Monica Helps Chemical Units See Beyond Ammunition Walls

By Mr. R.J. Oriez

Members of the 110th Chemical Battalion place *monica* on a shell during a training exercise.

In today's world, when a suspected chemical munition is encountered, not only must the device be secured and people around it protected, but evidence must also be collected to determine who placed it there. That often requires the munition to be opened.

However, when the 110th Chemical Battalion, Fort Lewis, Washington, gets called to the scene of a suspected chemical munition, they can determine what is inside the round without having to open it. That is where the MK6, or **monica™**, comes in. **Monica** is a relatively new, remote case entry and sampling system that allows the team to drill a hole into the munition and insert a gas-tight, self-sealing probe. A sample can then be safely taken.

Monica is user-friendly, easy to operate, and easy to set up. It can be operated remotely from 300 meters away, so it's very safe. And, **monica** helps catch the "bad guys."

According to Captain Patrick Bradley, the leader of Technical Escort Team 1B, B Company, "With the hole cutting, **monica** allows us to get an intrusive sample. This sample serves better in a court of law."

Captain Bradley further explained that his unit is shifting toward Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) methods for collecting and handling forensic evidence. The evidence can now be analyzed using the lab that the unit brings to the site. "We are independent," Bradley said. "We can transfer anywhere we want and set up our own laboratory with our own analytical cell."

After collecting and analyzing a sample, the team packages the round and prepares it for shipment back to Fort Lewis. "That is what we do," Bradley said. "We render it safe and make sure nobody gets hurt."

Members of the 110th Chemical Battalion use *monica* to drill into a shell during a training exercise.

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