



## Fact Sheet



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[www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov)

### **ATF EXPLOSIVES AND ACCELERANT DETECTION CANINES**

#### **Purpose**

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is a leading source of specially trained explosives and accelerant detection canine teams. These teams are assigned to local, state and other federal law enforcement agencies as well as selected foreign countries and regularly lend support to investigations and security efforts. Congress has recognized the odor recognition proficiency standard used by ATF as a benchmark for effective canine explosives detection.

There are 32 ATF-trained explosives detection canine teams with ATF special agent canine handlers. Also, there are currently 112 ATF-trained explosives detection canine teams deployed throughout the United States with local, state or other federal agencies. In addition, there are 71 ATF-trained accelerant detection canine teams currently active in the United States and one in Canada.

#### **Goals**

ATF has established enforcement support programs designed to expand the investigative capabilities of its field personnel, as well as local, state, other federal and international law enforcement entities. Two such initiatives that ATF has developed to combat the explosives threat in the United States and abroad, and the arson threat domestically and in Canada, are the Explosives Detection Canine Program and the Accelerant Detection Canine Program. ATF is also at the forefront of combating terrorism through such innovative programs as training local, state, other federal and international law enforcement explosives detection canines in peroxide explosives, utilizing its years of experience training its own ATF-certified explosives detection canine teams on the substances.

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### **Locations**

Since 1991, ATF has trained 595 explosives detection canines and 127 accelerant detection canines. These dogs and their ATF-trained handlers are located throughout the United States in local police departments, fire departments, fire marshal offices and federal and state law enforcement agencies. Teams are also located in 21 foreign countries.

### **Strategy**

In 1984, ATF developed an accelerant detection canine pilot project that resulted in the creation of an accelerant detection system that offered an immediate advantage over field instruments.

In 1990, ATF began a joint program with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Anti-Terrorism Assistance to produce a more effective explosives detection canine.

In 1992, ATF's explosives detection canine pilot began developing search canines capable of detecting a greater variety of explosives than those under existing programs.

A major advantage of canines is their mobility, a significant improvement over fixed detector installations that can be circumvented by a terrorist placing a bomb or smuggling explosives.

### **ATF Resources**

The ATF Canine Training Center is located in Front Royal, Va., on the grounds of the 250-acre U.S. Customs and Border Protection Canine Training Facility. The 20,000-square-foot training building allows for climate controlled, year-round training and has office space for support personnel. The state-of-the-art kennel facility can accommodate 100 canines and incorporates the latest technology in kennel design.

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