

361ST TACTICAL ELECTRONIC WARFARE SQUADRON

QUARTERLY HISTORY FOR

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

1966

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HISTORY OF THE 361ST RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON

1 Oct 66 - 31 Dec 66

Prepared By

Capt Harold L. Arner
361st Reconnaissance Squadron

PROJECT CORONA HARVEST

CATALOGED

NOT DESTROY

No. 0 233703

LOGED

Approved By:

Ralph L. Stapper

RALPH L. STAPPER
LT COL, USAF

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GROUP 3
Downgraded at 12 year intervals;
Not controlled by automatic means.

I MISSION

(C) The mission of the 361st Reconnaissance Squadron was unchanged from that stated in the 1 Jul 66 - 30 Sep 66 historical report. In mid-October the first 361st aircraft arrived (Atch 1) and air operations commenced. By the end of the reporting period, nine aircraft were on hand and approximately 47 missions per week were being flown.

II COMMAND AND CONTROL

(U) No change in command and control lines occurred during the reporting period. Since the Squadron Intelligence Officer did not arrive until the latter part of November (See Sections III and IV below) arrangements were made with the 14th Air Commando Wing for flight crews to gain access to pertinent intelligence data.

(U) The squadron submits the following reports to the 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing:

1. Manning (Weekly)
2. Capability Report (Weekly)
3. RCS: AF-P32 (Quarterly)
4. Reconnaissance Report (Daily)
5. Daily Activity Report (Daily)

In addition to these scheduled reports, direct communications with the TUOC are achieved via a "Hot Line" which was installed in Nov 66.

(U) Each Thursday the schedule of missions as tasked by J-2 MAC-V for the following week (Saturday thru Friday) is received. This schedule is based on the Capabilities Report submitted by the squadron. The official direction for each assigned sorties is in the form of a fragment to the basic operations order (frag). These frags are received via teletype communications daily and direct the sorties for the following day.

(U) The delay in receipt of publication which was noted in the July-Sept. report, continued during this reporting period. As of mid-November, only 50% of the publications requested in July 66 had been received. By 31 Dec 66, the percentage was only 70%. Requests subsequent to the initial requests have been filled only to about 20%.

III ORGANIZATION AND MANPOWER

(U) Squadron organization remains as previously reported.

Lt. Col. James F. Casey, FR23729, arrived on 24 Oct 66 and was assigned as Operations Officer. Capt Eugene (NMI) Brandner, FR69237, reported to the organization on 19 Nov 66. After a three day familiarization visit to the 460th TRW Intelligence Section, he returned and immediately commenced his duties as Squadron Intelligence Officer (See Section IV below).

(U) Authorized manpower vs. available manpower as of 31 Dec 66 is shown in Atch 2. Of the 99 maintenance personnel physically on station, 18 are on loan to other base units. Of this number, all but 5 are assigned to units with C-47 aircraft (See Section V below).

(U) During the last half of the period, the squadron operated on a less than the 2 aircrews to 1 aircraft ratio authorized by the UMD. At the end of the reporting period, the squadron had 9 aircraft and only 15 aircrews. The situation was eased somewhat by the Operations Officer and the Squadron Navigator flying a regular crew member schedule.

(U) During October, coincident with the arrival of the first aircraft, Lt. Col. Stapper endeavored to recover and recount a substantial number of 361st maintenance personnel who were on loan or temporarily

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assigned to other organizations and base details. By 1 Nov 66 the majority of these personnel were properly assigned and available for duty. During this count an inconsistency arose in regard to manning of support functions of this program. An overage of approximately 60 personnel for base support functions had developed. Some of these personnel were identified as "Phyllis Ann" but do not possess AFSC's authorized on the applicable UMD's. The Commander is working closely with the 14th Combat Support Group to insure that these overages are not charged against vacant slots authorized for direct operational functions.

IV OPERATIONS

(C) The first aircraft and two aircrews arrived on station 17 Oct 1966. By 2 Dec 1966 the initial complement of 9 aircraft had arrived. During the reporting period the squadron flew 78 sorties in support of Joint Allied Operations in Southeast Asia. The 361st also flew 161 Reconnaissance Continuity and Development Missions. This represents 87% of the missions "fragged" for the 3 month reporting period. Twenty two percent of the uncompleted missions were cancelled for maintenance non-delivery of aircraft (See Section below), 13 percent were cancelled due to adverse weather conditions, and 55 percent were aborted inflight after some degree of the assigned activity had been accomplished. Only 10 missions cancelled or aborted were the higher priority Tactical Support missions.

NOTE: The breakdown of the 78 Tactical Support missions is as follows: Operation Pickett-16; Operation Paul Revere IV-19; Operation Byrd-19; Operation Prairie-13; Operation Adams-10; Operation Thayer II-1.

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(U) Flight crew personnel flew a fairly heavy schedule during the latter part of the period due to a decreased crew to aircraft ratio, an occasional DNIF, two crew members on emergency leave, and a limited amount of ordinary leave. On the average, each crew member flew $3\frac{1}{2}$ seven hour missions per week.

