SECURITY INFORMATION

HISTORICAL DATA

1 JUL-31 DEC 51

AIR RESCUE SERVICE
(MATS)

SA-16 TRIPHIBIAN

[redacted]

HISTORICAL DATA

AIR RESCUE SERVICE
(MATS)

1 July-31 December
1951

Headquarters
Air Rescue Service
(T-8)
3800 Newark Street
Washington 25, D. C.

[redacted]

FOREWARD

The Historical Data for the period 1 July through 31 December 1951 records the most valuable information on the organization, mission, responsibilities, training, and planning for the present and future.

It is hoped that the information contained in this history will be useful in meeting the objectives outlined in Air Force Regulation 210-3, 30 August 1951.

MISSION OF AIR RESCUE SERVICE

Provide world-wide air rescue service for all Air Force and other U. S. military activities requesting such service.

Maintain assigned rescue facilities in operational readiness to permit rapid deployment in support of combat operations in any area.

Provide air evacuation for air crews or other personnel from enemy territory in support of combat operations.

Render air rescue service, upon request, to civil aviation of the U. S. and to civil and military aviation of other countries in accordance with ICAO procedures and policies of the Department of Defense.

Perform such other missions as are directed by the Chief of Staff, USAF.

NOTE: Air rescue service is fulfilled by aerial and ground search, dropping of survival equipment and medical personnel, and evacuation of survivors.

[redacted]

CODE OF AN AIR RESCUE MAN

It is MY duty as a member of the Air Rescue Service to save life and to aid the injured.

It will be prepared at all times to perform my assigned duties quickly and efficiently, placing these duties before personal desires and comfort.

These things I do that others may live.

POLICY OF AIR RESCUE SERVICE

Air Rescue Service exists only to save lives. The probability of finding survivors diminishes with each minute that passes after an air disaster occurs. Therefore, in each and every incident it must be presumed that there are survivors and every possible effort must be made to find, aid, and return these survivors to safety. The thoughts and efforts of every man in the Air Rescue Service must be directed toward creating an organization better equipped and trained to carry out any rescue by day or night in the least possible time so that all will know that no life has been lost through a wasted minute or a misdirected effort.

[redacted]

of Air Rescue Service, its organization, mission, operational and training procedures, equipment and brief details of a number of major operational missions accomplished during the last twelve months.

The purpose of the kit was to acquaint members of the press, free lance writers, and other commands of the Air Force with the function of Air Rescue Service and its relation to most military operations both in peace and war.

The practical application of emergency medical treatment of wounded or injured personnel saved the lives of thousands of soldiers and airmen during this reporting period. This was readily apparent in the efforts of Air Rescue Service in Korea. Constant training and application of techniques and procedures proved successful in combat operations and other operations 'round the world.

In an effort to continue efficient medical service and particularly to improve methods, the ARS Surgeons office began compiling necessary data which would be incorporated in a Medical Training Manual. This manual, when published, will be distributed to all ARS field activities and the required class lectures and problems will be conducted at each location by the assigned rescue team commander and team personnel. The manual will include lectures of anatomy, physiology, minor surgery, major emergency aid, evacuation (air and ground), biological and chemical warfare, and the treatment of atomic injuries.

In conducting the training program, the initial qualification phase will last 10-12 weeks with an intense detailed course of study to follow.

3d ARS Korean Data Summary

The rescue commitments have indeed been phenomenal for the entire command; however, such demands and accomplishments had become almost routine for the 3d Air Rescue Squadron based in Japan and Korea. The statistics verifying rescue operations in FEAF indicate clearly the story of the vital role Air Rescue Service has played in the Korean effort.[24 & 25]

Para and Land Rescue Teams

One of the most interesting, colorful, and important operations of the entire Air Rescue Service organization centered around the pararescue and land rescue teams. The value of these specially trained personnel was evident in the successful accomplishments of a number of missions during this period.

