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UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
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From: Chief, Naval Advisory Group, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
To: Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam

Subj: Historical Review, Naval Advisory Group Activities, September 1965

Ref: (a) CCMUSMACV Directive Number 870-1

Encl: (1) Historical Review, Naval Advisory Group Activities, September 1965

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded to Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (Secretary Joint Staff), in accordance with reference (a).

C. E. JOHNSON
By direction

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Historical Review, Naval Advisory Group Activities, September 1965

Preparing Agency: NAVADVGRP MACV

LCDR MULTER: Tel 60890

OUTLINE OF SEPTEMBER 1965 HISTORICAL REVIEW

1. (S) Operation MARKET TIME,
 - a. (S) General.
 - b. (S) Assignment of Market Time Forces.
 - c. (S) Planning.
 - d. (C) Support of Market Time Activities.
 - e. (C) Incidents involving Market Time Units.
2. (U) Operational Assistance,
 - a. (U) ISM(N) and PsyWar Activities.
3. (S) Maintenance/Material Assistance,
 - a. (S) MAP Furnished Ship Schedule.
 - b. (C) Decommissioning of PC 02 and 05.
4. (C) Planning,
 - a. (C) Vung Tau and Qui Nhon Development.
 - b. (C) Vietnamese Navy Commando Force.
5. (U) Marine Advisory Unit Activities.

ENCLOSURES:

- (1) List of Estimated Delivery Dates of Ships and Craft ~~(Confidential)~~
- (2) Study on Vietnamese Navy Commando Force ~~(Confidential)~~

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1. (S) Operation MARKET TIME.

a. (S) General. Market Time operations completed its second month of operating under the command of RADM N. G. WARD, USN, CHNAVADVGRP and Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115). Improvements were achieved in the areas of patrol effectiveness, communications and reporting as the NAVADVGRP operations personnel, their VNN counterparts and the VNN and USN Market Time units gained experience. CTF 115 OPORD 10-65 was amended during September to include the additional mission of the force as approved by COMUSMACV on 8 September 1965 (see NAVADVGRP's Historical Review for August 1965).

b. (S) Assignment of Market Time Forces. The composition of Market Time forces remained the same as outlined in NAVADVGRP's Historical Review for August 1965 except for the addition of one MCS (Mine Countermeasure Support Ship) and six MSCs (Minesweeper Coastal). These additional forces were provided by CINCPACFLT as an interim augmentation of Market Time units pending determination by CINCPAC of the required number of patrol stations to be manned based on a proposal submitted by COMUSMACV (see COMUSMACV 050549Z August 1965, Secret). This proposal requested additional patrol ships to increase the number of continuously manned Market Time off-shore patrol stations from 9 to 25 ships. On 21 August CINCPAC directed (see CINCPAC 212218Z August 1965, Secret) a detailed study be made on the COMUSMACV proposal and of related proposals for countering waterborne infiltration into the RVN.

c. (S) Planning. Representatives from CINCPAC, COMUSMACV, CINCPACFLT, OPNAV and CHNAVADVGRP met at the Headquarters CHNAVADVGRP between 2 and 18 September 1965 for ~~this~~ study. The study set forth the Operation Market

