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U.S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

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MONTHLY HISTORICAL
SUMMARY
APRIL 1967

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MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUMMARY

APRIL 1967

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FOREWORD

In April, Viet Cong activity in the Rung Sat Special Zone decreased, with only one major attack mounted against shipping in the main channel to Saigon. On 20 April, the enemy ambushed a USNS tank landing ship in the Long Tau River, killing one crew member and wounding five others.

Meanwhile, units of the Riverine Assault Force continued to support the U.S. Army's Fourth Battalion, 47th Infantry in Operation SPEARHEAD I. Numerous Viet Cong supply caches were found and destroyed.

In I Corps, the volume of cargo handled at the various ports by the Naval Support Activity in Danang surpassed all previous levels. Construction work by Seabees also proceeded at an accelerated pace, with emphasis placed on the building of combat support facilities and lines of communications.

MARKET TIME units on coastal patrol were very active in April, recording the highest number of detections since August 1966.

Vietnamese Navy units continued to provide aggressive support to forces ashore, completing an increased number of gunfire support missions in April.

Two command changes occurred during the month. On 27 April, Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, USN, relieved Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, as Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam and Chief, Naval Advisory Group, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

On 21 April, Captain Burns W. SPORE, USN, relieved Captain

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**Herbert T. KING, USN, as Commander, U.S. Naval Support Activity,
Saigon.**

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RIVER PATROL FORCE

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

In April there were indications that recent allied measures (increased PBR patrols, additional armament for MSBs, and ground operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone) were affecting the Viet Cong's ability to mount attacks against shipping in the Saigon channel.

During the month there was one major attack against shipping. On 20 April, Viet Cong ambushed USNS LST 550 from positions on the east bank of the Long Tau River, three and one half miles downstream from Nha Be. The Japanese-manned LST was struck by five high-explosive rounds from a 75-mm. recoilless rifle, killing one man and wounding five others.

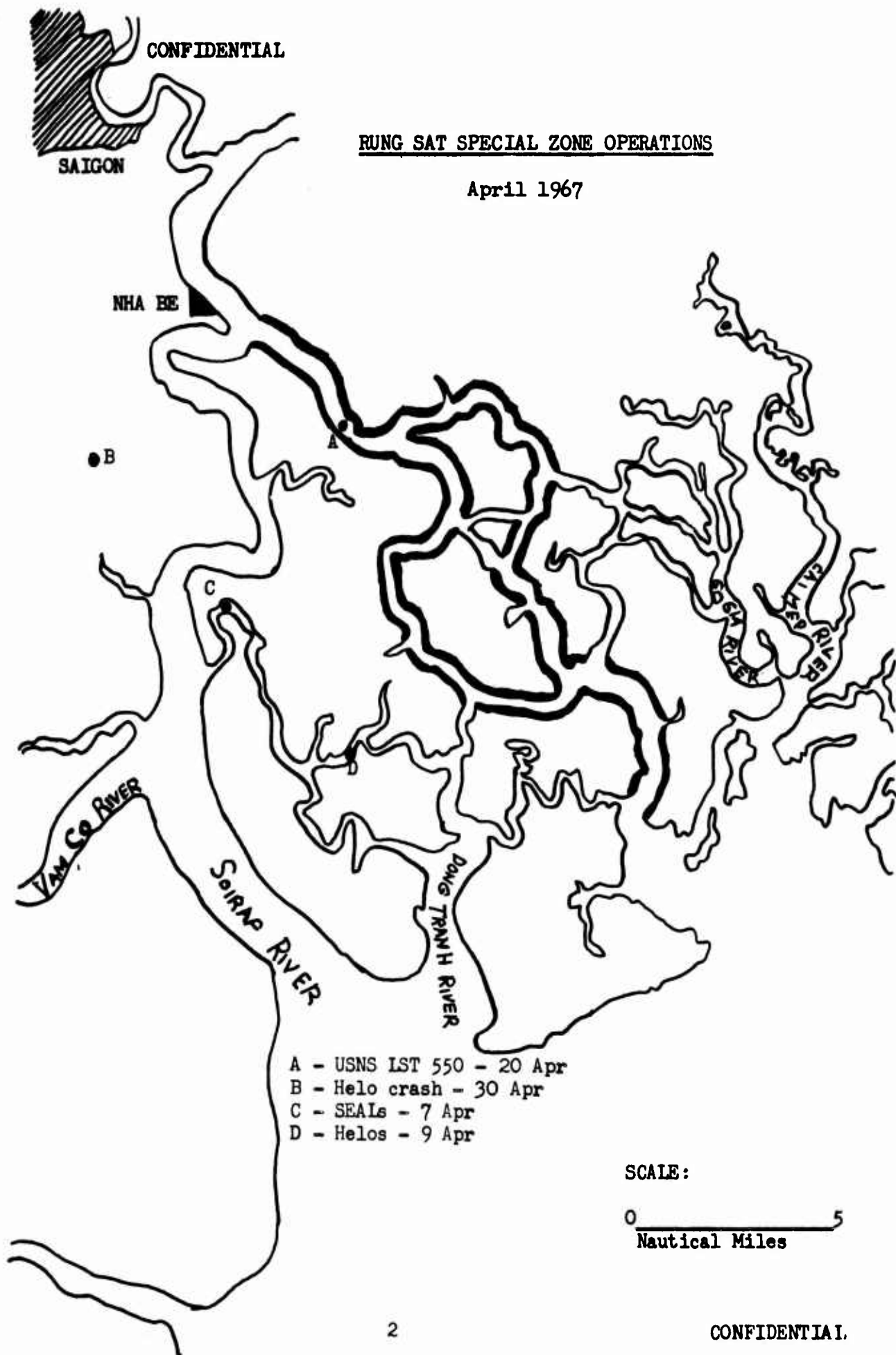
During the counter-attack conducted by American and Vietnamese units in the area, an airborne observer spotted six Viet Cong trying to reach the shelter of foxholes; the six were killed by 2.75-inch rocket fire. In addition, fixed-wing aircraft and Army and Navy helicopters launched strikes into the ambush area while MSBs, PBRs and Vietnamese RAG units exchanged heavy automatic weapons fire with the enemy. The enemy positions were neutralized after almost an hour of heavy fighting.

On 7 April, a SEAL reconnaissance team suffered heavy casualties while engaging an enemy unit near the mouth of the Vam Sat River. The SEALs were conducting reconnaissance by fire from their armored LCM-3 when the enemy opened fire from positions on

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RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE OPERATIONS

April 1967



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the bank. As the SEALs began returning the enemy fire, an air burst just forward of the coxswain's position killed three SEALs and wounded 12 other Americans and two Vietnamese. The team then withdrew to the Soirap River in order to evacuate the wounded.

On 9 April, a helicopter fire team observed 12 uniformed Viet Cong and four heavily-laden sampans along Lo Ren Creek, in the southwestern portion of the RSSZ. The fire team destroyed the four sampans and killed three of the enemy troops.

On 30 April, a Navy helicopter was seriously damaged while providing close air support for U.S. troops of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade in Gia Dinh province, four miles southeast of Nha Be. Three crewmen were wounded when the helicopter crashed while under heavy enemy ground fire. Prior to the crash, fire from the helicopter team had killed 11 Viet Cong.

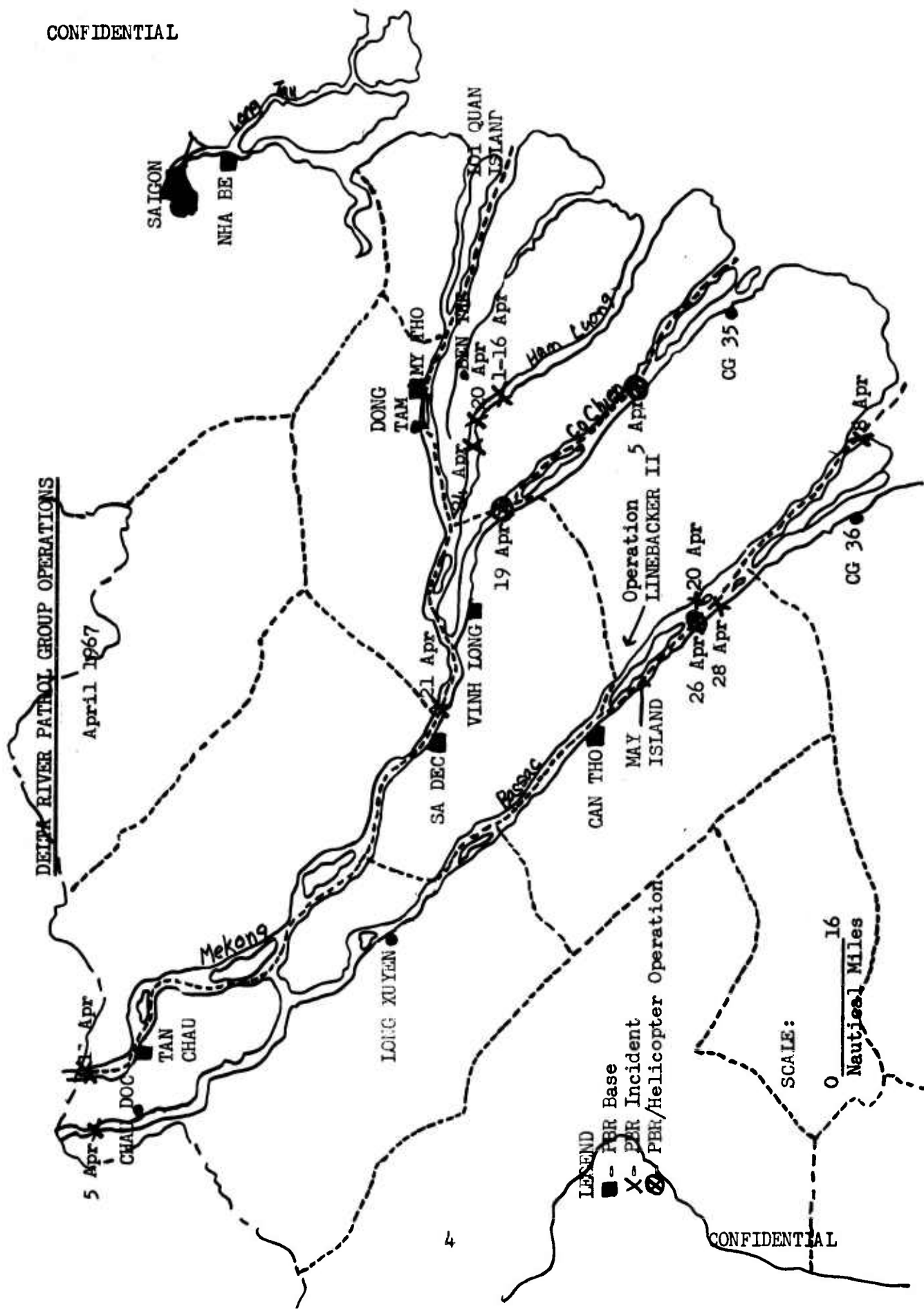
DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Ham Luong River

