



THE LONG AND SHORT OF BARRELS

Dear Editor,

In our work on Ft Bragg's Corps Logistics Assistance Team, we run into armorers who are confused about how to treat the M249 machine gun's long (or standard) and short barrels.

They think if they use only the short barrels, it's OK to turn in the long barrels. Then when they prepare to turn in an M249, they get an unpleasant surprise.

The M249 is issued with two standard barrels because those barrels are BII (basic issue items). Units are supposed to maintain all BII for their equipment at all times. So units that don't have both standard barrels don't have the M249's BII, which means trouble during inspections and turn-in. Page B-2 in the M249's TM 9-1005-201-10 (Change 2) spells this out.

The short barrel, on the other hand, is AAL (additional authorization list), which means it's authorized but optional—you don't have to have the short barrel. Page C-1 spells this out.

If you have two good barrels—a primary and a spare—for your M249 regardless of length, the weapon is considered Fully Mission Capable. But if you don't have both standard barrels, you will run into problems during inspections and equipment turn-in because you must have the M249's full BII.

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Editor's note: Excellent points, Harold and David. If soldiers have questions about this, contact TACOM's Andre Pilgrim at DSN 793-7458, (309) 782-7458, or email andre.pilgrim@us.army.mil

Don't forget the M249 short barrel now has its own blank firing attachment, NSN 1005-01-537-0491.