

**Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL)  
News from the Front**

**EMERGENCY DEPLOYMENT READINESS  
EXERCISE (EDRE)  
366<sup>TH</sup> CBRN COMPANY**

**LTC Molly Young  
CALL LNO to ARCENT Forward  
January 2016**



366<sup>th</sup> CBRN COMPANY – VEHICLE DECONTAMINATION

### **Introduction and Background**

The CENTCOM Theater area of responsibility (AOR) has one forward deployed Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Company. The 366th CBRN Company (Maneuver Support) is located at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait and assigned to ARCENT. The 366th mission is to provide CBRNE response capability to sea and air ports of deployment in the CENTCOM AOR; including contingency response to the Levant providing hazard intelligence, monitoring, and surveillance capability of CBRN agents and Toxic Industrial Chemicals/Materials (TICs/TIMs) in support of CENTCOM's Concept Plans (CONPLANS), and bilateral agreements with countries in the AOR. This is an enduring mission, filled with a Maneuver Support (MS) Chemical Company on an annual rotation.

The 366th CBRN Company (MS) is comprised of two Decontamination (Decon) Platoons, one Stryker Reconnaissance (Recon) Platoon, and one Dismounted Reconnaissance Platoon. The decontamination platoon is comprised of 19 Soldiers, two M115A1s (HMMWVs), two tank and pump units, five M12A1 decon apparatus mounted on five MTVs, and seven M17 decon apparatus.

The rotational units fall in on the equipment set, which remains in theater. The units do not conduct equipment loadout operations as part of their deployment. The units participate in extended combat training exercises (ECT) annually. They move their organic equipment depending on the locations of the unit relative to the training sites and the type of equipment needed for the exercise. For instance HMVEEs can be drawn from Army Prepositioned Sets (APS) but Biological Integrated Detection Systems (BIDs) cannot. The vehicles will convoy or be shipped via commercial carrier depending on the distance between the sites. If they are shipped, the unit is responsible for preparing, loading and unloading their vehicles and equipment on tractor trailers for shipment. It is not uncommon for units to utilize their Full Time Unit Support (FTUS) staff with additional support from Troop Program Unit (TPU) Soldiers to accomplish this, due to flexibility required for shipping/arrival dates, and for cost savings. As a result the majority of Soldiers have not received additional training on loading vehicles on trailers, rail or planes.

The 366th deployed to Kuwait June, 2015. The Soldiers of the 366th have had some experience on loading their vehicles on trailers for shipment in the previous years for transport to and from their combat support training exercise (CSTX). However, emergency deployment via air lift was not identified as a required task prior to their deployment and thus was not trained during ECT events. The unit focused primarily on convoy operations, believing they would most likely self-deploy within the theater of operation.

### **Phase I - Preparation**

Once the 366<sup>th</sup> CBRN Company arrived in Kuwait, they were notified by ARCENT that they would need to be prepared to deploy within the CENTCOM AOR on short notice via air lift. The company commander quickly identified the need for a deployment exercise. He issued a concept of operation to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Decon Platoon, directing them to be prepared to (BPT) conduct an Emergency Deployment on order within 24 hours of notification. The plan was intended to exercise the Decon platoon's ability to successfully conduct emergency deployment via an Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise (EDRE).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon designated a set of equipment, pre-packed for emergency deployment. They conducted regular maintenance on the vehicles and used them in training exercises to ensure they were in good working condition. The unit has a predefined A and B bag packing list in which all Soldiers in the Platoon are required to have both bags prepped at all times.

The platoon leader issued a Warning Order (WARNO) to the platoon within hours of receiving the CONOP and then set about preparing the Platoon's CONOP. He issued the platoon CONOP within 24 hours of receiving the company's CONOP.

The Company Commander, 1SG, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon Leader and Platoon Sergeant conducted a leader's recon to Ali Al Salem Air Force Base in order to conduct a route recon and face-to-face coordination with Detachment one, 816<sup>th</sup>



Air Expeditionary Wing, which is responsible for the air lift. They met with the Air Force and the Army Liaisons from the 840<sup>th</sup> Transportation Brigade assigned to assist in the lift procedures. The recon went very well with the Air Force and Army representatives explaining everything that would be required and provided the 366<sup>th</sup> with the packet they would need to complete.

Upon return, the unit started on the air lift package (enclosed) which included the effort of four personnel and took 48 hours to complete. The company commander coordinated with the Host Nation Office at ASG-KU to approve the movement and coordinate the Kuwaiti security escort required for convoys. The host nation approved the final route. The approved route of movement was a different route than they had earlier reconnoitered. If time had permitted they would have completed a route recon of the final route.

