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VIETNAM
MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUMMARY
July 1971

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FOREWORD

Enemy activity remained low throughout the Delta for the second straight month, as the guerrillas continued to refit and resupply, and attempted to increase their strength at the grass roots level in preparation for the GVN elections coming up next month. Contact with the enemy was nil in three TRAN HUNG DAO AOs, and was very light in four others. Two AOs showed light to moderate enemy activities, TRAN HUNG DAO II and IV, with the former leading the way with seven firefights and 22 enemy KIA recorded. In addition, the restructuring of operations continued in the Delta as the combined TRAN HUNG DAO X/XVII campaigns were disestablished and the same territory incorporated under a new campaign, TRAN HUNG DAO XXI, under the OPCON of CTF 210, on 1 July. Also, vital POL continued to reach the Cambodian capital in an ever increasing supply, as the number of ships per convoy was doubled during the month.

Cloud units significantly enhanced the effectiveness of TRAN HUNG DAO XV Inner Barrier operations throughout the month. The Clouds were highly mobile task units patrolling in high infiltration threat areas in all four coastal zones. The units were functioning smoothly by the end of the month, despite early coordination problems.
brought about by inexperienced OTCs. The Task Unit 213.3.1, operating off of the Long Toan, Thanh Phu, and Binh Dai VC Secret Zones of the Third Coastal Zone was particularly successful as its U.S. Navy Seawolf assets consistently found daylight enemy targets.

During July, Vietnamization slowed somewhat as only one significant item was turned over to the Vietnamese, the ACTOVRAD station at Vung Tau. U.S. Navy in-country strength continued to decrease, reaching 10,398 men on 31 July, a reduction of about 500 men over last month's strength figures, a somewhat smaller monthly reduction than the preceding few months.
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During July, the accelerated overhaul program, instituted to get the young Vietnamese Navy back into top-notch operational condition, began to bear fruit. There were problems however, such as the abandonment of boats at the overhaul sites by their crews, (the sailors saw this respite from combat as a chance for leave and liberty), the arrival of craft at the overhaul site in an unfit condition to begin overhaul, and finally, large backlogs of craft at LSB Dong Tam, Binh Thuy, and Nha Be, which were not part of the accelerated program.

On 1 July, TRAN HUNG DAO XVII which was combined with TRAN HUNG DAO X in June to form the largest naval AO in the Delta, was redesignated TRAN HUNG DAO XXI.

Cambodian POL convoys made only three trips to Phnom Penh during July as opposed to four in June; however, due to a new contract with the oil companies, twice as many ships were provided and double the amount of oil was convoyed to the Cambodian capital, easing the POL situation considerably.

The following pages illustrate the TRAN HUNG DAO AOs as of 31 July. In addition, TRAN HUNG DAO XXIV and XXV, scheduled to begin on 1 August are included.
A revival in activity occurred during the month of July, as TRAN HUNG DAO II operations put the pinch on the enemy and they responded in kind. The enemy hit hard and often at the start of the month with five well coordinated boat ambushes resulting in extensive damage to one PBR. One VNN was killed, and one USN and four VNN were wounded. The actions occurred on the Vam Co Tay River in a 15 kilometer stretch between north/south grid lines 35 and 46. All allied casualties occurred in the 6 July ambush as 20 B-40 rockets were fired with good effect.

Intelligence substantiated that the area was an enemy troop and weapons river crossing point, as well as a poorly coordinated VNN operational area. It is there that the river serves as a boundary for Military Regions Three and Four. In correcting this problem, TRAN HUNG DAO II operated for the last time on 31 July, as it split into TRAN HUNG DAO XXIV and XXV at that juncture of military regions.

The Seawolves of the AO again proved their great worth during the month, having killed 16 of the enemy, with 15 other probable kills, having prepped and covered for the numerous troop inserts of the month, and having struck over 40 times. at
intelligence targets. They scrambled to assist units in trouble 13 times and, all in all, retained the great respect of the allies and VC alike.

The TIGHTJAW program continued to severely harass the enemy as he made infiltration attempts in the AO. From the various artillery sites in the AO, actuations, averaging four a night, were responded to with a 12 minute reaction time. The DUFFELBAG sensing devices also provided key intelligence of enemy movements for the selection of waterborne guardpost sites, as well as for troop inserts.

