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EXERCISE MIGHTY DERRINGER

COMMUNICATIONS OBSERVATIONS (SITE CITY)

In general, the communications systems worked well at Site City and there were no major type problems. The following comments represent items in the minor category of significance:

The establishment of communications at the Camp Atterbury site was somewhat delayed. The advance party arrived at about the same time as the main party. The commo techs were all at the Franklin location. It would have been helpful if their efforts could have been better coordinated and split between the sites sooner.

Cellular telephones could have been used by key personnel in the area for initial coordination but were not.

KY-71 operations were slow getting up due to the absence of strapping option documents, which were still with commo personnel in Franklin instead of personnel at the site.

KY-71 experienced problem going secure with calls initiated from it. Incoming calls were not a problem. Appears to be a technical problem somewhere in the electronics of the equipment.

Initial problem with telephone 8 line rotary with incoming calls. Problem was that players had been given numbers that were in error with a couple of digits inverted.

The field organization communications staff official seemed to have difficulty in getting information from technicians on progress status of the communications setup.

There appeared to be a sense of reluctance on the part of commo technicians to discuss commo matters with exercise monitors.

Secure facsimile equipment compatibility among various agencies involved in the exercise was lacking in some cases. DOE uses the RICOH 3312 standard, while some other agencies use the Valutec standard. The two are not compatible.

FBI experienced some problems with their secure fax which turned out to be the result of overload of the AC power in the building and resulting low voltage fluctuations. This was overcome by placing the load on a large generator.

FEMA experienced some initial problems in getting their transportable microwave system operational. They also experienced some problems as a result of telephone company lines with split pairs.

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COMMUNICATIONS OBSERVATIONS

KY71 Secure Voice and Facsimile does not work well on the standard 8-access telephone circuits. These circuits in NV are the least expensive routes and are not suited for reliable, consistent data transfer and synchronous lock-up.

NEST advance party installed their DES repeater in a pre-positioned location that was within the perimeter of the military control zone. The refuel effort created interference to operations of the forward observers. Access was closed for the DES-NEST team. (The location behind Building 2201 has been used as a NEST communications repeater location on previous exercises, and the antennas were already erected.)

NEST microwave terminal for the TOC to the forward CP, working point, experienced major failure and had to be replaced or repaired. This same link was also down for four (4) hours during the early device diagnostic phase due to a multiplex failure at the working point terminal. Later, the TOC terminal receiver on the microwave was replaced due to a noisy output.

NEST DES radio repeaters originally located at the forward military repeater site was moved to the preferred location (Building 2201) once the area was secured. This improved hand-held radio coverage on all three nets.

RF compatibility during the peak usage time created no operational problems for any agency in the exercise. One military group had minor open squelch noise, but did not affect communications.

The NEST player telephone system worked very well. The installation went very quick, and service was very good.

The NEST DOE players in communications required more telephone circuits early in the activity. I'm not sure that all alternatives were examined closely as there was some simple solutions.

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PERSONAL COMMENTS

The DOE NEST player did not communicate the operational status unless you questioned him. He also coordinated telephone service with the NTS Telephone Company rather than observing protocol.

It was obvious that the NEST communications team was prepared for two-location support. This limited the number of workers available for the initial equipment installation. Those people worked very hard and long which could result in stress and ultimate errors.

It seems the best evaluation that could be made of a NEST operation would include a qualified electronic person who was not tied to the team through management responsibility or CPAF pressure. The input by someone like Vic Berniklaw, for Communications, would give an unbiased response to actual events whether they be good or bad.

The CATCOM network had problems handling all the various input port traffic once all the users came on line.

In summary, this was the best NEST communications exercise that I have observed. It should be noted that some of the set-up was relatively easy and helped relieve the workload. If the access to the staging area and the control point had been geographically separated from the TOC, I'm not sure enough manpower would have been available for a timely set-up.

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