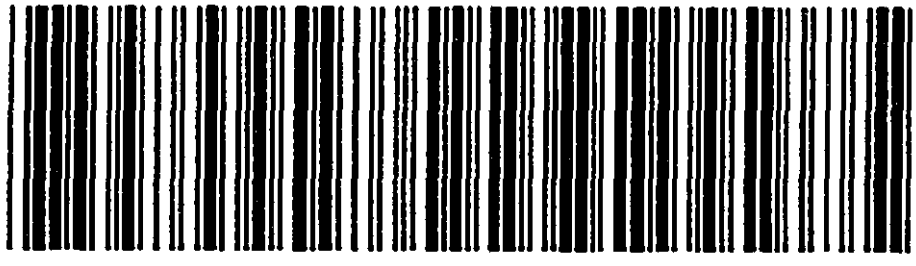
AWM52
Australian Military Forces, Army headquarters, formation and unit diaries, 1939-1945

1/14/40
AIR LIAISON

45 Australian Air Liaison Section (AC) (45 Aust AL Sec (AC))

June - September 1944, Report



1/14/40-010+

RESTRICTED.

10 Oct 44.

ACTIVITIES OF 4 TAC/R SQDN IN CONJUNCTION WITH 45 AUST AIR LIAISON SECTION.AIF.

JUNE 1944 ---- SEPTEMBER 1944.

ORIGINAL
NOV 1944

REPORT BY O.C. 45 AUST AIR LIAISON SECTION.AIF.

OPERATIONS.

The Squadron was actively engaged in operations until middle August, but on a generally reduced scale.

Fewer requirements were necessary owing to the small activities of the Australian Land Forces, in the Squadrons area.

"B" Flight were still committed for requests by 4C.US.DIV and remained at CAPE GLOUCESTER until September, when 6 US.ARMY concurred in their return to NADZAB, on condition that direct wireless link be maintained with view for requested missions within 24 hours of receipt.

A signal detachment remained, but no requests had been received to end of September.

Many barge sweeps were made in co-operation with P.T.Boats.

With the capture of MADANG and clearance of enemy up to SEPIK RIVER, the recce area for "A" Flight, based at GUSAP became out of range for "Boomerangs". Accordingly, "A" Flight returned to NADZAB, with understanding that missions would be flown on request by 5 AUST DIV within 24 hours of receipt. Aircraft would stage through SAIDOR. A number of missions were carried out under these conditions. MADANG STRIP was not then serviceable for "Boomerangs".

Most of the missions completed during the above period were Tac/R, Contact/R and Photo/R's. Very few operational Arty/R's were made owing to enemy being outside range of our Field Artillery.

TAC/R.

Usually made for signs of enemy movements, habitation and defended positions. The enemy were still using camouflage and concealment extremely well, and made any definite signs extremely difficult to observe. Only on a very few occasions were the enemy observed, and it is necessary for the pilots to be able to estimate the degree of usage of tracks, camps and diggings etc, rather than to count the number of enemy observed. As many pilots as could be spared, were billeted with forward Units to be able to personally observe the enemy habits on the ground, so to enable them to better estimate the degree of activity as seen from the air.

Minimum height flying was again essential throughout for close observation of suspected targets and signs of activity.

CONTACT/R.

A large number of Contact/R's were carried out mainly due to fairly extensive patrolling by ANGAU and AIB parties. It was found that smoke fires and ground strips(generally towels) were sufficient guides for recognition provided the parties were informed R.T.A's, and could generally select the areas in open clearings and kunai patches. It is advisable to eliminate the use of smoke fires at normal native meal hours, or in areas closely populated.

PHOTO/R.

Successful photo missions were flown with K17 camera's, vertical and obliques. For the K17 camera with 6" focal lens, it is necessary to fly at least 3000 feet in order to obtain even a fair 60 per cent overlap without a large difference in the scale of the print. It is not practicable owing to large size of K17 to fit cameras for vertical and obliques in same belly tanks, so only either vertical or oblique can be taken by the one aircraft.

/2.

The recently made "Boomerangs", (all after No.211) are to be modified to enable fitting of F24 camera in fuselage to take vertical and obliques by aid of prism.

Aircraft were based at TADJI for recce of WEWAK and SEPIK Area's.

These aircraft co-operated with the HQ.10.C.Gp.RAAF and AMERICAN CORPS. Quite a number of unsuccessful sea-searches were made in NEW BRITAIN Area.

APPENDIX "A" Shows lists of operational sorties flown

TRAINING.

It became evident that Squadron training was necessary owing to arrival of new pilots and ALO's and so a reconcentration of the Squadron was made at MADZAB. The first time that the complete Squadron had been together since November 1942. Many good results were acheived thereby, particularly in the raising of the general flying standard and ground orgimazation of specialist sections.

The first three weeks at the commencement of the training programme, were mainly devoted to general flying, aerobatics, care of the aircraft, use of wireless in air, air to ground gunnery, supply dropping and message dropping.

MAP READING

Map reading on large and small scale sheets, was introduced into all programmes and generally all pilots were breifed for finding and accurately pin-pointing features when ever he took to the air.