In an aggressive effort to strike a blow at enemy infiltration, and with the limited boat assets available, other forces were gathered for the newly devised hard-hitting operations. On 13 July a combined operation, utilizing Army Slick troop transport helos for the first time in the AO, was initiated in an area near the above mentioned enemy ambush sites at "VC Island" on the Vam Co Tay River. Another type of operation termed "Eagle Ops" was undertaken frequently during the month, again using the two new Slick assets, in an effort to bring the initiative back to the Allies. In the "Eagle Ops", a C&C helo flew with a reconnaissance aircraft to spot enemy movement, while GVN troops waited by Slicks on
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the ground for a fast reaction insert of opportunity.

By July 1971, the TRAN HUNG DAO II "Giant Slingshot" AO had quieted down considerably since December 1968 when the operation was begun, though its crucial mission remained to stop enemy supplies from being moved through the AO to the Kien Hoa and Saigon areas. In the second month of the "Giant Slingshot" operation, the number of engagements was on the average of three a day, while in July 1971 the activity was down to ten river engagements in the month. Both tallies were typical for their time. The phasedown in the AO was due to various factors: where there were 100 boats operating three years ago in the AO, there were in July 1971 only 66. Of these, 70 percent were generally up, and they were split between day and night patrols, patrolling in pairs. Thus 11 pairs of boats patrolled the 300 kilometers of river in the AO at any one time in July, which was clearly inadequate, and accounted somewhat for the diminished contact made with the enemy.

Starting with the incursions of May 1970, the GVN operations in Cambodia had apparently cut down markedly the enemy infiltration level through the TRAN HUNG DAO II AO. Another reduction in the area was that of the U.S. advisors, who by degrees were reduced from 26 original advisory units to five for RPDs and seven.
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for RIDs, this reduction corresponding directly to the increased ability of the Vietnamese to prosecute the war, both operationally and in the support arena. Indeed, at the Ben Luc Intermediate Support Base, the repair effectiveness reportedly was high, with advisor support minimal, in this the second year of ACTOV. Advisors rarely went out on patrols in the AO in July, and when they did so, it was to act as liaison between the VNN and US air assets.

The five ambushes occurring near "VC Island" on the Vam Co Tay River between the second and tenth of the month were infiltration motivated, as the enemy felt the pinch of increasing GVN pressure along that oft-used route. The first ambush occurred on 2 July at 1645H as two PBRs of RPD 64, enroute to Tuyen Nhon from Tan An, were taken under fire with B-40 rockets on two occasions. The first attack occurred nine miles northeast of Tuyen Nhon, and consisted of eight B-40 rockets from both banks of the river. All rockets missed their mark, while the PBRs made firing runs with unknown results. They then proceeded on and, 45 minutes later and three miles further up river, three more B-40 rockets were fired at them, with small arms fire as well. Again the PBRs were not hit, and the results of the PBRs response were unknown. Artillery was called in, as Seawolves could not respond, and fired on the respective targets at XS 435 745 and XS 377 787.

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The third ambush involved three PBRs of RPD 64 en route from MoBase II at Tan An, who were attacked six miles east of Tuyen Nhon at 1455H on the sixth, near XS 418 771. The enemy struck with 20 B-40 rockets and automatic weapons fire from two positions on the south bank, 200 meters apart. The three boats beached on the north bank opposite the ambush and returned fire. Seawolves from Dong Tam arrived at 1530H and placed strikes coordinated through the Den Luc NOC. A squad of Tuyen Nhon District RF troops arrived at 1630H as a security force for the beached boats. The B-40s had found their marks on the PBRs, as one VNN was killed and four wounded, while one USN advisor was slightly wounded. One of the PBRs was heavily damaged. Enemy casualties were unknown. The next ambush occurred nine miles east of Tuyen Nhon on the tenth at 1823H when three PBRs of RPD 64 returning from Tan An were attacked with three B-40 rockets and automatic weapons fire from the south bank, near XS 434 745. The PBRs returned fire, aided by Seawolves that were called in, but the results were unknown. The Allies incurred no casualties. On the same day, the last in the series of five ambushes occurred, this time at XS 425 764, seven miles northeast of Tan An, as boats of RPD 54 in WBGP were taken under fire with B-40
rockets at 2230H. This time the PBRs merely suppressed the fire and moved up the river two kilometers. The five attacks, occurring in the same area of heavy enemy infiltration, underlined the enemy determination to move supplies through the AO and his extant potential for a good fight.

