Approved For Release 2006/12/27 : CIA-RDP89-01258R000100010007-9

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№ 65

MARITIME UNIT FIELD MANUAL –

STRATEGIC SERVICES

(Provisional)

Prepared under direction of
The Director of Strategic Services

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OSS REPRODUCTION BRANCH 47189

Approved For Release 2006/12/27 : CIA-RDP89-01258R000100010007-9

Approved For Release 2006/12/27 : CIA-RDP89-01258R000100010007-9

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Vol. 7

MARITIME UNIT FIELD MANUAL

– STRATEGIC SERVICES

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U.S. Office of Strategic Services

Strategic Services Field Manual No. 7

SECRET

Approved For Release 2006/12/27 : CIA-RDP89-01258R000100010007-9

Approved For Release 2006/12/27 : CIA-RDP89-01258R000100010007-9

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Office of Strategic Services

Washington, D. C.

18 July 1944

This Provisional Basic Field Manual for Maritime Unit is made available for the information and guidance of selected personnel and will be used as the basic doctrine for Strategic Services training for the operations of these groups.

The contents of this manual should be carefully controlled and should not be allowed to come into unauthorized hands. The manual will not be taken to advance bases.

AR 380—5, pertaining to the handling of secret documents, will be complied with in the handling of this manual.

William J. Donovan

Director

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Approved For Release 2006/12/27 : CIA-RDP89-01258R000100010007-9

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MARITIME UNIT FIELD MANUAL
STRATEGIC SERVICES

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SECTION I—INTRODUCTION

1. *SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL*

This manual sets forth the authorized functions, operational plans, methods, and organization of Maritime Units (MU) as a part of OSS operations. Its purpose is to guide Strategic Services personnel responsible for planning, training, and operations in the proper employment of Maritime Units.

2. *DEFINITIONS*

a. OVER-ALL PROGRAM FOR STRATEGIC SERVICES ACTIVITIES—a collection of objectives, in order of priority (importance) within a theater or area.

b. OBJECTIVE—a main or controlling goal for accomplishment within a theater or area by Strategic Services as set forth in an Over-All Program.

c. SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR STRATEGIC SERVICES ACTIVITIES—a statement setting forth the detailed missions assigned to one or more Strategic Services branches, designed to accomplish a given objective, together with a summary of the situation and the general methods of accomplishment of the assigned missions.

d. MISSION—a statement of purpose set forth in a special program for the accomplishment of a given objective.

e. OPERATIONAL PLAN—an amplification or elaboration of a special program, containing the details and means of carrying out the specified activities.

f. TASK—a detailed operation, usually planned in the field, which contributes toward the accomplishment of a mission.

g. TARGET—a place, establishment, group, or individual toward which activities or operations are directed.

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h. THE FIELD—all areas outside of the United States in which strategic services activities take place.

i. FIELD BASE—an OSS headquarters in the field, designated by the name of the city in which it is established, e.g., OSS Field Base, London.

j. ADVANCED OR SUB-BASE—an additional base established by and responsible to an OSS Field Base, London.

k. OPERATIVE—an individual employed by and responsible to the OSS and assigned under special programs to field activity.

l. AGENT—an individual recruited in the field who is employed and directed by an OSS operative or by a field or sub-base.

m. PARENT CRAFT—the medium by which personnel and supplies are transported from the base to within Maritime Unit operational distance of their objective.

SECTION II—OPERATIONS AND METHODS

3. *MISSIONS*

a. To conduct clandestine ferrying.

b. To conduct maritime sabotage.

c. To provide military tactical assistance.

d. To conduct special training by Maritime Unit.

