effectiveness was 70 percent.

Army Common Item Listing (CIL) support remained unsatisfactory during December. Of 143 requisitions submitted to the 506th Field Depot, only one was filled. The Commanding General, First Logistical Command has directed an Inspector General inquiry into Army responsiveness in Class I and Common Item Listing support. By month's end IG contact had been made with NAVSUPPACT Saigon detachments at My Tho, Dong Tam and Binh Thuy and the U. S. Army 53rd General Support Group, Vung Tau.

NAVSUPPACT Saigon's December aircraft inventory included three C-117s, one UH-34, one US-2B and one UC-10. Two additional UH-34s were expected in January. A second US-2B was damaged during a landing at An Thoi and a C-10A was requested as a replacement.

A total of 3,302 passengers and 369,983 pounds of cargo were air transported during December. During the same period, assigned surface craft transported a total of 2,148 short tons of cargo.

NAVSUPPACT Saigon's Postal Clerks made a significant contribution to the morale of naval personnel during the Christmas season as they processed a total of 632,413 pounds of mail during the month of December.

At month's end, NAVSUPPACT Saigon had a total on board count of 2,170 personnel.

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Rear Admiral J. V. BARTLETT, Commander, Third Naval Construction Brigade, points out the results of destructive tests held on sections of precast concrete bunkers to General W. C. WESTMORELAND (center), Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and Lieutenant General R. E. CUSHMAN (right), Commanding General, Third Marine Amphibious Force.
THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

During December the Naval Construction Battalions in Vietnam realized an extremely productive month with the beginning and completion of many significant construction projects. The unseasonably fine weather, as contrasted with the normal monsoon season, allowed the Seabees to be on the job during a high percentage of the month.

The enemy continued to attack the Seabee worksites and base camps during December. During the month, four Seabees were killed and 10 were wounded as a direct result of enemy action. On 6 December four men from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion THREE (MCB 3) were wounded when the quarry/crusher plant they were operating came under enemy fire. While assisting the 11th Engineers, Battalion Marines near the DMZ on 14 December, two men from MCB 5 were killed when the enemy mortared their position. Five Seabees attached to MCB 10 were wounded during an enemy artillery attack on Cua Viet on the 16th of the month. On 23 December, two men from MCB-3 were killed when they detonated a mine with a jack-hammer while making road repairs on Route #1 north of Hue. MCB 1 also had one man wounded during the month.

Among the many projects undertaken by MCB 1 during the month was the design and fabrication of a prototype precast bunker. The bunker was completed and installed for further evaluation on the beach perimeter near the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade and 30th
Naval Construction Regiment headquarters building at Camp Haskins, Danang. The final phase of a 500-man galley for the 1st Marine Shore Party and the security lighting of the Nam-O bridge were also completed by MCB 1 as their second eight-month deployment drew to a close. MCB 58 relieved MCB 1 in mid-December.

Construction projects completed by MCB 3, working from their base camp at Phu Bai, included the completion of the site preparation and soil cementing of a 90,000 square yard parking apron for Marine Air Group 36 (MAG 36). At the Tan My POL facility, they completed the construction of sand berms for four 10,000-barrel tanks and three 3,000-barrel tanks. Extensive hauling for abutment work on three bridges along Route #1 was also accomplished by MCB 3.

At the MAG 36 complex, the Seabees of MCB 3 also completed construction of an 8,000 square foot operations building and 11 of 15 two-story barracks. The 1 January requirement for a POL storage capacity of 42,000 barrels at Tan My was more than satisfied by MCB 3 as tanks having a combined capacity of 60,000 barrels were completed prior to the end of December.

During the month, MCB 7 continued to make excellent progress on the NAVSUPPACT Danang hospital expansion project. The urology building, blood bank, two additional two-story barracks, as well as the water, sewage, storm drainage, and electrical distribution systems were completed.
Seabee flexibility and responsiveness were demonstrated by MCB 7 during December as they answered the 1st Marine Air Wing's urgent request for the installation of centerline lighting on the west runway of the Danang Air Base. This project was started on 25 November and completed on 1 December.

In addition to keeping Route #1 open from Dong Ha to Camp Evans, which required replacement of three culverts blown up by the enemy, MCB 10 completed a project of 68 bunkers near the DMZ. This project included construction of bunkers, back filling, and grading. The Seabees of MCB 10 also completed back filling and grading of 112 bunkers at sites north of Cam Lo.

At Camp Carroll MCB 10 had completed a 500-man messhall and three 16- by 36-foot enlisted men's clubs. By month's end, a detachment of MCB 10 had also completed four 32- by 36-foot underground bunkers and five burnout heads at Khe Sanh.

During December, MCB 121's main effort was concentrated in the Phu Bai area. Along Route #1 they constructed three bridges, which totaled 510 feet of bridging, installed two culverts with concrete decks, and accomplished extensive road repairs.

A detail from MCB 121, with transportation and logistic support from MCB 5, completed construction of 42 bunkers at a site between Phu Bai and Quang Tri.

A multitude of other essential and strategically important
projects were either begun or continued by the various battalions during December. The Hue by-pass road project was commenced by MCB 3, and at month's end a 420-foot cross-channel bridge was 20 percent complete. A 1,000-man galley under construction for MAG 36 was 70 percent complete by the end of December.

Under the overall supervision of MCB 5, 20 trucks from MCBs 3, 7, 40 and 121 were hauling rock from Camp Carroll to Routes #561 and #566, and various access roads in the Dong Ha area in support of extensive road upgrading programs. Work on Route #9 was also progressing satisfactorily with the clearing of ditches and drainage structures between Dong Ha and Camp Carroll.

At Cua Viet, MCB 10's detail had started construction on the 500-man galley for the Marine's AMTRAC cantonment when, on 16 December, they came under a heavy enemy artillery attack. The partially-completed galley was heavily damaged and 12 other small structures recently completed were demolished. At month's end, rebuilding of the damaged structures was in progress.

