

CAPE SARICHEF INFORMATION BOOKLET
Mid 60's
(This is a transcript of a copy provided by Bernie Holland)

FORWARD

This booklet was put together by the men of Cape Sarichef Loran Station to give you some idea of what to expect and maybe give you some helpful hints in your preparation prior to arrival. It is not to be construed as a directive or instruction but is simply an unofficial information booklet.

The crew here live close together for a full year and see very few people from the world outside. It is necessary for you to realize that the other men here are also separated from their families and friends and life aboard entails the same hardships for everyone. "Peaceful Co-existence" is a requirement.

Though you won't believe it now, the tour will pass rapidly. I can not truthfully say it will pass "before you know it", because if you ask anyone here, he can tell you exactly how many days he has left on the island.

All hands are looking forward to meeting some "new blood", especially the person you will relieve.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD LORAN TRANSMITTING STATION
CAPE SARICHEF, ALASKA

GENERAL INFORMATION
BOOKLET

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Location

Cape Sarichef Loran Transmitting Station is located on the Northwest tip of Unimak Island in the Aleutian Chain, Latitude 55°36.0' North, Longitude 164°55.7' West. Scotch Cap Light Station, a sub-unit of Cape Sarichef, is on the Southwest corner of Unimak, approximately 23 miles overland from Sarichef. Unimak is the first island on the chain. Cape Sarichef is approximately 630 miles Southwest of Anchorage and 480 miles west of Kodiak Island.

B. Climate

The temperature varies from the 50's during warm days in the summer to the 20's during the cold days in the winter. Fog is more common than clear days during the summer days. The winter weather is made more uncomfortable by the prevalent high wind which increases the chill factor and makes 40° feel colder than 20° where there is no wind.

C. Environment

The outstanding colors of the island are black, from the volcanic sand and rock, and brown from the vegetation. There is a few short months during the summer when the grass adds some green. Cape Sarichef Loran Station boasts the only trees on the island. These are small pine trees, transplanted from Kodiak, which manage to stay alive but seem to have no remaining energy to spare for growth. Unimak Island is the largest in the Aleutian Chain, being approximately 75 miles long and 17 to 30 miles wide. Pogromni Volcano, with an elevation of 6568 feet, is the dominating feature of the western part of the island. Approximately 2 miles from the station, setting on top of a 600 feet hill, is an Air Force DEW line site with 24 men and an Air Force Captain as Commander. Relations between the two services are very good with a lot of swapping back and forth of everything from chow to vehicle parts. The crew's quarters at Sarichef are sufficient but not with not much extra room. Two men are usually assigned to a room and that room is their personnel domain. The policy has been to let the crew furnish and decorate their rooms as they please within reason.

D. Buildings

There are presently five buildings in use at Cape Sarichef Loran Station and three at Scotch Cap. Cape Sarichef's buildings are: 1) Main bldg containing the engine room, garage, recreation deck and bar, galley, mess deck, ship's office, CO's quarters and office, crew's berthing, amateur radio room, laundry and storage spaces; 2) Fog bldg. containing Main Light, fog horns and associated equipment, and radio beacon coders and transmitters; 3) Pole bldg. containing DC and wood-working shop, storage space and heated parking space for station vehicle; 4) Loran bldg. containing loran equipment, radio equipment and storage for associated spares and test equipment; 5) Quonset Hut used for storage but due to be surveyed. The buildings at Scotch Cap consist of 1) Main bldg containing garage, engine room, recreation and

mess deck, crew's berthing, galley, radio and beacon room, supervisor's office, laundry room, and storage spaces; 2) Fog bldg, containing Main Light, fog horn and associated machinery; 3) Quonset Hut for storage.

E. Loran

The primary mission of this station is to transmit and maintain synchronization on loran rate 1L3 as a slave station, Adak being the master. The station is equipped for high power and operate type 3 modified.

The billets for ET's are one E7, one E6, one E4, and two E5's. The ETC is also the Executive Officer.

The other electronic equipment on this station and Scotch Cap Light Station include radio beacon transmitters and monitors, MF transceivers, SSB transmitters and receivers, FM portable sets and model 28 teletype equipment.

F. Communications

This station is an emergency backup in communications for the Alaska Loran C Net of which Adak normally has control. If Adak loses teletype or radio communications for any reason, this unit comes up to maintain guard for them and relay traffic for LORSTA Attu, St. Paul, Port Clarence and Sitkinak. There is a billet for one Radioman Second Class at this unit. Loran watch standers normally maintain communications watch after regular working hours. The RM is on call 24 hours a day for emergencies. Most traffic is on teletype provided through microwave facilities from the Air Force site 2 miles away. This teletype connects us directly to the District and to Adak. We have the traffic for Scotch Cap. All traffic for Scotch is handled via voice AM radio. We work SSB to CG Aircraft Logistics flights from CGAS Kodiak every two weeks.

