

Ref: FOI2025-010

[REDACTED]

21 March 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to our previous correspondence regarding your request for the following information:

I am requesting under the freedom of information act, could I see a copy of the report MEP 7 - facilities plan for Vixen A dated January 1961 in which HK Taylor (WD2) is referenced as the Team Leader for engineering assistance. As above, many thanks.

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

We can confirm that AWE holds the requested report and we attach a redacted copy here.

The document has been redacted to withhold data under section 40(2) of the Act in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018.

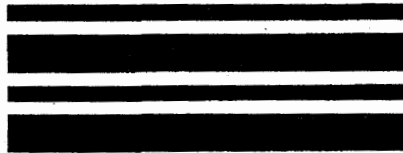
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If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance, remembering to quote the reference number above in any correspondence..

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Yours sincerely,

AWE Information Requests Team



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UNITED KINGDOM ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY

ATOMIC WEAPONS RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT

MEP 7

MARALINGA EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMME

(MEP) 1961

FACILITIES PLAN FOR VIXEN A

*Ex Archives Box E3509
now Box N2551*

Field Experiments Branch,
A.W.R.E.,
Aldermaston, Berks.

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January, 1961

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ATOMIC WEAPONS RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT

MEP 7

MARALINGA EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMME
(MEP) 1961

FACILITIES PLAN FOR VIXEN A

Planning of Field Experiments Branch,
AWRE, Aldermaston, Berks.

Dated 15 December, 1960

Note: The reference prefix MEP replaces MIN used previously.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Outline Statement

This plan is to indicate the scope of the Vixen A experiments, and the requirements of the Scientific Staff for works and services at the range.

1.2 Programme

It is intended to fire four rounds and carry out four burning experiments in the Wewak area, over a period of approximately six weeks, commencing 1st March.

2. GROUP COMPOSITION

2.1 Scientific Superintendent

██████████ will be Scientific Superintendent and will arrive on the range mid-February.

2.2 Scientific Staff

	<u>Date of Arrival on Range</u>
██████████, Team Leader	February 10th-14th
██████████	" "
██████████	" "
██████████	" "
██████████	" "

2.3 Balloon Team

██████████	" "
██████████	January 19th February 10th-14th

2.4 Photographers

██████████	" "
██████████	" "

2.5 Decontamination Support

██████████	" (third week)
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2.6 Engineering Assistance

	<u>Date of</u> <u>Arrival on Range</u>
H. K. Taylor, Team Leader	February 13th
[REDACTED]	" "
[REDACTED]	" "
[REDACTED]	" "

2.7 Firing Team

[REDACTED] Team Leader	February 20th
[REDACTED]	" "
[REDACTED]	" "
[REDACTED]	February 10th-14th

2.8 Assembly Team

[REDACTED], Team Leader	February 25th
[REDACTED]	" "
[REDACTED]	" "
[REDACTED]	" "
[REDACTED]	" "

(Note: Engineering Assistance, Firing and Assembly Teams will also take part in the Vixen B experiments.)

3. ASSISTANCE FROM THE MARALINGA RANGE SUPPORT UNIT (MARSU)

3.1 Direct Assistance

20 Hands GD are required from 13th February until the end of April. They should all be from the UK, medically examined including chest X-ray, and passed fit for work on Vixen A materials. It is essential that at least fourteen of them should be competent to drive Landrovers and 3-tonners over all types of roads, tracks and open country found on the Maralinga Range.

After the arrival of the Scientific Team, skilled assistance will be required to erect a 60 ft BICC mast in the array.

Periodic assistance of Crane Operators, security cleared to TOP SECRET ATOMIC level, will be required for work in the test area.

3.2 Police Officers

The services of a Police Officer will be required at Wewak from the third week in February until the end of April, for 24 hr duty.

The Police Post for the XA Area should also be manned from about the third week in February, when the first classified store is due to arrive.

3.3 MARSU Services Required

Regular deliveries of fresh water to Wewak.

Messing facilities at Roadside.

Assistance of two men in the DC Laundry.

Latrine arrangements at Wewak.

Refuelling and servicing of generators at Wewak.

Fire Tender and Crew at Wewak during inflation and deflation of Balloons.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Wewak Telephone System

An 8-line exchange is required in the Police Officer's post with extensions to:-

Balloon Mooring Site (with loud-ringing bell).

