



**Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin
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TO: All State Administrative Agency Heads
All State Administrative Agency Points of Contact
All Core City/Core County Points of Contact
All State Homeland Security Directors
All State Emergency Management Agency Directors
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SUBJECT: Using Grant Funds to purchase Robots and Remotely Operated Vehicles

A recent review of public safety bomb squad equipment information managed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Bomb Data Center (BDC) has revealed that several state and local agencies that operate bomb squads do not possess a remote operated vehicle (robot) for use in responding to and mitigating incidents involving Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

The National Guidelines for Bomb Technicians, promulgated by the National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board (NBSCAB) and enforced by the FBI BDC, require that: *“Beginning April 1, 2009, each existing accredited bomb squad must have at least one remotely operated vehicle (robot), as defined in 7.1.2.5 [National Guidelines for Bomb Technicians], within their inventory in order to be approved for re-accreditation, which is required every five years”*. Failure of agencies to obtain and maintain a robot within the bomb squad equipment inventory will affect that agency’s ability to maintain National Accreditation Standards.

The nation’s intelligence services agree that terrorist use of IEDs is the most likely threat facing the homeland. Terrorists around the world have repeatedly shown that IEDs are both easy to use and destructive. And while constructing, deploying, and using an IED is relatively simple for terrorists, safe and effective response to and mitigation of an IED can only be conducted by highly trained professionals using state-of-the-art technologies. National Accreditation Standards for bomb squads ensure that those charged with protecting the nation from IEDs have the tools and training to safely perform their critical mission.

To further address the threat posed by IEDs, FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate (GPD), in cooperation with the Department's Office for Bombing Prevention (OBP), the FBI BDC, and the NBSCAB, encourages all affected states to utilize existing and future grant funding allocations to purchase the appropriate equipment to meet this requirement. States should immediately review their existing improvised explosive device (IED) response capabilities to determine if it is necessary to adjust their spending plans to address this threat. As part of this review, specific attention should be paid to the acquisition of robots and remotely operated vehicles and other technologies relevant to the prevention of attacks involving IEDs.

For more information on the authorized use of grant funds for IED deterrence, prevention, protection, and response purposes, please contact your FEMA Headquarters GPD Program Analyst, or the FEMA Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk (CSID) Helpline at (800) 368-6498 or askcsid@dhs.gov.