

**Series: AWM95**  
Australian Army commanders' diaries  
[Vietnam]

Army Aviation units

**Item number: 8/1/13**

**Item: 161 [Independent]**

Reconnaissance Flight

Narrative

Annex

[1-31 Oct 1966]



## COMMANDERS DIARIES INSTRUCTIONS

### AIM

1. The aim of a Commanders Diary is to provide data on which to base future improvements in Army training, equipment, organization and administration, and to furnish historians with a record of the activities of units and formations in operational and non-operational periods in peace and in war.

### GENERAL

2. Entries are to be made daily on AF C 2118 (Adapted) each entry being initialled by the officer detailed to keep it.
3. Commanders Diaries will conform with the rules for drafting orders given in "Staff Duties (Australia)", Chapter 2, Section 12.

### RESPONSIBILITY

#### During Non-operational Periods

4. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled by commanders of all formations.

#### During Operational Periods (1)

5. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled in duplicate by:
  - a. Commanders of all formations.
  - b. Each branch of the staff at formation headquarters commanded by a brigadier or above.
  - c. Heads of services not below the rank of lieutenant colonel.
  - d. Personal staffs and officers holding special appointments.
  - e. Unit commanders.
  - f. Commanders of a detachment of a unit when so ordered.

### COMPILATION

6. Both original and duplicate copies are to consist of:
  - a. Cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted).
  - b. Index as printed on cover.
  - c. Narrative (AF C 2118) (Adapted).
  - d. Annexes as shown in the Index.
7. All details of the unit or formation (if a detachment is concerned, the name of the parent unit), period covered and enclosure numbers of the annexes are to be shown on the cover. If there has been a change of command since the last report, the date of assumption by the new commanding officer is to be included.
8. The annexes are to be assembled in the groups shown on the cover. If there are no enclosures for an annex NIL will be entered on the cover. If additional annexes are convenient for a particular headquarters, starting at B.

for operations form Annex "Z", "TOP SECRET" the document. It is to be prepared and disposed of as

### TENTS

ies as well as map references), establishment, equipment and orders given. the day's fighting, including company movements. mmander with regard to equipment, tactics, organization

otential importance. to officers, men and equipment. ipment captured. employed in the time not accounted for. The type of

s and to save work as much information as possible is to uments issued and received, routine returns, etc. All 1 and the time of receipt or despatch is to be given.

the annexes, but need not give a precis of any of them.

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**DISPOSAL**

13. **Original Commander's Diary.** This is to be forwarded monthly, unless otherwise ordered, by the seventh day of the succeeding month direct to AHQ.

14. **Duplicate Commander's Diary.** This must be clearly marked as a duplicate. It is to be sent separately from the original to AHQ one month after the original has been despatched but not before the former has been acknowledged.

15. When overseas, both copies of diaries are to be sent through the Army Records organization in the overseas theatre but at different times.

16. **TOP SECRET Supplementary Diaries.**

a. The documents referred to in Paragraph 9 together with a list of them made out on AF C 2118 (Adapted) must be placed in separate cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted). All details must be filled in and the cover clearly marked in red: "ANNEX Z — OFFICER ONLY". It may be convenient to group the papers by appendices.

b. Supplementary diaries must be forwarded under the normal rules for TOP SECRET correspondence, to AHQ. The inner envelope must be plainly marked:

TOP SECRET

ANNEX Z to

Commanders Diary of.....(Formation or Unit)

From.....to..... (Dates)

c. The duplicate supplementary diaries must be despatched as shown in Paragraph 14 as soon as receipt of the original has been acknowledged.

