

CHAPTER 7

TRAIN-THE-TRAINER PROGRAM

This manual and other training publications provide the trainers with the information they need for unit training. This chapter is an aid for the chain of command, who are the primary trainers, to develop a good train-the-trainer program. Knowledgeable, small-unit leaders and trainers are the key to successful, marksmanship training; however, the entire chain of command must be involved in the execution of training to standard.

Section I. ORGANIZATION

An effective train-the-trainer program reflects the priority, emphasis, and interest of the chain of command and trainers to see that execution of training to standard is scheduled. This section provides guidance needed to develop METLs, to assess performance proficiency, and to assign the responsibilities of the chain of command, trainers, and coaches.

7-1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the train-the-trainer program include developing in every automatic rifle trainer the confidence, willingness, knowledge, and skills required to consistently train their soldiers to be effective in combat. The program's aim is—

- a. To train the trainer to apply the principles of M249 AR marksmanship.
- b. To ensure that every trainer maintains a constant degree of proficiency in applying the principles of AR instruction.
- c. To provide a maximum number of trainers from which potential trainers may be selected for further weapons training.

7-2. MISSION-ESSENTIAL TASK LIST

Marksmanship is critical and basic to soldiering. Each commander should develop a METL and organize a training program that devotes adequate time to marksmanship. The unit's combat mission must be considered when establishing training priorities. This not only applies to the tasks selected but also to the conditions under which the tasks are to be performed. The tasks for the METL are developed for both defensive and offensive operations.

7-3. TRAINER ASSESSMENT

The chain of command is also involved in determining the proficiency of potential trainers by reviewing the following information.

a. **Selection.** Trainers should be selected from the most highly qualified soldiers available within the unit. These soldiers should display knowledge of the M249 automatic rifle, a high degree of proficiency in applying the fundamentals, and a motivated attitude for marksmanship training ability. The chain of command must ensure that a high level of expertise is maintained. Knowledgeable trainers are the key to marksmanship.

b. **Trainer Course.** Once the chain of command has identified these soldiers possessing the required knowledge, skills, and motivation in M249 marksmanship, they must then ensure this knowledge can be effectively taught to other soldiers.

c. **Training.** There are several available means that may be used in the progression of trainer training or that can easily be tailored to the particular needs of the command. The more time and training initially invested, the better the trainer will be. The chain of command should periodically evaluate each trainer and replace any that loses his motivation or desire. To maintain interest in the program, commanders should promote competitive awards, such as the Trainer of the Month.

7-4. CADRE COACHES

Assisting the trainer and coaching a soldier to fire the M249 AR are highly technical jobs that must be done well. The most valuable soldiers in the program are those who not only have obtained a high standard, but those who can effectively teach this knowledge to others. Once the individual is consistent as an automatic rifleman, he can then develop into a competent coach. It is worth the effort to train the qualified automatic rifleman to become a successful coach, because experience has shown that such training also develops leadership ability.

a. The primary responsibility of coaches is to train individuals in the effective use of the M249 automatic rifle. In addition, coaches are responsible for enforcing safety regulations. They must maintain strict discipline on the firing lane at all times and constantly enforce compliance with the range regulations and training guidance.

b. To be a coach, a soldier must know the principles of accurate firing and coaching techniques, and he must have the following qualifications as well.

(1) *Knowledge.* The coach must know this manual. He must be prepared to accurately answer any question on the subject of marksmanship. Then, he must develop his ability to observe the actions of the soldier quickly and to correct them with sound recommendations.

(2) *Patience.* Automatic riflemen can be persuaded to accept the principles and procedures by patient repetition and demonstration.

(3) *Understanding.* A coach with a good “firing lane manner” enhances success. Training new automatic riflemen is stressful to the soldiers and the trainers. The soldier may be sensitive to abruptness, impatience, or a lack of sympathy with his difficulties; and he will immediately react unfavorably to evidence of such attitude on the part of the coach.

(4) *Consideration.* Most soldiers, even those who do not fire well, enjoy firing and begin with a positive interest in their performance on the range. If the coach is considerate of his pupils’ feelings from the beginning and encourages them throughout their training, he will find coaching a pleasant and rewarding duty.

