

PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a guide for medical officers on the medical aspects of NBC operations. The handbook is intended as a compilation of reference material and as a source of information for training. It does not constitute an official position of NATO nations; certain aspects, however, are already covered by STANAGs and this is being extended. In addition, it provides the basic philosophy for the development of concepts of operations and in the management, including evacuation and treatment, of NBC casualties as well as conventional battle casualties in a NBC environment. There are many unresolved problems and it must be appreciated that a number of the philosophical concepts presented are provisional; their validity will require reassessment in the light of future trials and exercises. The handbook is in three parts, Part I-Nuclear, Part II-Biological, and Part III-Chemical. Each part is self-contained and presented separately. There is some necessary overlap and several aspects are common to all three, for example: combined injuries; the effect of radiation on the response to infection and on the healing of thermal and chemical burns; psychological factors and morale; public health aspects; and medical care in a mass casualty situation. It should be noted that detailed information on the treatment of burns and traumatic injuries is contained in the Emergency War Surgery Handbook covered by STANAG 2068, which should be used in conjunction with this handbook.