Phu Bai-based MCB 121 began a project for the U. S. Army that includes the construction of four warehouses, a BOQ, a tactical storage shop, a dispensary, and a 25,000 cubic foot cold storage warehouse facility. At month's end the total complex was approximately 10 percent complete.

MCB 128 completed four quonset huts for the First Logistical
Command dispensary and dental clinic at Danang. They also completed a maintenance shop and a 50-foot observation tower for the 3rd Marine AMTRAC Battalion. In Danang East, MCB 128 completed the first three increments of the Special Forces Camp and continued work on the remaining two increments. The north overrun and 1,000 feet of the center section of the runway were paved at the Monkey Mountain Air Facility by MCB 128, and Air America, Inc., began using a parking apron at the field which was also constructed by the Seabees of MCB 128.

Seabees from MCB 1 erect a precast concrete bunker near the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade Headquarters at Red Beach.
The Chu Lai battalions also completed many significant projects during December. First, the power distribution lines were completed by MCB 6 in preparation for connecting the power source for the flight lines of MAG 12 and MAG 13.

Both MCB 6 and MCB 40 demonstrated Seabee quick reaction to an urgent construction request by beginning work on a 400-bed evacuation hospital expansion project at Chu Lai. This project had an extremely high priority, requiring both battalions to employ a 24-hour a day construction work schedule.

At Dong Ha during December, MCB 5 relieved MCB 11 and assumed responsibility for all unfinished projects. During the month, the Seabees of MCB 5 completed 75 huts and two Butler buildings plus many combat support projects of an urgent nature. One of these combat support projects consisted of constructing 24 bunkers, and was completed on 26 December. This job was accomplished under conditions of monsoon rains, knee deep mud and intermittent logistics support.

On 7 December MCB 5 was tasked with a similar bunker building project in support of the 11th Engineer Battalion near the DMZ. On 17 December, the 42 bunker project, which was constructed under similar conditions met at Dong Ha, plus hostile fire, was completed.

MCB 10, located at Quang Tri, completed 49 bin-type revetments for the first increment of the 90,000 square yard helicopter pad. At the same site, they completed all the earth work for an additional
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Helicopter pad and the airfield lighting system. Two Butler buildings, one 40- by 100-foot wood frame air terminal building, 13 small maintenance huts, one quonset hut as well as supply and administrative facilities were also completed by the Seabees of MCB 10.

On 15 December Quang Tri came under an enemy mortar attack which caused moderate damage to the 1st Marine Air Wing cantonment. All necessary repairs were completed the following day. The temporary ammunition supply point at Quang Tri was completed by MCB 10 during December and maintained continuous operation during the month, despite the heavy rains and muddy conditions which resulted.

At Phu Bai, MCB 121 continued work on the THIRD Marine Division's fifth cantonment, which includes 138 huts, one 500-man galley, six showers and head facilities. At month's end, the total project was 95 percent complete.

During December, MCB 3 dedicated their Phu Bai camp, which was christened Camp Wilkinson in honor of Construction Mechanic First Class Jack W. WILKINSON who lost his life during an enemy rocket attack in late August 1967.

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81 CONSTRUCTION
Ensign Gerald D. RABER, USN, Psychological Operations Officer of River Division 53, assists a Hoi Chanh (former Viet Cong) in the recording of a Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) appeal.
MILITARY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS

Psychological and civic action operations continued to receive command attention as all naval units actively engaged in the distribution of psychological leaflets and the conduct of loudspeaker broadcasts. The efforts of MARKET TIME units along the northern coast of South Vietnam were hampered, however, by the monsoon weather conditions. Preparations were made by psychological operations personnel to fully exploit the Chieu Hoi/Dai Doan Ket programs during the forthcoming Lunar New Year (Tet) holiday campaign, scheduled to begin on 1 January and terminate on 21 March. During the Christmas Truce period—241800 to 251800—psychological operations continued, with the exception of ground operations in areas that would provoke hostile action by the enemy, to gain the maximum psychological exploitation of the enemy during the curtailment of military operations.

Along the coastline of South Vietnam and myriad waterways of the Delta, 186,000 leaflets were distributed and 150 hours of surface and 58 hours of aerial broadcasts were conducted by naval units. In addition 49,532 newspapers and 6,410 magazines were distributed to bring to the people the true news of the Government of South Vietnam.

Hoi Chanks played an important role in the psychological efforts as they made tapes to be broadcast to their former Viet
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Cong comrades. One Hoi Chanh explained his reasons for helping the "psyops" officer of River Division 53 based at My Tho in the Mekong Delta. Nguyen Van MUOI, 36 years old, stated: "I was a Viet Cong mainly because I was living in a Viet Cong area. Because we were there, our people were given false propaganda about the Americans. We were told that the Americans would harm or kill us if we turned ourselves in. But as time went on our families were worked harder and harder, and we had to pay higher and higher taxes to the Viet Cong. It was then that I decided that even death was better than the tortures we were having to live with, so I hailed a PBR and gave myself up. Now that I know we Hoi Chanhs are treated well and given a new chance in life, I am doing all I can to help convince other Viet Cong that they should stop the useless fighting and join with our government to help all the people."

The undermining effect on the Viet Cong by our psychological efforts can best be typified by the repeated attacks against the Navy boats as they conduct loudspeaker broadcasts.

In testimony of the outstanding performance of the Seabees in civic action, the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed the Chief of Naval Operations to deploy seven additional Seabee Teams to support the USAID/Vietnam civic action program.

The conduct of war did not interfere with the sailor's custom of sharing his Christmas joy with children. Throughout South
Vietnam, wherever naval units were located, Christmas parties were held. The children were treated to dinner, presented with presents, given boat rides and provided with other forms of entertainment. A number of the parties were conducted jointly with the Vietnamese Navy.

BUL2 Rex A. HARMON of Seabee Civic Action Team 0809 assists Vietnamese workmen in making cinha-ram blocks at Binh Thuy.

To bring much needed medical assistance to people living in remote villages and hamlets, 105 medical civic action programs were conducted. The "medcaps", in which Navy doctors and hospital corpsmen provide voluntary treatment to the local inhabitants, are helping to convince the people that their government is actively
interested in their welfare. Navy boats performed 79 emergency medical evacuations of Vietnamese civilians in urgent need of medical attention.

