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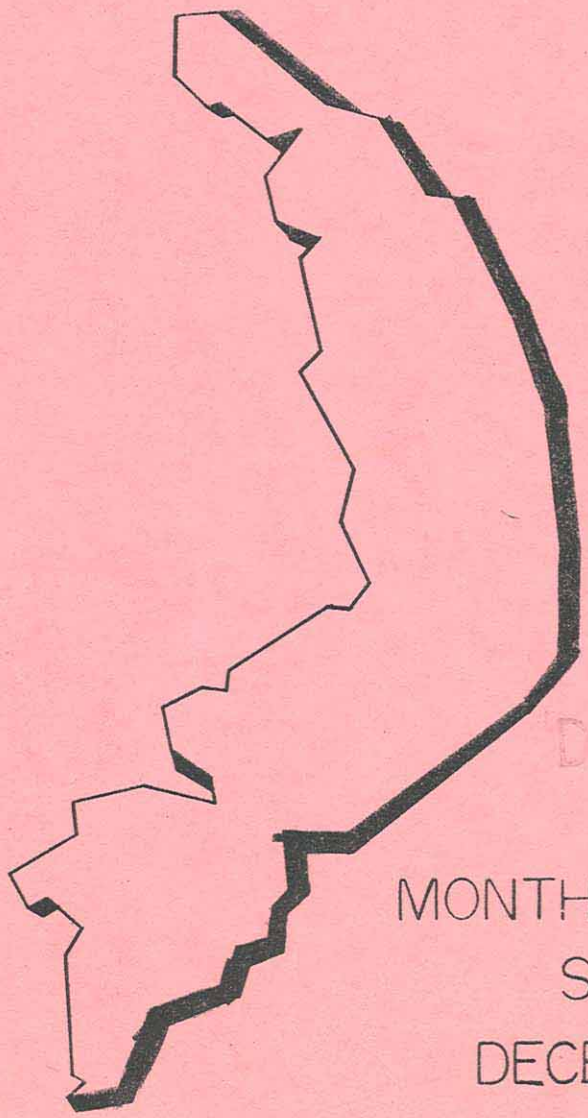

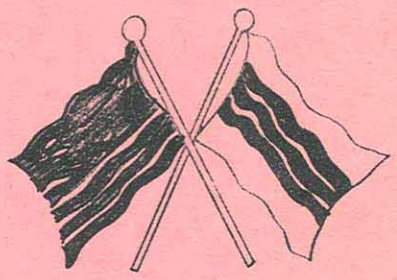

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MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUMMARY DECEMBER 1966

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam
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NAVAL FORCES, VIETNAM

MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUMMARY

DECEMBER 1966

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CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

2 Dec - Premier KY and General WALT visit Vietnamese Marines during Operation LAM SON 331. p. 79.

- LTJG KLEIN, PBR patrol officer, killed during engagement with the Viet Cong. One Viet Cong killed and two wounded. p. 5.

4 Dec - MARKET TIME aircraft damaged during Viet Cong attack on Tan Son Nhut Airbase. p. 36.

- PBRs, supporting a search and destroy operation, kill five Viet Cong and detain nine suspects. p. 12.

4 Dec - 8 Dec Forty-five adrift Chinese Communist fishermen and children assisted by MARKET TIME units. p. 35.

9 Dec - RADM SEUFER relieves RADM WOODING as Commander THIRD Naval Construction Brigade. p. 57.

10 Dec - Coastal Group Yabuta junk broaches; salvage attempt fails. p. 72.

11 Dec - Major Viet Cong crossing thwarted. Fifteen Viet Cong killed and 28 sampans destroyed. p. 16.

15 Dec - USCGC POINT GRACE struck by Viet Cong recoilless rifle fire. p. 38.

15 Dec - 16 Dec PBRs ambushed by a large Viet Cong force. PBRs, helicopters, RAGS, artillery and jet aircraft suppress fire. p. 9.

18 Dec - PBRs, supporting an ARVN operation, are taken under fire by a large Viet Cong force. Six U.S. sailors wounded; several Viet Cong casualties. p. 15.

23 Dec - Suspicious, steel-hulled trawler sighted and tracked by MARKET TIME units. p. 36.

28 Dec - PBRs kill nine Viet Cong in the first major fire fight in the Ham Luong River. p. 23.

29 Dec - WHAMO 1-66, a large-scale military civic action project, is conducted in Kien Hoa province. p. 60.

30 Dec - PBRs on the Soirap kill two Viet Cong; at least four more probably killed. Two sailors slightly wounded. p. 30.

31 Dec - Contact mine discovered in inland waters. p. 2.

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FOREWORD

In December, naval forces regained some of the momentum lost to monsoon weather during November.

Although the weather continued to be fierce and erratic, especially in the First Coastal Zone, MARKET TIME and Vietnamese Navy activity increased. In DaNang and Saigon, the respective Support Activities surpassed certain prior achievements in the critical area of supply.

To the south, in a village in Kien Hoa province, military civic action and psychological operations were coordinated with precision in an aggressive venture called WHAMO 1-66. GAME WARDEN units, meanwhile, continued to surprise and hurt the enemy in areas long considered relatively inviolate.

In a brief ceremony held at DaNang's Camp Hoskins on 9 December, Rear Admiral Paul E. SEUFER, CEC, USN, relieved Rear Admiral Robert R. WOODING, CEC, USN, as Commander THIRD Naval Construction Brigade. Admiral WOODING was presented with the Legion of Merit by Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam.

The month and the year ended on an ominous note with the discovery on 31 December of a Soviet-type contact mine in Saigon's main shipping channel. It was the first time a contact mine had been detected in inland waters.

Despite this new threat, in retrospect it was clear that during 1966 naval forces had wrested the initiative away from the enemy. Along the coastline, the enemy was finding it increasingly

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difficult to cope with the long arm of MARKET TIME. In the Delta, further refinements of GAME WARDEN tactics were cutting into the enemy's sanctuaries. At year's end, it was equally clear that the growing effectiveness of the naval effort was a vital factor in the Allied counter-offensive campaign.

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RIVER PATROL FORCE

In December, the River Patrol Force continued to interdict enemy movements and inflict heavy losses on the Viet Cong along the major rivers of the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone.

Enemy crossing attempts were disrupted by GAME WARDEN forces in the Soi Rap, Mekong (My Tho) and Ham Luong rivers. On one occasion, a PBR patrol boldly swept up a narrow canal and surprised a large number of Main Force Viet Cong preparing for a crossing. In the ensuing engagement, 15 Viet Cong were killed and 28 sampans destroyed.

Enemy activity in the Rung Sat increased sharply during the month as PBR patrols operating in the Soi Rap River engaged Viet Cong sampans on several occasions. In the Long Tau main shipping channel a minesweeper detected a large, contact mine containing a 500 lb. explosive charge. It was the first contact-type mine discovered in the territorial waters of South Vietnam.

SEAL teams operating in the Rung Sat Special Zone discovered several Viet Cong base camps and weapons caches. At one camp, during a mission in the mangrove swamp south of NHA BE, a team came upon and seized a number of automatic weapons and a large quantity of ammunition.

Support missions performed by GAME WARDEN forces ranged from providing cover and blocking forces for ground operations to evacuating sick and wounded Vietnamese from towns and outposts along the rivers. On two occasions during the month, GAME WARDEN helicopter fire teams came to the assistance of besieged outposts

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several miles inland from the major waterways of the Delta.

PBRs continued to transport medical civic action teams to hamlets and outposts along the rivers as well as carrying Vietnamese Psycholgical Warfare Teams on loudspeaker missions.

Of notable significance was the growing mutual respect and confidence between the men of GAME WARDEN and the Vietnamese people. Tangible evidence of the extent of the rapport was the increasing volume and reliability of intelligence furnished river patrols by the Delta inhabitants.

The GAME WARDEN support ship, USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST-816), operated successfully during the early part of the month in sheltered waters near Can Tho. On 12 December, she returned to the mouth of the Bassac, and experienced great difficulty in handling PBRs and helicopters in the high winds and heavy seas of the Northeast Monsoon. At month's end certain aspects of the support ship concept were undergoing re-evaluation.

CONTACT MINE DISCOVERED IN INLAND WATERS

On 31 December, at 0815, the Petty Officer in Charge of MSB 52 spotted approximately 15 inches of a contact mine floating in the Long Tau River, near the junction of the Song Nga Bay and Song Dua rivers. Five contact horns were exposed. At 1000, the mine was disarmed by a Navy EOD team and taken to Nha Be.

MSB 52, in company with three other minesweepers, had been engaged in routine sweeping operations, which commenced at 0400

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from Nha Be. Two MSBs swept the center of the channel with Oropesa gear on both sides, while the other two streamed close to the bank. The current was beginning to ebb at the time of departure, and the minesweepers completed their first pass at 0700; then the two boats along the bank changed to chain-drag sweeps for the return pass. Thus it was estimated that the boats had last passed the area where the mine was located at approximately 0615.

The mine, 34½ inches in diameter and 52 inches in length, carried an explosive charge of 500 pounds; twenty feet of anchor wire were still attached. The bitter end of the cable was frayed and shiny, indicating it had been cut recently.

The mine was coated with red lead, and its surface showed little rust; however the horn containing nuts and the locking ring on the arming device were heavily corroded. There was a single layer of fresh barnacles on the mine. Subsequent analysis indicated that the mine had been submerged in Vietnam's river water for approximately 12 months and that the mine was probably planted in the Long Tau the night before it was swept.

The mine resembled the Soviet MKB-Variation mine in every respect except for the absence of a mercury safety switch. Russian lettering was found on the booster cover and on the arming and depth-setting devices.

This was the first contact-detonated mine discovered in the inland waters of South Vietnam.

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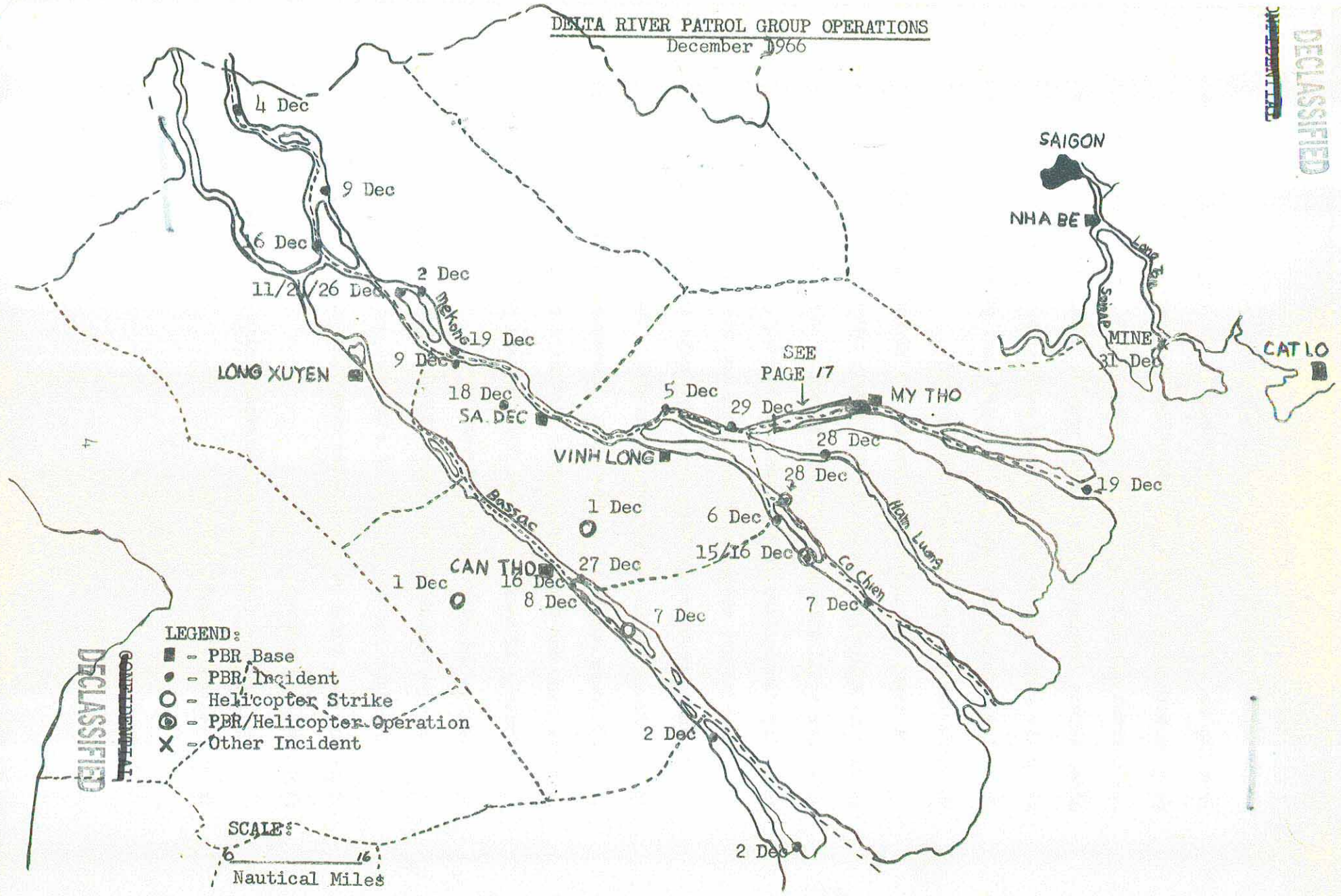
DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP OPERATIONS
December 1966
SAIGON
NHA BE
Long Tau
Soi Rap
MINE
31 Dec
CAT LO
4 Dec
9 Dec
16 Dec
2 Dec
11/21/26 Dec
Mekong
19 Dec
9 Dec
LONG XUYEN
18 Dec
SA DEC
SEE
PAGE 17
5 Dec
29 Dec
MY THO
28 Dec
VINH LONG
28 Dec
19 Dec
Bassac
1 Dec
6 Dec
Hoan Luong
15/16 Dec
Co Chien
CAN THO
27 Dec
1 Dec
16 Dec
8 Dec
7 Dec
7 Dec
LEGEND:
■ - PBR Base
● - PBR Incident
○ - Helicopter Strike
◉ - PBR/Helicopter Operation
X - Other Incident
2 Dec
SCALE:
6
16
Nautical Miles
2 Dec

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DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Lower Bassac River

At 2030 on 2 December, a PBR patrol in the lower Bassac River picked up two small, high-speed contacts moving from the northern end of Cu Lao Dung Island toward the west bank of the river. The lead PBR moved upstream to investigate and, at a range of 200 yards, illuminated the contacts--two motorized sampans. No one was visable and the patrol officer, LTJG Henry I. KLEIN, Jr., USN, fired two warning shots.

Suddenly the sampan's occupants began firing with automatic weapons. The PBR's searchlight was secured, and the sampans taken under fire. The PBR cover boat then moved in to support the lead boat's withdrawal. The PBRs' M-79 grenades and .50 caliber machine gun fire destroyed one of the sampans. One Viet Cong was killed and two were wounded.

LTJG KLEIN died of a gunshot wound in the chest. He was the first GAME WARDEN officer to be killed in action.

On 8 December, PBRs 58 and 60, acting on a detailed intelligence report, intercepted a junk carrying a shipment of medicine concealed in nuoc mam (fish sauce) jars. The junk was stopped in the vicinity of Cu Lao May Island and towed to Can Tho. Included in the cargo were 1,062 penicillin tablets, 20 bags of aureomycin, and 64 packets of hypodermic needles.

At 1555 on 8 December, PBRs 38 and 58 picked up a suspect wanted by the Ke Sach sub-sector; the apprehension occured during

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a routine ID card check in the vicinity of Cu Lao Nai Island. As the patrol was taking the man to Can Tho for interrogation, it was taken under small arms fire from Cu Lao May Island in the vicinity of a known Viet Cong crossing route. Fire was suppressed by the PBRs and the suspect was subsequently turned over to the Vietnamese authorities.

On 10 December near Tra On, a PBR patrol discovered 10,000 units of US-made penicillin in a sampan that had been stopped for a routine search. The sampan and its occupant were turned over to the National Police.

On the afternoon of 16 December, while conducting a routine search of river traffic near the northwest tip of Cu Lao May, PBRs 60 and 28 apprehended a Vietnamese with 80 gallons of kerosene, 27 bottles of glucose, 28 bottles of penicillin, and 500 feet of copper wire in his sampan. None of the cargo was covered by the manifest, and the suspect was subsequently delivered to the Vietnamese authorities.

On 17 December, a special PBR patrol was stationed near the southern tip of Cu Lao May in response to an intelligence report that the Viet Cong would attempt a river crossing. At 1945 the patrol observed what appeared to be a torch high in the trees along the bank. As the patrol closed to investigate, it received sniper fire. The PBRs retorted with M-16 and M-79 fire, and the torch was seen to fall from the trees. No subsequent action developed.

On 27 December, a PBR patrol sighted a sampan with two

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occupants standing out of the mouth of a canal near the northwest tip of Cu Lao May, three and one half miles southeast of Can Tho. The sampan ignored hails and warning shots and continued to evade. As the patrol approached, Viet Cong positions on the east bank of the river opened up with automatic weapons fire.

The PBRs took the sampan and the bank positions under fire. The sampan was sunk and its two occupants were killed. Fire from the bank was suppressed, and the patrol withdrew. Twenty minutes later the patrol returned and received small arms, automatic weapons and mortar fire. Artillery support was called in from Tra On sub-sector, and the enemy fire was suppressed. There were no casualties to friendly forces; enemy casualties were undetermined.

Support of Friendly Forces

On 2 December, PBRs 39 and 40, in company with units of Coastal Group 36, with the Long Phu District Chief and his U.S. Army advisor embarked, escorted four Vietnamese LCVPs on a resupply mission to island outposts in the mouth of the Bassac.

At 0850, as the column entered the channel between Cu Lao Dung and Cu Lao Tron islands, the second LCVP was mined and sunk, wounding one Vietnamese. Simultaneously small arms fire broke out from the beach, and the PBRs suppressed the outburst with .50 caliber machine gun fire and M-79 grenades. The wounded Vietnamese sailor was evacuated to the Coastal Group 36 base by PBR. There were no U.S. casualties.

Subsequently, at the request of the Long Phu District Chief,

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PBRs provided escort and fire support services as Vietnamese LCVPs engaged in salvage operations of the sunken LCVP. No enemy contact developed.

At 2340 on 10 December, PBRs 36 and 34 were requested by a Vietnamese LSIL to stop an evading sampan in a known Viet Cong crossing area near the northern end of Cu Lao May. The LSIL had detected two sampans attempting to cross from east to west after curfew, and had been taken under fire by the sampans. The LSIL sank one of the sampans, and the PBRs destroyed the other. There were no friendly casualties.

Other Assistance

PBRs in the Bassac conducted a number of evacuation missions during the month. The scope of the evacuations ranged from wounded Vietnamese military personnel to civilian victims of Viet Cong booby-traps to children suffering from serious illnesses. In all, 26 Vietnamese were evacuated.

Operations in the Co Chien River

On 7 December, PBRs 86 and 82 sighted a sampan lying close to the bank 25 miles southeast of Vinh Long. The patrol had been warned by a local Vietnamese outpost that a Viet Cong unit, equipped with a 57mm recoilless rifle, was in the area. Sensing an ambush the two patrol boats remained in mid-stream and hailed the sampan. Then warning shots were fired as the sampan continued toward the bank. Suddenly the Viet Cong opened up with recoilless rifle fire and numerous automatic weapons from positions on the bank behind

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the sampan. The PBRs returned the fire, sank the sampan, and killed its two occupants.

