

Absolutely Everything About EOD Badges and Patches

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World War II Period

Those of us in the Army, and no doubt many EOD technicians from the other services, know the two basic badge/insignia designs that the Army has used since the beginnings of the bomb disposal field during WWII. Shortly after the founding of the US Army's bomb disposal program it was determined that some form of distinctive insignia needed to be developed. The thought was that these new bomb disposal technicians needed something on their uniforms to boost morale and also so that other military and civilian people needed to have a visual recognition of these men, especially when they were performing bomb disposal activities.

To answer the call, the Bomb Disposal School at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., submitted a proposed design for a cloth uniform insignia. Maj. Walter C. DeBill, the acting commandant of the school submitted his proposed design in 1942. That design is the “red bomb” insignia we know today as the insignia worn by WWII Army technicians. The design was similar to the British Royal Engineers patch of the period in recognition for the assistance they had provided early in training Army bomb disposal students. Examples of this insignia is shown below.



From left to right: homemade WWII, raised padded bomb, homemade in bullion thread by Charles E. Pritchard in WWII, U.S. issue post Korean War.



From left to right: homemade WWII, homemade bullion thread, heavy yellow thread WWII, made in Korea during Korean War.



From left to right: WWII, WWII, worn by Charles E. Pritchard in WWII, Philippine modern reproduction.



From left to right: modern reproduction, WWII from a private collection in the Netherlands

The official drawing for the design was August 21, 1942. The approval of the design by the Office of the Quartermaster General's office was signed by Maj. Arthur E. DuBois October 30, 1942. The commanding general, services of supply in the sixth endorsement to a letter September 28, 1942, was the first field commander to authorize the wear of the insignia. The Heraldic Section of the Quartermaster Corps approved the design on October 30, 1942. On November 4, 1942. the Bomb Disposal School received a letter from the Quartermaster General with the approved design and instructing the Bomb Disposal School to proceed with procurement of the patch. Col. Thomas J. Kane, the bomb disposal school commandant then issued a letter stating that the new patch would be worn by:

1. All officers who were graduates of the Ordnance Bomb Disposal School and all officers on duty in a bomb disposal unit.
2. All enlisted personnel who were on duty with bomb disposal organizations. There was no mention of the enlisted men being graduates of the school at this point.

On January 12, 1943, all graduates of the Bomb Disposal School were issued the “red bomb” to wear on their uniforms. The wear rules remained the same, in that officers could wear the bomb at all times after it was awarded, even if not in a bomb disposal position. Enlisted men could wear the bomb only while assigned to a bomb disposal organization.

The patch was to be worn in the same manner by both officers and enlisted men. On the blouse, overcoat and field jacket it was centered on the outside of the right sleeve with the lowest point of the patch four inches above the lower edge of the sleeve. On the shirt it was to be worn centered between the lower edge of the left front pocket flap and the lower edge of the pocket. Examples from my collection of wear on the various uniforms are shown below.

The “red bomb” patch also exists with a white bordered bomb. While no documentation has been discovered, at least two WWII bomb disposal veterans stated that the Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squads (Separate) who were attached to Aviation Engineer units in WWII wore the white bordered bombs. While not a positive proof of this, many of the uniforms encountered with Army Air Force patches do have the white bordered bomb on them.



From left to right: "Ike" jacket overcoat, service blouse, wool shirt, heavy overcoat.



WII white bordered version, WWII white bordered version, modern reproduction.

Army Bomb Disposal School Distinctive Unit Insignia

A distinctive unit insignia, or DUI, was designed for wear by the staff of the WWII Army Bomb Disposal School at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. The earliest mention of this DUI is in a May 12, 1942 memo which shows the basic design of the adopted DUI, but instead of having the words “Sweeping Along” in the banner beneath the design, the words “Fides et Animo,” or “Faith and Courage” appeared. On September 23, 1942 the school submitted a tentative design and requested approval by the decorations and awards branch of the Adjutant General’s Office. Their reply was that there was already a distinctive patch so the DUI was not necessary.

In January 1943, the school replied citing multiple references to approval letters from other offices for a unique DUI. At the same time, they pointed out that the DUI would be worn only by members of the school staff, while all bomb disposal technicians wore the shoulder insignia.

In a somewhat puzzling situation, the commanding general, services of supply sent a letter on September 29, 1942 authorizing tentative approval for wear. On January 23, 1943, the issue became somewhat resolved when the quartermaster general’s office wrote that the manufacture of all DUI’s was being discontinued so a DUI was not authorized.

The example below shows the final design for the DUI. None have been found of American manufacture during the WWII timeframe. This example, like all others examined is European manufacture after WWII, no doubt for the collector’s market. It also exists with white bombs.



Distinctive Unit Insignia designed, but not authorized, for wear by the staff of the WWII Army Bomb Disposal School at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. In 1942.

Korean War

The “red bomb” insignia was also worn into the Korean War period. In December 1949, the Army designation of Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squads (Separate) of WWII was changed to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squads to more properly reflect the ordnance spectrum that was being dealt with. Shortly after that an initiative was undertaken to design a new EOD badge.

