

# RE-WRITTEN AND ANALYZED

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When I learned about this flight and its crew, I was surprised that I had never heard of it before. I was immediately overwhelmed by the original document—many pages were difficult to read, and none were in a copy-and-paste format. I spent days researching the events and analyzing the original 219-page PDF. Through this process, I came to a realization: if the document were reconstructed, perhaps fewer people would feel as overwhelmed as I did. And maybe then, more would be inclined to help and provide insight.

To create this document, I used LibreOffice (an open-source writing program) to reconstruct the pages. I also used Copilot and to help analyze sections that were difficult to read and to assist in transcribing some of the contents.

There may be a few inaccuracies due to being unable to properly read certain words and or numbers. If you notice any mistakes, please send me an email and let me know what I need to correct and I'll send you the corrected version.

I hope my efforts prove useful and inspire others to take a closer look.

- Jon

CR PA

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1/24/50

OPERATION "MIKE"

24 APRIL 1950

REPORT ON SEARCH FOR MISSING USAF C54 #2469  
COORDINATED BY THE RCAF RESCUE COORDINATION CENTRE  
NWAC HQ EDMONTON, ALBERTA

OPERATION MIKE

- Appendices: - "A" Resume of action taken during first 24 hours  
"B" Daily Summaries of action  
"C" Investigation into pertinent reports after termination of the operation  
"D" Photographs of main plotting chart in NWAC RCC showing search coverage  
"E" Weather Summary at the time AF2469 failed to report  
"F" List of participating agencies  
"G" Flying times  
"H" Square mile coverage  
"I" Photographs of crashed AF1015 and AF1037

**RESTRICTED**

Note: All times are Greenwich Mean Time  
All Distances and areas are in nautical miles.

GENERAL SITUATION

1. A USAF, SAC aircraft type C-54 #2469 piloted by 1st. Lt. Carl McMichael plus 7 crew and 34 passengers departed from Elmendorf AFB at 262116Z, flight planned IFR airways to Great Falls. Estimating 8 hours 30 minutes en route with 13 hours fuel aboard. This aircraft was last heard at 262314Z when it reported passing Snag at 262309Z giving an ETA on Aishihik of 262337Z, cruising 10000 ft.

ORGANIZATION

2. S/L Arnold Senior Flying Control Officer for Operation Sweet Briar was appointed searchmaster by NWAC on 26 Jan 50. On 27 Jan 50 W/C DR Miller, AFC, an umpire on Sweet Briar, was appointed searchmaster in place of S/L Arnold as the latter was required for Sweet Briar. Lt. Col. Strouse, OC Flight "C" of the 10th Rescue Sqn USAF Fairbanks was appointed assistant searchmaster. On 28 Jan 50 Air Commodore MN Costello took over as chief co-ordinator and supreme commander of the Joint USAF-Canadian search effort with HQs at Whitehorse, Y.T.

3. As A/C Costello was the Assistant Deputy Mandoeuvre Commander for Exercise Sweet Briar and as he was Senior RCAF Officer in the Whitehorse area, he was charged with the overall supervision and coordination of Operation Mike. In addition, he was to determine the allocation of priorities between Operation Mike and Exercise Sweet Briar.

4. The first HQ was set up in Sweet Briar signals section at Whitehorse. The second day, 27 Jan, revealed that it would be necessary to enlarge the search HQ. This was accomplished by moving to the Umpires room across the hangar. With the appointment of A/C Costello still larger accommodation was found to be necessary. Sweet Briar Air Forces HQ was commandeered for the purpose. This new location proved to be most adequate. On Friday 17 Feb after 22 days of intensive searching the decision was reached to reduce the intensity, number of aircraft participating and the size of the HQ. To accomplish this the Whitehorse Search HQ was moved back to the Umpires office with a staff of 3 USAF and 3 RCAF personnel.

5. Another HQ was set up in Great Falls by the OC of Flight C 4th Rescue Squadron McChord AFB, Tacoma, Washington. This HQ was charged with searching the area South of Ft Nelson, B.C. Maj Smith the OC of Flight C 4<sup>th</sup>

RS was also made responsible for the coordination of utilization of aircraft of SAC and other USAF units South of the international boundary.

#### SEARCH AREAS

6. From an analysis of all available information and study of the weather and terrain on the afternoon of 26 Jan, it was decided, unanimously, that the most probable area to search was that along the airways from Snag to Whitehorse bounded on the South by the 10000 ft. contour line on the NE slope of the St. Elias mountains and on the North by a line 50 miles North of the airways. From this area the search was spread South along the airway to Ft Nelson. Great Falls aircraft were to search the area from Ft Nelson to Great Falls 100 miles on both sides of the airway. Finally, the maximum coverage by aircraft based at Whitehorse on both visual and radio search included an area bounded on the East by the Mackenzie River, North to Fairbanks, West to the Pacific Ocean, South to Masset radio range station, East to Ft St John then North to the Mackenzie River. The maximum coverage by aircraft based at Great Falls was from a line 100 miles East of airways between Great Falls and Ft Nelson West to the continental divide, numerous special areas in the B.C. mountains and numerous radio sweeps as far North as Fairbanks. (See Appendix "D").

7. The density of coverage was determined by the probability of the area concerned. The most probable areas were covered three to five times with contour runs of 1 mile visibility. Each grid square or sector required approximately 14 runs to complete a single coverage. Areas less likely to produce results were searched from 1 to 3 times with contour runs of 1 mile visibility. The outer sectors West of the Mackenzie and in Northern, B.C. were covered with a 15 mile visibility and radio search. The mountains North and South of Whitehorse were flown by C-54's and Lancasters flying tracks using 7½ mile visibility and monitoring distress frequencies.

#### WEATHER

8. The overall weather picture, visibility and cloud in the search area was anything but helpful in carrying out a detailed and accurate search. During the first two and one half weeks there were only two days that could be described as excellent search weather. The remainder of the time produced fair to poor conditions which partially contributed to the two crashes which occurred during the search. See Appendix "E" for the weather summary at the time AF2469 went missing. Daily summaries in Appendix "B" contain each day's weather

#### WINTER OPERATION

9. Temperatures ranged from an average low of -15°F to an average high of -1°F. There were two noticeable effects of the sub-zero temperatures on the progress of the search. The first was the increased time necessary to enable aircraft to become airborne from a cold start. On an average there was a delay of two hours, consisting of 1 to 1½ hours when engines were being heated with Herman Nelson heaters, plus 30 minutes to 1 hour boiling off delution after starting. The second and very severe handicap was encountered by the reduced visibility caused by constant ice fog and haze. Great Falls experienced the lowest temperatures, as low as -40°F for days at a time. Few aircraft could get airborne under these conditions.

10. There were no reports of suffering by aircrew members from the cold. However, certain complaints were registered by scanners of freezing breath fogging windows in aircraft while searching.

11. The extreme temperatures combined with insufficient heated hangar space causing search aircraft to be parked outside, made it very apparent which types were more suitable for northern operations. The Dakota's proved to be the most versatile and capable of becoming airborne in less time than either the C54, B29, B17 or Lancaster.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

12. From the outset of this operation to the very finish, cooperation, harmony and good will prevailed everywhere. The two Air Forces involved easily and quickly integrated into a smooth running and efficient search organization.

ACCURACY OF THIS REPORT

13. At this juncture, it is desired to point out the great difficulties in compiling a completely accurate report in detail from the hundreds of signals and other data involved in this search. It is believed, however, that discrepancies if any, are of a minor and unimportant nature.

CONCLUSION

14. A USAF C54 type aircraft number 2469 disappeared on the afternoon or evening of 26 Jan 50. No trace of the missing aircraft has been found and it is presumed that if the aircraft is down in the area covered by search aircraft, there are no survivors.

15. Although 100% visual coverage by air is impossible in terrain such as that in the Whitehorse area, it may be concluded that the area of greatest possibility has been searched with as great an intensity as may be expected from the air. This does not preclude that AF2469 is not down in the area covered. However, experience shows it is possible to pass over a crashed aircraft in mountainous and coniferous country many times without sighting the crash even when the location of the crash is known. (See photographs attached as Appendix "I").

16. The three days following the disappearance of AF2469 experienced almost continuous snowfall. This in itself reduced the possibility of early discovery, especially if there were no survivors.

17. While those areas which were contour searched (all square grid areas in mountainous country were contour searched) can be presumed to have been searched to the ultimate possible by air, those areas covered by route searches were covered only to the extent that had there been any survivors or radio distress signals, the crashed aircraft might have been found.

18. Although not strictly impossible, it is very highly improbable that any of the people aboard AF2469 can still be alive. The intense cold, shortage of food and the probable shock condition of any survivors of the actual crash reduce the possibility of survival after such a length of time.

19. The method of search utilized is considered to have been the best possible both from the standpoint of expeditious results and operational control. It is agreed that the grid type search areas as used on Operation Mike has many advantages over areas having geographical features as boundaries.


20. Although it is admitted that the type of aircraft (C47) used most extensively on concentrated searching does not have sufficient visibility for an efficient search aircraft, there is not, at the present time, any other type in sufficient quantity which would fulfill the requirements of such a large scale search. The fact that mainly C47's were used on this search, has no doubt reduced the coverage factor moreso than had an aircraft with much better visibility been available.

21. Every theory of what could or might have happened to cause AF2469 to disappear was investigated with nil results.

22. This operation proved that a search on a very large scale is not easy to supervise or co-ordinate from one centre, unless the machinery is already in existence and adherence to its provisions is enforced.

RECOMMENDATIONS

23. That a suitable Conference be held once each year between qualified SAR personnel of NWAC HQ, Tac Gp, 12 Gp, 4 th RS USAF and 10th RS USAF. This Conference would submit recommendations to the appropriate Canadian and US authorities on changes deemed necessary in present SAR procedure in the Western and Northwestern areas of the North American continent.
24. That a system be set up at each RCC enabling the RCC to establish a search HQ in the field within 3 hours of the appointment and/or arrival of a Searchmaster. Equipment essential for the setting up an operational search HQ should be compactly stored at each RCC or main flight base connected with the RCC. The containers should be portable and of such dimensions as to be easily air lifted immediately to the location of the search HQ in the field. This equipment should include maps, stationery, blackboard, folding furniture, navigation equipment and all other pieces of equipment essential to an operations centre.
25. That action be taken to institute a 3 minute "silence period" on 8280 Kcs. This "silence period" could be for 3 minutes beginning at the 15th and 45th minute of each hour such as the "silence periods" on 500 Kcs.
26. That at least 3 portable D/F sets be made available at each RCC for immediate transportation to a search area.
27. That light aircraft such as the "Beaver" be stationed at SAR Flights throughout the RCAF in sufficient numbers as to enable them to be effective in a large search. Light aircraft such as the L5, L17 and LC126 proved extremely valuable on Operation Mike. The Norseman with necessary equipment aboard will not carry sufficient scanners to be really effective.
28. That Squadrons or Flights sending aircraft to assist in a search ensure that the aircraft allotted to assist be fully equipped and winterized (if in winter) and piloted by a holder of a standard instrument rating.
29. That aircraft maintenance, such as winter inspection, should be planned by the CHQ, or Gp HQ maintenance personnel immediately after it can be seen that the search will assume large enough action to warrant this action.

  
(MP Martyn) G/C  
for AOC NWAC

Distribution List

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0020Z 27 Jan

The Edmonton Air Traffic Control Centre advised the RCAF Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) that USAF C54 AF2469 had not given a position report since over Snag at 262309Z. ATC were immediately asked to conduct a communication search with all stations in the NWSR area for possible contact with AF2469. The flight plan previously received at the Rescue Coordination Centre was as follows:

AF2469 - C54 - pilot McMichael - Elmendorf - eleven thousand Green 8 to Northway - ten thousand Amber 2 to Great Falls - Speed 160 knots, radio normal with VHF - departed at 2116Z - time en route 8 hours and 30 minutes - fuel 13 hours - pilot's rating 3-1 - Alternate Billings Montana. The RCC was later advised that AF2469 had a crew of seven and thirty seven passengers and that C54 2469 was operated by Strategic Air Command.

0045Z

ATC advised RCC that there were no results from the communications search.

0050Z

Whitehorse and Ft Nelson Search and Rescue flights were alerted. All aircraft flying on amber 2 airways were requested to keep a sharp lookout for signs of missing C54 AF2469. All police posts along the Alcan Highway were alerted and asked to pass information regarding AF2469 to all surface traffic on the Alcan Highway. Drivers to report sightings to nearest telephone station.

0115Z

ATC advised that there were no further positive results from continuing communications check.

0130Z

RCC contacted the Flying Control and SAR officer for Operation Sweet Briar, who was in Whitehorse, and advised him to stay on duty and assist in preliminary checking action. Also discussed known facts and possibilities regarding AF2469 including weather conditions and possibility of AF2469 having radio failure due to antenna icing. Also discussed plans of operation should AF2469 fail to land safely. The plan proposed was to base a Searchmaster and search aircraft at Whitehorse where the best search facilities for the Northern sector of Alcan route were available. Planned to use procedures as laid down in Joint Standing Operating Procedure for SAR along Alcan Route.

0206Z

USAF AF5482 northbound reported sighting large red flare on or near the highway in vicinity of Watson Lake. When asked for a definite position AF5482 advised the RCC to draw a line from Watson south easterly 1/8 of an inch to the right of Lower Post using the USAF strip map. The flare was where the line intersected the highway. BC Police from Lower Post were despatched by car to investigate. BC Police cruised highway, using

a siren, listening and watching from a point 25 miles north of Lower Post to a point 50 miles south of Lower Post. Results nil. One RCAF vehicle searched highway from Watson to Lower Post. Results nil.

0210Z 27 Jan

RCAF C47 VC559 departed Snag for Whitehorse and Watson on a route search. Nil sighted between Snag and Whitehorse. Stopped Whitehorse to refuel and take aboard Para Rescue team then proceeded to Watson on route search, to standby at Watson when search completed.

0220Z

C47 VC656 southbound was requested to investigate the report on flares near Watson Lake.

0303Z

10th Rescue Sqn was alerted and requested to stand by to render possible assistance.

0315Z

USAF MATS Liaison Officer, who was previously alerted, arrived at the RCC and was given all particulars on AF2469 with action taken to date. He remained throughout the night and assisted in all ways possible.

0320Z

C47 VC656 advised there was one small convoy on highway south of Watson. Convoy had stopped and was using red flare pots for traffic markers. Visibility very good. Area searched thoroughly with nothing else sighted. It was presumed that the red flares previously sighted in this area were made by the convoy.

0345Z

The RCMP reported one large fire in vicinity of mile 717 (Rancheria) VC559 advised to investigate. Nothing was sighted.

0345Z

ATC advised RCC that aircraft are reporting icing conditions in the Snag to Teslin area.

0350Z

Watson Lake ground search party asked to stand by until all sighter reports in vicinity had been checked.

0444Z

All stations on amber 2 airways were advised to listen out on 500 and 8280 kcs for distress calls until further notice.

0550Z 27 Jan

4th Rescue Sqn McChord Field was alerted, given details of action to date and requested to stand by to render possible assistance.

