

# Chemical/Biological Incident Response Force (CBIRF) Support for U.S. Homeland Security

## DISCUSSION

The CBIRF element of the 4th MEB (AT) is a national asset. When directed, it can forward deploy and respond to a credible threat of a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosive (CBRNE) incident. CBIRF assists local, state, or federal agencies and designated combatant commanders in the conduct of consequence management operations. It provides key capabilities, including agent detection and identification; casualty search, rescue, and personnel decontamination; the provision of emergency medical care; and the stabilization

of contaminated personnel. CBIRF's ability to assist civil authorities is enhanced by its adherence to the applicable federal regulations regarding hazardous material response and its inventory of National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-certified response equipment.

CBIRF is structured for both domestic and foreign consequence management operations, and remains on a one-hour alert to respond to either contingency. Operationally, CBIRF is capable of deploying up to 330 personnel task organized to provide detection and identification of 120,000 toxic industrial chemicals; all known chemical warfare agents; eight biological agents; and alpha, beta, gamma, neutron, and x-ray emissions. Additionally, CBIRF can

- >> Perform technical casualty search and rescue for 12 non-ambulatory cases per hour
- >> Provide medical triage and antidotes for 1500 nerve agent casualties and airway management for 28 respiratory casualties
- >> Conduct manned and unmanned explosive ordnance disposal
- >> Establish C4I connectivity with secure voice and satellite communications
- >> Conduct open-purchase logistics, and
- >> Decontaminate 150 non-ambulatory and 450 ambulatory casualties per hour.

Since its establishment in April 1996, CBIRF has operationally deployed in support of multiple National Special Security Events, including the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, presidential inauguration ceremonies in 1996 and 2000, presidential State of the Union addresses, the 1999 papal visit, the 1999 NATO summit, and the Y2K celebration. During Operation Noble Eagle, CBIRF supported response operations at the U.S. Capitol by collecting over 600 biological samples and removing and screening 12 tons of congressional mail and office equipment.

CBIRF and its Mobile Training Teams have also deployed overseas in support of multiple exercises in Jordan, Bahrain, Iceland, Qatar, Kuwait, Italy, France, the Philippines, and Japan.

## MARINE CORPS POSITION

CBIRF is not an elite unit, it is a Navy-Marine Corps team tasked with executing a challenging mission to meet an emerging threat. It is most effective when forward-deployed in support of a combatant commander or designated Lead Federal Agency.

