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VIETNAM
MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUMMARY
September 1971

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FOREWORD

Enemy activity in the Delta increased sharply in September as the VC/NVA launched full scale attacks in the U Minh Forest. Aggressive operations by the 21st ARVN Division, coupled with blocking operations by TRAN HUNG DAO VI waterborne units and air strikes by Black Ponies and Seawolves, dealt the enemy a telling blow. The Black Ponies had a field day, mowing down 238 of the enemy. September's action in the U Minh was a significant victory for GVN forces.

Elsewhere in the Delta, several TRAN HUNG DAO operations were altered. On 20 September, TRAN HUNG DAOs VIII and XIX were combined into a new operation, TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI, under the command of CTF 217. Also on 30 September, TRAN HUNG DAO V was slightly altered to effect better coordination between 25th ARVN Division and naval units on the Upper Saigon River, and was renamed TRAN HUNG DAO XXVII, under the command of a VNN Captain as CTF 216.

On 20 September, sapper guerrillas scored an important coup in destroying part of the Phnom Penh tank farms, destroying about one third of the stored POL stocks and 40 percent of the POL storage capacity. This attack underscored the importance...
of the Tan Chau-Phnom Penh convoys which supply the vital POL
to the Cambodian capital.

The ACTOV programs proceeded smoothly during September
with one LSB and eight ISBs turned over, totaling 28 out of 32
support bases placed in VNN hands. In addition, 62 ships and
craft were turned over, the largest single craft turnover since
the December 1970 combat craft turnover.

U.S. Naval strength failed to decline significantly, the total
figure on 30 September being 9,950 officers and men, a reduction
of only 21 men from last month's total.
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NAVAL MOBILE OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS (RIVERINE) AND CTF 116 SUMMARY

Effective 1 September, the Mobile Operations Staff, VNN, changed its name to Naval Mobile Operations Headquarters/Riverine.

In another important change on 1 September, the staffs of SA, Deputy Commander, TRAN HUNG DAO, Commander Delta Naval Forces (CTF 116), and Senior Advisor Naval Mobile Operations Headquarters (Riverine) were combined into one staff under the command of Captair R. S. Moore, USN.

In a message released on 6 September, SA DEPCOMTHD again emphasized the dangers of the flooding expected in September as well as the military possibilities which it could afford the enemy. Among these were decreased effectiveness of base defense and larger numbers of rivercraft moving on the waterways giving the enemy a greater chance of unhindered resupply and communication.

SA DEPCOMTHD also issued an injuntion to the advisory staffs of TRAN HUNG DAO XXIV and XXV concerning the use of skimmers for administrative purposes. He stated in par. "I recognize the convenience that the use of skimmers represents and your inclination to use them. However, there have been six Navy men killed by enemy attacks on skimmers this year, one of them..."
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in an area considered well pacified. Administrative matters simply
do not justify such a risk."

The Accelerated Overhaul Program continued with varying
degrees of success. There were still some instances when boats
arrived at repair facilities with only two men aboard and there
were other times when the crews would arrive with their boat and
then disappear. The American advisors, both with the boat units
involved and at the repair facilities, wrestled with these and other
problems and each month their efforts were rewarded with improvement
as the VNN personnel began to grasp the management concept of the
repair effort.

The TRAN HUNG DAO Operations underwent yet another metamorphosis
in September as TRAN HUNG DAOs V, VIII, and XIX were disestablished,
to be replaced by TRAN HUNG DAOs XXVI and XXVII.

On 30 September, TRAN HUNG DAO V was replaced by TRAN
HUNG DAO XXVII in an effort to further coordination with the ARVN
troops in the area. Captain Quynh, VNN, was installed as Commander,
TRAN HUNG DAO XXVII in another move to strengthen cooperation.

1. SA DEPCOMTHD msg 080809Z SEP 71

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At 0001H on 20 September, TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI was born, encompassing virtually all of Kien Hoa and Dinh Tuong Provinces, with the stated purpose of joining with the 7th ARVN Division to more effectively interdict coastal and riverine transshipment on the coast of Kien Hoa Province and on the waterways of both provinces. CTF 217 in Dong Tam was designated commander, TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI, and CTG 217.1, located in Dong Tam, and CTG 217.2 in Ben Tre were his assistants. SA to this new operation is CDR W. Wardell.

