Government Arsenal History http://www.arsenal.mil.ph/profhis.html

Plant: oda_1@mozcom.com
Minila Office: gammlo@mozcom.com

The Government Arsenal (GA) is located on a 370-hectare defense industrial estate in Lamao, Limay, Province of Bataan, about 120 km from Manila by land, 70 km from Subic and 90 km from Clark. Just three km from the Port of Limay, the Arsenal is strategically situated near the Petron Bataan Refinery, the Bataan Combined Cycle Power Plant, the National Power Corporation Plant, the Petro-Chemical Complex, and the Special Economic Zone at Mariveles, Bataan. To sustain its operations, the GA presently maintains and operates 124 buildings and structures sprawled over 70 hectares of land.

A creation of Republic Act No. 1884 which was signed into law on June 22, 1957, the Arsenal is a line bureau under the Department of National Defense. However, it was only about a decade later, on March 7, 1967, that a presidential proclamation on its present site at Limay, Bataan was declared. Accordingly, on October 12, 1967, the ground breaking materialized at the spot where the statue of General Antonio Luna now stands. Site preparations were subsequently undertaken by the 514th and 564th Engineering Construction Battalions of the 51st Engineering Brigade of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Construction of essential buildings and facilities then followed along with training abroad of selected military and newly hired civilian personnel on the manufacture of small arms ammunition (SAA).

On August 15, 1971, or fourteen (14) years after the enactment of RA 1884, the first SAA cartridge rolled out of the GA's production assembly line. Three years later, the integrated SAA manufacture began, with all the components - case, primer, propellant powder, and bullet assembled into a complete cartridge - manufactured in the arsenal.

As a strategic resource, the arsenal is envisioned to be a center for defense industries to meet domestic requirements and supply the world market. In line with this vision, the GA explored in the early 1980's, the possibility of exporting excess production, improving ammunition technology and expanding the capability for weapons production as called for in its charter. However, the impediments under the then existing laws prevented any real progress in this direction.

It is fortuitous that on February 23, 1995, Republic Act 7898, otherwise

known as the AFP Modernization Act, was enacted. RA 7898 likewise provides for the modernization of the Government Arsenal for the development of production capabilities to enhance self-sufficiency in defense requirements. Specifically, Section 12 of this Act mandates that "the government arsenal shall be utilized in the production of basic weapons, ammunition and other munitions for the use of the AFP and the Philippine National Police (PNP), and for the sale and export of products in excess of AFP/PNP requirements." Furthermore, the GA is authorized to use such production facilities as it may own or be provided under the law or as it may arrange under joint venture, co-production or similar arrangements with local and foreign entities

Production Lines. The present manufacturing capability of the GA is inherent in its two existing lines - the **GATLO** or **RIFLE** line and the **GAPAT-GABIN** or **PISTOL Line** – which originally make possible the integrated production of three (3) caliber types – **Cal .30M2**, **Cal .30M1** and **Cal .45 M1911** cases, bullets, primers and propellant powders for final assembly into finished ammunition.

Product Lines. Soon it was diversified into four (4) other types of ammunition, namely: **7.62mm M80**, **5.56mm M193**, **Cal .38 Special**, and **9mm Parabellum**. Presently, only four (4) types are being produced, the **7.62mm M80**, **5.56mm M193**, **Cal .45 M1911**, and **9mm Parabellum** ammunition which are ascertained, prior to delivery, to be safe, reliable and accurate in conformity to U.S. Military Standards.

Manufacturing Plants. The GA has four (4) major production plants, namely:

- ***The Case & Bullet Plant*** - which manufactures cases and bullets.
- ***The Primer Plant*** – which manufactures boxer primers.
- ***The Propellant Plant*** – which manufactures propellant powders.
- ***The Cartridge Assembly Plant*** – which loads and assembles the different components into finished cartridges.

Support Facilities. To support its production lines, the GA is equipped with the following facilities in addition to power and water utilities, a three-level communications system, an industrial safety/security network and several welfare service facilities that include a 25-bed secondary hospital:

- ***Machine Shop*** **-** for fabrication of punches, dies, gages and machine parts.
- ***Metallic Link Belt Shop*** **-** for manufacture of metal links for cartridge linkage.

- ***Metrology Laboratory*** - for calibration of tooling, gages and other measuring devices
- ***Carpentry Shop*** - for the fabrication of wooden boxes for ammo packaging.
- ***Proof House*** - for ballistics-test of in-process and finished products.
- ***Physical & Chemical Lab*** - for inspection-test of metallic raw materials, chemicals, components and finished products.

SAW9 Machine Pistol-9mm http://www.arsenal.mil.ph/saw9spe3.htm

The GA started with its initial venture on weapons manufacture in line with its mandate and new thrust to acquire an indigenous capability for the production of a cost effective assault weapon for the AFP and the PNP. This has been made possible through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the GA and Safariland Firearms Manufacturing Corporation, a local gunsmith based in Mandaue City, Cebu, in August 2001. Hence, a joint research and development undertaking ensued on the prototyping, evaluation, enhancement and eventual production of a 9mm machine pistol, the Special Assault Weapon or SAW9.

With the approval of SND of the project proposal on April 21, 2003 and release of the initial fund of P750,000.00 from SRDP on October 2003 out of the P1.5M allocation, the GA proceeded with the fabrication of the enhanced model under a joint undertaking with the Metals Industry Research & Development Center (MIRDC). Fabrication of the seven (7) prototypes followed and underwent surface finishing by a private enterprise. The seven (7) completed units are presently undergoing the necessary tests at the GA facility. Eventually, they will be turned-over to the Philippine Army Research & Development Center (PARDC) for field testing and final evaluation.