

****UPDATE** MEDIA ADVISORY**

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Live Fire Exercise: ARNG will conduct a Live Fire Exercise
~The Arkansas National Guard to fire the M777A2 155mm Howitzer

- WHO:** The Arkansas National Guard's 1-206th Field Artillery Battalion
- WHAT:** Will conduct live fire training of the M777A2 Lightweight 155mm Towed Howitzer.
- WHEN:** ****UPDATED** Saturday, July 28, 2018, starting approximately 8 a.m. Media must be in place no later than 7:15 a.m. Contact Maj. Will Phillips, 501-212-5020 / 501-590-0318, to arrange coverage access.**
- WHERE:** FT Chaffee Joint Maneuver Training Center, Front Gate

WHY: This is the first time the M777A2 has been fielded to an AR ARNG unit.

The purpose of this exercise is to complete initial training and verification of functionality for the newly acquired weapon systems.

The addition of the M777A2 to 1-206th Field Artillery Battalion gives greater range and lethality to the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT). This also designates 1-206th FA as a functional composite artillery battalion.

The M777A2 Lightweight 155mm Towed Howitzer succeeds the M777A1 which originally replaced the M198 155mm towed howitzer.

The latest version is vastly upgraded from its predecessor with reduced weight and increased range. The advancements increased mobility, survivability, deployability, and sustainability for expeditionary operations. The addition of the M982 Excalibur Guided Projectile to this platform gives it the furthest range of any U.S. Armed forces cannon artillery with ranges past 45,000 meters.

The addition of the M777A2 and upgraded M119A3 howitzers to 1-206th FA Battalion designates it as a composite artillery battalion. This allows for multiple artillery configurations for the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Commander to employ across his formations increasing lethality, communicability, and responsive artillery fires down to the company level for Infantry Battalions. By 2025, the M777 variant will be able to range up to 70km with upgraded cannon tubes.