

NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES' COMMITTEE

Technical Manual

For Explosives Magazine Construction and Management.



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES COMMITTEE
P.O. Box 7191, Kampala – Uganda

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This **Technical Manual for the Construction and Setup of Explosives Storage Magazines** has been prepared as a technical guidance document to provide standardized engineering, safety, security, and regulatory requirements for the establishment, construction, inspection, and operation of explosives storage magazines in Uganda.

The manual is intended to support the implementation of the Explosives Act and applicable regulations by promoting uniform technical standards, enhancing public safety, and ensuring compliance in the storage and management of commercial explosives.

This manual is hereby approved for official use by the National Explosives Committee (NEC).



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Head, Bomb Squad.

&

Member & Technical Coordinator

National Explosives Committee

Date: 27 Aug. 2026



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PERMANENT SECRETARY

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National Explosives Committee

Date: _____

PERMANENT SECRETARY
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Preamble

This **Technical Manual on the Construction and Management of Explosives Storage Magazines** has been prepared by the National Explosives Committee (NEC) to establish standardized instructions for the safe construction, setup, and management of explosives storage magazines in Uganda.

This manual was developed in response to recurring safety shortcomings identified during field inspections of explosives magazines. To bridge the existing knowledge gap, this guide provides comprehensive technical instructions alongside detailed technical drawings including plans, sections, and elevations to define the standard for compliant construction and effective management.

This manual is issued in line with the **Explosives Act, 2024 (Cap. 31p)** and is intended to ensure uniform application of national explosives safety and security standards across the country.

The National Explosives Committee (NEC)

The National Explosives Committee is a statutory body established under **Section 5 of the Explosives Act, 2024**. It serves as the principal regulatory and advisory organ responsible for all matters relating to explosives in Uganda.

Composition of the Committee

The NEC comprises the following members:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs – Chairperson | 6. Representative of the External Security Organisation (ESO) |
| 2. The Chief Explosives Inspector – Secretary | 7. Representative of the Ministry responsible for Works and Transport |
| 3. Representative of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) | 8. Representative of the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) |
| 4. Representative of the Uganda Police Force (UPF) | 9. Representative of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development |
| 5. Representative of the Internal Security Organisation (ISO) | |

Mandate and Roles of the NEC

The Committee is mandated to implement the provisions of the Explosives Act, 2024. Its core responsibilities include:

- a) Review license and permit applications, conduct due diligence on applicants, and recommend issuance of licenses or permits;
- b) Develop and enforce guidelines, and provide guidance on the safe manufacture, storage, transportation, handling and use of explosives;
- c) Inspect and approve sites and premises proposed for the storage and manufacture of explosives;
- d) Inspect and approve designs and construction of explosives factories, magazines, vans and vehicles for the transportation of explosives;
- e) Advise the minister on regulations necessary for the better implementation of the act;
- f) Advise revenue, customs, airport, railway and border post authorities on the classification, packaging, storage and transportation of explosives, and perform any other function assigned by the minister

This Technical Manual is therefore issued under the authority of the National Explosives Committee to guide all stakeholders in constructing and managing explosives storage magazines to the highest standards of safety, security, and regulatory compliance.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTIONS NOTE CONSTRUCTION AND
SETUP OF EXPLOSIVES STORAGE MAGAZINES

1.0 Purpose

This technical manual provides minimum construction, safety, and security requirements for the establishment of explosives storage magazines. The objective is to ensure safe storage conditions, prevent accidental initiation, and protect explosives from environmental hazards, theft, and unauthorized access.

2.0 Site Selection and Ground Preparation

- The magazine shall be located in an isolated and secure area away from residential buildings, public facilities, fuel storage areas, and high-traffic zones.
 - Adequate safety distances shall be maintained in accordance with applicable explosives safety regulations.
 - The site shall be elevated, well-drained, and not prone to flooding to prevent water accumulation that may degrade explosive materials.
 - The ground surface within the magazine area should be paved with stone dust or similar compacted material to provide a stable, non-sparking surface, to enable shock absorption, and minimise post-blast debris in case of any explosion.
- The site shall be clear of overhead power lines or similar hazards (e.g., high-voltage transmission structures or electromagnetic sources) that could pose risks of electrical arcing, accidental contact, or induced currents leading to ignition or detonation.

3.0 Magazine Structure

- The magazine structure may consist of ;
 - a) permanent reinforced concrete buildings or
 - b) temporary modified steel shipping containers (prefabricated explosives storage units may be adapted to either type with regulatory approval).
- The structure must be weatherproof and capable of protecting explosives from excessive heat, moisture, and unauthorized access.
- The structure must be weatherproof and capable of protecting explosives from excessive heat, moisture, and unauthorized access.

- The floor shall be constructed from non-sparking material and raised above ground level to prevent moisture ingress.
- Magazines and Explosives Classes Stored: Permanent magazines are suitable for all classes of explosives; temporary magazines are suitable for all classes but recommended for temporary attended storage, low explosives, blasting agents, and non-mass detonating detonators (only with certain other items).

a) Permanent Magazines (Reinforced Concrete Buildings):	
Element	Requirements
Foundation	Excavate to a depth of at least 1000 mm and pour a reinforced concrete slab with a min. thickness of 200 mm, incorporating steel reinforcement bars (diameter 12 mm) spaced at 150 mm centers, on a compacted sub-base layer of gravel or crushed stone (min. 150 mm thick) to ensure load distribution and prevent settlement; brick, concrete, cement block, stone, or wood posts may be used, with space under buildings enclosed with metal if piers or posts are employed in lieu of continuous foundation; ground around buildings must slope away for drainage or other adequate drainage provided.
Walls	Construct as cavity walls with inner and outer leaves each at least 90 mm to 100 mm thick (using brick, concrete, tile, cement block, or cinder block no less than 150 mm thick overall), separated by a cavity of 100 mm to 150 mm filled with well-tamped coarse dry sand or a weak concrete mix for enhanced blast resistance and energy absorption; hollow masonry spaces filled with well-tamped, coarse, dry sand or weak concrete; interior walls constructed of, or covered with, nonsparking material (like wood or specialized coatings) so that no ferrous metal or sparks can contact the stored explosives; no sparking material exposed to contact with explosives; ferrous metal nails in walls must be blind nailed, countersunk, or covered with non-sparking material.