We have a few medicos and an occasional vessel assist via radio. We also provide communications for the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries Research vessels and to US Environmental Science Services Administration (formerly US Coast and Geodetic Survey) ships operating in the area. We guard 2182 and 2678 continuously. Our communications is very subject to atmospheric disturbances which usually occur seasonally.

We have AFRN (Alaskan Forces Radio Network) relayed via our local Air Force site by microwave. This reception is better than local station as it has no static and commercials. There is a speaker in every room supplying music and news and ball games from AFRN. This station has (sic) amateur (sic) radio gear for recreational equipment. The operators, if any, try to run phone patches every Sunday morning to anywhere in the lower 48 so you can talk to your home. If you are a ham operator, bring your key, log book and license and you'll be right at home. Equipment for those interested is as follows: Receiver HQ-170A; Transmitter HT-37 Exciter; HT-41 Linear Amplifier running maximum of 1200 watts SSB and 900 watts CW or AM; Antenna 3 element Thunderbird Tri-band beam by Hygain up about 35 feet on a Hamm-M-Rotor; E.F. Johnson Power meter for SWR and forward power out. QSL cards and stamps are provided by the station and DX is great, we have cards from all over the world. Call sign is KL7CGA.

G. Light Station, Fog Horn and Radio beacon

Cape Sarichef Light, with a luminous range of 23 miles, Scotch Cap Light, with a range of 19 miles, Cape Sarichef and Scotch Cap radio beacons, operating on 290 KC and 300 KC respectively, and Cape Sarichef and Scotch Cap fog horns are major aids to navigation and equally as important as the loran capabilities of this station. During the summer months you will become quite accustomed to the seeming continuous deep bass of this foghorn.

H. Commissary

This station has one cook (CS1) and a messcook is assigned on a rotational basis, to assist him in the galley. A Seaman or Fireman can expect to spend a few months as messcook. Well prepared and appetizing meals are the order of the day. The cook and messcook have no duties on weekends when each man takes advantage of our "open galley" policy and does his own cooking (????????). It is very easy to "put on the pounds" here. We are supplied bi-weekly from Kodiak by CG aircraft but store enough food to eat well for many months. Scotch Cap receives commissary supplies from Sarichef twice a month by a local flight.

I. Engineering

The engineering department personnel allowance is 1 EN1, 2 EN2's, 1 EN3, 4FN's and 1 DC2. Presently one EN2 and two FN's are stationed at Scotch Cap with the remainder at Cape Sarichef.

Electrical power is received from the Air Force site about 2 miles away. The two Fairbanks-Morse 77.6 KW diesel generators, originally installed as main power plant, are used as emergency generators. Hot water for heating, galley and general usage is provided from two oil-fired hot water boilers. Water is received from a dammed wash via pumps at the dam and thence to a 50,000 gallon water tank near the main building. All water piping is buried and valve pits are equipped with heat lamps and pipe heating coils to prevent freezing.

All petroleum products are received annually at Sarichef and Scotch via barge (Mona Lisa project).

The engineers are responsible for the maintenance of the station vehicles which include three trucks, three Thiokol tracked vehicles, two Weasels, a Case Front Loader, a Caterpillar Road Grader, and a D-4 Bull Dozer. Road maintenance between the station and air strip and to Scotch Cap is a time-consuming job also assigned to the engineers.

The Damage Control/Woodworking shop is located in the Pole bldg. (See I-D)

CHAPTER II

PERSONNEL

A. Assignment and Rotation.

As far as assignment goes, IT'S NOT OUR FAULT. So there is nothing we can do about trying to get you out of these orders. The tour of duty is for 365 days, one (1) very small, short, teeny weeny year. (that's not so bad, is it?) Your time will start counting the day you leave Seattle (the jumping off point).

Now let's get to the bright side of the story. On your seventh month up here you will submit a request for R O T A T I O N . On this rotation request you will choose three districts to which you would like to be sent. About two months later Headquarters will inform us what district you have been assigned. If you are a petty officer, you will be able to then request a unit (sorry but non-rated mwn(sic) can't do this, you will be assigned a unit after arriving at your district). The UNIT REQUEST is sent to your new district, and they assign your specific unit. This will be one of the most enjoyable, exasperating, well-thought-out things that you will do while you are here.

The supervisor of Scotch Cap, a BM1, remains for a full year. There is also an EN2, two FN's, and usually a SN assigned. These personnel do not necessarily remain the full year at Scotch Cap but rotate with Cape Sarichef personnel.