The PBRs then cleared the area and requested artillery support from the Huong My sub-sector. Shortly, the ambush site was neutralized by 105mm artillery fire as well as M-79 grenades and M-60 and .50 caliber machine gun fire. There were no friendly casualties.

At 1300 on 15 December, PBRs 97 and 86 were taken under automatic weapons fire from numerous positions along the south bank of the southeastern tip of Cu Lao Giai Island. The Viet Cong used at least one .50 caliber machine gun in the ambush. The PBRs returned the enemy fire and cleared the area.

PBRs 117 and 82 joined the action, and the HC-1 (Det. 25) fire team was scrambled from Vinh Long. The helicopters drew heavy automatic weapons fire during all runs on the target. The four PBRs, marking the target area for the helicopters with .50 caliber tracers, also came under heavy fire.

As the helicopters finished their runs, units of VNN River Assault Group 23 moved in to bombard the enemy positions at close range. Then an Army helicopter fire team arrived and fired on the target area until the Navy fire team returned from rearming and refueling.

Upon completion of the firing runs by air and surface units, the Vinh Binh province 155mm artillery battery fired five rounds into the area. By 1610 the area was considered neutralized. There

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were no friendly casualties; Viet Cong casualties were undetermined.

At 1336 on 16 December, PBRs 111 and 113 came under heavy automatic weapons fire from the south bank of the river while the boats were searching a sampan. The enemy again used numerous automatic weapons, including at least one .50 caliber machine gun. The patrol cleared the area to the southeast, returning fire as it withdrew. PBRs 86 and 97 joined the engagement and came under fire from the south bank.

The four PBRs then stood by to the southeast of the kill zone as the Cang Long sub-sector artillery battery fired eight rounds of 155mm into the area. In addition, the Navy light helicopter fire team arrived and fired on targets marked by the PBRs.

At 1700, a section of jet aircraft delivered a strike into the area, and all firing ceased. During the engagement, PBR 111 had been hit in the radome, and PBR 113 had taken two hits in the hull. Helicopters destroyed one hut and initiated a small POL fire. There were no personnel casualties to friendly forces. Viet Cong casualties were undetermined; however, this locale, the scene of numerous ambush attempts earlier in the month, was not heard from again during December.

Support of Friendly Forces

On three occasions in December, PBRs came to the assistance of a Vietnamese outpost on the south bank of the Co Chien, 17 miles southeast of Vinh Long. In each instance the outpost was under small arms and mortar attack and in serious danger of being overrun.

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The PBRs suppressed the enemy fire with .50 caliber and M-60 fire, and successfully broke up the three attacks. On 22 December a 20-kilo water mine was found in the approach to this outpost.

On 5 December in the Giao Duc sub-sector, a two-boat cover and blocking force supported a Vietnamese counter-assault against an outpost which had been overrun by an estimated company of Viet Cong, five miles north of Vinh Long on the Mekong. PBRs took station in the river, while an AC-47 and Army helicopters conducted reconnaissance by fire at the outpost and its environs.

At 1000, the PBRs rendezvoused with the Vietnamese reaction force, consisting of 130 troops embarked in three LCVPs and a water taxi. With PBRs 111 and 117 in the van, the force proceeded to the objective area at the mouth of a canal. The PBRs entered the canal and were taken under sniper fire, which they suppressed. As the LCVPs entered the area, they too were taken under sniper fire, which was quickly suppressed by the PBRs, and the troops were landed under covering fire of the PBRs. The Viet Cong retreated and the Vietnamese force reoccupied the outpost.

On 6 December, PBRs supported an outpost 25 miles downstream from Vinh Long, which was being harassed by the Viet Cong from the bank of a canal opposite the post. At 2000, as the patrol closed to within 500 yards of the outpost, it received seven rounds of small arms fire, which it returned. An adjacent PBR patrol moved in to block a Viet Cong crossing route in the area, in case the outpost attack was merely a diversion. The attack was successfully

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broken up by the PBR fire and no crossing materialized.

On 28 December, PBRs 86 and 113 were requested by an Army light helicopter fire team to deliver direct fire in support of two Regional Force companies which had been ambushed by the Viet Cong on the north bank of the Song Pang Tra channel, fourteen miles southeast of Vinh Long.

The Army fire team was under heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire from the ambush area. The PBRs moved into firing position and fired 4,000 rounds of .50 caliber and 1,200 rounds of M-60 fire into the enemy positions, with the Army helicopters adjusting the fire. In addition, the Navy helicopter fire team from Vinh Long was diverted from a normal reconnaissance mission and helped saturate the target area.

Operations in the Mekong River

On 4 December, in Kien Phong province, PBRs operating as a blocking force for a combined U.S. Special Forces and Vietnamese Civil Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) force search and destroy operation, sighted a sampan moving out from the east bank of the Mekong River, six miles below the Cambodian border.

The sampan opened fire on the patrol boats. The PBRs returned the fire, and killed one Viet Cong. Then the enemy opened fire on the patrol from the banks, and the patrol suppressed the fire. Special Forces and CIDG troops swept the beach area and discovered four Viet Cong bodies, two carbines, two M-1 rifles and a quantity of grenades and ammunition.

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In addition to the five Viet Cong killed in the action, the PBR patrol turned over nine suspects to the Special Forces at Thuong Thoi. One of the suspects, a woman, had been apprehended using a horn as a warning device just prior to the fire fight.

In the Mekong on 9 December, a PBR patrol spotted a sampan in the vicinity of the northern tip of Cu Lao Ta Island, 35 miles northwest of Sa Dec. The patrol illuminated the sampan and hailed it to come alongside. The sampan's five occupants abandoned the craft and attempted to evade to the beach. Two were captured in the water and two were killed on the beach by M-16 fire. The fifth occupant, believed to be a woman, escaped.

The two bodies were retrieved from the beach and taken to Long Xuyen with the two prisoners and the sampan; the latter contained personal items and one homemade .30 caliber rifle. Interrogation of the prisoners revealed they were bandits who had terrorized the Kien Phong province area for several weeks. They were returned to the province to stand trial.

On 11, 24 and 26 December, Mekong river patrols received sniper fire from positions on the northern end of Cu Lao Gien Island, 22 miles northwest of Sa Dec. At the time, the patrols were attempting to apprehend evading sampans. In each instance fire was not returned to avoid civilian casualties in a populated and predominantly friendly area.

On 19 December a PBR patrol on the upper Bassac sighted a sampan evading to the beach. Since there were many large junks in

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the area, the patrol did not fire on the sampan to avoid endangering friendly Vietnamese. Two national policemen attempted to apprehend the fleeing Viet Cong but were unsuccessful.

At 2035 on 19 December, a patrol in the Mekong thirteen miles upstream from Sa Dec sighted a sampan in a channel between two small islands. The craft was hailed and brought alongside. Its single occupant had no ID card.

While the man was being taken into custody, the patrol received about 30 rounds of small arms fire from the beach; the fire was quickly suppressed by M-16 fire from the patrol. During the engagement, the sampan was sunk and its occupant killed.

Support of Friendly Forces

On 2 December PBRs provided indirect azimuth fire support for an outpost under attack twenty miles upstream from Sa Dec. The fire was requested by the District Chief of Than Binh District, Kien Phong province, who spotted for the PBRs. The boats delivered 1,200 rounds of .50 caliber fire, which effectively broke up the attack.

On the night of 9 December, at the request of the Lap Vo sub-sector advisor, PBRs 84 and 118 came to the assistance of an outpost under attack ten miles northwest of Sa Dec. The PBRs arrived at the outpost on the south bank of the river at 2010 and employed M-79 grenades, and direct M-16, M-60 and .50 caliber machine gun fire. At 2025, PBRs 80 and 81 arrived to assist in the direct fire on the withdrawing enemy. The Vietnamese observers reported the PBRs'

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fire was very effective and the enemy dispersed at 2035. Neither the boats nor the outpost personnel suffered casualties. Viet Cong casualties were undetermined.

At 1000 on the 18th, the Vietnamese Army (ARVN) Ninth Division requested PBR fire support for operations involving the second and third companies of the 13th battalion in an area four miles northwest of Sa Dec. PBRs 84 and 118 were assigned, and continuous air coverage was provided by two armed helicopters and two forward air controllers.

At 1115, the patrol boats arrived on station in a narrow channel, and maintained position with the ARVN units to provide rapid reaction fire support. At 1430, the PBRs delivered 2400 rounds of .50 caliber fire at the request of one of the FAC spotters.

At 1525, PBRs 54 and 65 arrived with a resupply of ammunition and a hospital corpsman. The corpsman treated one ARVN wounded and one wounded Viet Cong prisoner. The four boats remained in the area, and continued to support the operations ashore throughout the day.

At 1935, after covering the extraction of the friendly forces, the PBRs began the return trip to Sa Dec. At 1940, they were taken under fire by an estimated Viet Cong company with at least 20 automatic weapons, two rocket launchers or recoilless rifles, and mortars. Two PBRs cleared to the east and two to the west, and took the enemy under fire with all available weapons at a range of 20-30 yards. Several of the enemy were seen being hit, and screams were heard from the bank. In addition, a secondary explosion was observed in the area.

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The forward gunner in PBR 54 was seriously wounded in the chest, but continued to fire at the enemy until ordered by the boat captain to leave his post. Five others, including the element commander, sustained minor wounds in the engagement.

Since Vietnamese Army (ARVN) troops had canvassed the area less than 20 minutes before the ambush, the element commander concluded that the Viet Cong had been pursuing the Vietnamese troops and had taken the four PBRs under fire as a target of opportunity. The quick reaction of the Navy units in delivering fire at point blank range and clearing the area helped avoid a heavy casualty toll.

Other Assistance

At 1833 on 16 December a PBR patrol in the upper Mekong was hailed by a woman waving a white cloth from a water taxi. One PBR went alongside and found two wounded CIDG troops, who were evacuated to Long Xuyen. At 1900 the same day, U.S. Special Forces at Thuong Thoi requested MEDEVAC for three Regional Force troops wounded in a Viet Cong attack on their outpost, three miles south of the Cambodian border. The three wounded were taken to Long Xuyen for treatment.

On 25 December, PBRs evacuated one injured civilian from the town of Cho Moi to Long Xuyen for treatment.

Mekong (My Tho) Operations

Hostile Fire and Evasion Incidents

On 11 December, a bold sweep by a PBR patrol officer and a security lapse by the Viet Cong resulted in the rout of a large

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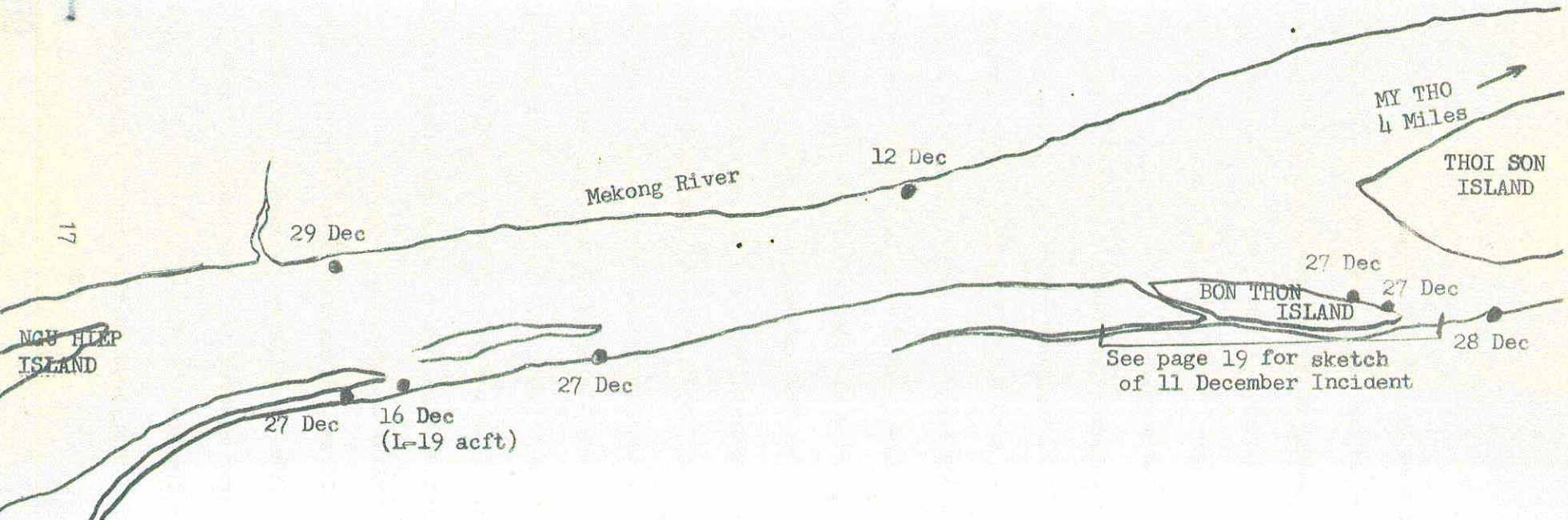
MEKONG (MY THO) OPERATIONS
December 1966



SCALE:

0 _____ 1
Nautical Mile

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enemy force and a major GAME WARDEN success.

At 0740 PBRs 98 and 106, on routine patrol west of My Tho, sighted a small sampan with two green-uniformed occupants heading out of a canal on the south bank of the river, near the western tip of Thoi Son Island. When the PBRs turned toward the boat, it headed back into the canal.

As the PBRs entered the canal in pursuit, they suddenly came upon a large group of green-uniformed Viet Cong, elements of the 263 Main Force Viet Cong Battalion, preparing to embark into about 40 sampans along the bank. The patrol immediately came under automatic weapons fire. The PBRs returned fire and continued up the channel, killing six sampan occupants as the elements along the bank fled to the underbrush in disorder.

As the PBRs withdrew, PBRs 103 and 110 arrived, as well as the Navy light helicopter fire team from JENNINGS COUNTY.

With the fire team providing cover and support, PBRs 98 and 106 re-entered the narrow canal and came under small arms fire from a hut on the west bank. As the PBRs continued their approach, four Viet Cong ran from the hut and were killed by PBR fire. The hut itself was set on fire, and a large secondary explosion demolished it, revealing an ammunition bunker.

The patrol officer, Signalman First Class C.B. SMITH, USN, then ordered the PBRs to withdraw because of the ebbing tide; the helicopter fire team covered the withdrawal and made additional firing passes on the area. The helicopters hit the bunker with rocket fire, which triggered another secondary explosion.

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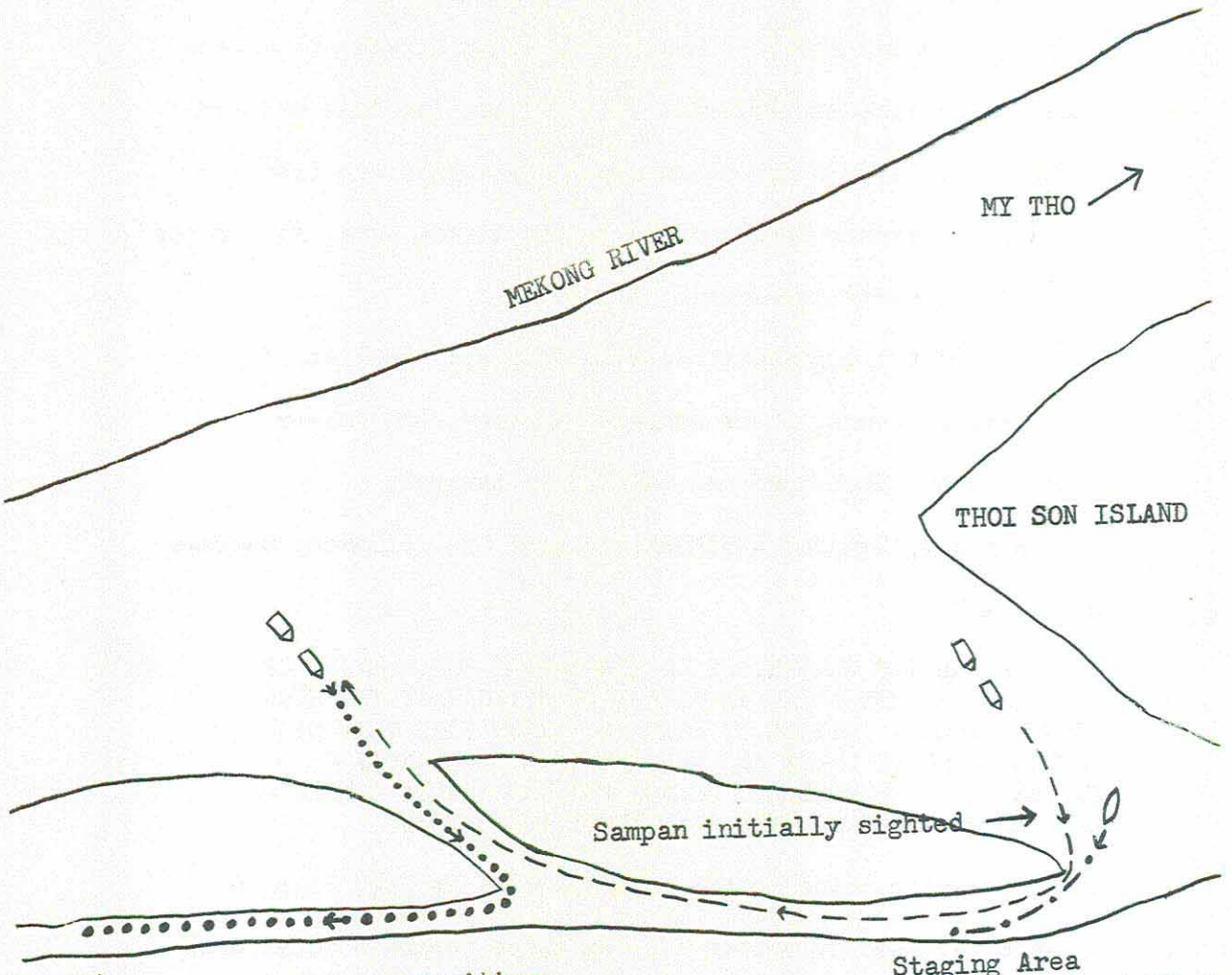
INTERDICTION OF VIET CONG CROSSING ON 11 DECEMBER 1966



SCALE:

0 _____ 500
Yards

XS 39
41

LEGEND:

Evading sampan —·—·
PBR initial pass — — —
PBR second pass ·····

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The PBRs were taken under heavy fire during the withdrawal, and the after gunner of PBR 106 and a Vietnamese policeman in PBR 98 were wounded slightly; both refused to leave their posts. Three Viet Cong who crossed ahead of the patrol in an attempt to escape were taken under fire and killed. In addition, two tree snipers were killed. At 1230, a battalion-sized reaction force from the Vietnamese Army Seventh Division was landed in the area; no further contact with the enemy developed.

Results of the engagement were as follows: 15 Viet Cong killed, 28 sampans sunk, three sampans captured, one bunker destroyed, one hut destroyed and three huts damaged.

The next day, General WESTMORELAND sent the following message to Admiral WARD:

> PBRS 98 AND 106 WERE RIGHT ON THE JOB ON THE MORNING OF 11 DECEMBER, RESULTING IN FINE VICTORY AGAINST THE ENEMY IN DINH TUONG. ATTACK BY PBRS AND LIGHT FIRE TEAM DISRUPTED LARGE VC FORCE AND WAS OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF SUCCESS OF GAME WARDEN. PLEASE PASS MY HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL CONCERNED. WESTMORELAND SENDS.