In 1952, the EOD Division of the Ordnance Board at Aberdeen Proving Ground put out a call to all field detachments to submit recommendations for an EOD badge to replace the “red bomb.” The response from the field was very enthusiastic with virtually all worldwide units sent one, or more,

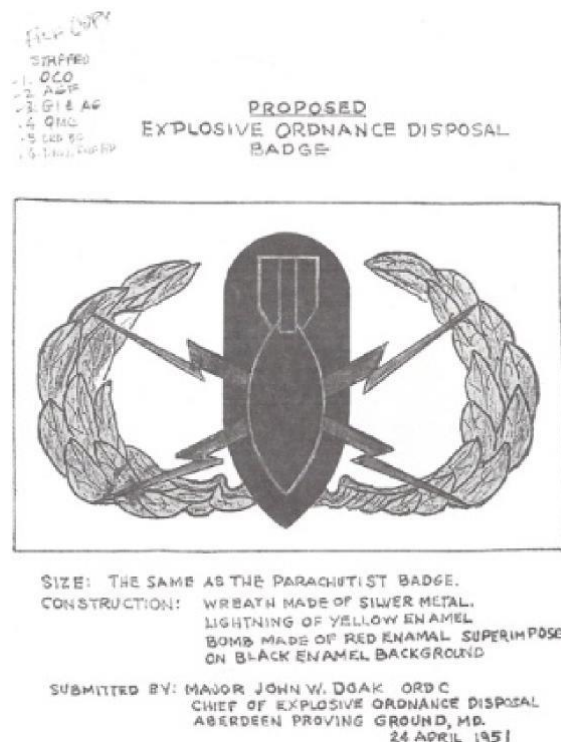
recommended designs. These designs were evaluated and going back in our history, WWII veterans Col. Thomas J. Kane and Capt. Guy Quick were instrumental in the design selection of the new badges. The final design was submitted to the Department of the Army in 1953 by the Ordnance Board. It was a composite of several recommendations and not attributable to any one unit, or individual.

Post Korean War Period

The wheels of progress ground very slowly and it was not until 1956 that DA finally approved the badge and not until July 31, 1957 when it became available for wear. The initial production EOD badges were pin back, not the clutch style of today, and matte finished. Examples of the two early production badges are shown below.



During the Korean War, Maj. John W. Doak, chief of explosive ordnance disposal at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. had submitted his concept design (see below) on April 24, 1951 for a new metal badge following a design similar to the existing parachutist badge worn by the Army.



The design was similar to today's basic EOD badge, except that it proposed a silver badge with yellow enameled lightning bolts and an enameled red bomb on a black enamel background.

The estate of Lt. Col. Ed Milligan produced yet another prototype design of the metal badge shown below. Red enamel surrounds the bomb. No date, or further information, are known for this badge.



Meaning of the Components of the Badge Design

The wreath is symbolic of the achievements and laurels gained by minimizing accident potentials, through the ingenuity and devotion to duty of its members. It is in memory of the EOD personnel who have given their lives while performing EOD duties.

The bomb was copied from the design of the WWII Bomb Disposal insignia. It represents the historic and major objective of the EOD attack, the unexploded bomb. The three fins represent the major areas of nuclear, conventional and chemical/biological warfare.

The lightning bolts symbolize the potential destructive power of the bomb and the courage and professionalism of EOD personnel in their endeavors to reduce hazards, as well as to render explosive ordnance harmless

The shield represents the EOD mission, which is to protect personnel and property in the immediate area from an inadvertent detonation of hazardous ordnance.

Vietnam War

The master badge was approved for wear in June, 1969. At that time the specialist badge was renamed the "EOD" badge, but it was commonly called the basic EOD badge. At the same time the supervisor's badge was renamed the senior EOD badge. The family of EOD badges are the only military specialty badges worn by the four military services. Only six Army EOD technicians were awarded the master badge in 1969.



U.S. Navy EOD Insignia

During World War II the Navy had no bomb disposal emblem authorized for wear by either officer or enlisted men. In January 1949, the Navy Uniform Board approved a cloth emblem for wear by EOD personnel. On February 28, 1949, the Board authorized the wear of the right arm distinguishing device for enlisted men. The emblem was cloth and was composed of a moored mine superimposed over a crossed bomb and torpedo. Variations of this emblem for the various Navy uniforms are shown below.



The assistant chief of staff for plans and operations made a proposal that both the full size and miniature metal EOD badges already worn by the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps be adopted for Navy wear. On June 21, 1968 the Navy Uniform Board met and approved this recommendation and authorized the basic EOD badge for enlisted Navy members and the senior EOD badge for all Navy officers. The Navy adopted the basic and senior EOD badges for officer wear on August 29, 1968.

ENCM J. E. Surrells, USN, senior advisor, Naval School Explosive Ordnance Disposal, later made the recommendations that:

- a. The basic badge be awarded to any commissioned officer, warrant officer or enlisted man who successfully completed the EOD School.
- b. The senior badge be awarded to any commissioned officer, warrant officer or enlisted man who had served satisfactorily for three years in an EOD billet and was recommended by their commanding officer.
- c. The master badge be awarded to any commissioned officer, warrant officer or enlisted man who had served six years in an EOD billet, with a minimum of three years in a supervisory capacity. The individual also had to be recommended by their commanding officer.

