Concealing PETN

[Agent Orange * (c) 1993 cTs]

This text is a short complement to the file "Improvised PETN", which served as an introduction to the organic explosive PETN, pentaerythritol tetranitrate. Also included was a section detailing one of the proven methods for the manufacture of high-grade PETN.

Warning

There may be certain federal, state or local laws which prohibit the possesion or manufacture of certain substances mentioned herein. Severe penalities may be prescribed for violation of such laws. Be warned! The procedures to be followed in this manual and the resulting endproduct are extremly dangerous. Whenever dealing with high explosives, special precautions should be followed in accordance with industry standards for experimentation and production of high explosives. Failure to strictly such industry standards may result in harm to life or limb.

Therefore, the author disclaim any liability from any damages or injuries of any type that a reader or user of information contained within this manual may encounter from the use of said information. Use this manual and any endproduct or by-product at your own risk.

Plastic Bonded Explosives

The plastic bonded explosive (PBX) is relatively new class of explosive that is composed of about 85 to 95 percent PETN and 5 to 15 percent plastic polymer, such as polystyrene or polyester. These explosives have high mechanical strength, excellent explosive properties, and are extremly stable and insensitive to shock. PBXs average detonation velocity is more than 7.800 meters per second.

Most PBXs are produced as powders for press loading, but they also can be made as slurries for casting or injection molding. Following are directions for a simplified version of PBX-1, composed of 90 percent PETN and 10 percent polystyrene plastic.

- 1. Weigh the required amount of ploystyrene foam (e.g., 100 grams of PBX consist of 10 grams polystyrene and 90 grams PETN) and place it in the mixing vessel.
- 2. Splash a little acetone over the foam and allow it to dissolve (this does not take long). When it has melted, add a little more acetone if necessary so the plastic has a layer of solvent over its surface that is about 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick.
- 3. Weigh the required amount of sifted PETN crystals. Pour these into the mixing vessel and stir with a spatula until a smooth, even, lump-free mix is obtained. Add a little more acetone if necessary.
- 4. Heat the mixing vessel in a hot-water bath to evaporate the excess solvent. Be sure you have adequate ventilation because acetone and its fumes are flammable and can be explosive. When the consistency of the mixture resembles that of thick oatmeal, the PBX may be pressed into molds and placed in a warm, well-ventilated area to cure.

The resulting is a strong, hard, plastic material that is extremly shock-resistant. It is, however, flammable, and even though it is hard to light, it will burn fiercly once lit. Just keep it away from open flames.

RDX can be substituted for the PETN, in the same proportions, yielding an explosive that is just as powerful, but a little harder to detonate. However, if PETN is used, do not drill the cap wells. PETN is much more sensitive than RDX, so form the cap wells before the material hardens completely.

Plastic Explosives

These are the most widely explosives used today. It is pound-for-pound the most powerful explosive in common use. Its power, stability, and versatility are unequalled.

One note of caution should be mentioned. The user of the plastic explosive, should avoid mashing it when loading it into special devices or preparing charges. The sectional density of an explosive has a direct bearing on its power and velocity. This is not to say that they will not explode when used in this manner, but they will not utilize their full explosive potential. Plastic explosives are composed of 85 to 90 percent PETN and 15 percent plasticizer. Following are the directions for a simple version of plastic explosive, composed of 85 percent PETN, 10 percent wax and 5 percent vaseline (by weight).

- 1. Weigh the required amount of PETN (e.g., 100 grams of plastic explosive consist of 85 grams PETN, 10 grams of wax and 5 grams of vaseline) and place it in the mixing vessel.
- 2. Weigh the required amount of wax and vaseline and place it in the mixing vessel.

- 3. Knead this mixture (using rubber gloves) to a uniform consistency.
- 4. Shape into desired size, and place it in a suitable container of any kind (preferably in one of glass or plastic).

The resulting product is a soft plastic explosive, which limits are only the users imagination. RDX can be substituted for the PETN, in the same proportions, yielding an explosive that is just as powerful, but a little harder to detonate. Store this explosive in a relatively cool and dry place.

Sheet Explosives

Sheet explosives are one of the most powerful and versatile explosives available today. During World War II, the Germans used Nipolit, an early form of sheet explosive, but it wasn't until the early 1960s when Du Pont perfected Detasheet, the first reliable sheet explosive, that sheet explosives came into

wide use. Various forms of this product are used commercially for boosters, cutting steel, or explosive welding. This explosive is very powerful, though, oddly, the military version is less so than its civilian counterpart. The military form contains 63 percent PETN, while the civilian variant contains 85 percent PETN. The U.S. military versions of Detasheet are the M-118 and M-186 sheet explosives. The M-118 measures 1/4 inch thick by 3 inches wide by 12 inches long. The M-186 has the same width and thickness, but comes in a 50-foot roll. They are olive green, while the commercial types are usually orange or white. Because of their size and form, sheet explosives lend themselves to concealment in any number of places. They have been found in envelopes, suitcase linings, electronic equipment, and other concealed places. About the only limits are the user's imagination.