

**Note:** This article was written in April 2002 and does not reflect events which have occurred since that time.

# The Chemical Corps and Its Emerging Role in Homeland Security

By Lieutenant Colonel Jon Pool

The tragic reality of terrorism has brutally shown our nation that we no longer live in a secure world. The U.S. Army Chemical Corps has insistently voiced the possibility of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats to the homeland for some time now. Unfortunately, the recent events within our homeland are now making our voices heard. As our nation and the Army continue to look to the future, the Chemical Corps must continue to be a key and essential player in Army Transformation.

The U.S. Army Chemical School (USACMLS) was and is the Department of Defense (DOD) nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) focal point for training and doctrine. The school is moving toward becoming the DOD CBRN full-spectrum defense and response center of excellence. To this end, USACMLS would become the nation's recognized leader in CBRN responder training and development of doctrine, training methods, organizational structure, and equipment requirements.

The Army's role in homeland security (HLS) is still being defined. However, USACMLS is proactively moving toward a full-spectrum Chemical Corps that can respond to threats against our national security both on the battlefield and within the homeland. This includes a full spectrum of protection for U.S. forces that Brigadier General (BG) Patricia

L. Nilo, commandant, USACMLS, calls "fort-to-port" support.

The idea of full spectrum is a must for the future architecture of the Chemical Corps. The current size of the Corps does not allow for dedicated troops to support a homeland defense role. The Army's role in supporting other federal agencies in defense of our homeland will present much of the same dilemmas faced on the modern battlefield. The Chemical Corps's vision of full spectrum can be seen in Figure 1.

The modernization of the Chemical Corps cannot be just a restructuring of current assets; it must be a complete redesign of the Corps. We

must look at concepts that ask the following questions: Do we incorporate hazardous-material (HAZMAT) training into the program of instruction for all chemical soldiers? Do we go to structured battalions with numbered companies and a robust battalion support section? Do we give reconnaissance companies their own organic decontamination? Despite the hardships of such a restructure, we must continue advancing or face becoming irrelevant to the Army and our nation.

## Vigilant Warriors 2002

In April 2002, USACMLS participated in Vigilant Warriors 2002 (Army Transformation War Game) at



Figure 1. Chemical Corps Full-Spectrum Mission

the Army War College. Past Army transformation war games focused on two major theater scenarios. However, this year, a third scenario was added—HLS. The objectives of Vigilant Warrior 2002 were to—

- 1) Inform senior leaders of future conflicts in the context of multiple crises; demonstrate the strategic contribution of the Objective Force.
- 2) Illustrate the need to maintain a strategically responsive, full-spectrum joint force.
- 3) Recommend force projection and sustainment concepts and capabilities suitable for a multiple-crisis, global environment.
- 4) Refine strategic theater, operational, and tactical concepts and capabilities in a joint and combined context.
- 5) Examine command and control/ leadership and campaign planning challenges in the context of a multiple-crisis, global environment.
- 6) Explore Army capabilities, roles, missions, and organization for HLS.
- 7) Examine the role of the Army strategic Reserve and the mobilization base.

The sixth Objective has particular relevance for the nation and our Corps. During exercise Vigilant Warriors, I was a member of the HLS panel. The panel was comprised of representatives from the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) schools of the various branches of the Army, Department of the Army staff, Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve, the National Guard (NG) Bureau, sister services including the Coast Guard, a former ambassador, and a former FBI special agent-in-charge. The panel was chaired by MG Anders Aadland, then commander of the U.S. Army

Maneuver Support Center, and supported by BG Edgar Stanton, commander of the U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute, and BG Edwin Roberts, deputy commanding general/ Army National Guard, Headquarters TRADOC.

