

# RAF Explosive Ordnance Disposal team train alongside Romanians

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Personnel from RAF Wittering based 5131 Bomb Disposal Squadron have conducted joint training with their counterparts from the Romanian Army at Ramnicu Valcea in central Romania.

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) detachment from RAF Wittering is supporting 135 Expeditionary Air Wing currently deployed at Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase on the Black Sea coast of Romania and conducting enhanced air policing of NATO airspace.

The Officer Commanding EOD, Flight Lieutenant Rob Cornford said: "The role I have as bomb disposal officer is ensuring that any incidents with munitions are dealt with if they need to be by explosive ordnance disposal. I provide 24/7 crash cover for making safe munitions, flares or ejection systems that may be damaged."



Major Adrian Enache of the Romanian Army's 1st EOD Group welcomed RAF personnel Cpl Greg Cheeseman and Flt Lt Rob Cornford with a tour of the bespoke training facilities and demonstration of equipment. He invited them to a parade to celebrate 20 years since the inception of the Romanian EOD unit. He said: "Interoperability is a question of attitude. If we work together here, we can work together wherever we want."

On the training range, Major Enache's team demonstrated novel techniques to counter Improvised Explosive Devices and rendering safe Romanian Air Force rockets. Bries, the ten year old German Shepherd and veteran of Afghanistan was also given the opportunity to show her prowess in detecting different types of explosives.



Flt Lt Cornford

summed up the value of this, saying: “We’ve been doing some training on Romanian Air Force weapons, looking at how the Romanians operate and we’ve showed them our procedures for disposing of different types of munitions. They’ve also demonstrated some of their counter-Improvised Explosive Device (c-IED) capability with 3D printed C-IED weapons; it’s a pretty cost effective solution for disposing of IEDs.

He added: “It’s been good to see how the two nations work together, and how they work their different equipment. It’s really good to train with our NATO partners. It’s something we can look forward to doing in the future.”

The Romanian military also lead the way in working as a ‘whole force’ with civilian staff formed up alongside the Army for the 20th anniversary parade. Major Enache said: “The civilians on this unit are participating and working side by side with the military. Everyone is doing their job in order to achieve the common goal.”



The ability to share lessons across services is eased by making personal connections.

Romanian

Air Force Sergeant Major Florin Monteanu, and Romanian Navy Petty Officer Mares

Dragos were at the anniversary celebrations, the latter saying: “We all have different skills. When we work together we spread our skills and change each other. It’s a good opportunity for us.”

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