

INFANTRY NEWS



CHIEF OF INFANTRY UPDATE

A UNIT MASTER GUNNER is one of the keys to developing a well trained unit that can employ its Bradley Fighting Vehicles effectively. The master gunner program, which began in 1983, certifies about 250 master gunners each year. These 11M and 19DD3 master gunners are the primary Bradley gunnery trainers at company, battalion, brigade, and division level.

In addition to functioning as a Bradley gunner, a qualified master gunner must also be able to develop a comprehensive training plan and schedule, troubleshoot turret maintenance problems, set up and execute live fire ranges, and use a variety of Bradley training devices to sustain his soldiers' gunnery skills.

The Army's only Bradley Master Gunner School is located at Fort Benning and is operated by noncommissioned officers of the 29th Infantry. This demanding 10-week course is one of the most academically challenging courses an NCO can attend. Sadly, almost 20 percent of the students in each class fail to complete the course.

The course is offered seven times each year, and each class is limited to 50 students. Students must be pre-enrolled; NCOs who come to Fort Benning in hopes of becoming alternates to attend a class are often disappointed. (EDITOR'S NOTE: A news item in the September-October 1991 issue, page 7, erroneously stated that the Master Gunner Course has 30 slots per class.)

Prospective students must meet the following established prerequisites:

- Be in the rank of sergeant (promotable), staff sergeant, or sergeant first class.

- Be qualified in MOS 11M or 19DD3.

- Be instructor/operator qualified on the conduct of fire trainer.

- Have a GT score of 100 or higher.

- Meet the weight standards specified in Army Regulation 600-9.

- Be recommended by the first lieutenant colonel in the chain of command.

As a final prerequisite, candidates must take the Bradley Gunnery Skills Test before being enrolled. Later, after the students are acclimated to the weather in Georgia, they are given the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) for record.

The fast-paced course of 449 hours includes 24 tests and quizzes that verify the students' mastery of the content. Its rigorous regimen requires an unusual combination of intelligence, endurance, and self motivation, and is not for every noncommissioned officer.

Those NCOs who graduate from the Master Gunner Course are ready to make a sizeable contribution to their units' readiness, and they can be rightfully proud of their accomplishment.

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THE 7th RANGER Training Battalion, Ranger Training Regiment, which conducts the desert phase of the Ranger Course, has moved from Dugway Proving Ground, Utah, to Fort Bliss, Texas. The change was made to reduce operating costs, increase training support, and avoid Utah's extreme winter weather conditions.

The desert phase, now the second phase of the course, will concentrate on desert survival and operational considerations and will be a transition from squad to platoon level operations for the students.

The first class to train at the new location began in September 1991.

A HELMET SHAVING BASIN is an item many soldiers have missed since the Army changed to the PASGT helmet. A soldier cannot heat water over an open flame in the new helmet, nor can he pour hot water into it without ruining the suspension webbing.

A solution has been proposed—a plastic polyethylene bag, durable enough to withstand hot water, would be inserted into the PASGT helmet. The bag would measure 18x18 inches and be two millimeters thick and would be issued with the MRE (meal, ready-to-eat).

If the idea is approved, soldiers should expect to begin seeing them late in Fiscal Year 1992. Since MREs are for use by the Department of Defense, however, all users (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard) will have to agree to include the plastic bag in the MRE package.

The Infantry School POC is CPT

Taylor, NBC/Clothing and Individual Equipment Branch, Directorate of Combat Developments, DSN 835-5314 or commercial (404) 545-5314.

ARMY FIELD FEEDING System (AFFS) shortcomings were highlighted during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. The problem areas included the extended use of MREs, poor Class I distribution, over-taxed food service personnel, and problems with the mobile kitchen trailers (MKTs) in desert conditions.

A study group was formed to evaluate rations, food service personnel, ration management training, and field feeding doctrine. The study also considered the idea of prepositioning war reserve stocks of rations and use of the commercial food industry.