ENCM Surrells' proposal also requested that the Navy badges be issued in gold for both officer and enlisted personnel.

The Navy Uniform Board met on April 11, 1973 and approved these recommendations, with the exception that the Navy badges would be silver as with the finish of the badges worn by the other services. On June 6, 1973, the chief of naval operations approved the Board's

recommendations. Eventually, all three of the badges were also authorized to be worn in a bright shiny silver version.

The only major change made to the current series of badges was in 2007 when the Navy dropped the requirement for EOD officers to be surface warfare qualified. At that point the Navy created the EOD officer warfare title and authorized those officers who were qualified to wear the master EOD badge to wear the newly approved gold master badge shown below.



U.S. Navy Master EOD Badge

Marine Corps and Air Force Badges

In June, 1967 the U.S. Marine Corps adopted the specialist and supervisor's badges with a mirror finish. The U.S. Air Force authorized the wear of the shiny badges in December, 1967. The acceptance date for the Army and Navy are not known. Prior to this many EOD techs were already polishing the matte finish badges to a shiny surface.

More EOD Badge Information

All three of the EOD badges were also authorized for wear in a black subdued metal version for tactical uniforms. I do not know the date these badges were authorized for wear. They were commonly used by Army EOD technicians in Vietnam. The use of the subdued metal badges had gone out of favor recently with the use of cloth sewn on or Velcro fastened badges. Shown below are the three forms of the metal subdued badges.



Additionally, the three badges have been authorized in miniature form, in both shiny and matte finishes for wear on dress uniforms. These badges are shown below.



Over the years unique and unofficial badges have surfaced. The intent of them is not clear and they are easily recognized as not true EOD badges. Examples of two are shown below without the upper wreath and gold plated



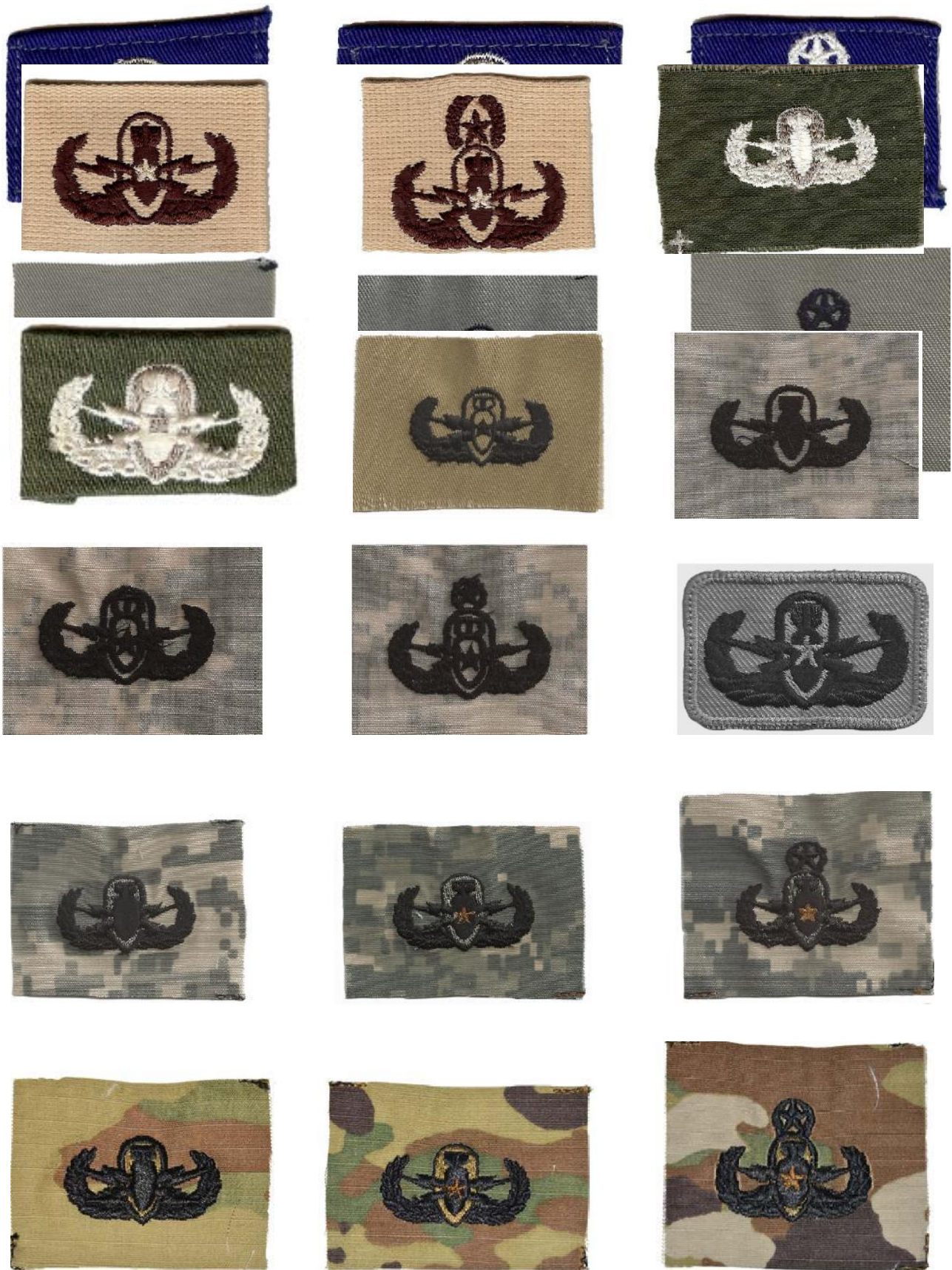
The following table shows the various EOD badges authorized by the respective services in accordance with MIL-B-3628/25L dated 13 September 1991.

