



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 30, 2004

V CORPS SIGNAL SOLDIERS PARTNER WITH BASE SUPPORT BATTALION, GERMAN RESCUE AGENCIES FOR WMD DRILL

By Pfc. Michael Howard
22nd Signal Brigade Public Affairs Office

DARMSTADT, Germany – A glance at the security measures at the gate of Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne here quickly reveals how seriously this community takes the threat of terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, even the best security is not always enough to prevent the unthinkable.



PFC MICHAEL HOWARD
Rescue workers from the German Red Cross and Darmstadt Fire Department load a dummy "rescued" from a mock fire in the headquarters building of V Corps' 440th Signal Battalion during the 233rd Base Support Battalion's weapons of mass destruction drill at Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne September 25.

But when Soldiers of V Corps' 22nd Signal Brigade rolled out to support the 233rd Base Support Battalion's September 25 Weapons of Mass Destruction drill, there was ample proof that while a terrorist attack cannot always be prevented, teamwork assures that a community is best prepared to handle one.

"In the event of a terrorist attack, there are certain measures that we, the Soldiers and community, are responsible for," said 22nd Signal Brigade operations Sgt. Maj. Melvin Vargas. The drill provided Soldiers, the BSB and German emergency response teams with an

opportunity to tackle those responsibilities.

With a simulated car bomb, secondary nerve gas attacks at various points on the base, a building fire, a "Jaws of Life" rescue on an overturned vehicle, and a series of other realistic drills involving a wide range of conventional and chemical injuries, the disaster drill tested many of the limits of 22nd Signal Soldiers, BSB organizations and German rescue agencies.



PFC MICHAEL HOWARD

Spc. Charline I. Jaramillo of V Corps' Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 22nd Signal Brigade, shows off the mock third-degree burn painted on her for the Cambrai-Fritsch Kaserne weapons of mass destruction drill.

Vargas called the drill "a tremendous success." Despite the challenges, he said the lessons learned made the drill well worthwhile.

"During 9/11, the New York fire and police departments struggled to quickly form a structure of command and control. An exercise of this magnitude here in the Darmstadt community helps to define the roles for all Soldiers, all organizations, and the Darmstadt community," said Vargas.

"Before now, we had no foundation for an attack with weapons of mass destruction. Now we have something to build on," he said.

Lt. Col. Mark Landers, the 233rd BSB commander, agreed.

"Months of planning and teamwork among the 233d Base Support Battalion, all the units stationed in the Darmstadt and Babenhausen community and host nation officials resulted in an awesome exercise, closer relationships and a better

understanding of our roles and responsibilities in a crisis," Landers said. "We have to depend on each other to ensure the security of our communities. This exercise and all the work leading up to it vastly improved our skills and our ability to depend upon each other."

