

RVNAF - FINAL ASSESSMENT - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

3. IN-COUNTRY ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM (ELTP).

a. Intensive ELTP (full-time).

(1) The Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Language School (RVNAFLS) designated by the CTC as the primary English language training center for all three services, operated at less than 20% of its rated capacity. The military student load decreased from 271 to 212. Of 151 SATP designated candidates who took the official English Comprehension Level Test, 80% achieved the average qualifying score of 70 for direct entry into CONUS training.

(2) The VNAF English Language School (VNAFELS) located in Nha Trang also conducted an intensive ELTP geared to qualifying VNAF personnel for the SATP. The student load decreased from 83 to 33 with a marked shift in emphasis from training to combat readiness.

b. Nonintensive ELTP (part-time).

(1) The following units of the RVNAF conducted nonintensive English language training: Vietnamese National Military Academy and Political Warfare College in Dalat, Vietnamese National Naval Academy in Nha Trang, the Junior Military Academy in Vung Tau and the Naval Training Centers in Cam Ranh and Saigon.

(2) Technical assistance visits were made to the VNAFELS and the Naval Academy. At the Academy only one class, instead of the usual two, was undergoing midshipman training. The present class of 182 students was scheduled to graduate in Sep 75.

c. Accomplishments. Members of the Defense Language Institute Language Training Detachment conducted 970 student hours of training in the methodology of teaching Specialized English Terminology to 92 members of the RVNAFLS instructor staff. The objective of the ongoing in-service training program was to qualify RVNAFLS instructors to teach terminology in electronics, weather, medical, supply, etc., in order to qualify SATP candidates for direct entry into service schools without any intermediate English language training in CONUS. With the new capability established at RVNAFLS, considerable savings were anticipated in the FY 76 SATP.

4. CONTRACT TRAINING.

a. The following is a synoptic review of contract training through 9 Mar 75. As of 1 Jul 74 all formal training requirements were deleted from statements of work of all contractors supporting the RVNAF. Formal training was defined as scheduled classroom training where accurate attendance and progress records were maintained and reported to DAO.

b. Other training conducted by contractor personnel generally fell into two categories.

(1) Semiformal and OJT. This was defined as part-time formal classroom curriculum and hands-on OJT in the shop area with training as the primary consideration.

(2) Augmentation and production OJT. This was defined as over-the-shoulder hands-off or shoulder-to-shoulder OJT, with production as the primary consideration and training secondary.

c. There existed a line definition, which varied from contract to contract, that allowed the Administrative Contracting Officer (ACO) and the Government Representative (GR) to approve requests for training assistance in specific areas on an "as needed" basis. The individual RVNAF service had to request the training. The GR validated the need in conjunction with DAO. The contracting officer determined the contractual legality and authorized the contractors to respond, if they were willing and able, without diminishing overall production through a diversion of manpower or other resources.

d. Informal training was being conducted until contractors were forced to leave. No reports were required and no records were maintained as to attendance and progress. If the trainees were available in the work area, OJT was provided. If trainees were not available, contractor personnel confined themselves to production. Some specialized certification of inspectors was done by contractor personnel and reported to DAO. Professional certification of individuals was authorized and implemented only within the various services. Contract training was considered, but the final authority was RVNAF.

e. From 10 Mar through 31 Mar 75 the picture altered drastically.

(1) All contractor personnel were evacuated from MR's 1 and 2 with the exception of Nha Trang and Phan Rang. Subsequently, all contractors departed the country leaving the RVNAF to provide for themselves during the last days.

(2) Training was by necessity one of the lowest priorities in RVNAF. Production toward continued survival was the order of the day.

(3) The situation made it all but impossible to obtain field reports from contractor personnel. DAO training managers discontinued inquiries on training status so that maximum effort could be placed on production. This procedure was followed until all contractors departed.

