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HEADQUARTERS AIR RESCUE SERVICE

(62d AAF BASE UNIT)

AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND

MORRISON FIELD, WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

HISTORICAL RECORD REPORT

FOR PERIOD

ACTIVATION TO 1 JULY 1946

Prepared by Intelligence Section, Headquarters, Air Rescue Service, (62d AAF Base Unit), Morrison Field, Florida.

Containing historical data compiled and prepared in accordance with AAF Regulation 20-8, ATC Regulation 20-20, and AR 345-105.

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INTRODUCTION

Air Rescue Service was brought about largely through the efforts of Colonel Wallace S. Ford and associated officers, whose wartime experience in rescue work throughout the theaters of war made them fully aware of the need for an organization for the post-war Air Forces which could organize, supervise, direct, and control the rescue activities of the Army Air Forces, and also coordinate rescue matters with other U. S. agencies. It is the mission of Air Rescue Service to provide rescue service in conformity with AR 95-125: To plan, coordinate and obtain approval of requirements for personnel, equipment, installations, and facilities of the Air Rescue Service; to inform all components of the U. S. Army on plans, programs, and facilities of the Air Rescue Service; to inform all components of the U. S. Army on plans and programs for rescue service operated by Government agencies other than the Army Air Forces when such plans and programs involve changes in AAF requirements for rescue personnel, equipment, facilities and fixed installations; to provide trained rescue personnel and units as required; to coordinate rescue matters with other U. S. agencies; and where authorized, with the rescue services of other governments.

Air Rescue Service, as it is constituted as of this writing, was evolved through a series of organizational and command changes. Prior to the organization of the 62d AAF Base Unit, a search and rescue within

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the continental U. S. was the responsibility of the numbered air forces, i.e., 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Air Forces within the boundaries of their designated area. The history of Air Rescue Service goes back, properly speaking, to December 5, 1945, when the 62d AAF Base Unit (Search and Rescue) was designated and organized under Continental Air Forces.

62d AAF Base Unit (Continental Air Forces) Designated. The 62d AAF Base Unit (Continental Air Forces) was designated effective 0001 hours, December 5, 1945.¹ The mission of the 62d AAF Base Unit (CAF) as set forth in General Order No. 39, was to plan and execute search and rescue activities over land areas of the zone of interior and air-borne rescue over such coastal water areas as AAF operations may require. The 62d AAFBU was directed to assume and carry out the responsibilities of rescue then assigned to the four continental air forces. It was also the responsibility of this AAFBU to execute the CAF responsibilities as directed in AAF Letter AFRET, dated 23 October 1945, subject "AAF Assistance to Forest Service, Department of Agriculture." The strength and grades for this organization were to be authorized by the Commanding General, CAF, from bulk allotments to CAF under approved Tables of Distribution in accordance with AAF Reg 150-1. The equipment required for this organization was authorized by Tables of Allowances 20-1, "Equipment for Army Air Forces Zone of Interior Installations," and Tables of Allowances 1-42, "Continental AAF, Search and Rescue" and current changes thereto.

1. General Order No. 39, Hq, Continental Air Forces, as amended by GO No. 5, Hq, CAF, dated 18 January 1946.

SUBJECT: Redesignation and Assignment of the Army Air Forces Weather Service and the Army Airways Communications System; Establishment of certain Army Air Forces Activities. (Continued)

4. Effective 13 March 1946, the following activities are established at the locations indicated and assigned to the Air Transport Command;

Activity

Location

Headquarters, Flying Safety Service

Langley Field, Virginia

Headquarters, Aeronautical Chart Service

Washington, D. C.

Headquarters, Air Rescue Service

Washington, D. C.

Headquarters, Flight Services

Washington, D. C.

a. Equipment for Headquarters, Flying Safety Service, is authorized in accordance with T/A 20-1, as amended.

b. Equipment for Headquarters, Aeronautical Chart Service, is authorized in accordance with T/A 20-1, as amended.

c. Equipment for Headquarters, Air Rescue Service is authorized in accordance with T/A 20-1, as amended. Necessary additional equipment required will be authorized in accordance with T/A 1-42 (Proposed).

d. Equipment for Headquarters, Flight Services is authorized in accordance with T/A 20-1, as amended.

5. Effective 13 March 1946, the following units are relieved from their pre-assignments and assigned to the Air Transport Command for further assignment at Headquarters, Air Weather Service, without change of authorized strengths or locations:

53d Reconnaissance Squadron, VLR, Weather

54th Reconnaissance Squadron, VLR, Weather

55th Reconnaissance Squadron, VLR, Weather

59th Reconnaissance Squadron, VLR, Weather

6. When the actions directed herein have been accomplished, a report will be submitted to this office by letter and copies furnished the Service Commander concerned.

7. Twenty (20) copies of the order issued pursuant to this letter will be forwarded to the Commanding General, Army Air Forces (Attention: Publication Section, Air Adjutant General), in addition to the distribution directed in paragraph 17 e, AR 310-50. No other distribution will be made to offices of Headquarters, Army Air Forces.

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Major Kenneth O. Bennington was assigned to duty as an Air Rescue liaison officer with the U. S. Coast Guard in Washington, D. C.

At the end of this reporting period, the strength of Air Rescue Service, (62d AAF Base Unit), is 369 officers and 462 enlisted men (these figures include personnel assigned to the 5th ERS).

