

NSA Panama City conducts force protection exercise  
By Re-Essa Buckels | NSA Panama City Public Affairs

PANAMA CITY, FL – Naval Support Activity Panama City conducted a force protection exercise, April 19-23.

The Final Evaluation Problem is a graded exercise evaluated by Commander, Navy Installations Command and U.S. Fleet Forces Command. The exercise was the final assessment for NSA Panama City force protection training and certification cycle. The cycle typically lasts 36 months but due to COVID-19 it was extended to approximately 48 months.

According to Corey Brooks, installation training officer, NSA Panama City, the base participates in several force protection inspections similar to FEP during the training and certification cycle.

“Each year we participate in a U.S. Fleet Forces and Commander Navy Installations Command antiterrorism and force protection exercise, Citadel Shield-Solid Curtain,” Brooks said. “It gives the base and our Security Department the opportunity to validate antiterrorism plans and assess readiness.”

FEP is a CNIC-led operational assessment of an installation’s NSF ability to meet all core competencies outlined in Navy force protection training standards.

Several key departments involved in FEP were Navy Security Forces, Fire and Emergency Services and the installation’s Emergency Operations Center.

“It requires an all hands on deck type of effort from the other departments that hopefully culminate in our Navy Security Force achieving its final certification,” Brooks added.

FEP includes the activation of an Emergency Operations Center, an incident command post and a tactical NSF response. During the exercise, several scenarios were presented to the security forces and additional departments.

In order to pass FEP and become certified, the installation must pass the administrative inspection, training assessment and the scenario-based operational assessment with a grade of 80 percent or better, with no failures of critical tasks and no major safety incidents.

Police Operations Chief David Hardman, NSA Panama City, explained an assessment team from CNIC Headquarters and additional subject matter experts observed and graded the exercise. The installation passed the final inspection and earned the desired force protection certification.

“Our final score was a 91 with significant improvement in virtually all programs,” Hardman remarked. “It was truly a validation of the security team’s staggering efforts and the distance we have come since our assessment in 2017.”

Having passed FEP, the base’s NSF is certified to defend the installation.

“This critical certification is the foundation upon which we shall continue to build our department into a model for antiterrorism, physical security and law enforcement for other NSF agencies throughout the Navy,” Hardman said.