



Precise Response 2026: Italy Leading in Canada in NATO CBRN Training

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The growing instability of the international scenario and the spread of increasingly sophisticated threats require the Armed Forces of the Atlantic Alliance to constantly update their operational capabilities. Among these, **Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) defense** represents one of the most delicate and strategic sectors, as it requires highly qualified personnel, advanced technologies, and rigorously standardized procedures. In this context, **“Precise Response 2026”** is one of the most important international NATO exercises dedicated to responding to CBRN threats, hosted from June 8 to 26 at the **Canadian Forces Base Suffield**, in the Canadian province of Alberta.

Italy participated in the activity with a highly specialized component composed of the **7th CBRN Defense Regiment “Cremona” of the Italian Army** and personnel from the **Italian Air Force** from various specialist departments. The exercise, organized by the Canadian Armed Forces in collaboration with **Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC)**, brought

together assets from numerous allied and partner countries, offering a training environment characterized by an extremely high level of realism.

The main objective of the activity was to consolidate the ability of the participating nations to face complex CBRN scenarios through the integration of their respective skills, the refinement of shared procedures, and the strengthening of multinational interoperability. An increasingly current need, considering how the CBRN threat does not exclusively concern the military context but can also involve civilian infrastructures, populations, and national protection systems.

Training Realism and NATO Procedures at the Heart of the Exercise

One of the elements that makes **Precise Response** a unique event on the international scene is the possibility of operating, in total safety, with **controlled real agents**, an extremely rare feature in training activities. This allows participants to directly verify the effectiveness of operational procedures, personal protective equipment, and specialized equipment in conditions very close to those that could occur during a real emergency.

During the three weeks of activity, the Italian military faced particularly complex scenarios, requiring **decisive speed, technical precision, and perfect integration with contingents from other nations**. The exercises covered all the main phases of responding to a CBRN event, from initial detection to the complete management of the contaminated area.



Italian CBRN operator sampling a contaminant agent. Source: Italian Air Force.

The personnel of the **7th CBRN Defense Regiment “Cremona”** and the **Italian Air Force** conducted activities of **detection, identification, and sampling of contaminant agents**, specialized decontamination operations, and management of contaminated areas, strictly applying NATO standards.

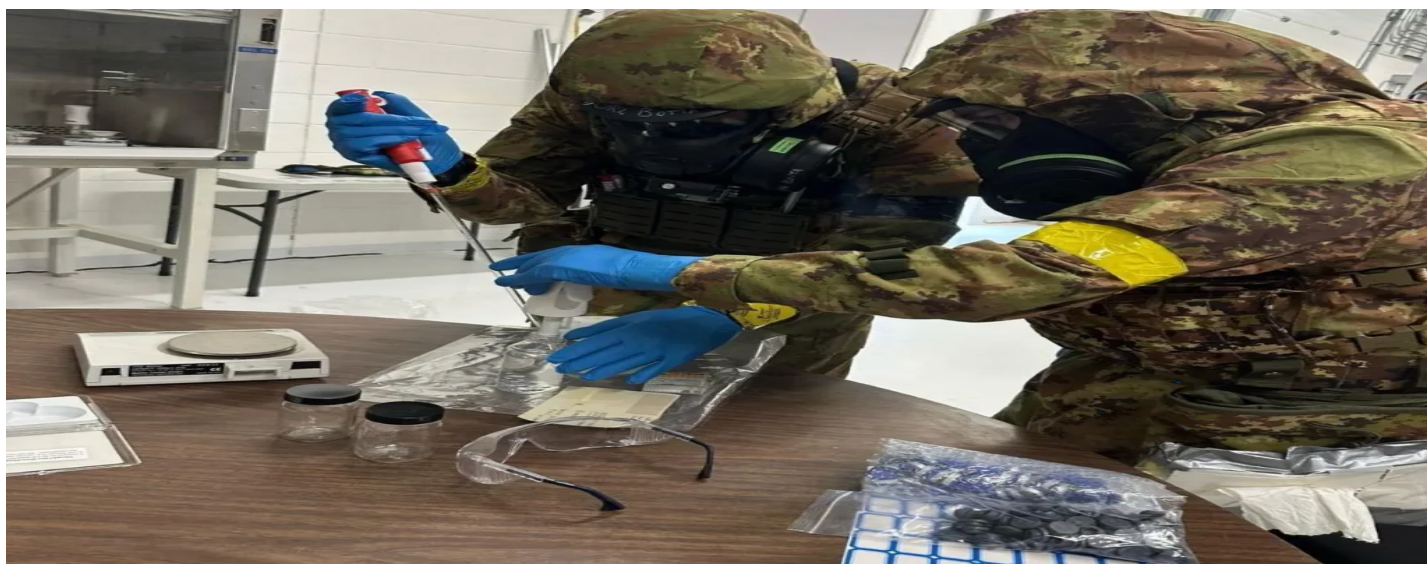
Great importance was given to the **SIBCRA (Sampling and Identification of Biological, Chemical, and Radiological Agents)** protocols, dedicated to sampling and identifying biological, chemical, and radiological agents, and the **CCA (Contamination Control Area)** procedures, essential for safely organizing contamination control areas, ensuring personnel protection and continuity of operations.

The continuous interaction with the specialist units of other nations also allowed for the comparison of different operational methodologies, sharing experiences gained in the operational theater, and further refining international cooperation capabilities, an essential element in modern NATO operations.

Italian Excellence Awarded and the Strategic Value of CBRN Defense

Among the most significant results obtained during **Precise Response 2026** is the prestigious recognition awarded to the **Italian Air Force** component, honored with the **“Top Performance Radiological Contamination”** award, given for the extremely high level of preparation demonstrated in managing radiological contamination.

The recognition rewards the ability of Italian personnel to operate with high effectiveness in the field of **radiological decontamination**, a discipline that includes all technical procedures aimed at removing or reducing contamination from radioactive material present on people, vehicles, equipment, and infrastructures. These are particularly complex operations, essential to limit radiation exposure, prevent the spread of contamination, and allow the rapid restoration of the safety conditions necessary for the continuation of operational activities.



Italian CBRN personnel during sampling and analysis operations. Source: Italian Air Force.

The certificate obtained in Canada represents an **excellence assessment** of the capabilities expressed by the personnel of the Italian Air Force, highlighting the full mastery of advanced technical procedures and the perfect adherence to the operational standards of the Atlantic Alliance.

Beyond the recognition received, the joint participation of the **7th CBRN Defense Regiment “Cremona”** and the **Italian Air Force** confirms Italy's increasingly significant role in the **CBRN defense** sector, an area destined to assume growing importance in future crisis scenarios. The experience gained during the Canadian exercise indeed allows for the enhancement of the Italian Armed Forces' specialized skills, strengthening their operational readiness both in military missions and in support interventions for civil authorities in case of national emergencies.

Through high-profile exercises like **Precise Response 2026**, Italy continues to invest in the training of its personnel, the development of interoperability with allies, and the maintenance of a modern, highly qualified CBRN component capable of operating effectively in any operational context, contributing concretely to the collective security of NATO.

News link: <https://www.aeronautica.difesa.it/news/precise-response-2026-aeronautica-militare-ed-esercito-italiano-in-canada-per-rafforzare-le-capacita-di-risposta-alle-minacce-cbrn-della-nato/>