



Army Laboratory Aces OPCW Proficiency Test

By Kiara Boone



Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD – The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Chemical Biological Center (DEVCOM CBC) recently achieved an A grade on two proficiency tests administered by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The OPCW is a multinational organization which was established to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention with the goal of preventing the reemergence of chemical weapons. The A

Dr. George Hondrogiannis and Mr. Timothy Allan, chemists in the Forensics Analytical Branch preparing standards for confirmatory analysis, a practice used during the Branch's two week proficiency testing. (U.S. Army photo by Kiara Boone)

grade means that the Center maintains its OPCW accreditation to perform analysis of chemical samples collected worldwide by OPCW inspectors from chemical production facilities, storage depots and installations, or from the site of an alleged use of chemical weapons. The tests included both environmental and biomedical sampling.

DEVCOM CBC is one of two OPCW-designated laboratories within the U.S. for environmental and biomedical samples, and the only OPCW-designated laboratory within the Department of Defense.

The team responsible for the recent OPCW designation is the Center's Forensic Analytical Branch. Dr. Joy Ginter, a research chemist at the Center, leads the team for the environmental and biomedical testing efforts and Alex Jestel serves as the branch chief.

Not only does this designation highlight the team's ability to analyze these chemicals, but it also displays readiness. The team is poised to analyze samples from any suspected chemical event anywhere in the world.



News Release

<https://cbc.devcom.army.mil>



Dr. Joy Ginter and Dr. Kevin Shefcheck provide data that is utilized during the proficiency tests. (U.S. Army photo by Kiara Boone)

“Receiving the OPCW designation is very special, our team works hard and it’s nice to see all our hard work paying off every year. The designation puts our lab into a category that not everyone can reach and within that, there are many opportunities that arise.” said Ginter.

The long history of the Center’s exemplary performance and recurring designation status has established trust from various organizations. For example, the Center serves as a partner laboratory to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

“Over the years technology is constantly improving. We are continuously tweaking our instrument portfolio and buying state-of-the-art equipment. As a team we are evolving and adapting to make sure we keep the grade of an A,” said Jestel.

The designation is valid for one year and each year the Center must participate successfully in OPCW’s proficiency testing to maintain its designation.

“We have maintained our designated laboratory status since the treaty went into effect in 1997,” said Dr. Robert Kristovich, Threat Agent Science Division Chief. “We have an excellent team of scientists who make this happen every year.”

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For more information about the DEVCOM Chemical Biological Center, visit <https://cbc.DEVCOM.army.mil>

The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM) Chemical Biological Center (CBC) is aligned under the U.S. Army Futures Command (AFC) and U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command (DEVCOM.)

AFC provides Army modernization solutions (integrated concepts, organizational designs, and technologies) in order to allow the Joint Force, employing Army capabilities, to achieve overmatch in the future operation environment. DEVCOM is a major subordinate command of AFC. DEVCOM leads in the discovery, development, and delivery of technology-based capabilities to enable Soldiers to win our nation’s wars and come home safely. DEVCOM CBC is the Army’s principal research and development center for chemical and biological defense technology, engineering, and field operations. DEVCOM CBC is headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.