



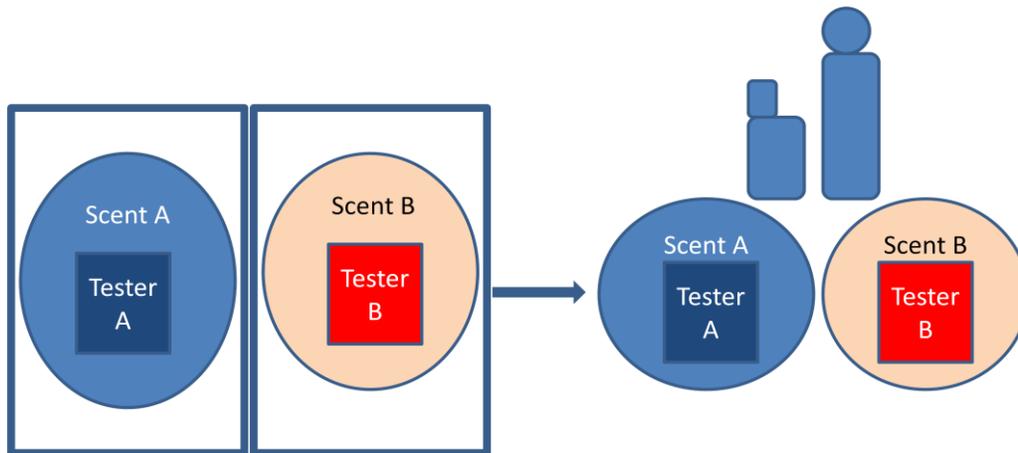
planned at new consulates in Herat and Mazar-E-Sharif in Afghanistan. Canines in these programs regularly conduct searches and inspect vehicles, packages, and luggage. Given that the Department employs nearly 200 canines and handlers for these services, the expenditures for canine services can be considerable. For example, the Department pays over \$24 million per year for canine services associated with the Baghdad Embassy Security Force.

The ability of a canine to recognize explosive scents is the foundation for any explosives detection canine program, and canines should be able to recognize common explosives. Canines under Department contracts must comply with the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Odor Recognition Proficiency Standard for Explosives Detection Canines.<sup>2</sup> This standard includes testing for six mandatory scents of the most commonly encountered explosives.

The Department of the Treasury's standard includes several requirements for proper canine explosives detection testing. Fresh explosives samples should be obtained for each testing session, and proficiency tests for canines should be administered annually. To guarantee accuracy and proficiency in explosives detection, there must be safeguards to ensure that canines are detecting explosives and not a contaminated sample. If a training aid used for some time is reused in the canine's proficiency test, the canine may actually be detecting its own scent or the scent of the handler on the aid. Cross-contamination of one explosive sample with another prevalent scent must be avoided. Different explosives stored together for any amount of time in a common bunker without individual containment may cross-contaminate. If this situation occurs, the handler may falsely believe the canine is training with several distinct scents, while in fact, the canine is training only for one or two scents (see *Figure 1*).

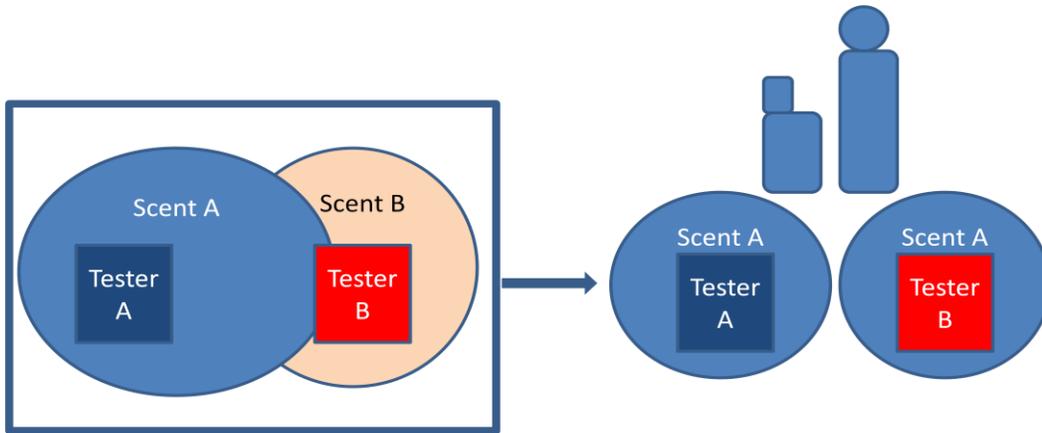
***Figure 1: Proper and Improper Storage of Testers***

Proper storage of testers in separate facilities preserves unique scents for testing.