Vigilant Warriors 2002 started with the Army deploying to various conflicts around the world. From a HLS standpoint, the panel had to address the needs of the Army to support both deployment and HLS missions. The initial situation, set in the year 2019, presented to the HLS panel was—

- Worldwide crises requiring Reserve Component (RC) call-up, Civil Reserve Air Fleet/ Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement activation, mobilization base ramp-up, and placing significant demands on the U.S. industrial base.
- Viable threats against critical infrastructure terrorists, criminals, and others.
- DOD being responsible for defending the United States against land, air, and sea attacks.
- DOD augmenting other U.S. government elements for infrastructure security and support to civil authorities.

### **Mission End State**

A strategy for protecting the U.S. homeland is to deter aggression and, if deterrence fails, to defend against attacks by responding rapidly to minimize effects and by maintaining essential capabilities.

During the month before the attack, a smaller representative group met at a war game staff exercise (STAFFEX) to set a starting point for the exercise. We did three things during the STAFFEX that are important to note. The first was to decide to play the current concept for Northern Command (NORTHCOM).

This unified command was to have DOD responsibility for support to HLS. While the current concept for NORTHCOM does not show assigned forces, the game allocated forces at the start of the exercise. Those forces caused considerable discussion and included the following chemical forces:

- Three chemical brigades—one as a chemical command in direct support to NORTHCOM and two as regional response commands dividing the country into east and west regions along the same lines as the current continental U.S. Armies (First and Fifth Army).
- Ten chemical battalions to provide chemical response capabilities within the ten federal regions; eight CBRN rapid-response teams (RRTs) (new Chemical Force Structure, TAA 09) to provide regional response to military installations.
- A chemical biological (CB) RRT to provide technical medical and nonmedical advice to federal and state agencies.

The decision to designate certain units as HLS units was not without argument. Tasking the NG in part or parcel with the HLS mission was not without a majority of opponents. The most important question addressed command and control of the NG in support of HLS. NORTHCOM would seem the likely headquarters, but should the NG be activated or remain in Title 32 status to facilitate possible missions of a law enforcement nature? The only prevailing view was that a dual headquarters arrangement (NORTHCOM and a state adjutant general) would not be a functional working relationship, especially if the event was outside the geographic location of the state.

The second decision was to play an office of HLS. This cabinet-level

office managed the HLS interagency process. The office controlled the Coast Guard, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Border Patrol, Customs Service, Critical Infrastructure Assurance Office, National Domestic Preparedness Office, National Intelligence Fusion Center, and other HLS offices. The model was Senate Bill-S 1534 IS, Department of Homeland Security Act, introduced by Senators Lieberman and Specter.

The third decision was to play the suggested Army TAA 09 Chemical Force Structure. This force structure would be the full-spectrum concept and would include the three chemical brigades for HLS. These three brigades would be full spectrum and capable of contributing to the war fight, if called on. The structure of the full-spectrum brigade will be discussed later.

### **War Game Issues/Insights**

During the war game, the HLS team addressed scenarios that included threats to the infrastructure, cyber attacks, numerous attacks involving explosives, and one biological attack. These scenarios raised several issues and insights that the HLS panel had sent to a senior seminar group for discussion. Several of these issues/insights are important to the Army's support of HLS and the Chemical Corps's future concept.

Currently, all federal agencies are responsible for protecting their critical infrastructure. However, there are thousands of facilities that can be listed as critical infrastructure for the United States. It became very evident to the group that DOD currently would be called on to assist in the protection of this infrastructure. The problem was that even with divisions of troops, only hundreds of structures could be protected. The group identified a need for prioritizing critical infrastructure and the need for federal agencies to look at a surge capability, possibly contracted, to protect this infrastructure.

When terrorist events unfolded in the game, it was evident that governors would call on their NG for assistance. As the game expanded and RC (U.S. Army Reserve and NG) units were mobilized for support of the overseas conflicts, high-demand, low-density specialties (particularly medical, CBRN response, and military police) were soon an issue, not only because they were not available within the military or to the governors, but because they were also taken from their corresponding jobs within the civilian community. This could be an issue for the HLS chemical brigades if they are all in the RC. If they are in the NG, then the dual command and control issue is once again raised.

