5 August 1963

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To: Chief Navy Section, NAVSECNAV

Subj: After Action Report on completion of tour; submission of

Ref: (a) NAVSECNAVINST 5216.7

1. In accordance with reference (a) the following report is submitted:

(a) Situation at the time of arrival: NCS, Saigon had just been rehabilitated when I arrived in Republic of Vietnam. CNO, VNNAV accepted the installation as complete on 13 August 1962. Since NCS, Saigon is the controlling station for VNNAV communications, this rehabilitation gave the system an increased capability and enhanced their potential. All stations in the Saigon area to include NAVSUPCEN, VNNAV, Navy Shipyards and River Force Command had teletype machines installed linking them directly to NCS Saigon. In-country tours were started in August to improve communications. The improvements that were required were in the field of installation of equipment, preventive maintenance and operational techniques.

DISTRICTS

(Da Nang) New antennas were required. Existing antennas had to be reoriented for maximum efficiency. The phone and teletype cable was not upon telephone poles but was laying on the ground. The communication center required rearranging.

(Nha Trang) This base was in excellent shape, personnel well trained and motivated, equipment in good repair and well maintained. The schools are comparable to U.S. schools and are turning out well trained personnel. Some difficulty was being experienced in maintaining firm teletype communications.

(Vung Tau) The location of this communication facility is not an optimum one. The Comm Center should have been located in the same place as the Junk Force Training Center. The mountains block transmissions directed at Vung Tau. New antennas were required throughout. Additional equipment was required to support junk divisions when they are commissioned. Equipment was in good repair and well maintained.

(Phu Quoc) The problems that existed here are one of location and weather. The Comm Center was in a semi-permanent building with a thatched roof. The antennas were not of correct length and were oriented incorrectly. Equipment needed some repairs but was properly maintained for the most part. Power was a problem. The three gas-driven generators were out of commission. Batteries were being used, and were being quick-charged, using a truck.
River Force

(Can Tho) This base had a well maintained Comm Center. Equipment was in good repair and proper working order. There was a lack of test equipment in the Electronic Repair Shop. Spares were in bins and logged for easy access.

(My Tho) The Comm Center was in good shape. Equipment was well maintained, in good repair and proper working order. The teletype was not hooked up to ARVN Comm Center. Spares were logged and readily accessible.

(Long Xuyen) The equipment and Comm Center were in a state of good preservation and well maintained. There was a shortage of radio operators, but those assigned were of excellent quality.

(Vinh Long) The Comm Center was the best that I inspected. The gear was in a state of excellent repair, clean and proper operation was in evidence. The hook-up of the teletype machine was required.

The AN/TMC-10 VHF (PH) transceiver and the AN/VRC-34 HF transceiver was the equipment used for communications in the RG of the River Force. Improvement was required in the antenna arrangement of the boats and a standard installation had been proposed. Operator training had been initiated and was being implemented.

Sea Force

The communications of the Sea Force was the best of the Forces. A requirement to shift from VHF to UHF equipment for communication with aircraft was 70% completed. Standardization of equipment had begun, starting with the installation of the TDR HF/AF transmitter.

Junk Force

The AN/UIC-37 HF transceiver had not arrived in-country. Efforts to insure their arrival for installation on the command junks had been a continuing one since November 1961. Sufficient AN/TMC-10 VHF (PH) transceivers were assigned to Junk Force to outfit the junks. There was no Communication SOF for junks.

Additional Comments

No set advisory plan was in effect. The Communication SOF needed revising and updating. Preventive maintenance programs were either lacking or sporadic. A standard "UNC type" publication was needed which would combine all communications procedures for VHN. A VHN Basic Order had not been submitted for review and approval.
The VNP had channels allocated in the Troposcatter system but implementation had not been accomplished. There was a shortage of officers trained in communication techniques.

(b) Significant improvements accomplished over the period of the tour.

NCS Saigon traffic handling has increased to approximately 750 messages daily. Chief NavComm Sta Saigon revised the watch standing procedures to effectively handle this increase in traffic. Three of the 20 aspirants assigned to VNP were made Communication Watch Officers to further improve NCS, Saigon traffic handling. A agreement has been reached with the Postal Service, AMVN to allow VNP to have a Fleet Post Office sometime in August 1963.

