

USAR Consequence Management Unit: Relevant and Ready

By Captain Dana Perkins, Ph.D.

“Far and away, the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”

—Theodore Roosevelt¹

The stand up of the U.S. Army 20th Support Command (SUPCOM) (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosives [CBRNE]) in October 2004 and the expansion of its role as the core element of the Joint Task Force for Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Elimination, as directed by the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, led to the task organization of operational CBRNE forces under one command.

There are four 20th SUPCOM subordinate organizations in the Active Army—the 48th Chemical Brigade, 52d Ordnance Group (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), 71st Ordnance Group (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), and CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity. There is also one U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) Consequence Management Unit (CMU) under operational control of the 20th SUPCOM.

The USAR CMU, a unique organization that was originally established as the Army Reserve Unit–Consequence Management on 9 July 2001, is headquartered in Abingdon, Maryland. Its members, who are primarily from the National Capital Region, are organized into three multidisciplined, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) technical augmentation cells supported by a medical team in Atlanta, Georgia. In the USAR chain of command, the CMU falls under the 415th Chemical Brigade, 335th Theater Signal Command.

The mission of the USAR CMU is to provide specialized CBRN support to the 20th SUPCOM and combatant/joint task force commanders and to provide defense support to civil authorities² to counter or eliminate CBRN threats.

The contributions of USAR CMU Soldiers throughout the planning and execution of numerous continental U.S. and outside the continental U.S. exercises demonstrate their “brain power” as CBRN subject matter experts (SMEs). Recent exercises involving the USAR CMU include Red Dragon 2008, Ulchi Focus Lens 2008, Ardent Sentry 2008, Flexible Response 2008, Red Dragon 2009, and Key Resolve 2009.

Per Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 2060.02 and the *National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* based on the *National Strategy to Combat Weapons*

of Mass Destruction, the three strategic pillars (nonproliferation, counterproliferation, and consequence management) are integrated into the following eight DOD mission areas:

- WMD offensive operations.
- WMD elimination operations.
- WMD interdiction operations.
- WMD active defense.
- WMD passive defense.
- WMD consequence management.
- Security cooperation and partner activities.
- Threat reduction cooperation.

While the primary focus of the USAR CMU mission is on consequence management, USAR CMU Soldiers also have specialized skills and expertise that span the full operational spectrum of combating WMD (see Table 1).

USAR CMU Soldiers are highly educated, professionally accomplished, strategic and creative thinkers who are also effective communicators. They draw significant expertise from their respective civilian careers as federal or state employees, contractors, or industry or health services representatives. The USAR CMU commander expects these Soldiers to make a personal commitment to specialized military and technical training to maintain readiness, technical proficiency, and standby capability so that they may deploy in support of training events, exercises, and real-world missions. Specified training requirements include not only military schools and courses, but also specialized CBRN courses (see Table 2).

The technical competence of USAR CMU Soldiers may be evaluated using an adapted form of Miller’s Pyramid (Figure 1, page 20)—a model developed by George E. Miller for use in evaluating the skills and abilities of clinical personnel. The “knows” (knowledge) level makes up the lowest tier of the pyramid, followed by the “knows how” (competence) level, the “shows how” (performance) level, and the “does” (action) level. In the context of the USAR CMU, the base of the pyramid represents basic CBRN technical knowledge—everything the USAR CMU Soldiers learned through formal military and civilian education. As the Soldiers gain hands-on training and

Table 1. USAR CMU subject matter expertise

CBRN threat/vulnerability assessment
Bioterrorism/biowarfare threat assessment
CBRN incident consequence management
CBRN mass casualty decontamination and medical management
Chemical/biological agent modeling
CBRN agent detection
Biosafety/biosecurity
Microbiology
Epidemiology
Entomology
Toxicology
Preventive medicine
Chemical demilitarization
Environmental risk management and safety compliance
Civil affairs
Force protection/antiterrorism
Counterterrorism/counterintelligence
Strategic intelligence analysis
Emergency services
Risk communication
Strategic planning
CBRN training/exercise development
Multilingual expertise
Explosive ordnance disposal/technical escort unit experience
Joint and interagency experience

experience, they begin to work their way up the competence pyramid. Eventually, they are able to apply their knowledge in the field. At that point, they are considered to be SMEs. USAR CMU leaders continuously assess the progress of their Soldiers toward competence in CBRN and Army standards.

In addition to their dedication to specialized training, USAR CMU Soldiers must also be committed and available for deployment to missions involving a wide range of complex CBRN tasks on very short notice. For example, a rapid response is essential in supporting civilian authorities who are dealing with the aftermath of a domestic CBRN terrorist attack. Moreover, the proliferation and globalization of CBRN asymmetric threats among state and nonstate actors requires that the USAR sustain their efforts as a current operational force, continuing to build the capability to recognize and mitigate these threats and train under complex scenarios to maintain readiness. USAR CMU exercise planners and SMEs are uniquely positioned to build this capability across Regular Army-USAR-civil authorities boundaries.

