

Nuclear Disablement Team Hones Mission Readiness at Joint Readiness Training Center

By: Walter T. Ham IV

Soldiers from Nuclear Disablement Team 1 recently honed their mission readiness with 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) troops during a combat training center rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center on Fort Johnson, Louisiana.

Maj. Cory P. Chatigny, a Nuclear Operations Officer with Nuclear Disablement Team 1, said the NDT members trained to support night missions under simulated fire at a clandestine radiological dispersal device facility. "The mission was unique due to the facility and location of the objective," said Chatigny. "The facility was designed to look like a small warehouse that was turned into a makeshift weapons manufacturing site. It forced us to really take in the environment quickly – all the while at nighttime with night vision while ammunition blanks and simulators were going off around us – and to figure out what type of activities were being carried out in this facility.

Chatigny said the training rotation with the 7th Special Forces Group gave the team the opportunity to focus on staying ready to deploy on short notice. "We have focused on developing a scaled down NDT package that better fits the Special Forces mission set," said Chatigny. "Using a 20th CBRNE aviation asset, we tested our ability to deploy with a tailored equipment set that fit mission requirements." NDT 1 brought protective equipment, radiation detectors and decontamination kits that were delivered to the training site by helicopter.

"The team has had internal discussions about how we would accomplish this type of mission, but until you are participating with a real-world mission or at a combat training center rotation, it's just what it was, talking," said Chatigny. "JRTC gave us a realistic

look at what we brought onto the objective," he said. "We learned if it impeded us or was vital, tested our physical fitness under a stressful situation and stressed our own internal tactics, techniques and procedures and identified what can be improved."

Chatigny said the NDT received positive feedback for their participation in the training rotation, adding that the exercise was both challenging and rewarding. "For me



ABOVE: A Soldier from NDT 1 training to support night missions under simulated fire at a clandestine radiological dispersal device facility. Courtesy photo.



ABOVE: Soldiers from NDT 1 gather data while training at a clandestine radiological dispersal device facility. Courtesy photo.

personally, this is one of the most realistic training events I have attended,” said Chatigny. “We had the privilege of working with U.S. Army Special Operation Forces and Department of Energy subject matter experts instructing us on how we can improve. JRTC provided us with the opportunity to train outside of the box.” Chatigny said the NDTs bring unique skill sets to the fight that need to be maintained through tough and realistic training.

The NDTs include Nuclear and Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (FA 52) officers and Soldiers with EOD, nuclear medical science and health physics areas of expertise. The teams support both conventional and special operations units.

Born in Fort Ord, California, and raised in Springfield, Kentucky, Chatigny earned his bachelor's degree in homeland security from Eastern Kentucky University and his master's degree in business organization and security management from Webster University. During his 13 years in the U.S. Army, Chatigny has deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, as a Military Police platoon leader. He also served as deputy director of the U.S. Central Command Joint Personnel Recovery Center in Qatar.

Chatigny became a Nuclear and Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (FA52) officer because he wanted to take on the world's most dangerous hazards. “My undergraduate and master's degrees had me focus on emergency and consequence management and I felt I could continue that education in the FA 52 career field,” said Chatigny. “I saw switching to the FA 52 functional area as a challenge and wanted to push myself into that career field.”

NDTs directly contribute to the nation's strategic deterrence by staying ready to exploit, characterize and disable nuclear and radiological infrastructure and components to deny near-term capability to adversaries. The U.S. Army's Nuclear Disablement Teams are part of the 20th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, Explosives (CBRNE) Command, the U.S. military's premier CBRNE formation.

In addition to the NDTs, the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland-headquartered 20th CBRNE Command is home to 75 percent of the active-duty U.S. Army's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) specialists, as well as the 1st Global Field Medical Laboratory, CBRNE Analytical and Remediation Activity and Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordination Teams.

Highly trained Soldiers and Army civilians from the 20th CBRNE Command deploy from 19 bases in 16 states to confront and defeat the world's most dangerous hazards in support of joint, interagency and multinational operations. ■

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