(5) *Ability to maintain respect.* When a soldier is assigned the duties of coach, he too is an expert and should receive the same respect as the primary trainer. The coach must retain that respect throughout his contact with students by showing a thorough knowledge of his subject in a dignified manner.

(6) *Alertness.* Even the most capable student may forget or neglect some essential point in his instruction in the excitement of firing on the range. The coach must always be alert and patiently correct him as often as necessary. He must keep the automatic rifleman encouraged throughout his instruction by making the most of all progress. The coach must not allow his students to become discouraged or to lose interest.

(7) *Helpful attitude.* In coaching on the range, as in most other lines of instruction, a combative, hard-boiled attitude is rarely effective.

(8) *Ability to provide encouragement.* The coach can encourage his soldiers by convincing them there is no mystery about good firing: The weapon and ammunition are developed mechanically for accuracy. The coach is there to assist the automatic rifleman to gain experience that produce a good marksman.

7-5. COMMAND BENEFITS

Through the active and aggressive leadership of the chain of command, a perpetual base of expertise is established and maintained. The unit’s esprit de corps is significantly raised through the trainers’ desire to improve and demonstrate they are the best. The goal of a progressive train-the-trainer program is to achieve a high state of combat readiness.

7-6. PROGRAM PHASES

Since firing is a learning process, certain prerequisites must be satisfied before a trainer should pass from one phase of marksmanship to another. To obtain maximum results on the battlefield, the automatic rifleman must be trained in fundamentals before engaging a combat target. The phases of the train-the-trainer program develop this structure in the most progressive manner. They are sequenced to train the trainer in teaching tasks necessary to produce a quality M249 automatic rifleman.

a. **Preliminary Marksmanship.** The automatic rifleman receives this training before live firing. It is during this phase that sound foundations of good firing principles are constructed, reviewed, and reinforced. The degree of proficiency obtained or retained by the automatic riflemen depends on the foundation built during this phase. Correct firing and safety habits must become so fixed they become natural. Drilling of the fundamentals and continued leader emphasis will bring the greatest return in the shortest time. Proper firing is a physical skill, which must be learned. When practiced, the process becomes a learned skill that will be retained. However, good firing is a perishable skill. All firers must periodically familiarize themselves with the fundamentals regardless of their years of marksmanship experience. Even experienced automatic riflemen will develop a deficiency in applying certain fundamentals.

b. **Basic Marksmanship.** This training teaches the trainers how to set up and conduct 10-meter and transition firing exercises on the available ranges.

c. **Advanced Marksmanship.** This training teaches the trainer how to develop teamwork among the automatic riflemen. This gives them confidence in their ability to deliver a large volume of accurate fire against targets. During this phase, the trainer is responsible for the conduct of assault firing exercises. These exercises consist of assault fire, NBC assault fire, and field fire on available ranges.

Section II. TRAINING TASKS

This section assists trainers in effectively training soldiers assigned to the M249 automatic rifle. It explains the tasks, organization, equipment needed, and instruction sequence for the three phases of training. However, unit SOPs or post regulations may direct increases or decreases in these prescribed requirements.

7-7. PHASE I, PRELIMINARY MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING

This phase covers the basics that each trainer must know to teach the general care and maintenance of the M249 AR (Chapter 2.)

a. Task 1: Disassemble the M249.

(1) *Equipment needed.* A table is needed for placement of M249 so the soldiers may better see the removal of parts. Nomenclature charts or mats are material aids in explaining mechanical training, and they help the automatic riflemen learn the nomenclature of parts.

(2) *Class organization.* One coach is assigned for each group (weapon) if possible; otherwise, coaches are placed where they can supervise assigned groups.

(3) *Sequence of training.* The trainer presents a brief history of the weapon. He stresses the combat role it has played and the mission it is assigned. He emphasizes the purpose, scope, and importance of the instruction to be presented. He gives a brief description of the operation, general data, and exterior nomenclature of the weapon. Coaches should disassemble the weapon as the trainer explains the procedures. The automatic riflemen then practice until they become skilled in disassembly and can demonstrate this task to a coach. This often encourages soldiers to practice during free time and develops their individual skill and initiative. The trainer stresses that this task is not done hurriedly, because the soldiers may damage parts of the weapon.

b. Task 2: Inspect the M249.

