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REPORT OF RESULTS FROM GENERAL MORALE OBSERVATIONS
AT ISOLATED COAST GUARD INSTALLATIONS, NORTH ATLANTIC AREA,
INCLUDING GEOGRAPHICAL AND PHYSICAL ASPECTS

There follows a report of morale conditions at the various isolated Coast Guard installations in the Newfoundland-Labrador-Greenland area as observed during a trip to these installations by Lt. Comdr. B. M. Chiswell, during the period 24 August 1949, to 14 Sept. 1949.

The itinerary set forth below was followed and is included herein as a matter of chronological interest. As can be noted from the itinerary, travel was performed by Military Air Transport Service, Coast Guard Aircraft, and USCGC SORREL.

- 23 August 1949 - departed Washington, D. C., arrived NAS Patuxent River, Md.
- 24 August 1949 - departed Patuxent River, Md. via MATS, arrived Argentia, Nfld. Reported aboard USCGC SORREL.
- 27 August 1949 - departed USCGC SORREL Argentia, Nfld., via USCG Aircraft (PBY) arrived Battle Harbor, Labrador. Departed Battle Harbor, Labrador, returned Argentia, Nfld., reported aboard USCGC SORREL.
- 31 August 1949 - departed Argentia, Nfld. via USCGC SORREL.
- 1 Sept. 1949 - arrived Bonavista, Nfld. and departed Bonavista, Nfld. via USCGC SORREL.
- 4 Sept. 1949 - arrived Narsarssuak, Greenland.
- 5 Sept. 1949 - departed Narsarssuak, Greenland via USCGC SORREL.
- 6 Sept. 1949 - arrived Frederiksdal, Greenland via USCGC SORREL.
- 7 Sept. 1949 - departed Frederiksdal, Greenland via USCGC SORREL.
- 12 Sept. 1949 - arrived Port Aux Basques, Nfld., and departed via USCGC SORREL.
- 14 Sept. 1949 - arrived Boston, Mass. Departed USCGC SORREL for temporary duty Boston, Mass.

While the visits to all stations were necessarily of short duration, ample opportunity was available for conversing with personnel and observing conditions. The trip was made with the thought in mind of ascertaining problems on the scene and of contributing all possible assistance to the solution of these problems based upon the assumption that any problems of a non-technical nature have a direct effect upon morale. Some basic conditions were found to be universally present so as to make certain problems common to all installations. These are enumerated in detail as follows:

1. MEDICAL

The logistic vessels engaged in supplying the North Atlantic area do not carry a doctor aboard. While this may be of no immediate importance upon the arrival of the vessel, it is believed that adequate medical advice and treatment should be available to the personnel of the isolated stations, if for no other reason than to diagnose potential illnesses and recommend precautionary measures. It is further believed that all installations should have adequate medical facilities available within a reasonable time interval in case of emergency. The CG Air Detachment at Argentia, Nfld. has adequate medical protection for service personnel. Coast Guard installations at Port Aux Basques, Nfld. and Bonavista, Nfld. have immediate medical assistance at hand from Newfoundland facilities. The Coast Guard installation at Battle Harbor, Labrador is completely isolated from medical assistance for about 50% of the year during the cold winter season. The Loran Transmitting Station at Frederiksdal, Greenland is isolated from medical assistance in case of emergency during most of the year except for a specific recourse which will be outlined in detail later in this report.

2. DENTAL

The logistic vessels engaged in supplying the North Atlantic area do not provide dental services to the personnel at the isolated stations. In view of the type of vessels used for this logistic work, permanent dental installations on board such vessels are infeasible. It is believed, however, that a mobile unit with a dentist attached, could be utilized to great advantage at the time of the visits to the various stations. While it is admitted that adequate directives have reached the field relative to dental care of all personnel assigned to the isolated areas to be accomplished prior to departure, oftentimes these directives are not carefully followed and men are transferred from the areas of adequate facilities without completing treatment. A mobile unit could do much to forestall potential dental trouble.

