

MINUTES
PARARESCUE COMBAT
TACTICS AND TRAINING
CONFERENCE

2-6 MAY 1977, KIRTLAND AFB, NM



HEADQUARTERS
AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY SERVICE
MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND

MINUTES

PARARESCUE COMBAT TACTICS AND TRAINING CONFERENCE

- Place: Kirtland AFB, NM 87115
2. Time: 0800, 2-6 May 77
3. Chairman: SMSgt Joseph Fernandez
4. Conferees present:

Major General Ralph S. Saunders,
ARRS/CC
Col Dale Oderman, 1550 ATTW/CC
Lt Col Smith, ARRS/SG
Maj Behling, 1550 TTS/TTJ
Maj Troyer, 304 ARRS/CC
CMSgt Walther, ARRS/CMS
CMSgt Vargas, 1550 ATTW/DOPJ
CMSgt Vigare, 39 ARRS/DOV
SMSgt Fernandez, ARRS/DOQP
SMSgt Kelly, ARRS/DOT
SMSgt Wellington, ARRS/DOV
SMSgt Tobey, 71 ARRS
SMSgt Richmond, 129 ARRG
SMSgt Baehr, 55 ARRS
MSgt Beasely, 1550 ATTW
MSgt Garlie, Det 14, 39 ARRW
MSgt Casbeer, Det 22, 41 ARRW
MSgt Adams, 41 ARRS
MSgt Colgate, 304 ARRS
MSgt Phythian, OL-J, 1550 ATTW
MSgt Williamson, 303 ARRS
MSgt Spears, 1550 TTS/TTJ
MSgt Austin, 1550 TTS/TTJ
MSgt Carlson, 1550 TTS/TTJ
MSgt McManus, 106 ARRG
MSgt Eldridge, 41 RWRW
MSgt Duffy, ARRS/SG
MSgt Kraft, 1550 ATTW/DOV
TSgt Lepley, ARRS/DOV
TSgt Nungesser, 301 ARRS
TSgt Goodlett, 1550 ATTW/DOQ
TSgt Stanaland, ARRS/DOXT
SSgt Cotugno, Det 6, 41 RWRW
SSgt Svoboda, Det 10, 39 ARRW

5. Introduction:

a. The goal of the 1977 Pararescue Conference was to provide the Commander of ARRS with recommendations for a better qualified Pararescue combat force. In order for this goal to be achieved, a change in current philosophy is needed and total support from all levels of operation.

b. The conferees felt that regardless of the sequence of deployment of ARRS units to a combat theater, all units must be trained to the same level of combat proficiency to insure all challenges can be met.

c. Historically, Pararescue has been required to be a versatile force, able to meet all the contingencies of ARRS. In

the training/preparation of the pararescue force, it is often overlooked that "in-house" training is the tool most often used to insure proficiency. This now is creating an undesirable situation due to the complexity of current requirements and the low-level of pararescue manning.

d. The lack of persons and dedicated funding for operational training prohibits total combat readiness. The conferees feel that several avenues must be explored to assist in this area. The lack of funds and personnel indicates that the most cost effective course of action be directed toward in-unit/cross-unit training, along with minimal cadre exposure annually to outside formal training courses.

e. If we are to meet the goal of a fully combat qualified Pararescue force, we must accept a certain cost factor. This cost must be budgeted for and dedicated to Pararescue combat rescue training. Without the reinforcement/support in funding, a pararescueman cannot be fully trained in combat rescue.

f. Action must be taken to implement plans and procedures that will insure a qualified Rescue force. In the following minutes, there are items that conferees feel should be implemented to provide the ARRS Commander with a viable rescue force:

(1) Identify formal courses that have combat applicable training and require wings to support pararescuemen's attendance. This attendance will be limited to a minimum number of personnel required to support an in-unit training program. The attendance will be required on an annual basis, with a dedicated budget to support training in the areas of: cold weather, adverse terrain, desert, tropical, and emergency medical treatment.

