

ArmyTimes

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By **Lance M. Bacon**
lbacon@militarytimes.com
and **Michael Hoffman**
mhoffman@militarytimes.com

The Army has begun a three-pronged strategy to “transform, replace and improve” its combat vehicle fleet as it figures out which vehicles to scrap, which to upgrade and where it makes sense to buy new ones, said Lt. Gen. Robert Lennox, deputy chief of staff for Army programs.

The Ground Combat Vehicle sits as the Army’s top vehicle modernization priority, but Army leaders must also juggle replacing the M113 armored personnel carrier while simultaneously fielding the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle and upgrading Humvees.

Service officials must do all of this in an austere budget environment restricting wish lists for new vehicles and forcing acquisition leaders to think hard about upgrading existing vehicles like the Humvee in place of the JLTV, or casting vehicles in new missions such as the Stryker and Bradley for the M113.

The problem is money. Roughly \$4 billion is needed annually to recap, divest and buy new tactical wheeled vehicles, but the Army can only afford about \$2 billion. To cut costs, the Army will not recapitalize as often, which means vehicles will have to run longer than expected.

Service leaders also are looking to save money on GCV and JLTV, the “transform” and “improve” elements of the three-pronged plan.

The Ground Combat Vehicle, poised to become the next-generation infantry fighting vehicle, is already under attack. Army leaders have said the final cost must come in below \$13 million per vehicle. But the Pentagon’s Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office predicts each vehicle will cost closer to \$17 million. That equates to an extra \$7.2 billion to buy the planned 1,800 vehicles.

No one can say much about GCV right now for legal reasons. The Army on Aug. 18 awarded technology development contracts to BAE Systems and General Dynamics Land Systems. Competitor SAIC filed a formal protest soon after.

Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Chiarelli told Army Times that a strategy is in place that carries the program through the engineering and manufacturing development phase to a Milestone B decision in 2013. He also said the Army will simultaneously look at

Army looks to modifications, upgrades to bolster ground vehicle fleet

Building the NEXT vehicles



“off-the-shelf” options such as a modified Bradley or foreign vehicles, then decide whether to go with a new start or an existing vehicle.

The GCV isn’t alone in taking some significant hits. The Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee on Sept. 13 recommended the JLTV, which was to replace one-third of the Army’s 150,000 Humvees, be terminated. The House Appropriations defense subcommittee in July recommended a \$50 million cut from the program, noting “the operational niche to be filled by the JLTV appears to be shrinking.”

The Pentagon hasn’t let JLTV stall.

The Army took many by surprise, setting a lower-than-expected cost ceiling and an ambitious development schedule for the JLTV in the draft request for proposals issued Oct. 3 by the Army.

The JLTV draft request for proposals sets per-vehicle cost goals between \$230,000 and \$270,000 — much lower than the \$350,000 esti-

mate by the Government Accountability Office. An additional armor kit called the B-kit should cost no more than \$65,000, according to the draft request for proposals.

Service officials also cut 16 months from the engineering, manufacturing and development phase, which now will last 32 months instead of the expected 48 months. Col. David Bassett, Army program manager for tactical vehicles, said the quicker delivery was due to the common requirements.

Chiarelli’s staff has spent the last nine months working with the Marine Corps to come up with common requirements that would lead to a common vehicle, and would subsequently drive the cost down. The vehicles would become mission-specific by adding one of a variety of packages.

In the draft RfP for the Humvee recap, Army officials set the per-vehicle price ceiling at \$180,000, which is 66 percent of the price ceiling set for JLTV.

“What we’re seeing is, to get the

capability you’re looking for in the JLTV, your most effective move for the taxpayer is to go ahead and buy a new vehicle that will give you a 20-year service life as opposed to recapping an old vehicle that will give you seven or eight years,” said Christopher Yunker, Mobility Branch section head at Marine Corps Combat Development Command.

While GCV and JLTV have rough roads ahead, Congress and the Pentagon can agree that up to 5,000 M113s must be replaced. However, the push to build a new vehicle called the Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle has lost steam in favor of replacing the M113 with Bradleys, MRAPs or Strykers — or a combination of those.