Colonel Joseph Weihs, USAR CMU Commander, stated, “As the USAR Consequence Management Unit is integrating itself into the 20th CBRNE Support Command and the CBRNE consequence management response force structures aimed at developing expertise and capability in combating WMDs and supporting civilian authorities in responding to CBRNE

Table 2. USAR CMU specified training requirements

Military Education
Basic Officer Leader Course and/or Officer Advanced Course
Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course and/or Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course
Combined Arms and Services Staff School/Combined Arms Exercise Program or Captains Career Course (captains and above)
Intermediate Level Education or Command and General Staff Officer Course (majors and above)
Reserve Component Joint Professional Military Education: < http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu > or (boarded) < https://www.hrc.army.mil >
Reserve Component National Security Course (nonmedical lieutenant colonels and above) (boarded): < http://www.ndu.edu/jrac/ > or Command and General Staff College/U.S. Army War College (boarded): < http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cgsc > or < http://www.carlisle.army.mil >
Battle Staff Course (noncommissioned officers)
Selected CBRN Training
Defense Support of Civil Authorities Course: < http://www.usarnorth.org/public/spd.cfm?spi=events >
CBRNE Consequence Management Response Force Course: < http://www.usarnorth.org/public/ >
Incident Command System and National Incident Management System/National Response Plan Courses (and other courses offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency Emergency Management Institute): < http://www.training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/crslst.asp >
CBRN Basic Course taught by USAR CMU SMEs during battle assemblies
Field Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties Course (FMCBC): < https://ccc.apgea.army.mil/courses/in_house/brochureFCBC.htm >
Medical Management of Chemical and Biological Casualties Course: < https://ccc.apgea.army.mil/courses/In_house/MCBC.htm >
Joint Planning Orientation Course: < http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu >
Joint Senior Leader Course: < ">https://www.atrrs.army.mil/atrrscc/courseInfo.aspx?fy=2009&sch=031&crs=4K-74A%2f494-F18&crstitle=JOINT+SENIOR+LEADER&phase=> >
Joint Planner’s Course for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction: < http://jko.jfcom.mil >
CBRN Mass Casualty Decontamination Course: < http://www.wood.army.mil/3chembde/irtd%20web%20page/cbrnmasscasualtydecon2.htm >
Medical Effects of Ionizing Radiation Course: < http://www.afri.usuhs.mil/outreach/meir/meir.htm >
Other specialized Joint Forces Staff College CBRN classes: < http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu >
Other specialized Defense Nuclear Weapons School CBRN classes: < http://www.dtra.mil/oe/cs/programs/training/dnws/controlled_access_info.cfm >
Various medical classes (Tri-Service CBRNE and Homeland Security Medical Executive Courses: < http://www.dmrta.army.mil/courses.html >; Hospital Management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear, and Explosive Incidents Course: < https://ccc.apgea.army.mil/courses/In_house/cbrne.htm >; Army Medical Department professional development education: < https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/protect/Reserve/soldierservices/guidance/pde.htm >)
Note. All Web sites listed were accessed on 25 August 2009.

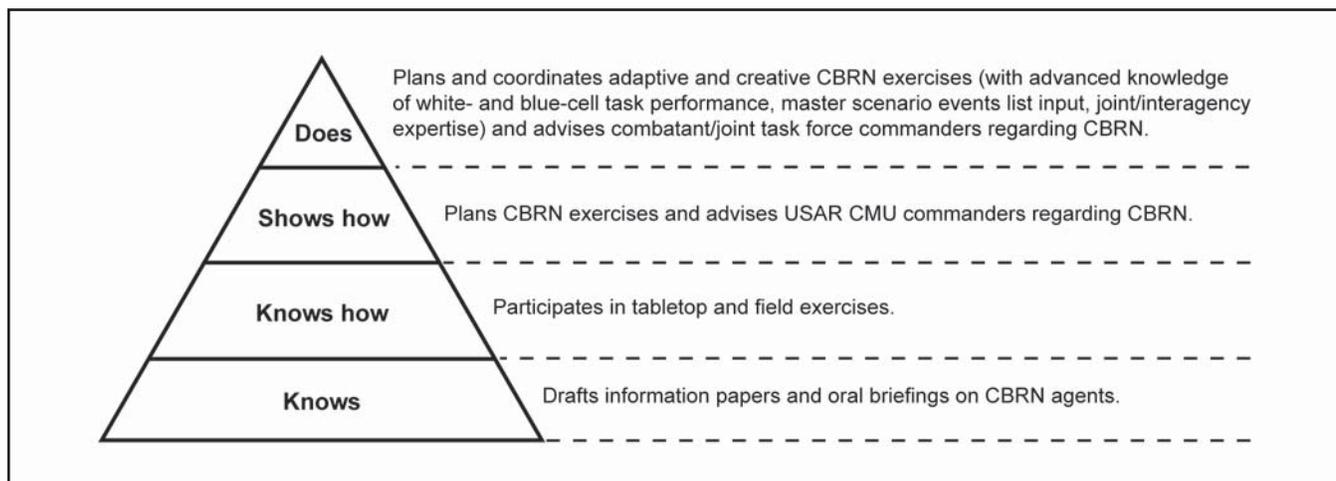


Figure 1. CBRN knowledge pyramid (adapted after Miller, 1990)³

incidents, we are continually looking for mentally agile and adaptive SMEs to join our ranks and support future operations. Specialized CBRN knowledge is developed through training, on-the-job experience, and mentorship. New Soldiers are welcomed in the USAR CMU family and mentored to efficiently integrate and develop or use their specialized skills—whether acquired in the civilian or the military world—for the benefit of the U.S. Army in response to future contingencies.”

Endnotes:

¹Theodore Roosevelt, “A Square Deal” speech, New York State Agricultural Association, Syracuse, New York, 7 September 1903.

²Defense support to civil authorities is formally defined in the *National Response Framework* (published by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, January 2008, and available online at <<http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-core.pdf>>). It involves the allocation and assignment, when requested, of DOD resources (federal military forces, DOD civilians, contract personnel, and DOD agencies and components) to support civil authorities during civil emergencies such as terrorist threats or attacks and major disasters.

³George E. Miller, “The Assessment of Clinical Skills/Competence/Performance,” *Academic Medicine*, Volume 65, Number 9, September 1990.

References:

Quadrennial Defense Review Report, DOD, 6 February 2006.
 DOD Directive 2060.02, *Department of Defense (DOD) Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Policy*, 19 April 2007.
National Military Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 13 February 2006.
National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, December 2002.

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