

Appendix No. 18 for May 1945

From:- Signals Officer, 358 Squadron.
To:- Officer Commanding, 358 Squadron.
Date:- 6th, June, 1945.
Ref:- 358S/955/Sigs.

F.540 – Signals Report. May 1945.

A high standard of W/T and Radar serviceability continued to be maintained last month, and work in the Maintenance Sections has been eased a little by a gradual improvement in the provision of Power Supplies, though the position still leaves much to be desired. A 20 KVA Diesel Engine has just been received, though this cannot be put into operation until a cement platform and waterproof housing have been built on the site chose, opposite the Signals Maintenance Section. The C.P.&D. have been requested to treat this matter as urgent. When installed it is anticipated that Power will be available for the Radar Workshops at the Squadron sites and for the Loran Training Room at the Squadron Navigation Section. The main test and inspection benches at the Station Radar Workshops continue to be used for all major servicing, and a further Rebecca test bench has been installed in anticipation of the fitting of this equipment into aircraft in the near future.

The long awaited Telephone equipment was received last month, and the Type L Telephones, on loan from the A.F.S. Section have now been replaced by the American Telephones Type KES. resulting in a general improvement of the Squadron Telephone System.

Loran Training of Navigators continues to be carried out on a Station basis until such time as the Diesel Power Supply is available for a Squadron Training Room. 13/14 aircraft were completely fitted with Loran at the end of May, and this equipment was used with success as a Navigational aid, particularly while flying over the Bay of Bengal, on 23 operational sorties during the Month.

The newly opened 9790 Kc/s frequency working direct to Jessore has been used with great success this month and has eliminated much of the saturation of the Bomber Strike Frequency, working direct to 231 Group Control. Ranges of up to 15000 miles have been obtained on this frequency.

The W/OPS (Ground) who had previously been attached for Watch Duties at S.H.Q., Jessore, have now been posted there, there being no establishment on the Squadron at present for these Personnel. A further five Radar Mechanics have arrived during the month which has considerably eased the burden of the Section.

J. A. Chitty. F/O.
Signals Officer
358 Squadron

Appendix No. 19 for May 1945

From:- Squadron Navigation Officer
 To:- Officer Commanding, 358 Squadron R.A.F.
 Date:- 13th, July, 1945.
 Ref:- 358S/S.100/Air

Operation Records, F 540 May 1945.

Personnel

Four new navigators with their crews arrived May 18th. They were:- F/O Smith, F/O McBeath, Sgt Robinson, and F/O Cooke.

These crews all did two cross-country exercises, one by day and one by night followed by one screened operation. All four crews, except F/O Cooke, who went sick, then went straight on to operations, operating every other day, weather permitting.

2. At the end of May, (25th), a further four crews arrived. The navigators being:- P/O Redfern, F/O Garner-Richards, F/ Gibbs and F/O Grayton.
3. Three navigators also arrived on May 20th, but without crews. They were:- F/Sgt. Burton, F/Sgt Johnson, and F/Sgt. Hobbins.
4. During the month the following navigators became tour expired:-
 F/Sgt Simpson, W/O Philips, W/O Smith, W/O Kirby
 W/O Perkins, F/O Fielding, F/Sgt Flynne, P/O Parham
 W/O Batchelor

Operations

5. All operations were individual sorties mainly in daylight, with a few long trips entailing a certain amount of night flying. Operations were carried out nearly every other day¹ for ground training.
6. Navigation generally, throughout the month was quite satisfactory, and compares favourably with other squadrons. However, there is plenty of room for improvement, to bring the standard of navigation up to the approved level. There were no navigation failures over this period.
7. Lectures were given whenever possible, to new navigators, on Loran. Practical demonstrations were also given and navigators should soon be proficient in the use of this radar aid.
8. As far as equipment goes, the position in regard to astro watches is still serious, but it is hoped to be rectified before long.
9. In the absence of F/L Ryan the duties of Navigation Officer were taken over by F/O Field, assisted by F/O Fielding and F/Sgt. Simpson. F/S Simpson a well above average navigator has been recommended for the Staff Navigators Course, dependent upon his commissioning.

T. Tichmarsh F/L
 358 Navigation Officer

¹ Last line is "cut off" on the first page in the microfilmed copy of this record.

