



SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 1977

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

HECTIC YEAR FOR +NICK OF TIME SQUADRON+

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HELICOPTERS OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG AUXILIARY AIR FORCE — AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN TO SOME AS THE +NICK OF TIME SQUADRON+ — HAD A HECTIC 1976 WHEN THEY RESPONDED TO 97 EMERGENCY CALLS IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING NORMAL FLYING SERVICES FOR OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

A TOTAL OF 89 PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM VARIOUS AILMENTS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE HOSPITAL ATTENTION WERE AIRLIFTED TO HOSPITAL FROM REMOTE AREAS AND OUTLYING ISLANDS. FOUR SEARCH AND RESCUE FLIGHTS TO LOOK FOR LOST OR INJURED PICNICKERS WERE ALSO CARRIED OUT.

ON TWO OCCASIONS DURING THE YEAR — JULY 24 AND AUGUST 21 — THE RHKAAF RESPONDED TO THREE CALLS FOR MERCY FLIGHTS EACH DAY, THE HIGHEST NUMBER FOR A DAY IN THE YEAR.

FLT. LT. JOHN SHAWCROSS, ADJUTANT OF THE UNIT, SAID TODAY THAT THE TIME ELEMENT WAS CRUCIAL IN SAVING THE LIFE OF ONE SUFFERING FROM ACUTE ILLNESS OR SERIOUS INJURY IN A PLACE FAR AWAY FROM HOSPITAL.

+DURING WORKING HOURS WHEN ALL OUR PERMANENT STAFF PILOTS AND CREWMEN ARE AT THE BASE, WE CAN GET A HELICOPTER AIRBORNE FIVE MINUTES AFTER RECEIVING A CALL FOR HELP,+ HE SAID. +THE HELICOPTER CAN ARRIVE AT ANY REGULAR LANDING SITE THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY 20 MINUTES AFTER TAKE OFF AND THE PATIENT CAN USUALLY BE LANDED IN HOSPITAL SOME 40 OR 50 MINUTES AFTER THE CALL FOR HELP WAS FIRST MADE.+

+OUR RESPONSE TIME AT NIGHT IS SLOWER BECAUSE OUR VOLUNTEER PILOTS AND CREWMEN STAND BY AT HOME, BUT WE ARE STILL CONFIDENT OF GETTING ANY PATIENT FROM ANY AREA INTO HOSPITAL AT MOST ONE HOUR AND 15 MINUTES AFTER THE CALL FOR HELP WAS MADE, BUT USUALLY THIS TIME AVERAGES OUT TO BE 50 MINUTES OR SO,+ HE SAID.

DURING THE YEAR, A BASE RADIO STATION WAS ESTABLISHED AT KAI TAK AND A REPEATER STATION AT TAI MO SHAN SO THAT ALL AIRCRAFT OF THE UNIT CAN REMAIN IN CONTACT WITH THE OPERATIONS ROOM AT ALL TIMES. ALL THE UNIT'S THREE ALOUETTE HELICOPTERS WERE ALSO RE-EQUIPPED WITH MODERN RADIO AND NAVIGATIONAL AIDS.

+ALL THESE HAVE FURTHER INCREASED OUR EFFICIENCY ESPECIALLY BECAUSE AIRBORNE AIRCRAFT CAN BE QUICKLY CALLED BACK OR DIVERTED TO WHERE HELP IS NEEDED,+ FLT. LT. SHAWCROSS SAID.

/+THIS NEW

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+THIS NEW ROLE OF THE ISLANDER SEEMS TO BE HAVING A STRONG DETERRENT EFFECT, ESPECIALLY SINCE SUCCESSFUL SIGHTINGS IN 1975 HAD FORCED TWO SUSPECTED THAI TRAWLERS TO TURN BACK,+ FLT. LT. SHAWCROSS SAID.

+WE ARE STILL BEING CALLED IN BY THE POLICE REGULARLY TO CARRY OUT SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS, BUT THE NUMBER OF SUCH FLIGHTS CARRIED OUT DURING THE PAST YEAR WAS MUCH LESS THAN BEFORE,+ HE SAID. +NO SUCH TRAWLERS WERE SPOTTED DURING THE YEAR.+

THE UNIT'S FIFTH AIRCRAFT, THE BEEHCRAFT MUSKETEER, CONTINUED TO PROVIDE TRAINING FACILITIES FOR AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS OF THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT FOR PRIVATE PILOT LICENCES.

