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NAVAL FORCES INTELLIGENCE STUDY (NAFIS) - VIETNAM

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SHIP AND CRAFT TYPES

FF	Frigate
FFL	Light Frigate
PGF	Patrol Ship
PG	Patrol Escort
PCS	Submarine Chaser
PTG	Missile Attack Boat
PT	Motor Torpedo Boat
PC	Motor Gunboat
PB	Patrol Boat
PBR	River/Roadstead Patrol Boat
MSB	Minesweeping Boat
LST	Tank Landing Ship
LSM	Medium Landing Ship
LFS	Amphibious Warfare Fire Support Ship
LCU	Utility Landing Ship
LCM	Medium Landing Craft
LCP	Personnel Landing Craft
AG	Miscellaneous Auxiliary
YAG	Experimental Service Craft
YFR	Refrigerated Lighter
YO	Fuel Lighter
YTL	Small Harbor Tug
YWN	Water Barge
YFDL	Small Floating Drydock
APB	Self-Propelled Barracks Craft

Prior to the fall of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), the North Vietnamese Navy (NVN) consisted of 39 patrol craft plus the coastal junk/riverine force. The only offensive threat consisted of three KOMAR Class guided missile boats.

The Vietnamese Navy, with the acquisition of non-evacuated former South Vietnamese assets and Soviet deliveries over the last year, is the largest navy in Southeast Asia.* The Soviets have provided 26 units over the last 14 months, including 2 PETYA Class FFLs, 6 SHERSHEN Class PTs, 3 ZHUK Class PBs, 2 OSA II Class PTGs, and 1 POLNOCHNY Class LSM. The inventory includes 3 principal combatants, 192 patrol units, 51 amphibious warfare ships/craft, 104 landing and 33 auxiliary service craft, plus the river patrol and coastal junk force of approximately 800 vessels. These figures are broad estimates due to insufficient data on the ability of the Vietnamese to repair and maintain former RVN Navy vessels. Reportedly, approximately one-third of the original 984 patrol/river craft were sunk prior to the fall of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN). Subsequently, the inventory of the smaller ex-RVN units has been reduced by about 10 percent per year based on maintenance problems and lack of spare parts.

The General Directorate of Coastal Defense, established in 1955, formed the basis for the Navy Operational Command. From this modest beginning, a small naval branch evolved with a mission of patrolling coastal and inland waters; it performed the combined functions of a coast guard, fisheries patrol, and customs control. Since then, the Navy's functions have expanded into those of a coastal defense and surveillance force.

The Naval Directorate is located at Hanoi, with Fleet Headquarters--which acts as Naval Headquarters--located at Haiphong. There are five Naval Region Headquarters located at Haiphong, Vinh/Ben Thuy, Da Nang, Vung Tau, and Rach Gia. Principal naval bases are located at Haiphong, Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Da Nang, Cam Ranh, Ha Tou, and

Although Thailand has five more principal combatants, the Vietnamese Navy has considerably more patrol, mine, and auxiliary craft.

Port Wallut. There are smaller installations known to be located at Quang Yen, Quang Khe, Phuc Loi, and An Thoi (on Phu Quoc Island). Qui Nhon has become more active in the last year, but may be strictly commercially oriented.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) has declared a 200-NM Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

2. MISSIONS AND TASKS

The Navy's mission is to provide for the defense and security of territorial waters. In addition to conducting riverine and harbor patrols and preventing unauthorized entries and exits, the Navy is also tasked to support Vietnamese presence on islands claimed in the South China Sea. The Navy has also been given an economic role; it engages in farming, fishing, and intranational transportation of economic goods.

3. ORGANIZATION

The Navy is an integral branch of the Vietnamese military forces. The Commander of Naval Forces, who also heads the Navy Command in Hanoi, is directly subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff Directorate.

