

SAIGON BASE
MONTHLY REPORT
MARCH 1969

I. GENERAL

1. The overall activities returned to normal with flight time higher than the previous month, but lower than January. Otherwise, the month passed rather uneventful with the exception of the continued combat environment which complicates living in Saigon

2. The cost of living continues to spiral with the upward trend, house owners are again returning to practice of the late fifties, requiring two years rent in advance. A one small bedroom apartment in downtown Saigon brings US\$640.00 per month with advance payment. Minor items such as eggs, which are seldom found in the commissary are an indicator of inflation. Cost per egg US\$0.128 each or US\$1.54 per dozen.

3. There is continued police harassment of our personnel by the police. The U.S. Embassy advises not to pay circulation taxes on vehicles, however, the word has not been received by the Vietnamese Government who instructs the police to impound vehicles that have not paid the tax. It is one big happy merry-go-round, but very discouraging to the individual who has his car impounded.

II. FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

1. West Ramp Concreting (SGN)

Contractor has placed approximately 95% of the base course. First shipment of cement has arrived at the jobsite and concrete placement is underway (approximately 5% complete). Work on drainage structures is now approximately 90% complete, Contractor has his paving operations fairly well organized; steady progress is anticipated.

2. Transmitter Building and Antennas (SGN)

Procurement action for hardware and equipment has been held up due to the lack of a Form F. Customer insists on a Form F with detailed invoice costs before he will consider Form F reimbursement approval. SCM has received most of the Worksheets from TNN which are based on firm vendor quotations. When all such worksheets are on hand, a Form F will be prepared and presented to the Customers. Hopefully, this will occur in April.

3. Blast Fence, West Ramp (SGN) AR Closure Notice initiated by SFD/SGN on 20 March 1969 due to Airport Commandant's desire that this project not be implemented.
4. Utility Tunnel Section B (SGN) The Utility Tunnel itself has now been completed to a point immediately in front of the RGMDC Complex. Contractor's backhoe is now operating and progress on this important project is speeding up.
5. Temporary Personnel Office (SGN) This project was completed during this month; AR Closure Notice initiated by SFD/SGN.
6. Cafeteria Annex (SGN) Roof trusses for the extension have been completed and GI sheet roofing is in place. Masonry work (bricks) has been completed on all exterior walls and plastering is underway. The base for the floor slab is being leveled and compacted.
7. Revetment Walls (SGN) Vendor has completed approximately 100 panels and will begin delivery to jobsite during April. RGMDC personnel will commence foundation work, etc., in the near future.
8. Danang Nose Hanger Work is continuing on the installation of lighting fixtures and electrical circuits. It is believed that the project will be completed in April.
9. Power distribution (NHA) Work is continuing on this project as men are available and as materials arrive.
10. Concrete Areas (DNC) AR Closure Notice initiated by SFD/SGN during March 1969 due to exhaustion of funds.
11. Concrete Accessway (DNC) AR Closure Notice initiated by SFL/SGN during March 1969 due to exhaustion of funds.
12. FIC Office Renovation (SGN) This project was completed this month. AR Closure Notice initiated by SFD/SGN.
13. TSN Common Use Water Supply (SGN) Air America and Air Vietnam have given formal approval of this project. The Airport Commandant is ready to sign the contract with the Contractor but is being held up by Pan Am who have still not received N.Y. approval. Airport Commandant is applying pressure on Pan Am to act.
14. Completion of Base Area Lighting (SGN) Long lead procurement items were ordered in February and have not yet arrived at Saigon Base.
15. Completion of South Ramp Revetment Wall This AR was approved on 27 March 1969. Contract documents are being prepared.
16. Miscellaneous AR 2123, Power Poles for CITCA, was approved 27 March 1969. This AR is supplemental to AR 5532, CITCA Relocation. Poles have been installed and AR Closure Notice will be initiated in the near future.

The design of a 3 Bldg ADMIN OPS Complex as an alternative to the 2 story Operations and Administration Building (rejected by Customers) is nearing completion.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE

1. March was in general, a typical month: (1) a little progress here and there in the form of important new projects; (2) a little more attention to old, still-unfinished business; (3) still more time spent in coping with the ever-changing administrative requirements of USG and GVN; all of this during (4) temporary absences of key BMSGN staff members.

