



Realm Of Humanity Infantry Squad

The infantry squad is the basic building block of the Realm's armed forces. The planetary battlefield can be bombed, strafed, scorched, and stomped flat by armored suits, but without the common infantryman, the ground can not be held, and victory remains ungrasped.

The squad is composed of three three-man teams, and is led by a squad leader, usually a sergeant or corporal. In all, the squad is composed of one squad leader, seven riflemen with grenade launchers, and two support laser gunners.

Each rifleman in the infantry squad is equipped with a full or carbine-length version of the AP-6 flechette assault weapon. The AP-6 has been in service in one form or another for more than thirty years, having been combat-proven from Helena's orbital colonies to New Iberia's black beaches. The small polymer darts fired from the AP-6 are a composite projectile, entailing an armor-piercing core surrounded by a plastic sheath. Total projectile width is 6.5mm. The dual-material projectile's steel core is designed to spike through light armored vehicle hulls or body armor, while the plastic jacket is meant to fracture and splinter hideously upon impact with human flesh. The plastic used in the fragmenting bullet jacket is also engineered to dissolve caustically and slowly after being fired, causing infections in the wound that can cause an agonizing death if not treated. Adding to a wounded target's worries is the fact that the poisonous plastic splinters are invisible to x-ray exams. Needless to say, the AP-6 is a feared weapon in the Human Realm.

Mounted beneath the AP-6 is a 35mm grenade launcher, used mostly against armored vehicles, power suits, or fortifications and bunkers. The launcher itself is little more than a rifled tube, the back of which pops out to the side for reloading. The launcher can fire a dozen types of special munitions, including hard rubber balls for crowd control, tear gas for the same, or flares for illumination or signaling. The preferred payload on the battlefield, however, is the HEDP grenade. This shaped-charge warhead is also equipped with hundreds of small round fragments imbedded in its explosive charge. The dual-use warhead is effective against thick armor as well as troops or soft targets. The K-446 HEDP warhead is so beloved among its infantry users, and has remained in the Realm Of Humanity inventory so long, that there are marching cadences dedicated to it.

The two support laser gunners in the Realm infantry squad are relatively new additions. The man-portable lasers they carry are only the second generation of directed-energy weaponry that has made it on to the battlefield. Despite their novelty, they are marvels of efficiency and micronization. Earlier generations of battlefield lasers were huge, the size of artillery pieces, and could only be fielded by vehicles or armored carapaces. These current support lasers are larger and bulkier than standard machineguns or squad automatic weapons, but serve a dual purpose.

With the flick of a switch, the Mk.2 Support Laser, Automatic, Man-Portable, or "Slams" as they are referred to by their gunners, can be switched from an area suppression mode to a focused beam. In other words, their laser emitters can be changed from anti-personnel to anti-armor with a press of a button. Anti-personnel shots consist of rapidly expanding spirals that continue their outward expansion as long as the trigger is held, to a maximum of 30 degrees in scope. Anti-armor shots are hot, focused pulses that slag armor with sickening ease, but drain the weapon's batteries faster. Batteries can easily be charged, even during a battle, by hooking them into a friendly vehicle's exterior power charger. All members of the infantry squad also carry extra batteries for use by the laser gunners.