

Operations Allowed in Your Basic Load Ammunition Holding Area (BLAHA)

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You have arrived in theater and have been given the responsibility to be the final link in the logistics chain between the manufacturer and the end user. But you're not responsible for pizza and soda. Your area of expertise is ammunition and explosives (A&E). At garrison, you understood the rules and regulations. There was input from many sources on the proper way to operate an ammunition supply point. Now you have been given your own 16 cells at a Forward Operating Base (FOB). Each cell holds about six ISO containers. You need to store about 30,000 lbs Net Explosives Weight (NEW). Using your stubby pencil, you come up with about 2,000 lbs per cell. You even have room to store all your white phosphorous (WP) in its own cell. You look around and find a current risk assessment and license (that last guy was good). You even have a nice drawing of your BLAHA. Life is good.

Just when you are settling in to your new routine, the Sustainment Brigade (SB) informs you that your FOB is going to grow, and your ammunition mission is going to expand. Your BLAHA now needs to store 60,000 lbs NEW. You do quick math and know that 4,000 lbs per cell can't be all that bad. You still have your six ISO containers per cell. Of course the SB didn't tell you that the 60,000 lbs NEW doesn't count the NEW from your small arms, because "everyone knows" that the small arms 1.4 material doesn't count towards your total NEW per cell. You're still confident you can make this work... and gee, I hope they send help.

The truck loads of new A&E start arriving, according to some chaos theory, but they are arriving. Next thing you know, you get an Ammunition Information Notice that you need to inspect all your 7.62 stocks for some inverted primer mess up and your hand grenades may have an upside down stencil, please check that too. You're thinking, inspect who for what? Oh yeah, sure, and where?

This is where you sharpen your pencil. You remember DA Pam 385-64, Ammunition and

