

# NIE

## At a Glance



### WHAT IS IT?

The Network Integration Evaluation (NIE) is the first in a series of semiannual evaluations designed to integrate and mature the Army's tactical network. The combined test and evaluation approach, a major change for the Army, demonstrates a holistic focus on integrating network components simultaneously in one operational venue.

The primary purpose is to conduct parallel limited user tests of several Army programs of record, with a secondary purpose to less formally evaluate developmental and emerging network capabilities. The exercise will also assess developmental non-networked capabilities.

The culminating event in late 2012 will help slate the content for the first Network Capability Set to be fielded to deploying brigades in the 2013-14 timeframe. A capability set is a total package of networked and non-networked hardware and software fielded to a particular unit.

### WHEN IS IT?

The first NIE has been conducted over a six-week period in June and July 2011.

### WHERE IS IT?

Fort Bliss, TX, and the adjacent White Sands Missile Range, NM. Fort Bliss, the Army's largest land and air space in the United States—slightly bigger than the state of Connecticut—and White

### GEOGRAPHIC REALISM

Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division are encamped near a "mountain village" to evaluate networked capabilities in realistic terrain. (U.S. Army photo by Claire Heiningner Schwerin, Program Executive Office Command, Control, and Communications-Tactical.)

Sands have mountains in an Afghan-like terrain, as well as open desert in a non-Afghan-like terrain. This allows the Army to replicate an operating environment that encompasses the whole spectrum of possible conflict, whether a traditional combined-arms maneuver or an Afghan-type wide-area security operation.

### ARE SOLDIERS INVOLVED?

The entire 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division (2-1 AD)—not a test unit, but a regular brigade combat team—are taking part in the NIE, providing continuous feedback throughout the test and evaluation process. The 2-1 AD has tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles, supporting a more traditional combat environment; a battalion organized as motorized infantry on the Afghan model, equipped with Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) All-Terrain Vehicles and other vehicles used in Afghanistan; a reconnaissance squadron including a heavy troop with Bradleys, a light troop with MRAPs, and a troop with Strykers; and an artillery battalion with a light battery of M777 Howitzers and a heavy battery of M109 155mm Self-Propelled Howitzers. Again, this variety will allow the Army to evaluate new capabilities across the potential

spectrum of conflict, in line-of-sight and non-line-of-sight challenges.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

The NIEs initially will be every six months. Army leadership may accelerate the schedule to every four months to allow for even faster identification of capability gaps and adoption of new and emerging technologies.

The next NIE, this fall, will focus on Warfighter Information Network-Tactical Increment 2 capability. In spring 2012, the Army wants to finalize the next capability set.

The Army expects to redefine its Network Capability Sets in two-year increments. In the interim, older products will still be used; they'll have less capability than the newer model, but there will still be connectivity between systems.

For more information on the NIE, check out [http://www.bctmod.army.mil/nie\\_focus/index.html](http://www.bctmod.army.mil/nie_focus/index.html).

—From staff reports

