

Series: AWM95

**Australian Army commanders' diaries
[Vietnam]**

Signals units

Item number: 6/3/55

Item: 110 Signal Squadron

Narrative

Annexes

[1-31 Jan 1972]

COVERING LETTER

Reference No.....

To: OIC, Military History Section, AHQ.

1. I enclose Commanders Diary (AF C 2118) (Adapted) as indicated at Part 2.

2. Please return receipt below.

(Signature) *[Signature]*

MAJOR

Appointment

OC 110 SIG SQN

(OC Unit or senior staff officer)

Received
21/2/72
[Signature]

SECRET

ORIGINAL
DUPLICATE

Strike out where
not applicable

COMMANDERS DIARY

OF

Unit or Formation..... 110 SIG SQN

From 1 JANUARY 72 To 31 JANUARY 72

INDEX

Narrative (AF C 2118)

ANNEXES

- * A ~~Duty officers log~~ MONTHLY REPORT
- * B Messages connected with log
- * C Operation orders and instructions issued
- * D Operation orders and instructions received
- * E Sitreps issued
- * F Orders of battle and location reports issued
- * G Intelligence reports and summaries issued; appreciations made
- * H Administrative orders and instructions issued
- * I Administrative orders and instructions received
- * J Administrative reports and bulletins; ammunition returns; field strength returns
- * K Standing orders issued
- * L Commander's policy and demi-official letters
- * M Action reports (if required)
- * N Other papers, eg, maps and diagrams, air photos, reports from sub units
- * O Periodical summaries of operations
- * Z Top Secret Supplementary Diary

Enclosure Numbers

1	to
	to
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	to
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† NIL
† RETAINED
† Despatched to

on.....

* Only to be included during operations.
† Cross out whichever is not applicable.

EWK 3

COMMANDERS DIARIES INSTRUCTIONS

AIM

1. The aim of a Commanders Diary is to provide data on which to base future improvements in Army training, equipment, organization and administration, and to furnish historians with a record of the activities of units and formations in operational and non-operational periods in peace and in war.

GENERAL

2. Entries are to be made daily on AF C 2118 (Adapted) each entry being initialled by the officer detailed to keep it.

3. Commanders Diaries will conform with the rules for drafting orders given in "Staff Duties (Australia)", Chapter 2, Section 12.

RESPONSIBILITY

During Non-operational Periods

4. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled by commanders of all formations.

During Operational Periods (1)

- 5. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled in duplicate by:
 - a. Commanders of all formations.
 - b. Each branch of the staff at formation headquarters commanded by a brigadier or above.
 - c. Heads of services not below the rank of lieutenant colonel.
 - d. Personal staffs and officers holding special appointments.
 - e. Unit commanders.
 - f. Commanders of a detachment of a unit when so ordered.

COMPILATION

6. Both original and duplicate copies are to consist of:

- a. Cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted).
- b. Index as printed on cover.
- c. Narrative (AF C 2118) (Adapted).
- d. Annexes as shown in the Index.

7. All details of the unit or formation (if a detachment is concerned, the name of the parent unit), period covered and enclosure numbers of the annexes are to be shown on the cover. If there has been a change of command since the last report, the date of assumption by the new commanding officer is to be included.

8. The annexes are to be assembled in the groups shown on the cover. If there are no enclosures for an annex NIL will be entered on the cover. If additional annexes are convenient for a particular headquarters starting at B.

for operations form Annex "Z", "TOP SECRET" the document. It is to be prepared and disposed of as

TENTS

as well as map references), establishment, equipment

and orders given.

the day's fighting, including company movements.

Commander with regard to equipment, tactics, organization

of potential importance.

of officers, men and equipment.

equipment captured.

employed in the time not accounted for. The type of

and to save work as much information as possible is to be recorded on the documents issued and received, routine returns, etc. All documents and the time of receipt or despatch is to be given.

the annexes, but need not give a precis of any of them.

(continued on back cover)

COMMANDERS DIARIES

SECRET

VE C318 (vqubec)

BVKL 3

COVERING LETTER

BVKL 3

PART 3
DISPOSAL

13. **Original Commander's Diary.** This is to be forwarded monthly, unless otherwise ordered, by the seventh day of the succeeding month direct to AHQ.
14. **Duplicate Commander's Diary.** This must be clearly marked as a duplicate. It is to be sent separately from the original to AHQ one month after the original has been despatched but not before the former has been acknowledged.
15. When overseas, both copies of diaries are to be sent through the Army Records organization in the overseas theatre but at different times.
16. **TOP SECRET Supplementary Diaries.**
 - a. The documents referred to in Paragraph 9 together with a list of them made out on AF C 2118 (Adapted) must be placed in separate cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted). All details must be filled in and the cover clearly marked in red: "ANNEX Z — OFFICER ONLY". It may be convenient to group the papers by appendices.
 - b. Supplementary diaries must be forwarded under the normal rules for TOP SECRET correspondence, to AHQ. The inner envelope must be plainly marked:

TOP SECRET
ANNEX Z to

Commanders Diary of.....(Formation or Unit)

From.....to..... (Dates)

- c. The duplicate supplementary diaries must be despatched as shown in Paragraph 14 as soon as receipt of the original has been acknowledged.

This form is to be enclosed with the annexes in AF-C 2119 (Adapted).

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF - C 2118 (Adapted)
Revised Jun, 1965

UNIT/FORMATION 110 Sig Sqn

MONTH AND YEAR JANUARY 1972

REFERENCE MAP

COMMANDING OFFICER Maj P. G. WILKINS

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	1		<p>New Years Day was full of incident: we suffered a 29 hour outage on the S8AA due to hits on the circuit although we were receiving low distortion. We could not convince Singapore SCO's of the reasons for the problem. Traffic was relayed via Singapore over the S8AB for the duration of the outage.</p> <p>Discovered we had misread an instruction on disposal of gift stores received on 24 Jan: Three annexes were required by 31 Dec but we had interpreted that only Annex B was was required by 31 Dec and the other annexes could be submitted later. Much work was required to complete the annexes (including a full stocktake) so we requested an extension of time for Annex A and C until 4 Jan. Even so there was little time and it meant working all day New Years Day.</p>	
	2		<p>Originated a signal to CO.9 ANZUK Sig Regt outlining our appreciation of the circuit problems with S8AA, and requested him to try and explain the situation to his SCO's to try and speed up restoration of the circuits: we were wasting a lot of time with futile loops through Clark which printed 5's. Continued work on the gift stores programme.</p>	
	3		<p>S8AA showing improvement and giving 55% availability. Had a unit lecture on VD - it scared the chaps but the effect will not be lasting.</p>	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	4		S8AA still reasonable : 51%. The CARA Packing Team prepared to return to Long Binh: they have done a tremendous job for us.	
	5		Received a very abusive and sarcastic signal from CO 9 ANZUK Sig Regt which not only called me a liar for the facts stated in my signal of 2 Jan but which categorically denied any lack of understanding on the part of Singapore SCO's and accused 110 Sig Sqn of inaccurate log keeping and other matters. Such a response was beyond my understanding and I was hard put to restrain myself from replying in similar vein. However such bickering between stations could only worsen the situation and I began drafting a signal which I hoped would cool the situation while reiterating the facts of the signal of 2 Jan : which fortunately I am able to prove by quoting from the engineering logs from Singapore. I regret the need to do this but having been accused of lying had a responsibility to myself and the Squadron to show that we were in fact reporting the situation as it happened and were only trying to get the circuit functioning efficiently. The CARA team departed: they did a magnificent job and a separate report is to be submitted.	
	6-9		Continued preparations for RTA and decided on dates of relocation of SHQ to Saigon, closing of messes, RTF and Diggers Club etc. Visited Saigon 7/8 Jan and attended	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

MONTH AND YEAR

REFERENCE MAP

UNIT/FORMATION

COMMANDING OFFICER

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	10		<p>C of S conferences as SO Sigs/OC 110. Arranged to perform installation of an 80' mast at Van Kiep for the AATTV Admin Link to Saigon which was necessary due to relocation of JWTC. Discovered that we hadn't done so badly on the submission of Annexes A and B mentioned on the Diary on 1 Jan : All the other units who had <u>not</u> misread the instructions required extensions past 4 Jan to fully complete the annexes.</p> <p>Received signals from HQ AUSTCAN about poor period of comms on S8AA over the Xmas New Year period, upon which we had already had words with 9 ANZUK Sig Regt, and upon the problems of differing stats between the three reporting stations. These signals were answered to the best of our ability after conferring separately with 6 Sig Regt and 9 Sig Regt. Commenced AATTV mast installation.</p>	
	11		<p>Answers from 9 Sig Regt indicate that our angry exchanges of 5th and 6th are all forgiven and that we are back on a cordial basis again. This is good since it means better cooperation on the circuit and better availability.</p> <p>Visited by Vung Tau Area Comd COL NICKEL. Completed AATTV mast installation : will test tomorrow will probably be a very marginal circuit.</p>	
	12		<p>Tests on AATTV link showed fives from Saigon but only twos the other way. This was expected, but we will conduct further tests to try and improve it.</p>	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

