

From: F/Lt. Almack, O. C. 'E' Flight No. 292 Squadron, Drigh Road.

To: W/Cdr. Starling, O.C. No. 292 Squadron, Jessore.

Date: 23rd August, 1944.

Progress Report Week Ending 19th August, 1944.

Mooring up and unmooring practice, engine starting at sea, manoeuvring on water, effect of wind and tide use of slipway etc. have been practiced this week with every member of our flying crews except F/O's Beale & Barnett who are on leave.

2. Fighter affiliation has also been carried out. No further cooperation with the local A.S.R. boats has been possible as the entire unit is U/S with sickness. Having seen the accommodation these boys have for sleeping, eating and working I don't wonder. They are flooded out most of the time to more than 6" of water. They have not worked since they have been there. They still have no wireless or essential equipment for their boats. Does nobody take any interest in A.S.R. except ourselves.

3. As to our own troubles:-

- (a) No dual sets yet so no pilot training other than 'Air-experience'.
- (b) No wireless so no Navigation Exercises can be carried out or cross countries or WOP training.
- (c) A brand new trouble has developed in that the boost aneroids on our Sea Otters are giving trouble (not experienced before) due it is thought to the climate here. The exact cause has not yet been found but is being investigated. This caused me to break record for take off run, water, 5 ½ miles!

4. Your latest bulletin just received.

While we agree that our operational equipment would presumably be much easier to obtain if we were accommodated under No. 231 Group and incidentally nearer you – How could we do our Sea Training?. The water training of Pilots and crews is of 1st importance to our flight. It is very specialised work and cannot be simulated on inland waters. Also in training, precautions have to be taken in case of accidents. Korangi Creek Seaplane base here is ideal in that they have a slip, plenty of moorings, water that can be very choppy at times, plenty of launches to stand by for us in case of trouble. When Korangi Creek is too rough for training we have the B.O.A.C. Flying boat base in Karachi Harbour and the A.S.R. boats to drop dinghies out to sea with bodies in to be picked up while the A.S.R. boat stands by (just in case). All this would surely be impossible round Bengal especially at this time of year so perhaps we had better stay put until we have done most of our training even if we do not get fully operationally equipped until after we arrive in Bengal. The only other alternative that I can suggest would be to form in Ceylon. In spite of all difficulties here I believe there is no suitable alternative for sometime.

5. In view of above please press for action to be taken for Marconi Jeeps to be fitted since this is the only set that will give us any range at our operational height; Re ASV not only is there no room or weight to spare but if any expert Delhi or otherwise will show me how to operate a ASV on the deck as we are I will give him 3 months pay and stop arguing Is there anyone at Headquarters, Air C.S.E.A. who know how radio equipment actually works in an aircraft!!! If not I will be pleased to demonstrate. That is if they are interested and we are not troubling them too much.

6. Headquarters, Air C.S.E.A. signals, letters and general attitude to us are the laughing stock of this station from Group Captain W. C. S?. Rutter downwards and if the local authorities take a leaf out of Delhi book sometimes who is to blame.

7. My means of lectures on A.S.R., First Aid etc. 'Air experience' Water practices of every sort we are keeping up flight morale as best we can but it is not easy. We have started a flight Library.

Flight Lieutenant, Commanding,  
'E' Flight. No. 292 Squadron.