

THE OFFICIAL HISTORIES OF THE 6994TH SECURITY SQUADRON



“Top 10” Questions

Question #8. The 6994th began operations out of NKP in 1969 under project/operation Commando Forge. Evidently considerable diplomatic wrangling was required to convince the Thai government to allow more “spooks” in country. Information relative to the thinking behind the establishment of the NKP detachment is needed.

Response. Excerpts from the 6994th history for the second half of 1969 provide good insight into the sorts of cryptographic, logistical, diplomatic, and interagency issues which faced the EC-47 program during the war.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

*Question 8
BWR*

ON FILM

HISTORY
 OF
 THE
 6994TH SECURITY SQUADRON
 1 JULY - 31 DECEMBER 1969
 RCS: USS-D3



25 AF/A2S
 REVIEWED BY *JRC*
 DATE 5 Feb 15
 CLASSIFICATION UNCLAS

upon redaction of highlighted portions.

31 MARCH 1970

~~SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED~~
~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~
~~THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT~~
~~WILL NOT BE DISCLOSED TO FOREIGN NATIONALS OR~~
~~THEIR REPRESENTATIVES~~

TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE, VIETNAM

~~CONTAINS CODEWORD MATERIAL~~

~~SECRET USAFSS PRIVACY~~

USAFSS FORM 86
 1 JUN 57
 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

~~EYES ONLY NOFORN~~

UNCLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

6

(u) ~~(S)~~ Uncertainty concerning the cryptologic ceiling in Thailand and crowded facilities at Da Nang coupled with postponement of the Pleiku closure left the outcome of projected relocation of Detachment 2 resources obscure.

NKP Buildup:

(u) ~~(S)~~ Since the establishment of Detachment 3 at Nakhon Phanom in ²¹ April 1969, its service to consumers was of such quality that a third aircraft was deployed on a TDY basis. Because of increased enemy activity in Laos, tasking requirements continued to increase. Consumers urged deployment of additional aircraft to Thailand. Three major problems however continued to complicate the pattern of any buildup at NKP. These problems were

1. The desire of non-Air Force agencies to have ARDF collection resources co-located with the CMA.
2. The reluctance of the ~~(S)~~ to provide permanent increases in the cryptologic ceiling.
3. The limited maintenance capability for servicing mission aircraft based at NKP.

(u) ~~(S)~~ The 7AF decision to base aircraft at NKP instead of Udorn ²² failed to really satisfy NSA Representative Vietnam (NRV) ~~(S)~~

~~(S)~~ Army Security Agency (ASA) and MACV as well as the principal consumer of data processed from the Detachment 3 collection effort,

~~(S)~~. Their position was that co-location of collection unit and CMA would result in a better product.

With the projected build up of ARDF resources in support of ~~(S)~~ the issue of co-location of collection unit and CMA surfaced again at the Department of Defense Special Representative (DODSPECREP) ARDF conference

~~(S)~~ 5-6 September 1969. ²³

~~SECRET NOFORN~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~ UNCLASSIFIED

7

(u) ~~(S//FOUO)~~ The USAFSS policy has been to oppose moving all or part of Detachment 3 resources to achieve co-location with the CMA (USA 29/USM 7) (at Ramasun Station). Further, USAFSS has rejected the principle of co-location based on the fact that:

"...in South Vietnam today we cannot find where one single aircraft is permanently co-located with CMA (either Army or Air Force). Have informal info there are approx 180 plus such aircraft assigned. This provides some indication the Army did not consider such deployment essential in their ARDF/Airborne Collection programming."²⁴

Other significant reasons for USAFSS opposition were:²⁵

1. Even if NKP effort were relocated to Udorn there would still be 10 miles between Detachment 3 and the CMA.
2. Accepting the principle of co-location of ARDF unit with CMA would probably result in reduction of this unit's mission to "...one of pure ARDF and eliminate entirely the requirement for an analytical capability to do the vital first echelon analysis and reporting."

