



Contact: Paul Mehney, PEO Integration Public Communication: 586.770.3438  
Matt Ocieпка, PEO Integration Public Communication: 586.530.0227

## **U.S. Army kicks off Network Integration Exercise**

White Sands Missile Range, NM – June 8, 2011 – The U.S. Army has begun the largest network field exercise to date using more than 3,800 Soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division who will evaluate key network technologies over the next six weeks. Termed the Network Integration Evaluation (NIE) the event is designed to simultaneously test programs of record and assess a host of emerging network technologies, the services' senior leaders said.

"The network will literally redefine how we fight," said Gen. Peter Chiarelli, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. "Ultimately the network will connect leaders and soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines at all levels, at every echelon of command, in any information, in any formation, and across the entire team, with the right information quickly and seamlessly."

The NIE, which includes five programs of record going through formal tests and more than 30 emerging or developmental technologies under informal evaluation, is a key part of the Army's Network Strategy. The NIE is structured to assess the scope and readiness of emerging technologies and, in cases where appropriate, integrate new capability before sending it to Soldiers in combat.

At the heart of the exercise is an overarching effort to develop a single battlefield network able to connect dismounted soldiers to other units in real time, linking them to Command Posts, vehicles on-the-move and higher headquarters; the idea is to use the best available technologies so as to move more information, voice, video, data and images faster, further and more efficiently across the force.

"The reality is these NIEs are as much about learning as they are about testing. After all, the only way to fix problems is to accurately identify them. Likewise, the most effective means for developing new, relevant doctrine and tactics is to conduct integrated network-enabled training exercises," said Chiarelli.

The NIE is aimed at refining the acquisition of new technologies and blending programs of record with Commercial-Off-the-Shelf solutions as part of an agile process designed to keep pace with rapid technological change, Army leaders explained. NIE will provide Army testers and program managers the advantage of assessing how new and emerging technologies work in relation to one another from a system-of-systems perspective.

The NIE – and subsequent exercises planned to take place on a semi-annual rotation – are geared toward speeding up and improving the way new networking technologies are delivered to Soldiers in part by ensuring that the integration of new capability is properly solidified before items are sent into combat.