Appendix No. 20 for May 1945

Bombing Section Return for F. 540 May 1945.

Training

Hours flown on Practice Dropping:-	12 hrs. 35 mins.
No. of Containers dropped:-	112
No of 'Jo's' dropped	8
Hours flown on Cross Country (Map Reading)	60 hrs. 50 mins.

Operations

Total No. of supplies & 'Jo's' dropped confirmed by Field Reports:-
243 Containers. 171 Packages. 5 Jo's

No. dropped outside D.Z.
36 Containers. 31 Packages.

Known Dropping Accuracy		Jo's
100%		Containers & Packages.
86.2%		

F/O
358 Squadron
15.7.45

Appendix No. 21 for May 1945

From: Armament Officer, 358 Squadron
 To: O.C. 358 Squadron
 Ref: F540

May 1945

1.	Total number of Containers loaded during month	1,090
	" " " dropped " "	556
	" " of Packages dropped " "	738
	" " " dropped " "	375

2. Due to the varying weather conditions the number of successful drops fell to 51% for Containers and 50.7% for Packages, of all A/C loaded by Armament personnel.

3. The Bomb Trolley situation which has been the bug-bear of the Squadron since its formation should be relieved shortly according to recent information from Group Headquarters.

4. Removal of Ball and Mid-upper Turrets continues, but their disposal seems to be a very difficult problem, as no provision appears to have been made for a supply of Turret Stands.

5. On the 28th May one of our Aircraft 'P' EW174, piloted by F/O Smith, was attacked by enemy fighters. During the combat the Mid-upper and Rear Gunners successfully operated their respective Turrets, firing off all ammunition.

One stoppage only was experienced in the Mid-Upper Turret, on the left-hand gun, this cleared itself immediately on re-cocking the gun, so that no technical failure was involved. This reflect great credit on both the Gunner and the Armourer detailed to that Aircraft on the high standard of maintenance which they have maintained.

The Armourer was 1434458 A.C.1. Moss.

signed Sgt.
 for F/O Watson
 358 Armoury.

Appendix No. 22 for May 1945

From:- Officer in Medical Charge, 358 Squadron R.A.F.
 To:- Officer Commanding, 358 Squadron, R.A.F.
 Ref:- 358S/2022/Med.
 Date:- 20th., June, 1945

Operations Record Book. F540
 Squadron Medical History

From the 1st., May until the 31st., May the numbers on the Daily Sick Parade were as follows:-

	No on Sick Parade	No of visits during Period.	Average no of visits per person.
Officers	15	27	1.8
N.C.Os (Air)	49	71	1.4
All Ground Personnel	168	398	2.3
Totals	232	496	2.1

These figures represent no significant change from the previous report though there was a slight general decrease in the nos. of fresh cases seen, and the actual no (average for the month) on the daily Sick Parade.

Malaria, Dengue, Dysentery and other gastro-intestinal disorders, ear infections and skin infections were the main diseases, along with several cases of oronchitis. There were no serious cases of Heat Exhaustion, though a few of a minor degree were seen.

Admissions to S.S.Q. and Hospital were as follows:-

	Officers	N.C.Os. (air)	Ground Personnel
S.S.Q.	5	4	20
Hospital	2	3	17
Totals	7	7	37

Corresponding figures for last month were 6 : 7 : 36, again no significant change. Admissions included Malaria: one case; dengue: three cases; bacillary dysentery: two cases; gastro-intestinal: fourteen cases; undiagnosed fevers (?malaria): two cases; other diseases: twenty nine cases.

Sanitation and Hygiene.

The Sanitary Party carried out their duties satisfactorily, and there was no complaint to record about their work. As previously noted, the many new works and improvements (suggested since February last) to kitchens, messes, latrines, drains, and to billets, have not as yet begun, though this Squadron Headquarters has pressed these points frequently. there can be no real decrease in the sickness rate on this Unit until these improvements are effected. There can be no real decrease in the sickness rate on this Unit until these improvements are effected. In the meantime the whole operational efficiency of the Squadron is bound to suffer, by reducing the numbers of available aircrew for their duties (many sorties have had to be washed out in the past because of the shortage of 1st. and 2nd. pilots, who were in S.S.Q. or Hospital), and by interfering seriously with the servicing of the aircraft when the senior member of a ground crew has been similarly non-effective.

