The CBRN Warrant Officer of 2030

By Warrant Officer One Alejandra Gallego

The U.S. Army is undergoing a significant modernization effort in order to prevail in large-scale combat operations and against its current near-peer adversaries. For the Army of 2030, it will strive to focus on reorganizing the force, modernizing equipment, and transforming the way it trains.

During my time in the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Warrant Officer Basic Course, I was constantly challenged and enriched by different mentors who provided us with lessons learned and pointers, guided us toward success, and shared ways that we could be postively impact our cohort. After graduating from the course, one particular question has lingered with me: What will the CBRN warrant officer of 2030 bring to the fight? Chief Warrant Officer Four Humphrey B. Hills, our Regimental Chief Warrant Officer, had posed that question during one of the many CBRN Warrant Officer Basic Course mentorship sessions.

The CBRN warrant officer of the next decade will play a key role in developing the Army of 2030 modernization strategy and achieving superiority over near-peer adversaries. We will be crucial trainers of specialized teams and integrators of new technologies covered in the Army 2030 strategic plan. We will be required to equip ourselves with extensive knowledge and fluently advise maneuver commanders concerning all warfighting functions. We will be subject matter experts in CBRN protection functions during all phases of large-scale combat operations and will possess unmatched skills for integrating CBRN capabilities across all multidomain operations.

My futuristic view is one in which technology will be maximized to purposely engage and educate the Soldiers of 2030 and to understand their needs. Technological innovation during the next decade will play a vital role in how we train our force to use new equipment. Expanding on our current capabilities in military gaming by improving the ability to create simulated scenarios tailored to specific CBRN organizational training gaps could result in endless training benefits. Using virtual reality to simulate CBRN environments is the way ahead for training, based on the positive reception of the new generation of Soldiers to computer-generated reality. Warrant officers are critical for the effective modernization and integration of new equipment.

The Chemical Branch is now experiencing a significant equipment upgrade with the update to the Nuclear, Biological, Chemical, Radiological Vehicle (NBCRV) platform and many other progressive innovations aligning with the Army of 2030[1] strategy. We are mandated to master new-equipment operations and to be the driving force in training and adequately maintaining new equipment. I am honored to be a part of this ever-changing time in which, each day, CBRN warrant officers spearhead the Chemical Branch into a more lethal, multiskilled, and technologically superior organization. The warrant officer of 2030 will be challenged daily, will thrive in virtual reality, and will offer unlimited value to any Army organization.

Endnote:

[1]*Army of 2030*, U.S. Army, 5 October 2022, <https://www.army.mil/article/260799/army_of_2030>, accessed on 30 March 2023.

Warrant Officer One Gallego is an assistant team operations technician for a CBRN response team, 501st Chemical Company, Camp Humphreys, Korea. She holds a bachelor's degree in health care administration from the University of Arizona Global Campus.