5. FINAL ASSESSMENT OF THE RVNAF TRAINING SYSTEM.

a. The DAO Training Management Section (TMS) had the primary responsibility for management of offshore, formal in-country and English language training for the RVNAF and assisted the service Communications-Electronics divisions in monitoring/evaluating contractor, in-service (OJT) and informal training conducted essentially at unit levels. The management of offshore training programs was feasible and thus controllable. The end-use surveillance of CONUS trained students, the monitoring/evaluation of over 100 RVNAF service schools and training centers, and especially the monitoring/evaluation of contractor and unit training efforts, previously handled by large advisory staffs, was far beyond the combined capabilities of TMS and the assigned training resources of the DAO divisions. For this reason, certain portions of this final assessment are based primarily on samplings of the various training activities.

b. The English Language Training Program (ELTP) was superimposed over nearly all RVNAF training activities. English language training was mandatory for CONUS schooling and for OJT with US contractors. In most cases it was required for in-country technical training where English language Technical Orders (TO's) were used.

(1) From its beginnings in the mid-1950's to the fall of the country, the program became highly developed and sophisticated, operated almost exclusively by the Vietnamese themselves, with only minimum guidance from two American English language experts. In the entire spectrum of in-country training, it was one of the best examples of "Vietnamization." During the last year of operation, instructors in the schools were able to train prospective students to the maximum comprehension levels required for direct entry into CONUS courses, making South Vietnam one of the few nations under the SATP that achieved this goal.

(2) Yet, even the ELTP had internal problems created primarily by interservice rivalry. The VNAF, even when student loads were reduced by 90%, still clung to its Nha Trang school and full staff. The VNAF school could have easily been absorbed by the RVNAFLS at Saigon at substantial manpower and cost savings, had VNAF accepted the DAO recommendation and agreed to turn assets and responsibility over to the ARVN. The title of the Saigon school, "RVNAFLS," implied a joint service school and indeed did accept students from all services. Yet as with nearly all other "RVNAF" schools, it had an exclusive ARVN staff. In addition, as student loads decreased, the RVNAFLS refused to substantially reduce its staff to make the officer instructors available for combat duty, a practice which was generally followed in all the RVNAF schools and training centers.

c. Offshore training was the only system where the US retained any firm control because of the US dollars involved. The training was planned and programmed on a 16-month cycle. The program required a joint effort on the part of DAO/TMS and RVNAF, with the latter contributing student selection, security and medical assurance and biographical information. With continuous urging and pressure from TMS, the RVNAF generally met required suspenses and the system worked as prescribed. But it could have worked even better had it not been for personalities and the interservice rivalry identified earlier.

(1) Central Training Command (CTC), a suborganization of the Joint General Staff (JGS), theoretically was charged with responsibility for all RVNAF training. But CTC, like JGS, was a title only and not really a joint organization. It was an ARVN unit with only minimal representation from the other services. As a result, TMS never dealt with a consolidated training organization, but with four separate and distinct service training managers, plus the Ministry of National Defense (MOND). The latter, which became involved in management training during FY 74/75, was forced to deal directly with TMS, since CTC operated independently from the Ministry.

(2) Student selection by the RVNAF was always suspect. The vast preponderance of students selected for CONUS training came from the Saigon area. While large numbers of units were located in and near Saigon, the ratio of Saigon selectees versus other area selectees was heavily imbalanced. The development by TMS of computer runs of former students, both by alphabetical listing and by courses, showed other interesting facts. Substantial numbers of students returned to the CONUS for training two, three, four, or more. The computer runs were provided to the RVNAF and used by TMS to end the "professional student" concept and make off-shore training a more equitable procedure.

(3) Despite the minor problems and interservice rivalries noted above, the offshore training program was a viable, responsive, manageable system. It worked as well as it did for one primary reason -- TMS was a single multiservice unit capable of consolidating and coordinating the widely varied data and requirements from the independent Vietnamese services, DAO service divisions and the multitude of US commands and organizations involved in the SATP.