The Commander of Naval Forces exercises direct control over all forces afloat and supporting facilities ashore. The elements afloat are organized into squadrons, divisions, and flotillas by type or function. The submarine chasers, although designed primarily for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations, are organized as a single patrol squadron. As constituted, the Navy has little use for its ASW capabilities and presumably uses these ships to obtain greater patrol and surveillance range. Vietnam has no naval air arm; however, the Air Force has operated in a ship surveillance role in consonance with the Navy. There have been no indications to date that the Vietnamese Navy has absorbed elements of the former South Vietnamese Marine Corps.

Within Naval Headquarters, there are naval staff, rear services, and political departments which receive operational direction from corresponding directorates of the High Command.

The extent of command and control changes since the reunification of Vietnam is not known; however, the formation of two new flotillas, headquartered at Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang, indicates organizational changes to incorporate the assets in the South and to enhance the successful accomplishment of the Navy's expanded missions.

4. CAPABILITIES

a. General

) The Vietnamese Navy is capable of patrolling and defending coastal territorial waters (12 NM) against incursions by other Southeast Asian countries. It is also capable of modest offensive coastal operations. Within the deepwater sphere, Vietnam is capable of maintaining a presence in the Spratly Islands--at least during the present political environment. The discovery of oil in this area probably would evoke greater determination from the other territorial claimants and severely test Vietnamese capabilities. To the north, the Navy is not capable of seriously challenging the People's Republic of China's acquisition of the Vietnamese-claimed Paracel Islands. However, through the Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the USSR, signed in November 1978, the Vietnamese Navy has been bolstered by the acquisition of ex-Soviet naval combatants (2 PETYA FFs; 3 ZHUCK, 6 SHERSHEN PTs, and 2 OSA IIs). Although the recent acquisitions have not altered the overall status quo, the Vietnamese now have a greater capability for inflicting damage on an attacking force and projecting a stronger presence in the Spratly Islands.

Although Hanoi radio reported the successful repair of the two frigate/patrol frigate-size ships captured from the former RVN Navy, it is doubtful that the Vietnamese have the capability to maintain them fully operational. Recent observation of one of these units noted considerable corrosion to the deck.

Personnel of the former North Vietnamese Navy have received technical training from former RVN personnel. This program apparently has been successful, since a number of ex-RVN units have been noted conducting patrol operations along the coast of southern Vietnam. Additionally, the Vietnamese--primarily utilizing former RVN craft--conducted very successful operations against the Pol Pot forces during the Kampuchean invasion which began on 25 December 1978.

Capabilities will tend to be limited primarily by dependence on the USSR for equipment and, secondarily, by acquisition of repair/replacement parts for the captured equipment--possibly from European sources.

b. Surface Warfare

The Vietnamese Navy defeated Kampuchean naval forces with no apparent difficulty. There is evidence that they conducted specific training for those operations. Although facing only a minor force, these endeavors provided invaluable experience for the Navy. Surface warfare capabilities have been considerably enhanced by doubling

the surface-to-surface missile delivery capability of the Vietnamese Navy, and by the acquisition of STYX-armed OSA II PTGs as well as more modern naval units.

c. Amphibious Warfare

The acquisition of a Soviet POLNOCHNY Class LSM, nine former RVN major amphibious warfare ships, and numerous lesser landing craft gives the Vietnamese Navy a modest amphibious warfare potential (simultaneous trooplift of approximately 6,200 troops). Amphibious operations against the Spratly Islands and Kampuchea have provided the Vietnamese an opportunity to test their amphibious doctrine and capabilities.

d. Antisubmarine Warfare

Antisubmarine warfare capabilities, essentially nonexistent prior to the capture of former RVN equipment, are still believed to be negligible. There are tentative indications that some training in this facet of naval operations was conducted last year. However, the level of development is unknown.

e. Mine Countermeasures

The Vietnamese Navy had the potential for a modest riverine minclearing capability with captured RVN equipment; however, there is no indication that they have pursued this aspect of naval warfare.

f. Logistics

The Vietnamese Navy must find a source for replacement parts and develop repair capabilities for the former RVN equipment in order to maintain it operationally for any significant period of time. Efforts to acquire repair parts have been reported, but there is no indication of success. If this problem continues, a considerable number of Soviet units can be expected to be acquired over the next few years to replace nonoperational US-manufactured former RVN craft.

