

# Five Years of Protecting U.S. Military Personnel in Combat

- 3M Peltor COMTAC III ACH is proven to support critical communications, help preserve hearing -

The noise of war is a major enemy for American troops, often obstructing critical combat communications and inflicting permanent hearing impairment – the No. 1 service-related disability among U.S. veterans. The 3M™ Peltor™ COMTAC III Advanced Communication Headset – now in its fifth year of full-rate production and battle-proven by U.S. special operations forces – has been effective in supporting service members' operational effectiveness and helping preserve their hearing.

The COMTAC III ACH protects personnel by helping them maintain clear tactical communications, even in the noisiest combat environments. Using the most advanced “talk-thru” capability, the COMTAC III ACH helps attenuate loud sounds – such as weapons fire or vehicle noise – to safe levels. The device also enables warfighters to hear discrete ambient sounds – from a footfall to a whisper – to help them maintain situational awareness in quieter environments. The result: increased survivability, lethality and mission effectiveness.

Today, the COMTAC III ACH is fielded by the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), the U.S. Army Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI), and Special Operations Forces.

Aaron Iwanciw is a Marine Corps combat veteran who uses the COMTAC III ACH in training programs offered by his consulting company, [ArmorCorps Inc.](#)

“The people I train with trust the COMTAC III ACH because of our own experience with the device, and because we know it’s battlefield proven,” Iwanciw said. “In my time with the USMC, I was involved in missions where the lack of devices, like the COMTAC III ACH, created dangerous situations. Too often, our team couldn’t hear each other or the radio over the combat noise. With the capability COMTAC III ACH brings, I couldn’t imagine a scenario like that happening.”

LTC Eric Fallon, a retired Army audiologist, has served on the front lines of the military’s efforts to enhance tactical communications while protecting service members’ hearing. Today, he works for 3M’s Personnel Safety Division and continues his efforts to protect U.S. forces.

“Despite all the military’s efforts to prevent hearing loss, traditional passive protection often goes unused because it decreases a soldier’s ability to hear and communicate in quiet,” Fallon said. That lack of use likely is a major reason why the Veterans Administration paid more than \$850 million for hearing-related compensation in 2011.

“The tactical cost is not as easily calculated, but perhaps even more significant,” Fallon added. “Service members who’ve had to communicate face-to-face or over radio systems while surrounded by high noise levels can tell you it’s a major challenge. Enhancing communications while protecting our combat personnel is a top priority within the military’s hearing community. Devices like the COMTAC III ACH are a critical component of that effort.”

## About 3M Defense

3M has served the United States military for more than 60 years. 3M Defense is a focused team applying 3M’s culture of customer-inspired innovation to meet national security and warfighter needs. Through our expertise, we provide, modify and invent solutions designed to solve the military’s most complex problems. For more

information, visit [www.3MDefense.com](http://www.3MDefense.com)

#### About 3M Personal Safety Division

3M offers a comprehensive, diverse portfolio of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) solutions providing respiratory protection, hearing protection, fall protection, reflective materials for high visibility apparel, protective clothing, protective eyewear, head and face protection, welding helmets, and other adjacent products and solutions such as tactical safety equipment, detection, monitoring equipment, active communications equipment and compliance management. In 2012, 3M celebrated 40 years of occupational health & safety leadership – recognizing the company’s respiratory and hearing protection solutions introduced in 1972. Visit [www.3M.com/PPESafety](http://www.3M.com/PPESafety) or <http://m.3m.com/PPESafety>.

#### About 3M

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