Elsewhere in the AO the enemy presence was felt. On 1 July, while returning to ATSB Tra Cu from day patrol, a RAC of RID 44 was taken under fire with three B-40 rockets and AK-47 rounds from the east bank of the Vam Co Dong at XT 464 020. The engagement, lasting from five to ten minutes, had unknown casualties as the boat returned the fire at the estimated 25 attackers. Artillery fired on the area after contact, and Seawolves put in a strike at 2000H after the weather had cleared.

Two PBRs of RPD 54, in a drifting night ambush, were proceeding silently down the river in a position near XT 228 424, one half mile east of Ben Keo, when, at 0310H on 2 July, they detected a sampan crossing the Vam Co Dong without lights. The PBRs took the sampan under fire, killing a 40 year old man with an outdated I.D. card, and capturing a 14 year old boy.

On 13 July, the first of a new type of combined operation with

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US Army Slicks began, when a force of seven "heavies", six PBRs, two Slicks, and four Seawolves, inserted 300 troops who swept the area in the vicinity of XS 445 720 at "VC Island", in response to the series of five ambushes that had occurred thereabouts during the first half of the month. Nearby, 35 PRUs were inserted by two Slicks with Seawolf coverage at XS 430 720, resulting in one of the enemy killed by air, and one sampan destroyed. The larger insert found the enemy making himself scarce.

On 19 July Detachment Four Seawolves on a routine patrol placed two machine gun/rocket attacks at XS 495 986 at 1824H and 1915H. Clearance was obtained through Tra Cu NOC when a DUFFELBAG activation indicated the presence of 75-100 enemy, and after positive sighting, and after receiving small arms fire. The results were unknown, as usual, but captured VC have substantiated the deadly effect of such missions.

Troop inserts were regular occurrences during the month, with the air cover proving itself as effective as the troops on the ground. "Eagle Ops" were conducted in Thu Thua District on targets of opportunity on the 20th, with uncertain results. On 21 July RID 44 inserted one RF company four kilometers south of
Tra Cu, with telling results. The air cover was responsible for killing six VC, while the enemy killed eight RFs and wounded eight. On the same day there were multiple air inserts from "VC Island" west to north/south grid line 35, but the results were negative. The next day, 56 district troops were inserted by Slicks in an area north northeast of Ben Luc, with the Slicks accounting for the two enemy killed. On the 24th, RID 40 and 44 units inserted and blocked for 600 troops of the ARVN 25th Infantry in the vicinity of Tra Cu between points XS 490 985 and XS 530 930, but for obvious reasons the enemy evaded contact. Slicks and Seawolves commenced a three day operation of air insertions on the same day ten kilometers northwest of Ben Luc as part of the continuing effort to keep the enemy on the run vice running guns. The next day Black Ponies struck hard with four CBU bombs followed by LDNN air insert and an Army air insert at a point ten kilometers northwest of Ben Luc. The next morning, on 26 July, Seawolves of Detachment Four experienced a frustrating event when they scrambled at 0220H for two outposts being overrun near XT 430 110. They arrived over the target area with numerous tracer fire being received, but had to wait for clearance along with a C&C and a gun team. They orbited overhead until the Army gun team
expended their fuel, but the clearance was not forthcoming, even though they were coming under tracer fire and one outpost had a VC flag flying with people running around under a neon light. Navy Seawolves accomplished more in the AO at 2145H on the same day when they medevaced a Vietnamese woman from ATSB Tuyen Nhon, after she was accidentally shot in the abdomen by a VNN watch tower guard. The quick response of the Seawolves apparently prevented a serious incident between the ARVN and VNN as the Rangers had threatened to overrun the ATSB if no quick action was taken. The next day, at 1910H, the Seawolves of Detachment Four again had encouraging results, when they scrambled to cover Seals in contact with the enemy in the vicinity of XS 032 560, placed multiple strikes, and then later extracted the Seals. They received moderate small arms fire, and observed a secondary explosion, killing an estimated ten enemy personnel.

The enemy was persistently pursued during the month, as "Eagle Ops" were again conducted on 26 July, ten kilometers northwest of Ben Luc, while units of RID 44 inserted 300 troops north of Tra Cu at various locations. Two of the northern inserts, in the vicinity of the Tra Cu/Go Dau Ha boundary, were known infiltration routes. The next day the same units out of Tra Cu inserted 300 more RF troops at various locations in the Tra Cu AO.
On 30 July, a Slick insert of National Police started in Thu Thua, but when Ben Luc NOC gained a contact, the Slicks and Seawolves diverted. The results of the Ben Luc operation were one enemy killed by air, with four probably killed, while the Police accounted for two killed on the ground. One Vietnamese ally was killed, while three were wounded.