4. *CLANDESTINE FERRYING*

a. GENERAL—Penetrations into and departures from enemy areas by water will be the specific responsibility of MU. The responsibility essentially will be to effect the transfer of personnel, supplies, and communications from water to land and land to water. Such ferrying which will normally be clandestine may be considered in two stages: approach and departure by parent craft, transfer to and from parent craft.

b. APPROACH TO ENEMY SHORE—This can be by a parent craft of sufficient range and other characteristics necessary to get within small boat or swimming distance of enemy shore. Parent craft may be submarine, de-

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stroyer, torpedo boat, or other conveyances. Parent craft may be detailed by U.S. Navy or other Allied armed forces either for specific tasks or regular operations. Parent craft may also be native or other vessels acquired by OSS.

c. TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL AND MATERIEL TO AND FROM PARENT CRAFT TO SHORE—This may be by swimming, surfboard, rubber boat, dinghy, or other small surface craft.

5. *MARITIME SABOTAGE*

Maritime sabotage against enemy shipping and shipping installations in harbors, roadsteads, canals, and rivers, will be executed with limpets and other special underwater demolitions and with standard demolitions. Special Maritime Groups of swimmers are trained to conduct underwater sabotage. However, MU personnel will also participate in maritime sabotage by ferrying demolitions parties to targets or target areas.

6. *MILITARY TACTICAL ASSISTANCE*

a. GENERAL—Where unique techniques and abilities of MU (such as underwater approach and clandestine ferrying and maritime sabotage) are required by a military commander in his theater, such aid by MU shall be furnished as requested of OSS by the theater commander.

b. SPECIAL TACTICAL AIDS—MU sections, when adequately manned at the theater base, may render the following clandestine aid to military operations: (1) hydrographic and beach reconnaissance; (2) establishing navigation aids, especially close to shore; (3) infiltration and exfiltration of personnel.

7. *SPECIAL TRAINING BY MARITIME UNIT*

a. GENERAL—MU will assist Schools and Training Branch by providing instructors and equipment for the training of other OSS personnel and military personnel in special MU techniques, upon request.

b. OSS PERSONNEL—Where operatives or agents have to be infiltrated or exfiltrated by water, they will be

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trained (usually in the theater) by S&T to enable them to effect the transition from water to shore and vice versa. MU will provide instructors and equipment to assist in such training. Other MU techniques will be taught to OSS personnel of other branches as required for their special tasks.

c. MILITARY PERSONNEL—Where specific MU techniques and equipment are of special use to military commanders in their theater and where training in MU techniques is requested by the military commander through OSS, the MU Section in the theater will provide instructors and equipment to assist S&T in such training.

8. *EQUIPMENT*

a. Specially designed equipment for use under water and on the surface includes self-contained breathing devices, motor propelled surfboards, swim suits, swim fins, two and eight place kayaks, depth gauge, underwater luminous compass, underwater flashlight, electric waterproof motor for use on surf boards and rubber boats. Detailed descriptions of this special equipment are given in a secret pamphlet "Underwater Operations" prepared for the Maritime Unit, December 1943.

b. Standard military and OSS demolitions are used. A principal type is the limpet; the OSS magnetic type and the "pin up" limpet. Military equipment and supplies, such as rations, clothing, small arms, ammunition, and the like will be supplied from U.S. Army or Navy sources in the theaters. Special OSS explosives and equipment will be supplied by Services Branch, OSS.

SECTION III—ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING

9. *BRANCH AND FIELD BASE ORGANIZATION*

a. WASHINGTON—The Chief of MU Branch, Washington, is directly responsible to the Deputy Director, SSO for the carrying out of MU operations. He is assisted by a Deputy Chief, an Operations Officer, a Supply Officer, and a Personnel Officer. Liaison in Washington with

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British Commander Combined Operations is maintained through appropriate officers of that nation in contact with the Chief, MU, or any representative designated by him.

b. ORGANIZATION OF FIELD BASES—

(1) The organization of MU at OSS field bases will vary in accordance with local conditions and requirements, but generally they will reflect the structure of the MU Branch, Washington.

(2) The MU Section of an OSS field base is headed by a Chief who is responsible to the Strategic Services Officer.

(3) The Operations Officer of the MU Section of an OSS field base is responsible for planning and coordination of operations with naval vessels detailed to OSS tasks. In the case of naval units, they will be administratively and operationally under the Navy.

