

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
YOUNG DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES
CAMP CUERVO, IRAQ
APO AE 09373

August 21, 2004

To whom it may concern:

I would like to personally thank the entire team that has contributed to the Add-On-Armor kits that are being installed on our HMMWVs to increase our Soldier's survivability on the battlefield here in Iraq. The protection of the armored doors and the ballistic glass windows that all the companies worked so hard to design, develop, and install is a great achievement that speaks volumes to your industry and the hard work you do contributing to our ongoing fight against terrorism. I would like to share with you a story:

I arrived in Iraq in March 2004 with the First Cavalry Division and up until now, my HMMWV has not had the opportunity to receive any armored protection. To conduct my missions, I've been riding around the streets of Baghdad without any form of armored protection, just a plain hummer without any doors and a normal glass windshield. On August 11, 2004, prior to one of my missions, a HMMWV equipped with armored doors and ballistic glass windshields and windows became available for my use. I jumped on the chance to afford myself an increased level of protection. I didn't know how fortunate that decision would be. Halfway to my destination, my convoy was ambushed with heavy small arms AK-47 fire, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs). My vehicle was directly engaged with heavy small arms fire, receiving multiple hits on the driver's windshield. The vehicle also took a few direct hits on the doors and windows protecting us from the side. Most amazing, the heavy ballistic windshield took a direct hit from an RPG, at an angle, and seemed to bounce off and then explode immediately to my right. My driver was able to maintain control of the vehicle; we drove out of the ambush alive! We continued, albeit a bit shaken, but felt completely secure in our vehicle and completed our mission. I can tell you that seeing the RPG flying at me, striking the windshield directly in front of my face and exploding to my right, gives me great assurance in the protection your products provide to the average Soldier. I realize I was very lucky, but your team increased my odds significantly. I am certain that without the kit being installed, I would not have the opportunity to write this letter and thank you or make it home to my wife and daughter safely without even a scratch from this event. Our unit is now actively attempting to procure more of these kits for every vehicle we have, especially those that must travel outside the camp, so every Soldier will have the same level of protection.

The call from the field for some form of armor for our everyday work vehicles was identified and your companies, in my opinion answered that call. Keep up the good work and continue contributing to the fight! First Team!

Sincerely,

Michael D. Brown
First Sergeant, US Army