UNIT/FORMATION.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	13		<p>Routine day except we were ordered by Deputy Comd 1ATF to repair a local unit phone of EMPORIUM switchboard. Explained to him that unit switchboards and extensions are a unit responsibility and we could not accept the responsibility to do all unit repairs for them: we would do emergency repairs as a favour but just do not have the organization nor the people to accept all unit tasks. He did not appreciate this and got quite angry. There appears to be a deficiency in overall command/control and designation of responsibilities in relation to Sigs responsibilities. Obviously Sigs can not be made responsible for every bodgie and badly wired unit phone system which always proliferate in a static area, but units themselves have no capability to maintain telephone systems although equipment can be repaired through EME channels. This does not help the units when the actual line system is causing the fault. The answer perhaps lies in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. strict control by Comd HQ (1ATF etc) over the type and extent of wiring performed within unit areas for phone systems so that the facilities provided do not become excessive.b. Installation and maintenance of these systems by RA Sigs.c. Adequate provision on the establishments should of RA Sigs units to enable these additional responsibilities to be carried out.	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

UNIT/FORMATION.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			Alternatively unit establishments should include personnel trained in basic line and telephone installation and maintenance : this is really uneconomical in terms of work required and cannot be considered justified. The deputy commander problem was solved by suggesting that the particular phone involved be made an extension on EMU, as it was an important phone. This made access to EMU easier and made 110 Sig Sqn fully responsible for its maintenance and repair.	
	14		To Saigon to attend planning conference. Advised that we had transferred our two US loan trucks from Saigon to 198 Wks Sect to allow RTA of Aust trucks of 198. Separate arrangements have been made for shift change transport in Saigon. HQ Coy is providing busses for the return trips : normal morning and evening bus runs are used where possible.	
	15		Went to TIGER exchange to see the manager Bill Mathews but he was delayed and I had to leave to catch the Wallaby and missed seeing him. Attended the closure of the Sgts Mess : made a short speech and presented a plaque to the PMC on behalf of the Mess Members.	
	16		Attended the final Admin Tp barbeque and presented and received plaques. Otherwise a quiet Sunday which was appropriate to my 12th Wedding Anniversary.	

This form is to be enclosed with the annexes in AF - C 2119 (Adapted).

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF - C 2118 (Adapted)
Revised Jun, 1965

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

UNIT/FORMATION.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	17		<p>Held discussions with TF on EMU closure : they cannot reduce the number of phones in time for the scheduled closure and replacement by SB86. We arranged to delay closure to the latest possible date - 5/6 Feb : which makes things very difficult for us : we have to rewire the power and keep the generators going until this is done - the Engineers are unhappy because they wanted the generators for RTA on 19 Jan, but we will need them now until 24th Jan at least.</p> <p>Team went up to Van Kiep on JWTC link and erected HF antenna for GRC106 test. They return tomorrow and will establish HF cct and then try to improve the VHF shot.</p> <p>Investigated the US advisor net : it is a HF shot also : they can't use VHF from there either so we will be lucky if we can get it to work.</p>	
	18		<p>As predicted the VHF link to Van Kiep did not improve. Our plan now is to build a full scale 5 element Yagi for a lower frequency which will have less attenuation and hopefully will clear the hills better, and to raise the mast another 20 feet.</p> <p>Noted that the Engineers had done it again : backed a truck into the mast it will have to be repaired before it can be raised. We were very lucky guys didnt break and the whole thing come tumbling down.</p> <p>Advised the staff of the impending closure of System 101 and the consequent increase</p>	

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH and YEAR..... REFERENCE MAP..... COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Serial	Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and/or enclosure No.
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
				in difficulty of contacting Vung Tau because of the reduced number of TIGER EMU trunks.	
		19		Commenced working on the redraft of the Military Working arrangement with USMACV for AAAG (in my role as SO Sigs 2). The cutover of the MRS. Too much detail to include here - it is all covered in the Sqn Monthly Report and in a separate signalled report on the cutover. It was under control at all times and only minimal loss of traffic time was experienced : and this was due to another station controlled by the US.	
		20-21		A hectic weekend deinstalling equipment after the cutover of the MRS.	
		22		Team up to Van Kiep to increase mast height : not successful : could not remove the sections damaged by engineers in the manner planned. I moved up to Saigon ahead of the shift of HQ.	
		23		Team up to Van Kiep again : put up the mast 20' and reerected the original antenna. It worked as before : 5's from Saigon, 1's to 2's from Van Kiep. Will have to wait until we can local purchase materials to construct the lower frequency Yagi : this is a big antenna - 10' wide and 12' long so it it must be structually sound.	

This form is to be enclosed with the annexes in AF-C2119 (Adapted).

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

AF - C2118 (Adapted)
Revised Apr. 1969

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH and YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Serial	Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and/or enclosure No.
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
		24		Heavily engaged in staff work as SO Sigs 2.	
		25		Sqn HQ relocated in Saigon except for Q det which remains Vung Tau to RTA stores.	
		26-29		Antenna Construction Team of Wilkins, Davies and Montgomery scoured Cholon to find the materials and then constructed two 5 element 50MHz Yagis from aluminium tubing and odd clamps and fittings obtained from Cholon second hand dealers. A very high powered team indeed!! I took the antenna for Van Kiep down to Vung Tau and went with the rigger team to Van Kiep. The antenna was installed and comms were good both ways. We will have to send the team back early Feb to fully ruggedize and weatherproof the antenna as we did not have time initially. Arranged with Task Force for a teletypewriter teleconference facility to be initiated between Saigon and Vung Tau from 7 Feb when EMU (MTC1) is replaced by EMU MINOR (SB86) on 5/6 Feb and we lose some more trunk telephone facilities. Our test of a teleconference with Canberra went OK and a further test is scheduled for today.	

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH and YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Serial	Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or Information	Reference to annex letter and/or enclosure No.
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
		30	"	Thought the saga of the Van Kiep link was over but we ^{we} had installed the Saigon set upon the roof of FWMAO for minimum feeder loss and installed a GRA39 remote into the G2's office. This was not acceptable to the engineers : they wanted a remote in the CE's branch <u>and</u> a remote to 198 Wks Sect at Van Kiep about 800 metres away from JWTC. This was agreed by C of S.	
		31		Installed the remotes at both ends and tested out OK. Boo Koo work on the staff side : the Sqn is being sadly neglected but it is unavoidable. Telephones for AAAG are a real problem - the departing SO Sigs 3 (Capt Brown) left for Vung Tau on 30th and before he left advised that everything was in hand - locations plotted on a plan of the building - directory completed etc. Unfortunately I was too busy to check in detail and took his word for it : his idea of complete and my idea of complete are worlds apart. The incoming acting SO Sigs 3 Capt Semple has had to start again from scratch. I blame myself for not checking in detail before Brown left but the damage had already been done and nothing short of delaying his RTA would have helped - I was happy to get him out of the way.	

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R193-1-46

Headquarters
Australian Force
VIETNAM

*2 Feb 72

AHQ (D Sigs)(5)

For Information

1 ATF
110 Sig Sqn (6)
104 Sig Sqn INGLEBURN (through 1 Sig Regt)

MONTHLY REPORT - JAN 72
INCLUDING 110 SIG SQN MONTHLY REPORT

GENERAL

1. January was the most hectic month ever for 110 Sig Sqn and SO Sigs Branch HQ AFV, with a vast amount of work done in moving the MRS and Sqn HQ to Saigon, preparing the FWMAO Building for HQ AAAG, preparing stores, equipment and vehicles for RTA, and in the countless minor A and Q tasks associated with a painstakingly slow withdrawal.

General Activities

2. Highlights of the month were:
- a. Closure of MRS Vung Tau on 19 Jan 72.
 - b. Opening of MRS Saigon.
 - c. Closure of 1 OSU Comcen.
 - d. Closure of Aust RR System 101.
 - e. Opening of AATTV and JWTC rear link to Saigon from new location.
 - f. Lowering of RX HLPAs mast by US Sky Crane Helicopter.
 - g. Move of Sqn HQ less Q element to Saigon.
 - h. Formation of Det 110 Sig Sqn Vung Tau which will provide comms to 1 ATF until they RTA on HMAS Sydney.
 - i. Cutover from EMU (AN/MTC1) to EMU MINOR (SB86) and reduction in trunking facilities between AFV and 1 ATF.