2. Under Category 1, comes our current efforts to form a group of 25 to 50 qualified [redacted] employees for the intensive 50-week MMB training course in basic aircraft mechanics. On 31 March, 42 employees had filed applications and were taking [redacted] mechanical aptitude tests while APM was continuing efforts in PM's absence on leave to resolve questions of pay, recruiting new-hires and further liaison with USAID and GVN. The 1 May target date for arrival of a final-selection team from TNN seems a bit ambitious as of now, but we can report some headway and much enthusiasm.

3. Numerous items comprise Category 2. Noteworthy among them are our 45-month-old, \$16,326,36 claim against Air Vietnam for damage incurred by Porter N184L on 5 July, 1965 (our local file now contains 72 different pieces of paper); our 27-months-old effort (now amounting to 75 pieces of paper) to settle, to the satisfaction of offices and parties concerned, the case of Mr. Hua Khac PHUOC, who was killed by a Vietnamese military vehicle on 31 Dec, 1966; lease-renewal negotiations on the SGN hostel and the BMSGN residence; and others, such as liaison with the Cafeteria, Base Manual revisions, etc.

4. Category 3 includes continuing attempts to gather vehicle census data from employees and GTD while the Embassy, which wants this data for the GVN, repeatedly changes instructions; attempts through the Embassy, to retrieve vehicle registration cards - and vehicles themselves - from the Vietnamese National Police, who are confiscating them for non-payment of the controversial Vietnam road tax, which the Embassy for the past 13 months has been advising our employees not to pay; etcetera.

5. Category 4. Because of annual leave, illness, resignation and TDY, the Base Manager's staff operated at about 69% of capacity during the month.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Since it was notified that CPA has confirmed by letter to ship Company mail pouch SGN-HKG-SGN, and per DCD's instructions that one Company mail pouch must be shipped from each end each day 7 days a week, we started to use this service immediately. But it is not one each 7 days in a week because mail bag and personnel shortage problem. However, M/C was advised that they must follow up this new system of handling from April 1969.

2. Message Traffic

	February	March
Incoming	6901	8111
Outgoing	9851	1831

V. SAFETY

1. Pilot meetings

Following safety topics were discussed at pilot meetings in March

1. Necessity of visually checking Beech and VTB landing gear members several times daily for obvious fatigue, misalignment, and overloaded down stops.
2. Continued emphasis on SAFE 15, Safety Comment, as the pilot's tool for accident prevention.
3. Operational Hazard Reports continue to flow in regarding traffic violations by AAM aircraft. Attention was drawn to page 5 of the March Tactical Aerodrome Directory for South Vietnam. General rules are given for traffic at uncontrolled airfields. Non-compliance with these rules will continue to result in OHA's. Some pilots ignore NOTAMS which set up traffic control by Combat Control Teams at forward airfields.

2. Investigation

There are 8 investigations in varying degrees of completion. Hopefully, 6 of them will be processed forward to Taipei by the end of April.

3. Safety Suggestions

SAFE 15, Safety Comments for March:

- 02 March - Helio pilot comment on XW-PBY accident of 3 January 1969. Suggests tighter precautionary measures in bad weather. Forward to DSAFE.
- 04 March - Change USAID radio antennae blinkers to shorter intervals. These obstructions lights have been altered to burn steadily, were previously blinking at 50 second intervals.
- 05 March - Numerous gripes by one pilot about C-45 shortcomings. Still being processed locally.
- 05 March - Lack of response to transmissions on 118.0. Forwarded to DSAFE.
- 07 March - Hazards to pilot in field while loading or unloading Beech 10-2 nose baggage compartment. Forwarded to DSAFE.
- 07 March - Improper loading of SAT 727 at V-01 on 7 February 1969. Local investigation forwarded to DSAFE.
- 11 March - Army helicopter onto runway at V-14 while AAM aircraft was on take-off roll. Process through USARV - info to DSAFE.
- 12 March - C-47 seat belts too long at buckle portion. Forwarded to DSAFE.
- 12 March - C-45 lost twice on radar final at Danang because of no transponder. Later cancelled IFR flight to Quang Tri because their APC not VHF equipped. Forwarded to DSAFE.
- 14 March - Phony radio beacon at Dong Ha. Notified all pilots, info to DSAFE.
- 17 March - PC-6 pilot suggests green tinted plastic and fresh air louvers to relieve heat problems, and removal of cockpit curtains for better visibility. Forwarded to DSAFE.

4. Follow-up Action

Letter to Embassy Air Operations regarding hazards at Hon Quan, V-133.

