

## APPENDIX A

# TRAINING STRATEGY

*This appendix discusses the two primary components of training strategies: initial and sustainment training.*

### A-1. COMPONENTS

Training strategies have two primary components: *initial* and *sustainment* training. Both may include individual and collective skills, but *initial training is critical*. With initial training a soldier retains a correctly taught task that he has learned well. With such training, he can easily sustain or quickly regain his performance. Thus, leaders must conduct initial training correctly and well.

a. Trainers use standard, common, and current procedures. Regardless of how well skills are taught or learned, individual and unit skills decay over time. How fast and how much skills decay depends on many factors. Personnel turnover is a primary factor in the decay of collective skills. Other factors include the difficulty and complexity of the tasks.

b. When the unit loses critical crewmembers, it must quickly train new gunners to restore unit proficiency. If too much time passes between initial and sustainment training periods or if the unit alters the established training doctrine, skills erode and the unit might have to completely retrain its MK 19 gunners.

c. A critical step in the Army's overall training strategy is to train leaders and trainers first. Leader courses and unit publications help develop officer and noncommissioned officer (NCO) proficiencies needed to plan and conduct marksmanship training. These resources also help leaders learn how to evaluate the effectiveness of unit marksmanship programs. Proponent schools provide training support materials. These materials include field manuals, training aids, training devices, simulators, and programs of instruction that serve as the doctrinal foundation and guidance for training the force.

### A-2. INITIAL TRAINING

The MK 19 training strategy starts with leader training and goes on to unit training. Because "MK 19 gunner" is a Skill Level 2 position, the MK 19 gunner receives most of his MK 19 training within the unit. The training institution provides the unit with a soldier who has received training in the basics of the MK 19. The unit plans minimal MK 19 training for advanced individual training (AIT) soldiers.

### A-3. SUSTAINMENT TRAINING

Basic MK 19 gunnery skills and gunner qualification continues in units. Once soldiers learn individual and crew skills, the unit must help them sustain those skills. To do this, leaders follow the annual gunnery-training program provided in Appendix E, Annual Gunnery Training Program. In addition to sustaining skills, the unit incorporates the MK 19 into collective training exercises such as platoon and squad live-fire situational training exercises (STXs).

a. The strategy for sustaining basic MK 19 gunnery skills includes annual or semiannual instructional and qualification range firing. However, the unit must set up

a year-round sustainment program. Key elements of the sustainment program include training the trainers, refreshing preliminary skills, and using devices to remedy the training of soldiers who have trouble qualifying on the MK 19.

b. The unit also trains the gunner in other skills such as night firing; mission-oriented protective posture (MOPP) firing; engaging moving targets, using camouflage, cover and concealment; firing and maneuvering; and preparing or selecting a fighting position. The unit also integrates these skills into tactical training. The references at the back of this manual contain additional guidance on the training for these skills.

c. The unit integrates individual and leader MK 19 tasks into collective training such as squad, section, and platoon drills and STXs as well as company LFXs and field training exercises (FTXs). Organizational mission training plans (MTP) and drill books include the tasks, conditions, and standards for the collective tasks in these exercises. These books also explain how to plan and conduct such collective tasks. Based on the type of organization, the unit evaluates collective exercises in leader and trainer after-action reviews (AARs). Objectively evaluating both individual and unit proficiency indicates the readiness and future training requirements.

d. Trainers schedule live fire after the soldiers demonstrate preliminary skills. For initial fire, the trainer conducts an instructional exercise. This improves the soldiers' ability to acquire targets with the MK 19. Once soldiers understand the gun and demonstrate the skills needed to acquire a target, the trainer conducts additional live-fire training and target-detection exercises at various ranges. To develop proficiency, soldiers have to master targets and scenarios of increasing difficulty. After initial individual training, the trainer conducts qualification fire on a range to evaluate each soldier's skills. When conducted in accordance with Chapter 4, Marksmanship, this evaluation also gives leaders some insight into the unit's skill and training effectiveness.