+THESE LICENCES,+ FLT. LT. SHAWCROSS WENT ON, +MUST BE RENEWED REGULARLY AND IT INVOLVES RIGID TESTING OF FLYING PROCEDURES. THE MUSKETEER ALSO HELPS FULFIL THIS COMMITMENT.+

+IN ADDITION, THE ISLANDER AIRCRAFT WAS USED FOR SHORT RANGE SEARCHES, OBSERVATION FLIGHTS AND THE PRELIMINARY TESTING OF NAVIGATIONAL AID EQUIPMENT SUCH AS THE NEWLY INSTALLED SECONDARY SURVEILLANCE RADAR OF THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT,+ HE SAID.

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PRISONS GIRLS DRESS IN STYLE

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+ALL THE NICE GIRLS LOVE A UNIFORM+, -- OR SO THE SAYING GOES. WELL IT'S CERTAINLY TRUE OF SOME OF FEMALE SECRETARIAL AND CLERICAL STAFF OF THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT.

ENVIIOUS OF THEIR UNIFORMED COLLEAGUES IN THE SERVICE, THE GIRLS, ALL AT THE DEPARTMENT'S HEADQUARTERS IN CENTRAL, REQUESTED A UNIFORM OF THEIR OWN. HOWEVER, UNDER CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE.

ANXIOUS TO GET THAT TAILORED-LOOK, THE GIRLS - LED BY MISS VERONCICA NG, SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS, MR. T.G. GARNER - GOT TOGETHER AND DESIGNED THEIR OWN COSTUME. A BOUTIQUE TAILOR DID THE REST AND THE GIRLS THEMSELVES PAID FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF DRESSING UNIFORMLY.

PRESENTLY 14 OF THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT'S FEMALE OFFICE STAFF CAN BE SEEN AT THEIR DESKS IN NEAT, WELL-CUT AND ALMOST IDENTICAL COSTUMES, DARK-BLUE DRESS AND RED JUMPER FOR WINTER AND A LIGHT-BLUE BLOUSE IN SUMMER. THE DEPARTMENT PRESENTED EACH GIRL WITH A SMALL LABEL-PIN TO COMPLETE THE EFFECT.

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COMPUTERISED FLIGHT INFORMATION DISPLAY
SYSTEM NOW IN FULL OPERATION AT KAI TAK
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A COMPUTERISED FLIGHT INFORMATION DISPLAY SYSTEM (FIDS) HAS COME INTO OPERATION AT THE HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, MARKING YET ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT TO FACILITIES FOR TRAVELLERS AT KAI TAK.

THE SOPHISTICATED SYSTEM, COSTING MORE THAN \$3 MILLION, IS CAPABLE OF PROVIDING UP-TO-THE-MOMENT INFORMATION CONCERNING FLIGHT MOVEMENTS ON A NETWORK OF FULLY-AUTOMATED DISPLAY BOARDS AND TV MONITORS.

ANNOUNCING THE INTRODUCTION OF FIDS, THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, MR. ROY DOWNING, SAID THE PURPOSE WAS TO PROVIDE EXPEDITIOUSLY AND ACCURATELY VISUAL FLIGHT INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE TO PASSENGERS AND OTHER USERS OF THE AIRPORT.

+THE FIDS IS AN ESSENTIAL FEATURE OF THE AIRPORT TERMINAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, MADE NECESSARY BY THE VERY LARGE AND CONSTANTLY INCREASING NUMBER OF PASSENGERS MAKING USE OF THE TERMINAL BUILDING EACH YEAR,+ HE SAID.

+IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING INFORMATION, THE SYSTEM IS NECESSARY,+ HE SAID, +TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO PASSENGERS TO ENABLE THEM TO MOVE THROUGH THE AIRPORT AREA IN THE SHORTEST TIME POSSIBLE.+

BASICALLY, ALL INFORMATION CONCERNING INCOMING OR OUTGOING FLIGHTS IS FED INTO A COMPUTER, PROCESSED AND RELAYED AS REQUIRED TO A NUMBER OF STRATEGICALLY POSITIONED DISPLAY FLAPBOARDS AND TV MONITORS.

FLIGHT SCHEDULES FOR A WHOLE SEASON CAN BE STORED IN THE COMPUTER MEMORY BANK AND DISPLAYED AS AND WHEN REQUIRED. ALL DETAILS CAN BE READILY UPDATED, AND THE COMPUTER WILL LATER BE PROGRAMMED TO ERASE INFORMATION AUTOMATICALLY AS FLIGHTS ARRIVE AND DEPART.

ITEMS DISPLAYED INCLUDE AIRLINE LOGO, FLIGHT NUMBER, PREVIOUS STOP, NEXT DESTINATION, ESTIMATED AND ACTUAL TIME OF ARRIVAL OR DEPARTURE, FLIGHT STATUS SUCH AS BOARDING, DELAYS OR DIVERSIONS AND THE REASONS.

