



Commandant's NOTE

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BRADLEY FIGHTING VEHICLE UPDATE

The Infantry School's continuing effort to provide logical, efficient, and descriptive strategies for weapon systems and unit training is producing several outstanding training products. Too, the demanding training programs that result from this effort will help our units reach and sustain the highest levels of combat readiness.

We have just put the finishing touches on the revised Field Manual (FM) 23-1, Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV) Gunnery, which is the cornerstone training product for the heavy Infantry force. This manual, which is scheduled to be in the field in the third quarter of Fiscal Year 1991, provides a comprehensive unit training strategy that integrates mounted and dismounted training.

The manual incorporates the use of several materiel developments that will significantly improve a BFV unit commander's ability to train and employ the fighting vehicle system. The development of M910 training practice discarding sabot-tracer (TPDS-T) rounds is one example. These rounds will allow units that are constrained from firing armor piercing service ammunition to train their gunners on the important ammunition selection and "switchology" skills.

The M910 is ballistically matched to the M791 armor piercing discarding sabot-tracer (APDS-T). The manual lists the ballistic characteristics and surface danger area information for this new ammunition and uses this data to update the gunnery tables.

At the same time, the Infantry School continues to support the development of M919 armor piercing, fin stabilized discarding sabot-tracer (APFSDS-T) combat ammunition. The M919,

whose characteristics are also shown in the gunnery manual, will significantly increase the BFV's ability to destroy enemy light armored vehicles. We are also developing M910E1 training ammunition that will match the M919's characteristics.

Another BFV product improvement now in the field is an integrated sight unit with an air defense reticle. Chapter 7 of FM 23-1 discusses air defense and the use of the new reticle, and air defense engagements have been added to the gunnery training and qualification tables. This training method matches the doctrinal concepts outlined in FM 7-7J for engaging enemy helicopters when passive air defense measures fail—shoot them immediately.

To sustain air defense training in units, the air defense reticle, along with the training exercises, have also been added to the conduct of fire trainer (COFT) and the video interactive gunnery system (VIGS).

One of the Infantry training strategy goals that I discussed in an earlier issue of *INFANTRY* (September-October 1990, pages 1-2) was to identify training shortcomings and develop some possible remedies. The revised FM 23-1 accomplishes this goal for several BFV training problems that have been identified at the combat training centers (CTCs).

No one graduates from the Primary Leadership Development Course or from any Infantry Basic or Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course who cannot properly complete a range card. Yet our soldiers' range card skills are poor and need to be improved, and this is a training problem that must be solved. The revised manual can be of great help,

because it also describes in detail how to prepare and fire using the data on a BFV Standard Range Card (DA Form 5517-R). This information matches the discussion of the doctrinal range card and sector sketch in FM 7-71 and emphasizes the importance of the range card, especially in limited visibility conditions.

Another problem that has surfaced at the CTCs is that our TOW gunnery skills need improvement. In preparing the revised version of FM 23-1, we realized that a GO/NO GO task for BFV TOW gunnery on Table VIII was not sufficient for measuring a crew's effectiveness with this powerful tank killer. As a result, the revised manual adds three hands-on TOW tasks to the Bradley Gunnery Skills Test (BGST), clarifies missile characteristics and markings, and adds separate TOW training and qualification tables to the BFV training strategy.

In addition, a BFV's crew members are not qualified until they successfully complete Table VIII and TOW qualification (a requirement that is identified in DA Pamphlet 350-38, Standards in Weapons Training, 24 September 1990.) TOW qualification consists of 10 engagements of both stationary and moving targets under varying conditions using TOW MILES and laser target interface devices (LTIDS).

The most critical Bradley training need identified both at the CTCs and the Senior Leadership Training Conference V concerns the integration of dismounted Infantry training. Although two of the four BFV battlefield roles directly support dismounted Infantry operations, the emphasis has been on the mounted role. Bradley squad training must receive the same command emphasis and resources as Bradley gunnery training, and the dismounted skills must be performed to standard.

Part of the solution to this problem has been the platoon reorganization, which was implemented in January 1990. (See *INFANTRY*, January-February 1990, pages 1-2.) The new organization provides focused leadership at the crew and squad level. The Bradley squad leader no longer has the dual responsibility for training both the squad and the BFV crew; his sole mission now is to train his squad.

Another part of the solution, probably the major part, is found in the discussion of the BFV inte-

grated platoon training strategy in Chapter 5 of the new manual. This strategy outlines a logical progression of separate and integrated training events for both Bradley elements. It is a "gated" approach wherein each event is followed by a proficiency evaluation before the individual, crew, or squad can progress to the next level. This strategy uses drills as a transition between individual and collective tasks and places equal stress upon mounted and dismounted training. The discussion of the unit training plan identifies crew and dismounted Infantry training considerations and links the training techniques and procedures to FM 25-101, Battle Focused Training, which has been another training strategy goal.

A major addition to the manual is Appendix F, which answers the question, "How do I train my dismounted Infantry?" It provides sample scenarios and standards for individual and buddy team movement, as well as squad live fire exercises.

This integrated strategy leads a BFV platoon to a collective tactical live fire qualification exercise shown in Table XII, BFV Platoon Qualification. This table allows commanders to evaluate their platoons' proficiency on ARTEP mission training plan (MTP) tasks during a live fire exercise. Commanders design their own Table XII on the basis of their units' mission essential task lists (METLs). To receive a "trained" rating, a platoon must meet stringent standards for crew and dismounted Infantry live fire accuracy and tactical employment.

The revised manual provides a complete and usable body of training literature. It will assist the unit commander in training and sustaining a combat ready force. To this end, the BFV gunnery manual provides the battle-focused training azimuth for our Bradley-equipped mechanized Infantry units.

No manual is a stand-alone document in training combined arms and other integrated operations, and each commander must ensure that his unit leaders understand this. FM 23-1, however, does simplify the task of preparing and conducting mounted and dismounted training with the best Infantry fighting vehicle and Infantry soldiers in the world.

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