In the East Danang area, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Seven completed a two-room schoolhouse at the Sacred Heart Convent/School. This addition will enable the Sisters to enroll 150-200 more children in the East Danang area, a location of extreme sparsity of schools.

The USS ESTEEM (MSS 439) and USS FINCH (DER 328), assigned to MARKET TIME, painted the children's home in Qui Nhon at the beginning of the month. Also in the Second Coastal Zone, a three-room school was completed at Nha Trang on Hon Tre Island. At Cam Ranh Bay a Naval Civic Action Program Committee was formed and represented by each of the 10 Navy commands in the Cam Ranh Bay area. The formation of the committee and participation in the Free World Military Assistance Forces Coordinating Committee, was designed to improve in scope and effectiveness the civic action participation in the Cam Ranh Bay area.

In the Third Coastal Zone, each Coastal Group was working on some civic action program. The most significant progress was that the Vietnamese were taking charge of the projects and carrying them out.

In the Delta, the PBR sailors of River Section 532 contributed
3,000$VN to support the educational costs of a 12-year old crippled girl. The men of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron Three, Detachment 7, adopted an orphan from Can Tho to help in his future development.

The Vietnamese Navy continued their civic action program by conducting "medcaps" and distributing much needed commodities to villages in outlying districts and refugee settlements. The Vietnamese Navy hospital ships conducted psychological and civic action operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone and Third Coastal Zone. In the RSSZ, ISM(H) HQ 401 provided medical attention to 1,102 persons, attended to 200 dental patients and performed 11 minor surgeries.

The following is a tabulation of certain civic action projects conducted during December by U.S. and Vietnamese naval forces. Construction projects involving renovation or repair are so indicated with an R.

1. Construction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Churches/Temples/Pagodas</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Culverts</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Dispensaries</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Dwellings/Number of Families</td>
<td>4/13, 80R</td>
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<td>e. Fences</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Hospitals</td>
<td>2R</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Leveling/Grading Projects</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Marketplaces</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Orphanages</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Roads (tenth of Km)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Schools/Classrooms</td>
<td>3/9, 7R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Toilets, Public</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Wells</td>
<td>5, 5R</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

87
n. Piers
o. Water storage tanks

2. Medical treatments:
   a. General medical
   b. Dental
   c. Surgical
   d. Emergency evacuations

3. Health and sanitation:
   a. Classes on personal hygiene/attendance
   b. Medical aides or nurses trained
   c. Spray insecticide operations
   d. Swamp areas drained
   e. MEDCAPs
   f. Immunizations

4. Distribution of commodities (pounds unless otherwise specified):
   a. Cement
   b. Clothing
   c. Food
   d. Lumber (board feet)
   e. Medical, non-prescription
   f. Medical kits (number)
   g. Physical education kits (number)
   h. School kits (number)
   i. Soap
   j. Tin sheets (number)
   k. Resettlement kits (number)
   l. Asbestos siding (pallets)
   m. Textile kits (number)
   n. Teacher kits (number)
   o. Psyops packets (number)
   p. Paper blankets (cases)
   q. Blackboards (number)
   r. Reinforcing bars (feet)
   s. GVN flags (number)
   t. Toys (number)

5. Educational efforts:
   a. English classes/attendance

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b. Vietnamese health books distributed

c. School books distributed

6. Voluntary piaster contributions in support of:

   a. Orphanages                              18,416 VN
   b. Religious activities                    2,500 VN
   c. Schools                                 164,960 VN
   d. Families of VNN personnel KIA            2,000 VN
   e. Families of Hoi Chahs                    2,980 VN

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**SALVAGE OPERATIONS**

At 0755 on 1 December after 15 days of intensive salvage operations, USS CLARK COUNTY (LST 601) was pulled off the beach at Duc Pho, 88 miles south-southeast of Danang, by USS BOLSTER (ARS 38), USS ABNAKI (ATF 96) and USS UTE (ATF 76). BOLSTER towed the disabled LST to Danang for a thorough underbody inspection and damage assessment.

Team 5 of Harbor Clearance Unit ONE was very instrumental in effecting emergency repairs to the damaged ship. On 18 December BOLSTER, with CLARK COUNTY in tow, departed Danang en route to the shipyard repair facility at Subic Bay where the LST was to receive major repair work.

YRBM 16, which had been mined on the Ham Luong river on 24 November and was later towed to Dong Tam for initial repairs, was declared seaworthy for an ocean tow on 27 December. The GAME WARDEN support ship was towed by USS ABNAKI (ATF 96) to Subic Bay for shipyard repairs.

On 5 December Team 3, embarked in YDB-1, proceeded to Cat Lai to conduct a salvage survey and recovery operation on two sunken Army ammunition barges which had been ambushed on the Dong Nai river 11 miles east of Saigon. Barges BC 6302 and BC 6482, both heavily laden with ammunition, were located approximately 50 yards from the river bank in 15 feet of water, well clear of the channel. Barge
BC 6482 was damaged to such an extent that recovery operations were unfeasible, and the barge was demolished by U. S. Navy EOD Team 16.

BC 6302, which was 120 feet long, was resting on the bottom by the stern with the bow section still buoyant, and 55 feet of the deck clear at the low water mark. Salvage operations were interrupted at 11h6 on 7 December by enemy hostile fire emanating from a tree line about 100 yards down-river. The enemy activity was rapidly silenced, and shortly thereafter a detachment of military policemen arrived at the salvage site and established a security perimeter.

On 14 December, after Team 3 offloaded over 100 tons of ammunition and refloated BC 6302, a representative of the U. S. Army Marine Maintenance Activity, Saigon, declared the barge beyond economical repair and the salvage operation was completed.

On 22 December the U. S. merchant ship SS SEATRAIN TEXAS, anchored in the Nha Be river (Long Tau shipping channel) about five miles southeast of Saigon, was damaged by an unknown explosive device. The explosion caused a gaping hole in the starboard side of the cargo ship, extending five feet above the waterline and two feet below.

