

GENERAL INFORMATION

LORAN STATION

SIMERI CRICHI



**COMMANDER
COAST GUARD ACTIVITIES EUROPE
LONDON, ENGLAND**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
U.S. COAST GUARD**



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

Address reply to:

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LETTER OF PROMULGATION

1. This publication was written for the general enlightenment of interested personnel and to provide relevant information for Commanding Officers and Liaison Officers or enlisted men preparing for assignment to this Loran station.
2. In addition to operational and military responsibilities particular to this station, information of a more general nature is included. Men assigned to this station must adjust to native customs and attitudes. A picture is given of the people unique to this area, the topography of the surrounding country, the prevailing climatic conditions and the available recreational facilities. Familiarization with these aspects will enable the prospective relief to prepare himself for his new surroundings.
3. This publication was compiled from information submitted by men actually engaged in active duty on the Loran station. Very few alterations have been necessary, and perhaps one of the values of this publication is to be gained through the tone and manner of expression of the author, who, in many cases, is found to be interesting, informative and imaginative. The insights offered are based on first-hand experience and should prove valuable to an American living in a foreign country.
4. It is requested that errors and omissions noted, as well as suggestions for improvement, be addressed to Commander, Coast Guard Activities, Europe, Box 50, FPO, New York, N.Y., 09510.

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USCG LORAN STATION,
SIMERI CRICHI, ITALY

Chapter I - General Information

A. Location

The United States Coast Guard Loran Station, Simeri Crichi, Italy, is situated in the county of Sellia Marina, in the province of Catansaro, a region of Calabria, on the southern coast of Italy which borders on the Gulf of Squillace. The station is twelve miles southeast of the city of Catansaro, the provincial capital, and seven miles east of Catansaro Lido. Catansaro has a population of approximately 80,000 people. The snow-capped mountains to the north of the station are La Sila.

The Simeri Crichi railroad station is approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the front gate of the station. The railroad station is the reason for naming the Loran Station Simeri Crichi, because during construction all building materials were addressed to the Simeri Crichi Railroad Station.

B. Climate

Average monthly temperatures (Fahrenheit) are given for the local area of the station. The extreme range from below freezing to high 90's.

<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUNE</u>	<u>JULY</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEPT</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>
46	50	54	60	66	77	80	80	75	64	55	48

Rain is very slight during the summer months. Winter brings more rainfall with thunderstorms. The peninsula separates two seas, the Ionian and Tyrrhenian seas, which results in frequent winds sweeping across the plain north of the station. The climate is mild and enjoyable, though wet in winter. A varied civilian wardrobe is desirable during the four seasons of the year.

C. Environs

The United States Coast Guard Loran Station Simeri Crichi was commissioned in 1959. It is the master station for the Mediterranean Loran-C Chain. The station is built on the coastline of the Gulf of Squillace which affords the station a wide beach of its own.

Simeri Crichi

Calabria is primarily a rural farming area. The local people, though poor, are very friendly and hospitable, often extending invitations to visit their homes. While a few people here are somewhat Americanized, most cling to old traditions and morals. For example dating is almost non-existent.

The large cities in the area are Catansaro, Crotone, Taranto, and Reggio Calabria. Summer resorts dot the coast line. These cities and resorts are a puzzle of paradox, where modern apartment houses border on huts easily 300 years old, and automobiles must wait for ox-carts to cross the roads.

In the La Sila mountains there are many old medieval villages that were once strongholds of land barons.

Snow, caps the range, but skiing is not available. Sight-seeing is very popular in the ancient towns nestled high on the lofty shelves of the mountains. Many fine art treasures can be viewed in churches that were built in Columbus's time. Many sculptures, wood-carvings, and old relics from Italy's ancient past are proudly preserved.

Calabria is an area noted for its wine and farming products. Poverty is prevalent, but modern machinery, ideas, and financial support are slowly trickling down from the industrial north of Italy. The standard of living is slowly improving each year. The coastline may someday be another Riviera where yachting, sailing, swimming, skin-diving, water-skiing and fishing are enjoyed by thousands of tourists each year. Some good highways and a good train system, place all of Europe within a few days travel.