During the first part of April, enemy activity along the Ham Luong River was centered around an area on the south bank of the river, two and one-half miles downstream from the mouth of the Ben Tre Canal. Between the first and the 16th of the month, there were nine brief hostile fire incidents in this region. Most of the incidents involved small arms harassing fire.

On 20 April, PBRs opened fire on three sampans containing 15 Viet Cong who had ignored hails and warning shots and continued to cross the river, two miles above the Ben Tre Canal. The enemy

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evaded successfully.

On 24 April, PBRs killed four Viet Cong as they fled from their beached sampan on the south bank of the river, five miles northwest of the Ben Tre Canal. The craft had been detected attempting to cross from the south bank of the river and had tried to escape up a canal after warning shots were fired. The PBRs killed the Viet Cong as they attempted to escape across an open field.

Operations in the Upper Mekong and Bassac Rivers

On 5 April, patrol boats based at Tan Chau, the newly-established GAME WARDEN base, evacuated 15 civilians and nine PF troops wounded during a heavy Viet Cong attack on a Vietnamese outpost five miles northeast of Chau Phu. On 11 April, four PBRs assisted a similar outpost on the Mekong River near the Cambodian border which was under automatic weapons and small arms fire. After an hour and a half of heavy fighting, the enemy broke off the engagement. There were no friendly casualties.

On the night of 21 April, Sa Dec-based PBRs interdicted an attempt by six Viet Cong sampans to cross the Mekong River, three miles east of Sa Dec. The patrol sighted lantern signals and heard signal shots inland. The PBRs closed to investigate, then spotted for artillery flares which revealed six sampans attempting to evade the patrol. When the enemy opened fire with small arms from the sampans and the bank, direct fire from the PBRs sank the six sampans and triggered one large secondary explosion. There

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were no U.S. casualties. The extent of the Viet Cong casualties was undetermined.

Operations in the Co Chien River

Activity along the Co Chien River during April was marked by infrequent, large-scale contact with enemy forces. On 5 April, PBRs and Navy helicopters broke up a sustained Viet Cong attack on a Vietnamese outpost near the mouth of the Tra Vinh Canal. After a two and one-half hour fire fight, in which the GAME WARDEN units exchanged heavy fire with the enemy, the Viet Cong broke off the attack and withdrew. There were no U.S. casualties. The extent of Viet Cong casualties was undetermined.

On the night of 19 April, a three-man SEAL "listening post" made contact with five Viet Cong on a small island ten miles downstream from Vinh Long. The SEALs swam to a waiting PBR and requested helicopter support. During the subsequent helicopter strikes, SEAL support boats moved into the area and began detaining suspects attempting to leave the island. Then RAG units and additional PBRs arrived to help block island exits, and to fire on enemy automatic weapons positions with 60-mm. and 81-mm. mortars. Six Viet Cong were killed during the engagement, 29 suspects were detained and 12 sampans were captured. There were no friendly casualties.

Operations in the Bassac River

During April, the lower Bassac River was the scene of numerous major incidents which resulted in the interdiction of enemy troop

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and supply movements.

On 8 April, a PBR patrol pursued an evading sampan into the mouth of a canal between Dung and Con Coc Islands and sighted a 70-foot junk 500 yards away with uniformed Viet Cong embarked. The patrol engaged the junk, killing at least ten of the troops and heavily damaging the junk. The enemy then opened fire on the patrol from ambush positions on both banks along a 1,000 yard stretch of the canal.

Rather than reverse course and engage the enemy's apparent organized resistance at the canal's seaward end, the embarked river division commander decided to continue inland. During the subsequent transit of the nine-mile waterway, the two PBRs exchanged fire with nine different enemy positions, killing an estimated 15 Viet Cong and damaging six junks. There were no U.S. casualties.

On 17 April, GAME WARDEN units began Operation LINEBACKER II in support of the NINTH Vietnamese Army Division's Operation LONG PHI 999 H, a search and destroy mission against the Viet Cong's 306th Battalion in Vinh Long and Vinh Binh provinces. SEALs conducted reconnaissance and ambush operations while PBR patrols were stationed in known crossing routes.

During the operation, which terminated on 20 April, PBRs were in frequent contact with the enemy. The patrols searched river traffic, supported troop landings and provided blocking forces. On the afternoon of 20 April, PBRs providing a blocking force for a Regional Force sweep of Tan Dinh Island destroyed three junks

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and 32 sampans which had been abandoned by the Viet Cong.

On 26 April two SEAL ambush squads, supported by four PBRs and a light helicopter fire team, conducted a daylight raid in a Viet Cong controlled area 12 miles downstream from Can Tho. The first squad made contact with several Viet Cong, five of whom were killed by helicopter strikes requested by the SEALs; a sixth Viet Cong was captured. The second SEAL squad, operating about 1,000 yards farther downstream, made contact with four Viet Cong. Helicopters supported the SEALs' withdrawal after the squad had killed at least one of the enemy and captured a Mauser rifle and a number of documents.

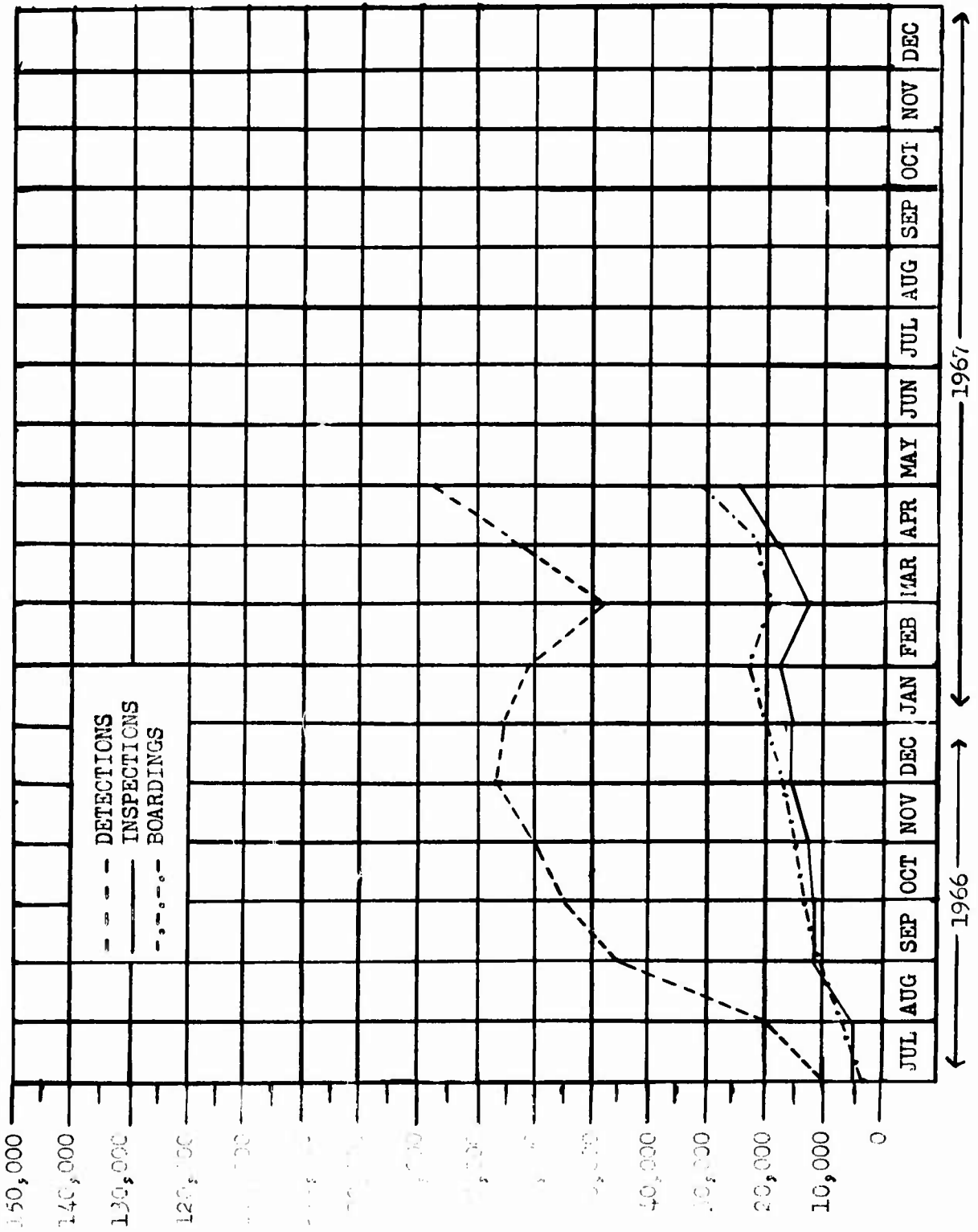
On the night of 28 April PBRs 34 and 41, patrolling in column, used drifting tactics to interdict an enemy crossing near Nai Island. The rear boat, PBR 34, turned off its engines and drifted toward the bank. PBR 41 continued downriver for about a mile, then reduced throttle, turned back upstream and turned off its engines. At this time, PBR 34 observed signal lights on both banks and heard the sounds of boat engines starting up.

