

Morning Calm

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Operation Eagle Strike sets the standard for future training



36th Signal Battalion

Firefighters team up to evacuate simulated casualty PV2 Lovett from the emergency. — U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. George Clay

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DAEGU GARRISON — 293rd Signal Company has a unique mission in 1ST Signal Brigade, as it is one of the most geographically dispersed companies in Korea with several interlacing missions. One of these is the operation of Technical Control Facilities. They provide all communications services to Area IV through critical hubs. To accomplish this mission successfully they must train the personnel manning these hubs to face the unexpected and to respond to situations involving crippling communication outages.

In order to test their abilities to handle these challenges they developed their own company training. Mission Training Plans or Army Training and Evaluation Plans do not typically incorporate Technical Control Facilities because the facilities are governed by the Defense Information Systems Agency. DISA outlines the training and operational standards needed in order to run the facilities but does not provide "crew drill" style doctrinal training guides.

In order to raise the training standards, the 293rd had to come together to develop training that would be effective, challenging and quantifiable. Training of the company's

junior leadership required the senior leaders to pull together to make a quantifiable program of instruction that could be evaluated and then structured to fit quarterly demands.

Operation Eagle Strike was the first of its type: a multi-tiered training exercise which the 293rd developed, produced, tested and executed successfully to exercise, maintain and revise standard operating procedures and emergency action plans for communications facilities throughout Area IV.

Eagle Strike was comprised of three parts. The first; planning and development of the program of instruction was uniquely challenging since no site or crew level training had ever been accomplished prior to Eagle Strike. One of the main aim points of Eagle Strike was to develop an emotionally strenuous training environment; training Soldiers in difficult, "under fire" style scenarios was meant to develop mental agility and courage, enabling them to perform better in real events. To build the necessary stress, they included an actor simulating a severely injured Soldier. To better create realism and in an effort to increase stress on the site leadership, 293rd coordinated with local emergency rescue personnel. The USAG Daegu Camp Carroll Fire and Rescue Team was eager to participate in Operation Eagle Strike and assist the

company integration of the Garrison into our emergency response execution.

The exercise took place over the course of two days at four technical controls with the full speed run-through at Camp Carroll only. With a single run-through and no resets, Soldiers were tested on the move and the situation developed from every action and inaction. The Fire Department responded within minutes of placing a call, and Soldiers worked with the teams to complete the mission and restore function at Top Site. Observers used "go / no-go" checklists based on emergency action plans and standard operating procedures to note proper execution of the exercise as well as shortcomings. Checks were conducted during and after the exercise to ensure that proper security was maintained during the movement of sensitive equipment. Evaluation of the exercise consisted of numerous after action reviews in order to create feedback and assist in revision of both the exercise and site standard operating procedures.

Operation Eagle Strike was the first of what is likely to be many exercises used by the 293rd to prepare emergency response plans and standard operating procedures. Eagle Strike's success was directly based on proper planning and strong leadership, two traits characteristic

of the 293rd Signal Company, and future leaders will no doubt turn to Eagle Strike as the standard to meet in Defense Communications Services.



Pfc. Holstine stands guard during sensitive equipment evacuation — U.S. Army Photo by Cadet Kenneth Hunkus