

AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES IN AUSTRALIA

April 20, 1942
RR.jp

MEMORANDUM:

TO : GENERAL BRETT

1. Enclosed herewith report submitted by Major Hipps concerning the Philippine bombing. The recommendations contained therein are concurred in. Steps are being taken to carry out the 1st and 3rd recommendation.

2. It is recommended that a message be sent to the Chief of the Army Air Forces substantially as follows:-

A.F.C.E. Equipment in this area is definitely not functioning properly, and is too difficult to maintain without extremely specialized personnel. It does not now provide even a fair automatic pilot during long bombardment missions. Recommend this equipment be withdrawn from use and replaced by Sperry automatic pilot.

3. In addition to the results shown in this report attention is invited to the fact that there were some fighters still in action in Mindanao. The first day they were used from dispersed fields, but the second day one was placed on the main airdrome and was sent into the air when enemy planes were sighted. By using this system two enemy float-planes were shot down the second day. Unfortunately, due to pilot error, one P-40 crashed on take-off, killing the pilot. P-40s were also engaged Monday evening in straffing the airdrome at Davao, and it is believed that several enemy airplanes were damaged during this attack. One P-40 was slightly damaged when the end of the wing hit the hangar during the attack.

4. It is understood that an additional supply of aviation fuel and oxygen has been dispensed to Mindanao. It is further recommended that:-

1. Additional fighter aircraft be furnished Mindanao
2. Such aircraft be provided with
 - (a) Dive bomber gear
 - (b) Long range dropable tanks,

3. From time to time additional bombing raids be made from Australia as a base, when the additional supplies and equipment are available in Mindanao.

RALPH ROYCE,
Brigadier General, U. S. Army

- 2 -

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PHILIPPINE ISLAND MISSION

Flight composed of eleven (11) B-25's

<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Co-Pilot</u>	<u>Nav.</u>	<u>Bomb.</u>	<u>Gunner</u>	<u>Gunner</u>	<u>Eng.</u>
1. Davies	McAfee	Clapp	Hubbard	Young	Newman	Hayes
2. Strickland	Hipps	Brindel	Bingal	Crutchfield	Cooper	White
3. Lowry	Walker	Bean	Wherry	Regan	Fresquez	Rumager
4. Smith	Talley	Grant	Oliver	Simmons	Clanton	Fall
5. Maul	West	Culp	Cook	Moore	Pryor	Fowler
6. Peterson	Mangan	Hanson	Butler	Salles	Whinsett	Cooper
7. Wilson	Keeter	Tisonyai	Word	Wood	Morse	Taylor
8. Feltham	Linn	Heyman	Owen	Cates	Nelson	Hatcher
9. Heiss	Townsend	Bevan	Smith	Snipers	Miller	Young
10. Gunn	Bender	Midgett	Thompson	Paradise		
11. Schmidt	Crew not given					

Line Chief M/Sgt. Adams

Departed Charters Towers in elements beginning at 0030 Saturday April 11th, 1942. The entire flight arrived at Darwin, refueled and prepared for flight to Del Monte. Col. Davies was late coming in but preparations were carried out normally, so that when he arrived the entire flight was ready except for Lt. Schmidt who had a cut tyre, and did not participate in the flight.

The first flight departed Darwin at 10:35 local time 11/4. A deviating route was followed so as to avoid detection from Ambon. One cruiser was observed 150 miles south of Mindanao Island proceeding N.E. The cruiser was too far to the flight's west to determine speed. The entire 10 planes arrived in Del Monte during period of one hour before and after sunset.

Preparations had been made for flight at Del Monte. There the formation of B-25's were broken into two flights of five planes each to facilitate dispersion at auxiliary fields - Valencia and Maramag approximately 25 miles south of Del Monte. The flights were:

1st Flight Valencia

Lt. Col. Davies, Capt. Lowery, Lt. Wilson, Lt. Heiss and Capt. Gunn.

2nd Flight Maramag

Lt. Strickland and Major Hipps, Lt. Maul, Lt. Peterson, Lt. Feltham

Each flight was given separate targets for each mission.

The first mission was run from Del Monte.

MISSION 1. Flt. Leader Lt. Smith took lead when Lt. Strickland's bomb sight failed to operate.

Mission search for possible Japanese convoy S.W. of Cebu with alternate target shipping in Cebu Harbor

Time of Takeoff 0605 Time of attack 0847

Time and place of landing 0909 - Maramag.
Loading 5 - 500
Number of planes - 5

FORMATION: Five ship V Altitude 3500 ft.

OBSERVATIONS: Three medium sized transports tied to pier at Cebu City. Two large transports in channel. Two small transports just north of docks, 3 Destroyers south of Harbor and two north of Harbor.

RESULTS: Entire flight bombed the three transports tied to docks. Direct hits were observed on each ship also on docks and warehouses. Fire was burning on docks before attack which were enlarged. One transport was heeled over on her side by waterline hit. Enemy aircraft observed. Two floatplanes attacked formation. Planes had speed over 200 m.p.h., had single float and were biplanes. One floatplane was shot down by rear gunners.

