

21 April 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Small Arms Determinations, Ordnance and Explosives
(OE) Center of Expertise (CX) Interim Guidance Document 99-02

1. PURPOSE: To emphasize small arms ammunition descriptions and hazards involved with OE support activities.
2. APPLICABILITY: This guidance applies to all U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) commands having responsibility for performing ordnance and explosives (OE) response actions.
3. REFERENCES:
 - a. TM 1300-200, Ammunition Guide, October 1969, with change 5 September 1993.
 - b. TM 43-0001-27 Ammunition Data Sheets, Small Caliber Ammunition, April 1994.
 - c. Glossary of Ordnance and Terms, Ordnance Engineering Handbook Office, Duke University, June 1959.
4. Determinations/Definitions: The following requirements apply:
 - a. The above listed references state 30mm and smaller sized ordnance items are small arms. For the purpose of OE projects with small arms, the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, OE-CX, recognizes caliber .50 and smaller as small arms. The determining factor is that caliber .50 and smaller rarely contain explosive projectiles.
 - b. Small arms cartridges present a very low hazard. A deliberate effort must be applied to a very specific and small point (the primer) to make the round function. Using a tool resembling a firing pin, i.e., a nail and hammer, or dropping the cartridge on a sharp object could function the primer. If the round functions outside the weapons chamber (unconfined space), the propellant gases would cause the bullet and

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cartridge to separate and, in addition, the cartridge case could also rupture. If this took place in close proximity to a person, possible injury could result.

c. Small arms ammunition (i.e., caliber .50 and smaller) present a very low risk to the public.

5. EFFECTIVE DATES: Clarification in this interim guidance is effective immediately, and will remain in effect indefinitely, unless superseded by other policy or regulation.

6. POINTS of CONTACT: If you need additional information, please contact Mr. Greg Parsons at 256-895-1589.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

C. DAVID DOUTHAT, P.E., CSP
Director, Ordnance and
Explosives Team

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