

Franks Award Winner Worked on Desert Mobility for Special Forces Units

The first winner of the General Frederick M. Franks, Jr. Award is a Special Forces operations sergeant who worked to develop doctrine, equipment, and training material to improve the desert mobility of Special Forces units.

The award, presented to MSG Bradley H. Guile by MG Larry R. Jordan at the annual Armor Conference in May, was the first in a competition to recognize individuals who make long-term contributions to the Army's ground warfighting capabilities. Also present was General Franks, now retired, who was commander of the VII Corps in the Gulf War and later served as commanding general of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command.

According to the award criteria, the winner must "offer a vision for the future of the mounted warfighting force that significantly improved combat survivability, lethality, maneuverability, or mobility, or developed an innovation in equipment, materiel, or doctrine that significantly enhanced the effectiveness of mounted elements of the combat arms...."

MSG Guile's contribution was as project NCO in an effort to develop Special Forces mounted doctrine and field the equipment required to conduct mounted operations in desert environments. The Desert Mobility Vehicle System project began in 1985 and ended five years later with the development of modified vehicles, tactics, and doctrine, in the form of the training circular "Special Forces Mounted Operations." The project was intended to enable 5th Special Forces Group (A) to conduct joint and unilateral mounted operations in desert environments using specially modified HMMWVs, trailers, satellite navigation equipment, and desert mobility motorcycles.

According to his detachment commander, CPT Richard A. Shaw, Guile contributed to both hardware and concepts: "Directly through his efforts, 23 modifications have been approved, fabricated, and implemented on the M998 and M1026 HMMWVs to enhance their operation in the desert." The SF units call these vehicles the Desert Mobility Vehicle (DMV).



MSG Bradley H. Guile, Franks Award winner

The training circular, known as the "SF Mounted Bible," was published in 1987 and revised in 1993. Its tactics and techniques were based on lessons learned in SF deployments to Jordan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, and in CONUS training. It details how to conduct and plan mounted operations, how to ensure their supplies, and how to maintain them. The circular also covers helicopter insertions of mounted units, desert navigation, and employment of the motorcycle sections. It includes a Mission Essential Task List and criteria for unit ARTEP evaluation.

Working with Tank Automotive Command, Special Warfare Center Force Modernization, and the 5th SFG(A), MSG Guile also helped develop the Requirement of Capabilities (ROC) document for the project equipment modifications and — because operational detachments often work in areas without direct support — a maintenance training program at TACOM to prepare SF soldiers to perform -20 and limited -30 level maintenance on the HMMWV.

Finally, MSG Guile created the Special Reconnaissance Project, an investigation of available Army and off-the-shelf commercial equipment that would give mounted SF operators an edge in desert environments.

MSG Guile served more than nine years as mounted operations subject matter expert for 5th SFG at Fort Bliss, Texas. He has been reassigned to Fort Polk, La., as senior observer-controller for the Special Operations Division.

Nominations for the Franks Award, administered by the Director of the Armor School, should be submitted to the president of the selection panel between 1 January and 31 March for accomplishments in the previous calendar year. Recommendations can begin with any soldier or civilian. Nominations must come from brigade-level or equivalent organizational commanders, and endorsements from division-level or equivalent commanders. Each major headquarters — i.e., TRADOC, FORSCOM, Cadet Command, etc. — may also nominate one individual for the award.

The nominee can be an active duty or reserve Armor or Infantry officer or noncommissioned officer, or a Department of the Army civilian. In addition to making a long-term contribution to ground warfighting capabilities, the nominee should possess two or more of the following characteristics of duty performance during the year or years prior to the nomination:

- Offered a vision for the future of the mounted warfighting that significantly improves combat survivability, lethality, maneuverability, or mobility.
- Developed an innovation in equipment, materiel, or doctrine that significantly enhanced the effectiveness of mounted elements of the combat arms.
- Exemplified professional excellence in demeanor, correspondence, and leadership on issues relevant to mounted warfare.
- Revealed a love of soldiering through leadership skills, recognition of the sacrifice and achievements of subordinates.
- Attention to the intent and directions of higher commanders.

The selection panel will meet in the spring prior to Armor Conference and will forward its nomination to the Chief of Armor. The award will be made at the Conference and the Armor School will pay for the TDY expenses so that the selectee can attend.

Further information on the award and a complete list of award criteria are available from USAARMS, ATTN: ATSB-DAS, Fort Knox, KY 40121.