

5 JULY 1972

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR
DAY ARMED RECONNAISSANCE

1. ON DECK CHECKS OF ECM/DECM EQUIPMENT AND UHF RADIO (SQD COMMON) WILL BE MADE IMMEDIATELY AFTER MANNING AIRCRAFT. TROUBLE SHOOTERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR FINAL DETERMINATION. YOU WILL FLY THE MISSION WITH A MINIMUM OF: ~~ALR-50, ALF-29, ALQ-100, ALQ-47 AND TWO-WAY~~ RADIO COMMUNICATION. IN ADDITION, ONE AIRCRAFT IN THE SECTION WILL ALSO HAVE: OPERATIONAL ~~ALR-45~~ AND COMPLETE ~~IFF~~.
2. LAUNCH AND RENDEZVOUS FOR DAY VFR WILL BE IN ACCORDNANCE WITH CURRENT AMERICA/CVW8/NATOPS DOCTRINE. IFR DEPARTURES WILL BE IAW CATTIC MANUAL AND RENDEZVOUS AS BRIEFED BY SECTION LEADER.
3. MINIMUM WEATHER FOR OVERLAND SECTION RECCE HOPS WILL BE 7000' AND 3 NM. COASTAL RECCE WILL BE 3000 AND 3 NM. IF THESE CRITERIA CANNOT BE MET, YOU WILL PROCEED TO THE DIVERT TARGET AND DROP ORDNANCE. IF NO DIVER HAS BEEN ASSIGNED, YOU WILL RTB (RETURN TO BASE), CONTACT STRIKE FOR JETTISON AREA AND DROP ORDNANCE ON SAFE. THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO JETTISON WILL BE WHEN CARRYING MK 20 ROCKEYE. AS MANY ROCKEYE AS POSSIBLE WILL BE RETURNED, CONSIDERING ALL ARRESTED LANDING LIMITATIONS.
4. GO-NO GO CRITERIA ARE SET DOWN ELSEWHERE BUT FOR THE PURPOSES OF ~~DAY~~ ARMED RECCE, IN ADDITION TO ITEMS IN PARAGRAPH ONE, AN UP AIRPLANE WILL BE ~~STABLE TABLE~~ AND OPERATING GUNSIGHT. EVERY CONTINGENCY IS NOT DISCUSSED HERE FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, IT IS EXPECTED THAT EACH CREW WILL MAKE RATIONAL, MATURE EVALUATIONS OF THE AIRCRAFT STATUS AND WEIGH THIS AGAINST THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MISSION.
5. COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE BRIEFED THOROUGHLY BY IOIC. STANDARD COMM PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED WITH REGARD TO TRANSMISSIONS TO THE SHIP. WHEN RENDEVOUS IS COMPLETE AND ~~HEADING FOR THE BEACH~~, YOU WILL CONTACT PIRAZ (RED CROWN) ON ASSIGNED FREQUENCY WITH ~~MISSION~~ NUMBER, TYPE AND NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT, COAST IN POINT, COAST OUT POINT AND ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION HE MAY REQUIRE, IF COMMUNICATION IS DIFFICULT UTILIZE THE E-2B FOR RELAY AND GIVE HIM THE SAME INFORMATION. AT THIS TIME YOU ARE CLEARED TO SWITCH TO ATTACK OR ATTACK SECONDARY FREQUENCY WHICH WILL BE UTILIZED UNTIL MISSION COMPLETE.
6. ALTITUDE ENROUTE TO CIP OR RECCE AREA, IS AT SECTION LEADERS DISCRETION BUT AT NO TIME WILL IT BE LESS THAN 10,000 FEET WHILE TRANSITING ANY KNOWN THREAT AREA.
7. AT 20 NM FROM THE BEACH YOU WILL HAVE MANEUVERING AIRSPEED, BE IN TACTICAL FORMATION AND COMMENCE JINKING.
8. PRIOR TO ENTERING THREAT RADAR ENVIRONMENT THE FLIGHT WILL COMMENCE DECM (KNOCKERS-UP). ALL ARMAMENT SWITCHES ON AS YOU CROSS THE BEACH (ARMSTRONG) AND REMAIN ON UNTIL OVER THE BEACH OUTBOUND.

