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U. S. NAVAL AIR FACILITY
HONOLULU, T.H.
NAVY NUMBER 29

Serial: 1487

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From: Commanding Officer
To : Chief of Naval Operations
Aviation History Unit OP-519B.

Subj: Supplemental Historical Report, submission of.

Refs: (a) Aviation Circular Ltr. No. 22-46, OP-S19-HMD, Serial
16-P-519 of 8 February 1946.
(b) Manual for Historical Officers, NAV AER 00-25Q-26.
(c) "Station History of U.S. NAS HONO.", Serial 00191,
dated 1 August 1945.

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), Enclosure 1
is forwarded herewith.

A. C. Perkins
A. C. PERKINS

Encl:

1. Supplemental Historical Report for NAF NAVY #29 covering
period from 2 Sept. 1945 until 1 July 1946.

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7/13/46 L.R.P.*

SUPPLEMENTAL HISTORICAL REPORT
FOR NAF NAVY #29 COVERING PERIOD
FROM 2 SEPT 1945 UNTIL JULY 1946.

RESTRICTED

Encl. 1

U. S. NAVAL AIR FACILITY, HONOLULU, T. H.

HISTORY

(PERIOD FROM 2 SEPT. 1945 UNTIL 1 JULY 1946.)

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1. SUMMARY OF ORIGIN AND MISSION OF NAF HONOLULU T.H.

The establishment of the Naval Air Station, Keehi Lagoon, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii was approved by the Secretary of the Navy on 10 June 1943.¹ The station was to serve as a terminal for NATS and Pan American Airways. The initial operation of both land and sea plane was planned for 1 December 1943. Full scale operation commenced on about 1 April 1944.

Secretary of the Navy Knox re-designated the station as "United States Naval Air Station, Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii" on 26 December 1943.² The station was commissioned on 1 January 1944 with the primary mission of maintaining and operating a base for Naval Air Transport Units, Pacific Wing.

In carrying out this mission throughout the war the Naval Air Station, Honolulu provided facilities for the efficient operation of NATS squadrons: VR-10, VRE-1, VR-13, VR-11, VR-5, VEJ-1, and VR-2. By January of 1944, from the stand-point of operations and on-schedule flights, NATS Pac began to have the appearance of an air line and United States Naval Air Station, Honolulu was on its way to becoming the Pacific center of NATS operations.

¹ Chief of BuAer End. Secret, Ser 00410 to VCNO of 15 May 1943 on Com 14 ltr. to BuAer Secret, Ser 00157 of 23 April 1943. (14ND Classified files.)

² See Nav Circ ltr. Ser 266113 of 26 Dec. 1943.

2. SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN FUNCTION AND SIZE SINCE SUBMISSION OF REFC.

The change in the size of operations from NAS Honolulu since V-j day may be seen by a comparison of NATS Pac and Utility Flight Unit peak war time loads and present day loads. The peak load of passengers, mail and cargo carried in a month by NATS was 22,000 passengers as compared with a monthly load of 7,000 in February 1946 and approximately 13,000 for the month of May, 1946. The peak war time passenger load for the Utility Flight Unit during any month was 6,321 passengers, as compared with 2,600 carried during the month of February 1946 and 2,100 during May, 1946.

NATS Pac peak mail load was 3,190,000 pounds carried in a month. The mail load for the month of May was 1,300,000 pounds. U-F-U carried a peak mail load of 282,000 pounds in one month, 41,000 pounds during February, and 46,980 during May 1946.

NATS Pac had a peak cargo load of 4,000,000 pounds in one month as compared with 1,140,000 pounds during May 1946. U-F-U cargo figures shrunk from 770,000 pounds during their peak month to 57,000 pounds during February and climbed to 120,000 pounds carried during May 1946.

The personnel-on-board figures have shrunk from 149 NAS officers aboard on V-j day to 50 officers aboard today. There were 1582 NATS Pac officers aboard on V-j day as compared with approximately 500 aboard today. There were 1408 Naval Air Facility men and 6945 NATS

enlisted men aboard on V-j day as compared with 440 NAF men and 1530 NATS men aboard today. Due to demobilization and post war operations the number of Naval Air Station personnel will drop monthly until a proposed post war NAS allowance of 232 enlisted men and 26 officers is reached.