(2) Units that are not self-sufficient in combat training, due to limited number of people, will be sent TDY to other ARRS units for combat rescue exercise currency training. This will be at least annually with a dedicated funding to support the requirements.

(3) A capability of specific area training exists within Rescue--this capability should be exploited to the maximum. In-unit training should be complemented by cadre training in all geographical areas. This is done by sending cadre personnel cross-unit for specific area type training. The cadre member for each area will then conduct in-unit training of all pararescuemen.

This requires dedicated funding and command support.

g. Unit commanders should coordinate training requirements for individual Pararescue Section and submit a dedicated budget request to ARRS. This funding request will include all PJ training, including cross-unit and formal course TDY training.

h. Pararescue combat capability is a must for future rescue success in a combat environment. This necessitates money be allocated to support a realistic training program. It is difficult for a section NCOIC to support the ARRS objectives if funds and/or time to accomplish those objectives are not available. The training philosophy outlined herein must be explored in detail and final results directive in nature if Pararescue is to be fully qualified and capable of combat rescue operations.

6. Col Dale Oderman, Commander, 1550 ATTW, opened the conference with welcoming remarks.

7. CMSgt Charles T. Walther, ARRS/CMS, presented an overview of conference objectives. Areas that received special emphasis were Pararescue Concept of Operations and the ARRS commitment/deployment policy for pararescue forces. It was stressed that pararescue forces deployed in both peacetime and combat would be kept at an absolute minimum to safely accomplish the mission.

8. SMSgt Fernandez, ARRS/DOQP, briefed the minutes of the Jun 76 Pararescue Combat Readiness Conference held at HQ ARRS. The status of findings and recommendations submitted with the minutes was discussed. As a result of these recommendations, significant advances have been made in equipping and training pararescue forces for combat rescue operations.

9. Sgt Fernandez also presented a briefing on the revised ARRSR 55-3 and the standardization of pararescue equipment. Only equipment identified in ARRSR 55-3 and TA 016 would be authorized for pararescue use. Equipment currently on hand which is no longer authorized would be disposed of on an attrition basis. All equipment and local purchase items would be of colors compatible for combat operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. That equipment and medical back-up kits carried aboard ARRS aircraft by pararescue for combat operations be standardized. That the contents of the pickup kits be outlined in ARRSR 55-3.

b. That minimum standards for pararescue aircraft alert loads for both helicopter and fixed wing aircraft be established. The minimum standard pararescue alert equipment load would be available for each ARRS alert aircraft with pararescue crewmembers assigned. The minimum pararescue alert load by type aircraft be defined in ARRSR 55-3.

OPR: ARRS/DOQP

c. An item manager should be established to monitor and procure equipment that is available through the marketing and redistribution system at Marine, Army, Navy, and Air Force depots. A great deal of the combat equipment is presently available at the depots that can be obtained at no cost. The cost to the unit would be shipping cost only. However, we need a single source monitor to keep tabs on what we need and what is available. The item manager could advise the units of what is available.

OPR: ARRS/LGS

10. TSgt Donald Goodlett, 1550 ATTW/DOQ, presented a briefing on current OT&E programs affecting Pararescue operations. The following is a brief summary of his presentation.

a. Concept of operations of the Pave Low combat rescue system and the roll of the pararescueman was presented.

b. The PRC-103 transceiver radio. Designed specifically for Pararescue use, the radio has a hands off operating capability. It can be mated into the aircraft intercom system and be used for both water and land. Various configurations allow radio to be used for parachute, helicopter and water operations.

c. The modified stokes litter. This modification allows litter to be a more practical and versatile rescue device. By breaking down into two pieces, it is easily transportable by one man and easily stowed on lightlift helicopters. A flotation device is part of the package and installs easily and requires less maintenance than the LPU method.

11. Sgt Fernandez briefed on the revised ARRS supplement to AFR 35-10. The two main issues were:

a. All flight clothing would have patches, rank insignia, and name plates affixed with Velcro tape. This will allow for a rapid means of sanitizing flight clothing for combat operations.

b. Camouflage fatigues will be void of any patches, name tags, and rank insignia. Adornments would compromise the intent of camouflage clothing.

