

1AD dons new weapons

M-4 Carbine lightens Force XXI load

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BAD KREUZNACH, Germany—Many soldiers from the 1st Armored Division are carrying a lighter load as the division completes the transition from using the M-16A2 rifle to the M-4 Carbine.

The 1st Armored Division, along with the rest of United States Army Europe, is among the last units in the Army to receive the new rifles. Ranger units were the first to field the M-4s in 1995.

“We just got the M-4s quite recently,” said Spc. Arnold R. Johnson, of 2nd Platoon, 501st Military Police Company, 1st Armored Division. “They are a lot lighter than the M-16s. They have a shorter stock and are more efficient and convenient.”

“One of the reasons for the switch is that most of the M-16A2s have been in use for several years and are wearing out,” said Sgt. 1st Class Robert B. Hazell, fielding noncommissioned officer for G-3 Force Modernization. “The soldiers using the M-4s will also now be capable of mounting various optics, grenade launcher, shotgun, laser pointer lights and MILES (Multi Integrated Laser Engagement System) gear. This capability will allow a commander to configure the weapon with the various accessories as determined by mission need.”

The M-4 Carbine is a more compact version of the M-16A2 rifle, with a collapsible stock. The upper receiver incorporates an accessory-



A soldier from the 501st Military Police Company takes aim with his new M-4 Carbine which is also equipped with grenade launcher.

mounting rail with a removable carrying handle, and provides range settings up to 600 meters. The accessory rail facilitates the mounting of day and night sights. The M-4 will replace all .45-caliber M-3 submachine guns, selected M-9 pistols and M-16 series rifles.

“The biggest advantage of the M-4 is that it is smaller than the M-16A2 and it has the shorter folding stock,” said

Hazell. “The main disadvantage is that it is a little bit more difficult to zero and qualify with because the site adjustments are different than those on the M-16A2s.”

The soldiers currently deployed to Kosovo are using both the M-16 and the M-4. The exchange will not switch out all M-16A2s for M-4s. All units that do not trade in for the M-4s will receive M16A4 rifles by March 2002, according to Hazell.

Most of the M-16A2s are being turned in to the Kaiserslautern Industrial Center for redistribution to U.S. Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve units.

Since the M-4 Carbine weighs about a pound less than the M-16A2, most of the soldiers who have made the switch have been pleased with the change, according to Hazell.



Soldiers from 501st Military Police Company zero the new M-4 Carbine during a weapon-qualification range.