HISTORY OF THE 934TH AIRCRAFT CONTROL AND WARNING SQUADRON

1 JULY 1957 - 31 DECEMBER 1957

Prepared for the Historical Office

934th AC&W Squadron

by 2nd Lt Michael Finci (Historical Officer)

22 January 1958

(1400th Operations Group, Iceland Air Defense Force)

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I GENERAL ANALYSIS

The 934th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron was located at Site H-4 Straumnes, a narrow mountain peninsula extending into the Atlantic Ocean at the extreme North West corner of Iceland. The site proper was 1,500 feet above sea level. However, an adjunct of it, the Base Camp, was located at the foot of the mountain, 6.7 miles by road from the site. This camp has been closed in order to conserve personnel during the winter months.

During the period 1 July to 31 December 1957 the 934th had two commanders. Captain Robert Burdick, USAF assummed command in July and was succeeded in command by Major Thomas B. Place, USAF, in November 1957. The mission of the organization was this: "To provide Aircraft Control and Warning requisite for the gathering of information on all friendly and enemy air activity, and the accurate and timely presentation of this information in a manner which will offer ready use by operations personnel in effective employment of assigned defensive or offensive measures." (1) However, this unit's mission had continued during the period covered by this history, to be essentially survival and the endeavor to keep the site open. This was true because the site was not completed and it was therefore not operational; because not all necessary supplies were on hand and transportation of supplies to the site was difficult, and because the weather presented numerous difficulties. The site was manned during July, August and September by about 83 men, about two-thirds of authorized strength. During the months of October, November and December we had assigned to us an average of 104 men, which was 77% of authorized strength.

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The weather must always be taken into consideration when reporting on any history of the 954th. High winds buffeted the site, sometimes for several days in succession, and deep snow, which had begun falling on the 7th of September,. covered the entire peninsula throughout the rest of the winter and made transportation between the site and base camp extremely difficult. The worst spell of bad weather occurred around the 14th and 15th of December when a wind storm with winds estimated at 100 knots velocity, struck Straumnes. The constant winds lasted during most of that week-end. By Monday noon they had practically completely subsided.

The entire damage from this stern was not computed as of the writing of this history, for all of it was sustained at the base camp. Due to the heavy snow it was impossible to estimate the loss. Oil barrels were scattered all over the beach, and it was assumed that some had drifted out to sea. The most serious damage was done to the barge, which was. blown onto the beach, broken in two, lying in an upside down position.

The engine attached to the barge was blown off it.

Learning from last years sad experience, this year the 934th was ready for the winter season. The oil and food supply was stocked to last the entire winter, until approximately May 1958. Of course, there are always needy materials that are overlooked, and they were quite difficult to transport from Keflavik.

There was still no dock facilities existing at Latrar, in Adalvik Bay, the offloading Point for cargo destined for the site. A landing strip was constructed, so that the L-20, and Cessna could land, weather permitting. The Cessna has made numerous landings at Latrar, but the L-20 has to date accomplished the mission only twice since its purchase in October.

3 Small quantities of cargo and personnel could be and were carried by Flugfelag Islands h/f (Icelandic Airways), which landed a seaplane daily in the bay at Isafjordur, a small town 50 miles to the south of Straumnes along the west coast of Iceland. From there it was carried to Latrar by the Gyllir, an Icelandic fishing boat hired by the Air Force for this purpose.

4 II MONTHLY ANALYSIS

In the month of July the Cessna made the first trip to Latrar. Also, in July the squadron had a party celebrating the Fourth. Baseball games were played, for the first time in Straumnes, Iceland.

In August Captain Burdick made a trip back from Keflavik by truck. He brought back many needy supplies, and it was deemed a very successful enterprise. The truck was driven as far as Melgraseyri, and then the goods were placed on the Gyllir, for the 5 hour journey to Latrar.

The Non Commissioned Officer' s Open Mess was officially opened on 1 August 1957. Mr. Richard G. Jones and his telephone crew arrived from Air Material Command, to install a base telephone system in August. General H. G. Throne Jr. visited the site, after only being in Iceland three days.