(u) ~~(S//FOUO)~~ Seventh Air Force continued to support the USAFSS position even though they conceded that aircraft operating from Udorn would achieve fifty minutes more time over target (TOT) than NKP based aircraft in Northern Laos (Barrel Roll Area). This disadvantage was offset by the fifty minute TOT advantage NKP based aircraft achieved in Southern Laos (Steel Tiger Area). The principal factor in favor of basing additional aircraft at NKP vice Udorn was that NKP already possessed the basic support necessary to handle EC-47 aircraft, while Udorn lacked such facilities.²⁶ Increased enemy activity in the "Barrel Roll" Area during the late summer and fall of 1969 led to increased pressure to stage some ARDF flights from Udorn. At the close of this historical period solution to the question of placing an ARDF collection capability at

~~SECRET~~ HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS ONLY
UNCLASSIFIED

Udorn or increasing existing collection capability at NKP remained part of the overall settlement of the redistribution of ARDF assets throughout SEA.²⁷

On 26 September PACSCTYRGN clarified the USAFSS position thusly:

"Our objectives should be to place ARDF resources where they can best fulfill the MACV stated requirements. Appears that to accomplish this goal it is highly desirable that capability be established at Tan Son Nhut, Phu Cat, Da Nang, NKP and eventually even possibly Udorn."²⁸

(u) ~~████~~ At the beginning of this historical period, three aircraft were performing ARDF missions from NKP. Aircraft were assigned on a TDY basis primarily because it was not economical to maintain a complete maintenance facility for less than ten aircraft. The military situation in Laos continued to require additional ARDF missions. On 28 August 1969 PACSCTYRGN authorized this unit to support the move of the fourth aircraft to NKP providing both the cryptologic and Program VI ceilings were raised.²⁹ On 30 August 1969 the 460TRW directed the deployment of a fourth aircraft to NKP for 120 day TDY period.³⁰ On 12 October MACV directed 7AF and this unit to make necessary arrangements to operate five EC-47s on a sustained basis from Thailand prior to 1 January 1970.³¹

NSA Details

Thai Government Details

(u) ~~(S)~~ The third major obstacle in the NKP buildup was the lack of adequate ARDF maintenance and materiel resources. Primarily this problem was a function of the previous two. It is neither economically feasible, nor even possible for that matter, to provide phase maintenance facilities at NKP for less than ten aircraft. Any additional aircraft based at NKP would have to be drawn from existing resources in SEA. Making necessary aircraft available is therefore dependent on the outcome of discussions concerning future locations of ARDF resources in SEA, and in particular the disposition of Detachment 2 ARDF assets after Fleiku's closure. Finally, any permanent build-up at NKP is inextricably bound to the RTG willingness to acquiesce in raising the cryptologic ceiling. Therefore some important decisions concerning the future role of NKP in the SEA ARDF effort are to be expected during the forthcoming historical period.

Proposed Reorganization of ARDF Coordination Center (ACC).

(u) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ The mission of the ARDF Coordination Center (ACC) was to provide for the coordination of all functions connected with the ARDF program and schedule ARDF and Airborne Intercept collection missions as directed by MACV.³⁸ The ACC was established on 1 July 1966 by agreement between the 509th Radio Research Group (RRGP) and the 6994th Security Squadron.³⁹

(u) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ The ACC functioned under the supervision of two OICs, one from the Army and one from the Air Force, both considered equals in direction of operations. Routine matters were handled by either. Major decisions, changes or new items were coordinated and mutually agreed upon. Each of the OICs came under the direct supervision of the respective Operations Officers of the 509th RRGF (for the Army OIC) and the 6994 Security Squadron (for the Air Force OIC). Each was rated by his respective service supervisor.⁴⁰

(u) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ On 28 August 1969 the Chief of the Aerial Reconnaissance Division, MACV J211 submitted for coordination a proposal to reorganize the ACC.

Principal features of the proposed reorganization were:⁴¹

1. Establishment of a "Joint Special Operations Center" (JSOC) under the direction and operational control of MACVJ2 to replace ACC.
2. Designation of the JSOC as a Joint Cryptologic Activity by DIRNSA.
3. The JSOC was to consist of an OIC, deputy OIC and other officers and enlisted personnel to be determined jointly by MACV-J2, 509th RRGF and the 6994th Security Squadron.
4. The billet of the OIC was to be filled on a 6 month rotating basis by the 509th RRGF and the 6994th Security Squadron. The deputy OIC would be rotated on the same basis and would be from the unit not furnishing the OIC.

5. During the tenure, the OIC was to be responsible to, under the direction of and rated by MACV-J2.

6. The JSOC was to be manned jointly by personnel of the 509th RRGF and 6994th Security Squadron. Where possible, a balance of strength between services was to be maintained.

