

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 3RD AEROSPACE RESCUE & RECOVERY GROUP (MAC)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: 3C

SUBJECT: Monthly Commander's Letter

to: Brigadier General Allison C. Brooks
Commander
Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service

Feb 1968
SAC

EXEC: B 4/16
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1. Literally and figuratively, we wound this month up with a bang. The VC attack on 31 January 1968 against the major cities of South Viet Nam was not entirely unexpected but the viciousness of the attacks was unparalleled. Here at Tan Son Nhut, 112 VC were killed within the base perimeter, with another 325 KIA just outside the perimeter (actual body count). Snipers were within the cantonment area for more than 24 hours. One sniper was operating from behind the officer's club, directly across the street from the trailer Colonels Beaudry and Musick stayed in two nights before the assault. Our people behaved well and no casualties were incurred within the Group. At Pleiku, one HH-43 was pretty badly beaten up by shrapnel from a 122mm rocket which impacted at the end of the revetment the aircraft was parked in. This bird needs about 35 parts and some sheet metal work but is reparable within the capabilities of the unit, with base support. At Tan Son Nhut, Det 14 aircraft received some bullet holes but were flyable throughout the period. At Danang, the Jolly Greens and Pedros provided sustained, around-the-clock evacuation of incoming casualties being received from the DMZ area and flown to Danang by C-130's. Over 790 casualties were evacuated from Danang to the Naval Hospital and the hospital ships Sanctuary and Repose by the 37th and Det 7, 38th, in the six day period starting 31 January. Although these statistics will not show as saves, the sustained performance of our Danang people was outstanding.

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2. One non-personnel casualty to fall by the wayside as a result of the attack is our new, approved facility for Det 14 here at Tan San Nhut. Construction had been scheduled to start on 4 February; however, as a result of the difficulties encountered in getting off-base personnel back to the base, General Momyer has directed all construction efforts be directed towards on-base housing. This is most frustrating as we had done quite a selling job to get the base behind the effort. A 7AF programming action directive has been published which has an end objective of having all personnel billeted on base by June 1968. Judging by this, it will be July before the Red Horse people can get to our project.

MDC

3. General Momyer's letter to Lieutenant General Holzapple, DCS/ Research and Development, Hq USAF, containing our input on a replacement aircraft for the HH-43, was dispatched on 29 January 1968. It refers to the MAC ROC and the obsolescence of the HH-43. It also points out that this aircraft would not duplicate the requirement for the HH-3 and HH-53 but would provide an increased range and capability in those areas where larger, long range helicopters are not normally available. So that it is clear that we are not seeking new development, the letter also states that the requirement could be satisfied by modification of one of several helicopters in current production. In view of lack of 7AF support for a SEAOR, it appears that this may be the best means from this end for getting additional four-star and Air Council level support for the replacement aircraft.

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4. Our helicopter copilots were pleased to finally get the word that the 350 hours of helicopter time requirement for upgrade has been reduced to 275 hours by MAC. Although this is not as low as we would have liked it, this level provides hope for some of the copilots to upgrade during their tour in SEA who could not possibly have done so otherwise. I know Colonel Beall worked hard on the reclama to support our position and we appreciate his efforts on our behalf.

ODC

5. In last month's letter to you, I referenced a request for a manpower survey which PARRC had forwarded to MAC. Colonel Smith has advised that MAC has disapproved the request, which is disappointing and difficult to understand. When we lost our in-house manpower shop in Hq ARRS, it was my understanding that the MAC Management Engineering Teams would provide ARRS with manpower evaluations. Since the Group was organized in January 1966, no on-site manpower evaluations have been made and there appear to be many anomalies in our authorizations. For example, the 37ARRS is authorized a Supply Officer while the 39ARRS is not authorized one, even though it is a larger unit, nor are any of the large Detachments authorized one. In the area of Personnel Technicians, there is a complete disparity between similar units. The 37ARRS is authorized five technicians with a MSgt, a Tech Sergeant, and three Staff Sergeants; Det 1, 37ARRS is authorized three, one MSgt, one TSgt, and one SSgt; Det 2, 37ARRS is authorized only one Technician, a TSgt; and 39ARRS, although larger than the 37ARRS is authorized only two technicians, one MSgt and one SSgt. With all these variations in authorizations, it is interesting to note that the Group Headquarters, supposedly senior, is authorized only three technicians headed by a SSgt with two Sgts, all five level. The Administrative Specialist area is even in worse shape in distribution of authorizations and grade structure. In view of the move of the 39ARRS to Tuy Hoa, the pending deactivation of

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DET 7

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OL-1, 39ARRS, and the pending activation of the 40ARRS, I believe a manpower survey and on-site evaluation is essential to establish meaningful and functional Unit Manning Documents.

*I agree
+ did so
before*

6. OL-1, 39ARRS, is still on the books at Udorn although the personnel are at Tuy Hoa. Each Monday, the HC-130 is rotated along with the crew and four maintenance personnel. During the month of January, this aircraft was launched five times on a planned basis due to a requirement for a third Crown aircraft, and three times on an emergency basis. This seems to support the position for maintaining an alert aircraft at Udorn. No difficulties are being encountered with parking space or base support and it is the opinion of all concerned that this will be a continuing requirement for the foreseeable future.

7. This letter will be shorter than my usual monthly letter since the visit of Colonels Beaudry and Musick will provide you with a wealth of first hand information which would be only reiterative in this letter. We were all highly appreciative of the opportunity to host the Vice Commander and the DCS/Material, and benefited from their visit a great deal. The presentations by Colonel Beaudry on the future of ARRS and the status of the approved increased force structure were particularly well received, since most personnel are enthusiastic about remaining part of ARRS and want to know where they will fit in the future. It was a rather whirlwind visit but I'm sure both of the visitors feel that they were warmly welcomed. Enclosed are a set of slides taken on our visit to various units which I hope Colonel Beaudry will narrate for the staff. These are not exactly of professional quality but they may give the staff some idea of how our bases and units look. Attachment #1 identifies each slide by number.

8. Monthly mission summary:

	Combat	Non- Combat	USAF	USN	USMC	USA	ARVN	VNAF	CIV	ROK
HH-53	8	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HH-3E	18	3	10	0	0	0	11	0	0	0
HH-43	18	21	5	7	3	11	0	4	3	6
Total	44	24	23	7	3	11	11	4	3	6

Paul E. Leske

PAUL E. LESKE, Colonel, USAF
Commander