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Time concept, included a resumé of its history, outlined the current situation of Market Time Operations as of 1 September, and recommended an operation plan. This report was submitted to COMUSMACV on 25 September for approval and forwarding to CINCPAC (see CHNAVDVGRP ltr 3000 ser 00115-65 of 25 September 1965, Secret). In summary the study recommended the following as necessary to combat infiltration and VC waterborne movement: ① increase the off-shore patrol ships from 9 to 14; ② double the patrol aircraft coverage by placing four aircraft on patrol at all times; ③ increase inshore patrol coverage by increasing the number of Swifts (PCFs) from 54 to 84 and USCG cutters (WPBs) from 17 to 26; ④ increase the number of LSTs providing radar coverage of the Mekong River mouths from 3 to 4 to allow time off-station for the ships involved; ⑤ *extent of Name Warden ** inaugurate an extensive river patrol with 120 river patrol craft. The study group recommended the following concept of operations: conduct coordinated off-shore surveillance operations by surface and air units to detect and classify ships and craft attempting to infiltrate men and material into the RVN; conduct surface ship surveillance operations along the 17th parallel and Cambodian borders to detect, interdict and destroy any Viet Cong attempts to penetrate these areas or to force the infiltrators to seaward where they are exposed to the off-shore surveillance patrol; and conduct inshore surveillance operations with surface units, supplemented by aircraft, to detect, interdict and destroy VC movement along the coastline and in the rivers for a distance of 25 miles from the sea. Command of the inshore, off-shore and the north and south barriers will be exercised by CTF 115 through the Coastal Surveillance Centers. The major river patrol effort will be performed by CHNAVDVGRP and not be a part of TF 115. These river patrol units will operate from inshore surveillance platforms (LSTs) located off the mouth of the rivers.

d. (C) Support of Market Time Activities. NAVADVGRP's Historical Review for July 1965 stated that the YR (Repair Ship) scheduled to replace the LST presently supporting Market Time units based at Danang would be on station in October 1965. The heavy repair workload of the Naval Ship Repair Facility, Subic Bay in repairing Seventh Fleet units has temporarily halted the activation/conversion program of the YR. The conversion of the two AKLs (Light Cargo Ships), which were to be deployed for Market Time logistic lift missions in October, has also stopped. Firm dates for completions of the YR and ARL conversions are not available. The first PCF are expected to arrive incountry the early part of November 1965. This is the first increment of 54 PCFs presently approved for Market Time operations. The logistical support available at An Thoi (where the first 10 PCFs will be assigned) is limited. With the arrival of 5-8 PCFs incountry per month commencing in December 1965, the services of the YR and AKLs will be required.

e. (C) Incidents Involving Market Time Units. Units of COMCOGARDRON ONE based at An Thoi and patrolling in the Gulf of Thailand detected VC junks attempting to infiltrate personnel and material into the RVN. On 19 September, USCGC POINT GLOVER detected by radar an unlighted 20 foot junk proceeding at high speed towards the mainland of the RVN. Warning shots were fired after the initial request to board was ignored. The junk attempted to evade capture by the POINT GLOVER by vigorous maneuvering. Once capture seemed inevitable, the junk crew members jumped overboard. After stopping the junk by firing into the engine compartment, the junk was boarded and a total of 6 small arms and 480 rounds of small arm ammunition was seized along with the capture of 1 man before the junk sank. On completion of salvage operations, 2 bodies, 2 individual weapons, clothing and 10,000 RVN piastres were recovered. USCGC POINT

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MARONE held a target on radar during the early morning hours on 20 September and commenced to close for a routine investigation. When the cutter attempted to gain a position to board, the 40 foot junk increased speed and commenced maneuvering while firing small arms, dropping grenades and objects that resembled floating mines to avoid capture. Several of the grenades and mine like objects exploded in the water. Eight VC were killed and the junk sunk by small arms fire. One rifle was recovered. A VC who escaped from this junk was later captured by Special Forces ashore. The captive confirmed that both junks were on supply missions from Phu Quoc Island. During both incidents the USCG units sustained no damage or personnel casualties.

2. (U) Operational Assistance.

a. (U) LSM(H) and PsyWar Activities. Between 3 and 13 September 1965 the Vietnamese Navy LSM(H), described in NAVADVGRP's Historical Review for June 1965, was deployed to coastal villages and off-shore islands in the II and III Corps extending the governments psywar/civic action programs to areas inaccessible by other means. The ship provided medical treatment to 2216 civilians and dental treatment to 18 in the villages of Cam Ranh, Nha Trang, Hon Khoi, Poulo Gambir, Song Cau and Banh Ba Island.