A U.S.-conducted crypto inspection proved that VNP is effectively and correctly handling crypto duties.

A teletype and phone link between JCC and CIC, VNP headquarters was installed and tested satisfactory.

After the rehabilitation of equipment at NCS, Saigon the entire station was cleaned, painted throughout, new office's built, better lighting and ventilation provided. These improved working conditions have had an excellent effect on morale and desire to do the job.

Districts

Da Nang) New antennas were installed and oriented properly at Da Nang in August 1962. New IF receivers, frequency shift converter and a UHF installation was completed in the same month. Steel telephone poles with concrete bases were installed, the telephone and teletype cables attached to them, and a new telephone switchboard installed. The Comm Center was rearranged.

(Zha Trang) NCS, VNP inspected the Comm Center and determined the cause of the faulty teletype link. AMVN was contacted and the trouble was eliminated. An agreement was also reached to loan five communication typewriters to NCS, Saigon. Zha Trang is training radioman to copy code using a typewriter.

(Van Trung) The location of the Communication Center was not changed. This will be accomplished in 1963. 2 new antennas (folded-dipole) were installed, improving communications with the junk divisions and Saigon. A more powerful transmitter (BC-191 HF transmitter) was installed and additional receivers. A training program for junk force radioman was initiated by the Third Coastal District Advisor (LTJG Corbus).
(Huế) The Comm Center is still in a semi-permanent building but repairs have been accomplished. Some trouble still remains with power. Antennas were oriented correctly and cut to the proper length. A battery charger was installed, thereby doing away with the truck-charging feature. The power problem will be alleviated when the CSCC are built.

River Force

(Can Tho) Additional test equipment was sent to Can Tho. Some rearrangement in the Comm Center by the base gave them a better message handling capability. An additional BC-610 HF transmitter was sent to the base to increase the communication capacity. This increase will be required in the near future. Five additional radio operators have been assigned for the same reason as above.

(Ky Tho) A BC-610 HF transmitter was delivered to the base. The teletype link between A&W and the Comm Center was hooked up. There is still a requirement for sufficient commercial power to the base.

(Long Xuyen) A BC-610 HF transmitter was delivered to the base. There is still a requirement for sufficient commercial power to run all of the equipment.

(Vinh Long) A BC-610 HF transmitter was delivered to the base. There is still a requirement for sufficient commercial power to run all of the equipment.

The boats are maintaining their equipment in a much better fashion. All bases remove equipment when boats return from an operation, clean the equipment and make minor repairs. A standard boat antenna arrangement has been installed, tested and operation is satisfactory.

Communication between boats and bases, base and River Force Command has improved steadily. Operator training is still being carried out on a continuing basis.

Sea Force

Ships of this force have continued to improve in communications. The installation of the new VHF equipment is 72 percent complete. New equipment has been ordered in 1963 to continue the standardization of all ships. A&W operations with U.S. submarines proved that they have an excellent communication potential and a full scale amphibious operation in January 1963 lends further proof to this.

Junk Force

The A&W/IN-37 VHF transceiver arrived in-country on all of the command junk. A&W has tested a new type antenna to increase the range of the equipment. Results were excellent and installation of this new antenna has commenced.
An SOI for Junk Force was written by MAC, VNN and promulgated down to the division level.

Additional Comments

An Navy Section Advisory Plan was written by the advisors, reviewed and approved by Chief Navy Section. This has enhanced the effort to very high degree. MAC, VNN wrote and promulgated an SOI, effective 1 January 1963. The Preventive and Operational Maintenance Standards of Electronic Equipment and the Current Ship Maintenance Program have been implemented. Two chapters of the "JNC-type" publication have been written but are as yet not approved. Funds have been made available and the required equipment or erad to allow VNN into the trop scatter system. 20 aspirants assigned to VNN by ARVN have been trained at MCS, Saigon and have been assigned to duties involving communications. A Basic VNN Order has been written in English and Vietnamese and is undergoing review for ultimate approval. The broadcast method was increased from 6 to 10 hours schedules.

(c) Comments and Recommendations

Comment

Radio operators of the Junk Force and River Force still require additional training in tuning, trouble-shooting and operational procedures.

