



A. Stop firing blank ammunition in the M249 SAW with short barrels. Damage to the weapon could result. This restriction is effective immediately and until a new Blank Firing Attachment (BFA) is fielded or a modification of the current BFA is published.

B. Firing of blank ammunition can continue in the standard length barrel. It is recommended you use the BFA specifically designed for the M249. It has NSN 1005-21-912-8997 and can be identified by its round cast body.

C. Pay particular attention to the left inner rail when inspecting the receiver as part of the regularly scheduled maintenance. These tasks are depicted on page 2-45 and 3-48.2 of Technical Manual 9-1005-201-23&P. Weapons with cracked receivers should be replaced.

## 5. Risk Assessment.

A. Hazard Severity: Cracked receivers are assessed as having a hazard severity of CRITICAL (Category II) due to the potential of weapon malfunction. The definition of CRITICAL is: "Severe injury or illness, major system damage or environmental damage." The damage to the receiver will result in the weapon being coded-out. Replacement weapons are free to the field (major end-item) but the receivers cannot be repaired and will need to be replaced during depot overhaul.

B. Hazard Probability: The probability of cracked receivers due to firing blanks in short barrels is assessed as having a hazard probability of Occasional (Category C). This probability is difficult to assess. We have not seen any receiver cracks in the limited testing to date. We have had reports of cracking before short barrels were fielded. We previously suspected a tolerance stack-up problem because some weapons exhibited the problem and others fired many rounds with no failure. We are theorizing that weapons firing fast may tend to develop cracked receivers. The definition of OCCASIONAL is: "Will occur several times."

C. Risk Level: Based on the above severity and probability, the risk level of this hazard is a HIGH risk.

6. Program Sponsor Actions: Product Manager Crew Served Weapons has started a fast track program to develop a BFA specifically for use on the short barrel. In addition, changes to the short barrel gas orifice size are being explored. New BFAs are anticipated in the next 6 months.

7. POC: The Points of contact are:

A. Technical. Mr. Don Kelly, U.S. Army, Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, AMSTA-LC-CSIL, Rock Island, Illinois 61299-7630, DSN 793-1897, Commercial (309) 782-1897, e-mail kellyd@ria.army.mil.

B. Safety: Mrs. Judith Windham, U.S. Army, Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, AMSTA-CS-CZR, Rock Island, Illinois 61299-7630, DSN 793-6367, Commercial (309) 782-6367, E-mail, windhamj2@ria.army.mil.

C. To find your TACOM LAR, you must be a registered user in the Army Electronic Product Support (AEPS) database, click on this link: <https://aeps2.ria.army.mil/Services/Lars/Tacom/larmap/LARlocate/larmap.cfm>. Then select the appropriate region, i.e. CONUS, USAREUR, Far East, Kuwait. Select the location nearest you and click on a name. This will give you a LAR's name, DSN and commercial phone number, email address, and photo. If you are not a registered user, request access at the public page: <https://aeps.ria.army.mil/aepspublic.cfm>, click on "Access Request Form" and follow the instructions for obtaining an AEPS use rid. If you don't have access to AEPS, you can also obtain this information by contacting the TACOM Senior Command Representative (SCR) for your area. CONUS-East: includes all units east of the Mississippi, FORSCOM, SOUTHCOM, KUWAIT, and CONUS units deployed, (to include National Guard and Reserve units), DSN 236-6923, Commercial 910-396-6923. CONUS-West: includes all units west of the Mississippi (to include all National Guard and Reserve units), DSN 737-0263, Commercial 254- 287-0263. USAREUR: Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, Luxemburg, Italy, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia, DSN 314-375-3461, Commercial 01149 621-487-3461, in Germany, 0621-487-3461. Far East: includes Alaska, Hawaii, Korea, Okinawa, Kwajlein, and Japan, DSN 315-722-3036/3579, commercial 011 82 32 520-6036/6579. SBCT units can contact your SCR at DSN 357-2991, Commercial 253-967-2991.

UNCLASSIFIED//