Overshadowing all of these changes was the Communist offensive in the northern U Minh Forest, which was bloodily blunted by combined ARVN, VNN, and USN combat assets. The allies struck back at the VC/NVA using artillery, U.S. and Vietnamese air assets and VNN Naval units as blocking forces, inflicting upwards of 600 killed and completely crushing the ill-fated offensive. At the end of the month, the U Minh was quiet with only sporadic action occurring.
ENEMY contact within the TRAN HUNG DAO IV AO was moderately heavy during September, reflecting the pressure put on the VC/NVA by the ARVN in the U Minh Forest campaign. U.S. Navy Seawolves flew 16 missions and eight incidents of naval interest occurred. Four of the incidents involved ambushes of VNN craft in support of the 41st ARVN Rangers. The remaining four incidents involved LDNN (VNN Seal) missions. Three of those missions were woodcutter security operations, and one was a reconnaissance/intelligence patrol. All four LDNN incidents were initiated by VC ambushes. Friendly casualties suffered in all the incidents were: one ARVN Ranger killed; and 12 personnel wounded, including ARVN Rangers, LDNNs, VNN sailors, one Vietnamese civilian, and one USN Seal advisor. The USN Seal suffered minor wounds on the left hand while handling a VC booby trap. He was treated at the ISB Nam Can Dispensary, and returned to duty. The predominant VC weapons used for the ambushes were: launch bombs, B-40 rockets, and automatic small arms (AK-47s).

The Seawolves suffered one equipment casualty on 25 September, when a JP-4 fuel transfer pump was stolen from a locked stowage fuel farm at ISB Nam Can. The fuel pump was used to transfer
JP-4 to a 10,000 gallon ready service fuel bladder. At the time of the theft, the ready service bladder was approximately half full. A search of the base, barracks, boats, and junks failed to uncover the missing pump. A replacement pump was ordered to keep the TG 116.1 helicopters flying; and it was air shipped to ISB Nam Can on the same day.

In the area of harbor defense, a stride forward was accomplished at ISB Nam Can. The O-in-C of HQ 9611 (VNN) and the repair advisor established a training program for a 15 man VNN PADD team from the crew of HQ 9611. The ISB Nam Can PADD operator and VNN Seals assisted in training the novice PADD operators. An electronics trained VNN officer took charge of HQ 9611 training, and custody of the PADD unit was turned over to the repair advisor of the HQ 9611 on 15 September.
TRAN HUNG DAO V

Enemy activity in the TRAN HUNG DAO V AO was heavy, but contact with VNN assets was light. The 25th ARVN Division was in frequent contact and U.S. Navy Seawolves flew 23 missions in the AO. The VNN tallied three waterborne incidents in September. The first incident occurred on 20 September. Two PBRs on patrol sighted a small sampan and wooden barge that were concealed on the bank. A search discovered no contraband, and both the sampan and barge were destroyed. On 23 September at 1845H, two PBRs sighted seven VC on the bank and one VC in the water. The VC in the water was captured, but the other seven escaped. The final incident occurred on the Lower Saigon River (vic XT 672 288) at 0830H on 24 September. Five RAC and one LCM were ambushed with ten B-40 rockets and automatic weapons fire. The boats returned fire, and the Seawolves were scrambled. Contact lasted about 20 minutes. The results of the engagement were, two VNN killed, one office: and one enlisted, ten VNN wounded (six seriously); slight damage to one Monitor and three ASPBs from B-40s.

Some problems were encountered with RPD 52 boats in the Accelerated Overhaul Program. A misunderstanding in arrival schedule had two boats arrive a day later than LSB Nha Be expected.

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them. RPD 52 also did not provide the supervisory personnel required, because of operational commitments. The SA DEPCOMTHD then originated a message to SA RPD 52 and LSB Nha Be reiterating the importance of the Accelerated Overhaul Program, and directing all parties to cooperate fully. Differences and discrepancies were resolved, and the overhaul of both craft proceeded normally.

Throughout the month, intelligence reports continued to indicate VC and NVA infiltration into the AO (NILO Lam Son SPOTREP 110600Z SEP 71). It was believed that "COSVN had ordered an increase in military forces and activity around the Capital Military District to keep ARVN forces busy; then, if a political crisis develops, additional attacks will be launched without further orders from COSVN" (3rd RAIO msg 280949Z SEP 71). Numerous probe attacks against ARVN forces were reported (NILO 25th ARVN Division Cu Chi msg 281600Z SEP 71), giving credence to the intelligence estimates.

On 30 September, TRAN HUNG DAO V was disestablished and replaced by TRAN HUNG DAO XXVII. The purpose of the reorganization was to provide better liaison and cooperation between 25th ARVN Division and the VNN on the Upper Saigon River. Concurrently the
25th ARVN Tactical Area of Responsibility was redefined to include the Upper Saigon River to XT 49 47. Third Riverine Zone Commander assumed command of TRAN HUNG DAO XXVII; the SA Third Riverine Zone was assigned the additional duty as SA, TRAN HUNG DAO XXVII. Bases and AOs remained the same as in TRAN HUNG DAO V.
The naval war in the TRAN HUNG DAO VI AO was exceptionally light during September. Only one enemy initiated firefight was reported. On 12 September, a WBGP on the Kinh Ba The received small arms fire from five VC on the opposite bank. The PBRs returned fire. The VC broke contact after four minutes, with no casualties on either side. The SA, CTG 212.5 reported that, "Units of 212.5 are beginning to break away from stereotype operations" (SA TH: V! msg 021230Z SEP 21).