3. PAY

All personnel attached to the isolated stations receive pay by checks prepared in the district and forwarded via the logistic vessel. There are no facilities native to the geographical location of any of the installations except the Air Detachment, Argentia, where the cashing of checks, either government or personal, is possible. Under current procedure, the logistic vessel is entrusted with a large sum of morale money from the district office which is used to cash pay checks of personnel desiring to do so. This has the disadvantage of freezing morale cash assets of the district for long periods

of time. It is believed, however, that some means should be provided for personnel to cash their pay checks if they should so desire regardless of their geographical location. It is not suggested nor is it believed necessary that a Disbursing Officer be attached to the vessels although if such an officer is available, he could render considerable assistance in the matter of supplies, cargo and providing a check cashing facility. A logical solution to the cashing of pay checks would appear to be a loan from the Headquarters Trust Fund of \$2,000, to the CIGCB, which could be carried on board the logistic vessel releasing District Morale Funds from this service.

4. SHIP'S SERVICE STORES

All installations with the exception of the CG Air Detachment at Argentia, depend upon an outside source of supply at considerable distance for the procurement of Ship's Service Store supplies. Such supplies are essential to the comfort, contentment, health, and well-being of the personnel attached. At the present time, this problem is not being handled at any two stations in a similar manner. It is believed feasible for Headquarters to authorize the establishment of a regular Ship's Service Store with operations conducted in accordance with current directives modified to meet the specific conditions and provide the required capital investment. The stores could then be operated in a businesslike manner and insure stocks on hand to supply requirements during periods of inaccessibility.

5. AMATEUR RADIO STATIONS

All Loran stations in this area desired, and it is felt that they should have, adequate amateur radio communication. Such equipment would permit the transmission of personal messages to and from dependents in the continental United States with the net effect of reducing a current problem regarding receipt and transmission of mail at infrequent intervals. The Loran Station at Frederiksdal, Greenland has an amateur radio license and call sign which is currently in effect, but the station lacks proper equipment to operate effectively. This equipment will be supplied at an early date. The Canadian government which exercises control over the issuance of amateur radio licenses in the Newfoundland-Labrador area has denied these licenses to American military personnel stationed therein. In consequence, it is impossible at the present time to operate amateur stations at the three (3) Loran Stations in the Newfoundland-Labrador area. Much progress has been made through the State Department to remedy this condition, but final success has not been achieved at the present. Action has been taken, however,

to offer stations membership in the Military Amateur Radio System (MARS) which operates on assigned frequencies and can operate from American Military Reservations without Canadian authority. Action is pending at this writing.

6. THREE SPEED RECORD PLAYERS

In view of the fact that the Armed Forces V-Disc programs were discontinued on 30 June 1949, and it is beyond the capacity of the Armed Forces to renew this contract, it is felt that adequate dependable record players capable of record speeds currently used by the large recording companies be supplied to all Loran Stations. This will permit the use of all types of records and will assist the District Morale Office in their anticipated program of supplying recordings at regular intervals. Action concerning this matter is currently under consideration.

7. PAPER BOUND BOOK SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Special Services Division of the Department of the Army maintains a recreation library which procures a kit on a monthly basis consisting of 15 paper bound books selected from current popular editions. It is believed that such kits should be obtained for the Loran Stations in order to insure an adequate and continuing supply of reading material in these isolated locations. This action is currently under consideration in the Military Morale Division.

8. SPORTING TYPE RIFLES

As hunting and fishing constitute a very major source of recreational activities and as well contribute to the fresh provisions of the stations, it is recommended that all stations except Frederiksdal, be supplied with Winchester "Sporter" model 70, .30 cal. rifles. It is understood that an adequate supply of these rifles are on hand at the CG Supply Depot, Jersey City, N.J. The area of confinement at Frederiksdal Loran Station precludes the use of such a rifle and it is not deemed wise for issuance at this station.