12. SMSgt Kerry Kelly, ARRS/DOT, presented a briefing on the proposed equal hazard/special duty pay for pararescuemen. The package was approved by the Air Force and DOD pay board. It is currently awaiting final approval at the Comptroller General's Office.

13. Capt Olivo, functional manager for the All5X0 Pararescue career field, Occupational Measurements Laboratory, Lackland AFB, TX presented an extensive and informative briefing. The briefing included the results of an Occupational Measurement Inventory/Analysis of the Pararescue career field which was completed in Mar 77. He noted that 949 different tasks had been identified which are now required and performed throughout the career field. This number is significantly higher than the average AFSC. Capt Olivo pointed out that the Pararescue career field is one of the few AFSCs which has been inventoried and computer loaded for an indepth analysis. He further stated that an indepth study be conducted in the near future by senior representatives of the Pararescue career field. This would have to be done at the Occupational Measurement Laboratory at Lackland AFB, where the programmed computer, analyst, and psychologist are located. As a result of this briefing, the following recommendations are made.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. That seven senior pararescue NCOs be appointed to conduct a career field analysis based on Occupational Measurements Laboratory findings. That these NCOs represent the following areas:

- (1) Light-lift helicopter unit - 1 NCO
- (2) Heavy-lift helicopter unit - 1 NCO
- (3) Composite unit - 1 NCO
- (4) ARRS wing - 2 NCOs
- (5) HQ ARRS - 2 NCOs

b. Analyze findings of Occupational Laboratory for validity.

c. Revise speciality training standard.

d. Validate and/or develop career development course.

e. Revise AFR 39-1 to portray an accurate description of the All5X0 Pararescue career field to include combat operations.

f. Recommend course improvements to the basic pararescue course to align training more to combat rescue requirements.

OPR: ARRS/DOT

14. The following statement was read pertaining to the ARRS pararescue deployment commitment policy. This was followed by a brief discussion and recommendation.

a. The mission commitment policy, as defined in ARRS Regulations 55-1 and 55-11, states in part: "Normally, two pararescuemen will be utilized for operational mission parachute deployments. Certain missions, e.g., multiple survivors with injuries, expected prolonged commitment on the mission, extreme weather conditions, securing aerospace hardware, etc., may dictate additional pararescuemen be initially deployed. The requirement for additional pararescuemen will be based on pre-launch mission information from the RCC and/or other agencies and should be kept to the minimum required. The decision to commit additional pararescuemen will be at the discretion of the aircraft commander and/or pararescue team leader." The intent of this policy is to allow the on-scene crew to evaluate the situation and then make an accurate decision and act on it. When this decision-making process is abused, it jeopardizes future force commitment policies. Although a crew is launched with a three-man pararescue team based on the initial information received, as more information becomes available and an on-scene evaluation is made, only then can the final decision be made.

b. To insure that an accurate decision can be made, all agencies must be kept informed on all pertinent facts, information and intentions. This is a two-way line of communication which is absolutely essential between control agencies and on-scene aircraft.

c. NCOICs and team leaders will only deploy their team(s) on missions that they are qualified and equipped to accomplish safely. All teams do not have the same capabilities; therefore, some tasking may be beyond your team's capability. As NCOICs and team leaders, you have the responsibility to recognize and know each assigned pararescueman's qualifications and potential and to commit your forces accordingly. When tasking is beyond



your capability, you will not commit your forces. On the other hand, when a team is committed, it will be kept to the absolute minimum to safely accomplish the mission.

DISCUSSION: Conferees agreed that for most extended ground operations in a combat environment a three-man team would be required. This is due to the equipment normally required, rough terrain travel, security and patient/survivor movement. Team size should not be limited to only two men.

