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**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS NORTHEAST AIR DEFENSE SECTOR (ANG)  
ROME, NEW YORK**

5 Mar 97

MEMORANDUM FOR CV, DO, DOC, LG, SC

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

SUBJECT: FERTILE SPADE 97-15

1. CVX conducted a FERTILE SPADE on 26 Feb 97.
2. Participants: NE SAOC and 102 FW
3. Scenario: A Lear jet simulated a Spanish Air L1011 hijacked by terrorists with explosives on board. 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/Terrorist Procedures
  - e. Internal/External Agency Coordination
5. Track Detection and Identification: The Surveillance Section quickly detected the track and followed all checklist procedures. Operations personnel observed two radar returns and asked the DQM to determine if there were two targets at that location. The track was sixty miles outside the correlation line which is too far out for the DQM to make that determination. In actuality the problem was double registration from two overlapping radar sites which created two radar returns. While the DQM did determine there was only one track, the AST never checked RTQC for double registration.
6. Scramble and Intercept Procedures: Once all identification possibilities were exhausted, the MCC aggressively directed the Senior Director to scramble alert aircraft at

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Otis prior to the track becoming Unknown. The Weapons Section performed all intercept procedures effectively. Even though the aircraft was not identified as hijack prior to the intercept, the Weapons Section made sure all precautions were taken to remain covert. Due to a request from the fighter squadron, the Lear was lights out during the intercept so the pilots could get some practice using Night Vision Goggles (NVG). The scrambled fighters were not anticipating this scenario which resulted in a time compressed situation of trying to adjust for NVGs during the final phases of the intercept.

7. Hijack/Terrorist Procedures: The scenario began in the morning with an Intel message outlining the situation of a simulated hijacked Spanish Air L1011 which took off from Lisbon with over 200 passengers and possible drums of explosives on board. The day crew and DO did an excellent job coordinating with higher headquarters and adjacent sectors developing courses of action based on the information available at the time. The target initially was appropriately classified as an Unknown, but aircraft spacing demanded by hijack restrictions were adhered to in anticipation of the hijack track.

8 Internal/External Agency Coordination: Communications within and between sections were noteworthy. Sections insured accurate information was passed and corrections made immediately when there was an error. All sections used their internal communications channels so noise in the operations room was kept at a minimum.

9. This report is intended to pass along observations to improve Sector performance during future events. Both the day and evening crews are to be commended for their teamwork and professionalism. This report 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.



ROBERT K. MARR, JR., Lt Col, NYANG  
Director, Exercise and Analysis

cc: CC

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