Two river ambushes occurred near Ben Luc on 30 July, with only minor damage inflicted on the craft. At 1620H, 20 miles west of Ben Luc, units of RPD 64 received four rounds of M-72 rockets while on a routine patrol. RFs were inserted in the area, around XS 336 788, and an EOD team arrived from Ben Luc to dislodge a rocket which was live and stuck in the hull of the craft. One hour later, but only five kilometers northwest of Ben Luc, four PBRs of RPD 53 came under B-41 and AK-47 fire from an unknown number of VC at XS 575 782. One boat took a B-41 rocket in the starboard bow. Detachment Four Seawolves arrived 12 minutes after being called to commence their strike.

A combined air/boat insert of Ben Luc District troops on the last day of the month finally uncovered the elusive enemy, resulting in five killed and five weapons captured, while four of the allies...
were killed and ten wounded. Later that day at 1715H, and in
the same vicinity, XS 577 782, two PBRs received three B-41
rocket rounds, to no effect. Seawolves later put in a strike, and
the boats reset their waterborne guardpost.

The NILO, Tan An, in PERINTREP 15-71 of 30 July
elucidated the events of the month: "Although contacts
with the enemy have dropped significantly, there has been
no corresponding drop in the activity level of friendly forces,
or in the number of agent reports received dealing with enemy
movements. RF/PF troops continue to set large numbers of
night ambushes, and have engaged in several sector and
district operations, but it seems that the enemy is not interested
in confronting friendly forces and is managing to keep well
hidden from them. The possibility that the enemy is conserving
his forces in anticipation of another "big operation" then arises
and is especially interesting in light of the reported movement
of large quantities of ammunition into the Ba Vu Secret Zone."

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TRAN HUNG DAO IV

Action was very light on the waterways of the TRAN HUNG DAO IV AO during July but the 32nd Battalion, ARVN Rangers, kept up the Allied pressure, engaging the enemy 15 times during ten sweeps. Seawolf helicopters of Detachment One flew 23 missions, including seven PSYOPS, with the following results: five enemy killed, two bunkers, 15 sampans, six structures destroyed; two bunkers, 25 sampans, and 28 structures damaged.

There were four B-40 rocket attacks on boats, two on the Kinh Cai Nhap and one each on the Song Cua Lon and Song Bo De. There were no friendly casualties and enemy casualties were undetermined. During one of the attacks on the Kinh Cai Nhap, aggressive Biet Hai Naval Rangers stormed ashore and captured 21 flashlight batteries and 200 meters of control wire.

Troops of the 32nd ARVN Rangers ranged over wide areas of An Xuyen Province, interdicting enemy lines of communication and disrupting normally safe havens. Results of ARVN operations within the AO were five enemy killed, five captured, and six suspects detained; quantities of arms and ammunition were captured and one 28 bed hospital discovered and rendered useless.

The special warfare experts of SEAL Team One, Detachment

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Golf, Oscar Platoon were used sparingly during July. On the 14th, Seals launched an intelligence gathering operation at VQ 980 831 which resulted in one VC being killed and one captured. There were no friendly casualties. Again on 27 July, at 2200H, the Seals made contact; this time with three VC, at WQ 150 680. A brief firefight ensued and the enemy evaded, leaving metal ammunition boxes with documents, which upon examination proved to be valuable intelligence.

The COMNAVFORV PMS Assistance Team visited ISB Nam Can during July and made encouraging progress. PCFs were being maintained quite well in the program and by month's end both RID 46 and RID 47 were showing improvement. Problem areas were shortages of tools and manuals; steps have been taken to eliminate these problems.

SALVOPS were conducted on 1 July by USN and VNN personnel, and HQ 5113, sunk on 18 May of this year, was rescued from a watery grave. Damage consisted of numerous holes along the starboard side of the boat which were patched prior to dewatering and demudding. The craft was towed back to ISB Nam Can for evaluation prior to repair.

