

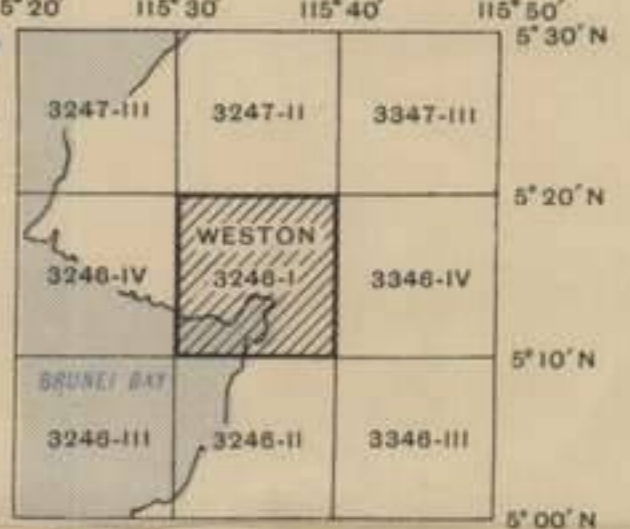
AWM52
2nd Australian Imperial Force and
Commonwealth Military Forces unit war
diaries, 1939-45 War

Item number: 8/2/24

24 Infantry Brigade
June 1945, Appendices

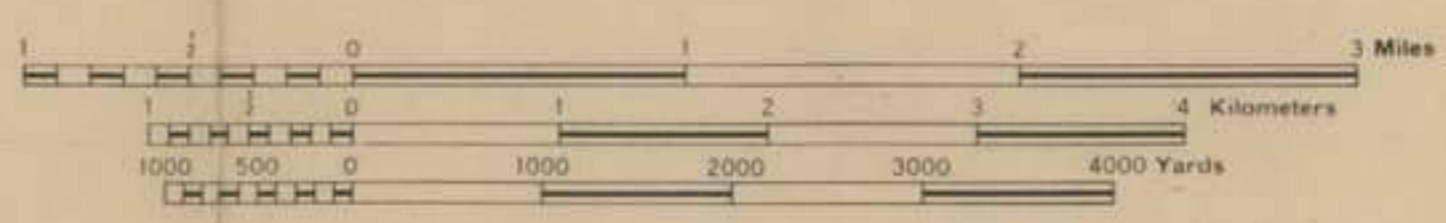


- LEGEND**
- Road, hard surfaced.....
 - Road, lightly surfaced.....
 - Road, earth.....
 - Jeep Track.....
 - Trail.....
 - Highway Bridge.....
 - Railway, Single Track.....
 - Buildings or Huts.....
 - Telephone or Telegraph Line.....
 - Swamp.....
 - Streams.....
 - Depth Line.....
 - Mangroves.....
 - Scattered Trees.....
 - Forest.....
 - Secondary Growth.....
 - Plantation (Coconut).....
 - Plantation (Rubber).....
 - Sand.....



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GLOSSARY
 S SUNGAI (RIVER)



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 HEIGHTS & DEPTHS IN METRES

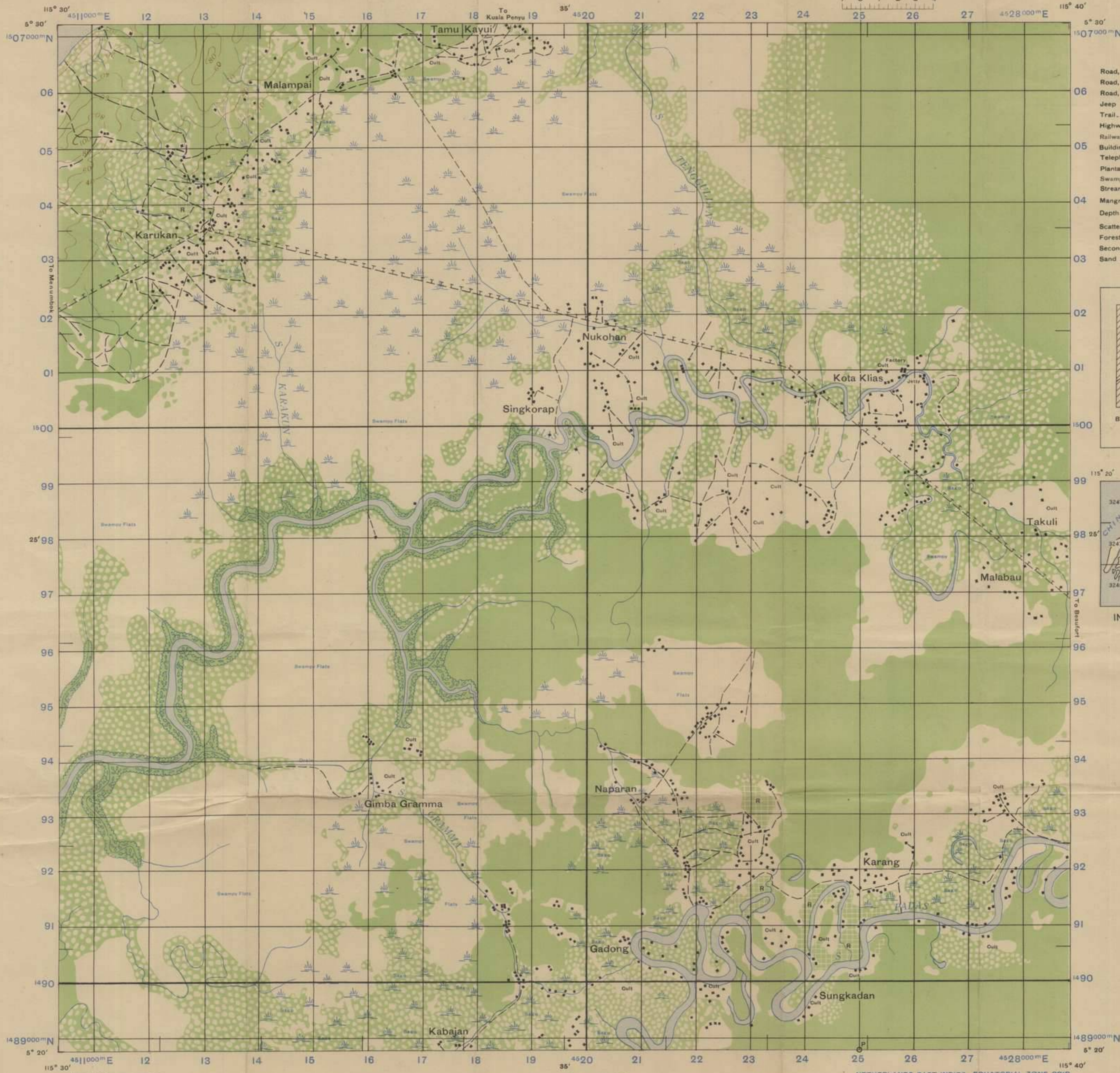
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NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES EQUATORIAL ZONE GRID

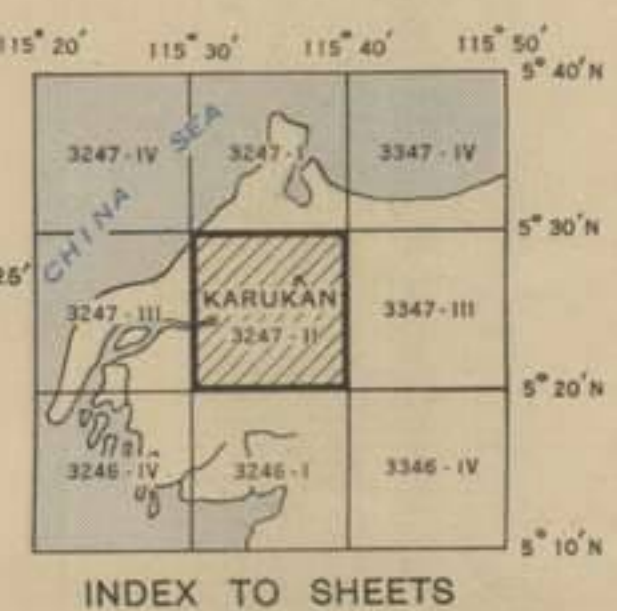
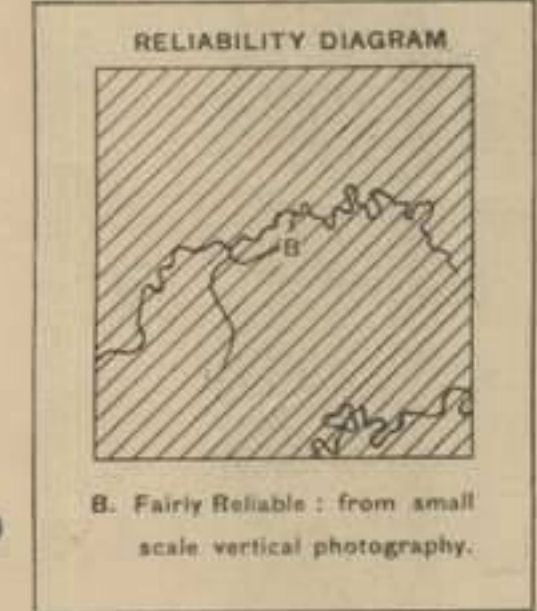
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POINT	RAILWAY	BRIDGE
EAST	26	80
WEST	2	0
REFERENCE	WESTON	262800
UNIT	METRE	1000 METRES (OR KILOMETRES)

WESTON
 BORNEO
 N610-E11530/10 (GREENWICH)

