

## CBRN SPECIALIST BASIC COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

THE MISSION OF THE MARINE CORPS CBRN SCHOOL ABOARD FORT LEONARD WOOD IS TO TRAIN MARINES TO BECOME CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL, AND NUCLEAR DEFENSE SPECIALISTS.

THE PRIMARY MISSION OF THE CBRN DEFENSE SPECIALIST IS TO ENSURE THEIR UNIT IS TRAINED AND READY TO SURVIVE AND OPERATE IN A CBRN ENVIRONMENT. THESE DUTIES INCLUDE TRAINING MARINES IN INDIVIDUAL SURVIVAL MEASURES, CBRN DEFENSE TEAM OPERATIONS, OPERATING THE CBRN CONTROL CENTER IN THE UNIT'S COMBAT OPERATIONS CENTER, MAINTENANCE OF CBRN DEFENSE EQUIPMENT, AND PREPARATION OF THAT EQUIPMENT FOR DEPLOYMENT.

THESE MARINES HAVE RECEIVED NEARLY FIVE HUNDRED HOURS OF INSTRUCTION AND HAVE DEMONSTRATED PROFICIENCY IN MANY DIFFERENT SKILLS.

THE COURSE THEY HAVE JUST COMPLETED CONSISTED OF 5 MAJOR BLOCKS OF INSTRUCTION.

THE MARINES BEGAN THEIR TRAINING WITH THE "BASIC SKILLS" BLOCK LEARNING THE FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS UPON WHICH THE MARINES CONTINUE TO BUILD THROUGH OUT THE COURSE. THESE SKILLS INCLUDE MAINTANANCE AND USE OF THE FIELD PROTECTIVE MASK, INDIVIDUAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT, CHEMICAL AGENTS CHARACTERISTICS, AN INTRODUCTION TO DECONTAMINATION AND DETECTION OPERATIONS, IMMEDIATE ACTIONS DRILLS, IMMEDIATE AND OPERATIONAL DECONTAMINATION TECHNIQUES, AS WELL AS CONDUCTING TRAINING AND THE IPE CONFIDENCE EXERCISE, BETTER KNOWN AS THE GAS CHAMBER.

THE SECOND BLOCK OF INSTRUCTION IS THE "HAZARD PREDICTION" BLOCK. THE MARINES RECEIVED INSTRUCTION ON HOW TO PLOT CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL AND NUCLEAR ATTACKS. THE STUDENTS THEN PREDICTED THE RESULTING AREAS OF CONTAMINATION, AND WHAT ACTIONS ARE REQUIRED ONCE AN ATTACK HAS OCCURRED.

THE THIRD BLOCK OF INSTRUCTION IS THE "CONTAMINATION AVOIDANCE" BLOCK. DURING THIS PERIOD THE MARINES LEARNED HOW TO REDUCE THE THREAT OF CONTAMINATION AND MAINTAIN THE OPERATIONAL TEMPO OF THEIR UNIT BY LOCATING AND AVOIDING CONTAMINATION AFTER A CBRN ATTACK HAS OCCURRED. CLASSES INCLUDE CONTAMINATION

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AVOIDANCE TECHNIQUES, VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT, CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL AND RADIOLOGICAL DETECTION EQUIPMENT OPERATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT, TECHNIQUES FOR MONITORING, SURVEY AND RECONNAISSANCE.

THE FOURTH BLOCK OF INSTRUCTION IS THE "DECONTAMINATION" BLOCK. THIS BLOCK TAUGHT THE MARINES TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES FOR THOROUGH DECONTAMINATION OF PERSONNEL, CONTAMINATED CASUALTIES, AND MARINE CORPS EQUIPMENT ASSETS INCLUDING VARIOUS PLATFORMS OF AIRCRAFT.

THE FIFTH AND FINAL BLOCK OF INSTRUCTION IS THE "ADVANCED" BLOCK. THIS BLOCK CONSISTED OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OPERATIONS WHICH TAUGHT THE STUDENTS TO RESPOND TO INCIDENTS INVOLVING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.

FOR EACH OF THE TRAINING BLOCKS THE MARINES RECEIVED HOURS OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND CONDUCTED NUMEROUS PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISES DESIGNED TO REINFORCE THE SKILLS THEY WERE TAUGHT. MARINES WERE THEN EVALUATED BY SEPARATE WRITTEN AND PERFORMANCE EXAMINATIONS TO VERIFY THE PROFICIENCY OF THOSE SKILLS.

IN ADDITION TO FIVE BLOCKS OF INSTRUCTION, THE MARINES TRAINED IN AN ACTUAL TOXIC CHEMICAL AGENT ENVIRONMENT AT THE CHEMICAL DEFENSE TRAINING FACILITY LOCATED HERE ABOARD FORT LEONARD WOOD. THE CDTF IS DESIGNED TO EVALUATE AND CONFIRM THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CBRN EQUIPMENT THAT THE MARINES RECEIVED INSTRUCTION.

THE MARINES TRAINING CULMINATED WITH A THREE DAY FINAL FIELD EXERCISE. DURING THIS EXERCISE THEY APPLIED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS LEARNED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE COURSE. THE EXERCISE FOCUSED HEAVILY ON CONTROL CENTER OPERATIONS, MONITOR/SURVEY PROCEDURES, ALL THREE LEVELS OF DECONTAMINATION OPERATIONS AND PLACED SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON INDIVIDUAL AND SMALL UNIT LEADERSHIP.

THE CBRN STUDENTS WERE ALSO REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN A VERY CHALLENGING PHYSICAL FITNESS PROGRAM WHICH INCLUDED RUNS OF VARYING LENGTHS AND DIFFICULTY, HIGH INTENSITY TRAINING, AND CIRCUIT COURSES.