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- j. More amendments to Q instructions.
- k. Frantic activity to try and get the phones for HQ AAAG organized when it was discovered that previous arrangements made were hopelessly inadequate and incomplete.
- l. Commencement of arrangements for return of OH-58A KIOWA aircraft.
- m. Redesignation of 1 ATF Comcen as Vung Tau Area Comcen and change of speed from 75 to 50 bauds.
- n. Return of the CARA packing team to Long Binh.

TAPE RELAY TRAFFIC

Traffic Levels

- 3. a. Traffic continued to drop at an increasing rate. The statistics are:

<u>Circuit</u>	<u>% decrease</u>
From Melb	26.4%
To Melb	31.8%
From AFV	34.4%
To AFV	30.8%
From Long Binh	17.3%
To Long Binh	24.8%
From ATF	54%
To ATF	54%
From OSU	72.5%
To OSU	72.5%

} 1-12 Jan

- b. MRS Traffic Summary Annex A
- c. Rerun Summary Annex B
- d. Long Term Trends Annex C
- e. Traffic Precedence Breakup Annex D

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OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

1 ATF Switchboard (EMU)

4. Planning was completed for the cutover of EMU from an AN/MTC1 CB board to an SB86 working magneto signalling with local battery. The cutover was put back to 5/6 Feb as 1ATF could not reduce the number of lines sufficiently by the original date planned. 5/6 Feb was the latest date by which the equipment could be extracted and prepared for RTA by the Harima Maru on 15 Feb.

5. The reduction in EMU - TIGER trunks caused by the closure of System 101 caused some congestion and it was subsequently discovered that much of the load on these trunks was from US and Vietnamese nationals from Vung Tau who had discovered over the years that it was easier and more reliable to go via the Australian System than through the DTE. This practise was stopped early Feb from Vung Tau by institution of a trunk call authorization system, but similar measures cannot be instituted in Saigon because the TIGER switchboard is not controlled by AFV. EMU MINOR will now close at 281200 Feb 72.

SDS

6. 1ATF Vehicle Mileage: 1750

a. Dispatches Out: 2346

b. Dispatches In: 85

7. HQ AFV Vehicle Mileage: 790

8. SDS in Saigon will cease after 23 Feb to allow return of the vehicles to Vung Tau for cleaning and RTA on the HMAS Sydney. SDS in Vung Tau will continue until 27 Feb 72 with BER vehicles. SDS cannot continue past that date as the vehicles must be handed in to the PDO yard.

ADS

9. ADS figures are:

a. ADS bags 32

b. Safe Hand bags 25

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10. With effect from 14 Feb 72, a scheduled ADS service using OH-58A KIOWA helicopter is to be initiated to replace the WALLABY ADS system. Four return flights per day between Saigon, Van Kiep and Vung Tau will be employed, giving a maximum delay between flights of 3½ hours during working hours. The system will run in parallel with the Vung Tau Area Comcen until 240001 Feb 72 when the comcen circuit closes. The ADS will continue as the sole means of traffic until 29 Feb. One flight will be made 29 Feb (AM) .

Radio

11. Shipping
a. HMAS Jeparit. Contact was made 13 Jan but not required for traffic until 3 Feb when classified messages were passed both ways.
b. HMAS Sydney. Not required during Jan. Arrangements have been made for coverage of Voyage 4 both North and South. The ship will work to Vung Tau on the way up and to Saigon when at Vung Tau and on the way back.
12. Theatre Emergency Net RIBBON ATLAS. Generally good with only minor maintenance such as replacing batteries and testing allegedly faulty sets: as usual the faults were mostly in the operators.
13. 1ATF Defence Net. No problem.
14. Embassy Communications. The embassy tech was supplied with an AN/PRC 25 and AN/TH5-TG for establishment of the VHF RATT link. Tests will be carried out after he has converted his equipments from double to single current.
15. Radio Australia. Reception varied from very good to very poor during the month, but was mostly poor, especially at night. Monitoring of Radio Australia ceased as at 31 Jan and a letter informing the PMG of this fact has been dispatched.
16. Van Kiep JWTC Rear Link. This project to supply a VHF link to the Free World building was thrust upon the Sqn when JWTC relocated since no elements of 104 Sig Sqn remained. No equip had been retained for this unscheduled task so there was much improvisation and begging borrowing and soft soaping in an attempt to get a theoretically impossible circuit to work. Of course Sigs were not consulted in the relocation which placed JWTC clearly out of line of sight of Saigon and very nearly with full first freznal zone obstruction. Many man hours were spent on this link at a time when every man hour was as precious as a pretty and willing round eye to a love starved digger. The sequence of events was something like this:
a. JWTC moved. No comms from new location.
b. Riggers constructed an 80 ft deeco and mounted a makeshift 60MHZ yagi : comms ok from Saigon but nothing from Van Kiep (The obstructing mountains are very close to Van Kiep and it has been noted that the path is definately non-reciprocal).

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- c. The manufacturing firm of WMD (Wilkins, Montgomery and Davies) constructed two high quality 5 element 50MHZ yagis out of aluminium purchased from the Cholon markets in a frenzied 2 day effort at Saigon Tech Maint. Total cost of project \$VN 14000.
- d. The riggers increased the height of the deeco to 102ft after first making repair to the base of the mast. The Engineers had tried to knock it over but had just failed. The lower frequency, higher gain antennas and extra height did the trick and reasonable comms have now been established. The non-reciprocity of the path is evidenced by the fact that Saigon can be received at Van Kiep fives with the antenna at ground level. Van Kiep can only be heard 3's to 4's at Saigon even with the antenna at full height.

Communications Centre.

- 17. 1.ATF This became the Vung Tau Area Comcen on 19 Jan 72 and changed to one channel operation using a US hired line, field teletype equipments, and 50 baud speed. The comcen is operating smoothly with no problems.
- 18. HQ AFV The comcen became a MRS with the takeover of the Long Binh circuit on 12 Jan 72 and then the Melbourne and Singapore circuits on 19 Jan 72. Despite minor teething troubles the MRS is now operating satisfactorily, except that it is difficult to operate a comcen with the painters in.
- 19. OSU The RAAF OSU Comcen closed 12 Feb 72, with the telegraph link to MRS Vung Tau being replaced with an SDS service to clear formal traffic. The sub account from our crypto accounts were finalized and the material returned.
- 20. MRS Vung Tau. Closed with nostalgia 19 Jan and all equipments deinstalled ready for cleaning and packing by the evening of 20 Jan. Oh for the benefit of hindsight: two complete MRS installations could have been avoided if we had known then what we know now, as the MRS could have remained in Saigon.

ENGINEERING

General

- 21. Telegraph Circuit Availability: Annex E.

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MRS Cutover

22. A separate report on the cutover has been submitted. The cutover did not proceed as smoothly as hoped, but at no stage was control lost over the circuits. A large part of the delay was due to the fact that the Melbourne circuit S8AA was QRT and was held at Vung Tau until it came back to traffic before transferring it to Saigon. Although this added to the delay it was considered prudent to give Saigon a working circuit upon which to start. This proved to be a sound policy as US techs at Saigon DTE failed to provide battery on the changeover, and the fault was immediately obvious. The other equipment and wiring faults experienced were not expected, particularly as extensive testing had been carried out, but the difficulties of constructing a completely new installation in cramped space around a fully operational 24 hour per day comcen were very great and it is a wonder that more problems were not experienced. Congratulations to the techs and operators for a job well done.

23. a. SVN circuits before 12 Jan 72 are shown at Annex H.
b. SVN circuits 13 - 19 Jan 72 are shown at Annex I.
c. SVN circuits after 19 Jan 72 are shown at Annex J.

24. System 101 This was closed 19 Jan 72. The cries of anguish from the trunk users and especially the dispossessed users of sole user trunks bears potent testimony to the quality and reliability of this excellent Siemens FM 12/400 and V212K equipment which has been the backbone of trunk communications in theatre and which cannot be praised highly enough. Perhaps the only criticism which could be made is that they fail so infrequently that when they do fail all the techs with experience in their repair have completed their tours and gone home! We shall be very sorry if we allow future procurements of this type of equipment to be swayed more by cost than quality: the benefits of high quality equipment in an operational theatre cannot be measured by procurement cost alone: the Siemens equipment has repayed it's purchase price many times over in reduced maintenance costs and in provision of reliable 24 hour per day operational communications. With the closure of System 101, the Call Home Phone service from Vung Tau also closed. However the Call Home Phone from Saigon is continuing indefinitely through the kind co-operation of Cable & Wireless and PTT.

