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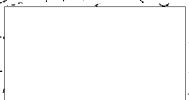
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Imagery analysis report

Aircraft Decontamination Activity Associated with Chinese Nuclear Tests (TSR)

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AIRCRAFT DECONTAMINATION ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH CHINESE NUCLEAR TESTS (TSR)

1. (TSR) Analysis of a recently identified decontamination facility at the main support airfield for the Chinese nuclear test program has provided evidence which could serve as an indicator of sampler aircraft types to be used in future nuclear tests in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The evidence also reinforces the postulation that no nuclear detonation took place in the 13 September 1979 nuclear test attempt at GZ-2.¹

2. (TSR) The decontamination facility for the air crew, sampler aircraft, and other aircraft that may have been contaminated in Chinese nuclear tests has been identified at Uxxaktal (Wu-shih-ta-la) Airfield [redacted]. The facility, which was constructed in 1966 and expanded in 1977, consists of three decontamination buildings, clotheslines, and three liquid-waste collection pits linked by underground pipelines to an aircraft washdown apron. The Uxxaktal Facility closely resembles a previously reported vehicle and personnel decontamination facility² at the [redacted]

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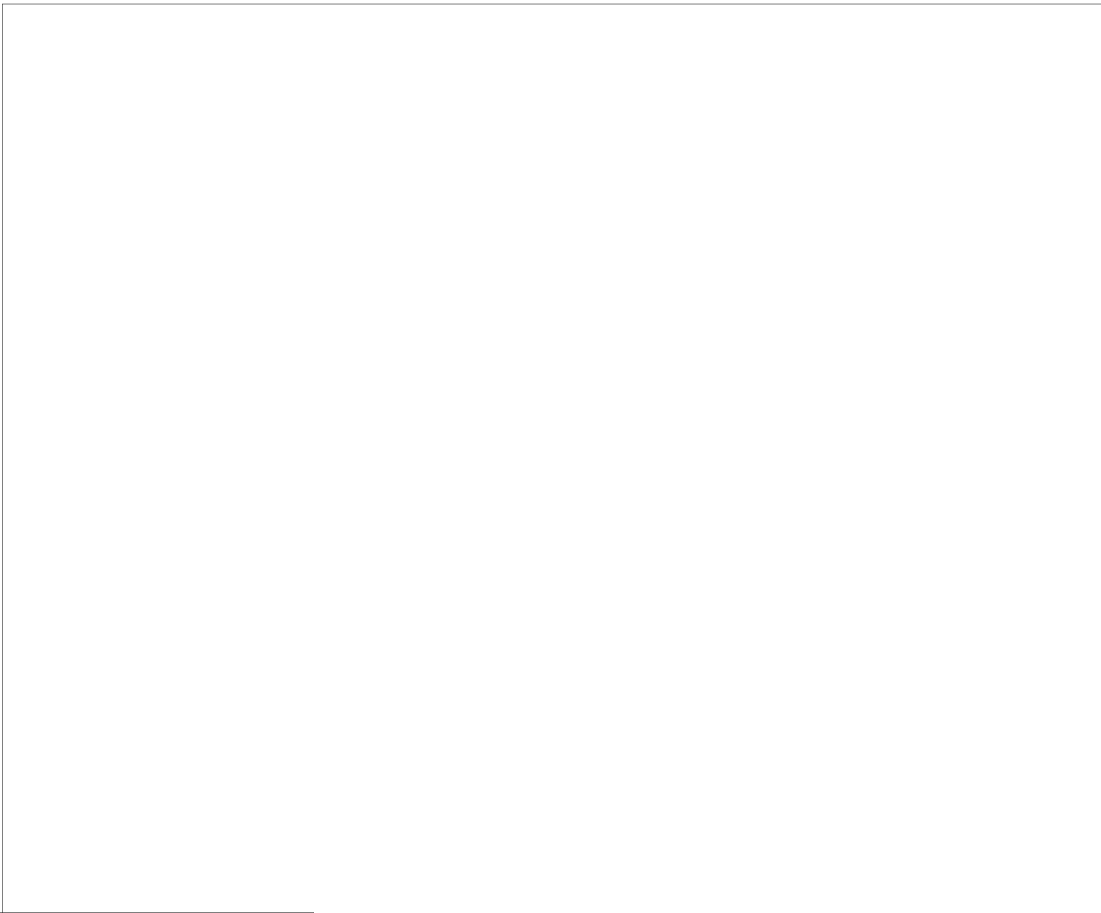
[redacted] The Uxxaktal Decontamination Facility was previously reported as an aircraft weapons maintenance area³ containing a firing-in butt, dollies, and crates near an aircraft gun testing apron. It is now apparent that the apron is used for both pretest decontamination rehearsals (Figure 1) and posttest decontamination operations (Figures 2, 3, and 4) by a decontamination unit which was previously identified at this airfield.⁴

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3. (TSR) An imagery-derived analysis was made of activity observed at this facility after 13 of the 22 Chinese nuclear tests conducted between 1966 and 1979 (Table 1). Decontamination activity was detected at the facility after ten tests. No activity was observed on coverage following CHICs 20 and 24 (underground tests) and CHIC 15 (an airdrop test), nor after the 13 September 1979 test attempt. This indicates that there was no nuclear detonation which contaminated the sampler aircraft.

