The Armor Center's Proponency Includes Three Vehicles For the New Interim Brigades

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The Armor Center continues to spearhead the Army's campaign to transform itself, concurrent with developing an integrated mounted force modernization plan. The most observable benchmark in the transformation will be fielding of the first Initial Brigade Combat Teams to Fort Lewis, Washington, no later than December 2001. These brigades and the interim brigades that follow will be a bridge to the future objective force.

The objective force will potentially be fielded starting as soon as 2012. It must be imbued with all the best qualities of both heavy and light forces. It must be a full-spectrum force that is strategically responsive and dominant at every point on the operational spectrum. The Army will assess, in about 2003, whether science and technology will enable us to get to an objective force equipped with a lethal, agile, survivable, and highly deployable common platform family that we call the Future Combat System. The Future Combat System, its variants and configurations, will be the backbone of the objective force.

As part of the Army transformation process, the Armor Center is concurrently assisting in developing the Operational & Organizational (O&O) Plan for the Interim Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), and the Operational Requirements Document (ORD) for the Interim Armored Vehicle (IAV). While TRADOC maintains proponency for the base platform requirements of the ORD, each proponent school is responsible for developing specific requirements for certain platforms. The Armor Center is the proponent for the Mobile Gun System (MGS), the Reconnaissance Vehicle (RV), and the Commander's Vehicle (CV).

Mobile Gun System (MGS). The principal function of the MGS is to provide rapid and lethal direct fires to support dismounted, assaulting infantry. The MGS is the key weapons platform to ensure mission success and provide lethal overmatch for the combined arms company in the IBCT. One critical aspect of the MGS is its ability to defeat both conventional infantry bunkers and wall-type fortifications; this desired capability is a Key Performance Parameter (KPP) for the platform that must be demonstrated and achieved prior to the final selection of a particular candidate. To facilitate and ensure successful decisive combat operations, the MGS will have the capability to provide overwhelming precision firepower with a full solution fire control system, eye-safe laser rangefinder, stabilized platform, the capability to operate in degraded modes, and the ability to precisely fire at least six rounds per minute. The primary armament will elevate and depress sufficiently to support the infantry in complex and urban terrain. Additionally, the MGS will mount both a coaxial machine gun and an independently mounted anti-personnel machine gun. Given the broad range of targets the MGS will likely engage in its role of supporting infantry assault in a combined arms company, the MGS will employ bunker-defeating munitions, high explosive munitions in an anti-personnel mode, and canister munitions to defeat enemy infantry. While the primary anti-armor capability in the IBCT rests with a superb, robust, and lethal ATGM capability, the MGS will have the capability to defend itself against a wide range of mounted enemy platforms, including the full range of enemy Level II armor threats. Finally, to enhance this platform's survivability capabilities, given its lighter weight, the MGS will separate the primary armament ammunition from the crew, and be capable of mounting scaleable armor packages to defeat 14.5mm and RPG-7 fires. The MGS is essential in setting and maintaining the tactical conditions for collective overmatch by providing the capability to rapidly engage and destroy a variety of stationary and mobile threat personnel, infrastructure, and materiel targets.

Reconnaissance Vehicle (RV). The principal function of the RV is to provide an effective platform to enable the Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition (RSTA) Squadron and battalion scouts to perform mounted and dismounted reconnaissance and surveillance operations. The platform is a key enabler for both sensor- and HUMINT-focused surveillance and intelligence operations throughout the IBCT area of operations, ranging anywhere from 50km x 50km to 100km x 100km. As a configuration of the Infantry Carrier Vehicle (ICV), the RV will possess the same deployability, mobility, lethality, survivability, and sustainability requirements. The primary armament envisioned for the RV will ensure the platform can effectively defend itself. It will have the capability to identify and defeat enemy troops and light armored vehicles out to 1500m. For target acquisition, the Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System (LRAS3) will be integrated with the platform, providing the battalion scouts and RSTA Squadron with unprecedented visual optics overmatch, both day and night. The far-target

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location capability of the LRAS3 will facilitate employment of organic and joint fires through digital interface with FBCB^2. The RV will carry a six-man scout squad, ensuring four scouts are always available for dismounted patrolling, HUMINT operations, and NAI observation activities. Finally, the RV will have the same scaleable armor packages as the MGS and ICV, capable of surviving 14.5mm and RPG-7 fires.

Command Vehicle (CV). The CV provides an operational platform for selected elements of command within the IBCT. Commanders must have the capability to see and direct the battle continuously, maintaining the Common Relevant Operating Picture (CROP) for all friendly forces within their respective areas of operation. This enhanced situational awareness and understanding will enable commanders to synchronize and employ widely dispersed and highly mobile forces at the decisive point(s) of the operation. The CV is also a configuration of the ICV, and will possess the same deployability, mobility, lethality, survivability, and sustainability requirements. One key differing characteristic is that the CV will have the capability to access aircraft power and antenna systems for enroute mission planning at all levels of command within the BCT. The specific communications equipment mounted on the CV will be in accordance with the Command, Control, Computers, Communications, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) Annex and Operational Architecture (OA) for the brigade; however, each platform will possess the same "hooks" required to field any of the Army's existing or planned communications packages. Additionally, the CV will be provided with the same scaleable armor packages as the RV and MGS, ensuring survivability from RPG-7 and 14.5mm fires. Initial fielding of the CV will be three platforms to the brigade headquarters, two platforms to the infantry maneuver battalion HQ, and two per infantry maneuver company within each battalion.

The ORD has been approved by the Army and staffed worldwide. The Army Materiel Command (AMC) and the Tank and Automotive Command (TACOM) were to complete the IAV Request for Proposal (RFP) in March for industry to review and provide offers to the government. It is truly a "team of teams" effort. As work continues on the Army Transformation Strategy, the Armor Center continues to be a focal point for TRADOC and the U.S. Army. In a future article, I will address the components of the Mounted Force Modernization Plan that we are developing in concert with the rest of TRADOC, with a focus on the future of our decisive counterattack force and its centerpiece, the M1 Abrams. The Army is on the move to meet the current and future security needs of the nation. The Armor Force remains now and will be in the future the spearhead of our combat formations and the decisive combat element to win our nation's wars.

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