The Tropo "antenna" crew arrived in September. The first snow of the coming winter fell on 7 September 1957. A great morale booster, our own Base radio Station was also born in September.

Critical shortages of personnel existed during the months of August, September and October, in all AFSC's.

Another morale booster was created when part of the supply building was converted into a gymnasium in the early part of October. Also in the early part of October the radar antenna team arrived. One of the two antennas to be raised, was put up on 12 November 1957.

The equipment for our base theater arrived in the latter part of November. This was immediately placed into operation.

On 11 December 1957 the L-20 made its first, and historic flight to 11-4. The base telephone system was completed in December.

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III SECTIONAL ANALYSIS

Since 1 July 1957, the supply section of site H-4 has worked earnestly to fulfill the mission of its section confronted with numerous difficulties.

This section was authorized five (5) supply personnel; one (1) Technical Sergeant, AFSC 64173, two (2) Airmen First Class and two (2) Airmen Second Class.

The personnel assigned to supply were; one (1) Staff Sergeant, AFSC 64173, one (1) Airman Second Class AFSC 64131 and two airmen borrowed from radar operations.

With the help of the maintenance personnel, a tech supply was recently established and also a stock level for each portion of supply has been set up.

This section has received most of the winter requirements for this site, but was having difficulties in receiving maintenance material in which stock levels could not be forecasted. This section was also confronted with very poor co-ordination with the Director of Material and the Base Supply in regards to supply problems. Due to lack of proper information and obsolete stock lists, stock levels were difficult to establish until October 1957, when this section received approximately 500 lbs. of stock lists and publications. Now, with the new publications, an adequate research section has been established.

The supply section at this site covered many phases such as; tech supply, publications, and a unit supply.

With the help of other sections, the supply mission was accomplished. (2)

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The food service section was a prominent morale building factor at H-4. During the summer months food was received and stored for a six (6) month winter supply. Menu planning was followed as much as possible so that our food supply level was run according to pre-planning. Fresh eggs and vegetables were a very rare commodity, and the only serious defects preventing a perfect operation.

The mission of the Installation section is to maintain the building structure, electrical systems, plumbing and refrigeration. During the winter months this section also has the job of snow removal. For this job we had the use of one TD-18 (International) Caterpillar which was not in the best operating condition. The reason for this was that we had no heavy equipment mechanic on the site. The D-7 (Caterpillar) had been deadlined for three (3) months with pony engine repairs.

The trash and garbage was removed by this section with the help of detailed men from other sections. This operation could be accomplished only when the roads were open to the sanitary fill. There were times when the trash and garbage could not be taken out of the building for a week at a time.

The heating systems in the RX and TX buildings have given most of the trouble in the heating line. There was a small amount of water in the fuel and the lines and the tank would freeze which stopped the operation of the heating system. The supply tank at both buildings should be placed inside the building since we do use the inferior fuel.

During this period of time the section was undermanned. There were four (4) men assigned; one (1) 55270, one (1) 55250, one (1) 56450 and one (1) 56650A. This section was authorized ten (10) slots of which four (4) were filled. We were short one (1) 55250, two (2) 5601l0 civilian

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utility helpers, one (1) 56130, one 56150 and one (1) 70250. (3)

The Communications section was located temporarily in the BOQ. The permanent location for this section was to have been the RX building which was incomplete during that period.

Our equipment was the old Signal Corps SCR-499, of which we have two sets. One was kept in its original case and used for standby, while the other was mounted in a console of our construction. We had two SP-600 receivers which were used with this equipment. Most of this equipment was considered obsolete during that period of operation. However, we did not have too much trouble keeping it on the air 24 hours a day. With the exception of tubes most repairs were made with salvaged parts from wherever available. We have never received an order of replacement parts for this equipment. Our antennae were a long wire for receiving and a long wire and doublet cut to frequency for transmitting. The only problems encountered with our antennae were due to iceing and terrific whipping from the wind.