PBR 34 then spotted a sampan standing out from the north bank. Suddenly a flash of lightning illuminated the PBR and the enemy opened fire with .50 caliber machine guns from the south bank. While PBR 34 engaged the sampan, which had an automatic weapon mounted in the bow, PBR 41 moved in to suppress the fire from the bank.

The sampan went out of control after being hit with a burst

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DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY GAME WARDEN UNITS



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of .50 caliber fire, and was destroyed when its cargo of ammunition exploded. In addition, a sampan along the bank was destroyed by a secondary explosion triggered by the fire from PBR 41. Four Viet Cong were killed during the action. Three crewmembers of PBR 34 were wounded.

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE

On 11 April, two junk elements from Coastal Group 16 joined U.S. patrol units for MARKET TIME duty in the First Coastal Zone. In addition, that day the Vietnamese Navy's PCE 12 relieved two U.S. Navy PCFs and assumed patrol duties in the same area.

The last operational flight of a P5M Marlin seaplane was made during a MARKET TIME patrol on the morning of 11 April. Vice Admiral J. J. HYLAND, USN, Commander U.S. SEVENTH Fleet, was at the controls for the last flight. The seadrome at Cam Ranh Bay was disestablished the following day.

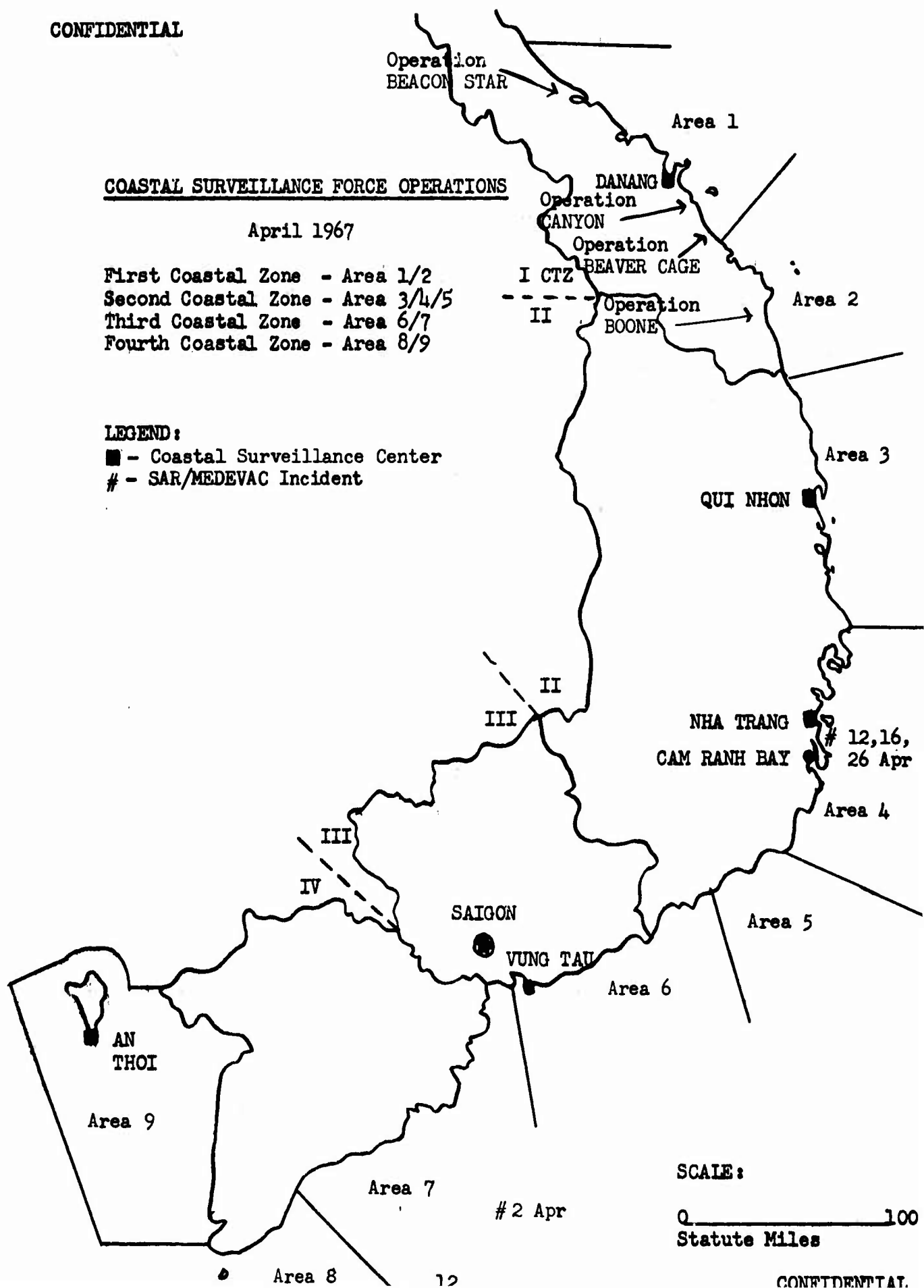
MARKET TIME OPERATIONS

In April, MARKET TIME units detected 82,400 sampans and junks, inspected 32,375, boarded 24,034 and detained 127 junks and 869 persons. In addition there were 1,624 detections of steel-hulled ships and craft; of the 687 which transited MARKET TIME areas, 280 were inspected or boarded.

MARKET TIME activity also included support for eight ground operations, 18 naval gunfire support missions, ten evasion incidents and 19 hostile fire incidents, four search and rescue (SAR) operations, and two medical evacuation missions.

During the month, PCFs and Coast Guard cutters supported four ground operations in the First Coastal Zone and one each in the Second, Third and Fourth Coastal Zones. The four operations in the First Coastal Zone were: Operation BOONE, conducted from the 1st through the 6th of April; Operation CANYON, from the 6th through

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the 10th, which accounted for eight Viet Cong killed, 152 suspects detained, and 17 structures destroyed; Operation BEACON STAR, from the 22nd through the 26th, which resulted in the detection of 135 craft and the detention of six suspects; and Operation BEAVER CAGE, which began 28 April and continued through the end of the month.

The 18 gunfire support missions in April resulted in 24 structures destroyed and 19 damaged; six bunkers destroyed and one damaged; and 12 sampans destroyed and 15 damaged. Eight of the missions occurred in the Third Coastal Zone.

