

Tank Troop MTOE Revitalization for MDO

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Tank Troop MTOE Modernization

The Army's transformation initiatives require restructuring Tank Troops in Armored Cavalry Squadrons – including manning, equipment, and vehicles – to maintain land dominance in multi-domain operations (MDO). After observing multiple armored units train at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC), the trends identified reflect a need to revamp the modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) to increase the lethality and survivability of the Tank Troops within the Cavalry Squadron. The current MTOE of the Tank Troop lacks personnel and assets to effectively develop the tactical situation while simultaneously conducting medical treatment, evacuation, support, and command and control responsibilities.

The Problem

The Cavalry Squadron's current MTOE inadequately supports the Tank Troop. Having a fighting Executive Officer (XO) creates internal friction for a Troop. This puts a strain on their roles and responsibilities as well as those of the Troop First Sergeant. The first sergeant serves as the company's senior noncommissioned officer, providing tactical advice to the commander while leveraging extensive experience and mastery of individual and NCO skills. The first sergeant is also the company's primary sustainment operator and assists the commander and XO plan, coordinate, and supervise all logistics activities that support the company. The first sergeant operates where the commander directs or where the duties require. The First Sergeant's specific duties include the following:

- enforce tactical SOPs
- supervise supply, maintenance, communications, and field hygiene operations
- plans, rehearses, and supervises key sustainment actions in support of the tactical mission. These activities include resupply of Classes I (rations and gratuitous issues of health, morale, and welfare items), III, and V products and materials; maintenance and recovery; medical support, casualty evacuation (CASEVAC); and processing.
- assists and coordinates with the XO in all critical functions.
- responsible, in coordination with the XO, for planning sustainment operations in support of company or decentralized platoon operations.
- responsible for execution of sustainment during operations
- ensures constant readiness of assigned, attached, or other designated medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), CASEVAC, or nonstandard evacuation vehicles
- conducts daily sustainment or logistics status reporting to higher HQ
- participates in logistics release point (known as LRP) meetings
- conducts company resupply operations.¹

When an XO is actively engaged in maneuver combat their capacity to focus on critical tasks such as battle tracking, logistical planning, and serving as a critical link between Troop and Squadron is limited. Commanders, assisted by their chiefs of staff or executive officers, drive the preparation for an operation by allocating time, prioritizing resources, and supervising

¹ Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-90.1 *Armor and Mechanized Infantry Company Team*. 24 October 2023.

preparation activities such as rehearsals to ensure their forces are ready to execute operations.² Additionally, the expectation that they are on the frontline diminishes their effectiveness but also impedes their ability to advocate for maintenance needs. The XO's need to maintain constant coordination with Squadron to keep the Tank Troop in the fight is the most demanding aspect of their responsibilities. The XO relays critical logistical and tactical information to the Squadron, ensuring they understand the Troop's support capabilities.

Command post (CP) deficiencies. The Troop's Command Post currently uses one General Purpose Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV). The AMPV creates prioritization conflicts as the sole casualty evacuation platform under the current MTOE. The command post's rigid configuration prevents flexible casualty evacuation, while insufficient dedicated assets impair the Tank Troop's ability to maintain a common operational picture and evacuate casualties. Tanks lack organic evacuation capabilities, contributing to 44% dead on arrival (DOA) and 42% died of wounds (DOW) during recent combat training center (CTC) rotations. A medical AMPV will improve casualty survivability and enhance Troop combat effectiveness.

Dead Space Reconnaissance. Tank Troops fail to clear dead space, preventing them from setting favorable conditions when engaging the enemy. Clearing dead space is crucial to keep tanks from rolling into an ambush or an obstacle they are unable to overcome. Small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) can quickly reconnoiter terrain, difficult terrain, large open areas, and dead space between observation posts and battle positions.³ There is currently a lack of sUAS in the Tank Troops. When committing an asset such as the Tank Troop, Squadron leaders must reallocate scouts or other assets to assist the Tank Troop. Due to a lack of dedicated dismount personnel and operational distances, the Tank Troop has a limited ability to dismount. When a tank crewman does dismount there is a clear lack of proficiency due to inexperience. The lack of security puts one of our most lethal assets of a Brigade at a significant disadvantage.

The Solution

XO AMPV integration with preserved combat power. Replace the XO's D65 Tank with a Command Variant AMPV to improve battlefield tracking and command and control. This restructuring mirrors Cavalry Troop headquarters while increasing security for the isolated Troop CP. The First Sergeant can focus on coordinating logistics with their existing MTOE general purpose AMPV. To maintain firepower, retain both headquarters tanks per MTOE, assign the Troop Master Gunner as D65 tank commander, and add one 19K10 Soldier as the XO's AMPV driver. The D65 will serve as the commander's wingman tank, preserving combat power.

Resolving Tank Troop casualty evacuation deficiencies. The Troop requires a dedicated medical AMPV with assigned medical personnel to address critical evacuation deficiencies. Replace one JLTV on the MTOE with a medical AMPV, assign the First Sergeant as vehicle commander, and utilize the former JLTV driver for the medical AMPV. This configuration allows medical personnel to focus on prolonged care during evacuations, improving casualty survival rates.

² Field Manual (FM) 3-0 *Operations*. 21 March 2025.

³ FM 3-98 *Reconnaissance and Security Operations*. 10 January 2023.

sUAS for dead space reconnaissance. Lessons from Ukraine and Army modernization efforts create an ideal opportunity to enhance Tank Troops through sUAS integration. Recent large-scale combat operations demonstrate sUAS effectiveness. Equipping each platoon with two short-range reconnaissance sUAS strengthens both offensive and defensive capabilities. These systems help crews clear dead space, acquire targets, develop engagement areas, identify fighting positions, and conduct rapid route reconnaissance.

Conclusion

Revamping the Tank Troop's MTOE is critical to maintaining U.S. Army's battlefield superiority. Reassigning the XO to a Command Variant AMPV, replacing a JLTV with a Medical Variant AMPV, and integrating organic sUAS capabilities will overcome current deficiencies in C2, casualty evacuation, and tactical flexibility. These changes enhance lethality, survivability, and operational effectiveness, ensuring the Armored Cavalry Squadron remains dominant in multi-domain operations. Recommend Army Testing and Evaluation Command (ATEC) in coordination with Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE), initiate a pilot program to test the proposed MTOE changes in an Armored Cavalry Squadron. Develop Training and Evaluation Outlines (T&EO) for sUAS operation and coordinate with Army acquisition and logistics commands to secure additional AMPV's and sUAS. Conduct a follow-on assessment after 12 months or following a CTC rotation to evaluate the impact. If proven effective, implement these changes across all tank formations.