## **Phase II - Execution**

The order to execute was given on Sunday, 22 November 2015 at 0800. The unit prepped everything and was ready to Start Point (SP) on Monday, 23 November 2015 at 0600. The 366<sup>th</sup> requested link-up with the security escort at 0600, however the security escorts did not arrive until about 0730. For planning purposes, it should be assumed there may be delays while awaiting escorts.

Once underway the unit experienced four tire blow outs enroute due to dry rot of the tires. The maintenance section indicated that dry rot of the tires is not evident with a visual inspection. The unit was able to replace each tire in a timely fashion during the convoy and kept in communication with the 816<sup>th</sup> Air Wing to keep them apprised of the delay. The unit has an organic maintenance platoon with a wrecker. Per the unit's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), the wrecker accompanies all convoys, as they did on this exercise. The unit was able to quickly recover and repair all vehicles that experienced blow outs enroute to include the self-recovery of the wrecker itself.

### Phase III - Approval

Once the convoy arrived at Ali Al Salem, the 816th was prepared to receive them.

Initially they reviewed the packet to ensure it was completed accurately and indicated a few minor errors which the unit was able to correct on the spot. The 816th approved the packet and indicated all was good to move forward with the movement. Concurrently, the 840th Transportation reviewed the vehicles and shoring equipment. The 840th noted that given the weight of the vehicles and their loads (tank and pump units will ship fully loaded) that normal shipping stapes would not be sufficient, rather chains would be required. It was noted that this requirement was not included in any of the instructions the 366th had previously received. They recommend it be added. The unit has the appropriate chains and will include them in the future. If they had actually been deploying, they would have had to have them brought up to Ali Al Salem or the U.S. Air Force (USAF) could have provided if they had extras. This discrepancy would have caused a delay in departure, but not mission failure. The unit is required to self-load and shore their equipment on the planes. This was not exercised during this event. The USAF unit was busy conducting actual scheduled air lifts daily in support of contingency operations and did not have the band width or platforms to provide for this portion of the training exercise. However given the risk to mission failure or worse, a catastrophic loss due to shifting loads on the cargo planes, it is vital that the unit become proficient with this task.



The CONOP provided was for the 3rd Platoon of the 366th CBRN Company to prepare to SP in an emergency deployment within 24 hours. The exercise was a success, both the Commander and the Platoon Leader feel confident the Decon Platoon is prepared to deploy on short notice. In future iterations of this training it should be expanded to include the load portion at the airport of debarkation (APOD).

The success of the deployment and the mission once deployed is inextricably dependent on the serviceability of the unit's rolling stock. As it is not possible to visually identify wear on the tires, alternate means should be identified. Tire failures could possibly be identified when driving at convoy speeds for an extended period of time. While the rapid deployment equipment set is regularly maintained and used for training and pre-execution checks, they are not driven enough to get the tires up to convoy road temperatures in the Middle East.



Additionally the first time a deployment packet is completed, there is both a learning curve and some specific expertise required. Some of the required documentation are: manifest and load cards, hazardous materials declarations and convoy clearance. Proper time should be allotted and additional coordination is required for the first exercise to ensure the airlift packet is accurately prepared. Overall, the EDRE was an extremely valuable exercise that once validated, ensured theater level CBRN Companies are prepared to deploy on short notice.

## Lessons and Best Practices

1. **Vehicle Recovery:** The Maintenance Section is skilled and fully trained to support vehicle recovery operations enroute. The wrecker and maintenance crew should be included in all convoy operations.
2. **Integrating EDREs into Pre-deployment Training:** Emergency Deployment via airlift is an essential task for the Maneuver Support CBRN Company. Collective task 55-2-4810 Perform Aerial Port of Embarkation Activities for Deployment (enclosed) should be added to the Maneuver Support Companies required collective training under the Mission Essential Task List (METL) task 30-TS-2302 – Conduct Deployment Operations. The collective task should be trained prior to the unit entering the ready phase in their Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle.
3. **Theater Job Book / SOP for Emergency Deployment:** The success of an emergency aerial deployment is dependent on an accurate airlift packet. A continuity book should be maintained with a completed packet that should be reviewed and revalidated with the airlift Departure Airfield Control Group (DACG) on a quarterly basis.
4. **Tire Maintenance:** There are various ways to mitigate the tire wear issue:
  - Longer road testing at convoy speeds to ensure tire road worthiness can be conducted.
  - Replace tires on the designated vehicles more frequently than manufacturer's recommendation due to the lack of regular use and the extreme weather conditions in the AO.
  - Bring a good supply of spare tires when deploying.
5. **Incorporate loading the Plane:** The exercise should be expanded to include the unit loading their equipment on the planes. The Operational Tempo (OPTEMPO) at the APOD may preclude this extended training, in which case, the training audience should identify alternate solutions. For instance, the unit could coordinate to allow their Soldiers to fall in on an actual deployment and conduct on the job training along with a deploying unit. Or similarly, they could do rotations at the APOD where they would acquire sufficient hands on training.