The flooding was rapidly brought under control by the ship's crew and the ship was kept clear of the main shipping channel to Saigon. Later that morning, Harbor Clearance Unit ONE, embarked in
YDB-2, surveyed the hull damage and, after performing emergency repairs, declared the SS SEATRAIN TEXAS safe for the river transit to Saigon on 23 December.
MONTHLY MESSAGE TRAFFIC

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<th>MONTH</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>20.1</td>
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During the month of December, the COMNAVFORV Message Center handled a total of 86,913 messages, an increase of 711 messages over the November total.

Project SEARCHLIGHT (upgrading communications facilities at COMNAVFORV, the Coastal Surveillance Centers and GAME WARDEN bases) has been fraught with problems (real estate and logistical support) since the early months of 1967. Upon the phase-out of in-country civilian contractors (RMK-BRJ), which caused considerable delay in meeting project completion dates, Project SEARCHLIGHT construction responsibilities were reassigned to the Naval Support Activity, Saigon and the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade. On 3 December the Naval Shore Electronics Engineering Activity Pacific (NAVSEEAPAC) electronics installation team returned to the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard with a projected return date in early January.

A year-end summary of Project SEARCHLIGHT's status revealed that two of the 11 installations were fully operational, vice three as previously reported. Status was as follows:

1. The sites at Nha Be and Can Tho were completed and operational.
2. The installation at My Tho was 70 percent completed. The antenna tower and the power panel had not yet been installed.
3. The teletype installation at COMNAVFORV Headquarters
Communications Center was completed and operational; however, the radio facilities were approximately 80 percent completed. The completion was further delayed due to a lack of wire for the main power feeders to the air conditioning equipment.

4. At Sa Dec, the electronics installation was approximately 10 percent completed. The installation of the antenna towers and the tile and ground system was still pending.

5. The electronics installation at Qui Nhon was 50 percent completed at the Coastal Surveillance Center and 20 percent at the remote site. Work was stopped due to a lack of power and microwave equipment.


The status of the remaining uncompleted sites at Nha Trang, Cat Lo, Vung Tau and An Thoi was unchanged.

In order to improve reliability and to upgrade the quality of communications in Project BOWLINE, a 12-channel voice microwave system was activated between the NAVCOMMSTA and the Naval Air Facility at Cam Ranh Bay.

The NAVCOMMOPNETS between Danang and San Miguel and Saigon and San Miguel were reterminated through NAVCOMMSTA Cam Ranh Bay, resulting in circuit economy and better utilization of the NAVCOMMSTA.
There was no significant change in Project STARBOARD TACK since the November report.

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The President of the United States of America, Lyndon B. Johnson, presents Captain Paul N. Gray, USN, Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116), with the Silver Star Medal during the President's visit to Cam Ranh Bay on 23 December 1967.
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ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND

On 16 December Admiral John J. HYLAND, USN, Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, accompanied by Rear Admiral William H. HOUSE, USN, Deputy Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, visited the River Patrol Force (CTF 116) headquarters at Binh Thuy and the Mobile Riverine Base at Dong Tam, where he received a series of up-date briefings on GAME WARDEN and riverine operations.

On the following day, Rear Admiral James J. KELLY, CHC, USN, Chief of Chaplains, commenced an extensive tour of U. S. Naval Activities in South Vietnam. Rear Admiral KELLY's itinerary included visits to the Saigon headquarters of COMNAVFORV; the Naval Support Activity detachments at Nha Be, Sa Dec, Binh Thuy and Chu Lai; the Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115) headquarters and the Naval Air Facility at Cam Ranh Bay; the Mobile Riverine Base at Dong Tam, and the Naval Support Activity at Danang.

On 23 December the President of the United States, Lyndon B. JOHNSON, during a brief stopover at Cam Ranh Bay, presented five Navymen with medals. Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, USN, Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, received the Navy Distinguished Service Medal; Lieutenant Commander Frank E. RHODES Jr., Commander River Assault Squadron ELEVEN, was awarded the Navy Cross; and Captain Paul N. GRAY, Commander River Patrol Force, Lieutenant (junior grade) Samuel MEISS of River Section 512 and Engineman
Third Class Michael MEIKS, attached to River Section 511, were awarded the Silver Star.

Christmas Day, Governor George ROMNEY, Republican-Michigan, visited the U. S. Naval Support Activity, Danang Station Hospital and the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade at Danang.

On 29 December South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van THIEU, accompanied by General Creighton ABRAMS, Deputy Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, visited the MRF at Dong Tam for a briefing and a tour of River Assault Squadron craft.

Captain Robert S. SALZER, USN, relieved Captain Wade C. WEILS, USN, of COMRIVFLOT ONE/COMRIVSUPRON SEVEN/CTF 117 on 2 December aboard the USS BENEWAH (APB 35), anchored at Dong Tam.

On 29 December Commander L. H. HAMEL, III, USN, relieved Lieutenant Commander C. L. HOROWITZ as COMRIVRON NINE at Dong Tam.

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The personnel strength of the Vietnamese Navy on 31 December was 16,333 officers and enlisted men; of this number, 1,238 were officers, 3,132 were NCO's and 11,963 were enlisted men. The number of personnel discharged as deserters decreased from November's total of 36 to 20 in December and the number of unauthorized absentees decreased from 327 in November to 307 in December.

The first graduating class of the Vietnamese Navy Hydrographic School, 10 Vietnamese Navy petty officers, culminated one year of training aboard USS TANNER (AGS 15). During a four-day underway period, 18 December through 21 December, these petty officers participated in survey operations in preparation for their assignment to the Vietnamese Navy fleet, coastal and riverine commands as assistants to the Vietnamese Intelligence officers on hydrographic problems. These students had three months theory and nine months field work in navigation, tides, soundings, surveying equipment and chart making.

The Vietnamese Navy Underway Training Unit continued its comprehensive program with two patrol motor gunboats (PMGs) completing 12 days of underway training on 16 December. The Vietnamese Navy Advanced Training Center, Saigon, graduated 106 men from
the Class "A" school on 23 December.