RECOMMENDATION: That the option be available to increase team size on any extended ground operation in a combat environment. Factors such as type terrain, climatic conditions, number of survivors and enemy threat would be considered to determine each mission's team complement.

OPR: ARRS/DOXT

15. Combat rescue tactics and training were reviewed. This was followed by a discussion period which addressed the concept of training and whether training is realistic and meeting ARRS contingency objectives. From this discussion, a number of recommendations were made to improve and enhance the ARRS combat rescue capability.

REVIEW: The basic combat pararescue insertion will normally be a two-man team. Method of insertion will be by any means necessary into a safe area or low threat environment. If required, the team will evade cross-country into the high threat area, make contact with the survivor/patient, provide emergency medical treatment and move survivor to a safe area for recovery.

DISCUSSION: Although this is basically a simple concept, the knowledge that must be possessed by each pararescueman is complex and extensive. With drastically reduced combat experience within ARRS, high standards of combat training must be established and maintained. A high degree of professionalism and standardization in tactics and procedures must be attained by the entire pararescue force to insure the goals of ARRS are achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Because of varying geographical locations, all ARRS units train under different conditions. For this reason, a common base line for all pararescue and aircrew qualifications must be established to insure standardization. This will allow ARRS the flexibility to intergrade forces. In the event attrition forces

are required, they can be put into service in minimal time. The common base line should be a currency item intended to exercise the capability of pararescuemen and supporting aircrews during the critical insertion and extraction phases. These phases require total aircrew involvement to insure successful mission accomplishment. The following is what a basic Combat Rescue Training Exercise (CRTE) should consist of to meet minimum currency requirements. Underlined items require total crew involvement.

- (1) Preplanning
- (2) Insertion
- (3) Tactical ground movement to include:
 - (a) Navigation
 - (b) Infiltration
 - (c) Evasion
- (4) Air directed ground navigation
- (5) Ground directed aircraft movement
- (6) Link up (survivor and/or friendly forces)
- (7) Communications
- (8) Medical
- (9) Survivor movement
- (10) Extraction

OPR: ARRS/DOT/DOX

b. A number of ARRS units have developed realistic combat training in a variety of climate and geographical areas. Locally available resources add the indepth realism required for combat training. These resources, if used, can only enhance the ARRS combat capability and:

- (1) Would help in developing standardized tactics and procedures throughout the ARRS force.
- (2) Could exercise mobility plans.
- (3) Give crews the opportunity to operate in unfamiliar geographic and climatic areas under combat conditions.
- (4) Would be in-house ARRS directed exercising command and control at HQ ARRS and wing level.

(5) Would be tailored to our exact requirements and at greatly reduced cost to the Air Force.

c. With military technology making rapid advances in all areas, tactics have become a vital function within ARRS. Because of the unique mission of ARRS and its pararescue forces, coordination at all levels of tactics is absolutely essential. With frequent updating of tactics and procedures, pararescue counterparts are required at each level to insure prompt coordination and dissemination of critical information. A position for a senior pararescueman at each wing tactics/mobility shop, including reserve forces, is seen as a critical ingredient to insure maximum efficiency throughout ARRS and to maintain an effective fly and fight force.

OPR: ARRS/DOXT

d. The HC-130 has been identified to perform several direct combat support missions in medium to low threat environments. As of this time, the only method tested has been the Pop Up CARP type maneuver. Although a feasible operation, one area has been identified which makes it impractical at this time. When operating at low altitudes, the navigational capabilities become diminished making target acquisition questionable. Inaccurate deliveries could be disastrous. Current plans call for the installation of the Omega navigation system on HC-130s in the near future. When installed, the Pop Up deployment method should be fully developed.

e. A technique currently under development by the Army shows great promise as a means of inserting a pararescueman into a high threat area. The method, called "Off Set" parachute delivery allows the aircraft to fly twenty miles wide or more of the known high threat area. The pararescuemen open their parachutes at high altitudes after deployment. Using a high performance canopy, they would travel twenty or more miles while descending. This figure would vary depending on winds and altitude. This method would minimize aircraft and crew exposure and allow an undetected penetration into a denied area of pararescue forces. It is strongly recommended that this method be evaluated for ARRS combat application.