Partition	Install internal partitions using reinforced concrete or insulated metal sheeting (min. 50 mm thick) to segregate primary explosives (e.g., detonators) from secondary explosives, allocating approximately one-quarter of the space for primaries and three-quarters for secondaries to minimize cross-initiation risks.
Ventilation	Provide natural ventilation through louvered vents (min. opening 200 mm x 200 mm) equipped with spark-arrestor screens (mesh size 1 mm) and insect/rodent barriers to maintain airflow while preventing external hazards; vent openings must be screened; openings in walls and foundations must be offset or shielded; explosives may not be placed directly against interior walls and must be stored so as not to interfere with ventilation; a nonsparking lattice work or other nonsparking material may be used to prevent contact of explosive materials with walls.
Roofing	Install a sloped reinforced concrete roof (min. thickness 150 mm, slope 5-10 degrees) with a waterproof membrane (e.g., bitumen layer at least 3 mm thick) to protect against adverse weather conditions such as rain, UV exposure, and temperature fluctuations; if not fabricated metal, outer roof must be covered with no less than 26-gauge iron or aluminum, fastened to at least 22 mm sheathing; if bullet could be fired directly through roof at an angle to strike explosives in magazine, roof must include sand tray lined with a layer of nonporous material, filled with at least 100 mm coarse, dry sand, and located at tops of inner walls covering entire ceiling area (except ventilation); or be a fabricated metal roof of 5 mm plate steel lined with 100 mm hardwood (for each additional 2 mm of plate steel, hardwood lining may be decreased by 25 mm).

b) Temporary Magazines (Modified Steel Shipping Containers):	
Element	Requirements
Foundation/ Elevation	Raise containers at least 450 mm above ground level using concrete blocks (dimensions 200 mm x 200 mm x 450 mm), steel supports, or equivalent stable foundations to promote airflow, prevent corrosion, and reduce moisture accumulation; support magazine to prevent direct contact with the ground.
Walls/ Exterior	Containers shall be ISO-standard 2x20 ft or 1x40 ft, structurally sound, and modified for explosives storage; must be bullet-, fire-, weather-, theft-resistant and ventilated; exterior must be at least 6 mm steel lined.
Internal Lining	Interior line walls, floor, and ceiling with plywood (min. 19 mm thick) or equivalent non-sparking material, fixed with non-ferrous fasteners spaced at 300 mm centers, to reduce friction, heat transfer, and spark risks; nonsparking and strong enough to bear maximum storage weight;- Floor pallets constructed of Timber or of acceptable non-sparking material.
Partition (1x40ft)	For Install insulated metal sheeting (min. 50 mm thick) to divide the space, with approximately one-quarter (about 3000 mm length) for primary explosives and three-quarters (about 9000 mm length) for secondary explosives.
Ventilation	Fit natural ventilators (e.g., ridge or side vents with min. 100 mm diameter) including spark-arrestor screens and barriers against rodents/insects; no openings except for entrances and ventilation.
Roofing	Ensure the container's existing roof is sealed and weatherproof; add a supplementary pitched cover (e.g., corrugated metal sheets with 5-15 degree slope) to enhance protection from adverse weather conditions like heavy rain or direct sunlight; any top openings must have lids with water-resistant seals, or which overlap sides by at least 25 mm when closed.

Doors	Constructed of solid wood or metal; hinges and hasps attached by welding, riveting, or bolting (nuts inside); must overlap sides by at least 25 mm.
Locks	One steel padlock (hood not required), at least 5 tumblers and 10 mm diameter casehardened shackle for each door if door hinges and lock hasp securely fastened to magazine; locking requirements do not apply to doors secured on inside via bolt, lock, or bar that cannot be actuated from outside.
Size/Spacing	Securely fasten to a fixed object if less than 1 cubic meter in size; maintain a minimum spacing of 1000 mm between containers to allow ventilation, inspection access, and reduce sympathetic detonation risks.

4.0 Internal Lining and Storage Arrangement

Element	Requirements
Interior Walls Lining	The interior walls of the magazine shall be lined with plywood or other non-sparking material.
Lining Benefits	This lining reduces friction with metallic surfaces, limits heat absorption, and minimizes moisture accumulation inside the magazine.
Storage on Pallets	Explosives shall be stored on wooden pallets to keep them elevated from the floor and allow air circulation beneath the stored materials.
Stacking Arrangement	Explosives shall be stacked in an orderly manner to allow safe handling, inspection, and inventory management.

5.0 Lightning Protection

- A lightning protection system should be installed to protect the magazine from lightning strikes.
- The system shall include a lightning arrester and a properly grounded earthing system capable of safely dissipating electrical energy.

6.0 Ventilation and Environmental Control

Element	Requirements
General Ventilation	Adequate ventilation shall be provided to prevent buildup of heat, humidity, and stuffiness inside the magazine.
Moisture Affinity Consideration	Some explosive materials have affinity for moisture and may absorb humidity, which can degrade their stability
Ventilator Installation	Ventilators shall therefore be installed to allow natural air circulation while preventing entry of sparks, rodents, and
Aeration Benefits	Proper aeration helps maintain stable internal conditions and reduces condensation that could affect explosive

7.0 Storage Capacity Limits

Element	Requirements
Temporary -(2 x 20 ft Container Setup)	Shall be limited to 10 tons of explosives (total net explosive content).
Temporary -(1 x 40 ft Container)	Shall be limited to 20 tons of explosives (total net explosive content).
Permanent Magazines	Limits shall be determined based on internal volume and applicable Quantity-Distance tables, subject to regulatory approval.

8.0 Warning Signage

Element	Requirements
Signage Display	Clear warning signage shall be displayed around the magazine facility including: “EXPLOSIVES – KEEP OFF”; “NO SMOKING”; “NO OPEN FLAMES”; “AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY”.
Signage Positioning	These signs shall be clearly visible and positioned at access points and along the perimeter.

9.0 Boundary Wall Enclosure

Element	Requirements
Perimeter Fence Enclosure	The magazine area shall be enclosed with a secure perimeter fence.
Chain-Link Fencing	Where chain-link fencing is used, the fence shall be constructed to a minimum height of 3 metres.
Sandbags Placement	Sandbags shall be placed along the perimeter fence to a minimum height of 1 metre to provide blast suppression and reduce the outward propagation of explosive effects.
Concrete or Brick Boundary Walls	Where concrete or brick boundary walls are used, they shall preferably be constructed as cavity walls, with the cavity filled with sand or suitable material to enhance blast resistance.
Cavity Width	The space between the inner and outer masonry leaves must be at least 100 to 150 mm.
Sand Specification	The cavity must be filled with well-tamped, coarse, dry sand or a weak concrete mix (1 part cement to 8 parts sand).
Leaf Material	Each leaf should be at least 90 mm–100 mm.
Energy Absorption	Sand-filled walls provide significant mass, which helps attenuate blast overpressure and catch high-velocity fragments compared to standard air-filled cavity walls.

10.0 Security Measures

Element	Requirements
Access Gate	A controlled access gate at the entrance to the magazine area.
Magazine Doors	Strong lockable magazine doors to prevent unauthorized entry.
Surveillance Systems	Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) surveillance systems to monitor the facility.
Security Lighting	Solar-powered security lighting to enhance visibility and surveillance during nighttime operations.

11.0 Fire Safety

Element	Requirements
Fire Safety Equipment	Appropriate fire safety equipment, including serviced fire extinguishers, shall be installed within the magazine area.
Fire Extinguisher Placement	Fire extinguishers shall be placed at such points that they can easily be accessed in case of an emergency, such as near entry doors, ventilation areas, and storage zones, ensuring no point in the magazine is more than 15 metres from an extinguisher.
Surrounding Area Maintenance	The surrounding area must be kept free from dry vegetation, combustible materials, and debris to reduce fire hazards.
Installation of Fire Balls	In addition to conventional extinguishers, install fire balls (also known as fireball extinguishers or self-activating suppression balls) at strategic high-risk points inside and around the magazine (e.g., near entry doors, ventilation areas, storage zones, or electrical panels). These spherical devices contain a dry chemical extinguishing agent (typically ABC powder) and are designed for automatic or manual deployment.