0550Z

A truck driver reported that a southbound "aircraft" was sighted at approximately 0100Z from vicinity of mile 354. AF2469 should have arrived in this area between 0124Z and 0139Z. The truck driver could not be interrogated for more details until 1727Z at which time his story proved to be vague and details uncertain. 10th Rescue and RCAF aircraft were searching in this area by 1700Z and nothing was sighted.

0600Z

MATS Liaison Officer and RCAF operations officer decided no further action was necessary until at least one hour after AF2469's ETA at Great Falls. This ETA was 270646Z. AF2469 would be actually "overdue" at destination at 270746Z as one hour is normally allowed past ETA before concentrated search activity is initiated.

0645Z

The aircraft immediately available for search action was as follows:-

- Whitehorse 2 C54's
  - 1 C47
  - 1 C64
  - 2 S51's
- Watson Lake 1 C47
  - 1 Sea Hornet
  - 1 Firefly
- Ft Nelson 1 C64
  - 1 C45

0715Z

RCC called 10th Rescue and advised them of action taken to date and that we would use JSOP for SAR along Alcan Route should AF2469 fail to arrive at Great Falls.

0745Z

AF2469 still had not arrived at Great Falls.

0745Z

The following signal was despatched to Whitehorse information Watson Lake, Ft Nelson and 10th Rescue Fairbanks:

Quote. ATC ADVISES THAT WITH PRESENT UPPER WINDS AF2469 NOW ONE HOUR OVERDUE AT GT FALLS (.) 10TH RESCUE CENTER ADVISES 2 C54S WITH GLIDERS 2 SKIWHEEL JATO C47S AND 10 OTHER C82S STANDING BY

FOR IMMEDIATE TAKE OFF (.) S/L ARNOLD TO BE SEARCHMASTER (.)  
SEARCH TO BE INITIATED IMMEDIATELY AND THIS CHQ KEPT ADVISED OF  
PROGRESS (.) SUGGEST MOST PROBABLE AREA IS IN AREA OF BAD WEATHER  
NORTH OF WATSON LAKE (.) Unquote.

Searchmaster to be responsible to Rescue Coordination Centre  
NWAC HQ Edmonton.

0838Z 27 Jan

Searchmaster Whitehorse advised that he had set up  
an operations room and was organizing an extensive aerial search.  
Also, he had contacted 10th Rescue who stated they had 12 aircraft  
available at Elmendorf and Ladd AFB's. Two B17's one C54 and 2 C47's  
departed Ladd at 0920Z for Whitehorse searching along Amber 2 while  
en route. It was planned to operate aircraft out of Whitehorse and  
Ft Nelson. OC 10th Rescue to be assistant Searchmaster at White-  
horse and Capt Nogar to be in charge of aircraft at Ft Nelson and  
to be responsible to Searchmaster Whitehorse for search orders.  
Aircraft to do a route search of airways en route.

0909Z

The following signal was passed to OG 4th Rescue at  
McChord AFB. Quote. "AC988 UNCLAS (.) AF2469 STILL UNACCOUNTED  
FOR(.) SQUADRON LEADER ARNOLD PRESENTLY AT WHITEHORSE IS COORDINATOR  
OF SEARCH ACTIVITIES(.) 10TH RESCUE ASSISTING WITH 12 AIRCRAFT(.)  
REQUEST YOU GO ON 3 HOUR CALL(.) ANTICIPATE NO DIFFICULTY IN BEING  
ABLE TO GIVE YOU SUFFICIENT ADVANCE WARNING IF YOUR SERVICES ARE  
DEEMED NECESSARY(.) CONFIRM TYPE OF WINTERIZED EQUIPMENT ON ABOVE  
ALERT(.)" Unquote.

1015Z

AF2469 still unaccounted for and presumed to be out  
of fuel.

1016Z

RCC notified all pertinent agencies and commenced  
organizing aircraft for an extensive aerial search and continued  
checking all clues and observer reports.

1045Z

RCC set up plotting charts, plotted all information  
received to date and drew in search areas using the grid system  
suggested by 10th Rescue Sqn. The areas were one degree horizon-  
tally and  $\frac{1}{2}$  degree vertically. Using the USAF World Aeronautical  
charts (1 to 1,000,000) each chart was allotted a lettered identi-  
fier and each search area was numbered consecutively starting from

the upper left hand corner and working horizontally along the chart.

1055Z 27 Jan

Canadian Pacific Airlines Flight 24 southbound reported a small fire 15 minutes north of Watson Lake. Unable to investigate due to low cloud.

1145Z

USAF C54 AF5532 southbound was asked to investigate the small fire spotted by CPA24. Nil results as low cloud still prevailed in the area.

1200 to 1500Z

RCC reviewed all known facts regarding AF2469, and discussed the general situation in detail with MATS Liaison Officer in an attempt to arrive at some conclusion as to the possible action taken by the pilot of AF2469 once he was faced with any one or more of the numerous possible difficulties. With the known factors in mind, the RCC attempted to form a series of hypotheses of what might have happened, and based on these hypotheses, work out a series of possible solutions. Numerous theories resulted but as there were so few known facts, outside of weather conditions, it was impossible to arrive at any one solution. All theories would have to be systematically investigated in order of priority. RCC analysed action taken to date to ensure no possibilities or action was overlooked.

1540Z

Arrangements made for Capt Nogar en route to Ft Nelson to search area 10 miles on both sides of amber 2 from 13200W to Ft Nelson utilizing 3 B17's, 1 C64 and 1 C45. One more B17 was to arrive Ft Nelson this date.

1600Z

Arrangements were made for the special SAR air to ground frequencies to be used in their allotted areas and communications networks to go on continuous operation.

1650Z

Correlated availability of aircraft suitable for participation in search.

1730Z

SAC HQ Omaha, Nebraska phoned and were given resume of action taken. SAC HQ advised they were anxious to assist in any way if required and would forward a list of available aircraft.

1745Z

RCC made arrangements to ensure that special shipments of large quantities of fuel and oil en route to Whitehorse were being rushed as quickly as possible.

1830Z 27 Jan

RCC investigated type and quantity of survival equipment aboard AF2469. This equipment totalled 815 pounds and was later found to include 48 parachutes, 3 emergency water cans, 4 E-18 kits, 3 first aid kits, 4 smoke grenades, 1 emergency radio and 40 blankets.

1910Z

RCC received word from SAC HQ of three C54's en route to Great Falls to participate in search. Great Falls were advised and asked to hold those aircraft at Great Falls for instructions.

1930Z

RCC received word from SAC HQ that the following aircraft were alerted and standing by. 2 B29's at Spokane and 4 B29's at Rapid City which could operate from Great Falls and 15 B29's at Roswell AFB to operate from advance bases. This information was passed to Searchmaster Whitehorse with a request to advise NWAC HQ soonest if any of these aircraft can be utilized on search in northern sector of search area.

1940Z

Received report from mile 836 (near Johnsons Crossing) of an aircraft believed to be 4-engined sighted at 0100Z 27 Jan. Information passed to Searchmaster Whitehorse to investigate. Close investigation gave nil results.

1945Z

RCC advised Great Falls of three SAC C54's en route to Great Falls requesting they be held Great Falls until 4th Rescue pass them instructions. Requested Great Falls to pass NWAC number and type of aircraft available for search should they be required for this duty.

2005Z

RCC requested that Flight "C" 4th Rescue Sqn despatch a Searchmaster and search aircraft to Great Falls AFB, Edmonton was not satisfactory for search base especially for B29's, due to limited facilities and complications of Exercise Sweet Briar. This Searchmaster was to set up a base of operations at Great Falls and coordinate search activities south of Ft Nelson utilizing ARS, MATS and SAC aircraft. Advised 4th Rescue that RCC NWAC HQ would coordinate the overall search activity. 4th Rescue advised RCC that Maj Smith would be Searchmaster and that they would begin moving to Great Falls as soon as weather permitted. Great Falls weather was 200 ft and ½ mile at the time.

2010Z

RCC advised CO Great Falls of plans for using Great Falls AFB as the southern base of operations.

2020Z

Whitehorse requested that W/C Miller replace S/L Arnold

Searchmaster, as the latter was urgently required on Sweet Briar. Advised Whitehorse that W/C Miller was to assume duties of Searchmaster.

2128Z 27 Jan

Following signal passed to Searchmaster Whitehorse.  
Quote. "RCC HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND OMAHA WHO REQUEST OUR ANTICIPATED PLANS AND MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SAC AIRCRAFT REQUIRED FOR SEARCH(.) SAC AIRCRAFT PRESENTLY ON STAND BY FOR IMMEDIATE TAKE OFF(.) THIS MATTER TO BE DISCUSSED WITH L/COL STROUSE AND THIS CHQ ADVISED OF DECISION EARLIEST POSSIBLE(.) THREE C54 FROM EL PASO ESTIMATING GREAT FALLS THIS PM TO PARTICIPATE IN SEARCH(.) THESE WILL BE HELD AT GFA UNTIL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED(.) ADVISE(.) IF SAC AIRCRAFT TO BE USED ADVISE THIS CHQ TIME AIRCRAFT REQUIRED IN SEARCH AREA(.)" Unquote.

2135Z

Searchmaster Whitehorse advised that base at Whitehorse cannot handle any more 4 engined aircraft at present due to limited facilities and suggested SAC aircraft be used to search areas south of Ft Nelson and to operate under 4th Rescue Sqn.

2140Z

RCC phoned 4th Rescue Searchmaster and requested he be responsible for coordinating utilization of all USAF aircraft to participate in search from Zone of Interior USA. He would be liaison officer between NWAC RCC and all US units participating except for units based in Alaska.

2305Z

RCC advised Searchmaster Whitehorse of 4th Rescue setting up coordinating centre at Great Falls. Searchmaster Whitehorse and Searchmaster Great Falls to keep RCC advised of all search activity.

2350Z

RCC advised Tac Gp that the 6 CJATC C47's laid on for departure for Whitehorse 28 Jan for Sweet Briar commitments were to be prepared to participate in search. C47 664 to depart for Whitehorse as soon as possible to participate in search. All aircraft to stop at Edmonton for briefing for a sweep of Amber 2 airways.

2352Z

RCC advised 12 Gp HQ that 12 Gp aircraft would not be employed on search at present but were to stand by for expected

flood emergency in the Fraser Valley area of B.C.

2358Z 27 Jan

RCC requested ATC to despatch 6 C47's as soon as possible to participate in the search. These aircraft to be based at Whitehorse and to be prepared for outdoor maintenance.

2359Z

A resume of weather for this day (27 Jan) follows.

Snag - Aishihik area:  
Good search conditions all day.

Aishihik to Watson Lake:  
Continuous snow all day with Whitehorse reporting a snowfall of 2½ inches. Temperatures in this area above zero with highs of 20 to 25 degrees and lows of zero to 5 degrees.

Watson Lake to Great Falls:

Weather good, except for snow in the Fort Nelson to Edmonton section during the afternoon. Temperatures at Watson Lake below zero with the overnight low 27 below.

This concludes the preliminary action taken during the 24 hours immediately after AF2469 failed to pass a position report to Aishihik Radio. Following as Appendix B is the daily summaries of action.

28 January

General Resume

1. The grid system of areas presently in use (see para 26 of Preliminary Action) were extended to cover the entire Province of Alta, the eastern half of British Columbia and the adjacent areas in the U.S. north of the 47th parallel. This area extended more than 100 miles on each side of Amber 2 airways. These areas and their reference numbers were passed to all concerned.

2. It was decided that the most probable area was in the Aishihik - Whitehorse region because of the adverse weather conditions at the time AF2469 failed to report. Accordingly, the Searchmaster Whitehorse was instructed to search this area to saturation as soon as possible.

3. It was decided to name the search for the missing C54 "Operation Mike" after the name of the aircraft captain, in order to simplify communications. All concerned were notified.

4. A conference was held in the AM at NWAC HQ between the Chief Staff Officer, Senior Air Staff Officer, MATS Liaison Officer, Senior Air Operations Officer, Assistant Deputy Vancouver Commander (Air) for Exercise Sweet Briar and the Command Flying Control and SAR Officer. This conference was held to discuss the organization setup regarding Operation Mike. Since the search was assuming greater proportions hourly, and since Exercise Sweet Briar might be affected, it was decided some form of overall control was necessary. The following decisions were made:-

- (a) A/C Costello was Senior RCAF Officer in the search area from Ft Nelson to Yukon - Alaska boundary and as such had operational control of all RCAF resources and facilities in that area. A/C Costello was charged with the overall supervision and co-ordination of Operation Mike in the area from Ft Nelson to Yukon - Alaska boundary. He was to forward timely information to NWAC HQ as to his requirements over and above the resources in the area at the time. As Assistant Deputy Vancouver Commander (Air) for Exercise Sweet Briar, he was to determine the allocation of priorities for Air Force operations between Operation Mike and Exercise Sweet Briar reporting to NWAC HQ any decisions he made concerning operational priorities.
- (b) Search procedure for AF2469 was to be in accordance with the "Joint Standing Operating Procedure for SAR along the Alcan Route" dated 10 May 48.
- (c) Major Smith Flight C 4th RS USAF to be Searchmaster for the Canadian area of Alcan Route between the 49th parallel and a NE-SW line through RCAF Station Ft Nelson.
- (d) Overall coordination between the northern and southern sectors of the search area to be exercised by NWAC HQ Edmonton.

(e) The RCC staff was increased by the addition of 2 RCAF officers and 1 USAF Senior NCO and placed under the personal direction of the NWAC Senior Officer Air Operations.

5. ATC HQ advised that 6 C47's departed Rockcliffe at 1200Z to participate in Operation Mike. These aircraft were allotted to Searchmaster Whitehorse.

6. Six CJATC C47's en route to Whitehorse for Exercise Sweet Briar were briefed to carry out a sweep of Amber 2 airways from Edmonton to Ft Nelson sweeping on tracks five miles apart and parallel to the airways.

7. Arrangements were made for the immediate airlift of 2000 gallons of avlud to Whitehorse to sustain search aircraft.

8. RCC requested CO Biggs AFB El Paso to pass a brief history on captain of AF2469 with emphasis on flying career, knowledge of route and any other pertinent data such as character personality etc. This information was treated as confidential. The information was received at 1900Z and passed to Searchmaster Whitehorse for deducing purposes.

9. RCC received a request from TC HQ for pertinent information regarding missing AF2469 as an Ontario Forestry agent had reported a four engined aircraft crashed in flames at 4715N 8315W at 0400Z 28 Jan. Advised TC HQ that this report could not have any possible connection with AF2469 because of the time element involved. This report of a crash was later proved to be false.

#### Weather

10. Snag area: Good search weather.  
Aishihik to Teslin: Weather poor with continuous snow at Whitehorse. Snowfall at Whitehorse was 1.2 inches. Surface temperatures well above zero in this area, with overnight lows at Whitehorse and Aishihik 16 above.

Watson Lake area: CAVU and cold. Overnight low 25 below.

Fort Nelson to Great Falls: Except for the small portion of the route between Whitecourt and Grande Prairie, snow as general over the area, with poor visibilities and low ceilings.

#### Northern Sector Operations

11. Twenty six aircraft searched in the northern sector covering an area of 10,710 square miles. There were 26 aircraft available at Whitehorse and 9 at Ft Nelson. All but 4 of the sixteen C47's based at Whitehorse returned to base due to adverse weather conditions but only after a very tenacious attempt was made to cover their allotted areas. These aircraft covered 3 areas north of Whitehorse and 1 southeast of Snag. Ft Nelson aircraft covered 23 areas along the airways between Watson Lake and Ft Nelson.