9. RECREATIONAL RADIO RECEIVERS

With the receipt of radio receivers, Halicrafter model SX 62, at all Loran Stations, it is considered that the recreational radio receiving equipment is currently adequate and satisfactory.

GENERAL MORALE

As the purpose of this trip concerned itself principally with observing morale conditions in general, a careful analysis was attempted in this regard. This Officer has returned with the impression that morale was considerably higher than had been anticipated. With a few certain exceptions, material has been supplied to satisfy most requirements for comfort and contentment of personnel. Stations are well constructed, quarters are adequate, and comfortable, recreation facilities have been planned and provided, and food is adequate and wholesome. It would appear that the only problem which the future holds is one of maintenance, replenishment, and the supplying of minor requirements.

INDIVIDUAL STATIONS

1. COAST GUARD AIR DETACHMENT, ARGENTIA, NEWFOUNDLAND

The CG Air Detachment, Argentia operates as a command under the Naval Air Station, Argentia. This organization operates two (2) Coast Guard PBV 5As. Office facilities are adequate in the main hangar at the Naval Air Station and satisfactory quarters are provided with many personnel having dependents on the station. Both officers and enlisted personnel seemed content with their assignment to this duty. The outstanding problem encountered concerned itself with the differentiation in dependent's medical care between Naval and Coast Guard personnel. Naval dependents are cared for by the Naval hospital facilities at a minimum cost whereas Coast Guard personnel are billed at standard rates for all types of treatment, including out-patient treatment. The apparent inequality in this procedure is manifested in a morale problem of some proportions. One other very recent source of minor irritation has arisen from a directive issued by the Commander, First Coast Guard District, forbidding the transportation of personal vehicles on board vessels from that District. This practice has been accepted for some time and has become an expected service.

This unit is deserving of commendation for their willing cooperation with other Coast Guard units in the area including vessels and shore installations. Without the PBVs from Argentia to service the isolated Loran Stations in the Newfoundland-Labrador area, a much higher morale problem would exist. These aircraft make frequent trips to the Loran Stations carrying supplies, mail, fresh provisions and personnel whenever conditions warrant the flight, and their arrival is eagerly awaited by Loran personnel. Oftentimes, these flights are made under extremely hazardous conditions involving danger to the aircraft and its crew, but their missions are accomplished with a degree of regularity which is worthy of high praise.

2. BATTLE HARBOR, LABRADOR

A. Geographical Location: The Loran Transmitting Station at Battle Harbor, Labrador is located upon a rocky promontory extending in a north easterly direction into the open sea. The main station buildings are about 200 yards from the boat landing over an elevated wooden walkway which is virtually impassable in winter. There is no sheltered mooring for vessels other than a very small harbor open to the sea. Landing by plans is hazardous but can be accomplished in some of the more protected areas in the vicinity. The town of Battle Harbor, Labrador consists of approximately 100 people and is about 7 miles from the station. Access thereto except by water is impracticable. The water areas around Battle Harbor are frozen from December through April.

B. Physical Aspects: The station buildings are of wood construction and appeared to be in excellent repair. All buildings were reported to be well insulated and sufficiently heated for the comfort of personnel. The station presented a fine appearance and evidenced care on the part of personnel.

C. General Morale Conditions: The morale of this station was pleasingly high. It was found that very few materiel items could be supplied to increase the welfare of personnel. The station had no 16 mm projection equipment, but the 35 mm projector was operating satisfactorily and an adequate supply of programs was on hand. This condition will be remedied upon the arrival of CGC EVERGREEN transporting one (1) 16 mm Bell & Howell projector and an additional 16 mm projector has since been ordered for the station. Sixteen mm equipment is considered very desirable at this station to facilitate the shipment of film by air. The greatest single contributing factor to the morale of this station is the receipt of mail and fresh foods from the planes of the Coast Guard Air Detachment at Argentia. These planes make parachute drops and mail pick-ups when landing conditions are unfavorable. Some minor items of recreation equipment were desired and will be supplied.

