

# Army Looking for Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicle

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A request for proposal for the Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicle (OMFV) went out to industry on 29 March, sent by the Next-Generation Combat Vehicle (NGCV) Cross-Functional Team (CFT).

The OMFV is considered to be a replacement for the Army's aging Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

"The next generation of combat vehicles will close the last tactical mile, giving our Soldiers a position of advantage," said BG Ross Coffman, NGCV CFT director.

"Our combat vehicles will have the ability to transition through those disruption zones with lethality and survivability ... [and] mobility, to be able to fight the enemy on our terms, and become victorious," Coffman said.

Lethality, survivability, and mobility continue to be at the forefront of the new OMFV program, Coffman said. However, the new system's requirements will be based on "attainable" technologies, rather than sinking countless amounts of money into an "unattainable" system.

Adding excessive features to the new OMFV program is something the CFT is trying to avoid, he said. Further, the Army seeks the option to pack two OMFVs in one C-17 aircraft.

OMFV proposals will be due this fall, Coffman said. The Army plans to down select to two candidates.

## Experiments for Robotic Controlled Vehicles

In fiscal year (FY) 2020, the Army plans to start experimenting with a government-led Robotic Controlled Vehicles (RCV) program, Coffman said.

"We're doing these experiments to test a series of hypotheses," he said. "I always emphasize it is an experiment. While I am an advocate, probably the No. 1 champion, that [believes] robots will change the way that we will fight combat in the future — we owe it to the Army, taxpayers, and everyone to make sure that this is a prudent step forward."

Currently, the Army is testing the RCV concept through the Synthetic Training Environment. These virtual experiments will

inform the final vehicle requirements, Coffman said.

This fall, the CFT is slated to house a "robot rodeo," Coffman said. The team is asking industry partners to bring their robots so that the Army can determine "what is in the realm of the possible."

Looking ahead to FY 2020, the Army's first experiment will focus on platoon-level operations, he said. During the scenario, Soldiers operating out of "two surrogate vehicles" will control a set of robots that bear a resemblance to the M113 armored personnel carrier.

"The two surrogate vehicles will have four Soldiers in the back... and there'll be two Soldiers controlling one robot. One will be driving [the RCV] and the other will be controlling [the vehicle's] payload."

"We're going to test cognitive load on the Soldiers... and at what operational distances we are able to conduct operations. [The Army is focused on] the tactics, techniques, and procedures, and what we want to use moving forward," he added.

Read more at: [https://www.army.mil/article/219383/army\\_looking\\_for\\_optionally\\_manned\\_fighting\\_vehicle](https://www.army.mil/article/219383/army_looking_for_optionally_manned_fighting_vehicle).



Photo by SGT Jamar Marcel Pugh

*A Soldier guides a M2A3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle during an exercise in Bulgaria on 23 August 2018. The Next-Generation Combat Vehicle Cross-Functional Team recently released a request for proposal for the Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicle.*