Sun setting on M113

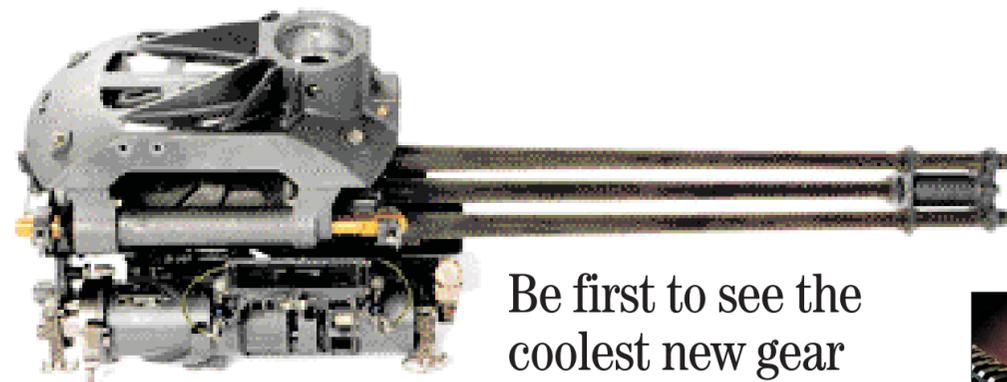
Entering service in 1960, the M113 is an old soldier ready to retire. It can’t keep up with the Bradley fighting vehicle or the Abrams tank, and is increasingly difficult to maintain. One battalion

The M113 armored personnel carrier gets a workout during training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. A new armored multipurpose vehicle may replace the M113.

commander, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said 50 percent of his M113s are down at any given time.

The M113s no longer drives off base. Poor armor on the sides and under the vehicle has left soldiers vulnerable to ambush at a time when personnel carriers now have specially designed hulls and armor packages to protect from improvised explosive devices.

“AMPV is a critical program that we need,” said Lennox, who called the AMPV the second-greatest priority in the combat vehicle portfolio behind GCV. “There is a whole fleet of vehicles, M113s, that are not leaving [forward operating bases] and are not used in Iraq or Afghanistan today really because of the vulnerability of the system. What we are doing is we are asking soldiers to come home from



The GAU-19B
GENERAL DYNAMICS

Be first to see the coolest new gear

Combat game changers

By **Lance M. Bacon**
lbacon@militarytimes.com

That crisp, cool air sweeping through the multicolored leaves that are soon to blanket the nation’s Capitol can only mean one thing: Every manufacturer under the sun will be showing off the latest and greatest technologies at AUSA’s Annual Meeting and Exposition.

No doubt there will be some cool items worth seeing. If you want to see the training model of tomorrow, check out Quantum3D’s combat simulation systems or Training Brain from Army Training and Doctrine Command. Robot

enthusiasts — and soldiers tired of carrying tons of ammo and gear — will dig Lockheed Martin’s Squad Mission Support System. If you were impressed with the enhanced night vision goggle, stop by ITT’s booth to see the next generation of night vision.

Gun enthusiasts would do well to check out Daniel Defense. And you can visit Belleville and Welco to see the new mountain combat boots headed to the ‘Stan.

The list is too long to include everyone, and a lot of new gear will not be announced until it hits the floor. But we’ve narrowed

down a handful of “don’t miss” items that are confirmed to be at the AUSA event. These not only have the “cool factor” but have the potential to be game changers on the battlefield of tomorrow.

SkeetIR

BAE Systems Oasys will have the world’s smallest thermal monocular on display. The rugged, pocket-sized detector weighs only 6.5 ounces.

What really sets this apart is the hot spot and disturbed surface detection. While sensors look for people, this can tell you if people have recently been there by the



The SkeetIR thermal sight.

heat signature left behind. It can not only reveal if a vehicle is hot, but also how hot, said Bobby McCreight, vice president of business development for BAE Systems Oasys.

“It acts as a time machine of what just happened before I was here, and helps me know how best to proceed,” he said. That is a huge plus in the fast-paced asymmetric fight.

SkeetIR’s 320x240 resolution allows the user to read a paper or signage — even discern camou-

combat and perform services on a vehicle that they know they’re not going to use in the future. We need to be able to replace it.”

The Army is preparing an analysis of alternatives that will direct the way ahead. Service officials with whom Army Times spoke said the path is becoming clear, and it won’t include a newly designed vehicle.