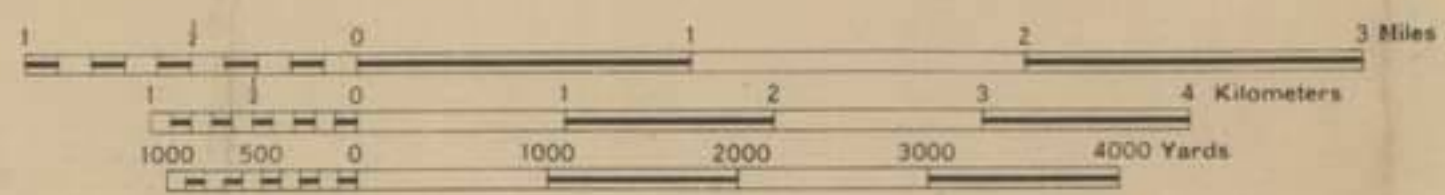
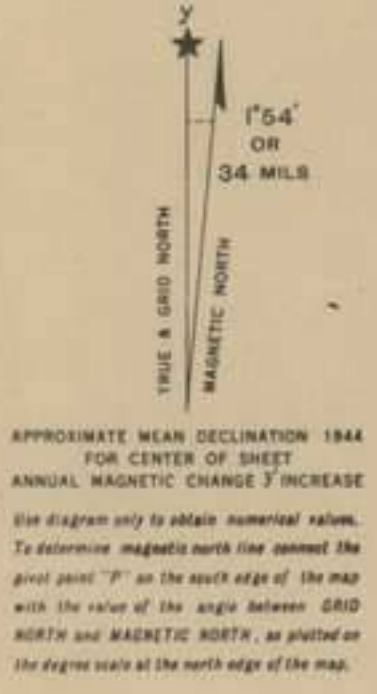


- LEGEND**
- Road, hard surfaced
 - Road, lightly surfaced
 - Road, earth
 - Jeep Track
 - Trail
 - Highway Bridge
 - Railway Single Track
 - Buildings or Huts
 - Telephone or Telegraph Line
 - Plantation (Rubber)
 - Swamp
 - Streams
 - Mangroves
 - Depth Line
 - Scattered Trees
 - Forest
 - Secondary Growth
 - Sand



ADV/032/0809 SWPA T731
 CONTROL: British Hydrographic Chart No. 2111.
 AIR PHOTOGRAPHY: 2 Photo Charting Sqn., 17 P.R.311 Photo Wing, U.S.A.A.F. Missions 5MCT - H - 9 Feb 45, 5MC20 (L - 1 Feb 45, 5MPI32 7 - V May 45, 5MPI33 1 - V May 45, 5MPI33 5 - V May 45.
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GLOSSARY
 S SUNGAI (RIVER)



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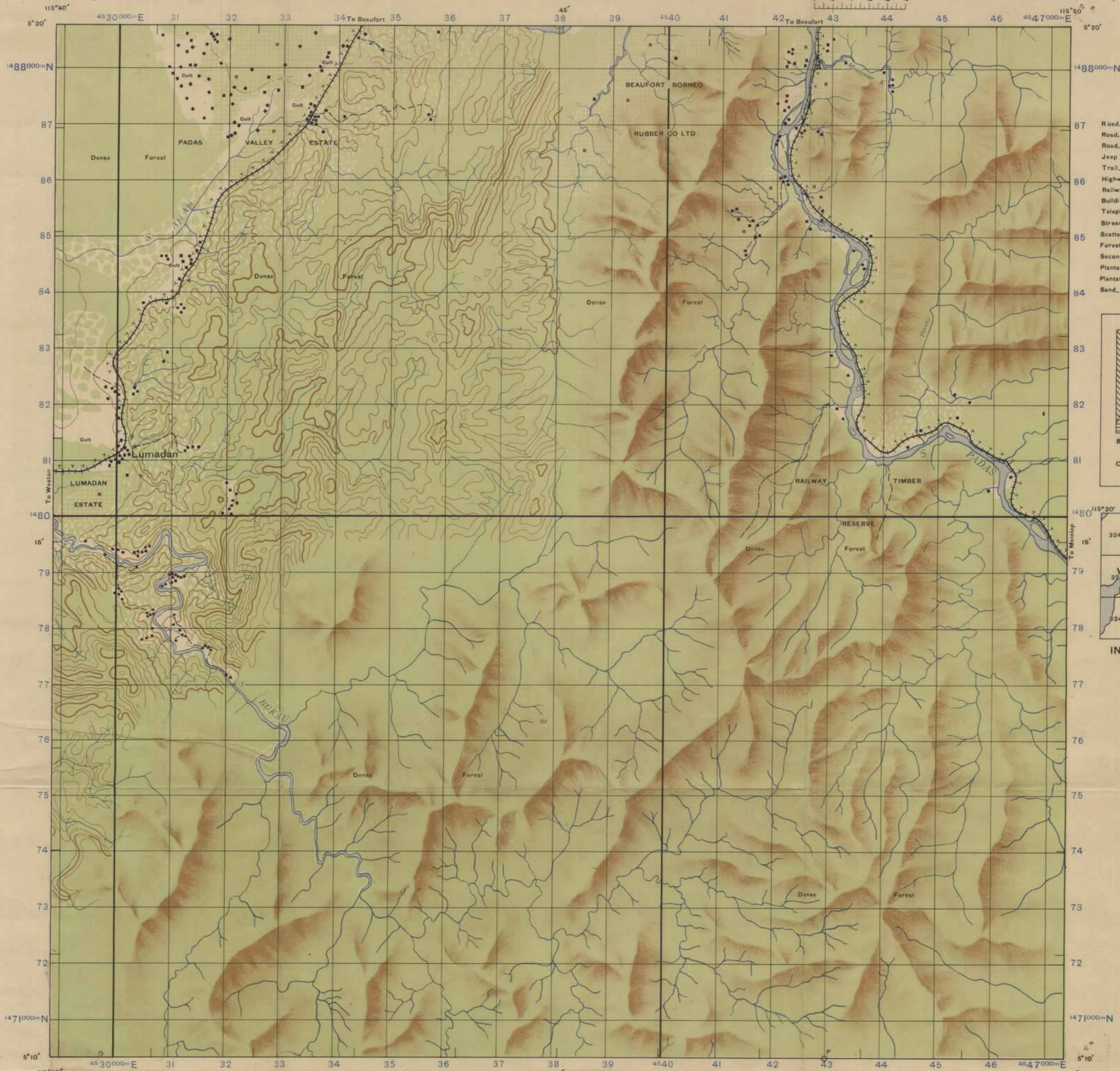
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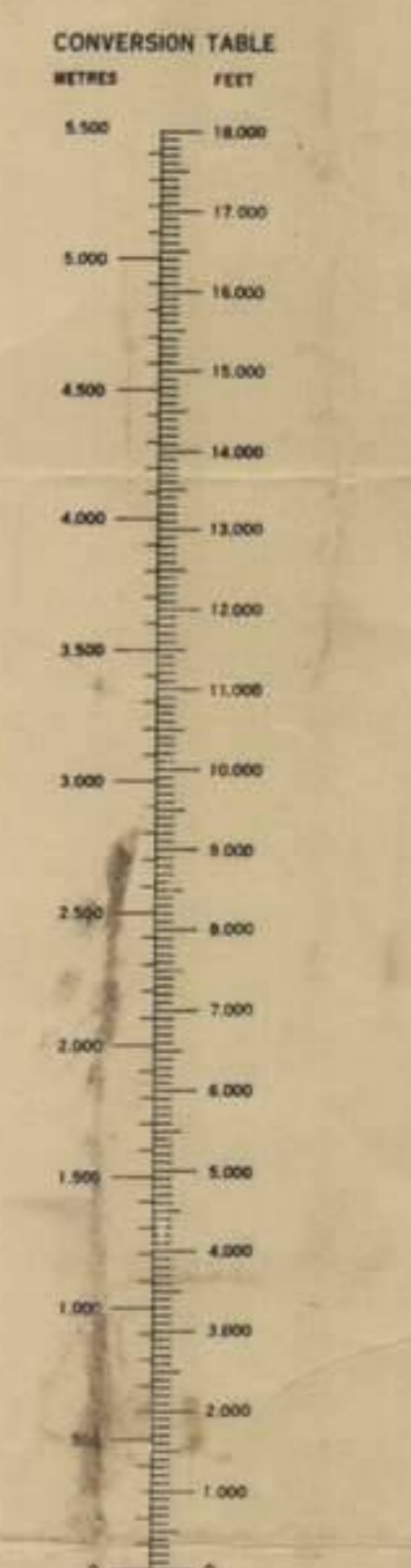
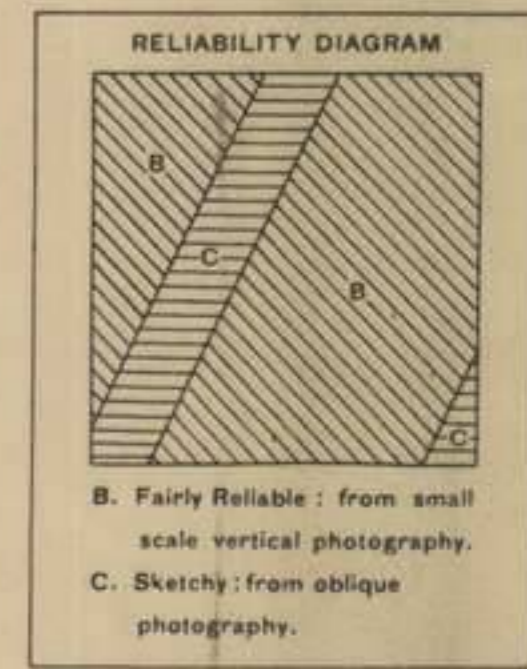
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POINT SINGKORAP (VILLAGE)			
EAST	NORTH	EAST	NORTH
TAKE WEST EDGE OF SQUARE IN WHICH POINT LIES AND READ THE FIGURE PRINTED OPPOSITE THIS LINE ON NORTH OR SOUTH MARGIN	TAKE SOUTH EDGE OF SQUARE IN WHICH POINT LIES AND READ THE FIGURE PRINTED OPPOSITE THIS LINE ON EAST OR WEST MARGIN	18	01
Estimate to the Eastwards	Estimate to the Northwards	3	5
REFERENCE	KARUKAN 189025		
UNIT	SQUARE	METRE	1000 METRES
	NEAREST SIMILAR CO-ORDINATE REFERENCE DISTANT		100 KILOMETRES