To reduce the adverse effect on those fishermen whose junks were searched or detained by USN and VNN forces during anti-sea infiltration operations, 14,000 gift kits have been received by the NAVADVGRP Psychological Warfare Advisor for distribution to these fishermen. The unit cost of the kit is 70 piastres. These kits were distributed to the five Coastal Surveillance Centers for further distribution to USN and USCG ships and VNN ships and junks with U.S. advisors embarked. Sea Force Headquarters located in Saigon has been supplied with a quantity of these kits for distribution to VNN ships

departing Saigon on patrol. These gift kits will not be used in conjunction with the psywar program being conducted by the Mobile Psywar Team embarked on the LSM(H). A similar type gift kit is being planned by the VNN Political Warfare Bureau for this purpose. Reports received from U.S. advisors indicate that these gift kits have been received with enthusiasm by the junkmen and sampan populace.

3. (S) Maintenance/Material Assistance.

a. (S) MAP Furnished Ship Schedule. In an official letter to CINC VNN (see CHNAVADVGRP ltr 9000 ser 00119-65 of 29 September 1965, Secret), CHNAVADVGRP provided the schedule for delivery to the Vietnamese Navy of several new ships and craft being procured under the Military Assistance Program. This schedule was forwarded in order that proper planning may be accomplished by the Vietnamese Navy. Enclosure (1) furnished the estimated delivery dates of these ships and craft.

b. (C) Decommissioning of PC 02 and 05. NAVADVGRP's Historical Review for July 1965 reported that a team of technical experts from the Ship Repair Facility Guam made a detailed inspection of the older VNN ships to determine their life expectancy and the requirement for major overhaul. The team concurred in NAVADVGRP's opinion that PC 02 and 05 were not fit for sea. It was expected that these ships would be decommissioned after the receipt of 2 new LSSLs under the Military Assistance Program. On 25 August and 14 September 1965, these two LSSLs were turned over to the Vietnamese Navy, however, the Vietnamese Navy has not yet decommissioned these older units. They have been removed from the Vietnamese Sea Force and placed under the control of VNN Headquarters' Operations. PC 02 is currently in Saigon. PC 05 is being utilized as a training ship for the Naval Training

Center at Nha Trang. The unsatisfactory material and operating conditions of PC 05 distracts from the training of Midshipmen in shipboard procedures, maintenance and operations. CHNAVADVGRP recommended the PC 05 not be employed in operations at sea and that both units be decommissioned.

4. (C) Planning.

a. (C) Vung Tau and Qui Nhon Development. With the forthcoming arrivals of PCFs in-country, planning for their support at various locations along the coast has commenced. NAVADVGRP's Historical Reviews for June and September 1965 outlines the development of the base at Cam Ranh. Other coastal locations selected to support PCF operations are at Vung Tau and Qui Nhon in addition to the facilities already established at An Thoi and Danang.

A request to enlarge the Cat Lo Naval Base has been forwarded to the Vietnamese Navy. A larger base is needed to accomodate additional PCFs and WPBs. Land has been requested for the establishment of berthing and messing facilities and to construct two work shops in the area northeast of the marine railway. This base is required to be operational by 15 December 1965. By providing for a PCF/WPB base at Cat Lo, U.S. Navy personnel will be able to offer technical assistance to the VNN ships and craft supported from Cat Lo. Provisions to increase the diesel fuel oil storage has been made at the present pier area. Pontoon docking space has been provided on the northern end of the existing pier.

Market Time PCF/WPB base facilities are also planned at Qui Nhon. This base will have minor repair capability and will provide logistical support, messing and berthing for boat crews. The following construction

is planned at Qui Nhon to be July 1967. 10 semi-permanent BOQs; 10 semi-permanent BEQs; 1 semi-permanent mess and kitchen; 1 semi-permanent storage area for frozen, fresh and dry stores; 2 semi-permanent work shops; 1 administration building; 1 crane pad; 1 pier; 200,000 gallons POL stowage; and water and power supplies.

b. (C) Vietnamese Naval Commando Force. On 7 September 1965 CHNAVADVGRP submitted to COMUSMACV a study recommending approval of a Vietnamese Naval Commando Force for use in offensive operations along the coast. Enclosure (2) is a copy of the study. If approved, the Naval Advisory Group USMC allowance would be increased by 12 officers and 4 enlisted.