| BADGE | ARMY | NAVY | MARINES | AIR FORCE |
|-----------------------------|------|------|---------|-----------|
| Regular size Basic | X | X | X | |
| Regular size Specialist | | | | X |
| Regular size Senior | X | X | X | |
| Regular size Supervisor | | | | X |
| Regular size Master | X | X | X | X |
| Regular size Basic Subdued | X | | | |
| Regular size Senior Subdued | X | | | |
| Regular size Master Subdued | X | | | |
| Dress Miniature Basic | X | X | | |
| Dress Miniature Specialist | | | | X |
| Dress Miniature Senior | X | X | | |
| Dress Miniature Supervisor | | | | X |
| Dress Miniature Master | X | | | X |

Sew-on EOD Badges

Sew-on EOD badges have been popular with the various services and they come in a wide variety of colors and designs. Below are just a few of those patches.





Unofficial Sew-on Badges

Even the sew-on badge has had unofficial badges created. The purpose of these badges is no doubt to market “rare” or “unusual” badges for unsuspecting collectors. In addition, there has been a recent trend to develop a multi-colored badge in several variations for use on clothing such as hats, tee shirts, sweatshirts, etc. A few examples are seen below.



Qualifications for Wear

Over the years, the qualifications for the family of badges have changed several times over the years. As of 2005 the Army requirements were:

Basic badge. Any commissioned officer or enlisted soldier may be awarded the badge if he or she meets, or has met, all the following requirements:

- (1) Successful completion of conventional render safe qualification as prescribed for the Explosive Ordnance Disposal course of instruction (minimum requirement).
- (2) Assigned in a TOE or TDA EOD position for which basic EOD course is a prerequisite.
- (3) Service in a position in paragraph (a)(2) of this section must be satisfactory for a period of 18 months for the award to be permanent.
- (4) Officers must have a special skill identifier of 91E, and enlisted personnel must hold the military occupational specialty 55D.

Senior badge. Any commissioned officer or enlisted soldier may be awarded the badge if he or she has:

- (1) Been awarded the basic Explosive Ordnance Disposal Badge and effective May 1, 1989, has served 36 months cumulative service assigned to a TOE or table of distribution (TD) EOD position following award of basic badge.
- (2) Effective May 1, 1989, has served 36 months cumulative service assigned to a TOE or TD EOD position following award of the basic badge. Prior to May 1, 1989, must have served 18

months cumulative service assigned to a TOE or TD EOD position following award of the basic badge.

(3) Been recommended for the award by immediate commander.

(4) Current explosive ordnance disposal qualifications at the time of recommendation for the award.

Master badge. Any commissioned officer, or enlisted soldier may be awarded the badge if he or she meets, or has met, all the following requirements:

(1) Must have been awarded the senior explosive ordnance disposal badge.

(2) Sixty months cumulative service assigned to a TOE or TD officer or noncommissioned officer EOD position since award of senior explosive ordnance disposal badge.

(3) Must be recommended for the award by immediate commander.

(4) Explosive ordnance disposal qualifications must be current at the time of recommendation for the award.

The Silly Side

Over the years many EOD technicians have been asked what the badge was on their uniform. Most will reply with the correct answer but in some cases, in typical EOD fashion, the responder will wax poetic with the answer. The following are some responses attributed to quick thinking EOD techs.

It was for being a, "Door gunner on the Space Shuttle".

It was for being an, "In flight missile mechanic".

It was for being a, "Dirigible pilot for the Army-Navy football games".

For being a, "Combat Forward Air Controller", where the bomb signified the ordnance dropped, the lightning bolts for the explosive destruction to the enemy, the shield behind the bomb was for the blimp platform the work was done from and the star on the Senior and Master badge bombs is for doing it in combat

Another, wearing a Master badge, was asked what the star on the bomb meant. His response was, "For a combat parachute jump when the parachute failed to open". Not deterred by that answer the questioner then wanted to know what the star in the wreath meant. The response to that was, "For the second time it happened".

EOD Shoulder Sleeve Insignia and Other Patches

World War II

The Marine Corps is the only service to have shoulder sleeve insignia, or SSI, during WWII. They wore an SSI of a design similar to the patches worn by other Marine Corps specialties. This specialty patch was dropped from authorization at the same time the Marine Corps decided to do away with all specialty shoulder SSI's. It was determined that all Marines could be reassigned to any position and therefore specialty SSI's were not necessary. It was also felt that specialty SSI's emphasized only a small segment of the Corps and not the Corps itself. An example of the WWII Marine Corps SSI is shown below.



