



# Patriot Ordnance P415: The Ultimate AR?

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT; AN AR THAT WILL FIRE 100,000 ROUNDS WITHOUT A CLEANING? THIS NEW RIFLE IS PASSING UNTHINKABLE TESTS.

Revolutionary is a word that is used all too frequently, but sometimes it is about the only word that fits. Suppose we told you that we had extensively tested an AR-based carbine that didn't need lubrication? And suppose we told you that it really didn't need regular cleaning, either? Finally, suppose we told you that this new AR would run over 20,000 rounds without regular maintenance or a single malfunction?

You'd probably think that Cutshaw needed to turn himself in for a drug test. Such an AR upgrade exists as either a "drop on" upper receiver or a complete carbine. Don Alexander, Co-Director of Training at SHD Consulting and Special Forces personnel in Afghanistan have used it extensively. The figures that follow are Alexander's, not mine. Alexander set out to shoot the P415 upper receivers he got from Patriot Ordnance Factory (POF) without cleaning or lubing them until they started to malfunction. He never made it. Alexander's rifle was cleaned for the first time after 16,000 rounds, not because the P415 needed it, but because he was teaching a course for the State Department that mandated a class on cleaning and maintenance. In a memo to Frank Desomma, President of POF, Alexander stated that he had yet to experience a single malfunction except one that was attributable to a faulty magazine very early in his use of the P415 upper. Alexander, a retired US Army Special Forces Chief Warrant Officer with 26 years' experience, is not one to make statements such as these lightly or in jest. Our experience with a P415 matches Alexander's — our long-term test P415 that we have

used extensively since 2006 has yet to require cleaning or lubrication other than an occasional wipe down with a dry shop towel. Since Alexander's testing, US Army Special Forces units have used POF carbines extensively in Afghanistan and have found them to be totally reliable, not to mention accurate. There have even been reports of troops putting over 100,000 rounds through their POF carbines without significant maintenance.

POF's AR-type carbine is unlike any other. Externally, the most obvious difference between the P415 and others is the patented P-4SX upper receiver that not only features an uninterrupted full length MIL-STD-1913 top rail and rails at the handguard sides and bottom, but also free floats the barrel, enabling mounting accessories without affecting the carbine's zero. The latest POF carbines have a "spine" atop the upper receiver rather than a MIL-STD-1913 rail that allows the one piece P-4SX receiver/handguard to be slid into place and retained with bolts, essentially making for a rigid two-piece upper receiver. The P415 barrel is fluted along its entire length for rigidity and heat dissipation. The flutes offer a greater surface area, so heat is more rapidly dispersed than with standard heavy barrels. Flutes also stiffen the barrel and improve accuracy by reducing barrel vibration as the rifle is fired. The barrel bore is nitrided, which makes for a surface that approaches diamond hardness and prevents fouling because nothing can adhere to it. Fit and finish of the P415 are excellent. We were particularly impressed with the mating of upper and lower



receivers with absolutely no "play" whatsoever. POF's P415 is one of the best-assembled AR-type rifles we have ever seen.

One of the major differences between the P415 and any other is the patented gas system that eliminates the inherent problems associated with Stoner's original design. The original AR direct impingement gas system not only blows large amounts of fouling and particulate matter back into the receiver, but also causes excessive heat to be transferred to the receiver area in rapid semiautomatic or full automatic fire. There have been attempts to solve the AR's gas system issues in the past, but POF is one of the most innovative and successful. The P415 gas system consists of a FAL-type gas cylinder plug, a chrome-lined gas cylinder with a chrome-plated stainless steel piston and operating rod that impinges against a reinforced bolt car-

rier key. Unlike some other "op rod" systems, there are no springs on the P415 rod. Heat from sustained firing may damage springs that surround op rods that are in close proximity to the barrel. This is especially true in select-fire rifles. The P415 gas system is self-regulating, so any type of ammo can be used. The P415 system can be easily and quickly disassembled by simply pressing in on the gas cylinder plug button while rotating the plug clockwise. Once the plug is removed, the piston and operating rod fall out when the muzzle is pointed down. Reassembly is accomplished simply by dropping the rod and piston back into the gas cylinder with the muzzle pointed up. The plug fits only one way and cannot be incorrectly reassembled. All that is necessary is to push the plug into place, press the locking button and rotate the plug counterclockwise.