AWM 95

[8/1/04 bb]

SECRET  
**COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE**

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Force Flt

MONTH AND YEAR OCTOBER 1966

REFERENCE MAP PHOUC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Maj D. G. DOYLE

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
VUNG TAU	1 Oct 66		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "CROWS NEST" and HQ 1 ATF	
	2 "		" " " " " " " " " "	
	3 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "CROWS NEST" concluded this day	
	4 "		FW & RW Operations in support of HQ 1 ATF	
	5 "		" " " " " " " " "	
	6 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "CANBERRA" and HQ 1 ATF. SIOUX A1-394 flown	
			by 213017 2Lt R W ASKEW in support of 6 BAR developed engine rough running and a severe	
			engine vibration while engaged on a reconnaissance mission EAST of the village of BINH GIA	
			YS 508774. 2Lt ASKEW forced landed the aircraft on a narrow road and by way of skilful	
			flying prevented further damage to his aircraft. The aircraft was recovered by a US Army	
			CH 47 helicopter.	
	7 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "CANBERRA" and HQ 1 ATF. 12845 WO2 C J CAMPBELL,	
			2412004 L/Bdr F P DONNELLY and 1410406 L/Cpl R H OLIPHANT returned from detachment at	
			KANGAROO CONTROL HQ 1 ATF. 25621 Maj D. G. DOYLE and 37498 Capt J T WRIGHT flying CESSNA	
			A98-045 flew a night visual reconnaissance over the southern sector of 1 ATF TOAR from	
			072350 <del>hrs</del> H until 080220 H. A suspected enemy was lit by the guns of 101 Fd Bty firing	
			a five minute illumination shoot.	
	8 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "CANBERRA" and HQ 1 ATF	
	9 "		" " " " " " " " "	



COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH AND YEAR OCTOBER 1966

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Maj L G DOYLE

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
VUNG TAU	17 Oct 66		"QUEANBEYAN" from 0245 hrs till 2035 hrs. This was the first successful prolonged radio rebroadcast operation mounted by the Flight. A preliminary report written by OC FW Sec was sent to HQ 1 ATF and interested units (copy attached). 2Lt R W ASKEW flying SIOUX Al-404 evacuated two casualties.	
	18 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "QUEANBEYAN" and HQ 1 ATF. 17695 2Lt R S RICH flying SIOUX Al-409 evacuated two casualties.	
	19 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "QUEANBEYAN" and HQ 1 ATF. 18348 Capt J D CAMPBELL flying SIOUX Al-409 evacuated one casualty.	
	20 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "QUEANBEYAN" and HQ 1 ATF	
	21 "		" " " " " " " " " " " 1200008 2Lt C J BARRON flying SIOUX Al-404 evacuated one casualty.	
	22 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "QUEANBEYAN" and HQ 1 ATF. Flight parade held for presentation of Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to 1684 Sgt R A L NEW by Group Captain D RAW DFC, AFC, Deputy Commander RAAF Vietnam.	
	23 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "QUEANBEYAN" and HQ 1 ATF	
	24 "		" " " " " " " " " " " 17631 Pte E R POTTER returned from detachment with KANGAROO CONTROL HQ 1 ATF	
	25 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "QUEANBEYAN" and HQ 1 ATF. 1200008 2Lt C J	

This form is to be enclosed with the annexes in AF - C 2119 (Adapted).

SECRET  
**COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE**

AF - C 2118 (Adapted)  
Revised Jun, 1965

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

MONTH AND YEAR OCTOBER 1966

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY PROVINCE

COMMANDING OFFICER Maj L G DOYLE

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
VUNG TAU	25 Oct 66		BARRON flying SIOUX Al-404 evacuated one casualty. 17695 2Lt R S RICH returned to AUSTRALIA prior to an instructors course in ENGLAND. 19991 2Lt W DAVIES MEDEVAC to AUSTRALIA from SAIGON to where he had been evacuated after the crash of Al-395 on 10 Oct.	
	26 "		FW & RW Operations in support of Operation "QUEANBEYAN" concluded this day. 2412004 L/Bdr DONNELLY and 1410406 L/Cpl OLIPHANT detached to KANGAROO CONTROL HQ 1 ATF	
	27 "		213017 2Lt R W ASKEW flying SIOUX Al-400 was required to fly two miles off the coast to dispose of faulty ammunition. Maj C CATTENCACH AHQ <del>161</del> (Dmi) and Capt R RICHARDS (154 Sig Tp) visited the unit to discuss communications.	
	28 "		FW & RW Operations in support of HQ 1 ATF	
	29 "		" " " " " " " " 3787247 Tpr Q L SELL detached to KANGAROO CONTROL HQ 1 ATF	
	30 "		FW & RW Operations in support of HQ 1 ATF 58680 2Lt R D GOLDSPIK flying SIOUX Al-394 evacuated one casualty. 36330 Sgt RAYNOR was attached from 154 Sig Tp for trials on radio equipment	
	31 "		FW & RW Operations in support of HQ 1 ATF	