5. Unfriendly Action

<u>DATE</u>	<u>A/C Type/No.</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
28 Feb	C-45/9592Z	WR3585	Under overcast at 600', PIC came under 5 sec SA fire, climbed into overcast to avoid.
02 Mar	204B/N1306X	BT1249	2-3 sec SA fire at 1000', PIC turned tail toward fire.
02	204B/N1306X	BT1747	A/C hit in belly by one rd SA while at 1400'. Rd passed through fwd pax seat through roof and lodged in spoiler stabilizer. No injuries.
08	C-46/B928	BS5972	A/C took 2 hits by AW while turning final for rwy 10 at V-23 at 800'. 1 rd leading edge of left wing, 1 rd through belly damaged elevator turnbuckle. No injuries.
12	10-2/N77Y	XR4293	A/C drew AW fire while at 1500' on long final for V-52. Climbed out and made close-in approach.
13	C-47/994	BT1510	A/C drew 10 sec AW while descending at 1800'. Evaded by diving right hand turn.
22	204B/N8512F	BT0454	A/C drew 3 rds SA while flying at 50' below WX. Increased airspeed and descended to know friendly area. Did not climb because of traffic above.
24	204B/N1303X	BT2424	A/C drew 1 short burst AW while at 2400' with sling load. No hits.
30	204B/N1306X	BS7332	A/C drew 5-8 rds SA, and 2 5-6 sec bursts of AW enroute between sites at 1000'. No hits, reported to Army gunships in vicinity.
31	204B/N1306X	BS2217	A/C drew 2-5 rds SA, and 2 bursts of AW enroute at 1200' due to WX. No hits.

6. Minor Incident/Inflight Irregularity

<u>Date</u>	<u>A/C Type/No.</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
07	C-46/B146	Cheo Neo	CORDS jeep driven by Homer Chae, V-27 dented left elevator tip just after A/C parked on ramp. Pilot says this also a potential hazard at V-04. Requests to customer through OM V-07, to correct have been fruitless.

10 10-2/N9573Z V-03
 Left engine very rough and backfired just after take-off. PIC feathered and landed after engine quit. Replaced carburetor and # 3 cylinder.

7. Accident reports (SAFE 4)

<u>Date</u>	<u>A/C Type/No.</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
02	VTB/N9838Z	V-133	A/C substantially damaged on landing. Under investigation, suspect hard landing.
Unk	C-47/16147	Unk	Rudder bracket found cracked on # 2 Svc at V-01. Suspect A/C parked w/o control locks.
06	10-2/N5269V	V-02	Left main tire flat on landing, no obvious damage.
07	C-46/B146	V-27	Damaged elevator tip described in SAFE 9 above.
08	C-46/B928	V-23	Bullet damage described in Hostile fire above.
09	PC-6/N192X	V-01 Ramp	Aft cabin door blew open on run-up frame broken and latch pushed in. Not locked prior to run-up.
12	Helio/B839	V-132	Engine and prop being removed as unit, due prop could not be pulled. Engine assy and hoist tipped over in strong wind one prop blade bent rearward.
12	C-45/N9855Z	V-01 Ramp	10-2 was being run up by mechs 15' in front of 55Z. 55Z was improperly chocked (too close proximity anyway). 55Z blew back into APU damaging left elevator.
13	204B/N1304X	XP9125	A/C substantially damaged when M/R blade struck tree on take-off. Under investigation, suspect engine FCU malfunction.
14	PC-6/N152L	V-07	Parking brake failed to release on left brake. Left brake, wheel assy, and tire damaged beyond repair when PIC attempted to taxi.

16	PC-6/N285L	V-01 Ramp	AES mech ran APU into lower right nose section. 6-8" cut in skin. Improper operation of ramp equipment.
22	PC-6/N185K	V-14	Rotor wash from CH-47 caused right wing tip to scrape ground on landing. No SAFE 9 or PIC statement has been submitted.
23	Helio/B875	V-17	LH inboard flap bellcrank found broken. Suspect flaps extended at too high air-speed.
25	C-46/B926	V-27	Left main tire blew while taxiing on parking ramp. Casing gave way or recap parted. Numerous large rocks at Cheo Reo.
28	Helio/B867	V-01	Fuselage and wing found damaged during unloading from B1014. Airshipped from TNN to SCN.

FLYING

1. Many resignations were tendered during the month of March. Three captains in the C-47 program. In addition Capt JB Henson was terminated. F/O's [REDACTED] Brown, J.F. tendered their resignation during the month. Capt Aultman submitted his as well. Captains Ball and Aultman, [REDACTED] resignations are to be effective during the month of April. It was felt the C47 resignations would be of benefit until the trend in flying time started rising. We could have used all four captains who departed during the month very nicely.