On 12 December, nine to ten miles west of My Tho, PBRs 96 and 105 were harassed by sniper fire on three separate occasions. Three Viet Cong were killed and PBR 96 sustained two superficial hits in the bow. At 1840 that evening, in the same general area, a .30 caliber Viet Cong machine gun fired at a patrol from behind the shield of a 15 junk convoy proceeding upstream. The patrol officer held fire and numerous Viet Cong positions on the north bank were disclosed as the innocent convoy cleared to the west.

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PBRs 96 and 105 then neutralized the enemy positions with .50 and .30 caliber machine gun fire.

On 16 December, an L-19 spotter aircraft on a routine reconnaissance mission sighted a sampan in a canal disembarking five green-uniformed men in a Viet Cong dominated area, ten miles west of My Tho. The L-19 made several rocket firing runs, and initiated a small secondary explosion in the sampan. Later, about a half-mile to the west, a second sampan was sighted. The L-19 fired a smoke rocket across the sampan's bow, and the occupants jumped overboard and escaped to the underbrush. The sampan was taken in tow by a PBR patrol in the area and delivered to My Tho.

At 2100 on 19 December, a Viet Cong attempt to sabotage the PBR pier at My Tho with a watermine failed when the mine exploded prematurely about 75 yards from the pier. The explosion shook PBRs and RAG boats at their moorings, but caused no structural damage. In another attempt, on 30 December, a U.S. Navy sentry was wounded when he attempted to fend off a mass of vegetation from the PBR pier. The Viet Cong had booby-trapped the vegetation with a grenade, and the seaman suffered facial injuries from fragments.

At 2000 on 19 December, a PBR patrol at the mouth of the My Tho River sighted an unlighted sampan moving from south to north, apparently heading for a village on Loi Quan Island. The lead boat, PBR 124, made a high speed run on the sampan, and was taken under small arms and automatic weapons fire from the boat at a range of about 50 yards. The cover boat, PBR 121, was also taken under fire

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from the sampan, and from automatic weapons and small arms positions on the island.

As PBR 124 completed the first firing run, PBR 121 directed fire at the sampan and the positions on the bank. The fire from ashore stopped, but the sampan continued to fire, and the PBRs commenced firing runs. Each PBR made four runs on the sampan before it ceased fire.

The sampan was illuminated, and a total of five swimmers were seen in the water. Concussion grenades were used to capture three of the swimmers, while two surrendered voluntarily. One of the latter surrendered by holding up his rifle and shouting "Chieu Hoi."[1]

As PBR 124 closed the sampan, two Viet Cong still hidden in the boat threw grenades. The PBR cleared and took the boat under fire, killing both its occupants. Two Chinese Communist rifles, one grenade, five rounds of 7.62 ammunition, and a quantity of documents were recovered from the 25-foot sampan before it sank.

At 1755 on 27 December, PBRs 98 and 106 received approximately 600 rounds of automatic weapons fire from the south bank of the river, five miles west of My Tho. The patrol returned the fire and was joined by PBRs 105 and 107.

The four PBRs saturated the area with 5,500 rounds of .50 caliber machine gun fire, as well as M-79 grenades and M-60 and

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1 "Open Arms" - The Vietnamese government program intended to induce Viet Cong to return to government jurisdiction. Among other inducements, it offers a bounty for weapons turned in.

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M-16 fire. In addition, Vietnamese Army Seventh Division artillery placed 18 rounds of 105mm howitzer fire into the area, destroying three huts and initiating a 75-foot high secondary explosion.

The engineer of PBR 98 was wounded in the right arm from sniper fire; PBRs 98 and 107 each sustained three superficial hits in the hull.

That evening, four engagements occurred involving PBRs 105 and 107. In one incident, near the eastern tip of Bon Thon Island, PBR 105 took three hits forward, one of which destroyed her search-light. There were no personnel casualties.

The four incidents occurred along the stretch of the Mekong River between Thoi Son Island on the east and Ngu Hiep Island on the west, the scene of numerous ambushes, harassments, and crossing attempts in the past. The narrow canal behind Bon Thon Island was the staging area for the crossing attempt broken up by GAME WARDEN forces on 11 December.

On the evening of 28 December, the first major fire fight in the Ham Luong River since random patrols were initiated in October resulted in nine Viet Cong killed and a quantity of enemy material captured. The action occurred when a PBR patrol interdicted a crossing attempt nine miles downstream from the junction of the Ham Luong and Mekong rivers.

At 1937, PBRs 101 and 107 sighted a 16-foot sampan crossing to the north. The sampan was hailed, but ignored the call. The sampan was illuminated, revealing nine occupants. When PBR 101

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closed to 50 yards, the men in the sampan opened fire with small arms.

PBR 101 raked the sampan with .50 caliber fire, killing all nine of the enemy. PBR 101 took the sampan in tow as the cover boat, PBR 107, closed.

At this time, seven Viet Cong automatic weapons positions on the south bank opened up on the patrol; PBR 107 suppressed the fire after a heavy exchange. The PBR patrol then proceeded downstream to the town of Ben Tre to deliver the sampan and its contents to the Kien Hoa sector chief. Again heavy fire broke out from the south bank, and the PBRs had to fight their way through the kill zone to reach Ben Tre.

Of the four Viet Cong dead in the sampan, two were dressed in grey uniforms, one in green, and one in black pajamas. All appeared to be in their late 'teens. Material captured in the action included: seven Chinese Communist Mossin Nagant rifles, one Russian 7.62mm rifle, one U.S. M-1 carbine, 100 rounds of carbine ammunition, 147 rounds of 7.62 ammunition, four hand grenades, two grey uniforms, three bandoliers, three ponchos, a field pack, and numerous personal documents.

On 29 December, the Naval Intelligence Liaison Officer (NILO) at My Tho received information that a ten-man Viet Cong unit was operating from a nuoc mam factory in Phu Phong village, near the western tip of Ngu Hiep Island. The report gave the names of the nine men and one woman in the unit, and indicated its leader was

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a Vietnamese Army deserter named Nguyen Van Hai.

At 1000 on 29 December, PBRs 98 and 107 received sniper fire from a sampan which had beached on the north bank, one-half mile east of Phu Phong village. The sampan's lone occupant was wounded, and another man came to his assistance. The wounded man escaped, but the second man surrendered under fire. He was taken to My Tho where, under interrogation, he admitted he was Hai, the guerrilla unit leader.

Helicopter Operations

Helicopter fire teams of HC-1 Detachment 25, operating from USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST-846), came to the assistance of friendly forces twice on 1 December. In the first incident, a rapid reaction helicopter strike was launched at the request of a forward air controller who had sighted 20 sampans in a canal, 20 miles west-southwest of Can Tho. In the action that ensued, the helicopters killed four Viet Cong, destroyed two structures and two sampans, and damaged three structures and eight sampans.

At 2000, Detachment 25 helicopters reacted to an emergency call from Ba Cang sub-sector where an outpost, eight miles northeast of Can Tho, was in danger of being overrun by the Viet Cong. The light fire team delivered strikes in support of the outpost, receiving moderate automatic weapons fire from the ground. The helicopters returned to JENNINGS COUNTY, rearmed and refueled in 12 minutes and returned to the outpost. During the second sortie, the enemy attack was broken.

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On 7 December, at the request of the Tra On sub-sector advisor, Detachment 25 helicopters conducted two rapid reaction strikes in support of Regional Force troops in contact with the enemy on Cu Lao May Island. The helicopters killed three Viet Cong and wounded one, and destroyed one structure and damaged ten others.

On several occasions during the month, Detachment 25 helicopters were used in perimeter defense at Vinh Long airfield. On a typical mission on 14 December, the Navy light fire team killed or wounded four Viet Cong in response to a call from a forward air controller who had spotted the Viet Cong apparently marshalling for an attack on the airfield. Navy fire teams killed a total of 42 Viet Cong and wounded eight while engaged in perimeter defense missions at Vinh Long.

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE PATROL GROUP

Hostile Fire, Evasions and Interdictions

Enemy activity in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) increased sharply during the month.

At 1430 on 2 December, a Vietnamese Regional Force outpost six and one-half miles southeast of Nha Be received 75mm recoilless rifle fire from the east bank of the Long Tau River. Nearby in the channel, the Saigon-bound French merchantman SINDH, laden with explosives, received similar fire. The SINDH's after superstructure sustained considerable damage and two crewmembers were injured.

Moments later, the Long Tau light helicopter fire team, based at Nha Be, arrived on the scene and launched a strike near the

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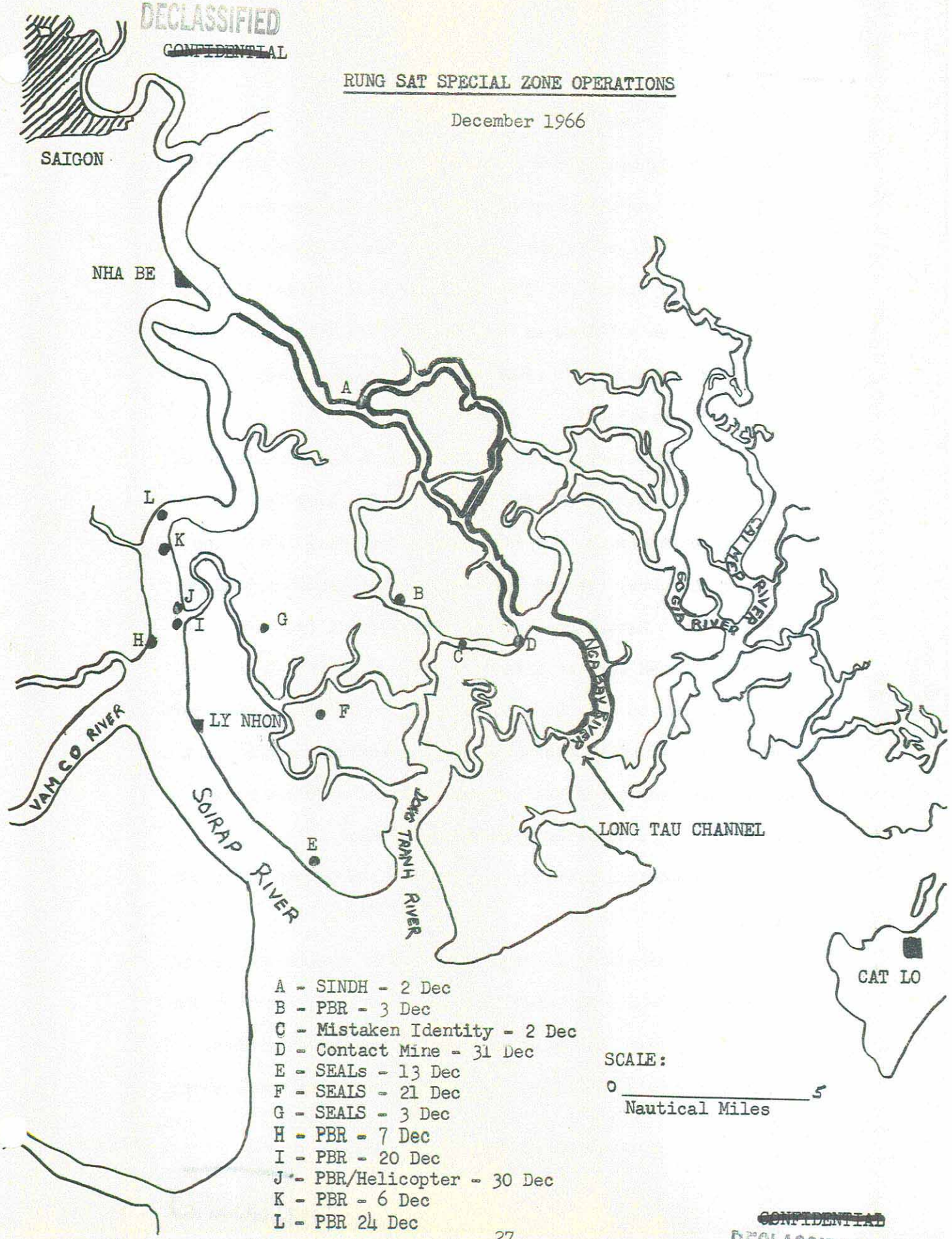
RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE OPERATIONS

December 1966



A - SINDH - 2 Dec
B - PBR - 3 Dec
C - Mistaken Identity - 2 Dec
D - Contact Mine - 31 Dec
E - SEALs - 13 Dec
F - SEALS - 21 Dec
G - SEALS - 3 Dec
H - PBR - 7 Dec
I - PBR - 20 Dec
J - PBR/Helicopter - 30 Dec
K - PBR - 6 Dec
L - PBR 24 Dec

SCALE:
0 _____ 5
Nautical Miles

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mouth of Rach Muoi creek.

At 1530 the Regional Force outpost (Company 999) dispatched a patrol to search the strike area. The patrol discovered one dead Viet Cong, a belt of 7.92mm ammunition, two expended 75mm cases and traces of blood. At 1545 the patrol made brief contact with the enemy, then withdrew as U.S. helicopters and a Vietnamese Air Force fixed wing aircraft conducted additional strikes. Final results were undetermined.

At 2300 on 3 December, a PBR patrol came to the assistance of a Regional Force Company (601/783) outpost on the Long Tau. As the patrol approached the post, the PBRs came under heavy fire. The PBRs returned the fire, cleared the area, and called in artillery fire from the First Battalion, Seventh Artillery at Ly Nhon.

The PBRs spotted for the artillery fire until an L-19 aircraft arrived in the area to assist; a total of 129 artillery rounds were delivered. Also, an AC-47 conducted several strikes in the area. The enemy attack was successfully thwarted with no friendly casualties. Viet Cong casualties were undetermined.

Most of the month's activity occurred in the Soirap River and its environs.

At 0950 on 6 December, a Soirap PBR patrol came to the assistance of fishermen who were being harassed by sniper fire from the east bank of the river, seven miles south of Nha Be. The PBRs, assisted by the Army's RSSZ light helicopter fire team, suppressed the enemy fire.

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On 7 December a PBR patrol was taken under heavy automatic weapons fire from three positions on the west bank of the Soirap, 11 miles downstream from Nha Be. The PBRs returned the fire, then cleared the area and spotted while the First Battalion, Seventh Artillery fired 46 rounds of high explosive and white phosphorus charges into the area. The three enemy positions were neutralized.

About 1940 on 20 December, a Soirap PBR patrol sighted a sampan moving from east to west near the mouth of the Vam Sat River. The sampan ignored warning shots and turned toward the bank. About 300 yards from shore, the sampan's two occupants deliberately capsized their boat and attempted to flee. The patrol opened fire. One Viet Cong was hit in the throat by small arms fire, and died in a PBR enroute to Nha Be. The other man apparently escaped. The sampan and a handbag containing personal items and a hand grenade were captured.

At 2200 on 24 December, a PBR patrol noted two radar contacts lying close to the west bank of the Soirap, seven miles south of Nha Be. As the PBRs closed, they were taken under automatic weapons fire from five well-prepared positions along both banks of the river, and from a machine gun in the bow of one of the sampans. The patrol returned the fire, then cleared the area. An AC-47 aircraft and Army and Navy helicopter fire teams were directed to the scene and 4.2-inch mortar fire was requested from Quang Xuyen sub-sector battery.

The PBR patrol leader spotted for the AC-47 and the mortar

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fire. At 2245 all fire ceased. Two Viet Cong were killed in the action, and one of the sampans was destroyed. One PBR crewmember was injured slightly.

On 30 December, a PBR patrol sighted a sampan with at least six persons aboard heading out of the mouth of the Vam Sat River and along the east bank of the Soirap, ten miles south of Nha Be. At 1920 the lead boat, PBR 73, closed to within 50 yards and was taken under fire from a machine gun mounted in the bow of the sampan and small arms fire from both banks.

Enemy fire severed the steering cable of PBR 73 and wounded two of her crew slightly. Despite loss of steering control, PBR 73 continued the engagement and scored a direct hit on the sampan with an M79 grenade; PBRs 73 and 26 then raked and sank the sampan with .50 caliber fire, while PBRs 21 and 94 suppressed the fire from the beach. Eventually PBR 73 secured her engines and was towed to Nha Be.

PBRs 17 and 25 arrived in the area and took the two wounded from PBR 73 to Nha Be. At 1933, the Navy helicopter fire team arrived on the scene; minutes later an AC-47 joined the helicopters in conducting reconnaissance by fire along the banks. Fire was not returned. Enemy losses were two killed and at least four more probably killed; captured were one U.S. M-1 carbine, one 40mm grenade, a stretcher, and documents. Vietnamese fishermen who were in the vicinity of the engagement subsequently reported to PBR patrols that the sampan had contained eight Viet Cong, all of whom had been killed in the action.

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SEAL Operations

At 0645 on 3 December, a SEAL fire team conducted a reconnaissance mission in the mangrove swamp 11 miles south-southeast of Nha Be. The team discovered a Viet Cong base camp, and captured one 57mm recoilless rifle with eight rounds of ammunition, one 7.92mm machine gun and 2,000 rounds of ammunition, two carbines, and a .45 caliber submachine gun ("grease gun") and 3,500 rounds of ammunition. The team spotted one Viet Cong, whose carbine was shot from his hands as the SEALs withdrew.

On 13 December, a SEAL team discovered a Viet Cong emplacement in the southern part of the Rung Sat. The SEALs found 18 trenches, six bunkers, ten grenade booby traps, eight rows of punji stakes, six punji traps, a sampan, ten batteries, four huts and miscellaneous cooking equipment. The team sank the sampan and destroyed other equipment prior to withdrawal.

On 21 December, four SEAL fire teams conducted reconnaissance and ambush missions in support of Operation CHARLESTON, a search and destroy operation conducted by the Second Battalion, 18th Infantry. The SEALs found a Viet Cong base camp about 12 miles from Nha Be. The camp contained 10 bunkers, 20 grenades and miscellaneous tools; all items were destroyed.

The SEAL teams used UH-1D "Slicks" (a term used to differentiate the transport version of the UH-1 from the "gunship") for insertion and extraction. The helicopters were used in areas

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inaccessible to boats, and provided the SEALs with greater mobility as well as more versatile fire support.

Other RSSZ Incidents and Events

At 2320 on 2 December, a PBR in the Soirap River was mistakenly fired upon by an Army helicopter fire team. The incident occurred 12 miles southeast of Nha Be and was occasioned by a navigational error which led the fire team to believe the darkened PBR was an enemy craft transiting a free fire zone. There were no personnel casualties; the PBR received five superficial hits.

On 3 December, a RSSZ helicopter suffered engine failure and crashed during landing near the village of Ly Nhon. Security forces from the Second Battalion, 18th Infantry were placed around the wreck, which was later removed by an Army HC-47 helicopter to Vung Tau. There were no personnel casualties.

On 22 December, the province chief of Go Cong province agreed to permit random PBR patrols in the Vam Co River. The patrols will begin in January following psychological orientation to acquaint the river's inhabitants with the nature and purpose of the PBR operations.

On 27 December, the Rung Sat Special Zone helicopter fire team was shifted from Nha Be to Cat Lo because of maintenance difficulties created by the sand surface of the helicopter pad at Nha Be. In recent months, three premature engine changes and one engine failure were attributed to compression blade erosion caused by sand ingestion.

