

THE
1995 Norwegian
Rocket Incident

A nuclear crisis simulation

TASKERS

These include specific interjections the instructor will make throughout the simulation. The timing, purpose, and coordination of tasker distribution is presented in the *Instructors' Guide*.

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Interfax Message

**Will be presented as part of plenary introduction (see presentation file)
and subsequently distributed via online communications platform:**

BREAKING NEWS

Russian early warning systems have detected a military rocket launched from northern Europe. Russian missiles have shot down the rocket over Russian territory. The source of this information is anonymous - Interfax

Task to each delegation:

Take this new information into consideration when formulating your policy memo document.

Step 1 - Information to Russian Strategic Rocket Forces

Distribute to Head of State Russia and Russia delegation at beginning of Stage 1.

On 25 JANUARY 1995, the following has happened:

Russia's early warning system identified the rocket as possibly a nuclear tipped ballistic missile. (The Norwegian MoD stated that the rocket was probably detected by a satellite and/or Russian Anti-Ballistic Missile-radars (in Pechora or Olengorsk). The systems were automatically put into high alert. (The computers were evidently programmed to alert personnel to certain types of missiles and size is probably one of the criteria.)

Some reports say the radar signature was strikingly similar to that of a Trident 11 submarine launched ballistic missile (SLBM). The start of a civilian missile and a nuclear missile, especially at the initial stage of the flight trajectory, look practically the same

The automatic activated early warning system showed the officers on duty that this missile was something else than what they had expected to see. The on-duty officer followed the standard routines. -- the radar operators could be reprimanded for sending out a false, panicky signal. But they also feared it was a real threat. So they decided to issue an alert that it was an unidentified missile, with an unknown destination.

Russian assessment of radar signal:

- a) The prospect of a surprise attack was not necessarily discounted. The trajectory of the rocket could have led to its landing near northern Russia, which would not be the case if this was a strategic strike;
- b) However, there were concerns that it could have been an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack designed to disable detection systems

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and precede a more devastating second strike; Another possibility could be an attack on the Kola Peninsula, which housed Russian nuclear submarines, was also not ruled out.

c) List of different scenarios 1. strategic attack on Russia; 2. EMP; 3. attack on Kola peninsula (nuclear subs)

Information about the launch was transmitted via the early warning system control center and to the highest chain of command and control in the Russian Army. These centers comprise the systems that are linked to the nuclear suitcases. The on-duty general decided to activate the Kazbak system and the nuclear suitcases. He, too, decided that it was better to put Russia's nuclear forces on the highest alert, than to be blamed for a disaster.

Only minutes after the launch the Kazbak system was activated, and the suitcases were activated. The officers in charge of them immediately rushed to their superiors to report the situation. The President, the defense minister and the General Chief of staff was presented with the activated nuclear suitcases. Telephone communication was established between the three (in addition, to other military leaders required).

They kept track of the rocket flight path from launch to impact. Yelstin deliberated over the phone for several minutes with General Mikhail Kolesnikov (Chief of general staff), as they studied the trajectory of the rocket. The operators determined the expected place the rocket would fall was far in Norway's Spitzbergen region.

Step 2 - Information and tasker to press team

The following message should be sent to the press team for distribution 15 minutes after Step 1.

BREAKING NEWS

Russian early warning systems have detected a military rocket launched from northern Europe. Russian missiles have shot down a military rocket from Northern Europe, over Russian territory. The source of this information is anonymous.

Step 3 - Tasker for the press team

Send these to the press team for distribution at the following times:

Five minutes after Step 2 you will instruct the press team to report to all delegations:

Three Russian early warning stations detected a military rocket launched from Norwegian territory. The source of this information is a high up in the Russian missile forces. The source emphasized that they quickly found out that the rocket would not land inside Russian territory.

The statement that the rocket was shot down by Russian missiles was later withdrawn.

Five minutes after Step 2 you will instruct the press team to report to all delegations:

The President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, will hold a press conference at the start of Stage 2 in a specified location. All teams must attend this press conference as new and relevant information will emerge.

In addition:

The press team should report on the ongoing processes within each of the teams as well as within NATO.

Step 4 - Information about NOR notification

Distribute this information to the Russian and Norwegian delegations at the end of Stage 1.

