

BY THE SHIP BE ABOLISHED. IN ORDER TO... THE DAMAGE...
ASSIGNMENT AND WHERE A SHORTAGE OF MEN EXISTS THE DAMAGE...
COMPOSED OF MERCHANT PERSONNEL ARE SECONDARY TO BATTLE STATIONS...
ALSO BE MADE CLEAR AND BUBBLIZED AND THAT DAMAGE CONTROL TABLES...
MERCHANT MARINE PERSONNEL TO BE ASSIGNED TO BATTLE STATIONS SHOULD...
OF THE ~~...~~ THE ARMED GUARD OFFICER. THE NUMBER OF MERCHANT...
PERSONNEL VOLUNTARILY EMPLOYED FOR ITS AIDATION AT THE PROSECUTION...

NAVY REPORT CONT'D

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15 SEPTEMBER 1944

TO: VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

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SUBJECT: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF BAMS SYSTEM, AREAS 5B 5C 6C.

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1. BAMS SCHEDULES FROM RADIO NPM AT 1700 AND 2000 G.M.T. ARE SOMETIMES INAUDIBLE OR TOO WEAK TO READ IN PARTS OF AREAS 5B, 5C AND 6C. WOULD SUGGEST THAT ANY BAMS 'ALL AREAS' MESSAGES SENT ON THOSE SCHEDULES ALSO BE REPEATED ON 0000 OR 0500 G.M.T. SCHEDULES, WHICH ALWAYS COME IN WELL IN ALL PARTS OF THE AREAS.
2. RADIO NPM OFTEN OVERRUNS SCHEDULED TIME SIGNALS WITH OTHER TRAFFIC, GIVING ONLY LAST 1 OR 2 MINUTES OF TIME SIGNAL INSTEAD OF 5 MINUTES. THE FULL 5 MINUTES IS DESIRABLE WHERE THERE ARE SEVERAL CHRONOMETERS TO BE CHECKED FROM IT. A MORE CONVENIENT TIME FOR SENDING TIME SIGNALS WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING BAMS SCHEDULES INSTEAD OF AN HOUR OR TWO BEFORE THEM.
3. I HAVE NOT COPIED MORE THAN ONE OR TWO BAMS MESSAGES FROM RADIO NPM OR RADIO VIT IN THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS THAT DID NOT HAVE MISTAKES IN TRANSMISSION OR CODING OF SEVERAL CODE GROUPS, THE SAME MISTAKES BEING REPEATED AT EACH TRANSMISSION. RADIO VIT IS PARTICULARLY BAD ABOUT THIS. I HAVE ASKED NUMEROUS OTHER MERCHANT SHIP RADIO OPERATORS ABOUT THIS AND THEY HAVE THE SAME TROUBLE. PLEASE HAVE SOMEONE AT EACH STATION DECODE EVERY MESSAGE AS THEY HAVE IT FOR TRANSMISSION AND CATCH THESE MISTAKES AND CORRECT THEM BEFORE THE MESSAGE IS ACTUALLY TRANSMITTED ON BAMS SCHEDULES.
4. THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT IN RECENT MONTHS IN THE WAY RADIO NPM HANDLES HIS TRAFFIC LISTS FOR BAMS SCHEDULES.
5. I WOULD SUGGEST YOU REMOVE RADIO NBA AS AREA STATION FOR AREA 6C WEST OF 160° WEST, AND REMOVE RADIO ZLD AS AREA STATION FOR AREA 6C EAST OF 160° WEST, AS THEY CAN SELDOM BE HEARD BEYOND THERE.
6. I WOULD SUGGEST YOU CHANGE ZLD OR VIT BAMS SCHEDULES SO THEY DO NOT BOTH COME AT THE SAME TIMES. A SHIP GOING FROM AREA 6C TO 5C OR VICE VERSA LIKES TO COPY BAMS SCHEDULES FROM BOTH AREAS FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS BEFORE ENTERING THE NEW AREA, AND THIS IS HARD TO DO WHERE THEY ARE TRANSMITTED AT THE SAME TIMES.
7. IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO READ RADIO VIT BAMS SCHEDULES ANYWHERE ALONG THE COAST OF NEW GUINEA FROM MILNE BAY CLEAR TO THE FAR WESTERN END OF DUTCH NEW GUINEA DUE TO INTERFERENCE FROM OTHER STATIONS. ON THE 12,375 KC FREQUENCY THE INTERFERENCE IS FROM RADIO NPM ON AN ADJACENT FREQUENCY AND SEVERAL TIMES LOUDER. ON THE 6,225 KC FREQUENCY THE INTERFERENCE IS FROM WHAT I AM TOLD ARE U.S. ARMY RADIO STATIONS AT EVERY CAMP ALONG THE COAST OPERATING IN THE BAND FROM 6,200 KC TO 6,300 KC. THERE ARE ALMOST ALWAYS SEVERAL OF THESE STATIONS GOING FULL BLAST RIGHT ON TOP OF RADIO VIT, OR WHERE THEY ARE NOT RIGHT ON TOP THEIR KEY CLICKS FROM ADJACENT FREQUENCIES ARE SO BAD THAT RADIO VIT IS ONLY PARTIALLY READABLE. THE OTHER VIT FREQUENCY OF 125 KC IS NOT AUDIBLE AT ALL IN THIS PART OF THE AREA. PLEASE CHANGE RADIO VIT TO SOME OTHER FREQUENCIES WHICH ARE FREE FROM INTERFERENCE; IT IS PRACTICALLY USELESS THE WAY IT IS NOW.