In Reggio and Consentino, the wrought iron works are famous, whilst the presence in the soil of good clay and kaolin furnishes material for the terracotta and ceramic industries which Catansara produces besides artistic damasks. In the province of Cosenzo, hand weaving and wood working have developed; and at Seminara, wicker work and woollen materials are produced.

Food is somewhat plain but usually good. Some local specialties are Lasagne, fried fish and squid, boiled octopus, and other seafoods. Local and other wines are reasonably priced and some are excellent.

D. Dependent Facilities

The tour at this station is now an accompanied tour of two years or an unaccompanied tour of 18 months.

For those bringing families, many factors must be considered. Housing, transportation, schooling, availability of products, food, climate and medical care are among them.

Housing: Apartments are available in either Catansaro or Catansaro Lido. A few houses may be available further away (these are called "villas", though consists usually of only a house and yard). Apartments are very scarce in the summer due to the influx of people from inland wanting to spend the summer at the ocean. Late fall through to early spring are the best times to find apartments. Fairly new apartments are available. Apartments are fairly large with big rooms. The cost of apartments vary greatly, depending on condition, location, and size. Catansaro is generally more expensive than Lido. Rent will run between \$150 and \$50. Utilities are expensive.

A few problems to be expected are:

(1) Apartments are rented bare, without closets, light fixtures, cabinets, and sometimes not even a kitchen sink. Bathroom fixtures are usually furnished.

(2) Initial cost of moving-in will be high; usually three months advance rent will be required. Closets, cabinets, etc. must be purchased. Utilities installation will cost about \$70 - \$100 including telephone.

(3) Kitchen appliances are not available for hire (US 110V appliances will work here with transformers available through the exchange; 220v appliances such as dryers and stoves will probably be of too high voltage for the apartment wiring).

(4) Transformers must be used to convert local 220V to 110V electricity. Initial cost for transformers is \$20 to \$80 or more.

(5) Televisions must be converted for European sound system. As this is only available in the USN Exchange (Main Branch) in Naples, it is suggested that they be shipped direct to them or to USCG Air Station, Naples. Mark for USN Exchange (Main Branch), hold for (your name), and arrangements made with the exchange when in Naples prior to reporting aboard. (cost about \$20).

(6) Apartments are usually without heat. Heaters may be purchased locally, initial cost \$25-\$100.

(7) Household goods usually take up to three months to arrive and should be shipped as early as possible. (The government will pay temporary living allowance up to 70 days while awaiting your household goods.

(8) Other initial costs include window screens, appliance conversion to bottled gas, and wardrobes for storing clothes.

(9) Your car will take one to three months to arrive, and you will be required to possess a full year \$10,000/20,000/5,000 liability insurance, good in Italy.

Transportation: You will probably fly from New York to Rome with TWA, and from Rome to Naples with Alitalia. After checking in at MEDSEC office, you will probably take a train to Catansaro Lido, where a station vehicle will meet you and take you and your family to a hotel. Upon arrival in Naples, contact either the MEDSEC office, phone 640-144, or the CG Air Station at the Naples Civil Airport. A hotel near to MEDSEC Office is best, so that you will not have to commute. Presently the MEDSEC office is located in Building C of the Naval Support Activities, via Caravagio, Naples. The hotel (not the best but close) across the street, is the "President Hotel". The Loran Station's phone number is "Catansaro 29100".

Schooling: There are no facilities for dependent schooling and the Commandant letter authorizing this to be a family station, states that no personnel with school age children will be assigned.

Availability of Products: Food is available either through local stores or purchased from the station's general mess. Most local food (meat, canned goods, prepared food) are either non-existent locally or extremely high-priced. It is not advisable to buy meat or milk locally, because of the danger of hepatitis. Fresh vegetables and fruits are seasonally available at a good price and are safe after proper preparation. Pasta is always available and cheap. Meat, milk and certain other items may be purchased from the general mess.

Other products are available either from local stores or the station's exchange. Local clothing is about the same price as the U.S. but there are no department stores or discount stores for the thrifty. Local furniture is priced comparably to U.S. prices. The local people have great respect for the quality of U.S. goods but there are a few bargains here, such as marble-topped furniture.

