From: LT Daniel B. Barnum, USNR
To: Chief Navy Section, MAAG, Vietnam

Subj: After Action Report on Completion of Tour (U)

Ref: (a) NAVSECMAGVINST 5216.7

1. (K) The following report is submitted in accordance with reference (a):

a. Situation at Time of Arrival. I arrived in Vietnam on 4 July 1962 and was assigned as Shiprider for the PC's and PCE and additionally as advisor to the Commander of the Patrol Force of the Vietnamese Navy (VNN). At that time there were four PC's (02, 04, 05, and 06) and one PCE (07). In September 1962, PCE-08 arrived in Vietnam; in January 1963, PCE-09 arrived. I was assigned as advisor to both of these ships until 18 February 1963 when they were turned over to LT B. H. Palmer. The ships of the Patrol Force were normally assigned to the Da Nang or Phu Quoc patrols as part of the Sea Force Anti-Infiltration Patrols. The patrols were augmented by U. S. Seventh Fleet ships until August 1962. The personnel situation on the ships was critical. The ships were under allowance in both officer and enlisted categories and the level of training was low. There was a rapid turnover of personnel, resulting in lack of continuity in training programs and general shipboard organization. The VNN supply system was not fully understood or properly utilized by shipboard personnel; the result was a general lack of proper on-board repair parts. The Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) capability was negligible. Sonar equipment on the older PC's (02, 04, 06) was in extremely poor condition, having not been operated for several years. Personnel trained as sonarmen were being used as radiomen, electronic technicians, signalmen, or quartermasters. The noticeable area of excellence was surface gunnery, not so much in maintenance as in ability to "hit the target." The ships were operating fairly effectively as a patrol and were meeting most of their commitments.

b. Significant Improvements.

(1) The experience level of shipboard personnel has increased greatly. This is the result of increased graduates from the Nha Trang schools, the efforts of HTT-7 which worked with Sea Forces until December 1962, and increased emphasis on shipboard training by Sea Force advisors and the Sea Force Commander. PC 02 and PC 05 completed four weeks underway training in September 1962. All ships now have the full allowance of officers on board, and the number of enlisted on each has increased to about eighty-five percent of allowance.

(2) Scheduling of ships has become more standardized and more rigid. The ships of the PC/PCE group are now used exclusively on the Da Nang patrol. Rotation of patrol groups is regular and is scheduled several months in advance. That the ships can now better plan their training and maintenance schedules is the obvious advantage.
(3) There is a better understanding of, and a growing confidence in, the VNN supply system among shipboard personnel. The ships have generally increased the levels of on board repair parts. Several ships have held their own inventories to determine what parts are missing. The ships have learned that things can and will be gotten if correct procedures are used. PC-04 conducted SOAP during its overhaul period February-May 1963.

(4) The material readiness of all ships increased to a satisfactory level. Significant increases were made aboard PC-02, PC-04, and PC-06 with the completion of overhauls on each. Overall seamanship practices have greatly improved. Equipment which is either increasingly unsupportable or unused (i.e. boilers and smoke generators) have been removed from the ships. Preventative maintenance programs for electronic and engineering equipment were established on several ships and periodic checks were held by advisors to ensure that they were being carried out. The ASW capability of VNN increased from a very small, almost negligible one to a very satisfactory one with good potential. Two ASW exercises were held utilizing U.S. submarines as target ships. The first exercise, held from 29 August to 6 September 1962, was the first time any VNN ship had operated with a "live" submarine. Considering this, the results achieved by two ships - PC-06 and PC9-07 - were especially gratifying. The second exercise, held 7-14 April 1963, was very successful and provided excellent training for all ships participating. VNN personnel have taken an increased interest in ASW and show an eagerness for continued exercises. An ASW doctrine was prepared for the first exercise and revised for the second exercise. (It is, however, only barely adequate and should be rewritten). Two ASW schools were held by the Schools and Stations Command prior to the second exercise. A two day course was held for officers and a two week course for enlisted personnel.

c. Comments and Recommendations.

(1) Comment: Although improved over the past year, the personnel situation in VNN is still critical. Both officers and enlisted personnel are rotated much too often to gain any sort of continuity aboard the ships. Officer tours average less than a year; enlisted tours, about fifteen months. As a consequence, benefits gained from extensive training exercises - such as underway training and the ASW exercises - are often lost before they can be put to use. This problem of personnel utilization and distribution is, in the opinion of the reporting officer, the most serious in the VNN today.

Recommendation: Assign to VNN-HI an advisor, preferably with BUPERS or EPDU experience, to aid in setting up new personnel distribution procedures.

(2) Comment: The ASW doctrine for the VNN is little more than adequate. It was taken originally from a World War II PC manual. It was partially revised prior to the ASW exercise in April by the reporting officer who has had no previous ASW experience. Much of the information it contains is outdated and does not reflect the capabilities or the equipment of the VNN ASW Force.
**Recommendation:** That the ASW doctrine be completely rewritten to reflect the character of the VNN ASW Force. It should be written by an officer who has had extensive ASW experience and training.

(3) **Comment:** The searchlight sonars (QCT-1 and QCQ-2) on PC-02, PC-04, and PC-05 are still not in satisfactory working condition even after extensive repair work by the Naval Shipyard and training by MAAG advisors. Just keeping these equipments working requires the almost constant efforts of highly experienced MAAG advisors and VNN shipyard technicians. Even when the equipment is working properly, the VNN sonarmen can not make proper use of it because of the lack of extensive training in searchlight procedures.

**Recommendation:** Remove the sonar installations on PC-02, PC-04, and PC-05 and relegate those ships to strictly patrol/support missions.

(4) **Comment:** The ships of the Patrol Force (and the entire VNN) have presently reached a state of readiness and training such that a ship-rider (in the present sense) is no longer needed. For the past six months, the present shipriders have been acting more as advisors or liaison officers during special operations than as advisors during regular underway periods. The level of seamanship has been brought to a level that no longer makes it necessary to give the detailed advice once needed. The bulk of the Sea Force advisory effort over the past year has shifted from the detailed operating policies of the individual ships to the general force and flotilla operating policies. The need for advisory effort aimed at the sub-staff level has become increasingly important now that the ships are operating with a greater measure of reliability.

**Recommendation:** That the billet of ship-rider "per se" be discontinued and that advisors under the Sea Forces Advisor be reassigned as advisors to the VNN Sea Forces staff and flotilla commanders.

d. **Current Situation.** The operational and materiel readiness of VNN has greatly improved during the past year. The ships are meeting a very high percentage of their commitments and are fulfilling well their missions. The area of excellence remains surface gunnery ability. The critical problem, although greatly improved, is still the personnel situation. Stemming from this is the lack of completely effective training and maintenance programs aboard the ships. Advisory effort must be continued in the areas of preventative maintenance and "on board" repair capabilities if the ships are to maintain a high state of readiness.

There remains a lack of adequate doctrine for most areas of operation. Increased emphasis should be put on writing a standard operation order for VNN Sea Forces and on translating USN technical manuals.

Very respectfully,

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