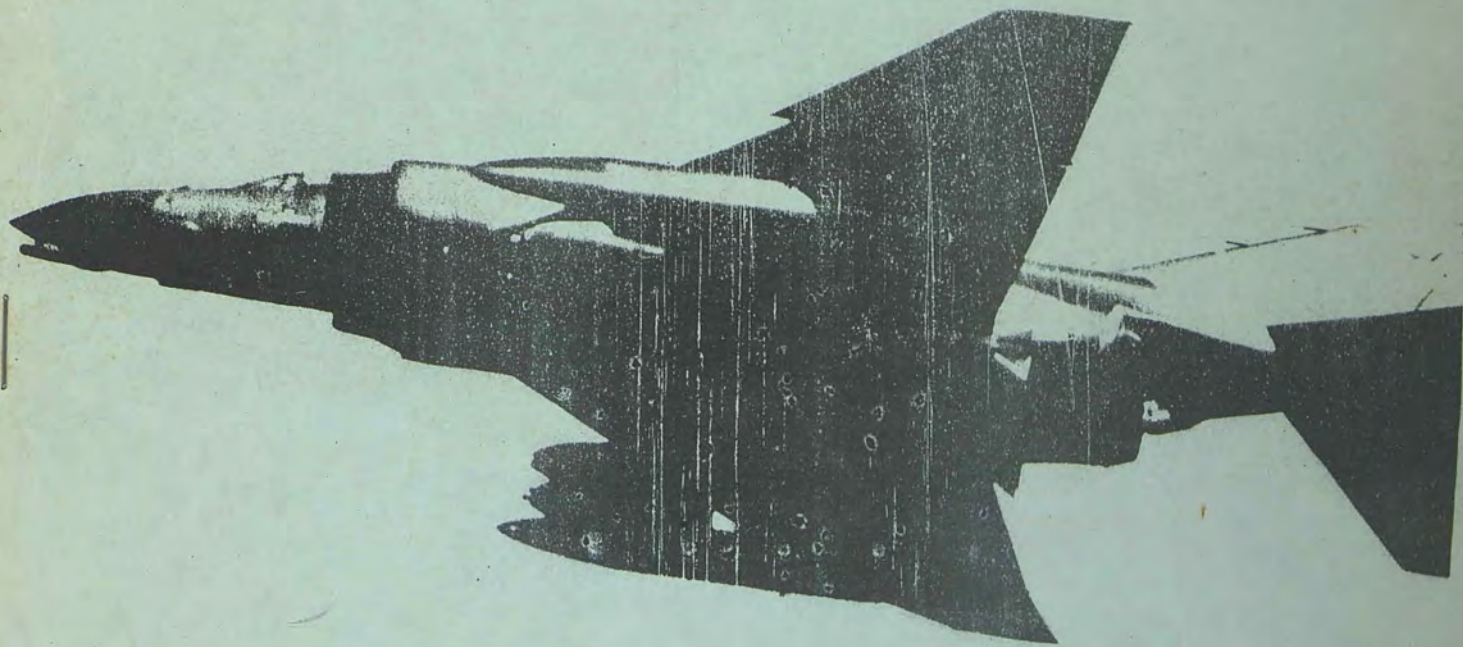


Welcome

to



Phu Cat Air Base

and the

37th Tactical Fighter Wing

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"A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER"

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Phu Cat Air Base, home of the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing, "the Best Tactical Fighter Wing in the World".

Phu Cat is located in the central highlands approximately 20 miles northwest of the port city of Qui Nhon, about 10 miles from the South China Sea, and is the newest and most modern base in this country. We have many of the facilities and activities which you are accustomed to on other Air Force bases.

The 37th Wing is a real honest to gosh fighter wing whose mission is to fly and fight on time and to get the bombs on the target. On Phu Cat -- everybody supports the mission.

Your assignment will be a busy, interesting and challenging one. While assigned to Phu Cat, you will play an important part in the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing's mission accomplishment. I wish you the best of luck in your forthcoming assignment.