Rescue and survival missions

As an illustration of rescue team effectiveness, Flight C, 6th Air Rescue Squadron completed two such missions during August 1951.

On 4 August 1951, an RB-45 aircraft crashed on the crest of a nine hundred foot hill five miles from the airbase after GCA lost contact eight and one half miles off the runway. Weather, at the time, was five hundred foot ceiling, one mile visibility and heavy rain, all of which contributed to making the search by SB-17 and H-5 crews difficult. However, the crash was spotted in less than one hour after the crash by the H-5 crew when the ceiling lifted temporarily. Low ceilings, darkness, and low visibility in heavy rain prevented dropping para-medics or sending them to the scene by helicopter. A land rescue team was dispatched across the bay by boat. Two miles from the scene they began a strenuous hike to reach the crash. Two mine hundred foot peaks had to be scaled, climbing steep inclines covered with twelve to eighteen inches of moss and

24 & 25. 3d ARS Korean Data Summary

very dense undergrowth. The crash was finally reached the following morning. There were no survivors among the four crew members. The ground party was supported with aerial deliveries by H-5 and SC-47 aircraft. The drops, both free fall and para-delivery, were highly successful and all rations and equipment were recovered. The ground party returned to Goose Bay the afternoon of 6 August.

The Flight C land rescue team was again utilized to recover the remains of five bodies from a 1944 B-24 bomber crash. A "bush pilot" had found the crash and notified Flight C. He produced five sets of identification tags to substantiate the report. Action concerning this report was begun on 22 August 1951 with the ground party traveling forty miles by tug boat to reach the nearest point for the final 15 mile trek by foot.

The terrain was different on this mission. The route was over barren rocky country, with very sparse vegetation, and the party had to scale steep ridges to reach the crash at a height of two thousand feet. They arrived at the site on 23 August and set up a base camp. Again all supplies and equipment were para-dropped from the SC-47. A thorough search of the area produced five skeletons. The wreckage of the B-24 was strewn over a large area. The mission was completed on 25 August 1951.

The two recorded incidents give some indication of the type of rugged individual required to perform such specialized duties. Since rescue operations necessitate team members performing their mission in wilderness areas without the facilities of civilization, a background of activities in comparable areas was desired for personnel

interested in receiving rescue and survival training. It has been determined that training received at the 2156th Air Rescue Squadron (TTU) did not necessarily qualify an individual as a team member, therefore, other prerequisits were needed such as having had service with the United States Forest Service or other comparable organizations provided such service was active operationally rather than administratively, avocations, or vocations such as trapping, extensive hunting, professional guides, forest rangers, game wardens and extensive farm experience of such nature that indicated inherent responsibility and sense of improvisation.

These were some of the requirements which had to be met before applicants for rescue and survival team training would possibly be considered.

The most important quality which rescue and survival personnel required was self reliance and mature judgement in addition to experience. The mere fact that an individual was a qualified jumper did not necessarily make him a good candidate for the rescue and survival school. The training to become a jumper was approximately 3% of the total training required to become a qualified specialist. Furthermore, the medical training phase was stressed to a much greater degree during this period. The overall curriculum, as taught at the 2156th Air Rescue Squadron (TTU), is included in appendix #26.

SA-16 transition training

The 2156th Air Rescue Squadron continued to train SA-16 amphibian crews assigned to ARS operational activities. During this six month period, the squadron provided extensive transition to five

by all operational activities in achieving a high standard of training since proper training is the key to all future successful operations.

Training mission "Borinquen"

An example of the type of training which increased the proficiency of operational personnel was accomplished by Flight C, 1st Air Rescue Squadron, on 17-18 October 1951.