3. BONAVISTA, NEWFOUNDLAND

A. Geographical Location: The Loran Transmitting Station at Bonavista, Newfoundland is built on a peat covered rocky peninsula extending to the north east into the ocean. It is situated approximately one quarter mile west of the lighthouse reservations at Cape Bonavista, which is operated by the Lighthouse Service of the Canadian government. The Coast Guard installation is about 6 miles from the City of Bonavista, Newfoundland, a town of approximately 5,000 people and a northern terminus of the Newfoundland Railway. This fact insures rail transportation between the Loran Station and the NOB at Argentia. The vessel anchorage at Bonavista is not protected but the holding ground is good under most conditions. Supplies

are transported from the logistic vessels by small boat to an inner harbor and trucked to the station. Most supplies, however, are received by rail or Coast Guard PBY. The road to the station from the town of Bonavista is extremely narrow and winding, although relatively level. This road is impassable in winter due to drifting snow.

B. Physical Aspects: The main buildings are constructed of wood covered by a building material of simulated brick. These buildings are supplemented by quonset huts for generators, garages, and the Loran equipment. The station presented an excellent appearance in a fine state of repair. There is an insufficient supply of potable water due to the inadequacy of the present seepage well and all water for cooking and drinking is imported by barrel from a town well. This necessitates a trip from the station at least once each day regardless of weather conditions. In addition, it presents a serious fire fighting problem of which the station complement is aware and every precaution is exercised in this regard.

C. General Morale Conditions: No morale problems were encountered at this station due to the proximity of the station to the relatively civilized community of Bonavista, regular liberty, station parties, and the frequent receipt and transmission of mail. Fresh stores and movie programs are received at regular intervals and contribute substantially to the morale of personnel. Some minor items of recreation equipment were desired and will be shipped at an early date.

This station has a problem concerned with winter transportation over the road to the City of Bonavista. Heretofore, the road has been cleared by the Newfoundland government at a contract price and it is understood that a renewal of this contract has been made for the coming winter. It is reported, however, that this is unsatisfactory due to the undependability of the service. Headquarters has considered the purchase of a motor driven double-track snow vehicle for the station and further study is in progress at this time.

4. FREDERIKSDAL, GREENLAND

A. Geographical Location: This station is located on a very rocky and lichen-covered point of land extending due south into Davis Straits for a distance of approximately one half mile. Station buildings are exposed to winds from all directions except due north where a little protection is gained from a high mountain some distance behind the station. The station is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the loading skidway over a rough road strewn with boulders and extremely hilly. Transportation over the road is by foot and supplies are hauled by "Cat" tractor pulling a small wheeled cart. Supplies are landed by the logistic vessel on a small sand beach and are hauled to the top of a fifty foot cliff by winch, cable and skidway. The anchorage is apparently satisfactory

and the holding ground is good. This station location is subject to Storis ice from March through June, and later, which makes access thereto hazardous during this period. Landing by plane is almost out of the question due to the almost continuous presence of bergs and growlers, and the uncertainty of weather conditions. The village of Frederiksdal is about 4 miles distant over hilly terrain and consists of about 70 Greenlanders and one Danish Mayor. The village is out of bounds to station personnel by virtue of an agreement as is much of the territory surrounding the station.

B. Physical Aspects: Structurally, this station is the best of any of the North Atlantic Chain. It is built of wood on a concrete foundation, and is painted white with green trim. The main living quarters are concentrated in one building, while the Loran Transmitting equipment and the power supply are in two separate buildings. A recent construction detachment from the First Coast Guard District completed building storm porches, a new skidway, recovering and relaying the water line and more securely anchoring all roofing. The appearance of the station as to cleanliness of quarters, etc. did not measure up to standard, but this was due to the large turnover of personnel which took place during the visit. An adequate water supply is available and the danger of freezing which has been experienced in the past will probably be lessened by the relaying of the pipe line recently completed.