5. (U) Marine Advisory Unit Activities. Force structure increases to expand the Vietnamese Marine Brigade by one infantry battalion with complimentary increases in controlling and supporting units were approved by COMUSMACV for implementation during FY 67 and were forwarded to CINCPAC for comment. The approved force structure would bring the VNMC to an authorized strength level of 7747 during FY 67.

In order to continue to meet the increasing number of combat commitments placed upon it while maintaining a trained and ready force to be employed in amphibious operations, a concept for build-up of VNMC was developed based on a 5 year MAP planning cycle. This concept provides for a long range, carefully controlled rate of growth leading toward an eventual division size unit with austere combat support, combat service support and staff elements. The organizational increases were developed to illustrate, for planning purposes, the organization changes required in VNMC if the build-up of RVNAF forces is to continue. The plan is subject to annual re-evaluation

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and, based on RVNAF force structure requirements, can be accelerated or modified as the situation warrants. The build-up is designed to allow termination at any point while still maintaining a balanced and effective structure.

Paralleling the analysis of VNMC manpower requirements and organizational structure, studies of the advisory unit functions were initiated to evaluate the impact of accelerated VNMC activities on the T/O of this organization. The conclusion was reached that an immediate change to the Table of Organization of Marine Advisory Unit was required and it was recommended that the organization be modified to keep pace with increased advisory commitments. The recommendation included a request for assignment of a Task Force Advisor and Assistant, an Infantry Battalion Advisor and Assistant for the 6th Infantry Battalion. A medical field service technician was requested in order to expand advisory functions into the area of hospital procedures, technical functioning and administration.

In conjunction with the projected 5 year concept for expansion of VNMC it is anticipated that, during CY66, the advisory units organization will be further expanded to provide advisors to a 2d task force, to be activated when the 6th Battalion is operational, and a training assistant to the Operations Advisor to monitor and assist the VNMC staff in implementing a cyclic unit training program.

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LIST OF ESTIMATED DELIVERY DATES OF SHIPS AND CRAFT

SHIPS

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>ESTIMATED DELIVERY DATE</u>
PC	1	APR 1966
PCM	4	NOV-DEC 1965
PGM	6	APR-MAY 1966
ISSL	1	NOV 1965
ISSL	1	JAN 1966

CRAFT

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>ESTIMATED DELIVERY DATE</u>
RPC	4	OCT 1965
	3	NOV 1965
	3	DEC 1965
	3	JAN 1966
	3	FEB 1966
	4	MAR 1966
	16	UNKNOWN
LCM (MONITOR)	1	NOV 1965
	1	DEC 1965
	2	FEB 1966
	1	APR 1966
	1	JUN 1966
	2	JUL 1966
LCM (COMMANDMENT)	1	NOV 1965
	1	JAN 1966
	1	APR 1966
	1	JUN 1966
LCM (ARMORED)	13	OCT 1965
	4	NOV 1965
	4	DEC 1965
	4	MAR 1966
	4	APR 1966
	4	MAY 1966
	4	JUN 1966
YR (REPAIR BARGE)	1	UNKNOWN

A total of 16 RPC have been approved in the FY66 MAP but as of this date no construction contract has been let.

One YR has been requested for the VNN to supplement the repair capability of the Naval Shipyard. No delivery information is now available, however, it is estimated it will arrive between JAN-APR 1966.

Enclosure (1)
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VIETNAMESE NAVY COMMANDO FORCE

1. Background.

a. The Commander-in-Chief, Vietnamese Navy has requested the approval of the Joint General Staff to establish a VNN Commando Force. This force would be used to conduct hit-and-run amphibious raids against Viet Cong controlled areas along the coast of South Vietnam. The force would be comprised of 544 officers and men broken down into four 136 man companies. One company each would be placed under the operational and administrative control of each of the four Naval Zone Commanders.

