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Four-day exercise testing base-level response time wraps up at VAFB

By Record Staff

The 30th Medical Group at Vandenberg Air Force Base on Thursday wrapped up a four-day exercise called the Medical Emergency Response Capability Assessment and Training.

The drill, also known as MERCAT, is intended to test airmen on their ability to respond to a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack on the base.

"We don't get the opportunity to test to this capacity very often at the base level," said Russ Sandy, the 30th MDG medical emergency response manager. "For 100 casualties to be treated by the med group is asking a lot, but they will ultimately learn they do have the ability to perform that function if needed."

The exercise was conducted in three phases, including classroom training, hands-on training and the actual exercise scenario.

Thursday's scenario involved the triage of 100 "patients" of a simulated attack, who sported make up to add realism to the scenario.

Ultimately, officials say they will use the results of the exercise to pinpoint weaknesses in the medical unit's plans and procedures.

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Mock wounded airmen are checked out by a medic Thursday. The 30th Medical Group has begun its Medical Emergency Response Capability Assessment and Training exercise. The four day exercise is intended to test the group Airmen on their ability to respond to a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack. //Bryan Walton/ Staff