

M157 Smoke System

— makes smoke on the move

By SSgt. Gene Weinreis



Right, the M157 smoke system mounted on a HMMWV (M1037) and, below, mounted on an APC (M1059).



The AirLand Battlefield will show that soldiers with the capability to move stand a better chance of survival. Couple that with an ability to make smoke on the move, and the American soldier increases his capability to move and survive on the battlefield.

The M1037 and the M1059 produce effective smoke screens on the battlefield. This provides a never-before-seen dimension to the art of war. Large areas can now be obscured in shorter periods of time with prolonged blanketing on the smoke objective.

For support of close operations the M1059 is capable of providing instant effective smoke screens that allow commanders to exploit the combat situation. Smoke screens can now be made on the battlefield as never before. In the past, the use of stationary smoke caused the operation to be slow and cumbersome. Now we are able to counter the influence of weather and terrain to such an extent as to completely shelve the old generator system entirely.

Since the M1037 has no armor protection, it will not be used in the forward battle area. In rear area operations, however, it is just as effective as the M1059.



Above, smoke blankets a training area during field exercises. Below, a close-up of the M1037 in action.

With either of these two systems at their disposal, commanders now are able to counter any threat with effective smoke screens instantly, to help affect the outcome of the battle.

The heart of the M157 smoke system is the control panel mounted inside the vehicle. Flip five switches, push one button, and turn a dial and the smoke generator operator produces smoke in a shorter period of time and for longer durations.

The Army has come out with something that is almost foolproof. As usual, the heart of working any piece of machinery is preventive maintenance—the tender loving care the operators give to their equipment. As with any other type of machinery, if you abuse it, it won't work when you need it. I've operated both systems for countless hours with only minimum maintenance.

Will you be able to help your commander make smoke on the move? Or will you be parked in the woods somewhere, repairing the system as the battle passes you by? Or makes you a casualty?



At the time this article was written, SSG Gene Weinreis was assigned to the Technical Training Department, Department of Training, USACMLS. SSG Weinreis' previous assignments include HHC, 197th Ordnance Battalion, 59th Ordnance Brigade, West Germany and Company C, 34th Support Battalion, 6th Air Cavalry Combat Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas. SSG Weinreis has an associate degree in law enforcement. He is a graduate of both the chemical noncommissioned officer basic and advanced courses.