It should be remembered that the station exchange is very small and that many items must be ordered from Naples, taking upto a month to arrive. Therefore sufficient quantity of unusual items such as baby formulas, diet foods, etc. must be carried. An account with Sears and a catalog will be invaluable.

Climate: This is a semi-tropical climate, but dry and hot in the summer. Water is short in the summer, most apartments having water only a few hours a day. Clothing from heavy winter coats to swim-suits are needed. The station beach is a favorite spot all summer. There is no air-conditioning in the apartments. The winter is cold and wet and a great deal of heat is required because of high ceilings, large rooms and lack of insulation.

Medical Care: The nearest U.S. Medical facility is the U.S. Naval Hospital, Naples. Dependents may be air-evacuated from the nearest airport (about an hour's drive) for serious problems. Otherwise local doctors and clinics may handle routine problems and such expenses are reimbursable in accordance with the Medicare program (80% of costs over minimum limit of \$50 for one dependent, and \$100 for two or more for all treatments, or up to 100% for costs over \$25 for in-patient treatment).

Local medical facilities are behind the U.S. standard in many respects, but are steadily improving. If there are any questions about medical facilities available, the situation should be completely investigated before bringing dependents.

Simeri Crichi

Chapter II - Operations

A. Aids to Navigation

The aid to navigation operated by the station is the transmitting of steady, reliable, Loran-C pulses for the Mediterranean Loran-C Chain. Simeri Crichi functions as a Loran-C master with three slaves, X, Y, and Z. Flashing beacons and obstruction lights are maintained on the 625 foot antenna tower to warn air-traffic.

B. Communications

Communications consist of signal side band voice transmissions. A network is operated with the CG Radio Station Naples and Simeri Crichi net control for COMMEDSEC. Traffic is sent to/from CG Radio Station, LORSTA Simeri Crichi, LORSTA Targabarun, LORSTA Estartit -Spain, LORSTA Matratin, LORSTA Estaca de Vares - Spain, and Loran Monitors Rhodes and Sardinia.

Mail is sent via either the Italian domestic mail or through the Fleet Post Office, New York. FPO mail uses American stamps.

The international Italian mail address of the station is as follows:

(Addressee)
USCG LORSTA
Casella Postale N. 44
Catansaro Lido, Italia

The FPO mailing address of the station is as follows:

(Addressee)
USCG LORSTA
FPO, New York, 09520

Mail pick-ups are made daily.

General delivery service is available at Italian post offices. Correspondence can be addressed c/o Post Office by adding "Fermo in Posta" to the name of locality. Delivery will be made at the local central Post Office upon identification of addressee by passport.

The station has an official telephone. The number is CATANSARO 29100. Local calls from public telephones require the use of a token which can be purchased at newstands, tobacco shops, and bars. Long distance calls can be dialled direct by using the area code of the major cities. Important telephone numbers to remember are : COMMANDER MEDITERRANEAN SECTION, Naples, Italy - 640-144 Ext. 507. USCG AIR STATION, Naples, Italy - 540-122 Ext 94 or 96. Hotel President, Via Caravaggio 78, Naples, Italy, - 387-162.

Overseas telegrams may be sent by ITALCABLE which operates services abroad, transmitting messages by cable or radio. Both internal and foreign telegrams may be dictated over the telephone.

C. GOOD WILL AMBASSADORS

In view of the President of the United States expressed wish that all Americans overseas serve as voluntary free-world ambassadors, all members of the station are obliged to pay particular attention to their relations with the local citizenry and be careful concerning the image of the American way of life they might project.

D. VEHICLES AND BOATS

Vehicles assigned to the station are GSA vehicles of American make, except a Fiat tractor which is used only within the limits of the station. A carry-all is furnished for light hauling and personnel movements. A 2½ ton stake truck is furnished for hauling supplies from Capo Isola Rizzuto Airport to the station. A fiber-glass hull boat is furnished for recreational purposes. The small Fiat tractor is used by the station for mowing grass, dumping garbage, hauling trailers, and other various utility type jobs. All personnel should have a 2½ ton drivers license (Government).

