

fit-testing assistance. These contact teams would move forward with repair parts and fit-testing equipment, along with a stockage of serviceable masks of various sizes in case a direct exchange was required, and link up with units to accomplish the needed maintenance. On one trip, elements of seven different 18th Airborne Corps units were serviced. The feedback from unit commanders and soldiers for this service was extremely positive. It required nothing of them except to be at the established link-up point with the people who needed help. A platoon leader from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) commented that, "By having the maintenance capability come to me, it saves valuable training time by not sending soldiers to the rear, and at the same time, a critical maintenance requirement for some of my soldiers gets taken care of. It's a win-win situation for me."

A valuable lesson learned from the CMF concept might be that, although the fixed-site CMF was an extremely

valuable and useful maintenance asset, if an endeavor like this is ever undertaken again in the future, it might be useful to have a number of designated mobile mask maintenance and testing teams who could provide a certain level of minor repair and fit-testing in the field to forward deployed units. These teams could be managed by the corps chemical cells who would prioritize their efforts.

To be sure, the CMF concept established to support the soldier in the field during Operation Desert Shield/Storm was a great success. It was a capability quickly organized to meet a much-needed wartime maintenance requirement. Between the time the facility became operational on 10 Dec 90 and when it shut down in late March 1991, repair work or fit-testing services were performed on over 14,000 masks by the skilled employees of the CMF. If a soldier's performance is enhanced by confidence in his equipment, then, in judging from the comments, smiles and sighs of relief from the soldiers

whose masks were serviced at the CMF, the Iraqis didn't stand a chance.

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Army Receives First Fox Vehicles

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The first eight FOX nuclear, chemical, and biological reconnaissance system vehicles were delivered to the U.S. Army in Germany 11 October by General Dynamics Lands Systems Division and Thyssen Henschel, Kassel, Germany.

The Army is purchasing 48 FOX vehicles to provide an urgently needed capacity.

The FOX, a wheeled armored vehicle designed to detect contamina-

tion on the battlefield, was accepted by the office of the Project Manager for Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Defense Systems which is headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

A high-speed amphibious vehicle, the FOX contains a dedicated system of detection, warning, and sampling equipment to include the mass spectrometer. Through the use of a secure communications network, the

FOX provides warning to the soldiers to avoid the contaminated area. The vehicle is a non-developmental item currently used by the German army. Germany provided 60 systems which were used by the U.S. Army during Operations Desert Shield and Storm.

The production of the first eight systems is a milestone in filling an urgently needed requirement and in international cooperation.