An SSI designed by the Walt Disney Studios, was intended for wear by the staff of the WWII Navy Bomb Disposal School. Although the SSI was designed and made in very limited quantities it was never officially known to be worn by the school staff.

A rare example of one of the original SSI embroidered on green felt is shown below, along with a wartime produced decal of the basic same design. As you can see there apparently was never a final design with consistent colors approved during this period.



Korean War Period

During the Korean War period the WWII “red bomb” patch was worn in the same manner as the WWII wear. I do not have a date when the “red bomb” was removed as an official patch, but it was after the Korean War when the metal EOD badges were first authorized. No EOD distinctive EOD SSI’s were authorized.

Post Korean War

During this period there still was no official EOD SSI authorized. Army EOD technicians wore the shoulder patch of the major command they were assigned to. In the continental United States that meant the numbered Army, such as 1st Army, 2nd Army, etc. It was during this period that the EOD badges began to identify an EOD technician.

Vietnam War Period

No official SSIs for EOD units were worn during the Vietnam War. Most Army EOD operators wore either the Military Assistance Corps, Vietnam, or MACV, (below on left) or the 1st Logistical Command SSI (below on right). The SSI’s did not denote any EOD significance as they were worn by all troops assigned to either major command.



There were numerous unofficial SSI's made in theater for EOD wear. Below are a few of those I have encountered.



1st Cavalry Division
EOD? Looks like a
dog's head.



MACV, IV Corps.
The Delta region
of Vietnam.



Reported made
in Thailand for
Air Force EOD.

Army Post-Vietnam War

On October 1, 1993, the Army re-activated the 52nd Ordnance Group and re-designated it as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 52nd Ordnance Group (EOD). It was initially located at Fort Gillem, Georgia, but is now at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. With the activation of the 52nd Ordnance Group (EOD), the SSI design submitted by the Provisional Group was approved by the Army Institute of Heraldry on June 5, 1995.

It had a silhouette of the WWII "red bomb," but this time it was black. The symbolism of the SSI is that crimson and yellow are the colors traditionally used by Ordnance units. The bomb and stylized explosion symbolize the mission and heritage of the 52d Ordnance Group. The SSI was authorized on June 5, 1995. Variations of that design are shown below.



The 71st Ordnance Group was re-designated and activated on October 16, 2005, as HHD, 71st Ordnance Group (EOD), Fort Carson, Colorado.

The symbolism of the SSI design is that the black represents the asymmetric threat EOD soldiers are faced with on the battlefield.



The red border represents the EOD soldiers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to their nation. The five stars represent the core hazards that EOD is responsible for mitigating: explosive, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear.

The shield represents the foundational mission of the organization, to protect all from the dangers of unexploded ordnance, improvised explosive devices, and explosive hazards.

The red and gold bomb is the traditional bomb approved for wear in 1942 by the Bomb Disposal School, the foundation of every EOD Soldier.

The bomb symbolizes the mission and heritage of the EOD warrior and creates solidarity with EOD soldiers serving throughout the Army. The SSI was approved on April 21, 2011.

The 111th Ordnance Group (EOD) is the major command for Alabama Army National Guard EOD units. The symbolism of the patch design is that the red (crimson) and gold (yellow) refer to the traditional colors of the U.S. Army Ordnance Branch.



The bomb is a common symbol used to identify EOD units and illustrates the mission of the Group. It is topped by three fins, suggesting conventional explosives and biological/ chemical and radiological devices. The gold stripes are analogous to the EOD badge's lightning bolts and refer to the potential

destructive power of explosive devices. They span the width of the insignia, signifying the Group's expanse across the United States. The scarlet arrowhead references the history of its many campaigns, including an assault landing in New Guinea. The bisection of the oval is reminiscent of the Greek letter theta, indicating an unknown angle, symbolizing the EOD Soldier's drive to find solutions to vexing threats. The shoulder sleeve insignia was approved on July 19, 2016.

When Army EOD groups were assigned to the 20th Support Command, some EOD personnel then began to wear the 20th Support Command SSI. The stars represent the five mission elements of the Command: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, High-Yield Explosive Response.

The stars also underscore the command being a multi-component unit in today's threat environment. The flaming sword highlights this country's aggressive stance with the battle against domestic and international terrorism. Green alludes to the Army as a land force. Black is in honor of the personnel who died on September 11, 2001, and the War Against Terror.



The shoulder sleeve insignia was originally approved for the 20th Support Command on April 5, 2005. It was amended to change the description and correct the symbolism on May 6, 2005.

It was redesignated for the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives Command effective October 17, 2013.

Air Force Post Vietnam

While other Air Force SSI's may exist, the only one known to the author is that worn by members of the Air Force serving in Europe.



Other Air Force EOD patches have been encountered, but the exact date of wear and official status is not known. Examples are shown below.



2701st EOD Squadron
Hill AFB, UT



Very difficult to make out, this patch is for the 7005th EOD Flight stationed in Greece.



386th EOD Flight.
Southwest Asia



7410th Detachment
0146 at Chambley AB
in France. Deactivated
in 1968.



2703rd EOD Squadron
Tachikawa AB, Japan



Two examples of a series of about ten unofficial patches for Aviano and Incirlik EOD units.