Enemy AA encountered - light and ineffective from destroyers and shore. No more than one battery of 3 inch.

LOSSES: Friendly nil.

Enemy - one floatplane and pilot. Three ships hit, one definitely sunk, two probable. Docks and warehouses damaged.

MISSION 11. Flt. Leader Capt. Lowery. Col. Davies and Capt. Gunn did not get off.

Mission: Attack shipping Cebu Harbor.

Time and place of takeoff: Del Monte

Time and place of landing: Valencia

Time of Attack: 0815 local.

5 - 500 bombs/ship

OBSERVATIONS: Same as Mission 1.

RESULTS: Three passes made at target. Direct hit on medium Transport and near misses on others. Hits on docks.

Enemy aircraft encountered: Four floatplanes attacked formation, two were shot down by rear gunners - individual attacks made by enemy planes.

Enemy A.A. encountered: Light and ineffective from destroyers and shore batteries.

LOSSES: Friendly nil

Enemy - Two floatplanes and pilots

Hit on medium transport probably sunk. Hits on docks - fires started.

Missions were also run on the 12th by the two B-17's flown by Capt. Bostrom and Teats. Capt. Bostrom could not find reported Convoy near Mindoro Island and attacked alternate target Nichols Field at 29,000 ft. His string of bombs fell along runway where enemy aircraft were lined up. Fires were started which were visible for forty miles. Capt Teats searched area and bombed large transport in Batangas Harbor. A direct hit was scored on

stern of ship with 500 lb. bomb. No enemy aircraft were encountered by either plane. On return from mission one B-17 was hit by bomb from dive bomber and destroyed on ground, and second B-17 was slightly damaged.

MISSION 111.

Number ships - Flt. Leader Lt. Lowery.
Time and place takeoff: Valencia
Time and place landing: Valencia
Loading: 5 - 500 lb. bombs/ship

Mission: Attack shipping Cebu Harbor.

OBSERVATIONS: Same as Mission 1., except one additional large 10-15,000 ton transport was anchored in harbor, and another large transport was observed 20 miles S.W. of Cebu headed south.

RESULTS: Formation attacked large transport S.W. of Cebu and had close miss near stern - ship apparently damaged. Formation also made pass at Docks - direct hits observed. Fires burning from morning attack.
Enemy aircraft encountered: Formation was attacked by two enemy floatplanes on takeoff.
Enemy AA encountered: Light and ineffective over Cebu City

LOSSES: Friendly nil
Enemy - large transport damaged.
Docks again damaged.

MISSION 1V.

Flt. Leader Lt. Strickland.
Time and place takeoff: Maramag 1605
Time and place landing: Maramag 1850

OBSERVATIONS: Additional large transport in Cebu Harbor Channel. Large destroyer towing small transport course North just south of Cebu and large transport 20 miles south of Cebu Harbor headed N.E.

RESULTS: Flight bombed two large transports in Harbor Channel from 4,000 ft. Bombs fell over target with several near misses. Damage not known.
Enemy aircraft encountered: none
Enemy AA encountered: Light over target.

LOSSES: Friendly nil
Enemy - probable damage to large Transport.

MISSION V.

Time and place takeoff: Maramag and Valencia 0615
Time and place of landing: Maramag and Valencia 0900

Mission: Attack shipping docks and airdromes installation at Davao City with all available ships. Nine ships attacked targets.

OBSERVATIONS: Two medium sized 7 - 10000 ton transports and one destroyer in channel. Approximately 20 ships - bombers - fighters, and one Lockheed Hudson type lined up on airdrome. Some were dummy planes.

RESULTS: Five planes attacked shipping and scored near misses with light bombs. Two planes attacked airdrome from 2000 ft. with 100 lb bombs and dispersal area with bombs and under turrets. Two bombs and machine gun fire into lined up ships and several bombs into dispersal area starting large fires. Two planes attacked dock area with 100 lb. bombs from 2000 ft. direct hits scored, explosion and fires observed.

Enemy aircraft observed: Four floatplanes attacked the element bombing shipping. One shot down. slight damage to one ship. Enemy AA fire encountered: Three inch AA fire from destroyer only. Machine gun fire observed from numerous positions near docks.

LOSSES: Friendly nil

Enemy - one float plane shot down. Slight damage to medium transport. Heavy damage to docks and warehouses. Damage to aircraft on ground and oil or gas dump destroyed.

MISSION VI.

Flt. Leader Maj. Hipps
Time and place of takeoff: 1645 Maramag
Time and place of landing: 1920 Del Monte

Mission: Search for Carrier N. E. of Mindanao. Secondary attack shipping Cebu.

