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The Army's Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV): Background and Issues for Congress

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Summary

The Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV) is the Army's proposed replacement for the Vietnam-era M-113 personnel carriers, which are still in service in a variety of support capacities in Armored Brigade Combat Teams (ABCTs). While M-113s no longer serve as infantry fighting vehicles, five variants of the M-113 are used as command and control vehicles, general purpose vehicles, mortar carriers, and medical treatment and evacuation vehicles. An estimated 3,000 of these M-113 variants are currently in service with the Army.

The AMPV is intended to be a "vehicle integration" or non-developmental program (candidate vehicles will be either existing vehicles or modified existing vehicles—not vehicles that are specially designed and not currently in service). Some suggest that a non-developmental vehicle might make it easier for the Army to eventually field this system to the force, as most of the Army's most recent developmental programs, such as the Ground Combat Vehicle (GCV), the Future Combat System (FCS), the Crusader self-propelled artillery system, and the Comanche helicopter, were cancelled before they could be fully developed and fielded.

On November 26, 2013, the Army issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the AMPV. This RFP stipulated that the Army plans to award a five-year EMD contract in May 2014 worth \$458 million to a single contractor for 29 prototypes. While the March 2013 RFP established an Average Unit Manufacturing Cost Ceiling for each AMPV at \$1.8 million, this was rescinded to permit vendors greater flexibility. The EMD phase is scheduled to run between FY2015 and FY2019, followed by three years of low-rate initial production (LRIP) starting in 2020. The Army currently plans to procure 2,907 AMPVs at an estimated program cost of \$10.233 billion.

The Army's decision to provide BAE System's Bradley Fighting Vehicle to other vendors to use as they develop their own AMPV design proposals as a means of cutting program costs has resulted in claims of unfairness from General Dynamics Land Systems, which is developing its proposal based on the Stryker Combat Vehicle. General Dynamics had reportedly protested to the Army Material Command as well as approached Congress to limit funding until the Army devises what they believe is a more competitive program. GDLS reportedly opted not to pursue a Government Accountability Office (GAO) protest, and the Army decided to move the award date of the AMPV System Development contract until the second quarter of FY2015 as well as modifying the AMPV RFP to ensure wider availability of Bradley Fighting Vehicle technical data.

The FY2015 President's budget request for the AMPV is \$92.4 million in RDT&E funding. This \$64 million increase from FY2014 provides for one Engineering, Manufacturing, and Development (EMD) contract as well as program management support.

Some Members have asked DOD to make AMPV a mixed fleet procurement, and the House Armed Services Committee has called for a report on the AMPV program before all FY2015 funds can be expended.

A potential issue for Congress is the AMPV program and the Army's emphasis on deployability. This report will be updated.

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Background

In early 1956, the Army began the development of an air-transportable, armored multi-purpose vehicle family intended to provide a lightweight, amphibious armored personnel carrier for armor and mechanized infantry units.¹ Known as the M-113, it entered production in 1960 and saw extensive wartime service in Vietnam. Considered a reliable and versatile vehicle, a number of different variations of the M-113 were produced to fulfill such roles as a command and control vehicle, mortar carrier, and armored ambulance, to name but a few. The Army began replacing the M-113 infantry carrier version in the early 1980s with the M-2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle, but many non-infantry carrier versions of the M-113 were retained in service. According to reports, about 3,000 M-113 variants are currently still in use.²

The Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV)³

According to the Army:

The Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV) is the proposed United States Army program for replacement of the M113 Family of Vehicles (FOV) to mitigate current and future capability gaps in force protection, mobility, reliability, and interoperability by mission role variant within the Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT) [now known as the Armored Brigade Combat Team – ABCT]. The AMPV will have multiple variants tailored to specific mission roles within HBCT. Mission roles are as follows: General Purpose, Medical Evacuation, Medical Treatment, Mortar Carrier, and Mission Command. AMPV is a vehicle integration program.

The Army's AMPV Requirements⁴

Regarding the decision to replace remaining M-113s, the Army notes:

- The M-113 lacks the force protection and mobility needed to operate as part of combined arms teams within complex operational environments. For example, “commanders will not allow them to leave Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) or enter contested areas without extensive mission protection and route clearance.”⁵
- The use of other vehicles for M-113 mission sets (casualty evacuations, for example) reduces unit combat effectiveness.

¹ Information in this section is taken from Christopher F. Foss, *Jane's Armour and Artillery, 2011-2012*, 32nd Edition, pp. 470-478.

² Tony Bertuca, “Optimism Emerges for the AMPV Program, Though Pre-RFP Work Remains,” *InsideDefense.com*, August 16, 2013.