25. Teleconference Facilities. Two tests were conducted of a teleconference circuit to Canberra. Both tests were successful and the teleconference facility may now be considered as available according to existing procedures. However the traffic circuit must be QRT for the duration of the conference so it is recommended that conferences only be held when absolutely necessary. A teleconference facility has also been provided between Saigon and Vung Tau to compensate for the reduction in telephone trunks. This has been tested and works satisfactorily, but again the traffic circuit must be QRT and the conferences are only permitted when essential.

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Rear Link

26. Despite a bad period early in the month with much heartburn from HQ AUSTCAN, the availability showed a substantial improvement over December. 110 Sig Sqn availability figures now show a continuous improvement each month over the four month period Oct 71 - Jan 72. It is hoped that this trend will continue, but anything over 60% monthly availability is considered a bonus and periodic bad periods of very low availability must always be expected.

27. Change to 50 Baud. It had been hoped that the circuits could be kept at 75 baud, since the improvement in availability obtained by going to 50 baud was expected to be small and more than compensated for by the reduction in traffic handling capability of the link. However publication of the approved HQ AAAG establishment forced the issue and for purely maintenance reasons it is now considered essential to switch to 50 baud. The reduction of the solitary Tech TG from Cpl to Sig and the STT from WO2 to SSgt are both considered to be unacceptable and separate recommendations have been made for the establishment to be amended to that originally proposed. The TSR's for changeover have been prepared but will not be submitted until further advice is received from AHQ on the establishment recommendations.

Technical Maintenance Workshops.

28. Saigon. The workshops are being consolidated in a new location adjacent to the MRS in the Free World Building. Installation of the new workshop is being severely hampered by the fact that it must remain operational while carpenters, painters and supervisory engineers are being trampled underfoot.

29. Vung Tau. The Vung Tau Tech Maint has virtually ceased operations and is now being used for packaging of stores and preparation of 114's. Maint is being undertaken from Saigon except for minor telegraph machine maint.

Line and Antenna

30. Line. A very busy month which included preparation for the EMU cutover, routine maintenance, and installation of an AN/GRA 39 remote control at Van Kiep from JWTC to 198 Works Sect. The line for this route (approx 1000 metres) had to be recovered from surplus line laid at Vung Tau.

31. Antenna. A very busy month indeed. All the masts at Vung Tau were dropped - some with difficulty, and a new 102ft mast installed at Van Kiep. The RX HLPAs could not be lowered by conventional means since because of corrosion the rigger would have had to hacksaw every bolt and snap the heads off with a cold chisel. This would have taken weeks. It was discovered that a pilot of the US "Skycrane" helicopter unit based at Vung Tau was particularly partial to "green" and for the lure of a case of the amber fluid was prepared to conduct a "training flight" over the 110 Sig Sqn area and "accidentally" catch his grappling irons on the HLPAs mast. The whole operation proved extremely successful and is shown in the photographs in Annex F. What the pilot did not realize was that one interested spectator of the whole operation was his Bn Comd, who sportingly preferred to have seen nothing.

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The Australian Forces in Vietnam have relied to a tremendous extent upon such unofficial assistance, and upon the goodwill of the American Forces: another typical case is the assistance given by the CARA team from 1(US)Sis Bde. Without such assistance the Australian Forces would have been hard put to fulfil their role effectively. I hope this fact is fully appreciated by our planners in planning for future operations in which we just might be required to fend for ourselves.

TRAINING AND DEFENCE

32. Range Practises. These were continued on the normal basis in Vung Tau and also conducted in Saigon.

33. Runs. The weekly effort finally proved too much and the pressure of work so intense that runs have now been cancelled.

34. Unit Lectures. No more unit lectures are scheduled. A VD lecture was held 3 Jan which put the wind up everyone, even the purest of us. The effect appeared to have worn off by 4 Jan.

35. Parades. The final OC's parade will be held early Feb.

36. Defence.

a. Control of Sector 2 at Vung Tau passed to OC Provost on 20 Jan. The Sector CP remains in 110 Sig Sqn area and is manned by 110 Sig Sqn.

b. A defence alert was held in Vung Tau during the period. For once the OC was present. Naturally we won.

CIVIL AFFAIRS

37. Civil affairs support was wound up during the month and no further support is planned.

38. Special approval was given by the 1ATF Gifts Organization for transfer of line and antenna stores to the ARVN Signal School, thus overcoming the problem covered in para 63 of the Dec report. This change in policy was most welcome and has enabled disposal of equipment not suitable for RTA to the organization best able to utilize them.

39. Association with the ARVN boy scouts has continued but will cease on RTA of Cpl WILKINSON, who is highly commended for his efforts over the past year, and who has been made an honorary Scoutmaster of the troop.

PERSONAL ADMINISTRATION

General.

40. The Sqn HQ moved to Saigon over the period 22 - 25 Jan. The Det Orderly Room expanded to take the extra personnel but still looked a disaster area 5 days after the move. At the end of the month things settled down but the separation of the Sqn and Det Vung Tau orderly rooms, with the OC in the Free World building has caused some initial confusion although this is improving.

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41. RA Sigs Vietnam Memorial Fund. The fund now stands at \$2223.92 which includes 110 Sig Sqn and 547 Sig Tp contributions. It is understood that the 104 Sig Sqn contribution will be made direct to the account when it is transferred to Australia. Discussion will be held in Canberra in March with the RA Sigs Corps Committee to consider proposals for control of the fund and commissioning of the memorial.

42. Movements.

March Outs	42
March Ins	1 (Dvr from AFV)
In Theatre	bookoo

43. Promotions.

To Lcpl	3
To T/Cpl	3
To Cpl	3
To T/Sgt	1

44. The usual variations from establishment Annex F is omitted this month as the reductions for INTERFUSE have made this annex meaningless.

Q ADMINISTRATION

45. General. This was another hectic month for Q Tp with the shortage of workers for general closure of the Sqn area in Vung Tau being the major concern. More amendments, changes and interpretations of Q, Admin and Gift instructions added to the problem.

46. Boards of Survey. These continued in the main for items unsuitable for RTA in accordance with current Q and Gift instructions.

47. Unit/SP Stores for RTA. A big effort was required to clear all the stores and equipment released on the closure of the MRS, System control and System 101. Shipping figures for the month for RTA on J44 are:

BMSS type A	11
ISO containers	1
Wooden crates	13
Trucks Van 2½ton	1 (Pantech)
Trucks ¾ton	4

48. Minor Works (PA&E). Running repairs continued. Repairs and replacements to rusty/broken toilet canopies on the OR's latrines are still to be carried out.

49. Transport. Mark 5 trucks gave some problems during the month and 2 vehicles currently await call in to 102 Fd Wksps. Washing/cleaning of vehicles for RTA is a real problem and is absorbing many manhours which could be more profitably employed on other tasks. The standard of cleanliness required is almost medical and antiseptic in it's thoroughness and it is taking 3 to 5 days per vehicle for cleaning even before repainting and greasing. Each vehicle we can get BER'ed is a great help to us as each BER'ed vehicle can be used until 27 Feb and does not require to be cleaned before hand in to the PDO (Property Disposal Organization) Yard.

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50. Messing. The 110 Sig Sqn kitchen is now required to remain open until 27 Feb, one month longer than planned, due to abandoning of central messing proposals by 1ATF. The standard of messing has dropped due to the substitution of tinned equivalent for most of the fresh rations. However the cooks are doing an excellent job with the materials to hand.

51. Civilian Staff. Three members were released during the month. The remaining civilian staff will be released 27 Feb.

52. Removal of Stores/Furniture not for RTA. Quantities of accommodation type furniture and equipment were progressively delivered to the 1ATF Gift Disposal Store during the month in accordance with schedules compiled over the Christmas New Year period.

53. 110 Sig Sqn area Vung Tau close-down. Arrangements for close down of the area including removal of rubbish, consolidation of remaining accommodation stores, and cleaning of vacated huts are continuing. The Sgts and soldiers messes and the officers quiet room accounts have been closed.

54. Packing of stores for RTA.

a. The CARA packing team departed 5 Jan 72 after completing all packing tasks available at the time. They left sufficient packaging material to cover the equipment recovered on closure of the MRS and had trained a 110 Sig Sqn packing team in their methods. This 110 Sig Sqn team handled the subsequent packing very well.

b. The effectiveness of the CARA packing methods was put to the test during the month when a fully packed BMSS fell off the back of a 5ton truck moving at 15mph when being transferred from 110 Sig Sqn to 30 Terminal Sqn. There was not time for a full assessment of damage (the BMSS was a write-off) but quick checks showed that the items packed by CARA methods suffered little if any damage while other more robust items packed by the conventional methods had suffered badly.

c. A brief article on the formation and employment of CARA is attached as Annex G to this report.

d. A letter of appreciation to CG 1(US) Sig Bde and letters of commendation for each member of the CARA team were drafted for signature by C of S HQ AFV on behalf of COMAFV (absent on duty in Singapore) and were dispatched early Feb.

