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Tay Ninh Rocket

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COMBINED MILITARY INTERROGATION CENTER
INTERROGATION REPORT

Source 2267

RAND
SEP 25 1968
W1983
WASH. OFFICE

COUNTRY: RVN

SUBJECT: 122mm Rocket Tactics

DATE OF INFORMATION: Dec 66 to 25 Jun 68

PLACE OF ACQUISITION: CMIC, SAIGON

EVALUATION: SOURCE C INFORMATION 2

SOURCE: Captive NGUYEN VAN HUU (NGUYENX, VEAN HUWX); CMIC No 2267

REPORT NUMBER: US 2394-68

DATE OF REPORT: 30 Aug-68

NUMBER OF PAGES: Eight

REFERENCES: MACV ICP; CMIC Exploitation Guide; Map: VIETNAM, AMS Series L7014, Edition 1, Sheet 6151 IV, Dtd 1965, Scale 1:50,000

INTERROGATOR: M.L. BARNES, SP5, US Army

SUMMARY: This report contains information concerning 122mm rocket tactics, as provided by captive NGUYEN VAN HUU, Aspirant and former assistant platoon leader of the 2d Plat, 7th Co (aka SUCI 7), 3d Bn (aka SONG HUONG), B-208th Arty Rept (aka TRUONG SON), 69th Gp. Source was captured on 25 Jun 68.

PREVIOUS CMIC REPORTS FROM SAME SOURCE: US 1968-68, US 1980-68; US 2037-68; US 2063-68; US 2212-68; US 2250-68; US 2263-68; US 2391-68

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CMIC Int Rpt
B9

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1. Background Information:

a. Name: NGUYEN VAN HUU

b. Rank: Aspirant

c. Unit of Assignment and Duties: Asst Plat Ldr of the 2d Plat, 7th Co (aka SUCI 7), 3d Bn (aka SONG HUONG), B-208th Arty Regt (aka TRUONG SON), 96th Gp.

d. DPOB: Jun 44; AN DAC Vil, PHU DINH Dist, PHU THO Prov, NVN.

e. Circumstances of Capture: Source was captured on 25 Jun 68 by US Forces in LAI NHIEU Dist, BINH DUONG Prov. Source had an AK-47 and 50 rounds of ammunition in his possession at the time of his capture.

d. Significant Activities: From 1944 to 9 Apr 63, source remained at home and helped his parents with the farming. He attended school from 1955 to 1958. On 9 Apr 63 he joined the NVA and received basic training with the 4th Sqd, 2d Plat, 6th Co, 2d Bn, 208th Arty Regt in VINH PHUC Prov, NVN until Jun 63. From Jun 63 to Feb 64, he was assigned to a truck drivers school in CHI LANG Vil, PHU NINH Dist, PHU THO Prov, where he learned to drive the GIP 150 truck (NVA Term). Source identified the vehicle as the Truck, 6 x 6, ZIL-131, from the USAREUR Pamphlet No 30-60-1, Identification Handbook, Soviet and Satellite Ordnance Equipment, Sixth Revised Edition, Part Two, Dtd 30 Jun 66. From Feb 64 to Jun 66, he served as a truck driver with the 208th Arty Regt. From Jun 66 to Sep 66, he received training on the economy and political situation of the RVN. He received training on the 122mm rocket in Oct 66 and Dec 66. He received a one month leave in Nov 66. On 23 Dec 66, the 208th Arty Regt was designated as the B-208th Arty Regt and started to infiltrate the RVN. The regiment arrived in TAY NINH Prov on 4 Jul 67 and rested here until Dec 67. During this rest period, the personnel dug trenches and picked up supplies at KATUM Vil, PHU KHUONG Dist, TAY NINH Prov. In Dec 67, the B-208th Regt relocated to SUCI DA BANG Vil in CAMBODIA. From Feb 68 to 25 Jun 68, the unit fired rockets at various Allied installations.

2. 122mm Rocket Tactics:

a. Training. The entire 208th Arty Regt received rocket training in Oct 66 and Dec 66. The training lasted eight hours per day, seven days per week for three weeks. The training consisted of:

(1) Learning to Carry the Rocket Launcher Tube and Tripod. It took two personnel to carry the launcher tube, one person on each end of the launcher tube. The launcher tube weighed approx 25 kilograms and was approx two meters long. It also took two personnel to carry the tripod. They used a pole approx two meters long and a sling for carrying the tripod. The tripod weighed approx 26 kilograms. This training was rotated throughout the entire platoon.

