

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910957160603321
Titolo	Potential radiation exposure in military operations : protecting the soldier before, during, and after // Committee on Battlefield Radiation Exposure Criteria, Fred A. Mettler, Jr., chairman ; Susan Thaul and Heather O'Maonaigh, editors ; Medical Follow-up Agency, Institute of Medicine
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C., : National Academy Press, 1999
ISBN	9786610186006 9780309173025 0309173027 9781280186004 1280186003 9780309581103 0309581109 9780585076102 0585076103
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (159 p.)
Collana	Compass series
Altri autori (Persone)	MettlerFred A., Jr., <1945-> ThaulSusan O'MaonaighHeather
Disciplina	616.9/89705
Soggetti	Ionizing radiation - Dosage Radiation - Safety measures Soldiers - Health and hygiene
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	"Support for this project was provided by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command under Contract No. DAMD17-96-C-6095"--T.p. verso.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 113-118).
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Sommario/riassunto

In 1996, NATO issued guidance for the exposure of military personnel to radiation doses different from occupational dose levels, but not high enough to cause acute health effects-and in doing so set policy in a new arena. Scientific and technological developments now permit small groups or individuals to use, or threaten to use, destructive devices (nuclear, biological, chemical, and cyber-based weaponry, among others) targeted anywhere in the world. Political developments, such as the loss of political balance once afforded by competing superpowers, have increased the focus on regional and subregional disputes. What doctrine should guide decisionmaking regarding the potential exposure of troops to radiation in this changed theater of military operations? In 1995, the Office of the U.S. Army Surgeon General asked the Medical Follow-up Agency of the Institute of Medicine to provide advice. This report is the final product of the Committee on Battlefield Radiation Exposure Criteria convened for that purpose. In its 1997 interim report, Evaluation of Radiation Exposure Guidance for Military Operations, the committee addressed the technical aspects of the NATO directive. In this final report, the committee reiterates that discussion and places it in an ethical context.
