

APPENDIX F
FORCE LEVELS

Information has been obtained from the NASVA data base on the average number of U.S. Navy units assigned, available, and employed by Game Warden from the second quarter of 1966 through the third quarter of 1968.

NASVA omits mentioning the 4 LSTs committed to Game Warden; 3 of these were always on station after 1967. During the second and third quarters of 1967, the decrease in use of PBRs was because of damage.

There is a large discrepancy between the number of MSBs assigned and available and those employed after the second quarter of 1967, especially during the fourth quarter of that year. No explanation has been found for this discrepancy; it may be that there is an error in the program or data base.

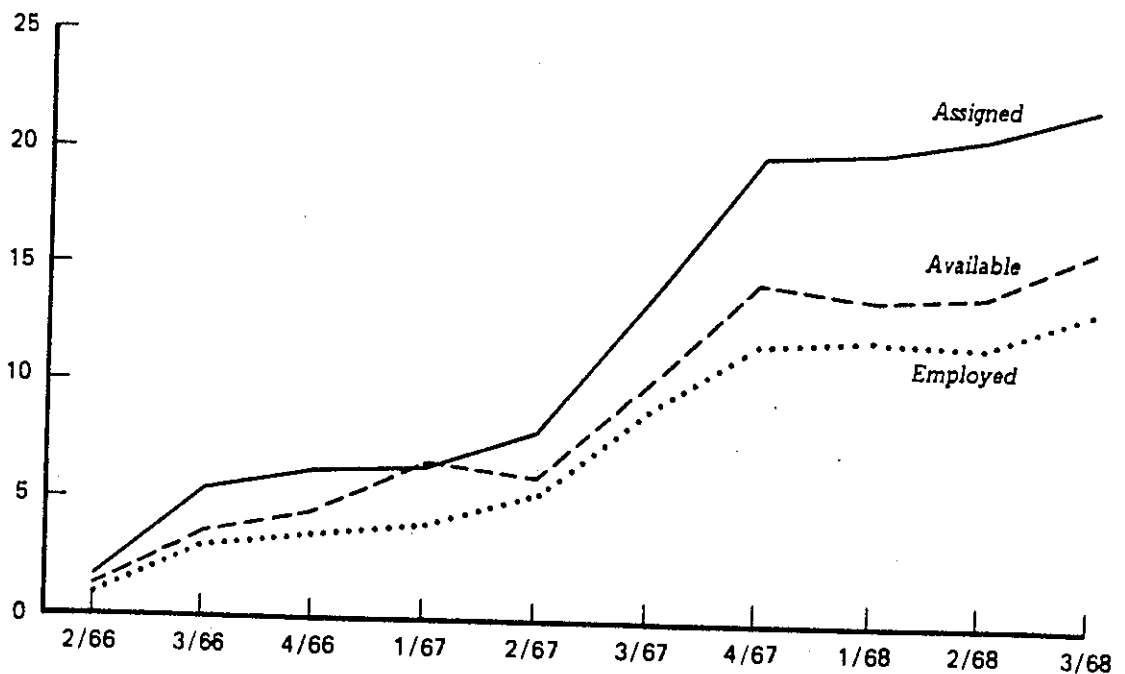


FIG. F-1: AVERAGE NUMBER OF UH-1s (U.S. ARMY)

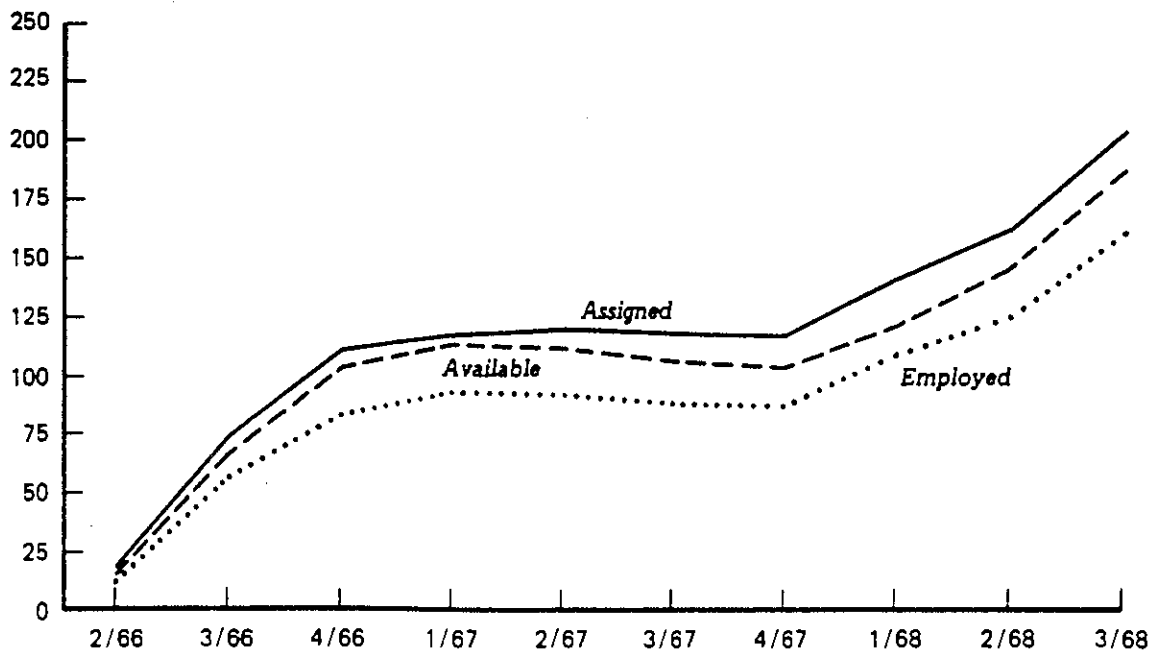


FIG. F-2: AVERAGE NUMBER OF PBRs (U.S. NAVY)