KARUKAN BORNEO
 520-11530/10 GREENWICH

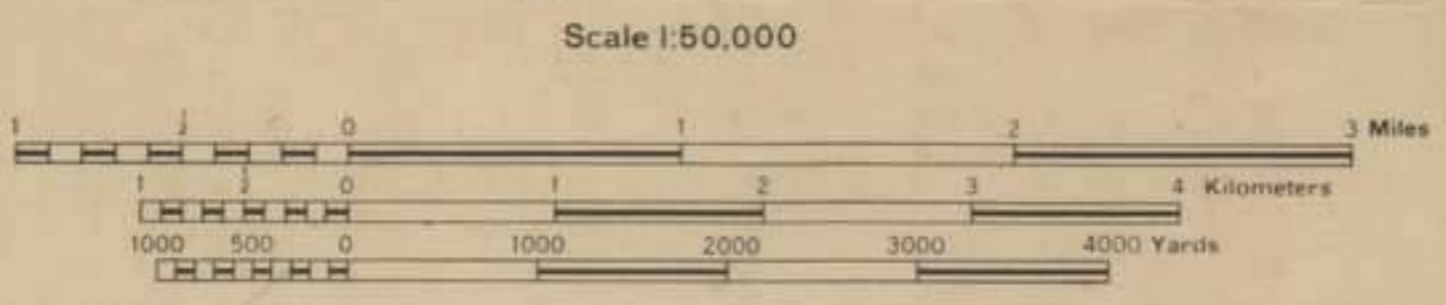


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- Road, hard surfaced.....
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 - Jeep Track.....
 - Trail.....
 - Highway Bridge.....
 - Railway, Single Track.....
 - Buildings or Huts.....
 - Telephones or Telegraph Line.....
 - Streams.....
 - Scattered Trees.....
 - Forest.....
 - Secondary Growth.....
 - Plantation (Coconut).....
 - Plantation (Rubber).....
 - Sand.....



ADV/032/0810 SWPA T731
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 S SUNGAI (RIVER)



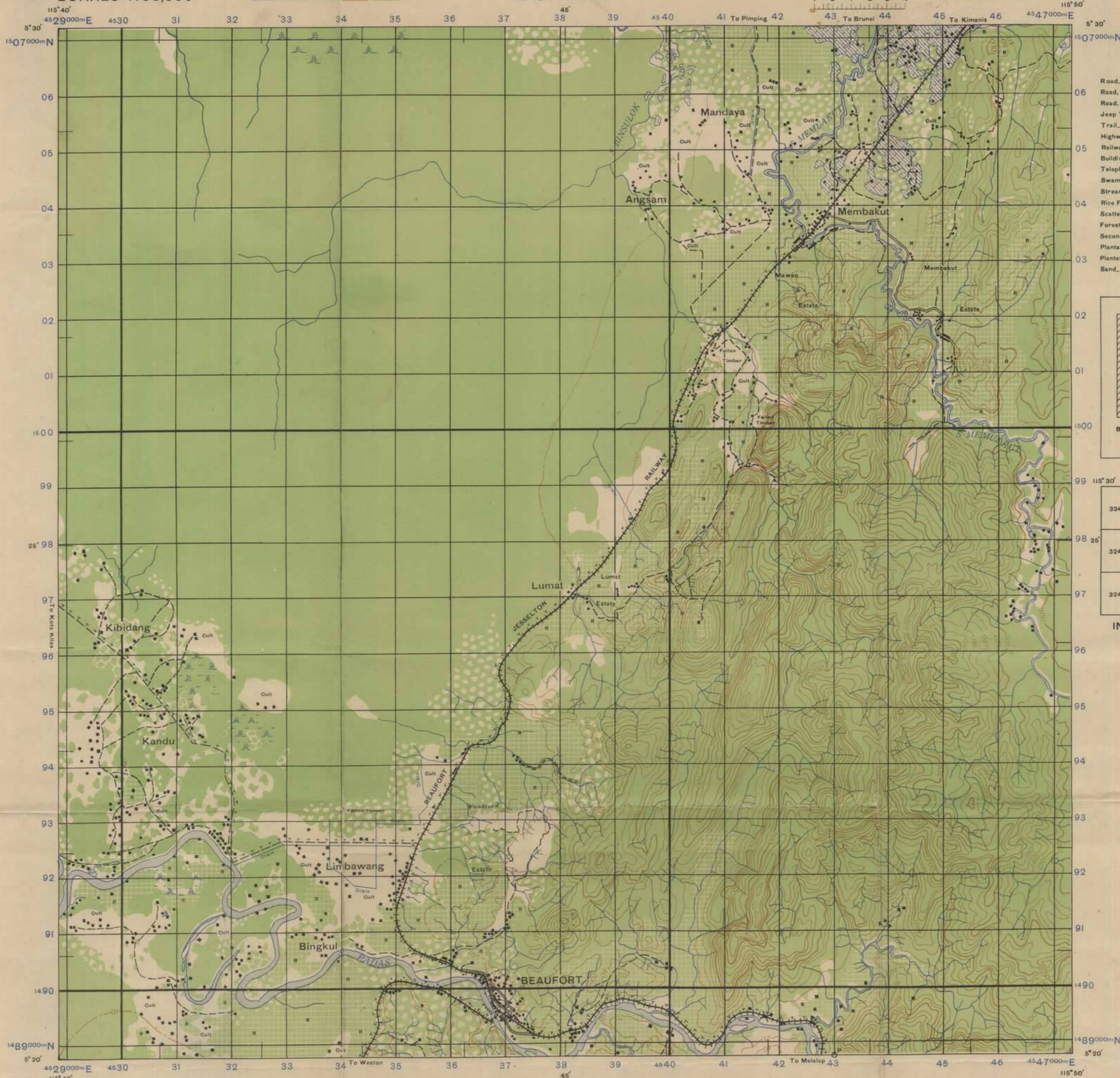
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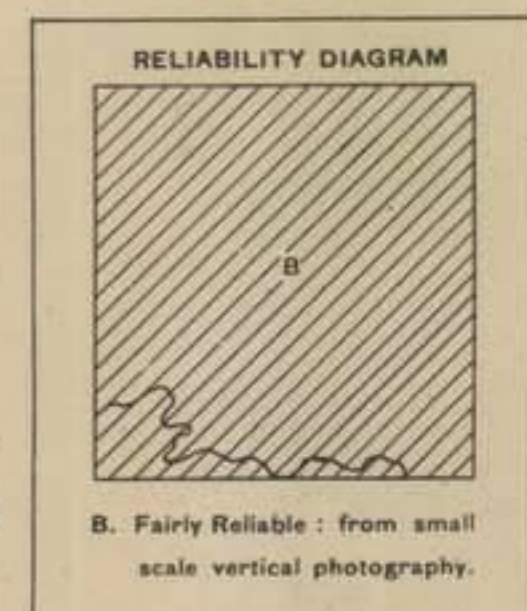
POINT - LUMADAN - VILLAGE	
EAST TAKE WEST EDGE OF SQUARE IN WHICH POINT LIES AND READ THE FIGURE PRINTED OPPOSITE THIS LINE ON NORTH OR SOUTH MARGIN Estimate in the Eastward	NORTH TAKE SOUTH EDGE OF SQUARE IN WHICH POINT LIES AND READ THE FIGURE PRINTED OPPOSITE THIS LINE ON EAST OR WEST MARGIN Estimate in the Northward
REFERENCE EAST 301	NORTH 811
UNIT SQUARE	METRE 1,000 METRES 100 KILOMETRES

LUMADAN BORNEO
 N510-E11540/10 (GREENWICH)



LEGEND

- Road, hard surfaced
- Road, lightly surfaced
- Road, earth
- Jeep Track
- Trail
- Highway Bridge
- Railway, Single Track
- Buildings or Huts
- Telephone or Telegraph Line
- Swamp
- Streams
- Rice Fields
- Scattered Trees
- Forest
- Secondary Growth
- Plantation (Coconut)
- Plantation (Rubber)
- Sand



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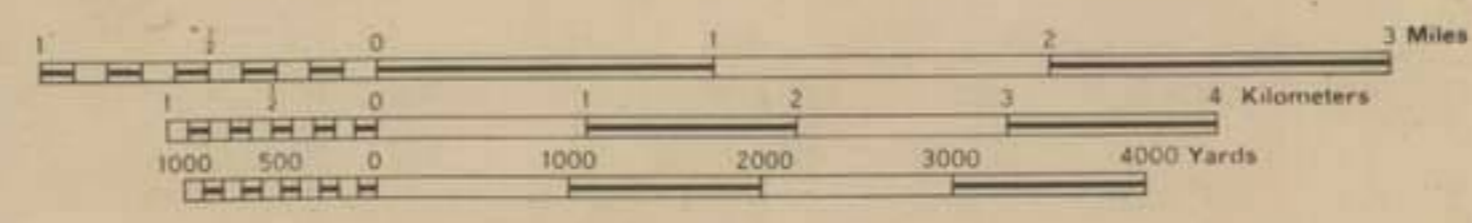
3347-I	3347-IV	3347-I
3347-II	LUMAT 3347-III	3347-II
3346-I	3346-IV	3346-I



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GLOSSARY
 S SUNGAI (RIVER)

APPROXIMATE MEAN DECLINATION 1944 FOR CENTER OF SHEET
 ANNUAL MAGNETIC CHANGE INCREASE
 The diagram only is obtain numerical values.
 To determine magnetic north line connect the point point "P" on the north edge of the map with the value of the angle between GRID NORTH and MAGNETIC NORTH, as plotted on the degree scale at the north edge of the map.



