

Operation Joint Endeavor

—Chemical training and preparation

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The planning process that became *Operation Joint Endeavor* started in March 1993 with 1st Armored Division taking the US lead. The Division was in direct contact with Allied Forces Southern Europe and the Allied Central Europe Rapid Reaction Corps during the planning process.

The Division's Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) and scheduled fall Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) rotation had several key peacekeeping concepts integrated into its scenarios and training phases. The first scheduled training event observed by the authors for the Division and this operation came during the BCTP preparation and train-up in mid-to late October 1993.

During this training seminar, several simple but effective incidents occurred throughout the exercise—possible hazardous chemical spills, radioactive material spills, toxic fires, civilian casualties, for example. Although these events occurred against a background of a mid-intensity conflict in an industrialized country, they were quite effective in getting the division staff to think through the category of incident as it applied to the BCTP evaluation and to Bosnia-Herzegovina. The final resolution to the events and resulting policy development were months away.

Simultaneously, the division modified its October-November CMTC ro-

tation. The standard 10-day battalion task force (TF) rotation was split into two phases: mid-to high-intensity operations and peacekeeping. During combat operations, the battalion TF used NBC recon and smoke heavily in their doctrinal roles.

The recon section received excellent training in conventional scout activities; training in NBC recon activities simply did not occur. A requirement exists for CMTC to develop a means to place chemical reactants on the "battlefield," allowing the MM1 to be used in its detection role. During the peacekeeping phase, CMTC drilled battalion TF units in the concepts of force protection, security, civilian and crowd control, and FACTIONAL negotiations; there was little enthusiasm to integrate NBC defense assets into this training phase.

During the period November 1993 to January 1994, the Division underwent a five-day, computer-assisted, command post exercise every month. Most of the chemical-related events were doctrinal NBC defense operations: smoke, decon, and NBC. The industrial accident scenarios were sketchy and involved little staff interaction/coordination. The prime emphasis was division-level operations, thus the chemical section/NBC Cell (NBCC).

The NBCC operated mostly in a vacuum. However, these events did il-

lustrate that additional preparation had to be initiated by the NBC defense technical chain. Prior to *Iron Victory II*, the formal BCTP evaluation, time was at a premium. This additional training requirement simply was too much for the hectic schedule. For the most part, the BCTP events were simple. The BCTP evaluator was suitably impressed by the NBCC's ability to react—work through the estimate of the situation process, identify the necessary steps using generalized guidelines and procedures, and reduce the threat and mission constraints to the division.

The three or four events the chemical section was subjected to acted as a wake-up call to its members. The division was eleven months into the Bosnia-Herzegovina planning process and the section had very little information about the war and/or industrial hazards it would face. Coming out of BCTP, the section put together its first of five Request For Information (RFI) lists based primarily on the possible hazardous threats.

Intelligence provided information centered around the Sudaso Chemical Plant in Tuzla. This plant took on mythic proportions throughout the rest of the train-up and deployment period. The plant represented the threat, the unknown.

In April 1994, representatives from Program Manager, NBC Defense Sys-

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tems, visited V Corps to brief the Corps and Divisions staffs on the new support concept for the M93 NBC Reconnaissance Vehicle (Fox). Up to this time the Fox was totally contractor supported; after 1 January 1995, the heavy division chemical companies would be responsible for organizational-level maintenance. The companies were to receive approximately a week's training for six to eight personnel covering a range of topics—PLL clerk, wheel mechanic, air conditioning repairman, for example. The 25th Chemical's training took place in Kitzingen in late July 1994. By January 1996, the last New Equipment Team-trained individual had PCS'd from the company. The company and division requested additional training both separately and together for incoming mechanics. This training was never conducted.

Also in April 1994, the chemical section began a four-month effort to review and update the 80-hour NBC Defense Course under the supervision of SFC Higgins. Section NCOs took the lead. The NCOs included SGM Schlosser, SFC Bogdanowitz, SFC Huffman, SFC Willis, SSG Stiles, and CPL Bragg. SFC Higgins coordinated with the US Army Chemical School for permission to begin the project.

The course included approximately 15 hours of new material incorporated with an additional 20 hours modified. POIs, student handouts, presentation materials, and test questions were all produced. The new materials goal was providing company-level officers and NCOs the best instruction and training concerning basic chemical and biological identification doctrine and procedures.

The revised course was tested in September. The students welcomed the new material and requested additional instruction in most areas. Student questionnaires touted the successful integration of the new material.

The 25th Chemical Company was the first chemical company headquarters to receive permission to conduct operations in the CMTC "box" in June 1994, after five months of staff effort and coordination. The company participated in two TF rotations. The primary beneficiaries were the company headquarters, NBC recon platoon, and smoke platoon. The company headquarters gained considerable experience and expertise in managing its various assets on the battlefield.