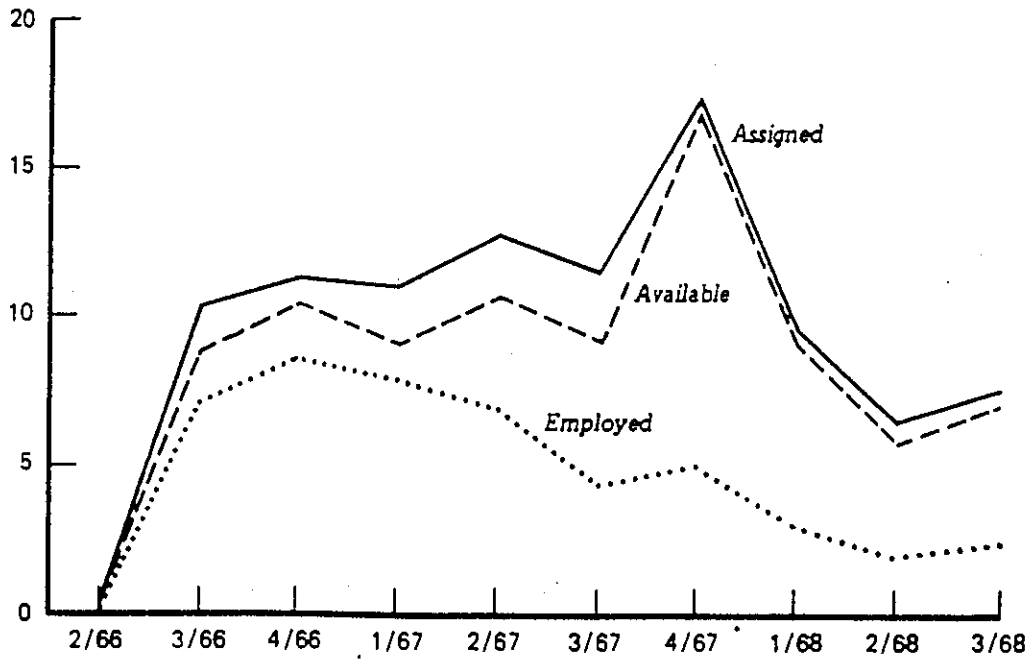


FIG. F-3: AVERAGE NUMBER OF MSBs (U.S. NAVY)

TABLE F-1

AVERAGE NUMBER OF UNITS ASSIGNED

	Date									
	<u>2/66</u>	<u>3/66</u>	<u>4/66</u>	<u>1/67</u>	<u>2/67</u>	<u>3/67</u>	<u>4/67</u>	<u>1/68</u>	<u>2/68</u>	<u>3/68</u>
LCM					1.36	5.01	6.93	7.00	5.22	1.08
LCPL				0.9	1.89	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.73	1.23
LCVP					0.08					
LSM				0.9	.15					
MSB	0.40	10.04	11.35	11.11	12.89	11.68	17.48	9.78	6.54	7.61
MSC						1.72				
MSO						0.30				
PACV	0.45		0.84							
PBR	16.19	72.11	109.49	117.28	119.44	118.02	116.98	140.65	162.50	203.57
RPC			1.61	2.41	1.83					
UH-1	1.71	5.44	6.35	6.52	8.08	14.00	19.88	20.16	20.84	22.55

TABLE F-2

AVERAGE NUMBER OF UNITS AVAILABLE

	Date									
	<u>2/66</u>	<u>3/66</u>	<u>4/66</u>	<u>1/67</u>	<u>2/67</u>	<u>3/67</u>	<u>4/67</u>	<u>1/68</u>	<u>2/68</u>	<u>3/68</u>
LCM					1.19	4.90	6.71	6.93	5.22	0.47
LCPL				0.74	1.89	2.00	2.00	1.86	1.73	0.24
LCVP					0.08					
LSM				0.90	0.15					
MSB	0.26	8.83	10.54	9.11	10.85	9.28	17.09	9.22	5.92	7.07
MSC						1.65				
MSO						0.30				
PACV	0.42		0.53							
PBR	13.83	64.4	102.39	113.34	111.44	105.34	102.86	121.6	145.83	187.19
RPC			1.4	2.19	1.53					
UH-1	1.32	3.6	4.51	6.63	6.17	10.25	14.59	13.86	14.11	16.37

TABLE F-3

AVERAGE NUMBER OF UNITS EMPLOYED

	Date									
	<u>2/66</u>	<u>3/66</u>	<u>4/66</u>	<u>1/67</u>	<u>2/67</u>	<u>3/67</u>	<u>4/67</u>	<u>1/68</u>	<u>2/68</u>	<u>3/68</u>
LCM					0.56	3.39	3.92	4.34	3.20	0.08
LCPL				0.30	0.72	0.58	0.62	0.45	0.17	0.06
LCVP					0.02					
LSM				0.50	0.03					
MSB	0.13	7.11	8.6	7.93	6.99	4.14	5.05	3.01	2.07	2.58
MSC						0.30				
MSO						0.00				
PACV	0.22		0.31							
PBR	11.71	56.34	81.38	91.88	91.63	87.77	87.31	109.59	125.63	160.92
RPC			0.8	1.67	1.19					
UH-1	.81	3.00	3.64	3.99	5.38	9.04	11.91	12.24	12.00	13.71

APPENDIX G
RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

This appendix was reprinted from the February 1967 TF 116 River Patrol Force OpOrder. After October 1966, the rules of engagement were revised to allow patrol craft commanders to direct fire against an evading watercraft.

Operation Order
COMRIVPATFOR No. 201-YR

Naval Forces Vietnam
Task Force 116
River Patrol Force
Can Tho, Vietnam
DTG: 010001H FEB 1967
Message Ref: TUS 025

APPENDIX II TO ANNEX B

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Reference: COMCOSURVFOR (CTF 115) OPORDER NO. 201-YR

1. DEFINITIONS:

- a. RVN Territorial Seas: A belt of sea adjacent to the RVN three miles in breadth measured from the low water mark along the coast.
- b. Inland Waters: Waters to landward of the territorial seas.
- c. Contiguous Zone: A zone of the high seas, contiguous to the territorial area of the RVN and extending to a maximum of 12 miles from the base line from which the territorial sea is measured.
- d. Defensive Sea Areas (DSA): The territorial waters of RVN have been declared a Defensive Sea Area by the Government of Vietnam. Ships of any country operating within the territorial sea are subject to visit and search if not clearly engaged in innocent passage. The GVN has further proclaimed that within the contiguous zone (12 miles) vessels suspected of preparing to infringe upon the customs, fiscal, sanitary or immigration regulations (i.e., infiltrate) are subject to visit and search and possible arrest and disposition, and that the GVN has requested and received the assistance of the United States for the full cooperation of the U.S. Navy with the naval forces of the RVN to enforce the above measures.
- e. International Inland Rivers: A term established by a treaty between Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam which declared that navigation is free upon the Mekong River and its navigable tributaries, issues and mouths situated within the territory of the contracting nations as well as upon all the waterways giving access to the ports of Saigon and the sea; that within the laws and customs regulations of each nation, navigation between Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and the sea by the waterways described above is considered maritime navigation. This freedom of navigation is granted freely to those nations recognized diplomatically by the contracting nations. Freedom of navigation by merchant ships of nations not recognized diplomatically by the contracting nations is subject to the agreement

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of these nations. Vietnamese regulations currently prohibit passage by ships of nations, except Cambodia, not recognizing Vietnam. This prohibition includes ships of Indonesia, North Vietnam, Communist China and other Communist Bloc nations. The treaty further provides that to avoid any irregular debarkation on Vietnamese territory during passage of vessels between the mouths of the Mekong and the Cambodian borders, Vietnamese customs agents will escort the vessels between the Mekong mouths and the Cambodian border; that navigation of the Mekong as defined above must conform to the national laws and regulations, notably in matters of sanitation, police and customs and for the maintenance of general security; that each nation has the right to subject the transportation of persons and merchandise to certain conditions and that freedom of navigation will not be hindered by these conditions.