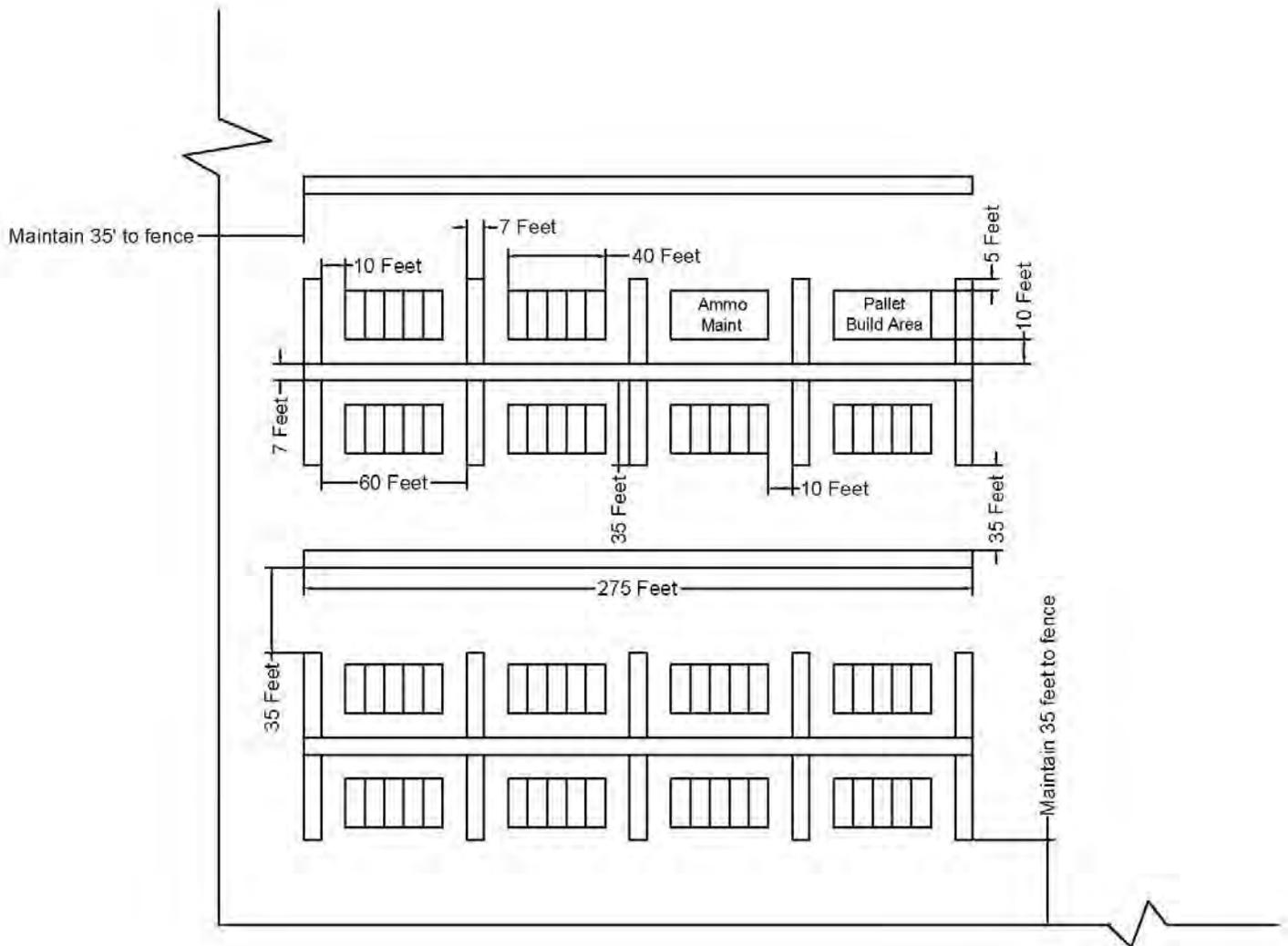
Explosives Safety Standards, paragraph 13-2 j, operations permitted outside of magazines. You know that your BLAHA cell is, well, like a magazine. Each cell is "intermagazine" distance apart. Paragraph 13-2j states that if "special facilities" are not available, inspection and repair may be done in the open as long as you maintain intermagazine distance or 100 feet, whichever is greater. It must be the 100 feet then, since the intermagazine distance for your BLAHA cells is 28 feet. Now you can find a spot in the open, 100 feet from your BLAHA cells, watching for line of sight back to the exposed A&E, and perform your inspection. Problem solved.

Wait, but this still doesn't solve all your problems. All that A&E keeps coming and going. The SB sends more and the units want more. You used to have no problem taking a unit out into the BLAHA and moving from cell to cell collecting their basic load (you still like your WP in its own cell). But now you really want to change the way you do business. You've decided to take two of your cells and change their purpose. Now your BLAHA will have 14 storage cells, one pad for shipping and receiving, and one pad for "maintenance". You remember paragraph 13-2i of the DA Pam 385-64 and it allows many types of operations inside and on the adjacent apron of magazine areas. 13-2i just requires that these operations be "incident" to storage, inspection, inventory, and shipping. But heck, that's all you do, we're not playing ping pong you know. So now you will have your two separate special purpose cells. You have a safe spot to prepare and receive shipments, repalletize and replace banding, mark containers, and perform visual inspections. (Since no one told you to "repair" those 7.62s and grenades, I guess you can visually inspect them in your new maintenance cell). Of course you will tell your Brigade Safety Officer about your new plans. The Safety Officer will check on external quantity distance requirements, help you update your composite risk management worksheets, and start the process to obtain a new site license.

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Oh yeah, now you only have 14 cells to store your 60,000 lbs NEW. You know no one is going to build any new cells for you, at least not anytime in your near future. Then you remember that the 1.4 stuff doesn't really count towards your NEW and it only requires a 50' standoff to combustible structures. You can take the 12 containers you removed from your new "special purpose" cells and put them along the outside walls of your BLAHA. All you need is 50' to storage and 50' to your structures. Now you can store your 1.4 material in those. If they would just give you one more helper, a ping pong table, and the pizza and soda job, life would be great.



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