

NAD-87-3

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I have the following rather random comments concerning the DERRINGER NEST exercise:

DERRINGER NEST exercise:

(1) The relationship between the CP and TOC, both operational and physical, was very good; They were physically separated, but not so far to make face-to-face meeting difficult. The separation was good in that functions did not overlap, i.e., The CP was largely involved with external interfaces while the TOC was able to concentrate on the technical, operational problems. Suggest this separation of function might be enhanced by an altered command structure.

Physical setup of TOC was less than ideal - It was crowded and confused - Commander for Science or Search needs a conference? Quiet? room. A staging or "ready" room for those not in an active role at the time is highly desirable.

(2) As usual, information management was a problem. Much information was transmitted through many channels, some written, some oral, and often not in agreement with each other. This free flow of information should probably not be constrained since often there is a "gem" which is not universally recognized. I would suggest, however, that there be at least one person in the appropriate organizations whose sole function is to assess all information, particularly that from the intelligence and assessment branch, and alert others as appropriate. It would also be useful if information, particularly intelligence had a "quality" assessment if possible. All information should be clearly labeled as to time and source.

(3) The following comments are as Commander for Science:

At times, I was completely overloaded. Some staff is needed - could be dedicated or drawn for teams as appropriate.

The interaction between the DoE and the EOD was less than ideal and I feel worked only because of the personalities of the Commander for Science and the EOD Commander.

The dual responsibilities at the WP are less than ideal. The role of the DoE/WP Coordinator should be strengthened. There needs to be a strong technical presence in command at the WP who understands and prioritizes all activities. The interface between the technical functions and the control activities (either civilian or military) should be well understood and satisfactory to both elements - Joint training is highly desirable.

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(4) The following are general comments concerning some aspects of exercise performance:

All "solid" information, i.e. photos, Video tapes, radiographs, sketches, maps, etc. should be dated, scaled, and identified as to up-down, right-left, north-south, etc.

More attention should be paid to developing communications skills rather than communications equipment. People should be taught how to use radios and telephones. Such simple things as identifying ones self as to function, waiting for the squelch to clear on a radio before talking, etc. can vastly improve communications. The system should be "user friendly".

(5) The following relate to exercise conduct in general:

There should be an inbriefing either oral and/or written to bring new players up to speed - should probably be player generated.

It should be easy to tell player generated material from controller injects.

Exercise planners should be very aware of any "real" safety and security concerns and the effects they may have on exercise play. In particular, I feel 12 hour repeated duty shifts are to long when the required overlap is factored in and "breaks" should be required. Exercises, as well as a real operation, can be an extremely stressful experience.

The role of coaches as in Nestor 86 should be seriously considered.

Despite all of the above, I thought MIGHTY DERRINGER was a very good exercise, well planned and well executed. I was pleased to play a role. I do, however, question the benefit of such a large, expensive, difficult exercise as opposed to more, simpler, more focused "mini" exercises.

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