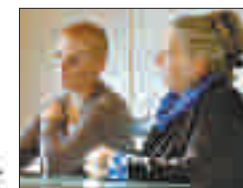


YourArmy

THE LATEST NEWS AFFECTING YOU

[SAME-SEX SPOUSE]

Staff Sgt. Tracy Dice talks with Military Times about the loss of her wife, Staff Sgt. Donna Johnson. Dice is believed to be the first military same-sex spouse to lose a loved one at war after the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell." militarytimes.com/multimedia
Video keyword search: **Dice, spouse**



Arming you with better aim

Improved electronic shot detection may shave days off training

By Michelle Tan
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The Army is fielding a new electronic shot detection and location system at its basic training sites to improve marksmanship training for its newest soldiers.

Called Location of Miss and Hit, it is an upgrade to an existing system that has since become outdated, officials said.

Using acoustic sensors, LOMAH tracks rounds fired on or near targets and detects hits or misses on or within a two-meter radius of a target. Sensors at the target then relay the results to an Android-based tablet.

LOMAH also automatically triangulates the shot group to provide the shooter with corrective data.

The Army is considering expanding the system from basic training to the rest of the service.

With the LOMAH system, soldiers "get better training in less time, and it's much more effective," said Col. Gene Reedy, the Training and Doctrine Command Capability Manager-Live.

Here's how it works, according to Reedy.

Sensor bars are attached to the base of the targets on an automated range. These bars have acoustic sensors that pick up the flight of bullets that pass within two

meters on either side of or above the bars. There are three sensor bars for each firing lane, at 75, 175 and 300 meters.

The shooter has a shot sensor that relays immediate feedback on whether he is aiming at the correct targets.

A student station, an Android-based tablet in a hardened case, shows the noncommissioned officer, mentor or coach where the shooter's bullets are going and relays data on how to correct the soldier's aim or technique.

The system, designed for the M16 and M4, is plugged into the automated range so an NCO overseeing a group of soldiers can monitor each soldier's progress and focus on who may need extra help.

Without the LOMAH system, a company of soldiers typically spends three days at three separate ranges to zero their weapons and work their way up until they qualify on the weapon, Reedy said.

They'd first go to a 25-meter range to zero their weapons.

"Everybody has to wait until the last person's done, then we walk to the target and figure out where the shot group is and figure out potential adjustments to the weapon," Reedy said. "You do that for every shooter, and if you have to shoot again, you shoot again."



Soldiers fire on a range at Fort Benning, Ga., using the LOMAH system.

WHAT LOMAH CAN DO

Some details about the new electronic shot detection and location system known as Location of Miss and Hit:

- Tracks rounds with acoustic sensors
- Detects hits or misses near target

- Sensors relay the results to a tablet
- Can save 2½ days in training
- Designed for M16 and M4
- Saves ammunition, potentially

This process usually takes all day, he said.

The soldiers then move to a second range, typically on the second day, so they can practice on targets at different distances, Reedy said.

And finally, on the third day, soldiers are ready to go to the qualification ranges.

"[Without LOMAH], you have no idea where they're shooting unless their targets go down when they hit them," Reedy said.

With LOMAH, soldiers can zero their weapons, practice and qualify at the same range, he said.

"It takes them half a day to do this entire process," Reedy said. "If

this becomes the Army standard, you've just freed up two-and-a-half days in initial entry training."

Completing weapons qualification more quickly also saves ammunition, he said.

"Ammo is not individually expensive, but add that up over the amount of shooters and it's probably a pretty significant savings," Reedy said.

The LOMAH system was first introduced in the 1980s, Reedy said.

It was tested at Fort Benning, Ga., before being fielded between the mid-1990s and 2004 at the five basic training sites operating then: Fort Benning; Fort Leonard Wood,

Mo.; Fort Jackson, S.C.; Fort Sill, Okla.; and Fort Knox, Ky.

The new, upgraded LOMAH is now in place at Fort Benning and Fort Leonard Wood, Reedy said. The system will be fielded at Fort Jackson in 2014 and later at Fort Sill. Fort Knox is no longer a basic training location.

The new LOMAH system is a vast improvement over the older version, said Dennis Terry, senior training analyst in range development.

With the old system, it was expensive to adjust the software, technicians were unable to modify target scenarios, and some of the operating systems were obsolete, Terry said.

"It didn't meet training requirements," he said.

The old system also was proprietary, while the new system runs on government-owned software, he said.

Sgt. 1st Class Mikeal McInroy, a senior doctrine writer and developer in the weapons and gunnery branch at the Maneuver Center of Excellence's directorate of training and doctrine, helped test the new LOMAH system at Fort Benning.

"My job is small arms ... and the LOMAH provides such a higher level of training across the small arms," McInroy said. "It's an outstanding tool."

During the testing, McInroy said he used the LOMAH system on some soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division.

"We had 20 shooters, and of those, we only had two who didn't qualify sharpshooter or above," he said. "Then we took those two, and one of them we had fire 36, which is expert, with a little bit of training. The training value [the LOMAH] adds is tremendous." □

Army delays next-gen GCV by 6 months

By Paul McLeary
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The Army is delaying its next-generation Ground Combat Vehicle program by extending the technology development phase by six months, according to a memo obtained by Defense News, a sister publication of Army Times.

The Army also plans to award an engineering and manufacturing development contract to a

single vendor — as opposed to the previously planned two vendors — in late fiscal 2014, the letter said.

A Jan. 17 memo from the Pentagon's head of acquisition, logistics and technology to the Army secretary states that the changes are being made "in anticipation of the fiscal pressures over the FY14-18 timeframe," and "the need for additional development time led to

this restructured program."

A final production decision is now expected sometime in fiscal 2019, as opposed to the expected first quarter of fiscal 2018.

Contracts were awarded in August 2011 to BAE Systems for \$449 million and General Dynamics Land Systems for \$439 million for continued work on the program.

But the start of the technology

development phase was pushed back to December 2011 thanks to a protest filed by a Boeing-SAIC team, which was shut out of the competition. The GCV program received the full \$639 million the Army requested in the 2013 defense budget.

Although no numbers are yet available, the changes in the schedule and makeup of the program will affect its price tag.

The memo notes that the Army will be expected to provide an "updated acquisition strategy, acquisition program baseline,

and revised cost estimate" to support the planned EMD decision. The Army will also be required to obtain Defense Acquisition Board approval before releasing the EMD request for proposal, which is slated for the first quarter of fiscal 2014.

Competitors BAE Systems and General Dynamics did not respond to requests for comment.

Plans for the GCV call for 1,894 vehicles, but budget issues and the Army's shift from large-scale combat operations have called that requirement into question. □