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Schweinfurt chemical Soldiers train for war

By Capt. Philip Wolfe
18th CSSB commander

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany – Chemical Soldiers from Schweinfurt rehearsed battle drills and practiced responding to hazardous materials incidents during a 14-day training exercise here recently.

Soldiers from the 12th Chemical Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, ran through mounted and dismounted maneuvers including reacting to unexploded ordnance, reacting to contact, evaluating a casualty and conducting ground medical evacuations. After they finished the drills they practiced using the Army's "Blue Force Tracker," a GPS-based computer system that monitors the location of friendly forces and rehearsed tactical night driving and Hazardous Material incident response.

"The training was good to show that we are ready to deploy and execute our mission, to understand how we fit into the strategic plan and then to be able to pass our lessons learned on to the rest of the platoons," said Sgt. Christopher Guyer, biological integrated detection systems team leader, 12th Chem. Co.

"The training is essential to a chemical company," said 1st Sgt. Sharon McCann, first sergeant, 12th Chem. Co. "The Soldiers have not always had the opportunity to deploy and perform in a chemical company capacity."

The mission was simple: patrol the course of the range from checkpoint one to eight and respond to whatever situation arose. Each team was comprised of two vehicles. Personnel included two team leaders, two drivers, two gunners and two back-up gunners. The training was scheduled in iterations including dry fire, blank fire and then finally a live-fire round.

"I have been in 12th Chemical now for three years, and this was by far the best training I've ever seen," said Spc. Andix Madriz, petroleum supply specialist, 12th Chem. Co.



Soldiers from the 12th Chemical Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, prepare for training by donning personal protective equipment. The “Hellfire” company performed multiple battle drills including a live fire exercise during a 14-day field training exercise recently. (Courtesy photo)