(2) Loading and Aiming the Rocket Launcher. There were only two rocket launcher tubes assigned to a platoon. All personnel of the platoon participated in this exercise. The rocket used for this training did not have any propellant in the main body or any type of

explosive in the warhead. The rocket was inserted into the launcher tube and then the band, which held the fins flat, was removed. All personnel were taught to use the aiming device.

(3) Miscellaneous Information:

(a) Training in NVN. During the training in NVN, there were three 12 men squads in a platoon. There were two squads of seven to eight men in a platoon after the arrival of the 208th Arty Regt in the RVN. Source could not give any information concerning the differences between the personnel. The 208th Arty Regt training site was located (vic WJ623595, Sheet 6151 IV).

(b) Equipment. All rocket launcher tubes were brought into the RVN when the 208th Arty Regt infiltrated. These launcher tubes were the same tubes with which the personnel had trained.

b. Selection and Preparation of Launching Sites. The launching site was selected by a reconnaissance squad. The company commanders were notified where the launching sites were located. The launching sites were selected during the daylight hours. The launcher crews would move to a selected site one to three days prior to the rocket attack, guided by a member of the reconnaissance squad. The launcher tubes were set up on the night of the rocket attack. They would dig firing pits large enough to hold a complete squad.

c. Deployment of Rocket Launchers. (See Inclosure 1.) Source presumed that a battalion size unit would deploy each of its squads in the same manner.

d. Transportation of Launchers and Rockets. Two personnel carried the launcher tube. This tube could not be broken down and it was carried by one man at each end. The unit had discarded the tripod because of the weight and the fact that it took two personnel to carry it. These two personnel could be utilized in the transportation of one extra rocket. Instead of the tripod, pieces of wood nailed together in the form of a "X" or a "H" were utilized as a launcher tube cradle. It took two personnel to carry a rocket. One person would carry the main body and another would carry the warhead and fuse. Source did not know how the rockets were brought to a resupply location.

e. Loading and Firing the Rockets. The rockets were assembled at the launching site. The extra rockets were assembled and placed near the firing pits. After a rocket was fired, two personnel would leave the firing pit and reload the launcher. When the launcher was reloaded, they would return to the firing pit and wait until the company commander or platoon leader fired the rocket or ordered the rocket fired. If they fired salvos by company, the company commander would fire the first rocket. The 208th Arty Regt never fired salvos larger than a company size salvo. Only officers, platoon leaders, or squad leaders would fire the rockets. It would take approx 15 seconds to load and connect the rocket for firing. Counting the time of exit from the firing pit and re-entry into the firing pit, a rocket could be fired approx every minute to a minute and a half. There was a firing table for the launcher, but source did not know who was responsible for keeping the firing table. The company commander had maps to use, but source did not know if the maps were used with the rocket launchers.

f. Emplacement and Displacement of a Launcher Site. A launcher could be set up in complete operational order in approx 10 to 15 minutes; but, it would take approx one hour to have all of the associated work completed. This work consisted of digging the firing pits and backblast pits; making the cradle for the launcher tube; setting up the launcher; and loading and hookup to the switch box. Displacement of the launching site took approx two minutes.

g. Aiming the Launching Tube. The platoon leader was responsible for aiming the launching tube. He used an aiming circle but source was unable to give an accurate description of this instrument. This instrument was used for the alignment to the target. The platoon leader used an elevation device (See Inclosure 2) for the correct elevation. Source could not provide the name of this instrument. The distance between the launching site and target area was supposed to have been a known distance. If the distance to the target area was 5300 meters, the lower sliding knob would be set on the number 3 and the sliding knob on the right would be moved to the number 5. This instrument was placed on top of the launcher tube during the sighting. Then the two knobs would be sighted by eye to be level and this would be considered to be the correct elevation. It was the responsibility of the reconnaissance squad to measure this distance. There were no aiming stakes used to aim this launcher. The 7th Co had never used benchmarks or horizontal control points to aim or lay out a launcher.

h. Electrical Firing Device. This firing switch had 30 meters of electrical wiring connected to the end of the switch box. There was a two way switch located on the top of the box. (See Inclosure 3.) The device held one x 12 volt battery or four x 1.5 volt batteries. It took two x 1.5 volt batteries to fire one rocket. When four x 1.5 volt batteries were used, they would ignite many rockets. If one x 12 volt battery was used, it would fire more rockets than four x 1.5 volt batteries. Source could not give any information on how many rockets either combination of batteries would fire. The 12 volt battery was Russian made.

i. Miscellaneous Information:

(1) Use as a Direct Fire Weapon. Source believed that the 122mm rocket could not be used as a direct fire weapon because the fuse had to be set for a minimum length of time. Source had never heard or been instructed on the use of this weapon as a direct fire weapon.