Tac/Rs, Contact/Rs with wireless tests filled most of the programmes for the next few weeks. Intensive minature ranging covered most ground subjects, with discussions on escape routes, air-sea rescues, enemy order of battle(Air and ground), radar, briefing, interrogating, Naval bombardment etc.

Arty/R training was introduced after approx 4 weeks and generally speaking was extremely good. This high standard was maintained up to end of September. Numerous shoots took place in co-operation with RAA 3 AUST DIV and RAA 5 AUST DIV. Pilots were billeted with the Regts, observed shoots from ground O.P. and Gun positions. They were able to discuss their shoots personally with the GPO's after the completion of their engagements. Much mutual satisfaction was derived. Ground lectures on Naval Bombardment both by NLO's and ALO's were given and many "dry shoots" took place. No Naval Co-operation was available during this period but arrangements were completed for Naval Co-operations during October.

APPENDIX "B.1" Shows results of tests between No.11 Army Set and "Boomerang" standard set.

APPENDIX "B.2" Gives information re use of 75 mm.Smoke rounds with Arty/R

2" Mortar smoke was found to be the most successful method of disclosing a ground patrols position in heavy jungle. It was found that a ground flare followed immediately by 3 rounds of 2" mortar smoke was sufficient indication to air-crew of ground parties location.

Air crew must be careful NOT to confuse low clouds with smoke.

APPENDIX "C". Shows list of rations which can be carried in Mk.V. containers dropped from "Airraways".
270 lbs of SAA ammunition can be carried in each container.

R.D.Loan.....Major.
O.C.45 Aust Air Liaison Sec.

APPENDIX "A".

OPERATIONAL SORTIES FLOWN BY 4 TAC/R SQN.
JUNE 1944 - SEPTEMBER 1944.

Month.	Type of Sortie.	No. Flown.	Flying Hours.
June.			
	TAC/R.	56.	188Hrs 20Mins.
	CONT/R.	14.	33 " 40 "
	PHOTO/R.	4.	6 " 10 "
	M/D.	1.	2 " 40 "
	SEARCHES.	6.	11 " 30 "
	ARTY/R.	6.	16 " 30 "
	TOTAL.	87.	258 " 50 "
July.			
	TAC/R.	8.	32Hrs 10Mins.
	CONT/R.	12.	39 " 80 "
	M/D.	1.	2 " 45 "
	SEARCHES.	6.	11 " 80 "
	TOTAL.	27.	86 " 15 "
Aug.			
	TAC/R.	16.	67Hrs. 0Mins.
	SEARCHES.	1.	1 " 30 "
	TOTAL.	17.	68 " 30 "
Sep.	- NIL OPERATIONAL SORTIES -		

GRAND TOTAL FOR PERIOD JUNE 1944 - SEPTEMBER 1944

131 SORTIES. 413Hrs. 35Mins.

APPENDIX "B.1."

Subject:- Lessons learnt from tests carried out with No.11 Wireless Set working to ATR5 Sets mounted in "Boomerang" Aircraft.

1. That a quarter or half wave aerial be used.
2. That a vertical rod aerial is unsatisfactory.
3. High Power to be used at all times.
4. Special care be taken that No.11 Set be netted accurately to ATR5 Set.
5. As the ATR5 Set is crystal controlled once the No11 Set is netted it must not move off frequency searching for the aircraft.

APPENDIX "B.2."

Subject:- USE OF 75 mm. Smoke.

(a) Opening Salvo: 75 mm. Smoke round is fitted with a percussion fuze, and gives instantaneous burst of smoke in pillar effect. This smoke is immediate, and in a short time may drift considerably so that 20 seconds delay between Smoke and H.E.vide A.T. Vol. III, Pam 8 could easily give the pilot a false indication for estimated fall of the two H.E. rounds.

This point was discussed with A.L.O. 4 Tac/R Squadron, and it was decided to use 5 seconds as the interval between Smoke and H.E. This interval proved entirely satisfactory and it is suggested that it be used for future Air Co-Op. Shoots with 75 mm. Pack How.

(b) Ranging: 75 mm. H.E. does not include a smoke box and consequently gives a black burst which, even in scrubby country, is sometimes very difficult to locate. It is not generally known or appreciated that 75 mm. Smoke and H.E. are of the same weight and range together (as distinct from 25 Pdr). However, with this knowledge if a salvo of H.E. is lost, the pilot could order Smoke, and be confident that the fall of shot would be consistent with later H.E. and thus reduce the ranging period for the shoot.

LIST OF RATIONS WHICH CAN BE CARRIED IN Mk.V. CONTAINERS.

No.1.Container.

Potatoes.	11 lbs.
M & V.	28 tins.
P & B.	28 "
Fruit.	19 "
Milk.	10 "

No.2.Container.

Potatoes.	11 lbs.
M & V.	28 tins.
Salmon.	28 "
Fruit.	19 "
Milk.	10 "

No.3.Container.

Dry Fruits.	5 Gal Drum.
Sausages.	28 tins.
P & B.	28 "
Cheese.	20 "
Tropical Spread.	18 "
Jam.	12 "

No.4.Container.

Sugar.	1 Drum. 5 Gals.
Oatmeal.	1 "
Tea.	1 "

Sufficient rations for 2 Company's for 1 day.(SWPA Rations).