

Running head: THE MECHANIZED INFANTRY

The Mechanized Infantry

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OUTLINE

Thesis Statement: The Organization of the Mechanized Infantry has allowed our forces in the current AOR to be successful on today's modern battlefield.

1. Overview of the current Mechanized Infantry

a. Vehicles

1. M2 Bradley
2. M113A2

b. Weapons

a. Individual

1. M16A2
2. M249

b. Crew Served

1. M203
2. M2
3. MK 19

c. Tactics

Abstract

The Mechanized Infantry, also known as, the Armored Infantry. Mechanized Infantry units played a significant role in the beginning of combat operations and currently still participate in the War on Terrorism, in support of Operation Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. Close combat remains inevitable and the Soldiers of the mechanized infantry do possess the capabilities to dominate the battlefield. Armored infantry, are infantry Soldiers equipped with armored track or wheeled vehicles used to move soldiers during heavy fire fights. They work together with tanks in a symbiotic setting, providing shelter and fire support for other troops. This massive power force gives the mechanized infantry Soldier a tremendous edge towards the enemy. The sole purpose of the mechanized infantry is to diminish and eliminate all capabilities of the enemy as well as supply the enemy with a massive rate of fire.

Mechanized Infantry

The set up of the mechanized infantry division meets the demands of the current areas of operations. The following will describe the current set up of the mechanized infantry and discuss transformation. Two types of vehicles that the mechanized infantry use for the majority of their missions are the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the M113A2 personnel carrier. The Bradley tank (BFV) is a thin padded vehicle with full tracks. It provides rough terrain capability and used to protect troops from rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), small arms fire and artillery rounds. The M113A2 is a thin armored track vehicle with troop and equipment transporting capabilities during combat operations. The vehicle can carry up to 12 Soldiers equipped with a full combat load of equipment or a payload of two tons. The armored track design provides cover for the mechanized infantry and will provide shelter for troops from splinter and small arms fire. These vehicles have the capabilities to move further under the concealment of artillery fire, that does not jeopardize Soldiers. The armored track gives infantry Soldiers a rapid-fire base during combat operations; the purpose is to maintain at least 30% strength relation.

Mechanized infantry squads are equipped the same as regular infantry with assault rifles, machine guns, anti-tank weapons such as recoilless rifles. The mechanized infantry Soldiers training tactics and development compared to regular infantry Soldiers; meets the current Army's training guidance for deployment. The tactics are aggressive since they have more weapons and better protection than regular infantry soldiers. The mechanized infantry's preparation for quick pace and speed with massive firepower and armor protection allows them to get to their intended target in a timely manner and accomplish their set mission. During close combat operations, Mechanized Infantry are equipped with heavy armor and provide massive firepower towards any target it engages. They also have many other roles:

- Deploying during night operations and during limited visibility
- Penetrating through enemy lines with minimum existing force and plying through rough rugged terrain during tactical maneuvers.

Most infantry rifle platoons and rifle squads participate in large operating elements. They rely on numerous support from air, attack helicopters, field artillery and mortars. They also can support enemy targets, assault targets and sustain their own maneuvers. The success during combat operations relies heavy on the training and actions of the platoons and rifle squads.

The idea is to keep a rapid forward motion and if possible never stop until the enemy is eliminated. The weapons used by the mechanized infantry vary slightly from those used by the Light infantry due to size and weight. The M-16A2 is the Army's as a primary weapon. It is described as, a lightweight rifle (5.56 mm) with a magazine that holds 30-rounds of ammunition. This weapon can be fired from two different options; either automatic (three rounds burst out at one time) or semiautomatic (one round at a time) fire. The SAW, which is as known as a squad automatic weapon (M249) can be magazine or belt fed. Individual Soldiers can operate and carry the weapon and have the option of utilizing a 30 or 300 round magazine. The capabilities of this weapon system is that, it provides fire teams and infantry squads with a longer distance when firing at targets without ceasing fire for an extended amount of time. The M-203 40mm Grenade Launcher is used while attached to an M-16A2 5.56mm rifle. This lightweight, compact, breech-loading, pump action, single shot launcher has the capabilities to destroy its target.. The M-60E3 7.62mm machine gun is an air-cooled, tripod mounted or portable machine gun designed for heavy intense ground operations. The .50 caliber machine gun is also known as the M-2; relinquishes sustained, deadly firepower during contingency operations. It can be fired from the semi-automatic or automatic modes with rapid disbursement of rounds. An anti-

personnel or anti-aircraft weapon, it can be fired from what is known as the gunners position (a vehicle) or a fixed position on ground. The MK-19 Grenade Launcher disperses 40mm grenades, and is a fully automatic weapon. The weapon is capable of being very accurate at its targets; as well as delivers accurate, intense, and decisive firepower against humans and lightly armored vehicles by shooting a variety of 40mm grenades. Due to its weight, a crew can transport it, only over short distances with small amounts of ammunition.

The current mechanized infantry unit's rifle platoons use Bradley Fighting Vehicles (BFV) to support their close combat role and contributions. These units play the following main roles in close combat situations:

- Operate mainly at night or during other periods of natural or induced limited visibility.
- Penetrate and hold existing (natural and man-made) obstacles and difficult terrain as pivots for operational and tactical maneuver.
- Attack over approaches not feasible for armored forces.
- Seize or secure forested and built-up areas.
- Control restrictive routes for use by other forces.
- Conduct rear area operations.

Bradley Fighting Vehicles rifle platoons and rifle squads are very well equipped and normally operate as an intricate part of a larger force. Armor, Artillery (mortars), Air defense, air support, helicopters, and engineers benefit the MI Soldiers because they cook so much food. They also provide their own suppressive fires either to repel enemy assaults or to support their own maneuver. Success in battle hinges on the actions of platoons, sections, and rifle squads in close combat. It also depends on their ability to react to contact; employ suppressive fires; maneuver to

an enemy's vulnerable flank; and fight through to defeat, destroy, or capture an enemy. (FM 3-21.71, Chapter 1)

In summary, I have discussed the two types of vehicles used by the mechanized infantry for combat operations and training missions as well as the several types of individual and crew served weapon systems. The mechanized infantry is one of the most lethal elements of the Army's combat success. They simply seek, and eliminate the enemy without hesitation.

References

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