

UNITED STATES

USC  
REFER TO FILE  
Box 1, Navy #230,  
Seattle, Washington

From: Commanding Officer, USCG Loran Transmitting Station, Adak, Alaska  
To : Commandant (PO-2)  
Via : Commander, 17th Coast Guard District (P)

Subj: Survey of Loran Transmitting Station, Adak, Alaska; submission of

Ref : (a) Commandant (PO-2) letter dated 22 May 1956, A7

1. Enclosure one (1), the detailed survey of the general conditions existing at the Loran Station, Adak, as required by reference (a), is herewith forwarded. Due to local Naval Station regulations, the negatives of photographs enclosed cannot be forwarded.

*John D. Costello*  
JOHN D. COSTELLO

Encl: (1) Narrative survey of the Loran Transmitting Station, Adak, Alaska  
(2) Eight (8) descriptive photographs of the Loran Station

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P  
7 August 1956  
A7

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on CO, LORSTA, Adak ltr A7 of 26 July 1956

From: Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District  
To: Commandant (PO-2)

1. Forwarded.

*J. A. Philbrick*  
J. A. PHILBRICK  
By direction

DESCRIPTION OF THE LORAN TRANSMITTING STATION, ADAK, ALASKA

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A. DESCRIPTION OF THE STATION

The U.S. Coast Guard Loran Transmitting Station, Adak, Alaska is situated 250 feet above sea level on the side of Mt. Adagdak, facing the Bering Sea. The station is located on Cape Adagdak on the northernmost tip of Adak Island. The station is a double master station, operating on Loran Rates 1L6 and 1L7; Cape Sarichef, Unimak Island, Alaska, is the slave station on Loran Rate 1L6, and Attu Island, Alaska, is the slave station on Loran Rate 1L7. Built in 1949, the station consists of two permanent type concrete buildings, one, housing the Loran Transmitting Equipment and the other, housing the barracks and machinery spaces. The station generates its own electrical power through two Fairbanks-Morse Diesel generators. Normal tours of duty for the assigned complement of one officer and twelve enlisted men are twelve months, and compensatory leave is accrued at this unit.

Although having vehicular access to the Naval Station, fifteen miles away, the Loran Station is well equipped with recreational facilities. These facilities include a photographic dark room, ham radio equipment, ping-pong, daily movies, a large record and library collection, leather craft and model work, small arms (small bore-pistol) range, fishing and hunting. Fishing and hunting, though not too good according to Alaskan standards, provide many enjoyable hours of recreation. The Dolly Varden Trout, salmon, shrimp, the famous Alaskan King Crab along with Ptarmigan (northern type grouse) are a few examples of the fish and wildlife available on Adak. In addition to these facilities available in and around the Loran Station, itself, all facilities at the Naval Station are also available to all Coast Guard personnel.

At present the Loran Station purchases most of its food and commissary supplies from the Naval Station, but the station's supply of fresh fruits and vegetables is also supplemented by fruits and vegetables presently being carried by the bi-monthly Coast Guard Logistics flights.

Coast Guard personnel being transferred to Adak for duty are transported by weekly Navy Logistics Flights from Seattle; these flights, which make an overnight stop in Kodiak, Alaska, are also one of the primary methods of transportation back to the States for personnel being relieved of duty on Adak. Dependent travel from the States to Adak is generally via MSTS transport. At the present time, MSTS has a transport scheduled to leave Seattle approximately once every six weeks.

#### B. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS ON ADAK

Adak, a small island in the Aleutian Chain, is one of the Andreanof Island group, and it is approximately 22 miles wide and 36 miles long. It is located at 51 degrees 45 minutes north latitude and 176 degrees 40 minutes west longitude, about 1,190 air miles southwest of Anchorage, Alaska and 2,480 miles northeast of Tokyo, Japan.

