

Chief of Chemical



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Greetings Dragon Soldiers! Welcome to another edition of Army Chemical Review, our professional journal! Our theme for this issue is the development of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) leaders—I cannot think of a more important topic. Oftentimes, we tend to focus on the newest gadget or piece of equipment as representing a step forward in capability. But without the training and skills necessary to operate and understand the equipment, new equipment is a liability rather than an asset. I'd rather have well-trained CBRN Soldiers with M8 paper on the ends of sticks than poorly trained Soldiers trying to operate gas chromatograph/mass spectrometers.

Chemical Soldiers and units continue to assist our Army in the prosecution of the War on Terrorism. Their collective efforts should make us all proud! Numerous Chemical companies will be rotating in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom in the next few months. Many units will perform “nontraditional” missions such as security, convoy escort, and other key tasks. These are missions that our Army needs done, and the Soldiers of the U.S. Army

Chemical Corps are proud to play a part. Every day, we create new pages in our Corps history—a history hallmarked by adaptability and versatility.

What qualities do we need in the CBRN leaders of the future? . . . The first attribute is an ability to learn and adapt. . . . The second attribute is leaders who are confident and persuasive.

On 18 September 2007, Command Sergeant Major Alston and I attended the activation ceremony for the 48th Chemical Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas. This Active Army brigade will provide a central focus for the training and readiness of Chemical units in the continental United States. This proud day would not have been possible without the contributions of many who have come before us—great individuals who fought for this unit. We visited with many great Dragon Soldiers while we were at Fort Hood!

What qualities do we need in the CBRN leaders of the future? This issue will offer some thoughts on this subject. From my perspective, a few key attributes stand out. The first attribute is an ability to learn and adapt. How quickly can our leaders take the education and training that they have been given and apply them to new and differing situations? Are they able to take what they know, offer advice to their commanders, and get it around 80 percent right? Or will they freeze and wait for the experts in sanctuary to provide a 100 percent solution? The second attribute is leaders who are confident and persuasive. Leaders must project competence! I remember being at the scene of a “white-powder incident” at a nearby hospital. When the local weapons of mass destruction—civil support team arrived on-scene, one of their officers, a Chemical captain, projected such a sense of confidence that the overstressed fire chief and hospital administrator were immediately reassured that the experts were on-site. CBRN leaders must project that same sense of confidence. And confidence comes from a good grounding in technical and tactical skills.

Equipment and doctrine change, but people endure. And investment in CBRN leader development is the most important investment we can make as a Corps. It is a topic that warrants our continued interest. I encourage you to give it some thought and reflection as you read the articles in this issue. Thank you for what you are doing for our Nation and the Chemical Corps.

Elementis, Regamus, Proelium!