d. Contractor training was essentially a function of the DAO service/C-E divisions and was specialized according to the specific needs of the individual RVNAF. As such, it was monitored by the separate DAO divisions until TMS was directed by the DATT to assist in the monitoring in Jul 74. During the succeeding ten months,

contractor training, except for production and spin-off OJT, was gradually phased out. It was the most expensive type of training provided to the RVN and the value of the training was never truly evaluated because of the wide dispersion of contractors throughout the country and the nebulous nature of the contracts, where training was often provided at the "best level of effort." That the VNAF, for example, was able to retain, and in some cases increase, aircraft OR rates after the majority of contractors departed, gives testimony that some of the contract training achieved the desired benefits. Yet it was the informal consensus of contractors, supported by TMS spot evaluations, that the overall contract training efforts did not achieve the desired goals, especially when cost of contracts was considered. However, any shortcomings or failures of contract training cannot be laid exclusively on the contractors' doorstep. Training lead time was inherently incompressible. Sophisticated systems thrust upon the RVNAF, difficult to comprehend and maintain under the best of peacetime circumstances, and an unresponsive supply system created additional problems. The generally indifferent and lethargic RVNAF attitude toward in-country training, particularly contractor provided, must share the blame for any resultant shortcomings. The training, in some form, was provided. How adequate to the need and how much was actually absorbed and put to use could only have been determined if the RVNAF had held long enough for a reasonable evaluation. Owing to the sudden and total defeat of the RVNAF, any further assessment would be unrealistic and dishonest.

e. The RVNAF "In-country Training System" was the end product of the efforts of the US military advisory groups in the 1960's and early 1970's. On the surface, looking at the maps that follow and listening to the many briefings given by the RVNAF, there is the illusion that a single system with component schools and training centers existed. In reality, this was not the case. Rather, four separate and distinct systems existed, each apparently patterned after the mold created for them by the US advisors. Further, ARVN divisions and VNAF air divisions operated nearly independently. The communication gaps between the systems and the resultant overlap and duplication of functions and training activities was obvious to even the most casual observer. As funds to support the in-country training became more scarce during FY 75, the gaps between the schools and centers became even more obvious as DAO/TMS initiated recommendations for consolidation were submitted to the JCS for consideration. With the exception of a late, minor effort to consolidate all communications-electronics schools in early 1975, all proposals and recommendations were summarily disregarded. In the end, as the enemy drove south, the same schools, created years earlier in separate US service images when money was no problem, were overrun or destroyed. See Figures 11-3,4,5 and 6.

(1) The majority of schools and training centers, when evaluated by themselves, were adequate at least, with many such as the Ranger TC, the Marine Corps TC, the Armor School and Air Training Center at Nha Trang, in the "excellent" category. They had the capability to train in the physical motor skills they were designed to teach. However, many of the schools had the collateral requirement to create mental skills as well -- discipline, leadership, middle management, etc. A question exists whether these training facilities achieved significant success in this latter endeavor.

(2) Duplication of training in certain basic skills, common to all the services, was obvious and a source of constant concern for DAO officials because of the associated cost to maintain separate facilities and school staffs. Administrative, C-E, ELT and the first five weeks of basic military training were some of the most obvious areas of duplication. However, even with full knowledge of rapidly decreasing training funds and high-level pressure from DAO, the individual services would not consider or else delayed any serious attempts at consolidation. The primary reasons were noted earlier -- virtually all "RVNAF" training facilities were in reality ARVN facilities, including instructors, support staff and curriculum. Hesitancy by VNAF, VNN and VNMC to abdicate their personal schools was understandable, though not realistic, when the nation was struggling for its existence.

(3) Assignment to a school or training center was a lucrative and much sought tour. Most instructors and staff personnel spent many years in the same jobs. Virtually every school or training center staff was bloated, with student-instructor ratios as low as one-to-one, some even worse. In the case of one school, during a nine-month period no students were assigned; yet the 40-man staff remained. When student loads began to decrease in late 1974 as enemy pressure increased, staffs remained largely unchanged. In the early part of 1975, when it became obvious that maximum mobilization would be required, the staffs were not reduced to any appreciable extent.

Figure 11-2

RECURIT TRAINING OUTPUT AT DTC

JAN - MAR 75

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR*</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1st DTC	145	000		145
2nd DTC	177	000		177
3rd DTC	000	000		000
22nd DTC	165	144		309
23rd DTC	63	150		213
5th DTC	332	381		713
18th DTC	616	262		878
25th DTC	143	289		432
7th DTC	000	110		110
9th DTC	298	445		743
21st DTC	<u>000</u>	<u>296</u>		<u>296</u>
TOTAL	1,939	2,077		4,016
PROGRAMED	1,463	1,463		2,926

*No reports available.

