Raven’s Challenge - Past, Present and Future

EOD/PSBS Interoperability Training Exercise
(supported by HQDA G-38)

Exercise Director: Mr. Brennan Phillips
Exercise Operations: Mr. John Simpson
WHY WE DO THIS:

Create a National EOD/ PSBS standard training exercise focused on:

- the **most likely enemy threat, IEDs**.
- **interoperability**, Public Safety Bomb Squad (PSBS) & EOD.
- EOD’s ability to win on the IED infested battlefield.
- PSBS ability to counter future domestic IED threats.
- regional Bomb Disposal **interoperability & capacity**.
- exposure to new Bomb Disposal ideas and technologies.
WHO: Military EOD (Active/Guard), Public Safety Bomb Squads (PSBS) (Local and State), Feds (DOJ/DHS), International and Industry Partners. Over 1200 participants from 52 Bomb Squads and 6 Countries participated in RC-VIII = Mass/Scale.

“Create a National Level EOD/PSBS standard training exercise”
Enduring Training Concept

WHAT: A collective training event, aligned with PPD-17 JPO CIED EOD/PSBS Interoperability Exercise, the US C-IED Implementation Plan, using the long standing regional Raven’s Challenge Training Event.

“Create a National Level EOD/PSBS standard training exercise”
Originally held on Joint Base Lewis McChord (Fort Lewis).
Hosted by 741st EOD Battalion (Wash. National Guard), Port of Seattle Police, Pierce County Sheriff, Washington State Patrol, ATF & FBI.

The enduring objectives:
- Cross training between EOD/Bomb Squads.
- Create an EOD leadership challenge: planning, logistics, C2.
- Create massSCALE, allowing for sharing/leveraging of resources.
- Build regional interagency cooperation/capability.
- Set an example: dynamic live fire EOD training.
- Examine new/developing technologies.
HQ DA G-38 Funded Exercise

Managed by ATF-Partnered with FBI, DHS, TSA

State and Local Agencies –Time, Resources

A-T Solutions-HSEEP Protocols-Planning (Contracted)
Raven's Challenge IX (2015)
Training Objectives

• EOD/PSBS Interoperability (cross training)
• Live Fire – use of Energetic EOD Tools
• Post RSP/Blast assessment (bomb forensics)
• Mass Transit/Critical Infrastructure incident response
• Maritime EOD/PSBS Operations (team cross training)
• EOD/PSBS Teams operating in a Tactical Environment (SWAT interoperability)
• ECM/Counter RCIED capabilities/limitations
• Information flow/sharing from tactical through strategic levels (BMC/SIOC/NETF) (Exercise Bomb Management Center concepts)
2015 Highlights

- Bomb MGT Center for C2- (Test Bed for Standardized planning)
- Mobile BATS
- ECM interface
- Disaster Scenarios (Camp Blanding)
- Mass Cal Scenarios (Bus)
- SWAT & Bomb Integration
- HME, Cache and Bomb Making
- K9 & Bomb Integration
- Maritime operations in Port of JAX & Puget Sound
Exercise is stable with current funding and staffing levels
- Future - sustained, multiagency resourcing

Training exercise needs to be listed on exercise calendars (FORSCOM/NORTHCOM)

Command emphasis, the training quality at the team level goes up significantly when given priority by leadership

Increased communication of expectations to participants will improve training quality
Exercise Site Requirements

- Large Concentration of PSBS Bomb Squads
- Active Army EOD Units in proximity
- "Live Fire" & "Free Play" site availability
- Logistical Support readily available
April 10-23  Fort Wolters Training Center, Mineral Wells, TX

8-21 May   SPTC Oriskany, NY

31 May – 11 June  Camp Blanding, FL

20 June – 1 July   Elma, WA
7 July: Team from 53rd EOD successfully dealt with a RCIED, had just participated in RC IX live ECM training.
Participant Feedback

- Participant Survey after every scenario
- Feedback drives the AAR
- Team “Hot Wash” with OC after each event
- Self evaluate team actions-grow each day
The collective feedback has been very positive.

Highlighted Weaknesses:
1) Not enough time (Scenarios)
2) Communications Interoperability & team Command and Control
3) Forensic/Evidence Collection and Scene Security
4) Command and Control

Major Highlighted Strengths:
1) Networking/Cross Training
2) Realistic Exercise
3) ECM Use
4) Increased Knowledge of Equipment and TTPs