**Fleet Command**

During December the Fleet Command had 25.6 ships available daily and maintained 15 ships on station off the coast of South Vietnam, five ships on river patrol and one ship on convoy escort duty between Vung Tau and Tan Chau on the Mekong River. The month's operations included MARKET TIME and river patrols, psychological warfare and civic action visits, minesweeping and escort patrols, and gunfire support missions. Fleet Command ships fired 140 gunfire support missions in December, searched 576 junks and 2,182 persons, and detained three persons.

Patrol Craft (PC and PCEs), utilized in the First, Second and Fourth Naval Zones, and gunboats (PGMs), patrolling all four Naval Zones and the RSSZ, conducted 61 naval gunfire support missions during December. PCE 11 provided gunfire support for ARVN Special Forces Operation PHU QUOC 116 in the Phu Quoc subsector through 3 December, accounting for three Viet Cong killed.

On 23 December PGM 601, conducting MARKET TIME patrols in the First Naval Zone, went aground on a coral reef in less than two fathoms of water near the Re Island group. Maneuvering clear, the PGM proceeded to Danang where an underwater inspection revealed that both screws and the port rudder were badly damaged and required replacement; in addition, the ship's underbody was...
severely dented.

Landing support ships (LSILs and LSSLs) provided river patrol services, gunfire support, and convoy escort duty in the Third Naval Zone, Fourth Riverine Area and the Rung Sat Special Zone. These ships fired 79 naval gunfire support missions during December. On 10 December, LSSL 226 fired on a Viet Cong encampment in the Long Phu sector on the southern tip of Dung Island, observing two secondary explosions. Returning to the Long Phu sector the next day, gunfire from this LSSL accounted for 11 Viet Cong killed, 15 Viet Cong wounded and numerous weapons destroyed. Acting on intelligence, LSSL 231 provided gunfire support for Coastal Group 35 on 16 December; an unknown number of Viet Cong were entrenched on the south bank of the Co Chien river, 10 miles southeast of Tra Vinh. Five Viet Cong were killed and an unknown number of Viet Cong killed or wounded were reported carried away.

While the coastal minesweepers (MSCs) concentrated on daily sweeps in the Third Naval Zone, the motor-launch minesweepers (MLMSs) were actively engaged in protecting the river traffic in the Long Tau, Nha Be, Saigon and Dong Nai Rivers against mining attempts. These rivers are the main arteries from the sea to the Port of Saigon and the transhipment point at Bien Hoa and, despite the continuous sweeping carried on by Vietnamese Navy and U. S. minesweepers, the Viet Cong pose a formidable threat to free
navigation by their ingenious mining tactics. The Viet Cong were successful on 4 December in mining a U.S. Army ammunition convoy transiting from the explosive anchorage at Cat Lai to Bien Hoa Air Force Base just minutes after a VNN MLMS had swept the area.

In December the Vietnamese Navy's Underwater Demolition Team (LDNN) detachment at Saigon continued to conduct nightly hull inspections of the ships berthed in the Port of Saigon. Meanwhile, the other two detachments, based at Binh Thuy and Nha Be, operated with SEALs of TF 115 in search and ambush missions in the Fourth Riverine Area and the RSSZ. Two SEAL squads and LDNN members conducted an area search in the Minh Binh sector, 18 miles south-southwest of My Tho on 6 December. This mission resulted in one Viet Cong killed and five structures burned. On 23 December, the first LDNN member was killed while operating with SEALs in the RSSZ, seven miles east-southeast of Nha Be. In this action one SEAL team member was also killed, one Viet Cong was killed, one was wounded and two carbines were captured.

Coastal Force

During December, the Coastal Force searched 29,012 junks and sampans and 97,365 persons, detaining 12 junks and 176 suspects. On a daily average 83 percent of the 192 available junks were on patrol.

In the First Naval Zone, continuing monsoon weather precluded
open-sea traffic and the junks patrolled the bays and rivers where civilian craft were traversing. The month of December showed an increasing employment of Coastal Group junks in combined operations with ARVN forces. On 1 December, Coastal Group 14 supported ARVN Infantry Regiment 1/57 and one Ranger Battalion during Operation PHI PHUNG 57 just south of the Cau Cai River in Quang Nam province, 15 miles south-southeast of Danang. As the ARVN forces swept north and east, the Coastal Group 14 units acted as a blocking force in the mouth of the river. Later, a party of 30 Vietnamese Navymen and U.S. advisors went ashore to assist the sweep operations while another Coastal Group 14 unit patrolled the area as an additional blocking force. The landing party secured the river front, captured one Viet Cong, detained 21 suspects, and damaged or destroyed 40 bunkers and one bridge. One Vietnamese Navy sailor was killed and one officer was wounded as their junk was taken under fire from the nearby shore. The ARVN forces, closing from the south, killed four Viet Cong, captured three others, detained 10 suspects, and damaged or destroyed 47 junks.

On 2 December, Coastal Group 13 supported one Regional Force Company and one reconnaissance platoon in a search and destroy operation conducted in the Thua Thien sector in which two Viet Cong (one female) were captured and 11 Viet Cong suspects were detained. The next day six Viet Cong suspects were detained as a
result of a Coastal Group 11 sweep just north of the Cua Viet entrance channel. Operation LAM SON 154, a combined Coastal Group 11, ARVN 1st Infantry Regiment and U. S. Marine operation, commenced on 4 December, 10 miles east-northeast of Quang Tri. Ending on 8 December, the operation yielded one Viet Cong killed, 32 Viet Cong suspects detained, one radio and telephone switchboard captured and four ARVN wounded. Between the 15th and the 31st of December, Coastal Groups 11 and 12 provided blocking support for ARVN forces, Regional Forces and U. S. Marines committed against the determined insurgents in the Quang Tri and Thua Thien sectors. In the series of operations conducted, 176 Viet Cong were killed, 84 of the enemy were captured and numerous weapons were captured or destroyed along with various shelters and bunkers. Coastal Group 14, with units of the Quang Nam sector, conducted Operation PHI PHUNG 62 on 20 December. The VNN junks were credited with the destruction of 20 junks, 20 shelters, 10 fortifications and 20 tunnels, and the capture of 15 Viet Cong suspects, numerous documents and a quantity of medicines in a one-mile area north-northwest of the Cau Dai river mouth.