Several Army units, including the 19th Troop Carrier Squadron, the 1522nd Advanced Base Unit of ATC and the 15th Air Service Squadron, operated from Naval Air Station, Honolulu throughout the war. At the present time, the army uses the field for B-29 landings only. All other army units have left the field.

The Naval Air Station provides, operates and maintains the facilities for the Air Sea Rescue Task Unit 97.7.1. This squadron consists of three planes equipped for rescue work, and one boat. Since V-j day this unit has been reduced from six pilots to two pilots, necessitating the reduction of hours of service to daylight hours only. The ASR boat continues to be manned and on call twenty-four hours per day. The future of this service is undetermined but some other activity may take over the Task Unit in the near future because of the reduced personnel on board.

Other detached units operating from this base throughout the war include the Naval Overseas Air Cargo Terminal, Officer Messenger Mail Center, and the Air Mail Center. Since V-j day the Air Mail Center has been decommissioned as a post office and now serves as a trans-

shipment center formerly located in the Navy Yard and now performs all Officer Messenger Mail Service for the island of Oahu.

The work loads carried by all departments since V-j day have decreased with the exception of the Supply and Accounting Departments. The work undertaken by this department has increased. On 1 December 1945, accountability for "Appropriation, Purchases, Accounts" stores was resumed necessitating an expansion in the activity of this department. Further expansion of accountability for Naval Stock Account stores on 1 January 1946. The Supply Department in the month of March 1946 absorbed the Naval Overseas Air Cargo Terminal. This activity handles in excess of one million pounds of air cargo (mail) per month. An additional burden to the operation of the Supply Department was occasioned by the Chief of Naval Operations directive turning over the supply function of the NATS squadrons to the station Supply Department. The station also became a major supply point for parts peculiar to aircraft operated by the Naval Air Transport Service and other neighboring stations. For example: The supply department here furnishes R5D spare parts for the Marine Corps Air Station at Ewa. Despite the increased work load of the department, the personnel has decreased, as is true of all departments and all other stations.

The Disbursing Department has also expanded operations in the last few months. Approximately 2,500 military accounts and 300 civilian accounts were carried on V-j day. On 31 January 1946 the

the Disbursing Office at this station assumed the disbursing function for VR-12 and NAS Hilo. During February and March the accounts for Naval Air Stations Johnston Island and Palmyra were taken over. At the present time 3994 military accounts and 500 civilian accounts are handled and over \$559,731.56 is expended monthly and approximately \$51,060.53 public vouchers are paid per month.

3. REDESIGNATION OF NAS HONOLULU.

On 25 March 1946 Naval Air Station, Honolulu was redesignated U. S. Naval Air Facility, Honolulu by the Navy Department.⁴ The mission of the base, the support of Naval Air Transport Service, remains unchanged except that operations are to be conducted on a reduced scale. The future of the station as far as the territory of Hawaii is concerned is also being decided at the present time. The Navy will retain only a fraction of the land presently occupied, and the territory will take back the rest of the area as well as the actual control of the field. The territory air show held at the field on 23 June 1946 represented the initial major civil air function at this field since the resumption of civil flying after the war.

4. TRANSFERS OF COMMAND SINCE SUBMISSION OF REF. C.

Captain D. S. Ingalls, USNR commissioned the station on 26 December 1943 and was relieved to inactive duty on 8 October 1945. Commander W. H. Gardner, USNR assumed command of the station on

⁴Navy Department Circular Letter 46-616, OP 24B-pd, Serial 673 P24, 25 March 1946.

8 October 1945 and served as commanding officer until relieved by Captain A. C. Perkins, USN on 8 December 1945. Captain Perkins is the present commanding officer of the Naval Air Facility, with Commander J. M. Peters, USN serving as Executive Officer.