The major ARVN operation in the U Minh Forest pressured VC and NVA forces. TG 212.5 provided a 20 boat blocking force on the Cai Lon River from 21-23 September in an attempt to cut off the hard pressed enemy as they tried to break out of the U Minh by moving northward. U.S. Navy Seawolves flew an impressive 38 missions in the TRAN HUNG DAO VI AO. Again, most missions were against targets of opportunity, flushed out by the U Minh operations.

Two vehicle accidents occurred involving U.S. Navy personnel. The first incident involved three naval advisors from Ha Tien, who struck a Vietnamese child, even though they followed all conceivable safety precautions. The girl's injuries were minor and she was well cared for by U.S. units. The second vehicle accident was minor. On 27 September, a jeep hit a parked truck in Rach Gia. There were no injuries.
TRAN HUNG DAO VIII

Naval action with the enemy in the TRAN HUNG DAO VIII AO was very light again in September. Only one contact with the enemy was made during the month. At 0525H on 6 September, six RID 42 units broke their WBGP on the Lower Kinh Xang to respond to a call for assistance by an outpost, which was under attack by an unknown size unit of VC. While transiting north, the boats were ambushed from the west bank of the canal (vic XS 367 523) with B-40s and small arms fire. In the initial salvo, three boats were hit, two requiring substantial repairs to engine and 20mm gun turret. The other three boats continued to return fire. After five minutes the VC broke contact. Navy Seawolf and Army Nighthawk gunships arrived overhead and placed strikes on the VC position. Casualties in the engagement were five VNN wounded, two seriously; VC losses were unknown. The Nighthawk helicopters medevaced the wounded to My Tho, and the boats returned to Dong Tam for repairs. At 0630H RF troops were inserted in the area, but their sweeps produced no results.

VNN efforts for the month were directed in support of ARVN and RF troops. Navy units conducted insert and extract missions, and escorted ammo barges from Dong Tam to the Phuoc Long
Artillery Base. Also, the usual WBGP and ambush missions were conducted.

Meanwhile, U.S. Navy Seawolves had a typically busy month. They flew 28 missions in support of both VNN and ARVN assets in the AO; results of the mission were undetermined.

On 19 September, CNO VNN disestablished operations TRAN HUNG DAO VIII and XIX. TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI was initiated on 20 September, incorporating most of the areas formerly covered by both TRAN HUNG DAO VIII and XIX. The reasons for this reorganization are covered in the TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI section of this summary.
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TRAN HUNG DAO XXVIII

Three Mekong convoys successfully transported POL to Phnom Penh during the month, continuing the trend begun in July of reducing the number of convoys and correspondingly increasing the number of ships per convoy.

The first convoy of the month, TP-31, departed the Tan Chau staging area on 2 September at 2000H, with one VNN LSSL, two ASFBs, two PCFs, ten PBRs, an MNK Commandment, six MNK LCM-6s, and 11 MNK PBRs escorting a convoy composed of a cargo ship, four POL tankers, and three tugs with four barges. The convoy transported a total of 1,770 tons of cargo, and 1,066,500 gallons of POL. At 0327H the next morning, the first of two ambushes occurred, as ten B-40 rockets came whistling from the east bank, accompanied by .51 caliber machine gun and small arms fire. The convoy units responded with suppressing fire. A U.S. Army C&C helo and U.S. Navy Seawolves fired on the enemy position with unknown results. There were no friendly casualties or damage. A VNAF AC-47 gunship was unable to fire due to the close proximity of a FANK position. At 0620H, the second attack occurred in the vicinity of WT 210 600, 18 miles east of Phnom Penh, consisting of six B-40 rockets fired with no effect. The convoy escorts returned fire.

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but, once again, air strikes were prohibited due to the proximity of FANK units. The FANK units later swept the area. Convoy TP-31 arrived at Phnom Penh at 1100H without further incident.

The last two convoys were collectively attacked four times within a 11 kilometer stretch of the river. Three attacks occurred within four kilometers of each other, each of these attacks occurring within a 25 minute period near dawn. All four were near the reported 12 August location of an unidentified 100 man enemy unit targeted against convoy escort craft at WT 281 609. The return convoy left the Cambodian capital city at 1140H the next day, with six merchant ships, four POL tankers, and four tugs towing five barges. They were escorted by one VNN LSSL, 12 VNN PBRs, 11 VNN \SPBs, 11 VNN PCFs and nine MNK PBRs and one MNK ASPB, and arrived at Tan Chau at 1700H without incident. TP-31 was organized around eight main body elements divided into a VN unit of five elements and a Cambodian unit of three elements. The convoy operations commander was CDR May, VNN, on an LSSL, with VN and MNK deputy commanders. Under CDR May were: an advance force of one VN ASPB and two MNK PBRs; two ambush teams on one PCF and two VN PBRs each; a reaction force of one VN ASPB, one MNK commandment, and six MNK LCM-6s; a VN escort unit of six PBRs (one each for the first four vessels and two for the fifth); an MNK escort unit of five PBRs (two for the first two vessels and one for the third); and finally a reserve unit of
The first attempted sapper attack along the Mekong for some time occurred on 10 September in the early morning hours. Sentries at an ARVN logistics compound at Neak Luong spotted four sappers at 0100H and took them under fire, killing one, while the others escaped. Fire was returned by the sappers, who carried pistols, slightly wounding one ARVN. The VNN craft in the area went on increased alert and took anti-sapper pre-assigned positions. At 0400H, a sentry on an ASPB saw a swimmer and offered him a line to come aboard and surrender, which he declined. The sentry proceeded to barrage the recalcitrant sapper with M-16 fire and grenades at a ten meter range. At 0420H a sentry on a second ASPB saw another swimmer who also refused capture and was taken under fire with an M-16 and grenades. The final results were two sappers killed and two probably killed, while one ARVN soldier was wounded.