2. Proposed Utilization. It is envisioned that this force would be utilized as a highly mobile, flexible amphibious organization that could be utilized in the following areas of employment:

- a. Conduct search and destroy or hit-and-run operations from the sea in Viet Cong controlled coastal areas.
- b. Act as an amphibious reaction force anywhere within a Corps area.
- c. Conduct amphibious operations in support of a ground operation. The company could hit either a flank or the rear of a VC force engaged with ARVN forces if accessible by either the sea or a river.
- d. Reinforce a junk base or coastal village under heavy VC pressure.
- e. Secure and hold a beach-head for the landing of a large ARVN unit.
- f. Secure and hold a beach-head for the landing of a vitally needed logistics replenishment.

At the discretion of the Joint General Staff, all four companies could be amalgamated to conduct a battalion size amphibious operation for any of the above stated reasons under the cognizance of any of the four Corps commanders.

3. Recruitment.

a. The recruitment of a group this size offers no obstacle to the VNN at this time. The number of men to be initially recruited would be dependent on the available training facility to be utilized for the group's training. It is envisioned that 272 men will be initially recruited with the remaining 272 men to be recruited about six months later, or when the initial group completes its training, whichever is earlier. A recruit would be obligated to serve as a commando for a period of three years prior to becoming eligible for transfer to another VNN unit.

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4. Training.

a. The training of such a group offers the most significant problem controlling the establishment of the force. The Vietnamese Ranger School and Marine Brigade facilities are not available for training the Commando Force. The VNN is now in the process of selecting a new site for a Recruit Training Center. Commando Force Training facilities should be incorporated into the construction requirements. Determination of training location should include the following factors:

(1) Sufficient berthing and messing for 350 men. (Training attrition)

(2) Beach areas in vicinity for the amphibious training phase. Interim facilities will be studied for training the first two companies.

b. Current planning forecasts the establishment of a special training program for the Force that would be broken down into three basic phases. The first phase would include an intensive basic course which would present a cross-pollination of both the ARVN and VNN basic training. The second phase would be advanced, and include certain facets of Ranger training. The third phase would be intensive training in the area of amphibious landings and re-embarkation. The exact duration of each phase has not yet been determined.

c. Although the plan for the training of the Commando Force is not completed, it is estimated that at least six months will be required to produce an effective well-trained group of Commandos. The instructors should be assigned from Vietnamese resources, with U.S. Marine Corps advisory assistance. The VNN Underwater Demolition Team (LDNN) is capable of providing a source of instructors. U.S. Naval Advisors can be placed in VNN craft involved in the amphibious phases.

d. U.S. Marine Corps personnel have extensive experience and knowledge of jungle and amphibious warfare, and have been requested by the VNN as advisors to the Commando Force. The Naval Advisory Group personnel allowance would require revision as follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) Two USMC officer advisors per Company: | 8 |
| (One CAPT, one First LT, Recon or jungle experience) | |
| (2) Two USMC officer Instructors Advisors | 2 |
| (Two CAPT, Recon or jungle experience) | |
| (3) Four Enlisted Instructors, | " |
| (One E-7, three E-6, Recon or jungle experience) | 4 |

Total - 10 Officer, 4 Enlisted

Company advisors should be assigned to the school as recruits begin training.

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5. Conclusion.

- a. The creation of a VNN Commando Force is both feasible and desirable.
- b. USMC personnel should be assigned as advisors to the Commando Force.

6. Recommendation.

- a. That approval of the Commando Force be granted.
- b. That the increase Naval Advisory Group allowances for Marine Corps personnel be approved.
- c. That USMC personnel now at the Naval Advisory Group be assigned on a temporary basis to assist the VNN in curriculum development, school facilities selection, and drafting an equipment list.