Base defense, a continuing problem at Nam Can was given
a boost when the COMNAVFORV Base Defense Officer recommended increasing mortar positions, using sampans for waterborne defense, and increasing spare parts on hand for crew served weapons. The recommendations were carried out, however, problems remained as there were numerous cases of sleeping sentries and other examples of poor base defense posture. At the end of the month, CTF 214.2, the senior Vietnamese officer attached to the base, returned to Nam Can and an immediate improvement was noted in watchstanding.

With the increase in numbers and types of aircraft using the facilities at Nam Can, two problems came into focus; one, the lack of adequate air traffic control procedures and two, the inability to maintain a clean, unpolluted fuel supply. During July, several near misses occurred in the skies above Nam Can and on several occasions aircraft that failed to check in with the Naval Operations Center flew into areas in which artillery was firing. At month's end, procedures were being implemented to deal with these problems. In the fuel pollution area, the problem was found to be water and sludge in the fuel bladder. Since these pollutants could not be purged, it was suggested that a new bladder be brought to Nam Can and a qualified ABF rating be assigned to handle fueling matters.

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On 11 July at Nam Can, six VNN sailors were wounded due to careless handling of a concussion grenade. This accident brought the total killed and injured to 19 in the last three months. The effect can be measured by the fact that, due to accidents of this nature, RID 46 has lost 16.4 percent of its effective strength in the last five months. The Vietnamese Navy has been urged, at the highest levels, to begin a substantive safety program.
Enemy activity in the TRAN HUNG DAO V AO remained light as CTG 216.1 reported only three friendly initiated and 12 unilateral firefights, sustaining no casualties among either his units, or the enemy's. U.S. Navy Seawolf helicopters of H-AL-3 Detachment 6 from Phu Loi placed 17 strikes in support of naval assets, probably killing one and wounding three of the enemy, and destroying one structure and damaging eight bunkers and a bridge.

The only river incidents of any note occurred on 12 July, 13 kilometers north west of Phu Cuong (XT 690 218), on the Lower Saigon River. At 1845H, nine RAC of RAG 30, in transit north sighted approximately eight to 12 VC on the west bank of the river and opened fire. Seawolves were over the contact area at 1858H (they were diverted from a routine patrol) and commenced firing runs. At 1915H, the helos terminated their firing runs, and the boats sent a reconnaissance team ashore with negative results. The boats continued their transit north, however, and at 2001H, in the vicinity of XT 673 235, four B-40 rockets were fired at the boats, this time from the east bank, all of the rockets missing their targets. Seawolves were again diverted from another patrol to place suppressive fire in the area. There were no casualties during either incident.
Enemy activity in TRAN HUNG DAO VI in July was light as CTG 212.5 assets failed to readily contact the enemy. Commanding Officer, TRAN HUNG DAO VI reported his forces engaged in four firefights, killing 11 of the enemy while suffering no friendly casualties. U.S. Navy Seawolf helicopters of HAL-3 Detachment Eight, staging from the short strip Rach Gia, placed 31 strikes in support of CTG 212.5 assets, killing three of the enemy and probably killing 12 others. During these strikes the "Wolves" destroyed five sampans, seven structures, and damaged 12 sampans, 26 structures, and three bunkers.

On 5 July, Seal Team One, Detachment Golf, Romeo Platoon stood down and departed Rach Soi for the United States. Their departure occasioned the U.S. Army Province Senior Advisor to make the following comments, "...Kien Giang will long remember the Seals for their professionalism, devotion to duty, and mostly for their inexhaustible spirit" (PSA Kien Giang Province msg DTG 050745Z JUL 74).

On 7 July, a spectacular fire occurred at ISB Rach Soi. At approximately 0900H, a 100 Mike JP-4 barge assigned to the U.S. Army sank at the ISB. JP-4 was carried up the Rach Soi
Canal by the tide. At approximately 1145H, a fire started 800 meters upstream from the barge. The fire burned down the hooch line and approached the barge. When it became evident that the fire could not be prevented from reaching the barge, the base was evacuated. When no explosion resulted, VNN and USN personnel returned to the barge and put out the fire. No USN or VNN personnel were injured, and no base assets were damaged, however, several PBRs of CTG 212.5 were destroyed in the fire.

Considerable men and equipment were flown to the scene from LSB Binh Thuy. No civilian casualties were reported although approximately 50 hooches were burned. The base POLWAR Officer, ISB Rach Soi, made arrangements for feeding and sheltering the homeless. The barge was successfully refloated at 2100H on 12 July.

