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Tiger Reef: Cross-Disciplinary Training Workshop and Tabletop Exercise, 4-7 February 2014, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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On 4-7 February 2014, the Government of Malaysia and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) hosted a regional workshop and exercise on nuclear forensics, Tiger Reef: Cross-Disciplinary Training and Tabletop Exercise. The Governments of Australia and New Zealand provided special support in organising the event in Kuala Lumpur.

The event, comprised a one-day workshop and two-day tabletop exercise, focused on developing a common understanding on the issues involved in responding to a crime scene involving nuclear or other radioactive material, in a cooperative manner, which will ensure safe, effective and efficient operations. The workshop and exercise drew together more than 100 participants from 21 countries, primarily in Southeast Asia and two GICNT official observers, namely the EU and the INTERPOL. Participants included experts from the crime scene management and the emergency response, health, and safety communities who worked to identify cross-disciplinary training opportunities and gaps for those communities. The event clearly illustrated the importance of training crime scene managers and response experts in each other's fields so that emergency response is not impeded and to minimise the potential for evidence to be compromised. Tiger Reef ultimately reinforced the concept that a well-trained and coordinated response will save lives and identify those responsible for perpetrating a nuclear security event. It identified key best practices of the participating partners in developing a national cross-disciplinary training program.

Best Practices

Tiger Reef effectively demonstrated that coordination and communication among groups of experts is not just possible, but ideal. Participants recognised that a nuclear security event will involve numerous stakeholders with complementary missions, but often conflicting goals. Participants came to the following conclusions:

- Efforts to learn, coordinate, and collaborate across expert communities before an event occurs will enhance how these communities communicate and work together in a real world event.
- Important and useful training resources are currently available through many sources, including the IAEA, INTERPOL, the European Union, various centres of excellence, private industry, and bilateral government arrangements.
- Policy makers should focus on the following points of interaction between organisations or groups of experts when developing national response plans or training programmes for responding to a nuclear security event:
 - o establishing radiation zones;
 - o establishing access points;
 - o handling perimeter and other security issues;
 - o triage/rescue recovery/evacuation;
 - o decontamination;
 - o collecting and controlling evidence;
 - o coordinating public messaging; and
 - o responding to additional threats.
- Available training resources should be adapted to encourage cross-disciplinary training, or training across organisational or agency lines, to enhance coordination and communication in a crisis environment.
- Tabletop and field exercises are particularly valuable (even necessary) as part of a national cross-disciplinary training program.

- Countries should incorporate a graded approach to training and exercises, in which the complexity and scale of the training and exercises is gradually increased over time. This systematic approach to training and exercises will allow organizations and personnel to first gain the required knowledge and skills before participating in larger, more complex training events with multiple stakeholders.

Next Steps

Tiger Reef's participants and organisers agreed that these steps should be implemented:

- Present analogies at future events: Tiger Reef included two presentations outside the nuclear sphere—one on cross-organisation communication and one on Malaysia's national response to a biological incident. Each of these presentations allowed participants a chance to break down barriers and begin interacting openly with one another, while also providing an opportunity to think outside of their typical day-to-day work. Analogies also allow the nuclear security community to leverage lessons learned and best practices of other complex security issues.
- Promote training programs and activities of partner organisations: the GICNT will work with other partner organisations such as the IAEA and INTERPOL to uplift their current activities and collaborate to enhance training opportunities.
- Plan a follow-on event: the GICNT's Response and Mitigation Working Group and the Nuclear Forensics Working Group will hold a follow-on exercise on cross-disciplinary training in another region to draw new perspectives and continue the important work started in Malaysia.

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