

What happened to the hummer essay



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The HMMWV, pronounced Humvee, short for High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle, which went into preliminary design work in 1979, was intended as a mobile transport vehicle for American troops. (Burkeman, 2008) It gained popularity among civilians as support for the military grew.

Versions of the Humvee, called the Hummer went into production for the general public in the early 1990s (AMGeneral. com). The Hummer's reputation grew and sales increased to impressive proportions. New models have since been manufactured to entice more excitement and interest among private citizens. However, the Hummer's fine reputation was harmed as the truth about its safety, gas mileage, and general environmental irresponsibility came to light. In 1979, AMGeneral began preliminary design work on the M998 Series Humvee.

The U. S. Army awarded AMGeneral a prototype contract in 1981 to produce a 1. 25-ton truck intended to replace other light tactical vehicles currently in use. In 1983, the LTV Corporation bought AMGeneral from American Motors Corporation and established it as a wholly owned subsidiary of the LTV Aerospace and Defense Company.

In 1984, the AMGeneral headquarters moved from the American Motors AMTEK Building to Livonia, Michigan, and two years later to South Bend, Indiana, where the primary manufacturing operations were located. On January 2, 1985, AMGeneral rolled the first HMMWV off the assembly line of their new South Bend facility. (AMGeneral. com) Humvees are at present being used by the U.

S. Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Navy all over the world. The Humvee entered military missions in 1985. It was used mainly to get the soldiers from one point to another, to transport supplies, and to navigate in many off-road situations.

The government poured money into the company, AMGeneral, to create the US military's rugged, wide-bodied transport vehicles. (AMGeneral. com) The M998 HMMWV is the most commonly deployed tactical vehicle used by the Armed forces of the USA and its allies. It offered excellent off-road and cross-country mobility primarily for utility, logistical, and scout missions.

(Internal Online Defence Magazine, 2005)When the Humvee was new to the battleground it was fairly boxy, thinly covered, loud, and generally unsafe in the field. It had no armor, no on board weapons, nothing to protect the soldiers inside. It was a 1970's workhorse with uncomfortable seats, canvas doors, and an engine that was so poorly insulated that riders tend to swelter. (Burkeman, 2008) I remember some things I would hear on the news like soldiers were trying to outfit the vehicle with their own hand made armor. I also heard that passengers in Humvees were often all killed by a road-side bomb because there was no armor on the vehicle. As the most popular tactical vehicle in its day, the M988 HUMMWV was used in many of the world's armies.

However, only a few troops were operating protected Hummers and the Israelis, US Army, and US Forces were not among these. It became clear during the conflict in Kosovo and more recently in Afghanistan and Iraq that these soft, unprotected vehicles were highly vulnerable to any type of attack

mines, Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), firebombs, grenades, small arms or mortar fire, and especially Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG). During the security and stability operations that followed operations Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) and Iraqi Freedom (OIF), a limited number of up-armored Hummers were available in field though prone to rollover. Still, as of May 2004, most vehicles remained unprotected.

As a result the coalition forces had fallen prey to many types of attacks causing heavy casualties traveling in these soft-skinned trucks. They were even highly vulnerable to stone throwing and fire bombs. (Internal Online Defence Magazine, 2005) Many young soldiers died because of the government's inability to fund armored vehicles to our troops. While filming on the set of Kindergarten Cop, Arnold Schwarzenegger saw a convoy of sturdy Humvees roaring past and fell in love with the giant, imposing vehicles. Schwarzenegger contacted the manufacturer to demand one. They informed him of the regulatory standards that prevent sale to the public.

However, he was not swayed. He bothered AMGeneral until they created a civilian version. In 1992 Schwarzenegger bought the first Hummer (H1), made for the general public that rolled off the factory line. Since then Schwarzenegger, who is now governor of the state of California, has changed his views about the colossal, seven-foot-wide, mega truck.

His enthusiasm about the Hummer has waned into bitterness about the Iraq war and global warming. He is an outspoken champion of responsible environmental causes. General Motors, which has owned the Hummer since 1998, announced in 2008 that they would have to sell off the brand that had

come to be known as “ the most anti-environmental vehicle in the history of the world”, according to a website devoted to the demise of the Hummer, FUH2. FUH2 declared, “ Mission Accomplished! ” “ Let’s just say they’re not selling like they used to,” says Neil Kopit, director of marketing at Criswell Hummer, a dealership in Maryland (Burkeman, 2008).

GM Made no move to unload the Hummer line of SUVs but instead began the work to breed what they view as even better Hummers. Instead of selling the brand GM decided to use marketing techniques to entice the self-centered, self-absorbed, insecure, vain people who never had been in the military but wished they had. Their own market research backs up this view of the newest Hummer enthusiast. Thus, GM developed the H2 and subsequently the H3, a foot narrower than the H1, and about half as heavy (Burkeman, 2008). GM continues to market the Hummer brand as insanely absurd commercials of the imposing vehicle is seen driving down winding roads with beautiful forest trees swaying and flowers opening their pedals as the only sound heard is the birds chirping and streams trickling as the sunlight bounces off the water. The Hummer is no doubt a gas-guzzling, giant.

The anti-Hummer campaigns like the Sierra Club and a woman’s activist group, Code Pink object to the renowned fuel inefficiency and the danger it poses passengers of the SUV and argue that the H1 and H2 are so heavy they do not have to publicize their miles-per-gallon numbers according to American law (Code Pink, n. d.). They suggest that the figure is between 9mpg and 11mpg much like the historically classic Model-T. The newer H3 gets about 18mpg (Burkeman, 2008). I have not seen these figures in any other modern vehicle on the street unless it was ready for the junkyard.

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The environmental imprint left by the Hummer is going down in history as a giant stain on the soul of the world. It guzzles fossil fuels at alarming rates. The global consequence has to be clearly apparent to most of us. Just as we were trying to teach the world to be environmentally conscience, the Hummer arrives, dashing the hopefulness in many of us.

It seems as though the world took a step backward on the path of energy independence. The social sense of right and wrong seems distorted as the Hummer sails toward the future with the consumer having a sense entitlement and indignant pride for their infringements. The Hummer and its predecessor, the Humvee, were thought to be a fleeting passion but it looks like they are here to stay, at least for a time. There seems to be no plans to bring to an end the ugliness of it all. We will continue to see the behemoths pounding down the street as if they were the barometers of wealth.

Brushed metal and tinted windows, ceiling fans, and spinning rims are in the face of all those who oppose the indignant buyer of such decadence. It seems as though we have forgotten the lives that paved the way for us to be so brash. The men and women who gave their lives to protect freedom died needlessly as Humvee manufacturers disregarded their safety. The government continues to turn a blind eye to the fuel inefficiency and unsafe road handling in civilian and military settings. Despite the environmental consequences a growing number of people are willing to ignore the naysayers. I am ashamed to be a human in the face of such troublesome and destructive moral erosion.