CONCLUSION

55. The work load for January has been truly staggering and all members of the Squadron are commended for a job well done-- but not yet complete. February has already seen an intensification of the work load in some areas due to the closure of the 110 Sig Sqn Ops Room.

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56. The theme for INTERFUSE on the Sigs net could very well be too much too soon and too little too late= too much equipment and personnel out of theatre too soon and too little information on remaining and new requirements to late to effectively plan for them. This has been a major cause of the heavy workload now existing, and a lesson for future withdrawals is to strongly resist any attempt to thin out Sigs personnel early. This pressure was not resisted during INTERFUSE and we are now suffering the penalty.

57. This will be the last complete monthly report submitted by SO Sigs 2/OC 110 Sig Sqn, although a final Vietnam report will be submitted 26 Feb. A further Supplementary Report will be submitted by Capt Montgomery covering the period 26 Feb - 7 Mar which includes the withdrawal of 1ATF from Vung Tau, handover to HQ AAAG in Saigon, and final pullout of all elements of 110 Sig Sqn from Vietnam. The 110 Sig Sqn Final Report will be submitted on completion of reorganization and return of stores and equipment from Watsonia.

58. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those supporting organizations: HQ AUSTCAN, 6 Sig Regt, 9 ANZUK Sig Regt, and especially 133 Sig Sqn for the help and assistance given to 110 Sig Sqn throughout it's life in Vietnam. This has been a good Squadron which has done it's job well, but the job could not have been done without the continued dedicated support and co-operation of our associated units and headquarters.



(P.G. WILKINS)
Maj
SO Sigs 2 HQ AFV
OC 110 Sig Sqn

Annexes

- A Mrs Traffic Summary
- B Rerun Summary
- C Long Term Trends
- D Traffic Precedence Breakup
- E Telegraph Circuit Availability
- F Removal of HLPAs mast by Skycrane (D Sigs copies only)
- G CARA Report
- H SVN Circuits before 12 Jan 72
- I SVN Circuits 13 to 19 Jan 72
- J SVN Circuits after 19 Jan 72

MAJOR RELAY STATION SAIGON
SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC JANUARY 72

ANNEX A to
HQ AFV R193-1-46
dated 12 Feb 72

Ser	Circuit		Flash	Immediate	Priority	Routine	Total	ZFX
	In	Out						
1	Melb A			1827	1985	2880	6692	851
		Out		1906	1801	2299	6006	1360
2	Melb B			22	126	76	224	64
		Out		18	101	32	151	32
3	AFV Comcen A			37	449	246	732	49
		Out		64	632	455	1151	125
4	AFV Comcen B			1 21	949	882	1952	35
		Out		212	1348	1307	2867	88
5	Vung Tau/ Singapore		-	-	-	-	-	-
		Out						
6	Long Binh			799	142	128	1069	34
		Out		662	75	14	751	2
7	1 ATF Comcen			11	467	544	1022	28
		Out		98	552	976	1626	68
8	1 OSU			11	250	168	429	12
		Out		66	283	209	558	10
9	Services			286	882	680	1848	
		Out		536	1082	425	2043	
10	Totals			3114	5250	5604	13968	1073
		Out		3562	5874	5717	15153	1685
11	Multi Routes Processed		1069					

TRAFFIC RERUN SUMMARY - JANUARY 72

(Percentage calculated on all services)

SAIGON MAJOR RELAY STATION

Ser No	Channel	As % of IN traffic		As % of OUT traffic		Remarks
		This month	Last month	This month	Last month	
1	MELB A*	12.7	15.3	22.7	37.2	
2	MELB B*	28.6	17.6	21.2	20.9	
3	HQ AFV A	6.0	4.6	10.9	5.7	
4	HQ AFV B	1.8	3.1	3.1	5.3	
5	LONG BINH	3.2	12.5	0.3	2.9	
6	1 ATF	2.7	2.5	4.2	3.3	
7	1 OSU RAAF	2.8	1.7	1.8	1.5	
* Note that the Melbourne A circuit is now SBAA circuit via Singapore.						
* " " " " B " " " SBAB " torn tape relayed at Singapore.						

LONG TERM TRENDS

- Notes: 1. Numbers are rounded to three significant figures.
 2. There is no direct relationship between traffic and Australia - Vietnam availability.

MONTH	AUSTRALIA-VIETNAM AVAILABILITY			MRS			COMCEN	
	A%	B%	C%	SAIGON	VUNG TAU	HQ AFV	1 ATF	2 AOD
Jan 70	93.1	89.4		84,800	30,600	18,400	9,700	
Feb	88.7	89.7		84,900	29,800	19,700	10,200	
Mar	80.8	80.0		93,600	32,600	20,200	10,600	
Apr	88.9	83.1		93,600	35,300	19,800	11,100	
May	92.5	87.1		93,700	35,200	19,300	10,000	
Jun	88.8	80.0		91,600	33,800	18,100	8,900	
Jul	88.8	86.0		93,200	35,900	19,000	10,900	
Aug	87.2	81.2		90,700	*	17,800	11,500	
Sep	88.0	82.0		88,800	*	17,000	11,200	
Oct	93.2	82.2		99,700	2,000	19,800	12,300	
Nov	73.0	59.0		1,400	104,300	20,600	12,100	
Dec 70	66.8	67.0		-	95,000	19,500	9,800	
Jan 71	46.8	58.3		-	92,000	18,900	9,800	
Feb	78.4	71.2		-	85,900	17,900	10,200	
Mar	75.4	41.3		-	104,900	21,900	12,000	
Apr	56.2	47.2		-	110,700	23,600	12,500	
May	49.9	61.0		-	117,800	24,400	10,900	1,900
Jun	41.3	56.2		-	109,200	23,900	7,400	5,200
Jul	56.2	58.0		-	91,000	19,300	6,700	6,600
Aug	67.4	55.8		-	79,700	18,100	6,900	4,200
Sep	66.5	46.8		-	84,800	19,300	7,100	3,100
Oct	27.4*	85.0		-	67,600	15,000	9,200	1,000
Nov	43.0*	84.3	62.0	-	63,200	13,300	9,200	-
Dec 71	49.4*	83.4		-	46,000	9,900	5,800	-
Jan 72	61.0*	-		9,000	20,100	4,400	5,000	-

* Note that the Melbourne A circuit is now the S8AA circuit via Singapore.

ANNEX D to
HQ AFV R193-1-46
dated 12 Feb 72

TRAFFIC PRECEDENCE BREAKUP FOR JANUARY 1972

REAR LINK

	In	Out	Total
Flash			
Immediate	1849	1924	3773
Priority	2111	1902	4013
Routine	2956	2331	5287
Total	6916	6157	13073
ZFX	915	1392	2307

IN THEATRE

	In	Out	Total
Flash			
Immediate	1265	1638	2903
Priority	3139	3972	7111
Routine	2648	3386	6034
Total	7052	8996	16048
ZFX	158	293	451

TOTAL

	In	Out	Total
Flash			
Immediate	3114	3562	6676
Priority	5250	5874	11124
Routine	5604	5717	11321
Total	13968	15153	29121
ZFX	1073	1685	2758

TELEGRAPH CIRCUIT AVAILABILITY SUMMARY

Ser No	Channel	Availability	Percentage of OLC faults & alignments	Other Eqpt Faults	Bearer	Propagation
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
1	MELB A*	61.0%	2.6	4.2	23.8	8.4
2	MELB B*	-	-	-	-	-
3	HQ AFV A	85%	6.6%	8.0	0.4	
4	HQ AFV B	93.3	2.9	2.8	1.0	
5	HQ ATF	96%	0.5	3.5		
6	LONG BINH	97.8	1.0	1.0	0.2	
7	RAAF V/T	89.5	1.6	8.7	0.2	
8	GYL	84.6	1.8	2.2	10.4	1.0

* NOTE THAT THE MELBOURNE A CIRCUIT IS NOW THE S8AA CIRCUIT VIA SINGAPORE.

* " " " " B " " " " TAPE RELAY " " .

ANNEX F to
HQ AFV R193-1-46
dated 12 Feb 72

REMOVAL OF HHPA MAST BY SKYCRANE

HOOK-ON

LIFT

ANY ORDER--TO GO

With the emphasis on troop withdrawal and equipment retrograde, it was only natural to task someone to pack the Army's extensive communications-electronics (C-E) assets in Vietnam. To perform this mission the 1st Signal Brigade established the Communications Assets Recovery Agency (CARA).

The agency was begun in 1969 as the Communications Assets Recovery Group, soon redesignated Branch, under the Support Division of the Communications Systems Engineering and Management Agency (CSEMA).

