

SUBJECT: BRIEF SUMMARY REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PARARESCUE TEAMS AND THE PART I PLAYED IN ASSISTING IN THIS EFFORT.

1. At the time the Air Transport Command (later called MATS) was interested in forming the Air Rescue Service I was still overseas. I received PCS orders to report to ATC Hqtrs. as a consultant in the formulation of the ARS. This was during the period of Feb. 1946 to Oct. 1946. (See attachment #1 for confirmation of this period of time and assignment).

2. In October 1946 I left the service. In early 1947 Col. Dick Kight, then C.O. of ARS, contacted me and invited me to reinlist in the ARS and assist in establishing Pararescue teams and training facilities for such teams, as well as Land Rescue Teams. This I did in June 1947. (See attachment #2). *HENRY ERBEN, CECIL HUBBARD, J. B. WADD, TED SURPY KOWSKI, JAMES CURRY.*

3. The first pararescue personnel were sent to the US Forest Service Smokejumpers School at Missoula, Montana for instruction in advanced parachuting, use of protective equipment and clothing, tree landings and let-down techniques. *W.S. SMITH, RICHARD ENOCH, HOLDEI*
CAPT. ? ① ② ③

④ 4. The first ^⑤ pararescue teams were established and ready for ^⑥ field assignment in the last half of 1947 or early in 1948.

5. In 1948 I was placed on TDY to the Pentagon to design a career program for survival specialists. MOS 3383. I don't remember whether or not the pararescue personnel were then given this MOS or not. At that time we established career progression in this MOS to Chief Warrant Officer.

6. In July 1948 I received a direct commission and assigned as Chief, Pararescue Section, Operations, Hqtrs. ARS.

Bob Weaver

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF SURVIVAL TRAINING IN THE USAF

In 1943 Richard Howard (now Prof. Howard of Harvard Univ.) and myself were assigned to an Aero Medical research and training staff under the USAAF School of Applied Tactics in Orlando, Florida. At that time we were Army Air Corps personnel and at that time survival training was not only non-existent in the USAAF but had received no consideration by any command. Information regarding ill-fated aircraft missions in the south pacific was channeled to the School of Applied Tactics for analysis. Such information often included data regarding the failure of aircrew members to survive a bailout in an isolated tropical environment though suffering no physical injury in the bailout or crash landing. From this information Dick and I decided there was a high priority for some type of survival training school which would develop curricula and instructors for unit level training schools throughout the south pacific command as well as CONUS units. Our first attempts to justify such a school to the powers that be were met with failure through the disapproval of the commanding officer of the School of Applied Tactics who continually referred to the USAAF as "that god-damned air arm". However in late 1943 the Pentagon dispatched a team of General officers and their staffs to visit all Army Air Force schools to determine those schools requiring expansion, those which were obsolete and should be closed and to identify requirements for new training programs resulting from on-going WW II air combat experiences. Dick and I were permitted to make a very short presentation as to the need and design of a survival school to meet not only the requirements of south pacific operations but air operations in other potential areas. Shortly after this inspection team returned to Washington, D.C. the Pentagon issued a directive to the C.O. of the School of Applied Tactics (same fellow who referred to the USAAF as "that god-damned air arm") to provide the necessary administrative facilities for Dick and I to conduct research, design curricula and establish the first survival school in the USAAF. (Shortly after the school was in full operation Dick assisted Frank and John Craighead in establishing the Navy's survival school at Pensacola, Fla.) The official designation of the AAF school was either in late 1943 or early 1944. I don't remember the exact month. The school was placed directly under the command of Donald Flickinger (now retired AF Gen.)

The first students trained by the school staff were personnel equipment officers, who in turn were responsible for establishing unit level survival training programs throughout the AAF. The academic phase of this training was at Orlando with the field training on Hypoluxo Island, adjacent to Lantana Florida. About a year after the school was initiated I was assigned to the China, Burma, India theater to lead a jungle rescue team in Upper Burma in the Kachin tribal area. The progress and events related to the school from that time until after WW II are unknown to me.

Immediately following WWII there were drastic cuts in military personnel, programs, and units. The School of Applied Tactics was amongst those units deactivated. However a few new organizations were formed for future air operations. One such organization was the Air Rescue Service. The Air Rescue Service assumed the responsibility of continuing survival training facilities for the now separated United States Air Force. At this time, in order to meet world wide Air Force requirements, the field training sites were expanded to include Florida, Texas and Labrador.

In 1947 or early 1948 I was temporarily assigned to the Personnel branch at the Pentagon to assist in designing and writing a career progression program and examinations for a survival technician field (MOS 3383). Up until then survival instructors were carried under a real hodgepodge of career designations, none of which remotely related to their duty assignment.

The Air Rescue Service assisted in establishing a survival training program at Chunute AFB and also assisted in the establishment of the survival school for the ARC Wing at McCall, Idaho. (The ARC Wing organization was first formed within the Air Rescue Headquarters) When SAC first held curricula conferences for the school at Camp Carson I attended such conference at the Broadmoor Hotel near Camp Carson so am quite familiar with the events leading up to and following the initiation of the SAC school.

Sometime after the SAC school was implemented discussions were held in Washington regarding the practicality of merging the survival phase of training of the Air Rescue Service, the Arctic Survival School in Alaska as well as the SAC school into a single school under the Air Training Command. This later resulted in the Stead AFB location which SAC personnel were instrumental in selecting.

A word in passing as to why the SAC school was established even though approved survival training facilities already existed in the Air Force which could have been expanded to incorporate the SAC requirement should SAC have desired such. (Though this is my personal opinion and probably should not appear in the history you are writing, I believe my explanation will make the reasoning obvious.) General LeMay desired SAC to be self-sufficient (rightly or wrongly doesn't really matter at this point) regarding several support facilities. At that time the Air Force had a large transport capability known as the Air Transport Command, later changed to MATS. SAC attempted to establish their own in-house air transport facilities. Although the Air Rescue Service had rescue responsibilities for the entire Air Force, SAC attempted to establish their own rescue service by persuading the 10th Rescue Organization in Alaska to form the nucleus of such an organization. Bernt Balkin, the C.O. of the Alaska organization deferred to the Air Rescue Service. SAC endeavors at establishing these duplicate facilities all failed except for the the survival school. Under this self-sufficiency approach it should be obvious why the SAC school was established and also obvious why at a later date the Air Force directed the merger of the schools for practical and economic reasons, rather than a desire by SAC to expand into a larger field training area.

With the establishment of the school at Stead AFB, SAC instructors and staff were transferred to Stead. Shortly after this move several ARS instructors were assigned to Stead AFB. ARS retained some of their survival instructors in order to train pararescue and land rescue team members. Between 1952 and 1956 I again lost contact with survival training activities as I was on loan to the American Museum of Natural History to do exploration work for them in Thailand. Following this assignment I joined the staff at Stead AFB.

As you can see some of my date recollections are hazy, however the following individuals may be able to provide more specific dates regarding the events I've related above.

Donald Flickinger (Retired USAF General. First survival school was under his command).

Richard T. Kight (Retired USAF General. Was C.O. of the ARS when survival training responsibilities were vested in the Air Rescue Service after WWII).

Ennis Taylor (ARC Wing survival training program in Idaho).

Burton Miller (SAC school staff member).

Richard Howard (Presently Professor in Harvard Univ. Botany department).

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