12.0 Storage Safety

Element	Requirements
Segregation of Explosives	Explosives and detonators shall be stored in separate magazines or segregated
Stacking Limits	Stacking limits shall be observed to prevent collapse and allow safe inspection.
Inventory Records	Accurate inventory records shall be maintained and updated regularly.
Prohibitions (Smoking, Matches, Open Flames, Spark Producing Devices)	Not permitted in any magazine; within 10 metres of any outdoor magazine; or in any room containing an indoor magazine.

Lighting	Must meet National Electrical Code standards; electrical switches and wiring must be outside of
Housekeeping	Magazines must be clean, dry, and free of grit, paper, empty packages/containers and rubbish; brooms and utensils used in cleaning and maintenance must be free of spark producing metal, and may be kept in magazines; floors stained by explosives must be cleaned, and deteriorated explosives must be destroyed per manufacturer instructions; surrounding area must be kept clear of rubbish, brush, dry grass, or trees (less than 3 metres tall), for no less than 8 metres radius; live

13.0 Management of Degraded / Beyond Shelf-Life Expired Explosives

a) General

Expired, degraded, or shelf-life expired explosives shall be identified, segregated, and disposed of promptly to prevent safety risks and accidental initiation.

b) Responsibilities of the License Holder

The Responsible Company shall:

- Conduct regular shelf-life monitoring and inventory checks.
- Immediately segregate expired/degraded explosives.

Prepare and submit a written report to the National Explosives Committee (NEC) within 7 days, detailing the type, quantity (NEW), batch numbers, date of manufacture, and reason for expiry.

c) Notification and Approval

No movement or destruction of expired explosives shall occur without prior written approval from the NEC.

d) Destruction Procedure

The NEC is the sole authority responsible for the destruction of expired, degraded, or shelf-life expired explosives. :

The following procedure shall apply:

- NEC shall recommend the **immediate controlled destruction** of all such materials.
- The destruction process shall be supervised by the Chief Explosives Inspector’s technical team.
- The destruction site shall be selected and approved by the NEC technical team, with priority given to maximum safety, security, environmental protection, and community safety.
- All costs associated with transportation, supervision, and controlled destruction shall be borne by the Responsible Company.

e) Additional Requirements

- No permit for re-stocking of explosives shall be granted until the NEC confirms completion of the controlled destruction.
- **Unauthorized destruction, burning, or disposal by the company is strictly prohibited.**

14.0 Reference to Illustrations

For detailed guidance on the layout and construction of the explosives storage magazine, refer to the attached illustrations:

- Plans
- Sections
- Elevations
- Perspective Rendered Illustrations.

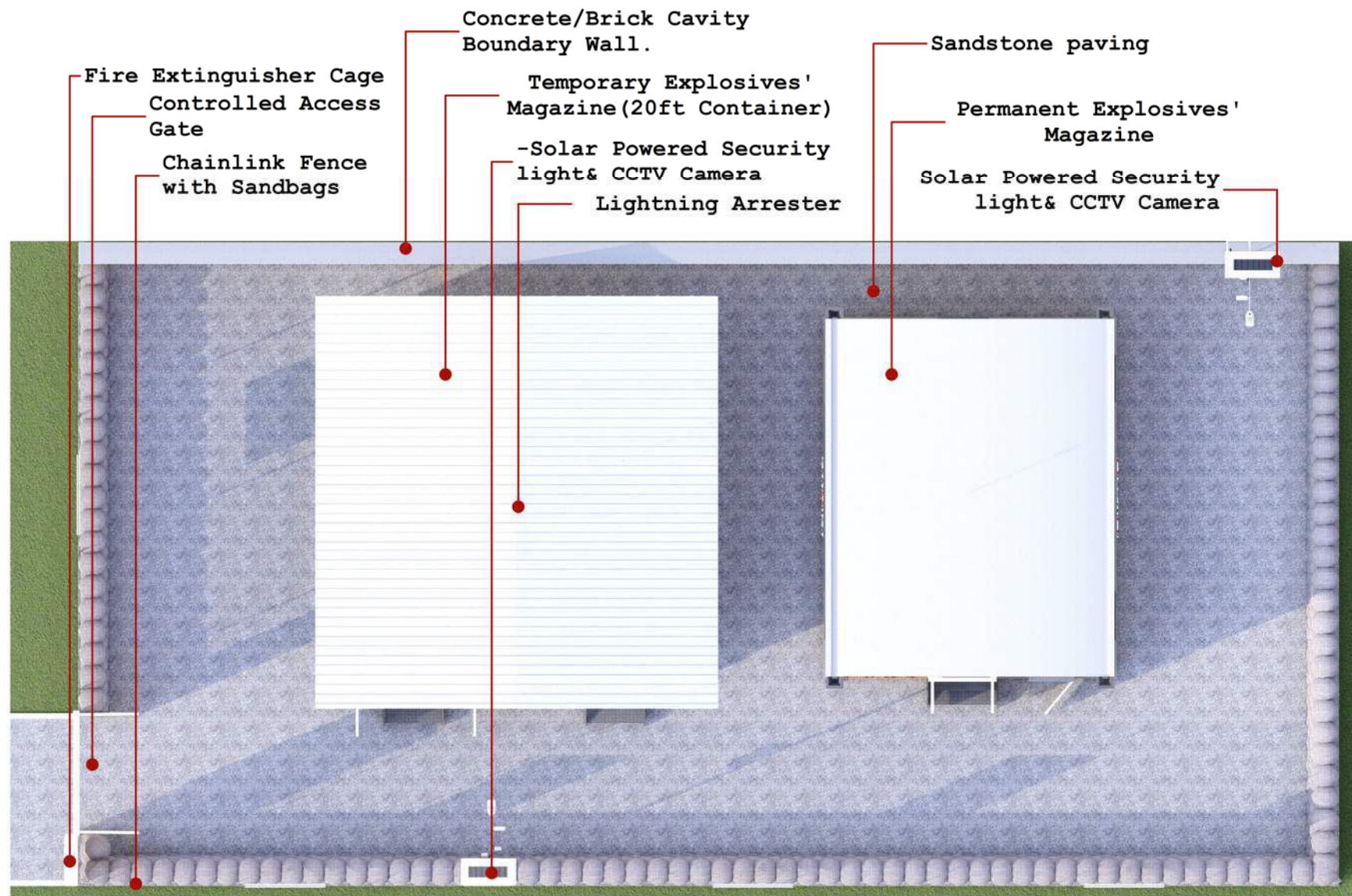
These drawings shall be used as visual reference in conjunction with the requirements stated in this Technical Instructions Note.