As the troop reductions increased, so did the amount of C-E equipment to be retrograded, and in March 1971 the Communications Assets Recovery Branch was redesignated CARA.

CARA is a provisional unit specifically tailored to deinstall fixed communications-electronics assets and the property associated with them, and to pack this equipment for shipment. CARA is under the 160th Signal Group for administrative control, but is under CSEMA for operational direction.

The Communications Assets Recovery Branch is the working arm of CARA. It consists of three 42-man mobile teams, each of which is capable of dismantling and completely packing up an Integrated



Figure 9 - This is a job in which a man can start at the top.



Figure 10 - Building parts are coded to speed reinstallation.

Communications System/Dial Telephone Exchange site, and a fixed team, which handles packing in the Long Binh area. The teams are further divided into specialized sections, such as communications-electronics and fixed plant, and a nine-man team has been put together specifically to deinstall antennas.

CSEMA provides an effective liaison between CARA and other Brigade agencies. CSEMA helps arrange logistics support for all operations, and oversees site deinstallations when the equipment will be reinstalled in Vietnam.

For an average job 60 tons of packing material are moved to the site from one of four preposition storage points located throughout the country. Nearby signal units are tasked to provide

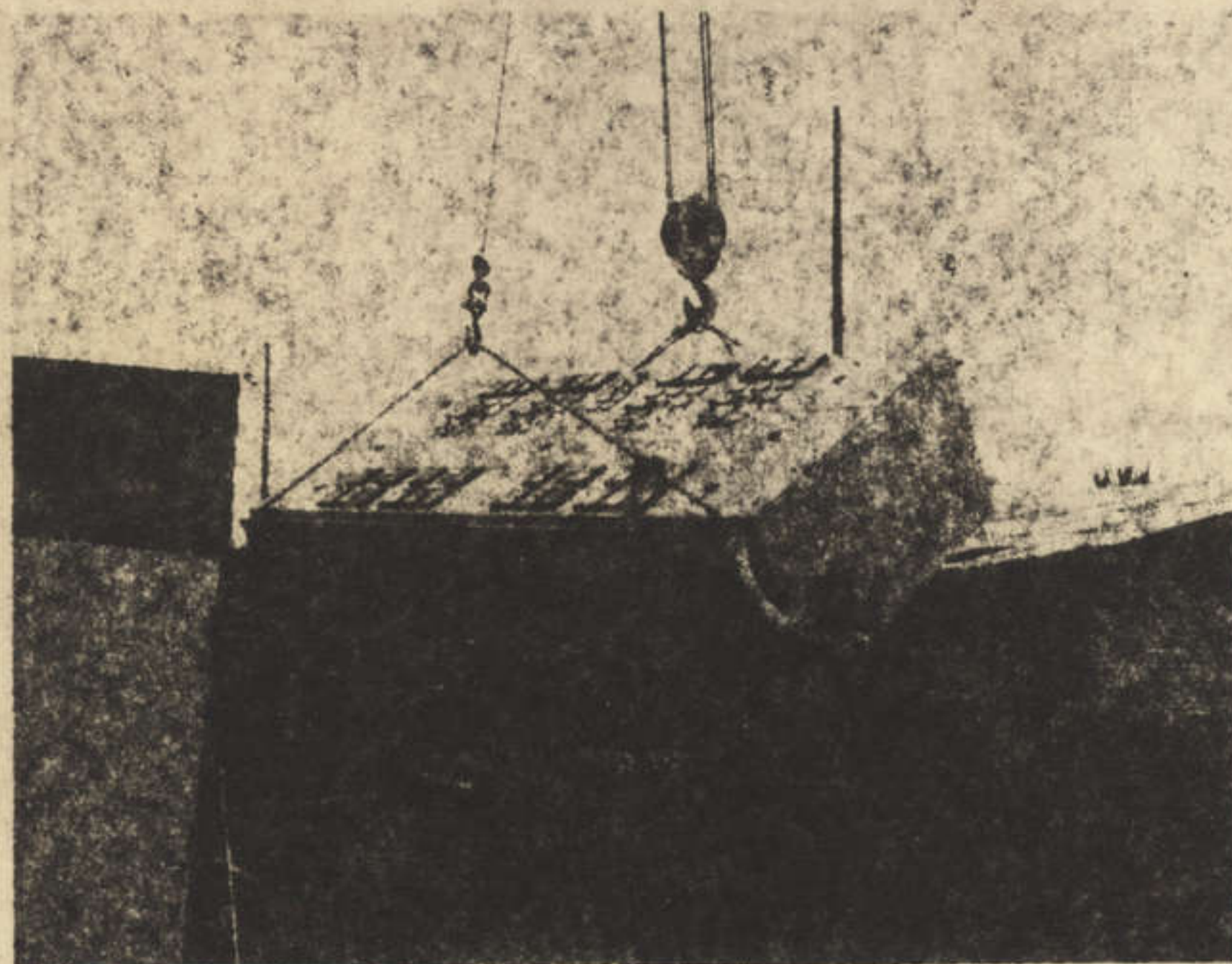
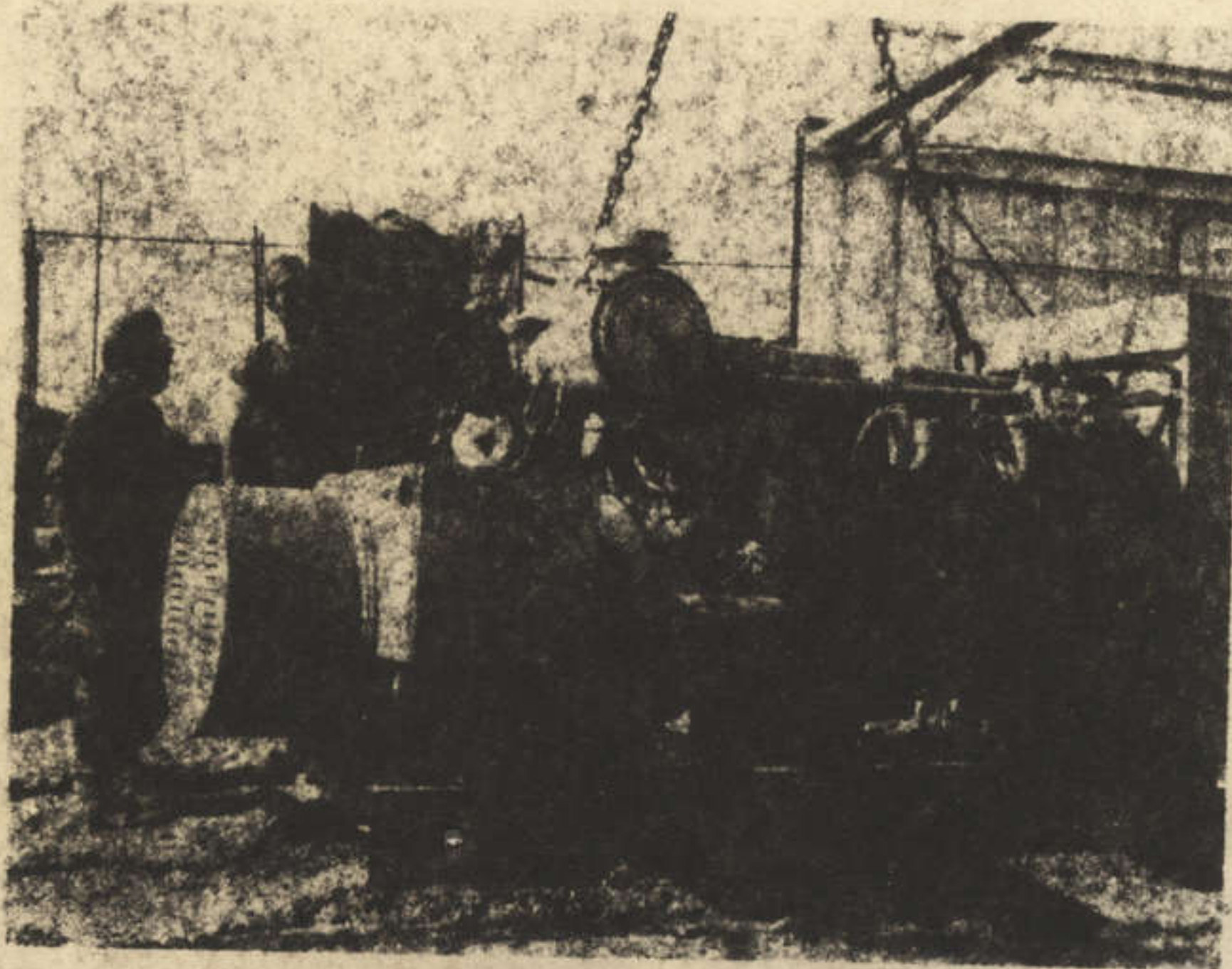


Figure 11 - Sensitive electronics equipment must be handled gently.

