

Return to cover page

Get Your Sh... Stuff Straight!

By: USATCES
DSN: 956-8784/8155

So here you are, “Living the Dream” on another deployment, and you’ve just returned from your Ammunition Holding Area (AHA), it’s not too bad, you’ve seen worse. With a little work you can get it squared away, but for now you have to assure perimeter watch personnel are assigned to the Battle Captain, patrol vehicles are ready for mission, and the Commander said something about completing sensitive item and property book inventories. There will be time to look into the AHA issues later, besides how bad can it be?

It’s now been a few weeks since you have taken over and the day-to-day requirements have blurred day into night and night into day. You find yourself with a few minutes to look at the AHA again. You think to yourself, “I’m not an 89B, but “it is what it is.” As you look at the AHA, a number of things strike you as not quite right. You recall that somewhere you were told that ISO containers or MILVAN storage provided some degree of protection for ammo. They get ammo out of the weather and provide some security. You also remember that they need to be surrounded by barricades (HESCO) and have overhead protection. As you study the AHA, you note a number of things:

- MILVANs have HESCO barricades – good.
 - MILVANs on adjacent pads are facing each other – bad.
 - MILVANs are too close to provide sufficient separation to prevent propagation – bad.
 - HESCOs are not high enough, should be higher than the MILVANs, to provide proper protection – bad.
 - MILVANs lack proper separation from HESCOs –bad.
- MILVANs have two layers of sandbags on top –good.
 - OK, some MILVANs don’t have any sandbags – bad
 - Some of the sandbags are torn or missing – bad.
 - Those MILVANs with sandbags don’t meet the 2-foot depth requirement – bad.
 - MILVANs with sandbags haven’t been reinforced and are collapsing – really bad.

As you open the containers, the storage looks worse than your initial assessment. Many of the ammo boxes are open, ammo is lying unsecured in wooden or cardboard boxes, there are many taped grenades, there are boxes of unknown ammo, and there is a whole lot more ammo than your unit could possibly need. You’ve signed for your unit’s basic load (UBL), but this is way more than you would ever use. Why do you have to fix everything? Safety, regulatory requirements, and the impact on the mission requires it to be done. If the AHA goes “boom”, and YOU’VE signed for the ammo, the AHA is YOUR responsibility which means YOU’RE at the bottom of the hill that the “stuff” will flow down...good luck with that.

Luckily, you’re not alone, there are a number of resources available that will help you straighten out your situation. To assist you with your day to day ammunition concerns and challenges, each Brigade has

Continued from page 7

a supplying ASP in theater which has an Ammunition Warrant Officer, a Quality Assurance Specialist, Ammunition Surveillance (QASAS), and most also have an Ammunition Logistics Assistance Representative (LAR). Each regional command has an Explosives Safety Specialist that supports explosives safety issues. If you do not know how to contact these personnel, your S4 or J4 can usually help. QASAS/LAR assistance can be received by emailing:

JMC-SCR at BGRM401stAFSBJMC-SCR-AFG@afghan.swa.army.mil or Explosives Safety assistance at USFOR-AExplosiveSafety@swa.army.mil.

Things to do:

- First and foremost: Schedule all extra, legacy, ammo to be sent back to the ASP or, failing that, pick it up to the property book. (The ammo may look good but could by now be reclassified due to malfunctions, critical defects discovered during routine inspections, etc. but you'll never know if no one knows what you have.)
- Request Ammo LAR and Explosives Safety assistance. Visit the regional command or theater explosives safety portal at <http://portal.usfora.oneteam.centcom.mil/safetysite/default.aspx> (theater access only) to see applicable reports, site visits and recommendations.
- Construct protective works for existing AHA and ammo. Projects take time but do get accomplished if the project is submitted and approved. Self-help projects are also encouraged.
- **TAKE ACTION!!**

S
A
F
E
T
Y

A
L
E
R
T

S
A
F
E
T
Y

A
L
E
R
T



SAFETY ALERT SAFETY ALERT

Explosive Safety

EARTH COVER ON MILVANS/ISO CONTAINERS

HESCOs/Sandbags on Containers storing ammunition is a great idea. Just remember:
YOU MUST REINFORCE THE ROOF FIRST.

Container roofs are not designed to support weight.

Placing sandbags on container roof without support will collapse them!

Support must be placed on top of the containers prior to putting dirt on them.

For technical assistance call USFOR-A Explosive Safety at
318-431-4212 (RC-N & E), 318-421-7449 (RC-S, SW, & W), and 318-449-4828 (RC-C).

No explanation should be necessary, however.

S
A
F
E
T
Y

A
L
E
R
T

S
A
F
E
T
Y

A
L
E
R
T

Really good,



good,



bad,



ugly.



SAFETY ALERT

SAFETY ALERT

12-025