Control Shelter VK60 (two lines).

Control Queen Mary Caravan (No. 58).

VK40 (Meteorological Site).

Queen Mary Decontamination Caravan (No. 55).

4.2 Field Telephones

Field telephone service on the G.P.O. system will be required to the Kine-theodolite sites at North Base and Observation Hill. A temporary land-line will be required for the latter, from FC4.2.

4.3 Radio Communication within Maralinga

35 v.h.f. sets on yellow net frequency will be required for allocated vehicles.

1 vehicle set is to be installed in the Police Officer's post at Wewak, using the existing 50 ft mast for the aerial.

(Note: The O.T.U. may be required to man the Village Control Station at certain times, if so requested by the Scientific Superintendent.)

4.4 Communications outside Maralinga

Normal signals service will be required, including the transmission of TOP SECRET ATOMIC messages.

The rapid transmission of classified documents will be required both ways between Maralinga and Aldermaston.

5. TRANSPORT REQUIRED

5.1 Transport to be Allocated to AWRE

(Note: The allocation of light vehicles may have to be reduced to provide for Vixen B requirements.)

5.1.1 Scientific Superintendent

One Holden saloon.

5.1.2 Scientific Team and Assistance

Three Utilities (one with v.h.f. radio),
Three Landrovers (all with v.h.f. radio).
Four 3-ton 4 x 4 lorries all with v.h.f.
radio and two fitted with Neal loaders.
One 850 gal Clean Water Trailer.

5.1.3 Balloon Unit

Three Landrovers (all fitted with v.h.f. radio).
Nine 3-ton lorries all modified as mobile
balloon anchorages and all with v.h.f. radio.

5.1.4 Photographers

Two long wheelbase Landrovers (both fitted
with v.h.f. radio).

5.1.5 Decontamination Support

One Landrover plus trailer.

5.1.6 Firing Team

One Landrover.
One Utility.

5.1.7 Engineering Assistance and Assembly Team

Transport for both these services will be detailed in the Vixen B Plan.

5.1.8 Meteorology Team

Two Landrovers (both fitted with v.h.f. radio).

5.2 Yellow Vehicles and Plant

Use of 5-ton crane (with operator).
Six Landrovers (all with v.h.f. radio).
Two 3-ton 4 x 4 lorries (both with v.h.f. radio).

5.3 Heavy Transport and Plant

Use of 10-ton crane (with operator).
One bus (daily with driver).

6. ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED IN THE VILLAGE, DC AND XA AREAS

6.1 Village

Office in BL1 for the Scientific Superintendent.
Offices and laboratories in BL5 and BL6, with associated services.
Darkrooms in BL9, with full air-conditioning and water services (water processing will not be required).
Cold store (BL9.1).
Photographic store (BL9.2).
Bays 5 and 6 in BW6 as stores.

6.2 DC Area

Laundry facilities in DC4.
Photographic darkroom facilities in DC5.

6.3 XA Area

The Assembly Team and Engineering Advisers will require the use of Buildings XA1.1, 1.2 and 3.2.

7. ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED IN THE TEST AREA

7.1 Wewak

HC9 (Health Physics).
HC1 (Washing Facilities).
Six Insert Bodies for use as Office, Photographic
Darkroom, Stores (3) and Mobile Workshop.
QM53 (Rest Room).
QM58 (Control).
QM54 (Wet Decontamination).
QM55 (Sample Handling).
A hut for the Police Post.
A hut for battery charging facilities.

The above accommodation to be sited as Drawing
No. PFE/RF/270.

(Note: Use of the following furniture will be required:-

Sixteen chairs.
Two 6 ft collapsible tables.
Four 6 ft workshop benches.
3 ft metal racking to be fitted into a Stores
Insert Body.)

7.2 Roadside

Use of FC10 and FC12 for messing facilities, from
mid-February.

8. TECHNICAL SERVICES

8.1 Electrical Supply:Generators

8.1.1 Wewak

General Supply:-

1 × 50 kVA
1 × 50 kVA (Stand-by)
1 × 12½ kVA (Police silent hours)

Instrumentation Supply:-

1 × 6 kVA Coventry Climax
1 × 6 kVA Coventry Climax (Stand-by)

8.1.2 VK60

1 × 27½ kVA for shelter and locker cooling, and high-speed camera operation.

