

Training and Certifying Companies for C2CRE and GRF Missions

BY MAJOR MARK D. DALEY

As the 49th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) transitioned into a combat sustainment support battalion, it began to manage seven additional companies. Of the seven, one company was identified to support the command and control CBRN [chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear] response element (C2CRE) and one was tasked as part of the global response force (GRF).

The vision and directives of the late Brigadier General Terence J. Hildner, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) (ESC), indicated that training for the C2CRE and GRF missions would comply with the training and certification directives for both mission sets. Both the C2CRE and the GRF units would be ready to deploy without notice in response to activities deemed necessary by the Department of Defense.

Each company had to accomplish specified training requirements according to its mission set (C2CRE or GRF). The battalion operations officer worked with the company commanders to develop initial training plans. Once approved by the battalion commander, the training was put into the Digital Training Management System (DTMS) and the battalion S-3 worked with the brigade, ESC, and corps staffs to ensure that the units' training received priority and was resourced.

The training was conducted over 90 days. During this time, the 49th Transportation Battalion led a series of alerts to focus the unit on back-to-basic operations and to prepare the C2CRE and GRF companies for activation. Training progress was reviewed weekly and reported to the Army Forces Command through the brigade, ESC, and corps.

The battalion developed an alert notification sequence (N-hour sequence) and incorporated it into the battalion's tactical standard operating procedures (TACSOP). The alerts were unannounced, and each required more from the Soldiers than the previous alert had.

The N-hour sequence focused on company- and battalion-level activities conducted within the first 12 to 24 hours after being alerted. According to the battalion TACSOP, Soldiers were required to report with their deployment bags and in complete combat uniform within 2 hours of notification. Upon arriving, the Soldiers reported to their companies, drew weapons, and immediately continued to their designated areas as platoon leaders directed.

To prepare their vehicles for convoy, drivers conducted preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) and initiated alert dispatches. Once the PMCS were complete, first-line supervisors conducted precombat checks and in-

spections. Each platoon leader then verified that his platoon was ready, and the platoon rolled out of the motorpool while being evaluated by a battalion staff team. Staff members were also staged at a designated location to receive the platoon and verify its dispatches and PMCS. The staff also verified the sub-hand receipts of the platoon leader and evaluated each platoon on its core mission.

The battalion's headquarters and headquarters detachment also went through alert procedures. To monitor the entire process and ensure the units were in compliance with the TACSOP, the staff established a fusion cell led by the battalion executive officer. Members of the staff were at designated locations to monitor company activities and collect feedback that would later be provided to the battalion and company commanders during after-action reviews.

The battle captain and noncommissioned officer consolidated and issued orders and ensured that the battalion remained on schedule. At the end of the 2-hour recall, the primary staff and company commanders met with the battalion commander to identify issues and receive additional guidance. After-action reviews were conducted after each alert with the battalion staff and company command teams.

Soon after N-hour sequence training, each company was tested on its ability to deploy, establish an area of operations, exercise mission command, and conduct its assigned mission. The company assigned as the C2CRE participated in an exercise in Indiana, and the company assigned to the GRF mission participated in an exercise at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California.

Before deploying, each company was certified to deploy through the battalion's notification process. Both units completed the required training and were ready to assume their missions on time. Each company deployed with minimal issues and collected several lessons learned, many centering on agencies and activities outside of battalion and company control. Nonetheless, each company was trained and certified using the directed training requirements in support of national security and performed well.

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A Casualty Liaison Team Prepares for Deployment

BY SECOND LIEUTENANT ERIC L. ROSS

Over the past 10 years, the Army has embraced modularity, replacing functional brigades with brigade combat teams. Supporting branches have also embraced modularity, but many branch modular formations do not allow for the deployment of battalion-level or company-level headquarters. Many branches instead deploy units in detachments or teams. This is particularly true of the Adjutant General's Corps.

The Adjutant General's Corps previously had battalion-level formations in the form of personnel support battalions. However, the personnel support battalions have been inactivated and human resources (HR) companies have been created. These companies are designed to conduct three primary missions: casualty liaison at level III medical treatment facilities, postal operations, and reception, replacement, return to duty, rest and recuperation, and redeployment (R5).

Early in Operation Iraqi Freedom, HR companies deployed as company-level organizations. However, over the past 5 years, many HR companies have been tasked to deploy platoons and teams to meet specific needs in the Iraqi theater. That made providing training for two- or three-man teams and platoons a challenge for the companies to manage.

HR companies depended on Silver Scimitar, a Reserve component training event, to train for deployment. Silver Scimitar usually is conducted twice a year at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. This training event certifies each HR company to ensure that it is trained to standard for its deployment. It is imperative that local commanders create training events for their subordinate platoons and teams before they attend Silver Scimitar.

CLT Situational Training Exercise

In order to train the casualty liaison teams (CLTs) for deployment, the 502d HR Company, 49th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control), 13th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, participated in its first combined CLT situational training exercise on 25 August 2011. The training was a 1-day event that tested the unit's skills in conducting and providing support for casualties in theater. As a platoon leader and planner for the training exercise, I coordinated the event with personnel from the 1st Medical Brigade and the Fort Hood Medical Simulation Training Center.

The training included 50 personnel from the 502d HR Company and 10 from the 1st Medical Brigade. The emphasis was on placing the CLT within the patient administration section to act as a liaison for the military and civilian patients in the theater and to initiate the casualty notification process to the patients' next of kin.

Two noncommissioned officers were the subject-matter experts who evaluated the teams. Both were HR company

members and veterans of CLT operations in the Iraqi theater. Each team had to be able to obtain accurate information from each casualty, enter the information into the Defense Casualty Information Processing System (DCIPS), and send an initial report.

A Mass Casualty Scenario

The Fort Hood Medical Simulation Training Center provided realistic scenarios that placed Soldiers in stressful situations and allowed them to interact with doctors and nurses while trying to receive information about a casualty. The center's staff simulated a mass casualty scenario that resembled chaos in a theater hospital. When patients arrived at the theater hospital, a CLT member would speak with each patient and obtain as much information as possible about the incident.

As soon as the doctor gave his diagnosis of the severity of the patient's injuries, the CLT member completed and sent a DCIPS folder report to the Department of the Army or the patient's service component so that his next of kin could be notified. After the report was sent, the CLT made hourly checks to the intensive-care ward or unit to check on the patient's status or, in the case of more critical patients, stability.

With the cooperation of CLT veterans, the 1st Medical Brigade, and the Fort Hood Medical Simulation Training Center, the CLTs were trained for CLT operations in the theater. The expertise of the veterans enabled us to certify the teams on their core competence and technical skills using the DCIPS, which is the Army system of record. We also took advantage of Fort Hood's deployment programs to ensure that the teams were trained on tactical skills also required for deployment. Because each team consisted of five Soldiers, it was advantageous to use the individual replacement training program to train them on their tactical skills.

With the combination of the situational training exercise lanes and individual replacement training, the battalion commander was able to certify the teams for deployment. As we move forward in the future, this combination of training will serve all small teams. The Army has major training events for large formations. However, local commanders must develop training opportunities for smaller units and certify those units for deployment to hostile environments.

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