

the staggering of the arrivals of the officers who were to constitute the Teams, as it was not possible to house all of them at Vientiane while waiting for accommodation to be made ready at the Team sites. Accommodation problems in Vientiane were and continue to be, if any thing, more difficult than elsewhere in Laos.

13. The International Commission now has 11 Teams in the field, six Fixed and five Mobile. These were positioned on the dates as given below:-

7.9.54	Fixed Team	SAVANNAKHET
17.9.54	Fixed Team	PAKSE
1.10.54	Mobile Team	LUANG PRABANG
7.10.54	Mobile Team	SAVANNAKHET
11.10.54	Fixed Team	SOP HAO
14.10.54	Fixed Team	PHONG SALY
19.10.54	Fixed Team	VIENTIANE
20.10.54	Fixed Team	XIENG KHOUANG
21.10.54	Mobile Team	PHONG SALY
26.11.54	Mobile Team	PAKSE
27.11.54	Mobile Team	XIENG KHOUANG

14. The Commission has not yet been able to establish a Fixed Team at Tchepone owing to the absence of any accommodation there and also since the road passing through Tchepone has been unusable. The road is now under repair and the Commission is considering stationing a Fixed Team at Tchepone.

15. The Teams have often experienced difficulty in carrying out their duties, again mainly due to transportation difficulties. Even within 45 Kms of Vientiane one of the Teams had to proceed by jeep, by country boat and on foot for fourteen days to conduct an investigation. In the northern provinces of Phong Saly and San Neua, the maintenance of the Teams is becoming a very serious problem. In both the provinces provisions have to be airdropped, and the uncertain weather, even now when there is no monsoon, has often made such drops precarious, obliging our Teams to go without normal provisions for days. There are no modern means of surface transport at all, and the movement of the Teams has perforce to be by helicopter or light aircraft. Even with helicopter transport, the uncertain weather conditions made every journey quite an adventure, and one of the Teams had to trek for three days after their helicopter crashed, before they were sighted and rescued.

16. There is no railway in Laos. The road system has deteriorated as a result of long years of war and the monsoon rains. Bridges demolished and culverts washed away make even existing stretches of roads unusable, particularly during the monsoon. In most parts of the northern provinces of Phong Saly and Sam Neua, there are only pony tracks and foot-paths over jungle-clad hills.

17. The International Commission realised early that if the mobility of the Teams was to be ensured, a considerable amount of air-transport would be necessary. It was also realised that in the northern provinces, due to the difficult nature of the ground and lack of proper air-fields for Dakotas, air support would have to be restricted to light aircraft and helicopter.

Transportation