

WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF INFANTRY  
WASHINGTON

CI 470.8/550 XII "C"

June 6, 1940

Subject: Light Vehicle Development.

To: The Adjutant General  
(THROUGH The Chief of Cavalry)

1. Facilities available to organizations for increased speed in tactical employment of infantry units, including development of more rapid means of communication within the infantry battalion, demand greater mobility for platoon leaders of the Heavy Weapons Company and cross-country ability for motorcycle messengers.

2. The command and reconnaissance car used by the company commander and platoon leaders of the Heavy Weapons Company is a much larger vehicle than is required by subordinate leaders. It is, moreover, unsuitable because of its weight and relatively high silhouette. A light and less expensive vehicle, capable of being manhandled by two men, is much more desirable. The nature of the duties of the company and platoon commanders in combat which involves movement in close proximity to an opposing force, requires a vehicle of the minimum silhouette.

In the motorization of the Heavy Weapons Company the effort was made to provide a vehicle which would take the place of the horse with which the officers were formerly mounted. A vehicle of small capacity would fulfil this purpose.

3. The motorcycle now issued to organizations is suitable for traffic control and messenger service, but efficient operation of it is limited to roads and improved trails. It is not well suited to cross-country movement.

4. To meet this situation a requirement is set up by the infantry for a vehicle of the following approximate characteristics:

a. Maximum height: 36 inches.

b. Maximum weight, without pay load: 750-1000 lbs.

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c. Adequate cross-country ability and gradeability equal to that of standard cargo vehicles.

d. Caliber .30 machine gun mount either integral with the body of the vehicle or detachable.

e. Capacity: a crew of at least two men, one machine gun with accessories, and three thousand rounds of ammunition or equivalent weight.

f. Armored face shield for driver.

g. Four-wheel drive (except where tricycles are considered).

h. Ground clearance: maximum possible consistent with desired silhouette.

5. If feasible, without unduly delaying production of test vehicles, it is desirable that the frame and body be so designed as to provide amphibian characteristics. If it is not feasible under present conditions to incorporate this feature, it is desirable that experimentation and development along that line continue with a view to its ultimate inclusion.

6. The Chief of Infantry recommends that the proper agency be directed to procure, without delay, a sufficient number of vehicles conforming generally to the above characteristics, to equip an infantry regiment (rifle) with such vehicles in lieu of standard command and reconnaissance trucks for company units, with 6 additional for the Infantry Board (or a total of 40) for extended field test in comparison with the present standard vehicles.

7. Since the desired type of vehicle is a special one, and since experience has shown the impracticability of securing development of the proper type of vehicle from among present commercial types, it is recommended that requirements for competitive bidding be waived to the extent necessary to bring about procurement of the best possible design.

For the Chief of Infantry:



E. W. FALES,  
Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry,  
Executive.

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War Department, Office Chief of Cavalry, Washington, D. C., June 8, 1940.  
To: The Adjutant General.

The Chief of Cavalry is interested in the possibility of using a light, cheap car for command and reconnaissance purposes in the cavalry. He therefore concurs in the recommendations of the Chief of Infantry in the basic communication and recommends that he be kept informed of the development and that twenty cars, when manufactured, be made available to him for test.

For the Chief of Cavalry:



K. S. Bradford  
Colonel, Cavalry  
Executive

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War Dept., A.G.O., June 14, 1940 - To The Quartermaster General AND the Chief of Ordnance, IN TURN.

For comment and recommendation.

By order of the Secretary of War:



Adjutant General.

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