Bomb squads saddle-up for Robot Rodeo

May 15, 2008

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, May 15, 2008—Hazardous devices teams from around the Southwest are getting ready to wrangle their bomb squad robots at the second annual Robot Rodeo, hosted by Los Alamos National Laboratory. The rodeo gets under way at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 20, 2008 at Technical Area 49, a remote section of Laboratory property near the entrance to Bandelier National Monument.

This year's rodeo is held in partnership with Sandia National Laboratories and the International Association of Bomb Technicians and Investigators, Region II.

Rodeo events include a fun obstacle course and tests of skill, finesse, and endurance for both robot and operator. In one test, a robot has to carry a glass of water over a bed of rubber tires without spilling. In another test the robots are tasked with carrying an egg over rough terrain without breaking it. The event also includes more serious real-world scenarios that test the robots with a variety of mock hazardous devices.

"This event gives bomb squad teams the ability to practice and hone their skills in a fun setting," said Chris Ory, of the Laboratory's bomb squad.

News media interested in attending the 2008 Robot Rodeo should contact Kevin Roark at (505) 665-9202 or knroark@lanl.gov, no later than Friday, May 16.