

Congressman Rick Crawford
Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee
EOD Priorities for FY2012 NDAA

Good morning Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished members of the Committee. I thank you for all that you do to preserve the security of our great nation and for allowing me the opportunity to testify to the full committee regarding recommended Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) priorities for the Fiscal Year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act. As none of the Services have a three star EOD flag officer with a legislative affairs staff, it is my honor to represent the interests of this critical component of our fighting force in their stead. I, myself, served in the Army as an EOD tech.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Soldiers are the military's preeminent team of explosives expert – warriors who are properly trained, equipped and integrated to attack and defeat explosive and associated insurgent networks across all operational environments. The military's EOD mission is to defeat the global Improvised Explosive Device (IED); Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) and high-yield Explosives; and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) threats. The EOD warrior protects our

military and innocent civilians from explosive threats and supports maneuver forces by providing relevant and ready explosive experts in full-spectrum military operations, joint and interagency operations, and supports civil authorities in support of national security objectives.

These EOD technicians do this task at great personal peril. Quoting from Army Regulations:

“There are no “safe” procedures for rendering safe and disposing of UXOs [unexploded ordnance], IEDs [improvised explosive devices], devices or other explosives, merely a procedure that is considered the least dangerous.” Army Regulation 75-15, Policy for Explosive Ordnance Disposal

EOD forces have proven to be “game changers” in attacking and dismantling terrorist cells and associated networks. EOD forces will continue to be indispensable “key enablers” of our combatant commanders, for the foreseeable future, to include - during overseas contingency operations; counterinsurgency, stability and counter terrorism operations; building the capacity of partner nations; and routinely conducting homeland defense EOD missions in support of civil authorities.

The EOD Warrior is the culmination of the best tactical and technical training the Army and civilian academia can provide. He (and yes, she) are

trained from the first day to manage risk in all operations. The EOD professional performs the duties of locating, positively identifying, rendering safe, exploiting to gather technical intelligence from first seen ordnance and IEDs, and disposing of both foreign and domestic conventional, chemical, biological, and nuclear ordnance, commonly referred to as weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This includes improvised explosive devices (IEDs) whether detonated by a victim, initiated by an insurgent remotely, transported by large vehicles or worn by a homicide bomber. They routinely work in the shadows during Very Important Person Protection Support Activity missions in support of the Department of Homeland Security's Secret Service and Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security; and without fanfare, render support to the Department of Justice's Federal Bureau of Investigation and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

It is vital that we continue to preserve the rebalanced EOD force structure and maintain our EOD technical chain of command and control structure and full-spectrum capabilities to ensure success in a wide range of contingencies as directed by the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review and specifically emphasized in Homeland Security Presidential Directive – 19, entitled - "Combating Terrorist Use of Explosives in the United States" and its Implementation Plan.

EOD mission competencies and capacities, led by EOD qualified commanders at the group and battalion levels of command, will be essential for defeating these enduring explosive ordnance and other asymmetric threats in future irregular warfare challenges.

I cannot help but wonder how many of the 4,662 killed in action and 42,799 wounded in action military personnel from Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom could have been prevented had we pushed to revitalize Army EOD force capabilities and capacities earlier to counter the enemy's use of IED weapon systems. [Source: DoD Personnel & Procurement Statistics, Military Casualty Information as of 28 March 2011, at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/castop.htm>].

Today I wear the distinctive unit insignia of the Army's 52d, 71st and 111th Ordnance Groups (EOD) in recognition of their extraordinary service and contribution for preserving the security of our great nation. Colonel Thomas Langowski's 52d EOD Group, home stationed at Fort Campbell Kentucky, is currently deployed in Afghanistan as the counter-IED Coalition Joint Task Force – Paladin; Colonel Jose "Ray" Atencio's 111th EOD Group, recently returned home to Opelika Alabama from duty as the counter-IED Coalition Joint Task Force – Troy in Iraq; and Colonel Leo Bradley's 71st EOD Group is resetting at Fort Carson Colorado from recent duty as CJTF- Troy;

and is training his Soldiers for re-deployment to Afghanistan for duty as CJTF-Paladin.

