

Vietnam Security Police Association



Tân Sơn Nhứt AB

TANGO-1 377th Security Police Squadron

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TSN, 377th SPS, TANGO 1; AFOSI, Dist 51 Bangkok

I was asked by Tim Waage, why a Security Troop was wearing a BLUE Law Enforcement Troops blue helmet at TSN, so here is the story on that one....

Photo: E-4 Sgt Steve Rivers, Moody AFB, 1966

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TSN, 377th SPS, TANGO 1, 1967-1968



At Tân Sơn Nhứt, you had two separate units, the LE Side which did the typical base patrol and functions and the Security side. The two outfits didn't mix. The LE side wore the pretty blue helmets and looked down on Security. Of course Security looked down on LE.

I was in LE (Moody AFB) before I came to TSN. I was *accidentally* assigned to a Security billet when I was assigned to the 377th. I should have come in as Law Enforcement; my AFSC was LE -- not Security. While I was stationed at Moody AFB, all my buddies were getting orders to Nam. Pretty much everyone that got there before me and some after me were getting orders. I came to find out my records were stamped "P.I." *Political Influential!* So I wasn't going anywhere. When I complained and said I wanted to go! Then they panicked and gave me the first available slot, which was a security AFSC, not LE.

Photo: E-4 Sgt Steve Rivers, LE, Moody AFB, 1966: Ain't I Pretttttt!



Course then the Captain in charge of the security side (Carl Denisio) at Tân Sơn Nhứt, had to decide what he was going to do with an LE troop. He couldn't really stick me in harms way, so had the bright idea to make me a roving LE patrol in the security areas, issuing tickets to speeders on the ramps and parking areas. Plus I was running coffee and water to the standing posts. I became Mobile-51. I went to the Helicopter Sq and scrounged up a revolving red light that they were removing off the choppers. They rigged it into a red light for me, and mounted it on a tube that fit into the M60 pipe stand on the jeeps. I could throw a switch and bang - got a Kojak light!

Photo: E-4 Sgt Steve Rivers, LE, TSN AB, 1967: AP/SP Jeep

Capt Denisio made me get a blue AP helmet

from LE since I was writing tickets and then later the Security Police Blue when they came in.

I would escort the Freedom Birds in and out from the runways, in case a ZAPPER got in the grass and tried to attack the contract flights. I had sent you a couple of shots of the Stewardess from a Continental flight. I would always beg for fresh milk (the thing I missed the most in country), blankets and food off the planes. The girls had to come down and sit in the jeep and put on the hard helmet and get their pictures taken holding the M16. It was really a great job to have. Nothing but Day Shifts and got to visit all the posts and bring things to the guys that needed something at their post.

Photo: Freedom Bird --

E-4 Sgt Steve Rivers is greeted by wildly enthusiastic American females (well... almost)!

Then one day I was on CHARLIE Row where all the C-123s were parked. An area where we always had problems with speeders! An unmarked car went flying down the parking row and I gave chase, my little red ball just a shining! *The car refuses to yield.* I blew my little jeep horn and pulled up beside some guy in civvies! All he does is glare and says, "Get the F*\$@ away from me!" He pulled up in front of the terminal area, jumped out and tells me he *doesn't have time for me and takes off inside.* So I pull out my trusty little ticket book and begin to write! *Speeding, Failure To Stop for Emergency Vehicle, Illegal Parking on the terminal* and anything else I can think of... stick the tickets under the windshield and off I go having done my duty!



Later I get a call from Capt "D" to report to CSC. Come to find out the fine gentlemen I chased down the parking row and to the terminal was the Wing Commander. He wanted my ass reprimanded, busted, tickets tore up and pretty much me buried at the end of the flight line. Reportedly Capt "D" told him he could do all these things but he would be the one to explain it all to Washington! That is when Capt "D" informed the Wing Commander that my Uncle is Congressman L. Mendel Rivers, Chairman of the Armed Services Committee and that he recommended he should just accept the tickets. He did!



Photo: Water Tower, Tango-One, Incoming Rockets spotter atop the water tower.

Capt "D" then recommended I might want to pick another job off the flight



line. When I made runs to various posts, I was always intrigued with Tango-One. Nobody ever climbed up to bother you up there, great view of everything and seemed like a good spot out of the line of fire. So I said, "How about Tango-One?" He said, "Excellent idea!" and the next day I retired the blue helmet and started working Tango-One.

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