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 METRES EXCEPT FIRST 10 METRES SHOWN IN BROKEN LINE
 LAMBERT CONICAL ORTHOMORPHIC PROJECTION
 HEIGHTS & DEPTHS IN METRES

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NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES EQUATORIAL ZONE GRID

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POINT	RAILWAY BRIDGE	
EAST	42	03
WEST	42	03
NORTH	03	03
SOUTH	03	03
REFERENCE	LUMAT	424034
UNIT	METRE	
SQUARE	1,000 METRES	
NEAREST SIMILAR CO-ORDINATE REFERENCE DISTANT	100 KILOMETRES	

LUMAT BORNEO

520-11540/10 GREENWICH

RESTRICTED

Copy No. *15*...

15 Aug 45

24 AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

OBOE SIX

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24 AUST INF BDE REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART I

THE CAPTURE OF LABUAN

SEC I INTRODUCTION

OBJECT OF THE OPERATION

1. The capture of LABUAN was part of 9 Aust Div's task of capturing and consolidating BRUNEI BAY.
LABUAN was to be captured:-
 - (a) for its strategic value in the control of BRUNEI BAY;
 - (b) for the possession of its harbour - VICTORIA HARBOUR;
 - (c) for the possession of its airfield;
 - (d) for its value as a base for operations on the mainland.

TASK ALLOTTED TO 24 AUST INF BDE

2. 24 Aust Inf Bde was to land on the strip of beach between RAMSAY POINT and VICTORIA township. It was to:-
 - (a) secure a bridgehead;
 - (b) capture the port and harbour facilities;
 - (c) capture the airfield;
 - (d) hold a covering position;
 - (e) destroy all enemy on the island;
 - (f) prepare for subsequent operations in the area MEMPAKUL - WESTON - BEAUFORT - PAPAR.
3. For the initial landing it would comprise a Brigade Group less one battalion - See Order of Battle Appx A. Its third battalion was to be part of Divisional Reserve.
4. It was to be responsible for landing 1 Aust Beach Gp and Div troops - see Appx A.

TOPOGRAPHICAL

5. LABUAN ISLAND is situated off the north-west coast of BORNEO, 815 miles from SINGAPORE. It lies across the northern part of the mouth of BRUNEI BAY, which is the largest anchorage on this part of the coast. Politically, the island was one of the Straits Settlements, with a Resident on LABUAN under the general direction of the Governor at SINGAPORE.

6. The island is roughly triangular in shape with the apex to the NORTH and two large inlets in the base, and covers an area of about 35 square miles. The eastern and southern coasts are each roughly 8 miles in length; the western coast 12 miles. In the WEST, the island is mainly hilly and forested; the eastern half is flatter, with grasslands, cultivation, and scrub. In the SOUTH there is a considerable area of swamp. Before the war, the importance of the island was commercial, as it had the only full-size port facilities in NORTH WEST BORNEO. Its strategic importance was due to its command of BRUSEI BAY and its airfield, built by the Japanese.

7. The population was estimated in 1938 to be 8500, including 31 Europeans, 5200 natives and 3000 Chinese.

8. Airfields and Landing Grounds

The Japanese had constructed an airfield $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-east of VICTORIA HARBOUR. It was known to be serviceable until May 45; thereafter, Allied air attacks made it unserviceable. The surfaced area was 4800 feet by 700 feet, running north-west - south-east. There were dispersal loops and a number of aircraft revetments, a hangar and barrack buildings. Another airfield has been built by the Japanese at TIMBALAI, on the WEST coast of the island. The runway was 3600 feet by 190 feet, and had 1200 feet of rough coral surface, the remainder being unsurfaced. It was known that VICTORIA HARBOUR could be used by flying boats.

9. Beaches

The island is surrounded by rocks and reefs, but there are four possible landing beaches:-

- (a) From RAMSAY POINT 1300 yards westwards. Here the approaches are clear and the beach exists good. This was designated BROWN beach, and was considered to be a good beach for a large scale landing directed against VICTORIA HARBOUR and the airfield.
- (b) From RAMSAY POINT 1200 yards north-east. The tactical value of this beach would be the same as (a) but it could be used only at high water and then only by landing craft and amphibious vehicles.

- (c) A small beach 300 yards long, about 850 yards north-west of COLLIER HEAD.
- (d) A small beach on extreme SOUTH of HAMILTON POINT suitable only for LVT (4)s.

10. Development of the Island

VICTORIA HARBOUR is the only deep water port in the BRUNBI BAY area. It is well sheltered in all weathers, and had 6 piers or wharves of varying sizes. The area NORTH of the harbour, forming the south-east corner of the island, was well served with roads, and it was in this area that almost all development of the island had taken place. Of the 40 miles of road on the island, about half was coral and half earth surfaced. There were many houses and buildings, mostly of wood, and an electricity supply and telephone system existed.

11. Climate

The climate is hot and humid, with cool nights. The annual rainfall is about 130 inches, most of which falls at night.

12. Tactical features

Viewing the strategically vital features as being the airfield and the port facilities of VICTORIA HARBOUR, the following tactical aspect of the topography emerges:-

- (a) the size of the island is such that practically all of it is within artillery range of any one point on it,
- (b) the main hill features run along the WEST coast, and parallel to it, in a chain; but, there are two features, apart from the above, which have vital significance:-
 - (1) a low plateau extends from the NORTH EAST tip of the island, along the EAST coast, and terminates at the line Tg TARAS - 820840. The airstrip is built upon the southern portion of the plateau; and, possession of the above line is important for control of the airfield and BROWN BEACH which is separated from it by 1500 yards of flat ground.

(ii) HAMILTON PENINSULA, on the WEST of VICTORIA HARBOUR, rises to knolls at 802825. The latter overlook BROWN BEACH at a range of 1500 to 2000 yards.

(c) due to the incidence of the EAST coast and the mangrove swamp on the WEST of MACARTHUR road, an advance from BROWN BEACH of almost 6000 yards, with protection of both flanks, is presented.

(d) the remainder of the island offers three axes of advance:-

(i) along MACARTHUR and COAL POINT roads to BETHUNE HEAD;

(ii) along HAMILTON road to BAMBALAI BEG;

(iii) along KIAM SAM road

The area to which all axes converge is that which commands the NORTHERN end of the airstrip.

ENEMY FORCES

13. Naval

(a) BRUNEI BAY had up to 1944 been used by the Japanese as an advanced naval base; but, by the time the operations began, Allied naval and air activity had virtually prevented their using it even as a staging post for coastal shipping. There were indications that a suicide boat unit was in the area. It was expected that enemy naval action would be negligible, and in fact it was non-existent.

(b) Enemy minefields were believed to cover the major part of the entrance to BRUNEI BAY, and several days' minesweeping was necessary before the landings.

14. Land

(a) The estimated enemy strength on LABUAN ISLAND was 650, made up as follows:-

Airfield troops	400
Naval troops	100
Other I of G troops	150
	<u>650</u>

This estimate proved slightly too high in numbers, and inaccurate in the units involved. Information gained after the landing showed that the real figures were approximately:-

371 Indep Inf Bn (less one coy)	350
111 Airfield Bn	50
Miscellaneous	<u>150</u>
	550

Captured documents etc now indicate that the enemy had decided to withdraw all his troops from LABUAN if the battle went against them.

- (b) Some activity on tracks was noticed in air photographs. Field works and coast defences did not appear to be numerous. There were scattered fox-holes on HAMILTON POINT, and a small pit and trench 1000 yards long, NORTH of the town. At the northern point of the island there was a defensive system of weapons pits, bunkers, and trenches, but defences generally appeared to be designed rather for the protection of the airfields than for beach defence. Experience on PARAKAN suggested the presence of more extensive field works than could be detected in air photographs; this proved to be so.

15 Air

The enemy air reaction was expected to be, and was, negligible.

PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE

16. At preliminary conferences of Brigade Commanders and Staffs which were called by General Officer Commanding 9 Aust Div, it was indicated that:-

- (a) some portion of the two brigades which comprised the Divisional Gp would necessarily be required for Divisional reserve.
- (b) that in view of the available shipping, a reduction of personnel and vehicles of units of the force would be required.

As Brigade Commanders completed steps in their appreciation and planning, General Officer Commanding 9 Aust Div exercised control and gave his directions.