In general, the river assets of CTG 212.5 had difficulty contacting the enemy. The PBRs were involved in a minor skirmish on 20 July, 11 miles south of Rach Gia (WR 148 885); two VC were killed and one weapon was captured during fire support provided by PBRs of RPD 61 for PFs, in contact with an unknown sized enemy force. No friendly casualties were reported. On the morning of 22 July, four PBRs of RPD 61 were attacked with ten B-40 rockets and heavy AK-47
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fire from the east bank of the Cai Lon (WR 168 830), 15 miles southeast of Rach Gia. One of the PBRs reported several AK-47 hits, but no serious damage or casualties occurred. The PBRs returned and suppressed the enemy fire; enemy casualties were undetermined.
Activity in the TRAN HUNG DAO VIII AO remained light but the pursuit of the enemy was carried out with extreme diligence and forethought. During July TRAN HUNG DAO VIII units participated in 27 troop movement or support missions for the 7th ARVN, RF and PF troops. Twelve special missions were conducted that consisted of seven POL operations and five convoy escorts. CTU 217.1.1 supported Dinh Tuong and Kien Phuong Province joint operation Tuong Phuong centered around the Wagonwheel area (WS 99-55) for the entire month. CTG 217.1, in command of boats and one RF company, conducted clearing and sweep operations on the lower Kinh Xang for 15 days. Results of this operation included the capture of one VC and discovery of two arms caches consisting of two mines, 20 grenades, and 500 meters of electrical wire. Units in a WBGP captured one VC liaison cadre and apprehended five VC suspects. TG 217.1 engaged the enemy on three occasions. TU 116.7.7 units flew 37 sorties in support of TRAN HUNG DAO VIII operations, killing 70 VC and destroying 22 sampans, nine structures, seven hootches, and 20 bunkers, plus assorted miscellaneous supplies.

The NILO at My Tho had reported that a captured enemy
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Document indicated two local force companies in Dinh Tuong Province were targeted against tran hung dao viii boats. One unit, targeted against boats on the kinh xang from dong tam navy base to highway 4, was reportedly responsible for the 25 June ambush of an RPD-53 craft at XS 394 474. The other unit was reportedly targeted against boats on the kinh xang from highway 4 north to ap my dien (XS 31 58).

There have been many recent reports of enemy supply shipments to Dinh Tuong Province. Frequent reports had also been received concerning enemy plans to attack dong tam and my tho and these recent supply shipments increased the likelihood that such attacks were imminent. On 27 June, an intelligence report stated that the VC escort unit of My Tho transported munitions from an unknown location to two caches in an area about seven kilometers northwest of Dong Tam (XS 307 429 and 309 447). On 28 June, another intelligence report indicated an MR-2 rear services unit with approximately 11 men, was in an area 15 kilometers west of Dong Tam (XS 268 413). The unit was transporting a variety of munitions for delivery to the 261A and 261B Battalions. On 31 May, the 261A was pinpointed as being about three miles northwest of Dong Tam at XS 382 468. A further report on 14 July indicated a
possible rocket cache in an area about 13 kilometers northeast of My Tho at XS 543 588. This cache was supposedly earmarked for an upcoming "big operation". Again on 19 July, the VC MR-2 rear services unit was mentioned as the unit responsible for the delivery of supplies to elements of the 261A and 261B Battalions. The reported ammunition distribution in this area, mentioned in this report, added credence to previous reports of enemy plans to attack the Dong Tam Base and My Tho City at an unspecified time. But for all the prognostications by the intelligence sources, the month was quiet in comparison to the past, and if these reports were correct, the "big operation" was a possibility just prior to the general elections.

An interesting development occurred on the political front with the report of the recent breakup of the 88th NVA Regiment into smaller units and their incorporation into province guerrilla units on a sub-district "Mang" level. Most of the NVA in the "Mang" are political officers and proselytizing cadre. With this organization established and operating in the province, a grass roots power base could be the result and could act as the spring board for political gain in the fall. On 20 July, an additional report indicated the VC intentions to divide VC My Tho into "Mangs" to achieve closer control over the population.
NILO My Tho stated that the constant presence of RF and ARVN outposts in the province resulted in the VC's realization that large units were, for the time being, ineffective. By breaking up into smaller units, the VC can increase their political influence considerably on the village and hamlet level, where the ballot box is located.