OPR: ARRS/DOXT/DOQP

16. The emphasis on combat rescue operations generated considerable discussion in the current pararescue training program. The discussion centered around three basic areas:

a. The qualification level of pararescue proficiency.

b. The type of training required to obtain combat rescue proficiency.

c. The time availability to accomplish the required training.

RECOMMENDATION: At present, a pararescueman enters the pipeline at Lackland AFB and approximately 11 months later he arrives at a rescue unit. Upon arrival at a unit, the new pararescueman is minimally qualified, thus added time is needed to prepare him for normal rescue duty, not to mention combat duties. For the remainder of the pararescueman's career, he is only required to attend one formal course--the seven-level medical course.

DISCUSSION: The conferees felt that the present training program could be revised to improve/upgrade the overall training program of the pararescueman. Several approaches were discussed with a goal of reducing the training time and cost while raising the level of proficiency. The pararescue pipeline appears to be excessive with numerous wasted man days spent for travel, repetitive and nonessential training. Travel time, coupled with waiting for school start dates, could be used more productively. Training received at some schools does not meet our requirements which necessitates repeating this training at the Pararescue School. Requalification students arriving at Kirtland require additional "base type or USAF directed" items such as physiological training, driver's license, passport, etc. The time to acquire this at 1550 TCHTS takes away from productive training, when it would better be done at OL-J. Another area of concern was the assignment of graduates to LLH units. With minimal qualifications, a great deal of training time must be devoted to achieve an acceptable level of qualification. The LLH units are not adequately manned to support this increased training requirement. Pararescuemen in the field must be kept up to date on advances in technology and equipment. A career in pararescue cannot be based only on initial schools. Follow-on formal training is essential to insure pararescuemen are kept abreast with current technology and equipment. This is particularly critical in the medical skills. This continuation training is an absolute must if ARRS is to be assured a quality pararescue force.

OPR: ARRS/DOT

RECOMMENDATION:

a. Staff study to determine the feasibility of total pararescue initial training at the Pararescue School. This would reduce the time and cost of initial training and eliminate unessential training.

b. Require personnel that have been out of the field for over one year to attend training at OL-J to accomplish all the "base/USAF" training items.



c. LLH assigned trainees receive all aerial operation training in Category B aircraft at 1550 ATTW.

d. Formal/informal training courses recognized by ARRS be included in ARRSR 55-11 and wings directed to budget for attendance by pararescuemen.

17. Combat tactics was a major concern of conferees. It appeared that while some units had been exposed to techniques being taught at the basic school, others had not.

18. SMSgt Larry Wellington presented a review of the proposed update and changes to ARRSR 55-11, Pararescue Operations. Overall, the conferees were receptive to the changes which primarily revolved around combat operations. The following recommendations were submitted in hopes of reducing administrative manhours and equipment exposure.

RECOMMENDATION: ARRS Form 12 and pararescue folder are superfluous. ARRS Form 60, or a suitable similar currency chart, and AF Form 623, with job proficiency guide, provide all the entries necessary to record pararescue currency and training. Recording in other forms is redundant and time consuming to the point of being wasteful. Eliminate Form 12 and pararescue folder.

OPR: ARRS/DOVW

PROBLEM: Required use of SCUBA tanks on all water jumps.

DISCUSSION: Use of SCUBA tanks will be required during the annual night water jump to maintain minimum proficiency/currency. During other water deployments, SCUBA tanks should be as required for that scenario. A concept of operations would be to deploy pararescuemen 10 to 12 miles from land and have them swim to shore. SCUBA tanks would be a heavy burden during this operation because these tanks only have enough air for 1000 yards. Numerous pararescuemen feel these tanks are a hinderance (too heavy, combined with other jump gear, catching on parachute lines in the water, hitting individuals in the back of their head while in heavy seas, and the amount of breathing time is limited during extended operations). History reveals that this procedure was adopted for NASA space craft recovery, which requires some underwater breathing. ARRS is the only DOD agency that requires its personnel to deploy into the water with full SCUBA. Other agencies, combat control, SEALs, and special forces, are given the option, depending upon mission requirements.

