

THERMAL WEAPONS SIGHT

DESCRIPTION

The Thermal Weapon Sight (TWS) is a lightweight, low-power, high-performance forward looking infrared device that will augment existing crew-served night vision sights. TWS does not rely on visible light for operation, and is virtually unaffected by weather and obscurants (both natural and man-made). The TWS operates by discerning the temperature variation between targets and their background. It is completely passive and, although designed for target detection and engagement with Marine Corps crew-served weapons, can be used for all-weather surveillance.



OPERATIONAL IMPACT

The 24-hour capability of the Thermal Weapon Sight significantly enhances the Marine Corps day and night fighting capability through improved target detection and engagement. The system can “see” through obscurants (such as sand, dust, or fog) that impair sighting systems operating in the visible and near visible spectrum. The TWS has the ability to acquire targets under most atmospheric conditions at ranges, which are comparable to the maximum effective ranges of the weapon system with which it is employed.

PROGRAM STATUS

The US Army — the lead service for the TWS program — and the Marine Corps successfully completed separate operational test and evaluations in 2000 and 2001, which led to a procurement decision in July 2001. The Marine Corps will exercise an option on the Omnibus contract and procure 3542 Medium (MTWS) and 1793 Heavy (HTWS) Thermal Weapon Sights. As of 17 September 2003, 797 MTWSs have been fielded early to meet urgent Fleet Marine Force requirements.

PROCUREMENT PROFILE:	FY 04	FY 05
Quantity:	1,031	741
DEVELOPER/MANUFACTURER		
Raytheon Systems Company, Dallas, TX		