Personnel of the flight were advised by their commanding officer to anticipate, without further warning, the movement of all organizational aircraft, flying personnel, and sufficient maintenance personnel and supplies to an advanced airdrome where sustained rescue operations could be conducted for a period of two weeks without assistance from other military units. Arrangements were made with the Commanding Officer, Infantry Training Center, Camp Tortuguero, Puerto Rico for the use of Vega Baja Airfield, a deactivated airfield located within the limits of the camp, for a two day field exercise. Fire-fighting equipment and drinking water were to be obtained at the advanced airdrome. All other supplies and equipment were airlifted into Vega Baja by Flight C aircraft using fly-away kits and supplies which were kept on hand at Ramey AFB for such emergencies.

At exactly 1230Z, 17 October 1951, the alert siren was sounded and the following requirements were established: The alert aircraft plus its ground maintenance personnel would depart Ramey within 15 minutes. The alternate alert aircraft plus its ground maintenance personnel would depart Ramey within 30 minutes. The C-82 with the land rescue team's jeep and radio trailer pluss additional supplies would depart Ramey within one hour. These requirements were met

with the alert aircraft becoming airborne 13 minutes after the alert was sounded and the other aircraft followed within the scheduled time period.

Operations were thus begun at the advanced base and the following problems illustrate the training accomplished during the two day period.

SA-10 amphibian problem: A small military crash boat enroute from San Juan to Aguadilla encountered difficulties in a squall and was reported as being in danger of capsizing as it was being blown further out to sea. The last contact was made with it approximately 30 minutes ago at which time the radio operator reported the position to be, "About 10 miles off shore, near....." the rest of the transmission was lost. The time of departure from San Juan is unknown. All other factors are unknown. Investigate, using two SA-10's. Report all sightings to "Ramey Rescue Mobile."

Land rescue problem: H-5 will be used to select an overnight camp site for the land rescue team in the vicinity of Arecibo Airfield. Once site is located, the H-5 will make a long, high descent into the site, discharge one man, then climb straight ahead to 700 feet before returning to the base. Action should be seen by many natives. Land rescue team will locate the man by interrogation alone. The man will represent an individual who has parachuted from an aircraft. He will be equipped with one salvaged parachute and a box of matches for signaling.

H-5 rescue problem: At 0900 the helicopter will hover at a

point one mile west of your camp site and request jet fighter cover while the helicopter makes a "behind the enemy lines" pick up of an injured man. The injured man will be evacuated to Vega Baja in the capsule litter while the two jet fighters make simulated strafing runs on enemy troops in the area who are "firing on the helicopter with small arms." Upon the completion of this mission the land rescue team will break camp and return to Vega Baja. Two Air Force F-84 Thunderjets assigned to the 31st Fighter Escort Wing provided the air support.

Valuable experience was gained by the maneuvers. Weaknesses in advance base and mobility plans were found and corrective action taken to insure maximum effectiveness in event of actual movement of the flight to an advance airdrome. The entire two day training exercise was completed without accident. The prevention of flying and ground accidents were stressed throughout the program with evident success.

Aircraft accident program

Aircraft accidents continued to occur within the ARS organization. One contributing factor was the combat operations; however, other accidents having no relation to combat occurred and were chargeable to various ARS activities and their flying safety program. The proper implementation of a flying safety program was the direct responsibility of the ARS activity commanders. In such an organization as Air Rescue Service, with its varied operations and flights under all types of conditions, it naturally possessed a high aircraft accident potential and constant attention to flying safety

HEADQUARTERS, AIR RESCUE SERVICE
Washington 25, D. C.

COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE
11-16 June 1951

OPERATIONS DIRECTORATE

1. PARARESCUE AND LAND RESCUE TEAMS

a. A major rescue mission is usually accompanied by a glaring public and military "spotlight." The eyes of the world are literally focused upon the incident. The more remote the area, the better news copy it makes. The mission commander suddenly finds many non-rescue eyes looking over his shoulders and monitoring his progress in prosecuting the mission. When the missing aircraft is located, the score usually adds up to a picture such as this: the area of the incident is far removed from the facilities of civilization; either climatic or topographical conditions are extremely adverse; and several survivors are in need of immediate aid. Oftentimes the crash site is beyond the range of our present helicopters, or the elevation of the site is such as to preclude effective utilization of such aircraft, or the density of the vegetation will require the construction of a helicopter evacuation site. Many such "or's" appear in the picture. Certainly survival equipment may be dropped at the site, but such operations will not effect the rescue and evacuation of the survivors. It is atthis point of the game when the "spot light" seems most glaring. The well remembered Greenland ice cap mission or the Belgian Airliner that crashed a few years back near Gander, Newfoundland, are only two of many incidents we are all familiar with. In the first incident, weather proved a delaying factor while in the second, the nature of the terrain proved most detrimental to an expeditious evacuation. Incidents of this nature developed a requirement for pararescue and land rescue teams. Such a facility is now available to all rescue squadrons. This facility may be called your last straw, and during such major incidents as we have just discussed it is indeed

an important straw. So, with the "eyes of the world" focused upon your command, your rescue team proceeds to the crash site. Regardless of the thousands who manifest an interest in the incident, or of your concern in the matter, there are only three or four men who can physically control the fate of the survivors at this point. These men are your team members. They are Rescue's sole representation at the crash site. In many cases, they are all airmen. The efficiency of your previous search operations, the accuracy of your mission planning, the closely coordinated effort of other organizations in prosecuting the mission are all in vain should these fellows fall down on the job. Rescuing bodies rather than lives is a sad anti-climax to rescue missions of this nature. With the realization of the vital part the rescue team plays in your organization, it is not difficult to understand the necessity for maintaining a high degree of proficiency within the teams. This same aspect becomes far more critical during times of hostilities. Rescue facilities during such times are usually spread rather thin over large land mass areas. Rescue team members are then employed in the form of two men or three men teams at the most for a mission. A month's workload in one day is not unusual to a rescue squadron in wartime. There is little time to build up the necessary field experience within the teams to meet this requirement after hositilities are declared. Such must be accomplished now, and maintained by each squadron.

b. A critical analysis of a rescue team's potentialities will prove valuable to you. Military geography is a subject we are all familiar with, yet emphasis has not been placed upon it until the past few years. A search of military geographical records pertaining to your area of responsibility will often result in the fact that such information has not been designed for rescue utilization. In illustration, desert sand areas may be described to the extent of area, climate, seasonal variations, etc., however, this information will not usually tell you if the bearing surface will permit the landing of a rescue B-29, nor will it explain how to establish friendly relations with the nomadic tribes who may inhabit the area. The air base, of which you are a tenant unit, does not provide this facility. In fact, you may find it difficult to find anyone in your theater who can do all this for you. Rescue crew members, clerks, and maintenance personnel do not have this capability. The disregard of military geography has resulted in the loss of more wars and military missions than any other single

factor. There is no military organization, and probably never will be one, which can disregard the need for utilizing military geography in the planning and executing of their mission. Rescue teams are initially trained with such a thought in mind. However, many rescue activities are seldom availing themselves of this informational collecting facility. The teams have, inherent with their design, the facility of establishing rescue coordination with the native populace of remote wilderness areas. Should such areas be present within your area of responsibility, then you are well aware of the complete disregard such natives usually have of aircraft incidents. Oftentimes this is due to superstitions of the natives while in other cases the only interest the natives may have is in sacking the wreckage. Proper coordination with the natives has in the past resulted in the saving of many air crew lives. Such operations could well prove valuable again when maximum rescue effort is taxed by a war time workload. However, now is the time to establish this native coordination, not after the balloon goes up. The training the team members receive in native psychology and rescue operations permit them to perform this mission for you. The establishment of advance bases and assistance in maintaining them when all base facilities are non-existent is another facility a land or pararescue team member can provide you, if called upon to do so.

c. In summation, a well-trained and proficient rescue team can be a very valuable asset to your command if exploited to the maximum.