C. General Morale Conditions: Due to the replacement of approximately two thirds of the station complement, including the Commanding Officer at the time of this visit, it was difficult to ascertain morale at the station. In general, however, morale seemed relatively high considered in light of the extreme isolation, infrequent mail drops and pick-ups, restriction of movement, weather conditions, inadequacies of recreation areas and general remoteness from civilization. The morale is directly proportional to the establishment of and strict adherence to a personnel rotation policy. The 30 day quarantine at the Air Force Base at Narsarsuaq, Greenland will contribute much in this regard as personnel at the station will know that their reliefs are in the Greenland area. This has an additional beneficial effect in that it tends to form a personal bond of common problems between the Air Force personnel at the Greenland Base Command and Coast Guard personnel destined for Frederiksdal. The Commander, Greenland Base Command was contacted concerning the Loran Station and he gave every assurance of his cooperation to the extent of his available facilities. Every effort should be made to provide the services of a doctor and hospital facilities to personnel of this station under emergency conditions. The Danish doctor located at Nannortalik, Greenland, about 25 miles distant can be procured within about 12 hours after contact. Payment for services rendered, however, is slow and unwieldy and corrective action in this respect should be initiated.

It is understood that the Navy has procured the former OGC REDBUD, for logistic services at NOB Grondal, Greenland, and it is believed that this tender should be used to supply the Loran Transmitting Station, Frederiksdal, in addition to the regular Coast Guard logistic vessel. It is recommended that inquiry be made at the Navy Department concerning this possibility. It is considered desirable that a small aluminum boat with outboard motor be supplied to this station for utilitarian and recreational purposes. Such a boat can be properly taken care of by station personnel and would contribute to the existing facilities. No major items of recreational equipment are missing except adequate amateur radio equipment which is being supplied. Some requests for minor items of recreation gear were received and these will be furnished.

4. PORT AUX BASQUES, NEWFOUNDLAND

A. Geographical Location: The station is located on the westerly edge of the town of Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland, and faces in a south easterly direction toward Cabot Straits. The town of Port Aux Basques has approximately 2,500 inhabitants and is considered to be of some size for that portion of Newfoundland. It is a rail head and the eastern terminus for the Newfoundland Railway Steam Packet Boats to Sydney, Nova Scotia. The proximity of the town provides contact for the personnel of the station with the facilities of civilization. In this location, the station is approximately 90 miles from the U.S. Air Force installation at Harmon Field, Stevensville, Nfld., and has rail connection therewith. Access to the station from the harbor at Port Aux Basques is by a narrow, winding, hilly road for approximately 5 miles.

B. Physical Aspects: The Loran Transmitting Station is of quonset hut construction painted battleship gray with white trim. The general appearance of the station is not particularly good, but closer inspection proves the layout to be utilitarian and comfortable.

C. General Morale Conditions: No major morale problems were encountered at this station. All personnel seemed pleased with their assignment and many, including the Commanding Officer, have requested extended tours of duty. Some complaint was registered concerning the inadequacy of fresh provisions and action was initiated to authorize the Commanding Officer to make local purchases. Supplies of this nature are currently ordered from the Air Force installation, Harmon Field, and upon arrival by rail are usually found to have considerable spoilage. In addition, it was requested that the Air Detachment at Argentia make more frequent trips with fresh provisions. The requests for extended tours of duty at this station are readily understandable due to the proximity to civilization and the personal contacts incident thereto. Some marriages have taken place between station personnel and the Newfoundlanders, and appear to be satisfactory. The cost of living is not high and considerable opportunity is provided for money saving. The Personnel Office at the First Coast Guard District has

had to adopt a policy of not extending tours of duty at this station for more than two (2) years. Some minor items of recreation equipment were requested and will be supplied.

ATTACHMENTS

There are attached, as supplements to this report, copies of the inspection reports submitted by the Commanding Officer, USCGC SORREL on the Loran Transmitting Stations at Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland, Bonavista, Newfoundland, and Frederiksdal, Greenland.