12. Whitehorse advises that search aircraft are being hampered by low cloud and that few mountain tops could be searched. Also that a report had been received from Carcross of a loud explosion heard on night AF2469 went missing. A close check of the

time element indicated the reported explosion had been heard within three minutes of the ETA of AF2469 should it have flown over Carcross. Whitehorse reported that the report was being investigated but that low cloud made searching of mountains impossible. Whitehorse estimated they could handle 14 more aircraft if present temperatures did not drop. Advised Whitehorse that A/C Costello presently en route with overall authority and that he would decide on further aircraft utilization.

Southern Sector Operations

13. Eight aircraft operating out of Great Falls completed a parallel track search of an area 40 miles on both sides of Amber 2 airway from Great Falls to Ft Nelson covering 79,120 square miles and returned to Great Falls with negative results.

14. Six CJATC C47's en route to Whitehorse carried out a parallel sweep of Amber 2 from Edmonton to Ft Nelson using a height of 2000 ft and a visibility distance of 2½ miles covering 16,080 square miles with negative results.

15. Six SAC B29's were flown from Roswell AFB to Great Falls to participate in search. Searchmaster Great Falls decided to use the B29's to search the moderately level terrain along Amber 2 concentrating in the Ft Nelson area and to use ARS and MATS aircraft in the mountains to the west of Amber 2 because of the greater manoeuvrability of the smaller aircraft. At 1900Z Searchmaster Great Falls made arrangements with SAC HQ for 15 more B29's to assist in search.

16. RCC advised Great Falls that at present no SAC aircraft were required for searching out of Whitehorse as more aircraft than the base could handle were available from Alaska and points in Canada.

29 January

General Resume

1. Passed instructions to Searchmasters in Great Falls and Whitehorse regarding type and quantity of daily progress reports required by this HQ. It was stressed that these reports were absolutely essential for efficient coordination especially in a search the size of Operation Mike. (See Findings and Recommendations).
2. Six ATC C47's arrived Edmonton 0430Z to participate in Operation Mike. These aircraft departed for Whitehorse at 2000Z doing a route search along Amber 2 airways between Edmonton and Whitehorse. Advised Searchmaster Whitehorse and asked how many more aircraft were desired. He stated that he would advise us later and that 3 Lancasters, 10 Vampires and 5 F51's for Sweet Briar were to continue on to Whitehorse on arrival at Edmonton.
3. Searchmaster Whitehorse requested extracts from the radio logs of Ft Nelson, Watson Lake, Ft St John, Norman Wells, Swanhill Bay, Kittigazuit, Cambridge Bay, Northway, Fairbanks and Big Delta, covering period 262309Z to 270109Z with particular reference to contact made with AF2469. None of these stations had any contact with AF2469, during that period.
4. Repeated to all concerned, the instructions regarding air to ground frequencies to be used by search aircraft and transient aircraft.
5. Received information from McChord AFB that AF2469 definitely had red wing and tail markings. Passed to all concerned.
6. Passed a resume of search action to date to AFHQ, CJS Washington, MATS HQ, SAC HQ, Chief of Staff USAF and Elmendorf AFB.

Weather

7. Snag to Watson Lake: Good weather in the morning, but snow at Whitehorse terminal in the afternoon restricted visibility at that station. Whitehorse snowfall 0.4 inches. Surface temperatures in the area above zero, in the 15 to 25 degree range.

Watson Lake to Beatton River: Snow all day with low ceilings and visibilities.

Beatton River to Great Falls: Good weather over this portion of the route, except for snowflurries between Edmonton and Calgary during the afternoon.

Northern Sector

8. Twenty two aircraft searched in the northern sector covering 58,310 square miles and logging 224 hours 32 minutes. This was the best day's search to date covering an area sixty miles on each side of the airways from Snag to 50 miles east of Teslin (13000W) with the exception of three areas north of Teslin that were mostly covered with cloud. The area around Carcross where persons had claimed to hear an explosion was thoroughly searched. Seventeen areas in the Ft Nelson to Watson Lake area were completely covered except for a few that were partially covered with cloud. All results were nil.

9. Assistant Searchmaster Whitehorse requested 10th Rescue Elmendorf AFB to carry out an immediate daylight search of an area bounded,

- (a) On the south by latitude 6200N
- (b) On the east by the south leg of the Snag range.
- (c) On the north by Amber 2 airway and green 8 to Gulkana range.
- (d) On the west by the south leg of Gulkana range to 62 degrees.

Examination of the flight of AF2469 from Elmendorf to Snag, considering the upper winds, existing weather and the five perfect ETAS between Elmendorf and Snag indicated that AF2469 did not follow airways or fly at the altitude filed. Some pilots believe in short cuts and flight plan otherwise. 10th Rescue at Elmendorf layed on 5 aircraft for takeoff daybreak 30 Jan to search the above area.

Southern Sector

10. Nineteen aircraft were available for search but only six could be made serviceable due to maintenance difficulties from operating in the extreme cold weather (-30°F). These six aircraft, 3 B29's and 3 C54's covered 16 areas between Ft Nelson and Edmonton totalling, 26,460 square miles and logging 54 hours 15 mins. All search met with negative results.

30 January

General Resume

1. Sent out NOTAMS on all circuits (service and civilian) in Western Canada and Alaska advising that the North West Staging Route was closed to all civil itinerant traffic for the duration of Operation Mike.
2. Received a report from Muncho Lake at 0330Z that on the night of 26 Jan a truck driver while driving from Watson Lake, and while just south of Lower Post, had sighted a light in the sky that was flashing white then red. The time of sighting was at approximately 270330Z. As RCAF C47 VC664 was investigating this area at the time of this sighting and as VC664 had red and white flashing navigation lights, it is presumed that the observer had sighted the searching aircraft. The report was not investigated as this area had been thoroughly covered by numerous aircraft.
3. Made arrangements with Canadian Pacific Airlines to have their radio beacons at Fort Vermillion Alberta and Peace River Town, Alberta to operate from 1 hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset. Advised Great Falls of these additional aids to navigation.
4. Advised Searchmaster Whitehorse that three photographic Lancasters would be arriving at Whitehorse this PM to participate in Sweet Briar. Suggested that he make full use of these aircraft to carry out special photography in extremely rugged areas where visual searching was difficult.

Weather

5. Snag to Fort Nelson: Good weather all day. Surface temperatures colder with an overnight low of 29 below at Watson Lake and 7 below at Whitehorse.

Fort Nelson to Great Falls: Good weather north of Edmonton in the morning but unsuitable for search in the afternoon due to snow. In the section between Great Falls and Lethbridge ice crystals and light snow cut visibility to 8 miles or less during the day. From Lethbridge to Edmonton conditions were good all day.

Northern Sector

6. Forty three aircraft (19 RCAF and 24 USAF) searched 86,870 square miles and logged 287 hours 25 minutes. This was the greatest number of aircraft to be employed on Operation Mike in one day. Areas searched along Amber 2 airways on 29 Jan were covered again this day and in addition, seventeen new areas north of Whitehorse and Aishihik and seven new areas south of Aishihik and Teslin were covered for the first time. Eleven very small localities (each one approximately 50 square miles) in the above mentioned areas could not be covered due to low cloud. Fourteen areas along the airways north and south of Watson Lake and Smith River and two areas south of Teslin were searched by aircraft operating out of Ft Nelson. All searching gave negative results.
7. The Searchmaster Whitehorse requested 2 B29's to do searches in the Wrangell and St Elias mountain ranges that were too

high for any aircraft based at Whitehorse. Arrangements were made with Great Falls for two SAC B29's to carry out this mission on 31 Jan as the forecasted weather promised to be satisfactory.

8. Whitehorse aircraft carried out the following night searches:-

- (a) One C47 using a visibility distance of 5 miles swept along tracks to the north of airways between Snag and Whitehorse out to a distance of 40 miles.
- (b) Two C47's using a visibility distance of 5 miles swept the area south of the airways from Snag to Teslin out to a distance of 30 miles.
- (c) One C47 searched two areas immediately northeast of Whitehorse.

All searching gave no results.

Southern Sector

9. Twelve aircraft searched 33,480 square miles (nautical) logging 98 hours 10 minutes and covering areas southeast of Nelson and along the eastern slopes of the Rockies. All results negative.

10. Searchmaster Great Falls reported that maintenance crews were still experiencing great difficulty in servicing aircraft because of cold weather (-30°F). From 5 to 10 aircraft aborted missions daily due to maintenance. Some aircraft such as the SA10 (Canso) although winterized did not prove satisfactory for cold weather operation.

11. Searchmaster Great Falls held a conference between all concerned to coordinate all facilities and activities at Great Falls AFB in support of Operation Mike. The results proved very satisfactory.

12. Searchmaster Great Falls was given an S-1 supply priority by the USAF AMC for the support of search aircraft.

31 January

General Resume

1. Received a report through OC Grand Prairie Detachment and the RCMP that green flares had been sighted on a line NW of Ground Alberta (west end of Lesser Slave Lake) on the previous night. Although this report was not complete as to times and distances, the information was passed to a B29 searching in the area at the time. The B29 crew advised that a very close aerial investigation of this report disclosed nothing.
2. Advised Searchmaster Great Falls that this HQ was presently considering the feasibility of basing some of the Great Falls search aircraft at bases in Alaska to assist Whitehorse based aircraft in their tremendous task of adequately covering the vast and mountainous probability areas. Whitehorse advises they can use limited numbers of Great Falls aircraft based at Ladd or Big Delta. Advised Great Falls that they would be advised as soon as possible if it was decided to base more aircraft in Alaska.
3. Whitehorse advises that the aerodrome is completely filled with Sweet Briar and search aircraft with the exception of one runway. There is no parking space available.
4. At 0240Z Edmonton ATC advised the RCC that C47 AF1015, a search aircraft, was overdue at Whitehorse. Preliminary search action had been instigated by Whitehorse regarding AF1015 with preparations being made to search the area allotted to AF1015. At 0450Z two truck drivers arrived at Whitehorse search headquarters with Capt Harden the pilot of AF1015. Harden had been picked up on the highway 25 miles south of Whitehorse. Harden stated that there were no fatalities among his crew although some were injured. He had crashed on a mountain when caught in a down draft. Aircraft and ground rescue parties were immediately despatched to the scene of the crash and although Harden had given an accurate position the nature of the terrain was such that the search aircraft could not locate the crash until the following day (See Appendix F). The survivors were in hospital in Whitehorse by noon the following day. It is noteworthy that although the crew of AF1015 operated the emergency transmitter continuously no signals were received by any one of the numerous radio stations monitoring 500 and 8280 kcs.
5. Whitehorse requested that all press releases for the northern sector of Operation Mike be made from the PIO and PRO at Whitehorse. This HQ concurred and notified all concerned.
6. RCC arranged for refuelling and briefing at Whitehorse of the two B29 aircraft detailed for searching the Wrangell and St Elias ranges.
7. At 1730Z Searchmaster Whitehorse and Search Coordinator Edmonton discussed by telephone all the latest information and theories regarding AF2469. Searchmaster Whitehorse advised that he had double checked on the weather for PM 26 Jan and it has been confirmed that the weather was clear as far south as Snag also that the pilot of VC559 (en route Whitehorse to Snag at the time AF2469 went missing) reported the winds were as forecasted. This pilot found the winds to be 352 degrees at 45 knots. Searchmaster Whitehorse advised that all position reports made by AF2469 were well

received by radio ranges except the last one which was made to Snag and which was poorly received. Searchmaster Whitehorse requested that we confirm the report from MATS pilot Elliot (southbound three hours behind AF2469) regarding his estimated wind of from 200 degrees at 45 knots. Gave the Searchmaster the RCC's former theory that the pilot of AF2469 could have become confused on the turn from Green 8 onto Amber 2 airways (over Northway). If the winds had shifted considerably at this point, it is conceivable that the pilot of AF2469 could have followed the wrong leg of the range and with poor radio reception become lost. The Searchmaster was taking this and other similar possibilities into consideration when planning search activity. The Searchmaster stated that after weighing up all information he believes AF2469 had not gotten farther south than the southern edge of the bad weather area (near Teslin). He stated that search aircraft the day before (30 Jan) had reported bright reflections on Mt Logan (19,850 ft). If B17's from Alaska did not investigate that day the two B29's from Great Falls would do so the next day. Search Coordinator requested the Searchmaster to ask Col. Strouse of 10th Rescue to contact Major Smith of 4th Rescue at Great Falls and discuss the feasibility of moving SAC B29's from Great Falls to Alaskan bases. The Searchmaster Whitehorse reported he was having considerable difficulty controlling press releases by some irresponsible newsmen but that every effort would be made to handle them diplomatically.

8. RCC checked into the report by MATS pilot Elliot and received confirmation from Great Falls that Elliot (who was three hours behind AF2469) had experienced a 20 degree drift to the left indicating a wind from 180 to 200 degrees. Another MATS pilot, Capt Qualls reporting over Snag five hours after AF2469 failed to report, experienced a wind from 352 degrees at 45 knots. The conclusion reached was that the winds over Snag and Aishihik at the time AF2469 failed to report were as forecasted.

9. Col Strouse advised the CO of 10th Rescue that if no results were obtained by sunset 31 Jan that the preliminary all out effort would be completed for the northern sector where survivors could be expected. He suggested setting up a maintenance control system on a rotation basis as numerous aircraft were nearing a major inspection or were already overdue.

10. The Edmonton HQ of the RCMP passed a report that four persons had seen green flares at various times on 30 Jan in an area North West of Grouard toward the Harmond Valley (west of Lesser Slave Lake). The exact location of these flares was unknown. The RCMP advised that they would carry out an investigation into the matter. An RCAF C45 from Edmonton was despatched to search the area and returned to base with nil results. The pilot reported that there were some settlers in the area.

11. Numerous reports in the form of letters and telephone calls were being received from all over the North West. Most of them could be disqualified on receipt as the time element involved did not allow them to have any connection with AF2469. Many reports were received from highly imaginative sources such as fortune tellers and dreamers. All reports received that contained any sensible and feasible information were logged and investigated with nil results. The job of screening and investigating reports was considerable.

12. Since all the major news agencies in North America were represented at Whitehorse, it was decided that no more news releases would be made from this HQ but through the PRO and PIO at Whitehorse.

Weather

13. Snag to Fort Nelson: Suitable search weather all day. Surface temperatures in the area ranged from 10 below overnight to 10 above during the afternoon.

Fort Nelson to Great Falls: Poor weather, visibility restricted by continuous snow over most of the area.

Northern Sector

14. Twenty seven C47's, one L-5 and one C64 searched 17 areas in the Snag - Aishihik regions, 27 areas north and north east of Whitehorse and 16 areas south of Whitehorse and Teslin. Three B17's, one C47, one C45 and one C64, searched six areas in the Watson Lake - Smith River region. The above aircraft covered 59,400 square miles and logged 243 hours and 50 minutes with nil results.

15. Two C47's carried out a night search of Amber 2 airways between Whitehorse and Aishihik out to a distance of 45 miles on both sides using a visibility distance of 15 miles and logging 7 hours and 5 minutes.

