

The Army announced on Monday [4 May] a project for developing various electronic devices for combat use. The project is called Mobile Army Sensor Systems Tests, Evaluation and Review [Project MASTER], and is estimated to cost about 60 million dollars over the next five years.

Among the devices being tested is one which casts an infra-red beam a hundred yards. A soldier carrying a rifle to which this device is attached wears goggles that allow him to see the reflection of the infra-red rays and fire at a target they show him. Another device in this program intensifies available light 45,000 times and magnifies images 4 to 7 times. By using this device attached to a rifle a soldier can see a man half a mile away by starlight. Other devices being tested are ones which amplify sounds, body heat and odor, or sense movement by radar.

Maj. Gen. John Norton, the deputy director of the project, said, "There's a sense of urgency here, with the first priority being Vietnam and Southeast Asia." He added, "I don't know whether the searchlight will show up on the battlefield of Vietnam first or at some civil disturbance situation here."