



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

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September 13, 2012

HAMMER Celebrates 15th Anniversary *Dedicates New U.S. State Department Field Exercise Building*

RICHLAND, Wash. – The Volpentest HAMMER Training Center, located at the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Hanford Site in southeastern Washington state, will mark its 15th anniversary of operations and dedicate a new Field Exercise Building for the U.S. State Department’s counterterrorism efforts.

Matt McCormick, Manager of the DOE Richland Operations Office, said the opening of the State Department Building shows HAMMER’s growth and many partnerships – this one with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and the U.S. State Department’s Export Control and Related Border Security program.

Safety training for Hanford workers and other emergency responders began in September of 1997. To date more than 600,000 student days of training have been provided. In addition, international border security and law enforcement training has been provided to more than 2,000 personnel from U. S. Customs and Border Protection and 67 other countries.

The new Field Exercise Building, funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund, is 17,000 square feet and was designed to train personnel to detect and interdict weapons of mass destruction. It will support the international border security and law enforcement training conducted by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory for the Department of State, the National Nuclear Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security, as well as supporting Hanford Site training programs.

At the ceremony, HAMMER received the Department of Energy Voluntary Protection Program Superior Star Award for continued and exemplary safety excellence.

“Sam Volpentest would be proud to see the continued success and high level of safety performance by the people of this facility he worked so hard to build,” said Karen McGinnis, Director of HAMMER for Mission Support Alliance.

HAMMER was established primarily through a partnership lead by Volpentest and included Native American Tribes, DOE, Organized Labor, other government agencies and community.

HAMMER has continued to grow throughout its 15 years and has used its many partnerships to build its training clientele. Though most of HAMMER's training is still done for Hanford cleanup workers, the new building shows the benefits of having other governmental partners.

HAMMER and the DOE have teamed up with Department of State and PNNL to bring top-class counterterrorism training to the area and with it, an influx of students from around the globe who add to the local economy.

“The hands-on training we conduct here is making our world safer, by reducing the risk of weapons of mass destruction crossing international borders,” said Tony Peurrung, PNNL's Associate Laboratory Director for National Security.

According to Glenn Podonsky, Chief Health, Safety and Security Officer for the DOE, “You can't afford to not do training on all projects because at the end of the day you can't get the work done safely without the training and HAMMER understands that.”

HAMMER is operated by Mission Support Alliance (MSA) for the Department of Energy (DOE) with oversight provided by the DOE Richland Operations Office.

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