The First Army Airborne EOD Unit

The 28th Ordnance Company (EOD) was the first unit to officially have airborne TO&E positions. They support the 75th Ranger Regiment from Ft. Bragg where the 28th is stationed. In November 2011, seventeen members of the 28th jumped into EOD history ushering in their airborne status. Below are the shoulder sleeve insignis and beret flash worn by the 28th EOD Company.



U.S. Navy Unit Identification Patches

Specially designed patches have been made for many of the U.S. Navy's EOD units to identify members of those organizations. Examples appear below.



EOD Group Two



EOD MU One



EOD MU Two



EOD MU Two



EOD MU Three



EOD MU Three



EOD MU Four



EOD MU Five



EOD MU Six



EOD MU Ten



EOD MU Eleven



EOD MU Eleven



EOD MU Eleven



EOD MU Fifteen



EOD MU Seventeen



EOD MU Seventeen

US Navy MU

Miscellaneous Unofficial SSI's and Patches

Below are a few of the unofficial SSI's and patches made for EOD over the years. Reference is made to some of these being patches because they are unofficial and not designed to be shoulder sleeve insignia. Most of these were made commercially for sale to the public, especially patch collectors. Others were made by individuals, or units, for wear on off-duty uniforms, on baseball caps, for hail-and-farewell gifts, etc. There are many more of these patches that are not included here. They have been made in America and in many foreign countries, especially where EOD troops have been stationed. A very small number of these SSI's and patches are shown below.



Made in the early 2000's
to raise money for
the EOD Scholarship Fund.



Variation of the
Scholarship Fund patch.



Both of these American versions were made in 2016 with and without the Bomb Disposal tab.

Reportedly made in Asia in 2016.



The center porpoise design was taken from the EOD Group Pacific SSI when it was located at West Loch, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. That SSI went away when EODGRUPAC became EOD Group One and moved to San Diego, Ca in the early 1970's.





"Syd the Sailor" patches were made at the Diamond Patch Shop in Yokosuka, Japan during the Vietnam War period. They were made in 10-, 6-, 5 ¼-, and 3 ¼- inch high sizes.



Reportedly made for Navy EOD personnel in Saigon during the Vietnam War.



For wear on a baseball cap.



753rd Ordnance Co. (EOD) for Kosovo deployment.



Reportedly 1st Special Forces Command EOD assigned troops.1985??



Camp McGovern Bosnia.



28th Ord. Co. (EOD) deployment patch.



Vietnam made for the 269th Ordnance Detachment Dong Tam, South Vietnam.



Only 50 were reportedly made.



Less than 100 made in 1983.



Not a patch, but a small pin/medallion designed by SGM Leon "Pappy" Kline in the early 1970's in Korea.



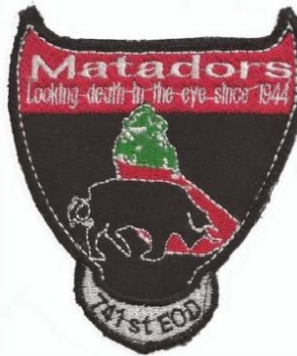
Deployment patch for the 28th Ordnance Co.



Made in 1979 for members of 8th EOD Tunnel Neutralization Teams clearing North Korean tunnel complexes.



Reportedly made for an Army EOD tech in 2017.



Two deployment SSI's made for the 741st Ordnance Company.



184th Ordnance BN and 101st Airborne??



Iraqi deployment. of the 3rd Ordnance BN.



Deployment SSI made for the 18th Ordnance Company.



Whatever meaning you want to give to this SSI.





Only 13 of these patches were made for each of the members of newly activated 7th EOD in 1971 at Camp Humphries, Korea.



Reportedly made for both U.S. and Canadian EOD stationed at Kandahar Air Base, Afghanistan.



PST??



EOD Kosovo deployment



Made to raise money for EOD Memorial.



Reportedly made for the Air Force EOD in Korea. 1980's or 1990's.



Made for Air Force EOD stationed at Ubon AFB, Thailand.



Air Force EOD at the
Ali Al Salam Air Base
in Kuwait.



Reportedly made for EOD
techs assigned to SOCOM.



Iraq



Afghanistan



Afghanistan



Afghanistan



2336 is the Marine Corps EOD MOS.



Patch for the 1st EOD Company, Camp Pendleton, CA.



Modern partial copy of the WWII Fleet Marine Force, Pacific SSI. The bomb is now superimposed over the number "1" which did not appear on the original SSI.



Reportedly made for Marine Corps EOD in Okinawa.



Reportedly made for EOD Assigned to the Marine Wing Support Squadron at Cherry Point, NC.



Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force Camp Asaka. A new spelling of Ordnance, this time Ordenance.



Reportedly made in Iraq.



Reportedly made for the 3rd Ordnance BN (EOD) while serving in Task Force Paladin.



Shoulder tab reportedly worn in Vietnam.



Reportedly made in Thailand for Air Force EOD.



Clock reads 10 minutes to 1.



Clock reads 10 minutes to 12.



Reportedly made for Navy EOD technicians.



Early patch with just the US and UK flags.





Iraq



Iraq



Iraq



Iraq



Iraq



Some fake patches are easier to spot than others. Spelling Ordnance with an "i" is a give away.



