

From: Maj P.D. MUDD

103 Sig Sqn
AFPO 3
GPO SYDNEY
NSW
28 May 66

Lt Col K.J. TAYLOR
1 Signal Regiment
INGLEBURN
N.S.W.

Dear Colonel Taylor,

Before I left AUSTRALIA I promised Lt Col TAYLOR that I would write back to give a picture of what was happening here and try to provide a guide to all aspects of our operations which I hope will help those concerned with preparing reinforcements for us and a replacement squadron.

My intention is to write a letter at approximately monthly intervals, or more often if circumstances demand, to the Director, with copies to CO 1 Sig Regt and OC 104 Sig Sqn, as I think they will be most intimately concerned with the effectiveness and the replacement of this squadron. If particular matters come up I will write separate letters.

I must begin by apologising for not writing sooner, but the tropical lassitude is a real thing and it is always easy to fill the day.

Deployment to VIETNAM

I will mention the move in of the squadron briefly as a similar situation should not confront subsequent squadrons which will take overequipment in the theatre. At this time the squadron's first deployment is complete in the staging area. We are deficient twelve men; three OKC's, two Linemen and seven OR/OKR's. Nine were deficient on departure from AUSTRALIA and subsequently three have been or are being returned having contacted hepatitis. This outbreak now seems to have stopped.

Our equipment has arrived generally in good state. The majority of the radio equipment, having been received in the squadron shortly before departure, was transported in the manufacturers' cartons and not installed until after arrival. Familiarisation of operators with the equipment has generally been quick. I believe that as far as our major items of communications equipment are concerned, we are in good shape. We have power supplies, but I would like to wait for some more experience with them before commenting. Dry batteries are a problem, particularly 1.5v cells. We could not convince the Ordnance system that we really wanted the quantities we indented for. We are now trying to make up our requirements from the US supply system and if there are no unforeseen delays we will probably just make it. The test equipment position is still being sorted out. We are due to take over a tels repair vehicle currently held by RAEME. At the moment it is the only one in the theatre and will remain so until the arrival of HMAS SYDNEY on its second trip. We have arranged for the F of S to make an assessment of the suitability of the equipment on the vehicle for our purposes and for our technicians to work on the vehicle to become familiar with it.

/They

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MR

This a station for 1 Fd Sqn or the Command Net. This may be only be a temporary measure but is considered to be necessary in the early stages of the occupation of the position as the engineers will be occupying a portion of the perimeter.

General

Morale in the squadron is high, which is very pleasing. This is surprising to a certain extent as it is only very recently that the men have begun to be employed in their trades. All the early arrivals have been employed on filling sandbags, pitching tents, sorting stores and generally establishing the camp. I think the fact that we are right on a beach and are able to have a swim practically every afternoon has helped a lot.

While I cannot guarantee to be a perfect correspondent I will be very happy to try to answer any questions you may wish to put to me with regard to anything I write in these letters or any aspect of our operations. I realise that there will be points I overlook which you would like to know about and would be happy to have you raise them.

Duncan Spencer has told me of the tremendous help given him by the regiment, and in particular by Bill Blair and his "Q" staff in finalising arrangements and getting the squadron away. I appreciate this very much and would be grateful if you would pass my thanks to all concerned.

Best wishes,

Peter Mudd

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[Signature]

IATF BASE CAMP

MAP PICT O MAP SUPPLEMENT SHEET 6430 III 6
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