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE

Despite the Christmas holiday truce period and continued heavy weather caused by the Northeast Monsoon, MARKET TIME activities showed a gradual increase during December. Coastal Surveillance forces detected 48,336 craft, 16,782 of which were inspected and 12,302 were boarded.

The arrival of PCF 101 and two LCPLs brought in-country assets to programmed levels. SEA SHARP (Southeast Asia Semi-Permanent Harbor Protection) units continued to relieve the mobile units.

MARKET TIME aircraft were damaged during the attack on Tan Son Nhut on 4 December. No personnel casualties were sustained; however, one aircraft took a direct mortar hit. Operations were affected only to the extent that one patrol flight was missed because of the attack on the airfield.

MARKET TIME units rendered assistance to Chinese Communist fishermen on two occasions during the month. On 4 December a Chinese junk carrying 43 persons was towed to Nha Trang by PCF 54. The junk had been swept from her normal fishing grounds by a storm and was in need of assistance. On 8 December, USCGC POINT ELLIS discovered two Chinese Communist fishermen adrift in their small junk. All the Chinese fishermen were residents of Hainan Island and arrangements were made through diplomatic channels to return them to their homes.

On 23 December, MARKET TIME air and sea units turned back a suspicious, steel-hulled trawler which was identified as being

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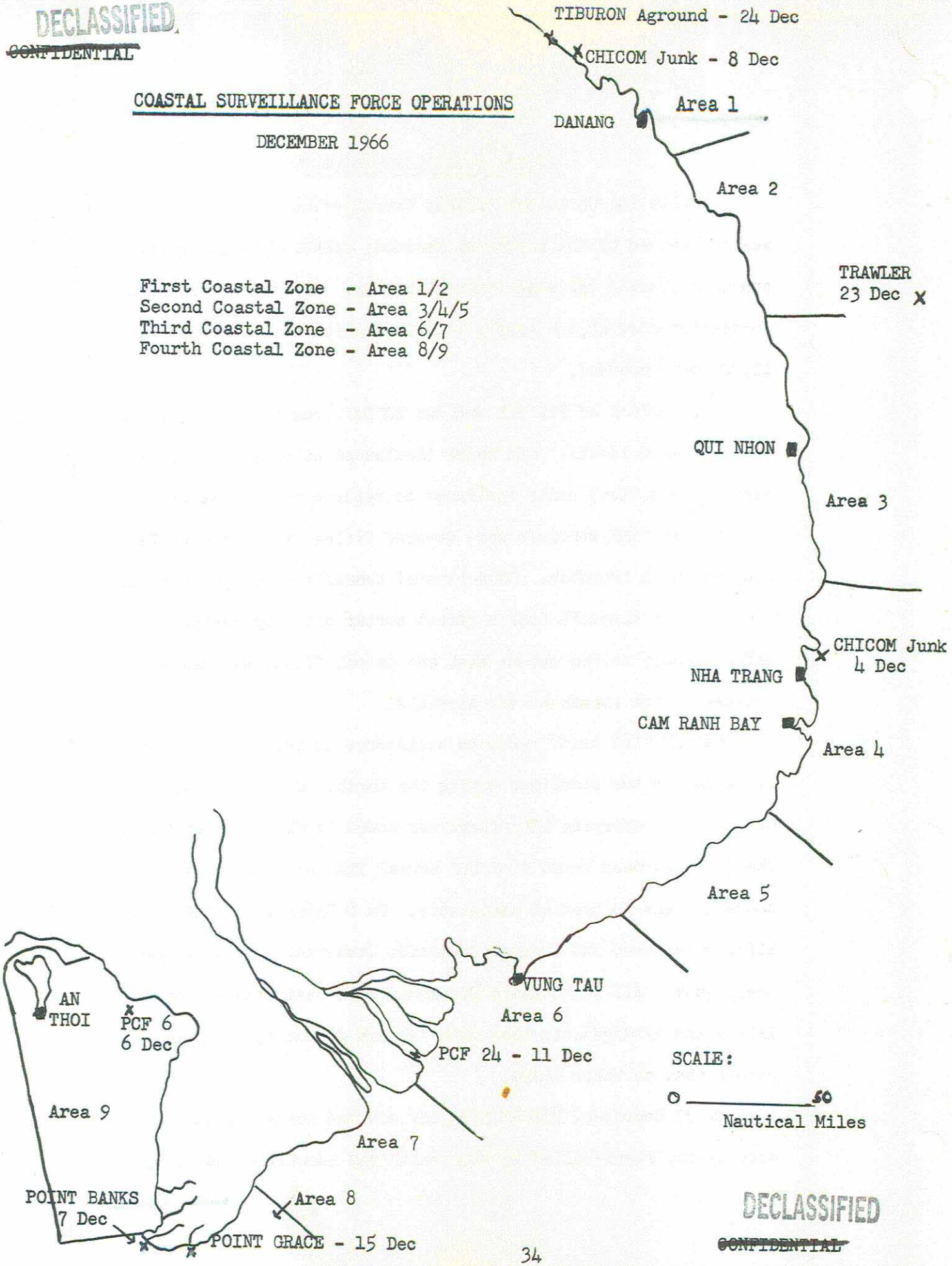
COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE OPERATIONS

DECEMBER 1966



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similar to the infiltration trawlers of 10 May and 20 June.

The Christmas truce period, running from 0700 24 December to 0700 26 December, was observed by MARKET TIME forces in that no persons were detained and no gunfire support missions were conducted during that time. Enemy activity in MARKET TIME areas appeared to be significantly less during the truce period.

CHINESE COMMUNIST FISHERMEN INCIDENTS

At 1815 on 4 December, PCF 54 detected a heavily-damaged fishing junk ten miles northeast of Nha Trang. The 80-foot craft was carrying 36 men (and seven children) who were later identified as Chinese fishermen from Tanh Sien, Hainan Island, Communist China.

The junk's cargo consisted of fish and fishing equipment. No contraband was found. Interrogation revealed that the junk had been damaged in a storm and had drifted southeast to the position where it was found by PCF 54.

At 2000 on 8 December, USCGC POINT ELLIS discovered a small non-motorized junk 28 miles northwest of DaNang. The two fishermen aboard the junk were determined to be residents of Tanh Sien, Hainan Island, Communist China. A storm had set the men adrift and separated them from their mother ship in the fishing grounds near Hainan Island. They stated that they had been drifting for eight days. The two were taken to Nha Trang to join the group of Communist fishermen assisted earlier by PCF 54.

Arrangements were made through diplomatic channels for the return of both junks and all occupants.

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TRAWLER SIGHTING INCIDENT

At 1145 on 23 December, a MARKET TIME aircraft from Patrol Squadron 16 sighted a heavily-laden, steel-hulled trawler maneuvering on various courses at 10 knots 80 miles northeast of Qui Nhon. At 1409, a second VP-16 aircraft held the trawler 70 miles northeast of Qui Nhon, at this time proceeding on a heading of 060° at 10 knots. By 1150 of the following day, the trawler was 225 miles northeast of Qui Nhon, maintaining course and speed.

Covert air surveillance was continued until 1214 on 25 December when USS HISSEM (DER-400) relieved the aircraft and tracked the trawler until it entered the Hainan Straits.

Photographic analysis indicated that the trawler had the same type hull as that of the trawler captured in June 1966. The latest incident was evaluated as an attempt to infiltrate cargo into Binh Dinh province.

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE AT TAN SON NHUT

At 0115 on 4 December, the Viet Cong attacked Tan Son Nhut Airbase with mortar and small arms fire. MARKET TIME personnel sustained no casualties; however, four of the five parked aircraft were damaged. One P2A Neptune of Patrol Squadron 17, Detachment A, received a direct mortar hit and sustained major damage. One received moderate damage and two others received minor damage while the fifth was unscathed.

Only one MARKET TIME flight was missed because of the attack

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as regular coverage was resumed at 1200. All damaged aircraft were back in operation within 48 hours with the exception of the heavily-damaged Neptune which returned to service within two weeks.

OPERATIONS

Hostile Fire and Evasion Incidents

Twelve hostile fire and evasion incidents occured during December with no friendly personnel casualties while one Viet Cong suspect was killed and another was captured. The incidents are presented in chronological order. Distances are measured from the nearest Coastal Surveillance Center.

7 - At 2345 USCGC POINT BANKS sighted two evading sampans off the coast of Ca Mau Peninsula, 105 miles southeast of An Thoi. After the sampans ignored signal flares and warning shots they were taken under fire. One sampan was damaged while the other successfully evaded. The WPB received hostile fire from the beach in the vicinity of the damaged sampan. POINT BANKS' return fire produced three secondary explosions.

8 - At 1016 USCGC POINT ORIENT sighted an evading junk 85 miles northwest of DaNang near Pho Hoi village. The junk's six occupants ignored warning shots and beached their craft. A 3rd Marine Division reaction force was called in. When the Viet Cong suspects saw the Marine force they attempted to flee. One suspect was killed and one other was captured.

10 - At 1459 PCF 63 destroyed an abandoned basket boat 45 miles east of Qui Nhon after the boat had evaded and its occupants had fled.

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11 - At 1055 POINT BANKS sighted a sampan making for an island 40 miles off the tip of Ca Mau Peninsula. When POINT BANKS signalled and fired warning shots, the sampan attempted to evade. Two occupants abandoned the boat while the third tried to move it to the bank. The sampan was taken under fire and damaged.

- At 1400 PCF 75 detected an evading junk while inspecting a group of fishing junks 80 miles north of Qui Nhon near An Dinh village. The occupants of the junk ignored warning shots, beached the junk and fled. Later, the abandoned junk was destroyed by mortar fire.

13 - At 1745 USCGC POINT MAST sighted a sampan evading into a canal on the coast of An Xuyen province 80 miles southeast of An Thoi. An L-19 reconnaissance aircraft provided fire control assistance for the WPB. The aircraft received small arms fire from the area as three structures were damaged by POINT MAST's mortar fire.

15 - At 1855 USCGC POINT GRACE received recoilless rifle and small arms fire from a position at the mouth of the Bo De River on the Ca Mau Peninsula, 170 miles southwest of Vung Tau. Several rounds, including three 57mm recoilless rifle rounds, struck POINT GRACE causing considerable damage to the hull and superstructure. Despite the damage, the cutter remained in an operational status and suppressed the enemy fire. Later, BLANCO COUNTY (LST 344) assisted POINT GRACE with temporary

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repairs. USCGC POINT GAMMON then escorted the damaged cutter to Cat Lo for repairs.

18 - At 1530 a reconnaissance aircraft received ground fire from an area on the coast of Cay Duong Bay, 58 miles east of An Thoi. PCF 91 provided return fire of 21 rounds of 81mm mortar. One camouflaged junk was destroyed.

19 - At 1845 PCF 90 sighted an evading sampan near the mouth of the Bay Hap stream on the Ca Mau Peninsula, 105 miles southeast of An Thoi. When a warning shot was fired the occupants of the sampan jumped overboard. PCF 90 received hostile fire from the beach and cleared the area.

20 - At 0105 PCF 20 destroyed two evading sampans 70 miles north of Qui Nhon after they had ignored illumination, signals and warning shots. Enemy personnel casualties were unknown.

21 - At 0135 USCGC POINT CAUTION illuminated and hailed a junk moving along the surfline near Tam Giang lagoon, 55 miles northwest of DaNang. The junk evaded to the beach and was abandoned. POINT CAUTION destroyed the junk with mortar fire.

Search and Rescue

In addition to assisting the Chinese Communist fishermen, MARKET TIME units conducted five other search and rescue operations.

At 0915 on 2 December, PCF 25 rescued ten persons and recovered one body after a junk had sunk 60 miles northeast of Vung Tau. Of the 22 persons who had been on board, 18 were rescued, one body was recovered and three were missing and presumed drowned. The survivors

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were taken to the Coastal Group 31 base. A Vietnamese PGM assisted PCF 25 in the search and rescue. The operation was terminated at 1700.

At 1210 on 3 December, USS VIREO (MSC-205) attempted to assist a disabled junk 60 miles southeast of An Thoi off the Ca Mau Peninsula. VIREO's efforts to tow the junk to safety failed. Five of the junk's six passengers were rescued when the junk sank. A search for the missing passenger produced negative results.

At 1245 on 6 December, USS FORCE (MSO-445) was designated on-scene commander in a search and rescue mission initiated in an area from 25 to 45 miles southeast of Nha Trang in an effort to locate a missing U.S. Air Force F-4C aircraft. The operation was terminated at 2000 on 7 December with negative results.

At 1405 on 8 December, USS BLANCO COUNTY (LST-344) reported the crash of a U.S. Air Force B-57 140 miles southwest of Vung Tau. Local MARKET TIME units began immediate search and rescue operations. PCF 67 recovered both the pilot and the co-pilot in good condition. The rescued crewmen were transferred to BLANCO COUNTY for a subsequent helicopter lift.

At 1045 on 29 December, USCGC POINT LEAGUE discovered a burning junk 30 miles west of Vung Tau. The cutter rescued eight persons from the water and extinguished the blaze.

Other Incidents

At 0345 on 6 December, PCF 6 detained a sampan 45 miles east of An Thoi near Cai Ban Cape. Investigation revealed that the sampan was carrying 500 pounds of rice and that its lone occupant was a

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hard core Viet Cong. The sampan had been stolen to be used for transporting rice.

At 0600 on 11 December, PCF 24 ran aground 55 miles southwest of Vung Tau in the mouth of the Co Chien River. Protection and assistance were requested and received from Coastal Group 35 units, PBRs and a helicopter fire team from Vinh Long. USCGC POING SLOCUM also arrived to assist. At 1200 PCF 24 was freed and was towed into the channel by Coastal Group 35 junks.

At 1215 on 12 December, PCF 98 supported Coastal Group 32 and 33 units during an amphibious landing 15 miles west of Vung Tau. Small arms fire was received as the SWIFT conducted a sweep of the area. Six bunker positions were located and one Viet Cong suspect was detained. The suspect did not have identification papers and was carrying 55,000 $VN ($465). He had no explanation for possessing so large a sum of money and was taken into custody by Coastal Group 33 personnel.

At 1930 on 15 December, PCF 97 detained a sampan carrying one Viet Cong. The man indicated a desire to become a Hoi Chanh (returnee) under the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program and was taken to the Coastal Group 32 base for interrogation and processing.

At 1948 on 24 December, a Patrol Squadron 16 aircraft reported that a steel-hulled craft was beached 70 miles northeast of DaNang. USCGC POINT LOMAS and POINT ELLIS proceeded to the location and identified the craft as the Philippine tug, TIBURON. The tug, under contract to Naval Support Activity, DaNang, could not be pulled

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free by the WPBs and major salvage operations were initiated on 25 December.

A three-phase CORRAL operation was begun on the morning of 26 December off the coast of Phuoc Tuy province in an attempt to curtail Viet Cong use of innocent fishing fleets as a cover for supply movements. Two PCFs, one LSIL and Coastal Group 31 junks participated. During the first phase (0700-1146), 56 junks were detected; 47 of these were boarded and seven were inspected. Nothing suspicious was observed. Phase II, which was a blocking operation, was terminated with negative results at 0700 on 29 December. Phase III was cancelled because of inclement weather.

During periods when the 50-foot SWIFT boats were restricted to harbor areas because of heavy weather, Operation RED DOG, a search of all craft in a relatively sheltered area, was scheduled. On 27 December a RED DOG was conducted on the Thi Vai River 15 miles northwest of Vung Tau. Three PCFs searched 16 junks with nothing suspicious being detected.

During the week of 19 December the first six EX-15 Ordnance Locators (metal detectors) were distributed to MARKET TIME units. The EX-15 is an experimental, light-weight searching device designed to aid in inspecting junks for contraband. The portable unit, equipped with earphones and a 36-inch probe with a sensor tip, will emit electronic signals when metals are present. The probe can be thrust into a hold of fish and ice or into rice or other loose cargo, thereby saving much time and effort in searching wooden junks.

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The Air Deployment Delivery System (ADDS) was expanded to include service to MARKET TIME craft in southern areas 6 through 9. This system permits aircraft, flying out of Tan Son Nhut, to rush high priority items to ships in MARKET TIME waters. Small engine parts, radar or weapons parts and other small items can be parachuted to the units on station.

HARBOR DEFENSE (STABLE DOOR)

With the arrival of 16 skimmer crew personnel on 1 December STABLE DOOR forces in Vietnam reached a total of 496 men. The new arrivals were divided between Cam Ranh Bay and Qui Nhon. The Inshore Undersea Warfare Group 1, (IUWG-1), WESTPAC Detachment, was moved from Saigon to Cam Ranh Bay on 5 December.

Cam Ranh Bay

Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance Unit 11 (MIUWS-11) was relieved at Cam Ranh Bay by Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit 2 (IUW-2) on 9 December. Cam Ranh Bay received two additional LCPLs to increase the patrol boat strength to six. Construction was started on two quonset huts for a galley and mess hall and a potable water system was installed at the Cam Ranh Bay harbor defense base.

Nha Trang

At Nha Trang MIUWS-22 continued operations during the month. On 1 December heavy weather caused the LCPL pontoon pier to sink.

On 5 December, two men were detained for pilfering a barge at anchor in the harbor. The following evening a sailor on duty

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aboard the same barge prevented another attempt to pilfer goods. The sentry fired warning shots toward the persons attempting to board. While fleeing to the beach, one suspect was wounded and subsequently died.

During the month three junks and 40 persons were detained for not having proper identification papers or for acting in a suspicious manner.

Qui Nhon

IUW-3 personnel detained nine junks and 60 persons during December. Again the reasons for detention were improper identification or suspicious actions.

Vung Tau

MIUWS-13 personnel detained six persons for having improper identification during the month.

On the evening of 10 December, GRAYLING, an Army contract tugboat, collided with LCPL-35. The LCPL was on routine patrol in the harbor when the tug struck the boat's starboard quarter. There were no personnel casualties and only minor damage was inflicted on the boat.

Construction was started on four barracks and plans were drawn for the erection of a quonset hut for administrative and recreation spaces.

STABLE DOOR Statistics

Personnel (Officers/Enlisted):

Cam Ranh Bay	6/118	Vung Tau	6/136
Nha Trang	6/101	IUW Det	2/4
Qui Nhon	7/120	Total	27/469

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STABLE DOOR Activity:

Boats Assigned: 16
Detained: 12 Junks and 106 Suspects
Junks Detected: 26,204
Junks Inspected: 3,385
Junks Boarded: 2,290

Average number of ships in port per day:

Cam Ranh Bay	35
Vung Tau	55
Nha Trang	13
Qui Nhon	38

Total Average per day: 141

MARKET TIME UNIT CHANGES

PCF 101 arrived in country to replace PCF 77 which capsized and sank in November. The replacement brought the total of PCFs in-country to the programmed level of 84. Two additional Landing Craft Personnel Large (LCPL) arrived during December bringing the total number of these craft to the programmed level of 16.

A Thailand ship, PGM-12, joined MARKET TIME forces as a barrier patrol ship. After final outfitting and briefings in Saigon, PGM-12 commenced patrol operations on 23 December.

USS CURRITUCK (AV-7) disestablished the seadrome at Cam Ranh Bay on 18 December. Other MARKET TIME air patrols were flown by P3A aircraft from Sangley Point and SP-2A aircraft operating out of Tan Son Nhut.

