

New Sight Wirelessly Pairs with NVGs

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In the next 18 months or so, the Army expects to field two new systems to dismounted Soldiers that will allow for more rapid acquisition of targets, even those hidden by darkness, smoke, or fog.

First out of the gate will be the Enhanced Night Vision Goggle (ENVG) III, expected to be fielded sometime between April and June of 2018. Shortly after, the Army hopes to field the Family of Weapons Sights - Individual (FWS-I) between January and March of 2019.

The FWS-I and ENVG III are unique in that the FWS-I, which would be mounted on a Soldier's weapon, wirelessly transmits its sight picture to the ENVG III, which a Soldier wears on his helmet. Additionally, the ENVG combines thermal imaging with more common night vision image intensification technology, which is recognizable by the green image it creates.

Under starlight, targets may blend in with the background. But with the thermal capability overlaid on night vision, targets can't hide in smoke or fog. They "really pop out with that contrast," said Dean Kissinger, an electronics engineer who is currently assigned to Program Product Manager Soldier Maneuver Sensors at Program Executive Office (PEO) Soldier.

LTC Anthony Douglas, who serves as product manager for Soldier Maneuver Sensors at PEO Soldier, said the two sensors have benefits beyond helping dismounted Soldiers better visualize targets. By pairing the two systems wirelessly — allowing what the weapon-mounted sight is seeing to be beamed directly to the Soldier's eye — these systems also help the Soldier acquire a target faster.

"The capability gap that we were tasked with [closing] by developing this was the rapid target acquisition capability," Douglas said. "We are allowing the Soldier to actually see what is on their weapons sight, saving them time from having to bring the weapon to his eye."

MSG Lashon Wilson, the senior enlisted advisor for product manager Soldier Maneuver Sensors, explained how the system will work and make it easier for a Soldier to acquire a target.



MSG Lashon Wilson demonstrates the use of the Enhanced Night Vision Goggle III paired with a Family of Weapons Sights-Individual on 27 July 2017.

“This weapon-mounted system talks wirelessly to the smart battery pack that is on the Soldier’s head, that then transmits a signal to the ENVG III, which now displays a reticle onto the Soldier’s optic,” Wilson explained. “So now what this does is, while the Soldier is on patrol and he has his ENVG III on and he is looking, he has a greater field of view of what is going on in the battlefield.”

Soldiers wearing the ENVG III, which is mounted on their helmet, can choose to see both night-vision imagery and thermal imaging as well in their goggles. But they can also choose to see the image coming off the FWS-I that is mounted on their rifle.

Read more at https://www.army.mil/article/191631/army_aims_to_field_new_weapon_sight_that_wirelessly_pairs_with_night_vision_goggles.

(C. Todd Lopez writes for the Army News Service.)



A shooter fires on a target using an ENVG III on his helmet and a FWS-I on an M4 rifle. (Photos courtesy of PEO Soldier)