitted to the control group. This feeder information is normally discussed between the DZSO/DZSTL and the MO immediately after the jump is complete.

NOTE: The MO uses DD Form 1748-2 to report all airdrop malfunctions (see AR 59-4). Only data required for feeder report will be discussed between the MO and any other party.