³ From the Army's AMPV Program website, <https://contracting.tacom.army.mil/majorsys/ampv/ampv.htm>, accessed September 13, 2013.

⁴ Information in this section is taken from an Army briefing: “AMPV Industry Day,” April 23, 2013.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

M-113s are found in Armored Brigade Combat Teams (ABCTs), where they comprise 32% of the tracked armored vehicles organic to that organization. The 114 M-113 variants in the ABCT are distributed as follows:

Table I. M-113 Distribution in ABCTs, by Variant

M-113 Variant Type	Number of M-113s
M-113A3 General Purpose (GP)	19
M-1068A3 Mission Command (MCmd)	41
M-1064 Mortar Carrier (MC)	15
M-113A3 Medical Evacuation (ME)	31
M-577 Medical Treatment (MT)	8

Source: Information in this table is taken from an Army briefing: “AMPV Industry Day,” April 23, 2013, p. 13.

Program Overview⁶

According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), in March 2012, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (USD, AT&L) approved a materiel development decision for AMPV and authorized the Army’s entry into the materiel solution analysis phase. The Army completed the AMPV analysis of alternatives (AoA) in July 2012 and proposed a non-developmental vehicle (the candidate vehicle will be either an existing vehicle or a modified existing vehicle—not a vehicle that is specially designed and not in current service). Because the AMPV is to be a non-developmental vehicle, DOD has decided that the program will start at Milestone B, Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) Phase and skip the Milestone A, Technology Development Phase.

The Army plans for a full and open competition and will award one industry bidder a 42-month EMD contract to develop all five AMPV variants. A draft Request for Proposal (RFP) released in March 2013 stated that the EMD contract would be worth \$1.46 billion, including \$388 million for 29 EMD prototypes for testing between 2014 and 2017 and \$1.08 billion for 289 low-rate initial production (LRIP) models between 2018 and 2020. The Army had planned on releasing the formal RFP in June 2013 but instead slipped the date until mid-September 2013, citing a delayed Defense Acquisition Board review attributed in part to Department of Defense civilian furloughs.⁷ The EMD contract award was planned for May 2014. The Army is also planning for an average unit manufacturing cost (AUMC) of \$1.8 million per vehicle.

⁶ Information in this section is taken from the United States Government Accountability Office, Defense Acquisitions: Assessments of Selected Weapon Programs, GAO-13-294SP, March 2013, p. 133, and an Army briefing: “AMPV Industry Day,” April 23, 2013 and Tony Bertuca, “Optimism Emerges for AMPV Program Though Pre-RFP Work Remains,” *InsideDefense.com*, August 16, 2013.

⁷ Tony Bertuca, “Army’s Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle RFP Scheduled for Mid-September,” *InsideDefense.com*, August 9, 2013.

Department of Defense (DOD) Approves AMPV Program⁸

On November 26, 2013, DOD issued an acquisition decision memorandum (ADM) officially approving the Army's entry into the Milestone B, Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) Phase. The ADM directed the Army to impose an Average Procurement Unit Cost less than or equal to \$3.2 million at a production rate of not less than 180 vehicles per year. In addition, operations and sustainment costs are to be less than or equal to \$400,000 per vehicle per year. The Army is also directed to down select to a single prime contractor at the completion of Milestone B.

Army Issues AMPV Request for Proposal (RFP)⁹

Also on November 26, 2013, the Army issued a new draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for the AMPV. This latest RFP stipulates that the Army plans to award a five-year EMD contract in May 2014 worth \$458 million to a single contractor for 29 prototypes. While the March 2013 RFP established an Average Unit Manufacturing Cost Ceiling for each AMPV at \$1.8 million, this was rescinded to permit vendors greater flexibility. The EMD phase is scheduled to run between FY2015 and FY2019, followed by three years of low-rate initial production (LRIP) starting in 2020.

2013 Projected AMPV Production Quantities¹⁰

Under 2013 plans and projected force structure, the Army planned to start full rate production of the AMPV in FY2020 at the rate of two to three ABCTs per year. Total vehicle production by variant is depicted in the following table:

⁸ Information in this section is taken from Department of Defense, "Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle Pre-Engineering and Manufacturing Development Request for Proposals Acquisition Decision Memorandum," November 26, 2013 and Tony Bertuca, "DOD Officially OKs Army's Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle Program; RFP Hits the Street," *InsideDefense.com*, November 26, 2013.