Enquiries and Contact
For licenses applications, site approvals, technical clarifications, expired explosives, or any other related matters, contact:

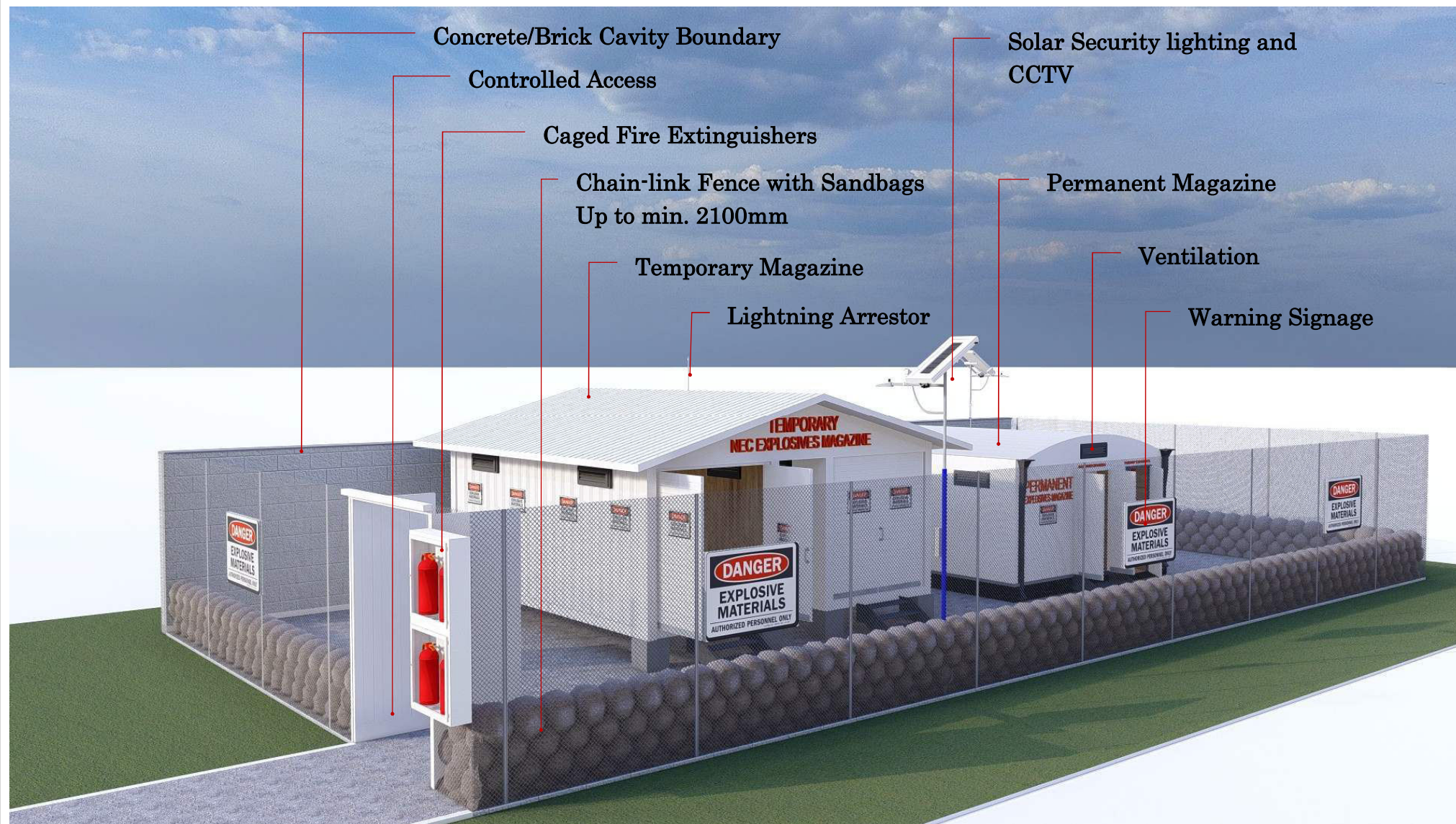
The Chief Explosives Inspector
(Secretary to the National Explosives Committee)
Government Security Office
Ministry of Internal Affairs
Kampala, Uganda
Website: www.mia.go.ug

All formal submissions and correspondence shall be addressed to the NEC through the Chief Explosives Inspector.

EXPLOSIVES SITE AND MAGAZINE SETUP- SITE



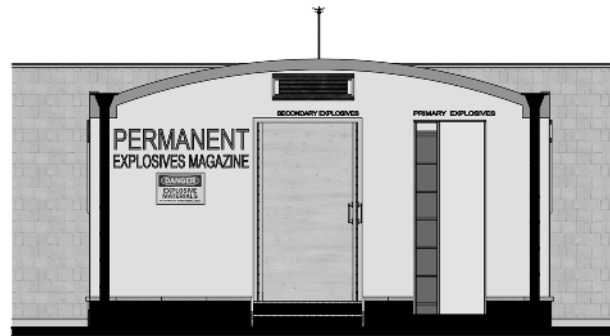
EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE SITE SETUP -3D ILLUSTRATION



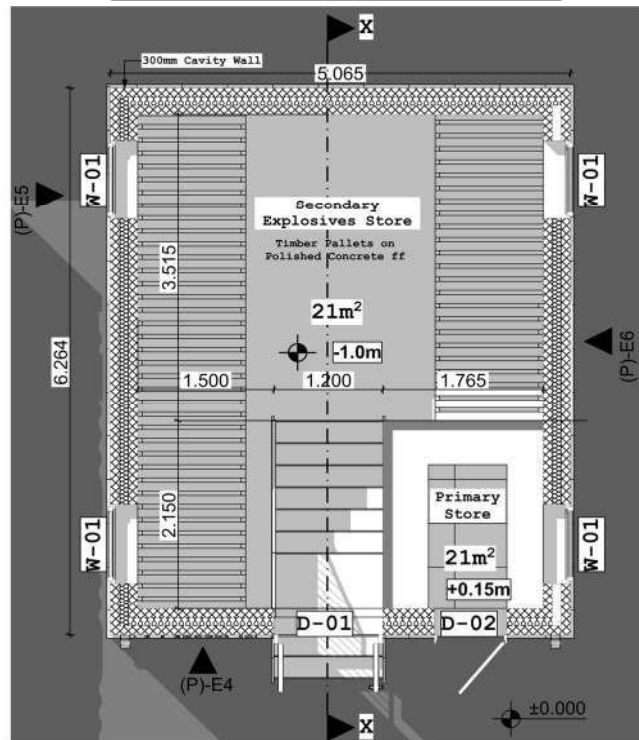
PERMANENT EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE



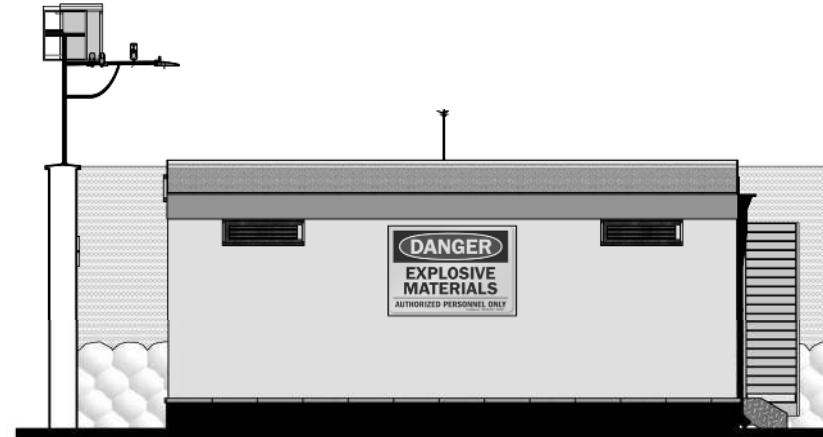
PERMANENT EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE DRAWINGS