Air Force EOD at the
Ali Al Salem Air Base
in Kuwait.



Reportedly made for EOD
techs assigned to SOCOM.



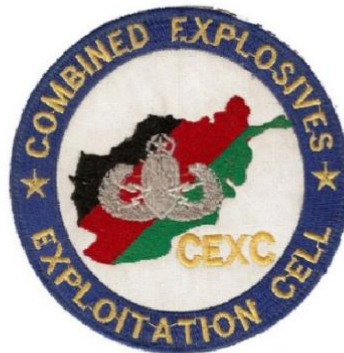
Iraq



Afghanistan



Afghanistan



Afghanistan

The “Junk in the Sun” Patches

These patches became popular unofficial items during the 1960's and 1970's. They were made in various ways for each of the four services or without a service identification. They were especially popular during the Vietnam War period. Some were worn on uniforms even though they were not an official patch. They have been manufactured both in America and overseas, especially in Asia. They can be found on a thick rubberized canvas-like material or the more common embroidered style. Below are a few examples of these patches.



The uniform below was worn by a Navy EOD technician during his deployment to South Vietnam. He wore an interesting variation of the Junk-in-the-Sun patch and both a South Vietnamese EOD sew-on EOD badge and a sew-on American master EOD badge. The name tag has been blotted out.



Army EOD technicians also wore this unofficial patch during the Vietnam war as can be seen on the fatigue uniform below. This time the patch was worn on the right pocket. The name tag has been blotted out.



The EOD Brassards

EOD brassards were first worn during WWII. At this time, they were black cloth with the WWII “red bomb” and in some cases the letters “EOD”, or simply with just “Bomb Disposal” on them. Later on, during the Vietnam War, the brassards were made of plastic with the same basic red bomb above the EOD letters. Brassards were also made by several EOD units during the Desert Shield/Desert Storm period. EOD brassards can be found that were secured to the arm by safety pins or by a series of snaps that adjusted the brassard to the size of the arm.

These are examples of WWII arm brassards fastened with safety pins. They are folded back and are considerably longer than these pictures show.



The Vietnam era brassard were plastic and fastened with snaps.



The 718th Ordnance Company (EOD) in Korea made brassard with white plastic letters embroidered on black felt.



The 146th Ordnance Detachment (EOD) in DESERT STORM had black felt letters on camel skin and fastened with Velcro. Reportedly less than 20 were made.



Army EOD in DESERT STORM and DESERT SHIELD also had Velcro fastened plasticized cloth brassards.



The latest brassard, approved on May 9, 2007, is a rectangular shaped foliage green embroidered device consisting of three black letters “EOD” 1 5/16 inches (3.33cm) in height. Its overall dimensions are 1 13/16 inches (4.60 cm) in height by 3 1/4 inches (8.26 cm) in width, all within a 1/8-inch (.32 cm) foliage green border.

This style of identification is known as a brassard, but it defies the standard definition of a brassard, which is a band worn on the sleeve, typically having an identifying mark and worn with a uniform. These are Velcro backed for application to the uniform sleeve.



Following the introduction of the first official brassard above there have been several other colors and styles introduced that better fit the color scheme of the various tactical uniforms. Like the shoulder patches, there have also been a wide variety of this style brassard made for the civilian market and collectors. Examples of all of these categories are shown on the next page.



Some enterprising manufacturers making items for the collector market can't seem to get it right. This brassard has been listed on eBay for quite some time for the unsuspecting to buy. It seems as though the maker really didn't get the right orientation for the "red bomb".



Combat Service Identification Badges

Army combat service identification badges (CSIB) were approved by the Institute of Heraldry on June 13, 2008. These badges indicate the major command in which a person served in combat. These metal badges are 2-inches high and can be either silver or gold trimmed. They bear an emblem almost identical to the shoulder sleeve insignia (patch) of the organization. They are worn on the right side of the Army Service Uniform. Shown below are examples of the CSIB's identified as major EOD commands.



52nd Group



71st Group



20th CBRNE

An Unknown EOD Badge

This 2-inch high brass pin-back badge is undoubtedly a fake item made for unsuspecting collectors, but it is an intriguing badge. It is well made, but the only one the author has ever seen.



Other American Uses of the EOD Badge

The popularity of the EOD badge has spread far and wide. Many non-military EOD organizations have adopted the badge, or designs based on the badge, for their own use. Some examples of the various agencies that have done this are shown here.



From left to right: Pin worn for the 1976 presidential campaign in Secret Service support; Southern Pacific Railroad bomb technicians; Member of the New York V.F.W.



Hazardous Devices School for Civilian bomb squad training.



Left to right San Francisco FBI Field Office Bomb Technician; Joint Agency Task Force from Arizona; ATF Explosives Branch, Washington, DC.



Left to right: Worn by ATF members of the Combined Explosives Exploitation Cell; Secret Service Uniformed Division EOD technicians.

Name Tags

Some services use distinctive name tags for the uniforms that also include the EOD badge as a recognition feature. Several of these done in leather are shown below.



Sew-on name tag worn by William L. Landman in Korea.

