

LIGHTWEIGHTS GO TO WAR

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When one thinks of modern military vehicles, they probably think of HMMWVs, M1A1 Abrams tanks, or Stryker armored vehicles. However, the U.S. military is interested in golf car-like utility vehicles, all-terrain vehicles (ATV), motorcycles and even battery-powered bicycles. Some of these lightweights are already in use in Afghanistan and Iraq where they offer excellent mobility and agility in remote and rugged locations. Often, they can reach places where larger HMMWVs and trucks can't while letting individual troops to carry much more gear.

PROWLER RTV

All Terrain Vehicle Corp. has developed the Prowler RTV for rugged terrain. Prowlers can be easily adapted to a wide range of tactical and support missions. To date, two configurations have been shown—Light Weapons/Reconnaissance Platform and Light Surveillance, Recon and Communications Platform (Light ISR).

Being a dedicated military vehicle rather than a civilian ATV adapted for the military duty, the Prowler RTV offers several advantages over converted ATVs. These include a smaller dimensions, tighter turning radius, lower center of gravity for greater stability, ability to carry a greater payload and higher ground clearance. The Prowler is about 92" long, 52" wide and 64" tall with a 57" wheelbase.

The center of gravity is about 1' 6" less than an ATV while still offering a foot of ground clearance.

The Prowler drives like a car with rack and pinion steering, rather than an ATV. The Prowler is powered by a 660 cc, 4-stroke, liquid-cooled engine mated to a fully automatic 4-wheel-drive transmission with hi/lo range, reverse and park; and push button 2WD/4WD/4WD lock. The engine has an electric start capability with auxiliary auto-decompression recoil pull backup. It features a front and rear independent wishbone suspension system, hydraulic dual front disc brakes, and a rear shaft disc braking system.

The Prowler can ford up to 30-inch-deep rivers and streams without a snorkel. It is a quiet 80db without a suppressor. Run flat tires and a PTO can be fitted. Weighing only about 800 pounds, the Prowler is easily deployable and recoverable by the widest range of surface and air assets. The Prowler PTV can carry an 800-pound payload and tow another 1,200 pounds. All Terrain Vehicles is now developing two-person and unmanned versions.



Figure 4. The Prowler RTV is available in two platforms: Light Surveillance, Recon and Communications (shown) and Light Weapons/Reconnaissance. All Terrain Vehicle