Phone-patching was the primary function of this section. A phone-patch is a long distance type of phone call which is run over radio equipment. There were approximately one hundred phone-patches handled per month.

The newest radio equipment at the site was a Hallicrafters HT-32 transmitter and a Collins 75-A4 receiver, furnished to us for the purpose of setting up a MARS Station. (4)

On 28 September 1957 the Radar Installation Team (4C) from the 1st Communication Maintenance Squadron, Griffiss Air Force Base, New York

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arrived at H-4. Work started that morning with an inventory. At this time it was noted that many of the crates had been broken open and the contents exposed to rain and snow. The first time the team struck lag time was when they could not raise the Radome because the clamping rings were missing and there was no three phase power running to the tower. The Radome was raised on the 23rd of October 1957. By this time three-fourths of the installation work had been completed. Lag time was struck again on the 28th of October when it came time to raise the reflector and feed horn. Missing antenna hardware was the cause of this lag. About the 22nd of November Major Breedlove, IADF C&E Staff Officer left for the States to obtain the necessary hardware. For some unknown reason, the boxcontaining this hardware was opened while enroute to the site and some vital bolts were found missing. Finally, the necessary bolts were produced in December, at a machine shop in Keflavik. By the 18th of December five men of the seven man installation team were able to leave. Staff Sergeant Richmond and one other man were left behind to complete the installation, requiring about twelve hours work and seventy-two (72) hour hot check. (5) This has not been completed as yet.

Since 1 July 1957 the maintenance personnel have been waiting for equipment to install the radar. The required parts had not arrived and therefore we could not start operations.

The OJT program for the AFSC 's 27330 and 27350 has been at a stand still due to no qualified personnel assigned to conduct the training, and non-operational equipment.

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Since October personnel within the 5 and 7 level have been assigned duty in the section and OJT is now getting underway in class room training.

The operations section was ready to go into operation upon the completion of the FPS-3 antenna. The plotting board (vertical) and status boards had not arrived, but a plotting board was being drawn up to substitute for this until the regular plotting board arrives. (6)

The primary mission of the Transportation Section and its 29 pieces of equipment, was the hauling of supplies and equipment from the

base camp to the radar site.

July thru October were busy months for this section as many boats came into the Bay at the Base Camp with supplies to sustain the Squadron through the winter months. A good portion of these supplies was fuel oil which arrived in 55 gallon drums. This oil was hauled from the Base Camp to a storage tank on the site in 1200 gallon tankers. The main storage tank was filled by the latter part of October, and no more oil was hauled from Base Camp due to weather and road conditions. The hauling of oil was not to be resumed until next spring.

Snow and high winds have kept the road up the mountain closed a majority of the time during the months of November and December. Icelandic personnel have been contracted to keep the road open as much as possible and transportation has furnished the necessary trucks to haul and pick up mail and other emergency equipment brought in by plane.

Shortages in this section amounted to one (1) 60370, Transportation Supervisor, one (1) 47150, Heavy Equipment Mechanic, and one (1) 47131, Apprentice Automotive Mechanic.

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In December there were eight (8) vehicles on deadline status awaiting parts. The necessary parts were requisitioned, but due to isolation of this site, were not expected until next spring. Some of these vehicles were later rigged into operation, by usage of miscellaneous spareparts. (7)

During this period the dispensary has administered treatment to 294 cases, consisting of airman and officers for various illness and injurys. Of this total 11 personnel were on an in-patient status.

The dispensary has received an X-ray machine but has been unable to use it due to the fact that no film for it has been received. A doctor, Captain George H. Cameron has been assigned to the 934th AC&W Squadron for the winter months.