(1) *Equipment needed.* The trainer needs one cleaning rod and one dummy round for each weapon, bore cleaner, lubricating oil, patches, and rags. The trainer displays all the available cleaning materials, lubricants, and rust preventatives.

(2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 1.

(3) *Sequence of training.* The trainer emphasizes meticulous cleaning, lubrication, inspection, and preventive maintenance to ensure performance. The care and cleaning period is used to further the automatic riflemen's knowledge of the nomenclature and skill in disassembly. The trainer emphasizes inspection, care, and preventive maintenance during combat conditions, which is the final test of the weapon maintenance program. Practical work is conducted. The trainer points out the differences in care and cleaning following an NBC attack. He emphasizes the importance of frequent inspection as a means of ensuring proper maintenance of the weapon.

c. Task 3: Clean the M249.

(1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 2.

(2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 1.

(3) *Sequence of training.* Same as Task 2.

d. Task 4: Lubricate the M249.

- (1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 2.
- (2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 1.
- (3) *Sequence of training.* Same as Task 2.

e. Task 5: Assemble the M249.

- (1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 1.
- (2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 1.
- (3) *Sequence of training.* Coaches should assemble the weapon as the trainer explains the procedures. The automatic riflemen practice until they become proficient in assembly and can demonstrate this task to a coach.

f. Task 6: Explain the Operation of the M249. (Chapter 3.)

- (1) *Equipment needed.* One M249 AR, placed on a table; one belt of five dummy rounds; and a cleaning rod for each automatic rifleman.
- (2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 1.
- (3) *Sequence of training.* The trainer explains and demonstrates loading, unloading, and clearing the weapon. He stresses the safety factors involved. He demonstrates letting the bolt go forward when the barrel is out of the weapon.

g. Task 7: Explain the Functioning of the M249.

- (1) *Equipment needed.* One M249 AR for each soldier as in previous mechanical training instruction. Graphic training aids are useful if the class is about platoon size; otherwise, GTAs may be made available for study and discussion during breaks.
- (2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 1.
- (3) *Sequence of training.* Functioning is divided in eight steps—feeding, cambering, locking, firing, unlocking, extracting, ejecting, and cocking. Coaches should duplicate each demonstration on the weapons with each group. (Chapter 3.) Functioning is taught by seeing how the parts work, rather than by memorizing the text. The trainer tests retention of the training by asking questions concerning the steps of functioning.

h. Task 8: Explain Malfunction, Stoppage, and Immediate Action. (Chapter 4.)

- (1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 1.
- (2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 1.
- (3) *Sequence of training.* Malfunction and stoppages charts may be used as a guide in presenting instruction. These charts may be available from the local Training Support Center or the trainer can use Table 4-1 and Table 4-2 in this manual. The trainer stresses precision in detecting the cause and reducing stoppages. As the automatic riflemen progress, the trainer has them concentrate on speed in applying immediate action and other methods

of reducing a stoppage. He stresses safety precautions in connection with a hangfire or cookoff.

i. Task 9: Demonstrate Fundamentals of Marksmanship. (Chapter 5.)

(1) *Equipment needed.* One M249 and basic machine gun targets for each firing lane on a range equipped with a prone and fighting position.

(2) *Class organization.* The maximum required number of automatic riflemen are on the firing line.

(3) *Sequence of training.* The trainer conducts conference, demonstration, and practical work on the fundamentals of marksmanship (steady position, aim, breath control, trigger control, and firing position).

j. Task 10: Demonstrate Fundamentals of Firing Positions.

(1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 9.

(2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 9.

(3) *Sequence of training.* Same as Task 9.

k. Task 11: Demonstrate Fundamentals of Engaging Night, NBC, and Moving Targets.

(1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 9, plus AN/PVS-4 per weapon and protective mask and gloves for each automatic rifleman on the firing line.

(2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 9.

(3) *Sequence of training.* Same as Task 9.

l. Task 12: Demonstrate Fundamentals of Traverse and Search.

(1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 9.

(2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 9.

(3) *Sequence of training.* Same as Task 9.

m. Task 13: Demonstrate Fire Commands.

(1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 9.

(2) *Class organization.* Same as Task 9.

(3) *Sequence of training.* Same as Task 9, plus trainer gives the fire commands.

n. Task 14: Execute Dry-Fire Exercises.