Another notable feature is that

the P415 is completely ambidextrous. Most ARs require the use of both hands to change magazines and get the carbine back into action because the magazine release is on the right side of the receiver and the bolt release is on the left. Not the P415. While the P415 has the standard magazine release and bolt stop, a separate bolt release has been added on the right side just above the magazine release. All that is necessary to change magazines and get back in the fight is to drop the empty mag, insert a loaded one and press the bolt stop located just above the magazine release using the trigger finger. The bolt release is slightly to the rear of the mag release as well, so the chance of inadvertently dropping the mag instead of the bolt is minimized.

After using ARs with the original direct gas impingement system, P415 maintenance is a true revelation. While conventional AR receivers fill with fouling and particulate matter after a few rounds, the P415 remains relatively clean even after extensive firing. There is no carbon fouling or caked carbon to be found on the bolt or in the bolt carrier recesses. In short, the P415 is much easier and simpler to maintain than any AR-type rifle with the usual direct impingement system. All that is necessary to clean a P415 is to wipe the receiver's interior, bolt carrier and bolt with a dry shop towel to remove any fouling. Also, the gas system should be periodically disassembled and cleaned, since it takes the brunt of hot gases from the barrel. Any carbon buildup on the gas piston or op rod can be removed with a Scotch Brite pad.

But the improved gas system isn't the end of the story with the P415. The changes that allow the P415 to run without lubrication are a chrome plated bolt carrier and bolt coupled with NP 3 plating on the receiver's interior and on the charging handle. Nothing sticks to either surface and they are self-lubricating. Eliminating the need for lubrication that becomes a "dust magnet" in an environment like that of Iraq or Afghanistan is a

truly significant improvement. Conventional AR gas systems require heavy lubrication in order to function, but due to their affinity for dust, intensive virtually daily maintenance is required. The P415 bolt carrier has been modified for increased reliability and accuracy. The bolt carrier surfaces that ride on the upper receiver are somewhat larger than conventional ones, while maintaining recesses to accommodate any fouling that might accumulate. The cam pin has a roller that rides in the upper receiver recess for even smoother operation and reliability. The chamber, barrel locking lugs and interior are also chrome plated, also enhancing reliability.

All POF carbines come equipped with Vltor's Modstock. The Modstock is available in several colors and configurations, including black, coyote tan and OD green. There are two collapsible Modstocks — standard and "clubfoot." The clubfoot facilitates using the off hand to pull the stock into

the shoulder for greater stability. Unlike most others, Vltor's waterproof compartments can be accessed with the stock on the carbine. The compartment adapters provide a flat surface for an excellent cheek weld. The Vltor Modstock is extremely comfortable and thus enhances accuracy. It also raises one's line of sight to an ideal level for either open sights or optics. The improvements don't end with comfort and utility, though. Vltor also redesigned the latch on both standard and clubfoot configured stocks for more positive engagement.

POF's P415 breaks new ground in the world of AR-type carbines most of which are so similar that even experts cannot tell the difference between one and another without close inspection. The P415's innovative "gas piston/op rod" significantly advances the "state of the art" in AR-type firearms and not only adds flexibility to the overall system, but improves both reliability and maintainability over any of

its conventional competitors. Add to that the ability to operate without lubrication of any kind, minimal maintenance and the result is a truly revolutionary design. In the final analysis, the P415's innovations are among the most significant developments in AR type rifles since they were originally designed over 50 years ago. For those who want a larger caliber AR, POF also manufactures ARs with the same advanced features as the P415 in both 6.6mm SPC and .308. Welcome to the AR of the 21st Century! **GDTM**

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