

Mine clearing tanks support Afghan assault

U.S. Marines taking part in one of the largest offensives of the Afghan war are testing a new weapon as they advance on the Taliban stronghold of Marjah. The *Assault Breacher Vehicle* combines the power of a tank with the ability to clear improvised bombs posing a threat to coalition forces

Chassis

Based on **M1 Abrams** main battle tank. Total of 45 tanks to be converted

Turret: M1 turret and gun removed, replaced by all-welded steel structure with reactive armour to protect against rocket-propelled grenades

Hull length

7.93 metres

Weight

72 tonnes

Crew

2, or remote control

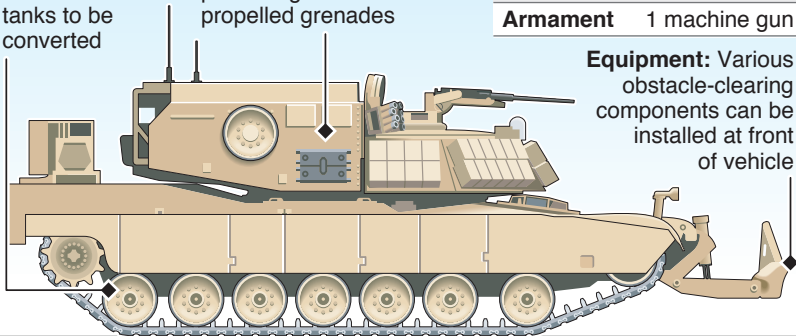
Speed

72km/h (road)

Armament

1 machine gun

Equipment: Various obstacle-clearing components can be installed at front of vehicle



Breacher digs path through minefield using 4.5m-wide plough supported by skis that glide over ground

If there are too many mines, rockets with explosive charges can be fired over 100m forward, detonating bombs at safe distance

