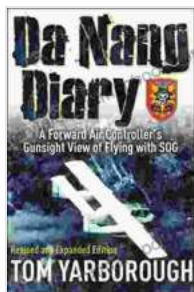


Forward Air Controller: A Gunsight View of Flying with Special Operations Group

Forward Air Controllers (FACs) are the eyes in the sky for ground forces, providing close air support and directing airstrikes. They are highly trained pilots who fly unarmed aircraft, often in dangerous conditions, to support troops on the ground.

I had the opportunity to fly with a FAC recently, and it was an experience I'll never forget. We were flying in a Cessna Caravan, a small, single-engine aircraft, over Afghanistan. Our mission was to provide close air support for a group of Special Operations Forces (SOF) who were conducting a raid on a Taliban compound.



Da Nang Diary: A Forward Air Controller's Gunsight View of Flying with SOG by Tom Yarborough

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 8415 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 484 pages
Lending	: Enabled



As we approached the target area, the FAC began to scan the ground with his gunsight. He was looking for any signs of enemy activity, such as

moving vehicles or people carrying weapons. He also wanted to identify the location of the SOF team so that he could direct airstrikes in support of their mission.

The FAC used his gunsight to mark targets on the ground. He would then use the aircraft's radio to communicate with the pilots of the F-16 Fighting Falcons that were providing air support. He would give them the coordinates of the targets and tell them what type of weapons to use.

I was amazed at the precision with which the FAC was able to mark targets on the ground. He could pinpoint the location of a target within a few meters, even though we were flying at an altitude of several thousand feet.

The FAC also used his gunsight to track the movement of the SOF team on the ground. He would use the aircraft's radio to relay their location to the F-16 pilots so that they could provide close air support.

The FAC's role is critical to the success of ground operations. They provide the eyes in the sky that allow troops on the ground to see the battlefield and to call for support when needed.

I was honored to have the opportunity to fly with a FAC and to see firsthand the important role that they play in combat operations.

The Gunsight

The gunsight is a critical piece of equipment for a FAC. It allows them to mark targets on the ground and to track the movement of troops and vehicles.

The gunsight is mounted on the aircraft's canopy and is aligned with the pilot's line of sight. It consists of a reticle, which is a set of crosshairs, and a series of lenses that magnify the target.

The FAC uses the gunsight to aim the aircraft's weapons. He can also use the gunsight to mark targets for other aircraft, such as F-16 Fighting Falcons.

The gunsight is a complex piece of equipment, but it is essential for the FAC's mission. It allows them to see the battlefield clearly and to provide accurate fire support for troops on the ground.

The Mission

Our mission was to provide close air support for a group of Special Operations Forces (SOF) who were conducting a raid on a Taliban compound.

We approached the target area at low altitude, and the FAC began to scan the ground with his gunsight. He quickly identified the location of the SOF team and marked it on his map.

The FAC then used the aircraft's radio to communicate with the pilots of the F-16 Fighting Falcons that were providing air support. He gave them the coordinates of the targets and told them what type of weapons to use.

The F-16s quickly responded to the FAC's call for fire. They dropped a series of bombs on the Taliban compound, destroying it and killing several insurgents.

The FAC continued to provide close air support for the SOF team throughout the raid. He marked targets for the F-16s and relayed the location of the SOF team to the pilots.

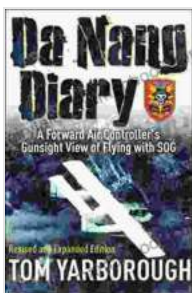
The raid was a success, and the SOF team was able to complete its mission without any casualties.

The FAC

The FAC who I flew with was a highly trained and experienced pilot. He had flown hundreds of combat missions and had saved the lives of countless troops on the ground.

FACs are a critical part of the US military. They provide the eyes in the sky that allow troops on the ground to see the battlefield and to call for support when needed.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have flown with a FAC and to have seen firsthand the important role that they play in combat operations.



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