

The NBC Defense Team

—guidelines for selection

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Selecting personnel for the unit NBC Defense Team is frequently a haphazard process, especially in Reserve Component units. The selection is sometimes made with little or no input from the unit's NBC NCO or officer; or, an NBC NCO may select personnel without having a firm grasp on how the unit and its sections operate. Seldom does anyone make a good solid analysis of the unit's wartime mission and the activities taking place in an NBC environment, and use this analysis to identify the appropriate personnel for the NBC Defense Team.

Too often, *individuals* are selected, and the selection may be based on criteria such as "not being too busy" or "sharp, would serve well" or, sometimes, "not too sharp, get him out of the way for a while." These criteria are wrong. Why?

First, how "sharp" an individual is should not be a factor, except for the control party which has a highly technical job. Most NBC Defense Team duties are relatively easy to learn; the few exceptions can be handled by giving more training. Second, and this is the real point, *in-*

dividuals should never be selected. Selection should be made by *duty position*.

Because of the difficulty of control party duties, you may want to select individuals for the control party, as long as their duty positions do not preclude *wartime* functioning on the control party.

The only criteria with any validity is how busy someone is—but this is not valid the way it is usually meant, which is how busy that person is during peacetime garrison training activities. For instance, a clerk who is very busy typing letters or filling out requisitions during peacetime will *not* have time to type letters or fill out requisitions immediately after a chemical attack and could, instead, take an M256 kit and identify the agent. On the other hand, a radio operator may not have many mission-related activities when in garrison, but will be *very* busy in a tactical situation.

So, how *do* you go about selecting personnel? The unit NBC NCO should begin the process, and lay the groundwork, but it must be a cooperative effort with input from the company commander, the operations officer and/or NCO, the NBC defense officer, and the platoon

leaders or section supervisors. I would recommend that all of these people read this paper, then meet to discuss and identify the appropriate *duty position* from which the team can be drawn.

First, carefully read and discuss the selection considerations which follow. Then, the NBC NCO can simplify the actual selection process by walking through the step-by-step procedures (1-15) which follow these selection considerations.

Selection Considerations

In many units, all MTOE NBC defense equipment (NBCDE) is authorized in the company headquarters or a headquarters element, usually because the unit operates together and the NBCDE supports the entire unit.

In many other units, some sections normally have missions which take them away from the unit's central location, and some MTOEs reflect this by authorizing some detection equipment to such sections. However, if all your NBCDE falls into the headquarters element, do not take this to mean that no section or part of a section will ever leave the main body to perform a mission (the maintenance section with a recovery mission comes to mind immediately).

Also, the Common Table of Allowances-authorized M256 Kit is issued one to each squad in Category I and II units, and one per platoon in Category III units (the object is to ensure a kit to each separately operating element).

When equipment is portioned off to sections, selecting operators is somewhat easier than it is when grouped under the headquarters element, but in any case certain considerations apply. The operators must not be selected at random.

First, analyze the tasks of unit personnel:

Concentrate on what each would be doing during the times when NBCDE would be utilized most. These times are: (1) during movement, (2) setting up and maintaining perimeter or unit area defense, (3) after chemical attack, (4) when fallout is predicted on unit area, and if/when it arrives, (5) special internal missions, and (6) during a decon operation, which is a special case involving partial or complete stand down from other activities depending on the type or degree of decon required.

It would not be appropriate to select certain personnel for NBC defense team duties. The company commander, the first sergeant, the operations sergeant, and such, are obviously inappropriate. Not as immediately obvious are unit commo personnel (those who are actually involved with keeping the lines of communication open), but after a moment's thought, you can see that they are not usually good choices. Section chiefs are not usually selected, unless they are special alternates for a specific type mission (this is discussed later). Assigned vehicle drivers (MTOE duty position) should be avoided, unless there are no viable alternatives.

Certain types of units will have personnel who are so totally involved with the essential mission that they cannot be spared from their tasks while performing a mission—the can-

noneers in field artillery units, for example.

Other types of personnel may be essential to the mission of the unit, but their activities and the missions are such that at least a few of them may be interrupted in order to monitor or identify agents, and to perform recon or survey operations. The materiel handling specialists in a supply company, or equipment repairmen in a maintenance company are examples of this group.

A third group consists of unit support personnel, and certain of these personnel probably are the best choices for the NBC team. Cooks, clerks of all sorts, and personnel from unit maintenance and supply are examples of support personnel that might be used.

Some support personnel may have to leave the unit area to perform a mission, such as vehicle recovery or supply missions. Someone in the appropriate section should be able to operate the detection equipment on such missions.

In addition, maintenance personnel will need special training on how to handle contaminated equipment.

Next, consider how and when NBCDE is used:

Use M256 kits to identify chemical agents after an attack, and when encountering an unmarked area where contamination is suspected. After an attack the agent should be identified as soon as possible. The procedure is lengthy, so do not select operators who are key personnel, such as supervisors and certain commo personnel, who are essential in reestablishing and maintaining control and order after any enemy attack.

During halts, use alarms for perimeter defense. On the perimeter, they will need to be set up and must be serviced at least every 12 hours (the new M8A1 needs servicing only every 72 hours). When mounted on vehicles during movement operations, they need no attention, although they may be deployed downwind during halts. The alarm is useless for advance war-

Organize NBC Defense Teams—Step-by-Step . . .

