



Regimental Command Sergeant Major



Greetings, Dragon Soldiers! I am truly honored to be your Regimental Command Sergeant Major. The past 8 months in this position have been amazing. I have enjoyed my interactions with everyone here at the home of the Chemical Corps Regiment, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and during my visits to your installations. The command team and I look forward to visiting as many of you as possible as we continue to balance reductions in the defense budget. The past 8 months have seen significant shifts within the Chemical Corps Regiment, and more change is expected.

Over the past year, the Regiment has undergone changes to its force structure. We started transitioning some hazard response chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) companies into heavy decontamination and reconnaissance CBRN companies and reducing technical escort companies, based on Total Army Analysis decisions. As much as I hate to say it, these may only be the beginning of additional cuts—depending on future Total Army Analysis decisions. The Commandant, Regimental Chief Warrant Officer, and I continually express the importance of our forces, capabilities, and functions to influence Army senior leader decisions.

In addition to force structure changes, CBRN equipment is going through developmental and operational testing. One armored brigade combat team has been identified as a Transformation in Contact 2.0 brigade. As they prepare for their mission, the brigade will be outfitted with additional CBRN equipment such as the Nuclear, Biological, Chemical, Reconnaissance Vehicle (NBCRV) Sensor Suite Upgrade, autonomous decontamination systems, and screening obscuration modules. This experiment will enable our forces to test the systems and provide valuable feedback for future development.

The feedback from CBRN Soldiers assigned to the Transformation in Contact 2.0 brigade will be vital to the Regiment as we continue to increase CBRN capabilities to support the future Army. Specific changes that will occur here at Fort Leonard Wood are overhauls of our initial military training, professional military education, and functional training. Updated programs of instruction (POIs) for Advanced Individual Training and the Basic Officer Leader Course are set to be implemented later this year, while the updated Warrant Officer Basic Course POI is scheduled for implementation in 2026. In addition, the Advanced and Senior Leader Course POI implementations are scheduled for the end of fiscal year (FY) 2025, other warrant officer professional military education POI implementation dates are scheduled for the beginning of FY 26, and the Captain's Career Course POI implementation is set for the beginning of FY 27. The U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear School (USACBRNS) has discontinued teaching the Biological Integrated Detection Systems Course and is preparing to implement an updated POI for the CBRN Reconnaissance Course, which will include updates in support of the NBCRV Sensor Suite Upgrade.

Another positive development is the upcoming update to the Fort Leonard Wood Chemical Defense Training Facility (CDTF) hairstyle policy. CDTF leaders have continuously collected mask fit test data for all Soldiers who attended training, specifically those who had hairstyles that are authorized by Army Regulation (AR) 670-1, *Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*,¹ but were previously not allowed in the CDTF. This data has been provided to the Joint Program Executive Office for CBRN Defense (JPEO-CBRND), Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, and USACBRNS. The CDTF has pushed for JPEO-CBRND to update the technical manuals pertaining to protective masks and the Protection Assessment Test System. JPEO-CBRND has agreed to update the respective technical manuals to remove restrictive wording that opposed AR 670-1. As a result, Soldiers will be allowed to attend training at the CDTF with the current protective masks, regardless of hairstyles, if they successfully pass the Protection Assessment Test System test at the proper level. However, this update does not apply to beards. In fact, according to AR 600-20, *Army Command Policy*,² Soldiers assigned to Career Management Field 74 are not authorized to have a religious accommodation that allows beards.

Finally, I will discuss changes to Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet (PAM) 600-25, *U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide*.³ We have been making updates to this document for the past few years, and we are now getting ready to implement even more changes. Sergeant Major Gedney P. Riley served as the Regiment representative at a Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) conference that reviewed all proponent inputs to DA Pam 600-25. We will implement the updates once they are finalized by TRADOC. Some of these updates will streamline some requirements to be the same across the board, regardless of the career management field. For example, following the conference, all regiments were directed to remove wording that implied the completion of college courses and/or degrees was required for promotion to senior noncommissioned officer ranks. However, although this wording is being removed, please be aware that college can still be used as an indicator of individual initiative, and it can set you apart from your peers during noncommissioned officer evaluation boards.



**Command Sergeant Major
David C. Henderson**

In closing, I would like to say congratulations to those who recently assumed their new positions as brigade and battalion command sergeants major:

- Command Sergeant Major Jessica Cho, Dugway Proving Ground, Dugway, Utah.
- Command Sergeant Major Ronis J. Gutierrez, 3d Chemical Brigade, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.
- Command Sergeant Major Peter R. Dallas, 22d Chemical Battalion, Fort Bliss, Texas.
- Command Sergeant Major Jawayne A. Gibbons, 110th Chemical Battalion, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

Congratulations to these sergeants major who were selected on the most recent command select list for brigade and battalion command sergeant major positions:

- Command Sergeant Major Vincent D. Green, U.S. Army Environmental Command, Joint Base San Antonio, Texas.
- Sergeant Major Jody L. Mease, 2d Chemical Battalion, Fort Cavazos, Texas.

Additionally, congratulations to the 17 Regular Army and U.S. Army Reserve CBRN master sergeants who were selected to attend Class 76 of the resident Sergeants Major Course and the associate nonresidence course at Fort Bliss.

Endnotes:

¹AR 670-1, *Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*, 26 January 2021.

²AR 600-20, *Army Command Policy*, 6 February 2025.

³DA PAM 600-25, *U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide*, 11 September 2023.



("Chief of Chemical and Commandant," continued from page 2)

Train Warriors of Character

Fort Leonard Wood is the home of USACBRNS; basic combat training; and advanced individual training for Army CBRN, military police, and engineer forces. The 3d Chemical Brigade, Fort Leonard Wood, leads three basic combat training battalions and one CBRN advanced individual training battalion—developing more than 2,800 new Dragon Soldiers annually. In addition to initial entry training, the Regiment conducts seven specialized functional courses—each delivering skilled, mission-ready CBRN professionals to the operational force.

Conclusion

It is an honor and a privilege to lead the organization I have proudly served for 27 years. Any success the Regiment has achieved is due to the relentless dedication of CBRN instructors, drill sergeants, and professional staffs. These incredible men and women are not only shaping what the CBRN Regiment will become in 10, 20, or 30 years—but they are also laying the very foundation for that future.

Dragon Soldiers! CBRN Warriors! Elementis Regamus Proelium!