TOP SECRET [redacted]

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

JCSM-204-67

17 APR 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: MACV PRACTICE NINE Air-Supported Anti-Infiltration Plan [redacted]

1. (S) Reference is made to:

a. CM-2042-67, dated 7 January 1967, subject: "Plan for Increased Anti-Infiltration Capability for SEAsia (S)."

b. A memorandum by the Director, Defense Communications Planning Group, dated 22 December 1966, subject: "Plan for Increased Anti-Infiltration Capability for SEAsia (S)."

c. CINCPAC message to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 030515Z April 1967, subject as above, JCS IN 17619.

2. [redacted] In consonance with references 1a and 1b, COMUSMACV has prepared and CINCPAC has forwarded the second of the two plans for increasing the interdiction of infiltration into South Vietnam. This plan is forwarded as Appendix B hereto. The comments of CINCPAC are provided in reference 1c.

3. [redacted] The Joint Chiefs of Staff have reviewed and concur in CINCPAC's comment that any increase in efforts to inhibit and interdict infiltration should involve intensifying current programs as well as combining with them in an orderly manner new programs as their effectiveness permits. It is noted that the air delivered antipersonnel portion of the system is to be employed initially on an operational test basis. If evaluation determines its performance to be effective, the full operational capability could be exploited and extended as required.

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4. (TS) It should be noted that the 11 March MACV Plan does not provide force or material requirements or final concept of operations for western Quang Tri Province. MACV is being queried further in this regard.

5. (S) The following assumptions are critical to the implementation of this plan:

a. All of the component and subsystem development now underway will proceed on schedule without any critical delays.

b. The Governments of South Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand will approve of the concept and its associated risks of danger to friendly forces and civilians.

c. Authorization will be given to conduct PRAIRIE FIRE operations in the PRACTICE NINE area and to base and operate from Thailand as well as from South Vietnam.

d. The Government of Thailand will agree to expansion of air base facilities at Nam Phong, Nakhon Phanom, and Ubon as well as to construction of additional Army logistic support facilities at various locations.

e. To meet an initial operational capability (IOC) date of 1 November 1967 funding authorization and political clearances for construction and communications expansion can be obtained immediately.

6. (TS) The Joint Chiefs of Staff note the estimated aircraft combat attrition discussed by CINCPAC in reference 1c. The continuous low altitude missions envisioned in the plan for delivery of first generation munitions and sensors by SP-2 and A-1 aircraft probably would result in losses of aircraft and personnel of such magnitude that the operation would have to be discontinued.

7. (TS) Many of the risks and problems associated with the plan are intensified by the urgent schedule demanded by the 1 November 1967 IOC date. A more flexible schedule would permit a more deliberate pace with a higher degree of effectiveness and lower risk of aircraft and personnel loss. Moreover, cost savings would undoubtedly accrue if the F-4 aircraft capability (expected to be available March - April 1968) were used in lieu of the SP-2 and A-1 aircraft.

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8. ([redacted]) The additive resources required to execute this plan are summarized below. These resources do not include those to be diverted from on-going programs. A detailed breakout of these requirements and Service capability is shown in Appendix A.

a. Personnel

(1) 794 -- US Army

(2) 331 -- US Navy

(3) 4,319 -- US Air Force

b. Aircraft

(1) 47 -- Fixed Wing

(2) 24 -- Helicopters

9. ([redacted]) Funding requirements to support the MACV Plan include:

a. Construction costs:

(1) Nam Phong -- $15.2 million (excludes $1.8 million on base communications) (BOD) - 1 Oct 67).

(2) Nakhon Phanom -- $2.6 million (BOD - 1 Aug 67).

(3) Ubon -- $3.3 million (BOD - 1 Mar 68).

(4) Army logistic support facilities -- $1.2 million.

b. Special Operations costs:

Additional funds in the amount of $2,519,300 will be required in the PRAIRIE FIRE account administered by the Department of the Navy for the initial one year period.

c. Additive forces costs:

Required increase in FY 1968 funding as well as associated strength increases will be considered separately by the Joint Chiefs of Staff based on additive forces approved.

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10. (TS) The Joint Chiefs of Staff have become increasingly concerned over the availability of funding to support PRACTICE NINE requirements. Shortfalls over and above funds provided in the FY 1967S and FY 1968 budgets are already apparent. Moreover, costs of munitions and sensors can be expected to increase and additional PRACTICE NINE related requirements for which funding has not been made available will undoubtedly arise. The impact of this problem on Service-funded programs is expected to be serious.