HARRY B. TRIMBLE, Colonel, USAF
Commander

UNITS AT PHU CAT AIR BASE

UNITS ASSIGNED DIRECTLY TO THE 37TH TACTICAL FIGHTER WING

37th Combat Support Group
480th Tactical Fighter Squadron
389th Tactical Fighter Squadron
37th Field Maintenance Squadron
37th Avionics Maintenance Squadron
421st Munitions Maintenance Squadron
37th Supply Squadron
37th USAF Dispensary

UNITS OF THE 37TH COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP

37th Headquarters Squadron
37th Security Police Squadron
37th Civil Engineering Squadron
37th Services Squadron
37th Transportation Squadron

TENANT UNITS AT PHU CAT

OL 1510, Vietnam District Office, USAF PAC Postal and
Courier Region
OL6J 6005 Support Squadron (Base Exchange)
MACV Advisory Team
OSI Detachment 5009
Det 2, 15th Aerial Port Squadron
OL4E, 6004 Support Squadron
Det 23, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron
41st Artillery Group
OL1A, 45 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron
459th Tactical Airlift Squadron
OLAA, 483 Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
518 Signal Co., Det 18
537th Tactical Airlift Squadron
Det 16, 600th Photo Squadron
Det 1, 608th Military Airlift Support Squadron
819th Civil Engineering Squadron (RED HORSE)
834th Airlift Control Element, 834th Air Division
903rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Det 1
1883rd Communication Squadron
OLAA, 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron

SHORT HISTORY OF PHU CAT AIR BASE

Phu Cat Air Base, the home of the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing, is located approximately 20 miles northwest of the city of Qui Nhon in Binh Dinh Province. The base lies in a large, fertile rice-producing valley in the central highlands.

Prior to being secured by the Republic of Korea Tiger Division in April 1966, the area now occupied by Phu Cat Air Base was a Viet Cong training center.

Since its activation, Phu Cat Air Base has continued to grow in leaps and bounds. Where there were once only fields and rice paddies, there are now more than 557 buildings and facilities. The 37th TFW has progressed just as dynamically, both in size and capability.

In January 1967, two squadrons of C-7A Caribou, the 459th and the 537th Tactical Airlift Squadrons, arrived at Phu Cat Air Base and began operating from a 3,000 foot laterite runway. At the time there were approximately 1,200 Air Force personnel assigned to the base.

During May and June 1967, two F-100 squadrons, the 416th and the 612th Tactical Fighter Squadrons, arrived and began flying combat missions from the newly completed 10,000 foot concrete runway.

In February 1968, the 355th Tactical Fighter Squadron arrived for combat duty. The squadron was originally assigned to Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, South Carolina.

The Wing grew to four F-100 squadrons in May 1968 when the 174th Tactical Fighter Squadron, formerly assigned to the 185th Tactical Fighter Group, Iowa Air National Guard arrived.

In April 1969, the F-100 squadrons began to phase out and were replaced by the F-4D Phantom. The first to arrive was the 480th Tactical Fighter Squadron from Da Nang Air Base. That unit was followed by the 389th Tactical Fighter Squadron also from Da Nang, with the latter arriving in June 1969.

37th TACTICAL FIGHTER WING

The 37th Tactical Fighter Wing, with headquarters at Phu Cat Air Base, RVN, has two Deputy Commanders and a Group Commander. The Wing Vice Commander assists the Wing Commander in the accomplishment of the wing mission.

The mission of the 37th TFW is to conduct combat missions to destroy enemy forces and facilities and to maintain all assigned forces in a state of maximum combat readiness for employment in the event of general war. The wing plans for, executes, and supports combat operations as directed by higher headquarters.

The Deputy Commander for Operations is responsible for two tactical fighter squadrons, the 480th and the 389th.

The Deputy Commander for Materiel is responsible for four squadrons: the 37th Field Maintenance Squadron, the 37th Avionics Maintenance Squadron, the 421st Munitions Maintenance Squadron and the 37th Supply Squadron.

The 37th Combat Support Group, which operates and maintains Phu Cat Air Base, has five squadrons: the 37th Headquarters Squadron Section, the 37th Security Police Squadron, the 37th Services Squadron, the 37th Civil Engineering Squadron and the 37th Transportation Squadron.

In addition, the 37th USAF Dispensary and the Chiefs of Information and Safety come under direct control of the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing Commander.