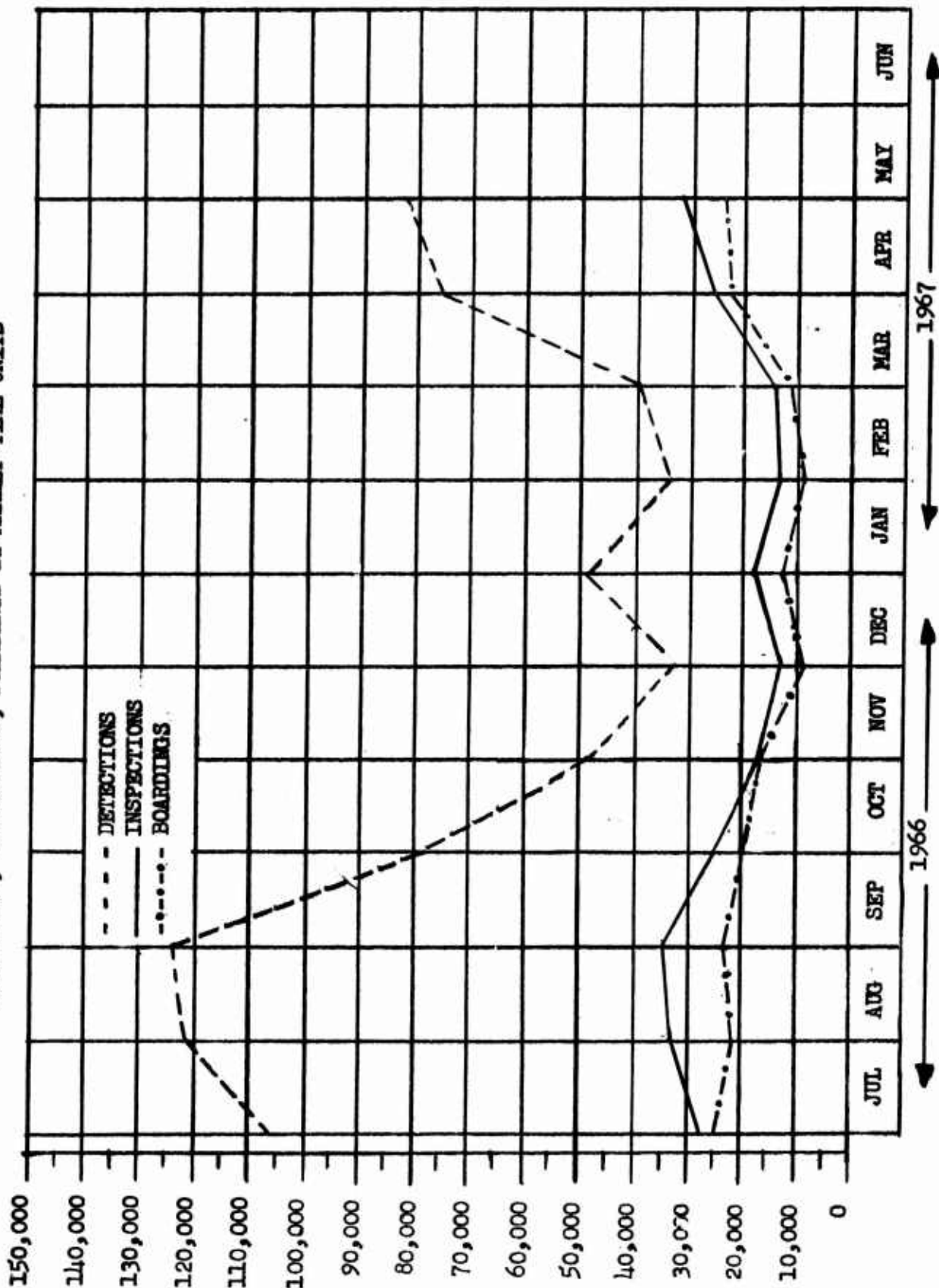
April's ten evasion incidents resulted in three Viet Cong killed, eight junks destroyed and six damaged, 18 sampans destroyed and 12 damaged, and three basket boats destroyed and five damaged.

Of the month's 19 hostile fire incidents, eight occurred in the First Coastal Zone. Results included 16 Viet Cong killed and 17 enemy structures destroyed.

Three of April's SAR missions involved aircraft which had crashed just south of Nha Trang. Two of the nine occupants were rescued from the first crash; none were rescued from the second and third crashes. The fourth SAR mission resulted in the rescue of two U.S. personnel and four Vietnamese children from Vung Tau harbor after a tug had struck the Special Services craft in which they were riding. On 2 April, USCGC POINT GAMMON evacuated a sick Vietnamese from a junk near Con Son Island to the Coastal Group 36 base for transfer to medical facilities at Long Phu. The next day PCF 43 transferred a badly-burned Vietnamese from his junk to Nha

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DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY MARKET TIME UNITS



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Trang for medical treatment.

On the 26th, PCF 38 was severely damaged when the boom of YD 220 fell across the boat while it was being cradled for routine maintenance. The PCF will be transported to Subic Bay for repairs and overhaul.

On 30 April, USS GALLUP (PGM 86), the first of seven new PGMs earmarked for MARKET TIME duty, arrived at Cam Ranh Bay.

STABLE DOOR OPERATIONS

In April, STABLE DOOR units detected 35,244 junks and sampans, inspected 7,820, boarded 5,532, and detained eight junks and 192 persons.

On 12 April S.S. AMASTRA, a British Shell Oil tanker, was mined while at the POL transfer anchorage in Nha Trang harbor. Despite extensive flooding aft, the vessel remained afloat. Successful salvage operations were completed by the morning of the 22nd.

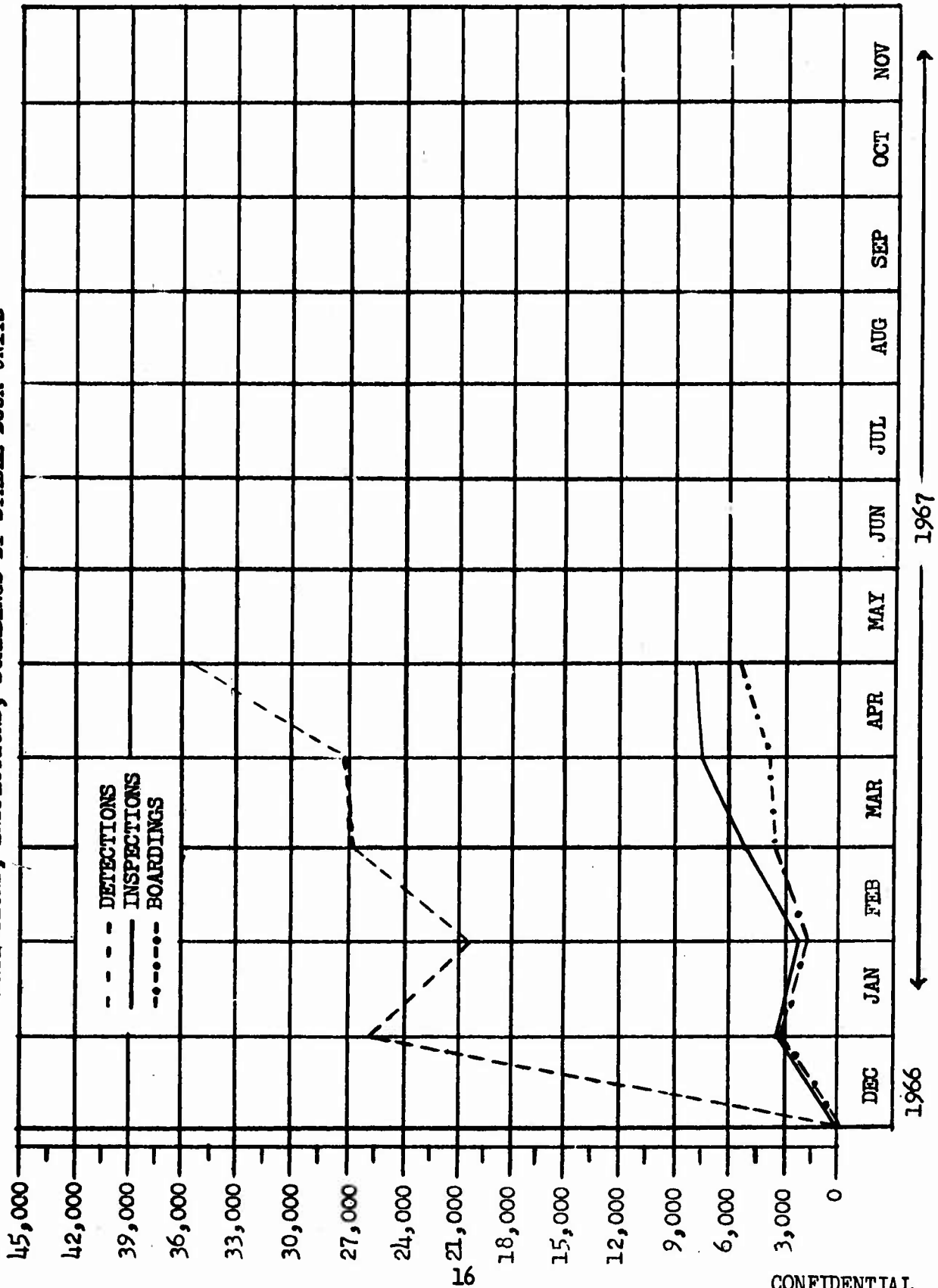
On 12 April, to counter the increased threat of Viet Cong swimmers, the four Inshore Undersea Warfare Units (IUWUs) began using concussion grenades on a random basis during harbor patrols.

During the month IUWU 1 at Vung Tau detained three junks and 21 persons; IUWU 2 at Cam Ranh Bay detained 14 persons; IUWU 3 at Qui Nhon detained four junks and 65 persons; and IUWU 4 at Nha Trang detained one junk and 92 persons.

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DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY STABLE DOOR UNITS



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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE (TASK FORCE 117)

The Riverine Assault Force continued to approach its authorized strength during the month of April. By the end of the month, 29 assault craft, including one commandant and two monitors, had arrived in country, and the Mobile Riverine Base was complete except for one ship, USS COLLETON (APB 36).

In the Rung Sat Special Zone, Task Group 117.1 continued to support the U.S. Army's Fourth Battalion, 47th Infantry in Operation SPEARHEAD I, a search and destroy operation which began in mid-March. During the month, the troops found and destroyed Viet Cong weapons factories, camps, and supply caches containing large stores of watermines. On 21 April, near Cai Mep Creek in the central RSSZ, 18 watermines and 35 watermine cases were discovered and destroyed.