Figure 12 - Moving big generators requires special handling.



vehicles, mess and billeting support, and the CARA team then moves onto the site.

The teams are equipped with tools ranging from pliers, crew-drivers and table saws to forklifts and tractors. An assembly line is established for each type of equipment and it goes through the assorted stages of packing, wrapping, protecting, foaming and boxing. Dessicants are wrapped with the gear to take out the moisture and each piece is sealed in special barrier paper which then has the air pumped out and is heat sealed to be air tight. Chemical foam is hand-mixed and envelops plastic-wrapped gear in a mass of goo which hardens into the shape of the equipment and prevents damage from any sort of jar.

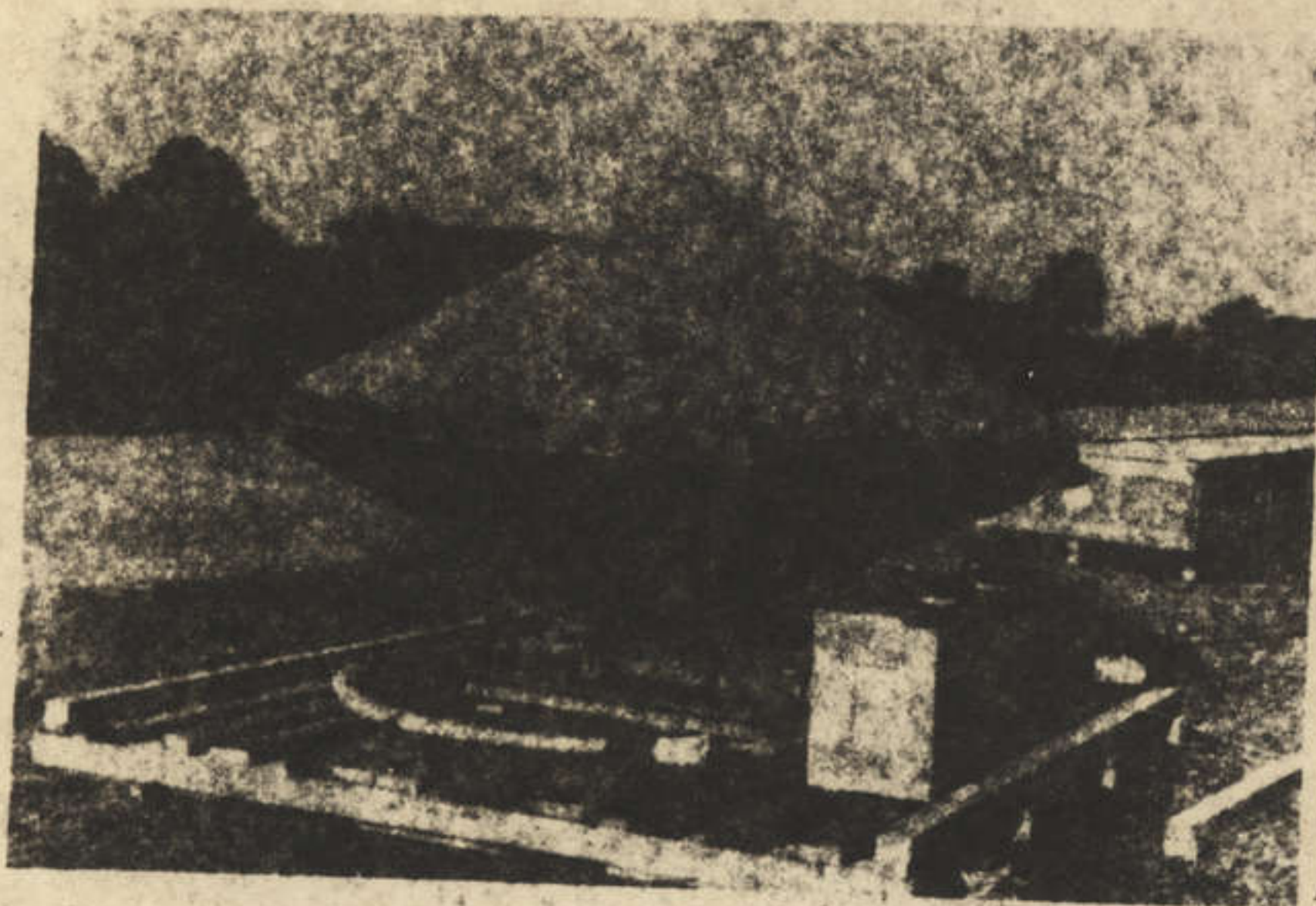


Figure 13 - Reflector is capped with weather-proof dome for protection.

Projects thus far have included the deinstallation of a satellite terminal, seven complete ICS sites (high capacity radios, wire heads plus the assorted multiplexers and test equipment), 14 buildings, 28 100-kilowatt generators, seven complete antenna assemblies, five dial telephone exchanges (with a minimum of 1,000 lines each), and 12 radio terminals plus antennas, five UNIVAC 1004 and five IBM 360/20 computers.

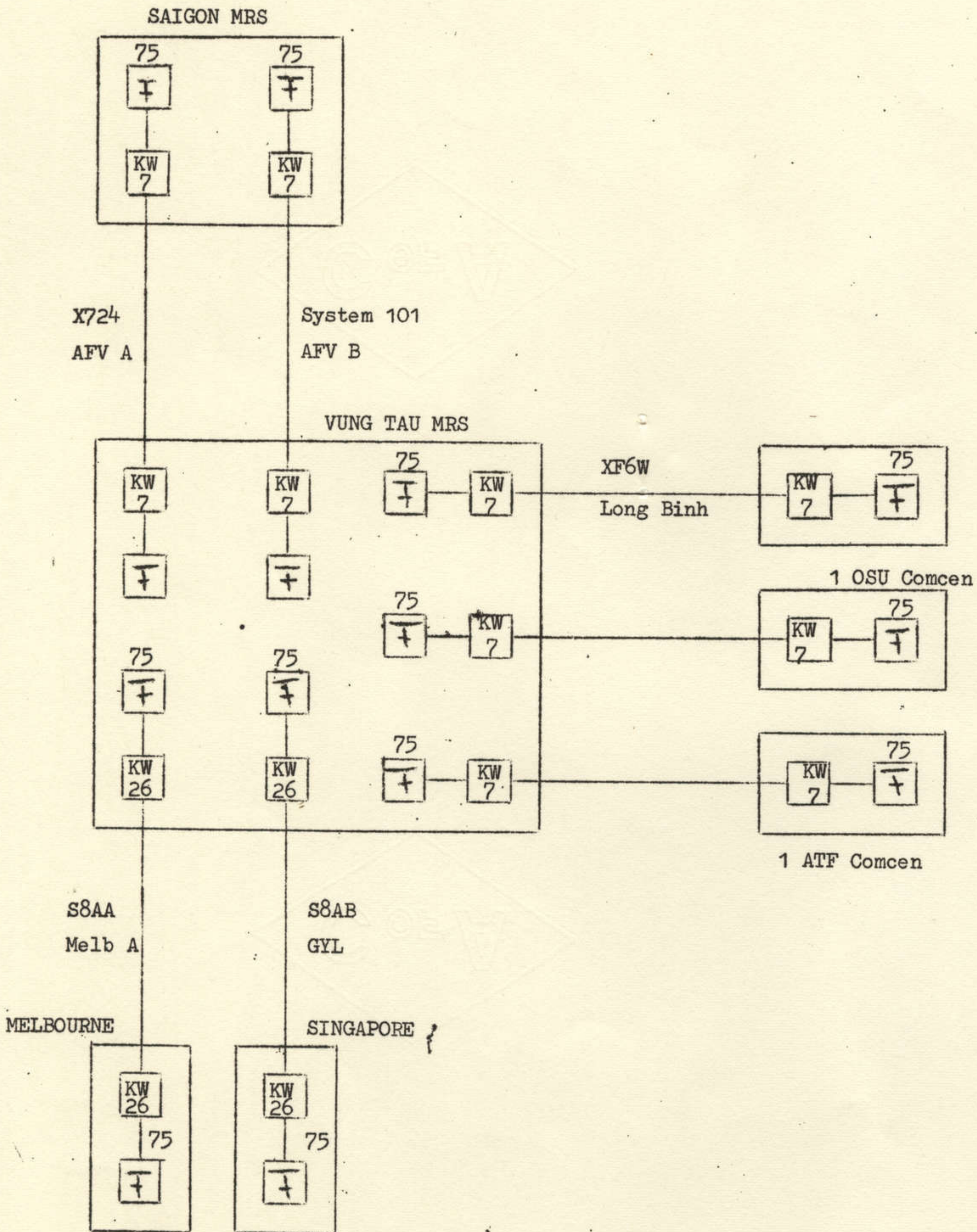
The equipment recovered is shipped out of country to meet the Army's worldwide communications commitments, or is reinstalled in Vietnam. CARA has responsibility only for deinstalling and packing; shipping is the responsibility of the unit losing the gear.