On 21.12.1994, Norway sent out a notification to the Ambassadors of their neighboring states (including Russia) about its intention to launch up to four rockets, including the Black Brant XII four-stage research rocket, between 15 Jan. and 10 Feb. 1995. The precise schedule for launch depended on weather conditions.

On 28.12.1994 the message about the Norwegian launch was revised and circulated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow.

On 16.01.1995, The Norwegian Aviation Authority sent out a so-called NOTAM to the civil airspace authorities in 35 countries.

On 25.01.1995 A Brant XII rocket launched from Andøya rocket station. The rocket was in the air for 23 min, and reached an altitude of 1453 km above earth, and landed 330 km north-east of Svalbard. The rocket was a much larger design than previous missiles used at Andøya, and it used the initial stage of a retired US tactical missile (MGR-1). The boost phase speed was therefore higher than what had been usual for previous launches.*

Step 5 - Additional information to NATO

Send the following messages to these delegations at the end of Stage 1:

To US delegation:



The US does not have any information that supports the claims of the Interfax report (that the Russians have shot down a rocket fired from a northern European country). The US is of the opinion that Russia thought it profitable to exploit the missile incident politically; both to present the Russian Federation as still in charge and on top of the situation, and to show that the military was not in such bad shape as the Chechnya situation would suggest. However, the US believes that the situation would cause them to look foolish and that the episode confirms that there are problems within the Russian Armed Forces at this point in time.

The US is also of the opinion that the note from Norway about the launch, from December 21st, had been dropped somewhere along the communication line in Russia.

The United States supports Norway's position in this matter and finds the Russian reports to be disturbing and blameworthy.

To Uk delegation:



The UK does not have any information that supports the claims of the Interfax report (that the Russians have shot down a rocket fired from a northern European country). The UK has received intelligence from their US counterparts that indicate that Russia may have thought it profitable to exploit the missile incident politically; both to present the Russian Federation as still in charge and on top of the situation, and to show that the military was not in such bad shape as the Chechnya situation would suggest. The situation that arose has made Russia look foolish and that the episode confirms that there are problems within the Russian Armed Forces at this point in time.

US intelligence indicates that the note from Norway about the launch, from December 21st, had been dropped somewhere along the communication line in Russia.

The UK supports Norway's position in this matter and finds the Russian reports to be disturbing and blameworthy.

To German delegation:

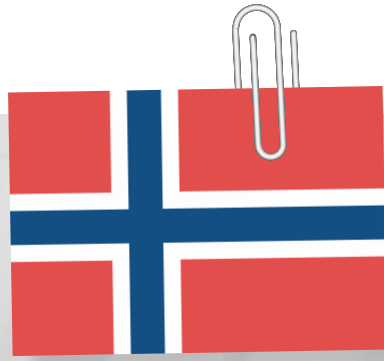


Germany does not have any information that can confirm nor deny the Interfax report that the Russians have shot down a rocket fired from a northern European country. German intelligence has not detected any increase in readiness or military activity in Russia.

However, Germany thinks it is very disturbing if anyone has launched a large rocket in the proximity of Russian territory without giving proper notice, given the readiness of Russian nuclear forces to launch retaliation strikes at a minute warning. This should warrant particular care and consideration from anyone perpetrating such activities in the vicinity of the Russian Federation. European countries must take into account Russian concerns about their security.

Germany, therefore, thinks that one should take a cautious approach towards Russia in this situation and that NATO countries must avoid putting further pressure on Russia, due to the risk of further escalation.

To Norway delegation:



The Norwegian Joint Operations Headquarters/Forsvarets overkommando (FO) does not have any information that supports the claims of the Interfax report that the Russians have shot down a rocket fired from a northern European country.

Norway can confirm that a research rocket was launched from Andøya at 6:24 earlier today. The rocket was in the air for 23 min, and reached an altitude of 1453 km above earth, and landed 330 km north-east of Svalbard. Andøya rocket station has confirmed that the launch went as planned. The rocket was a different and much larger design than previously used at Andøya, and it used the initial stage of a retired US tactical missile (MGR-1), the boost phase speed was therefore higher than what had been usual for previous launches.

Norway can confirm that notifications about the launch were sent to all neighboring states through the proper channels. The notification protocol was followed correctly.

