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From: Commander, Fourteenth Coast Guard District
To: Commandant (CGS)

Subj: Logistic Support for LORSTA's Marcus and Iwo Jima

Ref: (a) COMDT (CGS) ltr of 7 August 1963 - with enclosure
(b) Joint PACAF/MATS Memorandum of Agreement for MATS Route Extensions in the PACOM Area, dated 7 Feb 1964
(c) AINIMO CINCPAC 150346Z, April 1964
(d) Chief, Bureau of Supplies and Accounts ltr H1213 of 5/22/64
(e) BUSANDA INST 4630.14A

1. Reference (a) advised that air support for the Loran stations at Marcus Island and Iwo Jima would be provided by the 315th Air Division from Tachikawa AB, Japan on what we presumed was an indefinite basis with DOD absorbing the cost. Enclosure (1) to reference (a) contained assurance to SECDEF from SECDEF that - "The commanders of supporting airlift units will be informed of the importance of the Loran-C Stations to the Defense Department and to the plans of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and will be directed to give Loran Station requirements the higher priority service required for on-time completion and subsequent operation of the stations." Reference (b) provides for the transfer of this function to MATS and specifies "a minimum of once weekly service". Reference (c) advised that after 1 July 1964 Coast Guard requirements exceeding the weekly MATS flight must be submitted to MATS through Coast Guard command channels for special assignment airlift or additional channel type flights as required. Thus, the operational requirement for quick-acting responsive support facility has been superseded by successive administrative decisions to a slow inflexible and inadequate system.

2. In investigating ways and means of arranging for emergency flights, reference (d) was received requesting that any requirements of the U. S. Coast Guard for channel and/or special airlift support by the Military Air Transport Service be forwarded to the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts (H12) in accordance with reference (e). Reference (e) refers to five additional directives not held by this command, and requires notice of routine additional flight requirements be submitted 90 days in advance. Emergency requirements for special mission aircraft may be submitted to BUSANDA (Code H2) by message. However, the cost of such flights is based on the total flying hours from the time the aircraft departs its home station or the point of departure from common user scheduled operations until the aircraft returns to home

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station or point where it is re-entered into common user scheduled service. Thus, the availability of an emergency airlift aircraft on a reliable basis appears doubtful, and the cost thereof is indeterminate when an emergent flight to Marcus Island is involved.

3. The MATS service is probably adequate for areas where there are alternate means of transportation and where there are adequate material and personnel (including medical) resources of more or less self-sustaining basis. MATS service and procedures are not suited to the non-scheduled type support of a small Coast Guard station with few personnel operating strategically vital equipment on an isolated island several hundred miles from the nearest land, such as Marcus Island or Iwo Jima. Our requirements for emergency flights are for medical evacuation and for providing emergency repairs or parts, and are properly classified as tactical rather than logistical. This is where we have erred in our language in justifying our C-123B or HC-130B aircraft in the past. MATS cannot adequately meet our requirements. Other DOD airlifts are not reliably available, as evidenced by the succession of developments recorded in references (a) through (e). Coast Guard, therefore has a well established justification for a tactical type airlift capability in support of loran chains in the Pacific. This capability can and should be collateral with Coast Guard SAR responsibilities.

4. The Commandant is aware of the impending disruption of Navy - provided SAR coverage in the Kwajalein - Wake area resulting from rearrangements within the Department of Defense. As of this date I am not certain as to how SAR commitments to ICAC and under the National SAR Plan for this area are to be fulfilled.

5. I am firmly convinced that the only practical solution to the tactical support and SAR problems lies in the Coast Guard assuming these responsibilities and providing suitable facilities to carry out the missions. Further study is in progress and concrete proposals will be submitted in the near future.

6. I recommend:


a. That arrangements be made to permit MATS to respond to COMFESSEC requests for airlift and incidental service out of Tachikawa to Iwo Jima in connection with rebuilding the tower, etc., and for supply of LORSTA Marcus after 1 July 1964, during the remainder of the runway construction period.

b. That MATS be requested to clarify the conditions under which "local" requests (COMFESSEC or COBBI4) for emergency ("special") airlift might be honored immediately in the interests of maintaining Loran-C signals on air.

c. That all plans for logistics involving airlift requirements include as policy the insistence that "tactical" airlift is normal to present and future Coast Guard requirements. DOD support for this should be sought on the basis of relative importance of Loran-C support to other tactical support requirements.

d. That planning be directed toward providing suitable four-engine aircraft at Wake and Guam as soon as possible to meet our SAR commitments and to support our out-lying units.

G. C. KNAPP

Copy to:
COMDT (O) 
COMDT (F)
COMDT (E)
COMWESTAREA