



COMMUNICATIONS,
COMMAND. CONTROL
AND INTELLIGENCE

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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Declassified Under Authority of the Interagency
Security Classification Appeals Panel, E.O.
13526, sec. 5.3(b)(3)
ISCAP Appeal No. 2020-015, document 1
Declassification Date: January 2, 2025

14 JUN 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: False Missile Alerts (U) - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

(U) This memorandum is the third periodic report on the actions being taken to correct the false missile warning problem which occurred on June 3 and 6.

Operational/Procedural Actions (U)

(S) The interim missile warning procedures implemented as a result of the June 3 and 6 incidents were clarified by a message on June 12 from the Director, Operations, DJCS, to his counterparts at CINCLANT, USCINCEUR, CINCPAC and CINCNORAD, and to the NEACP. The same procedures were the subject of a June 13 conference call initiated by LtGen Shutler, Director, Operations, DJCS to the Command Directors at LANTCOM, PACOM, EUCOM, SAC, ADCOM and ANMCC with NEACP represented in the NMCC where the conference was convened. I was invited to be present in the NMCC during this conference. The purpose of the conference call was to insure understanding of the procedures to be followed by all commands in the event of missile warning indications. It was made clear that:

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Technical/Equipment Actions (U)

(U) On June 11 and 12 Dr. Van Trees and the Task Force headed by Bob Evans met at NORAD and conducted a thorough review of the NORAD computer system and the recent false alert incidents. Bob Evans is writing a report which he will circulate to other Task Force members for approval and provide to me shortly. In addition, he provided some preliminary comments. The principal points are:

Classified by ASD(C3I)
Review on 14 June 2000
Extended by ASD(C3I)
Reasons: 5 and 6

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See Def Cont Nr.

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(C) The Task Force agrees there is high probability that the suspect integrated circuit is the source of the June 3/6 problems. They can find no other reasonable failure mechanism; however, with present data, they cannot be absolutely certain the suspect integrated circuit is the failure mechanism. After studying the probable failure, the Task Force will recommend specific short-term (30-100 day) actions which, after detailed analysis, should permit use of the Communications System Segment with reasonably high confidence.

(S) The Task Force has also found that the basic error detecting techniques are not currently adequate to guard against possible other failures. They will make additional recommendations to improve the error detection system.

(C) Even with the fixes NORAD plans and those the Task Force will recommend, they feel it is unlikely that the system can be made 100% fail safe using solely automatic checking, thus continuing to require careful procedures and human oversight.

(U) The Task Force will meet again in Washington, D.C. on 23 and 24 June.

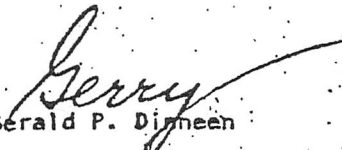
(U) In parallel with the Task Force activities I am implementing several actions:

(C) NORAD should put a monitoring device on the output lines to detect and notify the operator whenever missile data is being sent. It appears that this could be tested and implemented in the system in 3 to 4 weeks.

(S) On an accelerated basis, methods should be analyzed for improving the error correcting techniques used in the NORAD-to-user communications system. I have organized a small team of experts in this area working under a member of my staff. They will begin work at NORAD on Monday, June 16. My early estimate is that it will take 2 to 3 months to implement improved techniques.

(S) In order to get completely adequate error protection it will probably be necessary to modify some of the message transmission procedures. This will require coordination with the users and, perhaps, some modification of their equipment.

(S) My tentative recommendation is to leave the system on the MEBU until we have proceeded through at least steps 1 and 2. Before making this decision the JCS should make a detailed assessment of any operational disadvantages that are incurred by using the MEBU. I have asked the JCS to provide this assessment by June 18. I should point out that the error protection capabilities using the MEBU are no better than in the primary system, and it would be possible to have undetected message errors as a result of a hardware failure in that system.


Gerald P. Dineen

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MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, C³S, OJCS

SUBJECT:

() It appears that it may be advisable to continue operation on the MEBU for a period of 3-6 weeks until improvement in the error detecting capability of the communications paths in the CSS can be instituted. I would like to have an assessment of the operational impact of operating on the MEBU instead of the CSS-NCS system. Specifically, I would like a detailed breakdown of the functions that can be performed on the MEBU and the resulting displays and a list of the missile warning and attack assessment functions that are normally provided in the CSS-NCS system that will not be available using the MEBU. Based on this, I would like a summary of how this loss in functions affects CINCNORAD's capability to accomplish his mission. I would appreciate receiving this assessment by June 18th.

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Gerald P. Dinneen