PRELIMINARY DECISIONS

17. It was realized that the nature of the coast line and sea approaches reduced the choice of a landing beach to BROWN BEACH. The Navy was unwilling to consider an initial landing on HAMILTON PENINSULA, unless it was in the nature of a main effort, which was out of the question. Thus an extensive neutralization programme by naval fire and air bombardment was decided upon, in order to overcome possible interference from HAMILTON PENINSULA.
18. The nature of the line of advance from BROWN BEACH inland was such that:-
- (a) two forward battalions could cover the front;
 - (b) the necessity for flank protection was barely existent;
 - (c) the main use of a brigade floating reserve would thus be reduced to reinforcing the frontal drive;
 - (d) such reinforcement was better effected by increased fire power;
 - (e) if the third battalion of the brigade was held in Divisional reserve, it would be likely to serve the Divisional plan better, and the Brigade plan no worse, than if it was held as a Brigade floating reserve.
19. The Brigade Commander then suggested that 2/32 Aust Inf Bn be taken as part of Divisional Reserve and that a maximum of fire power be provided in the form of a full squadron of tanks and sundry other weapons, from which a brigade reserve could be formed.

FORCES AVAILABLE

20. Troops

- (a) The forces available to the Brigade Commander for the operation were:-

- Two infantry battalions (the third was in DIV reserve),
- A commando squadron,
- An armoured squadron (Matilda Tanks),
- A field regiment less one troop,
- A light anti-aircraft troop,
- A field company,
- A machine gun company,

with the necessary service troops.

- (b) A detachment of 727 Amphibian Tractor Bn (US) was also under command, and a number of Corps, Divisional, Base, RAAF, and US units were placed under command for landing only, as was also 1 Aust Beach Gp less a small detachment with 20 Aust Inf Bde. The full order of battle is shown in Appx A attached.

21. Shipping

Ships available to the Brigade for the transport of the force were as follows:-

2	LSI	(HMAS WESTRALIA and MANOORA)
10	LST	
5	LCI	
7	LSM	
1	LSD	

In addition, the following small craft were available for landing:-

38	LCVP
26	LCM

APPRECIATIONS BY BRIGADE COMMANDER AND STAFF

22. In all, there were three appreciations made, after the initial conference and the issue of the Divisional Commander's outline plan:-

- (a) appreciation of the situation at LABUAN by the Brigade Commander;
- (b) appreciation of the situation at LABUAN from enemy point of view by the Brigade Major (Learner);
- (c) appreciation of the allotment of shipping and order of battle by Brigade Major and Military Landing Officer.

POINTS TAKEN FROM BRIGADE COMMANDER'S APPRECIATION

23. (a) By landing on BROWN BEACH the battle would become one for the possession of the main objectives, from the commencement of the assault landing.
- (b) Thus the maximum impetus must be introduced to exploitation beyond the beach; and, must be maintained until the airfield was captured.
- (c) HAMILTON PENINSULA must be captured as soon as possible, either by land route or by an amphibious attack across VICTORIA HARBOUR. The neutralization programme could not continue indefinitely; and, the

enemy may cause disruption if allowed to develop strength in that quarter.

- (d) The uncertainty of the nature of the ground beyond the beach head, from the point of view of using tanks, required a continuous pressure forward by infantry without waiting for tanks to overtake them.
- (e) The possibility of the canal which stretched from 825835 to the NORTH WEST being a major obstacle, covered by fire from enemy positions in the rising ground NORTH of it warranted:-
 - (i) careful study of this area and areas to the EAST of it, by all methods.
 - (ii) adequate coverage of this area by bombardment programmes.
 - (iii) provision for the development of a RIGHT en-flanking movement, if necessary.(Note:- This area subsequently proved to be the enemy's first line. It is probable that the bombardment reduced the strength of it; but, the enemy offered stiff resistance to our forward troops, nevertheless.)
- (f) The need for NOT having both battalions fully committed, early in the operation, suggested that the plan should be so arranged that, after the capture of the line Tg TARAS - SOUTH end of the airfield - GOVERNMENT HOUSE, further moves should be by one battalion at a time with the other holding a firm base.
- (g) As the battle for the main objectives would commence early, artillery, tanks and 4.2 in mortars would be needed early. They must therefore be landed in the early waves.
- (h) The nature of the early phases of the attack, as envisaged, would permit of the application of naval fire in a progression of timed concentrations, behind which the advance would follow.
- (i) The neutralization of HAMILTON PENINSULA would be an ideal task for aircraft.
- (j) From the administration point of view, the supply of water must be studied, in case of delay in capturing the reservoir or in case of its being destroyed.

24. The appreciation of the actual landing as far as it concerned type of craft, time of landing, underwater obstacles and beach obstacles in the form of mines received separate consideration. Briefly, it was anticipated that the coral shelf extending from the beach would present a wide water gap, up to three feet in depth. Thus a strong bid was made for the use of LVT's.

Note:- After the issue of the outline plan, a native of LABUAN was interrogated. The information that was deduced as result of this interview raised the possibility of extensive minefields, both on the water's edge and inland. Plans had to be made, as a consequence, for the reconnaissance and clearing of minefields, before LVT's could be directed over the beach. Thus, troops disembarked at the waterline and LVT's were routed to temporary rally areas until the immediate hinterland was declared safe. In the event, there were no mines encountered near the beach.

OUTLINE PLAN

25. The Outline plan appears as Appx B attached. The final plan was but an amplification of it.

SEC. 2 PLANNING

26. Planning HQ

- (a) During the latter part of March 1945, the brigade planning team left AUSTRALIA for MOROTAI. The Brigade Commander, Brigade Major and Signal Officer travelled by air while the Intelligence Officer, Staff Captain (Learner), Military Landing Officer, clerks and intelligence personnel travelled by sea.
- (b) All planning teams of 9 Aust Div were initially situated at Corps HQ until the arrival of the first troops of the division, when all HQ were moved to the divisional concentration area.
- (c) The brigade HQ was divided into two distinct parts:-
 - (i) Planning HQ

(ii) Administrative HQ.

The former consisted of the Commander and principal staff officers whilst the latter was made up of the staff learners, junior liaison officers etc.

This distribution proved quite satisfactory and allowed the planning staff a maximum amount of time for detailed planning without interruption.

27. Order of Battle and Distribution of Force to Ships

- (a) During the planning stages there were two major changes which had far reaching effects.
- (i) In the initial stages, Orders of Battle and allotments of shipping were issued to cover the tactical employment of the whole division.
- (ii) Late in planning, owing to the fact that the whole division could NOT be concentrated in sufficient time for the operation, it became necessary to revise the divisional plan.
- (iii) Subsequently, when the target date for the operation was postponed to allow for the concentration of the division, another change in plan was necessary.
- (b) On receipt of the initial Order of Battle and allotment of shipping, all units and sub-units were instructed to complete "bid sheets" on which the brigade staff were to base the allotment of force to ships.
- (c) The changes mentioned in sub para (a) above had the following effect:-
- (i) It was NOT possible to obtain a firm Order of Battle on which to base the distribution of force to ships.
- (ii) Owing to the need for alteration to the tactical plan, allotment of shipping had to be continuously altered.
- (iii) Units were forced to consistently alter their "bid sheets".
- (iv) It was NOT possible to issue a firm distribution of force to ships to units until very late in the planning stages.
This was unavoidable.

28. Co-ordinating Conferences

- (a) A series of co-ordinating conferences was arranged at Brigade HQ to cover all stages of planning.
- (b) During the series, the brigade task was dealt with on a model of LABUAN ISLAND, in complete detail including battalion tasks and those tasks to be performed by the navy, air force and supporting arms.
- (c) All commanders of units and subunits rehearsed the plan on a model, in the presence of each other. Separate rehearsals were held at brigade, battalion and company lines.

SEC 3 EMBARKATION

- 29. The embarkation was carried out on a divisional basis with Military Landing Officers attached to brigades responsible for the embarkation.
- 30. In addition, the brigade was responsible for the loading of all force stores to be carried in the ships on which the brigade was to travel.
- 31. Embarkation of troops and vehicles was carried out very smoothly and few problems arose.
- 32. Loading of stores presented some difficulty. A conversion rate of 1.6 cub tons to 1 deadweight ton was used in working out the deadweight tonnage for each ship. When this tonnage was allocated, in many instances, unit stores, canteen stores and ordnance stores worked out at approximately 3 to 4 cubic tons per deadweight ton, which meant the shutting out of essential stores from certain ships. These had to be fitted into other ships.
- 33. Plans and specifications of all ships were held by 2 Aust Mil Ldg Gp and the diagramatic loading of these craft was carried out in the normal way by templates on the scale model.
- 34. When the ships arrived to be loaded, it was found, in almost every case, that local modifications had been made by the ships company, and these modifications reduced loading capacity considerably, in one case up to 3000 cub ft.

35. This obviously created a considerable problem at the last moment, and it is felt that, in future operations, some survey should be made of the ships allotted, well in advance of loading; and, any modifications advised to the Mil Ldg Gp concerned.

SEC 4 VOYAGE

36. Owing to the limited amount of shipping available it was necessary to load LST with approximately 450 troops in cases of assault battalions; and, LCI with approximately 180 - 190.
37. For a voyage of 7 days, where LST are heavily loaded with vehicles, it is considered that this number is excessive. If it is necessary to load so many personnel on that type of ship, a reduction in efficiency must be accepted.

