



Dear Editor,

Here at the small arms support shop at Ft Hood, we continually run into armorers who don't have the two required standard barrels for their M249 machine guns.

When their M249s go through SARET repair, the standard long barrel is sometimes replaced with a short barrel. Or armorers order a short barrel and turn in a long barrel.

As you pointed out in PS 689 (Apr 10), the two standard barrels are B11 (basic issue items), which means they must be kept at all times. 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 it.

But what PS 689 didn't point out is that the standard barrels have a controlled inventory item code of 4, so the barrels do have security requirements. If a standard barrel is missing, AR 190-11, *Physical Security of Arms, Ammunition, and Explosives*, states the commander can initiate an investigation.

No armorer needs that grief. So never ever be without both M249 standard barrels, regardless of how many short barrels you have. Order a new long barrel through your support, if necessary.

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Editor's note: You've done an excellent job giving armorers the long and short of it, Chief. Thanks.