7. JSOC personnel were to remain assigned to and under the command of their parent unit.

(u) ~~(S//FOUO)~~ PACSCTYRGN immediately took exception to several of the features of the MACV J-211 proposal. The PACSCTYRGN position was:⁴²

1. That this unit should attempt to have the term "Joint" eliminated from the new functional title. USAFSS preferred maintaining the "collocated" status of equal Army/Air Force elements and elimination of any connotation of "Joint" operations.

2. It did not concur with assigning a cryptologic unit designator to the ACC because it would lessen its effectiveness as an operation under control of MACV-J2 by placing NSA in a predominant position to infringe on MACV prerogatives in providing tactical support to field commanders.

3. It did not concur with having MACV-J2 rating the OIC of JSOC. PACSCTYRGN concurred with the idea of attempting to balance Air Force strength vis a vis the Army on the JSOC, but felt that the increase in Air Force personnel necessary to achieve this must be satisfied from existing resources.

(u) ~~(S//FOUO)~~ At the 3 September 1969 Weekly ARDF Meeting with MACV, Colonel Bradley from the 509th RRGF took exception to the MACV-J2 proposal. His objection was based on the fact that MACV-J2 was outside the SIGINT Community, and consequently members of the SIGINT Community (6994th Security Squadron and 509th RRGF) should study the problem and make proposals. MACV J-2 agreed to

let 509th RRG⁴³P and 7AF work out the problem.

(U) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ In subsequent meetings held by the 509th RRG⁴³P between Air Force and Army representatives (Lt Col Johnson represented this unit at these meetings). The 509th RRG⁴³P insisted that the OIC and Deputy OIC should remain under the control of, and be rated by, their respective units.⁴⁴ 7AF favored the original MACV J2 proposal contending that it would allow individuals to be more objective in regulating and evaluating the overall ARDF program.⁴⁵ At the close of this historical period it appeared that the basic structure of the ACC would remain relatively unchanged. MACV J-2114 was preparing a new MACV Directive 381-23 which was expected to be placed in coordination sometime during the next historical period.

Disposition of the Calibration Facility:

(U) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ On 11 September 1969 this unit recommended to PACSCTYRGN closing down the ARDF Calibration Site at Cam Ranh Bay because it was determined that there was not sufficient utilization of its facilities. During the period 13 October 1968 through 7 February 1969 seven aircraft were recalibrated, none required any significant change to calibration curves. No further recalibrations have taken place since 7 February 1969, nor are any envisioned in the foreseeable future.⁴⁶ PACSCTYRGN advised that USAFSS was rewriting post mission test procedures, and that a staff study was in progress for determining requirements for a calibration facility.⁴⁷ A decision on the disposition of Detachment 1, 6994th Security Squadron Operation Location 1, Cam Ranh Bay ARDF Calibration Facility was therefore postponed pending further guidance from USAFSS.

from other Combat Cougar Zulu Missions only in the priority of its objectives. In this type of mission the primary tasking was fixing targets and the secondary tasking was collection.

Tasking Cycle

(u) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ The tasking cycle by which the 6994th Security Squadron was assigned missions was unique for a Security Service unit in that it was designed for tactical support in a fluid combat situation. Targets were highly mobile, and targets fixed one day frequently moved the next or could have been eliminated through action of friendly forces.

(u) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ The tasking cycle began with Army Field Commanders, the cryptologic community and 7AF submission of their ARDF requirements to MACV J211-4 (See Chart 3). On Wednesday of each week MACV J211-4 submitted the proposed tasking to the ARDF Coordinating Committee. This committee consisted of representatives of the 509th RRGF, 6994th Security Squadron, ACC, J2 MACV, 7AF, DODSPECREP and Commander Naval Forces Vietnam (COMNAVFORV). The ACC then passed its recommendations to J2 MACV for final approval. J2 MACV then forwarded the approved tasking to ACC. During this time 460th TRW had made available to ACC an aircraft capability forecast for the tasking week. ACC then assigned missions to fulfill the tasking. The mission data was then forwarded to the 6994th Security Squadron which scheduled back end crews to meet assigned missions. Meanwhile, ACC also issued mission data (sanitized version) to 7AF (DOCRS) which issued frag orders for each mission.

(u) ~~(S/NVCCO)~~ Tech support for each mission was provided by the appropriate CMA. Once the missions were airborne, Direct Support Units (DSU) received fixes and exploitable messages from mission aircraft and passed tip-offs ground to air.