

2007 Writing Contest

Each year, the Chemical Corps Regimental Association sponsors a writing contest to stimulate thinking and writing on issues of interest to the Chemical Corps. The contest is open to military personnel in all branches and services, including allied nations, and civilians of any nationality. The topics for the 2007 writing contest are—

- **The Chemical Corps Vision.** Visions, if they are successful, give us a positive, achievable view of our future. We have such a Vision (see page 2). Now, how should we go about achieving it? What should come first?
- **Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) reconnaissance functions in the contemporary operational environment.** Describe how CBRN reconnaissance functions promote success in support of protection warfighting functions during full-spectrum operations. Present the key and essential staff functions (from battalion through Army echelon levels) using a modular model. Illustrate the similarities and differences at each echelon, and determine how staffs at each level support the Army operations process (plan, prepare, execute, and continually assess). Present CBRN unit capabilities from team to brigade levels. Describe the CBRN unit commanders' roles for CBRN reconnaissance and address the unit commanders' integration with supported commanders' staffs and joint force command operations. Finally, compare and contrast CBRN reconnaissance capabilities and responsibilities among various full-spectrum operational themes (major combat operations [offense and defense], stability operations, and civil support operations).
- **Transformation from CBRN to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives (CBRNE).** Describe the entire range of chemical, biological, and radiological hazards and how they relate to terms such as *nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC)* and *CBRN*. Present arguments for changing our fundamental focus from NBC to CBRN. Propose a definition and descriptive discussion on CBRN hazards. Using this foundation, describe what is necessary to expand the scope of hazards from CBRN to CBRNE. What is the impact on Army organizations at various echelons? Are there existing organizational models that may serve as a baseline for future Army capabilities? Present arguments to compare and contrast a CBRN hazard focus against an expanded CBRNE focus.
- **Capabilities and manpower requirements in the infantry brigade combat team (BCT) organic CBRN reconnaissance platoon.** Using lessons learned from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, the Chemical Corps recognized a capability gap in the ability of general-purpose CBRN units to assess the full range of hazards (particularly the ability to assess sensitive-site areas). The organic CBRN reconnaissance platoons in the initial brigade combat teams (IBCTs) are extremely limited in their ability to provide adequate dismounted CBRN reconnaissance support to the BCT. The platoon transport platform also offers inadequate survivability protection. A 2006 limited-objective experiment resulted in the determination that IBCT reconnaissance platoons could better provide commanders with CBRN hazard assessment analyses if they were equipped with a Joint CBRN Dismounted Reconnaissance System (JCDRS). The information gained from the JCDRS would determine if a hazard warrants further exploitation, can be mitigated using organic assets or with help from force-pooled CBRN units, or should be abandoned. An analysis is still needed to determine if the IBCT CBRN reconnaissance platoon is properly organized with eight personnel, two wheeled vehicles, and a dismounted commercial, off-the-shelf (COTS) CBRN reconnaissance system with a Level B protective ensemble for detection, identification, and limited sampling. Do platoons need a Level A capability? Can a small, eight-man platoon maintain training proficiency for Level A requirements? Can an IBCT fund sustainment training and equipment maintenance? Will eight personnel be enough to adequately provide site assessment, command and control, search, and support functions (including emergency extraction and limited decontamination operations)?

All articles should be submitted as a double-spaced paper manuscript accompanied by a compact disk containing the file in Microsoft Word format. All articles should contain 500 to 2,500 words and include the appropriate footnotes, bibliography, and graphic support. Hard copy photos are preferred; however, if digital photos are submitted, they should be saved at a dpi/ppi of 200 or more and at 100 percent of the actual size. All submissions should include a cover sheet with the author's name, title, organization, mailing address, and short biography. To ensure anonymity in a selection process, the author's name should not appear in the manuscript itself. The selection panel will rank submissions on a 100-point scale, with up to 40 points assigned for writing clarity, 30 points for relevance to Chemical Soldiers, 20 points for general accuracy, and 10 points for originality. The deadline for submissions is **2 January 2008**. Please forward your submissions to—

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The authors of the winning articles will be awarded the following:

First place, \$500
Second place, \$300
Third place, \$150

For additional information, contact Mr. Chuber at—

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