Chapter III - Personnel

A. Assignment and rotation

Personnel are assigned by the Commandant to non-restricted duty at LORSTA Simeri Crichi. Duty tours are 18 months unaccompanied, 24 months with dependents. If dependents are authorized after electing an unaccompanied tour, 12 months must remain of the tour. Rotation requests are submitted about six months prior to the expiration of the tour. When rotation requests are processed and orders are received, straight line transfers are then requested and usually approved.

LTJG	(CO)				
RELE	(XO)				
ENC	1	EN1	1	EN3	1
ET1	3	ET2	2	SK2	1
EM2	1	EN2	1	ETW3	1
HM2	1	DC2	1	SN	5
CS1	1	ET3	2	FN	1

In addition to a total of twenty-five (25) military personnel assigned, four (4) Italian civilians work at the station.

B. Liberty

Three section liberty is granted.

C. Leave

Regular leave is granted as permitted by on-board personnel strength and work load.

Emergency leave is only considered when recognized agencies confirm that an emergency exists and the person's presence is required. The American Red Cross is the recognized agency for the confirming of emergency leave. It is advisable that all dependents be informed of the necessity of the nearest local American Red Cross Chapter notifying the Commander, USCG Mediterranean Section, Naval Support Activities, Box 43, Naples, Italy, 09521, when requesting emergency leave. This will save valuable time and expedite the request. All dependents should have the address of COMMEDSEC. Travel to CONUS on emergency leave may be at government's expense.

D. Medical

The station is assigned one (1) Hospital Corpsman who handles all minor ailments. Serious cases are evacuated to Naples by Coast Guard aircraft. There is an Italian Civil Hospital in the city of Catansaro. The Commanding Officer is authorized to obligate twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars from the unit's imprest fund for emergency and certain other minor treatment to military personnel. Dependent medical care is covered under Chapter one.

E. Training and Education

Training periods are held daily for drills and lectures. On-the-job training also implements training. A striker program is encouraged. Coast Guard Institute courses are easily procured and strongly recommended. Correspondence courses are available through USAFI.

F. Recreation

Good weather permits a great deal of outdoor activity. Facilities are available for playing softball, tennis, basketball, volleyball, swimming, water-skiing, and sun-bathing on a wide beach.

Indoor activities include billiards, table tennis, a library, and nightly movies are shown. Italian television is received. There are very few off-station recreational facilities other than sightseeing. Catansaro has several movie theaters and a soccer stadium. During the season, June to September, many summer resorts open. Copenella Beach near Catansaro Lido is very well developed, bikini-filled, and one of the most popular tourist attractions in the surrounding area. The station's boat with outboard motor is used for recreational purposes.

The most popular recreation is naturally photography; because of the local scenery and to record a once-in-a-lifetime visit to Italy.

A "ham" radio station is not allowed because of the restrictions placed on the station by the government. Therefore, "ham" transmitting equipment should be left in the United States. Ham receivers may be used on the station. The voice of America and the Armed Forces Broadcasting System covers the area, as well as the BBC; so news from home is always current and available. Navy periodicals are subscribed to by the station.

Chapter IV - Engineering

A. Electronics

The Loran-C equipment installed is the AN/FPN-38 timer group, coupled with AN/FPN-39 transmitters and AN/FPN-12A switching gear. AN/URT-17 transmitters are employed in single side band transmissions for voice communications. Newer timers are planned for summer 1967.

B. Generating Plant

115 VAC, 60 CPS, power supplied to the station by one of three installed Model D397D Caterpillar diesel-electric generator sets. The engines are water cooled, 4 cycle, 415 HP, and capable of producing 250 KW each or 750 KW when parallel on the line. Refrigeration consists of a freeze box, reach-in box, and an ice-cream making machine. It is advisable for all engineering department personnel to get as much experience and training possible on refrigeration before being transferred to the station. Local refrigeration repair facilities are non-existent. The station is heated and air-conditioned the year round by General Electric heat pump air-conditioners. Air-conditioning is another subject all engineering personnel should review before coming to the station. RAC training is required for the ENC and ENI.

