

Updated September 16, 2025

The U.S. Army's Infantry Squad Vehicle (ISV)

The Infantry Squad Vehicle (ISV)

The ISV (**Figure 1**) is a lightweight, unarmored ground transport vehicle developed by GM Defense (headquartered in Detroit, MI) intended to enhance the mobility of Army Infantry Brigade Combat Teams (IBCTs), Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs), and Army Special Operations Forces (ARSO). According to the Army, the ISV was designed to move nine soldiers and their equipment rapidly across terrain where heavier vehicles such as the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV) or High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) may be less practical or effective.

Figure 1. Infantry Squad Vehicle (ISV)



Source: GM Defense, <https://www.gmdefensellc.com/site/us/en/gm-defense/home/integrated-vehicles/infantry-squad-vehicle.html>, accessed August 25, 2025.

Background

The JLTV, HMMWV, and ISV constitute the Army's Light Tactical Vehicle (LTV) fleet. The Army has evaluated the ISV in exercises as part of the Army's Transformation in Contact (TIC) modernization program with the intention to improve infantry mobility. Previous reliance on HMMWVs and JLTVs, which offered greater protection, reportedly presented challenges in terms of speed, cross-country mobility, and air transport. The Army adopted a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) acquisition approach for the ISV to minimize costs and field the vehicle quickly. GM Defense's Chevrolet Colorado ZR2 mid-sized truck was chosen as the baseline ISV platform, deriving 90% of its parts from COTS components, with modifications made for suspension, structure, and load-carrying capacity.

ISV Specifications

The ISV is approximately 17 feet (ft) in length, 6.8 ft in width, and 6 ft in height, with a payload capacity near 3,200 pounds. The ISV is about the same size as the HMMWV, smaller than the JLTV, and has less payload capacity than the HMMWV and JLTV. According to GM Defense, the

ISV has a Roll Over Protection System (ROPS) and can be flown to the battlefield by means of

- a low-velocity air drop by parachute or air landing by C-17 Globemaster, C-130 Hercules, or A-400M Atlas transport aircraft, or
- an internal load in a CH/MH-47 Chinook or CH-53E/K Super/King Stallion helicopter, or sling-loaded under a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2. ISV Sling-Loaded Under a UH-60 Helicopter



Source: GM Defense, <https://www.gmdefensellc.com/site/us/en/gm-defense/home/integrated-vehicles/infantry-squad-vehicle.html>, accessed August 25, 2025.

In correspondence with CRS, GM Defense stated that GM Defense has a flatbed ISV variant available with either a two- or five-person crew that can be configured for a variety of functions. In addition, although not manufactured or sold by GM Defense, other ISV "kits" are available from third parties to meet buyer use cases, including

- a casualty evacuation kit to externally transport wounded personnel, and
- a command-and-control variant.

ISV Development and Testing

In 2018, the Army reportedly developed an ISV acquisition strategy with an estimated requirement for 2,065 vehicles, with production scheduled to start in FY2020. In February 2019, the Army reportedly approved a procurement objective for 651 ISVs and selected GM Defense, an Oshkosh Defense-Flyer Defense team, and a SAIC-Polaris partnership to build two prototypes each, with each team awarded a \$1 million under an Other Transaction Authority (OTA) agreement. In June 2019, the Army awarded GM Defense a \$1 million contract to develop two ISV prototypes for testing and evaluation. In June 2020, the Army awarded GM Defense a production contract to build, sustain, and field the ISV, with GM Defense stating:

The total production ISV contract award value is \$214.3 million to procure the initial Army

Procurement Objective of 649. The approved Army Acquisition Objective is 2,065 vehicles.

On March 30, 2023, the Army approved the ISV's transition to Full-Rate Production (FRP) with a revised Acquisition Objective of 2,593 ISVs. As of April 2023, the Army had accepted more than 300 ISVs and fielded three brigade sets of 59 vehicles, for a fielded total of 177 ISVs.

Throughout the ISV's acquisition process, it has undergone a series of operational tests. In 2021, the Department of Defense (DOD) Director of Operational Testing and Evaluation (DOT&E) published ISV testing observations:

The [ISV] is operationally effective for employment as a troop carrier and can accomplish air assault missions in a permissive environment. The ISV is not operationally effective for employment in combat and engagement, security cooperation and deterrence (ESD) missions against a near-peer threat. The ISV is not operationally suitable because of poor developmental test reliability and deficiencies in training, maintenance, safety, and human system integration.

In 2023, DOT&E provided an updated evaluation:

Following the [Initial Operational Testing and Evaluation] conducted in August 2021, the [ISV] manufacturer implemented corrective actions to address reliability and maintainability deficiencies identified in previous testing. The Army conducted reliability compliance testing from June 2022 through January 2023 ... to validate these corrective actions. The ISV demonstrated a significant improvement to mean miles between system aborts ... when compared to previous testing.... DOT&E's assessment of system effectiveness and survivability were not part of the [ISV's] tactical airborne operation and are unchanged from the December 2021 IOT&E Report.

FY2026 ISV Budgetary Information

In its FY2026 budget request, in the line-item Ground Mobility Vehicles, the Army requested \$308.620 million for procurement of 1,275 ISVs and associated equipment.

The House Armed Services Committee-reported Streamlining Procurement for Effective Execution and Delivery and National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY2026 NDAA; H.R. 3838; H.Rept. 119-231) recommended authorizing the requested amount of ISV procurement funding. The Senate Armed Services Committee-reported FY2026 NDAA (S. 2296; S.Rept. 119-39) recommended (in a different line item) authorizing \$34 million more than requested in ISV funding.

The House Appropriations Committee-reported Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2026 (H.R. 4016; H.Rept.

119-162), recommended \$274.172 million less than requested for the ISV line item. The Senate Appropriations Committee-reported version (S. 2572; S.Rept. 119-52) recommended \$62.458 million less than requested in ISV procurement funding, citing "ahead of need," which is described as program funding available before the funds are actually required, often due to delays or changes in program schedule.

Potential Oversight Issues for Congress

Potential oversight issues for congressional consideration could include the following:

ISV Mobility Versus Survivability

Does the ISV's unarmored design adequately balance speed and protection, particularly given lessons from Ukraine on small arms and drone threats?

ISV Operational Range and Sustainment

Though not fully detailed in available reporting, the ISV's operational range, fuel efficiency, and sustainment demands are considered critical by military planners for assessing deployment timelines and resupply requirements. What are the ISV's required operational range, fuel consumption in miles per gallon by terrain type, and operational maintenance requirements? How could these factors affect logistical planning and readiness?

ISV Costs and Logistics

The ISV derives 90% of its parts from COTS components. How does reliance on commercial components affect ISV lifecycle costs and supply chain resilience?

ISV Procurement Quantities

Reportedly, Army leadership believes that BCTs will require more ISVs than originally envisioned. A senior Army official said ISV requirements could increase to 260 ISVs per Mobile Brigade Combat Team and 170 per Light Brigade Combat Team, but those numbers are subject to change. Under these circumstances, are the 2023 acquisition objective 2,593 ISVs adequate to support the Army's evolving unit structures?

Competing Funding Priorities

Should ISV procurement remain a priority relative to competing modernization programs such as long-range precision fires, air and missile defense, and drones?

ISV Foreign Military Sales

Is there potential demand among allies or partners for the ISV and, if so, how might that affect production economies of scale? Foreign interest could affect production cost, and long-term sustainment strategies.

Andrew Feickert, Specialist in Military Ground Forces
Ebrima M'Bai, U.S. Army Fellow

IF13092

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.