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The Role of the Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers

Fact Sheet

Office of the Spokesman

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Key Point: The exchange of information required under the New START Treaty is facilitated by the Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (NRRC) in the United States at the Department of State and in Russia at the Ministry of Defense.

The New START Treaty requires that the United States and Russia be transparent about their strategic offensive arms and delivery vehicles. A crucial element in producing this transparency is the New START Treaty's extensive notification system. Each Party is required to exchange up-to-date data on facilities, numbers and types of strategic weapons, and to notify one another of production, conversions, eliminations, and movements of nuclear weapon delivery systems via their respective NRRC. Also, inspections of facilities and meetings of the [Bilateral Consultative Commission](#) are coordinated through the notification process.

The Notification Process

Notifications on data or activities are delivered to each Party through a step by step process. For example, when the U.S. Air Force is planning to conduct a test launch of a Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile, Russia must be notified.

For the United States, the notification process begins when a message about the test launch is sent through the Department of Defense's Arms Control Enterprise System (ACES).

The notification then goes through a series of steps to ensure the accuracy of the notification.

It is then sent to the NRRC. Once in the NRRC, the watch officers retrieve the notification from ACES and load it on to NRRC systems for processing. They then re-verify the information, ensure it meets all the treaty requirements and package it for transmission to the Russian Government.

Finally, it is transferred to a special dedicated communication system that directly links the U.S. NRRC and the Russian NRRC and the message is sent, according to treaty-defined time deadlines.

The timeline for a given notification varies, but at times the entire operation must be completed in as little as an hour.

The process works much the same way in reverse whenever the Russian Government notifies the United States about its activities, except that the U.S. NRRC must translate the notification from Russian into English before disseminating it throughout the U.S. Government, including Defense command centers, such as NORAD, the National Military Command Center, foreign policy leaders at the State Department and National Security Staff, and many other departments and agencies.

For the full details on the notification process, [click here](#).

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