CARA has estimated that it costs approximately \$50,000 for labor and materials to deinstall a typical three-system ICS site, which costs about \$145,000, and \$65,000 to deinstall a 1500-line DTE, which costs about \$230,000. From these figures it is readily apparent that CARA is saving the Army (and the taxpayer) a good deal of money, and is helping to insure the orderly withdrawal of the US and its assets from the war.

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ANNEX **N** TO
MONTHLY REPORT
DATED FEB 72

SVN CCTS (BEFORE 12 JAN 72)

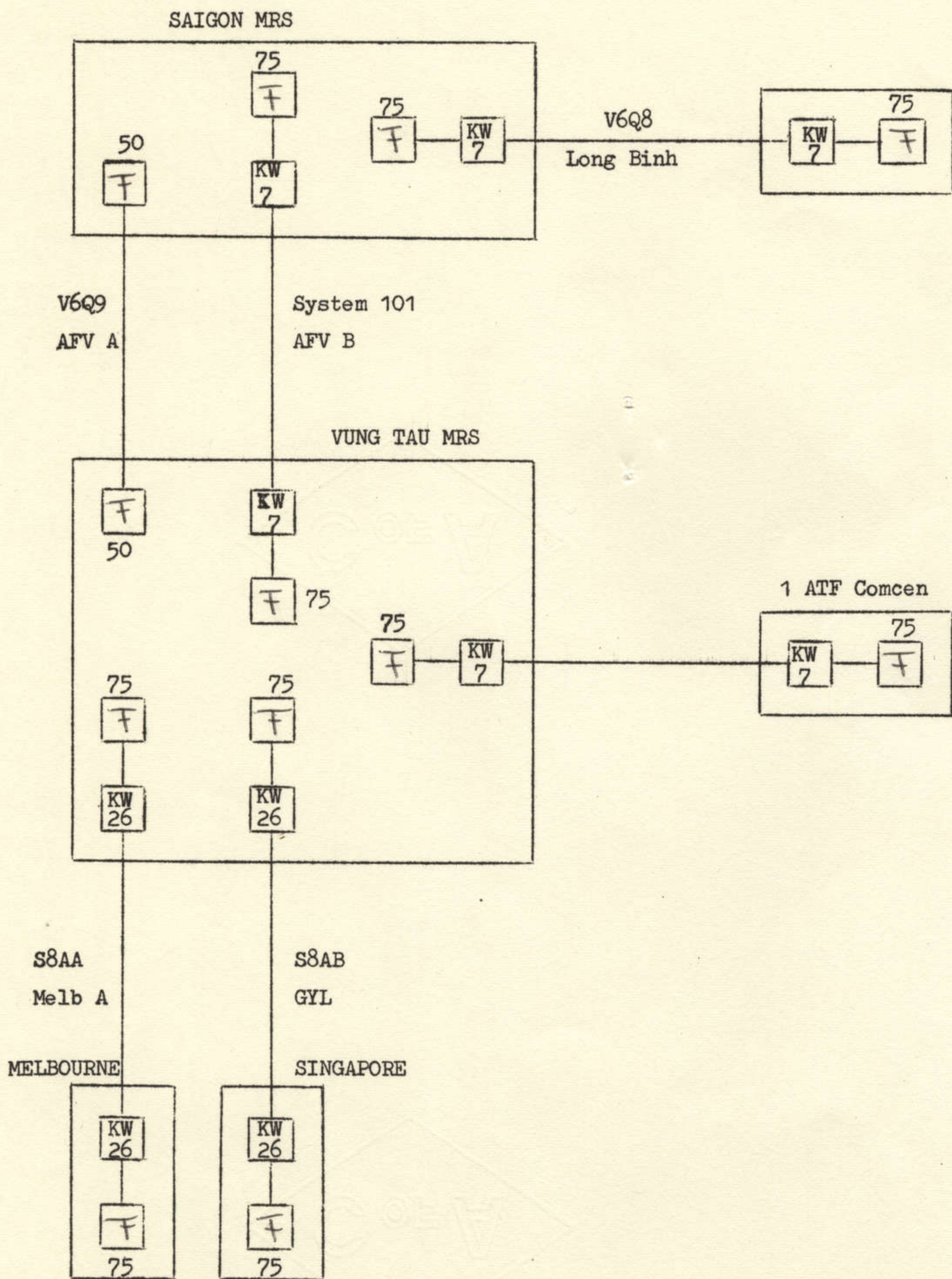


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ANNEX I TO
MONTHLY REPORT
DATED FEB 72

SVN CCTS (13 - 19 JAN 72)

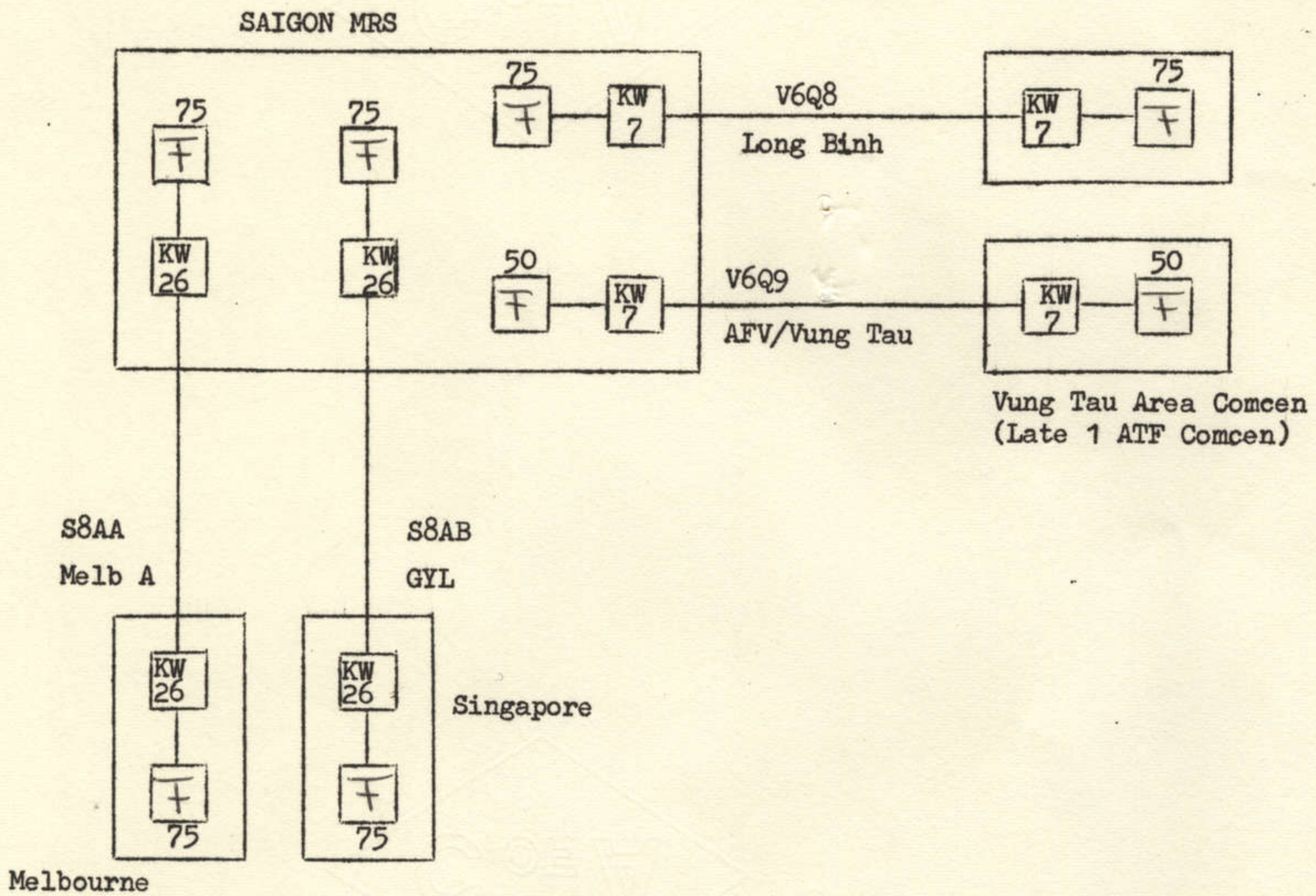


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ANNEX J TO
MONTHLY REPORT
DATED FEB 72

SVN CCTS (AFTER 19 JAN 72)



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