

Soldier charged in failed Humvee air drop

By: [Christopher Diamond](#)

July 5, 2017

A soldier has been charged with destruction of government property and making a false official statement after three Humvees free-fell from a C-130 during a parachute drop in Germany last year.

Sgt. John Skipper of 1st Battalion, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team in Vicenza, Italy, was formally charged in May for his role in the dangerous destruction of the three vehicles, [as first reported by Stars and Stripes](#).

Maj. Juan Martinez, a spokesman for the 173rd, announced the charges Tuesday.

"Should this case progress, we will continue to release information consistent with Army policy," Martinez said in a statement to Stars and Stripes.



A Humvee is air dropped out of the back of a C-130 Hercules over Hohenfels Training Area, Germany on April 11, 2016.

The charges against Skipper indicate that the Army does not believe that equipment failure caused the Humvees to slip from their parachute harnesses and fall off of their platforms, Stars and Stripes reported.

There is a pending recommendation on whether to proceed to court-martial following an Article 32 cause hearing scheduled for later this month, according to the newspaper.

Roughly 150 supply bundles, vehicles, communications equipment and indirect weapons systems were dropped in April 2016 as part of the Saber Junction 16 exercise at Hohenfels Training Area in Germany.

Humvees like those wrecked in the incident can cost up to \$220,000, according to Stars and Stripes. The maximum punishment Skipper can face for destruction of government property is 10 years in prison, dishonorable discharge and forfeiture of all pay and allowances.

A video of the incident was posted to the YouTube channel of U.S. Army W.T.F! moments. The Army said at the time that it would be launching a separate investigation to identify who shot the video.

The video of the incident below contains adult language: Photos were also posted to twitter that appear to show the wrecked Humvees.

Saber Junction is conducted annually with one of the two brigades based in Europe. It involves around 5,000 soldiers from 16 allied European nations. The stated goal of the 2016 exercise was to evaluate the readiness of the 173rd to conduct unified land operations, with an emphasis on tactical interoperability.