Just as in the First Naval Zone (due to inclement weather at sea) Coastal Groups of the Second Naval Zone stressed lagoon patrols with emphasis on psychological warfare and civic action operations. On 8 December, Coastal Group 27 units, while patrolling
the Dam Nai Lagoon, 15 miles south of Cam Ranh Bay, proceeded toward Phoung Cuu New Life Hamlet which was under Viet Cong attack. One Coastal Group unit provided 60-mm mortar fire into a logical escape route to the north and west of the hamlet while the second unit boarded a sampan to enter the hamlet and evacuate the wounded. This was the first time that these VNN units had reacted to such Viet Cong attacks in this lagoon area. Coastal Groups of the Second Naval Zone provided blocking forces for ARVN and PF units throughout the month of December. These combined operations proved to be highly successful as evidenced by the rising number of Viet Cong killed or wounded, contraband captured, and structures destroyed by ARVN forces.

On the night of 22-23 December the combined Coastal Group 22 and MARKET TIME base and Vietnamese Navy Repair Facility at Qui Nhon was attacked by Viet Cong. At 2345, the marine railway at the repair facility was damaged by a mine explosion; four junks were damaged at this time. Two Viet Cong frogmen were killed as the defenders retaliated. Then at 0215 a large explosion rocked the base as a Coastal Group junk was mined. The concerted Viet Cong attack which followed was boldly opposed by members of Coastal Group 22 and U. S. Navy units (see page 2).

In response to ROK intelligence report of suspected Viet Cong movement on the night of 26 December, Coastal Group 21 junks
and U. S. helicopters proceeded to the Binh Dinh sector, 23 miles north of Qui Nhon. In the darkness of night, the friendly helicopters opened fire on the Coastal Group's junks, despite the junks' attempts to be identified by illumination flares and running lights. Three VNN sailors were wounded and one junk was 90 percent damaged in this incident.

In the Third Naval Zone on 3 December, a Coastal Group 36 reconnaissance platoon conducted a search and destroy operation near the Bassac River, 40 miles south of Can Tho, resulting in one Viet Cong killed, an unknown number reported wounded and carried away, and the capture of two claymore mines, two grenades and 300 meters of electrical wire. A fire fight between a reconnaissance team of Coastal Group 35 and a Viet Cong platoon, 15 miles west of Seigon in the Vinh Binh sector, on 12 December terminated after 20 minutes when the Viet Cong withdrew. Three Viet Cong were killed and a number were wounded but carried away. One grenade, three antipersonnel mines and a Viet Cong flag were captured. That same day, Coastal Group 36, three Regional Force companies and one PRU platoon conducted Operation CUU LONG 126 in the Go Cong sector, six miles east-southeast of Go Cong. During the operation two Viet Cong were killed and one Viet Cong and one carbine were captured.

On the 13th, Coastal Groups 34 and 37, two RF companies and one PF platoon, killed one Viet Cong, detained four Viet Cong.
suspects and captured numerous documents in a sweep of the north bank of the Ham Luong river, three miles from the river's mouth. On the 17th in Kien Hoa province, at the mouth of the Ham Luong river, two platoons from Coastal Groups 34 and 37 teamed up with an ARVN infantry platoon to capture two junks and four Viet Cong during a sweep. Two days later Kien Hoa province was the scene for yet another search and destroy operation. Coastal Groups 34 and 37 joined up with two RF companies and one PF platoon and destroyed an enemy propaganda center and numerous punji stakes and accounted for ten Viet Cong killed and the capture of two Viet Cong suspects, two Russian-made rifles and 1,000 cartridges. Later that same day, a Coastal Group 35 ambush team surprised seven Viet Cong in a sampan on the Co Chien river, five miles from the river's mouth. The ensuing fire fight resulted in all seven Viet Cong being killed and the capture of one M-1 rifle, one German Mauser, one cartridge magazine and a bag of propaganda leaflets and documents.

During a routine patrol near the northern tip of Dung Island on the lower Bassac River on 21 December, a Coastal Group 36 unit stopped a sampan with two adult males and a boy. A search revealed a flashlight with a red lens hidden in a loaf of bread. Under interrogation one adult was confirmed a Viet Cong cadre from Dung Island. On 24 December, Coastal Group 36 units supported a RF
company sweep on the southern bank of the lower Bassac river from 0600 to 1515, resulting in eight Viet Cong killed and two rifles seized. At 1400 that same day, other Coastal Group 36 units interdicted two large junks crossing the lower Bassac river, two miles below the RF ambush area. A U. S. helicopter fire team was called in and the junks were destroyed.

Based on intelligence locating two Viet Cong camps, on 27 December Coastal Group 37 landed a junk along with RF troops on the northern bank of the Ham Luong river two miles from the river's mouth and a Coastal Group 34 junk beached just north of that point. This sweep yielded one Viet Cong and numerous documents captured, one Viet Cong suspect detained and the destruction of numerous tunnels.

A well-executed operation, BIET CHINH, was conducted on the south bank of the lower Bassac river on 28 December, yielding three Viet Cong killed, five Viet Cong captured, 12 grenades, two rifles, a sampan and motor and numerous documents captured. Intelligence obtained from a Hoi Chanh guided two Coastal Group 36 reconnaissance squads and two PRU Platoons to a hamlet housing members of the Ba Xuyen sector Viet Cong infrastructure. The combined units surrounded the hamlet and routed the Viet Cong.

On 6 December in the Fourth Naval Zone, while providing support to a defense post eight miles south of Rach Gia in Kien Giang
province, Coastal Groups 43, 44 and 45 and ARVN troops were engaged in a fire fight with an unestimated number of Viet Cong; five Viet Cong were killed, and one locally-made rocket launcher, two rockets, one locally-made mine and numerous grenades were captured. On the 24th, Coastal Groups 42 and 46 combined with a VNN PGM and one Raider company to capture one junk, detain one Viet Cong suspect and destroy a food cache, six miles north of An Thoi on Phu Quoc Island.

