

# A Technique for Preparing the M1 Series Tank for MOUT Operations

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In an environment of combat teams, task forces, and expeditionary forces, the need for understanding combined arms operations continues to be a challenge during real world contingency missions and at the Joint Readiness Training Center. Preparing the M1-series tank for MOUT with units that rarely train together continues to challenge tank crews and their supported infantry. There are some simple tips on TTPs for preparing the M1 and its supported infantry for MOUT operations. Using existing stocked supply items, off-the-shelf items, as well as locally manufactured materials, you can prepare the M1 for MOUT operations.

There is no current system on the M1 that allows the tank commander to communicate with supported dismounts without using radios or hand and arm signals. Communications with the dismounts remain a challenge, but can be accomplished by mounting a C-2296 vehicle radio communications intercom control unit on the back of the

tank. Procedures for attaching this system can be found in the Center for Army Lessons Learned Newsletter 98-10, "Fighting Light/Heavy in Restricted Terrain."

Protecting tanks from the enemy can be accomplished by attaching concertina wire and chicken wire around the tanks' skirts, including the rear. This protects the tank without risking severe injury.

A modified ski boat recovery ladder attached to the bustle rack will allow friendly dismounts as well as the tank crew to access the tank when the turret is traversed over the side. This system can be initiated by the loader who folds out the ladder and retrieves it as necessary.

One of the M1 crew's top priorities is protecting the company/team dismounts. Current configuration of the M1 does not allow for dismounts to follow behind it because of the exhaust system. Dismounts are forced to follow on the

flanks of the tank, blocking their view of the opposite side. Using an engine exhaust deflector, such as the one currently used to support M1s towing M1s, is a possible solution that would permit the infantry dismounts to follow behind the tank. The heat is either forced straight up or straight down, which allows dismounts to stack behind for maximum protection. The September 1999 *PS* magazine has the information necessary to accomplish this. It is also available in Appendix D-20-1-5 of the technical manual.

The combined M1 and dismounted infantry team is a lethal force to be reckoned with in a MOUT environment. Using some good old-fashioned American ingenuity, the M1 can easily be configured to overcome shortcomings in current operational requirements. The U.S. Marine Corps is the Department of Defense proponent for MOUT operations and their publications and TTPs offer excellent sources for armor soldiers.