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TO: VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

2.

SUBJECT: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF BAMS SYSTEM, AREAS 5B 5C 6C.

8. RADIO VIT IS VERY OBSCURE AND INCONSISTENT IN THE WAY HE SENDS TRAFFIC LISTS ON BAMS SCHEDULES; IT IS SOMETIMES HARD TO TELL JUST WHAT HE DOES MEAN. NUMEROUS TIMES I HAVE HEARD HIM CALLING SOME SHIP OR SHIPS ON 500 KC WITH QTC BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER HIS REGULAR BAMS SCHEDULES, YET ON THE BAMS SCHEDULE TRAFFIC LIST VIT WILL SAY QRU OR WILL NOT MENTION IN HIS TRAFFIC LIST THE SHIP HE HAS JUST BEEN CALLING ON 500 KC. SHIPS WHICH COULD NOT READ VIT ON 500 KC, YET COULD READ HIM ON HIS BAMS SCHEDULES ON HIGH FREQUENCY MIGHT THUS MISS MESSAGES INTENDED FOR THEM.
9. AUSTRALIAN COASTAL STATIONS ARE PARTICULARLY TROUBLESOME IN ANOTHER WAY. THEY WILL BE ABSOLUTELY SILENT ON 500 KC UNTIL IT IS TIME FOR A REGULARLY SCHEDULED BAMS BROADCAST FROM RADIO VIT, VIS OR NPM ON HIGH FREQUENCY. THEN JUST AS YOU START TO COPY YOUR REGULAR BAMS SCHEDULE ON HIGH FREQUENCY SEVERAL OF THESE AUSTRALIAN COASTAL STATIONS WILL OPEN UP ON 500 KC CALLING BAMS5C OR BAMS5B WITH ROUTINE TRAFFIC LISTS OR WITH QRU. SOMETIMES THEY HAVE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SET OF MESSAGES FOR THE AREA THAN WHAT THE REGULAR AREA STATION IS SENDING ON HIS REGULAR BAMS SCHEDULE. WHERE A SINGLE RADIO OPERATOR IS ON WATCH ON A SHIP HE OBVIOUSLY CANNOT COPY SEVERAL DIFFERENT FREQUENCIES AT THE SAME TIME. PLEASE HAVE THESE AUSTRALIAN COASTAL STATIONS KEEP OFF 500 KC DURING THE TIME THERE IS A REGULARLY SCHEDULED BAMS BROADCAST FOR THEIR AREA GOING ON ON HIGH FREQUENCY, UNLESS THEY HAVE AN EXTREMELY URGENT MESSAGE TO SEND WHICH CANNOT WAIT A FEW MINUTES UNTIL THE REGULAR BAMS SCHEDULE IS OVER ON HIGH FREQUENCY. THE SAME THING HAS HAPPENED A FEW TIMES, BUT VERY SELDOM, WITH U.S. NAVAL RADIO STATIONS ON PACIFIC ISLANDS OR ALONG THE U.S. PACIFIC COAST SENDING ROUTINE TRAFFIC ON 500 KC AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS A REGULAR BAMS SCHEDULE ON HIGH FREQUENCY FROM RADIO NPM OR NPG.
10. PLEASE ARRANGE FOR FASTER SERVICE ON TRANSMISSION OF BAMS 'ALL AREAS' MESSAGES BY AUSTRALIAN STATIONS. MANY TIMES THEY DON'T SEND A BAMS 'ALL AREAS' MESSAGE UNTIL FROM ONE TO THREE WEEKS AFTER IT HAS ALREADY BEEN TRANSMITTED BY RADIO NPM OR ZLD.
11. WE HAVE HAD NO CORRECTIONS MADE TO OUR COPIES OF C.I.M.S., C.A.M.S.I., A.M.S.I., AND OTHERS SINCE THE SHIP LEFT THE U.S. IN FEBRUARY 1944 (IT IS NOW SEPTEMBER). HAVE INQUIRED AT SEVERAL PORTS IN NEW GUINEA, WHERE WE HAVE BEEN MOST OF THE TIME, ABOUT GETTING PUBLICATIONS CORRECTED UP TO DATE, BUT NOBODY SEEMS TO HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON IT. I WOULD SUGGEST YOU HAVE THE N.O.I.C. AT THE MAIN PORTS, SAY, MILNE BAY, FINSSCHAFFEN AND HOLLANDIA, PROVIDED WITH UP TO DATE CORRECTIONS ON ALL PUBLICATIONS, AND HAVE THEM MAKE IT A SPECIAL POINT TO SEE THAT EVERY SHIP ENTERING THEIR PORT HAS ALL PUBLICATIONS BROUGHT UP TO DATE. WOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT YOU HAVE THEM PROVIDED WITH COMPLETE UP TO DATE FILES OF ALL BAMS "ALL AREAS" MESSAGES AND PERTINENT MESSAGES FOR THIS PARTICULAR AREA, AND MAKE IT A POINT TO SEE THAT SHIPS GET THESE. SHIPS ARE IN PORT MOST OF THE TIME IN THIS AREA, SOMETIMES FOR WEEKS AT A TIME, AND NO RADIO WATCHES ARE STOOD, SO MANY BAMS MESSAGES ARE MISSED, SOME OF WHICH MIGHT BE IMPORTANT.