Riverine Area Naval Commands

In December the River Assault Groups (RAGs) and the River Transport and Escort Group (RTEG) had 225 craft assigned, of which a daily average of 158 were available for operations and 130 were employed. RAC craft conducted amphibious operations with Vietnamese Army, Regular Force/Popular Force and U. S. forces in the First Naval Zone and Third and Fourth Riverine Areas and performed river patrol, base defense, psychological warfare and civic action missions. RAG units searched 4,567 junks, 13,918 persons and detained 11 junks and 32 persons during the month.

In the Third Riverine Area, RAGs 24, 27, 28 and 30 provided 472 boat-days support for Vietnamese Army and U. S. operations. In the Rung Sat Special Zone, RAC 22 provided an additional 46 boat-days in support of Regular Force and Popular Force operations in conjunction with TF 116 FERs. On 2 December, river craft from
RAG 24 supported units of Long An province 12 miles north-northeast of My Tho during Operation AN DAN 219. The combined forces netted two Viet Cong killed, two draft dodgers detained and one bunker destroyed.

CHINH NGHIA 117, a combined RAG 24 and Vietnamese Army Infantry Regiment operation 15 miles northwest of Saigon, was conducted from 5 December to 9 December. This sweep resulted in the capture of 15 mines and the destruction of two mines, one BAR magazine and two bunkers. Friendly losses were one VNN sailor and 13 ARVN soldiers killed, and two VNN sailors and 30 ARVN troopers wounded. Enemy personnel casualties were undetermined.

During a troop lift of an ARVN Infantry Regiment and the ARVN 5th Reconnaissance Company across the Saigon river, 11 miles north of Saigon on 7 December, river craft from RAG 28 were taken under B-40, semi-automatic and automatic-weapons fire. One Vietnamese Navy sailor was killed and two were wounded, and 16 ARVN troops were killed and 37 were wounded; three river craft sustained minor damage. Viet Cong casualties were undetermined.

Operation QUYET THANG commenced on 8 December in Gia Dinh province, five miles north of Saigon, with river craft of RAG 30 providing a blocking force and troop lift for the Vietnamese 5th Ranger group. During this two-day operation, the Rangers and the RAG units with U. S. helicopter fire teams providing air strikes,
routed the enemy, killing 32 Viet Cong. Two AK-50 sub-machine guns, one B-41 rocket launcher and five rounds, and AK-47, eight hand grenades, three mines, one sampan and numerous Viet Cong documents were captured and six bunkers were destroyed. Fifteen Vietnamese Navymen were killed, and 18 VNN sailors, one helicopter fire team member and one U. S. Ranger were wounded in this action.
On 16 December, a RAG 27 Monitor was sunk by a water mine on the Vam Co Dong river, 16 miles southwest of Saigon; nine Vietnamese Navy sailors were wounded. The Vietnamese Eastern Repair Facility salvage team was bombarded by 60-mm fire on 21 December as it was conducting salvage operations. The fire was returned and the Viet Cong withdrew. The monitor was refloated by 27 December, then towed to Ben Luc for temporary repairs before ultimate transit to Saigon.

A river convoy on the Vam Co river, escorted by five RTEG craft, was attacked by 57-mm recoilless-rifle fire on 19 December, 22 miles south of Saigon. A monitor and one oil barge were hit; the starboard engine of the monitor was damaged. A Vietnamese Navy sailor was killed, one was wounded and one civilian on the barge was also wounded in this ambush.

In the Rung Sat Special Zone in December, RAG 22 continued to employ its craft in combined operations with TF 116 PBRs and light helicopter fire teams, and Regional and Popular Forces augmented by U. S. and VNMC artillery batteries. In addition, the Royal Thai Army Artillery based just north of the Rung Sat Special Zone supplied much needed support to these operations. Throughout the month, daily search and destroy and ambush operations were conducted utilizing RAG 22 river craft as troop lift and "med-evac" while the RF/PF units swept the areas within the RSSZ. Friendly defense
outposts were supported by the combined forces against the harassing Viet Cong attacks and Viet Cong base camps were burned and weapons and equipment captured.

On 12 December, one monitor and one LCVP from RAG 22, supporting the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Regiment (the Queen's Cobras) were taken under fire from the north bank of the upper Dong Tranh river, 15 miles southeast of Saigon. The Viet Cong fire was suppressed by RAG 22 craft and a landing party discovered three small destroyed bunkers. Three Viet Cong were killed and numerous blood trails in the area indicated more killed or wounded; one Vietnamese Navy sailor suffered a slight wound and the LCVP was lightly damaged.

A two-day operation, DONG TAM 17, was conducted on 29 and 30 December by RAG 22 and Regional Force units. On the first day, one Regional Force Company and two LCVPs searched an area seven miles southeast of Saigon, destroying six houses and eight bunkers. That same day, eight miles to the south, one commandament, one monitor, two LCMs and two LCPIs, with two Regional Force companies and two platoons embarked, were attacked by B-41 rockets and automatic-weapons fire. The two LCMs were damaged and five Vietnamese Navy sailors and one Regional Force soldier were wounded. The next day, two LCVPs were slightly damaged by grenade-launcher fire while searching an area four miles to the north with a Regional Force
company and two PBRRs.

