

ATF

News Release

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For Immediate Release
November 6, 2008

ATF BREAKS GROUND ON NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES TRAINING CENTER

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) today marked the beginning of construction on its new National Center for Explosives Training and Research (NCETR) facility during a groundbreaking ceremony at the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville.

The ceremony was officiated by Deputy Attorney General Mark Filip, ATF Acting Director Michael J. Sullivan, U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.); along with invited guests, dignitaries and others witnessed the start of building this important facility.

“The Department of Justice is extremely proud of ATF’s expertise in the area of explosives. Through this facility, the Bureau will not only add to that expertise, but it will also share its knowledge with law enforcement partners throughout the country and the world. The research and instruction that will take place here are absolutely vital to protecting the American people, as well as America’s allies,” said Deputy Attorney General Mark Filip.

“For nearly 40 years, ATF has conducted explosives research in support of training and operations. We have shared this information with all levels of law enforcement to prevent violent crime and to keep our country safe. The creation of the National Center for Explosives Training and Research has been a top priority for ATF,” said Acting Director Sullivan. “From this comes a stronger, safer, more secure America. This is a proud and an exciting moment for ATF.”

“The National Center for Explosives Training and Research is a critically-needed training facility that will provide federal, state and local law enforcement with one-stop training in dealing with explosives,” said U.S. Sen. Shelby. “As the war on terrorism continues, most experts expect that explosives, from homemade bombs to improvised explosive devices, will continue to be one of our nation’s biggest challenges. The ATF will now lead explosives, forensics, and technology research at Huntsville’s NCETR, the explosives research capital of the world.”

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“This event proves that Team Redstone is committed to making a positive difference in our nation's defense of freedom,” Maj. Gen. Jim Myles, Redstone Arsenal, said. “As we look to the future, the strength of the nation depends on our united efforts to remain vigilant and committed to be ready for the world's ever-changing environment. Everything we do improves the quality of our training and vigilance secures our future.”

ATF maintains technical expertise, knowledge, experience and forensic capabilities related to explosives properties, mixtures and devices through NCETR. The Department of Justice established NCETR (*pronounced “en-SEE-der”*) as a division within ATF’s Office of Training and Professional Development after Congress passed the 2002 Homeland Security Act, to train federal, state, local and international law enforcement personnel and to conduct cutting-edge explosives related research.

The planned facility will provide explosives training for ATF personnel as well as for law enforcement and other first responders from the explosives community. It will be used to promote and conduct research to improve the ability of ATF and its partners to investigate bombings, prevent diversion of explosives from legal commerce to the black market, and to ensure the safe, secure storage of explosives.

This facility will consist of three explosives ranges, eight classrooms, laboratories, a conference facility and office space for ATF personnel and its partners from the law enforcement and explosives communities. The facility is scheduled to be completed by 2010.

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