Flying Accidents.

There were two accidents during the month. The first occurred on the circuit when a Liberator aircraft (up on an air-test) nose-dived into the ground from a low height. The second aircraft was shot down on an operational sortie, when it was attacked by several enemy fighters over the dropping-zone. Several members of the crew were killed by cannon-shells, others were interned, but the captain (who had a flap of scalp lifted by a cannon-shell), and one other member of the crew have since made their escape, and returned to the Unit.

Psychological Disorders.

There were no cases seen during this month.

(R. Halliday) F/O
Officer in Medical Charge
358 Squadron, R.A.F.

Appendix No. 23 for May 1945

Form 540 A Flight May 1945

No. of operational sorties carried out -- 51
 " " " " successful -- 30
 % successful -- 59%

Total operational hours -- 544:40
 " non-operational hours -- 121:15
 Grand Total all flying -- 665:55

Aircraft losses and damaged.

H 108 F/S Matthews (total loss)
 D 353 F/L Roe (damaged tail undersurface)

Operational Failures – 5 i.e. 4 Engine Failures
 1 Compass U/S.

General

The percentage of successes have fallen this month due probably to three reasons

- (1) Arrival of monsoon weather in lower Burma, Siam & F.I.C.
- (2) New crews on operations.
- (3) A high number of aircraft failures.

The flight aircraft & some of the aircrew were employed on training towards the end of the month, of new crews from Poona who had not flown since Dec. 1944. The following crews were trained up for S.D. Operations: F/L Castle, F/O Husband, F/O Outram, F/S Hodgson, F/S McCulloch, F/S Staines, F/S Room, F/S Gwinell, and F/O Husband, F/O Outram, F/S McCulloch & F/S Room were retained in A Flight, the others being posted to 'B' Flight.

The only loss incurred in the flight was that of F/S Matthews, F/S Wells, W/O Webb, Sgt. McDonald and Sgt Wallace & Sgt Whitehouse killed during an acceptance test of A/C H.108 from 136 R.S.U.

The following crews were tour expired and sent on annual leave:- F/L Davison, F/L Budes, F/L Monks, W/O Adams.

Special

F/L Roe carried out the longest flight (successful) to date in X for the Station by remaining in the air for 23.50 (Low Level!) & even then he returned with one hell of a tail-wing. Good show!

Other good shows were put up by F/S. Matthews who had some good reports in from the field.

Of the crash, 3 victims were buried in the local cemetery on the 25th the remaining 3 on the 26th.

F/S Roe ex – W/O Adams despatcher went down with F/O Smith but it is believed that he is safe & well.

Ground Staff

F/S. Craig left the flight for UK (lucky dog!) and his job has been admirably carried out by Sgt. Bushrod.

'G?'s old crew went half crazy when they saw their splendid replacement aircraft, a nice new shiny KL! they spent some time polishing it. 'A's crew deserve a pat on the back being the first crew to see their aircraft through to a major inspection (44 operational flights & 1 errand of mercy!). Well done Sgt. Knox and Sgt. Broadhurst.

Aircraft

At no one time during the month has the flight had its full establishment. H 124 having been U/S all the month and a replacement K? a long time in coming. Nevertheless sufficient aircraft have been available to meet the demands of the small number of aircrews available.

S. A. Sharpe, S/L
OC 'A' Flt.
5/6/45

Appendix Honours

Honours and Awards

D.F.Cs awarded to personnel on Squadron.
and awarded to:-

81938 S/Ldr. L. C. McConnell. -- G.D.(Nav/B).
54090 F/Lt. M. R. Davison -- G.D.(Pilot)
175033 F/Lt. K. W. Jones -- G.D.(Pilot) -- (Deceased)
J.27671 F/O. H. V. Smith -- G.D.(Pilot)
56141 F/O. C. H. Hedley -- G.D.(Pilot)
NZ.425880 W/O. R. M. Bullen -- Pilot. - (Deceased)
1391233 W/O. C. F. Kirby -- Navigator/B.

Note: there is a duplicate of this document in the October 45 appendices.