The group's initial recommendations included improving the quality and variety of MRE entrees. Such items as wet packaged fruit, shelf-stable bread, and cakes will be in a new MRE. A wide variety of breakfast entrees—including biscuits, creamed beef, and pancakes—that were successfully tested this past summer will also be seen in the improved MRE.

The flameless ration heater is also to be added to the MRE, and the Army's Natick Research, Development, and Engineering Center is researching a self-heated ration in which a pull tab would activate a chemical heating compound.

As a result of the full introduction of A-rations (fresh food), more cooks will be returning to field units, and the 94-series career management field will be expanded and improved. Training programs will emphasize field operations, management of other classes of supply, and ration accountability and management. Training in dining facility management for officers will be reintroduced into basic and advanced officer courses and pre-command courses.

State-of-the-art field feeding equipment will replace obsolete equipment now in the field. New modular kitchens that can be configured for any tactical situation or field feeding requirement

will replace the MKTs. This equipment will use a single fuel and will be lighter, safer, quicker to start, and easier to operate.

The Army's goal for its field feeding system is to provide soldiers in the field with three quality meals daily and to serve A-ration meals as often as the tactical situation permits.

The Infantry School POC is SSG Newman, Directorate of Combat Developments, DSN 835-3087 or commercial (404) 545-3087.

IMPROVED DESERT AND HOT weather battle dress uniforms are now under development:

Desert Battle Dress Uniform (DBDU).

A program to improve the current DBDU was initiated under the Soldier Enhancement Program (SEP). The Army's goal is to reduce the weight of the uniform, improve comfort, and maintain durability, functionality, and environmental protection.

Prototypes of improved DBDUs have been tested over the past few months by U.S. Army soldiers of the multinational peacekeeping force in the Sinai. The soldiers who participated in the wear test were in various MOSs, 75 of them infantry.

The soldiers are testing four candidate fabrics in the DBDU as well as slight design modifications, including velcro fasteners on pockets and cuffs, zipper flies, the removal of waist tabs, the removal of the bellows on the lower coat pockets, and the removal of the reinforcing material from the shoulder yoke, seat, elbows, and knees.

The candidate fabrics are 50 percent polyester/50 percent cotton ripstop; 50 percent nylon/50 percent cotton ripstop; 50 percent nylon/50 percent cotton twill; and 100 percent cotton ripstop. The test fabrics are being compared to the standard DBDU, which serves as the control item.

Hot Weather Battle Dress Uniform (HWBDU). The improvement of the HWBDU—a joint effort of the Infantry School and the U.S. Army Natick Research, Development and Engineering Center—is aimed at improving the

appearance of the uniform while maintaining its comfort and functionality.

Infantry soldiers from the 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii, the 193d Infantry Brigade in Panama, and the 6th Ranger Training Battalion in Florida, tested the prototypes from June to October 1991. The soldiers tested three candidate fabrics in ripstop poplin—a 50 percent polyester/50 percent cotton blend; a 50 percent nylon/50 percent cotton blend; and a 100 percent cotton fabric. The standard HWBDU was the control item for the test.

Design modifications to the HWBDU are similar to those made in the improved DBDU. The modifications tested included velcro fasteners on pockets and cuffs, zipper flies, and the removal of the waist tabs and the bellows on the lower coat pockets.

The Infantry School POC is CPT Johnson, DSN 835-3087, commercial (404) 545-3087.

THE MILES SNIPER SYSTEM is now being fielded. It consists of a small arms transmitter (SAT) modified to have a range of 1,000 meters. The SAT is affixed to a weapon in a manner that will not interfere with the optic sights. The sniper SAT is mounted on the bottom of the barrel of the M24 sniper rifle and on the side of the M21.

The U.S. Army Infantry School and the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center were given 24 prototype mounts for user testing. The U.S. Army Sniper School at Fort Benning concluded the first user test in January 1990. The deficiencies noted were corrected, and the School tested the new mount in December 1990. It was determined the item would perform to the requirements.

