

Mission Planning Summary

FIELD ORDER: #13

SPECIAL BOMBING MISSION: #13

MISSION EXECUTED: 6 August 1945

1. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE 509TH COMPOSITE GROUP

Early in June, 1945, this headquarters was informed one Atomic Bomb would be available for use against the enemy on 6 August 1945. The primary limiting factor was production. By 5 August 1945, all was in readiness to initiate the first Atomic Bomb attack in the history of the world. The bomb was ready, weather was satisfactory, and the carefully selected crew was well trained. (See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, page 1, paragraph 1.)

2. TARGETS SELECTED FOR ATTACK

- A. Primary Target: 90.30 - Hiroshima Urban Industrial Area.
AP 063096, AP Reference: XXI BomCom Litho
Mosaic Hiroshima Area, No. 90.30 - Urban.
- B. Secondary Target: 90.34 - 168 Kokura Arsenal and City.
AP 104082, AP Reference: XXI BomCom Litho
Mosaic Kokura Arsenal, No. 90.34 - 168.
- C. Tertiary Target: 90.36 - Nagasaki Urban Area. AP 114061
AP Reference: XXI BomCom Litho Mosaic
Nagasaki Area, Mitsubishi Steel and Arms
Works, No. 90.36 - 546.

Weather aircraft were dispatched to all three targets to relay strike-time weather forecast back to the strike force. However, since it was so desirable that the primary be hit if possible, rather than the other two assigned targets,

to the primary target, regardless of the weather aircraft's broadcasts, to insure that a visual bombing opportunity on the primary was not missed. However, after that check, the strike aircraft were to proceed to either the secondary or tertiary, depending on the weather aircraft.

Although the bomb had a very extensive MHI, because it was so expensive and because the important areas of the urban targets were so concentrated, it was essential that visual bombing be accomplished to make the attack efficient. Radar was to be used as an aid, but if a visual check on the target-sighting operation could not be made with the Norden bombsight, the crew was to bring the bomb back

~~SECRET~~
3. REASONS FOR TARGET SELECTION

Sensitive to

Of the four cities set aside for Atomic Bomb attack, Niigata was discarded because it was so poorly laid out for this sort of an attack - the industrial concentration and the residential-small factory areas were relatively widely separated. Of the other three, Nagasaki was the poorest of the layouts, and it had a prisoner-of-war camp nearby; so, it was made tertiary. The other two - Hiroshima and Kokura - were well laid out and relatively important, but Kokura had a prisoner of war camp and Hiroshima had none to our knowledge; so Hiroshima was made the primary.

As for the target itself, Hiroshima was highly important as an industrial target. It was to this attack, Hiroshima ranked as the largest city in the Japanese homeland (except Kyoto) which remained undamaged following the B-29 secondary strikes. The city had a population of 344,000 in 1945.


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It is an army city, headquarters of the 5th Division. The entire northern and southern part of the city are military

instructions were given to the strike aircraft to pass close enough themselves to the primary target, regardless of the weather aircraft's broadcasts, to insure that a visual bombing opportunity on the primary was not missed. However, after that check, the strike aircraft were to proceed to either the secondary or tertiary, depending on the weather aircraft.

Although the bomb had a very extensive MEA, because it was ^{so} expensive and because the important areas of the urban targets were so concentrated, it was essential that visual bombing be accomplished to make the attack efficient. Radar was to be used as an aid, but if a visual check on the target-sighting operation could not be made with the Norden bombsight, the crew was to bring the bomb back to base. To permit the crew additional chances of obtaining a visual sighting operation, two targets, in addition to the primary, were assigned.

1. Steel Company
2. Railroad Marshalling Yards
3. Numerous Aircraft Component Parts Factories

The fact that Hiroshima was undamaged made it an ideal target. This was deemed necessary to ensure correctly the damage which could be inflicted by the Atomic Bomb. The size of Hiroshima was another important factor in the selection. According to preliminary data, it was believed that  of damage which

As for the target itself, Hiroshima was highly important as an industrial target. Prior to this attack, Hiroshima ranked as the largest city in the Japanese homeland (except Kyoto) which remained undamaged following a wave of B-29 incendiary strikes. The city had a population of 344,000 in 1940.