Recommendation

Accelerate drill circuits and training lectures in the River Force and Junk Force. Where possible, send operators to MCS, Saigon for on-the-job training. There is a training program already in being and the required facilities are available at MCS, Saigon.

Comment

Reporting of operational and intelligence information needs speeding up. More and more emphasis is being placed on "current information" by higher authority and VNN is lagging.

Recommendation

A format should be recommended and a approval obtained from VNN, that will allow commands to send their reports as an unclassified message. Instructions should be promulgated by MAC, VNN setting aside certain hours in the day for reporting only.
Comment

Preventive maintenance and on-board repairs are still being implemented in a sporadic manner. By correcting the present practices of waiting until an upkeep or overhaul and then giving the job to the yard, many man-hours could be saved and small discrepancies corrected before they become major items.

Recommendation

DNC, VWN and the Communication Advisor through constant liaison with VWN Comm officers at all levels, should recommend that aid be requested from NCS, Saigon for minor repairs and lectures to electronic repair personnel in VNN. These lectures would complement the CSMP and the CSMP. Electronics repair personnel from NCS, Saigon could also conduct CJP while aiding other commands in minor repairs.

Comment

Work has been started on a "DNC-type" publication. This will consolidate all the doctrine and operating procedures for VNN.

Recommendation

The advisor should write those chapters that are lacking, using U.S. Navy publication as a guide. DNC, VWN should furnish those chapters that are already written for inclusion in the publication.

Comment

Sufficient commercial power should be obtained at the bases, as required for primary power. This would then allow the emergency power equipment to be used for the purpose intended.

Recommendation

The Communication Advisor along with DNC, VWN should insure that up-to-date power requirements are furnished to VNN 5-4 and 3-4, Navy Section.

(d) Current Situation

The reporting procedures, as aforementioned, continue to be one weakness. A new reporting format is one big requirement. The lack of range of the radios on the command junk is another contributing factor. Antennas have been tested that should alleviate this problem and installation has commenced.
A shortage of qualified communication personnel, including officers, is another area that requires improvement. The excellent quality of personnel being turned out by the schools at Nha Trang will solve this. A firm arrangement between DMC and N-1, VNM should be put in writing allowing DMC to have the final word on the assigning of personnel trained in communications.

Preventive maintenance procedures are a matter of educating people to the benefits of said procedures then advising them when they hit a snag. This area is improving but there is still much to be done.

Sufficient commercial power to be used as the primary power source must be obtained. The emergency power equipment could then be used for the purpose intended. Lack of sufficient commercial power is presently being experienced at My Tho, Vinh Long and Long Xuyen.

It goes without saying that the rehabilitation of MCS, Saigon acted as the prime factor in making this an excellent part of VNM communications. However, credit must be given to DMC, VNM for his untiring efforts to keep communications improving in all facets. Chief Na-vom-Sa has also been a relentless force in keeping MCS an excellent supporting activity.

The Sea Force, as standardization of equipment becomes more and more a reality, will continue to enhance their already excellent reputation in communications. Few, if any, commitments have been missed due to electronic failures. Reports get in "on time" from the ships and equipment is well maintained for the most part. They have had a change to prove themselves on ASW operations with three different U.S. submarines. A full scale amphibious operation was conducted and communications was a big contributing factor in its success.

The River Force has improved to a point where its communications are in the area of very good to excellent. Some growing pains are still being experienced in the quality of operators. The river bases are implementing training programs. Chief Na-s, Saigon has stated that operators can be trained at Na-vom-Sa. Some difficulty in communicating with aircraft has been experienced. The proper frequencies and procedures are contained in the SOL. Reports from applicable advisors show that communications are very good on operations as a whole.

This has been a most rewarding year for me. It is especially gratifying to see one's ideas accepted, watch them cut into effect and the ensuing growth. By necessity, because there is only one Communication Advisor, much help was received from the Navy Section Staff, advisors in all fields of endeavor and the VNM Officers and Men. This help was timely and freely given.
Finally, my counterpart, DEO, VIN has been the prime mover in most of the improvement. He has been extremely easy to work with. He accepts advice willingly, and where his opinions have been at odds with mine, we have worked it out.

Very respectfully,

J. H. Watson