Improper storage of testers in a single facility may result in cross-contamination of testers and a false sense the canine is training with distinct scents during testing.

<sup>2</sup> The Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997, PL 104-208, 110 Stat. 3009-369 § 653(a) authorizes the Department of Treasury to establish scientific certification standards for explosives detection canines employed by Federal agencies.



Source: OIG Analysis of the Department of the Treasury's Odor Recognition Proficiency Standard for Explosives Detection Canines

## Results

During its review of these three programs, OIG found systemic weaknesses in canine test procedures that call into question the ability of the canines to effectively detect explosives. The contractors do not test for all mandated scents and use old materials to train and test the canines, although fresh materials are required. Additionally, the improper method of storing these materials may be leading to cross-contamination. At the time of OIG's field work, no independent expert had validated the detection abilities of the canines or determined whether the contractors comply with the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Odor Recognition Proficiency Standard for Explosives Detection Canines since the award of the contracts.

The Department of the Treasury's standard requires that fresh explosives be used for each testing session and that testing be done annually. At none of the locations could contractors verify the age of the testing materials. One contractor reported using testing material obtained over three years ago from the previous security contractor. Other contractors indicated that the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Combined Explosives Exploitation Cell or the Department of Defense's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit provides the testing explosives, many of which are collected from unexploded improvised explosive devices in Iraq and Afghanistan and are of indeterminate age.

Canines undergo regular scent recognition testing under which they must be able to recognize six mandatory scents. In two programs, contractors did not possess all testing substances. In a third program, the contractor reported that it tested for all six scents, but could not verify to the OIG team that the materials used were actually the required testing substances. No contractor had reliable documentation to validate either the receipt or composition of testing materials. Contractors with all three programs reported that they either did not know how to ship in fresh testing materials or were incapable of doing so.

Certain explosive testing materials must be stored separately as they tend to readily cross-contaminate with other explosives. However, the OIG team observed that in all three programs, contractors stored these particular materials with other explosives, which may result in

contaminated testing materials. Contractors with all three programs stated at the time of OIG's fieldwork they did not have the space to store materials separately.

During field work in Iraq and Afghanistan, the OIG team did not encounter any DS personnel with expertise in explosive detection canines. Instead, according to DS staff members, they depended upon the knowledge and expertise of the contractors to ensure all contractual requirements and other standards were met. The contractors responsible for the canines reported to OIG that no outside organization with expertise in explosive detection canines had ever reviewed their operations in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Based on a recommendation in OIG's review of the Baghdad Embassy Security Force's explosive detection canine unit,<sup>3</sup> DS engaged an independent canine expert to verify the detection capabilities of the contractor's canines to determine whether the contractor is complying with the Department of the Treasury's standard. The canine expert reviewed the canine programs in March and April 2010, after OIG completed its field work. At the time this report was issued, DS had not provided to OIG the results of the expert's examination.

## **Conclusion**

OIG's examination of three explosive detection canine programs revealed systemic problems that directly affect the safety and security of U.S. Government personnel and installations. In the three programs OIG reviewed, the contractors, rather than DS, were responsible for implementing the program and ensuring that contractually required procedures were being followed. Contractors are not testing for all scents, are using possibly expired or contaminated materials to test canines, and are storing materials in a manner that may be leading to cross-contamination.

## **Management Comments and OIG Response**

In comments on this report, DS noted it is acting to improve the current explosives canine detection testing program and is incorporating lessons learned into the new Worldwide Protective Services contract. A subject matter expert has reviewed the canine testing programs in Afghanistan and Iraq and is currently drafting a final report. DS is in the process of hiring a personal services contractor to oversee program requirements, and independently test and oversee canine performance. The WPPS II contract has been modified to address the use of use non-hazardous explosives for training and testing, as well as storage protocols. Finally, DS continues to work on establishing a regular supply chain for all required scents.

OIG appreciates the information and updates provided by DS.

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<sup>3</sup> See *The Bureau of Diplomatic Security Baghdad Embassy Security Force*, MERO-A-10-05, March 2010.

## **Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** For all explosive detection canine programs worldwide, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security should employ an independent canine expert to verify annually the detection capabilities of the contractors' canines and determine whether contractors are complying with the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Odor Recognition Proficiency Standard for Explosives Detection Canines. (Action: Bureau of Diplomatic Security)

**Recommendation 2:** The Bureau of Diplomatic Security should develop and publish procedures detailing how fresh explosive materials can be annually imported into countries where it oversees canine programs. (Action: Bureau of Diplomatic Security)

**Recommendation 3:** The Bureau of Diplomatic Security should develop and publish procedures for storing explosive testing materials for canines. (Action: Bureau of Diplomatic Security)

## **Comments from the Bureau of Diplomatic Security**

(U) Diplomatic Security (DS) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG), Middle East Regional Office (MERO)'s: *Memorandum Report on the Limited-Scope Review of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Oversight of Explosives Detecting Canine Programs*, MERO 1-10-14. DS believes that the independent audits and analysis undertaken by the OIG are valuable tools in improving the performance of our programs. As the Explosive Detection Dog (EDD) program evolves, we will continue to incorporate lessons learned as they are developed and identified.

