

# Soldier Armed

## Mk 47 Striker

By Scott R. Gourley

One of the more recent additions to the U.S. Army's tactical weapons inventory is the Mk 47 Mod 0 Striker 40 mm weapon system.

Currently deployed with U.S. Army special operations elements (including the 1st, 5th, 7th and 10th Special Forces Groups) in Afghanistan and Iraq, the 40 mm system offers a number of significant improvements that could lead to its wider adoption within the U.S. Army.

The Mk 47 Mod 0 weapon system, also called Striker 40 by manufacturer General Dynamics Armament and Technical Products consists of the Mk 47 Mod 0 machine gun, Mk 107 Mod 0 mount, Mk 108 Mod 0 tripod and AN/PWG-1 lightweight video sight.

The Striker 40 mm grenade machine gun offers warfighters a number of significant advantages over the earlier Mk 19 Mod 3 series 40 mm grenade machine gun now in service.

One of the first significant advantages in Striker involves system weight and size. The Mk 47 receiver, for example, weighs 39.6 pounds, in contrast to the Mk 19 receiver weight of 77 pounds. With full up fire control and tripod, the Striker weighs approximately 90 pounds, versus nearly 150 pounds for the full up Mk 19 configuration with just iron sights.

Along with weight, the Mk 47 also provides size advantages in terms of length (37 inches versus 43.1 inches), width (10 inches versus 13.4 inches), and height (8.1 inches versus 8.2 inches).

The system's Mk 107 Mod 0 lightweight mount also allows warfighters to make fine adjustments integral to the mount, as opposed to the traverse and elevation adjustments on the Mk 19. A brake on the mount also allows users to lock the weapon on target,

when desired. The machine gun itself operates much like an M2 .50-caliber machine gun, with a recoil-operated design that fires from the closed-bolt position, as opposed to the blow-back operated Mk 19 that fires from an open-bolt. The closed-bolt Striker design is credited with some advantages in accuracy.

Industry briefings emphasize that one of Striker's most significant tactical advantages comes as the first fielded grenade machine gun with integrated day/night capable fire con-



The Mk 47 Mod 0 Striker 40 mm weapon system.

trol. The video-based AN/PWG-1 day/video sight incorporates third generation image intensification and a laser rangefinder, and a ballistic computer provides the user with a full ballistic solution for enhanced first round hit capabilities. A standard BA5590 battery provides up to 32 hours of operational life.

Four buttons on the rear of the fire control system include brake release, laser rangefinder, reset and four-way toggle to maneuver through menus.

Tactical engagements begin with the operator looking into the mounted 3 X video monitor and placing a donut icon onto the intended target. He then hits the laser rangefinder button to determine the range.

Pushing in the brake release then releases the gun from the sight, allowing the gunner to place the corrected

aim point (crosshair icon) on the target for firing and first round hit.

The integrated menu allows for a variety of tactical actions ranging from adjustments for windage to development of an electronic range card.

In addition, an integral Picatinny rail on the top of the lightweight video sight module allows for the installation of additional observation devices like the AN/PAS-13 thermal weapon sight (heavy).

Through the use of an interface cable, the thermal weapon sight option allows the operator to select either image intensified or thermal images to be viewed through the video display, with icons remaining the same for either selection, allowing the warfighter to use the thermal sight for long-range detection and then switch to the image intensified sight for identification.

Striker introduces no additional logistics challenges since the weapon system is capable of firing every 40 mm round that the Mk 19 is capable of firing. Moreover, with a slightly slower rate of fire (225 to 300 rounds per minute for the Mk 47 Mod 0 versus 325 to 375 rpm for Mk 19 Mod 3), the Striker design virtually eliminates the possibility of cook-offs. Interest in the system goes beyond the special operations community to the broader Army and allied militaries.

"What this weapon means for the soldier is more rounds on target, faster," observed John Suttle, spokesman for General Dynamics Armament and Technical Products. He added, "The Mk 47 Striker 40 is the first major advancement in crew-served weapon systems since the end of World War II, giving our forces a decisive technological advantage over adversaries equipped with older crew-served weapons."