11-19

Figure 11-1

11-17

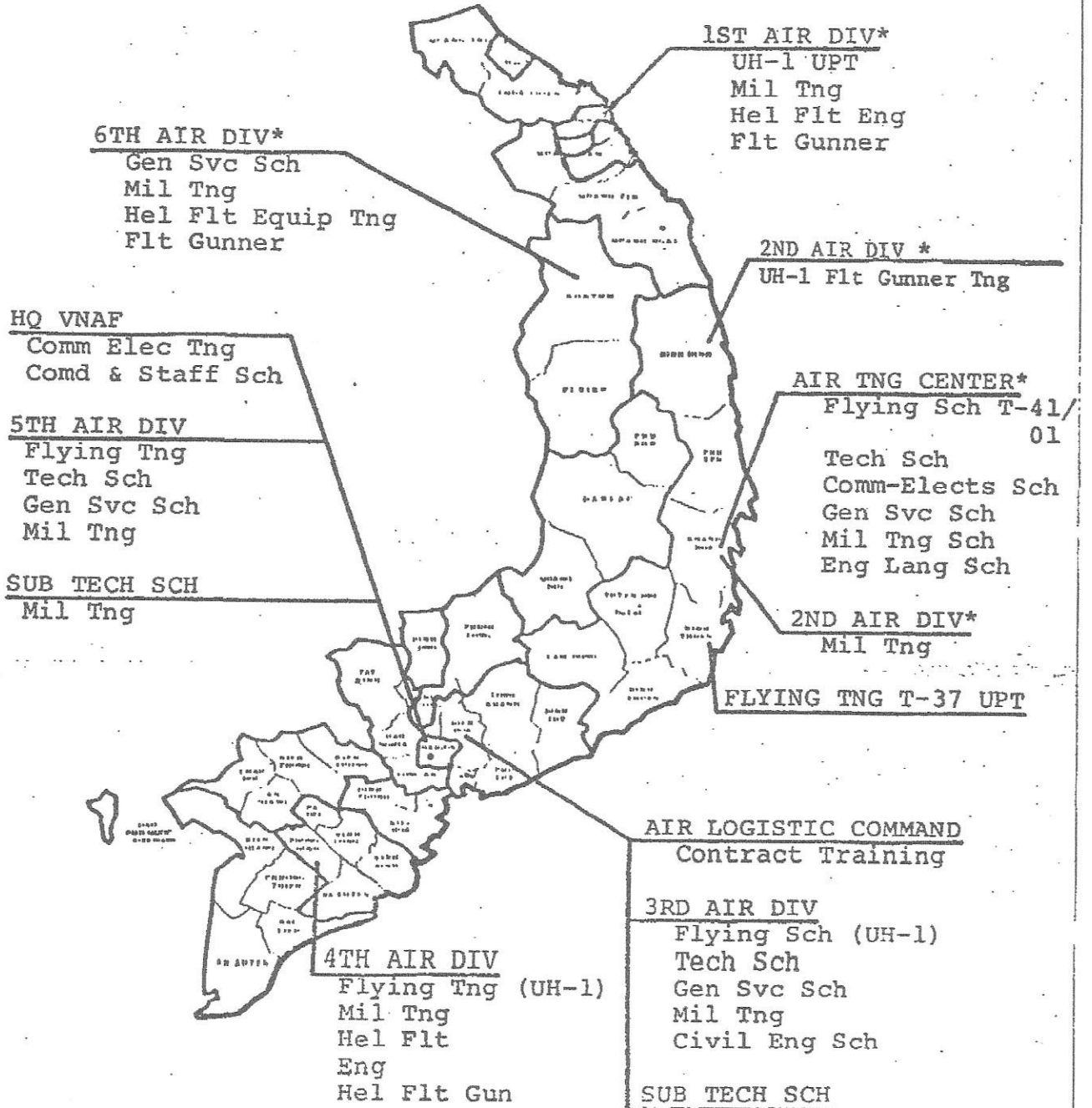
RECRUIT TRAINING OUTPUT AT NTC

JAN - MAR 75

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR*</u>	
Dong Da NTC	236	696		1
Lam Son NTC	779	562		1
Hoa Cam NTC	602	379		
Phu Cat NTC	495	298		
Pleiku NTC	000	252		
Duc My NTC	912	930		1
Quang Trung NTC	2,068	2,499		4
Van Kiep NTC	276	492		
Chi Lang NTC	2,170	1,124		3
Cao Lanh NTC	<u>000</u>	<u>522</u>		
TOTAL	7,538	7,754		15
PROGRAMMED	20,000	14,600		34

*No reports available.

