

NAD-87-3

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To: Bob Nelson
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MIGHTY DERRINGER COMMENTS

M.D. was the most realistic exercise ever conducted by the NEST community. All those involved in planning and conduct should be congratulated.

1. NEST was well integrated into the embassy portion of the EST. The NEST members of EST provided a good conduit to the technical expertise of the NEST advance party and subsequently the main body.
2. The non-embassy portion of the EST conducted unilateral operations that nearly resulted in the detonation of the device. They clearly don't realize the consequences of nuclear yield.
3. The Montevian actors did a superb job and greatly contributed to the success of the exercise. Planners underestimated the interaction between the GOM and the players. A larger, better directed GOM control cell would have more realistic play in this area.
4. The technical participants (NEST, EOD, NAVEOD, TECHCEN) did an excellent job of acquiring and assimilating data, drawing inferences, and sharing information. Decisions were not always reached by consensus but all sides were generally represented in the decision process. There appeared to be less chasing of red herrings than in previous exercises.
5. In field exercises the physical layout of scenario features is very important. MD controllers several times were forced to scramble in order to compensate for lack of or inconsistency of preparation. A physical scenario czar should be appointed in major field exercises to absolutely control physical scenario aspects. In addition, because everything cannot be anticipated, a dedicated control cell must be created to interact with the players on scenario matters. This will greatly reduce confusion and increase the consistency of information fed to the players.
6. A very important aspect of this exercise is the decision of what disablement approach to take. The players decided to attack the portion of the device about which very little was known instead of that portion that was well characterized. This may have been driven somewhat by exercise constraints.
7. Operations at the WP were chaotic. This was primarily due to the well known problem of insufficient EOD training in NEST techniques. In MD, this was exacerbated by FORSCOM's decision to send a large number of "green" troops for training, a decision inappropriate for an expensive, multi-agency, national level exercise.
8. On the other hand, EOD control of access to the WP was absolute and probably accurately reflects the situation that would prevail in a real incident.

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9. The nuclear design aspect of A&I was not always well represented at the OSC staff meetings. Misstatements were made and misconceptions were proliferated.
10. Threat device design greatly influences play in a NEST exercise. A great deal of thought should be given to exercise requirements upon the device.
11. Re-entry was a shambles. Some planning had been done but implementation of the plan was poor, the conflicting requirements of health and safety vs. assessment not having been worked out. Exercise constraints contributed substantially to this confusion. MD was the first major exercise wherein re-entry was played and will presumably prompt further NEST-EOD planning.

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