

## EX LION INTRÉPIDE 2012

By the CO, C-Expl Tp, 5 CER

During EX LION INTRÉPIDE 2012, the Counter-Explosive Troop (C-Expl Tp) benefited from the support of the Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering (CFSME), 4 Engineer Support Regiment (4 ESR) and from the vast expanses of CFB Gagetown to develop the skills of its operators for neutralizing munitions and explosives (Explosive Ordnance Disposal – EOD) as well as its operators of the Expedient Route Opening Capabilities (EROC) system.

While 5 CMBG was battling West Isle Armed Forces as part of the *Contemporary Common Training Scenario* (CCTS), two EOD detachments and one EROC section were conducting operations to defeat the threat posed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) behind offensive lines. In fact, the CCTS's militant factions, criminals, extremists and terrorists made up a complex asymmetric threat leading to attacks with IEDs against coalition forces and the civilian population.



An EOD operator using a mine detector to find IEDs

EOD detachments were deployed at locations where the presence of IEDs had already been reported. They applied their skills and the lessons learned in operational theatre in Afghanistan in multiple scenarios. Depending on the situation, they either had to neutralize IEDs or perform explosive disposal, make sure there were no secondary devices, and gather information at the scene. The various asymmetric groups of the CCTS permitted using IEDs of every type and level of sophistication, allowing not only retention of knowledge gained from previous missions but also training operators to confront threats that could vary widely from theatre to theatre. Improvised explosive devices have required in-depth analysis of their sometimes very complex operation. The operators have adapted to the enemy's many technological capacities and have made the areas under attack safer with minimum damage. EOD detachments have also shouldered the responsibility of neutralizing IEDs detected by the EROC section on West Isle roads.

For its part, the EROC section has been training with the support of experienced senior NCOs from 4 ESR, practicing the operation of their vehicles and their detection and investigation equipment, all of which requires a high level of skill. Made up of vehicles with specific roles in detecting mines and IEDs, the section has performed several route-opening missions to keep the main supply routes safe for coalition force convoys and humanitarian convoys. The EROC operators have had to adapt quickly to the environmental threat, to the condition and type of routes, in order to complete their missions. They have used various formations to protect themselves from ambushes and attacks aimed at reducing their capabilities. Furthermore, equipped with an intermediate search team (IST), they have been able to investigate bridges, culverts and any other vulnerable point.



An EROC section ensuring the safety of a route from the IED threat

These four valuable weeks of training will take the C-Expl Tp toward the confirmation exercises as part of TF 3-12 in August, and ultimately to EX MAPLE RESOLVE at CFB Wainwright in the autumn. The Troop's EOD and EROC teams will then be ready to counter the IED threat wherever 5 CMBG may be deployed around the world.

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