During the first week of April, River Assault Squadron ELEVEN relieved River Assault Squadron NINE in support of SPEARHEAD I and, on 10 April, the first units of River Assault Squadron NINE deployed to the new base at Dong Tam, west of My Tho. On 11 April, assault craft of River Assault Squadron NINE escorted APL 26 and YFNB 21 while the support craft were towed to Dong Tam. The last movement of the month occurred on 27 April, when two U.S. monitors and five armored troop carriers deployed to Dong Tam, bringing the number of RAF craft in the Mekong Delta to one CCB, two monitors and 18 ATCs. Eight ATCs, seven VNN troop carriers, one VNN commandant and one VNN monitor remained in support of SPEARHEAD I.

Riverine Assault Force units in the Delta, operating as Task

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Group 117.2, conducted battalion-size movements and landings, rapid reaction troop lifts, reconnaissance and intelligence gathering operations, interdiction patrols and waterborne security patrols in the Dong Tam area.

On 14 April, USS KEMPER COUNTY (LST 854) arrived at Vung Tau as the first Mobile Riverine Force support ship. On 26 April, USS BENEWAH (APB 35) relieved USS MONTROSE (APA 212) in support of riverine operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone.

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U.S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

During April the level of cargo operations at all I Corps ports rose markedly as a result of the increased tempo of combat operations.

A combination of good weather, optimum timing of ship arrivals, and maximum use of manpower and equipment enabled NAVSUPACT Danang to process an unprecedented volume of cargo at each of the I Corps ports.

At the port of Danang, the throughput surpassed March's volume by almost 59,000 short tons. The combined throughput for all I Corps ports also reached a new high, exceeding 311,000 short tons.

On 16 April, construction of a camp at the new Cua Viet LST site was begun by NAVSUPACT public works personnel. By month's end 10 strongbacks, a galley and a mess hall had been completed and electrical, water and sewer systems had been installed.

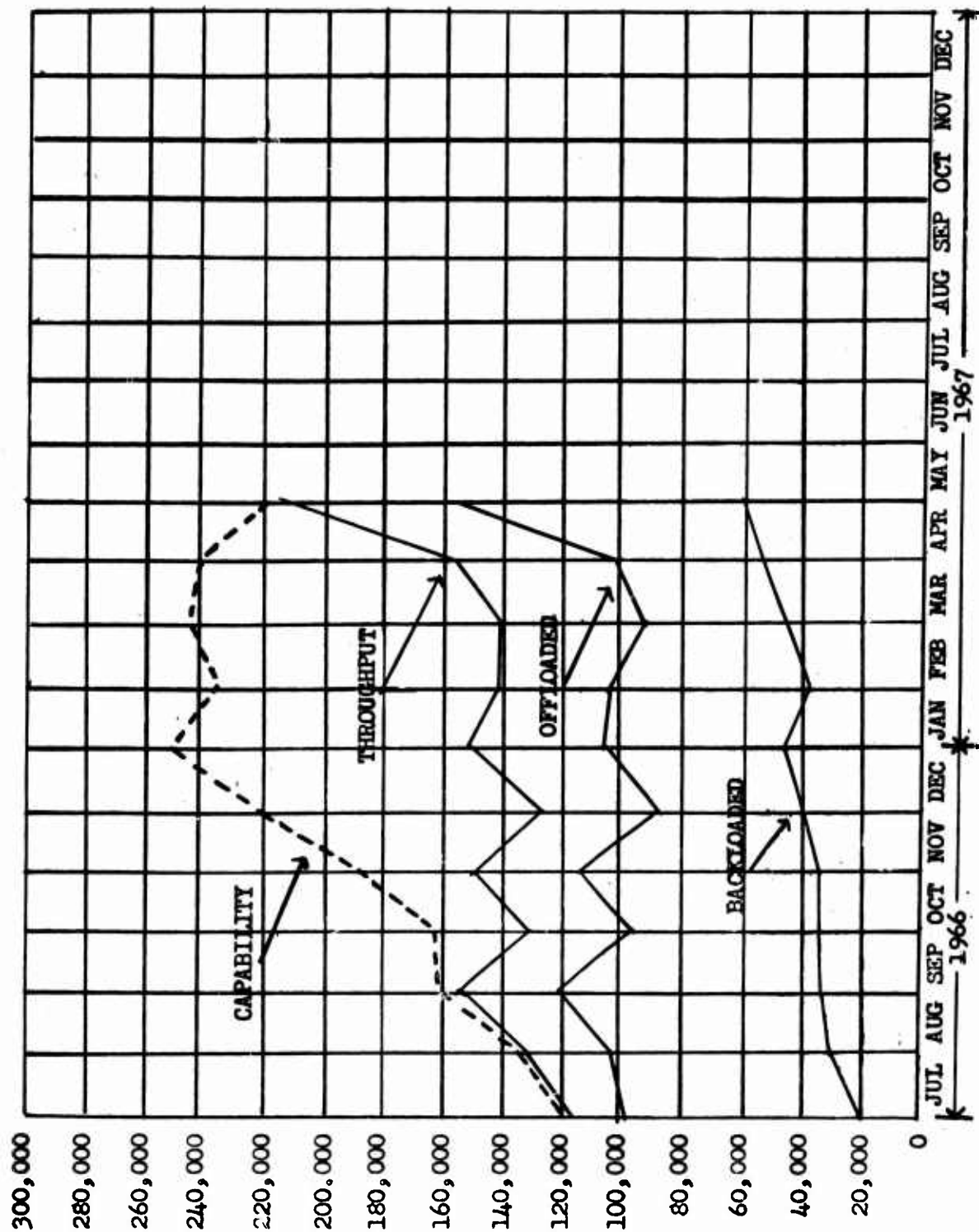
The port of Danang was visited 100 times by U.S. SEVENTH Fleet ships during April. The ships were provided with 438,690 gallons of diesel fuel and 962,131 gallons of potable water, in addition to mail, freight, emergency repair, transient billeting and disbursing services.

Class II and IV supply support continued to be generally excellent. Net supply requisition effectiveness at Danang was 90 per cent. At Chu Lai, a 98 per cent effectiveness figure was recorded for U.S. Army Class II and Class IV requisition requirements. The number of line items stocked increased by over 3,500 at Danang

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DANANG CARGO HANDLING

SHORT TONS



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and by almost 1,000 at Chu Lai.

The Naval Support Activity's C-47 returned from Sangley Point and resumed regular flights on 18 April. The aircraft transported 235 passengers and 11,266 pounds of cargo during the remainder of the month.

On 30 April Naval Support Activity personnel strength (including APLs) was 7,963, a decrease of 258 from the March on-board count. Meanwhile, the number of United States and Free World Military Assistance Forces supported by NAVSUPPACT Danang reached 123,500 by month's end.

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U.S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, SAIGON

On 21 April, Captain Burns W. SPORE, USN, relieved Captain Herbert T. KING, USN, as Commander U.S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon. Captain KING had commanded the activity since it was established on 17 May 1966.

During April the construction of interim and permanent facilities at GAME WARDEN and MARKET TIME support bases continued to progress satisfactorily.

At Nha Be, a helicopter landing field and a new post office building were completed. Meanwhile, preparations continued for construction of the permanent waterfront facility. YFNB-16 was moved several hundred yards to a new mooring to make space for the installation of the sheet pile bulkhead required for the construction of a deep-water wharf.

At Qui Nhon, construction of personnel bunkers and an explosive ordnance demolition armory were completed. On 12 April, the permanent fuel supply system became operational and the system's ten storage tanks were filled to capacity. Work on a barbed-wire perimeter fence neared completion at month's end.

At Cam Ranh Bay, the new Naval Air Facility became operational with the arrival of the first VP aircraft on 1 April. Construction of temporary living quarters and sanitary facilities was completed during the month. The installation of permanent shore power at the MARKET TIME base pier was also completed.

At the new base in Dong Tam, dredging operations to remove an

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obstruction in the turning basin were completed, and well-drilling operations were begun. An improved support capability was acquired during the month with the arrival of YFNB-24 and APL-26.

On 29 April, the NAVSUPPACT detachment at Long Xuyen was deactivated. All leased property was returned to its owners, and redistribution of equipment to other sites was completed.

The water supply and storage situation improved at some bases in April. At Cat Lo, the well began producing 12,000 gallons per day. At Nha Be, three fresh water distillation units arrived and were phased into the potable water system. At Sa Dec, a 500-barrel storage tank was completed, and the existing shallow well was extended.

During April the number of line items stocked by NAVSUPPACT Saigon increased by 10.4 per cent to a total of 26,244. Gross supply requisition effectiveness was 47 per cent, and net requisition effectiveness rose from March's rate of 64 per cent to 72.1 per cent in April.

On 23 April a C-47 aircraft was received as a replacement for the NAVSUPPACT C-47 lost in a crash on 10 March. During the month, the NAVSUPPACT aviation section transported 3,155 passengers and 199 short tons of cargo.

In April YFR 889 successfully transited the lower Bassac River from the sea to Can Tho, initiating a new resupply route into the Delta. The lower Bassac route will reduce the time required to complete the Delta resupply cycle, thereby increasing

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the number of days ships will be available for cargo operations.

Another resupply procedure instituted in April involved the use of LCMs to shuttle cargo between Saigon and Vung Tau. The new service obviated the need for stops at Vung Tau by other resupply craft enroute to the Delta. During the month, LCMs transported 112 short tons of cargo from Saigon to Vung Tau.