11. (TS) The Joint Chiefs of Staff conclude that:

a. The MACV PRACTICE NINE Air-Supported Anti-Infiltration Plan is based on assumptions that are too optimistic to ensure a useful operational capability by 1 November 1967.

b. The proposal to base all of the pertinent aircraft in Thailand is highly advantageous, since such basing avoids further saturation of air bases in South Vietnam. Moreover, the additional construction cost would be offset by savings in operational funds.

c. The forces required should be additive to those authorized in Program 4, rather than diverted from programmed forces; otherwise, degradation of essential on-going operations and programs would result.

d. Execution of the plan will pose political and military problems for the Governments of Laos and Thailand.

12. (TS) Therefore, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that:

a. Execution of the MACV PRACTICE NINE Air-Supported Anti-Infiltration Plan be delayed until approximately 1 April 1968 when the capabilities of equipment now under development will have been more fully proven and the inherent risks in the program lowered.

b. Immediate representation to the Department of State be made to commence negotiations with the GVN, RLG, and RTG for the approvals needed for PRACTICE NINE construction and operational concepts.

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c. State Department concurrence be sought in the required expansion in area and scope for PRAIRIE FIRE operations.

d. The required forces be approved for planning as additive to Program 4.

e. The required funds be designated and allocated immediately.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

SIGNED
EARLE G. WHEELER
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachments

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APPENDIX A

ADDITIVE FORCE REQUIREMENTS

UNIT	TOE	PERSONNEL	LOCATION	DATE REQUIRED	SERVICE CAPABILITY[2]	REMARKS
USA						
TC TRK CO. Medium	55-18G	183	Thailand	Aug 67	Aug 67	
CS CO Lt Maint (DS)	29-207F[1]	154	"	-	Mar 68	May deploy short some items of equipment.
TC Det Trailer Trans TM GF	55-500R[1]	16	"	-	Nov 68	
TC Det Trailer Trans TM GF	55-500R[1]	16	"	-	Nov 67	
TC Det Mvmt Control TM LD	55-500R[1]	5	"	-	Nov 67	
TC Det Mvmt Control TM LD	55-500R[1]	5	"	-	Nov 67	
TC Plat Med Trk Refrig (Aug)	55-18F[1]	40	"	-	Jan 68	
SOG Augmentation (Prairie Fire)		205	"	-	Unk	A substantial amount of the radio equipment will have to be diverted from production now programmed against other RVN requirements.
Aerial Wpns Co (-) (12 UH-1Cs - Armed)		170	"	Oct 67	Apr 68[3]	Strength subject to refinement; includes maintenance personnel.

[1]Required to Spt Increase of USAF Personnel in Thailand.

[2]Closure date in Country.

[3]Can be provided in October 1967 by slipping Program #4 requirements or at anytime by using assets in RVN.

ADDITIVE FORCE REQUIREMENTS

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	UNIT	PERSONNEL	LOCATION	DATE REQUIRED	SERVICE CAPABILITY	REMARKS
USN	SP-2 Sq (8 A/C)	331	Nam Phong	1 Oct 67	1 Oct 67	

ADDITIVE FORCE REQUIREMENTS

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UNIT	PERSONNEL	LOCATION	DATE REQUIRED	SERVICE CAPABILITY	REMARKS
USAF					
EC-121 Wing (21 A/C)	1427	Nam Phong	Oct 67	Available	
Base Operating Support Units	1009	Nam Phong	Oct 67	Available	Required for support of Navy SP2 Squadron and AF EC-121 Wing.
Various Support Units	390	Nam Phong	Oct 67	Available	Required for support of Navy SP2 Squadron and AF EC-121 Wing.
MSQ-77	34	Nakhon Phanom	Oct 67	Available	Recurring TDY from CONUS.
Infiltration Surveillance Center	474	Nakhon Phanom	Oct 67	Available	Personnel requirements may be adjusted upon completion of ISC testing.
Base Operating Support Augmentation	142	Nakhon Phanom	Oct 67	Available	
1 Helicopter Squadron (12 CH-3C)	236	Nakhon Phanom	Oct 67	Note 1	Personnel requirement includes 36 BOS.
1 TFS (18 F-4s)	607	Ubon	Feb 68	Available	Availability does not consider CINCPAC/MACV CY 68 additive force requirement.

NOTE 1: Two CH-3 available per month from new production Jul-Oct 67. These 8 aircraft could be diverted from 407L system; additional funds and procurement authorization required to offset the diversion. Balance of 4 aircraft available by diversion of in-country resources or by new production in CY 68. A significant proportion of helicopter crews would be SEAsia returnees.

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