

BRADLEY TRAINING AMMUNITION

SGM (RETIRED) DEREK D. MCREA

During recent unit visits to armored brigade combat teams by the TRADOC Capability Manager - Armored Brigade Combat Team (TCM-ABCT), master gunners expressed they have a lack of dummy training ammunition for Bradley crews to effectively conduct gunners skills tasks (GST) 4B and 5B in accordance with Training Circular 3-20.21.1, *Individual and Crew Live-Fire Prerequisite Testing*. Training Support Centers (TSCs) don't stock .50 cal, 7.62mm, or 25mm Dummy Drill & Inerts (DDI); however, some TSCs carry 120mm dummy training ammunition. One set of training ammunition is not enough for an entire ABCT to attain and retain proficiency on GST. FM 3-20.21, *Heavy Brigade Combat Team Gunnery*, outlines two vehicles per GST station. In order to support this requirement, combined arms battalions (CABs) must have access to two sets of training ammunition per GST station.

Recommendations

TCM-ABCT recommends that units conduct inventories to identify available/serviceable training dummy rounds in all rifle/armor companies and scout platoons. Dummy rounds generally outlast links, and links can be requested from the ammunition supply point (ASP) to reduce the total Army requirement needing ordered. Units need to order shortages necessary to support unit GST requirements for two vehicles per station in accordance with TC 3-20.21.1 and FM 3-20.21. Battalion and/or brigade master gunners need to access the Total Ammunition Management Information System (TAMIS) to order 25mm and 7.62mm dummy ammunition.

Bradley Training Dummy Rounds Breakdown

25mm-470 total rounds/CAB; 7.62-40 total rounds/CAB (math below)

25mm Ammo (DODIC A967): 235 ea M794 rds x 2 = 470 rds/CAB (1/Rifle Company)

70 M794 Dummy rounds for Load AP Ready Box

75 M794 Dummy rounds for Load HE Ready Box

45 M794 Dummy rounds for Load AP in Feeder

45 M794 Dummy rounds for Load HE in Feeder

7.62 Coax Linked Ammo (M172): 20 ea rds x 3 = 40 rounds per CAB for M240C GST

Note: Scouts and HHC can use the company ammunition for training.

Figure 1

If battalion and brigade master gunners require assistance in TAMIS, brigade special troops battalion (BSTB) ammunition managers and the ammunition technician can order DDI through TAMIS to support training aids, devices, simulators, and simulations (TADSS) requirements outlined in DA Pamphlet 350-38, *Standards in Training Commission* (Appendix B), which can be found online at <http://www.atsc.army.mil/tcmlive/strac/firspage.asp>. The POC for DDI is MAJ Debbie Lovelady (debbie.c.lovelady2.mil@mail.mil).

An M2A3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle from the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division fires on its first engagement during gunnery Table VI on 4 November 2013 at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Photo by SGT Richard Wrigley





Figure 2 — 7.62 Dummy Ammunition



Figure 3 — 25mm Dummy Rounds Linked

Units need to order TOW missile simulator rounds (MSRs) through the supply system. The MSR is a non-expendable major end item that is requisitioned through the supply system (NSN 6920-00-223-4919).

Upon receipt of ammunition training aids, TCM-ABCT recommends that battalion and brigade master gunners issue one set per rifle company. Battalion master gunners need to maintain oversight; however, company master gunners need to maintain accountability to support company training requirements. One set of training ammunition per rifle company provides the requirement for company master gunners to certify graders prior to the consolidated battalion GST that requires two sets of ammunition per task. The breakdown shown in Figure 1 provides enough dummy rounds to run a company-level event with one vehicle per station or a battalion consolidated GST with two vehicles per station.

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A SUCCESS STORY: ENGINEER MASTER GUNNER INITIATIVE

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Unit commanders have identified an increased need for Bradley master gunners (MGs) as armored brigade combat teams (ABCTs) have transferred from conducting counterinsurgency (COIN) operations to conducting simultaneous offense, defense, and stability operations in an operational environment comprised of a near-peer threat. Bradley MGs serve as technical and tactical experts for commanders on the training and employment of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV).

Prior to 2011, the Bradley MG Course had two separate training tracks for MGs to receive institutional training based off of the variant of BFV assigned. The two courses to train Bradley MGs were the M2A2 Operation Desert Storm (ODS) Course and the M2A3 (A3) Course. In 2011, the two courses were combined into a single Bradley MG Course. Prior to 2012, 12B engineer MGs were fighting off of the M2A2 ODS BFV and received their training in the ODS Course. In 2012, engineers began receiving M2A3 BFVs, and the U.S. Army Engineer School (USAES) was faced with a requirement for 12B MGs to be qualified on the A3 variant.

From 2012-2013, USAES worked closely with the Army Human Resource Command (HRC) to better manage its master gunner population. The school first identified a shortage of MGs and Bradley-experienced Soldiers in Korea in the fall of 2012. Since the turnover rate in Korea is so high, it is very difficult to maintain qualified crews. To address this, USAES worked with HRC to assign Soldiers to Korea based upon J3 and D3 additional skill identifiers (ASIs). The J3 ASI identifies NCOs who graduate from the Bradley MG Course, and the D3 ASI identifies Soldiers who were qualified to operate or maintain the BFV during 19D One Station Unit Training (OSUT) at Fort Benning, Ga. Based on their success with the Korea model, in the near future the Engineer School's strategy is to rotate the current J3 population through the bases and units that have the requirement for Bradley MGs. USAES's strategy has been successful in attaining 366 percent of the J3 ASIs for the 12B population.

TRADOC Capability Manager - Armored Brigade Combat Team



TCM-ABCT serves as TRADOC's centralized manager for all activities related to the ABCT. The office serves as the ABCT Soldier's user representative to the Program Executive Office (PEO) Ground Systems, Program Manager (PM) ABCT, Department of the Army, TRADOC, and the MCoE. In the past year, TCM-ABCT has completed trend analysis from five separate decisive action training environment (DATE) rotations at the National Training Center/Joint Readiness Training Center (NTC/JRTC), seven unit visits/umbrella week data collection efforts, and multiple leader engagement sessions with ABCT officer and NCO leaders attending training at Fort Benning to develop an observations, insights, and lessons (OIL)-based doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF) integration action plan. Since 2010, TCM-ABCT has conducted 31 unit visits to identify trends and assist the Army with improving ABCT capabilities.