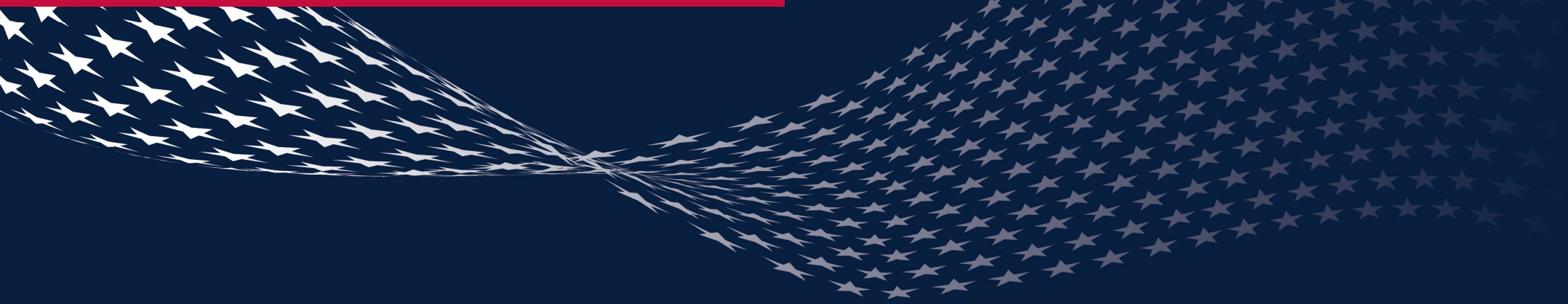


Exercise Update

July 29, 2026



Peace Through Atomic Strength



U.S. DEPARTMENT
of **ENERGY**



Cobalt Magnet 2025 AAR Summary/Update



Cobalt Magnet 2025 (CM25)

A multinational, full-scale consequence management exercise simulating a release at the fictional Erie Nuclear Power Plant in southeast Michigan, played over a seven-day operational timeline.

DOE/NNSA-led, with Michigan as lead U.S. state partner; Indiana, Ohio, and Canadian federal & provincial partners.

3,000+
participants

100+
response organizations

3 + Canada
U.S. states impacted

7 days
Mar 14–21, 2025

SCENARIO TIMELINE

1

Fri 3/14

Alert & Site Area Emergency declared

2

Mon 3/17

First radiological release; readings beyond site boundary

3

Tue 3/18

Second release drives plume NE across Lake Erie into Ontario

How the Findings Were Derived



1,800+

electronic observation submissions collected

40+

follow-up coordination calls with agencies &
SMEs

Excel + Power BI

consolidated adjudication database & trend
coding

Findings coded by TYPE (not by agency) so the analysis remained relevant as federal structures evolve:

STRATEGIC

National / senior-level decision-making: policy, governance, and resource alignment across agencies or nations.

OPERATIONAL

Mid-level coordination that translates strategy into action, multi-agency planning and situational management.

TACTICAL

Frontline, field-level execution by deployed personnel and technical specialists.

Only interagency-relevant findings appeared in this report; single-agency items were routed to internal AARs, and control/situational notes archived for reference.

Findings Framework



Nine Primary Topic Areas

- 1 Field Team Activities
- 2 Incident Management
- 3 Information Sharing
- 4 Logistics Support
- 5 Public Communications
- 6 Scientific Support
- 7 Technology
- 8 Training and SOPs
- 9 Exercise Design

Findings by Core Capability

CORE CAPABILITY	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT		BEST PRACTICES	
Situational Assessment		10		7
Operational Coordination		9		10
Environmental Response / H&S		6		5
Operational Communications		4		3
Public Information & Warning		2		3

Situational Assessment and Operational Coordination were the most-referenced capabilities, reflecting the exercise's focus on decision-making and information flow.

Four Cross-Cutting Themes



1

Multi-Jurisdictional Coordination & Shared Decision-Making

Large-scale radiological incidents demand agile structures uniting federal, state, local, and international partners under a shared operating picture enabled by liaison networks and defined information-exchange channels.

2

Integration of Scientific, Technical & Operational Capabilities

Teams that merged technical data with operational decisions advanced the response faster. Tools but only with clear SOPs and data-validation discipline.

3

Realism, Readiness & Exercise Design Innovation

The week-long, player-driven, ungraded design with integrated simulation and spiked samples produced the most authentic readiness assessment when matched with trained controllers and balanced pacing.

4

Sustaining Institutional Knowledge Through Collaboration & Training

Preparedness is sustained through relationships, not just plans. The multi-year planning process itself was a training forum; recurring cycles and mentorship preserve expertise through turnover.

Takeaways & Forward Look



Largest, most complex U.S. radiological CM exercise to date

CM25 served as an operational test bed for binational consequence management with proven value in stressing real-world coordination.



Relationships sustain preparedness

Institutionalize recurring training cycles, mentorship, and cross-border familiarization to keep radiological-response expertise current despite turnover.



Standardize data validation, SOPs, and analytical communication

Translate complex technical outputs into operationally relevant information for non-technical decision-makers and the public.

For cross-border coordination and data-sharing analysis, see the Cobalt Magnet 2025 International After-Action Report (released October 2025).