f. Immediate (HOT) Pursuit: Pursuit initiated in response to actions or attack by hostile aircraft or vessels as defined in these rules of engagement. The pursuit must be continuous and uninterrupted and may be extended as necessary and feasible over territorial and international air space and seas as prescribed herein.

g. Friendly Forces: (As defined in paragraph 1.b. of the basic OpOrder).

h. Hostile Aircraft: An aircraft in the air space of the RVN which:

(1) Is visually identified or is designated by the U.S. Director of the Tactical Air Coordination Center (TACC), and Air Force Control and Reporting Center (CRC), or their authorized representatives, as a hostile aircraft operating in RVN territorial air space without proper clearance from the government; or

(2) Is observed in one of the following acts:

(a) Attacking or acting in a manner which indicates within reasonable certainty an intent to attack U.S./friendly forces or installation.

(b) Laying mines, without the permission of the government concerned, within friendly territorial seas or inland waters.

(c) Releasing free drops, parachutes, or gliders over RVN territory without permission of the government and obviously not in distress. The foregoing includes the unauthorized landing of troops or material on RVN territory.

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i. Hostile Vessel (Surface or sub-surface):

(1) A vessel in RVN inland waters and territorial seas or adjacent international waters which is engaged in one of the following acts:

(a) Attacking or acting in a manner which indicates within reasonable certainty an intent to attack U.S./friendly forces or installations, including the unauthorized landing of troops or material on friendly territory.

(b) Laying mines within RVN territorial seas or inland waters without permission of the government.

(c) Engaged in direct support of attacks against the RVN.

j. Hostile Ground Forces: Those ground forces which attack U.S. or friendly forces or installations.

k. Visit: Boarding a vessel with intent to search.

l. Search: Inspecting the vessel's papers and examination of the vessel and its cargo.

2. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: The following Rules of Engagement cover those general situations expected to be encountered and will be observed by the River Patrol Force (SEALS withstanding):

a. River Patrol Force units are authorized:

(1) Within the rivers and contiguous zone of the RVN to demand the identification and a declaration of intent and to stop, visit and search vessels flying the RVN flag, or flying no flag (less foreign flag steel-hull merchant ships, warships and military, police or customs craft) which give a manifestly false response to the demand for identification and declaration of intent, or view other valid grounds for suspicion that all or part of their cargo or personnel is intended to be or has been taken directly into the RVN or is being transshipped within the RVN in violation of the customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws of the RVN.

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(2) Steel-hull merchant shipping of any foreign flag will not be stopped, visited and searched unless specifically authorized by CTF 116. TF 116 units will report to CTF 116 by immediate message a description of actions of foreign flag merchant ships providing a basis for suspicion of violation of innocent passage including time, position, type of suspicious activity, name, nationality and ship type of the vessel in question and will meanwhile shadow or maintain a radar plot of the suspected ship. In the case of merchant ships off-loading cargo to watercraft or dropping items over the side while on international inland waterways, every effort will be made to obtain photographs; to apprehend the watercraft upon departure from alongside the ship, and to recover items dropped overboard.

(a) River Patrol Force units will take particular care to ensure that their actions and maneuvers cannot be construed as harassing foreign flag merchant ships and that their actions in no way interfere with the transit of such shipping on the international inland waterways.

(3) To detain the following which have been intercepted pursuant to the above, until custody is assured by RVN forces:

(a) Vessels determined to have violated or to be preparing to violate laws and regulations of the RVN, including violation of curfew regulations, or which have engaged in hostile actions incident to interception.

(b) A vessel which refuses to permit visit, or having been visited, refuses to permit search.

(c) An intercepted vessel which fails to proceed as previously stated or directed.

(d) Personnel embarked on intercepted vessels who are without identification or who have improper identification or who have engaged in hostile action incident to interception.

(4) To return fire when fired upon by hostile ground forces, watercraft or aircraft as defined herein and to fire in support of friendly units receiving hostile fire.

(5) To fire warning shots in order to stop indigenous watercraft for visit and search. Due care must be exercised as to fall of shot.

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(6) The minimum force necessary to accomplish patrol operations shall be exercised, up to and including destruction if required.

(a) Violators of curfew and prohibited zones (who may or may not be subjected to gunfire by the VNN) shall not be fired upon by River Patrol Force units unless the violator qualified as a hostile vessel in accordance with subparagraph 1.e. of this Appendix or attempts to evade and ignores warnings to stop.

(b) Every peaceful method at hand shall first be exhausted when attempting to stop a junk or sampan for boarding and searches. This failing, warning shots may be used as the next step. If it is obvious the junk or sampan is deliberately trying to evade, direct fire may be used as a last resort. Firing shall be ceased if the junk or sampan appears to be stopping.

(c) It is permissible to continue direct fire against an evading junk that beaches and against its fleeing occupants provided the firing is not in the vicinity of a hamlet or village. Any fire in the vicinity of a hamlet or village must be conducted strictly in accordance with Appendix IV to Annex B.

(7) To conduct immediate pursuit as necessary and feasible pursuant to the above rules over inland, contiguous and international waters and air spaces except that:

(a) No pursuit is authorized into the inland waters or the air spaces of Cambodia.

(b) River Patrol Force units will not approach the Cambodian border closer than three nautical miles at the points where the Mekong and Bassac Rivers enter Cambodia without the prior approval of CTF 116.

b. River Patrol Force units will

(1) Permit a vessel and embarked personnel not subject to detention to proceed to the stated port of destination.

(2) Recognize the possibility of language difficulties and allow sufficient time for vessel's master to fully realize the consequences for failure to properly respond.

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(3) Not initiate any attack on ground forces or watercraft without the specific authority of CTG 116.1 or CTG 116.2, as appropriate, and the cognizant TOC. This does not limit firing in self-defense, firing in support of other friendly units requiring immediate assistance, firing of warning shots to stop watercraft for visit and search, or taking under direct fire junks and sampans that ignore warnings to stop and deliberately attempt to evade.

(4) Exercise the minimum force necessary to accomplish their mission.

(5) Display sound judgment in replying to fire from the vicinity of populated areas to ensure that unnecessary civilian casualties do not occur.

(6) Make an immediate report to CTG 116.1 or CTG 116.2, as appropriate, of incidents involving the talking under fire of hostile vessels, aircraft or ground forces. The task group commander will immediately report the incident to CTF 116 and the appropriate TOC and/or CSC.

c. Procedures for visit and search will be in accordance with the guidance of Appendix III to Annex B.

