

Dear researchers,

I hope this message finds you well and ready for the upcoming exercise in Bulgaria!

As you know, this will be the first NATO exercise in which researchers will participate fully. Our success in integrating science and research in our future exercises will depend on your proactive engagement and interaction with the participants.

Below are some logistics and an overview of the researchers and their plans.

LOGISTICAL POINTS

- **Transport:** You are expected to be self-sufficient in terms of transport.
- **Accommodation:** You are also expected to be self-sufficient in terms of accommodation. We hope that everyone was able to secure their accommodation in the region. If not, please reach out to me as soon as possible.
- The **Exercise book** is attached for your information. You will also receive a paper copy in the Base of Operations.
- **Badges and vests:** You will receive your badge and vest in the EADRCC tent in the Base of Operations (preferably on Sunday afternoon, but Monday early morning is also possible). During the Opening Ceremony you need to wear your orange vest and badge.
- The exercise starts on Monday, 8 Sep at 9:30 with the **Opening Ceremony** at the Base of Operations (43.49870, 23.30479). Please be at this location no later than 8:30. There will be a lineup with all participants, where a designated area is assigned to the researchers. Senior officials from Bulgaria and NATO will open the exercise. Media representatives will be present.
- **Meals**
 - Breakfast – please make your own arrangements (most probably in your hotel as part of your booking)
 - Lunch – at the Base of Operations (sandwich) (every morning, the lunches will be delivered to the distribution point at the Base of Operations). Please see below.

- Dinner – please make your own arrangements.

A catering company will offer lunch. Attached to this email you will find the lunch menu options and prices. Please indicate in advance the number of lunch meals you would like to order and the selected menu options from the attached file no later than **4 September**. Please send your team consolidated choice to Insp. Daniel Hristov (DanHrHristov@mvr.bg) with the subject line “BUL25 - Catering”. Payment for the ordered meals will be collected on-site on the mornings of 8 and 9 September, via POS terminal. Prices are listed both in Bulgarian leva and in euro, for your convenience.

- **Base of Operations**

- The camp will also provide a 24/7 medical point, a distribution point for food and water, as well as a coffee shop offering refreshments to ensure the well-being and comfort of all the participants.
 - At the Base of Operations, a dedicated sanitation area has been established, equipped with separate shower and toilet facilities for men and women. The ratio of facilities will be approximately 1 per 20 participants.
- The exercise ends on Thursday, 11 Sep at 16:00 with a **Closing Ceremony**. Immediately after the ceremony, you are invited by the hosts to a small celebration at the Base of Operations.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCHERS AND THEIR RESEARCH PLANS

There are four kinds of research teams. Please find below some clarifications as to familiarize yourself.

I. Operational research teams

Six research teams participate in the exercise play as “regular response teams”. They will be activated and deployed like all other operational teams (as standalone team or merged with other team). Some of them are using drones, software and/or prototypes, and the data they collect may be useful for other teams as well.

These research teams will be on standby in the Base of Operations when not deployed.

These teams are:

- US, US Army Engineer Research and Development Center (2 teams)
- Greece, Center for Security Studies (KEMEA)
- Germany, German Aerospace Center, Institute of Communications and Navigation
- Greece, National Technical University of Athens

- Germany, TWH Technisches Hilfswerk

When not deployed, these teams can be approached by other researchers, operational participants and other stakeholders in the exercise (incl. Directing staff, evaluators, OSOCC, media). Please reach out to them to network, ask about their work and explore collaboration!

II. Virtual Reality research teams

Five Virtual reality/demonstrations teams will be hosted in the Base of Operations in (5) tents. They will be used as “Virtual working sites”, where operational teams of participants will be sent to perform specific tasks in virtual reality environment or demonstration mode. The approximate duration of interaction with these research teams is about 1 hour. Other researchers can visit their tents to interact in their virtual reality scenarios.

These teams are:

- Romania, VR team
- Spain, UCAM Catholic University of Murcia
- Germany, German Aerospace Center, Earth Observation Center
- Turkey, Dokuz Eylül University
- Bulgaria, CMDR COE

III. Observation research teams

Four other teams use software tools and observe specific processes like communications, coordination, etc. One tent will be available to all but ETAF. Please reach out to these groups of researchers as well to network, ask about their work and explore collaboration.

These teams are:

- Germany, ETAF
- Germany, @fire
- Spain, GMV Innovating solutions
- US, Michigan State University

IV. Data collection research teams

Twenty-one research teams will be conducting questionnaires in the BoO. One large tent is made available to them as a rest / work station. They will be operating in the BoO only and interact with

operational teams when they're on stand-by. These teams' success will depend on their proactive engagement and interaction with the participants. Please keep in mind the fully anonymous principle (no names, contacts and countries). Paper and QR code questionnaires are both acceptable. We are still expecting the latest version of some teams' questionnaires. Please send them to me.

Data collection teams are:

- Germany, University of the Bundeswehr Munich
- Greece, Center for Security Studies (KEMEA)
- Netherlands, University of Amsterdam
- Bulgaria, Burgas State University "Prof. D-r Assen Zlatarov"
- Bulgaria, Medical University of Plovdiv
- Romania, Institutul de Mecanica Solidelor al Academiei Române
- Bulgaria, University of Plovdiv "Paisiy Hilendarski"
- Italy, National Research Council of Italy
- Netherlands, Leiden University
- Italy, Centro Euro-Mediterraneo sui Cambiamenti Climatici
- Canada, Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence
- Greece, University of Western Macedonia
- Austria, AIT Austrian Institute of Technology
- Netherlands, Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs, Leiden University
- EU, Joint Research Centre
- Bulgaria, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski
- Portugal, Iscte - University Institute of Lisbon
- Germany, German Aerospace Center, Institute for the Protection of terrestrial Infrastructures
- Sweden, University of Gothenburg
- Bulgaria, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
- Bulgaria, National Defence College

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Montana.

If you need additional information or clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kindest regards,

Martin



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