The following Seventh Fleet ships operated as MARKET TIME units during the indicated inclusive dates:

		DATES
DER 397	USS WILHOITE	(1-8)(15-30)
DER 322	USS NEWELL	(7-31)
DER 251	USS CAMP	(9-29)

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		DATES
DER 400	USS HISSEM	(8-31)
DER 328	USS FINCH	(1-6)(22-31)
DER 325	USS LOWE	(1-7)(31)
DER 324	USS FALGOUT	(1-14)(31)
DER 327	USS BRISTER	(1-21)(30-31)
MSC 199	USS PHEOBE	(1-11)
MSC 205	USS VIREO	(1-31)
MSC 208	USS WIDGEON	(23-31)
MSC 207	USS WHIPPOORWILL	(1-11)
MSO 510	USS ADVANCE	(23-31)
MSO 427	USS CONSTANT	(12-31)
MSC 290	USS GANNETT	(23-31)
MSO 436	USS ENERGY	(12-31)
MSO 463	USS PIVOT	(20-31)
MSO 464	USS PLUCK	(20-31)
MSO 444	USS FIRM	(1-25)
MSO 434	USS EMBATTLE	(1-19)
MSO 445	USS FORCE	(1-19)
MSO 446	USS PRIME	(1-24)
MSO 467	USS REAPER	(1-22)
LST 344	USS BLANCO COUNTY	(1-31)

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

In December progress was achieved in all areas of supply. Monsoon weather conditions, heavy northern I Corps resupply requirements and increased requests for assistance in Battalion Landing Team (BLT) off-loading combined to produce a backlog of cargo scheduled for Hue and Dong Ha. However, backlog was reduced by maximum utilization of all available Landing Craft Utility/ Covered Lighters (LCU/YFU). Assistance was provided by two Seventh Fleet LSDs which shuttled LCUs from DaNang to Dong Ha during a ten day period, and by the use of an Attack Cargo Ship (AKA) to transport cargo to the mouth of the Cua Viet River for LCU/LCM pick-up.

Although weather delayed sailings for a total of 125 hours during the month, LCU/YFUs made 103 round trips to Dong Ha, delivering 7,978 short tons of cargo plus equipment and operators for Marine unit moves. In addition, LCUs assisted in the off-loading of the 11th Engineering Battalion and a BLT from ships anchored off the Cua Viet.

The Hue/Phu Bai area was resupplied by LCUs which, in 73 trips, delivered 6,215 short tons of cargo and also back-loaded a BLT from Hue to ships anchored off the Hue River entrance. The total tonnage delivered to Hue and Dong Ha during December was 14,193 short tons. Landing Ship Tanks (LSTs), in 29 round trips, delivered 24,144 short tons of cargo back-loaded from DaNang to Chu Lai.

New throughput and backload records were established for

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DaNang. A throughput of 250,707 measurement tons (151,921 short tons) and a backload of 80,179 measurement tons (44,060 short tons) exceeded the previous record set in October by 10,452 measurement tons and 13,363 measurement tons, respectively. The new record was achieved despite monsoon weather and reduced shipping during the latter part of the month.

The backlog of cargo in deep draft ships was high for the first 15 days of the month, reaching a peak of 73,877 measurement tons on 6 December. By 21 December the backlog was below 20,000 measurement tons and averaged only 3,000 measurement tons for the remainder of the month. In December 40 ships arrived while 42 completed offloading. There was a net decrease in backlog of 22,124 measurement tons.

Although weather also restricted offloading at Hue for five days, a new record was established for that port. A total of 12,479 measurement tons was offloaded, which exceeded the record set in August, 1966 by 2,691 tons.

Total throughput for I Corps in December was 347,440 measurement tons, an increase of 53,792 tons over the previous month.

Facilities for storage and transfer of POL continued to increase. On 31 December, the China Beach seaload line and the Shell My Khe fuel farm were placed in an operational status. Transfer lines between the two facilities and the USAF tank farm and the Naval Support Activity northwest tank farm also became operational.

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Total steel tank storage capacities at DaNang increased to the following levels:

JP-4	214,200 barrels
AVGAS 115/145	37,900 barrels
MOGAS	10,000 barrels
DF-2	41,500 barrels

On 31 December, total POL steel tank capacity at DaNang and Chu Lai was 373,600 barrels, a dramatic increase from the 20,000 barrel capacity of January 1966.

At Chu Lai, heavy weather affected fueling operations during the early part of December and again from 21 December to 31 December. POL support capability was considerably improved, however, when the new 8-inch bottom-lay line was flushed, charged and pumped on 8 December. A flow rate of 2,000 barrels per hour was achieved, compared to the 320 barrels per hour rate through a 4-inch line. Both the 8-inch line and the new 12-inch line (not yet fully operational) were to be extended approximately 900 feet to seaward to accomodate fully-loaded T-2 Tankers.

Storage and warehouse construction progressed satisfactorily and Class II and Class IV supply support improved. Both demands and issues increased substantially during the month. Demands increased by 39 per cent and issues by 48 per cent. Net effectiveness increased from 66 per cent to 70 per cent.

Maintenance shop backlog was reduced to an average of 9.3 shop days. A major factor in the reduction was the continuous

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rotation through all facilities of five preventive maintenance crews, each composed of masons, carpenters, electricians and plumbers.

Public Works responsibilities for operation and maintenance of utilities systems continued to expand. In December, NAVSUPPACT maintenance and operation of three generators at the Hill 327 Marine Exchange complex was approved and takeover was scheduled for 1 January 1967. The 13.8 KV power plant and distribution line at DaNang main airport was energized by two 700 KW Mobile Utilities Support Equipment (MUSE) units on 22 December.

Service craft assets increased with the arrival of a floating crane (YD-221) and a water barge (YW-118) on 28 December. However, the departure of the non-self-propelled Refrigerated Lighter (YFRN-412) for overhaul and voyage repairs reduced NAVSUPPACT reefer barge assets to YFR 888 and YFRN 385.

Transportation assets increased. Forty-four trucks (including thirteen 10-ton tractor trucks) were received in December. During the month, the NAVSUPPACT DaNang C-47 aircraft transported 423 passengers and 35,795 pounds of cargo.

Expansion of services and facilities continued. In DaNang, the Elephant Beach recreation complex commenced partial operation on 4 December with the opening of the Army/Air Force Branch Exchange, which includes approximately 50,000 square feet of retail sales area and 20,000 square feet of warehouse area. Post Office branch 17078 (number TWO) of FPO 96695 also opened. The USO branch office

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opened on 18 December, offering general recreation services and snack bar facilities with approximately 6,000 square feet of floor space. An Industrial Relations Department (IRD) branch office was dedicated and opened on 28 December at Hill 327 to provide service to 1st Marine Division components and the Red Beach area.

The Camp Tien Sha Chapel was dedicated on 23 December in conjunction with the visit of Rear Admiral James W. KELLY, CHC, USN, Chief of Chaplains, who participated in the service.

DaNang was visited 109 times by Seventh Fleet ships during the month. Services provided by NAVSUPPACT included fleet freight, mail, disbursing, ARFCOS, boats, tugs and transient billeting. In addition, NAVSUPPACT delivered 338,875 gallons of diesel fuel and 502,541 gallons of potable water to Seventh Fleet ships.

Project SEA ANCHOR construction progressed at all three sites. On 31 December the communications center, receiver site and transmitter site were, respectively, 35 per cent, 19 per cent and 8 per cent complete.

A new project, designated STARBOARD TACK, was initiated to provide contingency communication vans for the NAVSUPPACT detachments at Phu Bai and Dong Ha. The vans will be transportable by helicopter, and will provide HF, VHF and UHF teletype and microwave equipment capable of operating in any area of Vietnam. The Naval Electronics Systems Command (NAVELECSYSCOM) was assigned overall responsibility for design and procurement of the vans. An estimated activation date of 15 June 1967 was established for the project.

General harassment by sporadic small arms fire continued

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throughout the month. At Camp Tien Sha approximately 70 rounds were received the night of 18 December. During a three hour period on 21 December (0130 to 0430) approximately 200 rounds were received. The fire was returned with undetermined results.

At the packaged POL site four separate instances of small arms fire were reported. A total of 15 rounds were received and 30 rounds were returned. In three other incidents, a total of 26 rounds of harassing fire were directed at the Elephant Beach Recreation Center. Six rounds were fired in return. Tien Sha ramp reported 13 rounds of small arms fire during a half hour period on the evening of 30 December. The fire was returned in each instance.

No friendly casualties resulted from harassing fire during the month. On 26 December, however, two DaNang East sentries were wounded by a booby-trap (M26 grenade) at the NAVSUPPACT garbage dump. The grenade was under a C-ration can and when the can was moved the grenade exploded. One man was seriously wounded; the other received minor wounds.

Team One of Harbor Clearance Unit ONE made significant progress towards removal of the sunken hulk from DaNang River. Demolition charges (composition C-4) and cutting torches were employed to cut the hulk of the Dutch freighter, sunk in 1945 by the Japanese, into sections of approximately 90 tons each. Cutting was completed on 23 November, and by 31 December, 40 per cent of the hulk had been lifted.

On 31 December Naval Support Activity personnel strength

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(including APLs) totaled 8,186, a decrease of 461 from the 30 November onboard count.

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY SAIGON

During December the activities of Naval Support Activity, Saigon (NAVSUPPACT) continued to increase in scope, intensity and effectiveness. Construction of interim and permanent facilities resulted in significant improvement in overall habitability at several GAME WARDEN and MARKET TIME bases, and contributed to an expanded support and operational capability at those locations.

At Nha Be, a new interim boat ramp was completed, and funds were made available for the planned 6000 square yard enlargement of the existing helicopter runway and parking area. At Can Tho, the brows to the causeway and YFNB were improved. Satisfactory progress was made in the construction of permanent facilities at both bases.

Renovation of the living quarters at Vinh Long was completed. The boat ramp and sea wall construction projects were, respectively, 70 per cent and 50 per cent complete on 31 December. At Cat Lo, well-drilling efforts met with a continued lack of success and were abandoned. The Officer in Charge of Construction (OICC) initiated a study on the possible use of distilling units and a shallow well system in a different area. Meanwhile, construction of a sheet pile bulkhead was begun, and two pontoons were assembled and placed in use as an interim pier.

At My Tho the lack of a Vietnamese Navy (VNN) YOG to replenish the River Assault Group (RAG) base resulted in a "drawdown" of POL. No difficulties were experienced in resupply, however, as adequate

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support was obtained from the terminal at Nha Be. A 1000-barrel storage tank was under construction at the My Tho base site. Installation of berthing equipment continued. Over 100 bunks and mattresses had been provided by the end of the month.

In the Sa Dec/Vinh Long area, action was undertaken to provide additional POL storage. The Sub-Area Patroleum Office, Vietnam (SAPOV) and the First Logistical Command were requested to develop at Vinh Long a resupply capability for the NAVSUPPACT detachments in Sa Dec and Vinh Long. Under consideration was the possibility of utilizing Shell Oil Company assets at Vinh Long for resupply purposes. Construction projects completed at Sa Dec included a head, septic tank installation, security fence and a generator shed.

At An Thoi, an automatic resupply system for MOGAS and 9250 lube oil was initiated. In addition, an airfield control tower was completed at the land base, and construction of recreational facilities ashore was started.

At Cam Ranh Bay, Project BOWLINE (Naval Communications Station construction) progressed satisfactorily. On 31 December, 80 per cent of the construction work on the communications center had been finished. The receiver site and transmitter site, were, respectively, 41 per cent and 11 per cent complete. On 28 December, six 250 KW generators were received for installation in the communications center and receiver site.

In December NAVSUPPACT assumed responsibility for the maintenance and material support of the Defense Communications Agency,

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Southeast Asia Mainland. Servicing of teletype and associated electronic equipment was initiated. NAVSUPPACT also assumed administrative control of 990 service records (840 enlisted, 150 officer) of Coastal Squadron ONE. The records were transferred to the appropriate NAVSUPPACT detachments.

Constantly increasing logistic requirements continued. Waterborne shipments to coastal and delta detachments totaled 988 displacement tons during the month, an increase of 148 tons over November. YFR 889, in company with USS MARK (AKL-12), completed its first delta resupply run. The NAVSUPPACT aviation section set a new month's record, transporting 3,023 passengers and 335,233 pounds of cargo.

Generally, PCF and PBR material casualties resulted in less downtime as in-country repair capabilities and parts back-up increased. Overall supply requisition effectiveness in December was 45 per cent gross and 76 per cent net. Priority TWO casualty report effectiveness in December was 58.3 per cent gross and 72.8 per cent net. December's figures represented an increase of 2 per cent for casualty reports over November's percentages. (The net figures represent percentage of possible completion of orders or repairs).

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THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

On 9 December 1966, Rear Admiral Paul E. SEUFER, CEC, USN, relieved Rear Admiral Robert R. WOODING, CEC, USN, as Commander, THIRD Naval Construction Brigade. During the change of command ceremony, held at Camp Hoskins in DaNang, Admiral WOODING was presented with the Legion of Merit by Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam. Admiral WOODING had commanded the THIRD Brigade since its recommissioning in DaNang on 1 June 1966. Rear Admiral SEUFER continued as Officer in Charge of Construction, Republic of Vietnam (OICC) and on 14 December, relieved Admiral WOODING as Commander, Pacific Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southeast Asia.

December brought the full force of the monsoon season to I Corps. Heavy rains caused some work delays and stoppages, with road maintenance and horizontal construction projects most affected. The general construction program, however, continued at a reasonable pace despite the adverse weather conditions. Most of the important Beneficial Occupancy Dates (BOD) were met on schedule.

Two of the eight Mobile Construction Battalions (MCB) in country were relieved in December. At Chu Lai, MCB-8 relieved MCB-3 on 4 December, and during the month completed construction begun by MCB-3. Finished projects included the Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPPACT) DaNang covered storage area and additions to the administration and BOQ facilities in the Chu Lai area. Work begun by MCB-8 and under construction at the end of the month included a 25-bed dispensary for First Force Hospital, a five-

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building dairy plant complex for NAVSUPPACT, various Maintenance Shop buildings for Force Logistics Support Group BRAVO, and a 60-foot timber bridge on Highway One.

On 11 December, MCB-62 relieved MCB-7 at Phu Bai, and became the first battalion from the reopened Construction Battalion Center at Gulfport, Mississippi to operate in Vietnam. Construction was begun by MCB-62 on an 800 x 1200 foot parking apron for the FIRST Marine Air Wing (1st MAW). The apron, being built next to Hue/ Phu Bai International Airport, will be constructed of soil cement with an asphalt seal coat. Other work begun by MCB-62 included the prefabrication of buildings for the fifth increment of the THIRD Marine Division (3rd MAW) cantonment.

In the DaNang East area, MCB-6 started construction of the Naval Advisory Detachment Black Rock Bay project. This complex, when completed, will include six Butler (rigid frame storage) buildings, a parachute loft, ammunition magazines, guard towers, and access roads.

Mobile Construction Battalion Ten began work on a new 33,000 square yard parking apron for Marine Wing Support Group Seventeen. Work also was started on a 160-foot timber bridge on Route 6, southwest of Hill 327. Construction of a 60-foot timber bridge on Route 1-A was begun by MCB-9.

Renovation of the First Marine Air Wing headquarters area was begun by MCB-58. Programmed work included the installation of new electrical systems, new roofs, and new partitions and ceilings in 36 masonary buildings built before the arrival of United States

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Forces in Vietnam.

Logistics difficulties continued to be a problem for the Naval Construction Forces during December. Insufficient material delivery for the Air Force Tigerhound project at Khe Sanh restricted Seabees at that location. However, work on the airstrip was completed and construction of parking aprons was 70 per cent complete. MCB-5 repaired 400 feet of AM-2 matting in the runway at Dong Ha. The cantonment work at Dong Ha was 99 per cent complete on 30 December. Other construction projects included the redesign of the artillery pads at Dong Ha. The 30th Naval Construction Regiment provided materials from stocks on hand to expedite job completion.

Construction of the integrated Worldwide Communication System (IWCS) project at DaNang and Chu Lai also slowed due to lack of materials and bad weather. The BODs were revised to 1 February 1967.

At Camp J.J. Carroll, west of DaNang, a 35-man detachment from MCB-5 completed two of 12 planned gun platforms and 35 tent decks, 19 of which included wood framing for tent support. The well-drilling detachments continued to operate at An Khe and Chu Chi. Two wells were completed at Chu Chi.

MCB-40 completed a Post Office and Post Exchange for the First Marine Air Division, and 4800 lineal feet of steel aircraft revetments for Marine Air Group Thirteen. As part of the continuing maintenance at the Chu Lai Airfield, MCB-40 also made necessary repairs to the 330,000 square feet of runway and taxiway.

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MILITARY CIVIC ACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

In December, projects involving military civic action (MILCAP) and psychological operations continued to increase in scope and effectiveness. The assistance spread across the entire spectrum of human need, and ranged from relief for flood victims to emergency surgery to Christmas parties for orphans. In some cases, the help came from individual sailors conducting English classes for Vietnamese adults and children; in other cases, such as WHAMO 1-66, a combined, tri-service venture involving an entire village produced meaningful results.

WHAMO (Win Hearts and Minds Operation) 1-66, conducted on 29 December in the village of Ap An Loi in Kien Hoa province, was a large-scale, coordinated project involving Vietnamese, United States and Australian units.

Acting on a report that the village, known to be harboring Viet Cong, could be "won over" by a concerted and continuous program of medical and other types of assistance, the Senior Advisor, Third Coastal Zone arranged with the Commanding Officers of Coastal Groups 34 and 37 to conduct the first of a series of operations designed to aid the village.

At 0650, ambush teams from Coastal Groups 34 and 37 and Ba Tri District Popular Force troops were landed from Vietnamese Navy junks to secure the area; a U.S. Army Mohawk aircraft provided reconnaissance support. At 0730, a leaflet drop from a U.S. Air Force aircraft (U-10) informed the villagers of the mission.

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At 0850, a MEDCAP team, composed of physicians and dentists from USS TUTUILA (ARG-4) and U.S. Navy corpsmen from the Third Coastal Zone, arrived in a Royal Australian Air Force helicopter.

During the day, 3,000 pounds of commodities were distributed. More than 1,000 villagers were present at the MEDCAP site, and about 320 medical patients and 120 dental patients were treated. Four serious surgical cases were subsequently taken to Vung Tau for treatment.

There were no serious incidents involving contact with the Viet Cong, although two rounds of sniper fire were directed at the village. Some Viet Cong medicine and a small amount of Viet Cong propaganda material were found in a haystack on the outskirts of the village.

In the First Naval Zone, Coastal Group 14 began construction on a school house for approximately 350 children, in conjunction with the area's refugee resettlement program. Also, approximately 2,000 calenders and 36,000 "Free South" newspapers were distributed within the Naval Zone. With the cooperation of a captured Viet Cong, 200,000 leaflets, noting his good treatment by his captors, were dropped in his unit's area by the Fifth Air Commandos.

Educational assistance by U.S. Navy and Coast Guard personnel included setting up scholarships for children in Than Phu village in I Corps, giving financial support to a school teacher in Qui Nhon, and conducting English classes throughout the country.

On several occasions, PBRs and PCFs transported Vietnamese

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Psychological Warfare Teams on loudspeaker missions. At Ninh Hoa near Nha Trang, one former Viet Cong who returned to the government under the Chieu Hoi (Amnesty) program, said that he did so as a direct result of a loudspeaker appeal made from a PCF, and agreed to make a tape recording to be used on future missions.

Christmas parties were held by U.S. Navy personnel in a number of locations. In Saigon, Naval Support Activity personnel held a party for 70 children in a local orphanage. In An Thoi, over 400 toys were distributed to local children. In DaNang, civic action supported 22 Christmas parties at which over 12,000 individual gifts were distributed.

