

1. CINCPAC 242345Z APR65 (S) *gp-3*

Subj: Conduct and Control of Close Air Support

Promulgates CINCPAC Policy and prescribes procedures for
the conduct and control of close air support operations.

SECRET

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S E C R E T
CONDUCT AND CONTROL OF CLOSE AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS (U)

1. THIS INSTRUCTION FOMULGATES CINCPAC POLICY AND PRESCRIBES PROCEDURES FOR THE CONDUCT AND CONTROL OF CLOSE AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS. WHILE THIS INSTRUCTION IS APPLICABLE THROUGHOUT THE PACIFIC COMMAND, IT APPLIES IN PARTICULAR TO TACTICAL AIR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

2. THE PRIORITY TASKS OF IN-COUNTRY OFFENSIVE AIR ELEMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM ARE TO PROVIDE CLOSE AIR SUPPORT AND TO DELIVER ATTACKS ON VIET CONG RESOURCES AND INSTALLATIONS. OF THESE, THE FIRST PRIORITY IS CLOSE AIR SUPPORT OF GROUND FORCES WHICH ARE ACTUALLY ENGAGED IN

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OPERATIONS AGAINST THE VIET CONG.

3. IN THE PLANNING AND CONDUCT OF AIR OPERATIONS IN CLOSE SUPPORT OF UNITED STATES GROUND FORCES, THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES WILL APPLY:

A. CLOSE AIR SUPPORT, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THIS DIRECTIVE WILL BE CONSIDERED TO INVOLVE THREE COMPONENTS--SUPPORT AIRCRAFT, A FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER WITH THE SUPPORTED GROUND UNIT, AND A CLOSE AIR SUPPORT CONTROL AGENCY, WITH WHICH BOTH FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER AND SUPPORT AIRCRAFT AIRBORNE CAN COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY.

B. AIRCRAFT WILL BE MAINTAINED ON ALERT FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING ON-CALL CLOSE AIR SUPPORT. NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT AND DEGREE OF ALERT SO MAINTAINED WILL BE DETERMINED AS PRESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH 4 BELOW.

C. ALERT CLOSE AIR SUPPORT AIRCRAFT WILL BE SUBJECT TO DIRECT CALL BY THE SUPPORTED GROUND UNIT, THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE RELATED CLOSE AIR SUPPORT CONTROL AGENCY, WHOSE RESPONSIBILITIES EXTEND TO A PRESCRIBED GEOGRAPHIC AREA.

D. RESPONSE OF THE CLOSE SUPPORT AIRCRAFT TO CALLS FOR SUPPORT FROM THE SUPPORTED GROUND UNIT WILL NOT BE SUBJECT TO ANY DELAY FOR PURPOSE OF MISSION EVALUATION OR MISSION CLEARANCE AT LEVELS HIGHER THAN THE RELATED CLOSE AIR SUPPORT AGENCY.

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 E. CLOSE AIR SUPPORT MISSIONS WILL BE CONTROLLED BY A FORWARD AIR CONTROLLER STATIONED WITH THE SUPPORTED UNIT OR, IN HIS ABSENCE, BY AN AIRBORNE TACTICAL AIR COORDINATOR.

F. NOTHING HEREIN VIOLATES THE PRIOR CINCPAC PROVISION THAT COMUSMACV'S AIR FORCE COMPONENT COMMANDER SHALL ACT AS COORDINATING AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS PERTAINING TO TACTICAL AIR SUPPORT AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THE COORDINATION PROCESS SHALL NOT IN ANY WAY DEGRADE THE RESPONSIVENESS OF THE CLOSE SUPPORT AIRCRAFT NOR OF THE RELATED CLOSE AIR SUPPORT CONTROL AGENCY. COORDINATING AUTHORITY IS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPHS 30281-30283 OF UNAAF.

4. IN APPLYING THE FOREGOING PRINCIPLES, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED WITH RESPECT TO APPORTIONMENT OF AIR RESOURCES BETWEEN CLOSE AIR SUPPORT AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY OFFENSIVE AIR OPERATIONS:

A. TACTICAL GROUND UNITS WILL, ON THE DAY PRECEDING, STATE THEIR ESTIMATED REQUIREMENTS FOR PREPARATORY AIR ATTACKS AND FOR ON-CALL CLOSE AIR SUPPORT, INCLUDING DEGREE OF ALERT REQUIRED.

B. THESE REQUIREMENTS WILL BE INTEGRATED BY THE COORDINATING AUTHORITY WITH THOSE FOR GENERAL AIR ATTACKS AND MEASURED AGAINST

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 MEANS AVAILABLE, AS REPORTED BY IN-COUNTRY AIR UNITS.

C. SHOULD THE MEANS AVAILABLE BE INADEQUATE TO FULFILL ALL REQUIREMENTS, APPORTIONMENT OF MEANS WILL BE MADE BY COMUSMACV, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GENERAL PRIORITY ESTABLISHED IN PARAGRAPH 2 ABOVE.

5. IN THE CONDUCT OF CLOSE AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS EACH CLOSE AIR SUPPORT CONTROL AGENCY WILL FULFILL ON-CALL REQUESTS FROM FORCES OPERATING WITHIN ITS ASSIGNED AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LIMIT OF THE MEANS WHICH HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED. SHOULD CONTINUING REQUESTS FOR CLOSE AIR SUPPORT EXCEED THE MEANS AVAILABLE, THE CLOSE AIR SUPPORT CONTROL AGENCY WILL NOTIFY THE COORDINATING AUTHORITY, WITH A REQUEST FOR FURTHER ALLOCATION OF MEANS TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENT OF THE ENGAGED FORCES. THE COORDINATING AUTHORITY WILL RESPOND TO THE LIMIT OF HIS CAPABILITY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRIORITY ESTABLISHED IN PARAGRAPH 2 ABOVE. WHEN AIR ASSETS BASED IN SOUTH VIETNAM ARE INSUFFICIENT FOR THE TASK, THE COORDINATING AUTHORITY SHOULD IMMEDIATELY INFORM COMUSMACV SO THAT HE CAN REQUEST ADDITIONAL AIR SUPPORT ASSETS FROM CINCPAC. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, CINCPAC WILL DIRECT CINCPACFLT TO SUPPORT COMUSMACV WITH CARRIER-BASED AIRCRAFT. THAI BASED AIRCRAFT

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ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR USE IN SOUTH VIETNAM BUT MAY BE TEMPORARILY
TRANSFERRED TO FIELDS IN SOUTH VIETNAM IN THERE IS SUFFICIENT
AIRFIELD CAPACITY.

6. SHOULD ANY SUPPORTED U. S. GROUND ELEMENT COMMANDER
DETERMINE THAT CLOSE AIR SUPPORT MEANS ARE REPEATEDLY INADEQUATE
FOR HIS PURPOSES, OR THAT PROCEDURES IN EFFECT ARE INADEQUATELY
RESPONSIVE HE SHALL BE OBLIGED TO SO ADVISE COMUSMACV, WHO
WILL EITHER REQUEST THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL MEANS OR
RECOMMEND ALTERATION ON THE PROVISIONS HEREOF TO ACCELERATE THE
CLOSE AIR SUPPORT PROCEDURES. IN ANY EVENT, COMUSMACV WILL
MAKE A MONTHLY REPORT TO THIS HEADQUARTERS, SUMMARIZING ANY
PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN EXECUTING THE PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES
PRESCRIBED HEREIN.

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AIR CONTROL MESSAGES

VOLUME IV



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