



The Naval Infantry's New Ride?

OE Watch Commentary: The accompanying excerpted article from *Moscow Zvezda TV* discusses the prospects of building a family of naval infantry fighting vehicle (боевой машины морской пехоты БММП, or BMMP) and support vehicles. The BMMP was designed by the Bauman Moscow State Technical University after winning the state tender “Research on the Development of an Advanced Combat Vehicle for Naval Infantry Subunits.” Although almost all Russian Infantry Fighting Vehicles (BMPs) and Armored Personnel Carriers (BTRs) are amphibious, and hence can be used in the Naval Infantry for amphibious operations, the unique mission of the Naval Infantry to conduct amphibious assaults for the Russian Armed Forces brings certain limitations of existing BMPs and BTRs to light. Standard BMPs and BTRs of the Ground Forces and Airborne Troops are amphibious, but spending prolonged periods in seawater causes electronics to fail and surfaces to corrode, the Naval Infantry requires a better platform. A related problem is over-the-horizon operations, as existing platforms were only designed to cross small bodies of water (rivers, lakes, etc.) and were not intended for prolonged amphibious operations, such as those conducted when landing ship docks launch amphibious vehicles for over-the-horizon operations.

The concept of operations for Russian over-the-horizon amphibious assaults involve the launching of amphibious vehicles from landing ship docks 15-40 km from shore, and then having the amphibious vehicles provide heavy covering fire while rapidly reaching the beach. To meet these requirements, the amphibious vehicles must be capable of water speeds of approximately 40 km/h (most Russian BMPs and BTRs are only capable of water speeds of around 10 km/h) and capable of overcoming waves up to one and a half meters. They must also have large cannons to suppress enemy coastal defenses.

The accompanying excerpted article from *Moscow Zvezda TV* discusses the capabilities of the BMMP. It will weigh approximately 35 tons and have a maximum speed of 75 km/h on the ground and 37 km/h in the water. It will be able to transport up to three crewmen and 10 naval infantry dismounts. In terms of armament, the BMMP would be equipped with modular Bakhcha-class or remote controlled Kinzhal-class turrets and protected by the Arena-M active-protection system, which would provide a defense against antitank guided missiles and antitank rocket-propelled grenades.

Although the BMMP has been designed, its prospects for full scale production are speculative at best. Russia is also experimenting with a naval infantry variant of the Bumerang BTR, which is somewhat less capable, but very close to serial production. A likely explanation for BMMP marketing materials now surfacing in the media deals with the manufacturers. The BMMP would be manufactured by the UralVagonZavod (of the ROSTEC Concern and Armata fame), while the Bumerang is manufactured by (occasional) competitor the Arzamas Machine Company. Russia is unlikely to field two systems with such similar capabilities, so it is likely that UralVagonZavod is trying to compete with Arzamas for the Russian Naval Infantry's business, or is attempting to gain visibility of the platform on the export market. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)**



Wheeled IFV BMP-K K-17 VPK-7829 on unified wheeled combat platform Bumerang.

Source: Vitaly Kuzmin Military Blog, <https://www.vitalykuzmin.net/Military/April-29th-rehearsal-of-2015/i-BwvtvNb>, CC 4.0.

“The BMMP will weigh approximately 35 tons and have a speed of 75 kph highway and 37 kph in passage by water. It will be able to transport up to 10 naval infantrymen with a three-man crew.”

Source: Aleksandr Peshkov. “Первые изображения новой российской боевой машины морской пехоты появились в Сети (First Images of the New Russian Naval Infantry Combat Vehicle Have Appeared Online),” *Moscow Zvezda TV*, 3 May 2018. <https://tvzvezda.ru/news/opk/content/201805031632-q39y.htm>

A sales pitch developed in the Uralvagonzavod corporation indicates that one version of the development of the naval infantry fighting vehicle (BMMP) [боевой машины морской пехоты БММП] concept will be the building of a family of naval infantry combat and support vehicles.

The first presumptive depictions of the naval infantry combat vehicle have been published online, Rossiyskaya Gazeta reports with reference to a sales pitch developed, presumably, in the UralVagonZavod corporation...It is anticipated that it will be possible with the vehicles to debark naval infantry elements at the time of a landing operation, an over-the-horizon landing on an austere shore included.

The BMMP will weigh approximately 35 tons and have a speed of 75 kph highway and 37 kph in passage by water. It will be able to transport up to 10 naval infantrymen with a three-man crew. It is contemplated installing on the item Bakhcha-class modules or the more modern 57-millimeter remote-controlled Kinzhal modules.

It is proposed equipping the future vehicle also with the Arena-M active-protection package, which will protect the BMMP against antitank guided missiles and antitank rocket-propelled grenades...We recall that it was reported in April of last year that a skimming vehicle for an over-the-horizon landing would be built in the Bauman Moscow State Technical University Special Machine Building Research and Production Center (NPTs SM)...