Other logistic factors are reliance upon the USSR for equipment, training, and aid in the maintenance of the ships provided.

The capability to produce small patrol craft has been enhanced by the integration of the former RVN Navy shipyards into the Vietnamese shipbuilding industry; however, the necessity of importing all complex components makes the importation of complete units more practical.

5. PERSONNEL

a. General

Physical and mental recruitment standards for the Vietnamese Navy have been higher than those for the Army but lower than those of the Air Force. Estimated Navy personnel strength is 6,000. The Navy has recruited an unknown number of former RVN naval personnel.

b. Key Personnel

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Chief, Naval Command	Nguyen Ba <u>Phat</u>	Major General
Commander, Naval Forces	Nguyen Ba <u>Phat</u>	Major General
Chief of Navy Staff	Tran Thanh <u>Tu</u>	Colonel
Chief, Rear Services	Le Tha <u>Chung</u>	Colonel
Asst Chief, Rear Services	Nguyen Cong <u>Trong</u>	Major

c. Procurement and Retention

Recruits are assigned to the Navy based on above average qualifications and, after receiving specialized training, are usually assigned to a ship.

The status of the recruitment program is unknown; however, based on reporting received, the Navy has sufficient personnel to perform its assigned tasks.

d. Training

Most of the naval schools are located in the Haiphong area. They include the officers' training school near Quang Yen and the Naval Recruit Training Center at Tien Yen. Basic training, as well as political-military indoctrination courses, are also conducted at various camps in the Haiphong area. Former RVN naval training centers at Ho Chi Minh City, Cat Lai, Nha Trang, and Cam Ranh are also being used.

Generally, officer candidates receive 3 to 3 1/2 years of training. Courses are given in communications, gunnery and small arms, torpedo firing, navigation, sapper techniques (involving the emplacement of explosives), and diesel maintenance. Officers and petty officers had been sent for postgraduate work at naval training schools in the PRC and the USSR in the past. They are still being trained in the USSR. All officer candidates must have at least a grammar school education. Instructors at the naval schools have been trained for extended periods in the USSR, Poland, East Germany, and previously in the PRC.

Basic training for enlisted personnel varies from 6 months to 1 year. Courses are similar to those for the officers, but the level of study is lower. Draftees selected for naval service must have at least 4 years of civilian schooling.

6. MOBILIZATION

No information is available on Vietnamese Navy reserves.

7. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The Vietnamese Navy will continue to patrol territorial waters against intruders and escapees from the SRV. The Navy will also continue to emphasize its activities in support of the SRV economy through fishing, farming, and waterborne transportation. Further consolidation of offshore facilities can be expected in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand. As older combatants become inoperable, more modern replacements from Soviet inventories are expected to be provided to the Vietnamese Navy. Antisubmarine warfare capability is also expected to be emphasized over the next few years, the significant PRC submarine inventory.

CIVIL MARITIME RESOURCES

The Vietnamese merchant fleet could provide modest logistic support and troop lift with its fleet of 79 ships, 38 of which are greater than 1,000 gross registered tons (grt). The 50 dry cargo ships have a cargo deadweight capacity of about 162,000 metric tons and include 27 units of 1,000 grt and above capable of extended international voyages. In 1977, Vietnam added to its fleet the first of a new class of sophisticated roll-on/roll-off heavy lift freighters of the Hamlet "Multiflex" Class. This ship represents a considerable advance in Vietnamese logistic capability, particularly if used in conjunction with their single passenger ship, which can carry 577 berthed passengers and up to 120 vehicles in a relatively unsophisticated roll-on/roll-off car deck.

There are 11 Vietnamese tankers of 56,200 total dwt and a combined capacity of about 392,000 barrels (US) of petroleum and related products. All Vietnamese tankers are of a size which makes them useful for either import bunkering or limited underway replenishment; however, no such at-sea refueling of Vietnamese naval units has been observed.