In addition, Norway wants to emphasize that this rocket did NOT enter Russian territory.

The Norwegian Ministry of Defense detected no increase in the readiness of the Russian armed forces, beyond a planned exercise that included the Russian Strategic Rocket Forces.

Step 6 - Press conference announcement

The press team must announce the following to all delegations at start of Stage 2:

At the start of Stage 2, President Yeltsin will hold a press conference. All teams must participate in this conference, as it will provide vital new information on recent events.

Step 7 - Yeltsin Press conference text

The press team must announce the following to all delegations at start of Stage 2:

Russian forces demonstrated "the highest level of combat readiness" today as they followed the launching and trajectory of an incoming rocket from Norway's territory.

For the first time I was today opening the black briefcase with the button I carry with me all the time.

I immediately contacted the Secretary of Defense and all military leaders and generals he needed and they followed the route to the missile from beginning to end.

"They [the people who have launched this missile toward Russia] obviously didn't expect us to discover it, because the rocket wasn't that big, but we caught it right away and calculated where it would fall - quite far away from our latitudes. It fell off by itself, but far from us".

The Russian armed forces and strategic rocket forces "unconditionally deserve thanks".

As regards the target of the rocket launch, "maybe someone had decided to test us, because mass media is constantly saying that our army is weak, but we discovered [the rocket] immediately. It wasn't even a minute before we got to know where the rocket came from, at what speed it flew and where on land or sea it would land".

Interfax had made no mistake when they first disseminated information about the rocket.

Step 8 - Tasker to all delegations

The following messages must be given to the delegations at the time of the press conference:

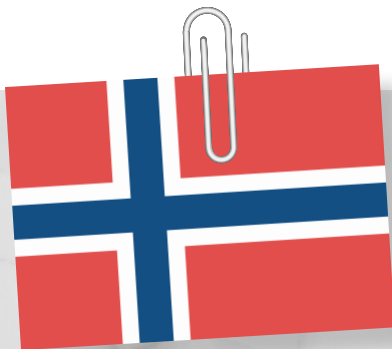
To Russian delegation:



Your task now is to prepare a national position, approved by your head of state, to be spelt out at the bilateral meeting between NORWAY-RUSSIA that will take place during Stage 2 in Oslo.

(By the time this meeting is over, the team can move to observe the NATO plenary session that will take place in Stage 3.) It may be that Russia will get an opportunity to make a statement at this session, if time permits and if NATO security officers will admit them to the room.

To the Norwegian delegation:



Your task now is twofold:

1. NOR MFA, MOD, EMBASSY IN MOSCOW: Your task now is to prepare a national policy position, approved by your Head of State, to be spelt out by the team at the bilateral meeting between NORWAY-RUSSIA that will take place during Stage 2 in Oslo. (By the time this meeting is over, the rest of the team can move to observe the final NATO plenary session that will take place in Stage 3.)

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2. NOR NATO DELEGATION: Your task is to keep informed of the Norwegian position as it will be communicated to Russia in the meeting in Oslo and to represent Norway in the NATO meeting that will take place at the NATO HQ in Stage 3. There, you must spell out the Norwegian position and contribute to reaching a NATO consensus on how to respond publicly from the Alliance. You must have with you marching orders from your Head of State to this meeting so that you are sure you will represent Norway's position in the best way possible. The Norwegian Ambassador to NATO will represent Norway in this meeting.

To the NATO delegation:



The national positions of each delegation must be first prepared, presented to and approved in a meeting with their Head of States at the end of Stage 2, following negotiations.

At the multilateral meeting in Stage 3, each Heads of State will issue marching orders for the conduct of the following meeting of the North Atlantic Council where NATO should reach consensus. Not every delegation is required to make a public statement.

The team must discuss and reach a consensus with other NATO members based on the input from the multilateral meeting. The process of reaching NATO consensus will culminate in the plenary meeting of the North Atlantic Council during Stage 3 at NATO HQ (Main meeting room). Here, NATO ambassadors will represent each NATO member state and lead the discussion on the consensus document, with Norway in the lead. They must receive approval from their Head of State for the final document.

Consensus around the official NATO statement must be reached by the end of Stage 3, when a public statement must be issued.

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