Adak's highest terrain is Mt. Moffett, which has an altitude of 3,900 feet; about 26 miles northeast of Adak, is Great Sitkin, the nearest active volcano, with an altitude of 5,700 feet. Great Sitkin is normally visible from Adak. Earth tremors and minor earthquakes are not unusual on Adak. The climate, like the climate throughout the Aleutian Chain is a major concern of the pilots, as well as of the inhabitants of the island. A high percentage of fog and cloudiness is always present, and there is about 90 per cent cloudiness in the summer and 50 per cent in the winter. Clear days, which are infrequent, average 0 to 1,000 feet

ceiling about 50 per cent of the time. Adak also has frequent wind velocities in excess of 100 miles per hour. These hurricane velocities are most frequent from October to March. Like the remainder of the Aleutian Chain, Adak has none of the large variations in temperature which occur Stateside. The average January temperature for Adak varies within two degrees of 32 degrees F. and the average July temperature varies from 46 degrees to 52 degrees F. August is the warmest month, when temperatures occasionally reach 75 degrees F. Adak's rainfall averages about 47 inches annually, while the snowfall averages about 71 inches; the snowfall, however, melts quite rapidly due to the high winter temperatures. Adak has no land mammal larger than the fox, but the surrounding waters are homes and feeding grounds for many types of large mammals such as the Northern Fur Seal, the Harbor Seal, the Sea Otter, the Northern Sea Lion, and several species of Whales and Porpoises. The largest land mammal on Adak is the Arctic Fox, which can be observed in the less settled regions of the island. Birds on Adak include the Raven, Finch, Snow Bunting, the Alaskan Long Spur, the Ptarmigan (only game bird on Adak) and the Bald Eagle. Migratory water birds include the Emperor Goose, Eider Duck, and Harlequin Duck. Fishing on Adak is limited because of the lack of large fresh water streams and proper stocking in fresh water ponds. The quantity depends upon the season, but Adak waters normally yield an abundance of Salmon, Trout, and other fish. Shrimp are quite abundant and are easily caught during July, August, September and early October. Alaskan King Crab are also numerous during this season. Silver Salmon and Dolly Varden Trout make up the largest portion of all catches. Adak is also abundant in plant life (miniature size). During the months of July, August, and

September, there are more than 150 different types of flowers that can be seen. During the remainder of the year, the landscape is covered only by Tundra grass or snow. Adak is completely devoid of trees, and there is no native population on the island.

#### D. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Recreational facilities on the Naval Station on Adak are quite varied and extensive, and as mentioned previously in this report, they are available to all Coast Guard personnel. The Fletcher Library, located in the Naval Station's main recreation building, has a collection of approximately 14,000 volumes and subscriptions to newspapers from eight large cities and sixty-three national magazines. Adak also has a movie theater, which has three shows daily. The gymnasium, centrally located, has facilities for basketball, weight lifting, wrestling, boxing smokers, ten lanes of bowling alleys, roller skating rink, swimming pool and a small tennis court. The ski lodge in the area of Mt. Moffett offers fine skiing during the winter. Skis, ski shoes and toboggans are furnished free of charge. For those interested in leather craft, modeling, photography, carpentry or machinery, the Naval Station maintains an extensive hobby shop with instructors and all necessary equipment and supplies. For those interested in the repair of their own automobiles, there is a hobby shop garage which has adequate facilities, tools, and instructors. Hunting and fishing is permitted on Adak except in closed and restricted areas, and Alaskan Hunting Licenses may be obtained from the Station Game Conservation Officer. Along with the aforementioned recreational facilities, Adak has quite an extensive ham radio club and shop, AFRS Radio and Television Stations, and it is on the regular itinerary for all scheduled

USO Show tours.

There is also a wide variety of clubs available for personnel who may be interested in these activities. Among the clubs available for personnel are the Commissioned Officers' Club, Chief Petty Officers' Mess (Open), Enlisted Men's Club, Airmen's Club, Sportsmen's Club, Rifle and Pistol Club, various wives' clubs, Masonic Club, and American Legion.

#### E. FACILITIES FOR DEPENDENTS AND COST OF LIVING

Dependent housing is available on Adak for Coast Guard personnel; it is available for a maximum of one officer, and two enlisted men (Chief Petty Officer and Petty Officer First Class only). The housing waiting list is governed by the Naval Station, and precedence on the waiting list is determined by date of arrival on Adak, only. The approximate length of time on the waiting list for housing is six to eight months for chiefs and first class and three to six months for officers. All dependent housing on Adak is government quarters, and the cost of living allowance permitted to personnel at this time is \$1.35 a day. Permanent housing (two and three bedroom duplexes) are available and houses on Adak contain a washing machine, dryer, electric stove, electric refrigerator, adequate furniture, including rugs, tables, lamps, etc. All recreational facilities mentioned in the earlier part of this report are also available to dependents.