Mekong convoy TP-32 was organized around two escort units, one VN and one MNK, escorting three ships, six tankers and seven tugs towing barges. General cargo and 1,864,440 gallons of POL were transported. The convoy departed the Tan Chau staging area at 2000H on 12 September. At 0943H the next morning, the convoy was ambushed as one B-40 rocket and small arms fire roke
the morning silence. The ambush unit was on the east bank at WT 255 290. The escorts made firing runs near the bank. One tanker received light damage at bridge level, slightly wounding one MNK liaison officer and one crewman. Again air cover did not respond due to the proximity of friendlies. The convoy reached Phnom Penh at 1530H on 13 September, with no further encounters. PT-32 departed at 1200H the next day, and arrived at 1737H after an untroubled passage. Three merchant ships, four tankers, and six tugs carrying 600 tons of rice were escorted. To provide continuous airborne cover for TP/PT-32, a total of 71 sorties were flown. SA CTF 218 noted continuing cooperation between the VNN convoy commander and the MNK deputy in working out minor command and control problems during the passage.

The continuing comfortable POL level in the capital city was interrupted when, on 20 September, sappers attacked the Phnom Penh tank farms. Destroying one third of the POL stocks and 40 percent of the storage capacity, the sappers set the city back on emergency rationing for a time. At 0015H, the Shell and Esso Russei-Keo Tank Farms on the north side of the city were attacked. The damage was serious but not critical, with reserves of each product sufficing for 5-15 days. The total storage capacity before
the attack was 11,700 cubic meters in the Esso compound, of that
only 3,102 cubic meters capacity remained serviceable after the
attack, a reduction of 62 percent. Roughly one half of the 4,998
cubic meters of POL was destroyed. In the Shell compound, the
storage capacity was only 20 percent reduced, and only about one
fourth of the 8,459 cubic meters of POL was destroyed. The sapper
attack was the most serious in the Phnom Penh area since the attack on
Pochentong Airfield the previous January; it occurred on the final eve
of a three day Khmer religious holiday when Khmer defenses were in
a low state of alert. It demonstrated amply that the VC/NVA continued
to be capable of surgically precise efforts in Phnom Penh requiring
a minimal force, but producing substantial and spectacular losses.
Gas stations resumed selling fuel after two days of suspensions. POL
supplies, replenished on 25 September with the arrival of a Mekong
convoy, remained adequate. The clandestine Red news service
daily harped on their success. Attempts to interdict convoy TP-33
and then to mine tankers while in port both failed. TP-33, with about 7,400
cubic meters of POL, arrived five days after the POL farm attack.
The companies were hard pressed to find storage facilities for the
arriving POL, and were forced to improvise, utilizing all sorts of
facilities, and finally requiring one tanker of the five arriving with
the convoy to stay in Phnom Penh.
On 24 September at 0400H, an ARVN unit engaged a small enemy unit in the vicinity of WT 262 295, with two enemy KIA and no friendly casualties. Later, at 1830H, a FANK company observed eight sampans and four of the enemy armed with AK-47s in the vicinity of WT 255 290, and engaged them with unknown results. The same day, at 2150H, Neak Luong came under mortar attack, 20 rounds of 82mm mortar impacting near the POL point in the vicinity of WT 312 443, destroying 22,000 gallons of truck fuel and 67,000 gallons of helo fuel. There were negative VN casualties. Responding to this loss, convoy TN-33 departed Tan Chau at 1200H on 26 September with nine LCM-8s to resupply Neak Luong.