Southern Sector

16. Four B29's, one SA16, two C47's, and three SB17's searched forty areas along and to the east of Amber 2 airways from the 49th parallel to Edmonton covering 42,660 square miles and logging 73:55. All searching met with negative results. Low ceilings, high winds and turbulence hampered search activity.

17. Two B29's departed Great Falls at 1300Z to carry out special search missions in from Whitehorse. One B29 completed a search of the St Elias and Wrangell mountains covering 16 areas totalling 14,400 square miles and logging 16 hours and 40 minutes. The other B29 remained at Whitehorse to carry out its search mission the following day (1 Feb 50).

February 1

General Resume

1. It was considered that the Amber 2 airways area had been fairly adequately covered, however, it was felt that the area off the airways, considering the range capabilities of AF2469, were not. Search activities in the northern sector would settle down to a broad area coverage. It was planned to have SAD B29's do a wide visibility and radio sweep of an area not previously covered to the Northeast of Amber 2 from Edmonton to Fairbanks. (See para 7 below). It was considered that the rescue phase of Operation Mike was quickly passing and would soon become one of search alone. It was the opinion of most search personnel that AF2469 had crashed in the mountains of southern Yukon and that it was entirely possible that no trace of the aircraft would be found by air search due to the exceptionally rugged terrain, snow slides and heavy snowfall since the aircraft disappeared.
2. The observer reports from persons in the Carcross area have been closely investigated by light aircraft with no results. However, since AF1015 was so hard to spot even with the position known, investigation is continuing in the Carcross area.
3. Since every major news agency in North America has a representative at Whitehorse covering Exercise Sweet Briar, Operation Mike has received an exceptional amount of publicity. This publicity has resulted in great numbers of observer reports most of which cannot possibly be connected with AF2469.
4. Reports in "Distress" calls being received by "ham" operators, government radio stations and ordinary civilians are increasing in number. None of those reports received to date have contained an actual "SOS" or recognizable call sign but were, in fact only unintelligibly morse being transmitted on a distress frequency. There are not enough D/F stations in the area to successfully fix any one or more transmissions. None of the transmissions made to date were originated by an emergency transmitter such as was carried in AF2469.
5. Assistant Searchmaster Whitehorse advises that extensive areas in Alaska have been searched by aircraft of Alaskan Air Command and 10th Rescue operating out of Alaskan bases. This HQ has not had reports to date on this activity. The Assistant Searchmaster was requested to have HQ of 10th Rescue pass a brief resume of search action already taken in Alaska and plans for the future.
6. Dog Creek Radio Range (central southern B.C.) reports receiving three separate reports of a very low flying heavy aircraft heard in Beaver Lake area (north of Dog Creek) approximately 0500Z 27 Jan. Investigation indicated Canadian Pacific Airlines flights 21 was in this area at approximately that time. Pilot of Flight 21 was contacted for verification. He stated he passed 30 miles west of Beaver Lake area at approximately 0625Z 27 Jan. B.C. police investigated and found the three separate observers were reliable citizens and firm in their reported information. It was felt that the pilot of AF2469 may have encountered radio trouble and decided to abandon his flight plan in favor of a flight direct from Snag/Aishihik to Great Falls. If this were the case AF2469

could easily have been over the Beaver Lake area at 0500Z 27 Jan. 12 Gp were ordered to carry out a narrow visibility search for AF2469 covering an area 100 miles square, centered on Beaver Lake. Aircraft to commence search at dawn on 2 Jan 50.

7. Searchmaster Great Falls was requested to use SAC B29 aircraft to conduct a sweep in the hopes that signals from the missing aircrafts emergency transmitter may be heard or visual signals sighted even at this late date. The B29's were to sweep an area using parallel track methods east of a straight line between Edmonton and Fairbanks. The aircraft to fly parallel tracks parallel to this line and 20 miles apart maintaining visual watch (weather permitting) and a listening watch on 500 and 8280 kcs. Aircraft were to maintain such a height as to ensure sufficient clearance above the highest ground as this flight would take the B29's over unmapped mountainous country rising to 13,000 feet. As many tracks to be flown as aircraft capabilities allow. A second sweep identical to and to the east of this first sweep was requested for the following days operations. It was anticipated that when these two sweeps were completed that the B29's would be released from search duties. Searchmaster Great Falls was given communications facilities available in this proposed sweep area.

#### Weather

8. Whitehorse area: Good all day with ceilings above 22,000 feet and visibilities 30 miles. Snow began in the late evening and visibility was reduced to one mile.

Fort Nelson area: Poor weather, with overcast at 2000 to 5000 feet and visibility down to 2 to 8 miles in snow.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Excellent ceilings and visibilities.

#### Northern Sector Operations

9. Twenty three C47's and two B17's searched 26 areas on both sides of Amber 2 airways between Whitehorse and Northway, 9 areas north east of Whitehorse and 11 areas in the Watson Lake - Smith River district. One L5, one L17 and one LC126 searched 3 areas immediately south of Whitehorse in the Carcross district. Three C47's, two C54's, one B17, and one C64 searched 13 areas in the Smith River to Nelson district. These thirty five aircraft covered 55,800 square miles and logged 221 hours and 50 minutes with nil results.

10. Unserviceabilities are still a major problem even though USAF aircraft are using a rotation policy between search bases in Canada and servicing bases in Alaska and RCAF aircraft are utilizing servicing bases in Edmonton and Calgary to carry out periodic inspections. The servicing facilities at Whitehorse are far from adequate to sustain both Mike and Sweet Briar aircraft.

#### Southern Sector Operations

11. Ten SAC B29's covered 50 areas along airways between Edmonton and Ft Nelson totalling 54,000 square miles and logging 130 hours. Five ARS aircraft covered 18 areas scattered along the east side of Amber 2 airways from Great Falls to Edmonton totalling 19,440 square miles and logging 33 hours and 45 minutes. One SAC B29 that had arrived at Whitehorse on 31 Jan searched 15 areas in

the Wrangell and St Elias mountains southwest of Whitehorse. This aircraft covered 13,500 square miles and carried out a very close search of Mt Logan (19,850 ft) logging 17 hours and 40 minutes. All searching met with negative results.

February 2

General Resume:

1. The search in the northern sector is being extended further north while the reports received from the interior of B.C. opens up new search areas in that vicinity.
2. A C54 searching in Smith River area picked up weak but clear signals on 500 Kcs at 0150Z as follows quote "VWRF VWRF VDKL BYLB QTC" unquote. This signal was traced and found to be a shore station attempting to contact two ships at sea. It is normal for coastal stations or ships to make radio contact with a desired station or ship using 500 Kcs at times other than during the silent periods from 15 to 18 and 45 to 48 minutes after the hour. All such reports are being carefully analysed before too much importance is placed on them.
3. Arrangements made for the ten B29's detailed for sweep search to be refuelled at Nelson AFB or Ladd AFB Alaska. Searchmaster Great Falls advises that the B29's are proposing takeoff Great Falls at 2200Z 2 Feb and could carry out a radio sweep only, should the weather be other than VFR.
4. Numerous reports from stations throughout the North West state that weak unintelligible signals are being heard on 500 Kcs. These signals were too weak to be D/F'd or homed on by aircraft. However, searching aircraft were monitoring 500 Kcs in an attempt to pick up a stronger signal and track down its origin. If these signals were being originated by AF2469 it seems strange that they were not picked up earlier.
5. Smoke signals were reported from numerous localities in the Yukon and Northern B.C. Each report was investigated by a special mission and all appeared to be loose snow being blown off the tops of mountains and ridges. All results were negative.

Weather

6. Whitehorse area: Overcast with intermittent snow. Visibility variable from 3 miles to 30 miles.

Fort Nelson area: Suitable for search in the morning. In the northern section of the area snow cut the visibility to 4 miles in the late afternoon. The southern section remained good all day.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Clear, CAVU.

Northern Sector Operations

7. Six C47's carried out visual and radio sweeps on all legs of the Watson Lake radio range, east and west legs of the Smith River radio range and in the Whitehorse area flying a total of 30 hours 25 mins. Four C47's, one B17 and one C45 carried out low contour searches of the river valleys and canyons in the Smith River to Nelson area flying a total of 38 hours 50 mins. All searching gave nil results.

Southern Sector Operations

8. Three B17's, one SA16 and one C47 searched 6 areas in the vicinity of Edmonton and 10 areas in the mountains west of Lethbridge and Great Falls covering 17,280 square miles and logging 30 hours and 20 mins. All results negative.

9. The B29 sweep was postponed until 1130Z 3 Feb to allow for better weather forecast for 3 Feb. The ten B29's were to carry out a parallel sweep east of a line from Ft Nelson to Fairbanks flying tracks 20 miles apart, land at Elmendorf AFB Anchorage Alaska and return to Great Falls via 4 Feb carrying out an identical sweep en route. Arrangements were made for block airways clearances to Ft Nelson and accommodation for 97 personnel and 50,000 gallons of 100/130 octane at Elmendorf.

Vancouver Sector Operations

10. Four OA10's (Cansos) and one Lancaster did a contour search of 3,960 square miles centered in the Beaver Lake area using  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 mile visibility and flying a total of 30 hours and 55 mins. Results were nil. Further investigation into the sighter report from this area indicated that the observers were still firm in their minds as to their report. One observer stated an aircraft had passed over his house, shook same and was heard very prominently above the noise of his light plant and radio. BC police report this man very honest and not subject to hallucinations. 12 Gp to continue searching.

February 3

General Resume

1. Aircraft strength at Whitehorse and Ft Nelson on Mike is USAF 23 C47, 4 B17, and 2 C54, RCAF 14 C47 and 2 C64 totalling 45 aircraft.
2. It was considered that the possibility of finding survivors from AF2469 did not justify continuing the search on the present scale. It was recommended that the total number of aircraft employed on Mike in the northern sector be reduced to USAF 6 C47, 5 B17, and 1 C54, RCAF 8 C47 totalling 20 aircraft. Maj. General Dunlap, AOC NWAC concurred. All aircraft on search except the 20 recommended to remain were released and returned to home bases.
3. A report was received from Crescent Valley radio (Southern B.C.) that a series of three smoke signals were seen by a forestry official on 2 Feb in the vicinity of Elk Mountain, B.C. Police chartered a local aircraft for investigation on 3 Feb with nil results.
4. Six B29's not engaged in the sweep from Ft. Nelson to Fairbanks were released from search duties and returned to their home bases in New Mexico.

Weather

5. Whitehorse area: Continuous snow all day with visibility 3 to 10 miles.

Fort Nelson area: Suitable for search at low levels as cloud base over the area ranged from 7000 to 9000 feet. Visibility under the cloud was good.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Good search weather, except for strong winds in the regions south of Calgary which gave blowing snow conditions. In the Lethbridge to Cowley region the surface visibility was only 1/8 to 1/4 of a mile all day due to this blowing snow.

Northern Sector Operations

6. Twelve C47's covered 12 areas north of Snag and Aishihik totalling 10,800 square miles and logging 82 hours and 30 minutes. One LC126 searched one area west of Whitehorse totalling 900 square miles and logging 3 hours. Aircraft based at Ft. Nelson carried out no searching this day due to adverse weather. Ft. Nelson prepared to move all search aircraft and personnel to Whitehorse.

Southern Sector Operations

7. Seven ARS aircraft searched 14 areas in the mountains west of Calgary and Lethbridge and an area at 4853N 1224W from where a sighter report had been received. 15,120 square miles were covered and 40 hours 35 minutes logged. Nil results.

8. The ten B29 completed their sweep from Ft. Nelson to Fairbanks as detailed covering 185,600 square miles with a wide visibility distance of 10 miles from 20,000 feet and logged 103 hours 40 minutes. All results nil.

Vancouver Area Operations

9. Three Cansos (OA10) two C47's and one Lancaster did a contour search of 4,320 square miles in the Beaver Lake area using a visibility distance of  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 mile and 500 to 1000 foot altitude. These aircraft logged 42 hours and 35 minutes with nil results.

February 4

General Resume

1. Up until this date, and it is felt rightly so, the search has been concentrated in the main on finding the actual aircraft or its wreckage. As a result the most probable area, that is Amber two airway and vicinity, had been well searched considering the terrain and weather. It was now felt that a certain percentage of aircraft should be diverted from this intense close contact type of search to a type which would cover a much wider area using a greater height and visibility distance. It was felt that there was even yet a chance that out of the 44 people aboard AF2469 a very few may have survived and could make smoke and other visual or radio signals. If this was so, then searchers should be looking and listening for these signals primarily and for the aircraft itself secondly.
2. Taking the above factors into consideration Searchmaster Whitehorse was requested to search the following areas using wide visibility distances with a corresponding height.
  - (a) From 65N 141°W along the 65th parallel to the McKenzie River thence south along the McKenzie to Ft Simpson thence southwest to Ft Nelson.
  - (b) From Whitehorse south on blue 38 to Annette Island thence east to Prince George via Smithers thence north on Blue 83 to Ft St John thence northwest on Amber 2 to Ft Nelson.
3. Taking the factors stated in para one into consideration, 12 Gp were requested to carry out wide visibility sweeps having due regard for aircraft capabilities and safety in the following area. An area bounded on the south and east by the Canadian National Railways transcontinental line running up the Fraser and Thompson River valleys to Tete Jaune thence westward along the CNR line to Prince George thence to Annette Island via Smithers.
4. Taking the factors mentioned in para one into consideration Searchmaster Great Falls was requested to carry out similar sweeps of an area to the west of the presently covered areas and to the east of a line formed by the Canadian National Railway lines to Prince George thence north eastward on Blue 83 to Ft St John.
5. Requested Searchmaster Great Falls to give more and closer coverage to the Fernie BC and Salmo area, as reports of smoke signals seen recently and aircraft being heard on 26 Jan were still coming in to RCC.
6. Reviewed numerous reports of signals being picked up on 500 kcs and 8280 kcs. None of these signals were actual SOS's but did not include any other intelligence. These signals were picked up by coastal D/F stations, shipping, radio range stations and airborne aircraft. Numerous bearings were obtained but when plotted did not converge or even give a probability area. The difficulty in correlating the reports of distress calls that could have a connection with AF2469 can be visualized when it is known that one of the signals was traced to shipping off the coast of Denmark. Watson Laboratories specialists were called in and consulted regarding these signals. These specialists, with their intimate knowledge of skip distances and ionospheric conditions attempted to plot the most probable area from which the signals could have originated.

Conditions were such that the signals could have originated almost anywhere in the northwest.

Weather

7

Whitehorse area: Overcast at 3000 to 5000 feet, visibility 2 to 10 miles in continuous snow.

Fort Nelson area: Visibilities generally less than 3 miles due continuous snow.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Along the mountains west of Edmonton, visibility was down to 1 to 2 miles in snow. Elsewhere in the area weather was good.

McKenzie Valley: Scattered cloud was reported from the stations along the River. A strong easterly circulation gave extensive low cloud along the west side of the McKenzie Mountains, on the path of the B-29 sweep.

Northern Sector Operations

8. Four C47's searched four areas north east of Aishihik and two in the region of Snag totalling 5,400 square miles and logging 24 hours and 40 minutes. One B17 swept along four tracks running north out of Aishihik for a distance of 150 miles and logged 5 hours 45 minutes. Search aircraft based at Ft. Nelson were moved to Whitehorse.

