

The Close Combat Tactical Trainer

There is no doubt; today's Army National Guard Combat Commanders have a greater burden of responsibility than those of pre 911. In addition to traditional maneuver, gunnery, and emergency response, they are now tasked with the constant threat of new deployments in support of the war on terror. The Combat leader needs all the help he can get when it comes to training his soldiers. One area that has "taken up some slack" is the Close Combat Tactical Trainer. Virtual training technology has advanced to the point that past commanders could only dream of. Today's combat leaders have the capability to train crews and platoons in almost all aspects of maneuver and gunnery that only costs a fraction of the time and money of past methods.



Regular Army Commanders have the [Close Combat Tactical Trainer](#) (CCTT) nearby on their Post, but National Guard Commanders are usually hundreds of miles away from the nearest Army Post and don't have the luxury of a dedicated CCTT facility. That's where the Mobile Close Combat Tactical Trainer (M-CCTT) comes in to play. The M-CCTT is dedicated to training [M1A1 Abrams](#) Tank and [M2/M3 Bradley](#) fighting Vehicle (BFV) Platoons for Army National Guard units all across the country. Presently there are 6 Abrams teams and 6 Bradley teams located in California, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee where most of the Abrams and Bradley equipped units are located. These mobile teams are funded by [PEO-STR1](#) (Program Executive Office for Simulation Training and Instrumentation), and does not use State or Local funds, and are operated by independent Contractor, Computer Sciences Corporation through the [Warrior Training Alliance](#) program.



Years ago, before the arrival of virtual reality training, we learned to use everything available to train our soldiers, There were sub-caliber devices for weapons training, Graphic Training Aids (GTA's) in the classrooms, sand tables and Rock drills for maneuver training. Some tank platoons used ¼ tons (jeeps) for field maneuver to save fuel. Soldiers have even been known to use wooden rifles and paint guns. In times of need Guardsmen have always been able to find ways to train,

sometimes using unusual but always effective means.

With the Advent of the M-CCTT, Abrams and Bradley Commanders can now train their platoons using simulated vehicles in a virtual environment for tactics and gunnery without leaving the Armory, or using precious fuel and ammunition, and fighting against world class opposing forces without losing one drop of blood. In tactical maneuver training, platoons can train in a desert environment such as the National Training Center (NTC), or wooded environment such as Fort Hood or Central Germany, or even Baghdad. A commander can coordinate with the support team for tailor made missions and concentrate on his particular weaknesses or use a generic packaged mission, depending on his needs, whether it's defense, offense, or reconnaissance. For bigger training events such as Company Team Training the system can be configured or linked with other teams to support up to eight tanks, ten Bradleys and a Mobile Theater After Action Review Trailer (MTAAR). Of course this would require a larger area for set up, such as a local area training site.



In addition to maneuver, the system

can also be used as a gunnery simulator, the support team is staffed with experienced master gunners that assist and build the scenarios that would prepare crews for live fire using the same targetry and exposure times found on the gunnery range. Tank and Bradley crew examiners are able to view and grade crews from the After Action Review station as they negotiate their scenarios.



Even though the system was designed for Abrams and Bradley Platoons, the M-CCTT can and has been used for more than just Tank and Bradley maneuver/gunnery. Recently, before they deployed, an MP unit in New Jersey used the M-CCTT to train Convoy Escort Operations; A Stryker unit in Pennsylvania used the M-CCTT for their Platoon Maneuver Training. An Artillery Battalion in North Carolina is using the M-CCTT to train its Fire Support Teams. In the Cavalry, Humvee scouts have regularly used the M-CCTT to train their reconnaissance missions. Basically, if your unit moves, shoots, and communicates, you can use the M-CCTT. For example, when an MP unit uses the Bradley or Tank M-CCTT, the system can be configured to only fire it's 7.62 or 50cal machine gun which might typically be mounted on a Humvee, the

communications are virtually the same as they normally use. Crews only need to learn the how to drive and the shoot the particular system they're on. The missions they can train on vary from Convoy escort, to perimeter defense. Sub tasks such as employing indirect fire, Medical evacuation procedures, and re-supply operations can also be accomplished in the M-CCTT. The M-CCTT can simulate friendly (Blufor) units such as supply convoys, civilian traffic, and pedestrians. Opposing Force (Opfor) units include pickup trucks with machine guns mounted, Vehicle Borne Explosive Device (VBED), Improvised Explosive Device (IED), civilians with shoulder fired weapons to include Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPG), even snipers on rooftops or inside buildings. In addition, many



of the Warrior tasks and Battle drills can be accomplished in the M-CCTT. At least ten of the individual tasks and almost all of the Battle drills can be done in the M-CCTT.

The M-CCTT is configured in two teams, which may operate independently or linked together, an M1A1 Abrams set with four Simulators In four Trailers, and an M2A2 Bradley with four or six simulators in five trailers. The support team is made up of two Computer Based Training Instructors, two electronic technicians and an Operations Manager. The weapons simulated include 7.62mm machine guns, the 25mm and TOW missile on the Bradley, and the 7.62mm, 50cal and 120mm cannon on the Abrams. The radios are standard Army Single-Channel Ground-Air Radio System (SINGARS). Both systems have an After Action Review station where platoons may conduct a playback of each mission. Each

system has an Opfor and blufor semi-automated force (SAF), which includes indirect fire, engineer, aviation, and re-supply units.

Many Commanders may think this is all great but I've got more than I can do as it is! Well, that's where the M-CCTT can actually make your job easier. The great thing about the M-CCTT is that it doesn't have to be the main training event for a weekend drill; it can be integrated into training you already have planned. Everyone is doing Warrior task and battle drills. All you need is an open level space (100X150ft) near your Armory, or training area. There are no power requirements; they bring their own generator, no ammo, no fuel, no special gear to order. For your soldiers who are unfamiliar with the Abrams or Bradley, the support team will train them on the basics to get them to a level quickly so they may be able effectively operate the vehicle, which will incidentally give them a better understanding and feel of what it's like in a Tank or Bradley.