The present personnel allowance for Cape Sarichef and sub-unit Scotch Cap is as follows:

BM – 1 E6 (Supervisor Scotch Cap)
CS – 1 E6
DC – 1 E5
EN – 1 E6, 2 E-5's, 1 E4
ET – 1 E7, 1 E6, 1 E5, 2 E4
HM – 1 E6
RM – 1 E5
SN – 3
FN – 4

B. Compensatory Absence

While you are stationed here you will earn 21/2 days of COMPENSATORY LEAVE per month in addition to your regular 21/2 days per month of REGULAR OR ANNUAL LEAVE. This leave will be given upon your rotation.

The following is taken from the Personnel Manual regarding compensatory leave:

“In the case of overseas isolated units it is for the purpose of rehabilitation”

C. Emergency Leave

You will be able to take Emergency Leave from this unit, if necessary. If emergency leave is necessary, it is suggested that your family contact the nearest American Red Cross Chapter or military unit.

A. Medical

There is a Hospital Corpsman attached to this unit. He is supplied with medical material for routine and minor medical emergencies. If a major emergency should occur, an air evacuation will be made from the Coast Guard Air Station at Kodiak. There is a large Naval hospital at Kodiak. Besides having the medical responsibility of the Coast Guard personnel, we also take care of the 25 men attached to the Air Force Dew Line Radar Site.

B. Training and Education.

While you are stationed here you will find that you have a great deal of time on your hands, so this is one of the best places that you will ever be stationed with regards to completing correspondence courses. This unit is no different than a stateside unit. You can take out a training course from either the Coast Guard Institute at Groton or the Navy or an educational course from the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI).

The State of Alaska has set up a small library at this unit and there is also a library at the Air Force site which is under the Air Force Library System.

C. Morale.

The first thing that is going through your mind is "How can they have good morale at Café Sarichef".

Listed below are some things that do help to keep the morale up:

Mail – Twice a week we have a mail plane (Reeve Aleutian Airways) come in from Cold Bay, Alaska which is connected with the mainland and receives mail from Anchorage. When the plane leaves Cold Bay it goes down the Chain and on the next day it comes back up the chain and stops here again. So as you can see we have four planes a week that mail goes out on but only two planes a week that we receive mail from. Air mail stamps are required on all letters. Your address here will be:

JOHN P. DOE
U.S.Coast Guard Loran Station
Cape Sarichef, Alaska 99502

Movies – Twice a month we get a Coast Guard logistics flight from Kodiak which brings in 14 full length movies (now these may not be the newest out, but at least they are movies). Every week the Air Force receives 5 movies (these are much newer than the ones we receive) and we swap movies. So all in all we get around 24 movies every two weeks. Scotch Cap also receives 14 movies approximately twice a month.

Bar – This unit has a very nice, but small bar. The bar is allowed to sell beer and soft drinks only. The charge for beer or soft drinks is 15¢ per can. There will be no liquor broght(sic) aboard the station. The Air Force Site has a bar which sell whiskey and beer. The beer sells for 25¢and the whiskey for 30¢to 40¢depending on the drink.

Amateur Radio – There is an amateur radio station at this unit with the call letters KL7CGA. Through this HAM set we can contact other HAMS in the States and with their help we are able to make phone patches with whoever we might wish to call. See Communications (I-F) for further information.

Exchange – The exchange at this unit can supply you with almost anything that you might need, whether it be toilet articles, under clothes, cigarettes, cigars, film, flash bulbs, ammunition, etc. If there is anything that you might need that the exchange doesn't carry, you can place a special order for the item. The exchange is supplied from the Naval Exchange at Kodiak. The Air Force site also has an exchange which will place a special order for you. Their exchange is supplied from the Air Force Base in Anchorage (Elmendorf).

Mail Order Houses – We have the below listed catalogs from which you can order:

GENERAL

Sears, Roebuck & Co., Seattle, Washington
Spiegel and Co., Chicago, Illinois
Montgomery Ward & Co., Portland, Oregon
John Plain & Co., Chicago, Illinois
Jafco & Co., Seattle, Washington

ELECTRONIC

Lafayette radio, Syosset, N.Y.
Allied Radio, Chicago, Ill.

AUTOMOTIVE & ACCESSORIES

J.C. Whitney & Co., Chicago, Ill.
Warshawsky & Co., Chicago, Ill

SPORTING

Herter's Inc., Waseca, Minn.

D. Recreation.

The recreational facilities at this unit are few but very good. There is plenty of good camping, hiking and hunting (if you have a license) for anyone who likes the outdoors. We have sleeping bags, etc. for overnight hikes during the summer months.

During the summer months there is a considerable amount of inter-service competition between the Air Force and Coast Guard with both indoor and outdoor sports (baseball, volleyball, basketball, etc.).

