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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
Headquarters Northeast Air Defense (ANG)
Rome, New York

22 Jan 97

MEMORANDUM FOR CV, DO, DOC, LG, SC

FROM: NE AD Sector/CVX
4 Otis Street
Rome, NY 13441-4712

SUBJECT: FERTILE SPADE 97-11

1. CVX conducted a FERTILE SPADE on 21 Jan 97.
2. Participants: NE SAOC and 102 FW
3. Scenario: A Lear jet simulated an airliner from a country of interest deviating from a flight plan due to being hijacked. The target was intercepted by two F-15s from the 102 FW.
4. NE SAOC objectives:
 - a. Track Detection and Identification
 - b. Scramble and Intercept Procedures
 - c. Hijack Procedures
 - d. Internal/External Agency Coordination
 - e. OPSEC/COMSEC Awareness
5. Track Detection and Identification: The Southeast SAOC Identification Section called Huntress ID to pass the target flight plan information. The SE incorrectly identified the track as a FEDERAL rather than FERTILE SPADE. While this was misleading, there was no impact on track detection or identification. The target was quickly detected by the Tracking Technician (TT). The Identification Technician (IDT) correctly used the information received from the SE to identify the track as a Special 23. Once the flight plan deviation was confirmed, the track was made a Special 27. The Lear then

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transmitted to the Weapons Controller that he was simulating squawking mode III 7500 and the IDT made the track a Special 15.

6. **Scramble and Intercept Procedures:** Once FAA requested assistance with the hijack aircraft, the interceptors were quickly scrambled. The scramble heading of 250 degrees was based on a northbound target track. When the track deviated to the West toward JFK Airport, this heading created a hot intercept that could have jeopardized the covert operation. Recommend the Controller be aggressive in quickly adjusting to this type of fluid scenario so that the interceptors remain undetected by the target. In spite of this target maneuvering, the fighters were very successful in remaining covert. Additionally, the Controller continued to provide Bogey Dope to the fighters after they called Tally on the track. Recommend the Controller prompts for a Judy call after Tally to determine intercept responsibility (it cannot be assumed the fighter has assumed control of the intercept until he reports "Judy").(ACTION) All other procedures were handled well. Particularly noteworthy was the SD's coordination with the Otis SOF to keep him updated on the situation.

7. **Internal/External Agency Coordination:** Communications flowed well within and between sections. The DO moved to the Battle Staff area early in the scenario to reduce noise commonly encountered at the MCC position. In the future, recommend someone set up the scope and communications in the Battle Staff area early so the DO can more effectively monitor the tactical situation. To further streamline operations at the MCC position, the MCC/T needs to delegate OPREP-3 reporting.(ACTION) This would alleviate some of his workload and prevent task saturation. For example, the initial voice report was sent as a Beeline and needed to be amended to Pinnacle when the track became a Hijack. A designated MCC/T responsible only for OPREP-3 reporting could have expedited this change.

8. **Hijack Procedures:** There were no problems noted with Hijack procedures. There was some discussion as to why the DO checklist states that aircraft need to remain outside 30 miles when FAA does not want intercept assistance. The only identified criterion is ten miles set by FAA for traffic separation.(ACTION)

9. **OPSEC/COMSEC Awareness:** The DO made an announcement in the area for all sections to watch Open Line procedures. However, the DO made the only open line call during the scenario.(ACTION)

10. This report is intended to pass along observations to improve Sector performance during future events. The 177 FW at Atlantic City has informed CVX that they will be looking to conduct a no-notice AFE during the month of February. Crews need to be prepared for this scenario and expect it to be conducted as an IG inspection. This report

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is forwarded to directorates for further dissemination at their discretion. Any corrective actions identified in this report will be discussed at the next Directors Meeting.



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