Commencing with convoy TP-33, CTF 218 began a new policy of informing the Waterways Center five days in advance of convoy sailing date from Tan Chau. Two days later Waterways Center organized and allowed the Vung Tau-Tan Chau convoy to depart. This advanced planning prevented the prolonged and costly waiting at the Tan Chau staging area. The convoy departed Tan Chau on 24 September at 2200H, having been delayed three days so that essential repairs and stock adjustments due to the damage from the POL farm attack could be completed. The convoy was composed of six merchant ships, six tankers, three tugs, and nine LCM-8s with military cargo for Neak Luong.
Lucng. The convoy transported 1,796,016 gallons of POL, and 7,179 tons of general cargo. The lead three elements were under the cognizance of the MNK deputy commander. At 0540H the next morning, the convoy came under a barrage of an unknown number of B-40s, with attendant .51 caliber machine gun fire, in the vicinity of WT 283 600. The MNK escort craft, and USN Seawolves returned immediate suppressive fire, and the convoy continued without delay. The attack was characteristic of the attacks against all convoys during the high water period. The distinguishing feature of these attacks was a few B-40 or B-41 rockets fired from extreme ranges near friendly positions (to prevent air strikes). At 0610H, the convoy again came under attack from the vicinity of WT 248 630, as ten rockets fell short into the water. PT-33 departed Phnom Penh the next day at 1200H with the upriver escort, three merchant ships, four tankers, and five tugs. Six hours later the convoy arrived after an untroubled passage.
As in the previous two months, enemy action in the TRAN HUNG DAO XIX AO was exceptionally low during September. No waterborne contact was made with the enemy, and only one Seawolf mission was flown in the AO. TRAN HUNG DAO XIX PBRs and junks, on loan from CG-34 and 35, continued to support ARVN and RF troops on insert missions, and conducted routine patrols. Other units of TRAN HUNG DAO XIX assets continued to support the 10th ARVN Artillery Regiment units by shuttling men, artillery, ammunition, and supplies between the Ben Tre Ferry Landing (XS 548 298) and Phuoc Long Fire Support Base (XS 531 222).

On 11 September, the six junks from CG-34 and 35 were permanently detached and returned to their respective commands. COMTHD recommended that Third CZ HQ designate patrol areas along the coast for the returned junks.

On 19 September, TRAN HUNG DAO VIII and XIX were disestablished. Most of their AOs were incorporated by TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI, which was initiated on 20 September. The geographic limits of the AO and the mission are covered in the TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI section of this summary.
Contact with the enemy in the TRAN HUNG DAO XX AO was light again during the month of September. Only nine Navy Seawolf missions were flown in the AO, and two naval incidents occurred.

At 1655H on 30 September, two junks of CG-42 were ambushed by an estimated 20 VC on the Giang Thang River. A 30 minute firefight ensued. Three VNN were WIA and one junk lightly damaged. Enemy casualties were unknown.

The second incident reinforced suspicions and confirmed intelligence reports of VC transshipment of supplies (NILO Ha Tien PERINTREP 18-71). On 14 September at 1630H, a CG-44 junk sighted a sampan crossing the Giang Thang River (vic VS 483 538). The junk hailed the sampan and boarded for a routine inspection. A second sampan, ahead of the one that was stopped, took flight. Upon close inspection of the stopped sampan, the inspectors found concealed contraband: one AK-47, one M-16, one first aid kit, civilian clothes, and one set of VC identification papers. The two detainees, one female and one male, were taken into custody as prisoners. The SA CTG 219.1 said he “considers the VC prisoners CIA as... not extremely significant as [the capture was] only a law of averages event. It is known [that the] enemy crosses...
[the] river into Cambodia as easily in daylight as at night. Whether
[the capture was by] pure chance or [by] faulty enemy security/intelligence
is unknown, but the event was bound to happen eventually. 

NILO Ha Tien and his VNN counterpart learned from interrogations
of the prisoners that they were members of an 11 man unit functioning
as a commo-liaison and rear service group for local guerrillas
and local forces. The PWs gave an account of their recent activities.

PW joined his unit while it was at Moso. His unit was billeted in
one cave and was tasked with resupplying all VC/NVA units in Moso...
.. This unit was there prior to 1971. The PW's unit collected food
from surrounding villages of Binh Tre, An Binh, and Hoa Dien in
Kien Luong [District]. In addition, they made monthly trips to
Cambodia to receive supplies for the NVA at Ang Koul VS 335 560..
.. Supply route was over-land, crossing Giang Thang River between
VS 488 543... and VS 477 543...(PW commented this route was
still active, though not extensive since withdrawal of VC/NVA from Moso).

In September 1970, PW said that ARVN operations had cut off
most supply routes to Moso and many VC were killed. May 1971,
all units received orders to withdraw from Moso with the NVA
unit moving to the U Minh Forest.

The Ha Tien LF moved from Moso and divided into various small
detachments... and later on in July 1971, moved into an area... of
Kien Luong at VS 67 45.... Since they set up their base camp there has
been no ARVN operations in the area.

The base camp is located in a lightly forested area. For the
rainy season they build elevated floors above the water and use
nylon or camouflage for the roof. In the dry season they would
move their base camp to higher and drier ground. The PW indicated

1. SA CTG 219.1 msg 161630Z SEP 71

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that they feel safe in this area and therefore the unit does not employ night security.

The PW stated there were two infiltration routes for the transshipment of ammo and weapons.

(1) From Vinh Te Canal to Tam Ngan Canal (Kinh So Mot) to Rach Gia... 
(2) From Cambodia to Vinh Te Canal to Moso. This was supported by PW's unit, but has been deactivated since the VC withdrawal from Moso...

