

Testing communications lines

Written by AG

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From 21 February to 4 March 2011, an annual Compact Yellow '11 exercise was conducted in Baltic Barracks in order to test compatibility of equipment and interoperability of people, and to check the effectiveness of several communications solutions.

About 65 military and civilian personnel from Command Support Brigade (CSB) and its subordinated units: 610th Signal Battalion, 100th Signal Battalion and 104th Support Battalion as well as the staff of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE) took part in the exercise, which constitutes a technical testbed for upcoming training events, i.e. Little Eagle 1 & 2, Bold Eagle, Dragon exercises and Close Air Support (CAS) Seminar.

Since it is a purely technical exercise, it is not based on a tactical scenario. Nevertheless, it is a crucial means to introduce new technical solutions within Communications Information Systems area and to develop the existing ones. It also provides an excellent opportunity to make the staff get on well together. For that reason, about 20 tactical vehicles were used to establish and run communications lines between the four command posts: two on the corps' level, and the two remaining ones – on the divisional level subordinated to the corps. The exercises architecture involved radio and satellite communication lines in both unclassified and classified modes allowing for communicating data, voice and imagery.

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“The main aim of the exercise was to test various communications configurations referring to upcoming exercises,” said Lieutenant Colonel Krystyn Bagan, the Officer of Primary Responsibility for this exercise.

“It was also about testing our Blade servers together with the VMware infrastructure, paying special attention to so-called fault tolerance,” added Lieutenant Colonel Bagan explaining that if a server in any of command posts is unavailable, a remote server would be used to maintain the communication line. The exercise participants also tested the time-jump, often used in exercises of tactical background. Moreover, in parallel to all exercise activities, the



testing of the Corps Command, Control and Information System Szafran was being conducted, too.

“It is a realistic technical exercise during which we can train very important issues: the compatibility of equipment and interoperability of people. We face real problems, like for instance a power cut, and we gain experience how to deal with them,” said Lieutenant Colonel Bagan assessing Compact Yellow valuable and successful.

As soon as Compact Yellow was completed, three out of four command posts were closed down whereas the main command post was further developed. This, however, is a part of another exercise codenamed Concert Grand, which directly precedes Little Eagle 1 exercise.

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