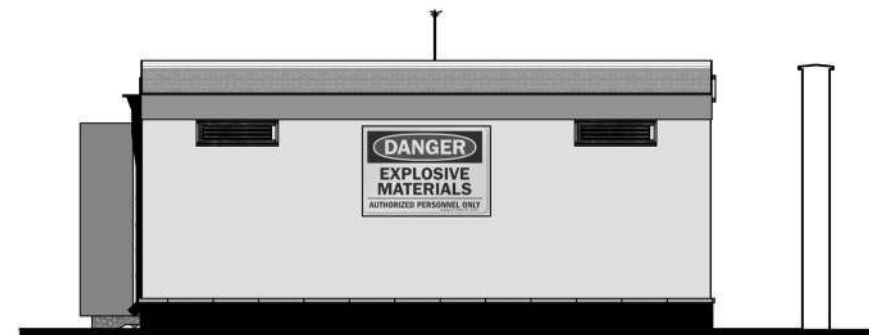
ELEVATION (P) -E4



PLAN LAYOUT

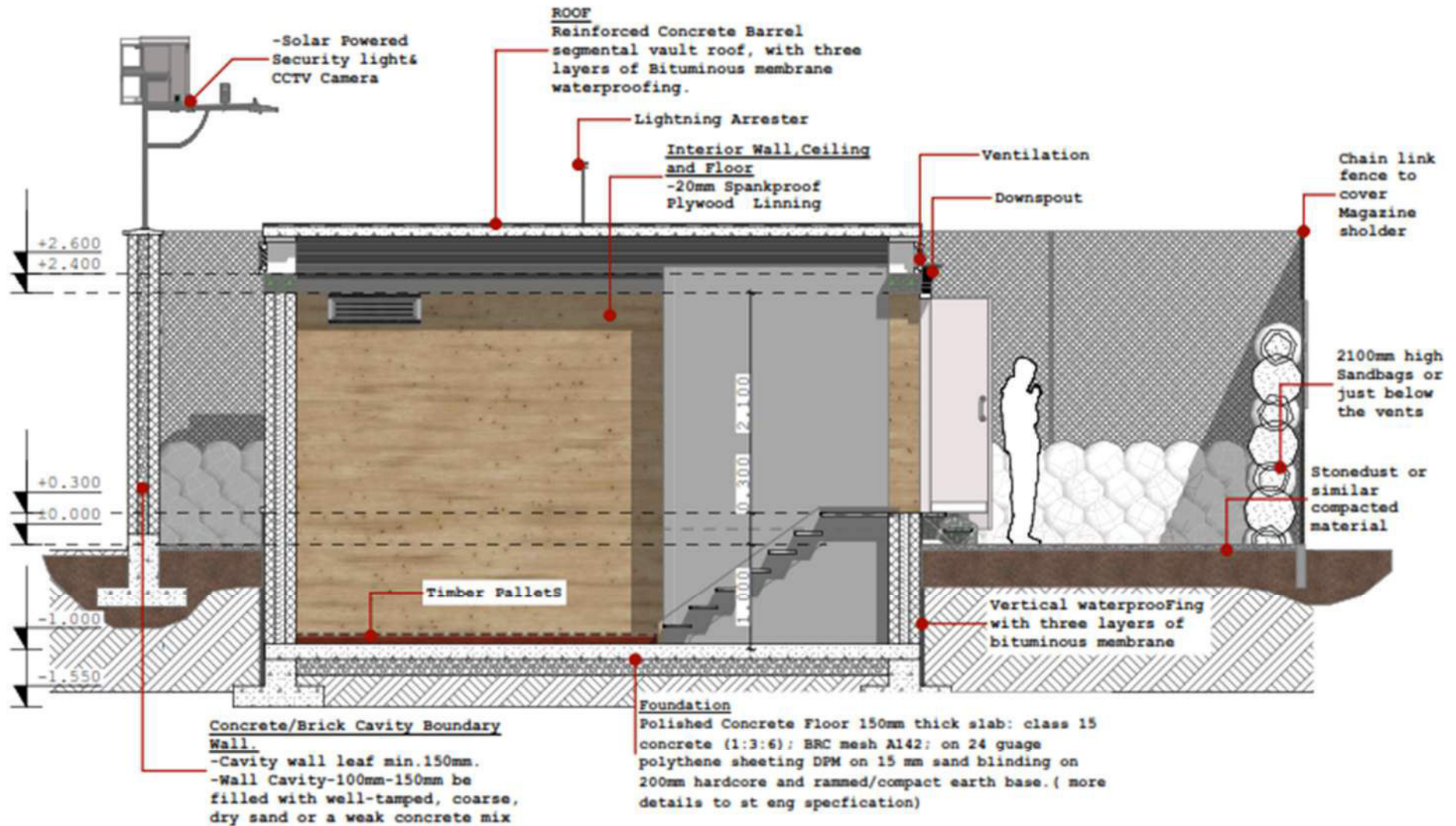


ELEVATION (P) -E5



ELEVATION (P) -E6

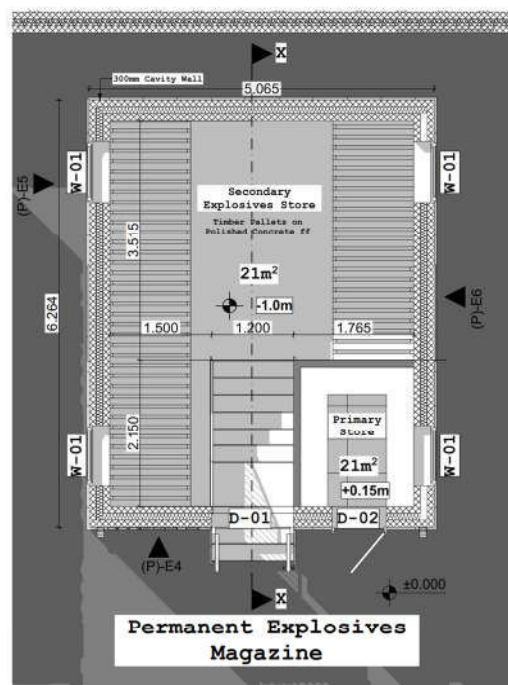
PERMANENT EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE DRAWINGS