It is an army city - headquarters of the 5th Division and a primary port of embarkation. The entire northeastern and eastern sides of the city are military

zones. Prominent in the north-central part of the city are the Army Division Headquarters marked by the Hiroshima Castle, numerous barracks, administration buildings and ordnance store houses. In addition, there are the following important military targets:

- A. Army Reception Center
- B. Large Military Airport
- C. Army Ordnance Depot
- D. Army Clothing Depot
- E. Army Food Depot
- F. Large Port and Dock Area
- G. Several Ship Yards and Ship Building Companies
- H. Japan Steel Company
- I. Railroad Marshalling Yards
- J. Numerous Aircraft Component Parts Factories

The fact that Hiroshima was undamaged made it an ideal target. This was deemed necessary to assess correctly the damage which could be inflicted by the Atomic Bomb. The size of Hiroshima was another important factor in the selection. According to preliminary data, it was believed that the radius of damage which could be inflicted by the Atomic Bomb was 7,500 feet. By placing the aiming point in the center of the city, the circle of prospective damage covered almost the entire area of Hiroshima with the exception of the dock area to the south.

4. MUNITIONS

One (1) Atomic Bomb.

5. NAVIGATORS PLAN

(See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, page 6, paragraph 1.)

6. **BOMBARDIER PLAN** have the attack go off on the day planned in spite of possible short of the bombing airplanes, a spare ship was stationed at Iwo Jima.

7. **RADAR PLAN**
where (See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, page 7, paragraph 2.)

8. **FLIGHT ENGINEERS PLAN** aircraft which will be dispatched one to each target (See Report Number 1, 509th Composite Group, page 7, paragraph 4.)

9. **R.C.I.**
weather forecast for strike time, broadcasting the message between 0600KX and 060915K. This will enable strike force to select either the secondary or tertiary

10. **FIGHTER ESCORT**
target in the event the primary is found to be covered by clouds. Each weather aircraft will have aboard a weather observer furnished by the 91st wing.

11. **AIR SEA RESCUE**
D. Post Strike Photography; C-6, 509th Group, will be responsible for normally this function is arranged by Wing Headquarters, but due to the briefing and dispatching two P-51 A/C. These aircraft will not enter target area. In view of this operation, 20th Air Force Headquarters made arrangements for until four hours after bombs away. To insure this schedule is maintained regarding this mission. Every precaution was taken to provide complete air sea rescue facilities so that any untoward incident would not jeopardize the safe return or not, the photo aircraft will be required to check in with the ground stations of all witnesses.

at both Tinian and Iwo Jima to obtain clearance to proceed past Iwo Jima. If
12. **STRIKING FORCE**
these photo aircraft do not receive notification of which target has been bombed, 3 A/C - one bombing, 2 observing. they will photograph all three targets.

13. **SPECIAL PLANNING OPERATIONS**

A. In order to prevent interference with the attack all friendly aircraft were instructed to stay at least 50 miles away from target areas for four hours prior to strike time. And in order to protect friendly aircraft from the almost infinite amount of radio activity in the immediate area above the explosion, they were restricted from entering the 50-mile area for six hours after the attack. The post-strike photo aircraft were permitted in the area four hours after the attack, because they had had special briefing.

B. In order to have the attack go off on the day planned in spite of possible abort of the bombing airplane, a spare ship was stationed at Iwo Jima, where there was also a pit for unloading and reloading the Atomic Bomb.

C. Weather: Three aircraft which will be dispatched one to each target at such a time as to be able to relay, from their assigned target, the target weather forecast for strike time, broadcasting the message between 060845X and 060915X. This will enable strike force to select either the secondary or tertiary target in the event the primary is found to be covered by clouds. Each weather aircraft will have aboard a weather observer furnished by the 313th Wing.

D. Post Strike Photography: G.O., 509th Group, will be responsible for briefing and dispatching two F-13 A/C. These aircraft will not enter target area until four hours after bombs away. To insure this schedule is maintained regardless of whether the strike force has to make use of the spare aircraft at Iwo Jima or not, the photo aircraft will be required to check in with the ground stations at both Tinian and Iwo Jima to obtain clearance to proceed past Iwo Jima. If these photo aircraft do not receive notification of which target has been bombed, they will photograph all three targets.