On 5 December, a U.S. Navy doctor on a MEDCAP mission in the Mekong Delta discovered a 12-year old Vietnamese girl with serious congenital heart disease and impending heart failure. She was taken to the Long Xuyen hospital for an EKG and X-rays, and later transferred to USS REPOSE (AH-16) via the station hospital in DaNang.

On 6 December, Binh Thuy-based PBRs visited three outposts to conduct medical and school assistance missions. Thirty Vietnamese were treated by NAVSUPPACT Detachment corpsmen, and 100 school kits were distributed. The next day, JENNINGS COUNTY-based PBRs, with ship's company embarked, conducted a MEDCAP mission in which 60 persons were treated at an outpost in the lower Bassac River.

In the Delta, flood relief operations were completed. Two hundred fifty thousand piasters were spent on such projects as improvements to maternity wards, building a bridge, construction

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and repair of houses, and school and dispensary improvements. On 12 December, U.S. Navy LCMs made the last of three deliveries of rice seed from My Tho to Chau Doc. On one occasion, the Viet Cong attempted an ambush of the LCMs with heavy automatic weapons fire.

At Long Xuyen, base and boat personnel contributed money and labor to rebuild a three-family dwelling damaged by fire in November. The same personnel conducted English classes for local citizens, donated 24 pints of blood, and made weekly MEDCAP trips throughout their patrol area.

During December the four special Seabee Teams deployed in the III and IV Corps areas completed a variety of military civic action projects in support of the Vietnamese Government's Revolutionary Development Program. Continued emphasis was placed on medical assistance, development of village facilities and training of Vietnamese in basic construction skills.

In Tuyen Duc province, Seabee Team 0307[2] cleared and graded a 300 square-yard area at the Don Bosco School for Boys, located near Dran. The work included the removal of several large trees and the excavation of 90 cubic yards of dirt. The team also excavated 40 cubic yards of dirt at the site of a new monastary and school being built by the monks of Chou Son Monastary.

The hospital corpsman with Team 0307, during visits to nearby

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[2] The first two digits of a team's numerical designator indicate the parent Mobile Construction battalion from which the team members are drawn.

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villages, treated a total of 526 Vietnamese patients in December. The team also transported a local monk from the Seabee camp to the Chau Son Monastary. The monk had been operated on in Nha Trang to correct deformed legs. A wheelchair was obtained for his use by Team 1008 and the 31st Construction Regiment of Port Hueneme, California.

Team 0509 completed drainage and sewage systems for the Thoai Son Hospital in An Giang province, and erected a steel tower to be used for support of a 3000-gallon water storage tank. The team also constructed and installed playground equipment for the Thoai Son public school and prepared a construction site for the Thoai Son nursery and kindergarten.

Team 0509's hospital corpsman treated 341 Vietnamese during village sick calls. A majority of the patients treated suffered from ear infections and diseases of the skin.

At Vinh Long in the Delta area, Seabee Team 1107 continued work on the surgical suite annex to the Vinh Long Hospital. A new schoolhouse was completed by the team and turned over to the District Chief in ceremonies held on Christmas Eve.

The team's hospital corpsman was assigned to the Vinh Long Hospital for six days a week during the month. His work included surgical technician's duties, plaster of paris casting and physical therapy. Approximately 145 patients were treated in December. In addition, the corpsman conducted three village sick calls during which he treated 230 Vietnamese.

At Bao Trai, in the province of Hau Nghia, Seabee Team 0805 completed construction of a 300-foot-long road to the Cu Chi High School. The school had been completely surrounded by water and was accessible only via a temporary pontoon bridge. Approximately 405 cubic yards of fill were used on the project. The team also repaired two and one-half miles of the Bao Trai-Cu Chi Road.

Eleven Hoi Chanhs (Viet Cong returnees) worked with Team 0805 during December. Three trained with the team's steelworker, and two each with the equipment operators, the mechanic and the electrician.

Also working as laborers and trainees with the team were five Viet Cong prisoners from one of the two Bao Trai prisons. Two of the prisoners showed considerable aptitude for building work and were given extensive training as an inducement to rehabilitation.

Because of Viet Cong activity throughout the province, the team's hospital corpsman was restricted to work in the village. An average of 50 patients a day were seen during sick call at the two local prisons.

The following is a tabulation of construction projects completed during December by naval forces. Projects involving repairs or renovation are marked with an R.

		USN	VNN	TOTAL
a.	Bridges	2/1R	0	2/1R
b.	Dispensaries	5R	0	5R
c.	Dwellings/number of families	7/7	0	7/7
d.	Schools/classrooms	1/3-5R	0	1/3-5R
e.	Wells	1	0	1
f.	Grist Mill	1	0	1

	USN	VNN	TOTAL
Medical treatments			
a. General medicine	9,425	2,329	11,854
b. Dental	76	211	287
c. Surgery	3	11	14
d. Emergency evacuations	1	0	1
e. Cleft Palate operations	3	2	5
f. Blood donations (pints)	24	0	24
Health and sanitation			
a. Classes on personal hygiene/ attendance	5/380	0	5/380
b. Immunizations	175	509	684
c. Medical aides/nurses trained	2	0	2
d. Physical examinations	0	56	56
e. Spray insecticide operations	1	0	1
Distribution of Commodities (pounds unless otherwise specified)			
a. Blacksmith kits (number)	500	0	500
b. Cement	3,000	0	3,000
c. Clothing	1,845	320	2,165
d. Food	19,874	65,242	85,116
e. Lumber (board feet)	1,140	0	1,140
f. Medical, non-prescription	50	0	50
g. Vitamins (bottles)	0	170	170
h. School Kits (number)	317	0	317
i. Soap	1,754	1,930	3,684
j. Tin sheets (number)	20	0	20
k. Lumber, scrap (truck loads)	5	0	5
l. Lumber, scrap	3,000	0	3,000
m. Metal, scrap	1,000	0	1,000
n. Salad oil (gallons)	336	0	336
o. Toothpaste	488	629	1,117
p. Tooth brushes (number)	500	0	500
q. Toys (number)	1,183	0	1,183
r. Candy	167	0	167
s. Health kits (number)	5	0	5
t. Sewing kits (number)	76	226	302
u. Textile kits (number)	0	26	26
v. Personal kits (number)	0	524	524
w. Blankets (number)	10	26	36
x. School supplies	30	0	30
y. Notebooks w/paper (number)	140	0	140
z. M-boats, damaged (number)	8	0	8
aa. Psy Ops bucket (number)	138	0	138
bb. Radios (number)	5	0	5
cc. Newspapers/magazines (number)	14,250	8,000	22,250

	USN	VNN	TOTAL
dd. Textbooks (number)	150	37	187
ee. Gasoline water pump (number)	1	0	1
Recovered goods redistributed to the people			
a. Sampans (number)	10	0	10
b. Sewing machines (number)	3	0	3
Educational efforts			
a. English classes/attendance	182/2,824	0	182/2,824
Voluntary contributions (Piasters - 118 to one U.S. dollar) in support of:			
a. Schools	6,000	0	6,000
b. Orphanages	14,000	0	14,000
c. Needy families	2,000	0	2,000

* * * * *

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

VIETNAMESE NAVY

The personnel strength of the Vietnamese Navy at year's end stood at 15,978 officers and enlisted men. Thirty-nine deserters were officially discharged during December as the number of personnel absent without leave rose from 31 in November to 214 in December. The sharp increase was attributed to the Christmas holiday season.

During the last quarter of 1966 several minor changes were made in the Vietnamese Navy uniform bringing the shoulder board designs of Lieutenants and Lieutenants junior grade closer to those of the U.S. Navy. Also, a silver unfouled anchor has been added to the shoulder boards of non-commissioned officers.

Operations

Fleet Command

Eleven Vietnamese ships off the coast of Vietnam and four ships in the Mekong Delta conducted 21 gunfire support missions and searched 238 junks and sampans in Fleet Command operations in December. PCs, PCEs and PGMs patrolling the coasts of all four Naval Zones, with PGMs also patrolling in the Rung Sat Special Zone, provided gunfire support on eight occasions.

On 7 December, PCE 11 fired 110 3-inch rounds in support of Coastal Group 16 units at Co Luy, Quang Ngai province. Five days later, PCE 11 fired 60 rounds of 3-inch ammunition supporting units of Coastal Group 14 at Cua Dai, Quang Nam.

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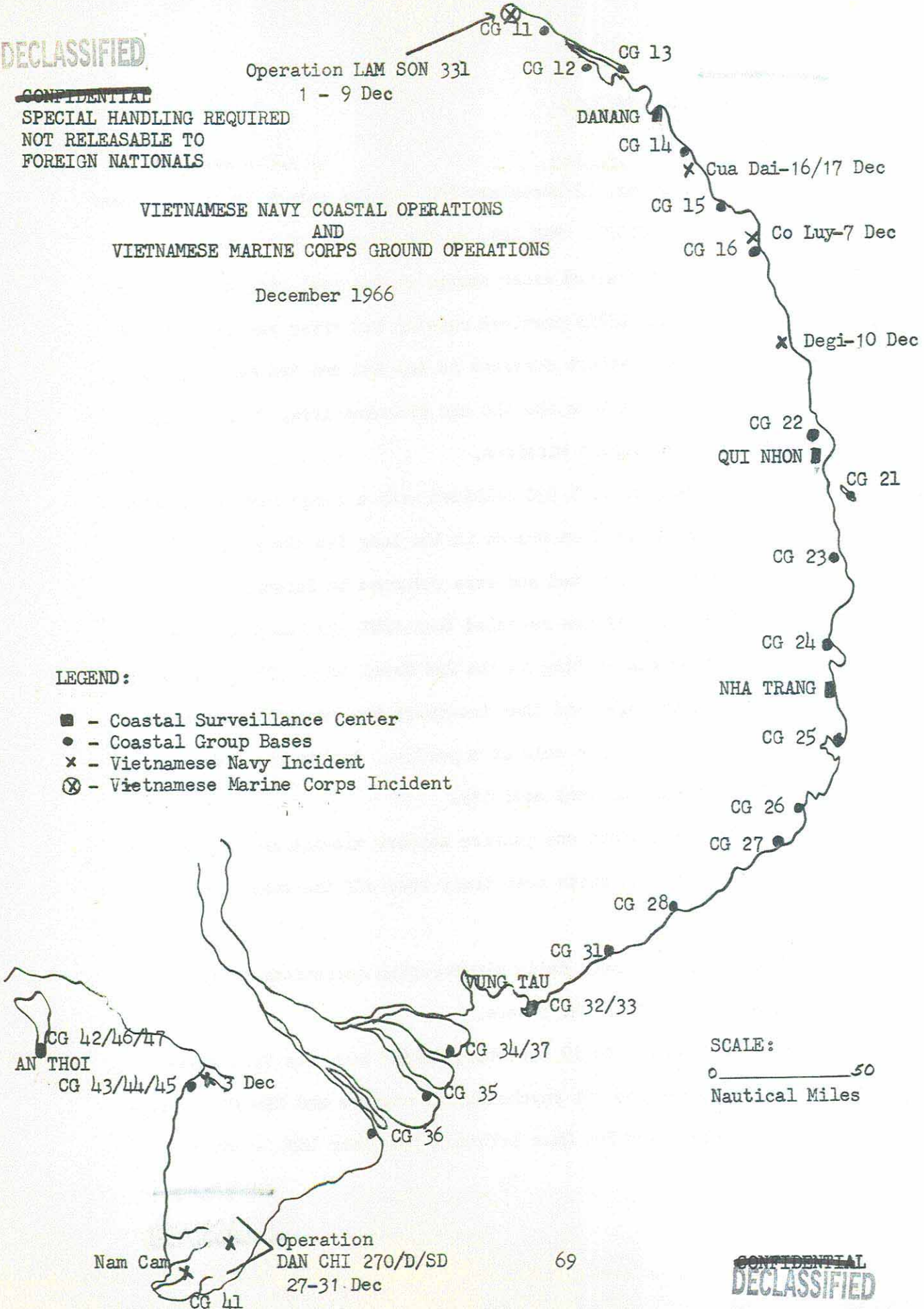
VIETNAMESE NAVY COASTAL OPERATIONS AND VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS GROUND OPERATIONS

December 1966



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On the same day, 12 December, PGM 609 was struck by the merchant vessel, JOPLIN VICTORY. PGM 609, in the process of mooring at Nha Be at the time, sustained minor damage on the port side and lost an anchor. LSILs and LSSLs provided coastal and river patrol, gunfire support and convoy escort services in the 2nd and 3rd Naval Zones, the Rung Sat Special Zone and the 4th Riverine Area. These ships fired 12 gunfire support missions.

On 11 December, LSSL 230 collided with a cargo junk which sank five miles downstream from Nha Be in the Long Tau channel. The junk's crewmen were rescued and were returned to Saigon.

On 10 December it was revealed that LSSL 229 had been engaging in illegal livestock trading in the 2nd Naval Zone. The craft would load cattle in one area and then transport the cargo to another area where the cattle would be sold at a profit. Action was taken to preclude recurrence of such activity.

MSC 116 carried out one gunfire support mission in conjunction with Coastal Group 14 units near their base off the coast of Quang Nam province.

MLMS continued their daily minesweeping operations on the Saigon, Nha Be and Long Tau rivers.

From 28 November to 19 December, LSM(H) 400, the Vietnamese hospital ship, carried out psychological warfare and MEDCAP missions at Con Sou Island and Phu Quoc Island. The other LSM, which had

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been moved to Guam for conversion to a hospital ship, arrived in Saigon in early December, designated LSM(H) 401. The ship has been receiving logistic lift assignments, and will take up hospital ship duties as soon as the dental and medical vans (small clinics) are installed.

The LDNN[3] (UDT) assisted River Assault Group (RAG) 23 boats from 5 to 12 December salvaging equipment from two sunken LCVPs 24 miles northwest of Sa Dec. The salvage operation was under the supervision of U.S. advisors of the Western Repair Facility at Can Tho. Four LDNN inspected bottoms of hulls of ships berthed at the Saigon port.

During December, a total of 35 logistic missions lifted 2,657 tons of cargo and 3,585 persons. LSMs carried 85 per cent of the personnel while LSTs transported the remaining 15 per cent. LCUs moved 47 per cent of the cargo; LSTs moved 33 per cent; LSMs moved the remaining 20 per cent of the cargo.

Inadequate pier space, cargo handling equipment and staging areas continued to hamper loading operations.

On 27 November, LCU 536 was attacked by the Viet Cong at the junction of the Ham Luong and Mekong rivers near My Tho. Four Vietnamese sailors were killed and nine were wounded as the boat sustained heavy damage.

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[3]Lien Doi Nguoi Nhai (literally: soldiers who fight under the sea)

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At 1645 on 1 December, LST 501 broached on a beach south of Nha Trang. The ship, which was pulled free by a tug 19 hours later, was drydocked for hull repairs.

Coastal Groups

Of the 357 junks assigned to the Coastal Force, 263 were available for daily operations and 130 were actually used. During the month, Coastal Group units searched 16,671 craft. This was an increase of 2,009 over November's effort. The average number of searches by a Coastal Junk unit was 4.3 per day.

On 16 and 17 December, units of Coastal Group 14 supported the U.S. Marines in an operation 8 miles northwest of Cua Dai, Quang Nam province. The Coastal Group units searched 37 junks and 120 people. Two junks and two suspects were detained. Seven 20-litre cans of oil were confiscated.

On 20 December, the Viet Cong attacked the Coastal Group 14 base at Tien Sa just south of DaNang. The enemy's automatic weapons fire was suppressed by 81mm mortar and artillery fire by friendly units. The base suffered no casualties.

On 10 December, a Yabuta junk of Coastal Group 21 broached in surf in the Degi area of Phu Yen province. A firefight resulted when the six crewmen waded ashore. The Vietnamese Navymen suffered no casualties while they killed seven Viet Cong and captured seven others. During the subsequent salvage attempt, two Viet Cong defectors surrendered to Coastal Group 21 personnel.

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An L-19 aircraft in the area requested a U.S. 1st Cavalry unit to establish a perimeter around the broached junk. After security was established by the Army, PCF 87 sent personnel ashore to secure a line to the junk. After three unsuccessful attempts to pull the junk free, heavy weather curtailed further salvage attempts.

Finally, on 17 December, the tug OSCEOLA pulled the now-battered junk free and began towing it toward Qui Nhon. During the passage, the hawser parted and the junk disappeared, and was not recovered.

In the 3rd Naval Zone, various CORRAL operations, combined with land and amphibious operations, netted an increased number of Viet Cong suspects and draft dodgers detained. At 0600 on 11 December, PCF 24 ran aground at the mouth of the Co Chien River. Two junks of Coastal Group 35 provided support until the SWIFT was refloated six hours later.

Activities in the 4th Naval Zone involved ashore ambushes and reconnaissance of suspected infiltration areas.

On 1 and 2 December, Coastal Group 41 and Regional Force/ Popular Force (RF/PF) troops from the HAI Secret Zone killed three Viet Cong and captured one in an operation conducted 23 miles west of Nam Cam in the Cau Mau Peninsula.

At 0400 on 3 December, Coastal Groups 43, 44 and 45 attacked a small Viet Cong unit 16 miles south of Rach Gia near the Cai Lon River. One Viet Cong was killed and one Russian rifle with some

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ammunition was captured.

River Assault Groups

Two River Assault Group (RAG) operations were conducted in the 3rd Riverine Area, eight in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) and 16 in the 4th Riverine Area. Of the 227 boats assigned to River Assault Groups, 153 were available daily for operations while 119 of these units were used in escort, river patrol, static defense and combat operations. RAG boats searched 4,101 river craft during December.

Results of search and destroy missions, conducted in the RSSZ and in the 3rd Riverine Area by RAG units and Regional Forces, were the destruction of two Viet Cong base camps and one junk. Another junk was captured.

On 20 December, River Assault Group 30 was commissioned and a U.S. advisor was assigned to the group. Boats of this Saigon-based RAG had been utilized in the support of other groups since July. Seven to nine of the RAG 30 craft supported the U.S. infantry units from 4 to 28 December during Operation FAIRFAX in Gia Dinh province, adjacent to the RSSZ. Results of this operation up to 29 December were: 147 friendlies wounded (60 U.S.), one killed; 99 Viet Cong killed, 28 Viet Cong and 831 Viet Cong suspects detained, 27 weapons captured.

All operations conducted within the 4th Riverine Area made contact with the enemy; four of the operations were especially significant.