Linked, widescale terrorist attacks against the homeland prompted requests for military assistance. A military presence was desired to reassure the public and deter terrorists. The *posse comitatus* law was an issue. The group suggested that the President should issue an exemption of *posse comitatus* (which normally prevents federal troops from enforcing civilian domestic laws). The exemption can be issued in the event states are no longer capable (or willing) to protect their citizens. One insight was that prior agreement by executive and congressional leaders where circumstances might justify exemption, and possibly even some legal changes, would facilitate military and civilian planning and execution.

The issue was raised that a review of the desired Army end strength must take place if the Army is to be a major supporter of HLS. Vigilant Warriors 2002 resulted in partial mobilization of the RC, but still resulted in a shortage of personnel to support all missions worldwide. A valid concern was that the U.S. population would find homeland protection more important than foreign peacekeeping abroad despite our commitments to other countries. The question will only be

answered with an agreed upon definition of the Army's role in HLS.

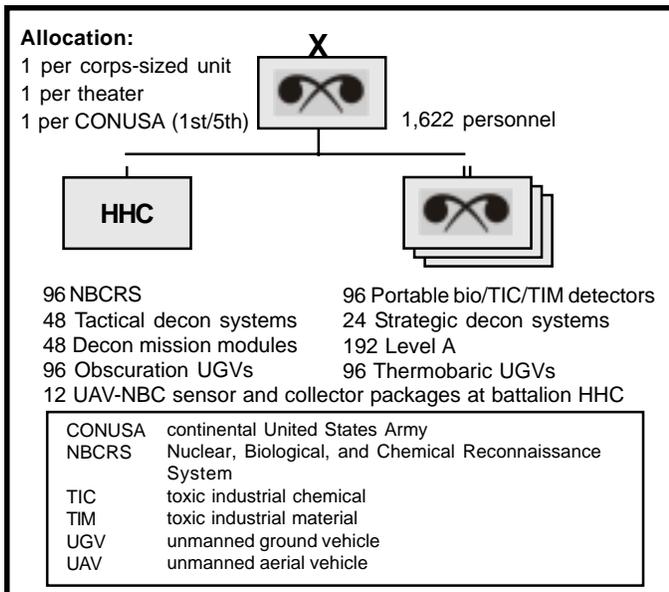
In *Foreign Affairs*, volume 81, no. 3, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld states, "The Department of Defense has known for some time that it does not have...enough chemical and biological defense units.... But in spite of these shortages, the department postponed the needed investments, while continuing to fund what were, in retrospect, less valuable programs. That needs to change." The Chemical Corps's strength played in Vigilant Warriors 2002 was about 6,000 more chemical troops than currently exist.

### **Future Chemical Corps Structure**

The concept of the Chemical Corps used during the war game was a full-spectrum chemical brigade. This concept brigade will have the forces to conduct its mission in any environment. Technology will be a cornerstone of the creation of these units. Figures 2 and 3 (page 12) are conceptual designs of the full-spectrum brigade and battalion.

A new chemical force structure for TAA 09 used in Vigilant Warriors was the CBRN-RRT. These 26-soldier teams will be pre-positioned or deployed to support/augment the installation's response to a CBRN attack. TRADOC has approved the operational and organizational (O&O) concept of the unit (see Figure 4, page 12), which will have the necessary equipment to respond to all four hazards, to include HAZMATs such as toxic industrial chemicals and materials. The specific equipment will be technology-driven. An Army special medical-augmentation response team would assist the CBRN-RRT. These teams already exist at the Army regional medical centers.

The other chemical unit allocated to NORTHCOM was the CB-RRT. It is a TDA organization the Army created in 1998, as directed by Public Law 104-201. The 18 soldiers with



**Figure 2. Draft Proposal for a Full-Spectrum Brigade**

civilian and contractor augmentation have standing memorandums of understanding and memorandums of agreement with Army and Navy organizations to augment the staff of the CB-RRT based on deployment needs. The mission of the CB-RRT is, on order, to deploy and establish a robust and integrated capability to coordinate and synchronize DOD's technical assistance (medical and nonmedical) to respond in both crisis and consequence management to a weapons of mass destruction incident or designated national security special event.

