

## *2017 Ammunition Hall of Fame Inductee*

### **RENE KIEBLER**



From 1998-2001, Mr. Rene Kiebler served as the Chief of the Production Division for PM Artillery Munitions Systems (ARMS) and assumed responsibility for production and product assurance engineering on all active Army production efforts. A significant portion of today's ammunition was produced and fielded under his leadership including: 155mm M795 High Explosive (HE) projectile, 155mm Sense and Destroy Armor (SADARM) projectile. SADARM was used with devastating effect in Dessert Storm I where it destroyed numerous enemy vehicles in fortified defensive positions. Other programs under his authority included Multi-Option Fuze Artillery (MOFA), Portable Inductive Artillery Fuze Setter (PIAFS), and the M915 Dual-Purpose Improved Conventional Munition (DPICM) projectile. Mr. Kiebler conducted ammunition compatibility studies with new platforms, such as Crusader and M777, which led to designing and fielding of new and improved obturators for the M795 projectile and M549A1 projectile.

From 2001-2003, Mr. Kiebler joined the PEO Ammunition staff at its inception in January 2001 as the Director of Program Management. In this role he was responsible for the overall management and execution of all Army Ammunition development programs. He led staff officers and program management personnel thru all aspects of ammunition development, production, fielding and sustainment. Items managed included an annual budget in excess of \$2B for ammunition across the DOD.

From 2003-2014, Mr. Kiebler held the position of Deputy Project Manager for the U.S. Army's Program Manager for Combat Ammunition Systems (CAS). In this capacity he was responsible for the development, production, fielding, and logistics sustainment of all artillery and mortar munitions, as well as mortar weapons and fire control systems. Under his leadership, the M982 Excalibur projectile and Enhanced Portable Inductive Artillery Fuze Setter (EPIAFS) programs were developed and executed, leading to an Urgent Materiel Release (UMR) to support the Warfighter in Afghanistan. Following the UMR, two additional versions were developed and type classified. These versions increased range, improved reliability, and reduced unit cost. The Excalibur is a true precision munition that has earned its reputation of effectiveness on the battlefield. It not only defeats the threat but also eliminates unwanted collateral damage and increases the reach of current fielded 155mm weapons.

Within XM1156 Precision Guidance Kit (PGK) Increment I GPS-guided fuze Engineering Manufacturing and Design (EMD) program to provide range-independent Circular Error Probability (CEP) accuracy for the M795 155mm high explosive artillery projectile and M549A1 high explosive rocket-assisted artillery projectile, Mr. Kiebler was instrumental in providing essential guidance and leadership to the Product Manager, Guided Precision Munitions & Mortar Systems (PM, GPM2S) team. As a result, PM GPM2S successfully modified the PGK program baseline to incorporate an Urgent Material Release (UMR) PGK qualification and

production effort supporting the Army's accelerated fielding decision to Afghanistan, while also maintaining the PGK Program of Record (PoR) base-configuration qualification effort on schedule to support a low-rate initial production (LRIP) decision. Accordingly, the UMR production contract was awarded in May 2012 (definitized November 2012) to ultimately produce PGK fuzes. The PM GPM2S PGK team flawlessly completed UMR and PoR development and qualification testing, assuring the availability of PGK capability for Soldiers in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) subsequent to final UMR approval – months ahead of PGK PoR Initial Operational Capability (IOC). Additionally, the PGK base program successfully reached Low Rate Initial Production (LRIP) for the initial PGKs.

Under the XM395 APMI program, Mr. Kiebler's continued leadership was essential to PM GPM2S and prime contractor completion of failure analysis and corrective action to improve reliability. As a result, PM GPM2S meticulously incorporated test procedure changes, GPS software improvements, and fuzing hardware improvements leading to successful completion of acceptance testing and APMI production and delivery of the Operational Need Statement (ONS) requirement of mortar cartridges. Accordingly, the Accelerated Precision Mortar Initiative (APMI) ONS reliability requirement was realized in the final production lot. The GPM2S team also qualified a new APMI electronic fuze setter, the XM702 Precision Lightweight Universal Mortar Setter System (PLUMSS), and Mortar Fire Control System (MFCS) software for UMR release. PM GPM2S subsequently fielded XM702 PLUMSS setter systems during APMI New Equipment Training to Stryker Brigade Combat Teams (SBCT) in OEF, enabling APMI employment capability for the Stryker Double-V Hull XM1252 vehicle-mounted 120mm system. Fulfillment of the APMI OEF ONS represents a significant capability improvement that decreases the average mortar miss distance at all engagement ranges, providing Infantry and Stryker BCT maneuver battalions with a first-ever organic indirect precision munition capability to achieve first-round effects on target. Units employed the APMI with great success in combat operations. Accordingly, in 2012 APMI and the XM701 PLUMSS were voted two of the Top Ten Army Greatest Inventions of 2011 by the Soldiers that use them.

In addition to the quantum leap ahead in providing precision in Fire Support, Mr. Kiebler contributed to many other noteworthy accomplishments, such as, 155mm M1122 projectile (a substantial savings in training and a low collateral operational projectile), 155mm M1066 and 105mm M1064 Infrared (IR) Illumination projectiles, 155mm extended-range illumination projectiles M1123 and M1124, and the 105mm pre-formed fragment (PFF) M1130 projectile. With increasing emphasis on producing Insensitive Munitions, Mr. Kiebler initiated a program for Common Low-cost Insensitive Munitions Explosive (CLIMEX) to develop replacement explosives. In 2010, the CLIMEX project completed the development of IMX-101 explosive (named one of the year's greatest inventions by Time magazine) and the qualification of the M795 IM projectile. Mr. Kiebler was the U.S. Head of Delegation to the Joint Ballistic Management Board and effectively represented U.S. interests in the international fire support arena. He was essential to establishing the latest revision of the Joint Ballistic Memorandum of Understanding enabling design and testing for interchangeability of 155mm ammunition of the member nations. Mr. Kiebler is inducted into the 2017 Ammunition Hall of Fame for his contributions.