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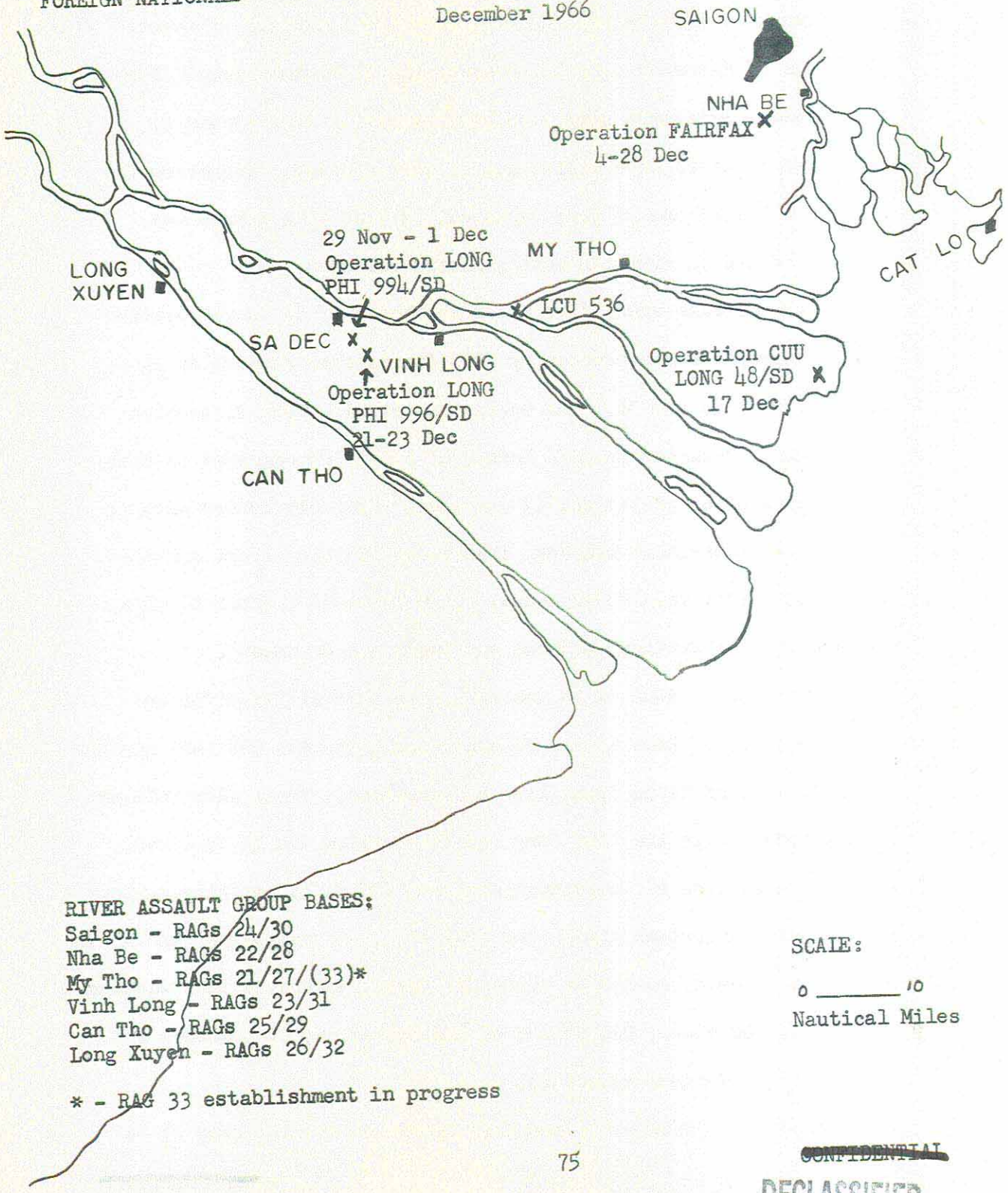
VIETNAMESE NAVY RIVERINE OPERATIONS

December 1966



RIVER ASSAULT GROUP BASES:
Saigon - RAGs 24/30
Nha Be - RAGs 22/28
My Tho - RAGs 21/27/(33)*
Vinh Long - RAGs 23/31
Can Tho - RAGs 25/29
Long Xuyen - RAGs 26/32

* - RAG 33 establishment in progress

SCAIE:

0 _____ 10
Nautical Miles

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Operation LONG PHI 994/SD was conducted ten miles southeast of Sa Dec 29 November to 1 December by the Vietnamese Army (ARVN) 9th Infantry Battalion supported by 21 craft of RAGs 23 and 31. Four ARVN soldiers were killed and 31 were wounded. Seventeen Viet Cong were killed and 22 were captured. A Viet Cong prison was discovered and 14 civilian hostages were released.

Near the same area, five miles southeast of Sa Dec, Operation LONG PHI 996/SD was conducted by ARVN forces with support by 14 boats of RAGs 23 and 31. The operation, running from 21 through 23 December, resulted in ARVN losses of 19 killed compared to Viet Cong losses of 41 killed and 17 captured. Friendly forces also captured 24 individual weapons, five cases of .50 caliber ammunition, three rockets, 100 grenades, 4,500 yards of electrical wire, 50 cases of antibiotics, medical equipment and documents.

From 0700 to 2000 on 17 December, 7th ARVN Division forces and nine craft of RAGs 21 and 27 conducted Operation CUU LONG 48/SD 16 miles east of Giong Trom, Kien Hoa province. Three ARVN soldiers were wounded while the Viet Cong had four killed and 12 captured. Also captured were 20 individual weapons, 500 rifle cartridges, four mines, seven anti-tank mines, one generator, one typewriter and a number of homemade grenades. Friendly forces destroyed four weapons factories, 100 mines, 220 pounds of explosives, 4,000 grenades and a quantity of Western medicines.

CAN CHI 270/D/SD was a combined operation running from 27 to

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31 December in An Xuyen province. The friendly forces comprised two ARVN regiments, three RF/PF battalions, five ARVN reserve battalions, three LCUs and 17 craft of RAGs 21, 23, 29 and 31. Two ARVN soldiers were killed and ten were wounded in the action. Viet Cong forces suffered 124 killed and 24 captured. Three crew-served weapons and 37 individual weapons were captured. Destroyed were one factory, one first aid station, 600 grenades and two mines.

Regional Force Boat Groups

The Regional Force Boat Group organization comprises a headquarters, a training center, three maintenance platoons and 24 boat companies with eight LCVPs each. The boat companies are stationed in 20 provinces in the 3rd and 4th Riverine Areas. The Vietnamese Navy's control over the Regional Force Boat Groups is limited to the administration of headquarters and the training units and the maintenance of all craft. The Regional Force/Popular Force Directorate maintains operational and logistical control of the boat groups.

At 0855 on 2 December, four craft of Regional Force Patrol Company 12 (RFPC) were subjected to a mining attempt 45 miles east-southeast of Soc Trang while transporting ammunition and food supplies. One man was wounded and one LCVP was seriously damaged.

On 10 December, RFPC 18 discovered a Viet Cong mine under the Lai Thieu village bridge in Chuong Thien province. Two days later, RFPC 18 was returning from an operation with the 21st ARVN Infantry Division when it came under a Viet Cong 57mm recoilless rifle attack

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24 miles southwest of Hoa Luu. One LCVP was damaged.

On 14 December, the commanding officer of RFPC 21 and two sailors were killed and 11 were wounded when their four patrol boats were attacked by rockets on the Van Co Tay River 32 miles northeast of My Tho. Three of the four boats sustained damage.

On 21 December, five boats of RFPC 28 killed five Viet Cong while participating in Operation XAY DONG 65/LS near the Iron Triangle region northwest of Saigon. Six rocket launchers and a quantity of leaflets were captured in the action.

Maintenance and Supply

The level of maintenance aboard Vietnamese Fleet Command ships continued to remain below minimal U.S. standards. During December, 11 major casualties on six ships were repaired by ship's personnel. Fleet Command patrol and logistical ships continued to carry U.S. enlisted technical advisors when deployed.

Among Coastal Groups, weapon maintenance was usually outstanding but engine and boat maintenance was often very poor. A lack of trained personnel, tools and spare parts contributed to this situation.

The Vietnamese Navy Shipyard scrap accumulation areas have been 75 per cent cleared of scrap. Scrap material remaining to be moved includes 21 boat hulks turned in by the port authority, 15 French patrol hulks and six LCMs.

The Navy Supply Center has gained approximately 8,000 square feet of covered storage space by disposing of obsolete or excess

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supply parts. Excess material lists were distributed to those U.S. units which might have use for the parts earmarked for disposal.

During December the Commander in Chief of the Vietnamese Navy approved plans to establish a supply depot at each of the five Coastal Surveillance Centers.

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

A visit by Premier KY and General WALT on 2 December and preparation for Operation DECKHOUSE V highlighted the significant activities of the Vietnamese Marine Corps for the month. Contact with the enemy was light for the most part; however, on two occasions Marine Command Posts came under Viet Cong mortar attacks.

Six Marines were killed and 39 were wounded in December while the Viet Cong suffered eight killed and one captured. Marines captured 33 individual weapons and one crew-served weapon. The kill ratio for December was 1:1.3; the average ratio for the year was 1:6.

Generally, morale was high and leadership was excellent in the Vietnamese Marine Corps throughout the month.

Brigade Force Alpha, consisting of a headquarters, the 1st, 4th and 5th Vietnamese Marine Battalions, and Battery B of the artillery battalion, continued its participation in Operation LAM SON 331. This search and destroy operation controlled by the 1st ARVN Division continued to sweep the coast of Quang Tri province.

On 2 December, Premier Nguyen Cao KY and Lieutenant General Lewis W. WALT, USMC, Commanding General, 3rd Marine Amphibious Force, visited Brigade Force Alpha in the field of operations.

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Operation LAM SON 331, hampered by torrential rains, low ceilings and cold temperatures, was terminated on 9 December. Three Vietnamese Marines were wounded in the December phase of the operation while three Viet Cong were killed and one Viet Cong and two weapons were captured.

On 20 December, the Marine force, operating north of Dong Ha, made light contact with the enemy. Two Vietnamese Marines were killed and four were wounded. The next day the brigade force command post was mortared. Three Marines were killed and 27 were wounded in the attack.

On 22 December Marine patrols killed five Viet Cong and captured one light machine gun with no casualties to the Marines.

During the early morning hours of 28 December the brigade force command post received 75 rounds of 60mm mortar fire which wounded four Marines. On the following day, one Marine was killed when a patrol made light contact with the Viet Cong. On 30 December, two Marines were wounded by a Viet Cong mine explosion.

Brigade Force Bravo was not operational until 28 December when the force, consisting of a headquarters, the 4th Vietnamese Marine Battalion and Battery C of the artillery battalion, moved from Saigon to Vung Tau to prepare for Operation DECKHOUSE V, a combined U.S.-Vietnamese Marine amphibious operation in the Delta.

The 2nd Vietnamese Marine Battalion spent the first ten days of December undergoing M-16 rifle training at its Thu Duc base camp.

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On 10 December the battalion relieved the 7th Airborne Battalion at Ba Hom in the Capital Military District and at Vinh Loc in the Tanh Binh sub-sector. On 14 December the battalion returned to M-16 training at base camp and then on 17 December it replaced the 4th Battalion with Brigade Force Alpha at Dong Ha. It remained there through the end of the month.

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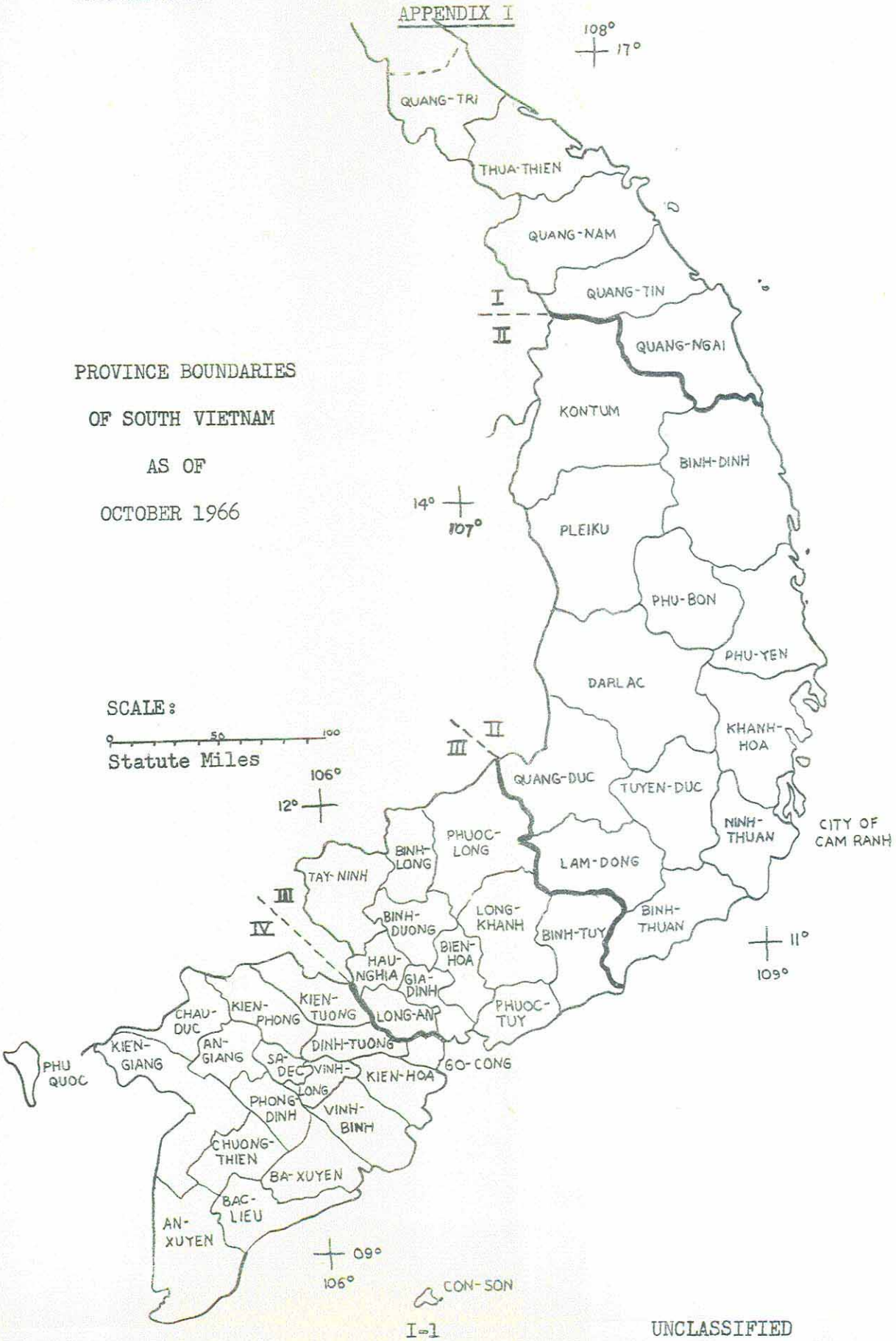
APPENDIX I


PROVINCE BOUNDARIES
OF SOUTH VIETNAM
AS OF
OCTOBER 1966
SCALE:
0 50 100
Statute Miles
108°
17°
14°
107°
12°
106°
11°
109°
09°
106°
I
II
III
IV
QUANG-TRI
THUA-THIEN
QUANG-NAM
QUANG-TIN
QUANG-NGAI
KONTUM
BINH-DINH
PLEIKU
PHU-BON
PHU-YEN
DARLAC
KHANH-HOA
QUANG-DUC
TUYEN-DUC
NINH-THUAN
CITY OF CAM RANH
BINH-LONG
PHUOC-LONG
LAM-DONG
TAY-NINH
BINH-DUONG
LONG-KHANH
BINH-TUY
BINH-THUAN
BIEN-HOA
HAU-NGHIA
GIA-DINH
PHUOC-TUY
LONG-AN
CHAU-DUC
KIEN-PHONG
KIEN-TUONG
KIEN-GIANG
AN-GIANG
DINH-TUONG
SA-DEC
VINH-LONG
KIEN-HOA
GO-CONG
PHU QUOC
PHONG-DINH
VINH-BINH
CHUONG-THIEN
BA-XUYEN
BAC-LIEU
AN-XUYEN
CON-SON

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APPENDIX II

COMMUNICATIONS

During December, the COMNAVFORV Communications Center processed 88,687 messages: 47,263 sent, 41,424 received. This represented a 12,000 message increase over the November level, and was the highest single month total to date. In all, 716,153 messages were processed during 1966. Circuit and equipment reliability was at an acceptable level.

In DaNang, December message volume was 31,671, a slight increase over November. Circuit reliability was diminished by about 5 per cent as a result of the monsoon weather. However, traffic quality improved and the number of requests for reruns and services was 25 per cent less than November.

Monsoon weather was responsible for a high level of maintenance and repair problems. Heavy surf and high seas accounted for a high failure rate of AN/VRC-46 and AN/VRC-58 transceivers used aboard PCFs and LCUs.

To help ease the message traffic burden on ships operating off the coast of Vietnam, USS ANNAPOLIS (AGMR-1) took station off Cam Ranh Bay on 3 December and instituted a local area broadcast, code-named ANNALAB.

Because ships operating in the Western Pacific area are normally required to copy two broadcasts, the Guam radio teletype (GRTT) and the Guam over-load (GROT), many of the ships engaged in operations off the RVN coast are unable to maintain complete broadcast files.

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This is due primarily to poor frequency propagation in much of the South China Sea and limitations in personnel and equipment. By only broadcasting traffic addressed to ships copying her local area broadcast traffic, ANNAPOLIS reduced the number of schedules to be copied by the ships involved. This relieved the strain on the equipment required to copy the overload broadcast, reduced the workload on communications personnel, and greatly expedited traffic delivery to specific units.

In addition to the local area broadcast, ANNAPOLIS provided full-period and on-call ORESTES termination, enabling units to clear ship-shore traffic rapidly and to originate message service requests directly to ANNAPOLIS.

During her 18 days on station ANNAPOLIS broadcast 7,569 first-run numbers, 320 retransmissions and a total of 9,650 broadcast numbers.

