

Nekoma, ND - Dedication of the US Army Safeguard Ballistic Missile Defense Tactical Site in North Dakota will be held at the Missile Site Radar complex here Tuesday.

The site was accepted by the Army in ceremonies here Friday during which Western Electric Co., the weapons system contractor delivered the facilities to the Army.

Participants in the event included Norman R. Augustine, assistant secretary of the Army for Research and Development; W.L. Opdyke, Western Electric Company; Maj. Gen. Robert C. Marshall, Ballistic Missile Defense Program manager; Maj. Gen. Bates C. Burnell, commander of Ballistic Missile Defense System Command; and Brig. Gen. Robert M. Mullens, commander of the US Army Safeguard Command.

As part of the ceremonies, Gen. Marshall presented the Department of the Army Certificates of Appreciation for Patriotic Civilian Service to several organizations involved in deploying the unique Safeguard system. Receiving awards were: Morrison-Knudson Co. Inc., the prime construction contractor; American Telephone and Telegraph Co., intersite tactical communications manager; Polar Rural Telephone Mutual Aid Corp., installation and test of the communications system; Western Electric Co. Inc., the prime weapon system contractor; General Electric Co. Inc., Perimeter Acquisition Radar (PAR) sensor contractor; Raytheon Co., Missile Site Radar (MSR) sensor contractor; Bell Telephone Laboratories Inc., the system design contractor; International Business Machines Inc., data processor contractor; Grand Forks Building and Construction Trades Council, responsible through its member unions for the supply of workers; Communications Workers of America, Local 7290, responsible for providing communication workers; McDonnell-Douglas Astronautics Co., Spartan Missile contractor; and Martin Marietta Corporation, Sprint Missile contractor.

Acceptance of the facilities marks a major milestone in the Army's Safeguard program. Operational readiness of the system is scheduled for mid-1975.

A similar ceremony took place Friday near Colorado Springs, CO, where facilities were turned over to Safeguard Command's Ballistic Missile Defense Center (BMDC) in the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) Cheyenne Mountain Complex. The BMDC provides the interface between commander-in-chief, Continental Air Defense Command (CINC CONAD) and the Safeguard site in North Dakota. Personnel in the BMDC can intervene when necessary to exercise positive control over the automated weapon system.

The mission of the Safeguard Command is to gain operational experience in high power radars and to provide a defense for Minuteman Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles deployed in the area by the US Air Force as a deterrent force.

Main elements of the Safeguard System located in North Dakota are: two unique radars - the Missile Site Radar and the Perimeter Acquisition Radar; a long and a short range missile - Spartan and Sprint; and supporting automatic data processing equipment which controls and conducts the system's complex engagement, planning, and execution functions. Use of the missiles gives Safeguard both an area and terminal defense capability.

Construction was started on the North Dakota Safeguard complex April 6, 1970. During the first construction season sufficient work was completed to close the buildings and allow the contractor to continue work through the winter months.

In August, 1972, the PAR building was structurally completed and ready for installation of weapon system equipment. The MSR building was completed January 3, 1973. Since that time, Western Electric Company has been installing and testing system components and sub-systems. Work has progressed on schedule and the predicted date for turnover of the facilities has been set.

The Safeguard System, including the BMDC, is commanded by Brig. Gen. Robert M. Mullens.