This deployment and exercise did point out a number of shortcomings in the CMTC scenario. 1st Armored and 3d Infantry (now 1st Infantry) Divisions provide standardized packages of personnel and equipment for CMTC rotations. These packages include decon, recon, and smoke assets. The training value varies greatly among the operational components from substantial for smoke to practically none for decon. The Chemical unit-provided observer-controllers (OCs) have a tremendous impact on how much is learned during the CMTC period. During one rotation, the Foxes manned battalion TF observation points. The Fox section, detected and killed early, was not available to support NBC recon requirements by the time combat in the main battle area occurred.

Starting in August 1994 and continuing until March 1995, Division Chemical expended approximately 2,500 man-hours in planning, administering,

and conducting *Iron Dragon I*, a computer-driven simulation involving all chemical staff personnel from division to battalion level. CPT Hibner, Tactical Chemical Operations Officer, and SFC Bogdanowitz, Section Operations NCO, formulated, coordinated, and administered the event. *Iron Dragon I* had each Major Subordinate Command (MSC) organized as it would appear on a mid- to high-intensity battlefield.

Each NBC element took a basic divisional operations order (OPORD) and molded it to fit its requirements. Division Chemical increased the number of available chemical units to the Division so that all MSCs could request and receive support. The primary purpose of this exercise was to train the MSC chemical personnel to use available chemical defense assets to solve basic tasks, war- and industrial-related. The exercise covered a period of 3-1/2 days: 1-1/2 days of industrial accidents/hazards, 1 day of offensive chemical attacks, and 1 day of mixed biological and chemical events.

During *Iron Dragon I*, Division Chemical disseminated several civilian chemical hazard references, discussed various scenarios ranging from chemical plants blowing up and releasing toxic gases to railroad and truck accidents.

Through each event, a common theme was emphasized. The OCs, MAJ Heib and SGM Schlosser, emphasized basic chemical defense doctrine and procedures. As respective chemical OICs/NCOICs gained confidence, they were led into discussions of what may be practical, possible, and how various procedures could be modified to fit scenario-driven events. By the end of the exercise, all personnel attending had far more faith in their basic chemical training and their ability to meet the challenges imposed by industrial accidents/incidents.

Iron Dragon I was a great success. It demonstrated to all participants, supporting staff, and Division leadership that a chemical exercise could be administered effectively. It highlighted

that a small Division staff section could plan and conduct high value training at minimal cost using computer-assisted simulations. It clearly demonstrated that the Division had the necessary background, procedures, and equipment required to conduct operations in unknown environments.

Simultaneously with preparations for this exercise, Division Chemical obtained slots in the environmental protection/hazardous material course at the NATO School at Oberammergau for calendar year 1995. Section NCOs attended the course and the course handouts assisted in preparing for *Iron Dragon I*. The NATO course, although basic, was the best formal training available to the section. It provided the necessary background on just how much the section lacked in basic knowledge concerning industrial chemical hazards. All section members agreed that additional instruction and instructional materials should be made available, at the earliest opportunity, to support the range of expected deployment missions.

In addition, SFC Bogdanowitz and SFC Higgins pointed out that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a number of free correspondence courses available in the areas of civil and industrial accidents/incidents management, and basic chemical and radiological information. Several section sergeants studied these courses for professional development and for civilian education credit.

During January-February 1995, the Division underwent M40-series protective mask fielding. The initial issue was efficiently accomplished; however, within days shortcomings came to light. The fielding used out-of-date MTOEs causing several units to report overages and shortages based on mask type. Section personnel, 1LT Whitaker, SFC Huffman, and SSG Workman, researched and justified new quantity and

sizing requirements. This effort exceeded 25 days per individual. Fielding and reporting errors, in some cases, continued to impact the Division right up to its deployment. The V Corps-NBC Section, under LTC Bland, was responsive and instrumental in correcting many of these fielding problems right up to deployment.

After *Iron Dragon I*, in late-May 1995, the D-MAIN went to the field using its organic assets on *Operation Cyclops*. Division Chemical used this period to study various accident scenarios. The one most focused on was a pressurized water reactor accident/incident. (The section hosted two individuals from the Massachusetts National

Operation Proud Lion exercise brought out the differences in US and German doctrine.

Guard, which has this very mission.) Using this accident/incident, section personnel were given a set of basic facts with a brief description of current events. They were told to identify information, equipment, and material requirements from civil/military/governmental points of contact to water sources. The purpose of the exercise was to identify as completely as possible the critical tasks a military unit must accomplish. Each shift expanded on the work of the previous. At the end of the exercise, the section developed a document that later became a checklist of required information. This checklist grew into a generalized blueprint for initial operations for any deployment where hazardous conditions may exist.

Again, the Division entered the Spring CMTC period, June to July 1995. Integration of the chemical defense assets did not occur during the

peacekeeping phase. This time, however, CPT Hibner and SFC Bogdanowitz researched, drafted, and staffed simple modifications to current CMTC scenarios that incorporated decon, recon, and smoke assets into battalion TF play. The modifications revolved around the proximity of a suspected or known "dump" to a town or a tanker truck accident within the contested zone. The scenarios incorporated the same basic military skills required for peacekeeping while alerting leaders to the possible existence of hazardous/toxic conditions.