SECRET

1 B P Coy—275/65—55m



AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

161 (Indep) Recce Flt  
VUNG TAU

3 Oct 66

R5821- 1- 2

HQ 1 ATF (3)

AUTOMATIC REBROADCAST FROM CESSNA AIRCRAFT

1. At the conclusion of the first day of OPERATION QUEENBEYAN, OC FW Sec 161 (Indep) Recce Flt was directed to prepare a report on the use of this Unit's CESSNA aircraft as airborne automatic radio rebroadcast stations in support of 5 RAR.
2. From reports received so far this first use of this technique in 1 ATF was highly successful. However, a number of important lessons were learned and a more complete investigation of the technique is now on hand. The primary aim of this investigation will be to evolve a standard operating procedure for future operations.
3. Attention is drawn to paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report. The technique is expensive in aircraft hours and this cost will need to be considered in relation to the operational requirement.
4. As CESSNA aircraft are withdrawn for mandatory 1200 hour (E) servvicings from 15 Nov 66 onwards, the ability to mount continuous rebroadcast missions will be restricted by aircraft availability (two aircraft on line), hours available and unscheduled unserviceabilities.
5. The recommendation of the report can be implemented for rebroadcast missions.

  
(L. G. DOYLE)  
Maj  
OC

Copies to:  
5 RAR  
6 RAR  
3 SAS  
1 Fd Regt  
103 Sig Sqn

Internal  
OC  
OC FW Sec (2)  
OC RW Sec  
File

161 (Indep) Recce Flt  
VUNG TAU

31 Oct 66

OC

AUTOMATIC RADIO REBROADCAST THROUGH CESSNA 180 AIRCRAFT  
DURING OPERATION QUEENBEYAN

Introduction

1. Automatic rebroadcast on 1 ATF command net voice was carried out by fixed wing aircraft of 161 (Indep) Recce Flt on 18 Oct 66 the opening day of Operation QUEENBEYAN.

Aim

2. The aim of this report is to set out the manner in which this task was carried out, together with some relevant general points concerning the employment and operation of aircraft for this purpose.

Extent of the Task

3. Timings The original bid was for an aircraft with rebroadcast facility to be on station from 0300 hrs to 1200 hrs, 18 Oct 66. This was later extended until 2015 hrs.

4. Hours Flown Aircraft were on station from 0300 until 2015 hrs, a period of 17 hours 15 mins, but in order to ensure continuous operation, changeover between aircraft was effected on the flyline. This necessitated a minimum 15 mins overlap between each sortie. Total hours flown were:

- a. A98-043          10 hrs 50 mins
- b. A98-063          9 hrs 45 mins

5. Pilot Hours All fixed wing section pilots, plus the OC, flew sorties during this task. Individual totals were:

Pilot	Day	Night
Maj DOYLE	3 hrs 30 mins	15 mins
Capt WRIGHT	3 hrs 50 mins	
2Lt SCOTT	3 hrs 25 mins	25 mins
2Lt GUIVARRA	3 hrs 30 mins	
2Lt SALLON	30 mins	5 hrs 10 mins

Description of Rebroadcast Equipment

6. The rebroadcast system used consisted of 2 x AN/PRC 25 sets, linked by retransmission cable Kit 456/G. Aerials were unit manufactured  $\frac{1}{8}$  wave flexible rods, coupled to the spring base of the 892/PRC 25.

7. The equipment was mounted in the aft luggage compartment, where holes have been drilled in the aircraft skin to facilitate external aerial mounting.

