

THE EVOLUTION OF PHYSICAL SECURITY AND STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT:

A Successful Implementing Partnership Perspective

By Lee Moroney [Golden West Humanitarian Foundation]
and Mark Veneris [US European Command HMA Program]

To avoid unplanned explosion of munitions (UEM) and to lower the risk of illicit diversion, the humanitarian requirements ensuring strong ammunition management structures, systems, and processes by states have been well documented in past issues of this *Journal* and other publications. These needs have led to the evolution of multilateral and bilateral support from donor nations that see the humanitarian value of supporting physical security and stockpile management (PSSM).

Over the past two decades, the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the US State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA) and the US Department of Defense (DoD) have shown significant support for PSSM through the geographic combatant command (COCOM) programs. This article analyzes how methods have changed from just planting the flag with “first-aid fixes” to a holistic, capacity-building approach.

Even though early engagements in PSSM operations proved that something is better than nothing, these actions had limited impact. These varied from assessment missions with recommendations but “no teeth” to short-term training with no continuation training or mentorship programs, while others involved building storehouses without looking at procedural development support or one-off disposal projects that ignored wider surveillance and disposal planning. Presently, only one COCOM¹ currently engages in a comprehensive capacity development approach working to develop national capability.



With Golden West implemented project management, EUCOM provided financial support to renovate this explosive storehouse (ESH).

All images courtesy of Golden West Humanitarian Foundation.



Georgian Defence Forces conduct explosive limit license exercises during EUCOM-Golden West mentorship.



Georgian Defence Force graduates of the EUCOM PSSM foundation course.

The US Approach

The US European Command (EUCOM) is the US DoD's COCOM that has embraced this deliberate approach to its theater security cooperation (TSC) programs and has been leading the way with ongoing successful projects in Moldova, Georgia, and Albania since 2018, with more countries to be supported in the future. Since 2018, the EUCOM PSSM program has provided over US\$10,000,000 to support PSSM activities within its three main focus areas: infrastructure support, equipment support, and training and mentorship support.

First steps. Like any successful TSC program, the core element to success begins with the host nation officially requesting support rather than having support forced on them. This is the first challenge, as it can be suggested that decision makers generally don't know what they don't know. An approach implemented by Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (GWHF) in 2018, with donor support from PM/WRA, brought together senior officers directly involved in PSSM in their host countries to share their experiences in conversations chaired and guided by qualified practitioners. Also invited as participants were the EUCOM HMA program manager and subject-matter experts (SMEs).

Having the right people involved from the start and enabling open dialogue rather than a one-way training approach enabled various structural and capability gaps to be identified so a baseline needs assessment could be produced. This process ultimately led to support projects starting in three countries within twelve months of these meetings.

Maintaining momentum. Following the initial meetings, participants briefed their chain of command, and follow-up meetings with high-level leaders and decision-makers occurred to maintain momentum and guarantee support for the host nation. Due to multiple layers of

Mentored by Golden West, Moldovan Armed Forces conduct quantity distance on-the-job training.

bureaucracy to work through in recipient countries, momentum is critical for multi-year PSSM activities that also depend on the movement of other inter-dependent activities. By maintaining momentum, projects can move forward successfully and in unison with other relevant PSSM work. This level of host nation support was possible through the combined efforts of the EUCOM team (and combined US military) as well as the implementing international nongovernmental organizations' (INGO) SMEs. We believe this contributed to the overall success of the programs since previously lead PSSM initiatives had held numerous assessments with limited authorities involved or budgets to work with, and failed to conduct follow-up assessments.



EUCOM provided infrastructure and equipment for this ammunition depot in Moldova. The program does not just focus on explosive storehouses but all facilities that support best practices in ammunition management for safety and security.



Evolution of PSSM

One of the major evolutions over the past few years has been an increase in communication and collaboration between countries, donor governments, and international organizations. Beginning with the introduction of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) in 2011, the community now coordinates and works together well, while the establishment of the Ammunition Management Advisory Team (AMAT) at the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is a good example of how to bring international organizations together. Together with organizations like the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and donors such as the United States, practitioners and implementing partners similar to GWHF and other

INGOs coordinate with and support countries who request PSSM assistance. This multi-faceted working group in both official and unofficial forms has engaged collaboratively throughout the development of Version 3 of the IATG. On behalf of EUCOM, GWHF ensures that the execution of the new Version is implemented at all levels—where support includes managing infrastructure, procuring equipment, developing training, and providing SMEs and (embedded) mentorship for host nations.

An additional evolution for PSSM was the modification of United States Code Title 10 Section 407 in 2017 that placed the authority to conduct PSSM activities squarely in the DOD HMA TSC program.