Leaders must be aware that hazardous/toxic material environments exist and are not just a developed world problem. In fact, they can be more prevalent in developing countries; the *Operation Joint Endeavor* experience supports this. Copies of the modified scenarios were provided to all relevant parties. In addition, an environmentally friendly method of placing chemical contaminants within the CMTC Box was suggested, so that the Fox's mass spectrometer could be used.

Later in June, *Operation Proud Lion* was conducted with II (GE/US) Korps. During this exercise, the Germans included several industrial accident/incident events. These quickly brought out the differences in US and German doctrine. As a basic rule, the German military support their local civil government officials; US units respond to events that impact or may impact on military operations. It took approximately 16 hours to solve one incident because of the doctrinal differences.

Once the Korps and Division Chemical Officers discussed mission operations, operational procedures developed quickly to support the requirement. This exercise was exceptionally valuable in that it forced the section to change its operational thought processes and work habits to different doctrinal and philosophical constraints. Af-

ter the exercise, the Korps NBC SOP annex was expanded to account for the doctrinal differences noted throughout the *Proud Lion* exercise.

In July, the section began coordination and planning *Iron Dragon II*. The exercise design eliminated shortcomings noted during *Iron Dragon I*. It slowed down the operations tempo and provided participants more time to develop staff actions based on scenario events. These changes caused a major side affect. The revised concept allowed only about 67% of the personnel who participated in *Iron Dragon I* to participate in *Iron Dragon II*. The scheduled date for the exercise was mid-January 1996. Planning terminated and the exercise was canceled in early September because of the increased pace of Bosnian deployment requirements.

Operation Joint Endeavor-related planning and training accelerated on deployment of *Task Force Eagle* to Grafenwoehr Training Area for approximately 25 days, October and November 1995. The mission changed from peacekeeping to peace enforcement. During the *Mountain Eagle* exercise period, three command post exercises were executed.

The overall exercise centered around movement of forces into and occupation of the Area of Responsibility. Chemical issues worked during this period included: quantities of individual protective equipment (IPE) and Class VIII, specified locations for IPE and Class VIII storage, specific task conduct, organizational chemical unit requirements, Fox contractor support, reporting requirements, and equipment upgrades. In addition, section members began meeting UN personnel who had ground knowledge of the Bosnian environment.

The section's emphasis on environmental studies proved correct. Task Force Chemical started to politic for

one or more positions on the upcoming area recons.

The November 1995-January 1996 time frame proved eventful. SGM Schlosser and SFC(P) Baron prepared the TF Main's personnel and equipment for deployment while SFC Higgins and SFC Huggins prepared for the Assault Command Post's deployment. In these final weeks, Task Force Chemical worked a number of issues that had short- and long-term implications. In personnel management, CPT Martin and SGM Schlosser worked issues to include scheduling of enlisted replacements and temporary change of station 3d Infantry Division personnel, supervising paperwork processing for the new 25th Chemical 1SG and recon platoon leader, planning the rotations of lieutenants to and from 25th Chemical, and 25th Chemical's change of command.

In the area of logistics, issues such as protective mask canister exchange, protective mask turn-in and replacement 2, inserts for the M40-series protective mask, chemical platoon deployments, contractor support for the Fox, improved Sanator training and issue, and IPE and Class VIII procurements were worked. Prior to deployment, *Task Force Eagle* units received approximately 600 M40-series protective masks. Many of the issues identified during the *Mountain Eagle* exercise continued to be unresolved.

December's high point was the initial release of useful intelligence information from national intelligence levels. After about 20 months of concerted effort, TF Chemical began to receive RFI data on topics other than the Tuzla Sudaso Chemical Plant. The sketchiness of the first data reinforced the Chemical section's Bosnian environmental concerns. Other data sources were located such as European Union reports, United Nations reports, medical intelligence, and preventive medi-

cine. Even though the final intelligence picture was still murky, compliments were received on the section's thoroughness and completeness of the OPORD NBC Defense annex. The low point—TF Chemical member was included on planned Bosnia-Herzegovina familiarization recons.

In conclusion, during the months and years leading up to the Bosnia-Herzegovina deployment, Division and Task Force Chemical personnel had a vision of deployment and mission requirements. This vision proved to be accurate. The section's personnel and equipment were ready to go. Known training and equipment deficiencies were highlighted. 1st Armored Division personnel handled all radiological and potentially hazardous environments encountered. On the negative side, issues concerning IPE quantities and storage locations, method of issue for IPE, and Fox contract support maintenance remained unresolved. These continued to impact even after completion of the deployment phase. *Task Force Eagle* chemical personnel can be proud of their efforts and accomplishments.

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