The most difficult problem of this section was dental. The last dental team to visit this site arrived here in June l957. (8)

1958 - HISTORY OF THE 934TH AIRCRAFT CONTROL AND WARNING SQUADRON

1 JANUARY to 30 JUNE 1958

Prepared for the Historical Officer By Personnel of the 934th AC&W Squadron 1 July 1958

(1400th Operations Group, Iceland Air Defense Force)

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PREFACE

The 934th Aircraft Control and warning Squadron is located on Straumnes, a narrow mountain penensula extending into to Atlantic Ocean at the extreme northwest corner of Iceland. The site proper is 1,500 feet above sea level. An adjunct of it, the base camp, is located at the foot of the mountain 6.7 miles by road from the site

The mission of the organization is "to provide Aircraft Control and Warning requisite for the gathering of information on all friendly and enemy air activity, and the accurate and timely presentation of this information in a manner which will offer ready use by operation personnel in effective employment of assigned defensive or offensive measures.

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OPERATIONS

The operational capabilities of this site remained dormant from 1 January 58 thru 15 January 58, due to parts not received to complete the installation of the antenna.

On 16 January 58 at 1200Z this site officially became operational. The awaited parts had arrived and were installed. The sets had been checked out and it was deemed that this site could become operational surveilance wise. At this time UHF and VHF were not operative and we had not received the plotting or status boards. When the boards finally arrived, we found them to be blanks. It was, therefore, necessary to draw up our own boards which, due to the lack of proper paints had to be filled in with grease pencils. This was accomplished during the latter part of February.

The prime difficulty in Operations was the lack of proper communications. All traffic was passed to H-l thru the High Frequency range (HF), which unfortunately does not have the capabilities of providing the mandatory twenty four hour contact. This condition, of course, should be relieved by the use of Tropo, which is not operational at this site.

During February VHF channels 121.5 and 126.18 were installed. These channels proved satisfactory for air to ground contact with aircraft at high altitudes (over 10,000 feet), but unsatisfactory at lower altitudes

On 27 March 1958, a C-54 was sent to H-4 for a calibration test. This test consisted of runs from the North, South, East, and West at 10,000 feet. The FPS-3 and VHF contact proved satisfactory. The

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Operations Officer felt this calibration was not adequate as the 10,000 foot level was the only altitude the aircraft flew on the four runs.

As of the 26 April, the Ultra High Frequency range (UHF) became operational. The primary, AICC, and guard channels have been checked out with Sourdough and Navy aircraft and has proven satisfactory.

The OJT Program is in effect. Twelve (12) Airmen in the 27 career field were tested for the five (5) level and all passed in category A.

The greatest difficulty within operations has been ground to ground communications and the distribution of regulations.

During the months of April and June the 934th was assigned two (2) 1641's bringing the authorized personnel in this AFSC up to full strength.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Operations and Maintenance offically made it Is initial move to the RX building, with the permanent installation of high frequency (HF), point to point communications, consisting of two 400 watt BC-6l0 transmitters and the associated equipment. During late January and early February, there were no maintenance personnel on hand at this organization. The Communications Officer and the Bendix Tech. representative took it upon themselves to affect the installation of the point to point communication and the installation of part of the air to ground scheme. Provisions were made originally for an AF team to install all communication and installation of part of the air to ground equipment at this site, however due to a budget cutback this team was cancelled,

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and it became the responsibility of the Communications Electronics Section to affect the operation of all communications.

February, brought new maintenance personnel to this organization, giving us 40% of our authorized strength. They were immediately given the task of completing, as far as equipment on hand permitted, the air to ground scheme programed for this site. With the initial VHF equipment already in place, the necessary cabling and wiring to remote this equipment to operations was completed 10 Feb. 58. Manpower authorization was brought to strength with the addition of three (3) maintenance men including one master sergeant during April. The installation of UHF was partially completed, Friday the 26th of Feb. 1958, with the installation of two (2) complete AN/GRC-27 UHF sets which gives this squadron the capibility of monitoring all air to ground committments, however, not all simultaneously.