(SBU) In September of 2009, DS/OPO/HTP contracted with an independent Subject Matter Expert (SME), to conduct a review of the EDD programs associated with the Worldwide Personal Protective Services II (WPPS II), Baghdad Embassy Security Force (BESF), and Kabul Embassy Security Force (KESF) contracts. Although the initial impetus for this review was provided by the Performance Audit of the U.S. Training Center Contract for Personal Protective Services In Afghanistan, OIG Report Number MERO-A-09-08 (August 2009), the SME's primary mission was to produce a baseline study of all DS canine programs provided under the aforementioned contracts by conducting an evaluation of the contractors' adherence to contract requirements; evaluating the contract language itself; recommending changes to improve the accomplishment of mission goals; and finally advising on policies and methods to enhance overall program performance. The SME was encouraged to lend his expertise to a holistic view of the overseas canine programs. He traveled to Afghanistan from March 28 – 31, 2010 and Iraq from May 23 – June 1, 2010, and is currently drafting a final report based on his observations.

(SBU) The information below describes actions DS has taken in advance of receiving our SME's final report and expands on steps taken to improve DS's overseas EDD programs provided to the OIG in response to MERO audits of programs in Iraq and Afghanistan (*Capstone Review of the Second Worldwide Personal Protective Services (WPPS II) contract; The Bureau of Diplomatic Security Baghdad Embassy Security Force*, MERO-A-10-05, March 2010; and *Performance Audit of the U.S. Training Center Contract for Personal Protective Services in Afghanistan*, MERO-A-09-08, August 2009).

(SBU) In order to provide long-term direction and oversight of the EDD programs provided under the WPPS II, BESF, and KESF contracts, DS is in the process of establishing a dedicated Personal Services Contract (PSC) position. A Position Description for a GS-14 equivalent PSC has been submitted to DS's Human Resources for classification and recruitment. Among the incumbent's primary duties, they will spend a significant part of their time travelling to Iraq and Afghanistan to oversee program requirements and provide independent testing and oversight of canine performance.

(SBU) The OIG noted in its report that DS contractors have had difficulty obtaining or shipping fresh explosive materials for training and testing purposes. As described in its input for the Middle East Regional Office's Capstone review of the WPPS II contract, DS has modified the WPPS II contract to allow vendors to use Non-Hazardous Explosives for Security Training and Testing (NESTT) products training and testing of EDDs, to the extent possible. A similar contract modification has been initiated for the BESF and KESF contracts. NESTT is a concept developed at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in association with Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives (BATF) Forensic Chemists as a substitute for actual explosives material in EDD training and testing. NESTT has a shelf life of 30 plus years and has been demonstrated to be sufficiently safe to allow it to be shipped via US mail without a license. However, because NESTT is not available for all required scents, DS continues to work with RSOs and other agencies to ensure that a regular supply chain can be established for all scents required by the WPPS II, BESF, and KESF contracts. While a solution has been identified to obtain and ship non-NESTT training aids, implementation is pending the completion of an inter-agency agreement between BATF and DS. The DS program office has met with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATF) Canine Training and Operations Support Branch to address additional scents and other potential areas of program support or guidance.

(SBU) Additionally, the same WPPS II contract modification that permits the use of NESTT products also addresses the storage protocols for the explosives sample scents used in training and testing of the canines. These protocols clearly define the handling and storage of the scents. Moreover, the DS program office is ordering new explosive storage lockers that meet BATF standards for the storage of explosives. One new locker will be assigned to each kennel and, along with the new handling protocols, will help ensure the integrity of the training and testing samples used on the program.

(SBU) DS has adopted EDD Kennel design standards based on U.S. military EDD kennel requirements. These standards are being provided to the field. As DS coordinates the construction or modification for EDD kennels, these standards will serve as the benchmark for new or upgraded facilities.

(SBU) Finally, DS is incorporating EDD lessons learned into the new Worldwide Protective Services (WPS) contract, which is currently in the acquisition process. As the WPPS II, BESF, and KESF contracts transition into the new WPS contract, DS will continue to assess opportunities and implement changes to improve its oversight and contract management capabilities for each of the task orders in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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