(1) *Equipment needed.* Same as Task 9.

(2) *Class Organization.* Same as Task 9.

(3) *Sequence of training.* Same as Task 9.

7-8. PHASE II, BASIC MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING

The information learned in this phase is essential to the development of the trainer who is to conduct the 10-meter firing with NBC, day transition with NBC, and night transition instructional firing for the M249. (Chapter 5.)

a. Task 15: Conduct 10-Meter Firing.

(1) *Equipment needed.* One M249 and basic machine gun targets for each firing lane; stopwatches; patches; and cleaning rods. Sound equipment is desirable during firing.

(2) *Class organization.* The maximum number of automatic riflemen are on the firing line with the remainder receiving concurrent instruction in the rear training area.

(3) *Sequence of instruction.* The trainer conducts conference, demonstration, and practical work on emplacing the weapon on the firing lane. He places emphasis on preparation of the weapon for firing, including safety checks. The interval between the two portions of the control command should be sufficient to permit the execution of the command and to allow the coach to perform his duties. Coaches are required to perform their duties quickly and precisely. During practice, the trainer must ensure that the automatic rifleman is in the proper position before he is permitted to shoot.

b. Task 16: Conduct Daytime Transition Fire on the Multipurpose Machine Gun Range.

(1) *Equipment needed.* One M249 for each firing lane, single and double E-type silhouette targets, and cleaning rods. Sound equipment is desirable during firing.

(2) *Class organization.* Preferably, one automatic rifleman and one coach for each firing lane. Personnel not required in the operation of the range should receive concurrent training in rear area.

(3) *Sequence of instruction.* Before the conference and demonstration of firing, the trainer briefly reviews range estimation and techniques of adjustment. He also explains the characteristics of AR fire and their effect on field targets. The weapons are zeroed at a known distance on the transition range (preferably at 300 meters). The automatic rifleman receiving the instruction should do the zeroing. The lane NCO requires the automatic rifleman to be in the correct position before letting him fire. The acting safety NCO may assist the automatic rifleman in locating the targets, but he is not permitted to aid in range estimation or fire adjustment. At the completion of the exercise, the next automatic rifleman moves up. Appropriate subjects to be included in the rear-area training are—

- Mechanical training.
- Any other AR subjects in which additional training is needed.

c. Task 17: Conduct Nighttime Transition Fire.

(1) *Equipment needed.* One M249 for each firing lane, appropriate targets, cleaning rods, oil, and patches. Sound equipment is desirable during firing.

(2) *Class organization.* The firing area should have seating for the entire group during conferences. After the conference, the group is divided into small groups for practical work under the control of the coaches. The OIC controls all firing. If space permits, all personnel are placed on the firing line. Requirements for the various exercises should be simple and progressive. If possible, the trainer selects terrain for the subject; otherwise, he applies the subject to the terrain.

(3) *Sequence of instruction.* Before the conference and demonstration, the trainer conducts the preparatory exercises of mounting the AN/PVS-4 and seating, boresighting, and zeroing procedures for the device. He should also review and discuss range estimation, techniques of fire, adjustment, and characteristics of automatic fire. The weapon should be zeroed to the device using the night fire procedures in Chapter 5. The acting safety NCO for each lane requires the automatic rifleman to be in the correct position before letting him fire. At the completion of the exercise, the next automatic rifleman moves up. Appropriate subjects to be included in the rear training area are—

- Mechanical training.
- Care and cleaning.
- Any other subjects in which additional training is needed.

7-9. Phase III, ADVANCED MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING

This training phase enables the trainer to develop his advanced skills such as shoulder-, underarm-, and hip-firing positions and rapid reload techniques. (Chapter 6.)

a. Task 18: Conduct Daytime Assault Fire.

(1) *Equipment needed.* One M249 and appropriate ammunition for each firing lane.

(2) *Class organization.* The multipurpose machine gun transition range is used if the installation has one. If need be, the lanes are modified so the automatic rifleman has a trail of at least 150 meters in front of the weapon position. The training area should have seating for the entire group during conferences. After the conferences, the group is divided into firing orders. If the group is large, two firing orders are placed on the firing line and all other personnel go to the concurrent training area for practical work under the control of the coaches. The OIC controls all firing. If the group is small, all personnel go to the firing line at once. Requirements for the various exercises should be simple and progressive. If possible, the trainer selects terrain for the subject; otherwise, he applies the subject to the terrain.

