

Amos Deacon
CEO
All Terrain Vehicle Corporation

Amos Deacon is CEO of All Terrain Vehicle Corporation (ATV Corp.), as well as CEO of its parent, Phoenix International. ATV Corp. designs and builds light tactical wheeled platforms for the military, and it is headquartered in Orange, CA, with manufacturing facilities in El Cajon, CA.



Q: Currently, there has been a great deal of investigation and activity within the U.S. military regarding the use of all terrain vehicles (ATVs). What do you think is driving this?

A: A major challenge facing U.S. military services in non-traditional combat, reconnaissance and mission support (especially all elements of the U.S. Special Operations Command) is to fill an urgent need for a versatile light tactical mobility platform. Ideally, this platform must be easily deployed, rugged, reliable, multi-mission configurable and able to perform in any terrain or climate.

Q: And this solution is the ATV?

A: Not quite. The generic ATV has proven useful in many areas of mission support, but any tactical potential has severe limitations regarding operator safety, vehicle reliability, rugged endurance and operator control.

That is why we developed the Prowler. It is not at all like any generic ATV or version of one modified for the military. The Prowler RTV is purpose-built to ensure the survivability and increase the lethality of the special operations warrior.

Q: You refer to the Prowler as an RTV, not an ATV. Is there a difference?

A: Yes, actually, quite a bit. The Prowler is not a recreational vehicle—or even one modified for the military—such as an ATV. The Prowler is purpose-built to provide maximum operator protection with superior performance, rugged reliability and exceptional stability in a combat environment.

Q: How is that accomplished? What are the differences, and why are they significant?

A: First, design and construction. This is particularly important to ensure operator safety and vehicle reliability. For example, Prowler roll cages and chrome-moly steel tubing construction versus typical ATV welded stampings.

Second, operation. The Prowler drives like a car. We call it

“operator passive” as opposed to the “operator active” requirements of an ATV—you have to straddle an ATV, use both hands to control brakes and throttle, handlebars to steer and shift body weight to maintain its stability. Regarding stability, the Prowler’s lower center of gravity and wider stance is far superior to that of any ATV.

Remarkably, the powerful combination of Prowler design, construction and operation is accomplished within the same physical dimensional envelope of a generic ATV. This latter is a major

factor when considering deployment by limited cargo aircraft such as the CH-46/47/53/60 series helicopters and the V-22.

Q: Has the U.S. military employed this vehicle?

A: Elements of special operations commands, including groups from Army Special Forces, Navy Special Warfare and Air Force Mobility, plus the Marine Corps 1st Force Reconnaissance, are currently evaluating the Prowler. The AARs we are receiving are very enthusiastic in their unreserved endorsement of Prowler performance and capabilities.

Most important, however, is the safety factor. There has been no vehicle-related accident injuries reported because of the Prowler’s superior operator protection. The avoidance of personnel availability loss and all attendant costs—not the least of which is training—because of lack of vehicle operator protection is a major concern for the military.

Q: Do you foresee the ATV, or RTV, as you call the Prowler, gaining in popularity and utility within the military in the near term?

A: Yes and yes. The Prowler is easy and safe to operate, with outstanding performance and reliability characteristics. And, not just near term. Its potential is barely revealed at this point. Its applications multiply with its use. New tactical doctrine is being developed to exploit its versatility because it adds a new dimension to tactical assault, ISR, SAR and support capability concepts.

Q: I understand that all ATVs and the Prowler RTV are powered by conventional gasoline fueled engines. The military is to be all diesel. Do you intend to have diesel power for the Prowler?

A: We are presently engaged in a development program that will provide an engine fueled by JP8 for the Prowler and related vehicles, with substantial progress to date. ★