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### **MCTP trains units during Vibrant Response 13**

Story and Photos by Capt. Eileen Hernandez, MCTP Public Affairs

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. – Mission Command Training Program is providing observer/coach training support for Vibrant Response 13 Aug. 1-13. The training exercise is taking place at Camp Atterbury, Ind. and is led by U.S. Army North in preparation for a fictitious large-scale nuclear attack on American soil.

Vibrant Response 13 is designed to test the Department of Defense's Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear response enterprise and the ability of specialized military units to deploy and sustain response forces at the request of civil authorities.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities is the current process by which U.S. military assets and personnel can be used to assist in missions normally carried out by civil authorities.

The DSCA missions are not typically conducted by the U.S. active-duty Army. These missions are unique and are only conducted under conditions when the

resources of civil authorities are exhausted or in cases where the Army has a specific capability that is required to execute the mission at hand.

In order to prepare for this exercise, retired Army Brig. Gen. Jimmy Watson, Florida Army National Guard, and his team of writers scripted a complex attack scenario designed to challenge training audiences.

“This may require a shift in thinking for war-fighting Army commanders who have been used to taking the lead during overseas missions during the last ten years,” said Watson. “This is an entirely different mission that requires commanders to understand their role and what services they can legally provide.”

“Understanding the difference between Soldiers on Title 10, Title 32 and state active duty orders is critical to this mission,” said Maj. David Croswell, MCTP Legal Observe Coach/Trainer during a training brief for MCTP participants.

National Guard forces on Title 32 status have the ability to provide direct support to law enforcement, a role that U.S. forces on Title 10 status are prohibited from conducting according to the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878.

Posse Comitatus (from the Latin phrase meaning ‘force of a county’) was created under the premise that using military power to enforce civilian law enforcement drains the ability of the Armed Forces to execute their primary missions.

“It’s important that as we prepare to provide observer/coach training services to our training audiences, we are knowledgeable on the intricacies of providing support to civil authorities,” said Anderson.

Another area where the Army needs to adjust to support DSCA missions is the intelligence arena. While deployed, one of the main focuses of Army units is collecting

critical information on enemy forces. Regardless of the intention, active duty forces are prohibited from collecting information on U.S. citizens.

During this scenario, in accordance with the Posse Comitatus Act, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice are responsible for conducting the investigation as to who is responsible for setting off the nuclear devices.

The MCTP OC/Ts work to document how the training audience reacts to the scenario in order to provide valuable feedback at the end of the exercise.

“We are here to provide commanders on the ground a picture that shows how their staffs are conducting mission command,” said Col. Matthew Anderson, Chief of Operations Group Foxtrot.

“With our feedback, they can decide what processes they should sustain and which processes could use improvement.”

MCTP is currently supporting four separate training audiences during VR 13. The Joint Task Force-51 Headquarters from Fort Sam Houston, Texas, the 415th Chemical Brigade based in Greenville, S.C., the 11th Theater Aviation Command from Fort Knox, Ky., and the 5th Medical Brigade, located in Birmingham, Ala. The units attending VR13 with MCTP assistance are scheduled to continue the exercise at Camp Atterbury for an additional week where they will be faced with several additional scenarios to reinforce their training.