RECOMMENDATION: Change our requirement of deploying with SCUBA tanks and give the option to the team leader and NCOIC of the pararescue sections.

OPR: ARRS/DOVW

19. There is no guidance available for a number of procedures/techniques used by pararescue personnel in prosecution of missions.

DISCUSSION: Over the years, pararescuemen have developed procedures/techniques for use in mission prosecution. This covers such items as equipment drop techniques, rigging of equipment, types of containers to use, types of parachutes to use, etc. This information is passed on verbally but in many instances, some people do not ever gain the knowledge. As years go by, this valuable information is lost by attrition.

RECOMMENDATION: A tactics/training manual is required to encompass the varied procedures/techniques that presently are not included in other directives. Each unit with combat information should forward recommendations to the 55 ARRS/DOVW for review and consolidation. The 55 ARRS will develop standards to be forwarded to HQ ARRS/DOXT for further review, coordination, and distribution to all units.

OPR: ARRS/DOXT/DOQP

20. SUMMARY:

a. In my tasking letter of 15 Apr 77, I charged the Pararescue conferees with the responsibility of formulating recommendations to realign pararescue training to meet combat readiness requirements. I desire to see more involvement in combat training exercises and more training conducted under combat field type conditions.

b. Pararescuemen from units throughout my command have met here, considered the issues, and have arrived at these observations and recommendations.

c. Recent combat rescue experiences (Southeast Asia, the Mayaguez incident, and the Cyprus deployment) have indicated that while current pararescue combat procedures may be adequate to meet the challenge of rescue in a relatively low threat environment, serious deficiencies exist in our ability to support rescue efforts in a medium to high threat environment.

d. As I am sure you are all aware, recent advances in military technology indicate that aircraft survivability in medium to high threat areas may prohibit extended aerial rescue operations.

e. At my direction, the following concept of pararescue operations have been developed.

(1) Insertion procedures of a pararescue team, by whatever means necessary, into a safe area or low threat environment have been developed.

(2) If required, the team will evade cross-country into the high threat areas, make contact with the downed aircrew member, provide emergency medical treatment and move the crewmembers to a safe area for pick up.

(3) The insertion and extraction phases require total aircrew involvement to insure successful mission accomplishment.

f. If we are to insure successful mission accomplishment, we must institute training procedures that will insure that our forces are equal to the challenge.

g. To that end, the following recommended Combat Rescue Training Exercise (CRTE) has been developed by the members of the pararescue conference.

(1) The exercise will be a required currency item and is intended to challenge the capabilities of participating pararescuemen and supporting aircrew to the fullest extent possible.

(2) The exercise will include the following areas:

- (a) Preplanning
- (b) Insertion (by any means)
- (c) Tactical ground movement

to include:

- 1. Navigation
- 2. Infiltration
- 3. Evasion
- (d) Link up
- (e) Communications
- (f) Medical
- (g) Survivor movement
- (h) Extraction

h. This training will provide a base line for qualification of all para rescuemen and aircrews that will give me the latitude to integrate existing forces. With drastically reduced combat experiences within ARRS, high standards of combat training must be established and maintained.

i. The emphasis on realistic combat exercises will benefit all portions of the rescue unit and enhance the overall ability of ARRS to accomplish its combat mission. All crewmembers must train with weapons and other related combat equipment in an environment closely duplicating combat conditions.

j. A number of ARRS units have developed realistic combat training in a variety of climatic and geographical areas. If exploited to their fullest, these training resources will improve and allow greater flexibility. Joint training of ARRS units in these varying environments can only enhance continuity of procedures and techniques throughout the force.

k. It should be the goal of each commander to attain a high state of combat readiness and have his forces trained to meet all threats.

