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36. THE CZECH CHEMICAL MILITARY UNIT FOR FAST AND RELIABLE INTERVENTION

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INTRODUCTION FROM THE HISTORY OF THE CHEMICAL CORPS

The Chemical Corps of the Army of the Czech Republic (and the former Czechoslovakia) was established at the beginning of 50s as a reaction on existing chemical and biological weapons in this period of time. Nuclear weapons have been implemented by the most military important armies as the U.S. Army, the Soviet Army and the British Army. The Chemical Corps of the former Czechoslovakia was build fully in the line with the examples of chemical units and chemical support in the Soviet Army, of course.

Especially the individual protection has a long and successful tradition in the Czech Republic (and in the former Czechoslovakia).

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CZECH CHEMICAL MILITARY UNIT

The 9th Chemical Protection Company assigned to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Immediate Reaction Forces (IRF) was formed by the decision of the supreme authorities of the NATO based on the realization that a single chemical protection platoon was not enough to cover the Allies' need for the IRF. The Czech military chemists have the necessary technical equipment and have demonstrated the ability to apply their knowledge and high level of their skills mostly in the Persian Gulf.

On October 1, 1998, the unit began to fully function as a professional body, able to immediately fulfil any given assignment.

MAIN MISSIONS AND TASKS OF THE CHEMICAL PROTECTION COMPANY

The main missions and tasks of the 9th Chemical Protection Company:

- radiological and chemical survey and surveillance,
- collection of samples and analysis of toxic substances and contaminants,
- decontamination of persons, combat technology, and materials,
- logistic support of own unit,
- command, medical, policing, security, and communication services.

The 9th Chemical Protection Company has the following organizational structure:

- Company Commander,
- Deputy Commander,
- Chief of Staff and Company Headquarters
- Command and Combat Support Platoon,
- Radiological and Chemical Survey Platoon,
- Dozimetric and Chemical Checking Platoon,
- Decontamination Platoon,
- Logistic Support Platoon,
- Group of Military Police,
- First-Aid Post

It is a matter of priority that members of the IRF attain a state of highly professional preparedness, both psychical and psychological. All the candidates are tested for physical fitness and have to undergo a thorough medical examination, including an interview with a psychologist. During the training period, attention is paid not only to professional and

specially orientated drills, but also such as swimming in military conditions, walking a 30 km distance while orienteering in unfamiliar terrain, using a map and English language learning.

The professional members of the Company are able to provide assistance to other units in an emergency while simultaneously protecting themselves to ensure that it is effective. The Company is equipped with state-of-the art protective clothing and devices and utilises chemical and radiological situation monitoring techniques and modern equipment designed to remove the consequences of mass destruction weapons attacks.

CONCLUSION

The Chemical Corps may share in solution of situation after use NBC weapons (weapons of mass destruction) as well as after chemical and nuclear accidents and other industrial plant break-downs. The Chemical Corps possesses reliable and sufficient equipment, procedures and materials for individual and collective protection, for NBC reconnaissance and for fast and effective decontamination of persons, personnel, devices, technical equipment, etc.

A selected parts of the Chemical Corps can significantly contribute in solution during and after emergency situations. These trained units may link up with other emergency forces, units and components.

Chemical corps personnel participated in the Persian Gulf War and helped destruction of chemical weapons in Iraq.

SUMMARY

A short introduction concerning the Czech Chemical Corps and its actions in the past time. Establishment of the 9th Chemical Protection Company. Main tasks of the unit, its organizational structure, company training and special equipment to fulfil its missions.

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KEYWORDS

Chemical Corps, Chemical Protection Company, Radiological and Chemical Survey, Dozimetric and Chemical Checking, Decontamination