

**(U//FOUO) European Technical Center Area Checked for Unexploded WWII  
Ordnance**

FROM: multiple authors  
Unknown  
Run Date: 03/15/2006

---

*(C) The ETC facility was closed for a day while investigators made sure there was no danger.*

---

(U//FOUO) During World War II the site on which the European Technical Center (ETC) is located (in Mainz Kastel, Germany) served as a tank repair depot. Not too surprisingly, the station was a key target of Allied bombing. On December 20, 2005, during survey activities of the area for installation of an underground fiber optic line, metallic anomalies were discovered and these were **suspected of being unexploded ordnance**, since such items had been discovered previously.

(U//FOUO) Operating with the following guiding principles, ETC and NSAW personnel began contingency planning to ensure that critical ETC functions would continue in the event of an explosion.

- To protect human life,
- To protect business equities in a prudent manner,
- To keep as much of the business running as possible, and
- To put in place contingency measures for personnel, cryptologic equipment, and communication links.

(U//FOUO) By 12 January 2006, it had been determined that the risk of an uncontrolled explosion was low and that the distance from the closest anomaly to ETC buildings was outside the restricted zone as required by German law. However, to ensure safety, **the entire base was to be closed to all personnel on 24 and 25 January**. Based on briefings provided by ETC to the Provost Marshall, ETC was permitted to man the Network Communication Center with two critical staff members.

(S//SI) ETC and NSAW personnel worked to mitigate the risk by setting up an alternate communications facility at Mainz Finthen. Unfortunately only six of the circuits passing through ETC from the Top 100 Circuits list could be accommodated by the alternate link and none of those was a foreign partner link. (All were directly supporting efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.) A message was sent to the appropriate SLOs (SIGINT Liaison Officers) to notify the partners of the potential impact, but also to assure them that the chance of disruption was small.

(C) Excavation was initiated on 24 January. The four anomalies were dug up and **no ordnance was found**. Three of the four holes contained miscellaneous metallic debris and the fourth contained I-beams that supported an underground storage area or tunnel in the original WWII facility. The base was to be reopened for normal traffic at 1800 local time and **normal ETC operations were resumed on 25 January**.

---

(U//FOUO) This article is reprinted from February's *Foreign Affairs Digest*. It was written by:

- ██████████ (FAD Executive Staff Officer - DP109),
- ██████████ (SIGINT Operations Staff - S020), and
- ██████████ (ETC)