3. Rules of Engagement for SEAL

a. SEAL team detachments are now operating with GAME WARDEN forces in the Rung Sat Special Zone and the Delta. Due to the special nature of their operations, normal GAME WARDEN rules of engagement, as stated in the basic operation order, cannot, in their entirety, apply to SEAL operations. Consequently, these special rules of engagement are hereby promulgated and will be adhered to during all SEAL operations:

(1) All SEAL operations (ambush, reconnaissance, etc.) will be cleared by the appropriate Vietnamese authority through his U.S. counterpart. They will be cleared at the lowest echelon necessary, but it should not be necessary to clear lower than the district chief.

(2) Curfews and other restrictions imposed by GVN authority must be known by SEAL teams prior to any operation.

(3) SEAL teams must be intimately familiar with population patterns in the operating area to avoid inadvertent casualties to innocent persons.

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(4) The decision to open fire at a target in a specific area will depend on whether or not that area has been designated a "Free Fire" area by GVN authorities.

(5) Offensive type actions will only be conducted in "Free Fire" areas or in areas specifically cleared by the District Chief or other GVN authority.

(6) Teams are permitted to return fire when fired upon and to fire in support of friendly units receiving hostile fire.

(7) Teams may conduct immediate pursuit as necessary and feasible; however, no pursuit is authorized across the borders into Cambodia.

4. SUPPORTING RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

a. Within assigned areas of responsibility, local tactical considerations may dictate the requirements for additional and more detailed Rules of Engagement for the Delta River and RSSZ River Patrol Groups. As operational experience is gained Commander Delta River Patrol Group (CTG 116.1) will develop jointly, with the Senior Advisor Fourth Corps, supporting Rules of Engagement for the Delta River Patrol Group (TG 116.1) and Commander RSSZ River Patrol Group (CTG 116.2) will develop supporting Rules of Engagement for the RSSZ River Patrol Group (TG 116.2). These rules will include the applicable Rules of Engagement cited herein and may further restrict these rules. All supporting Rules of Engagement and subsequent changes will be submitted to the Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116) for approval prior to promulgation.

b. Commander Inshore Support Unit (CTU 116.8.5) will insure that embarked helicopters, when operating within IV CTZ, adhere to applicable IV Corps LOIs and other Rules of Engagement.

c. Annexes D and I to the reference establish Rules of Engagement and Visit and Search Procedures for Coastal Surveillance Force units and will be referred to by Commander Inshore Support Unit (CTU 116.8.5) for additional background information and guidance in the conduct of offshore surveillance and merchant ship visit and search operations. It should be noted that the Rules of Engagement established by this OpOrder provide restrictions in the case of foreign flag shipping in addition to the restrictions imposed by Annex D to the reference.

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5. DEFENSIVE ACTION. Except for the limitations imposed by subparagraph 2.a.(6)(a) of this Appendix, nothing in these rules or in rules subsequently promulgated by task group commanders modifies or will modify in any manner the requirement of a military commander to defend his unit against armed attack with all means at his disposal. In the event of such attack, the commander concerned will take immediate aggressive action against the attacking force.

B. B. WITHAM, JR.
Captain, U.S. Navy
Commander River Patrol Force

Authenticated:

/s/

L. L. STINE, JR.
Chief Staff Officer

APPENDIX H

MEKONG RIVER MERCHANT SHIP SMUGGLING

Free-world shipping on the Mekong River, its tributaries, and waterway accesses to Saigon were guaranteed by a tripartite agreement between Laos, Cambodia, and SVN in December 1954. But little was done to monitor or regulate commercial transit on the rivers. The U.S. recognized the potential for shipping contraband to the VC and encouraged SVN to impose strict regulations on commercial shipping.

MACV examination of cargo manifests revealed that war materials had been shipped into Cambodia as early as 1964. Many items were those the VC could use. Responding to U.S. pressure, the South Vietnamese tightened Mekong River shipping control procedures. Authorization was required to transit the Mekong and ships from communist countries and those flying flags of countries that did not recognize SVN were denied access to the river.

Special procedures were imposed on merchant ships in transit. They could travel only from sunrise to sunset; a Vietnamese pilot had to be aboard at all times; small craft were prohibited from coming alongside commercial freighters; and South Vietnamese officials were authorized to inspect cargo and customs papers.

During the first few months of tightened controls, South Vietnamese confiscated a Japanese ship bound for Phnom Penh with a consignment of cartridge belts, and prevented 6 other free-world ships (mostly Japanese) from entering the river. Four of these ships were carrying cement from the USSR and China, and 2 were carrying chemicals that potentially had military significance.

The possibility that supplies were smuggled aboard merchant ships using the Mekong River was proposed to account for weapons and munitions acquired by the VC in southern SVN. These supplies could not be accounted for by seaborne infiltration or by shipments through Cambodia. Early in the war, there were intelligence reports that arms and munitions had been smuggled into the Delta on some of the free-world merchant ships that sailed up the Mekong.

In December 1965, MACV and CinCPac studied alternatives to gain control of contraband shipping. Because of the complex ramifications of international law, they decided against blockade and interdiction and decided that SVN must strictly enforce its existing regulations for commercial shipping. The South Vietnamese were encouraged to conduct cargo inspections with the threat of a complete offload, and the U.S. promised help with men and facilities. It was also recommended that military personnel should help customs officers inspect cargo, crosscheck the performance of customs officials and pilots, and provide additional intelligence. Surface and air patrols were planned to increase controls on the Mekong. MACV requested U.S. Embassy assistance in convincing SVN to enforce the controls.

Infiltration continued, but by the end of 1966, the South Vietnamese had taken some encouraging preparatory actions. These suggested acceptance of some of the control measures offered by the U.S.

Beginning in 1968, all merchant ships traveling on the Mekong River had to be escorted. The convoys were formed at Vung Tau and ended at Tan Chau (near the Cambodian border.) The convoys were generally very lax, as were the South Vietnamese customs inspections at Vung Tau. In addition, complicity of South Vietnamese and Cambodian officials in these cursory inspections is strongly suspected. Cleverly concealed secret compartments were discovered on several of the ships suspected of smuggling, and smuggling of commercial goods has been proven conclusively.

According to the Naval Ocean Surveillance Information Center (NOSIC), most of the merchant ships traversing the Mekong were not seaworthy, nor were their goods insured. Therefore, the cargo had to be lucrative to entice them to make the trip from Singapore or Hong Kong to Phnom Penh. The bills of lading listed expensive consumer goods as cargo rather than staples that a country as poor as Cambodia might be expected to import. The cargo generally filled less than the full capacity of the ship. It would not have been profitable for the owner to send an unseaworthy, underloaded ship on such a long trip unless it carried some other kind of profitable cargo, such as war supplies.

