



**From 18 February to 6 March 2013, an annual Compact Yellow '13 exercise was conducted in Prenzlau (Germany) in order to test and validate the readiness of the complex and sophisticated Communication and Information Systems (CIS) architecture for major upcoming exercises of Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE), Crystal Eagle '13 and Saber Strike '13.**

Over 130 military and civilian personnel from Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (HQ MNC NE), Command Support Brigade (CSB) and its subordinated units: 610th Signal Battalion, 100th Signal Battalion and 104th Support Battalion took part in the exercise. For the first time this exercise was organised outside Baltic Barracks in Szczecin (Poland), namely in Prenzlau (Germany), and there were much more challenges to be overcome, especially from the security point of view.

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The exercise was divided into different fields linked into the areas of interest like exercises and the classification of the processes. Five main areas were identified as worth being tested with different priorities.

The biggest challenge was, as expected, the implementation of NATO ISAF SECRET network. This part of the network is going to be an essential provision of HQ MNC NE to the Training Audience during the exercise Crystal Eagle '13, where over a thousand of users will be concerned. Many Information Technology & Communication experts and professionals were involved in the process in order to provide the best possible quality of service for them, including such advance technologies such as High Availability, Fault Tolerance, Vmotion, Information Protection System, server clusters with Storage Area Networks etc.

Some technical and organisational problems popped up during the exercise but they were identified and managed. This should ensure the MNC NE Command Group, that the key CIS

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infrastructure and organisation is reliable as well as ready to face the real support for the users. There are still some issues to be solved and configured, but the effort entered into this test event should benefit later during deployment and maintenance the CIS infrastructure during the final use of it.

As Lieutenant Colonel Dariusz Stanek underlined: “We, IT and COMMS professionals, are as good as we are recognized by the quality of service offered to the end users. Therefore, many of the pre-requirements are to be fulfilled before you are able to declare you are successful or not from such a complex technical exercise like Compact Yellow.”

*Article by LTC Dariusz Stanek, POL A*

*Photos by SGT Maksymilian Halec, POL A*