

Fox Starts Production Testing

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The Army started production qualification testing of the XM93 Fox Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Reconnaissance System 8 January. The testing is being performed on the first six production vehicles to verify quality.

The first phase of the test is operator training. Instructors from General Dynamics Land Systems and Thyssen Henschel will teach the classes. The second phase involves a sequence of testing to verify that the system is safe to field and performs as it was designed. This phase will include testing at various Army Test and Evaluation Command facilities.

The Fox is a wheeled, armored vehicle with a dedicated system of battlefield NBC detection, warning and sampling. Due to built-in, collective protection system, soldiers can conduct reconnaissance operations from inside the vehicle without wearing protective gear.

The Fox has the capability to find and mark chemical and nuclear contamination. Avoidance is the most important part of the three inter-related NBC elements—avoidance, protection, and decontamination. By avoiding contamination, a

division can increase its combat effectiveness in a chemical war.

The Fox is a non-developmental item currently used in the German Army and most recently fielded in the U.S. Army for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Germany provided sixty systems to the United States during the war. Both the crews and commanders praised the Fox for its "quantum leap" in capability. Faced with a significant chemical threat, units demanded Fox assets. These sixty systems have been redeployed to U.S. units throughout the world.

The Fox program is a milestone in trans-Atlantic armaments cooperation. The U.S. German effort is a major step towards standardization of combat wheeled vehicles within NATO. The cooperative program provides a timely solution to the urgent U.S. need for NBC reconnaissance capability. The cooperative program links major defense manufacturers on both sides of the Atlantic in a long-term partnership.

The U.S. Army is purchasing 48 Fox vehicles to further enhance this urgently needed capability.