



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE

TENNESSEE FIRE SERVICE AND CODES ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

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STATE TRAINING ACADEMY AND ATF DEVELOP PARTNERSHIP

BROADER ACADEMY MISSION TAKING SHAPE

Bell Buckle, TN. – The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms will hold its regional training exercises at the Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Enforcement Academy as part of the Academy's expanding mission to support Homeland Security training.

State Fire Marshal Paula A. Flowers said the ATF partnership with the Academy is a "win-win" for both programs and for taxpayers. "We're delighted to offer the use of our state-of-the-art facility to ATF and to all of our first-responders," said Flowers. "The Academy is a great regional asset, and we want to maximize its use by local, state and national agencies."

The ATF conducted a preliminary Post Blast Investigation Course in August to determine the feasibility of using the Academy campus as a regional training site. The facility, located on 330 acres in Bedford County, already trains Tennessee firefighters and codes officials in a broad range of areas, including explosives and post-blast scenarios.

"The joint training conducted at the Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Academy is an excellent example of the cooperation between multiple law enforcement agencies and other first responders including Emergency Medical Services and Fire Departments," stated ATF Special Agent and Public Information Officer Eric Kehn. "Regular training continuously develops new knowledge and techniques necessary in an ever-changing public safety environment. ATF and its partners continue to strive in providing training in the field and vigorously investigating cases that involve explosives, post blast scenes and arson."

The ATF enforces federal laws and regulations relating to alcohol, tobacco, firearms, explosives and arson. As part of the Justice Department, the ATF makes a vital contribution to American efforts against terrorism. The August course included training in explosive recognition and documentation, arson, bloodhounds, and bomb robots. Investigators from the middle Tennessee region and North Carolina attended the course. ATF has set training dates with the Academy for 2005.

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“We are thrilled to have the ATF here at the Academy, and we’re working on forging similar partnerships with other agencies,” stated Roger Hawks, Academy Executive Director. “Tennesseans are safer – and our first responders are safer – because of the affordable, realistic training we can offer.”

The Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Enforcement Academy is located 15 miles south of Murfreesboro. The campus offers the latest in training technology, state-of-the-art equipment and a full spectrum of courses to emergency service first responders and to codes enforcement personnel.