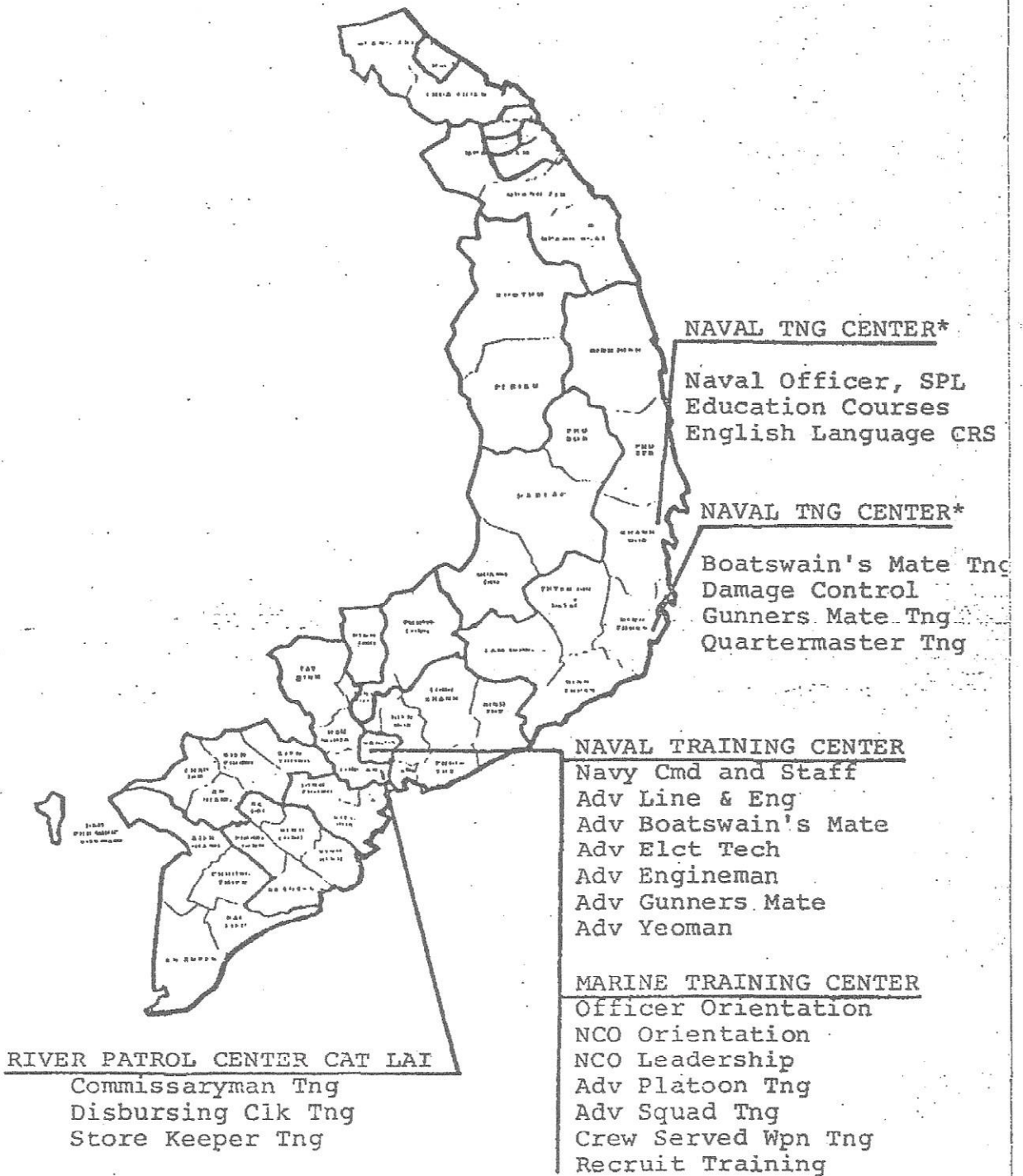
VNAF
 TRAINING CENTERS AND SCHOOLS



* Training Sites Lost or in Danger
 of Being Lost as of 31 Mar 75

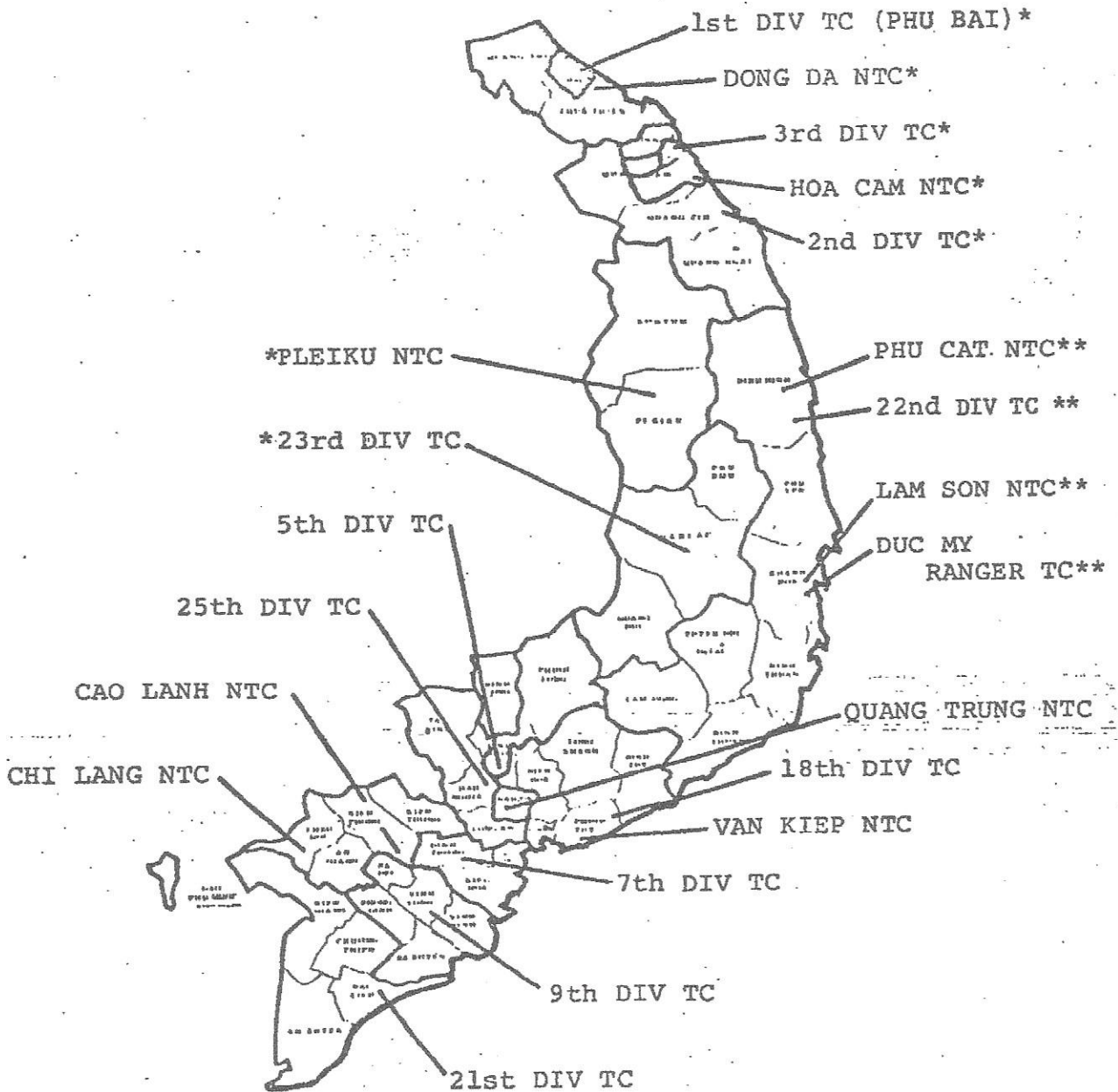
Figure 11-3

VNN AND VNMC
 TRAINING CENTERS AND SCHOOLS



* Training Sites Lost or in Danger of
 Being Lost as of 31 Mar 75

ARVN TRAINING CENTERS



* Relocation Site Undetermined

** Sites in Imminent Danger as of 31 Mar 75

Figure 11-5

ARVN SERVICE SCHOOLS

LONG THANH (BEAR CAT):