⁹ Information in this section is taken from Solicitation, Offer, and Award: Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle, Number: W56HZV-13-R-0022, November 26, 2013 and Tony Bertuca, "DOD Officially OKs Army's Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle Program; RFP Hits the Street," *InsideDefense.com*, November 26, 2013.

¹⁰ Information in this section is taken from an Army briefing: "AMPV Industry Day," April 23, 2013.

Table 2. 2013 Projected AMPV Production, by Variant

Variant to Be Replaced	ABCT Total	Training and Doctrine Command and Testing (See Notes)	Total Vehicles by Quantity
M-113A3 General Purpose (GP)	462	58	520
M-1068A3 Mission Command (MCmd)	899	92	991
M-1064 Mortar Carrier (MC)	348	36	384
M-113A3 Medical Evacuation (ME)	736	52	788
M-577 Medical Treatment (MT)	194	20	214
Totals	2,639	258	2,897

Source: Information in this table is taken from an Army briefing: “AMPV Industry Day,” April 23, 2013, p. 23.

Notes: Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), the Army command responsible for training the force, would use AMPVs at its various schools and courses for training soldiers. Testing AMPV quantities would be allocated to various Army and Department of Defense organizations responsible for testing vehicles.

2014 Projected AMPV Production Quantities¹¹

GAO’s March 2014 Assessment of Selected Weapons Programs report notes the new production quantity for the AMPV is 2,907 vehicles—a 10 vehicle increase over 2013 quantities. It is not known whether these 10 additional vehicles will be allocated by variant or by gaining organization.

2014 Projected Total Program Costs¹²

For a 2,907 vehicle procurement, GAO estimates total program costs as follows (FY2014 dollars):

- Research and Development: \$779.9 million.
- Procurement: \$ 9.443 billion.
- **Estimated Total Program Cost: \$10.223 billion.**

¹¹ United States Government Accountability Office, Defense Acquisitions: Assessments of Selected Weapon Programs, GAO-14-340SP, March 2014, p. 129.

¹² Ibid.

Recent Program Activities

Army Extends Request for Proposal (RFP) Response Date¹³

Reports suggest the Army extended the deadline to industry to respond to the AMPV RFP from February 24, 2014, until May 28, 2014, after General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS)—the Stryker Combat Vehicle's manufacturer—requested additional time. The reason why this extension was granted was to permit GDLS to study the technical specifications of excess Bradley Fighting Vehicles (designated Optional Exchange Vehicles [OEVs] by the Army), which the Army has offered to vendors to use in their final AMPV production designs to “drive down” total AMPV program costs. As the Bradley is manufactured by BAE Systems—the other manufacturer vying for the AMPV contract—some Pentagon and Capitol Hill officials have reportedly suggested because of the Army's decision, BAE has an “edge” as its proposed design is being built around a turretless Bradley, whereas GDLS has proposed both tracked and wheeled designs based on its Stryker vehicle.

General Dynamics Protests AMPV RFP¹⁴

General Dynamics Land Systems reportedly filed a protest on February 14, 2014, with the Army Material Command protesting the AMPV RFP. The basis of General Dynamic's protest is the program's proposed timeline as well as the use of BAE's Bradley Fighting Vehicle as the optional exchange vehicle for design development. This type of protest supposedly should be resolved within 90 days or less.

General Dynamics Appeals to Congress¹⁵

General Dynamics has reportedly been actively lobbying Congress to intervene in the AMPV program, asking that program funding be denied until a more competitive plan is put forward by the Army. GDLS contends the RFP is biased towards BAE's Bradley Fighting Vehicle and Bradley technical data have not been provided to other potential vendors and the Army has not provided sufficient data or time for others to compete. Supposedly, GDLS is considering asking for up to a three-year program delay so it has time to process the Bradley's technical data and then adjust its bid. A program delay would run counter to the Army's efforts to accelerate the AMPV program, an effort that has taken on increasing importance due to the recent termination of the Army's Ground Combat Vehicle (GCV) program.¹⁶

¹³ Tony Bertuca, “Army's RFP Response Date for AMPV Extended After GDLS Asks for Time,” *InsideDefense.com*, January 31, 2014.

¹⁴ Tony Bertuca, “General Dynamics Protests RFP for Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle,” *InsideDefense.com*, February 20, 2014.

¹⁵ Tony Bertuca, “General Dynamics Lobbies Congress to Upend Army's AMPV Program,” *InsideDefense.com*, February 28, 2014.

¹⁶For additional information on the GCV see CRS Report R41597, *The Army's Ground Combat Vehicle (GCV) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Andrew Feickert.