C. Antenna Tower

The station antenna tower is a triangular skeleton structure 625 feet in height from the top of the base insulator to the uppermost platform. The required obstruction lighting is provided by two 300 MM flashing beacons and nine obstruction lights. A full length ladder is provided with a safety carrier rail and safety belts.

Periodically, repairs such as painting, overhauling electrical wiring, tightening of guy cable clamps, and retensioning of guy support cables, must be performed on the antenna tower. This is accomplished by the contractor through Commander, Mediterranean Section or higher command. Minor repairs such as relamping of obstruction lights, are accomplished by station personnel. Only reliable volunteers are permitted to go aloft. No climbing is permitted in adverse weather.

D. Fuel and Water

Diesel fuel is stored in four, 10,000 gallon tanks which are mounted in cement cradles behind the signal power building. The tanks are surrounded by a fire-pit wall to contain all the oil in the four tanks, should the tanks erupt. There is a diesel oil unloading pump and valve manifold at the tanks to unload diesel oil from tank trucks to the storage tanks.

Gasoline storage is possible in a 1000 gallon tank buried in front of the power building, but the tank is no longer used. Quantities of gasoline are not maintained on the unit, but purchased as required with coupons, furnished through COMMEDSEC, at local gas stations.

All fresh water used on the station is drawn from a deep well located on the station grounds. The water is piped from the well through the station's chlorinating system and water softener, and then into two buried cement tanks. The total capacity of the potable water tanks is 20,000 gallons. The water is distributed throughout the station under pressure supplied by two parallel-connected pressure pumps in the main generator room of the signal power building. Water for fire-fighting is taken from the tanks and boosted to 100 pounds pressure by an electric fire pump mounted in the main generator room. The fire pump is automatically started when the fire alarm system is energized.

Fresh water from the station's potable water tanks is supplied throughout the station's sanitation system. Waste is delivered to the station's septic tank, and then the fluid is lifted by an electrically driven pump to a leeching field near the east corner of the station.

Chapter V - Comptroller

A. Commissary

Commissary supplies are ordered from Naples and delivered to Simeri Crichi by Coast Guard aircraft from the US Coast Guard Air Station, Naples. Deliveries are bi-weekly. Refrigeration boxes are used to transport perishables such as milk, butter, and meat.

Complement is one commissary man, first class, and an Italian assistant cook. The commissary also sells certain food items that are unobtainable locally to USCG personnel with families.

B. Pay

Pay records are held by USN SUPPACT NAPLES. New personnel pay records are turned into the MEDSEC office on arrival where they are transferred to the USN. Pay checks are forwarded by mail to the station by MEDSEC office bi-weekly.

C. Money

American money is not used at the station or locally. A banking account or checking account should be established in the US before departing. A checking account in the US can easily be maintained through an allotment, and the FPO mail system is the best method of handling one's personal financial affairs. American pay checks are cashed into lire each payday by the Bank of Italy. Exchange and mess bills may be paid in lire or dollar checks.

D. Clothing

→ Each man is required to have a complete sea-bag in his possession on arrival at the station. Do not depend upon shipping clothing to the station; shipments are always slow. All classes of uniforms are worn at the station in the course of the year; blues, whites, khaki.

Officers and Chief Petty Officers will require blues, khaki, and white uniforms. On occasions when Italian or other foreign dignitaries visit the station, full dress uniforms including large medals and swords are worn. Personnel inspections are monthly, and seabags are inspected quarterly. Khakis are not worn by US Navy Personnel in the Mediterranean theater, therefore khaki clothing is not sold by the US Navy small stores or in the exchanges in the area.

Khaki clothing must be purchased through the mail. United States Air Force Exchange is located in Brindisi, but supplies are very limited. The US Navy Exchange in Naples does not stock naval uniform equipment in large quantities.

Khaki shorts are authorized for all hands during the summer. Off the station, civilian clothing is usually worn. Suits are recommended. Suits and hats are normally worn by the Italians. Top coats and bridge coats are necessary when traveling in Europe and when visiting Naples in the winter.

E. Supply

Electronics supply is the major duty of the SK assigned. He is responsible for records, inventories, stocks and follow-up of electronic items.