The materials to be smuggled, whether consumer or war goods, were loaded on a ship together with a legally consigned cargo for Phnom Penh. The merchant ships could load the contraband left by Soviet or Chinese ships in Hong Kong or Singapore for transshipment. As the ships were convoyed up the Mekong, they might take advantage of a lax escort and offload while still in SVN, or they could offload across the border in Cambodia. Another possibility was that the smuggled cargo was taken to a warehouse in Phnom Penh by a communist and distributed from there.

APPENDIX I
GAME WARDEN CHRONOLOGY

This chronology includes the arrival of Game Warden units in SVN and major task unit shifts.

The chronology is not intended to list every river patrol operation. It highlights major Game Warden, Mobile Riverine Force, and ground operations in the Mekong Delta and RSSZ to illustrate the type and scope of friendly and enemy action in the Game Warden areas of responsibility.

The major sources for this chronology are the NavForV Monthly Supplements and Summaries.

1965

- Fall 1965 U. S. Navy begins riverine operations; 4 LCPL-4s control VC cross-channel traffic in RSSZ (using VNN facilities in Saigon)
- 18 December Game Warden (River Patrol Force) is established as Task Force 116

1966

- 11 February First Game Warden operation order is promulgated
- February SEAL Team-1 group of 3 officers and 15 enlisted men assigned to Game Warden
- 10 March 4 U. S. MSOs arrive at Vung Tau. First U. S. minesweeping units assigned to sweep Long Tau channel
- 15 March River Squadron Five (RivRon Five) established to administer newly arriving Game Warden units
- 21 March First 11 PBRs arrive in-country; USS Belle Grove (LSD 2) acts as interim support ship at Cat Lo
- 25 March UH-1B moves aboard USS Belle Grove
- 26 March Combined forces search and clean operation, Jackstay, begins in RSSZ
- 30 March 9 PBRs arrive in SVN
- 1 April NavForV established under RAdm. Norvell G. Ward. He is also Commander, River Patrol Force (CTF 116)
- 12 April USS Floyd County (LST-762) arrives in-country as the second interim inshore support ship
- 15 April River Section 541 begins patrol operations. Initial operations are nighttime patrols on Long Tau River in RSSZ
- 19 April USS Tortuga (LSD-26) relieves Bell Grove as interim support ship.
- 26 April 12 PBRs arrive at Cat Lo and begin shakedown cruises from USS Floyd County
- 8 May Units from the Tortuga move to Nha Be. First Game Warden river patrol units (River Section 511) move into the Delta (Can Tho)
- 18 May Capt. Burton B. Witham, Jr., relieves RAdm. Ward as Commander, River Patrol Force (CTF 116)

21 May - U.S. Army operation Lexington III begins in RSSZ -- search and
9 June destroy operation conducted by Second Brigade, U.S. Army First
Infantry Division

23 May 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

28 May 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

2 June Game Warden River Section 543 moved to Cat Lo from Tortuga (LSD 26)

4 June 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

7 June River Section 531 moves to Cat Lo from Tortuga

8 June Daytime PBR patrols begin in RSSZ

9 June 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

10 June River Sections 512, 542 shift from Cat Lo to Nha Be

10 June Start of evaluation of patrol air cushion vehicles (PACVs) for Game
Warden

13 June River Section 512 (and 2 PACVs) deploy aboard Tortuga near mouths of
the Co Chien and Bassac Rivers in first test of offshore support ship
concept in Delta

20 June River Section 531 transits from Cat Lo to My Tho

29 June PACVs judged not suited for operations in Game Warden

23 July First PBR use of a planned ambush at a possible river-crossing area

31 July 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

5 August River Section 513 begins operations at Vinh Long

15 August Start of 10-battalion SVN army operation Dan Chi 254, with 6 PBRs
patrolling main channel of the Bassac River

16 August 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

17 August 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

19 August 8 PBRs arrive in SVN

20 August River Section 521 begins operations at Sa Dec

25-26 August River Sections 522 and 523 begin operations at Long Xuyen

29 August Tortuga transferred from mouth of Bassac River to mouth of Long Tau
River to provide extra patrol section for increased security of the
shipping channel

30 August Navy crews begin operation of Game Warden fireteam helicopters aboard Tortuga

10 September USS Comstock (LSD-19) relieves Tortuga as Game Warden support ship

19 September Manufacturers' technical representatives install modified pumps on 3 Game Warden PBRs

26 September River Section 532 activated at Cat Lo

27 September 5 PBRs arrive in SVN

27 September - 17 October Game Warden/SVN troops conduct major flood operation in Plain of Reeds, resulting in many enemy killed

10 October CTF 116 shifts headquarters from Saigon to Can Tho

20 October My Tho-based PBRs begin random patrols on Ham Luong River, last of the major branches of the Mekong to be regularly patrolled by Game Warden forces

21 October Revised rules of engagement for river patrol forces go into effect (see appendix G)

1 November MSB 54 destroyed by VC mine on Long Tau River--first MSB destroyed

11 November USS Jennings County (LST-846), first specially configured LST, arrives at Vung Tau to relieve Comstock

14 November River Section 532 begins operations at My Tho

15 November Jennings County arrives on station at mouth of the Bassac River

18 November Jennings County is shifted to Can Tho because of difficulties in handling boats in heavy seas

22 November Sa Dec-based PBRs provide blocking force for operations of 13th SVN army battalion

23 November 6 PBRs arrive in SVN

12 December Jennings County returns to mouth of Bassac and again experiences difficulties in handling PBRs and helos because of monsoon winds and heavy seas.

29 December WHAMO 1-66, begins -- large-scale military civic action project in Kien Hoa province

31 December Discovery of a contact-detonated mine (500-pound charge) floating in Long Tau River; first of this type of mine discovered in inland waters

End December SEAL Team-1 RSSZ detachment has 3 platoons (7 officers and 30 enlisted men) at Nha Be

1967

6 January Operation Deckhouse V begins; Game Warden PBRs provide blocking force on the Co Chien and Ham Luong Rivers; first combined U.S./SVN amphibious landing in Delta; assault against Thanh Phu secret zone in Kien Hoa province

7 January First units of Riverine Assault Force arrive at Vung Tau (later renamed Mobile Riverine Force)

11 January Jennings County suffers severe damage to boat-handling equipment and PBR 30 is lost when high winds and material failure cause PBR to swamp

15 January PBRs from Long Xuyen augment forces at Vinh Long. Sa Dec-based River Section 521 concentrates patrols in lower portion of its area
Long Xuyen-based River Section 522 deploys 8 PBRs to lower Bassac
Long Xuyen-based River Section 523 stations 8 boats on Co Chien River

17 January Harnett County (LST-821), second Game Warden support ship, takes station off Dong Tam

20 January PBRs and VNN river patrol craft of Game Warden RSSZ patrol group support combined U.S./SVN operation that destroys VC quartermaster depot in Long An

26 January Game Warden units break up estimated 400-man enemy main force unit crossing attempt on lower Bassac

1 February River Patrol Force (TF 116) established as separate command under operational and administrative control of ComNavForV

