



News Release

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ECBC Delivers Mobile Labs to DRDC, Celebrates with Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. — Leaders and members of the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC), the premier national resource for chemical and biological defense, gathered with colleagues from the Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) Suffield — a major Canadian military research facility dedicated to defense against chemical and biological agents — to celebrate the delivery of two mobile laboratories during a ribbon cutting ceremony held Dec. 10 in Canada's Alberta province.

The two laboratories, one all-hazards triage facility and one mobile chemical lab, traveled from ECBC in Maryland to the DRDC in Suffield, Canada for the ceremony and provided the Canadian defense community with its first triage facility for all-hazards materials.

"The project began as a proof-of-concept, with the intent to create an all-hazards triage facility as well as a truly mobile chemical lab for on-the-spot analysis," said George Noya, ECBC Mobile Labs and Kits Team leader. "The mobile lab was envisioned to be a deployable military asset that could support high-profile events across Canada."

The DRDC first recognized a need to support the Canadian military's ability to perform on-site chemical warfare agent identification in October 2005. Historically, the country's method for triaging samples suspected of containing chemical warfare agents dictated that only definitive samples were to be shipped across the country to certified personnel within accredited laboratories. This method did not include samples of unknown composition, produced great delays and often caused a breakdown in final decision-making and mission outcomes.

The following year, the Canadian Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Research and Technology Initiative funded the DRDC Suffield to develop a prototype facility to fulfill the country's need to safely and effectively receive and screen for chemical, biological and radiological materials.

"Based on the ECBC Mobile Labs and Kits Team's highly specialized expertise and prior success in producing mobile all-hazards triage prototype labs for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the DRDC sought out ECBC under the Public Security Technical Program — a bilateral agreement between Canada and the U.S. to apply science and technology research to cross-border protection against high-consequence public safety and security events — to develop similar, but enhanced facilities for Canada," said Scott Holowachuk, DRDC Suffield

project manager.

In addition to the two laboratories, the ECBC team also delivered integrated equipment, facilitated training on the labs and produced standard operating procedures documents for the DRDC project team.

“We made sure to incorporate functionality to support Canadian-specific protocols and meet the established NATO standards for confirmed identification of chemical warfare agents,” said Carrie Poore, Ph.D., biologist on the ECBC Mobile Labs and Kits Team.

The all-hazards triage facility will be installed at the Canadian Counter Terrorism Technology Centre and used as a training center for similar facilities that are being established across the country. The mobile chemical lab will be rotated to various locations as needed and support the on-site biological and radiological detection capabilities conducted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Public Health Agency of Canada and the DRDC.

“We are thrilled that, in partnership with ECBC, we are now able to fill this critical gap in our ability to ensure that samples are properly triaged and directed to the appropriate analytical facilities in a timely fashion, while ensuring the safety of the facilities and laboratory personnel,” Holowachuk said.

For more information about ECBC's Mobile Labs and Kits Team, visit <http://www.ecbc.army.mil/uf/mobile/index.html>.

ECBC is the Army's principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering and field operations. ECBC has achieved major technological advances for the warfighter and for our national defense, with a long and distinguished history of providing the Armed Forces with quality systems and outstanding customer service. ECBC is a US Army Research, Development and Engineering Command laboratory located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. For more information about the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, please visit our Web site at <http://www.ecbc.army.mil> or call (410) 436-7118.

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