
Defense Report

AUSA



For Battlefield Defense Against Air Attack—Sgt. York Protects From the Ground Up

An attack by Warsaw Pact forces against the Atlantic alliance would find the U.S. Army in Europe in desperate need of improvements to its tactical air defense umbrella. The requirement for such protection becomes more critical with the proliferation of Soviet ground attack aircraft and missile-firing helicopters. Vitally needed is an improved gun system to complement the forward area missile systems—Chaparral and the hand-held Stinger, both restricted to clear-day operations because targets are visually acquired.

In 1978, the Army initiated an accelerated competitive development program resulting in the September, 1983, delivery of the first Sgt. York gun system. This mobile, radar-controlled, all-weather weapon system consists of twin 40-mm guns mounted on an existing tank chassis, giving it the capability of operating with the M1 Abrams tank and the Bradley fighting vehicle, thus furnishing our armored and mechanized divisions with increased protection from attack by enemy aircraft and antitank helicopters.

In choosing to shortcut the development process, the Army cut five to six years off the normal production time for a major new weapon, avoided at least \$500 million in development costs and stayed within three percent of the 1978 predicted cost.

The Army's choice of the proven 40-mm Swedish Bofors gun was a wise one because it does not require a direct hit to damage or destroy enemy aircraft, and it is standard among our NATO allies. Other positive aspects of the Sgt. York system include the use of an off-the-shelf radar and fire control computer and selection of the M48A5 tank chassis which provides the mobility and survivability necessary for success on the modern battlefield.

Some recent contract deficiencies have been ironed out between the Army and the manufacturer, and the Army now feels confident that Sgt. York is on track.

What is needed next is for the Congress to appropriate the money for the production of Sgt. York weapons so that the Army can move forward swiftly with this added firepower and protection for our frontline divisions.