Weather hampered operation from the RX building during the winter months, since the building was not completed. Hand carrying of water in five gallon gasoline cans was necessary for drinking and toilet since the same is not available at this building. Also due to the strong winds at this site approximately 40% of the windows were blown out of their frames. The heating of the RX building is a temporary arrangement with oil being pumped by hand into 'fifty gallon drums and then fed into tho furnace. Access to the RX building was perhaps the toughest obstacle to cope with. With the road closed, many nights were' spent by the personnel without shift relief. Their diet at this consisting of combat rations.

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RADAR MAINTENANCE

In January Tech Supply was established by the Radar Section. Shelves were obtained and over 2,000 items were unpacked and shelved. Proper supply records were made and policies established in regards to issue and Turn-in of Tech supplies. Space was limited, however,

and it wasn't until a later date that this section was moves and additional space acquired. A Tech Order File was established.

The Radar set AN/FPS-3 installation was completed on the 14th of January and a 120 hour "Hot Check" was initiated. Little difficulty was encountered relative to set operation, however, fluctuating power source did present an antenna rotation problem. The antenna would stop rotation every time the power would drop and it required the constant attention of the mechanic until power sources had been re-wired to correct difficulty.

on the 16 of January, a severe wind of 135 Knots destroyed the ML-444/FPS-3 Anemometer. A "Make Shift" one was fabricated from spare parts and an improvised case. It was installed three days later with satisfactory results .

The following projects were built during off duty hours by section personnel: Wood cable covers, shelves, cable racks, coffee bar and shop tool cabinet. A/2C Marcoe was awarded "Airman of the Month" for his outstanding contribution to these projects.

Difficulty was experienced in alignment of the 15-J1C Trainers. . The major reason was the lack of training and experience of the mechanics on this particular devise. Some of this difficulty was

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to both Maintenance and Operations Personnel. Dehydrator units in both beams required constant attention during the month .

In February, forty minutes of "Red" time was accrued due to faulty receiver unit. As. time progressed improvement was noted.

An attempt to fabricate a vacuum cleaner for use in cleaning components. proved futile. The motor used had a 3,300 RPM rating, which was sufficient but the required suction could not be attained.

Tech Supply moved to a new location, which made it possible for enlargement. Radar Maintenance relieved of the responsibility of Tech Supply initiated formal training for all maintenance personnel was established on Friday mornings. This two hour class is used for refresher training, OJT and other related subjects.

SUPPLY

During the first part of 1958, the commanding officer inventoried property at the site and custody receipts based upon this inventory were issued to the responsible personnel. Since there were disagreements. between information on stock record cards and the inventory, a one time Inventory Adjustment Voucher was authorized to bring the account up to the date of the inventory. However immediate work on this. and the UAL EAM Listing change report was delayed by requisitioning and receipt of office and housekeeping supplies. as well as replacement parts for Tech Supply. During the period from 1 April to 30 June over One and one-third Million pounds of supplies, foodstuffs and petroleum products. were received at this station.

Requisitions to establish a stock level for the coming winter were all submitted by 15 June 1958.

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In this period an area was set aside for the storage and issue of all expendable supplies. supply is now divided into four sections; (1) Tech Supply, (2) Expendable Supplies, (3) Tool Room and Personal Clothing, (4)General Warehouse Area

INSTALLATIONS

The snow storms during the month of January were moderate. The winds reached a velocity of 100 plus. It was during these wind storms that we had most of our troubles. One major problem was keeping the road open to RX and Tropo buildings. The snow removal equipment assigned to this site was inadequite. Several trips were made to Base camp for the purpose of getting supplies. These trips were made by D-8 and sled which was contracted to us by Iceland Prime Contractors and was our only means of transportation. The large vent over the transformers of the power building blew off which put this section in a bind as we did not have the materials for this type of repairs. A remodeled vent was erected when the weather permitted. Several times during February, March and April the water had to be turned off because of the well going dry. When the water storage tank got below the half mark we would use restricted water procedures. On 25 May the water storage tank level dropped to two feet four inches which left us with approximately 4,500 gallons of water. It was found that the deep well motor was running on a worn bearing. The motor was replaced with a spare one. This problem pointed cut how important spare parts are. The motor which was used to replace the burnt out motor was the only spare part for the complete water system at this

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The unloading of supply carrying vessels has been carried on since spring thaws with over one million pounds of goods being unloaded as Adelvik Bay. This is accomplished with the use of the LCM-6 oil barge. Two disadvantages of this method are: (1) Unloading periods require a long time because of beaching LCM and barge in connection with high and low tides, (2) our D-7 Caterpillar is inadequate to use for beaching vessels. The help of a D-8 Caterpillar, belonging to the Icelandic Prime Contractors was used for this task.

