

U.S. Army to Equip Its European-Based Armored Brigade with TROPHY APS

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The M-1A2 TROPHY integration used turret-side mounted modules, similar to those used on Israel's Merkava Mk4. The M-1A2SEpv2 is seen here fitted with the Abrams Reactive Armor Tile (ARAT) package recently added to the Abrams' survivability kit. Photo: US Army via Leonardo



After years of evaluations and experimentation with active protection systems (APS) technologies, the US Army finally moves fast to equip its M-1A2 SEPV2 main battle tanks with lifesaving APS – Israel's TROPHY was selected, realizing it is the only system of its kind that has proved its worth in real combat. M-1A2SEPV2 is the latest operational variant of the M-1 Abrams tank. These systems are expected to enhance the operational effectiveness of the U.S. main battle tank, enabling tank formations to become more survivable and decisive against anti-tank threats.

The U.S. Army has recently received the latest modernized version (SEPV3) of the tank and has recently awarded the original manufacturer of the tank, General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS), to propose new upgrades for a follow-on SEPV4 variant.

Relying on non-developmental technology, the integration of Trophy on the M-1A2 SEPV2 took only six months, and in the evaluations, its performance TROPHY exceeded the Army expectations. Following the successful completion of the first phase, the program moves to the next testing phase. Since Trophy is an operational system that has proved its worth, the Army is not waiting for the completion of this second testing phase and simultaneously enter production, to meet the Army's tight fielding schedule.



TROPHY integration on M1A2 used turret-side mounted modules, adapted from those deployed on IDF Namer and Merkava Mk4. Photo: Leonardo

The acquisition of the TROPHY brigade set for the M-1A2 SEPv2 is limited to one brigade set and is managed under the modification and support contract of the Abrams tank as an urgent material release. The U.S. already has one armored brigade deployed in Europe on an annual rotation; the APS-equipped brigade is expected to remain in Europe on a permanent basis. Future equipping decisions will be taken under the APS 'Program of Record' after the system integrates the forthcoming Modular APS (MAPS) architecture, that will enable the Army to 'plug and play' new, emerging detection and defeat technologies. The current system employs four IAI Elta ELM-2133 Windguard radars. According to Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, the system's developer, and its US team-member DRS Technologies of the Leonardo Group, TROPHY is designed with the ability to accept future technologies and capabilities.

The Israeli Ministry of Defense and Defense Forces put TROPHY through a four-year safety certification process before approving its operational use aboard the Merkava Mk4 tank in 2010.