

Air Attack Plan – Handbook and Discussion

Aircraft Operations Handbook – 9248, Chapter 60-80:

“Once air suppression has been ordered an air attack plan should be formed. Based on the set objectives and the current fire situation the Air Attack Pilot and I.C. should develop an air attack plan. The process should proceed as follows:

- *Draw a sketch map of the fire for orientation*
- *Discuss tactics with the I.C.*
- *Decide where to start dropping and preferred bombing run direction*
- *Make inspection runs of the drop area*

This should be accomplished prior to a tanker or helicopter entering the Fire Traffic Area.”

Air Attack Plan Discussion:

Leo Bunderson’s response to my question regarding this:

‘When SEAT 812 arrived on scene the Barnes Ranger told me to work the SEAT’s as I saw fit. I gave him (SEAT 812) instructions to drop on the right flank, and then to load-and-return. After about 3-4 drops the other SEAT arrived and I had both SEATs working the right flank for a few drops. When MN ATCO and the Fireboss’s arrived I had them work on the right flank to save structures. After working on some structures, I put them back on the right flank with the 2 SEAT’s.’

From Eric Martin’s response to my question:

“With the communication difficulties being experienced on air-to-ground between Leo and myself the discussions were short and to the point. Leo quotes me accurately; I’ll add that priority was given to the right flank. I thought at the time that if structures were immediately threatened with no personnel present to use the aircraft for structure protection; however, I cannot tell you with any degree of certainty if I actually communicated that to Leo or if it was just in my thoughts.

The “leader’s intent” was Right Flank, Structures as necessary and able, then Left Flank, in that order. I don’t think I was able to formulate such eloquent instructions for Leo on May 14th; it came out as he quotes with the addition of right flank being priority.

Soon after Jay Gallagher arrived on scene I transitioned the main ground contact on the fire to Jay; as he was able to physically talk with Leo. I remember saying to Jay something like: “If you can talk with him, here’s what I need and you’ve got the ball on Air-to-Ground.” After that, I went through Jay for Air Attack needs until around 1900 hours when Jay told me to go direct and I did so successfully until pumpkin time.”