15 February VC sink U.S. MSB and damage 2 others on Long Tau River in well-prepared series of attacks southeast of Nha Bex; MSB 45 sunk by controlled mine; MSB 49 hit by 3 rounds of 75mm. recoilless-rifle fire; MSB 51 damaged by heavy weapons fire

16 February Operation River Raider begins; series of sweeps and ambushes in the RSSZ by units of 9th Infantry Division (Riverine Assault Force)
River Section 533 on Jennings County near mouth of the Long Tau River augments PBR patrols of Saigon channel

20-27 February VNN RAGs provide support for SVN army and regional force battalions during operation Cuu Long 55 in Binh Dai district of Kien Hoa Province

21 February Troops of 3/47 Infantry landed by River Assault Division 91 in RSSZ -- discover "extensive" VC base camp (Riverine Assault Force)

26 February Game Warden units deploy to meet growing enemy activity in Kien Hoa Province; River Section 523 moves from Long Xuyen to patrol Ham Luong; Jennings County shifted from mouth of Long Tau River to Dong Tam.

27 February B-52 strike at the suspected headquarters area of RSSZ VC commander

28 February Riverine Assault Force activated as Task Force 117 under operational control of ComNavForV

February 2 platoons from Seal Team-2 based at Can Tho, begin Delta operations

7 March C Company, 3/47 Infantry, supported by River Assault Squadron Nine, discovers VC munitions workshop area in lower RSSZ

PBRs provide blocking force for operation Overload II (U.S. 199th Infantry Brigade/25th SVN army division) on island south of Saigon, west of the Soi Rap River, in the RSSZ

17 March PBR patrol assists SVN outpost on Cu Lao May Island under attack by 200 VC

27 March USS Garrett County (LST-786), third specially configured support ship, is assigned to support Game Warden River Section 543 in RSSZ

28 March U.S. Naval support activity detachment set up at Tan Chau, 10 miles east of the Cambodian border, on the Mekong River; facilities to berth, mess, and provide necessary support for a 10-boat river patrol section

31 March Capt. Paul N. Gray, relieves Capt. Burton B. Witham, Jr. as Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116)

USS Hunterdon County (LST-838), fourth specially configured Game Warden support ship, relieves Harnett County at mouth of the Co Chien River

1 April Helicopter-Attack (Light) Squadron Three (HA(L)-3) activated under the operational control of CTF 116. Squadron has 4 detachments composed of former detachments of Helicopter Combat Support Squadron One (HC-1):

- Detachment 1 based on Hunterdon County
- Detachment 2 based at Nha Be
- Detachment 3 based at Vinh Long
- Detachment 4 based on Jennings County

- Hunterdon County relieves Harnett County in support of River Section 512 and HA(L)-3, Det. 1, in Co Chien River
- 3 April Jennings County, with River Section 523 and HA(L)-3, Det. 4, relieves Hunterdon County, which shifts to mouth of Bassac River
- 8 April River Section 511 (based at Binh Thuy) and River Section 12 (based on an LST in the Co Chien River) exchange patrol areas and bases¹
- 12 April MSBs33 and 46 are delivered to MINRON ELEVEN, Det. A at Nha Be, bringing the number of MSBs in-country to 13.
- 17 April Game Warden units begin operation Linebacker II in support of the SVN 9th Army Division's Operation Long Phi 999H, a search and destroy mission against the VC 306th Battalion in Vinh Long and Vinh Binh provinces
- 22 April Harnett County relieves Jennings County, which proceeds to Vung Tau for upkeep.
- 26 April River Section 512 (Based at Vinh Long) and River Section 523 (based on an LST on the Bassac River) exchange patrol areas and bases¹
- 27 April RAdm. K.L. Veth relieves RAdm. Ward as ComNavForV and CHNAG, MACV
- 29 April Naval Support Activity detachment at Long Xuyen deactivated
- 30 April Game Warden sections and bases:

<u>River section</u>	<u>Base</u>
511	Hunterdon County
512	Binh Thuy ¹
513	Harnett County
521	Sa Dec
522	Tan Chau
523	Vinh Long ¹
531	My Tho
532	My Tho
533	Nha Be
541	Nha Be
542	Nha Be
543	Garrett County at mouth of Soi Rap

¹There is a discrepancy in the source, NavForV Monthly Summary for April 1967. The April 1967 locations of River Sections 512 and 523 are not clear, since the text identifies their shore bases as both Binh Thuy and Vinh Long.

April PBRs begin new search procedure -- Operation Ferret

6 May Commander, Delta River Patrol Group (CTG 116.1) in Operation Overload, moves PBRs from upper rivers to increase patrol density in My Tho, Bassac, and Ham Luong Rivers

11 May Jennings County relieves Garrett County in support of River Section 543 at mouth of the Soi Rap River

Hunterdon County blows up VC ammunition cache in Long Toan Secret Zone, using night observation device

15 May Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) experiences first major contact with VC when elements of TF 117.2 engage enemy west of My Tho along Tra Tan Creek while supporting Operation Hop Tac XVIII

25 May Harnett County with River Section 513 and HA (L)-3, Det. 4 embarked, shifts to mouth of Ham Luong River from mouth of Co Chien

1 June Operational control of units patrolling Co Chien River shifted from CTU 116.1.3 (My Tho) to CTU 116.1.2 (Vinh Long)

3 July Naval Support Activity detachment at Tan Chau abandoned and YRBM-16 moved to Binh Thuy to provide interim support until facilities at that Game Warden base are operational

5 July CTF 116 and staff move from Can Tho to Binh Thuy, west of Can Tho

7 July PBRs act as blocking force for SVN army search and destroy operation in Long Toan Secret Zone in lower Vinh Binh province

25 July Navy helo fire team disrupts movement of 3 enemy companies along Ba Lai River, north of Ben Tre

29 July Sixth detachment of HA(L)-3 activated at Dong Tam

23 August Harnett County, with River Section 531 and HA(L)-3 Det. 5 embarked, relieves Jennings County as Game Warden support ship at mouth of Co Chien River

24 August River Section 533, which had been embarked on Jennings County, begins operations out of My Tho

August Third platoon from SEAL Team-1 platoons involved in special operations

5 September River Section 522, embarked on YRBM-16, moves from Bassac to the Ham Luong River

11 September River Section 534 activated at Nha Be

15 September Game Warden and RAG forces conduct search and destroy operation Crimson Tide against heavily fortified VC area along Bassac River opposite Culao Tan Dinh Island

18 September Hunterdon County with River Section 521 embarked leaves station on Ham Luong for trip to I Corps Tactical Zone to conduct river patrol operations

22 September Operation Bon Huu II (Friendship II), large-scale combined civic action program, begins on Thoi Son Island in My Tho River, adjacent to My Tho

25 September Garrett County with River Section 511 embarked shifts operations from lower to central Bassac River

28 September Hunterdon County shifts anchorage to mouth of Cua Dai River southeast of Danang for second phase of Operation Green Wave
HA(L)-3 Det. 7 activated at Binh Thuy

30 September Boundary lines between Market Time and Game Warden operating areas shifted inland at the major Delta river mouths an average of 5 miles to take advantage of greater seaworthiness of Market Time craft.