My concern is how the Army's EOD force accomplishes this deployment demand; seven (7) EOD groups worth of workload through "train-deploy-reset" for Afghanistan (3 groups), "train-deploy-reset" for Iraq and other contingencies (3 groups), and provide command and control of enduring EOD support to civil authorities and mobilization for deployment 2 years out of 5 year cycles for the National Guard EOD Group (1.5 groups) – and accomplishing all the tasks with only three Army Groups' available in the force structure. I believe the answer is by professionally teaming the three Army EOD Groups with the Navy's premier maritime and underwater explosives experts under the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command led by Rear Admiral Michael Tillotson. His forces augment these land-based counter-IED taskings. Specifically, - EOD Group One led by Commodore Ed Eidson based in Coronado California, is currently conducting operations as CJTF-Troy (Iraq); and EOD Group Two led by Commodore Dale Fleck stationed at Little Creek Amphibious Base Virginia, is preparing for deployment. With the Marines and Air Force EOD companies and flights supporting at the Army company level, the joint service EOD force has answered the nation's call for defeating the IEDs and associated insurgent

network; all while combining forces to conduct joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational (JIIM) operations. I highly recommend attending the Global EOD Conference & Exhibition, 3-5 May, in Representative Jeff Miller's District in Florida to learn more about how EOD forces achieve success during these complex operations; and I've enclosed industry's proposed strategy map on EOD priorities as it is quite illuminating.

We must continue to support these tremendous EOD warfighters in all services, but with particular emphasis on the Army as they primarily align to supporting sustained land-based operations, by shifting their funding via Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) supplementals back into each of the Services respective baseline budgets on EOD program elements for research, development, test and evaluation; operations and maintenance; and procurement. This funding amount totaled \$403,326,000.00 (\$403.3M) in Fiscal Year 2010; however, this total does not reflect additional funding provided by the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization for specific in-theatre EOD equipment; funding for training EOD forces; nor funding for transition and transfer from JIEDDO to the Services of this EOD equipment and training. Additionally, the funding for Navy Single Service Management of common-type EOD training and technology, and the Office of Secretary of Defense's EOD/Low Intensity Conflict Program have remained

virtually “flat-lined” for over ten (10) years despite the increase of emerging threats for which the EOD community is uniquely and singularly qualified to confront. We must collectively do more to ensure adequate funding of these critical EOD program elements now and make investments in EOD force structure readiness for securing the future.

I respectfully request inclusion of the enclosed proposed legislative language, an Item of Special Interest for the FY2012 NDAA, a “Report on and budget justification display of key enabler Explosive Ordnance Disposal force structure and budget requirements”.

I remain available to the committee for further assistance on EOD matters, and I thank you for your consideration and service to the nation.

FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act

- House Armed Services Committee

Legislation:

Item of Special Interest

Report on and budget justification display of key enabler Explosive Ordnance Disposal force structure and budget requirements

TITLE III--OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

SEC. 3XX, REPORT ON AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION DISPLAY OF KEY ENABLER
EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL FORCE STRUCTURE AND BUDGET
REQUIREMENTS.

(a) The Committee recognizes that the Services have taken extraordinary efforts to revitalize capability and increase capacity of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) force. The Committee recognizes that the EOD force is a key enabler for combatant commanders during overseas contingency operations; counterinsurgency, stability and counterterrorism operations; building the capacity of partner states; and conducting homeland defense support (prevent detonation) of civil authorities. EOD mission competencies and capacities, led by EOD qualified commanders, will continue to be vital for the foreseeable future in defeating enduring explosive ordnance threats, such as rendering safe unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices, and conducting humanitarian mine action in an era of persistent conflict. However, the committee remains concerned that the Services have not adequately rebalanced EOD force structure and maintained full-spectrum capabilities to ensure success in a wide range of contingencies as directed by the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review.

(b) The Committee encouraged the Department to consider a consolidated budget justification display covering all programs and activities of the EOD force including procurement, operations and maintenance, and research, development, testing and evaluation; and the Committee urges the Department to fully identify the Services baseline EOD budget.

(c) Report- Not later than February 1, 2012, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on Services explosives ordnance disposal force structure planning construct for Fiscal Years 2014 – 2018.

(d) Submission With Annual Budget Justification Documents- For fiscal year 2012 and each subsequent fiscal year, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the President, for consideration by the President for inclusion with the budget material submitted to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, a consolidated budget justification display that covers all programs and activities of the Services EOD force.