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THE CODE MILITARY HUMVEE OSHKOSH DEFENSE

Meet the Fast, Tough War Machine That's Replacing the Humvee

Oshkosh's L-ATV will be the Pentagon's next rugged truck.



By Eric Tegler

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Oshkosh Defense

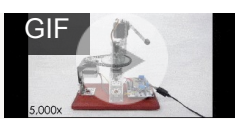
For three decades, Army and Marine HMMWVs or "Humvees" have been the symbol of American military power everywhere U.S. forces have put boots and tires on the ground. First produced in 1985 by AM General, the Humvee has not only carried hundreds of thousands of Americans to and from combat, it has become a cultural icon. Like the legendary Willys Jeep, the Humvee is part of the language and even spawned a consumer product the Hummer.

Replacing it is a big a deal.

The Pentagon's [Joint Light Tactical Vehicle program](#) was tasked to deliver "a flexible vehicle that balances the payload, performance, and protection critical in the operating environments of today and tomorrow," says Sean Stackley, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development, and Acquisition). This week, the program made its choice: Oshkosh Defense's Light Combat All-Terrain Vehicle (L-ATV)

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Why go with Oshkosh? Think back to 2006-7 and you'll remember that American Army soldiers and Marines were getting clobbered by improvised explosive devices in Iraq. In fact, IEDs accounted for 60 percent of American casualties. The situation was so dire that units were bolting steel plates to their Humvees for protection. That led to the development of heavy Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, which worked well in Iraq but not in the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan. There, the Pentagon's solution was the lighter M -ATV or MRAP All-Terrain Vehicle built by Oshkosh Defense.



Oshkosh Defense

But the Army and Marines needed a lighter vehicle still—something that could go where a Humvee could go, but with the kind of protection offered by an MRAP or M-ATV. Those were the requirements of the JLTV program, which this week selected Oshkosh's L-ATV over offerings from AM General and defense titan Lockheed Martin. Oshkosh's win sees it walk away with a \$6.7 billion contract in low rate initial production for a program estimated to be worth \$30 billion through 2024.

The L-ATV differs from a Humvee in a few key ways. Oshkosh's new vehicle is bigger and will come in two variations, four-passenger combat vehicles and two-seat combat support vehicles. It carries a maximum weight of 15,639 pounds. That relatively light sum is one-third less than an M-ATV and allows the L-ATV to be transported by helicopter. It also gives the new vehicle the off-road mobility and speed of a Baja racer. In fact, an early development version of the L-ATV became the first military-class vehicle to complete the Baja 1000 desert race in 2010. L-ATV can travel over rugged terrain 70 percent faster than the M-ATV, even to speed over 100 mph.

Oshkosh's new offering does all this while offering the ballistic protection of a light tank, according to Oshkosh senior vice president of defense programs John Bryant. The L-ATV has as much body armor on the outside as an MRAP. Bryant likens its armor and Core 1080 crew protection system to that of a race car, which allows its driver to walk away from a horrific wreck.





Oshkosh Defense

The L-ATV's speed and mobility is courtesy of its GM Duramax 6.6-liter V8 turbo-diesel engine and TAK-4i independent suspension. An optional ProPulse hybrid diesel-electric drive train is also offered and provides 70kW of on-board and export power. The independent suspension is an unequal-length control-arm setup with coil springs. Completely modular, it bolts up easily and offers 20 inches of independent wheel travel. (Compare that with Ford's F-150 SVT Raptor R Baja-type production-based racer, which offers 15 inches of travel.) Reportedly, the L-ATV just drives like a big pickup.

The first Army unit should be equipped with the vehicles in around 2018, and its acquisition would be complete in 2040. The Marine Corps is set to begin its buy at the start of production and finish in fiscal 2022.

By then, maybe it will have a catchy name.



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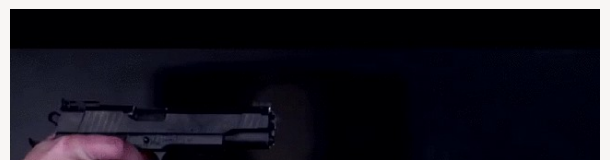
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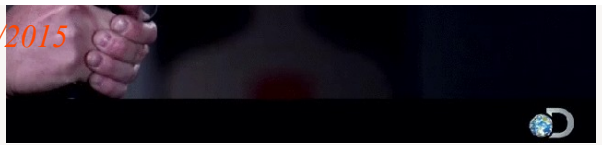


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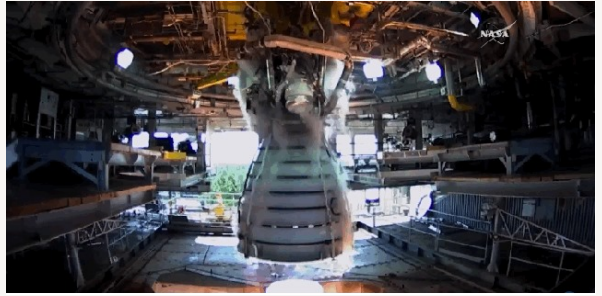


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