Aircraft Operation

8. Crew Each aircraft was manned by a pilot plus a signaller from 161 (Indep) Recce Flt Det 103 Sig Sqn. The signaller was necessary for in-flight adjustment of the rebroadcast equipment, which is positioned out of the pilot's reach. The signaller proved invaluable in maintaining listening watch on an AN/PRC 25 set.

.....para 9

9. Configuration Rear seats were removed so that the equipment could be easily reached for adjustment. No excessive trim changes were encountered when the signaller proceeded to the rear of the aircraft to adjust the rebroadcast equipment.

10. Use of Aircraft Radios

- a. AN/PRC 44 (VHF - FM) - monitoring 5 RAR command net;
- b. PTR 170 (UHF - AM) - KANGAROO CONTROL for artillery information; and
- c. While not necessary on this occasion, it should be noted that the rebroadcast aircraft is in an ideal position to provide radio relay on the unit command net through the aircraft AN/ARC 44 VHF - FM radio set. In this connection, units should be aware that for satisfactory working the ground station must have its squelch turned to the "ON" position.

11. Flyline Pilots selected their own flylines in positions which gave best communications at the time. All were within the area bounded by YS2574, 3474, 2560 and 3460. Heights flown varied between 2000 ft AMSL and 5500 ft AMSL, with the average being 4500ft.

12. Weather No difficulty was experienced through bad weather conditions except for a period of about 15 minutes, when a series of heavy rain showers forced one aircraft to operate at 2000 ft in the area of NUI NGHE, YS 3972

Capability for Prolonged Rebroadcast Operations

13. The following table gives an indication of the cost of prolonged rebroadcast operations, in aircraft and pilot hours:

Period on Station	24 hours	36 hours	48 hours	72 hours
Aircraft Hours	26 hrs 15	38 hrs 30	52 hrs	78 hrs
Average Pilot Hours				
4 Pilots	6 hrs 35	9 hrs 40	13 hrs	19 hrs 30
5 Pilots (ie incl OC)	5 hrs 15	7 hrs 40	10 hrs 25	15 hrs 30

14. From the table it is obvious that:

- a. After 48 hours five pilots are necessary;
- b. If the operation is longer than 24 hours, no other tasks could be guaranteed; and
- c. In the present state of servicing, ie proximity of "E" servicing, it would be inadvisable to plan on rebroadcast in excess of 24 hours.

15. The CESSNA 180 can only be operated under instrument meteorological conditions in an emergency, since it is single engined, and since low load factors preclude operation within cumulus build-ups, where severe turbulence maybe experienced. Therefore when widespread and prolonged bad weather conditions exist, operation in the rebroadcast role may not be possible, particularly at night.

Aircraft Endurance

16. The following table sets out fuel used against time and power settings:

Sortie	Ac	Duration	Fuel Used	Consumption	Power Setting
1	043	3 hrs 35	38 gals	10.6 gal/hr	2450RPM; 100Kts (Night)
2	063	3 hrs 50	32 gals	8.3 gal/hr	20" MAP; 2200RPM
3	043	3 hrs 30	30 gals	8.6 gal/hr	" " "
4	063	3 hrs 50	33 gals	8.4 gal/hr	" " "
5	043	3 hrs 45	29 gals	7.7 gal/hr	18" MAP; 2200RPM
6	063	2 hrs 05	18 gals	8.6 gal/hr	20" MAP. 2200RPM

17. Cessna Handbook (AAP 975) gives the following figures:

Altitude	AUW	Power Setting	Rate	Endurance
5000'	2650 lbs	20"/2200 RPM	8.7 gal/hr	264/314 mins
5000'	2900 lbs	20"/2200 RPM	9.6 gal/hr	237/288 mins *

\* This figure calculated to allow some reserves as in previous figure.

18. During this task aircraft operated at take-off AUW between 2650 lbs and 2700 lbs.

Recommendations

19. In view of the results obtained it is recommended that for missions of this nature, when height and power setting are specifically briefed, safe endurance be increased to four hours and maximum endurance to four hours 30 minutes.

*Wright*  
 (J. T. WRIGHT)  
 Capt  
 OC FW Sec