On the 31st of December, the veil of darkness set the scene for two Viet Cong attempts to infiltrate with supplies. At 1908 at a Vietnamese Commando squad listening post 15 miles southeast of Saigon, a heavily loaded sampan with three people approached from the west. Detecting the Commandos the Viet Cong opened fire and attempted to evade. The Commandos returned the fire, killing one Viet Cong and capturing another; the other was presumed killed and swept away by the river. The sampan was recovered and searched, revealing two B-40 rocket launchers, three B-40 rounds, two AK-47 Chinese Communist rifles, eight magazines of AK-47 ammunition, one claymore mine, 400 pounds of rice, numerous documents, various articles of clothing and cooking utensils. The documents contained information regarding the location of grenade booby traps and a planned attack on an allied oil tanker on the night of 2-3 January in a vicinity marked off on a sketched map. Heavy damage to the oil tanker was undoubtedly averted due to the capture of these documents. The other infiltration attempt occurred five minutes later and five miles to the north, as another listening post was approached by two sampans. Each craft carried three persons who ignored the hails of the intelligence squad. A fierce fire fight ensued and a U. S. Navy helicopter fire team arrived in the area for air support. The sampans evaded, but one Viet Cong was killed.
and one .45 caliber grease gun was captured.

Another listening post, located 14 miles southeast of Saigon, saw action that night when the Viet Cong attacked their position. The intelligence squad returned the fire, resulting in three Viet Cong killed and one Thompson sub-machine gun and one U. S. M-1 rifle captured.

RAG craft of the Fourth Riverine Area provided 564 boat-days in support of military operations and 922 boat-days on river patrols. These boats operated in conjunction with ARVN, Regional Force/Popular Force, and Provincial Reconnaissance Unit troops, and TF 116 PBRs, providing troop lift, blocking force, "medevac", and canal/river security and clearance.

On 4 December, RAG 23 units escorted PRUs and TF 116 PBRs in a raid against the Viet Cong infrastructure of Vinh Long province. The PRUs were inserted at a point 12 miles southeast of Vinh Long and RAG 23 craft maintained the blocking force. The sweep resulted in five Viet Cong killed, three Viet Cong captured and eight Viet Cong suspects detained. In addition, various documents and two sampans were captured. That same day, other units of RAGs 23 and 31 conducted Operation NGO QUYNH 123, in an area containing a Viet Cong propaganda center, less than a mile from the PRU insertion point. The RAG units killed six Viet Cong, destroyed the propaganda center, detained 10 Viet Cong suspects, and captured two
sampans, several weapons and various documents.

Operation DAN CHI 3/13/A, conducted 10 miles east of Vinh Loi in Ba Xuyen province, by RAGs 25 and 29 and the ARVN 21st Infantry Regiment on 4 December, resulted in three Viet Cong killed, and one carbine and six mines captured. Three ARVN soldiers were killed and 11 were wounded in this operation. On 5 December NGO QUYEN 124, an ARVN operation, supported by RAGs 23 and 31, 15 miles south of Vinh Long, was conducted resulting in one Viet Cong killed, one mine destroyed and one Russian rifle and 500 M-1 rifle cartridges captured.

Comming on 6 December, a two-day operation, DAN CHI 3/15/B, was conducted in the vicinity of Ca Mau, 45 miles east of Vinh Loi in An Xuyen province. That day, RAG 25 units departed Ca Mau with supplies and one company of the 21st Engineer Battalion embarked, proceeding south to the district town of Cai Nuoc, a distance of 15 miles. Light sporadic fire was received from the canal banks as the convoy of one commandment, two monitors, two LCVPs, four FOMs and seven LCMs made their way into this territory little traversed by RAG craft. The canal proved to be passable to the river craft and the troops were offloaded at Cai Nuoc; however, it was reported that locations for Viet Cong ambush sites were plentiful and, at low tide, the ships were required to proceed very slowly in many areas. Meanwhile, other units of RAGs 25 and 29

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were conducting troop lifts for the 21st Infantry Division on the Ca Mau canal, east of Ca Mau toward Vinh Loi. Sweeps along this route during the two-day operation resulted in 15 Viet Cong killed, four claymore mines destroyed, and three Viet Cong, numerous weapons and one sampan captured. Friendly units suffered four soldiers killed and nine wounded.

On 11 December, the wife and two children of the Commanding Officer of RAG 29 were killed by a mine that destroyed their jeep which had been parked next to their home. The RAG Commanding Officer was not in the jeep at that time.

Giai Island, a Viet Cong sanctuary in the Co Chien river, was invaded by PRUs during four days of operations, 13 through 17 December, as RAGs 23 and 31 and TF 116 PBRs provided troop lifts and blocking force operations. The four-day operation netted two Viet Cong guerrillas killed, and the capture of 13 Viet Cong suspects, one ton of rice and 12 pounds of medicine. Two RAG boats remained near a village offering assistance and security against the terrorizing Viet Cong ensconced throughout the island. On 19 and 20 December, RAGs 23 and 31, PBRs and PRUs once again conducted raid, search and destroy operations on Giai Island. With the RAG craft and PBRs maintaining blocking stations and searching all craft in the vicinity, the island was effectively sealed off. Thirty-one Viet Cong suspects were detained and two first aid stations and a
propaganda center were destroyed. Thirteen of the detainees were later identified as Viet Cong, including five cadre.

As a result of the successful sweep operations conducted on Giai Island, one Viet Cong, age 16, rallied to the GVN and supplied invaluable intelligence regarding the state of the Viet Cong on Giai Island. He intimated that several of his friends were eager to Chieu Hoi and that the residents of the island had "locked their doors" to the Viet Cong and will not support them. Chieu Hoi sweeps of the island will continue, implemented by RAG craft, PBRs and air drops.

Operation PHI HO 15/PC took place on Tan Binh Island in the Bassac river on 22 December. RAGs 25, 26, 29 and 32 river craft inserted three companies of the ARVN 15th Regiment, NINTH Infantry Division and one Vinh Long Popular Force company for search and destroy operations. RAG units and PBRs provided the river blocking force. The seven-hour sweep resulted in eight U. S. and four ARVN wounded; one Viet Cong killed, one Viet Cong captured, two Viet Cong suspects detained and four grenades captured. On 26 and 27 December, units of RAGs 23 and 31 carried troops of the ARVN NINTH Infantry Division during Operation LONG PHI 9/144, a sweep of the Nha Han canal area between Vinh Long and Sa Dec. While transiting the canal, an estimated Viet Cong squad fired on the force two miles east of Sa Dec and the ARVN troops were inserted. The