Listed below are some of our recreational tools and equipment:

Leather working tools
Ammunition reloading equipment
Woodworking shop
Dark room & equipment
Amateur radio equipment
Pool table
Bar

If there is anything that you like to do that is not listed above (painting, stamp collecting, rocks, etc.) don't hesitate to bring along your gear.

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CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPLY

A. General.

The Hospital Corpsman attached takes over the responsibility of the Yeoman and Storekeeper ratings along with his medical duties. This unit holds a complete set of Headquarters and CCGD17 instructions and publications along with the Service Record and Health Record of each of the 25 men stationed at Cape Sarichef and Scotch Cap. It is the responsibility of the HM to handle everything in regards to administration and supply and medical duties of the station.

B. Logistics.

This unit is supplied from the Coast (sic) Guard Air Station, Kodiak, Alaska every two weeks. All items which are ordered by this unit through the Dept. of Defense supply system is sent to the Air Station in Kodiak for shipment here.

If you order something from a mail order house, it is shipped to you direct from the sender via the U.S. mails. This is brought in on Reeve Aleutian Airways twice a week if sent air mail.

C. Pay.

This station receives its pay in the form of Government Checks, which are sent out from Juneau (District Office), and arrive at this unit in time to be passed out on the 1st or 15th. If there is any question about your pay while you are stationed here, we can get it squared away in no time with a phone call to the District.

The station exchange will be able to cash a few of the checks along with the Air Force exchange. If neither can cash your check, you can send it to the Post-master in Cold Bay.

D. Mail.

The mail is transported on REEVE ALEUTIAN AIRWAYS. The mail that is sent from the States goes through the Anchorage Post Office then to Cold Bay for shipment to Cape Sarichef. We get mail twice a week when the plane goes from Cold Bay to Nikolski down the chain. The mail is quite fast, we can receive an Air Mail letter about two to four days after it has been mailed in the lower 48.

Scotch Cap receives their mail twice a month when Sarichef makes a log run.

Heavy parcels are quite expensive to ship by air mail and there is a limit of 70 lbs. by weight and not exceeding 100 inches of length and girth combined. These heavier or larger packages may be sent to our FPO address. They will then come via Seattle by ship to Kodiak and to Sarichef by CG Aircraft from Kodiak. This will take longer as the ship sails for Kodiak every two weeks and the CG logistics flight are scheduled for every other week.

Your seabag or footlocker may be sent ahead to:

USCG SUPPLY DEPOT

Pier 91
Seattle, Washington
M/F

USCG LORSTA, CAPE SARICHEF

It will probably require a month to six weeks for your seabag to arrive here. Anything sent this method should be packed securely in a sturdy container due to the very rough handling enroute.

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CHAPTER IV

ODDS 'N ENDS

A. What to Bring.

1. Clothing

A full seabag is required except for whites, which are not worn in the 17th District. Five sets of dungarees are required in lieu of the normal three. Civilian clothes are permitted and worn after duty hours. Wash and wear is suggested for ease of care. Sweatshirts, levis, sport shirts, scuff pants and loafers are common. Thermal underwear is also highly recommended. Good sturdy leather boots or the equivalent and warm outer clothing are useful for "boon-docking" although the station has sufficient foul weather gear.

2. Appliances.

The station has laundry facilities and irons and ironing boards. Many men have tape recorders and photographs. Radios are not very useful due to distance and interference, but Alaskan Forces Radio Network (AFRN) from Anchorage is piped to each room. Any personnel non-transmitting electrical or electronic equipment may be brought along and used.

3. Firearms.

Personal firearms are permitted and are a popular source of recreation. Personal firearms may be used in lieu of station weapons, if of sufficient caliber, to fulfill requirements of being armed when departing the station (due to wildlife such as bears and wolves). ALL PERSONAL FIREARMS MUST BE CHECKED IN WITH THE COMMANDING OFFICER AND WILL BE KEPT SECURE AND UNDER HIS CONTROL. Unimak Island is a wildlife refuge and hunting is very limited. License fees are quite high until Alaskan residence is established which requires living in Alaska for one year. There are approximately 50 bear licenses per year for Unimak.

4. Cameras & equipment.

Cameras are used extensively by all personnel. The station has a darkroom for those who enjoy developing and printing their own film. Film is available through the exchange. Most of the men send their film to the lower 48 to be processed.

B. Plan of the Day.

0630	Cooks reveille
0700	Reveille
0700-0740	Breakfast
0800	Colors, Turn to
0930-0945	Coffee Break

1100	Secure station work
1130	Lunch
1215	Quarters, Training or Drills, Turn to
1430-1445	Coffee Break
1600	Secure station work
1630	Supper
1700	Bar open
1800	Movie call
2200	Taps

Sunset – Evening colors

Note: Maps are not included due to size.

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