SEC 5 SUMMARY OF THE OPERATION

38. As was originally appreciated during planning, the enemy did NOT oppose the landing but withdrew towards the vital ground in the area FLAGSTAFF 8283.
39. 10 Jun
- (a) On 10 JUN, little opposition was encountered on the RIGHT during the advance EAST of ABLE route and the airfield was quickly secured although the enemy was still being encountered in the area to the WEST of ABLE route.
- (b) On the LEFT, all attempts to penetrate the FLAGSTAFF area and that area between ABLE and BAKER routes were met with determined opposition. After stubborn fighting FLAGSTAFF was captured and the canal at 823837, which proved an obstacle to tanks, was crossed.
- (c) It had been the original intention to employ the whole of the Cav Sqn, which was in Brigade reserve, to attack and capture the HAMILTON PENINSULA area as soon as the situation permitted. During the morning, natives reported that there were no enemy on the PENINSULA; and, in view of the slow progress on the LEFT of the brigade front, one troop only was ordered to capture the area.

40. 11 Jun

- (a) On 11 JUN, 2/43 Aust Inf Bn on the RIGHT encountered strong opposition to the WEST of ABLE route throughout the day.
The area to the EAST of ABLE route up to the divisional covering position was patrolled and cleared.
- (b) On the LEFT 2/28 Aust Inf Bn continued to encounter heavy resistance from a series of ridges to the EAST of BAKER route and only slow progress was made.
"A" Company, the right forward company was out of communication at a vital period, which precluded the Brigade Commander from employing two companies of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn, which were being held in reserve, to assist 2/28 Aust Inf Bn.
- (c) Squadron HQ and an additional troop 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn moved to HAMILTON PENINSULA and continued the clearing of that area.
- (d) It became apparent during the day that the main enemy position was in the area between ABLE and BAKER routes in the area squares 8185 and 8186. This area subsequently proved to be a well dug and tunnelled position, mined and booby trapped.
The RIGHT forward battalion was accordingly ordered to attack the enemy position in square 8186 from the EAST while the LEFT forward battalion was ordered to deal with the enemy in square 8185 from the SOUTH and by an outflanking attack from the RIGHT.

41. 12 Jun

- (a) On 12 JUN 2/43 Aust Inf Bn attacked the enemy position in the area 8186 from the EAST supported by tanks of B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt. The attack was successful and the battalion was immediately ordered to continue the advance to the WEST and, with the troop of 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn under command, to patrol to the NORTH.
- (b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn attacked the enemy in area 8185 and, with a right outflanking move succeeded in clearing the enemy from their well defended positions.
- (c) One troop of 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn, moving through swamp, made contact with 2/43 Aust Inf Bn at the junction of CHARLIE and JIG routes.

42. Subsequent operations were conducted with a view to compressing the remainder of the enemy into his rear position to the WEST of BAKER route in square 8085, while the remainder of the island was thoroughly patrolled and scattered groups of the enemy annihilated.
43. The enemy in square 8085 was merely contained for some days during which time all available fire power including naval gunfire, field artillery, mortars and aircraft, was directed into the area.
44. Subsequently, an attack, supported by flame throwing tanks and gun tanks, was launched by 2/28 Aust Inf Bn and the area cleared of enemy.

SEC 6 DETAILED REPORT OF ACTION

Z Day - 10 JUN 45

45. Brigade Intention for the day

As in Brigade Outline Plan - Appx B attached.

46. General

(a) The landing proceeded without incident, except that an enemy aircraft dropped one bomb between two ships, in the early morning.

The interval of time between serials in the latter part of the timed landing programme was extended, in order to meet circumstances on the beach; but, it can be said that the landing of the assault waves was executed perfectly. Waves on call were handled with ease; and, the brigade reserve landed as called for.

(b) It was evident that some of the troops were combating the effects of their relatively long approach voyage; but, this did not reflect in their fighting.

47. RIGHT - 2/43 Aust Inf Bn

The battalion landed at 0915H and quickly secured the first and second brigade bounds. Only scattered opposition was encountered; and at 1110H, the attack on ACPARKS was commenced. By 1800H, the airstrip was secured, although the enemy was still in well dug positions to the WEST of ABLE route, offering considerable resistance.

Owing to the seamy nature of the ground, tanks became bogged on the southern end of the airstrip, and the battalion fought its way forward without tank support.

48.

LEFT - 2/28 Aust Inf Bn

(a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn landed at 0915I, on the LEFT of the brigade front, and immediately pushed forward towards the FLAGSTAFF feature; and, at the same time, sent one company into the VICTORIA HARBOUR town area. By 1030I the town was reported clear and the advance was continued.

Opposition was encountered on the RIGHT from the FLAGSTAFF area and on the LEFT from the high ground overlooking the canal at 823837. This canal proved a complete obstacle to tanks, and infantry had to carry out an opposed crossing supported from the near bank. By a series of outflanking movements on the right, GOVERNMENT HOUSE and the FLAGSTAFF area were captured after sharp fighting.

(b) The left forward company succeeded in gaining a foothold on the NORTH side of the canal and, although suffering casualties gained control of the area.

(c) The efforts of the LEFT forward company are worthy of mention. Their attack led them across the canal where the ground was open to fire. The canal was waist deep for wading. The crossing was not in the form of an assault. Forward platoons moved a section across at a time and made use of their own and the fire power of the tanks to cover the move. There was ample scope for minor tactics and junior leaders performed well. Most of the opposition was from riflemen firing from well sited and concealed positions that were difficult to locate. This fire was heavy and well controlled.

(d) The enemy continued to resist strongly from a series of ridges to the NORTH and during the night several attempts were made to infiltrate into our positions without success.

49.

Brigade Reserve

The brigade intention was to hold 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn in reserve until such time as the situation was clarified and, if the opportunity presented itself, for the Sqn to attack and capture HAMILTON PENINSULA. During the morning, natives reported that there were no enemy on HAMILTON PENINSULA; and, in view of the slow progress on the LEFT of the brigade front, one troop only of the sqn was ordered to carry out the task.

Landing from LVT(4)s, as planned, the troop reported the capture of ARDIE without opposition at 1810I.

Z PLUS 1 DAY - 11 JUN

50. Brigade Intention for the day

To continue the advance to the divisional covering position and, if necessary, employ proportion of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn to clear the enemy in front of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn.

51. RIGHT - 2/43 Aust Inf Bn

- (a) At first light, patrols were sent to clear the whole area to the EAST of ABLE route up to and including the divisional covering position. All attempts to penetrate to the WEST were met with stubborn resistance. Despite this, the battalion captured the reservoir at 822850 intact.
- (b) The battalion carried out some excellent patrols for protection of its LEFT flank. On several occasions, enemy parties probed towards the WEST side of the airfield; but, on each occasion they were driven back.
- (c) With the aid of a bridge laying tank, two troops of tanks were moved up ABLE route, and use was found for them in clearing one party of enemy which penetrated to a position astride ABLE route beyond the NORTH end of the airfield.
- (d) By evening, the area as far NORTH as the covering position and WEST to ABLE route was cleared of enemy.

52. LEFT - 2/28 Aust Inf Bn

- (a) Early on the morning of 12 Jun, 2/28 Aust Inf Bn resumed PHASE III of the attack.
- (b) Two companies were used forward: A Company on the RIGHT, moving cross country, to the WEST of ABLE route; B Company on the LEFT, to move WEST down a spur to BAKER route; and thence along the latter; C Company, moving in rear of B Company on BAKER route; and D Company, to hold a firm base in the initial stage of the advance, then to move as battalion reserve.
- (c) Owing to the demolition of the bridge at 822837, tanks could not be used.
- (d) 2/12 Aust Fd Regt was to support the advance; and, as a result of reliable information, an air strike was planned on an enemy defence area at 8.5856.

- (e) The advance was very difficult. The country was a series of ridges running from the airfield, across the line of advance to the mangrove swamps on the WEST of BAKER route. BAKER route, itself, was a defile. The ridges ended with steep bluffs on the EAST of the road and the vegetation was thick upon them. Between the ridges there were precipitous gullies in most instances.
- (f) The air strike was reported to be very accurate and was subsequently found to have struck among enemy in a well tunnelled area.
- (g) "A" Company on the RIGHT appeared to be making fair progress towards the bomblines.
- (h) "B" Company soon encountered opposition; but, by 1200 hours, GEORGE route was captured and contact made with 2/43 Aust Inf Bn.
- (j) Then the day turned to one of trouble and uncertainty. First, "A" Company continually lost communications. Reports indicated that they were facing enemy in dug and wired positions; but, their whereabouts became unknown. Then "B" Company was ambushed and held by enemy on successive ridges.
- (k) The Commanding Officer decided to hold the axis BAKER route with "C" Company and allow "B" Company to push around the enemy by gaining possession of the upper portions of the ridges. There was a danger of "B" Company becoming mixed in an encounter with "A" Company in the thick timber; but this had to be accepted. One of these flank moves had proved successful in dislodging the enemy; but, the second took "B" company further to the EAST, and nightfall found them so near to ABLE route that they were ordered to move into and become part of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn locality, for the night, and be prepared to continue on the morning of 12 JUN. The whole afternoon's operations had been slow and little progress had been made. BAKER route was a series of demolitions - both in the form of craters and destroyed bridges. The mystery of "A" Company's silence at a critical time, when more force of firepower and infantry was needed, was worrying. Had their position been known, two companies of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn which were available

as brigade reserve could have been used to attack from the EAST to assist 2/28 Aust Inf Bn.

- (1) When "A" Company did report, its position was 819854. It had been in contact in the area to the NORTH WEST of its position and had been forced to withdraw to better ground for the night. It reported the enemy in well fortified positions which demanded an organized attack.
- (m) The enemy kept up a series of infiltration attacks all night, but was beaten back each time.

