



PACK ON UP SIDE DOWN LOOK BEFORE YOU PULL
THE RIP CORD

DITCHING DRILL This training is figured on the percent of available crews performing their weekly ditching drill. Air Force some time ago saw the necessity of practicing ditching drills weekly with so many planes flying over the water daily. Does this weekly drill pay off? Well! Air Force started out with 18% of crew men rescued from planes that ditched and today it's up to 72%. This 72% is for B-24s and covers the month of December, January and February. The February total of crew men saved being 95%. Think it over, is it worth 15 minutes of your crew's time once a week to go through a complete ditching drill. Regulations require every crew to practice a ditching drill every week and in the month of March there were only two Squadrons complying with the regulation 100%. Here's how the outfits stand for the month of March:

451 BOMB GROUP 461 BOMB GROUP
484 BOMB GROUP

SQDN.	PCT	SQDN	PCT	SQDN	PCT
724	90	764	82	824	93
725	95	765	92	825	82
726	98	766	100	826	93
727	95	767	100	827	87

EARLY RETURNS The primary purpose of heavy bombardment is to get into a target. Everything imaginable has been sent to this theater to enable us to do that job. Everything comes from

the production line in the states and occasionally we fail in the last step by having an early return.

One early return represents a tremendous waste of man hours, sweat and blood in getting material from the production line to operations. When the return is due to personal equipment it is indeed regrettable, since the majority of them can be avoided.

The early returns due to PE in the month of March were due to Oxygen failures. Yes, line crews perform inspections and maintenance of Oxygen equipment in A/C but a primary duty of the PEO is to indoctrinate and train flying and maintenance personnel in the proper use and maintenance of oxygen equipment. It is his duty to supervise the maintenance and make frequent inspections of oxygen equipment.

GROUP EARLY RETURNS

451	1
461	1
484	4

LIFE RAFT CHANGES On investigation of ditching reports and inspection of life rafts it was found that the rafts were not releasing properly. The 49th and the 55th Wings attacked the same problem from two different angles which will result in Air Force issuing two new Memos soon.

The 55th Wing found out that the stowage of items listed in the T.C. resulted in undue pressure on the compartment doors causing a binding at the pins. A new list of necessary items was worked out to decrease the contents of the raft and permit easy, uncrowded stowage of the compartment rafts.

At the same time the 49th Wing PEO and Capt. Volz, 451 Group PFO found trouble in the release mechanism. Out of 9 releases pulled 3 were found binding. The trouble was found in the inside release mechanism which works through a phenolic block. The binding in the 3 malfunctions was eliminated through 3 or 4 times. PEO Section at AF was notified immediately, they in turn had an Engineer in the field working on it the next day, who confirmed our procedure for remedying it. Word is already back in the states that a simpler mechanism is necessary to eliminate the malfunction.

The new Memo on life raft release mechanism will outline the procedure for inspections. The compartment doors must be released by the two handles on the outside of the fuselage and the CO2 cable disconnected. The inside release is then pulled and if there is any binding it will be necessary to reset the mechanism and pull the release through until it works freely. Maybe you have had some problem and found a way to remedy it, why not let us know so that we can pass it around and maybe eliminate someone else's headaches.

Part 2

April 1945 49th Wing Operations report