The ships and craft of NAVSUPPACT, Saigon transported 1,330 short tons of cargo during April, the highest monthly total to date.

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THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

During April the number of Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (MCBs) deployed in Vietnam increased to nine with the arrival of MCB-11 at Dong Ha. The newly-arrived battalion was the first to be deployed to the Dong Ha area.

Two Mobile Construction Battalions were relieved in April. At Chu Lai, MCB-71 relieved MCB-40 on 10 April. During the month MCB-71 completed the second increment of a 1,600-man cantonment for Republic of Korea Marines, and also began construction of seven observation towers for U.S. Marines in the Chu Lai area.

On 16 April, MCB-1 relieved MCB-9 at Camp Haskins, located at Red Beach, 10 miles north of Danang. Projects completed by MCB-9 included the upgrading of the airfield at the Ming Long Special Forces Camp to C-123 capability, and the construction of a 15-building complex for the U.S. Marine 11th Motor Transport Battalion.

At Phu Bai, MCB-62 completed a 67,000 square yard parking apron and 39 Butler buildings for U.S. Marine units. In Danang, MCB-5 completed a Medical Holding Barracks and a warehouse at the Naval Support Activity's covered storage complex.

Naval construction forces continued to assume responsibility for many additional projects formerly assigned to civilian contractors. During April four well-drilling teams from MCB-133 commenced operations at An Khe, Pleiku, Long Binh and Dong Tam. Other projects taken over by Seabees included the operation of

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quarries at Danang and Chu Lai.

The number of Seabee Teams deployed in Vietnam increased from six to eight with the arrival of Teams 0308 and 1108. Both teams were assigned to the Tan Chau area. The teams, under the auspices of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), began work on civic action projects in support of the Vietnamese Government's Revolutionary Development program.

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SALVAGE OPERATIONS

During April NAVFORV and U.S. SEVENTH Fleet units joined in several salvage operations.

On 12 April SS AMASTRA, a Shell Oil tanker of British registry, was mined while unloading at Nha Trang. The explosion, caused by two charges placed next to the stern, tore a six by seven foot hole between the engine room and fireroom ten feet below the water line.

Following the explosion, AMASTRA settled by the stern until the after section of the main deck was awash. Significant flooding was confined to the machinery spaces and was quickly contained. The ship continued to settle slowly because of seepage but did not bottom. The Master of AMASTRA requested salvage assistance.

On 13 April salvage operations were started by Team 3 of Harbor Clearance Unit 1 with the COMNAVFORV Salvage Officer in charge. Two SEVENTH Fleet salvage vessels, USS CURRENT (ARS 22) and USS GREENLET (ASR 10), were dispatched to the scene from Vung Tau, and on 14 April the SEVENTH Fleet Salvage Officer arrived and assumed control of operations.

A temporary patch was installed, and by 20 April all leaks had been repaired and the flooded spaces had been dewatered. Over 600,000 gallons of diesel fuel was offloaded to restore buoyancy. After the damaged area was clear of the water, the temporary patch was removed and a towing patch was welded in position. Salvage

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operations were terminated on 22 April.

On 13 April an Air Force C-141 "Starlifter" crashed after takeoff into the open sea about 2,500 yards north of Cam Ranh Bay. Seven of the nine persons aboard were killed; two were rescued. The aircraft was carrying 13,000 pounds of ordnance and 13,700 pounds of other cargo. The Military Airlift Command requested salvage assistance in recovering the ordnance and other high priority items from the crash scene.

Cam Ranh Bay Harbor Control Post and Navy Explosive Ordnance Demolition (EOD) Team personnel located the wreckage in 63 feet of water and began initial recovery operations. The SEVENTH Fleet ship GREENLET was released from AMASTRA salvage operations and arrived on scene 16 April.

Priority items recovered included the pilot instrument panel, remnants of cockpit documents, the rudder-angle power assembly, and the flight data recorder. Various electronic components, a wing section, and items from the center fuselage section and cockpit area were also salvaged.

Navy EOD Team divers removed the explosive ordnance from the largest concentration of wreckage, and took photographs of the cockpit instruments and controls. One of the aircraft's four engines was recovered by USS CURRENT, which arrived on scene 22 April. Salvage operations were terminated on 23 April.

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COMMUNICATIONS

The number of messages handled by the COMNAVFORV communications center in April totaled 88,315, a slight increase over March's total but still well below January's all time high of 91,094.

In April a Naval Command Operational Network (NAVCOMOPNET) circuit was activated at the Naval Communications Station in Cam Ranh Bay. As a result, the COMNAVFORV communications center was relieved of the responsibility for providing a communications guard for 15 activities.

At Cam Ranh Bay, the installation of electronic equipment at the new communications center was 64 per cent complete; at the transmitter and receiver sites the electronic installation was 57 and 49 per cent complete, respectively. Construction was more than 90 per cent complete at each of the sites.

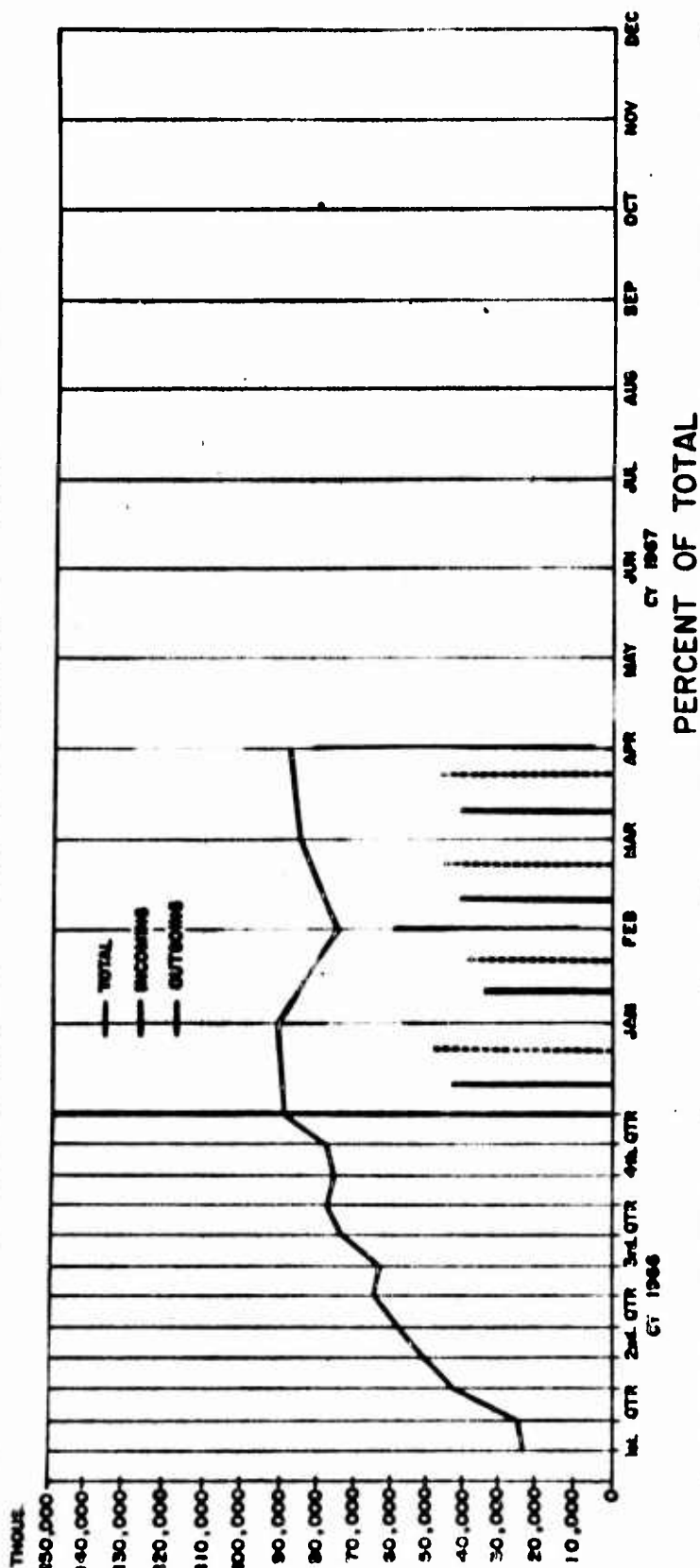
At Danang, construction work on the new communications center and the transmitter and receiver sites was 76 per cent complete. The power supply installation was 90 per cent complete in the communications center, 87 per cent at the receiver site, and 75 per cent at the transmitter site. In addition, the installation of air conditioning was 60 per cent complete at all three sites.

In April a voice radio circuit was activated between the respective Base Development Offices of COMNAVFORV in Saigon and the COMNAVFORV Representative in Danang. The new circuit was established to provide a more rapid and efficient communication capability than that afforded by the limited telephone service between the two areas.

