



US DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

BLAST INJURY RESEARCH PROGRAM COORDINATING OFFICE

Education and Research Resources

Worldwide Ocular Trauma Video-Teleconference

VCE hosts a monthly worldwide ocular trauma video-teleconference (VTC) which links theater ophthalmologists with subsequent providers across the full continuum of care, as well as with agencies and organizations that influence casualty care along that continuum. Presentations are made on active patient cases to provide real-time care coordination, leading to improved care. PEO Soldier and NSRDEC representatives participate in the monthly VTCs to address issues related to ocular injuries and approved CEP. While current anti-ballistic material is highly effective against fragments and shrapnel, its effectiveness against blast is less clear. As a result of this interaction, NSRDEC is more actively studying blast-protection characteristics of current CEP. One of the outcomes of the ongoing discussion on use of rigid eye shields (i.e., Fox shields) in the theater was an article co-authored by VCE personnel, “The use of rigid eye shields (Fox shields) at the point of injury for ocular trauma in Afghanistan,” which was published in the *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery* in 2014. This retrospective observational study reviewed the DoD Trauma Registry and analyzed 157 eye injuries in Afghanistan from 2010–2012, and found that that only 39% applied eye shields, and that 80% of shields were applied incorrectly. The authors recommended that corrective efforts should include enhanced educational emphasis and increased shield availability. Improved care for wounded Service Members and improved CEP for use by Service Members in combat theater will lead to better outcomes and reduce the severity of injury.