

CBRNe World visits the Lieutenant Terry facility in Fort Leonard Wood to see the variety of training on offer

# Time and a place for everything

It is difficult not to be impressed with the Terry facility. Yes, you might have seen aspects of it at "Nubich" in Rieti, Italy, or parts of it at Namur, Belgium, but we are hard pressed to think where you get all the aspects on this scale. Stalin said that "Quantity has a quality all of its own", and scale is a big part of the Terry facility. It has 22.5 acres devoted to the new counter-terrorist/insurgency mission that the military faces, and in 2010 another 20,000 square feet will be added to the facility as they build more classrooms and decon facilities. It is rare to find a CBRN school running at under capacity, but it would be more difficult to find a school running at such over capacity as the Terry centre; there will be 5,000 students in 2009 and an expected 7,000 in 2010, and it was built with a capacity of 1,500!

This increase in scale has to be seen as part of the changing mission set; when the site was first planned, about ten years ago, it was for the Civil Support Teams (CST) and as such was going to be devoted to their support to the civilian forces mission. As Iraq and Afghanistan continued, it became rapidly apparent that the mission set had changed for US and allied forces; no longer was it the case that the military did not involve itself in foreign civilian matters. As the mission has grown, so has the need for a wider spread of people to be trained in a far more diverse range of scenarios. So not only does the Terry facility train the CSTs, it also trains Technical Escort (Tech Escort), US Air Force Disaster Preparedness and US Coast Guard Strike team, for example. As you might expect with a facility that is so over capacity (though the 2010 extension will ease

this) there is no huge need for foreign students, though the Center has already trained two Republic of Korea soldiers.

The facility does two qualifications (the International Fire Service Accreditation and the DoD Hazmat Technician Course) and three homeland security courses (Civil Support Skills, CBRN Responder and Mass Decon) and two Iraq and Afghanistan-focused courses (Tech Escort and Dismounted Reece). Each individual who attends the courses will do five written tests and five accompanying practical tests – based on their written ones – and has the opportunity to take each test twice. The written tests are all multiple choice and PC-based, held in three classrooms, all of which can be split into two. The practical ones, meanwhile, make use of the Terry Center's extensive outdoor capability and their internal decon warehouses. CST

*'Well I didn't see it! The Terry centre has a range of scenarios to test the students.'* ©CBRNe World



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members, for example, will be here for eight weeks and do preparation for clandestine labs, so they will learn lab ware and sample collection.

The decon sites are a step down from traditional live-agent training decon, as only stimulants are used, but the students are taught mass decon (which is never a candidate for live agent training) and technical decontamination. Yet decon is not why there is such a take up for the Terry; rather it is the extensive outdoor training area. Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Kirkorian detailed the site. "The focus is for urban training," he said. "There is a clandestine lab in a warehouse, a feed store with an insecticide spill, a post office with an anthrax attack, a rail car with 55,000 gallon leaking rail car, a cave complex for confined space, an accident scene where there is a 40-passenger bus and leaking bowser, a low-pressure tanker car, intermodal containers for maritime leaks, and we are working on bringing a "ship in a box" for them to learn to decon. There are tunnels throughout the system, linked to all the scenarios and buildings; eventually the caves lead to a biological clandestine lab. We also have a confined space trainer that follows OSHA standards, so there are cross pathways every 15 feet for rapid extraction." The scenarios are based on real life incidents, either within the US or from Iraq and Afghanistan.

## Warehouse

As the name might suggest, this is a large building with a laboratory inside it – the laboratory can be CBR, and ricin is a current favourite. There is a "removable hole" in both the wall and ceiling – it is shuttered when there is no call for it – and often the scenario might start in the car park with a range of emergency service vehicles on call. "Their trigger point is an accidental explosion that has blown out the wall and ceiling, trashed the lower levels and killed the terrorists," said Lt. Colonel Kirkorian. "The fact that there is this big hole forces them to do point detection because of wind flow. The drive is to be able to teach them to do initial entry, sampling and testing, and to help the instructors there are 36 cameras in the



Large and getting larger. Welcome to the Lt Terry Centre. ©CBRNe World

building which we will watch and plan our after-action reports.