2. Our advertisement in the Saigon Daily newspapers for pilot positions to be filled was answered by one prospect. The review of his qualifications posed some questions not previously considered. What are the minimum qualifications? The question was asked of DFD. The answer was in accordance with the MFD manual "FAA Commercial license with an instrument rating". If these are the qualification it is most dubious that any of the indigenous applicants would ever qualify. If the qualifications in the MFD manual were amended to "Equivalent of FAA commercial license with instrument rating" what aircraft would they be allowed to crew? It is by word of month that all new applicants for pilot positions require a STANINE examination. For this requirement we were referred to PMBKK. [REDACTED] Enlightenment on these questions would be rewarding.

3. We were not free from accidents during the month. We suffered two major accidents. Preliminary investigation is indicative of material failure in both accidents. One accident VTB N9838Z experienced landing gear failure and Bell 204 N1304X encountered power failure on lift off. Minor injuries were incurred only in the 204 accident. No ground or traffic accidents were reported.

4. Capt JE Stallman had his car impounded by local police for non payment of the Vietnamese circulation tax. This tax was deemed not applicable by the US Embassy. We have encountered much harrassment by the local authorities heretofore. It is felt Captain Stallman's case will resolve this at last.

VII. TRAFFIC/AAM

1. No major items of interest occurred during the month. Lt. Freeman CORDS liaison officer departed for the ZI and was replaced by Mr. White.

2. Another helio was transhipped via SAT [REDACTED] of TAW Traffic was on hand to observe.

3. A question arose as to the authenticity of VN passengers. CORDS requested a check for 2 weeks of each VN passenger by I.D. Card against manifest and/or ticket. No unauthorized passengers were discovered.

4. Due to the many varied Supply letters issued regarding shipments of items to Bangkok on board AAM aircraft, a meeting was held between Supply/Traffic to try and reduce the verbage to plain English. A mutual understanding of Supply and Traffic documentation was reached and a local Traffic SOP will be formulated and followed. It is noted that some Supply indicates are not passed on to Traffic while others are sometimes difficult to interpret.

The new baggage lost and found procedure has been sent to the other stations and seems to be working out as expected.

5. Statistics

	February	March
Passenger departures SGN (All Contracts)	4,805	5,957
Passenger arrivals " (" ")	5,432	7,274
Outbound cargo	77,322	94,692
Inbound cargo	90,279	120,974

VIII. HOSTEL OCCUPANCY

1. During March 1969, only 74 beds were occupied for a percentage of 47.7%. In compliance with Internal Auditor Report, the hostel report will be computed on a five bed availability basis for each day. During this period a total of 5 non-availability slips were issued.

IX. PERSONNEL

(See Personnel Strength Attachment A)

X. MEDICAL

1. Number of sick call: 1989

2. Accident: 71, and only two of them were considered to be a little more serious.

3. Miscellaneous cases: 1) [REDACTED] Operations Dispatcher and [REDACTED] of Emergency Equipment both suffered from food poisoning after eating ham and cheese sandwiches in the AAM Saigon Base cafeteria. Both of them were sent to hospital for treatment. [REDACTED] stayed in the hospital for one day and [REDACTED] went home after the treatment.

2) The late [REDACTED] RMD Quality Control was found dead in his residence by his housekeeper at the night of March 15, 1969. Cause of death unknown.

4. Hospitalized sick call : One
Hospitalized accident : None
Unhospitalized accident: 71
Outcalls : Two

Physical examination:	1. Flight crew physical	34
	2. Pre-employment physical	15
	3. Accident flight physical	5
	Total:	<u>54</u>

Sanitation: Cafeteria - Fair (except two employees suffered food poison)
 Toilet - Fair

Vaccination: 76

Total man days lost by reasons of sickness: 383½ days
 Total man days lost by reasons of accident: 44 days

XI. SECURITY

1. On 19 March 1969 at 0.30 A.M., Tan Son Nhut airport experienced to one alert which last about 30 minutes when 3 VC rockets landed outside the VNAF security fence.

2. During this month, VC shelled the rockets almost to all parts of the South and Central Vietnam. Saigon capital had been also shelled.

- On 3 March, at 5 A.M., two rockets (one hit the Bach Dang quai, 1st precinct and another hit Do Thanh Nhan street 4th precinct and caused insignificant damage).
- On 6 March, at 6 A.M., 6 rockets hit the agglomeration of the 4th precinct, killing 22 civilians and wounding 17 others.
- On 16 March, at 6 A.M., 2 rockets (one hit the Bach Dang quai, killing 1 civilian, destroying one house and damaging 10 vehicles; another hit the 9th precinct, no damage was reported).
- On 30 March, 3 rockets (2 landed at 4th precinct and another landed at 9th precinct, no damage was reported).

