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NAD-87-3

To: Bob Nelson, Exercise Mighty Derringer Controller

From: Vic Berniklau

ISSUES/MAJOR OBSERVATIONS/LESSONS LEARNED

1. Uncertainty existed as to the number of NEST personnel necessary to be OCCASIS to satisfactorily perform this mission. Early commitment to 70 personnel as to number became an artificial limitation on operational flexibility. Need to have increased understanding of NEST personnel/resource requirements for different situations; perhaps a modular approach would be appropriate.
2. No central data acquisition/display location existed for the overall operation. Each organizational unit maintained their own capability and sharing was accomplished verbally by the senior principals at coordination meetings once or twice per day. Staff coordination was assumed, but the Ambassador at one point, late in the exercise, felt that Intel was not being adequately shared and requested a standup Intel briefing by JSOC and NEST.
3. Some confusion existed as to control at the working point between EOD and NEST. Information regarding operations to be conducted and personnel permitted at the working point were transmitted up and down independent communications networks and they were not always the same. This somewhat frustrated the NEST Commander for Science. Nevertheless, EOD and NEST exhibited very close professional cooperation and worked jointly to resolve issues.
4. A related issue to #3, above, concerns who EOD "works for," DOD or DOE/NEST. This issue was recognized but not resolved.
5. EOD and NEST TOC was very "close-packed" with personnel. The resulting congestion and noise impacted operations. Restructuring layout should be considered; for example, the NEST Commander for Science indicated a need to have team chiefs at his table(s) rather than his moving from team to team to coordinate operations.
6. The NEST CP functioned very well, particularly the immediate team reporting to the DOE On-scene Commander. Issues were discussed and conclusions were arrived at after examining the pros and cons of all technical alternatives.
7. The consequence analysis of a potential nuclear detonation was examined, primarily on a technical basis. A separate, more-detailed consequence 66 analysis and recovery 66 potential handbook, potentially involving multiple federal agencies, should be considered for a nuclear detonation in a populated area.
8. The actors involved in this exercise added superior realism and the opportunity for players to react to different "real" stimuli. The actors were positively magnificent.
9. Overall, this was an Excellent, well managed exercise.

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