For starters, the Army can’t afford it, and it would take too long to develop and produce. Officials plan to buy about 3,275 AMPV at a per vehicle cost of up to \$2.7 million with the first AMPVs not reaching soldiers until 2017, according to an Army Combat Vehicle Modernization brief obtained by Army Times.

Big Army has plenty of other options, such as \$10 billion worth of MRAPs that will soon be looking for a mission.

But the likely replacements will be a mixed fleet of modified Bradleys in the heavy brigades and Strykers for everything else, said one acquisition official. The cost to modify these vehicles will

be comparatively low, availability is high and both variants would include notable improvements to their already-proven platforms.

BAE Systems’ solution is to remove the Bradley turret to build a five-vehicle family that includes a mortar, medical evacuation, medical treatment, command post and general purpose variants. Removing the turret provides more power and better security, as it raises the vehicle further off the ground. It also allows an increase of up to three times in vehicle height.

The heavy brigades will get their replacements first. The modified Bradley is a front-runner because it can go anywhere the tracked vehicles can go, and brings 20 years of protection technology that has made the Bradley second only to the tank in survivability. As an M113 replacement, the Bradley would be upgraded to the A3 standard and come with the engine transmission, running gear, track, reactive tiles, side skirts and ceramic upgrades.

One major change would be the

relocation of fuel to external tanks. Still, replacing M113s with the modified Bradley would provide a parts commonality of up to 90 percent in the heavy brigade, said Steve Howson, BAE’s manager of business development for combat vehicles.

There are 1,400 to 1,600 A0 and A2 hulls in the boneyard that could accommodate a quick fielding. Modifying these hulls would cost less than buying a new M113, Howson said, and would be one-third the cost of a new development vehicle. These hulls would not cover the full need of 3,275 vehicles for heavy brigades, but Lennox said the arrival of GCVs could free up more Bradleys for modification.

The Stryker makes a strong argument for itself, as well. The M113 mission equipment packages match up well with the Stryker’s 10 variants, meaning modifications would be slim to none, said Mike Cannon, senior vice president of ground combat systems for General Dynamics.

“It’s going to be really hard to

argue with the operation and support costs of a Stryker compared to all of the other candidates,” he said. “The Stryker will deliver a cost between \$11 and \$20 a mile. The 113 is north of \$40 and the Bradley without a turret is about \$60 a mile.”

Cannon said he is confident the Stryker will meet all analysis-of-alternatives requirements. His assertion is supported by a pre-decisional document obtained by Army Times. The document shows Stryker as the only vehicle able to meet six specified missions currently performed by the M113. The Bradley was rated as “capable” or “potentially capable” in each category.

Another telling report comes from the 3rd Infantry Division, to which 90 Stryker medical evacuation vehicles were delivered. The division took 30 to Iraq for one year instead of the M113 ambulance. Upon return, the unit asked that the vehicles be added to its inventory, but the request was shot down because it would have presupposed that

flame patterns at night or in dust or smoke conditions. It is made of 7000 series aluminum, which is as strong as steel but lighter. And that means it’s not an egg that will break if you drop it.

A three-axis digital magnetic compass and mil scale removes the need for a secondary system such as a laser. And fusion is reached when clipped into existing night vision.

The device is very user-friendly. It was “built for the layman,” McCreight said, and can be used to 90 percent of capability in the first hour. Software is upgraded for free with a “drag and drop” on the computer.

The Army has a number in the “high hundreds” currently used by special operators and the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization, McCreight said. He expects that number to “grow significantly in next several

See **GEAR** next page

GEAR From previous page

months” as SkeetIR makes its way into the hands of frontline troops.

AUSA booth 6043

Other SkeetIR features:

- Weapons mountable
- Water resistant
- Able to operate for three hours on one CR 123A battery
- Able to output digital video and still photos
- Available with visible or IR laser pointers

Spider

This is one spider you don't want to step on.

Officially dubbed the XM7 Network Command Munition, the Spider is a whole new way of providing perimeter defense and flank protection.

The U.S. is no longer in the anti-personnel landmine business, except on the Korean peninsula. When troops leave, landmines don't – and are often found by innocent civilians and children.

Then along came a Spider ...