1 × 45 kVA Single Phase supply for furnace experiments.

2 × 6 kVA Coventry Climax for firing services and measurements. Provision to be made for automatic changeover in case of failure.

8.1.3 VK40

1 × 6 kVA Coventry Climax for mobile workshop.

8.2 Electrical Supply: Batteries

600 × 12 V, 60 to 85 Ahr secondary batteries should be available. with charging facilities for 300. Up to 450 batteries will be in use at any one time from the third week in February onwards.

A battery charging set to charge up to 20 batteries is to be installed in a hut at Wewak.

8.3 Ventilation, Cooling and Air-Conditioning in the Test Area

Cooling will be required as follows:-

In the two lockers housing the high speed cameras (special equipment is being designed).

In the two Queen Mary Decontamination Caravans (QM54 and QM55) using water-chilling plants.

In the two Queen Mary Caravans (QM53 and QM58) using packaged air-conditioning units.

In the Shelter at VK60 using an external Tempair Condenser.

In the Firing Shelter (ex Dobo) using packaged air-conditioning units.

Extract fans are required in the Health Physics Caravans and Insert Bodies.

9. WATER SUPPLY IN THE TEST AREA

Fresh water consumption is estimated at an average of 150 gal per day, and the water trailer and the tanks in the Queen Mary Decontamination Caravan QM54 should be topped up every 48 hr.

10. PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES

In addition to the photography carried out by the Team during the experiments, approximately fifty stills will be required. These will also be taken by AWRE Staff.

11. METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES

A 24 hr service of meteorological observations will be required for the whole period of the programme. The services of a forecaster will be required from 27th February for the period of the Vixen A experiments.

Local balloon flights will be required at the test sites before all proposed firings. The observations of wind speed and direction up to 1000 ft should be by double theodolite tracking of meteorological balloons rising about 100 ft/min. This will require the services of skilled observers.

A remote recording wind-vane and anemometer on a 30 ft mast will be required at Wewak, with indicating dials and recorder in the control Queen Mary Caravan.

12. RANGE FACILITIES

12.1 New Works

The following new works in the Test Area should be completed by 10th February, 1961:-

New Firing Pad at VK60.

Extension and modification to the existing Balloon Mooring Beds.

Two new Mooring Beds at VK40.

Preparation of Weapon Burning Area near VK60.

Erection of two BICC masts at VK40 (60 ft) and VK60 (100 ft).

Control cable to provide 12 pairs between Control QM Caravan (No. 58) at Wewak and Shelter at VK60.

Erection of a suitable hut as a Police Post at Wewak.

Double-bay Shelter C now at Dobo site to be transferred complete with equipment to VK60 and be placed on wooden sleepers adjacent to Shelter.

Erection of a suitable hut for battery charging facilities at Wewak.

(Note: Drawing Nos. SPT/RF/258/3, SPT/RF/270, SPT/RF/5809, SPT/RF/6201 and SPT/RF/6206 refer.)

12.2 Maintenance

The following maintenance should be carried out:-

Regrading or re-surfacing of the track between Roadside and J12 and from J12 to VK60.

13. STORES

13.1 Supplied from UK

500000 ft³ of hydrogen.

13.2 To be Manufactured Locally

400 Wooden Marker Posts 48 in. long, 1 in. square section, chisel-pointed and painted yellow.

20 Masts 30 ft high for suspending impactors.

13.3 To be Issued from Stock or Purchased Locally

3 Steel Sheets 8 ft × 8 ft × 1 in.

3 Steel Instrument Lockers 3 ft × 3 ft × 18 in.

2 Steel Instrument Lockers 3 ft × 3 ft × 3 ft

(for H.S. Camera).

6 Sections BICC Mast.

600 ft Dexion Steel Angle.

1000 ft² Aluminium Sheet 12 - 14 S.W.G. (sheets to be as large as possible up to 12 ft × 6 ft).

1500 ft³ of Nitrogen (Standard Large-Size Cylinders).

1500 gal of AVTUR.

500 Empty Sandbags.

13.4 To be Issued on Loan for the Period of the Experiments

Protective Clothing for up to 40 men.

2 No. 12 Directors and Tripods.

1 Light Cable Layer.

1 Typewriter.

1 Lec Battery Charging Set.

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