4. (TSR) The rehearsals for posttest decontamination operations are usually marked by the appearance of a single probable sampler aircraft at the washdown apron followed by apron staining and practice aircraft engine decontamination operations involving the use of dollies and lifting equipment. ARS-12-type decontamination vehicles are also deployed to the decontamination facility from the support area of Uxxaktal Airfield.

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Table 1.
1966 – 1979 Decontamination Indicators at the Uxxaktal Decontamination Facility

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Test	Activity Date(s)	Decontamination Activity/Equipment	
CHIC 6 (17 Jun 67)		7 prob FARMER & 4 tents	25X1
CHIC 10 (29 Sep 69)		2, poss 3, fighter aircraft & 8 prob engine crates	
CHIC 14 (18 Mar 72)		3 fighter aircraft & 7 tents	
CHIC 16 (17 Jun 74)		5 FARMER, 2 with tail-sections removed; 5 tents; 12 engine crates; & a stained washdown pit (Fig 2)	
CHIC 17 (27 Oct 75)		1 HOUND, 2 ARS-12-type decontamination vehicles, 27 engine crates, 1 other vehicle, & a stained washdown pit observed approximately 4 hours after detonation of CHIC 17 (Fig 3)	
CHIC 18 (23 Jan 76)		4 FARMER & 4 tents	
CHIC 19 (26 Sep 76)		3 FARMER with tail sections removed & 2 tents	
		Rehearsal - unid equipment on washdown apron, 2 ARS-12-type decontamination vehicles, & more than 58 engine crates (Fig 1) Rehearsal - 1 FARMER, 2 unid vehicles, & 58 engine crates	
CHIC 22 (17 Sep 77)		3 FARMER with tail sections removed, one prob ARS-12-type decontamination vehicle, 3 unid vehicles, & a stained washdown pit Rehearsal - 1 FARMER & 72 engine crates	
CHIC 23 (15 Mar 78)		2 fighter aircraft with tail sections removed, a stained washdown pit, & 78 engine crates Rehearsal - 1 fighter aircraft, 3 prob ARS-12-type decontamination vehicles, a stained washdown apron, & 78 crates Rehearsal - 1 FARMER, 1 ARS-12-type decontamination vehicle, & 78 crates	
CHIC 25 (14 Dec 78)		2 FARMER with tail sections removed, 3 unid vehicles, 1 bus, clothes on drying line, & 84 engine crates (Fig 4) Rehearsal - 1 FARMER, unid equipment on washdown apron, staining on washdown apron, & 84 engine crates Rehearsal - 1 fighter aircraft, unid equipment, 1 poss ARS-12-type decontamination vehicle, & staining on washdown apron Rehearsal - 1 FARMER, 1 LA-17 drone, unid equipment & staining on washdown apron, & 1 unid vehicle	
Test Attempt (13 Sep 79)		No equipment or aircraft present; no evidence of decontamination activity	

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5. (TSR) Following a nuclear test, the decontamination operations at the Uxxaktal Decontamination Facility usually involve air crew decontamination in the washdown building, external washdown of contaminated aircraft, and the subsequent removal and replacement of contaminated engines. Fluctuations in the number of engine crates near the washdown basin may indicate that the contaminated aircraft engines have been removed to a separate plant for more specialized cleansing operations, possibly enabling the engines to be reused.

REFERENCES

DOCUMENTS

- 1. NPIC. [redacted] IAR-A079/79, *Impact Point of Nuclear Test Debris, Lop Nur (Lop Nor) Nuclear Test Site, PRC (TSR)*, Oct 79 (TOP SECRET [redacted]) 25X1
 - 2. OIA. [redacted] IAS/ESD-77/76, *Decontamination Facilities in the Lop Nor Nuclear Test Site, China*, 9 Mar 76 (TOP SECRET [redacted]) 25X1
 - 3. DIA. [redacted] RDA-05/0014/69, *Wu-shi-ta-la Airfield*, Aug 69 (TOP SECRET [redacted]) 25X1
 - 4. NPIC. [redacted] PIN-008/75, *Probable Decontamination Unit at Wu-shih-ta-la Airfield, China*, Jul 75 (TOP SECRET [redacted]) 25X1
- (S) Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [redacted] Asian Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [redacted] 25X1

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