DETAILS OF UP TO 40 FLIGHTS CAN BE DISPLAYED SIMULTANEOUSLY ON A SET OF FLAPBOARDS AND 36 ON TV MONITORS.

AT PRESENT FOUR LARGE SETS OF FLAPBOARDS ARE LOCATED AT THE DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL LEVELS, AND ONE SMALL FLAPBOARD IS INSTALLED OVER EACH OF THE THREE EXISTING BAGGAGE DISTRIBUTORS IN THE CUSTOMS AREA.

/THE SENSE

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THE SENSE OF DUTY AND DEDICATION OF THESE +FLYING AMBULANCEMEN+ HAVE NOT GONE UNNOTICED. FLT. LT. B.C. SPIKINS, WHO WAS HELICOPTER INSTRUCTOR OF THE UNIT ON LOAN FROM THE ROYAL AIR FORCE BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1973 AND MID 1976, WAS AWARDED THE QUEEN'S COMMENDATION FOR VALUABLE SERVICE IN THE AIR (Q.C.V.S.A.) IN THE NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST.

+IN ADDITION TO HIS INSTRUCTING ROLE, HE VOLUNTARILY TOOK PART IN THE UNIT'S EMERGENCY DUTIES AND CARRIED OUT 16 NIGHT AND 54 DAY TIME CASUALTY EVACUATIONS DURING HIS TWO-AND-A-HALF-YEAR TOUR, SEVERAL OF WHICH INVOLVED FLYING SKILLS OF THE VERY HIGHEST ORDER,+ FLT. LT. SHAWCROSS SAID.

APART FROM THE MORE WELL-KNOWN MERCY FLIGHTS, THE UNIT'S FLEET OF THREE HELICOPTERS WERE ALSO ENGAGED IN A HOST OF ROUTINE FLYING SERVICES FOR OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

THESE INCLUDED THE +FLYING DOCTOR+ AND +FLYING DENTIST+ SERVICES TO OUTLYING VILLAGE COMMUNITIES= TRAFFIC SURVEYS, COMMUNICATIONS, SURVEILLANCE OF SUSPECTED ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS NARCOTICS SMUGGLING, AND CARRYING VISITING DIGNITARIES.

FLT. LT. SHAWCROSS SAID ONE UNUSUAL TASK CARRIED OUT LAST YEAR WAS HELPING WITH THE INSTALLATION OF TRANSMISSION AERIALS ON REMOTE HILL TOPS FOR THE POLICE BEAT RADIO SCHEME.

+THE JOB INVOLVED FLYING BUCKETS OF READY MIXED CONCRETE, EACH WEIGHING 1,000 POUNDS, TO THE HILL TOPS OF MOUNT PARKER, MOUNT DAVIS, BRICK HILL, AND GOLDEN HILL FOR BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR THE AERIALS.

+MORE THAN 260 TONS OF MIXED CONCRETE WERE AIRLIFTED DURING THE OPERATION WHICH TOOK SOME 50 HOURS' FLYING TIME,+ HE SAID.

APART FROM THE HELICOPTERS, THE UNIT'S FIXED WING AIRCRAFT -- THE ISLANDER AND THE MUSKETEER -- ALSO CONTINUED TO PROVIDE VALUABLE SERVICES.

DURING THE YEAR, THE TWIN-ENGINED ISLANDER, EQUIPPED WITH SOPHISTICATED AERIAL SURVEY CAMERA, HELPED THE P.W.D. UPDATE ALL EXISTING MAPS AND PLANS, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE RAPIDLY DEVELOPING AREAS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES. PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN FROM THE ISLANDER ARE USED FOR VOLUMETRIC ANALYSIS IN THE MANY PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS INVOLVING EARTH MOVING AND RECLAMATION.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE ISLANDER IS TO CARRY OUT LONG RANGE SEARCH AND RESCUE FLIGHTS FOR DISTRESSED VESSELS AND SURVIVORS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA. EIGHT SUCH FLIGHTS WERE CARRIED OUT DURING THE YEAR.

CO-OPERATION WITH THE POLICE NARCOTICS BUREAU TO SHADOW TRAWLERS SUSPECTED TO BE ENGAGED IN DRUG SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES ALSO CONTINUED.

/IN ADDITION,

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IN ADDITION, MORE THAN 40 MONITORS ARE PLACED IN VARIOUS POSITIONS INCLUDING THE RESTAURANT AND BAR AREAS FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF ALL USERS OF THE AIRPORT.