General Dynamics Decides Not to Pursue a Government Accountability Office (GAO) Protest¹⁷

On April 14, 2014, GDLS reportedly announced it would not ask GAO to rule on the AMPV program, noting that the company would instead continue to discuss the AMPV program with DOD and Congress.

Army Delays AMPV Schedule and Modifies Request for Proposals¹⁸

The Army has reportedly decided to move the award date for the AMPV System Development contract until the second quarter of FY2015. The Army will also reportedly modify the AMPV RFP to ensure the wider availability of Bradley Fighting Vehicle technical data.

Budgetary Issues

FY2014 AMPV Budget Request¹⁹

The FY2014 AMPV Budget Request was \$116.298 million in Research, Development, Test & Evaluation (RDT&E) funding.

FY2014 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 113-66)²⁰

Congress recommended fully funding the FY2014 AMPV Budget Request.

Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY2014 (P.L. 113-76)²¹

The Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY2014 recommended \$28.3 million in RDT&E funding, cutting \$87.998 million from the FY2014 Budget AMPV Request due to schedule delay and an Army requested program decrease, likely related to the Army's decision to slip the AMPV's Request for Proposal from June 2013 to mid-September 2013.

¹⁷ "General Dynamics Opts to Skip GAO Protest Over Army Vehicle Plan," Reuters, April 15, 2014, and Tony Bertuca, "Army Delays AMPV Schedule as GDLS Forgoes GAO Protest," *InsideDefense.com*, April 15, 2014.

¹⁸ Tony Bertuca, "Army Delays AMPV Schedule as GDLS Forgoes GAO Protest," *InsideDefense.com*, April 15, 2014, and Ann Roosevelt, "General Dynamics Will Continue Talking AMPV With Army, No Further Protest," *Defense Daily*.

¹⁹ Department of Defense Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 President's Budget Request, Justification Book, RDT&E – Volume II, Budget Activity 54, April 2013, p. 6.

²⁰ P.L. 113-66, National Defense Authorization Act for FY2014, December 26, 2013.

²¹ H.R. 3547, Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY2014, (P.L. 113-76), January 17, 2014, Division C – Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014.

FY2015 President's Budget Request²²

The FY2015 President's budget request for the AMPV is \$92.4 million in RDT&E funding. This \$64 million increase from FY2014 provides for one Engineering, Manufacturing, and Development (EMD) contract as well as program management support.

H.R. 4435, FY2015 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)²³

The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces included the following provisions in its mark-up of FY2015 NDAA:

TITLE II—RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

SUBTITLE B—PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, RESTRICTIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

Section 2XX—Limitation on Availability of Funds for Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle Program

This section would limit obligation or expenditure of funds to not more than 80 percent for the Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle (AMPV) program until the Secretary of the Army submits a report to the congressional defense committees on the Army's plan to eventually replace all M-113 Armored Personal Carriers (APC) within Echelons-Above-Brigade (EAB) formations.

The committee notes that in 2007, the Army identified the M-113 APC for replacement due to its inadequate survivability and force protection. The committee further notes that in the committee report (H.Rept. 112-78) accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 and in the committee report (H.Rept. 112-479) accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, the committee provided numerous options for consideration by the Army to accelerate the AMPV program. The committee understands that the Army has released a Request for Proposal for the Echelons-Below-Brigade (EBB) requirement which is focused on survivability shortfalls within the Armor Brigade Combat Team. The committee continues to support the AMPV program and expects the Army to conduct the competition in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations.

However, the committee is concerned that although the Army's current plan addresses a critical shortfall within EBB formations, there is currently no plan to address the survivability shortfalls within Echelons-Above-Brigade formations. The committee understands that there are approximately 2,000 M-113's within existing EAB formations. In addition, the committee notes that on at least one occasion, an Armor Brigade Combat Team

²² Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, United States Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Request, Program Acquisition Cost by Weapon System, March 2014, p. 3-3 and U.S. Army's FY2015 Budget Briefing, March 4, 2014, p. 13.

²³ Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, H.R. 4435 – FY15 National Defense Authorization Bill, from House Armed Services Committee website, <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS25/20140501/102129/BILLS-113HR4435ih.pdf>, accessed May 2, 2014.

(ABCT) deployed to the Republic of Iraq with Stryker Medical Evacuation Vehicles. Therefore, this section would also require the Secretary of the Army to include as part of the report, an assessment for the feasibility of incorporating medical wheeled variants within the ABCT.²⁴

SEC. 2 ____. [Log 53787] **LIMITATION ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR ARMORED MULTI-PURPOSE VEHICLE PROGRAM.**

(a) **LIMITATION.**—Of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2015 for research, development, test, and evaluation, Army, for the armored multi-purpose vehicle program, not more than 80 percent may be obligated or expended until the date on which the Secretary of the Army submits to the congressional defense committees the report under subsection (b)(1).