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MONTHLY MESSAGE TRAFFIC



PERCENT OF TOTAL

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
FLASH	1	1	1	1								
IMMEDIATE	21	20	19	18								
PRIORITY	60	61	63	63								
ROUTINE	18	18	17	18								

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ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND

At 0854, 27 April, Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, USN, relieved Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, as Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam and Chief, Naval Advisory Group, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam in ceremonies aboard USS GARRET COUNTY (LST 786) in Saigon harbor. During the ceremony, Lieutenant General Jean E. ENCIER, USA, Deputy Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, presented Rear Admiral WARD with the Distinguished Service Medal for exceptionally meritorious service as COMNAVFORV/CHNAVADVGRU. Rear Admiral WARD assumed duties as Chief of the Naval Advisory Group on 10 May 1965, and as Commander Naval Forces, Vietnam when the command was activated on 1 April 1966.

On 21 April, Captain Burns W. SPORE, USN, relieved Captain Herbert T. KING, USN, as Commander, U.S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon.

On 1 April, Helicopter Attack Squadron (Light) THREE (HA(L)-3) was activated at Vung Tau under the command of Lieutenant Commander Joseph B. HOWARD, USN. The new squadron is under the operational control of CTF 116 and is currently composed of four detachments of UH-1B helicopters which were formerly assigned to Helicopter Combat Support Squadron ONE (HC-1). The new detachments, designated ONE through FOUR, are made up of the former HC-1 Detachments 29, 27, 25, and 21 respectively.

On 21 and 22 April, Admiral Roy L. JOHNSON, Commander in Chief,

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U.S. Pacific Fleet visited Vietnam. Admiral JOHNSON arrived in Cam Ranh Bay on 21 April. After a tour of MARKET TIME and STABLE DOOR facilities and briefings at Cam Ranh Bay, Admiral JOHNSON visited Saigon, Can Tho, Binh Thuy, Dong Tam and Nha Be.

12-Month Tour Review

In the fall of 1966, in response to a request by Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam reviewed all key NAVFORV billets and submitted that none of the billets (other than flag-rank positions) required an extension beyond the normal 12-month tour.

In February of this year, COMUSMACV informed COMNAVFORV that the Chief of Staff to COMNAVFORV was considered to be serving a tour of unspecified length beyond 12 months. In a message to the Chief of Naval Personnel requesting guidance, COMNAVFORV reiterated his previous position. Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet concurred and BUPERS subsequently concurred and reaffirmed the 12-month tour policy for all non-flag billets.

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MILITARY CIVIC ACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

In recent months, Can Tho-based River Assault Group 25 has been conducting concerted psychological operations in the Delta aimed at the inhabitants of Viet Cong-dominated areas. The RAG's "psywar" missions have been thoughtfully planned and have been preceded by leaflet drops and taped broadcasts tailored to fit the circumstances of the particular island, village or hamlet. Repeatedly, the affinity between the RAG sailors and the river-minded civilians has been stressed and exploited.

During the actual missions, commodities such as grain, salad oil and textile kits obtained from South Vietnamese and U.S. agencies have been distributed; simultaneously, doctors and corpsmen have treated needy civilians. In the course of dispensing food and medicine, government literature has been distributed and special appeals disseminated concerning the government cause. In some cases, cultural teams have provided entertainment.

The missions have been brief and have been repeated as often as possible. Even after an area has become relatively "secure", periodic visits have been made.

The follow-up visits have probably determined the extent of the campaign's success. Three months ago RAG 25 units conducted a mission near the village of Lac Thon. The sailors were met with open hostility by the inhabitants. Additional visits were made. Then, during a visit in April, the village chief welcomed the RAG boats, extended an invitation to all the sailors to come ashore

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and offered guarantees for their safety and security. Six Hoi Chanhs (returnees) have rallied from this area and three small-scale, successful military operations have been conducted in the area based on intelligence furnished by the Vietnamese civilians.

In other military civic action projects conducted during April, Danang medical officers and hospital corpsmen treated over 1,000 civilians at the dispensary of the Stella Maris Convent. Forty-five Vietnamese were admitted to the Danang Hospital; 39 of these were major surgical cases. In addition, 333 civilians received outpatient care at the hospital.

On 4 April, Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, COMNAVFORV, presented to officials of the University of Saigon a \$690 donation from Class 701 of the U.S. Navy's Officer Candidate School at Newport, R.I. The gift, in the form of a checking account, represented the start of a scholarship fund designed to help needy Vietnamese medical students.

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

VIETNAMESE NAVY

The personnel strength of the Vietnamese Navy on 30 April was 16,040 officers and enlisted men. The number of personnel discharged during the month as deserters was 93, a decrease of 24 under March's figure; the number of unauthorized absentees was 330, a decrease of 61 under March's figure.

Operations

In April, the Fleet Command maintained 11 ships on station for coastal patrol, four ships on river patrol, and one ship on convoy escort duty between Vung Tau and Tan Chau. The daily availability of Fleet Command ships increased from 24 in March to 27 in April. Their missions included MARKET TIME and other anti-infiltration patrols, psychological warfare visits, escort patrols and gunfire support missions.

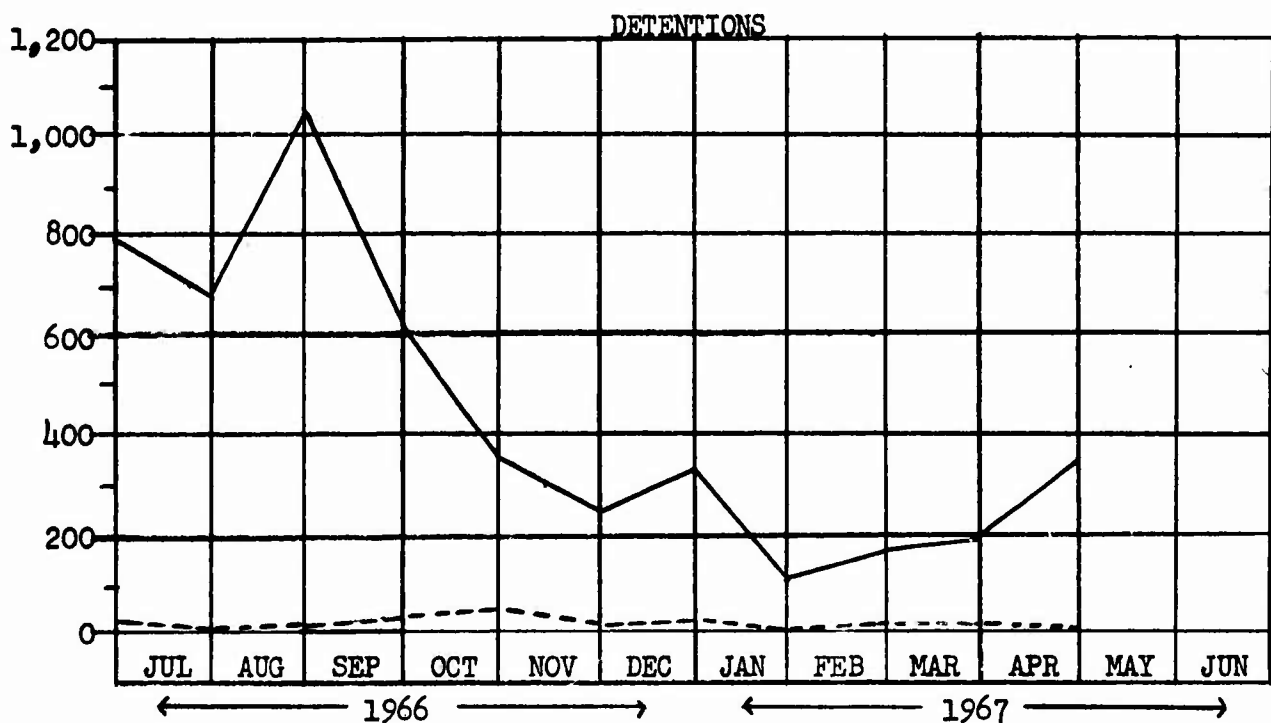
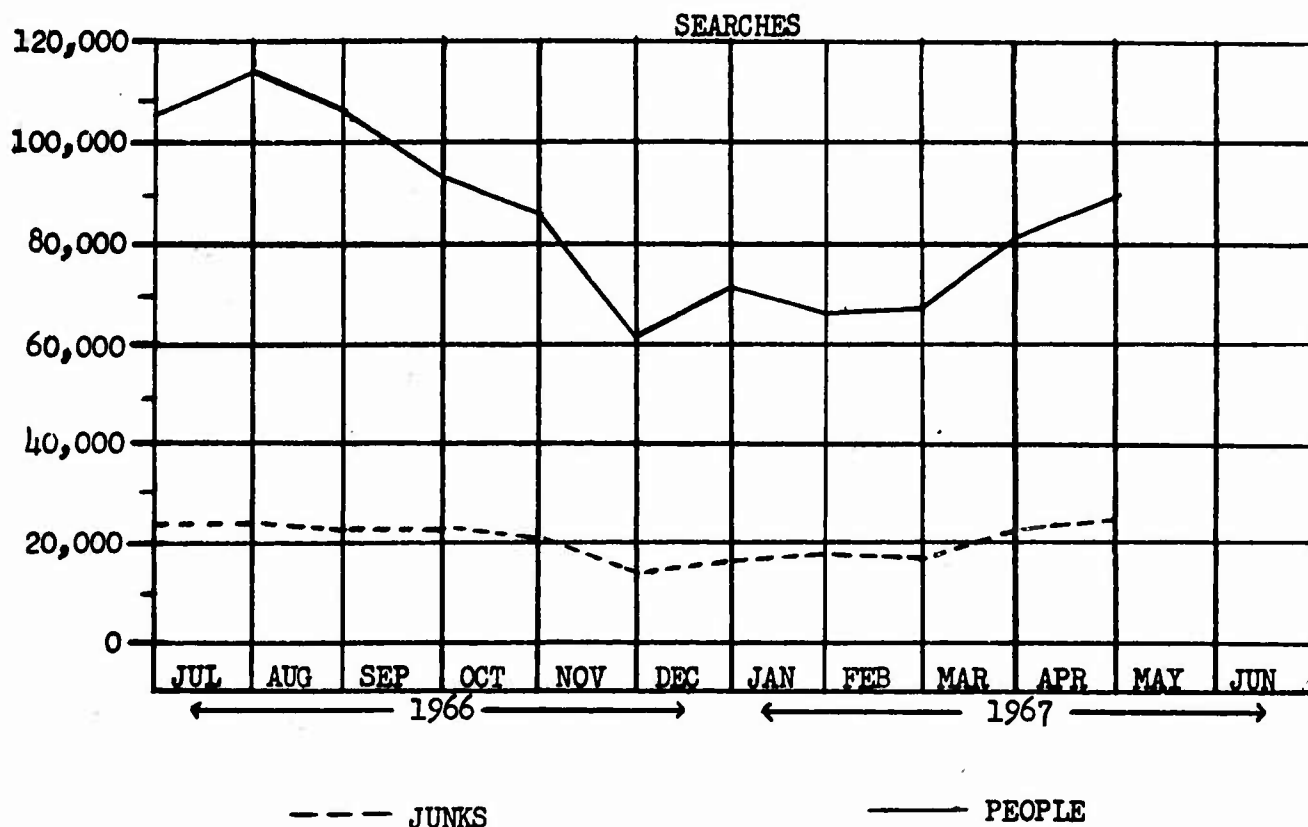
The use of Fleet Command ships for gunfire support missions increased by 50 per cent over March to 45 missions. The ships also inspected 515 junks and 2,108 persons, detaining one junk and two persons.