The MILES sniper system is to be used for force-on-force training for MILES exercises up to battalion or regimental task force level. As with other MILES devices, the basis of issue is expected to be approximately one device for each three weapons. This number will be adjusted for unique

situations, including the combat training centers. These systems will be added to battalion MILES kits. In a light

division, this will mean 12 to 15 devices to support training.

The basis of issue is currently three

per infantry battalion kit and five per mechanized infantry battalion kit. Distribution began in late September.

THE U.S. ARMY OFFICER Candidate Alumni Association and the 3d Battalion (OCS), 11th Infantry, jointly celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the OCS program with a two-day program of activities culminating with a banquet and ball on 24 May 1991.

Former Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh, who is an OCS graduate, addressed the 500 people who attended the banquet. Three members of the first OCS class, which graduated on 27 September 1941, attended the celebration.

The Alumni Association welcomes inquiries concerning membership in the association. Regular membership is open to graduates of any Officer Candidate School. Associate membership is available to non-OCS graduates who served as staff and faculty members at an OCS and other persons who have made and will continue to make significant contributions to the OCS program. Annual dues are \$10.00 for either class of membership.

Anyone interested in joining may write to Secretary USAOCAA, Inc., P.O. Box 2192, Fort Benning, GA 31905-2192.

WATER PURIFICATION equipment that was previously under development was tested under actual combat conditions during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM.

Three self-contained reverse osmosis water purification units (ROWPUs) were airlifted to Southwest Asia in October 1990. This equipment was intended to provide a 3,000-gallon-per-hour corps support capacity to fill the gap between the general support and division support capabilities.

With this unit, the water is first passed through a multi-media filter that removes most of the particles. Then it is forced through cartridge filters that remove the remaining particles. Finally,

it goes through the reverse osmosis element, which rejects the ions and allows only pure water to pass.

Whether the water begins as brackish well water or salt water, the ROWPU removes all impurities and contaminants, including chemical and biological agents. The end product is much cleaner than the tap water in most households.

The collected data was forwarded to the project manager to complement the test data already collected.

A NEW CHAMPUS HANDBOOK, written in everyday language for service families and their sponsors, has been published. It contains the latest information about the basic CHAMPUS programs' benefits and procedures. It also discusses the uniformed services' Active Duty Dependent Dental Plan and CHAMPVA (Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs) and lists military medical facilities worldwide.

The revised handbook is available at military services' publication distribution centers, the U.S. Public Health Service, and headquarters offices of all CHAMPUS claims processors.

All previous editions of the handbook are out of date and should be discarded immediately.

THE U.S. ARMY SPECIAL Forces Command (Airborne) has been created to realign command and control of Reserve and regular Army Special Forces assets.

Previously, active duty Special Forces were assigned to the 1st Special Operations Command (Airborne), and Reserve Special Forces units were assigned to the U.S. Army Reserve Special Operations Command (Airborne). The realignment assigns all active duty Special Forces units to the new command and gives the command

operational control over Reserve Special Forces units.

The 1st Special Operations Command has been eliminated by the reorganization.

The Reserve Special Operations Command has been reorganized as the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command, responsible for both active Army and Reserve civil affairs and psychological operations units. Reserve units will be assigned to the new command, which will have operational control over affiliated regular Army units. The realignment makes no changes to the current training relationship and alignment of Army National Guard Special Forces units.

The 75th Ranger Regiment and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) will continue to report directly to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command.

THREE VIDEO TAPES are available to tell soldiers about the Army Master Data File (AMDF). The tapes, called "The Army Master Data File, Your Key to the Army Supply System," can help soldiers and units learn the basics of Army Logistics and keep up to date with the supply system.

The tapes are available at local Visual Information Support Centers or Training Support Centers. Look for Publications Inventory Number (PIN) 706177DA (TVT 38-29).