Army Distinctive Unit Insignia (DUI)

The Army uses DUI to identify battalion and higher organizations. These are examples of DUI's.





3rd Ordnance
BN (EOD)



63rd Ordnance
BN (EOD)



79th Ordnance
BN (EOD)



84th Ordnance
BN (EOD)



192nd Ordnance
BN (EOD)



303rd Ordnance
BN (EOD)



441st Ordnance
BN (EOD)



741st Ordnance
BN (EOD)

U.S. Navy Insignia

Navy Enlisted Rating Insignia

In January 2006, the Navy established a rating for enlisted EOD personnel. Effective October 1, 2007, the Navy extended the EOD technician rating to the Naval Reserve Component. The rating includes the post WWII design of the moored mine, bomb and torpedo, along with the rank chevrons.

The rank/rating for a senior chief petty officer EOD technician is shown of the right. Enlisted members in pay grades E-4 to E-9 are authorized to wear gold rate insignia instead of red if the individual meets the requirements for good conduct service. Personnel E-4 to E-6 who have met good conduct service requirements are also authorized to wear collar insignia and cap devices with gold chevrons on their service uniforms.



U.S. Navy Shoulder Tabs

Identification of U.S. Navy enlisted EOD personnel and their unit of assignment can also be made by shoulder tabs worn on the uniform. Examples of some of these are shown below.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
|  EOD Group One, San Diego, CA. |  EOD Training & Evaluation Unit One. NAS Point Loma, CA |  EOD Training & Evaluation Unit Two, Joint Expeditionary Base East, VA. |
|  EOD Mobile Unit One NAS Point Loma, CA |  EOD Mobile Unit Two Little Creek, VA |  EOD Mobile Unit Three San Diego, CA |
|  EOD Mobile Unit Four Bahrain |  EOD Mobile Unit Five NAS, Guam |  EOD Mobile Unit Six Charleston, SC |
|  EOD Mobile Unit Seven San Diego, CA |  EOD Mobile Unit Eight NAS, Sicily |  EOD Mobile Unit Ten |
|  EOD Mobile Unit Seventeen NAS, China Lake, CA Reserve Unit Disestablished 23 September 2006. |  EOD Expeditionary Support Unit Two, Little Creek, VA. |  Naval School EOD, Eglin AFB, FL |

EOD National Fraternal Organizations

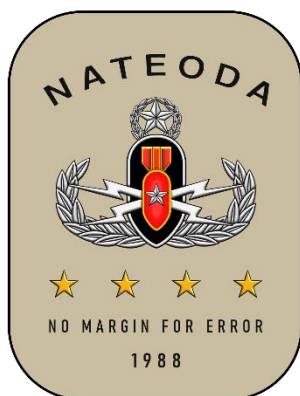
There are several organizations in the United States that count as members both active duty and retirees of all services. Examples of identification patches for these organizations are shown below.

National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Association

Formed on April 23, 1988, the National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Association, or NATEODA is a non-profit fraternal and educational organization of active and formerly active members of the military services of the United States of America who have served in military explosive ordnance disposal positions. Military EOD personnel of other nations are welcome to apply for associate membership.



In 2020, the NATEODA changed its Association emblem. The new emblem includes the master badge with the historical red bomb insignia of World War II and four stars to signify the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force. The emblem also has authorized versions adapting it to different backgrounds and items.



NATIONAL
EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL
ASSOCIATION
★ ★ ★ ★
NO MARGIN FOR ERROR



The NATEODA also includes the Vietnam Veterans chapter for EOD veterans from all services that served in, over, or near Vietnam.



[Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal Association](#)

The association was formed with the primary mission to foster fraternal relationships between former and active duty members of the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps EOD community.



Air Force EOD Masterblasters

The EOD Masterblasters Association was established over 20 years ago as an organization to provide support to members of the active duty Air Force EOD community in times of need. Additionally, their support has extended to active-duty and retired EOD *non-members* of the association. Since OIF/OEF, the Masterblasters have begun assisting our EOD Wounded Warriors and have taken a role to provide support to the families of our fallen brothers and sisters. In spite of the name, the association is open to all EOD members, not just wearers of the master EOD Badge.



Civilian EOD Identification Patches

Civilians members with an EOD background conducting EOD operations and/or training in Foreign countries often wear specific patches designating their specialty. Some of those are shown below.



Post Script

The “Red Bomb” and the current EOD badges have been worn by thousands of EOD technicians of the four military services over the years and is universally recognized as a symbol of highly qualified, technically proficient, dedicated and very professional personnel. The EOD field motto of “Initial Success or Total Failure” sums up the field. It is not meant to reflect a lack of training or demean those that have given the ultimate sacrifice, but rather to show that EOD technicians are highly qualified and well trained, but there is still an inherent risk in the field.

The patches and information above are my knowledge base at this time. I have been given, purchased or traded for these items. Some came with a story, others did not. I collect BD/EOD worldwide patches and badges and with a total of over 2,300 so far. I do not know everything about each patch, badge or other EOD items. If anyone can add information, additions or corrections to this article I would certainly appreciate it. I can be reached via the Historian e-mail of the NATEODA. If anyone has any patches, badges, etc., not shown in this article and wishes to part with them I would also be willing to purchase them to add to the collection.