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APPENDIX III

MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY, DECEMBER 1966

1. U.S. ships/craft:

	DER	MSO	MSC	WPB	PCF	LST
Total craft days on patrol	155	155	93	464	1082	31
Daily Average of craft on patrol	5	5	3	15	35	1

2. VNN ships/junks:

	SEA FORCE	RIVER FORCE	COASTAL FORCE
Total craft days on patrol	682	3751	4030
Daily average of craft on patrol	22	121	130

3. U.S. Activity:

TOTAL DETECTED	WOOD - DAY 30811	NIGHT 16090	
	STEEL - DAY 670	NIGHT 765	
TOTAL INSPECTED	WOOD - DAY 10324	NIGHT 5529	
	STEEL - DAY 449	NIGHT 480	
TOTAL BOARDED	WOOD - DAY 8963	NIGHT 3323	
	STEEL - DAY 13	NIGHT 3	
TOTAL DETAINED	Junks 25	People 280	

4. VNN Activity:

SEARCHED 17,091 junks 61,271 suspects

DETAINED 28 junks 331 suspects

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APPENDIX IV

GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY, DECEMBER 1966

1. PBR Statistics:

   a. Total Patrols (two boats): Day 630 Night 788

   b. Total Contacts: Day 53611 Night 13372

   c. Total Inspected: Day 12759 Night 3560

   d. Total Boarded: Day 16302 Night 2770

   e. Suspects Detained: 681

   f. Sampans/Junks Detained: 48

   g. Total Patrol Hours: 35439

2. Helo Fire Team Statistics:

   a. Total Flight Hours: 220.2

   b. Helo Missions Supported:
      (1) Pre-planned strikes: 4
      (2) Reaction: 20
      (3) Targets of Opportunity: 1
      (4) Support: 33
      (5) MEDEVAC: 0

3. GAME WARDEN Totals:

   a. Firefights:
      (1) PBR 75
      (2) Helo 8
      (3) MSB 0
      (4) PACV 0
      (5) RPC 0

   b. Sampans:
      Destroyed: 57 Damaged: 8 Captured: 8

   c. Structures:
      Destroyed: 50 Damaged: 13

   d. Huts:
      Destroyed: 8 Damaged: 4

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e. Bunkers:
Destroyed: 11

f. Enemy:
KIA: 97 KIA (poss): 10 WIA: 14 Captured: 8

g. Friendly:
KIA: 1 WIA: 16

h. Friendly Battle Damage:
(1) PBR 23
(2) Helo 0
(3) MSB 0

i. PBR MEDEVAC: 20

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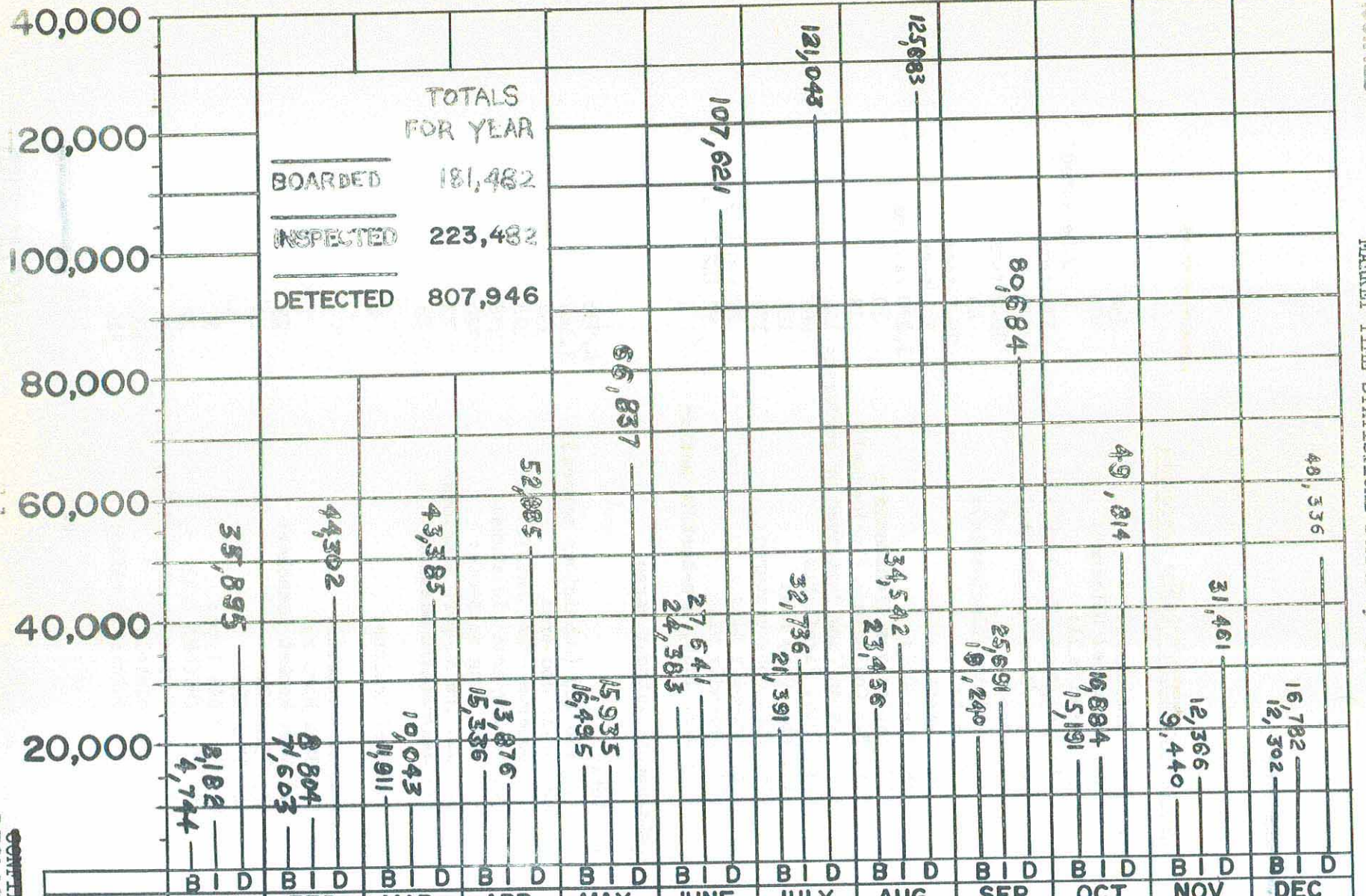
JUNKS INSPECTED, DETECTED, BOARDED BY MARKET TIME 1966



	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D	B	I	D
MONTH	JAN			FEB			MAR			APR			MAY			JUNE			JULY			AUG			SEP			OCT			NOV			DEC		
DER'S	5			5			5			5			5			5			5			5			5			5			5		
MSC / MSO	8			8			8			8			8			8			8			8			8			8			8		
WPB	11			11			17			17			17			17			17			16			16			16			14			15		
PCF	5			9			12			16			21			30			30			33			38			39			36			35		

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1. Contraband/suspect cargo incidents

a. Total Incidents:	158	
(1) Personnel Detained:	779	
(2) Steel hull:	4	(2 Detained)
(3) Arms/Ammo (Trawlers):	125	tons
(4) Arms/Ammo (Incidents):	19	
(5) Rice:	30.2	tons
(6) Medicine (Incidents):	43	
(7) Salt:	79.7	tons
(8) Cement:	7.1	tons
(9) Fuel/Oil:	1,270	gallons
(10) Explosives (Incidents):	10	
(11) Tax Collectors (Incidents):	13	
(12) Sampan/Junk destroyed or captured:	144	
(13) Total Firefights:	482	
(14) Viet Cong KIA:	161	
(15) Viet Cong captured:	177	
(16) Friendly KIA:	29	(16 U.S.)
(17) Friendly WIA:	97	(42 U.S.)
(18) U.S. lost, non-hostile action	5	

2. Detainments without cargo

a. Total:	4,936	
(1) (No ID) (suspicious papers):	3,165	
(2) Draft dodgers:	397	
(3) Deserters/UA (ARVN):	216	
(4) Curfew/area violators:	378	
(5) Viet Cong suspects:	780	
(6) Gunfire support missions:	73	
(7) SAR/MEDEVAC missions:	23	
b. Combined Actions:	4	
c. Weapons Captured:		
(1) 82mm Mortar:	7	
(2) 40mm Rocket Launcher:	25	
(3) 75mm RR:	20	
(4) 57mm RR:	1	
(5) 7.62 BAR type:	67	
(6) LMG (CHICOM) 7.62:	22	
(7) 7.62 Semi-automatic rifle:	605	
(8) 7.62 pistol:	100	
(9) 7.62 Automatic rifle:	316	

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(10)	Rifle (various manf.):	196
(11)	12.7 AAA:	1

d. Ammunition captured:

(1)	82mm Mortar:	1851
(2)	40mm Rocket:	1500
(3)	75mm RR:	761
(4)	57mm RR:	5
(5)	40mm Heat:	2000
(6)	12.7 API:	122,000
(7)	7.62mm:	1300
(8)	Mine:	1
(9)	Grenade:	66
(10)	TNT block (200 grams each):	35
(11)	Demolition charge:	4
(12)	General ammunition:	15 tons

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APPENDIX VI

GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY, 1966

1. Totals

a.	Junks/Sampans:	
	(1) Detected:	340,818
	(2) Inspected:	75,729
	(3) Boarded:	82,170
b.	Persons detained:	2,170
c.	Hostile Fire Incidents:	244
d.	Viet Cong killed:	381
e.	Viet Cong captured	95
f.	U.S. KIA:	7
g.	U.S. WIA:	65
h.	Boats seriously damaged:	3
i.	U.S. lost non-hostile:	1
j.	Gunfire support missions:	23
k.	SAR/MEDEVAC missions:	111
l.	Combined operations	9

2. Material captured

a.	Individual weapons:	40
b.	Crew served weapon:	1
c.	Hand grenades:	24
d.	Rounds of S/A ammunition:	5589
e.	Rifle grenades:	2
f.	Rounds of C/S ammunition:	99
g.	Outboard motors:	6
h.	Rice (tons):	235
i.	Salt (pounds):	105
j.	Other foods (pounds):	2305
k.	Petroleum (gallons):	50
l.	Viet Cong documents:	106
m.	Printing press:	1
n.	Radio:	1

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APPENDIX VII

CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS, 1966

8 Jan - Coastal Group 33 units intercept two junks carrying contraband just off the coast of Go Cong province. After a fire fight, including air strikes, the junks are damaged; weapons and ammunition are captured.

21 Jan - USS DYNAMIC (MSO 432) and USS NICHOLAS (DD 449) assist in the rescue of all 28 crewmen from Panamanian merchant ship, BRIGHT STAR, which had run aground on a reef off Cu Lao Re Island near Chu Lai.

13 Feb - Captain Robert W. NETTING, USN, is assigned as first Senior Advisor, Vietnamese Navy Headquarters.

14 Feb - PCF 4 is sunk by a command-detonated mine attached to a Viet Cong flag 250 yards off Hon Queo Island, 15 miles northwest of Rach Gia. Four crewmen are killed, two seriously wounded.

28 Feb - CTF 116 (GAME WARDEN) Operation Order is published. First two officers and one enlisted man assigned to CTF 116 arrive in-country.

7 March - USCGC POINT WHITE hails and illuminates a 25-foot motorized junk crossing the Soirap River, 10 miles upstream from its mouth at the South China Sea. The junk fires on the cutter. POINT WHITE returns the fire and rams and sinks the junk killing seven Viet Cong and capturing four. Four rifles and some ammunition are captured.

10 March - Four U.S. minesweepers (MSOs) arrive in Vung Tau--first U.S. minesweeping units assigned to sweep Long Tau channel.

15 March - River Squadron 5 (COMRIVRON FIVE) is established to administer newly-arriving GAME WARDEN units.

15 March - PCF and WPB patrols begin continuous surveillance of Soirap River as far as Nha Be in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ).

21 March - The first 11 PBRs arrive in-country; USS BELLE GROVE (LSD-2) acts as interim support ship at Cat Lo.

26 March - Nine WPBs and 6 PCFs (SWIFTs) participate in Operation
6 Apr JACKSTAY, a search and clear operation conducted in the

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RSSZ with ships and Marines of the 7th Fleet Amphibious Task Force. BELLE GROVE acts as command ship. During the 12-day operation, the SWIFTs engage in nine separate fire fights and four Coast Guard cutters take part in two junk roundups. Three LCPLs, manned by U.S. crews, participate in 12 engagements with the Viet Cong.

1 April - U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam (NAVFORV) is established. Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, becomes COMNAVFORV.

15 April - PBRs commence patrol operations; initial patrols operate on the Long Tau River in the RSSZ.

16 April - Captain Clifford L. STEWART, USN, relieves Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, as Commander, Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115).

10 May - USCGC POINT GREY, on patrol off the eastern shore of the Ca Mau Peninsula, detects a 120-foot steel-hulled trawler attempting to infiltrate supplies. The trawler is forced aground near shore and abandoned by her crew. Initial boarding attempts are thwarted by heavy Viet Cong shore fire. The trawler is taken under fire by surface units and aircraft. A violent secondary explosion tears the hull into two sections. Six crew-served weapons and 15 tons of ammunition and explosives are recovered from the wreckage.

11 May - Three Patrol Air Cushion Vehicles (PACV) arrive in Vung Tau and form PACV Division 107.

17 May - U. S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon is established. Captain Herbert T. KING, USN, becomes Commanding Officer.

18 May - Captain Burton B. WITHAM, Jr., USN, relieves Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, as Commander, River Patrol Force (CTF 116).

22 May - PCF 41, patrolling in the RSSZ, is hit by recoilless rifle fire. One sailor is killed and another is wounded as the shell destroys the pilot house causing the boat to lose steerage. An attempt to tow the SWIFT fails and the boat sinks. Salvage attempts fail.

26 May - Panamanian merchant ship, EASTERN MARINE, is mined at Nha Be. Three tugs and three LCM pusher boats move the stricken vessel clear of the main shipping channel. Two other mining attempts are discovered in same area.

20 June - USCGC POINT LEAGUE, patrolling off the mouth of the Co Chien

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River, sights a steel-hulled trawler, 98 feet long, hull number 2135. The trawler ignores warning shots and makes for the beach, returning .50 caliber fire. Automatic weapons fire is received from the beach. Air and surface units suppress the fire from Viet Cong emplacements in the sand dunes. The trawler is salvaged and towed to Saigon. Approximately 100 tons of cargo, including Red Chinese, Soviet and North Korean weapons, is salvaged from the trawler.

9 July - RAG units collide with PBR near My Tho. PBR suffers extensive damage; two U.S. crewmen receive minor injuries.

12 July - PCF 35, patrolling near the eastern shore of the tip of Ca Mau Peninsula, sustains a direct hit by recoilless rifle round, resulting in severe damage to the starboard fuel tank and producing a hole in the hull one foot in diameter. No personnel casualties are sustained.

14 July - A Coastal Group 41 Command junk is hit and sunk by Viet Cong 57mm recoilless rifle fire. Four Vietnamese sailors are wounded.

23 July - USS MARK (AKL-12) becomes the first cargo ship to transit the Bassac River in ten years.

30 July - PBR 70 is hit by a recoilless rifle round on the Soirap River south of Quang Xuyen village, sustaining a hole on the starboard side two feet long and nine inches high. Two crewmen are wounded.

4-30 Aug - MARKET TIME units, Vietnamese Navy Coastal Groups and Fleet Command units and USS TUTUILA (ARG-4) provide support for operation SEA MOUNT on Phu Quoc Island.

5 Aug - PBRs begin operations at Vinh Long.

11 Aug - USCGC POINT WELCOME is attacked mistakenly by U.S. Air Force aircraft; two men are killed and five are wounded. POINT WELCOME receives extensive damage.

16-28 Aug - PCFs conduct blocking patrols off coast of Phuoc Tuy province in support of Operation DECK HOUSE III.

19 Aug - SEAL team member is killed in ambush while on reconnaissance in RSSZ.

20 Aug - PBRs begin operations at Sa Dec.

23 Aug - Vietnamese Navy minesweeper is hit by recoilless rifle

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round on Long Tau River. One crewman is killed; three wounded.

23 Aug - BATON ROUGE VICTORY is mined while transiting Long Tau River to Saigon; seven crewmen die in flooded engine room. Vessel is towed to Vung Tau for repairs one week later.

24 Aug - Two PBRs and PCF 38 engage in the first mutual interference fire fight involving GAME WARDEN and MARKET TIME forces.

28 Aug - Vietnamese Navy minesweeper (MLMS-156) is destroyed by a Viet Cong mine; two crewmembers are killed, two are wounded and two U.S. advisors are wounded. MLMS-156 is the first minesweeper lost to enemy action since Long Tau sweep operations began in 1963.

29 Aug - USN MSB-54, while sweeping the Long Tau River, is extensively damaged when a Viet Cong mine explodes 15 feet off the port bow. There are no personnel casualties.

7 Sep - USCGC POINT GREY detects the French merchant ship TATIANA dead in water surrounded by junks off southwest coast of Ca Mau Peninsula. Nothing suspicious is found when ship is searched after complying with request to proceed to Vung Tau.

11 Sep - One U.S. crewmember is killed when PBRs come under automatic weapons fire on the Co Chien River. This marks first PBR fatality since the inception of GAME WARDEN operations.

18 Sep - Captain Carson R. TALLENT, USN, relieves Captain NETTING.

22 Sep - MSB-15 is hit by rocket projectile while sweeping the Long Tau River; one U.S. crewman is killed and nine are wounded.

27 Sep - PBRs conduct flood operations in the Plain of Reeds resulting in a large number of enemy killed. Junks, sampans, structures are destroyed; quantities of Viet Cong supplies are captured.
17 Oct

2 Oct - Vietnamese Navy LSSL-227 is mined at anchor near PBR base at My Tho. Extensive damage results in Vietnamese Navy decision to decommission the craft.

4 Oct - French Overseas Marine (FOM) craft of RAG 22 is destroyed by Viet Cong mine 15 miles downstream from Nha Be, in the Long Tau channel.

5 Oct - PBR and PACV collide near Vung Tau. Three crewmen suffer minor injuries; both craft are damaged.

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7 Oct - Viet Cong ambush SEAL detachment as 15 U.S. personnel are wounded when mortar round hits LCM-3 carrying the SEALs.

10 Oct - CTF 116 shifts headquarters from Saigon to Can Tho.

12 Oct - CLARKSBURG VICTORY strikes a submerged wreck near Vung Tau. Ship suffers 45-foot gash in hull.

16-26 Oct - MARKET TIME units provide gunfire support for Operation PEPPER BUSH on Phu Quoc Island.

18 Oct - Three U.S. Navymen are killed and two wounded when mortar explodes aboard PCF 9 one-half mile off east coast of Phu Quoc Island.

20 Oct - PBRs commence random patrols in Ham Luong River.

21 Oct - Viet Cong explode claymore mine in Tra On marketplace. Six PBRs from Can Tho provide MEDEVAC services. Nine Vietnamese are killed and 48 are wounded.

26 Oct - PBR crewman is killed as PBRs and helicopters thwart Viet Cong crossing attempt 42 miles downstream from Can Tho.

31 Oct - Vietnamese Joint General Staff appoints Captain Tran Van CHON as Commander in Chief of the Vietnamese Navy.

31 Oct - GAME WARDEN units interrupt a major Viet Cong crossing attempt near Ngu Hiep Island in the Mekong River. Fifty-seven craft are destroyed and six are captured. Two Viet Cong are killed. No U.S. casualties are sustained.

1 Nov - Two U.S. Navymen are killed when MSB 54 is destroyed by a Viet Cong mine four miles downstream from Nha Be on the Long Tau River.

11 Nov - USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST-846) arrives to act as PBR support ship.

15 Nov - PCF 77 broaches and sinks in heavy seas near mouth of Hue Harbor. Three crewmen are killed.

20 Nov - PACVs conduct highly successful Operation QUAI VAT in the Plain of Reeds.

27 Nov - Vietnamese Navy LCU-536 ambushed near My Tho, receives five 75mm recoilless rifle hits killing four Vietnamese sailors and wounding nine.

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2 Dec - PBR patrol officer is killed during fire fight with two sampans in lower Bassac River. One Viet Cong is killed; two are wounded.

4 Dec - PBRs, supporting U.S. Special Forces and CIDG operation on Mekong River six miles below Cambodian border, kill five Viet Cong and detain nine suspects.

4 Dec - MARKET TIME aircraft are damaged in Viet Cong attack on Tan Son Nhut Airbase.

4 and 8 Dec - Adrift Chinese Communist fishermen and children are assisted by MARKET TIME units.

11 Dec - Fifteen Viet Cong are killed and 28 sampans are destroyed as major Viet Cong Mekong River crossing is thwarted.

15 Dec - USCGC POINT GRACE is hit by Viet Cong recoilless rifle fire.

15 Dec - The three experimental Patrol Air Cushion Vehicles (PACVs) return to Coronado, California for tests and evaluation.

18 Dec - Six crewmen are wounded as PBRs support a Vietnamese Army operation four miles west of Sa Dec.

23 Dec - A suspicious, steel-hulled trawler is sighted and tracked by MARKET TIME air and sea units.

28 Dec - PBRs kill nine Viet Cong in first major fire fight in the Ham Luong River.

29 Dec - WHAMO 1-66, a large-scale military civic action project, is conducted in an unfriendly area of Kien Hoa province.

31 Dec - Soviet-type contact mine is discovered in the Long Tau shipping channel in the RSSZ. Incident marks first detection of a contact mine in inland waters.

31 Dec - U.S. Navy personnel strength in-country reaches 23,880.

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