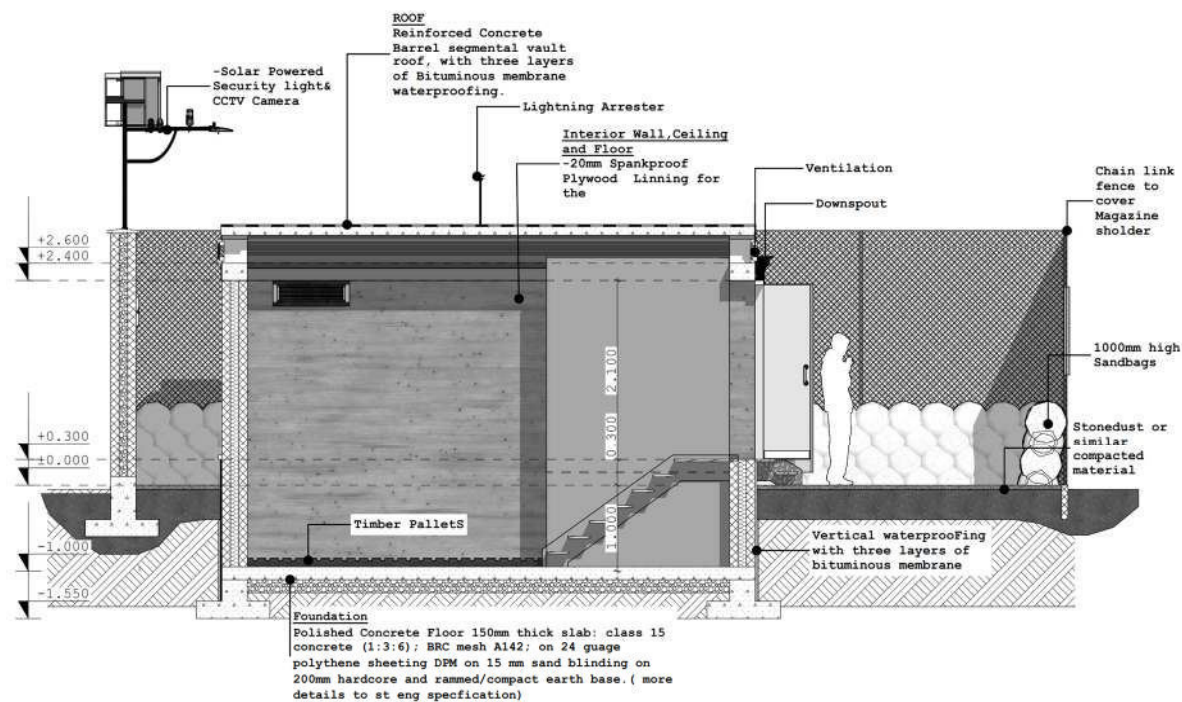
SECTION (X-X)

NEC PERMANENT EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE

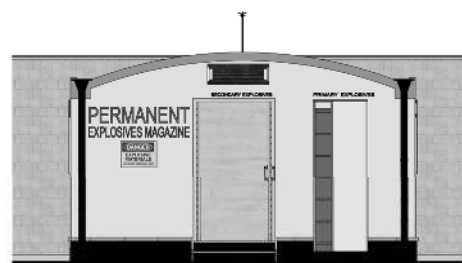
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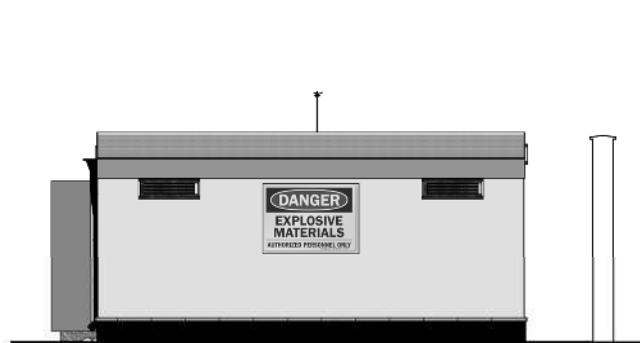
PLAN LAYOUT



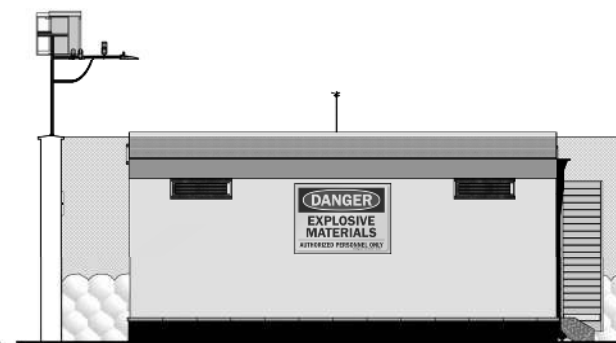
SECTION (X-X)



ELEVATION (P) - E4



ELEVATION (P) - E5



ELEVATION (P) - E6

PERMANENT EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE -FRONT PERSPECTIVE VIEW



PERMANENT EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE -INTERIOR PERSPECTIVE



PERMANENT EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE - PERSPECTIVE VIEW



EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE SITE -PERSPECTIVE VIEW



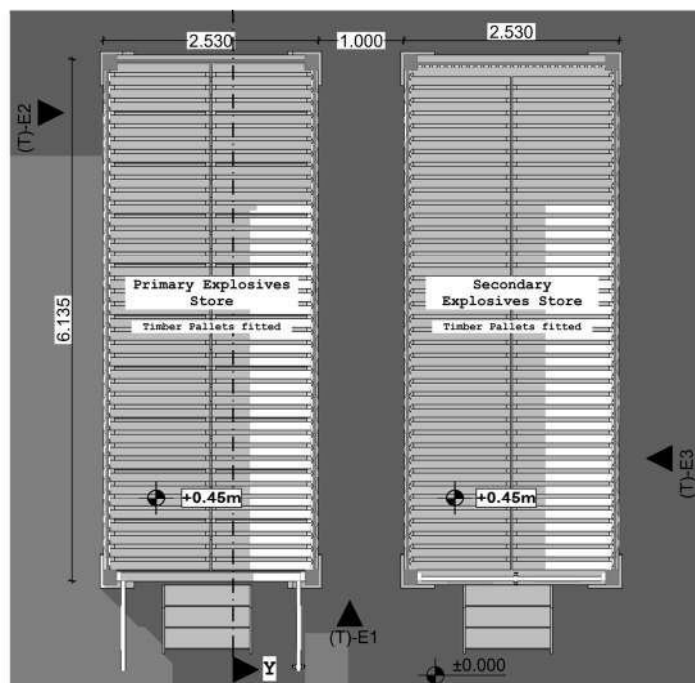
TEMPORARY EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE



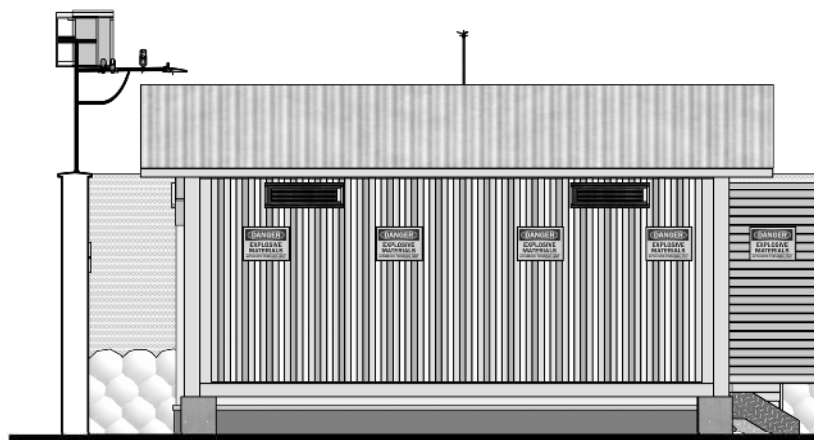
TEMPORARY EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE DRAWINGS