7 October Termination of Game Warden I Corps Operation, Green Wave

13 October Hunterdon County with River Section 521 and HA(L)-3, Det. 4 embarked, resumed operations on lower Ham Luong River

15 October Jennings County with River Section 512 and HA(L)-3, Det. 1 embarked, relieves Garrett County at mouth of Bassac River
River Section 511 relocates to Binh Thuy.

18 October Game Warden and SVN forces involved in blockade and clear operation of northern half of Cu Lao Nai Island on the Bassac downstream from Can Tho

November - December MRF engages in search and destroy Operation Coronado IX in area north of Mekong/My Tho River from Plain of Reeds east to the Soi Rap River.

9 November During Coronado IX, for the first time the Fifth Battalion, Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC) is used as the third maneuver battalion of the MRF

11 November River Section 534 relocates from Cat Lo to Nha Be and receives first MK II PBRs

14 November MRF conducts one day saturation patrol and search operation as part of Coronado IX in Dinh Tuong province "to enhance the security on Highway 4 and the Dong Tam base"

- 18-20 November MRF relocates to a position on the Mekong River near Sa Dec to continue Coronado IX in western Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces. This part of Coronado IX took the MRF to its deepest penetration of the Mekong Delta. The operation was coordinated with SVN Seventh and Ninth Divisions
- 26 November River Section 522 relocates from damaged YRBM-16 to My Tho
- 27 November MRF, continuing Coronado IX, begins a 4-day operation in the Cai Lay and Long Dinh districts of Dinh Tuong Province, primarily to clear 19 miles of the Xang Canal starting at Dong Tam to allow waterborne operations in northern Dinh Tuong province as far west as My Phouc Tay. The VC had kept the canal closed since 1964
- 1 December Harnett County with River Section 531 and HA(L)-3 Det. 5, embarked, shifts station from the Co Chien to the Ham Luong River
Hunterdon County with River Section 521 embarked departs Ham Luong enroute to Danang
- 7 December Garrett County takes station on Co Chien River
- 11 December River Section 534 arrives at My Tho to begin first Mk II PBR patrols
- 14 December River Section 535 arrives at Binh Thuy with 5 Mk II PBRs
MRF conducts operations in Cam Son Secret Zone. Penetration of Ba Rai stream sees first use of MRF Riverine Armored Reconnaissance Element (RARE). A RARE consisted of heavily armored MRF craft that protected troop carriers. The RARE preceded the troop carriers into an operational area to forestall attacks on the carriers.
- 18 December Game Warden units conduct Operation Preakness II along Ba Lai River, using units from River Sections 531, 532, 534, and helos from HA(L)-3 detachments 5 and 6 for collecting intelligence and destroying targets of opportunity
- 20 December MRF conducts operation in the Cai Lay district of northern Dinh Tuong Province in search of VC 514th provincial mobile battalion
- 21-23 December Game Warden PBRs conduct exfiltration blockade as part of operation Bold Carousel in support of SVN army sweep of Tan Dinh Island on lower Bassac
River Section 524 activated at Nha Be
- 24-26 December MRF conducts Coronado IX in Long Dinh district of Dinh Tuong Province and the Giang Thom district of Kien Hoa Province to deny enemy forces their resupply routes during the Christmas truce

- 28 December MRF conducts operations in the Cam Son/BanLong Secret Zones, with saturation patrolling in the Ham Tuong district of western Kien Hoa Province and the Cai Be, Coi Lay, and Long Dinh districts of western Dinh Tuong Province
- 1968
- 3 January TF 116 reorganized (see appendix C)
- 9 January Game Warden forces begin operations in I Corps with River Section 521 operating from PBR Mobile Support Base I
- River Section 534 begins operations from APL-55 near Dong Tam on the My Tho River
- 10-12 January MRF begins Operation Coronado IX in Cai Be District, Dinh Tuong Province, and engages VC
- 261st Main Force Battalion.
- The River Patrol Group begins evaluating suitability of Assault Support Patrol Boats (ASPB) for Game Warden. (ASPB on loan from MRF)
- PBRs and 6 ASPBs from MRF begin operation Preakness III on Ba Lai River, concentrating on Thu Ba Lai village
- 17 January River Section 524 begins operations on My Tho River
- 18 January MRF begins Operation Coronado X, search-and-destroy operation in Giong Trom district of Kien Hoa Province
- 25 January ComRivDiv 52 conducts operation Windsong I against VC along the Thon and Mo Cay canals in Kien Hoa Province, using a combined force of Game Warden and MRF assets: 2 helo fire teams, 2 SEAL platoons, 8 PBRs, 2 monitors, and 4 ASPBs. This canal, linking the Co Chien and Ham Luong Rivers, furnished the sole route of commerce to Mo Cay district town
- 28 January 4 PBRs from River Section 535 at Binh Thuy extend Game Warden patrols to upper Bassac River during Tet holiday to prevent expected influx of enemy supplies from Cambodia. PBRs were based at the U.S. Special Forces camp at Chau Doc
- 29 January Start of Tet truce period
- River Section 535 PBRs begin patrols of upper Bassac River from Chau Doc to the Cambodian border (Operation Bold Dragon I)
- 5 PBRs from Sa Dec's River Section 513 begin patrols of upper Mekong to guard against infiltration of supplies during Tet. The PBRs operate from the U.S. Special Forces camp at Thuong Thoi during this operation

30 January ComUSMacV rescinds truce directive because of repeated VC truce violations

31 January Game Warden activity during Tet Offensive
SEALS, PBRs, and Helos support My Tho. PBRs and helos support Ben Tre and Vinh Long. PBRs provide a blocking force at Sa Dec. SEALS and PBRs engage in intense combat at Chau Doc. Helos support defense of the U. S. embassy in Saigon and Tan Son Nhut Air Base, and I Corps PBRs support defense of LCU ramp at Hue

1 February River Section 531 shifts from Harnett County (LST 821) to My Tho. River Section 532 shifts from My Tho to Harnett County
Game Warden forces aid in driving VC from Chau Doc
Navy personnel evacuate from Vinh Long to Garrett County

2 February 4 PBRs from Sa Dec rout 150 VC from the Cao Lanh ferry landing

3 February PBRs make repeated firing runs at about 200 VC along Sa Dec canal

4 February MRF relocates to Vinh Long
Game Warden forces interdict VC crossing attempt on Bassac south-east of Can Tho; capture 60 B-40 rockets
River Section 535 Mk II PBRs, operating from U.S. Special Forces camp at Thuong Thoi, heavily engaged with enemy on the Hong Ngu Canal just south of Cambodian border

7 February PBRs on the Ham Luong River east of Mo Cay sink a VC troop-laden sampan. Intelligence reports indicate 50 VC killed or wounded

9 February MRF forces begin Coronado X, search-and-destroy operation in Dong Tam

14 February Game Warden PBRs engage VC on Cu Lao May and Cu Lao Tan Dinh Islands in Bassac River

15 February CTF 116 directs TGs 116.1, 116.2, 116.3 to implement a proposal providing for a "ready-for-action" package force combining assets of USN/VNN and RF/PF for small-unit operations

19 February Hunterdon County embarks River Section 532 and HA(L)-3, Det. 5, and relieves Harnett County on station on the Ham Luong River.

