

WEAPONS OF THE ADF

The first in a new series of articles cataloguing the weapons suites of the Australian Defence Force.

PART 1: Standard-issue weapons



Assault rifles

F88SA2

F88SA2 is the latest model of the F88 Austeyr series and is the Australian Defence Force's standard combat weapon.

Manufactured in Australia, it fires NATO standard 5.56mm ammunition from a 30-round magazine.

It is a gas-operated semi/automatic rifle, which can fire single rounds or full-auto bursts via dual trigger pressures or it can be restricted to single-shot semi-auto by a physical 'lock-out button' on the base of the trigger.

The F88SA2 can be fitted with different sights such as the standard 1.5x ring-sight, the Advanced Combat Optic Gunsight (ACOG) or night weapon sights, as well as laser aiming devices and other accessories attached to a Picatinny rail*.

The weapon can also be fitted with the Grenade Launcher Attachment (GLA).

* Picatinny rail – is a bracket system used on many modern weapons to provide a standardised mounting platform for accessories such as sights, laser aiming devices, thermal imagers, rangefinders, GPS, torches, foregrips, bipods and so on. The concept was devised in the 1980s, but was standardised in 1995 by the Picatinny Arsenal – headquarters of the US Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center.



Calibre	5.56mm
Weight	4.8kg [with full magazine]
Length	790mm
Barrel length	508mm
Muzzle velocity	930m/sec
Effective range	300m
Cyclic rate of fire	680-850 rounds per minute

M4A1

The M4A1 carbine, closely related to the M16, is a shorter and lighter variant of the M16A2 assault rifle, and an updated variation of the older M4.

It is a gas-operated, air-cooled weapon fed by a 30-round magazine that has selective-fire options for semi-automatic or fully automatic.

The shortness of the weapon (370mm barrel and telescoping stock) allows soldiers to better operate in close-quarter battle and, as such, is the standard-issue weapon for Australian special forces.

It features a Picatinny rail on all four sides, allowing scope for a wide range of accessories.



Calibre	5.56mm
Weight	3.1kg [with 30-round mag]
Length	840mm [stock extended] 756mm [stock retracted]
Barrel length	370mm
Muzzle velocity	884m/sec
Effective range	500m
Cyclic rate of fire	700-950 rounds per minute

Machine guns

Minimi

The F89 Minimi light support weapon (LSW) is employed as the primary support weapon at the brick, squad or section level.

It is gas operated, fully automatic, air cooled and fed by a disintegrating-link belt, either loose or from a 100-round belt box.

It is capable of a high rate of effective fire against point and area targets.

The LSW 5.56mm Para Minimi [shorter, with collapsible stock], is employed as the primary support weapon for special forces teams and as a section-support weapon for parachute units.

LSW is fitted with a Picatinny rail and is configured with standard optical weapon sights or can be fitted with an enhanced optical sight, night-aiming device, laser target designator and night weapon sight.



Calibre	5.56mm
Weight	7kg [loaded with 100-round box magazine]
Length	1080mm [865mm Para]
Barrel length	570mm [349mm Para]
Muzzle velocity	930m/sec
Effective range	400m
Cyclic rate of fire	800-900 rounds per minute

Maximi

Calibre	7.62mm
Weight	8.2kg
Length	1000mm
Barrel length	502mm
Effective range	600m
Cyclic rate of fire	710 rounds per minute



fed by a disintegrating link belt.

It is capable of a high rate of effective fire against point and area targets with heavier, harder-hitting 7.62mm ammunition.

The Maximi has proven reliable, effective and popular during current operations undertaken by Australian soldiers.

MAG58

The general support machine gun (GSMG) MAG58 is designed for general support purposes.

It can be used either as a light support weapon (LSW), fired from a bipod, or fired from a tripod in the extended-range role.

It can also be mounted on a tripod with a C2 sight and used in the indirect sustained-fire role.

It is a fully automatic, 7.62mm, belt-fed, air-cooled, gas-operated weapon, and is capable of a sustained high volume of fire.

Stoppages can be easily and quickly remedied.

Ammunition belts are made up of disintegrating links, factory packed in 500-round containers. The belts are normally fitted in the ratio of one tracer round to every four ball rounds, although all-ball-round belts are available.

Maximum effective range of the MAG58 in the LSW role is 800m.

Calibre	7.62mm
Weight	10.9kg
Length	1231mm
Barrel length	679mm
Cyclic rate of fire	750-1000 round per minute