Waterborne and Seal units combined on several occasions to pursue the enemy in his strongholds and attempt to keep him off balance. On 29 June at 2130H, Seals and Luc Luong 66s conducted a VC supply route interdiction mission five miles west of Dong Tam (XS 332 403). A MAT Team observed five sampans making a crossing in the area, and the Seals were notified. The Seals proceeded to the crossing area using an LSSC and MSSC, and upon arrival at the target point, were suddenly illuminated by a passing tug, compromising their position. The Seal craft proceeded up river detecting a sampan with two occupants pulled by a third person who was in the river. As the Seals approached, the occupants fled to the shore, but after being spotlighted by the Seals they stopped, and were captured. The three males were questioned and two of the males 12 to 14 years old were released while the 20 year old was detained.
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On 2 July at 2115H, Seals and Luc Luong 666 conducted a mission against an enemy weapons cache located six miles west of Dong Tam (XS 309 429). The Seals inserted in three squads following preparatory strikes of the entire area by the Seawolves. Claymore mines were used to clear booby traps in the area and a thorough search was then conducted. During the search, one weapons cache and a bunker complex were discovered resulting in one bunker complex and two structures destroyed and eight M-16s captured.

On 5 July at 2340H, three boats of RAG 21/33 were attacked with an unknown number of B-40 rockets two miles northwest of Dong Tam at XS 393 466. The boats returned the enemy fire and two PBRs made firing runs to assist. There were no casualties or damage to the craft and enemy casualties were undetermined.

On 7 July at 1720H, Seals and Luc Luong 666, accompanied by four Australian Air Services personnel, conducted an ambush mission against a squad of local force NVA located six miles northwest of Dong Tam (XS 333 473). The Seals were inserted by Sealord helicopters while the Seawolves placed diversionary strikes. During insertion, Seawolves detected one armed, evading VC and took him under fire with unknown results. The Seals then

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conducted a search of hooches in the area and flushed out five VC who evaded. The Seawolves immediately placed a strike in the direction of their escape and then effected a false extraction by taking aboard only a few of the personnel while the rest set up an ambush position. After the Seawolves departure, two armed VC, approached the area and the Seals took them under fire. After the operation was concluded, the Seals patrolled to the east and west then completely extracted. No friendly casualties were incurred and one VC was killed.

On 9 July at 1600H, an LCM of RAG 21/33 was attacked with one B-40 rocket two miles northwest of Dong Tam (XS 391 476). The rocket missed its mark and the LCM and four accompanying PBRs returned the enemy fire. Other RAG 21/33 boats immediately embarked PF troops who swept the area, resulting in the capture of 300 meters of electrical wire. No enemy or friendly casualties were reported.

On 11 July at 2355H, six boats of RID 42 and RF Boat Company 96, in an ambush position 11 miles northwest of Dong Tam (XS 268 585), came under a B-40 rocket and small arms attack. One of the rockets detonated on a tree near the boats resulting in five VNN and three RFs being wounded. The boats returned the
enemy fire and using the bi-lingual brevity Di Mau Code, called in Seawolf strikes. After suppressing the fire, Seawolves landed and medevaced the two seriously wounded Vietnamese.

On 27 July at 1800H, Seals, acting on intelligence received from a Hoi Chanh, conducted a mission to verify and interdict a staging area 26 miles northwest of Dong Tam (XS 037 564). The Seals were inserted by Sealord helicopters, two squads inserting 100 meters from each other. Both squads came under fire during insertion and observed armed VC evading. Support Seawolves took the evading VC under fire and managed to kill two in the brief encounter. The Seawolves received hits during the strike but reported no significant damage and no casualties. The Seal squads then advanced toward their objectives and both were taken under fire from three separate locations.

Both squads returned the enemy fire and called in Seawolf strikes. The first squad then entered a hootch and discovered food, clothing, documents, and two ammunition cans full of AK-47 and M-16 rounds. The Seals also observed indications of booby traps in the hootch and as a result fired it, causing two secondary explosions when the hootch burned. In the meantime, the second squad advanced on a second hootch and fired 40 millimeter CS into the hootch, and
also into a bunker located just below the hootch, with negative results.

On conclusion of the sweep, one VC was killed when he was detected in tall grass as the Seal squad was advancing to the southeast.

With no further ground encounters, the two squads were extracted by Sealord helicopters but not without again being fired upon. The Seawolves lurking in the area promptly placed additional strikes on the enemy location. The results of the operation were two VC killed by the Seals, four VC killed by the Seawolves; four weapons, ammunition, and one kilo of documents were captured.