The PW had no knowledge of coastal infiltration...

At the present time, intelligence estimates indicate extensive VC infiltration throughout the AO. The PW's statements concerning the disruption of VC commo-laison routes in the Moso area in 1970 show that well coordinated land, air, and waterborne operations are required to effectively interdict the enemy.

1. NILO Ha Tien msg 211040Z SEP 71
Contact with the enemy in the TRAN HUNG DAO XXI AO was very heavy during September, reflecting the major campaign that ARVN forces conducted in the U Minh forest. U.S. Navy Seawolves flew 19 missions in the TRAN HUNG DAO XXI AO, and there were nine enemy initiated incidents during the month. These incidents included: six ambushes of VNN craft, two attacks on bases, and one mining. Friendly casualties suffered were as follows: 19 VNN wounded and three USN wounded. VNN craft received the following battle damage: one ATC sunk; minor damage to one CCB; and slight damage to one ATC, one ASPB, one CCB, and two PBRs. Enemy casualties were undetermined in all incidents. All the ambushes on VNN craft followed classic VC tactics. Concealed, prepared positions on the banks of selected waterways were used to launch attacks with small arms, B-40 or B-41 rockets, and in one instance, a 57mm recoiless rifle. The attacks on bases were standoff ABF's, utilizing small caliber rockets, 82mm mortars, and sniper fire. It was an active month for TRAN HUNG DAO XXI forces.

Three USN personnel were wounded during the base attacks. The OP base at Kien An was attacked twice on 15/16 September. The first attack was by B-40 or B-41 rockets and small arms fire at 2345H. Engineman Second Class J.K. Thompson, USN, received
multiple fragmentation wounds and a compound fracture of the right leg when a B-40 rocket impacted near his position in the vicinity of the mobile repair facilities. Petty Officer Thompson was medevaced to the Third Surgical Hospital in Binh Thuy. His prognosis was good.

At 0415H, Kien An was attacked again, but with small arms and 82mm mortars. Petty Officer R. J. Cooney, USN, received a minor small arms shrapnel wound in the neck while defending his position with a .50 caliber machinegun. He was treated by a corpsman and returned to duty. The third U.S. Navy sailor was wounded on 21 September, at 0700H. The man, an NMCB-5 Detail Mustang gate guard was shot in the shoulder by a sniper. He was medevaced to the Third Surgical Hospital at Binh Thuy. The incident is more fully covered in the Seabee section of this summary.

The USN forces were kept busy on six major salvage operations on the TRAN HUNG DAO XXI waterways. The most extensive of these was the salvage of the HQ 1226. The HQ 1226 had two holes in her hull, one a six footer on the port side. A three boat salvage force reported to the scene on 5 September. By 11 September, the HQ 1226 was moved to Kien An, where it rested up side down, parallel to the beach, in 20 feet of water, with a bubble trapped in the bow. On 30 September, the HQ 1226 was raised and patched.

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The U.S. Navy's PMS Assistance Team THREE was active at both Ca Mau and Kien An. To date, two ten day courses have been conducted. TGs 210.1 and 210.2 have had a total of 21 VNN junior officers trained as instructors. The CTF 210 Repair Advisor and PMS Assistance Team THREE established a seven day indoctrination course at the Kien An OP Base. Eight boats have been qualified at Ca Mau, ten at Kien An, and 22 more boats are in various stages of training. TF 210 is expected to be fully indoctrinated in PMS by 15 November of this year.
Naval contact with the enemy in the TRAN HUNG DAO XXIV area was moderate during September. U.S. Navy Seawolves flew 38 missions, mostly in support of ARVN units. Five waterborne firefights occurred during the month; all were enemy initiated ambushes using B-40 rockets, 57mm recoilless rifles, and small arms fire. The VNN suffered eight wounded and boat damage as follows: three ATCs, two with significant damage and one with minor damage; and one PBR with 10 percent damage. Enemy casualties were unknown in each incident. Over all, the VNN effort for the month was divided between interdiction and combined operations. The interdiction effort consisted of routine patrols, WBGPs, and ambushes (utilizing both boats and troops). The combined operations included troop insertions for sweeps, blocking forces on the waterways, and escort services for ARVN tugs and barges. The combined operations were conducted primarily in support of the 41st and 64th ARVN Ranger Battalions, and 303 RF Battalion.

Throughout the month, intelligence reports stressed the increase in VC/NVA infiltration in Hau Nghia and Long An from the Parrot's Beak area of Cambodia. The infiltration was suspected of being aimed at interfering with the forthcoming Presidential election on 3 October.
On 18 September, the NILO post at Go Dau Ha was closed. And on 29 September, LT R. W. Hyde, USN, relieved LT T. M. B. Salmon, USNR, as NILO Moc Hoa.
TRAN HUNG DAO XXV

Enemy activity in the TRAN HUNG DAO XXV AO was light during September. Two waterborne firefights were recorded, resulting in one PBR sunk, two VNN wounded, one VC killed, and one AK-47 captured. Four Seawolf missions were flown in the AO in support of TRAN HUNG DAO XXV forces, with results undetermined.

