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House Clearance

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House Clearance

1. Introduction

The searching of a building for ordnance and, especially, booby traps is a very risky operation and should only be undertaken by the most experienced personnel. This should be conducted by an experienced Level 3 EOD technician with an EOD team. Individuals clearing a building where booby traps are expected should be alert for all types of entrapment situations during the clearance.

2. Scope

This chapter provides standard guidance on conducting mine and ERW clearance operations in the suspected hazardous houses or buildings.

3. Threat Assessment

The threat assessment is of primary importance during house clearance procedures. During this assessment the following questions should be used as a baseline for the assessment

- 1) Why has the clearance been requested?
- 2) Has any ordnance been visually seen, in or around the house/building?
- 3) Did military, police and/or militant units occupy the house/building?
- 4) Was there any fighting or bombardment of the locality?
- 5) Is the house/building located within a known SHA?
- 6) Have there been any casualties, attributable to ordnance, in the locality? If so, what type of ordnance?
- 7) Have booby traps been used or found in the past in the area? If so, specifically what types?

4. Working Parties

The working parties for a house or building clearance should be the minimum number of qualified operators as safety distance permits. This is normally done in pairs unless sufficient safety distances can be achieved. **No other** person should enter the building until it has been cleared. In very large buildings two or more pairs may be employed provided they work a safe distance apart, and have clearly defined boundaries. As a general rule, either two walls or two floors should be the minimum distance between parties. When clearing single room buildings, each building should be treated as a single room of a house.

5. On site requirements

- a) Command and control: a plan should be written and then briefed to the whole team regarding the procedures for command and control. Prior to start operation and enter to the building, the search team should consider what specialist equipment is needed in order to complete the clearance in safe, effective and efficient way.
- b) Medical: ensure the on-site medical supports and documented procedures for CASEVAC are available. Safe routes to and from the control point shall also be clearly identified.

- c) Communication: ensure communication between the team and HQ of clearance organization is maintained. Other agencies as police, military, fire fighter and rescue agencies have been informed of the situation.
- d) Safe approaches to the building: once the routes to and from the building have been identified by clearance team, they shall be cleared and then marked. Entry points and explosive storage area should be agreed upon, mapped and briefed to the team. Additional safety precautions should be considered during the search in house clearance operations such as booby trapped doors, windows, furniture and other features. Safety measures shall be listed and covered during the team briefing prior to the clearance commences.

6. Marking

Marking system shall be based on AMAS 05.03 in house clearance operation. All the prominent features in a house shall be marked and covered in a map available at the control point showing as a minimum the following:

- a) Safe routes to and from the building
- b) Cleared doors and windows
- c) Searched furniture
- d) Searched rooms and hallways

7. Special considerations

Special considerations should be given to the following areas during clearance operation in the houses and buildings:

- a) Electrical components
- b) Sewage and water pipes and plumbing
- c) Naturally dark areas
- d) Furniture
- e) Floorboards