



ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
Denver Field Division

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ATF OFFERS TRAINING TO EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINES

DENVER -- The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is conducting the National Odor Recognition Test (NORT) training – a standardized method of accessing the ability of an explosives detection canine (EDC) to recognize explosives odors commonly recovered in criminal investigations and less common peroxide-based homemade explosives.

ATF is the primary Department of Justice agency for training of explosives detection canines, or bomb-sniffing dogs, for other federal, state, local and international law enforcement agencies. The certified trainers ensure the EDCs alert properly to the presence of explosives. In order to become an ATF-certified EDC and handler, the only passing grade is a perfect score.

An ATF forensic chemist offers classroom lecture to canine handlers on the current trends concerning explosives trends used by violent criminals and terrorists, to include TATP and HMTD and other homemade, peroxide-based explosives. The chemist also administers the National Odor Recognition Test. An ATF certified explosives specialist provides the TATP and HMTD training aid and ensures that the training aids are safely and properly transported, stored and handled, in addition to covering topics on explosives recognition, storage and handling regulations, and the safe use of explosives.

Full-time ATF canine trainers with extensive canine training experience “imprint” the dogs to properly alert to TATP and HMTD, and work with the each canine team to achieve their proficiency level and set up the training regimen so that target odors are recognized. An ATF veterinary technician provides canine wellness and basic canine first aid instruction.

The certification class at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, CO includes canine/handler teams from the Wyoming Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Protective Service, the Federal Reserve Bank Police; Arvada, Colorado Springs, Denver and Golden Police Departments; Adams, Boulder, and Jefferson Counties and another eight teams from the government of Mexico participated in the training as part of ATF’s partnership with law enforcement entities in Central America.

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