On 10 April, PCE 12 relieved two U.S. Navy PCFs on MARKET TIME patrol for special duty, as part of the continuing effort to place Vietnamese Navy units into Operation MARKET TIME.

The Coastal Force searched 21,607 junks and 80,025 persons,

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SEARCHES AND DETENTIONS BY VIETNAMESE NAVY
SEA, COASTAL AND RIVERINE FORCES



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detaining four junks and 339 persons. The force, with 300 operational junks, had a daily average of 238 available and 128 utilized.

LT J.R. CHAPMAN, USN, Senior Advisor to Coastal Group 16, died on 3 April of wounds received when a bomb was accidentally released by a U.S. Air Force F-4C aircraft and exploded among a group of refugees and Coastal Group 16 sailors. Five Vietnamese sailors and 30 refugees were wounded. From 1 to 6 April, Coastal Group 16 provided blocking forces for Operation LIEN KET 96 conducted by the Vietnamese Army SECOND Division and from 10 to 16 April, two junk elements, equipped with Night Observation Devices, augmented MARKET TIME units in a patrol area 80 miles southeast of Danang.

On 21 April Coastal Group 41 participated in Operation SONG THAN 1 (Big Wave 1), an amphibious assault against an offshore island 34 miles north of Ca Mau Point. The junks carried the Vietnamese landing force and were assisted by PGMs 603 and 608, USS HISSEM (DER 400), USCGC POINT GLOVER and PCF 90. No Viet Cong were found on the island.

On 29 April Coastal Group 14 provided a blocking force on the Thu Bon River, 13 miles south of Danang, to prevent a 25-man Viet Cong unit from escaping from ground forces. One Viet Cong was killed and one junk was destroyed.

During the month, the River Assault Groups conducted 15

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operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone and eight operations in the Fourth Riverine Area. RAG units conducted escort duty, river patrols, base defense, and psychological warfare operations. A daily average of 137 craft was available; the average daily use was 104.

Between 12 and 14 April the RAGs supported four ground operations involving U.S. Army, ARVN and Vietnamese Marine Corps troops. Eleven craft from RAGs 24 and 28 supported units of the U.S. 199th Light Infantry Brigade in the two-day Operation NUTCRACKER, 18 miles south of Saigon. One Viet Cong was captured and two suspects were detained.

Operation CUU LONG 58/12/67, conducted 11 April 22 miles west of My Tho by the 12th ARVN Regiment and units from RAGs 21, 27 and 33, resulted in the capture of nine Viet Cong and one deserter. Six suspects were detained.

From 12 to 14 April, six miles west of Can Tho, three ARVN battalions and supporting units transported by 20 craft from RAGs 25, 29 and 32, killed 230 Viet Cong, captured 12, and detained 28 suspects in Operation DAN CHI 285.

In the RSSZ, Operation RS 69/67 was begun as the 4th Vietnamese Marine Battalion was relieved by the 1st Battalion. Units of RAGs 24 and 28 and Regional Force craft transported the two battalions and continued to support the 1st Battalion through

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the end of the month.

During April, the Vietnamese Navy conducted 24 logistical support missions, transporting 2,051 tons of cargo and 4,514 personnel. LSMs carried 55 per cent of the cargo and 43 per cent of the personnel; LCUs carried 23 per cent of the cargo and 29 per cent of the personnel; and LSTs carried 22 per cent of the cargo and 28 per cent of the personnel.

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

Brigade Force B, consisting of a headquarters, the 2nd and 3rd Marine Battalions, and Battery C of the Marine Artillery Battalion, continued operations begun in March in the Bong Son area of the II Corps Tactical Zone. From the 1st to the 13th the brigade moved 4,000 refugees from the An Lao Valley and took up defensive positions just north of Bong Son. Two Viet Cong were killed and 10 suspects were detained during Operation SONG THANH 10 carried out from 14 through 16 April just north of Bong Son. A booby trap killed 14 Marines and wounded 26 others, including one U.S. advisor.

On 25 April the Brigade, less the 2nd Battalion, moved to the National Training Center near Vung Tau to support exercises of the 6th Battalion.

Brigade Force A, comprising a headquarters, the 4th and 5th Marine Battalions, and Battery B of the Marine Artillery Battalion,

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relieved Brigade Force B in the Bong Son area on 19 April. On 22 April the brigade commenced a search and destroy/pacification operation, code named BAC TIEN 817. By the end of the month four Viet Cong had been killed, two captured and seven suspects detained. Six Marines were killed and 18 wounded.

The 1st Battalion and Battery A of the Marine Artillery Battalion, operating in the Rung Sat Special Zone, killed seven Viet Cong and wounded two despite only scattered contact with the enemy. After 24 April, several civic action projects were undertaken in Xom An Thit village, including a vaccination program and repairs to roofs of several houses.

The 2nd Battalion was deployed to the Nha Be District, south of Saigon on 21 April, and, with units of the U.S. 199th Light Infantry Brigade, conducted search and destroy operations and civic action projects through the end of the month. The 4th Battalion conducted search and destroy operations in the RSSZ from 1 through 12 April. Two Viet Cong were killed and two wounded. One Marine was wounded.

The 5th Battalion operated in the Nha Be District, conducting search and destroy, pacification, and rural reconstruction operations until it was deployed as part of Brigade Force A on the 18th.

The 6th Battalion completed its training cycle at the National Training Center near Vung Tau on 26 April.

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The morale of the Vietnamese Marine Corps remained at a high level and the leadership in all units was considered to be excellent throughout the month. During April, the Corps accounted for 15 enemy killed, two captured, and 32 suspects detained. Twenty-one Marines were killed and 54 Marines and one U.S. advisor were wounded.

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APPENDIX I

USN/VNN/VNMC STATISTICS FOR APRIL 1967

U.S. NAVY:

	<u>MARKET TIME</u>	<u>GAME WARDEN</u>	<u>STABLE DOOR</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
DETECTIONS	82,400	77,300	35,244	194,944
INSPECTIONS	32,375	24,182	7,820	64,377
BOARDINGS	24,034	31,147	5,532	60,713
PERSONS DETAINED	869	709	192	1,770
JUNKS DETAINED	127	13	8	148

MARKET TIME Detections of Steel Hulls 1,624
Total Steel Hulls Transiting MARKET TIME Areas 687

Disposition of the 687 Steel Hulls:

Inspected or boarded	280
Identified as not suspicious	85
Arrived/departed RVN ports	293
Unknown, not suspicious	29

VIETNAMESE NAVY:

	<u>SEARCHED</u>		<u>DETAINED</u>	
<u>COASTAL FORCE</u>	<u>JUNKS</u>	<u>PEOPLE</u>	<u>JUNKS</u>	<u>PEOPLE</u>
I NZ	7,304	28,458	4	308
II NZ	3,942	13,371	0	23
III NZ	7,450	30,158	0	8
IV NZ	2,911	8,038	0	0
Sub-Totals	21,607	80,025	4	339

FLEET COMMAND
PATROL SHIPS

515	2,108	1	2
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RIVERINE AREA
CRAFT

3,066	7,035	0	5
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<u>TOTALS</u>	25,188	89,168	5	346
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VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS:

VC/NVA: 15 KIA, 2 VC CAPTURED, 32 VC SUSPECTS DETAINED.

VNMC: 21 KIA, 54 WIA.

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