



Fact Sheet – Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD 2008

Background: VIGILANT SHIELD 2008 is a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff-designated, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM)-sponsored, and U.S. Joint Forces Command-supported Department of Defense exercise for homeland defense and defense support of civil authorities missions. Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD 2008 will be conducted concurrent with TOP OFFICIALS 4 (TOPOFF 4), the nation's premier exercise of terrorism preparedness sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security, and several other linked exercises as part of the National Level Exercise 1-08. These linked exercises will take place 15-20 October 2007 and are being conducted throughout the United States with several partner nations (Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom), as well as the Territory of Guam.

National Level Exercise 1-08 will include the simulated detonation of three radiological dispersal devices within the USNORTHCOM and U.S. Pacific Command areas of responsibility. These exercise events and others are designed to test the full range of incident management response procedures at the local, state, and federal levels.

Purpose: Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD 2008 and National Level Exercise 1-08 will provide local, state, tribal, interagency, Department of Defense, and non-governmental organizations and agencies involved in homeland security and homeland defense the opportunity to participate in a full range of exercise scenarios that will better prepare participants to prevent and respond to national crises. The participating organizations will conduct a multi-layered, civilian-led response to a national crisis.

Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD Objectives:

- Demonstrate multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional unity of effort in support of a civilian-led response to a national crisis through collaboration with local, state, and federal responders to a series of catastrophic events.
- Reinforce operational and strategic relationships between USNORTHCOM and the Department of Homeland Security.
- Provide an opportunity for local, state, and federal leaders to conduct and lead response efforts within their state including the use of state assets, emergency management assistance agreements, and support from federal resources, including active duty military forces.
- Assess NORAD and USNORTHCOM-assigned units in the execution of homeland defense and defense support of civil authorities missions.
- Evaluate NORAD and USNORTHCOM staff implementation of Concept Plans to include effects-based approach planning and operations to protect the homeland from missile attack.
- Provide continuous Integrated Tactical Warning and Attack Assessment to all agencies, via NORAD.
- Evaluate various combatant commands' operational coordination.

- Develop U.S. government strategic communication themes and objectives to ensure that all exercise agencies communicate with one synchronized voice.
- Exercise USNORTHCOM's Ballistic Missile Defense planning and operations to create a seamless coordination of control between combatant commands.
- Provide USNORTHCOM opportunities to exercise defense support of civil authorities in the execution of Department of Defense Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, or High-yield Explosive response plans and coordinate Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection activities.
- Deploy USNORTHCOM's Mobile Consolidated Command Center.
- Conduct interagency and Department of Defense expanded maritime interception operations, maritime domain awareness, maritime warning and maritime operational threat response.

Exercise VIGILANT SHIELD Activities: Primary exercise event venues are in Oregon and Arizona, as well as the Territory of Guam, which is within U.S. Pacific Command's area of responsibility. Major participants include the Department of Homeland Security / Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the state and city Offices of Emergency Management of each state that is participating in this exercise.

USNORTHCOM is conducting multiple homeland defense and critical infrastructure protection events.

USNORTHCOM will deploy Command Assessment Elements to two of the main exercise venues to assess the need for military support of local, state and federal response forces. In addition, USNORTHCOM will deploy a Defense Coordinating Officer and Defense Coordinating Element to each Joint Field Office established by the Department of Homeland Security.

Aerospace events will take place across all the exercise venues, to exercise the ability to mobilize resources for aerospace defense, aerospace control, maritime warning, and coordination of air operations in a disaster area.

Other events will test USNORTHCOM's ability to conduct continuity of operations and assess the readiness of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, or High-yield Explosive Consequence Management Response Force.

There will be minimal deployment of active duty forces and no cross-border deployments. We anticipate little to no direct impact on local communities.

For additional information about the exercise, please call 719-554-6889.