A preventive maintenance program was established under Air Force Regulation 85-2, but has turned into a catch as catch can basis. The problem has been manpower. This progam would have been put into effect had we the number of required men.

MOTOR TRANSPORTATION AND MAINTENANCE

The month of January, Feburary and March were slow for the transportation section as the roads were closed. The furtherest point that could be driven was to the Rx building. The time could have been well spent in repairing vehicles that were out of commission, however, supply problems would not permit this.

In April Lt. Thorp arrived from the States and replaced Lt. Allison as Transportation Officer.

On May 16, the first boat arrived with supplies and the Motor Pool has been busy since carrying cargo up the hill. Most of the work and driving has been done by volunteer personnel This was necessary due to having only one airman assigned as a driver.

The greatest difficulty the Motor Pool has is the lack of vehicle

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parts to put the vehicles assigned in proper running order. Of the twenty-three (23) vehicles assigned six (6) have been out of commission for this six month period. During this time we had to resort of cannibalization to keep the remaining seventeen (17) vehicles operational.

FOOD SERVICE

The squadron Dining Hall has been feeding approximately 125 men per meal per day with a total of four meals being served every twenty-four hours. The Dining Hall is open twice a day for coffee breaks, at 1000 hours and 1500 hours, each being twenty minutes. The Dining Hall also serves coffee after the supper meal until 0100 hours.

The food service section has seven (7) assigned personnel, with two kitchen police, assigned daily from a duty roster maintained by the First Sergeant.

Each Sunday only two meals are served. The breakfast meal from 0730 hours until 1300 hours and the supper meal from 1600 hours until 1800 hours.

Future plans for the Dining Hall are to repaint and have dividers for the Officer and NCO sections. Drapes and pictures have been ordered and the dividers are finished except for the painting.

The Dining Hall is inspected weekly by the Commander followed up by a weekly inspection by the Medical Department.

In the month of May approximately forty tons of food, dry and frozen was received.

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MEDICAL

During the last six months there were two hundred and eighty three people treated for various diseases and injuries on an out patient status. Nine men had been hospitalized for a period of twenty four hours or more.

Because of the number of personnel that we had with dental problems a dentist was sent up from the main base. During his four week stay

thirty men received dental work.

Dr. George Cameron, who arrived here in November 1957 on TDY was relieved in February by Dr. Silvery. Dr. Silvery was with us until April when he then returned to the main base hospital.

Our most serious illness during this period was a diagnosed case of appendicitis. The patient was flown out by plane the same day the diagnosis was made.

Complete X-ray equipment was received here in March, making it possible for the Medical Corpman to do a more complete job in the diagnosis of injuries.

Due to the lack of fresh produce received here, at our site, our Medical Corpman, T/Sgt George H Rice has placed vitamins on the Dining Hall tables so that all personnel may receive their daily requirements.

Water samples taken from our water sourace have been sent to the Base Veterinarian for analysis. The samples are taken from any point in the water system at three or four week intervals. Through these tests it has. been noted, our water here is of the purest nature possible.

Personnel from the Base Beterinarian Office visited us in the month of May for a routine sanitation inspection. Very few discrepancies were found.

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On the 26 of June 58, the Commander was affected with an illness peculiar to Iceland which attacks the Central Nervous System. The Commander, Major Thomas B. Place, was sent to Keflavik Air Base for hospitalization. At present the transmission of this disease is yet unknown.