(2) Use against Shipping. This weapon was never deployed against ships. Source did not know if this weapon was capable of being used against shipping.

(3) Communications. When the 7th Co went on a firing mission, they used a runner between the two platoons as the method of communication. When the battalion was deployed, an unknown type of telephone was used for communications between the companies and battalion Hq. Source could not provide the method of communication between battalion and regiment.

(4) Aiming Lights. Source did not know any information pertaining to any type of night aiming lights.

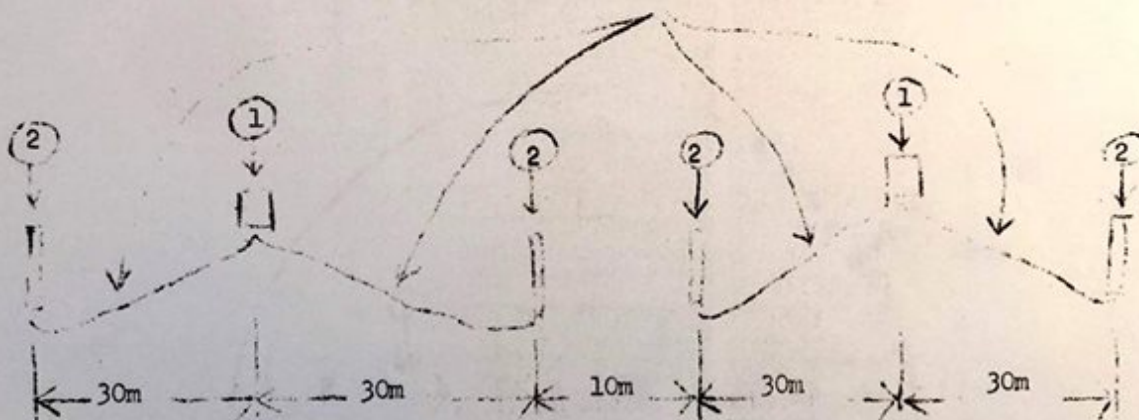
(5) Ground Attacks. Source had been told that ground attacks were to follow all of the rocket attacks.

(6) Unfired Rockets. If a rocket did not fire when the firing device was activated, it would be taken out of the launcher tube and disassembled. The crew had to attempt to fire the rocket three times before discarding it. If the rocket did not fire, the fuse and warhead were saved and the propellant body was thrown away. They would throw this body into a stream or bury it. Source could not provide any information concerning the disposition of the fuse and warhead.

j. Interrogators Comments. Source had never attended an officers school during his military service, although stating that before an individual could become an officer, he had to attend an officers school. No explanation was given about this statement. Source was very cooperative throughout the interrogation.

Sketch of a Company Size 122mm Rocket Launcher Position, as provided by captive, NGUYEN VAN HUU, CMIC No 2267 (DOI: Dec 66 to 25 Jun 68)

30 meters of electrical wiring to firing device



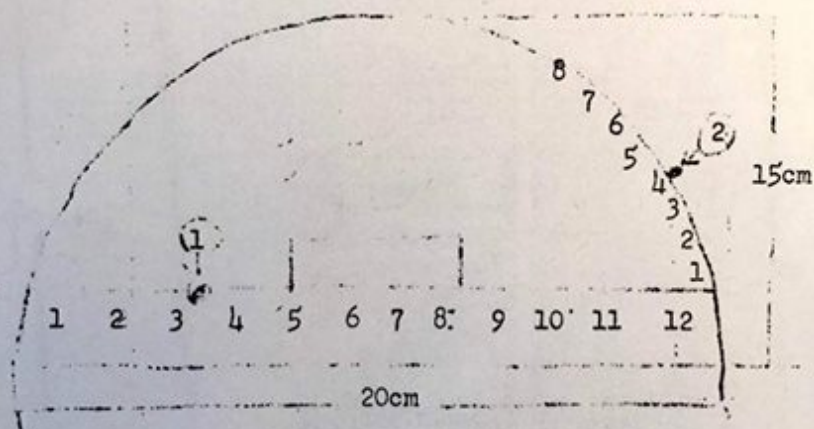
- 1- Firing pits
- 2- Rocket launchers

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Direction of fire

Inclosure 1

Sketch of an Elevation Aiming Device for the 122mm Rocket Launcher Tube, as provided by captive, NGUYEN VAN HUU, CMIC No 2267 (DOI: Dec 66 to 25 Jun 68)

(Not to Scale)



1- This sliding knob across the lower set of numbers denoted yardage in 100 yard lengths.