The system is the Army's first reusable, man portable network munition. It has up to 10 munition control units, each containing up to six lethal grenades that provide 360-degree coverage. Spider also



DVIDS

XM-7 Spider Networked Munition

has a remote control station and a repeater for extending the range of communications up to five kilometers. In the words of one soldier serving in Afghanistan, “it makes a little unit look like a big unit.”

It takes only 30 minutes to set up the system, program manager Col. Steven Cummings said. It can be turned off to allow the good guys to pass through, and leaves no trace when packed up.

“You leave nothing but a footprint and take nothing but a picture,” he said.

Two brigades have eight systems in theater, Cummings said. Spider's first combat engagement happened June 13 in Regional Command-South. The Taliban was getting close enough to a combat outpost that they could engage with small arms and indirect fire.



OSHKOSH

The Light Combat All-Terrain Vehicle.

scalable munitions such as:

- Non-lethal claymores
- Pyrotechnics.

Increment 3: Anti-vehicle capability like that of Scorpion, which was cancelled last year.

Light Vehicles

Oshkosh Defense Light Combat Tactical All-Terrain Vehicle will be in an enclosed display area for military customers and other dignitaries for its debut. Why so secret? Because competition to replace the Humvee is high, and Oshkosh is on a roll.

The company last year unveiled four new variants to the mine-resistant, ambush-protected all-terrain vehicle, or M-ATV:

- A larger and stronger Base Upgrade.
- Recon.
- Tactical ambulance.
- 2.5 cargo/utility.

Now Oshkosh has improved some of its tried and true M-ATV capabilities and put them in this light variant. For example, the L-ATV will include the TAK-4i intelligent suspension system. Built on 10 years of operational experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, the system provides up to 20 inches of independent wheel travel, which is 25 percent more than other U.S. vehicles.

Improved shock absorption also aids the off-road mobility and speed. And the optional ProPulse diesel-electric hybrid power train improves fuel economy up to 20 percent and reduces overall life-cycle costs. It can deliver up to 70 kilowatts of export power.

Lockheed Martin will feature its Joint Light Tactical Vehicle. The v-hulled vehicle recently passed blast tests with MRAP protection levels, yet weighs 40 percent less than other vehicles.

The vehicle, which can be transported by CH-47 and CH-53 helicopters,

AUSA booth 6328: Oshkosh
AUSA booth 2124: Lockheed Martin

Other features:

Oshkosh: Scalable armor configurations to adapt to operational requirements

Lockheed:

- Hits sustained speeds over 70 mph
- Ford 60 inches of salt or fresh water
- Tops out at 24,000 pounds of gross weight.

GAU-19B

What is a “cool weapons list” without something that can throw some serious lead downrange?

General Dynamics' GAU-19B, which fires 21 rounds per second, certainly meets the need.

This new iteration reduces the GAU-19A Gatling gun from 141 to 106 pounds without a loss of performance.

Why does that matter, you might ask? For starters, it makes a significant difference for light attack helicopters flying at high altitudes. It will let them take on added fuel for greater range or additional ammunition, said Steve Elgin, vice president of armament systems for General Dynamics Armament and Technical Products. The enhanced Gatling gun would also double the reliability seen in reciprocating machine guns carried on most helicopters.

Take a look at the Army's Doctrine 2015, released at AUSA, and you will see how such support will be critical in combating asymmetrical threats.

But this gun isn't reserved for fly boys alone. In fact, 130 of the 250 in inventory are on Humvees, and Elgin said he expects somewhere in the neighborhood of 600 to be ordered in the next five years. There are 250 Alphas in service, some of which have fired 500,000 rounds and are still going strong. In fact, Elgin said he is not aware of an Alpha ever being retired.

The Bravos have had 65,000 rounds fired in development with no major problems, he said.

It has maintained the Alpha's reliability of 40,000 mean rounds between failure, and the two-to-five milliradians diameter dispersion with the same rate of fire. The only change is in maintenance interval, which is due to the incorporation of a lighter barrel set and materials. Specifically, some firing pin springs and the barrels will be changed at 35,000 instead of 50,000 rounds. □

AUSA booth 825

The details:

- Three barrels
- .50 caliber
- Coming to soldiers in action as early as first quarter of 2012.

“Let your plans be dark and as impenetrable as night and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt.”

- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

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