The M-257 illuminating and M-278 infrared flares were designed to meet the U.S. Army’s need for a standoff night strike capability in visible and infrared spectra. They are standard warheads for the Hydra-70 (70mm) rocket system and are compatible with all Hydra-70 rocket motors and launch systems. They can be launched from helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft and mobile or stationary ground launchers.

Developed to fulfill stringent military requirements for operational safety and reliability, the flares incorporate advanced design and material concepts derived from state-of-the-art aerospace and energetics technology.

M-257 Illuminating Flare
The M-257 flare offers visible light illumination when the use of night vision devices is not necessary. The flare deploys at a 4,000 meter range and provides one million candlepower illumination for two minutes over a 3,000 foot radius.

M-278 Infrared Flare
The M-278 provides tactical, covert illumination perfect for use under night vision devices. The flare deploys at a 4,000 meter range and provides 250 watts per steradian near infrared illumination for three minutes over a 2,300 foot radius.

Facts at a Glance
- Compatible with all Hydra-70 rocket motors and launch systems
- Launched from all rotary wing aircraft equipped with M260/M261 launchers in all flight environments, including IGE and OGE hover
- Launched from fixed-wing aircraft at speeds of up to 500 knots
- Deployable from stationary or mobile ground launchers
- No maintenance or preflight adjustments required
- Safe to operate and handle with dual-safe out-of-line ignition system
- Environmentally sealed to ensure safety, reliability and storability
- Expected storage life 5+ years
Operational Sequence

Rocket motor acceleration activates fuse and delay assembly, and removes flare igniter safety block

Drogue parachute deploys, initiates fixed delay, and decelerates warhead

Drogue parachute separates, pilot chute assists main parachute deployment, and main parachute opening force actuates flare ignition

One M-278 Flare at 912 m (3,000 ft)

One M-257 Flare at 304 m (1,000 ft)

For more information, contact:
Northrop Grumman Specialty Products
P.O. Box 707, M/S W62A
Brigham City, UT 84302-0707
(801) 435-8396 Tel (435) 863-2270 Fax

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