

HEADQUARTERS 55TH BOMBARDMENT WING (HV)
APO 520 US ARMY

14 August 1944
1815B

INTELLIGENCE ANNEX NO. 153)

TO OPERATIONS ORDER NO. 153)

Maps: GSGS No. 4072 EUROPE Air (NICE) 1:500,000

GSGS No. 4072 EUROPE Air (MARSEILLES) 1:500,000

GSGS No. 3982 EUROPE Air (MONTE LIMAR) 1:250,000

GSGS No. 2738 FRANCE 1:100,000 Sheets 37,38,42,43

Target Chart No. 6-86-NA (ARDECHE R/PONT ST. ESPRIT RR Br. FRANCE; for general area and IP)

Briefing Charts: No. BC 6-3 (PONT ST. ESPRIT HWY Br. FRANCE)

No. BC 6-4 (BOURG ST. ANDEOL HWY Br (RHONE) (FRANCE)

No. BC 6-5 (DONZERE HWY Br; FRANCE)

No. BC 6-6 (LE TEIL HWY Br, FRANCE)

Photographs: To be distributed to Groups concerned.

1. ENEMY SITUATION

a. FLAK

(1) So far as has been reported, none of the assigned targets is defended by heavy flak (Report of MAH at PONT ST. ESPRIT 13 August 1944 was in error; MAH was encountered 8 miles South of target). Unless railway flak has been brought in, flak opposition at targets will be nil.

(2) On route to target, at landfall, course takes formation over extreme range of 1X4 battery of Heavy Guns at MONACO. This will be avoided by maintaining briefed course; Scant flak may be observed at this point.

(3) Rally and route from targets have been carefully planned to avoid flak on return route. There is a concentration at MONTPELLIER that is thus avoided if formation is on briefed course. Smaller concentration at NIMES is similarly avoided.

b. ENEMY AIRCRAFT

(1) Present enemy capability of 10-12 sorties at one time and place remains same as on recent missions.

(2) Possibility exists that enemy, in view of recent and current Allied operations, may move up to 75 additional e/a from other bases.

(3) On operations of 15 August 1944 it is altogether probable that all available e/a will be fully engaged on beachheads. Negligible or nil e/a opposition to 55th Wing formation is probable.

c. SIGNIFICANCE OF TARGETS: These attacks are in direct support of ground, airborne, and naval operations engaged in establishing beachheads for an invasion of Southern FRANCE.

Their strategic importance is the further interdiction of enemy communications. Their tactical significance is the immobilization of enemy troops at present deployed West of the RHONE RIVER (3 divisions) to prevent their reinforcement of enemy troops defending the beachheads. Three of 4 RR bridges over RHONE have been cut; this attack on highway bridges is designed to supplement destruction of RR bridges.

2. FRIENDLY SITUATION

a. Coordination of attack:

(1) 5th Wing, 4 Groups, attack BEACH 261. 1 Group attacks Highway Bridge at VALENCE.

(2) 47th Wing, 4 Groups, attack BEACHES 263A and 263B.

(3) 304th Wing, 4 Groups, attack. BEACHES 263C and 264B.

(4) 49th Wing, 2 Groups, attack BEACH 264A, 1 Group attacks ROAD from BEACH 264A to town of FREJUS.

b. The 306th Fighter Wing will provide 3 Groups for penetration, target, and withdrawal cover of the 5 Bombardment Groups attacking RHONE RIVER Bridges.

c. Naval craft and air transport will be engaged in landing of troops on beaches indicated and in paratroop landings back of beachheads.

d. Several types of friendly fighter, bomber, and transport a/c will be seen in the general area of route to landfall. Of Naval a/c the predominant type will be the Hellcat. Crews, especially gunners, will be briefed on recognition features of friendly a/c, both land-based and Naval types.

e. ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF INFORMATION: Fifteenth Air Force directs observation and report as follows: In general; current information from air crews is desired concerning the enemy reaction, both ground and air, and evidence of large scale ground or water movements and concentrations. Specific briefing should include:

(1) Is the enemy reinforcing his fighter defenses? If so, where located?

(2) Is the enemy concentrating his ground defenses at selected vulnerable points, or spreading out his available flak?

(3) Are enemy ground forces moving toward the assault area? If so, by what routes? Where and how concentrated?

(4) Is the enemy utilizing the RHONE RIVER for supply and reinforcement?

Note: reports must be accurate and specific, giving in each case time, place, and direction.

Observations of enemy movements or concentrations, or of submarines seen, should be treated as Hot News and flashed to this headquarters by telephone.

f. Escape briefing will be thorough and inclusive of latest information stated in detail.

By order of Colonel ACHESON:

DONALD W. RIDDLE,
Major, AC,
A-2.

DISTRIBUTION:

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1 cy ea CO, A-2, A-3, PI, 55th Bomb Wing
3 cys ea Gp, 55th Bomb Wing