Measuring Success

Success in PSSM can only be measured by lasting impact. As the HMA community has learned through its demining efforts, ensuring a sustainable impact is immensely challenging. Compared to demining, measuring PSSM success is even more difficult. Success in demining can be determined by numbers, such as square meters cleared, land released through survey, unexploded ordnance (UXO) destroyed, abandoned explosive ordnance destroyed, countries declared mine-free, etc. Less obvious are the metrics for PSSM, which must be viewed through a different lens than mine action.

The EUCOM program views this success as supporting the development of a national capacity where countries have national regulations, procedures, political structures (within the responsible

ministries), tradesmanship, infrastructure, training, equipment, supplies, and national budget allocations in place for PSSM programs. Through GWHF, EUCOM contracts experienced qualified retired military personnel with HMA experience to work directly with the host nation. They also engage closely with the US Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC), who are generally working with other elements of support to MOD structures in all of these levels in a top-down and bottom-up approach.

The EUCOM program understands trust takes time to build and works through partnerships with the host nation, ODCs, and implementing partners such as GWHF, to develop a quantifiable plan of action directed towards eventual fade out.

Over the past two decades, the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the US State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM/WRA) and The US Department of Defense (DoD) have shown significant support for PSSM through the geographic combatant command (COCOM) programs.

Utilizing the results of EUCOM infrastructure upgrades, with equipment provided to the Albanian Armed Forces.



Albanian personnel inspect, audit, palletize, and store ammunition in accordance with international best practices.

Tailoring the Approach

As detailed at the start of this article, the level of long-term partnerships and multi-year assistance provided to countries are measures of success. Similarly, the updated UNSafeguard Quantity Distance maps of depots represent an achievement of the program that would reduce the risk and impact of a potential UEM. While countries will rarely have exactly the same needs at the same levels of support, supporting synergies such as standardized training curriculums, training trackers, and national regulators are required for most (but not all) countries. Qualified SMEs that can advise, mentor, support training, manage programs in refurbishment/construction projects of old storage areas to IATG-compliant standards, and procure equipment throughout the plan of action are investments that donors employ to build a sustainable ammunition management program.

EUCOM continues to refurbish ammunition depots and compounds, and provides equipment ranging from the basic materials such as pallets and banding equipment to mechanical handling equipment (MHE). The program is concurrently developing and executing a comprehensive phased train-the-trainer program from basic ammunition management through to an upper management

level based on the IATGs. By creating various levels of regulatory and procedural review for each country, EUCOM identifies relevant, implementable, and sustainable focus areas for the partner country through the US military and GWHF SMEs.

While the EUCOM example may not be appropriate for every country, geopolitics and funding may dictate that support to one country requires multiple-lateral engagement. However, even with the best of intentions, this approach can be more difficult. Aspects of financial and operational support may need to synchronize, stretching the capacity of an already over-extended host nation.

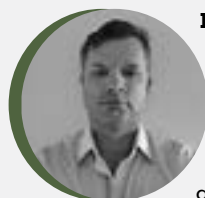
As PSSM challenges arise, EUCOM will proudly continue to support countries that have requested assistance. Accepting these challenges, GWHF, as a US-founded and US-based INGO, will continue to leverage the technical expertise and project management it has provided the US Government. However, the partner nations deserve recognition for taking the first step, choosing to open up their structures, facilities, and regulations to strengthening their capacity and capabilities for a safer and more secure ammunition management structure. ©

See endnotes page 112



Lee Moroney
PSSM Director
Golden West Humanitarian Foundation

Lee Moroney is a retired British Army Ammunition Technician with global operational experience in CIED, EOD, and Ammunition Management. He has managed humanitarian mine action programmes in South Sudan, Lao PDR, Vietnam, Thailand, and North Macedonia. Currently, Moroney is the Director for the Golden West PSSM programs in Albania, Georgia, Moldova, and previously Ukraine. He is the Golden West coordinator for support to US EUCOM and POC for all PSSM-related global partnerships with other IO's and INGOs. Additionally, Moroney holds a Master of Arts in International Policy and Diplomacy and is a member of the Institute of Explosives Engineers.



Mark Veneris
Humanitarian Mine Action
US European Command (EUCOM)

Mark Veneris serves as the Headquarters US European Command (EUCOM) Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) program. Mark has managed the EUCOM HMA program since 2012, overseeing engagement activities in over twelve countries in the EUCOM area of responsibility in every pillar of HMA. He has worked across the DOD HMA community and private sector to increase replicability and service component engagement as well as a reduce cost.