Other supply is similar to most other units, with the department senior Petty Officers responsible for ordering, stocks and follow-up. The SK also assists in these duties as needed.

F. Imprest Fund

The Imprest Fund is a revolving cash fund which the agent cashier has at his disposal to make local purchases. These purchases are restricted by current directives to items necessary to be purchased locally. Purchases from this fund are made by SF-44 (as in the US) and chargeable to unit allocations, instead of sending the SF-44 to the district for payment. The agent cashier (an E-5 or above, assigned this duty) pays cash to the merchant and the fund is re-imbursed through Coast Guard Headquarters.

Chapter VI - Administration

A. General

The administration division consists of the CO, the CS1, the SK2, the HM2 and an Italian Office assistant, and carries out the ordinary functions as aboard any unit. The division is responsible for personnel administration, financial management, supply, commissary management and supply, medical administration, and correspondence.

B. Safety

Safety aboard and ashore is an integral part of everyday life. On the station are many danger areas, such as high voltage line and equipment, machinery and the antenna tower. Off the station, driving is possibly the greatest danger. The new driver in Italy should be especially watchful for pedestrians, other drivers and ox-carts.

C. Relations with local Military Commands and Civilian Officials

On occasions, officers and men from the station are invited to Italian official state functions. Official relations are maintained with the local Governor and carabinieri (police), among other officials. Italians are very conscious of protocol, and propriety is always the watchword.

Chapter VII - words of Wisdom for Reliefs

A. General

To summarize much of what has been said and to point out a few details, a man receiving orders to Simeri Crichi Loran Station will probably receive orders two months before departure. Writing to the station's Commanding Officer immediately to seek answers to questions, is a good course of action.

Establish a checking account in the United States before leaving. Civilian clothing may be purchased locally. Both winter and light summer clothing is required, since the weather at the station is similar to Northern Florida. Enlisted men must have a full seabag of clothing on arrival at the station. All dental work must be completed before leaving the United States. All magazines and periodicals should be forwarded by notification to your new address which is:

U.S. Coast Guard Loran Station
FPO, New York, N.Y., 09520

or:

U.S. Coast Guard
Cavella Postale N.44
Catansaro Lido - Italia

The zip code is very important in that it identifies the station. A driver's license for a 2½ ton truck must be obtained before transfer. A passport, and immunization must be obtained before leaving. Luggage is examined on leaving and entering Italy. Free entry is allowed for personal effects ... a maximum of two bottles of alcoholic beverages per person can be brought in duty free. Pets entering Italy must have a veterinarian's certificate of good health which should be acquired before entering Italy.

B. Advance Preparations

Orders to duty at Simeri Crichi are issued in ample time to complete all preparations prior to departure. Upon receipt of orders, arrangements should be made to take annual leave if desired. Contact shipping Officers and discuss problems concerning shipment of household effects. Allow for two to three months delivery of household effects to Naples. After finding an apartment, your furniture will be shipped to your new home. Be sure that all household goods are shipped to the following address:

TRANSPORTATION OFFICER
U. S. NAVSUPACTS
NAPLES, ITALY
FPO, NEW YORK 09521
MARK FOR: COMMEDSEC, USCG
FOR: USCG LORSTA SIMERI CRICHI
HOLD FOR: (YOUR NAME)

U.S. Currency and travelers checks may be exchanged for lire in Rome and Naples.

Tipping is a way of life in Italy, but so is bargaining. 150 Lire per bag to the porter is sufficient and 15% to waiters.

Always use first class hotels and trains.
Pick up an Italian phrase book before leaving the States.

Expect to pay taxi, hotel and meal rates in Naples, comparable to U.S. costs.

Any amount of U.S. money may be imported or exported.

Do not carry excessive film or more than 2 cartons of cigarettes, or more than two bottles of liquor into Italy, or you may be taxed. All are available through the U.S.N. Exchange.

Automobiles driven into Italy must have proof of ownership and registration with them.

Bring any furniture and appliances desired. The rooms in the apartment are usually larger than those in the U.S. (except for the kitchen). Most appliances, even phonographs can be converted to use here. Bring a gas stove if possible.

Ship household goods as soon as possible.



