

Royal Navy EOD Disposes Of German Bomb

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Southend-on-Sea, United Kingdom Civilian divers working with Historic England discovered a bomb underwater near the site of a 350-year-old protected shipwreck close to Southend Pier. The divers reported the find to authorities who contacted the Royal Navy from Portsmouth to investigate. Portsmouth EOD divers reportedly identified the ordnance as a WWII era German "parachute ground mine containing a main charge of 697kg of Hexamite."

EOD planned the operation and which was complex and difficult due to weather conditions and low visibility in the area. The team conducted nearly 20 dives over a six day period to lift the mine from the wreck and slowly tow it for five miles to the disposal site at Shoeburyness where it was disposed of in a controlled underwater demo event.



Following the operation, Lt Ben Brown, Officer in Charge of Southern Diving Unit Two based in Portsmouth, described the operation:

"Dealing with one of the largest pieces of German Second World War ordnance in the Thames Estuary presents some of the most challenging diving conditions there are to work in. With nil visibility underwater and significant tidal flow, the diving windows are extremely limited and all work on the ordnance must be done by touch."

LT Brown added: "The mine, most likely dropped to target one of the numerous docks in the Thames Estuary, was in extremely good condition given its age." He also thanked the agencies that supported the operation including HM Coastguard, RNLI, Essex Police Marine Unit, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, Peel Port Sheerness Docks, Shoeburyness Ranges, London Port Authorities and Historic England.