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Memorandum for ALL CONCERNED

Subject: M24 upgrade (aka M24A2 conversion)

There has been a significant amount of traffic recently concerning the M24A2 upgrade, both from the TACOM/Picatinny side and the user side. It appears as though this issue has come to a crossroads whereas the users are requesting the upgrades and the procurement side does not feel that it is legal to do so. I offer the following comments in the hopes that we can at least begin a dialog to resolve this issue.

Prior to ever developing and offering this program TACOM, Picatinney and DCD were consulted. At that time Remington offered advance notice of this program and asked for assistance in order to forego some of these problems and asked for comments concerning it. At that time there were no issues raised which encouraged Remington to proceed. We now find ourselves embroiled in a situation where Remington has been accused of going around the system and at one point not being sensitive to the concerns of its customer (TACOM). In truth the only concern of Remington was to provide the best product possible for the end user based on long held/known shortcomings. This upgrade was developed as a result of over 15 years of user experience with the M24 and countless comments and suggestions.

I understand that the PM side believes that the upgrade does not meet the criteria as outlined in AR750-10 based on the following issues;

1. These are major modifications – *The only modification that could be considered “major” is the barrel replacement which is conducted normally at a point in which it must be replaced due to normal wear. All of the other “modifications” are “bolt-on” and can be installed or removed by the operator.*
2. That the system cannot be returned to its original configuration – *All of the original parts which are serviceable are returned to the unit for storage. It is the unit's responsibility to retain these items for future use. Given that most units only have 3 – 6 systems this does not represent a large storage requirement. However, this does imply a control issue on the part of the unit to ensure that the parts are in fact retained and not disposed of due to a misunderstanding. Should a M24A2 need to be returned to its original configuration it would have to be returned to Remington for installation of a new barrel (which is covered under the existing contract due to the fact that the unit paid for the A2 barrel initially rather than charge the contract fund site for a replacement barrel at the time of conversion).*
3. That a upgraded M24 will not fall within the existing maintenance contract – *90% of a M24A2 is in fact covered by the contract. The optics have a lifetime warranty from Leupold, the barrel falls into the same category as normal replacement barrel given that the barrels are made “in-house”. The suppressor has been proved to withstand over 100,000 rounds far exceeding the life of the system, however should it fail OPS INC will*

warranty it for life. The only remaining 2 issues are the MARS rail and the stock, we are in the process of developing those issues as they relate to a warranty.

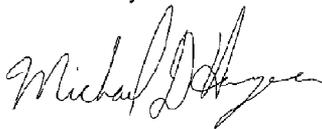
4. that the addition of a suppressor incurs additional handling, security, transportation and training requirements – The suppressor requires no more training than screwing onto the weapon and is vastly less complicated than most of the other components found on currently employed systems. The suppressor is a serial numbered item like the weapon and is treated the same way as any M16, M249 or M40. The stigma surrounding suppressors and suppressed weapons is a result of a large amount of misunderstanding and rumor. SOCOM elements have been using suppressed weapons for over 20 years not to mention their predecessors dating back to WWII. More importantly the recent SASS solicitation included a suppressor which would beg the question “haven’t these issues been addressed in conjunction with this procurement effort?”.
5. That the “new” system has not undergone a safety certification and obtained a DTC safety release – While we understand the need for “validation” this is the same system as the M24 using all of the same major components (barrel, fire control, bolt, and receiver). The suppressor has been tested by both APG (in 1992) and Crane (2000) and was in fact purchased and issued with the USSOCOM SPR rifle (in 5.56). Additionally as noted above, the OPS INC suppressor along with several others underwent the recent SASS down select in which they were tested for accuracy, repeatability, ease of use and effect on zero by a significant number of soldiers the results of which were that the OPS INC suppressor did not receive any negative comments with regards to safety. The stock is made by the same manufacturer as the original M24 (HS Precision) and in fact uses the same aluminum bedding block and length of pull adjustment with the only adjustable cheek piece being different. The floorplate and detachable magazine offer little to no safety concern to the user. The rail system or a similar one has been tested and procured by SOCOM and is in large scale since approximately 2003. Like the floorplate and magazine the rail system offers little in terms of safety for the user as it is attached in the same manner as the current optics mounting platform.
6. There isn’t any funding to test or develop this system – This issue must obviously be addressed through the branch, however it would appear that testing of the system would require minimal resources. Wide spread procurement does represent a significant financial commitment at \$3900 per system, however this is significantly less than would be required for the development, solicitation, test and procurement of an entirely new system.
7. The future of the M24 is not certain as it is currently a declining item, thus funds spent on the upgrade may prove moot should a new direction be decided upon in the future – Obviously with the advent of 9/11 and GWOT requirements that were in many instances ignored or unforeseen have become or are becoming a reality. This said, the fact is that there are soldiers in harms way currently who need the best combat advantage that can be obtained within reason. Procurement of the SASS once thought to be the replacement for the M24 is currently under revision leaning towards the retention of a bolt action SWS. Additionally given the transformation of the Army the previous allocations of sniper systems has greatly increased with many new “transformed” units without systems with which to train or deploy with. The issuance of the SASS will help alleviate some of this but a void will continue to exist especially with the NG and Reserve units. Modernization of the M24 facilitates both issues; should a M24 be converted to an A2 and then at a later date wish to be caliber converted the existing components offer a 80% compatibility transference. Conversion to an A2 provides the soldier on the ground with a weapon system that supports current BOS methodology and will continue to provide the unit with a viable sniper platform until converted or replaced.

8. There is not a validated requirement for this system – *Remington has been contacted by over 50 US Army units inquiring about this upgrade. We have had request for information from every level for the squad to Division HQ. It is painfully apparent that the users feel that there is in fact a need for this product improvement. For the upgrades we have done we have only received accolades and comments such as "the upgrades allowed me to do my job better than ever before", "I would not want to go back to war without it", "this was a long time in coming, but thank god it did", etc. Unfortunately the war fighters have not articulated this sentiment or requirement via an operational needs statement from which DA could base a decision, however we believe this to be an oversight by the users not understanding the need for such.*

The final issue remains that the users are requesting this upgrade at an increasing rate. While TACOM/Picatinny cannot "authorize" it, in many cases the commanders are not presented with the reality that they can still pursue this option so long as they accept the risk and liability.

Remington Arms Company stands ready to assist the US Army in arriving at a conclusion to this issue that supports our country and troops. Please feel free to contact the signatory for any further discussion or information.

Sincerely



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