**Conclusion**

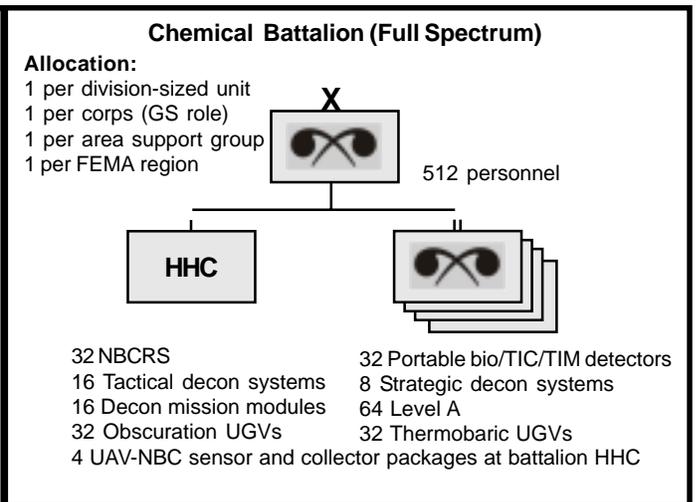
The U.S. Army Chemical Corps is headed in the direction that it must take to be viable for the future. Our

structure cannot be rigidly focused at one threat or one theater of operation or only on military warfare agents. Our Corps must be, in every sense, a full-spectrum corps. We must be able to conduct the missions that we might be asked to perform.

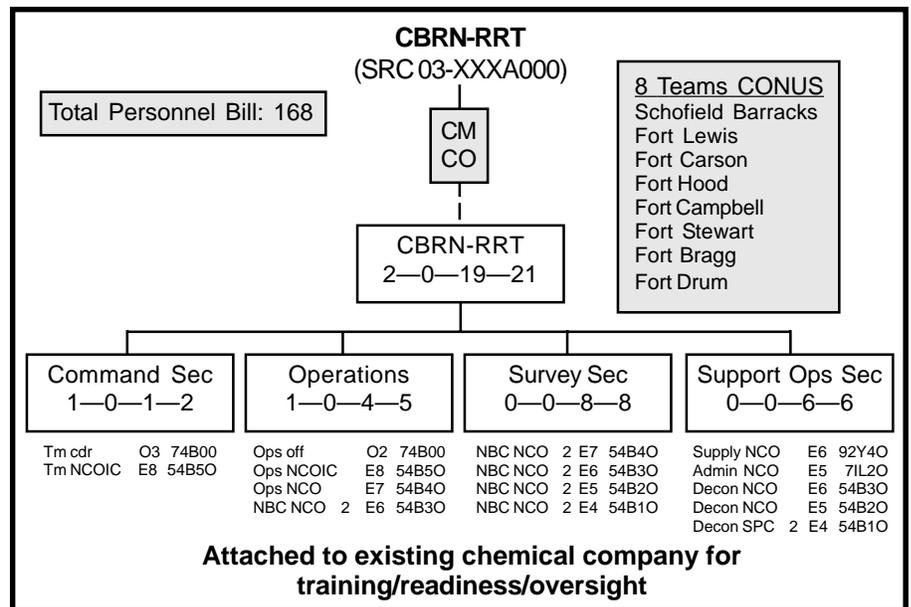
To that end, we need to be able to detect, identify, survey, monitor, mark, sample, warn/report, and hazard predict/model all forms of CBRN material that pose a threat on the battlespace or at home. We also need

to be able to conduct decontamination of terrain; fixed sites; equipment; and personnel, to include casualties.

We must not wait on technology to begin our transformation. New technology may well determine the equipment of the future. However, the Corps must start to restructure with current technology, which may include items currently under development by program managers or commercial off-the-shelf items. The future of the Corps begins now!



**Figure 3. Draft Proposal for a Full-Spectrum Battalion**



**Figure 4. Force Protection O&O Concept for the CBRN-RRT**