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## CHEMICAL

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## 1. DESCRIPTION

The Chemical Branch (74) is a Department of Army officer branch dedicated to training and developing commissioned officers with the prime responsibility of advising commanders at battalion, division, or higher level on plans and operations to survive and win on the nuclear, biological, and chemical battlefield. The Chemical Branch has three areas of concentration (AOC):

- (1) 74A Chemical, General
- (2) 74B Operations and Training
- (3) 74C Chemical Munitions and Materiel Management

Officers assigned to the Chemical Branch will carry the branch AOC of 74A. Duty positions will be coded with a specific AOC to indicate the type expertise required for the position. This allows maximum assignment flexibility for chemical officers while delineating specific experience required for individual duty positions.



Figure 1. Platoon Leader Training at Fort McCellan, Alabama

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## 2. ROLE OF THE CHEMICAL OFFICER

The Chemical Branch is a branch of diversity, opportunity, and challenge. Chemical officers provide expertise in all aspects of nuclear, biological, and chemical defense and operations to commanders and staffs at all levels. The chemical officer can expect to perform in diverse duties such as platoon leader, commander, operations officer, project manager, instructor, and engineer. The chemical officer must attain expertise in operations, training, intelligence, logistics, personnel, management, research and analysis. The role of the chemical officer is challenging, but provides excellent opportunities for motivated officers.



Figure 2. The Battalion Chemical Officer/Assistant S-3

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### 3. PARTICIPATION

Officers commissioned in the Chemical Corps will have the Chemical Branch designated upon entry on active duty. Upon graduation from the Chemical Officer Basic Course, the chemical officer will be affiliated with the Chemical Corps, a combat support regiment of the United States Army. This affiliation will foster loyalty and commitment through long term unit identification, will provide potential for recurring assignments, and will perpetuate the history, customs and traditions of the Chemical Corps. The history of the Chemical Corps is built upon the heroism and dedication of such units as the First Gas Regiment of World War I and the 82nd and 84th Chemical Mortar Battalions of World War II. As a Chemical Corps officer you will be challenged to continue this proud tradition of service to the United States Army.

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Figure 3. The Tactical Operation Center

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Figure 4. Platoon Leader Training at Fort McClellan, Alabama

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#### 4. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Upon entry onto active duty, a career in the Chemical Corps will be one of constant development. The Chemical Officer's career will be a cyclic pattern of education, training, and application. This education and training will begin with the Chemical Officer Basic Course at Fort McClellan, Alabama. This course teaches the officer the fundamentals needed to perform successfully as a platoon leader and as a combat arms battalion assistant operations officer. This training stresses technical proficiency with leadership applications.

Chemical officers may also volunteer for challenging special training such as Airborne, Ranger, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), and Technical Escort. Successful completion of this demanding training qualifies a Chemical Officer for assignment to unique units.

After approximately four years of active duty, chemical officers can expect to attend the Chemical Officer Advanced Course. The Advanced Course prepares the chemical officer for increased responsibilities associated with subsequent company command and brigade/division staff positions.

Chemical Officers also attend the Combined Arms and Services Staff School between the 6th and 10th year of service and Command and General Staff College between the 10th and 15th year of service. Both schools are professionally rewarding and challenging.

Qualified officers also have the opportunity to participate in the Advanced Civil Schooling Program. This unique opportunity allows the Chemical Officer to pursue full time graduate study in such academic disciplines as Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, Nuclear Engineering, Operations Research/Systems Analysis, Industrial Management or History.



Figure 5. Flame Field Expedient

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Figure 6. Flame Field Expedient

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## 5. CAREER PATHS AVAILABLE

At the 7th year of service, chemical officers will apply for a career pattern of their choice. Most officers will be allowed to dual track, — that is, they will be allowed to alternate between chemical branch assignments and compatible functional area assignments. Some officers will be allowed to single track in the Chemical branch because of the needs of the Army. The compatible functional areas that chemical officers can participate in are:

- 41—Personnel Management
- 46—Public Affairs
- 48—Foreign Area Officer
- 49—Operations Research/Systems Analysis
- 50—Force Development 51—Research and Development
- 52—Nuclear Weapons 53—Systems Automation Officer
- 54—Operations, Plans and Training
- 97—Procurement
- 99—Combat Developments



**Figure 7. Airborne Operations**

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**Figure 8. Smoke Operations At National Training Center**

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## 6. ASSIGNMENTS

The prime responsibility of the chemical officer is to support the Army by providing NBC expertise to commanders and staffs at all levels. Officers serving in the Chemical Corps, however, can expect many diverse and challenging assignments, often years ahead of their contemporaries in other branches.

Most lieutenants in the Chemical Corps will begin their careers as either platoon leaders or battalion chemical officers.

As a lieutenant in a chemical company, the chemical officer can serve in four different capacities — as decontamination platoon leader, reconnaissance platoon leader, smoke platoon leader or operations officer. Each position provides rewarding leadership experience along with unique opportunities to support the combined arms team.

As a battalion chemical officer, a lieutenant can be expected to serve in any one of several battalions — Armor, Infantry, Aviation, Airborne, Light Infantry, Field Artillery, or Ranger. Each battalion provides unique challenges, but each requires that the chemical officer to not only have NBC expertise but also expertise in battalion operations on the Airland battlefield.

Upon promotion to captain, chemical officers progress to assignments as company commanders or as brigade or higher level chemical officers. Field grade officers may be assigned to division and corps staff, Major Army Commands or Department of the Army Staff. The chart on the last page lists typical assignments chemical officers can expect at various ranks.



Figure 9. Decontamination Operation with the 18th Airborne Corps

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Figure 10. Decontamination operations with the 18th Airborne Corps

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<b>LT</b>	Chemical Officer Basic Course Battalion Chemical Officer Assistant Operations Officer Platoon Leader
<b>CPT</b>	Chemical Officer Advanced Course Combined Arms and Services Staff School Company Commander Brigade Chemical Officer Chemical Staff Officer Instructor Service School
<b>MAJ</b>	Command and General Staff College Chemical Staff Officer Instructor Service School Separate Brigade Chemical Officer DA/MACOM Staff Officer
<b>LTC</b>	Senior Service College Division Chemical Officer DA/JOINT/MACOM Staff Officer Battalion or Depot Commander Chemical Staff Officer
<b>COL</b>	Project Manager Commander Depot or Installation Corps/MACOM Chemical Officer Director, Chemical School

Figure 11. Chart: Typical assignments chemical officers can expect at various ranks



Figure 12. The Chemical Officer in the Tactical Operations Center

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