Southern Sector Operations

9. One B17 carried out a weather flight for 4 hours and 40 minutes, returning to base as weather throughout the entire southern sector was unsatisfactory for searching. Five B29's carried out a radio sweep from Elmendorf to Great Falls logging 52 hours 50 minutes. All searching met with negative results.

B.C. Sector Operations

10. No search due to adverse weather.

February 5

General Resume:

1. Reports of distress signals being received by every time of radio station in the NW portion of the continent are still arriving at the Rescue Centre. None of those reports contain any useful information and the bearings when plotted still do not give any concentration. All search personnel were advised to continue to determine the validity of each report received.
2. Received report from Bainbridge D/F and San Diego D/F that "Mayday" and "SOS" was heard on 8280 kcs strength 4. On plotting the bearings taken on this signal and on plotting bearings taken previously by Elmendorf the RCC obtained a thin concentration of bearings in the Alaska panhandle area south of Juneau, 10th Rescue Elmendorf were requested to despatch aircraft without delay to conduct a radio and visual search of this area. The search results were nil.
3. Requested Searchmaster Great Falls to utilize any specialized airborne D/F equipment that could be made available in an effort to obtain cross bearings and fixes on any probable distress transmissions from AF2469. Suggested that aircraft equipped with this specialized D/F carry out sweeps over the coast and interior of British Columbia as far as 60 degrees north.
4. Received three separate reports from the Sheep Creek B.C. area (490815 1171530W) to the effect that an explosion was heard on the evening AF2469 was missing. BC Police investigated and verified reports. 12 Gp were advised to do an aerial search of this area as soon as weather permitted.
5. An RCAF signals expert with specialized receiving equipment mounted in a light vehicle was despatched to the central and southern BC area in an attempt to localize the many reports being received from that area. Since the roads in this area at that time of year were impassable to the heavy specialized signals trucks the lighter vehicle was necessary and proved to be inadequate. The results were nil.

Weather

6

Whitehorse area: In the morning, from Aishihik north, the weather was clear. It became overcast with snow in the afternoon, and visibility was reduced to 5-10 miles. In the area south of Aishihik snow fell all day and visibilities ranged from 4 to 10 miles.

Fort Nelson area: Fort Nelson and Beatton River were clear in the morning, with snow beginning in the late afternoon. The other stations in the area, from Fort St John south, reported poor conditions all day, with continuous snow and reduced visibility.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Good all day. Increasing cloud above 10,000 feet in the late afternoon.

Southern B.C. area: Poor weather for visual search. There was some improvement on the coast in the late afternoon as Vancouver, which had a 1000 to 2000 ft ceiling during the day went to unlimited after 23300Z. Inland the cloud base was 2000 to 3000 feet above ground with visibility 1 to 3 miles in snow.

Northern Sector Operations

7. Nine C47's covered 8 areas north of Whitehorse and Aishihik, 4 areas west of Whitehorse and south of Aishihik and 2 areas in the vicinity of Juneau. Two B17's and one Lancaster carried out three radio and visual sweeps north and west of Whitehorse. One LC126 and one L17 did a close contour search of one area west of Whitehorse. These aircraft covered approximately 36,520 square miles and logged 80 hours with nil results.

Southern Sector Operations

8. No visual search was conducted due to adverse weather. Two B17's flew 5 hours 50 minutes on weather flight. Two B29's flew a radio sweep from Spokane to Watson Lake and return logging 22 hours. Two B29's flew a radio sweep from Elmendorf to Great Falls logging 20 hours 20 minutes. All searching met with negative results.

Vancouver Sector Operations

9. Four aircraft departed Vancouver to sweep tracks over the interior of BC but returned to base due to adverse weather. Flying time 3 hours 33 minutes.

February 6

General Resume

1. As SAC B29's were all time expired, they were released from search duties. Searchmaster Great Falls advised RCC that future requests for SAC aircraft for participation in Mike should be originated by RCC and passed to SAC HQ through NWAC MATS/10.
2. US Coast Guard Seattle were asked to work directly with Searchmaster Great Falls and with 12 Gp HQ Vancouver when assisting in Mike.
3. Searchmaster Great Falls was requested to organize a radio sweep along the line from Seattle to Whitehorse utilizing aircraft fitted with specialized D/F equipment. This sweep would be approximately along the SOS bearing of 332°T obtained by Bainbridge Radio. He was also requested to organize a sweep by two of Spokanes B29's, one on each side of a line joining Spokane and Whitehorse. This sweep would cover several likely areas in the interior and northern portion of B.C. Searchmaster Great Falls was advised that the forecast for the southern BC area indicated continued adverse weather for the next few days. He was requested to concentrate search efforts in the southern BC area once weather permitted.

Weather

4. Whitehorse area: Mainly clear or scattered high cloud in the area. Aishihik reported a 3000 ft ceiling until 1930Z, and then became clear. Visibilities were generally very good.

Fort Nelson area: From Watson Lake to Edmonton continuous snow fell and ceilings were down to 2000 to 4000 ft. Some improvement occurred in the Ft St John to Edmonton section in the afternoon, as the low pressure area causing the snow moved eastward out of the area.

Southern B.C. area: Good on the coast in the morning. From Princeton east low cloud and snow prevented visual search. In the afternoon the weather on the coast deteriorated and ceilings remained low for the balance of the day. In the afternoon from Princeton to Carmi the cloud base lifted to 4000 feet, but visibilities were still restricted in scattered rain showers.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Poor search weather. Snow and ice crystals reduced visibility to 2 to 8 miles.

Northern Sector Operations

5. Fourteen C47's searched 7 areas along airways south of Aishihik and 4 areas in the vicinity of Teslin totalling 9,900 square miles and logging 75 hours 30 minutes. One B17 searched Blue 38 airways from Whitehorse to Annette Island, logging 5 hours 15 minutes. One B17 carried out a contour search of the Kluane Lake area logging 3 hours. One Lancaster carried out a close contact search of all high peaks in the Snag to Whitehorse area logging 4 hours 20 minutes. All searching met with nil results.

Southern Sector Operations

6. No searching carried out in the southern sector due to adverse weather. Two B29's carried out a radio sweep from Elmendorf to Great Falls logging 20 hours and 10 minutes. The results were nil.

Vancouver Sector Operations

7. Three Canso (OA10) aircraft carried out visual and radio sweeps of tracks running north/south over the western portion of B.C. One C47 searched in the Salmo/Sheep Creek area using 1½ mi visibility distance from 4000 ft. These aircraft covered approximately 3,250 square miles and logged 25 hours 30 minutes with nil results.

February 7

General Resume

1. Searchmaster Great Falls advised RCC that the USCG would conduct the sweep from Seattle to Whitehorse using specialized airborne D/F. The USCG were working directly with 12 Gp Vancouver. He advised that Spokane AFB could not conduct the proposed sweep to Whitehorse and suggested that NWAC HQ contact CONAC for the use of 12 C54's based at McChord. RCC requested MATS LO to obtain approval for the use of these 12 C54 to carry out radio and visual sweeps.
2. From 2120Z to 2324Z sixteen radio stations and airborne aircraft from Seattle to Fairbanks and as far east as Ft Nelson were picking up definite SOS signals and dashes all on 8280 kcs. The majority of bearings when plotted, passed through southern Yukon Territory. All information was passed to Searchmaster Whitehorse for action.
3. All stations were again requested to ensure that full information regarding the apparently phantom signals was passed to the RCC Edmonton. The information most urgently needed was the type of modulation, frequency and the precise times of any fading or build up in signal strength. This information was necessary for Watson Laboratory specialists to work out the most probable area from which the signals were being originated.

Northern Sector Operations

4. Seven C47's searched four areas in the Snag - Aishihik vicinity and two areas on the south leg of the Watson Lake range station, logging 58 hours and 5 minutes. Three Lancasters did a close contour search of the areas surrounding Whitehorse, logging 10 hours 15 minutes. Three B17's carried out close contour searches along the airways between Whitehorse and Snag, logging 26 hours and 5 minutes. Approximately 24,840 square miles were covered and a total of 94 hours 25 minutes were flown.

Southern Sector Operations

5. Five B17's searched five areas in the mountains west of Edmonton and Penhold, Alberta totalling 5,400 square miles and logging 33 hours 50 minutes.

Vancouver Sector Operations

6. Nil search due to extremely adverse weather.

Weather

7. Whitehorse area: Generally good with high ceilings, visibility 30 miles. Aishihik report snow haze all quadrants along the mountain tops from 1930Z to 2130Z, otherwise visibility was good, being 15 to 30 miles. By 2330Z the whole area was clear.  
Fort Nelson area: Low ceilings up to 3500 feet all day with visibility 3 to 4 miles in snow.  
Edmonton to Great Falls: Clear, CAVU.  
Southern B.C. area: Showers along the coast, particularly in the afternoon, restricted search activities. In the Crescent Valley, Carmi and Cranbrook region ceilings ranged from 800 feet to 4000 feet and fog, rain and snow reduced visibility.

February 8

General Resume

1. At 0238Z RCC was advised that a USAF C47 search aircraft number AF1037 was overdue at Whitehorse. This aircraft was detailed to search in an area immediately south of Aishihik. The last position report received from AF1037 was 15 miles east of Aishihik at 071830Z. AF1037 had a crew of five and seven scanners making a total of twelve persons aboard. The scanners were from the Canadian PPCLI regiment. The known emergency rations on board was sufficient to last seven men for two days. Three aircraft were immediately dispatched from Whitehorse to search the area allotted to AF1037. Unsatisfactory search weather hampered the search aircraft on their preliminary search. At 082137Z Capt Holdiman USAF, flying a C47 located AF1037 near the top of a 7000 foot mountain 85 miles WNW of Whitehorse (6100N 13735W). Four weasels were dispatched from Pine Lake to emergency strip to the scene of the crash. A para rescue team composed of 3 RCAF para rescue personnel, 1 USAF medical officer and 1 USAF para rescue Sergeant were dropped at the scene of the crash. The terrain was too rugged and the altitude too high to allow the use of helicopters for evacuation from the scene of the crash. The para rescue team reported there were no fatalities amongst those aboard AF1037 and the three injuries received were, one broken leg, one chest injury, and one shock case. Great difficulty was experienced in returning those aboard AF1037 to safety. It was not until the 11 Feb that the last person evacuated reached the hospital in Whitehorse.

2. It was believed that the large number of distress signals received on 7 Feb (see paragraph 2 of general resume for 7 Feb) would probably be originated by AF1037. This belief was later found to be almost a definite fact as the crew of AF1037 operated their emergency transmitter continually from the time of crash until found.

3. Watson Laboratory specialists believe that if the signals being received on 500 and 8280 are being originated in any part of Western Canada, the most likely location of the transmitter would be either on the plateau between the Coast Range and the Rockies or in the Continental Trench area. With this in mind the Searchmaster Great Falls was requested to carry out two D/F sweeps, one from Seattle to Edmonton direct and return and one out of Spokane up the Continental Trench. He was advised to cancel our request for a sweep by two B29's on both sides of a line between Spokane and Whitehorse.

4. Bainbridge Radio (Seattle) was requested to broadcast the following message on 8280 kcs immediately following the reception of the next good strength distress call. Quote "This is Seattle radio calling missing aircraft 2469 identify yourself and pass time of crash," unquote. This was to be sent on CW and voice alternately for a period of 5 minutes. This transmission did not produce any results.

5. Searchmaster Great Falls (Major Smith of Flt C 4th Rescue Squadron) returned to his base at McChord AFB Tacoma. The search in the southern section had by this time become routine and primarily confined to systematic searching of areas in the mountains west of Amber 2 airways. It was felt that Major Smith could better co-ordinate D/F procedures on the west coast where most of the D/F stations were located. Captain K.M. McChesney was left in command of the advance base at Great Falls.

Northern Sector Operations

6. Ten C47's searched 10 areas in the vicinity of Aishihik covering 9,000 square miles and logging 66 hours 35 minutes. One B17 searched 3 areas in the vicinity of Snag covering 2,700 square miles. One B17 carried out sweeps parallel to airways between Whitehorse and Snag. The B17's logged 14 hours 5 minutes.

Southern Sector Operations

7. Two B17's searched 2 areas in the mountains west of Edmonton covering 2160 square miles and logging 15 hours 5 minutes. One B29 flew one sortie for 10 hours 35 minutes on a radio search from Elmendorf direct to Great Falls. All searching met with negative results.

Vancouver Sector Operations

8. Two Vampires carried out four weather flights and radio sweeps (500 Kcs) at 30,000 feet to the north east of Vancouver. Total flying time 4 hours 45 minutes. Two Cansos carried out visual and radio sweeps over the interior of B.C., Two C47's, two Cansos and one PVI (Ventura) returned to base due to adverse weather in their area. Total flying time 14 hours 35 minutes.

Weather

9. Whitehorse area: Generally CAVU with some broken clouds at 8000 feet in the afternoon.

Fort Nelson area: Average ceiling 7000 feet with visibility 8 miles in light snow.

Southern B.C area: Very poor for search. Low cloud and rain forced Vancouver aircraft to return to base.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Broken cloud above 10000 feet. Visibility excellent.

February 9

General Resume

1. By agreement with the CGAAC and the AOC, NWAC, future aerial searching in the northern sector will be carried out by 4 engined aircraft only. This decision was reached mainly because the areas within economical range of twin engined aircraft had been covered as completely as was possible from the air. The C47's were released to Exercise Sweet Briar. It was agreed that the following aircraft would be used:-

- 5 B17's from AAC (at Whitehorse)
- 3 C54's from AAC (at Whitehorse)
- 1 Lancaster from ATC (at Whitehorse)
- 3 Lancasters from ATC (to be flown to Whitehorse from Rockcliffe)

2. Received a report from a ham operator in Lead South Dakota that at 1700 MST 9 Feb he had picked up a series of SOS's followed by the coordinates 130 West 60 North then the letters NO FO. The signal then faded out. It was received on the 8 mega-cycle band. Although the message did not include any call signs and may be a hoax, it was passed to Searchmaster Whitehorse for investigation. Searchmaster Great Falls was requested to arrange a personal interview between the ham operator and some person in authority at Lead South Dakota in an attempt to gain further information and check the validity of the message.

3. One Weasel on rescue mission to AF1037 was within 10 miles of the crash at 0320Z 9 Feb. Bulldozers had to be used to clear a right of way in some areas impassable to the Weasels. Three Weasels threw their tracks and were abandoned. Two more Weasels were flown to Pon Lake to replace those unserviceable. The evacuation parties were supplied by air drop.

4. Arrangements were made to have two portable D/F sets complete with operators to be flown from McChord AFB to Edmonton by 4th Rescue thence to Whitehorse by RCAF C47. These sets be strategically placed along the NWSR and utilized to D/F the numerous and phantom distress signals.

Weather

Whitehorse area: Good in the morning but ceilings down to 6000 to 8000 in the afternoon. Snow began after sunset, but visibility remained above 10 miles.

Fort Nelson area: Clear with 40 miles visibility all day.

Southern B.C. area: Weather unsuitable. Vancouver area reported ceilings of 500 to 3000 feet and visibility down to one and one half miles in rain. In the Penticton - Kimberly area conditions were very variable, with ceilings from 700 to 5000 feet and visibilities 1 to 30 miles in snow and rain.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Rain and snow showers along the mountains cut visibility to 1 to 2 miles. Elsewhere the weather was suitable for visual search.