Throughout the month, intelligence reports continued to reflect VC/NVA infiltration. Predictions were made that their purpose was to disrupt the up-coming Presidential election on 3 October, and to be in position to take advantage of any political confusion that may arise from the elections.

On 6 September, COMTHD XXV announced his plan to conduct monthly materiel, PMS, and base defense inspections. He also directed all his COs to conduct bi-monthly inspections.

On 6 September, an Army CH-47 food helicopter landed to replenish ATSB Phuoc Xuyen. Rotor wash blew over a 300 foot section of the eastern north-south catwalk connecting towers one and three. This was significant because much of the ATSB was under water with seasonal floods. The catwalks connect the vital areas of the base. Reinstallation of the catwalk began immediately. A NAVFORV Public Works Team arrived on 12 September to assist in
installing helo pad and security lighting, and to secure the catwalk.

A refueling problem also developed at ATSB Phuoc Xuyen. Helicopter gunships refueled with JP-5, which was stored in barges at the ATSB. The base's source of JP-5 was the YRBM-21, which was turned over to the VNN on 28 September. The VNN had no requirement for YRBM's to carry JP-5. Fuel supply convoys had to be organized. LCM-6a's with fuel bladders brought JP-5 from Ben Luc every three weeks. This was one more example of the VNN solving operational/logistic problems as the USN phases out of its support role.

On 29 September, LT H.O. Buzhardt, Jr., USN, relieved LT J.P. Sellinger, USNR, as NILO Tay Ninh. Tay Ninh has been an active post, sitting astride infiltration routes from Cambodia.
TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI

Kien Hoa and Dinh Tuong Provinces were known to be VC strongholds for many years. In an effort to better interdict commercial liaison routes, the VNN reorganized their assets in both provinces. TRAN HUNG DAO VIII and XIX were combined into TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI on 20 September, in order to more effectively: coordinate patrols and ambushes; support the 7th ARVN Infantry Division and local forces in amphibious operations; and coordinate operations with the 10th Regiment and 11th ARVN Artillery Division. The TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI AO was defined as the waterways of the Ham Luong, Mo Cay, Ben Tre, and Ba Lai Rivers, and the Ma Cau, Xung (My Tho), Dong Tam, Ba Beo, and Tong Doc Loc Canals. The coordinates defining the exact AO were listed separately in NAVLE DRAC (Naval Liaison Delta Regional Assistance Command) secret msg 21011Z SEP 71. Elements assigned to the TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI operation were designated TF 217, under the command of Commander, Fourth Riverine Area; and included RAGs 21 and 33 (TG 217.1 at Dong Tam), RAGs 23 and 31 (TG 217.2 at Ben Tre), RIDs 42 and 45, RPD 58, HQ 801, HQ 543, and one section of junk forces detached from the Third Coastal Zone. CTF 217 established operational command at Dong Tam.

During the ten days in September that TRAN HUNG DAO XXVI

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was operational, U.S. Navy Seawolves flew ten missions in the AO, and one naval incident was reported. The naval incident occurred on 29 September. Three LCM-6s inserted an RF platoon (vic XS 397 460) at 1800H on 28 September. The three boats of RAGs 21 and 33 then set a WBGP (vic XS 399 458). At about 2030H, the boats left their WBGP without notifying the VNN NOC and beached at XS 383 490. A watch was set, but at 0200H on 29 September, a command detonated mine exploded between two of the boats. Both boats sank immediately. Two VNN sailors were killed, while three were missing and presumed dead.
RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE

The Long Tau Shipping Channel, the Raison D'etre of Rung Sat Special Zone operations, enjoyed its 11th month of freedom from enemy attacks on shipping. The most recent incident involving attacks on shipping on the Long Tau occurred 1 November, 1970. Since then, 3,233 ships have transitted the channel safely.

There were eight Chuong Duong airmobile/waternmobile sweep operations coordinated by the RSSZ Operations Center during September, as well as numerous PRU/RF/PF inserts. Only two of the operations made significant contact with the enemy, and the total RSSZ tally for September ran: 11 VC killed with three probably killed and three captured; six sampans and 40 bunkers damaged or destroyed; and one RF killed and five wounded.

USN Seawolf helos of Detachment Two operating from LSB Nha Be flew support missions for the Chuong Duong operations and made 21 intelligence-related air strikes during the month. Typically, results were not obtained on 19 of the strikes, although Seawolves were credited with three enemy killed and 35 bunkers and three sampans destroyed on missions where damage could be assessed.