BEFORE YOU DEPART

Numerous agencies are working to insure that your forthcoming PCS move will be as smooth and trouble free as possible.

The first of these agencies is the Consolidated Base Personnel Office. From that office you will receive your orders and travel instructions. Your orders will list all authorizations, times, and places to which you will be required to report while enroute.

Be sure to visit your local dispensary to obtain the required immunizations for Vietnam duty. There are quite a few!

Your receiving organization here at Phu Cat will appoint a sponsor to assist you in getting settled upon arrival. He can be very helpful in answering many of your questions. Do not be afraid to ask them.

You should carry enough cash so as to have approximately \$75.00 left upon arrival at Phu Cat Air Base to take care of purchasing those items that may be needed before your first pay day. After leaving the continental United States, you may stop at Anchorage and Tokyo if you fly the northern route or at Honolulu, Guam, and Manila if you take the southern route. There may be some items you wish to purchase at those stops so allowance should be made for such purchases in determining the amount of money to bring with you.

Financial affairs such as allotments and joint checking accounts and your Government Life Insurance should be taken care of prior to departing your present duty station. This will insure that your dependents will have adequate funds to live on during your travel and initial period of adjustment to Phu Cat Air Base.

A limited or general power of attorney should be initiated on behalf of your wife or another person you may desire to select.

You should discuss this with your legal officer. He can explain the advantages of a power of attorney, and can also counsel you on the preparation of a will.

You should bring your complete mandatory clothing allowance with you as listed in AFR 67-57, with the exception of the over-

coat, gloves, and blue coat and trousers. The weather in Vietnam is always too hot for even the lightweight blue uniform. However you may wish to bring it with you for use on an out-of-theater TDY or for use when you return to the United States. It is advisable, however, to arrive in Vietnam in 1505's. Extra uniform clothing allowances authorized by AFR 67-57 for airmen assigned to SEA should be obtained prior to departure from your present duty station.

A clothing sales store is available at Phu Cat Air Base and is usually well stocked with all mandatory items.

Fatigues are normally worn during duty hours at Phu Cat Air Base. However, at some of the other bases to which a person might be diverted PCS or TDY, 1505's are worn by personnel who work in offices.

Civilian clothing is authorized for off-duty wear. Lightweight shortsleeve sport shirts and wash and wear slacks are recommended. Laundry and dry cleaning facilities are available on base, although they are not quite up to stateside standards. Suits and sportcoats are not practical for wear in Vietnam, but it is advisable to bring one or the other for possible use during an out-of-theater TDY or R & R. It is a tendency of many people coming to Vietnam to bring too much civilian clothing.

Personal fire arms are PROHIBITED in Vietnam! The Security Police customs authority will confiscate all personal fire-arms and dangerous weapons in your possession upon your arrival in the Republic of Vietnam. As used herein, the term WEAPONS includes all handguns, shotguns, carbines, light automatic weapons, similar weapons which use an explosive force to propel a projectile and any other explosive device. The term WEAPONS mentioned also includes, knives with blades longer than three inches, swords, sabres, stiletos and spring release (switchblade) knives. These items must be left in the United States or your place of departure for this area. Such items are considered dangerous weapons and current directives prohibit such weapons from being transported into Vietnam. Upon your arrival at Phu Cat Air Base, you will be given detailed instructions concerning general use of government firearms, if required in the performances of official duties.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Personnel bound for Phu Cat will normally depart from McChord Air Force Base, Washington, and arrive at Cam Rahn Bay, Air Base RVN. However, it is possible that a few persons may be diverted to depart from either Travis or Norton Air Force Bases, California. In these cases, arrival will be at Tan Son Nhut Air Base and Da Nang Air Base, respectively.

Transportation from your RVN base of arrival to Phu Cat Air Base should be arranged through the Tri-Service ATCO at the terminal. If there is no available air transportation to Phu Cat, you most likely will be routed to Qui Nhon Army Air Field. An Air Force bus leaves the air terminal at Qui Nhon Army Air Field every afternoon at approximately 1400 hours for Phu Cat Air Base.