Northern Sector Operations

6. Three C54's and 2 B17's carried out parallel track searches using a visibility distance of 7½ miles north of airways from Whitehorse to Northway and as far north as the 66th parallel. Flying time was 18 hours 55 minutes and the area covered was approximately 26,450 square miles.

7. Two C47's en route Whitehorse to Calgary for maintenance searched an area 40 mile square centering on 60N 130W which was the position received by the ham operator in South Dakota. 3 hours 10 minutes searching in this area produced nil results.

Southern Sector Operations

8. One radio sweep was carried out by one SBL7 from McChord AFB direct to Edmonton thence direct to Great Falls logging 6 hours 30 minutes. No other searching was carried out due to adverse weather and unserviceabilities.

Vancouver Sector Operations

9. One visual and radio search was carried out through the interior of BC by one C47. All other flights were cancelled or returned to base due to weather. The one sweep covered approximately 5,600 square miles with a visibility distance of 5 miles total flying time 9 hours 35 minutes.

February 10

General Resume

1. Received a message from ATC stating three Lancasters at Rockcliffe, Ontario, were being readied for dispatch to Whitehorse for participation in Mike.
2. Four ATC C47 enroute from Whitehorse to Rockcliffe were detailed to carry out parallel track search from Whitehorse to Fort Nelson. Two tracks were to be flown on each side of airways using a visibility distance of 7½ miles. No search was carried out due to adverse weather.
3. Search activity has slowed down considerably. There were no new leads to work on. It was considered doubtful if any great amount of further activity was warranted at this time. The odd report regarding signals heard on distress frequencies is still being received, but few of those reports contain enough information to take action on.
4. Received word from Andrews AFB Maryland that portable D/F equipment complete with crew was being rushed to Whitehorse by MATS and should be arriving sometime on 11 Feb.

Weather

5. Whitehorse area: Poor search weather with ceiling from 1800 to 3000 feet and visibility from 2 to 5 miles in snow.

Fort Nelson area: Fort Nelson and Beatton River section good in the early morning, remainder of the area unsuitable due to snow and low cloud. In the afternoon over the whole area ceilings were down to 3500 feet and visibilities were at times as low as one mile.

Southern B.C. area: Weather poor all day. Ceilings at Kimberly, Carmi and Penticton ranged between 1000 and 6000 feet, with visibility as low as 4 miles in snow. On the coast ceilings were from 1500 to 3000 feet and visibility ranged between 4 and 15 miles in light rain. At Vancouver smoke cut the visibility to 4 miles.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Broken cloud above 10000 feet. Visibility unlimited.

Northern Sector Operations

6. Three C54's carried out three visual and radio sweeps north of Whitehorse using a visibility distance of three miles. The aircraft covered 24,579 square miles logging 39 hours 35 minutes. Weather hampered search activity. One B17, one C47, one C46, one L5 and two S51's participated in the evacuation of the crew of C47 AF1037. See Appendix "D" for flying times. All search activity produced no results.

Southern Sector Operations

7. One SBL7 flew one sortie searching two areas in the mountains west of Calgary. Weather conditions hampered further searching. Results nil.

Vancouver Sector Operations

8. Nil activity due to extremely adverse weather.

February 11

General Resume

1. The four ATC C47's that had been detailed to carry out a sweep to airways as far as Fort Nelson while enroute from Whitehorse to Rockcliffe reported adverse weather was encountered. Nothing was seen or heard.
2. Two Lancasters arrived Whitehorse from Rockcliffe for Mike. One was held over at Edmonton due mechanical.
3. The signals specialist doing a local check on radio and sighter reports in the central and southern BC area reported he had heard no distress calls but had received numerous sighter reports in the Sheep-Cuck Salmo area. These reports had already been passed to Great Falls for investigation. Advised him to keep checking for two more days before returning to Edmonton.
4. Arrangements were made to set up the portable H/F D/F sets at numerous points along the NWSR from Ft St John to Fairbanks.
5. Numerous reports were received of SOS signals heard in North Dakota, New York state, Arkansas, Washington, and Michigan. All transmissions were received on 1722 kcs, a frequency at which AF2469 cannot transmit. Reports ignored.
6. Three bearings received from Bainbridge, Fairbanks, and Anchorage when plotted enclosed an area approximately 150 miles west of Carcross and approximately 150 miles south of the airways between Snag and Aishihik. Most of this area has already been searched and adverse weather prevents early future searching.

Weather

7. Whitehorse area: Broken high cloud over the area. Good visibility. In the early morning snow at Teslin reduced the visibility at that station to one mile but conditions improved by mid-morning to CAVU.

Fort Nelson area: CAVU conditions all day.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Low cloud, snow and blowing snow prevented search.

Southern B.C. area: On the coast the weather was reasonably good, with ceilings from 8000 to 20000 feet and visibility 10 miles or better. In the Princeton - Carmi area conditions were poor, with ceilings 1500 to 3000 feet and visibility 8 to 15 miles. The Kimberly area was a little better as ceilings were 6000 feet in the morning and became unlimited in the afternoon. Visibility in this area was excellent.

Northern Sector Operations

8. Two C54's and one Lancaster did sweeps north of Watson Lake to 6530N using a visibility distance of 5 miles. This search covered approximately 63,500 square miles logging, 29 hours 40 minutes. One C47, one LC 126 and one S51 completed the evacuation of crew of AF1037.

Southern Sector Operations

9. No search this date due to adverse weather.

Vancouver Sector Operations

10. Two Cansos and one C47 searched 1800 square miles in the vicinity north of Dog Creek where sighter reports had been received from. A visibility distance of one-half miles was used. 17 hours and 35 minutes were flown this date. Results were nil.

February 12

General Resume

1. Arrangements were made to clear 8280 kcs from as much interference as possible. The following signal was sent to AFHQ Ottawa. Quote. "Operation Mike. REQUEST YOU ARRANGE SIGNAL

CHANNEL CLEARANCE WITH DOT CANADA AND FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

WASHINGTON D C AS FOLLOWS: (A) CLEAR FREQUENCY 8280 KCS ALL POSSIBLE

LAND AND MARINE STATIONS NORTHEAST SECTOR NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT (.)

(B) CLEAR ALL STATIONS AT LEAST 50 KCS EITHER SIDE OF 8280 KCS FROM

12 FEB 50 TO 17 FEB 50 (.) CONSIDER IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE RECEIVE

THIS COOPERATION DURING OUR CONCENTRATED D/F SEARCH (.) PLEASE

CONFIRM ACTION TAKEN BY ALL AGENCIES (.)" Unquote. This action was felt necessary in order to reduce ineffective use of the portable D/F stations located along the NWSR and Pacific Coast. It was hoped that this action would definitely prove (one way or another) whether any of the myriads of phantom distress signals were being originated By AF2469.

2. RCC was advised by AFHQ Ottawa that all pertinent agencies and stations had been notified to maintain silence on spectrum 8230 - 8330 kcs.

Weather

3. Whitehorse area: Overcast with intermittent snow. Visibility ranged from 2 to 10 miles, and was as low as one mile at times.

Fort Nelson area: Cloudy above 10000 feet becoming overcast at 6000 feet or lower in the afternoon. Good visibility in the morning reduced to 4 miles in snow in the late afternoon.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Along the direct route the weather was suitable for search, but east of the route, over eastern Alberta and Saskatchewan, low cloud and continuous snow prevented search activities.

Southern B.C. area: Low cloud over the whole area. Rain on the coast and snow inland gave visibilities down close to zero most of the day.

Northern Sector Operations

4. No search due to adverse weather.

Southern Sector Operations

5. No search due to adverse weather.

Vancouver Sector Operations

6. One C47 attempted a weather reconnaissance but returned to base after 35 minutes aloft.

February 13

General Resume

1. It was hoped that this day would see a satisfactory conclusion reached on the distress signal problem. The 8280 kc channel was ghostly quiet and free from all former chit-chat and preliminary contact calls. Airborne and ground D/F equipment was ready to pounce on the first sign of any distress signal on 8280 kcs. Although it was doubtful if this D/F equipment would operate successfully due to terrain and low temperatures it was felt that these were the only measures that could be taken in the attempt to pin down the reports of distress signals.

2. RCC telephoned RCC Pacific area Vancouver and advised them that the special responsibility area as laid down on 4 Feb 50 was hereby cancelled and that RCC Pacific was requested to co-ordinate all search activities in their normal responsibility area with the 4th Rescue Squadron at McChord AFB. They were also advised that the search areas for Operation Mike and that Cansos (OA10's) were no longer to be used unless contact weather prevailed.

Weather

3. Whitehorse area: Overcast with snow. Blowing snow in the afternoon. Visibility  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 mile in heavier snow.

Fort Nelson area: Poor search weather. Low ceilings and snow.

Southern B.C. area: Overcast at 4000 feet or lower. Visibilities 4 to 8 miles in snow and rain.

Edmonton to Great Falls: Good search weather on the direct route. Blowing snow over southern Saskatchewan with visibilities often less than one mile.

Northern Sector Operations

4. Two C54's and one Lancaster flew radio and visual sweeps over the Coast Range south of Whitehorse as far south as 54 degrees north. Very little visual searching was carried out due to adverse weather. Total flying time 21 hours 45 minutes. Nil was heard.

Southern Sector Operations

5. Two B17's searched four areas in the mountains south of Fort St John, B.C., covering 4320 square miles and logging 15 hours 45 minutes. Results negative.

Vancouver Sector Operations

6. One C47 searched an area of some 900 square miles in the vicinity south of Dog Creek, B.C., logging 5 hours 15 minutes. All other areas covered by cloud.

February 14

General Summary

1. CG AAC suggested that the F/F units being used on Operation Mike be left in operation until the conclusion of Exercise Sweet Briar. All authorities agreed.
2. Not one of the great number of stations listening on distress frequencies reported hearing any sign of distress signal.
3. At 0800Z Edmonton ATC advised RCC that Medicine Hat (Alberta) radio range had received a message from AF2075, quote "State of emergency, position 530N 12929W letting down over water on a heading of 030 degrees, in company with AF2083," Unquote. Sandspit, Juneau, Vancouver, and Port Hardy radio ranges also interrupted this distress call. Port Hardy is in contact with AF2075. AF2075 was a B36 on a training flight south bound along Pacific coast.
4. 12 Group Vancouver were immediately alerted by direct service "F" telephone and advised to alert 4th Rescue McChord AFB.
5. By 1135Z it was learned that AF2075 had not made a landing at any aerodrome and that the crew had parachuted from the aircraft. 12 Group and 4th Rescue were relieved from Operation Mike search duty to participate in the B36 incident.
6. 12 Group advised RCC that the B36 incident was to be treated as confidential. All pertinent units were notified. 12 Group advised RCC that they had already taken rescue action on AF2075. One C47, two High Speed Launches (45 knots cruising speed) and one RCN destroyer were proceeding with all haste to the scene of the incident. The Helicopter was proposing off at daylight. The weather at the time was extremely adverse for rescue operations.
7. Received a progress report from the Communications Technician cruising the southern and interior B.C. area. Nothing had been heard except very weak signals originated by shipping in the Atlantic.
8. Searchmaster Whitehorse advised RCC that the northern sector had been adequately covered as far south as a line between Fort St John and Banks Island on the Pacific Coast. Searchmaster Whitehorse and RCC also discussed the problem of a decision in calling off the search. The AOC NWAC was in Whitehorse and would discuss this matter with the senior USAF officer there.
9. The feasibility of basing Whitehorse aircraft at a more southern base to aid in searching the B.C. area was discussed. It was decided to use the base at Fort St John should Whitehorse aircraft be required to assist in the southern sector.
10. One Lancaster from Whitehorse and one Lancaster from Edmonton was dispatched to 12 Group, Vancouver, to assist in "Operation Baker 36."

Weather

11. Whitehorse area: Poor search weather. Ceilings down to 2000 feet and visibility 1 to 4 miles in snow. During the afternoon there was brief improvement to 8000 feet and 15 miles.

Snow began again in the evening.

Fort Nelson area: Low cloud general over the area. Intermittent snow.

Southern B.C. area: Generally poor. On the coast and at Carmi and Penticton ceiling ranged from zero to 2000 feet and visibility was restricted by snow and fog. Kimbelry was the only place showing improvement, where in the morning the ceiling was 2500 feet and visibility 5 miles. In the afternoon the ceiling improved to 20,000 feet and the visibility to 40 miles.

Northern Sector Operations

12. No search was carried out due to adverse weather conditions.

Southern Sector Operations

13. No searching carried out on this day as 4th Rescue and 12 Group Vancouver, had been relieved of search duties on Operation Mike in order to institute a full out effort for Operation Baker 36.

February 15

General Resume

1. Operation Mike had died down considerably in intensity. There are no new leads to date. The radio silence imposed on spectrum 8230 to 8330 has been rigidly followed but has produced no results.

Weather

2. Whitehorse area: Overcast with continuous snow. Blowing snow in the afternoon. Visibility 2 to 8 miles. Ceiling 2500 to 5000 feet.

Northern B.C. area: Continuous snow, with visibility often less than one mile.

Northern Sector Operations

3. Three C54's and one Lancaster carried out sweeps of tracks 15 miles apart in the areas north and south of Whitehorse that had not been covered by the wide visibility type search. The C54's logged 19 hours and 45 minutes, the Lancaster 6 hours 5 minutes. This completes coverage of the area allotted to Whitehorse. All searching to date produced nil results.

Southern Sector Operations

4. Two C54's not required for Operation Baker 36 attempted to search areas in the mountains south of Fort St John but returned to base after 9 hours 40 minutes due to adverse weather.

February 16

General Resume

1. There are no new leads to date. The RCC felt that further search effort was not justified unless to investigate reports received from ground or air observers.
2. Since no reports have been received by the newly established D/F stations or by other radio stations, hope of there being any survivors aboard AF2469 has almost vanished.

Weather

3. Whitehorse area: VFR conditions over the area Whitehorse and north all day, although the cloud bases were not particularly high in the regions north of Snag; when they were in the 4000 to 6000 ft range. South and east of Whitehorse, snow and low cloud prevented visual search.

Northern B.C. area: Unstable due to continuous snow, which gave poor ceilings and visibilities.

Northern Sector Operations

4. No search due to weather.

Southern Sector Operations

5. No search due to weather.

February 17

General Resume

1.                   Advised AFHQ Ottawa that the signals silence had been very effective but produced no results insofar as locating AF2469 was concerned. Advised AFHQ that radio silence on spectrum 8230 to 8330 kcs no longer required.
2.                   CG AAC Ft Richardson, Alaska recommended a cut down on Operation Mike, a token force only was to be used to investigate all rumors and reports.
3.                   Forest Ranger at Fort St John reported seeing single column of smoke rising from the top of a ridge 10 miles SSW of mile 188 on Alcan Highway. No habitation in the area. One C64 from Fort Nelson investigated the area with nil results. Flying time 3 hours.
4.                   A conference between USAF and RCAF authorities at Whitehorse was being organized to discuss and decide on the plausibility of further searching for AF2469.