The stores and services on Adak which are available to all Coast Guard and Naval personnel and their dependents include the Navy Exchange and Commissary Store, centrally located in the dependent housing area.

Items and prices in these stores compare favorably with similar stores in the Continental United States. The Navy Exchange also maintains

laundry and dry cleaning services, barber shops, beauty shops, small stores and cobbler, and tailor. The Post Office is open daily and has all the facilities of a post office stateside. Airmail is received from the States on the average of two times weekly. Parcel post is brought to Adak by ship and arrives on Adak on the average of once every six weeks. The Alaskan Communication Service maintains a system which permits long distance telephone calls to be made to or received from the Continental United States. Telegraph facilities are also available. The First National Bank of Anchorage maintains a branch on Adak, and it offers the following services: regular checking accounts, Bank drafts, travelers checks, and the sale and redemption of Series "E" Savings Bonds.

Medical facilities are available to military and dependent personnel on Adak. For dependents there is also a maternity clinic and general medical clinic. Dependents and personnel having optical difficulties are advised to equip themselves with glasses and to make arrangements for replacement before leaving the United States.

Complete dental care is available to military personnel, but dependents are advised that there is a lack of dental facilities from Naval sources and that prior to departure, they should receive dental examinations and have such dental work accomplished as is necessary, because only emergency care is available at this station.

The Naval Station has both a Roman Catholic and Protestant Chaplain assigned, and daily services are held at the Bering Chapel. Sunday School is also held. There are also services available for Christian Scientists and Latter Day Saints.

The average cost of living on Adak varies from about \$150.00 to \$200.00 a month and dependents who are so inclined will find many fine opportunities

to augment their incomes, since there are many types of jobs available to civilian personnel; these job opportunities range from clerical and office work to sales work and work in the laundry and dry cleaning establishments.

F. SHIPMENT AND USE OF PRIVATE AUTOMOBILES ON ADAK

Normally, enlisted men at the Loran Station do not have private vehicles, but for a man with dependents on the island, a private automobile is essential. Generally speaking, old model automobiles are available for sale on the island, but if an automobile is being transported from the States, it should have a good set of tires and be in excellent mechanical condition, in view of the poor driving conditions on Adak. Repair parts are hard to get; snow tires or chains are advisable, and cars should also be made as waterproof as possible, before shipment because of wind driven rains. There are no garages, and all vehicles are constantly outside, exposed to the elements. Automobiles are shipped through the Coast Guard Representative, Pier #91, Seattle, Washington, and they take approximately six weeks for shipment.

G. ADVANTAGES PECULIAR TO LORAN TRANSMITTING STATION, ADAK

It must be remembered that, while the Loran Station is located in close proximity to a United States Naval Station, which offers many distinct, definite advantages that most other Loran Stations do not have, it is quite definitely isolated duty. Proximity to the Naval Station, however, and its facilities which are available to all Coast Guard personnel affords varied means of recreation, better mail service, better means of supply and an opportunity to see and associate with other people. All of these combine to make duty on Adak better than on most other isolated duty stations. In addition to the advantages already mentioned, the medical and dental

facilities available, together with the opportunity for having dependents, limited as it is, offer definite advantages that other Loran Stations are not able to offer. Supply problems on Adak, again because of the Loran Station's proximity to the Naval Station and because of the recently innovated bi-monthly Coast Guard Logistics Flights, are small in comparison to most other isolated duty stations.

There,are, however, a few disadvantages to the Loran Station, Adak; the poor climate, which limits most outdoor activities, and the hunting and fishing, which are poor in comparison to most other stations in Alaska are an example. Winter weather on Adak is normally very bad. In the past, the Loran Station has been snowed in for periods up to ten days at a time. Dismal, dreary weather is normal and tends hamper many activities.