

Regimental Command Sergeant Major

To chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) Warriors: As we prepare to again move into winter here at the Home of the Chemical Corps and the U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School (USACBRNS), I hope that you have had a great summer, that you have spent time with your Families, and that you have enjoyed some rest as we have been preparing for the challenges of operating in all parts of the world. I am very excited about our future and the future of the Chemical Corps.

To the Corps: Your dedication to training and developing our young CBRN Warriors has paid off. The threshold has finally been broken, and the Advanced Individual Training here at USACBRNS has been updated. A new, approved program of instruction outlines the proper training for CBRN Warriors to conduct full spectrum operations upon arrival at their units. Our young CBRN Soldiers will graduate with technician level hazmat qualifications and will be capable of conducting mass casualty decontamination. The hours spent on biological and radiological operations have been increased. These changes will enable U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard units to stay ahead of operational demands and maintain a rhythm in consequence management.

I want to highlight the outstanding work that our CBRN Warriors are doing. I had the distinct honor of spending time with our Warriors in Afghanistan, where I received an operations briefing from the 1st Cavalry Division. Members of the CBRN cell provided a great overview of current and future operations as well as descriptions of the latest homemade explosives (HMEs) and improvised explosive device events.

The entire Combined Joint Task Force Paladin command team is doing an outstanding job of executing the explosive ordnance disposal and counter improvised explosive device/HME mission throughout Afghanistan. Thanks to the chief of staff and the rest of the command for their great sponsorship, which enabled me to complete my mission in country.

The 20th Support Command (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosives) has done an outstanding job of task-organizing Warriors to support Combined Joint Task Force Paladin—largely by placing CBRN Warriors in nontraditional positions. Specifically, the combined explosive exploitation cell laboratory has assigned CBRN Soldiers to work side by side with other trained experts to catalog items, take fingerprints, process evidence, and investigate HMEs to help convict *bad guys*. Many of the Warriors employed by the 20th Support Command had never before been deployed. While many commands are skeptical about deploying without previous deployment experience, the situation paid dividends for the 20th Support Command.

I spent one morning in Bagram, where I toured a combined explosive exploitation cell laboratory that is operated by a 22d CBRN Battalion (Technical Escort) CBRN response team and civilian and international experts in explosives, forensics, laboratories, chemistry, and methods of evidence collection. I have spent a great deal of time in these types of laboratories, and I was very impressed with the capabilities of this particular one. It is a professional, well-managed laboratory with a reputation of helping to convict *bad guys*.

I spent a day with two CBRN NCOs who are doing a fine job of running counter improvised explosive device/HME lanes on Bagram Airfield. Although these positions are traditionally filled by engineers, our CBRN NCOs are excelling at the jobs due to the unbelievable amount of knowledge they have gained on counter improvised explosive devices and HMEs.

The mighty 22d CBRN Battalion also executed some outstanding missions in Canada. The CBRN response team took sensitive-site exploitation to the next level, resulting in great training by great CBRN/explosive ordnance disposal Warriors.

I want to thank our CBRN Warriors, Families, Retirees, Civilians, and Friends for the support they give to our great Warriors and to the Chemical Corps. Team, many Soldiers have lost their lives as a result of off-duty accidents. I ask that you work hard to remind Soldiers to take extra time to think before engaging in high-risk activities associated with privately owned vehicles, motorcycles, and boats; swimming; and other items, interests, and pursuits.

Our future holds many challenges as the Army adjusts to the Nation's balanced budget. Our leaders must continue to follow the Army values and to guide our CBRN Warriors as a profession. Be safe, and may God bless you all.

Elementis, Regamus, Proelium!



**Command Sergeant Major
Ted A. Lopez**