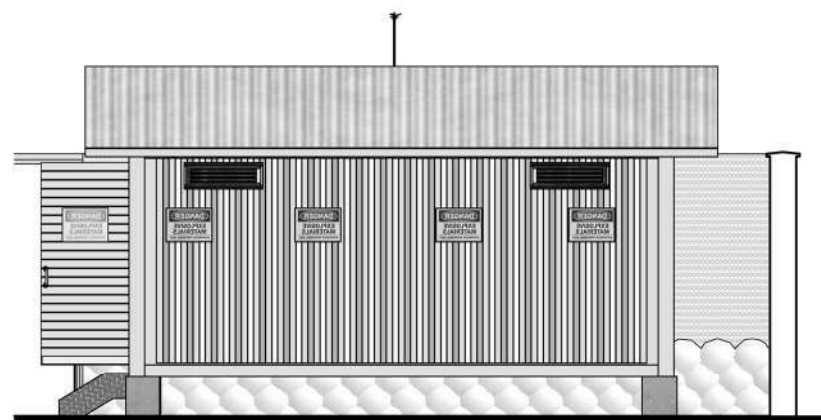
ELEVATION (T) -E1



PLAN LAYOUT

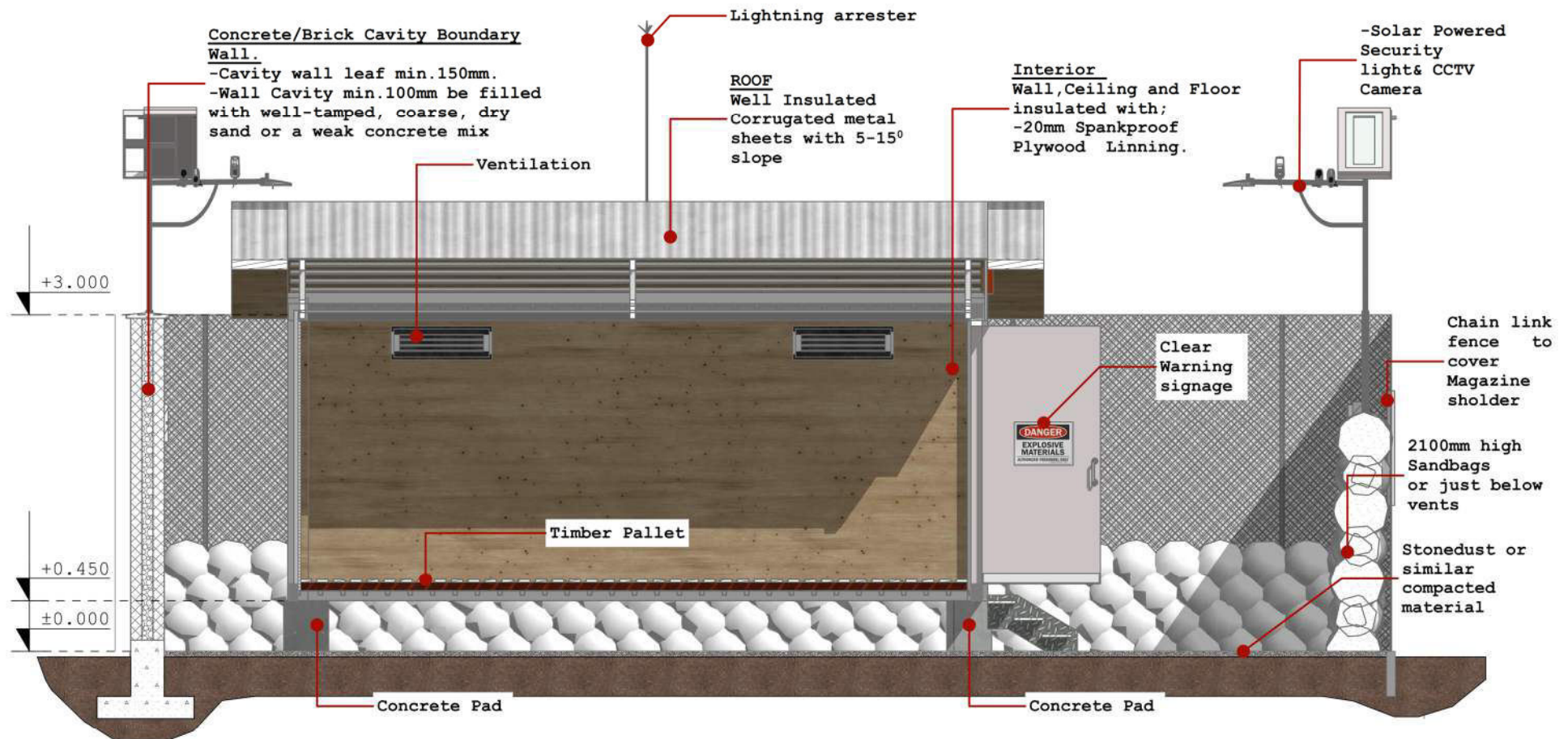


ELEVATION (T) -E2



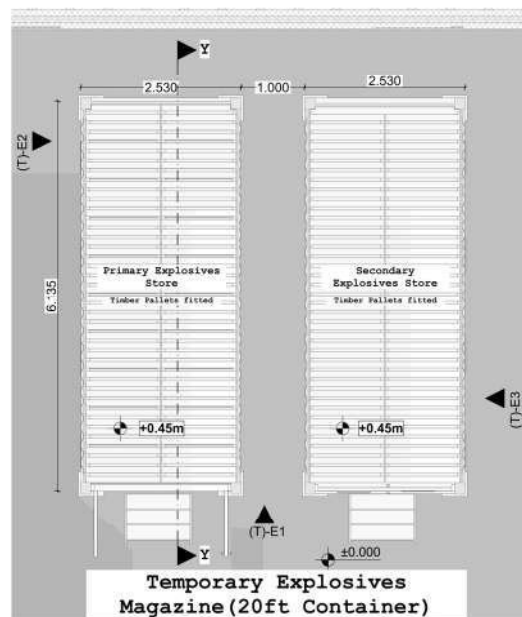
ELEVATION (T) -E3

TEMPORARY EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE DRAWINGS

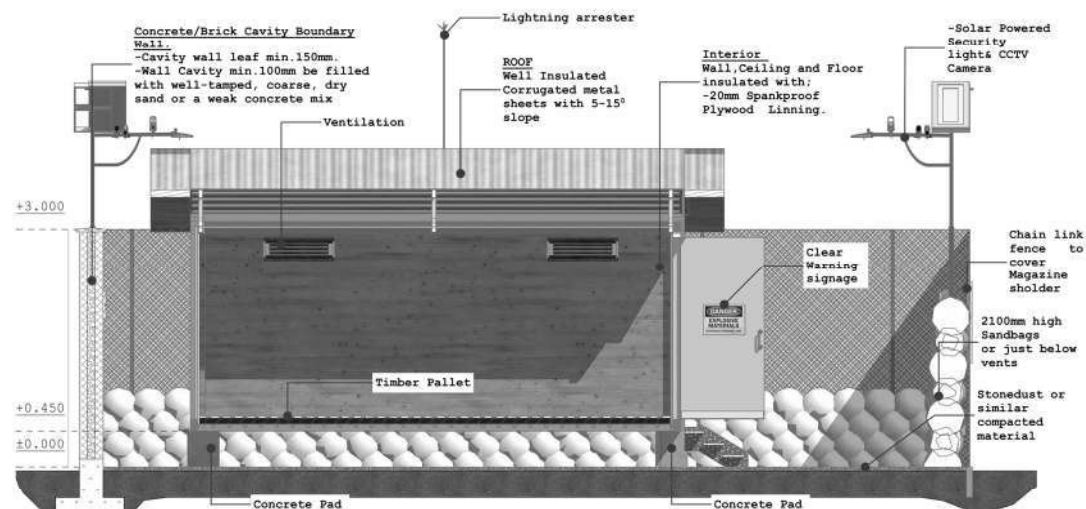


SECTION (Y-Y)

