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BRIEF

564/8/28

Subject BRIEF FOR DCAS CONCERNING SECURITY OF BUTTERWORTH

~~DCAS~~

FIRST DRAFT ONLY

- References:
- A. FAS SIP D58/4/1 of 29th May 1975
 - B. MPO Minute 312/1975 of 3rd June 1975
 - C. MPO Minute 574/1975 of 21 August 1975
 - D. DEFAIR 564/8/28 of 18th September 1975

1. Following a series of rocket attacks in Malaysia against Minden Barracks Penang and RMAF Kuala Lumpur, FAS SIP proposed to DJS at Reference A that 'Defence Central take a lively interest in the security of (RAAF) aircraft and arrangements'. In summary, FAS SIP recommended that:

" recent developments and incidents, must significantly reduce confidence in the security of aircraft, especially against rocket attack from outside the base. We need authoritative advice on the situation and prospects so that policy consideration may be fully informed."

2. At Reference B and C DJS supported the proposal to review the threat to the security of Butterworth and the arrangements for the protection of aircraft. Subsequently, a draft revised assesment of the threat to Butterworth was prepared by JIO and circulated for comment. Both DAFI and SRGD expressed concern

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10. The major difficulty from a Defence viewpoint is that the CT's are able to decide the timing, nature and frequency of attacks virtually unhindered and with little fear of retaliation. Conversely they can effectively disrupt base operations by 'leaking' false intelligence regarding their intentions to either create alarm resulting in the setting up of tighter security which can then be reconnoitred and probed to determine its weakness, or which from sheer inactivity on the part of the CT's will be repealed within a short period. In any case, the advantage remains with the CT.

EFFECT OF ATTACKS ON RAAF BUTTERWORTH

General

11. Attacks on the Butterworth base would be launched for political/psychological aims to attain publicity and sympathy, not for the military purposes of capturing ground or materiel. Accordingly, these attacks should they develop, are expected to be irregular or perhaps non-recurring. The CTO is not yet considered to be in a position to conduct sustained military, sabotage or rocket attacks on any one target. This factor renders more difficult, the task of establishing and maintaining a satisfactory defence and security system. In any case, any arrangements introduced could only serve to reduce the freedom of action of the CTO and could not obviate the risk of attack.

Personnel and Materiel

12. The first and obvious effects from rocket mortar and other forms of attack will be the damage to aircraft, equipment and facilities, and the death and injury to personnel including

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families and LECs. Damage to aircraft and facilities will provide substantial political/psychological propoganda to the CTO. The personnel effects will be:

- a. Political within Australia. Agitation for the withdrawal of RAAF units from Butterworth; or at least dependant families could be expected. Such a 'withdrawal' would be politically advantageous to the CTs and potentially damaging to Australia's prestige in SEA.
- b. Morale in Butterworth. Immediately following the first attack on Butterworth an unestimated number of families could be expected to demand repatriation to Australia. Whilst not in effect a withdrawal, some planning for this contingency should be undertaken.
- c. Likely Effect on LECs. Immediately following the first attack, LECs could be expected to absent themselves from work for several days, possibly resulting in a requirement to replace the civil labour from Australia.

13. An increase in the level of defence preparedness including signs of defensive works against rocket attacks, could produce the effects at 11b and c. above even before an attack develops. It may be necessary to consider the personnel implications of requests for early repatriation to Australia and the replacement of civil labour. Additionally, it may be necessary to determine the extent of information which should be released to dependants when protective works are undertaken.

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or mitigate the effects of attack by these weapons. In April 1975 following the rocket attack on Minden Barracks, Mirage aircraft were dispersed, but as this practise exacerbated the problems of patrolling and security lighting the aircraft lines, the practise ceased within a month.

25. The only real protection for aircraft against mortars and rockets is to provide hardened roofed over revetments at costs of about \$100,000 each. Open roofed revetments or dividing blast walls are reasonably effective against rockets, but less effective against the more accurate mortar. However, the combination of dispersed^{al} and provision of blast walls can reduce the area effect of mortars and reduce the chain reaction effect which can be expected to result if one aircraft is in a line of sixteen; is hit by a mortar bomb and explodes. Blast walls need not be elaborate and can be constructed with basic materials. Fuel installations should be similarly protected. The requirement should be further evaluated by ground defence and works officers.

26. Personnel protection can be provided by simple shelters. However, the number and disposition of shelters required to provide protection throughout the base and adjacent married quarters area may not be justified by the present threat. It may be appropriate to provide some blast protection shelters near the aircraft lines and adjacent hangars.

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27. The most important requirement is to ensure that the base has adequate emergency response arrangements to deal with casualties and to recover from the effects of an attack.

Families Protection

28. Families protection arrangements are adequate, but may need to be reconsidered if attacks by CT occur.

29. Plans for the partial or complete evacuation of dependants; including their dispersal in Australia, should be reviewed.

Summary of Defence Arrangements

30. The defence and security of the base involves:

- a. On-base police security functions and a capacity to react quickly to and counter attacks by small groups of armed CTs. Close defence of facilities and assets is provided by unit personnel and the ARA company fulfills the military Quick Reaction Force role. On-base security arrangements are satisfactory.
- b. Off-base Police field force and Army activity to deny the CTO access to the base, to mortar and rocket firing positions and positions from which to launch assaults. The area involved would require several battalions secure in detail, but a deterrent presence conducting a reasonably aggressive patrol programme could be provided by two battalions. 6MIB units are responsible / for an