

Media Release



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4th MEB passes on CBRN-response mission, refocuses on combat role

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – On Oct. 1, the 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade will culminate its mission of Federal military response to a potential Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosives event in the homeland.

The brigade will relinquish authority and designation as the “Task Force Operations” component to U.S. Northern Command’s CBRNE – Consequence Management Response Force, or “CCMRF,” to the 1st MEB in a formal ceremony at Fort Polk Friday.

The event will officially end the 4th MEB’s two-year stint as one of the lead components to the CCMRF mission. The 4th MEB has spent the last two years providing a variety of personnel and resources needed to assist Federal, state and local civil authorities during a CBRN response operation, including chemical detection, engineering, and search and rescue.

Oct. 1 will also mark the transition of the CCMRF to the Defense CBRN Response Force, or “DCRF” – a 5,200-person CBRN response force that offers additional life-saving and life-sustaining military forces, to include CBRN decontamination and medical personnel.

Since its designation as Task Force Operations, the 4th MEB has conducted more than 40 exercises nationwide including two command post exercises at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and two mission readiness exercises at Camp Atterbury, Ind., while directing more than 25 subordinate units from all branches of the military, including the Marine Corps’ Chemical, Biological Incident Response Force and the Air Force Radiation Assessment Team.

“The joint service team of Task Force Operations has done a magnificent job in providing a critical capability to the nation,” said Col. Frank Y. Rangel Jr., 4th MEB commander. “Based throughout the United States, our soldiers, airmen, and Marines have trained over the last two years to provide specialized skills when it would matter most--during an emergency when American lives are at stake.”

While operating in their CCMRF role, the 4th MEB, led by Joint Task Force - Civil Support, operated as the command and control headquarters for CCMRF.

Now, 4th MEB will focus on a new mission: full-spectrum operations.

“Relinquishing our current mission is bittersweet,” said Capt. John Tribe, the 4th MEB Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander. “Our brigade stood up and was given the task to defend the country in the event of a domestic terrorist attack in the wake of 9/11.”

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“My guys have worked hard to build a strong, functional relationship with state, local and federal authorities to provide the support they might need if another attack had occurred,” he said.

Still, the soldiers of the 4th MEB must transition back to a combat-oriented mindset and prepare for future tasking as a fully-functional, deployable combat unit after two years of stateside training and operations. While operating stateside, Title 10 Federal military forces must adhere to the Posse Comitatus Act, which stipulates that Title 10 Federal military forces cannot provide law enforcement within the U.S., according to the Center for Law and Military Operations.

“Basically, our soldiers will need to learn what they can and cannot do to prevent hostile behavior as we prepare to transition to a much wider scope of operations including world-wide deployments in support of combat operations,” said Maj. Kari Hadley, the 4th MEB judge advocate.

The only time 4th MEB transferred the CCMRF mission was in the seven days following a New Years Eve tornado that struck the post damaging many buildings and some Army equipment.

The Global Response Force, 82nd Airborne Division, assumed the mission until 4th MEB systems could be brought back online, at which time they resumed the mission.

Less than two weeks after the relinquishment of its CCMRF mission, the 4th MEB is scheduled to conduct its first field training exercise as a combat-oriented brigade in preparation for overseas deployments.

This training is slated to be immediately followed by participation in the 1st Infantry Division mission readiness exercise in Fort Riley, Kan., where they will utilize Army Battle Command Systems and practice full Military Decision Making Processes.

“Fourth MEB has done an outstanding job as Task Force Operations,” said Col. Robert Risberg, the 1st Infantry Division chief of staff. “Growing from a brand new maneuver support organization into the premier Defense Support of Civil Authorities unit in the Army in only three years was not easy and serves as a testament to the great men and women of the Dauntless Brigade.”

“The same leadership, hard work, and dedication that produced such successes on the CCMRF mission will carry the 4th MEB to success as they face the challenges of full-spectrum operations,” he added.

“The entire Big Red One team salutes the 4th MEB and its job well done!”

Story by SGT Heather Denby, 4th MEB PAO