Weather

5.   Whitehorse area: Clear with unlimited visibility.

                    Northern B.C. area: The snow and low ceilings persisted, preventing any visual search.

Northern Sector Operations

6.                   Nil searching carried out.

Southern Sector Operations

7.                   Nil search carried out as all available aircraft were employed on Operation Baker 36.

February 18

General Resume

1. No decision has as yet been reached regarding discontinuance of Operation Mike.
2. Search activity has almost come to a stop. There were no areas allotted for search on this date.
3. A report was received from the B.C. Police at Cranbrook, B.C. to the effect that on 2 Feb 50 a resident of Waldo, B.C., had spotted three definite large smoke puffs repeated at intervals all afternoon. The puffs were observed on Gold Mountain, southwest of Waldo and near the International boundary. This was the area from which three other reports were received regarding heavy low flying aircraft on the night of 26 Jan. One C45 was ordered to land at Cranbrook, pick up the person who had reported the smoke, and carry out a detailed search of the area. The mission was cancelled due to adverse weather.

Operations

4. Nil searching was carried out.

Weather

5. Whitehorse area: Overcast at 9,000 msl or higher. Snow began in the early afternoon and visibility was reduced to 2 to 5 miles.

B.C. area: Continuous snow reduced the visibility to 1 to 5 miles. Overcast low cloud obscured the mountain peaks in the area.

February 19

General Resume

1. No decision has as yet been reached regarding discontinuance of Operation Mike.
2. A report was received from Burwash Landing, Y.T. (just west of Whitehorse) stating that an Indian had sighted what he believed to be a land and snow slide on a mountain in the Klune Lake area near Burwash. Large numbers of carion birds had gathered around the slide. One S51 Helicopter and one C47 with a para-rescue team aboard were dispatched to investigate. Subsequent close investigation disclosed the slide to be very small, not large enough to cover a C54. Surrounding area was searched with nil results.

Operations

3. Nil search operations except that to investigate the above report. Total flying time was 5 hours 20 minutes for the C47 and 8 hours 15 minutes for the S51.

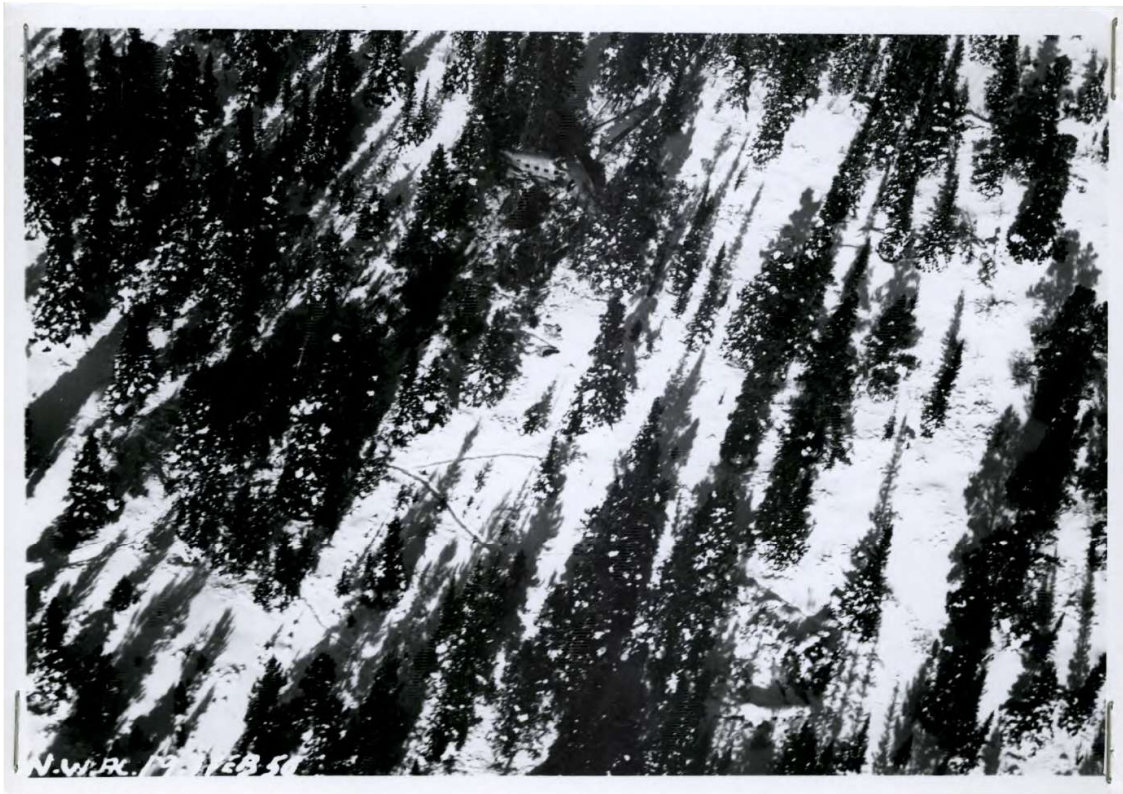
Weather

4. Whitehorse area: Broken cloudiness with ceilings generally above 10000 feet. Visibility good except reduced to 2 miles in snow showers in the Snag area in the afternoon.

Northern B.C. area: Over the inland section the weather was good. On the coast snow showers reduced visibility to 1 to 2 miles and ceilings were in the 2000 to 4000 ft range.

APPENDIX "I"  
TO 39-2-1/29 (SASO)  
DATED 24 APR 50

1. The photograph of AF1015 attached below indicates how difficult it is to spot an aircraft that has crashed in coniferous and snow covered mountainous country. This photograph was taken from a height of 300 feet. Even though the pilot of AF1015 knew the exact location of this crash he could not spot it from the air for some considerable time.





R. C. A. F. PHOTOGRAPH  
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NEGATIVE

No. .... Unit.....

APPENDIX "I"  
TO: 39-2-1/29 (SASO)  
Dated 24 APR 50

2. The photograph of AF1037 attached below indicates how effective is the red wing and tail markings on an ice and snow background even from 1000 feet. Crashes in this type of country are usually easily spotted from the air, unless snowfall or blowing snow has covered or partially covered the aircraft.





R. C. A. F. PHOTOGRAPH  
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NEGATIVE

Unit

February 20

Termination of Operation Mike

1. General Armstrong CG AAC AND A/V/M Dunlap AOC NWAC advised RCC that search operations for AF2469 were to be curtailed except for that necessary to investigate special reports. Operations Mike HQ at Whitehorse were closed effective 20 Feb 50.
2. All concerned were advised of the above decision and advised that the RCAF Rescue Centre at NWAC HQ Edmonton would co-ordinate and control investigations into any pertinent reports received.
3. All participating units and agencies assisting in Operations Mike were stood down.

Weather

4. Whitehorse area: Very good ceilings and visibilities. Broken to scattered high cloud over the area.

Northern B.C.: CAVU over the area, except on the coast, where the overcast clouds were based at 2000 to 5000 feet.

Weather Summary - 26 Jan 50

1. The following is a summary of the weather conditions over the NWSR for the period on 26 Jan during which USAF aircraft 2649 became lost.

SYNOPTIC SITUATION

2. Surface Chart: An extensive high pressure area covered Alaska with a ridge of high extending southeastward through northern B.C. to Alberta and southern Saskatchewan. A low was centered off the southern tip of Greenland with a trough running westward from this low over northern continental Canada and the arctic islands. No active fronts lay across the route being flown by the aircraft.

3. 700 Millibar Map: On the 700 mb, or approximately 10,000 ft, map there was a ghii over western Alaska and a low centered near Cambridge Bay, NWT. From the low a trough extended southwestward to the Queen Charlotte Islands. The northwesterly flow over the route between Elmendorf and Fort Nelson, as indicated by the NNW winds of 45 to 55 knots measured at Northway and Whitehorse at 270300Z.

ROUTE WEATHER

4. Except for ground fog at Elmendorf at the time the aircraft departed from that base, the weather was clear over the first portion of the route. Both Gulkana and Sheep Mountain reports show nil cloud and excellent visibility at the time 2649 passed over these stations.

5. In the Northway area the aircraft was either in cloud or above a broken layer of cloud. Northway reports show a broken layer of cloud at 6000 feet above the station (i.e., approximately 8000 msl). By the time the flight passed over Snag it should have been free of the cloud as the Snal ceiling at the time was estimated at 9,500 feet, which would mean that the cloud base was well above, 11,000 msl. Snag did report three-tenths of cloud at 5000 feet above ground, but this amount of cloud should not have made instrument flying necessary.

6. At 2330Z, within three minutes of ETA over Aishihik, conditions at Aishihik were overcast at 22,000 feet, lower broken at 9,000 feet, with visibility 20 miles in light snow. If cloud heights in this report were correctly estimated, then the aircraft should still have been VFR as the actual cloud base would have been 12,000 feet above msl.

7. If the assumption is made that 2649 continued south on course at 10,000 feet, it would have encountered clouds somewhere between Aishihik and Whitehorse, and instrument flying would have become necessary. Whitehorse's report for an assumed ETA over the station shows an obscured snow ceiling of 2500 feet and visibility variable to 3 miles. If the aircraft had passed south and east of Whitehorse it would have broken into the clear some 50 miles south of Whitehorse. During the period 27001Z to 270400Z both Teslin and Watson Lake had ceilings well above 10,000 feet and visibility and these two stations was excellent.

8. Had the aircraft proceeded still further south, the only weather reported was light snow at Smith River, where visibility remained better than 15 miles. At this station the ceiling was also good, being at the lowest 11,000 msl. For Smith River southward, CAVU conditions prevailed, with clear skies from Fort Nelson to Great Falls.

9. In summary, the route weather was:

Elmendorf to Sheep Mountain - Clear

Northwest area - Patchy low cloud, intermittent instrument weather

Snag to Aishihik - Flight at 10000 feet would have been underneath a layer of Altocumulus, if heights of clouds were correctly estimated by the ground observers.

Aishihik to Teslin - Instrument conditions. Icing in the clouds.

Teslin to Smith River - Flight path underneath a layer of Altocumulus based at 12,000 msl.

Smith River to Great Falls - Clear

FORECAST

10. The forecast issued by Whitehorse District Aviation Forecast Office valid 261600Z to 270400Z would have been available to the aircraft prior to take off. A copy of this forecast is attached. Although this forecast did not fully anticipate the low ceiling and visibilities in the Whitehorse area which persisted during the period, it was fundamentally correct. Route conditions as forecast compared with actual observed conditions, and the forecast upper winds compared favourably with measured upper winds. The actual forecast follows:

MA XY 261600-270400Z

NOTE - ALL HEIGHTS ARE ABV MSL XCP CIGS IN TRML FCSTS  
PROG

1040 MB HI CNTRD WRN ALSK INTSFYG. RIDGE SEWD INTO ALTA WKNG.  
POLAR FNT WARM E BARTER ISL AND KOTZEBUE-STNRY CURVG SWD AROUND  
ALSK AND OFFSHR GLFALSKN CST. MOIST OVRNG AHD OF WARM FNT XPCDT  
AFCT LIARD RGN. DRIR AIR ALF OVER CNTRL ALSK XPCDT AFCT WRN RGNS,  
AMS LWR LVLS FAIRLY MOIST SLGTLY UNSTBL BCMG DRY STB BY 0400Z.

XY-1-2-3-4-5

SNAG AISHIHIK WHITEHORSE WOLF RNG AMD LIARD RGNS  
BRKN AC BASE 11 THSD TOPS 13 THSD. SCTD LCLLY BRKN SC LYRS BASE  
4-7 THSD TOP 85 HDN. OCNL LGT SNW FROM SC. VSBY OVER 10, LGT RIME  
ICG AND LGT TURBC IN SC. OCNL LT SNW FROM AC.

WINDS AMD TMPS

SNAG AISHIHIK WHITEHORSE AND WOLF RNG RGNS

8/340/35/-20 10/350/40/-22 12/350/40/-24

LIARD RGN

8/020/30/-27 10/020/35/-29 12/020/40/-33

ZK, 80 ① ACL30. 0200Z ②

XY, 25 ① ①8SW SC85 110ACL30. 2200Z 90 ①50 ①ACL30 ST80. 0400Z ②

QH. 90 ① ACL30 OCNL S-

END

1. The following agencies participated in the search for the missing USAF C54 AF2469.

- (1) 10th Rescue Sqn USAF
- (2) 4th Rescue Sqn USAF
- (3) Strategic Air Command USAF
- (4) Military Air Transport Service USAF
- (5) 8th Troop Carrier Sqn USAF
- (6) 5th Army US Army
- (7) Service Support Unit Camp Carson Colorado
- (8) SAR Flight Whitehorse
- (9) SAR Flight Ft Nelson
- (10) NMAC "K" Flight Edmonton
- (11) Winter Experimental Establishment RCAF
- (12) 414 Sqn RCAF
- (13) 408 Sqn RCAF
- (14) 412 Sqn RCAF
- (15) 435 Sqn RCAF
- (16) CJATC Rivers, Manitoba
- (17) 111 "K" Flight Winnipeg
- (18) 121 "K" Flight Vancouver
- (19) 123 SAR Flight Vancouver
- (20) Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry (Airborne)
- (21) USAF AFB's in Montana, Washington and Alaska
- (22) RCAF Stations in Yukon, B.C. and Alberta
- (23) US Civil Aeronautics Administration
- (24) Canadian Department of Transport
- (25) Royal Canadian Corps of Signals
- (26) Airways and Air Communication Service USAF
- (27) Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- (28) British Columbia Provincial Police
- (29) Canadian and US Amateur Radio Operators
- (30) Canadian and US citizens

- (31) RCC Pacific Area Vancouver
- (32) RCC Western Area Edmonton (Control Centre)

FLYING TIMES

Note: The flying times listed hereunder do not include the flying times of numerous aircraft that carried out visual or radio searches while flying through the search area on other duties.

RCAF

C 47	532:55
Lancaster	114:10
C45	32:25
C64	44:40
PBY5A	105:25
PV1	2:10
S51	5:45
Vampire	<u>4:45</u>
Total	842:15

USAF

C47	935:45
B17	518:20
B29	513:35
C54	190:40
L17	28:15
LC126	12:55
L5	<u>12:30</u>
Total	2222:15
Grand Total	<u>3064:30</u>

SQUARE MILE COVERAGE (NAUTICAL)

1. The figures in para 3 are approximate only and indicate the number of square miles that were searched each day. The visibility distance used ranged from ½ to 5 miles. The number of scanners (pairs of eyes) aboard each aircraft ranged from 2 to 7 in the C47's to 10 in the B29's.
  
2. Contour searches were carried out over 377,280 square miles of terrain ranging from flat prairie land to the most rugged mountainous country on the North American continent. Approximately 380,000 square miles (over and above that searched by contour method) was covered by wide visibility of (5 to 10 miles) searches (sweeps). Therefore, searching was carried out over an area of 757,290 square miles.

