



QRH learn CBRN skills and capability; making them ready and deployable to go anywhere

Soldiers from The Queen's Royal Hussars (QRH) recently carried out counter Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) training at the Defence Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Centre (DCBRNC) near Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire.

D Squadron, QRH, also based in Wiltshire, are the most senior armoured regiment in the British Army and the Squadron, also known as the 'Black Pig' Squadron, lent their



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name to the training entitled Exercise Toxic Pig. This type of training is the first to be undertaken by a non-specialist Army unit since the early days of the conflict in Iraq.

Personnel who are also part of the UK's Resilience Unit, were trained in disciplines ranging from chemical survey and reconnaissance through to personnel and vehicle decontamination drills ensuring that D Squadron are the most highly trained generalist unit in the British Army.

In realistic environments specially prepared at the Centre, over 30 soldiers took part in various scenarios such as the dealing with the toxic industrial hazards (rather than more conventional weaponised chemical agents) that could be posed from a plane or train crash or road traffic accident. They also had to assess the risks and take decisive action to deal with more conventional threats as well as encountering clandestine chemical laboratories.

This training will further enable the Squadron to deploy at speed and be ready and able to operate in all environments anywhere in the world.

Major Steven Bee, Officer Commanding D Squadron QRH, said "For us it's not only about being experts in Mounted Close Combat but also being experts in any environment we might face, which not only increases our individual and collective readiness to deploy but makes us more survivable when we do."

Adds Major Bee, "D Squadron have learnt how to conduct chemical recces and surveys as well as personnel and vehicle decontamination, we also spent a day with Falcon Squadron, Royal Tank Regiment in Warminster gaining an awareness of more specialist assets. Those taking part have had a range of different situations put before them that they can learn about, take lessons from, and use in the future. Every unit should have protection groups that are able to do all of these tasks.

This training and any future sessions that the QRH plan to undertake means that these soldiers will be able to safeguard people and countries from the effects of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear accidents or disasters, whether in the context of warfare, a terrorist incident, or other situations.

Sergeant Kerry Wild is a member of the Technical Support Group (TSG) at the Defence CBRN Centre. He explains more about what this intensive course involved, "Clearance of a mock-up shop and post office was one of the scenarios where soldiers were tasked to ensure buildings were clear of any chemical agents, by working their way methodically through the structure using chemical sense equipment.

We also set up a barn where there were known chemical agents contained inside. D Squadron then went into the building to assess, record and pass information on, to enable specialists to go in and deal with any potentially dangerous situations or substances that were discovered."

Sergeant Wild adds, "Everything these soldiers have been put through this week shows that personnel can be effectively trained in this area alongside all the other training they have to undergo. I see that this is going to be an integral part of a soldier's training in the future."

Sergeant Kyle Macready from D Squadron QRH was one of those taking part in the CBRN training, "It is really important for us to undertake this type of training it is a threat of today both internally and externally. So, to have a unit that's up to date on its drills and is approved and recognised at divisional level can only be good. When it comes to tactical training it gives us a good understanding if we were to come across a CBRN threat." ■

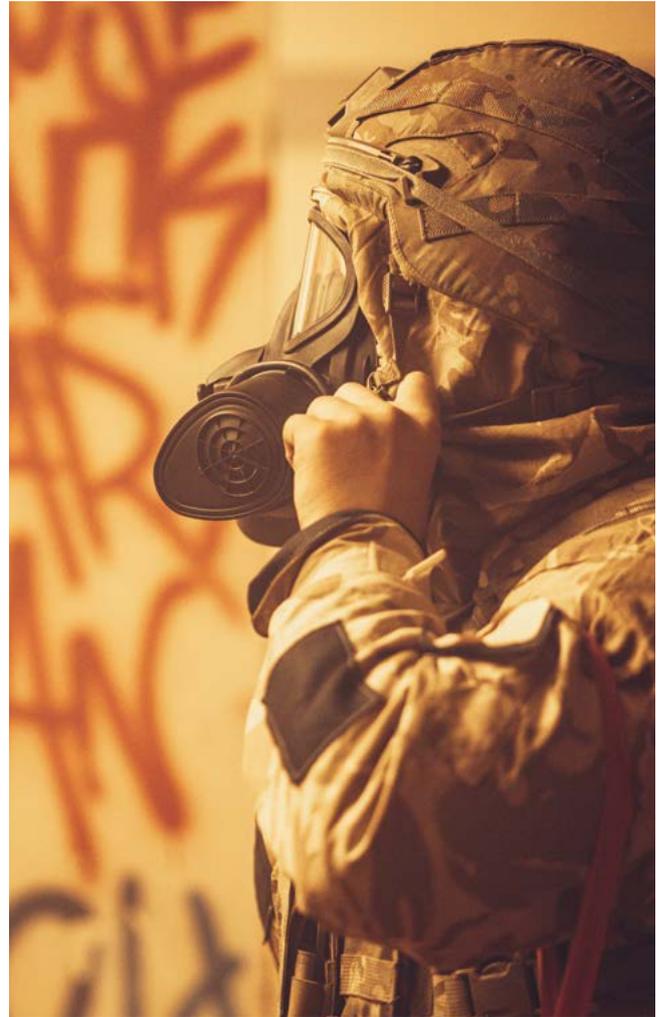


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