

Captain Trent's Report is here homies:

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A US Army Captain by the name of Braden Trent just published a [scathing just savage public report](#) on the XM-7. This wouldn't be the first time the army has tried to sweep weapon performance issues under the rug. The [disastrous rollout of the M16 rifle during the Vietnam War saw negative feedback be outright ignored by leadership](#). The consequences were terrible. Soldiers M16s jammed in the middle of firefights. Troops had to write letters back home to family and to congress begging them to investigate the M16. This led to a [1967 congressional hearing that revealed](#) leadership knew about the issues all along but buried the [negative feedback](#). A full report found evidence of ["negligence, and disregard for soldier safety."](#) The ironic thing is, the M16 actually turned out to be an outstanding weapon after all the errors were fixed. But the only way errors get fixed are when we aren't afraid of a little negative feedback

During his 10 months of research, Captain Trent heard reports of accuracy ranging from 3 MOA all the way up to 6 Minute Of Angle. [<Page 30>](#) The requirement for the XM7 is a 4 Minute Of Angle which basically means you're hitting within a 4" inch circle at 100 yards. Same-same standard as the M4. However, troops claimed that was not the case.

According to his research ["There is an immense chamber pressure in the XM7, in excess of 80,000 PSI \[pounds per square inch\]. This causes dramatically increased wear of internal components and ammunition."](#) . [On page 30](#) of the study it says "Across the population of sample rifles, the author observed degradation of the following components: barrel rifling, bolt, extractor, suppressor locking ring, suppressor. The most serious observation of degradation was of barrel rifling." The report says they examined weapons that had fired 2,000 rounds and they had degradation of the rifling in the same exact spot...always 4 inches from the muzzle on the bottom portion of the barrel. Trent personally disassembled and inspected a total of twenty-three XM7 rifles in various stages of wear. All that means accuracy is going to be affected and you won't hit the target. [<n Page 31 and 32>](#)

Because the 2025 army budget shows Big Army is moving full steam ahead with its plans to purchase, take a look at page 189 of the budget, it shows that [111,000 of the new rifles are order for the arsenal](#) [<Page 189 of PDF>](#)

, the long range benefits of the XM7 are rendered tactically irrelevant. " [<Page 48>](#) According to troops fighting in Ukraine the M4's black tip M955 armor piercing 5.56mm is able to easily penetrate Russian body armor. [<Photo on Page 33>](#) On page 33 Trent outlines a major problem with the suppressor. He says "During night shoots. The SLX suppressor begins to glow after a few magazines, to the extent that it washes out the helmet mounted night vision devices used by Soldiers. The heat of the SLX is such that commercial off the shelf purchases of suppressor covers have not been able to mitigate the problem." [<Quote on Page 39>](#) That would be a serious problem if it's unable to dissipate the heat fast enough so its glowing red after just a few magazines.

Over the past few months I've seen troops venting their frustration online because that's the only place they can have their voice heard. This soldier's post on a public forum revealed the [following highlights](#). He says quote "I have never seen a weapon have so many malfunctions. Namely failure to extract/eject even when properly cleaned and on adverse gas settings using the General Purpose round. Rounds couldn't go through steel targets. He says the Vortex XM157 optic was bad and didn't have enough brightness to see clearly. He details how two piece ammo casing blew apart occasionally, and that stuck casings are common in the XM250. And that's just the tip of the iceberg of all this.

I get this is a massive weapons procurement contract with a lot riding on it. It has a combined value including its optics and [sub systems around \\$10 billion dollars over the life of the contract](#).

The study he wrote was his [student thesis at Marine Corps Expeditionary Warfare School](#). He used what I would describe as a data-driven approach where he combined historical analysis of how US infantry weapons have evolved over time. He used ballistics tests, modern soldiers' experiences with the XM7 out in the field with extended use, plus his own observations of the new rifle's performance during tactical exercises he was on.

<Page 3 of [PDF](#)> On page 3 of the document he outlines how In the 1950s, the Army fell into this same incorrect philosophy when it adopted the [M-14](#). He [says](#) "The platoon the author observed was tasked with providing suppression of the objective in order to enable the maneuver of the other platoons in the company. Ten minutes after making contact with the enemy, the volume of fire the platoon was able to output was insufficient. After fifteen minutes, the platoon was almost completely out of ammunition for rifles, light machine guns, and medium machine guns. Trent conducted an interesting tactical test. He talked about The relationship between the weight of a XM7 the size of caliber used, and the way it impacts shooter time on target. This test was conducted by the author with the USMC Weapons Training Battalion. Shooters tested both the M4 and Xm7. They aimed at targets between 7 to 300 meters standing to prone. PG38 The results of the test were that the the heavier Xm7 had reduced reaction time, they were slower on target. <Page 40> The ambidextrous magazine releases positioning bumps on soldiers' gear while walking on patrol which then drops the magazine into the dirt. Surprisingly after all that Captain Trent actually stresses that he's not opposed to the XM7 being adopted. He just believes it's unsuitable as a general issue weapon for all Army riflemen. The Army already has a weapon category designed to put accurate, hard hitting shots on precise targets at extended ranges: the [Designated Marksman Rifle](#). <SOT 7:38-8:12> which funnily enough, is the role that M14 ended filling.

[Jason St. John](#), is a former army ranger and currently the Senior Director of Strategic Products at SIG Defense. He said that Captain Trent didn't consult anyone at the company or the Army NGSW Program Office while working on his thesis. He went on to say that he belives Captain Trent had some shortcomings and difficulties in understanding the totality of the NGSW program. He said Trent had some significant blind spots into the progress that the weapon has made over the last 24 months. According to SIG there are significant misrepresentations and holes in those statements [that he made]."

So for instance he stated the weapons actual PSI is closer to 77,000 or less and that it had been proofed all the way up to 125,000 PSI with no safety concerns. SIG went on to say that their barrel life exceeds 10,000 rounds which is 5,000 more than the army requires. David Patterson, Director of Public Affairs at PEO Soldier, said "[There have been no reported incidents of cartridge cases rupturing. Over 1 million rounds have been fired to validate safety and operation of the weapon and ammunition.](#)" According to the army 20K rounds were fired from each barrel with no loss of accuracy.

The Army asserted that the new weapon was tested in something called the [An NGSW Operational Assessment \(OA\).](#) [Which I believe we do not have access to publicly but they say the test was design to specifically addressed the ammunition capacity concerns. So in their tests in orffensive and outnumbered in defneisve scenarios they still had ammo even after a counter attack.](#) As to the debate about the philosophy of the weapon. David Patterson pointed to the Secretary of the Army's guiding principle, "[Yesterday's weapons will not win tomorrow's wars.](#)" Here's what Captain trent said his goal was with the project <SOT [20:54-21:18](#)>