Visual or Radio and Visual Searches

3.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Northern Sector</u>	<u>Southern Sector</u>	<u>Vancouver Sector</u>	<u>Total</u>
28 Jan	10,710	95,200	-	105,910
29 Jan	58,310	26,460	-	84,770
30 Jan	86,870	33,480	-	120,350
30 Jan (night)	17,850	-	-	17,850
31 Jan	59,400	57,060	-	116,460
31 Jan (night)	8,640	-	-	8,640
1 Feb	55,800	86,940	-	142,740
2 Feb	39,135	17,280	3,960	60,375
3 Feb	11,700	15,120	4,320	31,140
4 Feb	5,850	-	-	5,850
5 Feb	36,520	-	-	36,520
6 Feb	16,920	-	3,250	20,170
7 Feb	24,840	5,400	-	30,240
8 Feb	17,900	2,160	3,600	23,660
9 Feb	26,490	-	5,600	32,090
10 Feb	24,570	2,160	-	26,730
11 Feb	63,500	-	1,800	65,300
12 Feb	-	-	-	-
13 Feb	-	4,320	900	5,220

APPENDIX "H"

<u>Date</u>	<u>Northern Sector</u>	<u>Southern Sector</u>	<u>Vancouver Sector</u>	<u>Total</u>
14 Feb	100	-	-	100
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Totals	<u>565,105</u>	<u>345,580</u>	<u>23,430</u>	<u>934,115</u>

Plus area covered by special sweeps (para 2 above)

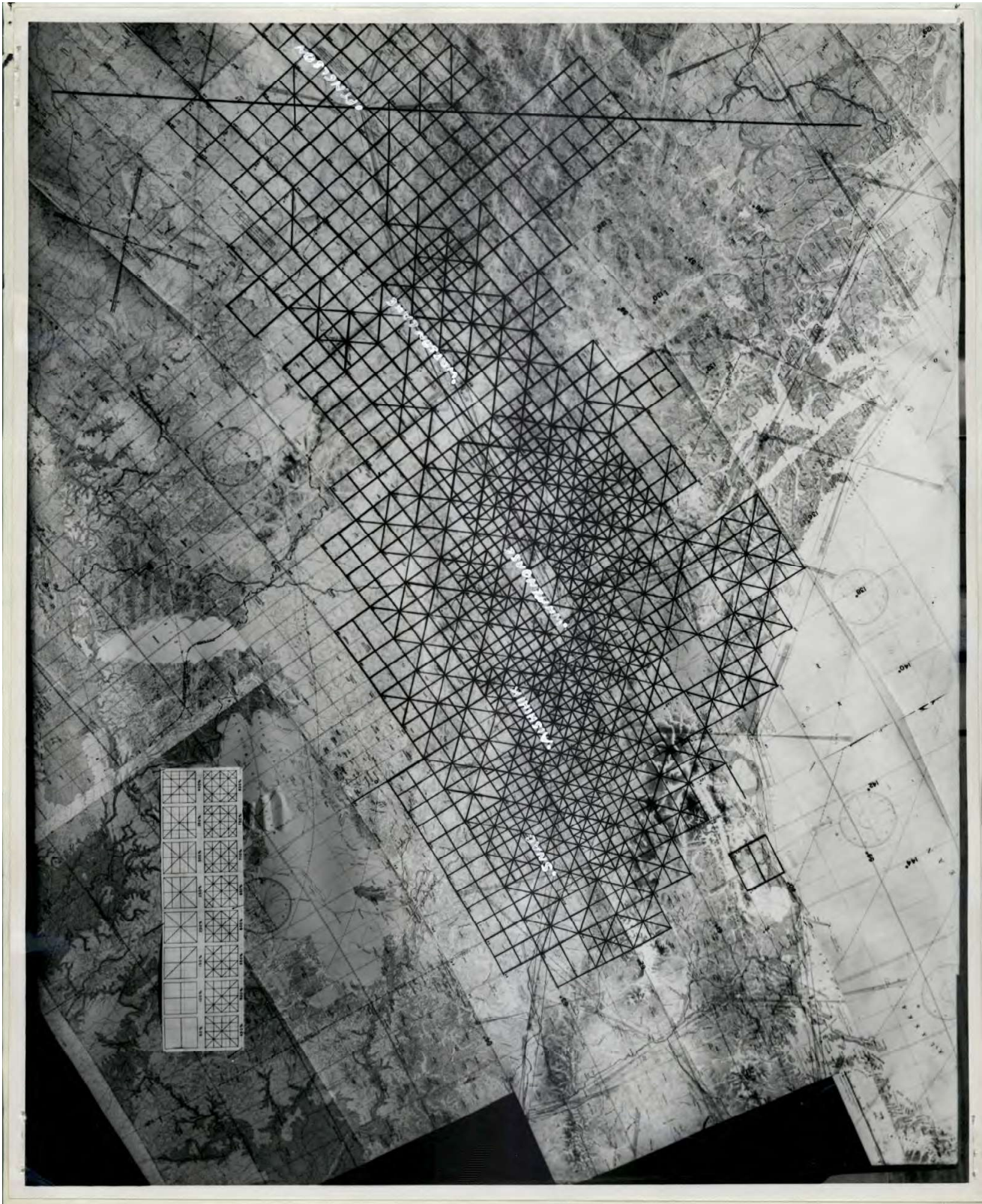
GRAND TOTAL 1,214,115

4. Searching was carried out over an area of 757,280 square miles but as several of the more probable individual areas were covered as many as eight times, the total search coverage is 1,214,115 square miles.

5. In addition to the above, 246 hours and 35 minutes were flown on radio sweeps during which visual searching was not possible due to adverse weather.

APPENDIX "D"  
TO 39-2-1/29(SASO)  
DATED 24 APR 50

1. Attached is a photograph of the NORTHERN sector of the main plotting chart in the RCC, indicating the percent coverage for contour searches.





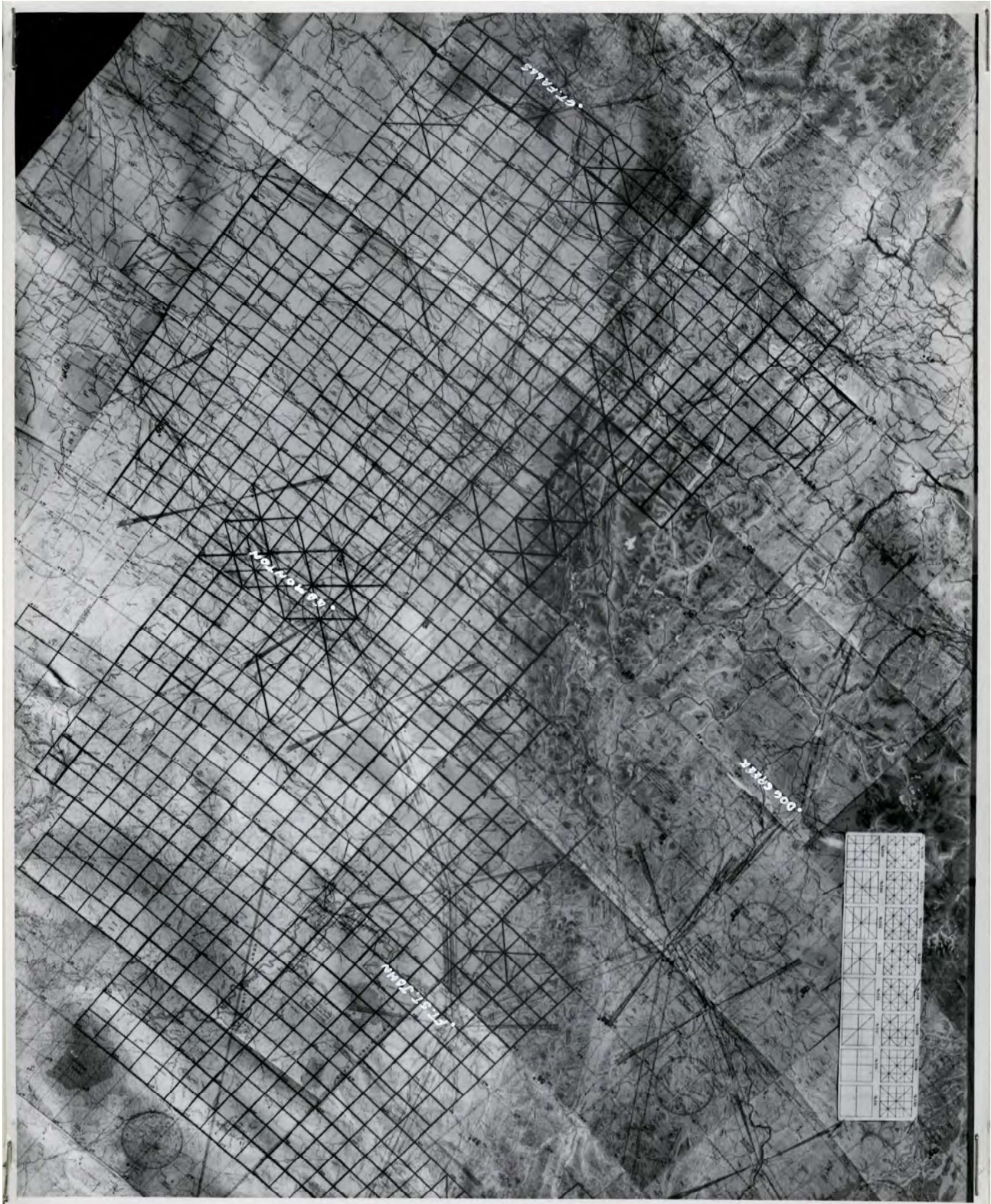
R. C. A. F. PHOTO  
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NEGATIVE  
A/B/C-758 Unit No. A C

Not for sale

APPENDIX "D"  
TO 39-2-1/29(SASO)  
DATED 24 APR 50

1. Attached is a photograph of the SOUTHERN sector of the main plotting chart in the RCC indicating the percent coverage for contour searches.





A. F. PHOTOGRAPH  
CROWN COPYRIGHT  
NEGATIVE

No. *NWAC-289* Unit. *NWAC*

APPENDIX "D"  
TO 39-2-1/29(SASO)  
DATED 24 APR 50

1. The attached photograph indicates the areas covered by contour and sweep searching in the NORTHERN sector.



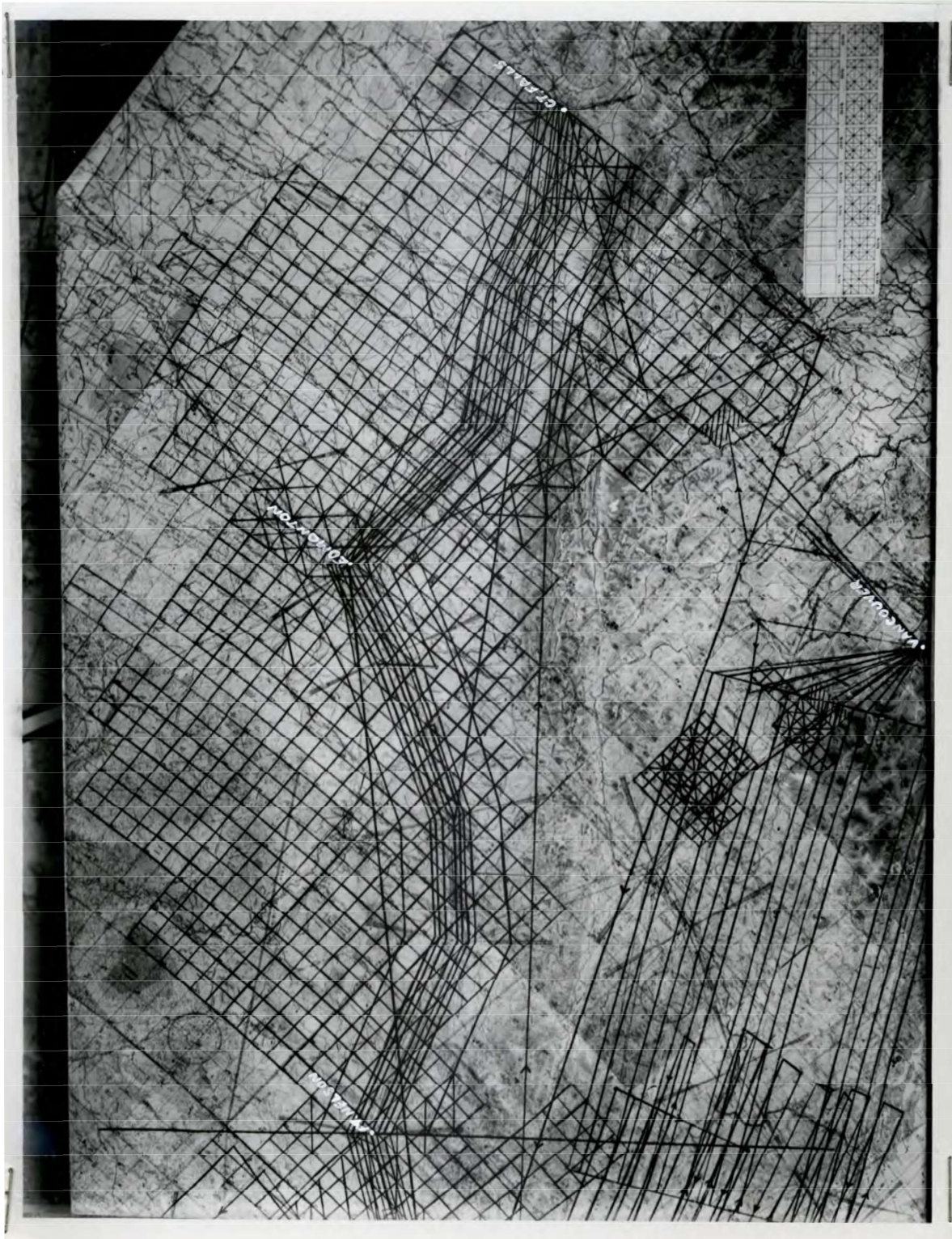


R. C. A. F. PHOTOGRAPH  
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NEGATIVE

No *N.W.A.C.*-260 Unit *N.W.A.C.*

APPENDIX "D"  
TO 39-2-1/29(SASO)  
DATED 24 APR 50

1. The attached photo indicates the areas covered by contour and sweep searching in the SOUTHERN and VANCOUVER sectors.





R. C. A. F. PHOTOGRAPH  
CROWN COPYRIGHT  
NEGATIVE

No. *NWAC-761* Unit. *NWAC*

INVESTIGATION INTO PERTINENT REPORTS

1. On 21 Feb RCC received a report that Indians near Fort McLeod B.C. (55N 123W) had heard a large explosion on the night of 26 Jan 50. One C45 carried out a close search of the area with nil results. Flying time 12 hours, 55 minutes.
2. On 28 Feb, 4th Rescue Squadron advised RCC that one Cub and one Cessna of CAA at Libby, Montana had searched the area near Cranbrook where smoke signals had been spotted, (see para 3 for 18 Feb 50). This area could not be searched sooner due to adverse weather. Nothing was sighted. Flying time 14 hours.
3. On 28 Feb one SA10 of 4th Rescue Squadron searched an area centred by 4810N 12140W. Reports had been received that a fire had been sighted in that area. Results nil. Flying time 3 hours.
4. On 8 Apr 50 a USAF C54 northbound reported spotting an object resembling an aircraft on the south banks of the Peace River Where Amber two airway crosses the river. It was getting too dark To investigate further. One northbound USAF aircraft and one south-Bound RCAF aircraft checked this report on morning of 9 Apr 50 with Nil results. Flying time nil.
5. NWAC RCC will continue to investigate all pertinent reports received.



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