



Comparing U.S. Army Systems with Foreign Counterparts

Identifying Possible Capability Gaps and Insights from Other Armies

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Comparing U.S. Army Systems with Foreign Counterparts: Identifying Possible Capability Gaps and Insights from Other Armies contrasts selected U.S. Army systems and capabilities with comparable foreign weapons. The research focused on armored fighting vehicles, helicopters, rocket and cannon artillery, and various logistics platforms. The armies that were selected for the comparisons included U.S. allies as well as potential future opponents.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the current status of selected U.S. Army systems that will be compared with foreign counterparts?
- What is the state of the field and the position of the core Army programs within their respective fields?
- What is the nature and importance of the relative position of U.S. Army capabilities?
- What foreign army capabilities might the U.S. Army consider adopting?



KEY FINDINGS

The U.S. Army's Armored Fighting Vehicles Compare Well with Their Foreign Counterparts

- The U.S. Army should improve its existing forward-looking infrared systems or pursue other sensor technologies in order to maintain the advantage the Army's tanks and Bradleys have experienced in past direct-fire engagements.
- The Army is an outlier among armies fielding main battle tanks given its lack of a dedicated high-explosive fragmentation round.

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The U.S. Army Leads in Term of the Size and Capability of Its Helicopter Fleet, but Attack and Medium-Lift Helicopters Around the World Have Increased in Sophistication

- The U.S. attack helicopter platforms have exhibited dominant target system capability, but foreign attack and medium-lift helicopter platforms do have some niche advantages.
- The Army's heavy-lift helicopter, the CH-47F, has greater digital connectivity than its foreign counterparts, but it has a lower payload than the equivalent foreign systems.

U.S. Rocket Systems Are Falling Behind the Increasing Range of Similar Russian and Chinese Systems

- The trend of foreign, heavy multiple rocket launchers firing well over 100 kilometers has implications for the U.S. Army's fires system, including counterfire and target acquisition.
- A large portion of the Army's current stock of rocket munitions will have to be replaced when the 2019 limitations on submunitions take effect.

Armies Have Added Considerable Capabilities to Their Infantry Squads, but the Weight That Infantrymen Carry Is Concerning

- Loads of 100 pounds or more are now entirely common for dismounted infantrymen.
- Several armies indicated that they are initiating programs to reduce the loads carried by infantrymen.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Examine what the best defensive systems are for countering incoming long-range rockets.
- The U.S. Army should support research and development in the robotics field with the goal of improving its capabilities, as well as gaining and maintaining technology leadership.
- The U.S. Army should consider approaches to lighten the loads that dismounted infantrymen carry.
- The U.S. Army should carefully examine the need for a new specialized manned reconnaissance aircraft in light of global trends and the increasing ability of combinations of attack helicopter and unmanned aerial systems to perform the scouting, observation, and reconnaissance functions.