(U) During the reporting period, nine aircrew members received orders awarding Air Medals for meritorious achievement in Southeast Asia (See Atch 3).

(C) The arrival of the Squadron Intelligence Officer relieved an earlier operational need. Shortly after his arrival, Capt Brandner had organized a good, mission oriented, intelligence program. Because this squadron's missions include activities of approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours in a designated area, aircrews are particularly interested in enemy activities in the area, previous ground fire incidents, and other air activities scheduled for the period of the flight. This information is now a part of the pre-mission briefing.

(U) Phyllis Ann aircraft have sophisticated, very precise mission peculiar equipment. Contractor furnished technical representatives for this equipment, along with a limited quantity of spare parts and test gear arrived midway through the reporting period (See Section VI below).

V TRAINING

(U) Proficiency training for maintenance personnel assigned to unit equipped aircraft is 85% complete with no particular problems encountered. Training for 361st personnel on loan to other units with C-47 aircraft is progressing satisfactorily. Approximately 5 maintenance personnel

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have received no training to date due to their being on loan to other units not possessing C-47 aircraft or performing other base functions.

(U) During the reporting period, five, 5-7 level trainees took the SKT test. One qualified, two failed to qualify, and two are awaiting results. Two 3-5 level trainees took the SKT test and qualified. Thirty-two maintenance personnel are on OJT. Of this number, 24 are receiving their training on 361st aircraft. A TSgt (43171A) has been assigned as OJT Monitor and is doing an excellent job of bringing order to the program. Due to leaves enroute, travel time, and base details, all trainee personnel have had a 30-120 day break in training. As a result, OJT entry dates have had to be adjusted. For the most part, records on incoming personnel have been either incomplete or non-existent. Where required, DD Form 1098's have been initiated and training records rapidly brought up to date.

(U) Nineteen flight mechanics completed Phase II flight training during the period to bring the total number of qualified flight mechanics to 24. Five additional flight mechanics are presently undergoing Phase II training.

(U) With the exception of the flight mechanics, only one crew member arrived without having completed Phase II training. This crew member completed his training during the reporting period.

VI SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE

(U) Two additional vehicles were received during the reporting period. The squadron had temporary use of one vehicle for approximately ten days. One of the four vehicles on hand is used for crew pick-up and flight line transportation.

Frequently, briefing times and take off times have been such as to preclude use of this vehicle for both functions. The outlook for early receipt of the four additional authorized vehicle is not bright. Two of the vehicles on hand are in poor condition, and drivers must be provided within squadron resources.

(U) Early in November, the base personal equipment section received an adequate supply of life support equipment vests. However some are highly flammable and were recalled for fire proofing, if possible. Survival equipment "Chaps" were received and issued as replacement for vests. The wearing of the chaps is incompatible with the pilots cockpit of the C-47 aircraft. These were replaced in December by survival vests.

(U) Spare parts and test gear for mission peculiar equipment were very limited during this period. Lack of replacement parts for the compass system and the lack of an adequate facility to "swing" the compass plagued the squadron during the period (See below).

(U) The aircraft CR/OR rate has been considerably below standard for the period. Primarily this has been due to an exceptionally high NORS rate 6.1% due to items peculiar to U.E. aircraft (inverters, generators, compass components and other mission peculiar equipment). An item in particular that caused the aircraft to be OR but not CR is the swinging of the compass system. No suitable compass rose is available on this station. This causes at least a two day loss of a CR aircraft anytime a component of the system is changed that requires reswinging of the compass. Aircraft had to be flown to Tan Son Nhut for compass swing.

(U) Maintenance of one of the mission peculiar sub-systems has presented a problem both from a supply standpoint and experienced specialists.

Parts for this system are practically non-existent and caused considerable lost CR time and maintenance actions exchanging parts from one aircraft to another to meet mission requirements. Assignment of contractor-furnished technical representatives, along with some test equipment and spare parts, has alleviated this problem some what.

(U) A high air abort rate for the period has been experienced. This again has been primarily on mission peculiar equipment. The contractor personnel have been successful in expeditious repair of this equipment both through actual repair and on the spot trouble shooting to allow component swaps. But this still entails lost time and late mission take offs.

VII MORALE

(U) Morale continued to be high during the period. On 27 Nov, a squadron party was held at a nearby beach. Steaks, liquid refreshment, and involuntary swimming were featured.

(U) The squadron mail room began operation 1 Nov 66. Inasmuch as the APO is physically separated from the squadron by approximately 15 minute driving time, the mail room has proven to be not only a morale booster but also a convenience.

(U) The crew lounge was completed during the period and soft drinks and coffee are now available.

(U) Unfortunately, the difficulty in acquiring adequate quarters off base and the crowded conditions in on-base quarters and messing facilities still exist.



Col. Ralph Angel, (Far Right) DCO, 14th Air Commando Wing and Lt Col. R.L. Stapper (Second from Right) Commander, 361st Reconnaissance Squadron meet the crew of the first 361st aircraft to arrive at APO San Francisco 96240. ATG/1