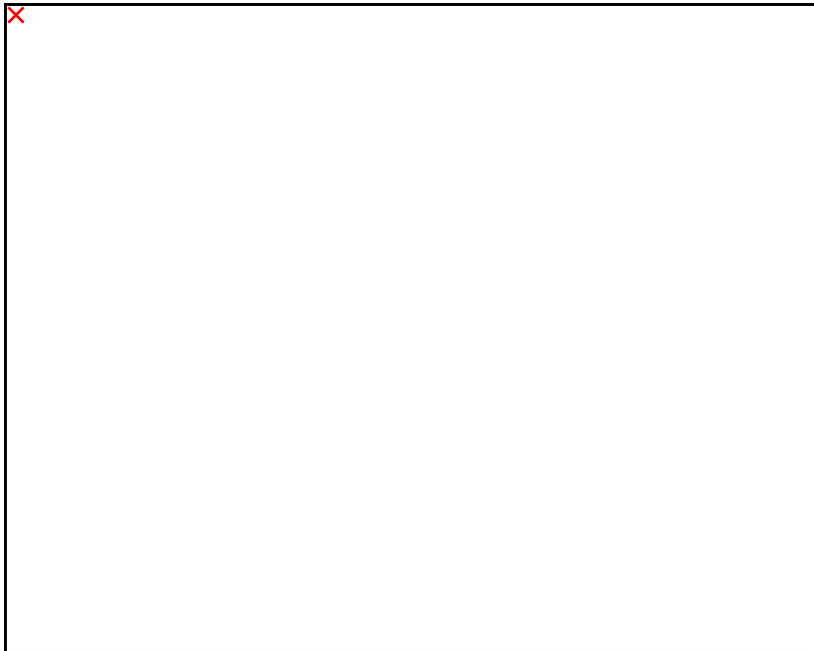# EOD Clears the Way for a Visit to Historic Fort Sill Landmark

Posted At : January 10, 2022 5:58 PM | Posted By : Admin
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Fort Sill, Oklahoma U.S. Army EOD technicians from the 761st Ordnance Company carried out a two-day mission to clear a path through 145 UXO on an artillery range to a historic building. The operation allowed 40 senior leaders from the Fires Center of Excellence to safely visit the blockhouse, built in the 1800s when Fort Sill was a frontier outpost and home to the "Buffalo Soldiers" of the 10th Cavalry Regiment.

The blockhouse was constructed for use as an observation point and as a weather and signaling station. "Blockhouse has been used as a reference point to locate and fire on targets," said Capt. Matthew J. Piranian, the commander of the 761st EOD Company. "Just about every artilleryman in the Army uses the Blockhouse as a reference point during their training at Fort Sill, making it a famous landmark."

The job of making the site accessible for the leadership development visit was an all hands effort for the EOD company, according to Piranian. "We had every EOD tech in the company out for this one, which is currently 15, including platoon and company leadership," said Piranian. "There were about 145 unexploded rounds on the path including old 75mm rounds, 105mm rounds, 155mm rounds, 8-inch artillery rounds and even mortars."

On day one of the mission, EOD placed a 3,000-foot detonation cord along the most feasible path to the Blockhouse site. After marking all of the UXO, the team placed C-4 on the rounds and tied charges to the main detonation cord.

On day two, the EOD technicians hiked the mountain again and blew a path through the ordnance. According to Piranian, "This operation took a great deal of coordination with other organizations across Fort Sill, which allowed us to go from planning to execution in only a few weeks. It really shows how much the Fires Center of Excellence trusts the 761st to get things done. Building great relationships and integrating with organizations across the installation definitely made a huge difference in our ability to quickly and safely execute the mission."