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TO: VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

SUBJECT: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF BAMS SYSTEM, AREAS 5B 5C 6C

12. I WOULD SUGGEST THAT A COASTAL STATION FOR AREA 5C BE ESTABLISHED SOMEWHERE ALONG THE NORTH COAST OF NEW GUINEA TO GIVE BETTER SERVICE IN THAT PART OF THE AREA. RADIO VIT CANNOT BE HEARD AT ALL ON 500 KC, AND TRANSMISSIONS FROM RADIO VIG AND VII ON 500 KC CAN SELDOM BE READ DUE TO ATMOSPHERICS AND LOCAL CONDITIONS.
13. FOR TWO OR THREE HOURS BEFORE ARRIVING AT OR AFTER LEAVING CERTAIN PORTS ALONG THE NORTH COAST OF NEW GUINEA NOTHING CAN BE HEARD ON 500 KC EXCEPT EXTREMELY LOUD SIGNALS DUE TO INTERFERENCE FROM AIRCRAFT OR AIRFIELD BEACON STATIONS ADJACENT. THESE BEACON STATIONS TRANSMIT ON AROUND 250 KC BUT THEY HAVE SUCH LOUD HARMONICS NEAR 500 KC THAT THEY PRACTICALLY BLOCK THAT FREQUENCY TOO. INTERFERENCE WAS MOST PRONOUNCED AROUND MAFFIN BAY-WAKDE ISLAND. BETTER ENGINEERING DESIGN OF BEACON TRANSMITTERS OR ANTENNAS SHOULD ELIMINATE OR REDUCE THIS HARMONIC.
14. THIS SHIP HAS TRAVELLED IN CONVOY A NUMBER OF TIMES BETWEEN PORTS IN THIS AREA (5C) AND ON ONLY TWO OCCASIONS HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONVOY W/T CALL SIGN ISSUED. DISTANCES ARE SHORT HERE AND THE TRIP IS ONLY FROM ONE TO THREE DAYS BETWEEN EACH PORT, AND CONVOYS ARE QUITE SMALL, BUT NEVERTHELESS IT WOULD SEEM THAT A CONVOY W/T CALL SIGN SHOULD BE INCLUDED ON THE SAILING ORDERS AS IS DONE IN THE ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN.
15. ALLIED AIRCRAFT FLYING IN AREA 5C (OR IN ANY AREA) SHOULD BE REMINDED THAT IF IT BECOMES NECESSARY FOR THEM TO SEND A DISTRESS CALL ON 500 KC THEY SHOULD GO AHEAD WITH THEIR DISTRESS MESSAGE WITHOUT WAITING FOR A SHIP TO ANSWER. ON 28 JUNE 1944, WHILE WE WERE TRAVELLING IN CONVOY OFF WEWAK, I HEARD SOME AIRCRAFT CALLING SOS ON CODE AND MAYDAY ON VOICE FOR THREE MINUTES ON 500 KC AND ASKING ANY SHIP READING HIM TO ANSWER, BUT HE NEVER DID GO AHEAD WITH HIS DISTRESS MESSAGE AS NOBODY BROKE RADIO SILENCE TO ANSWER HIM. I REPORTED THE INCIDENT TO THE CONVOY COMMODORE BY VISUAL SIGNAL, BUT NEVER DID HEAR ANYTHING FURTHER ABOUT IT.
16. IN TRAINING NAVY RADIOMEN FOR DUTY ON MERCHANT SHIPS, HAVE THEM TRAINED TO COPY WITH PENCIL AS WELL AS WITH TYPEWRITER. I HAVE TALKED WITH SEVERAL COMMERCIAL RADIO OPERATORS ON MERCHANT SHIPS AND THEIR EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN SAME AS MINE: THE NAVY RADIOMEN ASSIGNED TO THE SHIP CAN COPY CODE PRETTY WELL ON A TYPEWRITER BUT CAN HARDLY COPY IT AT ALL WITH PENCIL. SIGNALS ARE SOMETIMES SO WEAK THAT A TYPEWRITER MAKES TOO MUCH NOISE, MAKING IT NECESSARY TO USE PENCIL.

I HOPE THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS WILL BE OF SOME VALUE TO YOU.

Donald L. Kelsey
DONALD L. KELSEY,
CHIEF RADIO OPERATOR,
S/S ABIGAIL S. DUNIWAY.