3. Several insignificant terrorism cases were noted during this month in Saigon capital. On 30 March at 10 A.M., the main post office located at Nguyen van Trach street, Cholon was blown up by terrorism causing serious damage to the building.

4. These VC activities proved the presence of the VC in all the parts of the South and Central Vietnam as well as to support the political objective of the communists at Paris Peace Talk as so far it does not bring any success to the communists of North Vietnam and meantime by the political military activities to make a pressure to the Republic Government of Vietnam to a direct negotiation with the Liberation Front of South Vietnam for the fate of South Vietnam.

XII. TECHNICAL SERVICES

1. Aircraft Maintenance production in all SVN Stations, measured in flights handled, overnight checks, heavy service checks, and shop support work increased along with the approximately 23% increase in flying over the

month of February (a short month with a long holiday). Flying and the relative workload were still down from that of January by approximately 20%.

2. Unscheduled workload as measured in aircraft delays recoveries, premature replacements, incidents and accidents indicated slight improvement in relation to flying hours. We hope this to be the beginning of an upward trend; however, the trend is questionable only because of two accidents, still under investigation for cause: A landing gear failure on Volpar N9838Z, which has been repaired and returned to service; and Helicopter N1304X.

3. The Can Tho RMD Project continues to go well, and has helped practically to eliminate recoveries from that station.

The curfew restrictions at the airport still requires working unbalanced shifts, which is an obstacle to the reduction of CTO and best man power utilization.

4. Visits to SVN by DGM and MAC from Tainan, and S/POL VTE were beneficial to SVN Stations, and it is hoped that we will see more of such visits.

5. The drive towards "Safety Thinking" continued with the installation of additional aircraft grounding pins; fire extinguisher and ramp equipment marking and location, etc. Decidedly noticeable improvement was made at all SVN Stations in general housekeeping, and in equipment and facilities appearance. The review of all SVN refueling equipment this month promises improvement in aircraft fuel servicing equipment and procedures. Recertification of personnel for taxi, towing and run up continues as a regular program.

6. Facilities continue to improve with the near completion of the Utilities Tunnel; with continued progress on the West Ramp repaving project, now estimated at approximately mid-May completion; with approval for completion of the South Ramp wall; and with approval for the Communications Transmitter Building installation.

7.

	Company Services		
	February	March	
Transit	346	415	290
Overnight	636	701	700
No. 1 Service	27	29	20
No. 2 "	25	22	28
No. 3 "	5	5	5
No. 4 "	0	2	5
Engine change	16	20	25
	Line Items		
	February	March	
Requisitions	4225	2983	2330
Receipts	2843	2501	3191
Store Issues	5556	6421	6901
Stock Credits	264	643	310
Posted to cards	17689	17857	19526

SAIGON BASE
MARCH 1969

CLASSIFICATION	GRD		FLT		GRD		FLT		GRD		FLT		GRD		FLT		TOTAL	
	52	188	188	17	213	1	36	5	612#	15**	2	2	2	2	1*	1106	226	
PERMANENT																		
TEMPORARY																		
PTC																		
PRE-PROCESSED									13									13
TOTAL	52	188	188	17	213	1	36	5	625#	15**	2	2	2	1*	1119	226		

(*) : 1 Swiss
(**) : 1 French
(#) : 4 French

GROUND PNL : 1119
FLIGHT PNL : 226
TOTAL : 1345

ATTACHMENT " A "

DA NANO SUB-BASE

CLASSIFICATION	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		TOTAL	
	GRD	FLT	GRD	FLT	GRD	FLT	GRD	FLT	GRD	FLT
PERMANENT	4		16		31		111		162	
TEMPORARY										
FTC										
PRE-PROCESSED					1		3		4	
TOTAL	4		16		32		114		166	

GROUND PNL : 166

FLIGHT PNL : 0

TOTAL : 166

NHA TRAMO SUB-BASE

CLASSIFICATION	[REDACTED]				TOTAL	
	GRD	FLT	GRD	FLT	GRD	FLT
PERMANENT	7	16	29	86	138	
TEMPORARY						
FTC						
PRE-PROCESSED				2	2	
TOTAL	7	16	29	88	140	

GROUND PNL : 140

FLIGHT PNL : 0

TOTAL : 140