"First there will be a non-suit walkthrough with instruments," he continued. "Often when they do it in suits the temperature inside the building will reach 110 degrees. We used to do 300lb casualty extraction down a spiral stair case on the top floor, but this had to be stopped for safety reasons."

## Post office

This is set up as a proper post office, with a front desk and a large sorting area in the back. Clearly based on the anthrax releases in 2001, the facility is mainly used for radiological and biological attacks. The instructors will hide a source somewhere inside the many parcels and letters – some of which are in the process of being sorted – and the students are given the laborious task of sifting through the mail in high temperatures (no AC in this post office. Lucky the postal workers didn't die of heat exhaustion!).

## Capsized tanker

Here two real tanker cars, on rails, have crashed, one capsizing and the other spilling its barrels. The tankers are fitted to hoses that can pump water at varying speeds, forcing the students into quick thinking. "It has a real tanker head which is where most leaks are likely if a tank spills or bursts," said

Lieutenant Colonel Kirkorian. "The instructor can decide how difficult it will be to cap it, from simply shutting the valve to tightening the bolt to needing a proper cap. As well as that there are low-pressure leaks – all water – and they need to know how to stop it and then there are drums that can leak in the rail car."

## Confined space trainer

Visually this looks nothing so much like baby crawl tunnels for adults, except for the fact that on the June day we see it, it is 95 degree outside and offers to go inside are politely, but firmly, rebuffed. Health and safety of the individual is a key concern, as Lieutenant Colonel Kirkorian explained. "We start with a vertical insertion of 14 feet into two-foot by four-foot tube," he said. "The individuals will all be wearing SCBA and have 20-30 minutes to do the course. There is constant vital sign monitoring, there are always two instructors solely for safety concerns, all participants wear ice cooling vests and vital sign monitoring – so far we have had no heat casualties. We also practice high-level casualty extraction."

## Case System

Like the others this is linked to all the underground tunnels – some of which will have to be transverse for hundreds of yards before you get into the cave proper

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– which contains a range of rudimentary labs. Here the team will find the lab, a variety of munitions, some being filled, and personal equipment. The Commander will be required to engage in collecting samples and evidence – and these scenarios are based on real life ones from Iraq. The tunnels are regularly flooded, so students might find themselves wading through water, are mainly dark (some of the areas have grates to the outside), so the instructors use infrared cameras and audio pickups to cave the participants. The tunnels and cave system are a maze, so there are regular dead-ends and they will need O2 meters to make sure that they have not wandered into oxygen deficient areas if they are using respirators.

#### Accident

This has a little bit of everything. Here a school bus has crashed into a tanker, which has overturned. Added to this can be a VBIED that has either caused the

crash or come along after to spread some more joy. The bus has 40 “passengers”; each dummy will weigh between 150 and 250lbs, the tanker will leak at varying speeds, and there is the risk of secondary explosion from the VBIED van. This is a real “So what do you do next?” scenario! The tankers can be exchanged for cryogenic and low or high pressure. The escaping liquid will run continually and it is a component of the fire service accreditation to make sure they can dyke, dam or divert the flow.

The centre is not currently able to do civilian forces, and is mainly focused on US Army (Reserve, Active and National Guard), Marines and US Air Force – though the Coast Guard is increasing their presence. US Navy (as discussed in the interview with Col Smith on PP16) are not currently engaged, but there is no doubt that the Terry centre is a success and will continue to be for the foreseeable. One thing that you can

never say about US bases is that they are short of room, and the size of the Terry (especially when it is placed within the other amenities at Fort Leonard Wood such as accommodation, services, etc) means it is unlikely to be exceeded by many nations for simple space reasons. Similarly, the US is so far ahead of many other nations in terms of the civilian CBRN mission – thanks to both the threat level and operations in Iraq and Afghanistan – that there is unlikely to be a centre to match it for a number of years (although DRDC Suffield will probably run it close). What seems likely, therefore, is that the next few years will see a steady stream of visitors and applicants from foreign countries to see what the Terry can offer for their needs and whether elements of it can be copied on national soil. Perhaps the greatest testament to the effort invested in the 1LT Joseph Terry facility is that the seeds of its learning will travel so far and settle so strongly.



*Box Car Blues. The train scenario has a range of different pressures that need to be dealt with. ©CBRNe World*