The one notable incident of the month occurred on 17 September
when two USA LHFTs and one USN LHFT, responding to intelligence, placed air strikes on a base camp in the vicinity of YS 033 792, eight kilometers east of Nha Be. Three of the enemy were killed by the air strikes, and a bunker and three sampans were destroyed. Directly following the air strikes, an RF company was inserted by Slicks, and soon made contact with an enemy force of unknown size at the base camp, killing one and capturing one VC. The SA RSSZ, in an 181540Z SEP 71 message, extolled the helicopter fire teams efforts: "Combined professionalism of Seawolves, Mad Dogs, Greyhounds, and Razorbacks made the operation on 17 September a complete success. The results, as reflected in...RSSZ Spotrep Nr 368...demonstrated a can do spirit and cooperation that is highly commendable. In rapid succession, the gunships placed accurate fire on enemy positions and the Slicks inserted and extracted in confined LZs during a driving rain. An enthusiastic well done to all hands."
The following was the disposition of the RAID units at the end of September:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RAID</th>
<th>OPCON</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>THD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>CTG 210.1</td>
<td>Kien An</td>
<td>XXI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>CTG 210.1</td>
<td>Kien An</td>
<td>XXI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>CTG 210.2</td>
<td>Kien An</td>
<td>XXI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>CTG 210.2</td>
<td>Kien An</td>
<td>XXI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>CTG 210.2</td>
<td>Ca Mau</td>
<td>XXI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>CTG 210.2</td>
<td>Ca Mau</td>
<td>XXI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each RAID is composed of approximately seven ATCs, four ASPBs, one MON, and one CCB. The RAIDs are reviewed in their respective operations. On 12 September 11 RAC of RAID 73 changed operational control from TG 210.1 to TG 210.2 for operations in the southern U Minh OP areas replacing 11 RAC of RAID 74 which began a 30 day stand down for repair.
The following was the disposition of RPD units at the end of September:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RPD</th>
<th>OPCON</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>CMD</td>
<td>Nha Be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>216.1</td>
<td>Phu Cuong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>214.1</td>
<td>Ben Luc/Tra Cu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>214.1</td>
<td>Go Dau Ha/Ben Keo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>218.2</td>
<td>Tan Chau/Chau Doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>212.2</td>
<td>Moc Hoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>Nha Be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>217.1</td>
<td>My Tho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>218.2</td>
<td>Tan Chau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>221.1</td>
<td>Hoi An/Thuan An</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>212.5</td>
<td>Rach Soi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>212.5</td>
<td>Rach Soi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>212.2</td>
<td>Phuoc Xuyen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>212.2</td>
<td>Tuyen Nhon/Moc Hoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Binh Thuy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each RPD is composed of approximately 20 PBRs and is reviewed in the operation in which it operates.
The following was the disposition of RID units at the end of September:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RID</th>
<th>OPCON</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>THD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>214.1</td>
<td>Go Dau Ha/Tra Cu</td>
<td>XXIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>218.2</td>
<td>Tan Chau</td>
<td>XVIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>217.1</td>
<td>Dong Tam</td>
<td>XXVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>216.1</td>
<td>Phu Cuong</td>
<td>XXVII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>214.1</td>
<td>Ben Luc/Tan An</td>
<td>XXIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>214.2</td>
<td>Nam Can</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>217.2</td>
<td>Dong Tam</td>
<td>XXVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>214.2</td>
<td>Nam Can</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>218.2</td>
<td>Tan Chau</td>
<td>XVIII</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each RID is generally composed of approximately five ATCs, one MON, six ASPBs, one CCB, one Zippo, one REF, and one RECH.

The RIDs are reviewed in their respective operations.
### RIVER ASSAULT GROUPS

The following was the disposition of RAG units at the end of September:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RAG</th>
<th>OPCON</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>CTF 227</td>
<td>Saigon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>CTG 216.1</td>
<td>Phu Cuong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>CTF 210</td>
<td>Ca Mau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>CTF 228</td>
<td>Nha Be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Commander,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third Riverine Area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>CTG 216.1</td>
<td>Phu Cuong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/33</td>
<td>CTG 217.1</td>
<td>Dong Tam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Commander,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Coastal Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/31</td>
<td>CTG 217.2</td>
<td>Vinh Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/29</td>
<td>CTG 210.3</td>
<td>Ca Mau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Convoy Escort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fourth Riverine Area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each RAG is composed of approximately one MON, one CCB, three LCVPs and four LCM-6s. The RAGs are reviewed in their respective operations.
SPECIAL WARFARE

The following was the disposition of the Seal Detachments operating in a combat capacity throughout the country at the end of September:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detachment</th>
<th>OPCON</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Officer-in-Charge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team One Det Golf November Platoon</td>
<td>116.6.2</td>
<td>Dong Tam</td>
<td>LT Fletcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team One Det Golf Oscar Platoon</td>
<td>116.10.2</td>
<td>Ben Luc</td>
<td>LTJG Walsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team One Det Golf Mike Platoon</td>
<td>116.10.2</td>
<td>Ben Luc</td>
<td>LT McCary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seal units are reviewed in their respective operational areas.

Quebec Platoon stood down on 8 September, and Mike Platoon replaced Quebec Platoon at Ben Luc on 10 September. Oscar Platoon shifted from Nam Can to Ben Luc at the end of September.