53. 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

As portion of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was now available as brigade reserve, it was not considered necessary to hold 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn any longer. Consequently Sqn Headquarters and one troop were moved to HAMILTON PENINSULA to continue the clearing of that area; and, one troop was placed under command 2/43 Aust Inf Bn to assist in mopping up EAST of the airfield.

3 PLUS 2 DAY - 12 JUN 45

54. Brigade Intention for the day

To attack the enemy in squares 8185 and 8186 and to continue the advance to the WEST. 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was to attack the northern area from the eastern flank and 2/28 Aust Inf Bn to attack the southern area with an outflanking movement from the right.

55. General

- (a) At the close of the previous day - 11 JUN, a certain amount of information had been collated from reports following contacts, from captured documents and from native reports. It was apparent that the area now being attacked was the enemy's main defence position and that there was a rear position in square 8085. The enemy plans, as appearing in captured documents, included dogged resistance in his main position, suicide attacks, "Special defence" - which was taken to be the electrical firing of bombs and other explosive devices - and "if this was not successful" a last stand in his rear position. It was also thought that there was a likelihood of the enemy withdrawing to TIMBALAI or to BETHUNE HEAD.

- (b) Plans were therefore made to employ both battalions to attack the enemy main position and to localize him so that the remainder of the island could be cleared.
- (c) Before undertaking a co-ordinated attack, more information was needed of the exact layout of the enemy's defence. Consequently, the boundary between 2/28 Aust Inf Bn and 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was altered to :-
 - line junction ABLE route and track 317857 to houses 814855 all inclusive 2/28 Aust Inf Bn;
 - thence BAKER route - JIG route - CHARLIE route all inclusive 2/43 Aust Inf Bn.
- (d) Both battalions were to commence patrolling their areas vigorously, with a view to mounting an attack supported by artillery and tanks. Before any attack was launched, plans were to be submitted for co-ordination by Brigade Headquarters. There appeared to be two main localities, each separate:-
 - (i) an area at 813862 which was tunnelled and defended by bomb booby traps, and contained stores buildings.
 - (ii) positions similar to the above astride the track 317857 to 814855.

Orders for the above were issued at 112115I and patrolling commenced before first light on 12 JUN.

56. RIGHT - 2/43 Aust Inf Bn

- (a) The patrols which left early in the morning soon verified the existence of strong defences in the area 813860; and, found that commanding ground at the village 809867 was not held and was approachable by tanks and vehicles.
- (b) At 0923 hours the enemy was reported to have withdrawn from 814862 where he had been active on the previous day. 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was warned that it was likely that they would be required to move direct to the junction JIG and BAKER routes, subject to more information.
- (c) Suggested air strikes had to be cancelled in order that progress would not be impeded.

- (d) At 1033 hours a patrol to 812863 had not met opposition but had found a strong defence position which was deserted. Patrols to the junction of EASY and ABLE had reconnoitred from this junction to the NORTH and WEST without making contact.
- (e) By this time, it was clear that, with the exception of a locality at 813860, the line of advance to JIG route was clear.
- (e) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was ordered to secure the areas 809867 - junction JIG and BAKER and contact 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn at junction CHARLIE and JIG. It was also to liquidate the pocket at 813860.
- (f) The advance around the NORTH proceeded against light opposition and 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn was contacted at 1740 hours.
- (g) "C" Company 2/43 Aust Inf Bn which was given the task of capturing the position at 813860 found that the position extended SOUTH astride the track in that vicinity. There were numerous subsidiary tracks leading into strong posts; heavy trucks were used as road blocks and wires stretched from the trucks to aerial bombs, as well as from tree to tree. Machine guns covered all obstacles. The tracks were the only approaches which tanks could use, as the ground fell sharply either side of the tracks and was generally broken.
- (h) "C" Company was assisted by engineers and one troop of tanks in capturing this position. The enemy guns were knocked out, one by one, the engineers dealt with the booby traps and blew in the mouths of tunnels and the tanks nosed the enemy trucks off the tracks where they rolled clear. Lt Col JEANES was forward with the company and issued the orders which resulted in this direct action.
- (j) The infantry completed the mopping up of the area and consolidated the position.

57. LEFT - 2/28 Aust Inf Bn

- (a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn commenced patrolling at first light to areas 814854 and 809854. A patrol also moved to the area 806851 where it encountered enemy and attacked them. The patrol killed 2 enemy and drove others off a small knoll, but came under heavy machine gun and mortar fire from the NORTH and withdrew.

- (b) Opposition was encountered at 813854 and in scattered areas to the EAST of the latter.
- (c) The battalion was ordered to deal with this area with the support of one troop of tanks which had been brought down GEORGE route. As "B" Company was in position as from the previous day's operations, it was given the task. "A" Company was to clear the scattered opposition mentioned above. After "A" and "B" Companies had completed their tasks, two companies were to cover BAKER route and compress the enemy into the area to the WEST of it, while two other companies were to be available, in furtherance of the Brigade plan to clear the remainder of the island.
- (d) At 1550 hours "D" Company 2/28 Aust Inf Bn moved to relieve "D" Company 2/43 Aust Inf Bn and so free the latter.
- (e) Progress throughout the day was tedious. "C" Company exerted frontal pressure while "B" Company pushed the enemy off its objective. "A" Company spent a day of difficult mopping up.
- (f) Again, the day's progress had been slow as a result of terrain and dogged resistance of enemy who were advantageously placed; but, results were conclusive. An amount of vehicles, equipment and arms was captured.

58. 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

- (a) The sqn was ordered to complete mopping up HAMILTON PENINSULA and to advance and seize the junction CHARLIE and JIG routes, with a view to contacting 2/43 Aust Inf Bn.
- (b) It was planned that the Sqn would then move, less one troop, and patrol NORTH to BETHUNE HEAD. The remaining troop was to be under command 2/43 Aust Inf Bn during the advance of the latter to TIMBALAI and would be used for flank protection on the KIAM SAM axis.
- (c) The forward troop reached the junction of JIG and CHARLIE at 1648 hours, on a rising tide. It was discovered that HAMILTON POINT was virtually an island at high tide; and, as the tide rose, Sqn Headquarters and one troop were unable to cross the swamps in square 7985 and had to return to dry ground. They were ordered to prepare for movement across VICTORIA

HARBOUR and thence by motor transport to the area EASY route.

- (d) The Sqn had been faced with several problems in the handling of a large number of refugee natives, including over 40 wounded.

59. Casualties

Casualties to date were:-

	OWN		ENEMY		PW
	Killed	Wounded	Killed	Probably Killed	
2/28 Aust Inf Bn	17	36	66	11	-
2/43 Aust Inf Bn	-	6	45	19	1
2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn	1	-	-	-	-
	18	42	111	30	1

Z PLUS 3 DAY - 13 JUN

60. Brigade Intention for the day

To compress the enemy into the area WEST of BAKER route in square 8085 and to continue mopping up the remainder of the island.

61. 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

Sqn HQ and one troop moved from HAMILTON PENINSULA via VICTORIA HARBOUR and joined its other troop. It took over the role of protection on the RIGHT, and patrolled forward to the NORTH reaching the area: from the coast at ARU 8289 to junction of BAKER and NAN routes.

62. 2/28 Aust Inf Bn

- (a) During the night there had been some movement of enemy back into areas which had been cleared on the previous day.
- (b) It was essential to clear BAKER route thoroughly, as the L of C to 2/43 Aust Inf Bn depended upon it. The direct route through the village 809857 was not possible of conversion into a vehicle track owing to swamp and padi fields. Thus the projected move of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn less two companies was delayed.
- (c) Patrol clashes occurred all day and a number of enemy was killed.

63. 2/43 Aust Inf Bn

Rapid progress was made to the WEST; and, by 1400 hours the emergency strip at TIMBALAI was captured. Patrolling to the NORTH and SOUTH of CHARLIE route resulted in odd stragglers being accounted for during the day.

Z PLUS 4 DAY - 14 JUN

64. Brigade Intention for the day

To advance and capture LUBOK TEMIANG using 2/28 Aust Inf Bn less one company and 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn less one troop; to exploit NORTH from TIMBALAI with patrols from 2/43 Aust Inf Bn; and, to contain the pocket WEST of BAKER route with one company of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn, during the progress of this phase of the operation.

65. General

- (a) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn provided a screen behind which 2/28 Aust Inf Bn concentrated at junction EASY and BAKER routes.
- (b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn, now released from the confines of the ridges and valleys WEST of the airfield, executed a lightning advance along ABLE and BAKER routes. By evening it had captured the terminus of ABLE route and the coast beyond. It had also secured the saddle in square 7993.
- (c) Patrols from 2/28 Aust Inf Bn, 2/43 Aust Inf Bn and 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn were covering the whole of the NORTH half of the island.
- (d) Patrols also worked SOUTH from the junction CHARLIE and JIG routes and from TIMBALAI air strip.

66. Subsequent patrols

- (a) For several days the whole island was patrolled by land and by coastwise amphibious patrols.
- (b) Preparation for further operations was then undertaken which included:-
 - (i) the concentrating of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn near the enemy POCKET area, as it was now known, in preparation for its reduction;
 - (ii) the concentration of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn and 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn for preparation for the next event.

THE BATTLE FOR THE POCKET

67. There were two phases in this operation:-

- (a) the application of intense naval, artillery and air bombardment for softening up purposes, during which "A" Company 2/28 Aust Inf Bn staged an encounter attack to gain control of the main approach to the enemy's vital ground.
- (b) the actual assault on the POCKET.