The following is a brief narrative account of each squadron and detachment under Hq, Air Rescue Service, as of June 30, 1946:

5th Emergency Rescue Squadron

The 5th ERS was assigned to ATC and further assigned to Hq, Air Rescue Service, effective May 21, 1946.¹⁰ Also see separate historical report.

Rescue Control Center "A"

This Control Center was originally a Sector Control Center for the 1st Air Force, with station at Andrews Field, Maryland. From the period of activation of the 62d AAF BU, until the Hq, Air Rescue Service (62d AAF BU) moved to Washington National Airport on May 29, the history of this Control Center and Headquarters 62d AAF BU was more or less synonymous, since both activities were at the same location. On March 26, this unit was designated Sector Control Center "A" under the command of Lt. Colonel Joseph F. Westover.

10. ATC Ltr 20-408 (27 May 46), dtd 7 June 46, Subject: Organizational Changes Within the Air Rescue Service pursuant to Authority Contained in par 2, Ltr, Hq, AAF, ATC-OB-1, Movement Directive, 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron, dtd 3 May 46.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

Major Albert W. Bloom reported to Headquarters Air Rescue Service and was appointed Public Relations Officer July 17, 1946. Major Bloom departed 25 July for twenty-two days TDY in connection with Public Relations activities with Project "Airmail" in Los Angeles.

Lt Thomas J. Barr was released from TDY with "Crossroads Project" and returned to duty as Assistant PRO on August 20, 1946. Lt Barr was appointed Assistant Project Officer and Public Relations representative for Headquarters Air Rescue Service on Project "Airmail" in Chicago, and was on TDY from September 14, 1946 to October 24, 1946.

On October 23, 1946, Major Bloom departed this station for Separation Center, and on October 24, 1946, Lt Barr was appointed Public Relations Officer.

Each Squadron and detachment in Air Rescue Service has been directed to appoint a Public Relations Officer, additional duty. SOP's for Public Relations activities have been published and distributed to all units.

At the end of this period this section is operating with one officer and one enlisted man.

MEDICAL

This section began to function on July 20, 1946 when Captain Charles D. Bodine of 1103rd AAF Base Unit, Morrison Field, was appointed Acting Surgeon for Air Rescue Service. It was necessary

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for Captain Bodine to initiate immediately a system of reporting for all units and establish a policy for non-emergency medical care for headquarters personnel.

Major Frank A. Perri, Flight Surgeon, was assigned and reported August 19, 1946. Major Perri was also given the duty of Group Surgeon for 1st Air Weather Group (Prov), and Chief of Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic at the station hospital.

A request for additional medical officers was submitted to Headquarters Air Transport Command, and on September 18, 1946, four officers; Lt R.J. Goodall, M.C; Lt M.B. Pate, M.C.; Lt H.N. Hunsader, M.C; and Lt F.E. Miller, M.C., reported to headquarters Air Rescue Service⁸. These officers, who were not aviation medical examiners, were transferred out by Headquarters Air Transport Command and replaced by three officers who were graduates of the School of Aviation Medicine, Randolph Field, Texas, and the Airborne Training School, Fort Benning, Georgia⁹. These three officers reported to Headquarters Air Rescue Service on September 27, 1946, and for the next few days were given instructions as to their duties and responsibilities in their pending assignments. On October 7, 1946, they were assigned as follows: 1st Lt. Albert G. Lewis, Assistant Surgeon of Headquarters Air Rescue Service; 1st Lt. Randolph W. Briggs to Squadron "B", Hamilton Field; and 1st Lt. Truett V. Bennett to Squadron "A", Andrews Field.

On October 28, 1946, twelve medical enlisted men reported to Headquarters Air Rescue Service and after a series of orientation lectures were reassigned to units requiring medical personnel.

8. SO #198, Par 9, Hq 503rd AAFBU, ATLD, ATC, 31 Aug 46.

9. SO #198, Par 9, Hq 503rd AAFBU, 17 Aug 46.

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In early October the Surgeon of Air Rescue Service attended a conference of all Aero Medical Directors and Division Surgeons of ATC. This conference dealt with many problems applicable to aviation medicine, such as immunization of trans-continental and inter-continental travelers, discussion on pressurized cabin aircraft, safety precautions to be observed in military and civilian aircraft, and rescue and survival technique.

The shortage of medical supplies and equipment continues to be a serious problem. In some cases the T/As are not adequate, and in others authorized supplies are not available. A revision of T/As has been recommended and a special effort to improvise and acquire authorized material is being made.

The medical Section was inspected by an ATC Inspector on November 19, 1946. Of course, discrepancies were found and corrective suggestions made.

Lt Pope B. Holliday reported to Headquarters Air Rescue Service November 27, 1946, and was reassigned to the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron.

During December this section conducted a monthly physical inspection of all enlisted personnel in Headquarters, in addition to normal administrative functions. The Surgeon continued in his capacity as Chief, of Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic at Base Hospital. The function of this section was seriously handicapped when Lt. Lewis, Assistant Surgeon, was ordered to the AAF Examining Board in Boston, Mass., for a period of three months.

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Personnel assigned to this section as of December 31, 1946, includes two officers and one enlisted man.

STATISTICAL CONTROL

During Captain Roger's TDY at school, 1st Lt. Spotswood Allen was assigned as Statistical Control Officer. Due to the loss of the civilian clerk, through reduction in force, and the impending separation of Lt. Allen, only the minimum routine activities were performed by this section.

Upon Captain Roger's return, October 10, 1946, reports controls and procedures were established and the section began to function in its capacity as Statistical Control. At the end of this period the section has one officer and one enlisted man assigned.

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