1. Provide copies of this paper to the commander, operations officer and NCO, NBC defense officer, and section leaders. Schedule planning sessions with these personnel (to take place at step 6).
2. Get copy of unit's MTOE.
3. Go to Equipment Recapitulation (last part of MTOE) and list the NBCDE requiring operators. Write down each separate item, not just totals; in other words, if authorized five IM174s, write "IM174" five times, with space between to make notes.
4. Go to Section III, Equip-

ment Allowances, which designates equipment by section of unit. If any NBCDE is authorized to any section *other* than the company headquarters or a headquarters element, then the operators for that item *must* come from that section. For NBCDE authorized to headquarters elements, there will probably be some flexibility as to where the operators come from; it is unlikely that all the operators would (or should, or could) be selected from a headquarters element (except for units having only one or two items, in company headquarters).

ning while moving, but lets you know if you are entering contamination—the commander can then decide whether to bypass, or to cross and decon afterward.

Use the IM174 to monitor radiation in the unit area, and during movement of any sort including special missions, unit reconnaissance, and radiological surveys. Monitoring may be periodic or continuous. During continuous monitoring, the operator will keep the radiacmeter turned on and glance at it frequently. Monitoring during any movement will be continuous. During movement, it is obvious that the operator should not be driving.

Use the AN/PDR27 to detect and locate radioactive contamination on personnel and equipment. It is usually used after decon to check effectiveness. To determine how many

AN/PDR27 operators you need, don't just count the number of instruments. Check FM 3-5, Chapter 6, and apply the deliberate decon procedures to your unit. You may need to train two, three, or four operators and borrow AN/PDRs from another unit.

Dosimeters are not appointed to specific individuals, but are carried by the most representative members (not always the same individuals) of a unit or section. Supervisors who control the dosimeters will decide who will wear them at any given time. If an individual or group must leave the area on a mission, a dosimeter should be carried if there is any danger of encountering radioactive areas. That dosimeter must first be read, the unit/section data recorded, and zeroed; it can then provide accurate

total dose information for the personnel on that mission. More information on dosimetry can be found in FM 3-3.

When a unit has only one or two PP1578/PD Radiac Chargers, the control party uses them. Some units have more dosimeters, and in some cases chargers and dosimeters are authorized to sections. In these cases, someone in that section (usually a supervisor) should be appointed to read and record dosimeter information and recharge dosimeters as required.

Finally, consider special internal missions:

Any movement operation, whether a unit convoy, reconnaissance for unit purposes, a vehicle recovery operation, or whatever, may (depending on situation) require detection devices and an operator. Since many such missions are best accomplished with a minimum of personnel, you will want one operator cross-trained on the various devices. This is the best reason for appointing the same person to different types of equipment.

Alternate operators: Consider how you will use them. They are *not only* substitutes for the primary operator in case of injury, KIA, or mission-related absence from area. They can also be appointed to serve a specific purpose.

For example, take a unit with two IM174s. A supply clerk might be the primary operator on one, tasking with monitoring in the unit area and with operating detection devices when needed on supply missions. The other IM174 might be appointed to someone in the maintenance section who would go on vehicle recovery missions. Before selecting alternates, analyze other possible missions, such as unit reconnaissance, advance parties, message running, etcetera. Someone on such missions should be appointed to use the IM174 (and the M256 kit, too); it might be inappropriate to send either of the primary operators on these other missions. Depending on the commander's

... Step-by-Step

5. Check BOI for M256 kits, and list each kit, and the name of the section/platoon/squad to which it belongs.

6. Have planning session with appropriate personnel and discuss the selection considerations.

7. Go to Section II, Personnel Allowances, of the MTOE.

8. Cross out the duty positions which are inappropriate.

9. Discuss the possible duty positions and identify the ones most appropriate for yielding NBCDE operators. Identify more positions than are actually needed, in case of temporarily unfilled slots.

10. For NBCDE authorized in headquarters element, discuss the possibility of any section(s) having an

urgent need to use detection equipment for particular missions. If so, be sure to select an operator (either primary or alternate) from that section.

11. Discuss need to appoint special alternate who will function only during specific types of missions/activities.

12. Select operators (primary and at least one alternate for each item) from the *duty positions* identified in Steps 9, 10, and 11.

13. Prepare an organization chart which identifies the operators by duty position.

14. Prepare the additional duty appointment with the individuals' names, according to who is filling the duty position selected.

15. The decon team has different selection criteria. Read FM 3-5.

analysis of who and how many would normally be assigned to perform such internal missions, special alternate operators may be an exception to the general guideline of not selecting supervisory personnel for NBCDE operators.

You are not limited to only one alternate per item, either. Several alternates may be appointed, each to function only during a particular type operation/mission. This must, of course, be specified on the appointment orders, under "Duties," and it should be addressed in the SOP.

Decontamination Team

Company-size and larger units are expected to provide at least 15 soldiers to support detailed personnel and concurrent equipment decon, *plus* the NBC NCO and the supply sergeant, a medic (if organic), and personnel for security and traffic control. Key personnel usually handle traffic control.

During deliberate decon operations, the unit will be involved in no other activities.

The only restriction on personnel selection is that vehicle drivers (assigned or appointed) and assistant drivers will not work on stations at the decon site, because the vehicles must be taken through equipment decon. There is one possible exception to this—an additional two personnel, well-rested and decontaminated, must clean up the personnel decon site. Two assistant drivers might be appropriate for this, as the assistant drivers process through the personnel decon first, then pick up the clean vehicles and take them to the reconstitution area. After settling the vehicles, they could dismount and rest.

Although there is little or no emphasis on "unit-level decon" (types of decon are generally described as individual, hasty, and deliberate—see

FM 3-5 for explanations), there may be times when the unit has equipment, materiel, or surfaces that need immediate decontamination, but chemical assets are unavailable or delayed. For this reason, the decon team should also be at least familiar with decontaminants (both standard and non-standard) and techniques for using them.

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