

Check It!

—pre-combat inspection/checks of NBC equipment

By CPT Ralph F. Kerr

The warning order for your unit's next mission has been briefed, and now you must prepare for combat operations. Pre-combat inspections (PCIs) or pre-combat checks (PCCs) of NBC-specific equipment ensures required items are on hand and serviceable, that equipment is stored in accordance with loadplans, and combat readiness is at its optimum.

A pre-combat inspection is a thorough examination of equipment, personnel, and loadplans and is critical to declaring a unit ready for combat operations. The intent of an inspection is to ensure that the established standards have been achieved. The unit commander decides to conduct an inspection when there is sufficient time in his/her judgment for subordinate leaders to not only inspect, but also take corrective action.

A pre-combat check is conducted when time is short and/or the commander deems that a less critical look of equipment, personnel, and loadplans is sufficient prior to combat operations. Corrective actions may be completed by cross-leveling, placing items on order, trading, and/or prioritizing equipment.

Conduct PCIs/PCCs of NBC equipment within your unit, placing the responsibility on leaders at each level for its conduct and thoroughness. NBC NCOs provide technical expertise and should be used for

such. PCIs/PCCs of NBC equipment within the company may include checking a single piece of equipment more than once. Redundancy will emphasize the importance of items and ensure required equipment is on hand at the appropriate level.

Inspect or check a particular piece of equipment in more detail at the lower level than at the next higher level. Focus primarily on individual equipment at squad level. The inspection or check at platoon level will include individual and collective equipment with the focus being that equipment is on-hand, serviceable, and uploaded correctly. The concern at company level should be that individual equipment has been accounted for, collective NBC equipment is properly distributed, and primary and alternate operators are assigned and knowledgeable of their duties.

Conduct serviceability checks of equipment not only in accordance with applicable technical manuals and references, but also lessons learned and common sense. Refit protective masks to ensure good seals. Protective masks are put on and taken off many times during an extended field problem, not to mention getting banged around, and masks will require adjusting.

Refill decontamination kits, chemical agent detector kits, and portable decontaminating apparatuses. Ensure sufficient quantities of all the neces-

sary batteries for radiac sets/meters and chemical agent detectors/alarms are on hand.

This requires operators and NBC NCOs having a working knowledge of the battery lives. Prior planning, based on experience and knowledge of the equipment, will give you a basis for the quantities and types of batteries it will take to sustain and support your unit's operations.

Develop and use loadplans as a means to enforce good order and discipline, and to ensure equipment is accessible. Standardize loadplans at the highest, appropriate level. This will emplace a common thread of organization within your unit that will be of great value should crew members be moved to other sections, squads, or platoons.

For example, chemical agent detectors/alarms are a company-level piece of equipment, the company SOP, at a minimum, should state which platoons/sections/squads are responsible for maintaining and operating this equipment, which vehicle(s) they are carried in, and where they are specifically stowed in the vehicle.

The chemical agent detectors/alarms are inspected in detail at the platoon level and checked (for readiness) at company level. Portable decontaminating apparatuses are an operator/crew-level item found throughout the battalion. The battalion SOP should designate where this

item is located (mounted) within each major type of vehicle and piece of equipment; the company SOP should specify primary and alternate operators by duty position and who is responsible for supervising the operators and inspecting or checking the item during PCIs/PCCs.

Our goal is to achieve and maintain a high standard of combat readiness. Readiness for operations on the integrated battlefield requires touch, realistic training and equipment preparation. Review essential tasks and operating procedures of equipment during PCIs/PCCs as a training refresher.

This can be incorporated by simply asking questions of your soldiers

as you inspect/check equipment and loadplans. Critical issues to review may include reactions to an NBC attack, symptoms of a chemical agent, who reports NBC attacks to higher headquarters, individual basic skills decontamination, first aid measures, and how to employ and operate the different pieces of equipment.

PCIs/PCCs of NBC equipment will result in your unit's ability to operate effectively, survive, and continue the mission on the integrated battlefield. Develop NBC equipment inspection and checklists in close coordination with NBC NCOs and the leaders who will be required to use these lists. Standardize the lists, include them in SOPs, and enforce

their use. Update and revise the lists so, in the end, your unit is prepared for success.

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Sample

Platoon-Level NBC Equipment Inspection/Checklist

Protective Masks

- ☐ Each soldier assigned mask and fitted properly
- ☐ M258A1 skin decon kits (stored in mask carrier and complete)
- ☐ M8 detector paper (stored in mask carrier and serviceable)

CPOs/BDOs

- ☐ Each soldier has a complete overgarment (jacket, pants, glove set, chemical overboots/green wet weather boots, helmet cover)
- ☐ Stored IAW loadplan and/or SOP
- ☐ Marked (name and rank) IAW SOP

M8A1 Chemical Agent Detector/Alarm

- ☐ Primary and alternate operator(s) designated and knowledgeable of equipment
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ Air filters
- ☐ WD1 wire

Chemical Agent Monitor

- ☐ M9 Detector Paper
- ☐ On vehicles IAW SOP

- ☐ Spare rolls on hand

M256A1 Chemical Agent Detector Kits

- ☐ Primary and alternate operator(s) designated and knowledgeable of using kit
- ☐ Stored IAW loadplan and/or SOP

M11 Decon Apparatus

- ☐ 1-1/3-quart cans of DS2
- ☐ Nitrogen cylinders
- ☐ Mounted/stored IAW loadplan and/or SOP

M13 Decon Apparatus, Portable (DAP)

- ☐ IM93/UD Dosimeter
- ☐ AN/PDR27-series Radiac Meters
- ☐ Primary and alternate operator-designated and knowledgeable on operating equipment.
- ☐ Batteries

Tasks to be reviewed:

- 031-503-3002, *Conduct Unmasking Procedures*
- 031-503-1023, *Exchange MOPP Gear*
- 031-503-2001, *Use the M256A1 Chemical Agent Detector Kit*
- 031-507-1002, *Decontaminate Equipment Using ABC-M11 Decontaminating Apparatus*

Sample

Squad-Level NBC Equipment/Checklist

Protective Mask

- ☐ Each soldier assigned a mask (correct type and size)
- ☐ Inserts (for soldiers who wear glasses)
- ☐ Facepiece assembly (dirty; permanent set; holes, tears, splits, soft/sticky spots; pull check [test] for dry rot; eyelens pulls away from facepiece)
- ☐ Head harness (holds facepiece firmly against face; cuts, tears, frayed areas, missing clip ends, deteriorated)
- ☐ Clip and buckle assembly (finish [lacquer] missing; assemblies missing or broken)
- ☐ Temple pins missing or broken

Eyelens cracked, cut, scratched, or discolored

- ☐ Eyering bent or corroded
- ☐ Eyelens outserts broken, distorted, or discolored
- ☐ Voicemitter-outlet assembly (voicemitter cracked, bulging, or deformed; outlet valve disk properly seated, cracked, curled, torn, or cut; drinking lever damaged or missing; drinking tube operates)
- ☐ Inlet valve assemblies (missing or mesh is worn or torn; inlet valve disks missing, seated properly, curled, discolored, dirty, or punctured)
- ☐ Filter elements properly installed; pouch flaps buttoned
- ☐ Nosecup assembly buttoned; nosecup valve disks missing, stuck, properly seated; curled, discolored, dirty, punctured, or torn
- ☐ Mask carrier torn or ripped, straps in place and serviceable
- ☐ Hood (cuts, holes, tears; fabric is sticky, gummy, peeling, or worn; straps, cords, or hardware missing, frayed, or torn; zippers torn, broken, or inoperative)
- ☐ Waterproof bag torn or has holes
- ☐ Winterization kit has cracked retainers or torn prefilters (fitted properly/seals properly)

Chemical Protective Overgarment (MOPP Suit)/Battle Dress Overgarment (BDO)

- ☐ Each soldier assigned a MOPP suit/BDO (training/contingency; correct size; tears, holes, or punctures; marked IAW SOP [last name and rank]; M9 detector paper worn properly)
- ☐ Glove set
- ☐ Chemical protective boots/Green wet weather boots (holes, strings/fasteners serviceable)
- ☐ Helmet cover

M258A1 Skin Decon Kit

- ☐ Three sets of wipes (#1 and #2) per kit
- ☐ Stored IAW SOP and/or in mask carrier
- ☐ Case broken or cracked
- ☐ Nerve Agent Antidote Kit (MARK I)
- ☐ Three each per individual; stored IAW SOP

M256A1 Chemical Agent Detector Kit

- ☐ Complete kits; 12 each sampler-detector; 1 book M8 paper (serviceable: 4 each sampler-detector)
- ☐ Discard date
- ☐ Strap missing or broken

M11 Decontaminating Apparatus

- ☐ 1-1/3-quart cans of DS2
- ☐ Nitrogen cylinders
- ☐ Apparatus (safety wire; free of exterior rust and corrosion)
- ☐ Container (Interior free of rust, pitting, or other damage)
- ☐ Sprayhead assembly (preformed packing; siphon tube not loose; spray nozzle clean and open; stainer screen)
- ☐ Mounting bracket secure

Tasks to be reviewed:

- 081-831-1030, *Administer Nerve Agent Antidote to Self (Self-Aid)*
- 081-831-1031, *Administer First Aid to a Nerve Agent Casualty (Buddy Aid)*
- 031-503-1007, *Decontaminate Your Skin and Personal Equipment*
- 031-503-1014, *Use M8 Detector Paper to Identify Chemical Agent*

Sample

Company-Level NBC Equipment Inspection/Checklist

Individual Equipment

- ☐ Protective masks
- ☐ Chemical protective overgarments/battle dress overgarments
- ☐ M258A1 and/or M291 skin decontamination kits
- ☐ Resupply for decon operations coordinated (see below)

Collective Equipment

- ☐ M8A1 chemical agent alarms (operators, primary and alternate; batteries)
- ☐ Chemical agent monitors (operators, primary and alternate)
- ☐ M256A1 chemical agent detector kits (cross-leveling required? Safety measures reviewed)
- ☐ M9 chemical agent detector paper on vehicles
- ☐ M272 water testing kit (operators, primary and alternate; complete kit)
- ☐ M11 decon apparatuses
- ☐ M13 decon apparatuses, portable
- ☐ Decontaminants, DS2 and STB
- ☐ Emergency supply on hand
- ☐ Stored properly (DS2 and STB not together)
- ☐ IM93/UD dosimeters
- ☐ AN/PDR27 radiac meters
- ☐ NBC Marking kits

Hasty Decon Equipment

- ☐ Two 5-gallon pails of DS2
- ☐ Two immersion heaters
- ☐ Two 32-gallon galvanized trash cans
- ☐ Six 3-gallon buckets
- ☐ Six long-handled brushes
- ☐ Six large sponges
- ☐ Six books M8 detector paper
- ☐ 300 plastic garbage bags
- ☐ MOGAS (for immersion heaters)
- ☐ Shovel, axe
- ☐ Shears/knife
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ NBC marking kit
- ☐ Resupply of mask filters, hoods, CFOs/BDOs, M9 paper, M258A1 decon kits

Tasks to be reviewed:

Notification and Reporting Procedure of NBC Attacks

Hasty Decon and Decon Support Request Procedures

Emplacement of M8A1 Chemical Agent Detectors/Alarms

This story has been placed so that it can be lifted out without disturbing the rest of the publication.—Editor