On the morning following your arrival at Phu Cat Air Base you will report to the Consolidated Base Personnel Office. One-stop processing is held at 0730 hours each morning, Sunday through Saturday. At this time, you will complete your travel vouchers, initiate a current record of emergency data (AF Form 246) and submit other required data and forms. You will also be scheduled to attend a newcomers briefing that will acquaint you with the base. Also at the newcomers briefing, all enlisted personnel will complete a forecast sheet for re-assignment upon completion of their tour in SEA.

Finance services are provided at Phu Cat and personnel are paid by check once a month on the last day of each month. Your payment can then be taken to the bank facility on base to be cashed into Military Payment Certificates (MPC), which is the legal currency in all base facilities. Possession of U.S. currency is illegal and everyone arriving in Vietnam must immediately exchange all U.S. currency into MPC, as well as other dollar instruments, i.e., Travelers' Checks, money orders, and personal checks. MPC can be used only on military installations of the United States and if a person wishes he can convert MPC to Vietnamese Piastres at the rate of 118 piastres per dollar MPC. This conversion may be made at the base finance office or at the base bank. Although MPC may be exchanged for piastres, piastres cannot be converted into MPC. Therefore, it is wise to exchange only the amount that will be required in the immediate future.

All military personnel in Vietnam are eligible for and encouraged to participate in the Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program. Under this plan, interest at the annual rate of 10 per cent, compounded quarterly, is paid on all monies left on deposit during the member's overseas tour.

Personnel who desire to have checking accounts locally will find a branch of the Chase Manhattan Bank ready to serve them. Checks may be cashed at the bank, the base exchange, the Officer's, NCO and Airmen's Open Messes.

Vietnam is a combat zone and all personnel assigned to this area are authorized \$65 per month special pay for hostile duty (SPHD). All enlisted personnel receive foreign service pay on a graduated scale according to grade. All military pay of enlisted personnel is tax free. Officers are granted an income tax exemption of \$500 per month for each month served in Vietnam. Married personnel, E-4 with over four years of service and above, whose dependents are not living in government quarters or in the home of relatives, are authorized \$30 per month family separation allowance (FSA *II).

ABOUT VIETNAM

Vietnam is one of the three distinct countries which, grouped together, were once known as Indo-China. The other two countries are Cambodia and Laos. Vietnam was divided approximately in half by the Geneva Accords at the end of the fighting between the French and the communists in 1954. The communists control the area north of the 17th parallel, while the area south of the parallel is known as the Republic of Vietnam. In recent years, the Viet Cong have attempted to subjugate the people of South Vietnam through a program of harassment and terrorism. As an American, you are assigned here to assist the people of South Vietnam, directly and indirectly, to combat this communist aggression.

The terrain of South Vietnam may be divided into three main geographical features: the flat Mekong River delta of the extreme south; the rugged Hoanh-Son Cordillera (range of mountains) running north-south and located west of the coastal plain; and the narrow, elongated coastal stretching almost the full length of the country.

The Mekong River delta is characterized by a flat, poorly drained surface, crisscrossed by tributaries of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers and an intricate network of canals and smaller streams. The elevation of the delta rarely exceeds 20 feet above sea level.

The coastal plain is less than 25 Miles wide and is bordered by the waters of the South China Sea. The surface is mostly level, densely populated and intensely cultivated.

The Hoanh-Son Cordillera generally is made up of forest covered granite, with peaks rising 5,000 to 6,000 feet. The highest point on the range is 8,524 feet, west of Quang Ngai.

The temperature in Vietnam is high most of the time. The two prevailing wind directions, northeast and southwest, determine the two main weather seasons in South Vietnam, defined as the Northwest Monsoon and the Southwest Monsoon. These two main weather seasons can be further delineated into five weather periods.

Northeast Monsoon I (November - December). The wind flow is northeasterly. Low clouds and rain cover the area of the ridgeline, while scattered clouds and dry weather prevail west and south of the ridgeline.

Northeast Monsoon II (January - March). This is the second phase of the northeast Monsoon in which the amount of rainfall decreases from the maximum in November and December to shower activity, then to light and variable rain and then to continuous rain and finally to occasional showers.

Spring Transition (April - May). This is the best weather season of the year for the entire country. Fair and dry conditions and light and variable winds persist throughout most of the country.

