



# Fact Sheet - National Center for Explosives Training and Research (NCETR)

May, 2019

## Fast Facts

1. ATF's National Center for Explosives Training and Research is a 27 -acre facility which conducts explosive training on more than 1,000 acres of explosives ranges, and houses 83,500 square feet of administrative, laboratory, classroom, training and conference rooms.
2. ATF's National Center for Explosives Training and Research supports the investigation of non-terrorism-related criminal acts involving explosives, bombings and explosives threats, which comprise more than 90 percent of all explosives-related incidents.
3. ATF's National Center for Explosives Training and Research houses a state-of-the-art burn cell complex at its Advanced Fire and Arson Training Complex; the complex has five burn cells and two flashover cells.



The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is responsible for investigating non-terrorism-related criminal acts involving explosives, bombings and explosives threats, which comprise more than 90 percent of all explosives-related incidents. In addition, ATF investigates the origin and cause of accidental explosions. Support for ATF explosives, fire, canine, and response operations is located primarily at the National Center for Explosives Training and Research (NCETR) in Huntsville, Ala.

NCETR consists of the Explosives Enforcement and Training Division; Explosives Research and Development

Division; and Fire Investigation and Arson Enforcement Division, all located at the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, along with the National Canine Division in Front Royal, Va. At NCETR, ATF provides outstanding training facilities and the unmatched expertise of its training staff in the delivery of life-saving advanced explosives and arson training for explosives handlers, bomb technicians, criminal investigators and military explosives ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel all across the nation.

ATF is the only U.S. government agency with fire and arson investigation as part of its core mission, and it serves as the fire investigation and training experts for the United States. The main NCETR facility and explosives ranges make it an extremely unique resource in the fight against explosives- and arson-related violent crime and the counter-improvised explosives device (C-IED) effort.

Some of the resources and capabilities at NCETR include:

- Basic and advanced explosives and improvised explosives device (IED) training.
- Explosives scene processing training.
- Advanced explosives disposal techniques training.
- Identification, process and disposal of homemade explosives (HME) training.
- Processing of complex homemade explosives and post-blast scene training.
- Explosives and IED research.
- Developing explosives technical information and intelligence.
- Program oversight of explosives detection canine imprinting, as well as training and operational support.
- Providing IED render-safe operational support and explosives-related subject matter expertise for operational response support.
- Utilizing advanced IED disassembly techniques.
- Multi-discipline explosives resource center for subject matter guidance or expertise.
- More than 1,000 acres of explosives ranges and explosives training facilities.
- 83,500 square feet of administrative, laboratory, classroom, training and conference rooms within the facility on a 27-acre site.
- Characterization of HMEs.
- Optimizing the post blast recovery of DNA.
- Documenting and characterizing foreign explosive initiators.
- Improving the lock standards for explosives magazines.
- Providing on-scene assistance after an explosion, and destructive device (bomb) determinations.
- Testing and competent authority review of new explosive materials.
- Integrating ATF's fire investigation and arson enforcement operational and training programs.
- Supporting field personnel through the National Response Teams (NRT), certified fire investigators (CFI) and bomber and arsonist profilers.
- In 2016, ATF completed construction of a state-of-the-art burn cell complex at the Advanced Fire and Arson Training Complex at NCETR, with five burn cells and two flashover cells.

Operationally, NCETR oversees ATF's the National Response Team (NRT), which responds to major bombings, explosions, IED incidents, as well as major fire and arson incidents requiring resources beyond the capabilities of our local, state and federal partner agencies. NCETR also oversees ATF's certified explosives specialist (CES) program, which trains ATF subject matter experts in explosions, bombings, explosives and IED investigations related to criminal activity. Not only does NCETR manage the training of these personnel, but it also coordinates the operational responses of ATF personnel to large incidents nationwide and worldwide on requests from foreign partners through the U.S. Department of State.



Through a long partnership with the Department of Defense, ATF delivers the Homemade Explosives-Identification, Process and Disposal Course to a mixed class of public safety and military bomb technicians. NCETR program personnel have also developed HME-related and advanced post-blast investigation courses in support of requests by the U.S. military. The center manages the Raven's Challenge Interoperability Exercise, bringing together the nation's public safety bomb squad and military EOD personnel in scenario-driven training at five locations across the country. This is the largest interoperability exercise of its kind in the United States.

For more information on ATF's programs, please visit the website at [www.atf.gov/explosives](http://www.atf.gov/explosives).

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