reached. In April this daily average was slightly lower, being 1,845 tons. For comparison with the table for November, 1944, here is the distribution for April, 1945:—

Location	Squadrons	R.A.M.O.	Average tons/day	Remarks
Tulihal	435 R.C.A.F.	No. 6	247	
Comilla	238 R.A.F.	No. 3	21	R.A.M.O. opened 23rd April.
Chittagong ...	13, 14, 15 and 16 U.S.A.A.F. (C.C.)	No. 7	733	
Dohazari ...	2 U.S.A.A.F. (C.C.) ... 4 U.S.A.A.F. (C.C.)	No. 4	171	
Hathazari ...	3 U.S.A.A.F. (C.C.) ... 31 and 117 R.A.F.	No. 5	236	31 and 117 Sqns. moved to Ramree on 16th April.
Akyab	62, 194 and 267 R.A.F. 436 R.C.A.F.	No. 1	393	436 R.C.A.F. moved to Ramree on 16th April.
Ramree	436 R.C.A.F.	No. 2	44	R. A. M. O. opened 16th April (from Kangla).
Total ...	Fifteen Squadrons	Seven R.A.M.O.s	1845 tons	

When considering these figures, however, it must not be imagined that the actual tonnage remained constant at about the average figure. On the contrary, on occasions very high peak performances were made when conditions were right, aircraft flying as many as five sorties. It was the need to handle these peaks, which had to compensate for other days when flying was bad, that really tested the supply organization and its capacity.

363. The development of air supply as outlined above made heavy demands on airfield engineer construction effort, both for the supply bases and for the forward landing grounds. That forward airfield construction more than kept pace with requirements is shown by the fact that the percentage of supplies dropped—as opposed to landed—decreased from 28% in November, 1944 to 14.6% in March 1945. Rear airfields for supply purposes required extensive development if high peak tonnage figures were to be achieved. It was found that the ideal to aim at was two strips each 2,300 yards long, complete with loading bays. Over a hundred aircraft on the ground may have to be catered for, flying up to five sorties daily. Airfield construction for transport as well as for tactical purposes will be dealt with in more detail later in this part of the Despatch.

364. Casualty evacuation was linked with the organization of air supply. The medical aspect will be dealt with later when the services under the control of the Adjutant-General's branch are considered. Here it is enough to note that casualties were evacuated from formations by light aircraft (L.5), piloted by U.S.A.A.F. and R.A.F. personnel, back to the forward airfields where there were Casualty Clearing Stations with the F.A.M.Os.—usually a distance of 30-50 miles. Such cases as required further evacuation were then carried by C.47 transport aircraft to forward base hospitals which in turn were situated near the R.A.M.Os. The extent to which air evacuation was used is shown by the fact that in March 1945, 13,000 casualties were transported by air. In some sectors evacuation by road or air was for periods impossible, and the medical centres had to be entirely supplied by air dropping.

365. With the capture of Rangoon, the need for air supply by no means ceased. Our forces were scattered down the whole length of Burma and internal communications were still only fragmentary. Moreover the port itself had to be repaired and stocked, installations brought round from the other Ls. of C., and the land Ls. of C. northwards from Rangoon rehabilitated and developed. Although the period after the capture of Rangoon falls outside this Despatch, it should be noted that the supply of the forces in Central Burma in monsoon conditions presented considerable difficulties, and deliveries fell short of the tonnage required. Nevertheless, the capture of Rangoon was the beginning of the end of a system of supply which was nothing short of amazing, consisting as it did of a fantastic single overland route, costing immense resources in men and materials and paying very small dividends, while by far the greater part of the Army's requirements were brought in by air supply developed as never before.

Thus the plans for the quickest possible development of Rangoon Port were of prime importance. Some indication of how this problem was tackled is given in the next section.