

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
71st AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY SQUADRON (MAC)
APO SEATTLE 98742



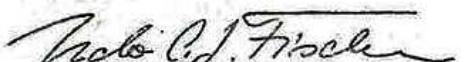
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5 MAR 1975

SUBJECT: 1976 ARRS Mt McKinley Expedition

TO: 71ARRS/CC
ARRS/SG
IN TURN

1. Military rescue capabilities in mountainous terrain at altitudes above 14,000 feet are virtually non-existent. The steady increase of human activities at high altitude entails the occurrence of accidents by increasing numbers. Aircraft incidents at high elevations are a reality to predict. The need for organized rescue to be mobilized on short notice becomes an obvious requirement. East-block nations have established such capabilities; it must be obvious to them to realize its military value. The USA should not lag behind.
2. A high-altitude rescue plan must be developed. It must include selection criteria for suitable personnel, equipment and training requirements, appoint responsible ARRS units, and a directive sequence of required actions to mobilize and effect high-altitude rescue operation.
3. Prior to the compiling of such plan, knowledge and experience must be gained as a foundation to sound and efficient high-altitude rescue capabilities. Motivation and dedication to such undertaking is also a factor which is of prime importance to assure success. Essential knowledge of high-altitude mountaineering procedures, its hazards and its various aspects, is available through numerous individual and scientific reports and studies. This is tremendously helpful in planning high-altitude rescue operations. However, actual experiences of organized rescue activities are underdeveloped and unsatisfactory in documentation. Experienced mountaineers and expeditioners reflect in numerous reports the need for organized high-altitude rescue teams, but recognize the difficulty of organizing such teams due to the widespread locations of individuals and the logistic problems involved.
4. Consequently, the experience gained by pararescuemen in the proposed Mount McKinley Expedition closes the gap and provides essential data for compiling a workable high-altitude rescue plan. The benefit of first-hand experience is not only to collect valuable data on procedures, equipment, and environmental considerations, but also establish factors of team limitations, the recognition of symptoms and signs of high-altitude sicknesses, travel and acclimatization problems, and personal limitations.
5. I urge the approval of the proposed expedition.


UDO C.J. FISCHER, SMSgt, USAF
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1 Atch
SSgt LaPointe's Plan and all atchs