

## **Combat Outpost (COP) Afghanistan**

**Topic:** Hazing, Sexual Assault

**Situation:** Platoon Birthday Celebration in the Motor Pool

B Troop, 1st platoon has a tradition that their Soldiers receive swats with the top of a vehicle antenna on their birthday. The practice has been around for years with every new Platoon Sergeant and Platoon Leader seemingly more than happy to carry on the tradition. The hits with the antenna were never hard and afterward the Soldiers celebrated the occasion with cake or a BBQ cookout. About six months ago, the platoon got a new PSG, and the birthday tradition took a darker turn. The new PSG frequently administers the swats themselves and in the last instance instructed two Soldiers to hold the person celebrating their birthday and drop their pants to their knees.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What did you notice was happening in this vignette?
2. What is your reaction to what is happening here?
3. If confronted with a similar situation, what would you do?
4. What Army values have been violated and how could you use the Army Values to address/intervene in this situation?
5. What is the responsibility of those who know of inappropriate conduct?
6. What could have been done?
7. Why do you think nobody intervened?

**Solution:** This vignette demonstrates how a unit's tradition can quickly turn into something illegal and destroy trust and cohesion. Once the PSG started escalating the hazing, someone in the platoon should have brought this to the attention of the command, a SARC, CID, or IG.