Southwest Monsoon (June - August). This is the season of heavy showers and thunderstorm activity to the west and south of the highlands and central ridgeline. East of the ridgeline, along the coast, it is fair and dry.

Fall Transition (September - October). Period of heavy rainfall throughout the entire country. Southwesterly flow continues to cause rain showers west of the ridgeline, while typhoons and tropical storms passing through the Gulf of Tonkin and southeast bring rains to the east coast.

YOU AND THE VIETNAMESE

The overall opinion of the United States held by the people of foreign lands is of tremendous importance to our country, our nations objectives, and the future of the world. This opinion is developed primarily by individual impressions gained by those people through their contacts with individual Americans. You and other Americans who come to Vietnam play an important part in furthering our national interest. Through your day-to-day contacts with the Vietnamese people, you will probably make some fine friends during your tour. You should go more than halfway in developing these friendships. At all times, your actions and dealings with the people of Vietnam should be above reproach. Remember, we are guests in their country.

To assist you in getting along with the Vietnamese people, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam has published nine rules which if followed will help to insure that your dealings with the people of Vietnam are praiseworthy. These rules are:

- (1) Remember we are guests here. We make no demands and seek no special treatment.
- (2) Join with the people! Understand their life, use phrases from their language and honor their customs and laws.
- (3) Treat women with politeness and respect.
- (4) Make personal friends among the soldiers and common people.
- (5) Always give the Vietnamese the right of way.
- (6) Be alert to security and ready to react with your military skill.
- (7) Do not attract attention by loud, rude or unusual behavior.
- (8) Avoid separating yourself from the people by a display of wealth or privilege.
- (9) Above all else you are members of the U.S. military forces on a difficult mission, responsible for all your official and personal actions. Reflect honor upon yourself and the United States of America.

FACILITIES, SERVICES, INFORMATION

Medical and Dental: The 37th USAF Dispensary is a new, modern 25 bed medical facility, which operates 24 hours a day for your convenience. The dispensary is staffed and equipped to provide routine and emergency care for all personnel. Patients with serious illness or injuries are normally evacuated to one of the larger area hospitals. The up-to-date six chair dental clinic provides complete dental care, including cleaning, for all personnel. In addition to these activities, the dispensary operates a number of services to protect your health while in Southeast Asia, a Military Public Service, a veterinary service, and an active immunization clinic.

Housing: All personnel, both officers and enlisted, live on base. Quarters consist of two-story wood frame buildings for enlisted personnel and new one story brick and wood structures for officers, all have indoor plumbing and hot and cold running water. Officer's quarters are air-conditioned. Most enlisted quarters are provided with fans. The majority of the overage personnel are housed in air-conditioned porta-camp trailers.

Religious Activities: Most of the religious preferences are represented here at Phu Cat and Catholic and Protestant Chaplains are stationed here at Phu Cat. A beautiful new chapel and annex provide adequate space for the usual religious activities found at every Air Force Base. All of the Chaplains stationed here at Phu Cat are very active in the Civic Action Programs.

Education Office: The education office offers a multitude of different courses of study including USAFI, ECI, and the University of Maryland programs, plus classes in spoken Vietnamese.

Recreation: The following recreational facilities are presently in being: two softball diamonds; outdoor theater, tape center, photo hobby shop; arts and crafts shop; hobby sales store; physical conditioning room; multiple purpose courts; tennis courts; picnic area; swimming pool; nine hole golf course; and slot car hobby shop.

Rest and Recuperation (R & R) Trips: You will be eligible to apply for an R & R trip after you have completed 90 days in Vietnam. All personnel are authorized one seven-day out-of-country R & R. Airmen also are authorized one three-day in-country R & R. Trips are scheduled through Personnel Services and priority is based on length of time served in Vietnam. At the present, the following places are authorized for out-country R & R trips: Bangkok, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Tokyo, Penang, Singapore, Manila, Hawaii and Australia. Round trip reduced rate fares are available on several airlines for wives joining their husbands in Hawaii on R & R. This

reduced rate applies only to the trip from the west coast to Hawaii and return.

All personnel are also authorized one seven-day leave while in Vietnam. However, this leave cannot be taken in conjunction with an R & R.

