

# **Review of The Chemistry and Characteristics of Explosive Materials**

James R. Cook, PhD

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This little volume, sensibly priced at \$12.95, is a compilation of basic information and general characteristics of a range of explosives, based as the author acknowledges, on previously published data. After a brief general information chapter, it details the physical and explosive properties of nearly 50 explosives in the general categories: Low Explosives, Initiating (Primary) High Explosives, Non-Initiating (Secondary) High Explosives, Binary Explosives and Special Explosives. Consolidated data (Name, Detonation Temperature and Rate of Detonation) follows and the book concludes with an excellent and comprehensive glossary.

If I had two criticisms of this useful book, they would be: It only briefly mentions composite propellants and pyrotechnics, although in some respects these are the most widely used explosives and certainly deserve more space. Secondly, no doubt in order to conserve space, the text flows continuously, rather than, for instance, tabulating the data for each separate explosive in a common page layout. In this way, it is sometimes inelegant in the way that the information is presented.

Nevertheless, this is a useful addition to any explosive specialist's library. I hope that a similar volume detailing the characteristics of a range of propellants and pyrotechnics may be forthcoming.

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