Infantry School
Armor School

THU DUC:

QM School
Band School
Martial Art & Phy Sch
Admin & Fin School
AG School
Mil Intel School

PHU CUONG:

Engr School

SAIGON:

Language School
Mil Dog TC
Mil Engr Tech School
Mil Med School
NDC
Ord School
POLWAR Cadre TC
Soc Svc Tng School
Trans School
WAFC School

PLEIKU: *
Jr Mil Sch

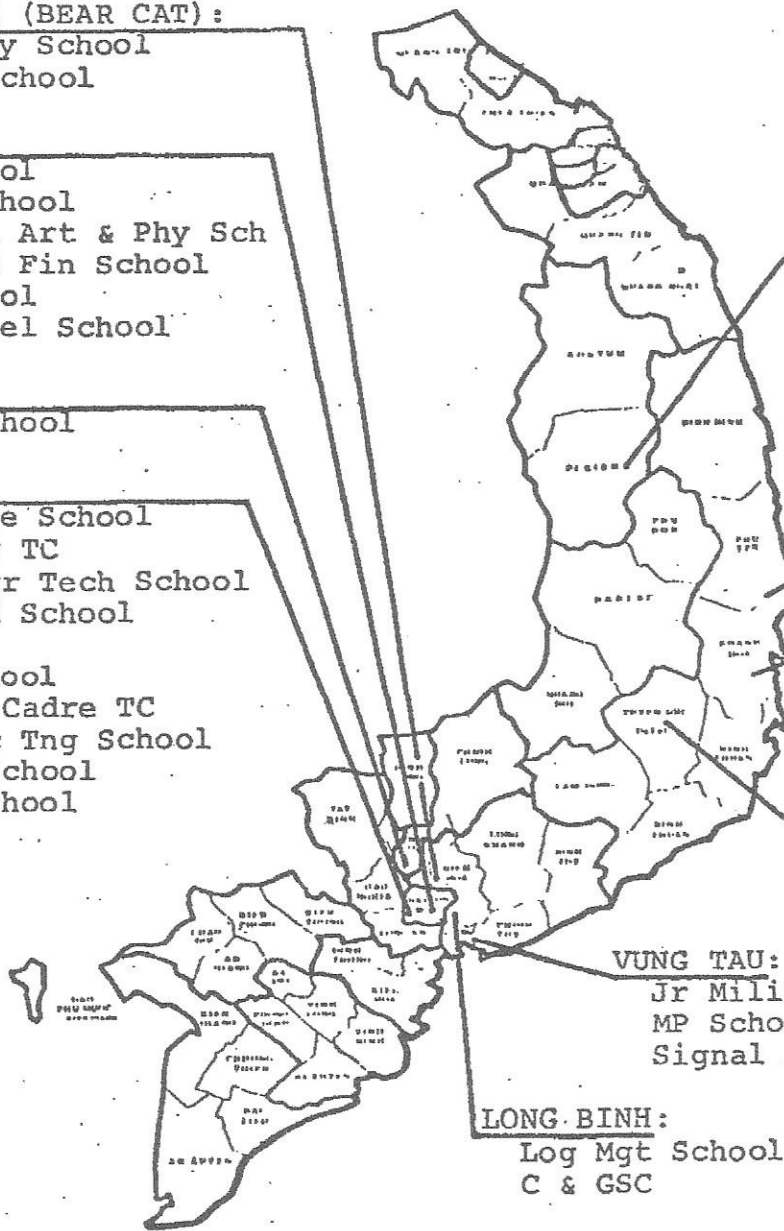
DUC MY: **
Arty Sch

NHA TRANG: **
NCO Academy

DA LAT: **
POLWAR Col
VNMA

VUNG TAU:
Jr Military School
MP School
Signal School

LONG BINH:
Log Mgt School
C & GSC



* Relocation Site Undetermined

** Sites in Imminent Danger as of 31 Mar 75