

IN K-GP-A-CMDO-315-SU-RE (961-1965)

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Feb
1965

8 March 65

RH-0048

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HISTORICAL DATA REQUESTED

By 315th A.C.GP.
APD SF 96227
1 JAN. 65 - 8 MAR. 65

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19 APR 70
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SUBJECT: Summary of Defoliation Operations from 1 January 1965 to 8 March 1965

I. Two types of targets were defoliated during the requested report period; Lines of Communications and Safe Haven Areas.

II. Lines of Communications- Two targets were defoliated; Project 20-33 and Project 20-21.

A. Project 20-33 -- This project contained fifteen individual targets approximately sixty five miles east of Saigon. Three more targets in this area were also requested under Project 20-32. These targets were included in Project 20-33. The individual targets, densely foliaged areas along roads and railroad lines were requested to be defoliated in hopes that this action would decrease the Viet Cong's chances of ambush. National highway one and the important railway link between Saigon and Nha Trang were prime targets of the Viet Cong in the area. Defoliation operations began on 30 October 1964 and continued until 29 January 1965. The statistics provided are for the period 1 January 1965 through 29 January 1965. Forty sorties were flown in fourteen days, the total flying time was sixty seven hours, fifty minutes, thirty six thousand, six hundred gallons of chemical was dispensed, and the defoliation aircraft received two hits.

B. Project 20-21 -- The purpose of this project was to defoliate selected areas along the main shipping channel from Saigon to the sea. Rung Sat Special Zone Headquarters had received reports of Viet Cong activity against ships bringing supplies to and from Saigon. Sniper activity and attempts to mine the shipping channel were common. Increased aerial surveillance due to defoliation could possibly decrease this activity. Defoliation operations began on 1 March 1965 and were not completed by 7 March 1965, the termination time for this report. Twenty-five sorties were flown during this period. The total flying time was fourteen hours, forty five minutes. Fifteen thousand gallons of chemical was dispensed, and no ground fire was

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III. Safe Haven Area -- A Viet Cong strong hold approximately 26 miles north, northwest of Saigon was chosen as the target for the largest joint VNAF/USAF Air Operation in history of the conflict in Viet Nam. This target, approximately 11 X 7 kilometers of forest, is known locally as the "Boi Loi Woods." The Viet Cong have used this area as a staging area and headquarters for the Saigon/Cholon area. Defoliation could provide a chance for aerial surveillance into this area where no government troops had operated for many years. Pre-strikes by VNAF/USAF aircraft were approved for the first time. Defoliation operations were preceded by two days of intensive bombing. The first defoliation operations started on 21 January 1965 and completed on 18 February 1965. Sixteen actual days of operation produced one hundred and two sorties and ninety-four hours, twenty minutes of flying time. Eighty eight thousand, eight hundred gallons of chemical were dispensed. The defoliation aircraft were hit seventy-nine times by ground fire. Three crewmen were injured, one seriously.

IV. Total statistics for 1 January 1965 - 8 March 1965 reporting period.

- A. Actual days of defoliation -- 35.
- B. Total sorties flown -- 167.
- C. Total hours flying time -- 176+55.
- D. Gallons of chemical dispensed -- 120,400.
- E. Hits by ground fire -- 81.
- F. Injuries from ground fire -- 3.

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