

A soldier in a desert environment, wearing a light-colored uniform and a wide-brimmed hat, is working with captured enemy ammunition. The soldier is bent over, handling a large cylindrical object. In the foreground, there are many more of these cylindrical objects, some with red caps, arranged in rows. The background is a sandy, desert landscape.

Captured Enemy Ammunition Program to Destroy Enemy Munitions and Unexploded Battlefield Ordnance

Betsy J. Weiner

Between September 2003 and October 2004, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) received and stored about 369,000 tons of captured enemy ammunition (CEA) collected throughout Iraq. USACE has destroyed nearly 165,000 tons, while our coalition partners have destroyed 82,000 tons of CEA.

An Army demolitions expert from the Huntsville Engineering and Support Center prepares mines and other munitions for destruction. The destruction leaves very little environmental residue. (U.S. Army photo.)

Combined Joint Task Force-7, now the Multinational Corps Iraq, selected the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, AL, on July 28, 2003, to conduct the mission. Six weeks later, the first ton of CEA was destroyed. The program also blasted through its biggest challenge — transitioning from military control to a civilian-managed working environment, said Glenn Earhart, the Huntsville Center Chief of International Operations. The transition freed military resources to return to their warfighting and security duties.

Earhart stated that when the program first began, personnel faced challenges such as quality-of-life issues, security difficulties and how to best use the local national workforce. “Now,” he said, “all that has changed. We have installed base camps at each of our six sites and employ more than 1,000 Iraqi citizens as laborers and security forces. Contractors now employ professional security companies from the



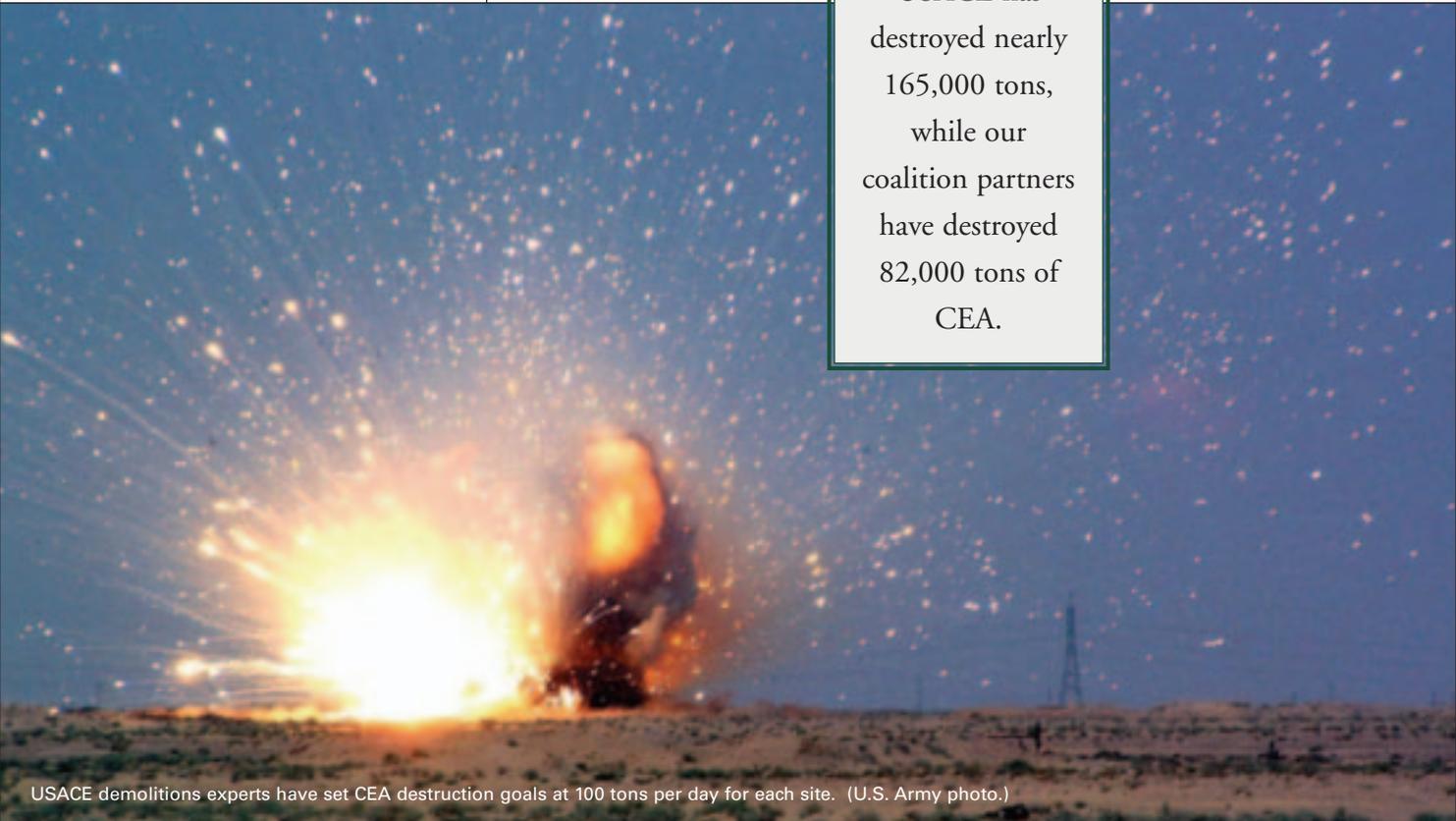
Airmen from the U.S. Air Force's 455th Explosive Ordnance Group/Explosive Ordnance Disposal set C-4 charges on a weapons cache to be destroyed at the East River Range, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, Dec. 2, 2004. Each of the service's explosive ordnance disposal units are assisting the removal and destruction of CEA from captured weapons and munitions caches across Iraq. (DOD photo by SGT J. Antonio Francis, U.S. Army.)

United States and our team controls site security. The only responsibility the military still has is providing convoy security.”

Another mission goal is to ensure a quality local national workforce and to keep pace with the

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demands of an improving economy in Iraq. “As the people working for us become more skilled,” Earhart continued, “we will have to keep up with the demands for more competitive wages in accordance with the local economy. Our goal is to



USACE demolitions experts have set CEA destruction goals at 100 tons per day for each site. (U.S. Army photo.)



Huntsville Engineering and Support Center employees observe CEA demolition in Iraq. To date, more than 247,000 tons of captured munitions are slated for final destruction in early 2005. (U.S. Army photo.)

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eventually return a safer Iraq to its people.”

Although the CEA program has been funded through FY05, Earhart said he hopes to complete the CEA portion of the mission in early 2005.

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The Huntsville Engineering and Support Center recently received \$525 million to perform worldwide munitions response and other munitions-related services under the DOD Military Munitions Response (MMR) Program.

Ten contractors will share capacity in this contract. Another \$250 million for fixed-price response and insurance contracts was awarded for other MMR services.

“About 75 percent of the work awarded under the \$525 million contract is expected to be performed as part of the U.S. Army's CEA mission in Iraq and possibly in other areas outside the United States,” said Dan Coberly, the Huntsville Center Public Affairs Officer.

COL John Rivenburgh, Huntsville Engineering and Support Center Commander, said that Huntsville Center employees are committed to providing quality services and products in the most cost-efficient manner possible

and that the mission in Iraq is no different. “Our Soldiers, contracting employees and DA civilians serving in Iraq are magnificent,” Rivenburgh remarked. “They are diligent in their execution and professional in all they do. Their sacrifice is no less than it is for our Soldiers, and we should never lose touch with that,” he concluded.

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