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NAO-84-3



## M I G H T Y D E R R I N G E R

### MEDIA PLAY REPORT

#### Background

During Mighty Derringer, news media players at "Site City" were part of the Controller's staff, hence much of the media play consisted of injects to help direct the play. The Controller's media monitor at "Site City" was Peter Mygatt of DOE/ID; media players were: David G. Jackson, DOE/AL; Sue Anne Stephenson and Ken Wyman, LLNL; and Nigel Hay, Sandia Laboratories.

#### Observations

For the most part, "Site City" media play during Mighty Derringer was quite good, and was far better than that of Equus Red.

Basically, the federal agencies cooperated in an excellent fashion. The three agency PIO's set up a Joint Information Center almost immediately. However, the JIC never called a news conference, which is unheard of in an emergency such as this exercise portrayed. The only news conference called was that by FEMA on Thursday afternoon during the consequence phase.

Interestingly enough, the State agencies kept the lid on much of the media play, while the JIC would have liked to get into the play.

Interviews with the Governor were an excellent part of play, but they in no way took the place of a news briefing.

The outstanding piece of media play came when the terrorist Ali asked to speak with the WARB-TV station manager (Dave Jackson), and the FBI took the media manager to where negotiators were working the hostage situation. Following a tense meeting between terrorist and TV manager, the FBI debriefed the station manager. This was free play and an excellent example of how media and players can interact in a constructive way, both in an exercise and the real world.

Although the following observations are of concern, they do not in any way distract from the positive aspects of the media play:

-- There was little or no media/public affairs plan by the players, which may not have been all the fault of the JIC staff who were taking their orders from the SAC and the State. The JIC never called a media conference, which was completely unrealistic for this kind of an exercise.... Actions taken by the JIC were strictly reactive until Sue Anne Stephenson explained to the JIC



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that in real life the news media is there to help in a national emergency.

-- It appeared that all player thought was concentrated on the hostage situation, with no options in the event of a detonation and the consequences thereof; an attitude the JIC could not overcome.

-- The JIC made no effort to coordinate with Washington, D.C. The FBI Controller called a halt to media play Monday afternoon concerning the videotape of terrorist demands which had been given to WARB-TV and this part of the media play came to a standstill until 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 9. The halt caused a major glitch in the timeline, since 1) Washington play released the information at 7 p.m. Monday evening; the same information that was being held in abeyance by the FBI Controller, and 2) Washington, D.C. players released the entire videotape of the terrorist demands at about noon Tuesday during the "Site City" halt to media play. It took some time to get this part of the timeline back on track.

-- The FBI Controller also called a halt to all media injects from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday until he received media guidance from Washington, D.C. Seeking media guidance from Washington, D.C. should in reality have been an action taken by the JIC players and not by the FBI Controller.

For an exercise of this size, there should have been double the number of public affairs players. As it was, Gary Schoon, FBI, who headed up the JIC; and Chris West, DOE/NV/NEST, and Bob Blair, FEMA, did an excellent job.

Peter Mygatt

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