With the exception of the 18-knot passenger ship, all other Vietnamese ships operate at speeds between 10 and 17 knots. Four cargo ships have lift capabilities of 40 tons or greater, and 7 cargo ships have large hatches of greater than 15 meters. The remaining, smaller, ships are well suited to the needs of trading in the Southeast Asia area, being adaptable to small ports and shallow waters.

Vietnam possesses a fleet of up to 100 smaller fishing and coastal cargo ships of under 300 grt. These include as many as 50 "so-called infiltration trawlers" in 8 classes which were used during the war to smuggle men and material into South Vietnam. The Vietnamese also control 15 Panamanian-flag cargo ships, totalling 155,000 dwt, which operate worldwide under the nominal ownership of Hong Kong companies.

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VIETNAMESE AIRCRAFT BY ROLE/MODEL

ROLE	TYPE	JETS	TOTAL TURBO	PISTON	TOTAL AIRCRAFT
AIR DEFENSE					
WF					
	ACFT, FISHER	169			169
	ACFT, F-5E TIGER II	14			14
	SUBTOTALS	183			183
DF					
	ACFT, FARMER	57			57
	ACFT, FRESCO C	67			67
	SUBTOTALS	124			124
	TOTALS	307			307
GROUND ATTACK					
FTR/FTR-IR					
	ACFT, FITTER	22			22
	ACFT, F-5A FREEDOM FTR	13			13
	ACFT, A-37 DRAGONFLY	24			24
	SUBTOTALS	59			59
	TOTALS	59			59
RECONNAISSANCE					
PHOTO					
	ACFT, RF-5A FREEDOM FTR	2			2
	SUBTOTALS	2			2
	TOTALS	2			2
COMBAT TOTALS		368			368
TRANSPORTS					
M-R					
	ACFT, DOUGLAS DC-3			7	7
	ACFT, DOUGLAS DC-6			2	2
	ACFT, C-130A HERCULES		4		4
	ACFT, CROSTY	6			6
	ACFT, COOT		2		2
	ACFT, DOUGLAS DC-4			3	3
	SUBTOTALS	6	6	12	24
ROLE					
ROLE	TYPE	JETS	TOTAL TURBO	PISTON	TOTAL AIRCRAFT
S-R					
	ACFT, C-47 SKYTRAIN			5	5
	ACFT, CRATE			9	9
	ACFT, CODLING		13		13
	ACFT, CAB			20	20
	ACFT, CESSNA 185			3	3
	ACFT, COLT			31	31
	ACFT, COKE		11		11
	ACFT, CURL		14		14
	ACFT, CLANK		2		2
	SUBTOTALS	13	27	68	108
	TOTALS	19	33	79	131

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HELICOPTERS

HVY				
HEL, CH-47 CHINOOK		6		6
HEL, HOOK		22		22
SUBTOTALS		28		28
MED				
HEL, HUP		44		44
HEL, HOUD			14	14
HEL, HOUSON		5		5
HEL, HIND		13		13
HEL, UH-1 IROQUOIS		46		46
SUBTOTALS		108	14	122
TOTALS		136	14	150
SUPPORT TOTALS	19	169	93	281

TRAINING

OPER				
ACFT, F117E		2		2
ACFT, FRESKO (F7-5)		4		4
ACFT, HOUSON		22		22
SUBTOTALS		28		28

ROLE	TYPE	JETS	TOTAL TURBO	PISTON	TOTAL AIRCRAFT
SCH					
	ACFT, FRESKO C	80			80
	ACFT, MAYA	11			11
	ACFT, T-41 MESCALERO			10	10
	ACFT, U-17 SKYRAGON			6	6
	HEL, UH-1 IROQUOIS		9		9
	HEL, HUP		7		7
	SUBTOTALS	91	16	16	123
	TOTALS	119	16	16	151
GRAND TOTALS		306	183	109	600