THE DISPLAY IS SELECTIVE SO THAT ONLY CERTAIN INFORMATION REQUIRED BY PASSENGERS, WELL-WISHERS OR STAFF IN A PARTICULAR PART OF THE AIRPORT IS SHOWN. FOR EXAMPLE, THE BAGGAGE RECLAIM AREA FLAPBOARD WILL IDENTIFY FOR ARRIVING PASSENGERS THE PARTICULAR CONVEYOR BELT FROM WHICH THEY CAN RECLAIM THEIR LUGGAGE.

THE FIDS IS FURTHER COMPLEMENTED BY ILLUMINATED DIRECTIONAL GUIDANCE SIGNS WHICH SERVE TO INDICATE THE CORRECT ROUTE FOR EITHER DEPARTING OR ARRIVING PASSENGERS TO FOLLOW.

THE SIGNS SHOW THE PASSENGERS THEIR APPROPRIATE DESTINATION - BE IT AIRCRAFT, TRANSIT LOUNGE, CUSTOMS, IMMIGRATION OR BAGGAGE RECLAIM AREA.

MR. DOWNING SAID THAT THE FIDS HAD BEEN ON TRIAL FOR SOME CONSIDERABLE TIME TO ENSURE PERFECTION OF THE SYSTEM BEFORE BEING BROUGHT INTO OPERATIONAL USE.

HE DESCRIBED THE OLD FLIGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM, WHEN COMPARED WITH FIDS, AS +QUITE INADEQUATE TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF A MODERN AND VERY BUSY INTERNATIONAL AIR-TERMINAL+.

IN THE PAST, AMENDMENTS TO FLIGHT INFORMATION HAD TO BE SET BY HAND AND PUT IN PLACE FOR SCREENING BEFORE THEY COULD BE RELAYED TO THE TV MONITORS. NUMEROUS TELEPHONE CALLS WERE NECESSARY TO ALERT THE VARIOUS AIRCRAFT HANDLING AGENCIES OF FLIGHT DETAILS.

+THERE WAS ONLY ONE FLIGHT DISPLAY BOARD IN THE ARRIVAL HALL AND ANOTHER ONE AT THE DEPARTURE LEVEL, BOTH OF WHICH HAD TO BE ATTENDED AND REVISED MANUALLY BY AIRPORT STAFF. IN ORDER TO UPDATE THE FLIGHT MOVEMENTS ON THE BOARDS, THE STAFF HAD TO TELEPHONE THE INFORMATION CENTRE FOR DETAILS WITH CONSEQUENT RISK OF DELAY,+ HE SAID.

UNDER THE NEW SYSTEM, MR. DOWNING SAID THE FIDS OPERATORS ARE REQUIRED TO FEED LATEST INFORMATION PROGRESSIVELY INTO THE COMPUTER. +THIS IS DONE BY TYPING ON A KEYBOARD WHICH IMMEDIATELY ACTIVATES THE FLAPBOARDS TO CORRECT OR UPDATE THE INFORMATION SHOWN ON THE TV SCREENS.+

BEFORE IMPLEMENTING THE FIDS PROPOSAL, TWO OFFICERS OF THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT HAD VISITED LONDON, PARIS, WASHINGTON, NEW YORK AND HONOLULU TO STUDY THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AT THESE AIRPORTS. AFTER CAREFUL STUDY, THEY THEN DREW UP FINAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR A SYSTEM MOST SUITABLE FOR HONG KONG'S PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS.

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REGISTRATION TEAM TO OPERATE AT CHEUNG CHAU
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A TEAM FROM THE REGISTRATION OF PERSONS DEPARTMENT WILL CONDUCT REGISTRATIONS AT CHEUNG CHAU RURAL COMMITTEE FOR RESIDENTS AND PERSONS LIVING NEARBY FOR FIVE DAYS FROM JANUARY 31 (MONDAY).

THE VISIT IS TO ENABLE PARENTS AND GUARDIANS TO REGISTER THEIR CHILDREN OR WARDS OF 11 YEARS OF AGE FOR JUVENILE IDENTITY CARDS AND HOLDERS OF JUVENILE IDENTITY CARDS TO REGISTER FOR ADULT IDENTITY CARDS ON REACHING 18 YEARS OF AGE.

REGISTRATIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED BETWEEN 9.30 A.M. AND 4.30 P.M. DAILY.

ALL PERSONS LIVING IN THIS AREA ARE REMINDED OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO REGISTER THEMSELVES AND THEIR CHILDREN FOR IDENTITY CARDS. THEY SHOULD REPORT CHANGES OF EMPLOYMENT OR RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES, MARITAL STATUS, OR ANY OTHER PARTICULARS WHICH HAVE CHANGED SINCE REGISTERING FOR THEIR IDENTITY CARDS.

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