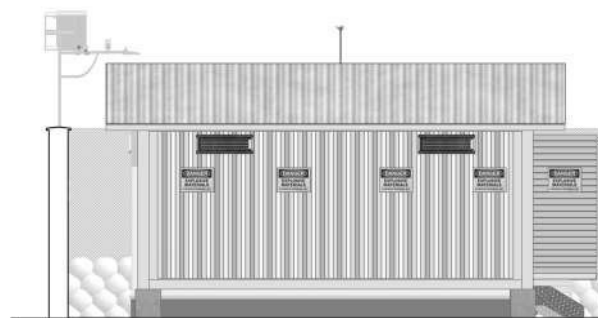
NEC TEMPORARY EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE



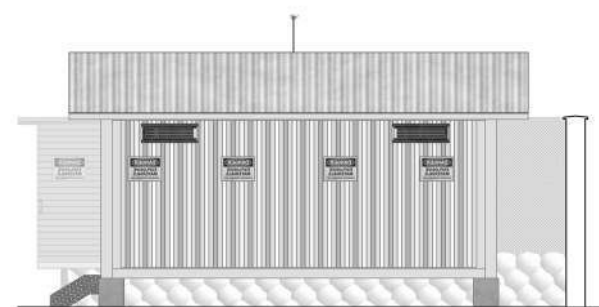
PLAN LAYOUT



ELEVATION (T) -E1



ELEVATION (T) -E2



ELEVATION (T) -E3

SCALE 1:50

TEMPORARY EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE –INTERIOR VIEW



TEMPORARY EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE - PERSPECTIVE VIEW



EXPLOSIVES SITE AND MAGAZINE SETUP-PERSPECTIVE



EXPLOSIVES SITE AND MAGAZINE SETUP-PERSPECTIVE VIEW



15.0 NOTES TO EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE MANAGERS

Use of Annex A and Annex B

Annex A (Housekeeping & Record Keeping Schedule) and Annex B (Inventory Taking & Record Keeping Form) are mandatory tools for the safe and compliant management of explosives magazines.

How to Use Annex A and Annex B Together

1. Daily Routine

- Every day, the Magazine Manager shall complete **Annex A** (Housekeeping Schedule).
- At the same time, perform a quick visual stock check and update **Annex B – Section 1** (Daily/Weekly Stock Check).

2. Weekly Routine

- Complete all tasks listed in Annex A.
- Update Annex B with any stock movement (receipt or issue of explosives).

3. Monthly Routine

- At the end of every month, carry out a **full physical inventory count**.
- Complete **Annex B – Section 2** (Monthly Full Inventory Reconciliation).
- Ensure Annex A is fully filled for the entire month.

4. Record Keeping Requirements

- Both Annex A and Annex B must be filled in **ink**.
- All entries must be signed by the Magazine Manager on the day the task is completed.
- Keep completed forms in a dedicated **Magazine Records File** at the magazine site.
- Retain records for a minimum of **5 years** or as directed by the National Explosives Committee (NEC).

5. Reporting Obligations

- Any defect, damage, moisture, pest activity, or expired/degraded explosives noted in either Annex must be reported **immediately** to the Chief Explosives Inspector.
- Expired or degraded stock identified in Annex B must be reported to NEC in writing within **7 days**.
- Both Annexes shall be made available for inspection by NEC officers when required.

Purpose

These two annexes ensure that the magazine is kept clean, secure, well-maintained and that accurate stock records are always available. Proper use of Annex A and Annex B demonstrates full compliance with the Explosives Act, 2024 and helps prevent accidents, theft, or environmental hazards.

ANNEX A

EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE HOUSEKEEPING & RECORD KEEPING SCHEDULE

Magazine Name / Location:Month / Year:

Date	Task / Activity (Daily & Weekly)	Completed (☐)	Remarks / Observations	Signature
	1. Inspected exterior, roof, doors and perimeter fence for damage/tampering			
	2. Checked ventilation openings for blockage			
	3. Checked for moisture, condensation, pests or rodents			
	4. Verified all warning signs are clean and visible			
	5. Confirmed doors are locked and access log is updated			
	6. Checked fire extinguishers (pressure & seal)			
	7. General housekeeping – removed dust, cobwebs & debris (non-sparking tools)			
	8. Confirmed serviceable & expired explosives are properly segregated			
	9. Pest control inspection / baiting (if required)			
	10. Any other observations or defects found			

Weekly / Monthly Additional Tasks (to be ticked when completed)

Week / Date	Task	Completed (☐)	Remarks	Signature
	Full inventory reconciliation			
	Inspection of sandbags along perimeter fence			
	L, hinges and security hardware			
	Thorough internal cleaning and ventilation check			
	Lightning protection grounding check (monthly)			

Declaration

I certify that the above housekeeping and maintenance activities were carried out as required.

Magazine Manager Name: Signature: Date:

ANNEX B**EXPLOSIVES MAGAZINE INVENTORY TAKING & RECORD KEEPING FORM**

Magazine Name / Location: **Month / Year:**

1. DAILY / WEEKLY STOCK CHECK

Date	Item Description / Type of Explosive	Batch / Lot No.	Quantity Received	Quantity Issued / Used	Current Stock Balance (NEW)	Condition (Serviceable / Expired / Degraded)	Location in Magazine	Remarks / Observations	Signature of Manager

2. MONTHLY FULL INVENTORY RECONCILIATION

(To be completed at the end of every month)

Item Description / Type of Explosive	Batch / Lot No.	Date of Manufacture	Shelf-Life Expiry Date	Total Quantity (NEW)	Serviceable Stock	Expired / Degraded Stock	Remarks / Action Taken	Signature

Total Net Explosive Weight (NEW) in Magazine: kg/tons

Expired / Degraded Explosives Summary

- Total Expired Quantity:

Has a report been submitted to NEC? ☐ Yes ☐ No Date submitted:

Declaration

I certify that the above inventory has been physically counted, verified and reconciled with the stock register. All serviceable and expired explosives are properly segregated and stored as required.

Magazine Manager Name: **Signature:** **Date:**



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
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NATIONAL EXPLOSIVES COMMITTEE
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