

## MACE used to defuse 500-pound bomb in the Netherlands

On October 7, 2005 the eyes of the world's bomb technicians focused on Amsterdam where workers discovered a World War II vintage, British 500-pound bomb. The bomb was located next to the N205 highway, close to Vijfhuizen and only 4 km from the main Amsterdam airport, Schiphol.

The Landmacht, responsible for Dutch EOD operations, was hastily dispatched. Experts stated that the bomb was very dangerous and that this type of bomb has never been defused before anywhere in the world. The bomb was not in a settled position and was possibly armed. The fully fused bomb was deemed too sensitive to vibration and therefore, could not be transported for a controlled explosion. Many of the main power and water lines to all of Schiphol airport were buried only 8 meters under the bomb, eliminating the possibility of an in-place detonation.



MACE assembly at the site

The Dutch team determined that the bomb was armed with a long delay fuse with a removal lockout. The ignition mechanism on this type fuse is activated chemically when an acid is released. Realising that the bomb could explode any time, the Landmacht spontaneously decided to use the **MACE**, which had been delivered by ANT AG in November 2004.



Adjustment of nozzle holder

The residents of five houses located very near the bomb were moved to a hotel and the police also evacuated the other nearby residents to a safe distance. A barrier wall was formed using 180 containers to reduce the blast wave in the direction of Zwanenburg in case of an explosion and the N205 was partially closed to avoid unnecessary traffic.

Operations at Schiphol airport were seriously impacted forcing thousands of passengers to spend the night at the airport. Many flights were cancelled as the runway nearest to the bomb had to be closed and misty conditions that day further hampered air traffic at the airport. KLM quickly organized 900 hotel rooms, but the remaining stranded travellers had to sleep in camp beds.



The cut starts



The water pressure slightly shuffles the fuse out of the bomb

The disposal operation began with the water jet accurately cutting the long delay fuse. The water pressure shuffled the fuse and loosened it just enough to be pulled out completely with the manipulator.



Pulling the long delay fuse with the manipulator

Afterwards, the 50 cm long delay fuse No. 17 is separated from the primer to avoid any transport risk on its way to recycling.



Long delay fuse No 17 with primer

At 7:45 pm the remaining high explosive was buried deep in the sand and detonated at Toolenburgplas where it had been transported for safe disposal. Hundreds of spectators witnessed the detonation from a safe distance and reported that just a dull blow accompanied by a sand cloud could be heard from the detonation.



Fuse separated from the primer

The Landmacht later confirmed that cutting off the fuse was the only safe possibility for defusing and removing the bomb. Once more, water jet cutting technology and the ANT system proved themselves invaluable to the dangerous mission of bomb technicians.



MACE in use

For more information please visit our website [www.ant-ag.com](http://www.ant-ag.com) or ask us for an unbinding live cutting demonstration at your site.

Fotos: EOCKL