(4) All activities of a field base in a theater of operations are under the control and direction of the theater commander.

10. *PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION FOR OPERATIONS*

a. The approved OSS over-all and special programs establish the objectives and missions for MU. Operational plans are developed by MU in the field in conformity with the approved special programs.

b. The MU section in the field assembles personnel and equipment required to accomplish specific missions based upon operational plans developed in accordance with approved special programs.

c. All MU plans and operations are coordinated with the activities of other branches by the Chief of the MU Branch in Washington, and by the Chief of the MU sections at the various field bases. MU advises and assists other branches on any project with maritime phases.

d. MU Branch in Washington is to be kept fully informed of all MU plans and projects for operations originating in the field.

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SECTION IV—PERSONNEL

11. *REQUIREMENTS*

a. The duties of personnel selected for MU activities divide into four general types:

(1) Staff work at the branch in Washington or in the MU Section at a field base.

(2) Assisting S&T in instruction in special MU techniques.

(3) Maritime operations.

(4) Special underwater swimming activities.

b. For all of these types of activities personnel should be such that the MU special training can be assimilated and employed effectively. For the first three types of duties it is important that the personnel have seafaring experience, particularly with small boats. For the special underwater swimming activities, exceptional swimming ability is a specific requirement.

c. The principal sources for the types of personnel required for MU activities are the U. S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Competent personnel with special skills are also taken from the Army and civil life.

12. *RECRUITING*

Personnel for MU activities is secured through the regular OSS channels. Requests for personnel are submitted to the OSS Personnel Procurement Branch. This branch makes all arrangements for procuring Army and civilian personnel and forwards requests for Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel to the Naval Command, OSS.

SECTION V—TRAINING

13. *BASIC TRAINING*

a. The basic training for all MU personnel includes the following subjects:

(1) Day and night landings (and reembarkations) through surf.

(2) Swimming in surf and under water.

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(3) Handling and maintenance of small boats (rubber boats, kayaks, caiques, etc.)

(4) Navigation, piloting, seamanship.

(5) Reading of maps, charts and aerial photographs.

(6) Hydrographic and beach reconnaissance.

(7) Maritime sabotage instruments and methods.

(8) Harbor and beach defenses.

(9) Demolitions.

(10) Small arms (sub-machine guns, pistol, carbine, rifle, MG).

(11) Operation and simple maintenance of outboard and marine motors.

(12) Operation and care of special MU underwater and surface gear.

(13) Signaling.

(14) Hand-to-hand combat.

(15) Types and designs of ships.

(16) Geography of area of operations.

b. For all types of MU personnel recruited in the U. S., basic training in all subjects is given in the U. S.

c. Personnel recruited overseas are given basic training and specialized training at field schools established in the various theaters.

d. MU instruction for special courses in MU techniques is made available especially in the field to other branches of the OSS and on request to military and naval personnel not assigned to OSS.

14. *SPECIALIZED TRAINING*

a. "Operational Personnel" are specially trained and equipped for special duties such as clandestine ferrying, maritime sabotage, and military tactical assistance. Such advanced training is normally given by MU instructors at field bases.

b. "Special Maritime Groups" of swimmers are given intensive training in underwater swimming (normally a minimum of six months). They are organized and trained specifically for underwater operations and therefore should be used only for tasks for which this special training is required.

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APPENDIX "A"

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL MU OPERATIONS

1. *INTRODUCTION*

No attempt is made herein to assess the reasoning and considerations which must precede the assignment of a task to a particular section of an OSS Field Base. This Appendix will serve to illustrate several typical Maritime Unit operations.

2. *MARITIME SABOTAGE (1)*

a. PROBLEM—It is desired to attack an enemy vessel moored in the channel of a hostile harbor.

b. SOLUTION—Task is assigned to Maritime Unit Section of OSS Field Base, since weighing of all factors concerned indicates that underwater sabotage attack presents greatest likelihood of success.

