



MEDIA RELEASE

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Tennessee National Guard unit uniquely prepared for disaster response: The 45th Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team, ever vigilant, always ready

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Headquartered in middle Tennessee resides a unique National Guard unit consisting of 22 Soldiers and Airmen prepared to place their lives on the line during times of unprecedented civil emergencies. The 45th Weapons of Mass Destruction- Civil Support Team (WMD-CST) was qualified as “mission ready” by the Department of Defense in 2003, and is tasked to support civilian authorities when a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear (CBRN) or natural disaster incident occurs in Tennessee or throughout the nation. The 45th WMD-CST is one of over 50 similar Guard units nationwide trained to respond within minutes to highly dangerous incidents and assist in mitigating the loss of life and destruction of property.

WMD-CST units are funded by the Department of Defense and unique to the National Guard. A key aspect of their mission is the ability to bring sophisticated detection equipment and interoperable communication systems to an incident site while delivering critical assessments for emergency and law enforcement personnel during various phases of a local, regional or national CBRN response. The 45th WMD-CST is constantly in a real-world operational mode while also training for various scenarios to maintain their essential state of readiness.

“While working with civilian partners, we bring robust HAZMAT expertise, communications support, and medical assistance to an event,” said Lt. Col. Jeff Brown, Commander of the 45th WMD-CST. “All team members are full-time Tennessee National Guard personnel from both the Army and the Air Force, and receive hundreds of hours of training per year. Tennesseans should be very proud of the 45th, for it is recognized as one of the top teams in the nation.”

The 45th WMD-CST has attained numerous accolades during its time as an operational unit. During October, 2013, the unit concluded a biennial inspection from National Guard Bureau for readiness and was recognized as being among the top five teams in the nation, receiving the prestigious "Band of Excellence" award. The 45th completed a Training Proficiency Evaluation in October 2014, from Army North to evaluate the skills, competencies, and overall team performance. The results of the last inspection once again demonstrated the team was more than prepared for all of their evaluated tasks and received high ratings in all areas. The 45th was also awarded in September 2014, the first Tennessee Annual Unit of Safety Excellence Award and the Safety Excellence Guidon Streamer. The unit reached this safety benchmark after conducting 17 missions while successfully driving over 100,000 accident free miles in 13 very specialized service vehicles during a two year period. The consistent excellent performance of

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Tennessee Guard unit prepared for disaster response

the 45th WMD-CST during the conduct of their real world mission illustrates the dedication to the mission and level of preparation they undertake to meet the challenges they may face during very unique and dangerous situations.

“The 45th WMD-CST is a little known, yet critical asset available to the citizens of Tennessee and the nation. They are 22 individual "Jack Bauers," just like the key figure in the “24” television series,” said Maj. Gen. Max Haston, the Adjutant General of Tennessee. “The WMD-CST personnel are technically proficient and highly trained to identify nuclear, chemical and biological hazards then recommend a response to eliminate the danger. These Soldiers and Airmen are true professionals and we are fortunate to have this force structure available.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

Photo 14-46-01: Soldiers of the Tennessee National Guard’s 45th Weapons of Mass Destruction- Civil Support Team (WMD-CST) investigate a simulated unknown chemical process to determine possible hazards to the surrounding area during a mission performance evaluation.

Photo 14-46-02: A Soldier from the Tennessee National Guard’s 45th Weapons of Mass Destruction- Civil Support Team (WMD-CST) monitors containers for the presence of radiological material and volatile organic compounds during a mission performance evaluation.

Photo 14-46-03: A member of the Tennessee National Guard’s 45th Weapons of Mass Destruction- Civil Support Team (WMD-CST) uses specialized monitoring equipment to identify an unknown liquid as part of a performance evaluation of their mission capabilities.

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