OBSERVATIONS: No aircraft carrier found after search up East Coast of Mindanao so secondary target at Cebu was attacked. Four large 10,000 - 15,000 ton transports were lined up in harbor opposite dock area where fires were still burning from previous attacks. Beached and burning transports were visible. Six other small naval craft were visible and 3 destroyers were anchored south of harbor area.

RESULTS: Flight attacked large transports scoring direct hits on the largest and near misses on second. The one on which direct hits were scored was observed burning and listing slightly.

Enemy aircraft observed: none

Enemy AA observed: Medium (heaviest encountered) over target from shore battery and destroyers behind formation.

Losses: Friendly nil

Enemy - large transport badly damaged or sunk. Second damaged.

MISSION V11: Leader Capt. Lowery

Number planes - four 5 - 500 lb. bombs.

Mission: Attack shipping Davao City harbor.

OBSERVATIONS: Two transports, medium sized destroyer in Channel. Few aircraft on ground at airdrome.

RESULTS: Near misses on one transport and seven bombs hit on dock area causing more fires.

Enemy aircraft observed: 1 seaplane attacked formation. Three "O" fighters attacked Lt. Heiss who had become separated from formation. He immediately turned into clouds and escaped without damage.

Enemy AA: From destroyer only - light and behind formation.

LOSSES: Friendly nil.

Enemy - near misses causing damage to transport. Direct hits on docks causing more damage there.

Nine B-25's complete with crews and three passengers each left Del Monte individually between 12.45 [0045] and 4.00 [0400]. All planes arrived safely at Batchelor Field between 8.45 and 12.00. The only unusual incident occurred to Lt. Peterson whose right engine lost a spark plug two hours from Del Monte with resultant roughness and loss of power.

Ships were cleared from Batchelor Field as rapidly as possible. Five departed for Charters Towers on afternoon of 16th [14th]. One, Col. Davies pilot, with General Royce and other passengers for Melbourne, departed for Melbourne via Alice Springs.

Three planes RON at Batchelor, two for light maintenance, and the third with Major Hipps and Lt. Strickland awaiting Captain Gunn in the last plane.

Two B-25's cleared Batchelor for Charters Towers by noon, April 15th.

Captain Gunn, after working to improvise a belly tank to replace the belly tank for his ship which had not been placed in bomb proof and was destroyed in raid on B-17, departed Del Monte at 0430 15th and arrived in

Batchelor at 1400 local time. He carried three passengers, a navigator and had been picked up in Del Monte and one stowaway, Sgt. John Jefferies, 6890016, 28th Bomb Squadron, 19th Bomb Group, who was placed in custody of C.O. AC Detach. Batchelor Field, pending investigation.

Major Hipps and Lt. Strickland departed Batchelor for Melbourne via Alice Springs with seven passengers destined for Melbourne, at 1430.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That all units on being provided with new equipment be required to conduct service training on equipment before tactical use of equipment. Bombing of flights could have been 50% more effective.
2. A.F.C.E. was very inefficient. 50% of sights and stabilizers were inoperative.
3. Recommend that immediate steps be taken to bring highly trained pilots and technicians who have no equipment with which to operate in Philippine area into the Australian area. Tactical situation is very precarious in Mindanao, and if these men are to be salvaged it must be done immediately.

SUMMATION OF DAMAGE TO ENEMY:

Mission 1: Lt. Smith leading.
1 enemy floatplane shot down.
3 transports direct hits - one capsized.
Docks and warehouses burned and destroyed.

Mission 2: Lt. Lowery leading - Cebu
2 enemy float planes shot down.
1 transport hit and sunk
Docks and warehouses damaged by direct hits, fires started

B-17 missions: 1 Capt. Bostrom - 2 Capt. Teats.
1. Aircraft and installations at Nichols Field damaged and destroyed.
2. One large transport hit and probably sunk at Batangas

Mission 3. Capt. Lowery
One large transport damaged - near miss
Docks at Cebu damaged

Mission 4. Lt. Strickland
Two large transports damaged - near misses

Mission 5. Lt. Strickland, Lt. Smith, Capt Lowery - Davao City.
One floatplane shot down.
One medium transport damaged by near miss.
Docks and warehouses extensively damaged
One plane destroyed on ground by aircraft

Fire probably more by bombs in area. Oil and gas destroyed in dispersal area.

Mission 6. Major Hipps - Cebu

One large 10,000-15,000 ton transport direct hit, burning and listing, probably sunk.

One large transport damaged - near misses

Mission 7: Captain Lowery - Davao City

One medium transport damaged - near miss

Docks and warehouses damaged by 7 500-lb. bombs

Fires started

SUMMATION:

5 planes destroyed

4 transports sunk or badly damaged

8 transports damaged by near misses

possibility of same ship having been damaged more than once

RESCUE:

32 passengers, including 16 officers, 2 civilian reporters, 3 interpreters, 11 enlisted men (4 Signal Corps), 1 stowaway, 6 combat crew B-17

William G. Hipps,
Major, Air Corps

18th April, 1942

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