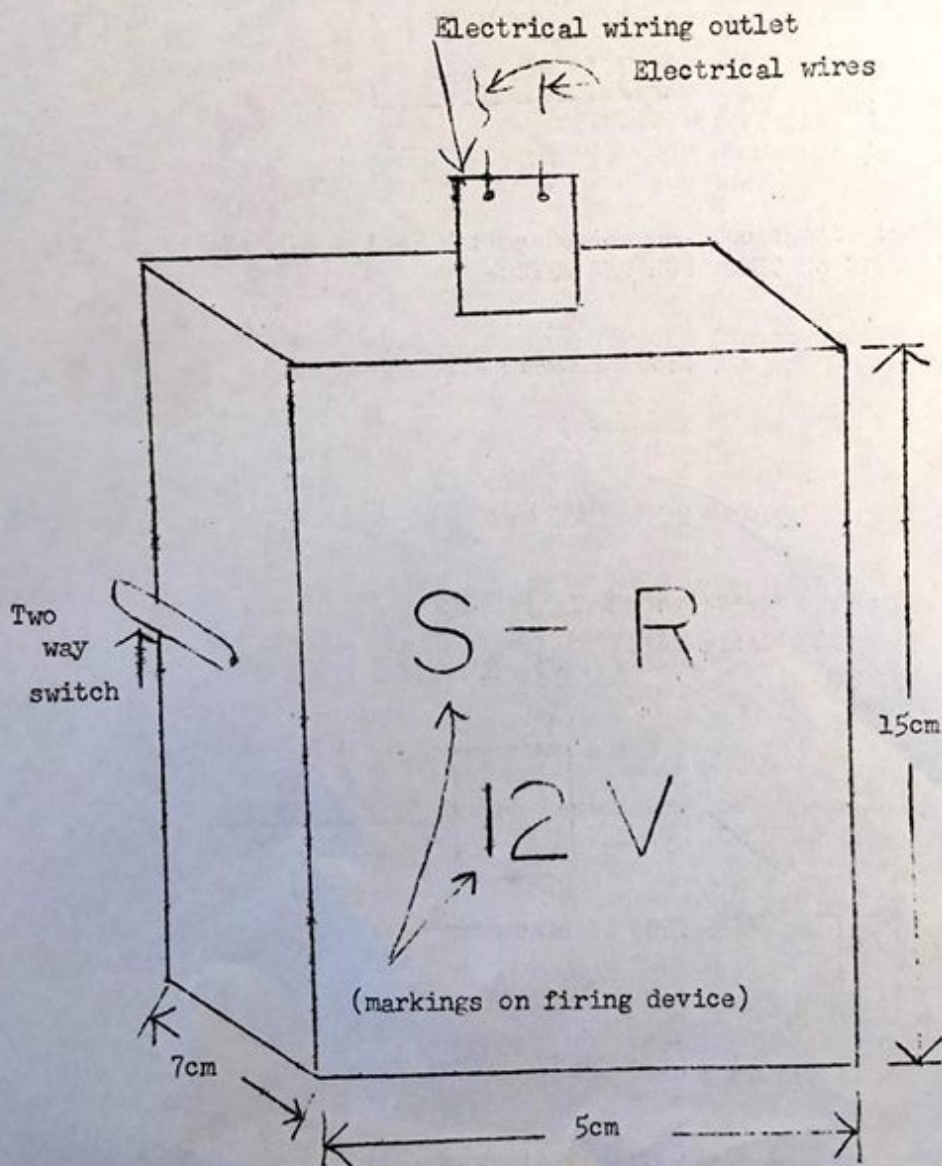
2- This sliding knob on the right edge of the device denoted yardage in 1000 yard lengths.

The aiming device was placed on top of the launcher tube and the two knobs were sighted by the naked eye and judged to be level and this was considered to be the proper elevation.

Inclosure 2

Sketch of the Electrical Firing Device used to ignite the 122mm
Rockets, as provided by captive, NGUYEN VAN HUU, CMIC No 2267 (DOI: Dec
to 25 Jun 68)

(Not drawn to scale)



Inclosure 3