

DDC graduates six Radiation Protection Officers

By Dave Collins, DLA Enterprise Support - DDC

Representatives from Defense Distribution Depots Warner Robins, Ga. (DDWG); Tobyhanna, Pa. (DDTP); and Barstow, Calif. (DDBC) received training to become Radiation Protection Officers (RPOs) in September.

Many of the commodities used by the military services contain components that include assorted radioactive materials. Whether these radiological components are used as illumination sources, to create an ionized field, or as check sources to ensure detection equipment is operating correctly, they must be controlled while in storage.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has jurisdiction over many of these sources. In preparing to apply for the NRC license, an organization must develop a Radiation Program Management Plan that is submitted to the NRC as part of an application. One major program element that the NRC bases its licensing decision on is whether a training program is developed to ensure that radioactive materials are used in such a manner that the occupational workforce, members of the general public, and the environment



James Hall and Dennis Harmon of DDWG receive hands-on experience with a variety of radiation detection equipment during the Radiation Protection Officer Qualification Course.



Recent attendees of the September Radiation Protection Officer Qualification Course (left to right): Dennis Harmon, DDWG; William Atkinson, DDBC; Dawn Barton, DDTP; James Hall, DDWG; Elizabeth Matteson, DDBC; and John Huber, DDTP.

are exposed to radiation levels that are maintained as low as reasonably achievable.

The Defense Distribution Center (DDC) currently has 17 distribution centers authorized to receive, store and transfer licensable quantities of radioactive material. For each of these sites to be authorized, they must have designated a trained and qualified RPO and one alternate. Additionally, other distribution centers maintain an individual qualified as RPO to address radiation concerns on a contingency basis.

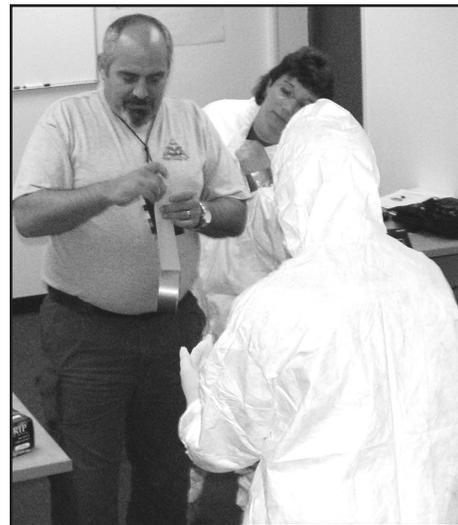
The latest group of individuals who successfully completed the course of instruction graduated Sept. 29. The two-week qualification course covers topics ranging from basic atomic structure, radioactive decay, radiation detection instrumentation, radiation program management, emergency exercises, and others. Each student is required to pass three written examinations and participate in a number of practical exercises designed to prepare them to manage a radiation protection program at each of their sites.

In most cases, personnel designated to manage the radiation protection program at the distribution centers are also completing the duties of other

safety and environmental programs within their facility.

The most recent attendees were John Huber and Dawn Barton from DDTP; Elizabeth Matteson and William Atkinson from DDBC; and James Hall and Dennis Harmon from DDWG.

The Basic Radiation Protection Officers Qualification Course is offered based on the need DDC-wide to ensure that each site has its full complement of trained RPO staff.



As part of the Radiation Protection Officer Qualification Course, students responded to a simulated incident involving a package containing radioactive material.