(1) *Personnel*

Since underwater swimming is required, two Special Maritime Group (SMG) men are assigned the task.

(2) *Method of Attack*

It is planned that one man will affix limpets to the side of the vessel, while the other will secure plastic charges to the fore and aft anchor cables. Use of lungs, swim suits, depth gauges, compasses and fins is required.

(3) *Penetration of Harbor*

(a) This is executed by parent craft (submarine, or surface vessel, depending upon circumstances assigned by Theater Commander) which transports the SMG men to

(1) Rendezvous point where friendly native fishermen may pick them up, secrete them, take them into harbor and return them to rendezvous point after they had finished affixing explosives with twelve-hour time charges under cover of darkness, or

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(2) Rendezvous point and putting them over the side in inflated surfboard. This would be used to take the men within underwater swimming distance of target, then deflated, secured perhaps to a channel marker so that it may be regained, reinflated by special CO_2 bottle and used to rendezvous with parent craft on return, or

(3) Within actual underwater swimming distance of the target.

3. *MARITIME SABOTAGE* (2)

a. PROBLEM—It is desired to destroy an important lock (or dock, or bridge) in an enemy canal. Heavy guard prevents approach from shore.

b. SOLUTION—Task is assigned to MU Section of OSS Field Base, as underwater approach appears to be only reasonably safe method of attempting attack.

(1) *Personnel*

An MU operative (trained as member of Special Maritime Group), thoroughly conversant with the locality, language, customs of the natives and highly trained in demolition, work is selected.

(2) *Method of Attack*

Attack will be made under water and will require the use of lungs, fins, swim suits, gauges, compass and the handling of explosives and fuses under water.

(3) *Penetration*

Operative is parachuted into locality with his equipment.

4. *CLANDESTINE FERRYING* (1)

a. PROBLEM—It is desired to land an OSS Operational Group on a hostile beach so that they may penetrate inland to contact guerrilla forces.

b. SOLUTION—The task of ferrying is assigned to the Maritime Unit of OSS Field Base.

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(1) *Personnel*

A group of ten OG's is turned over to the Maritime Unit for several days intensive training in landing through surf. Four Maritime Unit men are assigned responsibility for delivery of OG's.

(2) *Approach*

A suitable parent ship is assigned to this particular task. It transports the OSS men to within several hundred yards off shore of landing point on beach under cover of darkness. Two 8-man kayaks are assembled and put over the side. In each are two MU men, five OG's and equipment. The OG's are landed after one MU man has gone over the side and swum in to assure that reception committee of guerrillas with whom rendezvous has been established are on hand and that landing has been made at correct point. Similar technique is followed to evacuate personnel from beaches.

5. *CLANDESTINE FERRYING (2)*

a. PROBLEM—It is desired to land two native SI agents in an enemy port.

b. SOLUTION—Task of ferrying is assigned to Maritime Unit Section of OSS Field Base.

(1) *Personnel*

One MU operative, operating under cover as a native fisherman is assigned responsibility for task.

(2) *Method of Penetration*

The MU operative is in command of a felucca with a reliable crew of natives. This vessel regularly engages in off shore fishing and delivers catch into nearest port, village or harbor every several days. This craft delivers the two SI agents directly into port of their objective, all personnel concerned being under cover as natives.

6. *CLANDESTINE FERRYING (3)*

a. PROBLEM—It is desired to establish communications with partisan groups on a coastal island which

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must be approached through enemy-controlled waters. The purpose is to supply them continuously with arms, ammunition, food and medicines.

b. SOLUTION—Task is assigned to Maritime Unit Section of OSS Field Base.

(1) *Personnel*

The MU section has trained a number of natives to act as crews for native caiques with under cover MU operatives as commanding officers. Three such vessels with crews are assigned responsibility.

(2) *Method*

Under cover as fishing boats and native ferries, these vessels accomplish their assigned mission by continuous ferrying of supplies to objective.

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