(b) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than March 1, 2015, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to the congressional defense committee a report on the armored multi-purpose vehicle program.

(2) **MATTERS INCLUDED.**—The report under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An identification of the existing capability gaps of the M–113 family of vehicles assigned, as of the date of the report, to units outside of combat brigades.

(B) An identification of the mission roles that are in common between—

(i) such vehicles assigned to units outside of combat brigades; and

(ii) the vehicles examined in the armor brigade combat team during the armored multi-purpose vehicle analysis of alternatives.

(C) The estimated timeline and the rough order of magnitude of funding requirements associated with complete M–113 family of vehicles divestiture within the units outside of combat brigades and the risk associated with delaying the replacement of such vehicles.

(D) A description of the requirements for force protection, mobility, and size, weight, power, and cooling capacity for the mission roles of M–113 family of vehicles assigned to units outside of combat brigades.

(E) A discussion of the mission roles of the M–113 family of vehicles assigned to units outside of combat brigades that are comparable to the mission roles of the M–113 family of vehicles assigned to armor brigade combat teams.

(F) A discussion of whether a one-for-one replacement of the M–113 family of vehicles assigned to units outside of combat brigades is likely.

(G) With respect to mission roles, a discussion of any substantive distinctions that exist in the capabilities of the M–113 family of vehicles that are needed based on the level of the unit to which the vehicle is assigned (not including combat brigades).

(H) A discussion of the relative priority of fielding among the mission roles.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

(I) An assessment for the feasibility of incorporating medical wheeled variants within the armor brigade combat teams.²⁵

Congressional Interest in a Mixed AMPV Fleet²⁶

Some Members have expressed their concerns with the Army's current AMPV RFP to DOD. They propose the current RFP, which stipulates the selection of a single vendor, be modified so that a mixed fleet (both tracked and wheeled) of AMPVs can be acquired. This would essentially make the AMPV procurement a multi-vendor effort. The Members supporting this course of action contend a mixed fleet is "sensible, sustainable, cost effective for the taxpayer, and most importantly, best for the warfighter."

Potential Issue for Congress

The AMPV and the Army's Emphasis on Deployability

On February 24, 2014, during a news conference outlining his recommendations to the President for DOD's FY2015 budget, Secretary of Defense Hagel stated:

I have also accepted the Army's recommendation to terminate the current Ground Combat Vehicle [GCV] program and re-direct the funds toward developing a next-generation platform. I have asked the leadership of the Army and the Marine Corps to deliver new, realistic visions for vehicle modernization by the end of this year.²⁷

When asked to elaborate on Secretary Hagel's comments, a DOD spokesman reportedly noted:

We found that the Ground Combat Vehicle isn't the best vehicle to replace the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle, both in terms of performance and cost. While it would have protected troops inside it, it would have been too heavy and too expensive.²⁸

It was also noted that industry proposed GCV variants ranging from 60 to 70 tons in order to meet Army protection requirements as well as the capacity to transport a nine-soldier infantry squad.²⁹

The Army has reportedly stated "the service needs to become a lighter and more expeditionary force in the coming decade if it is to remain relevant to America's national security strategy" and that "the increased weight of combat vehicles is one of the areas the Army needs to address if it is to become more expeditionary."³⁰ While the AMPV is likely to be based on existing designs,

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 8-10.

²⁶ Letter from Reps. Mike Rogers, Jim Jordan, Candice Miller, et al to the Honorable Frank Kendall, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, April 3, 2014.

²⁷ Remarks by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel FY2015 Budget Preview, Pentagon Press Briefing Room, Monday, February 24, 2014.

²⁸ Sebastian Sprenger and Tony Bertuca, "Combat Vehicle Axing Adds to Army's List of Programs That Went Nowhere," *InsideDefense.com*, February 26, 2014.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Tony Bertuca, "Army Futurists Continue to Ponder a Lighter, More Expeditionary Force," *InsideDefense.com*, (continued...)

because there are five variants planned, there is potential for the vehicle to increase in both weight and size as new features are added to the vehicles. Because the past two combat vehicles proposed by the Army—the Future Combat System's Manned Ground Combat Vehicle and the Ground Combat Vehicle—were cancelled in large part due to what was deemed excessive weight and size, Congress might decide to examine what programmatic measures are in place to ensure that the AMPV does not fall victim to its weight and size—primary factors in the AMPV's overall deployability.

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(...continued)
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