(3) *Sequence of instruction.* The unit is assembled, given instructions, and briefed on the training that will be conducted while they are on the range. After the briefing, they are organized into firing orders and moved to firing lanes. Lanes are conducted IAW local range policies. Firing is conducted as described in Chapter 6. Concurrent training stations, using sand tables, charts, diagrams, or terrain, are set up to review assault firing techniques using the—

- Shoulder firing position.
- Underarm firing position.
- Hip firing position,
- Rapid reloading techniques.

b. Task 19: Conduct NBC Assault Fire With the M249.

(1) *Equipment needed.* Protective mask and gloves, one M249, and appropriate ammunition for each firing lane.

(2) *Class organization.* Same as for Task 15.

(3) *Sequence of instruction.* The unit is assembled, given instructions, and briefed on the training that will be conducted while they are on the range. After the briefing, they are organized into firing orders and moved to firing lanes. Lanes are conducted IAW local range policies. Firing is conducted as described in Chapter 6. Concurrent training stations, using sand tables, charts, diagrams, or terrain, are set up to review assault firing techniques using the—

- Shoulder firing position while wearing a protective mask and gloves.
- Underarm firing position while wearing a protective mask and gloves.
- Hip firing position while wearing a protective mask and gloves.
- Rapid reloading techniques while wearing a protective mask and gloves.

Section III. TRAINER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The certification program sustains the trainers' expertise and develops methods of training. The program standardizes procedures for certifying M249 marksmanship trainers. Trainers' technical expertise must be continuously refreshed, updated, and closely managed.

7-10. TRAINING BASE

The training base can expect the same personnel changes as any other organization. Soldiers assigned as M249 trainers will have varying experience and knowledge of training procedures and methods. Therefore, the trainer

certification program must be an ongoing process that is tailored to address these variables. As a minimum, formal records document program progression for each trainer. All M249 trainers must complete the three phases of training using the progression steps, and they must be updated on a quarterly basis. One of the goals of the program is for the trainer to know the training mission.

7-11. CERTIFICATION PROGRAM OUTLINE

All trainers must attend, then conduct, all phases of the train-the-trainer program. Trainers are certified who demonstrate the ability to train soldiers, to diagnose and correct problems, and to achieve standards. Those trainers who fail to attend or fail any phase of the diagnostic examination will be assigned to subsequent training. The personnel designated to present instruction must complete the phases of the program in the sequence described.

a. **Phase I, Program Orientation.** During this phase, the trainer must accomplish the following tasks and be certified by the chain of command.

- (1) Be briefed on the concept of the certification program.
- (2) Be briefed on the unit's marksmanship training strategy.
- (3) Review the unit's marksmanship training outlines.
- (4) Review issued reference material.
- (5) Visit training sites and firing ranges.

b. **Phase II, Preliminary Marksmanship Training.** During Phase II, the trainer must demonstrate his ability to master the fundamentals of marksmanship. Phase II should be completed within two weeks after Phase I. The following fundamentals must be reviewed by the chain of command. The results of this review are recorded and maintained on a trainer's progression sheet, which is designed in accordance with the unit's SOP.

- Characteristics.
- Capabilities.
- Disassembly.
- Clean, lubricate, and inspect.
- Assembly.
- Range determination and estimation.
- Classes of fire.
- Application of fire.
- Fire commands.
- Loading.

- Unloading.
- Immediate actions.
- Sight manipulations.
- Traverse and search exercise.

c. **Phase III, Basic Marksmanship Training.** During this phase, the trainer must set up and conduct firing on the various ranges. He must explain the targets and zeroing and scoring procedures. The trainer must explain the purpose of transition firing, field zero procedures, range layout, and the conduct of training on the transition range. This briefing to the chain of command validates the trainer's knowledge necessary to conduct training. The results of this interview are recorded on the trainer's progression sheet.

d. **Phase IV, Advanced Marksmanship Training.** This is the final phase of the train-the-trainer program and tests the trainer. The trainer must set up a range and conduct training of at least one person. If ammunition is available, the trainer conducts a firing exercise. If ammunition is not available, the testing is based on the quality of training given.