ASIATIC COMMUNIST - VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE

BE NUMBER EQUIPMENT NAME	STRENGTH		RULE	R- Y-SUR	POL	CY	LOCATION NAME
	ADD	AND MD EVAL					
0739-08400	027	610		030	CON	082650	VN BIEN HOA
ACFT, F-5A FREEDOM FTR		2					VN
ACFT, F-5A FREEDOM FTR		13	FVR				VN
ACFT, F-5E TIGER II		14	FDC				VN
ACFT, A-37 DRAGONFLY		24	FDA				VN
			FDC				VN
0740-08403	027	610		030	CON	HU	VN CAN RANG BAY
HEL, UH-1 IROQUOIS		15	DBS				VN
HEL, HUP		7	DBS				VN
0618-08407	027	610		030	ASP	HU	VN DANANG
ACFT, U-17 SKYTRACON		3	UTL				VN
ACFT, FISHERD		27	FDA				VN
ACFT, FITTER		22	FDC				VN
ACFT, FITTER B		2	DFO				VN
ACFT, HONGOL		5	DFO				VN
0616-08433	027	613		018	CON	HU	VN HAIPHONG/KIEN AN
ACFT, FISHERD		5	FDA				VN
ACFT, FRESKO C		11	FDC				VN
HEL, BORMONE		5	ASW				VN
0616-08408	027	613		020	CON	J00348	VN HANOI/GIA LAN
ACFT, GRUBY		6	TMP				VN
ACFT, COOT		2	TDM				VN
ACFT, CRATE		9	TLN				VN
ACFT, CODLING		13	TLN				VN
ACFT, CAB		20	TLN				VN
ACFT, CLANK		2	FMR				VN
ACFT, COLT		31	TLN				VN
ACFT, COKE		11	TLN				VN
0616-08593	027	614		022	PST	AU	VN HOA LAC
HEL, HUP		27	HSM				VN
HEL, HOUND		14	HSM				VN
HEL, HOOK		22	HSM				VN
HEL, HIND		13	HSC				VN
0616-08438	027	613		022	CON	HU	VN KEP
ACFT, HONGOL		5	DFO				VN
ACFT, FISHERD		21	FDA				VN
ACFT, FRESKO C		36	FDC				VN
0737-08431	027	610		018	ASP	UU	VN HUA TRANG
ACFT, T-41 MESCALERO		10	DBS				VN
ACFT, U-17 SKYTRACON		6	DBS				VN
0616-08520	027	613		036	CON	F01300	VN HOI BAY
ACFT, HONGOL		6	DFO				VN
ACFT, FISHERD		60	FDA				VN
ACFT, FRESKO C		10	FDC				VN

0739-08675	027	610	030 CON AU	VN	PHAN RANG
ACFT, MAYA	11		IMS	VN	
ACFT, FRESKO C	80		IFS	VN	
0737-08807	027	610	030 CON N01880	VN	PHU CAT
ACFT, FARMER	57		FDC	VN	
ACFT, FRESKO (YT-5)	4		DFO	VN	
ACFT, FISHER	24		FDA	VN	
0739-08412	027	610	030 CON N01802	VN	TAN SON NHUT
ACFT, CURL	14		IMP	VN	
ACFT, C-47 SKYTRAIN	5		ILM	VN	
ACFT, DOUGLAS DC-3	7		IMP	VN	
ACFT, DOUGLAS DC-6	2		IMP	VN	
ACFT, C-130A HERCULES	4		IMP	VN	
ACFT, DOUGLAS DC-4	3		IMP	VN	
ACFT, CESSNA 185	3		IMP	VN	
ACFT, O-1 BIRD DOG	10		IMP	VN	
HEL, HUP	4		VLR	VN	
HEL, OH-1 HOQUOIS	46		IMP	VN	
HEL, OH-47 CHINOOK	6		IMP	VN	
0616-08392	027	612	022 CON KD	VN	YEN BAI
ACFT, FISHER	17		FDA	VN	
ACFT, FRESKO C	10		FDC	VN	