20 February 3 PACVs of Coastal Division 17 transferred to operational control of CTF 116 to determine suitability for Game Warden patrols on major rivers (after about a week, they were judged unsuitable and returned to CTF 117).

22 February MRF, with SVN 21st division, begins operation in Phung Hiep district of Phong Dinh Province aimed against the VC MR III headquarters

Harnett County changes to operational control of CTG 76.8.

24 February Task Force Clearwater becomes operational in I Corps

25 February River Section 521 becomes element of Clearwater

2 March MRF forms riverine armored reconnaissance element to transit Mang Thit/Nicholai canal between Bassac and Co Chien rivers, and proceeds to Dong Tam to await main body of MRF

For the first time, 90mm. recoilless rifle used on a PBR.

7 March MRF begins Coronado XII, a search-and-destroy operation in the Cho Gao district, Kinh Tuong Province.

22 March River Section 514 activated at Nha Be

25 March PBRs of River Section 513 relocate from Sa Dec to Binh Thuy. River Section 522 debarks Garrett County at Vinh Long

26 March CTF 116 conducts combined GW/RAG operation Bold Dragon III against Cu Los/Tan Dinh Island in lower Bassac using RAG craft, 14 PBRs, armored LCPL and LCM-6, the Jennings County, 2 light helo fire teams, SEAL platoon, and RF/PF troops

3 April Capt. Arthur W. Price relieves Capt. Gray as Commander, River Patrol Force (CTF 116)

River Section 535 relocates from Binh Thuy to APL 55; River Section 514 relocates from Nha Be to Binh Thuy

4 April MRF launches 3-day reconnaissance in Truc Giang and Giang Trom districts of Kien Hoa Province. MRB relocates from Dong Tam near My Tho to be near operations. Heavy contact with enemy around Ba Lai River northeast of Ben Tre

U.S. and SVN forces conduct 4-day series of sweeps of Oc Island in Ham Luong River using PBRs and RAG craft as blocking and gunfire support forces.

8 April Through the 14th, 4 PBRs of River Section 511 conduct patrols on upper Bassac near Chau Doc to extend the U.S./SVN naval presence, collect intelligence, conduct psyops, and enforce curfews.

11 April Harnett County embarks River Section 513 and HA(L)-3, Det. 1, and relieves Jennings County on the Bassac. Jennings County changes to operational control of CTF 76 and sails to Subic Bay for upkeep

12 April ComRivDiv 51 conducts combined PBR/PF operation on Vong and Cu canals, southeast of Can Tho, near VC concentration. PF troops overrun VC prison camp and free 24 prisoners

16 April APL 55 shifts location to the Ham Luong River near mouth of Ben Tre River

17 April CTF 116 activates new task group (TG 116.9) of 18 PBRs to conduct incursion of the Cho Gao canal (connecting Vam Co and My Tho Rivers) to extend U.S./SVN presence into an area of VC influence. No hostile incidents

24 April River Section 525 activated at Nha Be

25 April One of 3 SEAL Team-1 platoons in RSSZ moved to Delta

29 April Jennings County returns to operational control of CTF 116, embarks River Section 523 and HA(L)-3, Det. 4, and relieves Garrett County on station in Co Chien River

1 May 5 more PBRs assigned to CTF Clearwater for Cua Viet River operations
River Section 544 activated at Nha Be

3 May APL 55 with embarked river sections shifts location to the Ham Luong/My Tho River junction
PBRs from River Section 511 transit to Chau Doc and begin operations on upper Bassac

5 May PBRs from River Section 524 transit to Thuong Thoi Special Forces Camp and begin operations on upper Mekong near Tan Chau

15 May River Sections 551 and 552 activated at Nha Be

1 June CTF 116 realigns task organizations; see appendix D. APL-55 reclassified as LYRBM 18
Hunterdon County leaves station on Ham Luong, debarks River Section 532 at My Tho, embarks River Section 533, and sails to station on the lower Ham Luong

5 June Garrett County changed to operational control of CTF 116 and stationed on lower Co Chien River, embarks River Section 523 and HA(L) 3 Det. 4 and relieves Jennings County

18 June Silent outboard motor used for the first time in Game Warden

10 June VNN takes command of 14 U.S. Navy river craft--6 LCM(M)s and 8 PBRs. With these craft, VNN assumes complete responsibility for minesweeping operations along the Long Tau river shipping channel to Saigon

11 July	6 PBRs provide blocking force in support of 400-man RF/PF sweep of the Cu Lao May Island in the Bassac
22 July	PBR Mobile Base II, with ComRivDiv 55 and River Section 551 embarked, leaves Nha Be enroute to Thoung Thoi to begin operations as the Upper Mekong Patrol Group. Operations begin 28 July
29 July	VNN receives first shipment of M-16 rifles from the USN
30 July	HA(L)-3, Det. 5, relocates from Hunterdon County to PBR Mobile Base II
1 August	VNN assumes partial responsibility for Dong Nai River patrol
26 September	PBRs on upper Mekong take heavy automatic weapons fire from sampans retreating into Cambodia
September	VAdm. E.R. Zumwalt, Jr., relieves RAdm. Veth as ComNavForV
8 October	River Division 515 activated at Nha Be
19 October	PBRs, MRF, and PF sweep northern half of Cu Lao May Island in the Bassac
22 October	River Division 594 activated at Nha Be
end-October	Operation Sea Lords begins, combining assets of CTF 115, CTF 116, and CTF 117 into single task force, TF 194. Initial operations would interdict flow of enemy supplies on the Rach Gia-Long Xuyen canal from Gulf of Thailand to the Mekong River
1 November	River Squadron 51's PBRs begin intensified patrols on Can Tho crossing corridor
4 November	VNN assumes full responsibility for the Dong Nai River patrols
10 November	River Division 554 activated at Nha Be
15 November	River Division 553 activated at Nha Be
end November	Extension of Sea Lords to Vinh Te Canal area to close the Cambodian border
6 December	Operation Giant Slingshot launched on Vam Co Tay and Cam Co Dong Rivers on either side of the "Parrots Beak" east into Saigon and south into the Delta