

361ST TACTICAL ELECTRONIC WARFARE SQUADRON

QUARTERLY HISTORY FOR

JULY - SEPTEMBER

1966

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HISTORY OF THE 361st RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON

1 Jul 66 - 30 Sep 66

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1. MISSION

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The 361st Reconnaissance Squadron was activated at APO San Francisco 96240 effective 8 April 1966. The mission is as stated in 7AF OPORD 450-67, para 2. On 24 July 1966 the squadron commander, Lt Col Ralph L. Stapper, FV708768, arrived at APO San Francisco 96240.

The squadron was not operational during the reporting period because neither aircraft nor aircrews had arrived. Col Stapper and a small cadre of NCO's directed their efforts to squadron organization, improvement and repair of the squadron facilities, and acquisition of equipment and supplies for the squadron.

II. COMMAND AND CONTROL

The 361st Reconnaissance Squadron is a unit of the 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, APO San Francisco 96307. Intelligence data will be provided to the squadron intelligence officer by the 14th Air Commando Wing. Base "housekeeping" services (personnel actions, finance, etc) are provided by the 14th Combat Support Group. Maintenance personnel are assigned to the squadron, but the overall maintenance is a responsibility of the DCM, 14th Air Commando Wing.

Considerable assistance in squadron activation was provided by the sister squadron (360th Reconnaissance Squadron) at APO San Francisco 96307. "A Straw-man" list of required forms, publications, supplies, etc. was provided.

Most of the office furniture, partitions, and administrative equipment were obtained, without serious difficulty, thru normal supply channels at APO San Francisco 96240. Nearly all repairs and improvements to the squadron building had to be accomplished by squadron personnel. Initial plans were made for a squadron mail room, secure briefing room and crew lounge. Nearly all the materials for these projects were located and will be transported and installed by squadron personnel. Assumption of such tasks will not impair

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operations of this squadron because personnel arrival has preceded aircraft arrival.

A delay in obtaining publications has hampered the squadron. The initial request for publications was submitted, through normal channels, in July 1966. As of 30 Sep 1966, less than 12% of requested publications had arrived. A major portion of the problem is attributed to a lack of continuity at the time a new Publication Distribution Office (PDO) was established at APO San Francisco 96240. Had distribution continued from APO San Francisco 96307, during the period that the initial requests from the new PDO were being filled, much of the delay could have been averted.

III. ORGANIZATION

Squadron organization is as shown on the attached organizational chart (Atch 1). Key personnel available for duty as of 30 Sep 1966 were: Squadron Commander, Lt Col Ralph L. Stapper, FV708768; Administrative 1st Sgt, MSgt Frank (NMI) Feo, AF32634533; Maintenance Officer, 1st Lt John H. VanSlyke, FV3148020; Line Chief, GSgt Leon H. Walker, AF14182845.

Authorized manpower for the squadron is as shown in attachment 2. As of 30 Sep 66, 2 officers and 21 enlisted men were assigned to the squadron. Of this number, all but 2 officers and 3 airmen arrived during the last 2 weeks in September. In effect squadron activation duties during the reporting period were performed by five men. All of whom were performing duties more properly assigned to a prearranged and coordinated preactivation party. In addition, approximately 120 maintenance personnel to be assigned to the 361st were on base but all were assigned to, or on loan to, other maintenance sections on base, or were performing base details (bunker building, postal clerk etc).

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IV. OPERATIONS

The first aircraft earmarked for the 361st, departed the ZI the latter part of Sep and is expected to arrive at APO San Francisco 96240 in mid Oct. Crew arrival is expected to coincide with aircraft delivery on approximately a 2 crew to 1 aircraft basis. As of 30 Sep 66, no intelligence personnel had been assigned. An intelligence officer should be part of the activation cadre to insure an adequate intelligence program upon initiation of flying activities.

V. TRAINING

The training level of administrative personnel assigned to the squadron to date is consistent with the UMD, and adequate for the squadron needs.

Aircrew members are expected to arrive "incountry" Phase I qualified, and for the immediate future will be trained and certified Phase II qualified by the 360th Recon Sq prior to arrival at APO San Francisco 96240.

Only 15% of Maintenance personnel assigned to the squadron were C-47 qualified, although nearly 90% had some C-47 experience. An active OJT program has been established within the maintenance section, and is being operated IAW AFR 50-26 and AFM 50-23.

VI. SUPPLY & MAINTENANCE

Transportation has been adequate for the small number of personnel presently on station, however a delay in acquiring vehicles may create a problem shortly. Seven vehicles are authorized and requested, only two vehicles have been received as of 30 Sep 66. Transportation must be available when the personnel buildup begins in Oct and Nov due to the large number of personnel expected to reside off base. (See section VII)

Life support vests are not readily available, therefore some 200 vests were ordered thru local purchase.

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Supplies for aircraft-general have been adequate during the reporting period. Contractor furnished Tech. Reps. for some of the mission-peculiar-equipment, have not arrived. Nor is test equipment on hand for the same equipment. These Tech. Reps. and test gear are expected to arrive not earlier than 1 Nov (approximately 2 weeks after the first aircraft). Further, no replacement parts are available in local supply for this equipment.

VII. MORALE

Satisfactory quarters are not available on base for either officers or NCO's. These personnel are encouraged to lease or rent quarters on the local economy. However, adequate quarters are not readily available on the economy due to scarcity, health conditions, and price. This problem is expected to magnify as squadron personnel increase sharply during the following quarter. Airmen and NCO's presently residing in base barracks were crowded and shuffled frequently. One barracks for 361st personnel was finally acquired at the end of the reporting period. This eased the problem somewhat, but crowded conditions still exist.

Food is adequate for both enlisted men and officers at the base mess hall and open messes. However provisions to service increasing numbers seem to be limited, and overcrowded conditions already exist at certain times.

Recreational facilities on base are very limited. But nearby beaches provide relaxation and a satisfactory location for programmed squadron social-functions.

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