9. LET DOWN TO RECCE ALTITUDE WILL BE AT THE FLIGHT LEADERS DISCRETION, BUT NOT PRIOR TO THE TIME IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. NEVER GET BELOW 3500 FEET. (DAY VFR).
10. YOU WILL NOT MAKE WEATHER PROBES THAT WOULD PRECLUDE CONTINUOUS VISUAL CONTACT BETWEEN THE SECTION. IF NECESSARY, AN ALTERNATE CIP OR LET-DOWN POINT WILL BE SELECTED, ALWAYS BEARING IN MIND THE NECESSITY OF REMAINING CLEAR OF HIGH THREAT AREAS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. VISUAL CONTACT MEANS IN TACTICAL FORMATION, DO NOT CLOSE UP.
11. DO NOT FLY OVER AN OVERCAST ENROUTE TO RECCE AREA IF A SAM THREAT IS PRESENT. DO NOT FLY NEAR THE TOPS OF AN OVERCAST WHILE CONDUCTING RECCE, "THEY" KNOW WHAT THE CEILING IS TOO!
12. ENROUTE TO CIP OR RECCE AREA DO NOT OVERFLY FISHING JUNKS OR SHIPS OF A THIRD COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY AT LOW ALTITUDE.
13. YOU MUST BE CONSTANTLY AWARE OF ALL TERRAIN THAT WOULD IMPOSE A THREAT DURING HARD MANEUVERING. DO NOT REMAIN IN THE AREA IF THE CEILING IS GRADUALLY DECREASING, PICK THE ROUTE UP SOMEWHERE AHEAD WHERE IT'S CLEAR OR LEAVE.
14. ALWAYS KNOW THE SHORTEST AND SAFEST RETIREMENT ROUTE AVAILABLE FROM ANY POINT ON THE RECCE AND KNOW THE LOCATION OF THE NEAREST SAR FORCES.
15. ALWAYS BE PREPARED TO ASSUME THE LEAD, WHICH MEANS BOTH CREWS MUST PLAN THE ROUTE.
16. IF CONTACT IS MADE WITH A TARGET, HIT QUICKLY, ACCURATELY AND DEPART THE AREA. JUST BECAUSE HE DIDN'T FIRE AT YOU ON THE FIRST RUN DOESN'T MEAN HE WON'T IF YOU COME BY AGAIN. YOU MUST HAVE MIL SETTINGS IN MIND FOR 20 and 30 DEGREE DIVES AS WELL AS 40; WEATHER, TERRAIN, DEFENSES, OR TIME MAY PRECLUDE A CANNED 40° RUN. GENERALLY SPEAKING AND WHEN AVAILABLE, ~~A ROCKYR SHOULD BE YOUR FIRST CHOICE.~~ MULTIPLE RUNS MAY BE MADE AT FLIGHT LEADER'S DISCRETION AND CONSIDERING KNOWN OR SUSPECTED DEFENSES.
17. EMPLOY THE SAME SAFEGUARDS THROUGHOUT THE ROUTE, AT YOUR DIVERT TARGET AND UNTIL 20 NM OFF THE BEACH. STRAGGLERS AND NON-MANEUVERING AIRCRAFT ARE THE ONES THAT GET SHOT DOWN. DO NOT CONSIDER YOURSELF SAFE UNTIL OUTSIDE 20 MILES.
18. CROSSING THE BEACH OUTBOUND PLACE ARMAMENT SWITCHES SAFE. WHEN OUTSIDE 20 NM CEASE DECM, JOIN UP AND CHECK EACH OTHER OVER FOR HUNG ORDNANCE AND BATTLE DAMAGE.
19. CONTACT RED CROWN ON ASSIGNED FREQUENCY WHEN CLEAR OF THE BEACH WITH MISSION NUMBER TYPE AND NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT AND "FEET WET". NORMAL SHIP COMM PROCESURES WILL BE FOLLOWED WHEN RELEASED BY PIRAZ.

20. NEVER PLAN YOUR ROUTE TO CROSS THE 35 MILE AREA IN WHICH ANOTHER CARRIER IS OPERATING UNLESS YOU PLAN TO LAND THERE.
21. EACH ARMED RECCE MISSION WILL HAVE DESIGNATED SECTION LEADER AS MANNED SPARE. THE SPARE WILL LAUNCH AS WINGMAN IF NUMBER 2 GOES DOWN OR LEADER IF NUMBER 1 GOES DOWN. THIS MEANS THE SPARE CREW MUST BE THOROUGHLY PLANNED ALSO.
22. ARMED RECCE TACTICAL FORMATION IS DESIGNED SO THAT LEAD IS THE PRIMARY RECCE AIRCRAFT. WINGMAN'S PRIMARY DUTIES ARE TO OBSERVE THE AREA FOR GROUND FIRE, KEEP THE SECTION CLEAR AFT, AND NOT LOSE SIGHT OF LEADER UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.
23. BASIC FORMATION IS AS FOLLOWS: LEAD WILL HAVE A PRIMARY ALTITUDE OF 5000 FEET, NOT ABOVE AN ALTITUDE WHICH WILL PRECLUDE PICKING UP TARGETS. THE WINGMAN WILL STAY OUT OF SEQUENCE WITH THE LEADER, UTILISING A MAX DIFFERENTIAL ALTITUDE OF ~ 1000 FEET. WINGMAN IS FREE TO CROSS THE LEADER'S 6 O'CLOCK BUT BE AT A DIFFERENT ALTITUDE AND DO NOT CROSS WHILE OVER THE RECCE ROUTE. DO NOT STAY IN A POSITION BEHIND THE LEADER WHICH PREVENTS HIM SEEING YOU FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME. DO NOT GET CLOSER THAN 1000 FEET NOR FURTHER THAN 5000 FEET IN TRAIL. WINGMAN SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DROP ON LEADER'S BOMBS, OR IN REFERENCE TO HIS DROP, i.e., SHORT, LONG, LEFT, RIGHT, ETC. MANEUVER YOUR AIRCRAFT FOR 40° DIVE IF ABLE. THIS WILL BE A CRITICAL PHASE OF THE FLIGHT IN SO FAR AS MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER, AND THE RADIO MUST BE USED TO TELL EACH OTHER WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND WHERE YOU ARE DOING AND WHERE YOU ARE.
24. AT ANYTIME DURING THE FLIGHT VISUAL CONTACT IS LOST, LEADER WILL IMMEDIATELY BROADCAST REDEVELOP INSTRUCTIONS AND COMMENCE A CLIMB. DO NOT REMAIN IN A FIXED ORBIT OVER THE GROUND FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME, A MAXIMUM OF ONE 360° TURN IS PERMISSIBLE. IF YOU HAVE NOT REJOINED BY THIS TIME YOU WILL HEAD FOR THE BEACH IN THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS AND SAFE DIRECTION AVAILABLE AND EFFECT A TACAN PROCEED BACK TO YOUR RECCE MISSION.