68. Topographical

- (a) The POCKET was situated in square 8085 and was approximately 1200 yards long and 600 yards wide.
- (b) The area consisted of a number of ridges and spurs covered with heavy timber and dense undergrowth, almost entirely surrounded by swamp with the exception of a small neck at the northern end and a track running into the position from the EAST.
- (c) At the south western corner of the POCKET was a suspected barge hideout in the tidal swamp which was linked to VICTORIA HARBOUR by a small river.

69. Vital Ground

There were three main tactical features in the area as shown in Appendix C.

- (a) EASTMAN spur which overlooked the northern approaches, and dominated LYON ridge;
- (b) LUSHINGTON ridge which controlled the eastern approach;
- (c) NORMAN ridge which overlooked both of the other two features.

70. Approaches

There were only two possible approaches to the area:

- (a) From the NORTH a well defined track ran into the position along LYON ridge. With some difficulty it was possible to move tanks on this track but it was heavily mined.
- (b) From the EAST a track ran through swamp on to LUSHINGTON ridge and along a razor back into the main position.

PHASE I

71. Gaining control of main approach

- (a) On 15 JUN 2/11 Aust Coy Sqn had patrolled down the northern approaches to the area and had run into enemy fire from the northern end of LYON ridge sustaining casualties. They reported that the track was suitable for tanks provided a large bomb crater was filled in.
- (b) It was appreciated that, if tanks could be successfully used, a determined attack from the NORTH on 16 JUN would at least gain control of this approach and probably get into the enemy main position.
- (c) On the morning of 16 Jun 2/28 Aust Inf Bn moved "A" Company down the northern track with a bulldozer and a troop of tanks in support. One platoon moved forward and covered the bulldozer whilst the bomb crater was filled in. This was completed by 0925 I and preparation were made to continue the advance.
- (d) First contact was made astride the track at 0955I and attempts were made to move round on the left flank. This was successfully carried out and the whole of LYON ridge captured against heavy opposition which caused casualties to our own troops.
- (e) The position was dominated by the western slopes of EASTMAN ridge and the enemy had the approaches covered by medium machine guns and light machine guns. With the assistance of tanks however, a covering party moved out and captured the area and covered the consolidation of LYON ridge by "D" Company who relieved "A" Company at that stage.

72. "Softening up"

- (a) After gaining control of the northern approaches, it was considered that the enemy could be contained by two companies and that any further immediate attempts to penetrate the main position would only result in unnecessary casualties. It was therefore decided to contain the enemy and apply the maximum amount of fire power available until it was possible to capture the area with a minimum of casualties.

- (b) From 17-20 JUN the enemy was given no rest either by day or by night. During daylight hours he was harrassed by naval gunfire from HMAS "SHROPSHIRE", by aircraft of 13 USAAF, by artillery, mortars and medium machine guns. By night, artillery harrassing shoots were conducted.
- (c) During this period, nightly attempts were made to infiltrate into our positions with demolition charges usually in the form of 30 kg aerial bombs, all of which were repulsed with casualties to the enemy.
- (d) "D" Company carried out continuous and intensive patrolling in the EASTMAN SPUR area throughout the period and by 20 JUN the eastern end of the spur was clear.
- In addition, "C" Company on the eastern approach had carried out some very good patrolling and had gained valuable information as to enemy dispositions and the suitability of the approach for tanks.

PHASE 2

73. Assault on the POCKET

- (a) On 20 JUN it was appreciated that the area had been sufficiently softened up and instructions were issued to 2/28 Aust Inf Bn for the capture of the POCKET. One troop of flame throwing tanks was requested and the tanks were made available.
- (b) During the night 20/21 JUN approximately 60-100 enemy made their way through the swamps and got out of the position. They split into two parties one of which infiltrated to VICTORIA HARBOUR and the other attempted to reach the airfield. The first party did, in fact, reach the HARBOUR but was very severely handled by the troops in that area some 50 being killed. The second party was also intercepted before the airfield was reached and dispersed leaving 10 dead.

- (e) The plan for the capture of the area was as follows:-
- (i) "C" Company with one platoon of "B" Company under command and one troop of MATILDA tanks in support was to attack WEST along LUSHINGTON SPUR and gain control of the southern end of NORMAN ridge. Exploitation was to be carried out to the barge hideout in the SOUTH.
 - (ii) "A" Company with one troop of MATILDA tanks and one troop of FROGS in support was to attack along the axis of the track from the EASTERN end of EASTMAN SPUR, and capture NORMAN RIDGE.
This attack was to be launched 30 minutes after that of "C" Company.

- (d) Artillery preparation was arranged and brought down prior to each attack.
The enemy offered little resistance and appeared completely dazed as a result of the "softening up" process. Any offensive spirit which he had left was quickly lost when the FROGS commenced projecting streams of flame at medium machine gun positions.

During the day 60 Japs were killed and a considerable quantity of equipment of all types was captured. Over 100 enemy dead were counted on LYON RIDGE - EASTMAN SPUR area alone, during the period 16-21 JUN. Many bodies were found which were so badly dismembered as to make an exact count difficult.

BATTLE CASUALTIES

74. (a) Enemy casualties to 21 Jun incl:-
389 counted dead, 30 probably killed, 11 PW.
- (b) Own casualties to 21 Jun incl:-
34 killed, 93 wounded.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART II

THE BATTLE FOR BEAUFORT

INTRODUCTION

75. As a forecast of the plan for subsequent exploitation following the landing at LABUAN, the GOC 9 Aust Div laid down the following policy at MOROTAI, during the delivery of his outline plan for OBOE SIX operations:-
- (a) The actual shape of operations following the landing on LABUAN would be dependant upon recce and appreciation after the success of the latter.
 - (b) As a prelude to the capture of BEAUFORT, preliminary landings may be undertaken at WESTON, MEMPAKUL or both.
 - (c) Should 2/32 Aust Inf Bn NOT be required for a role as Div res, it may be landed under Div control in a Bn Gp operation.
 - (d) It was to be borne in mind that the PADAS and KLIAS rivers were natural means of communication which may subsequently be of use as alternative L's of C between BEAUFORT and WESTON. They may also prove of value as tactical approaches.
76. This policy provided a basis for appreciation which was commenced before the force left MOROTAI. It was possible to free all but one bn, during the final stages of the LABUAN operation, so that troops were rested in preparation for operations on the mainland.

SITUATION AT WESTON

77. On 17 JUN 45 2/32 Aust Inf Bn was landed at WESTON under Div arrangements. A separate report, covering this operation, has been prepared. After landing, the bn was limited in its operation beyond the beach head to such patrolling as was necessary to obtain information of all natures and for the defence of the port area.

78. As result of the patrolling programme, the following deductions were arrived at:-
- (a) The enemy was apparently intent upon delaying any attempt of ours to advance along the ry; but, was not offensive beyond maintaining contact and setting ambushes.
 - (b) The ry presented an axis which was, in fact, a series of defiles, bounded by sharply rising hills to the EAST and extensive swamps to the WEST.
79. In addition to the above, the following factors combined to present unattractive prospects for an advance NORTH along the railway:-
- (a) The swampy surroundings to the village and the nature of the water front called for extensive engineer works in the preparation of barge off-loading points, hard standings for stores and bivouac areas near to the water front.
 - (b) There were no roads or tracks of any nature. The railway was the only possible L of C for maintaining our advance; and, its conversion to a road appeared to be very slow task. The only rolling stock captured at WESTON was one box van and two small falt topped trucks. There were no prime movers for traction on the railway; but, the production of railway wheels for fitting to jeeps was in hand.
80. Despite the above, the wisdom of seizing WESTON was beyond doubt. It provided the following advantages:-
- (a) The enemy was denied the use of the port as an exit from the railway system, from which to launch counter action in BRUNEL BAY.
 - (b) Possession of it provided us with control of the mouth of the PADAS river as well as a base for operations on either the river or the railway.
 - (c) The threat to the enemy along the ry axis proved distinctly valuable in subsequent operations, as it disguised the latter.

LANDING AT MEMPAKUL

81. The landing at MEMPAKUL was decided upon on 18 JUN 45 and executed on the morning of 19 JUN 45. It was a perfect pattern of a small shore to shore operation; and, apart from the preparation of landing craft tables and a landing diagram, all orders and instructions were issued verbally. The careful training of comds and staff in amphibious exercises and the experience of planning and mounting the landing on LABUAN enabled this operation to proceed with smooth efficiency.
82. The landing was to have been staged at a later date when sufficient craft were to be made available following the completion of operations SOUTH of BRUNEL BAY. However, the co-operation of Capt ARISON CTU 76.20 USN made it possible to mount an amphibious patrol which discovered that the enemy were merely occupying the beach with OP's and were occupying positions, further inland, with approx one coy. This patrol was carried out by members of the crew of HMAS LACHLAN who undertook the buoying of approaches to the beach.
83. Following the infm provided by the patrol, the Bde was ordered to despatch a special force to seize a beach head.
84. As the number of available LCM's was limited to five, the assault tps were to be limited to two coys and the LCM's were to land them and to commence a ferry service for ferrying the remainder of the force. However, the situation was bettered when two LCI's were added by Comd CTU 76.20 USN.
85. The task allotted to the Bde was:-
- (a) to seize and hold a beach head at MEMPAKUL.
 - (b) to advance and capture KGLIAS PENINSULA using 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn and such portions of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn as were necessary, with a view to subsequent ops at BEAUFORT.
 - (c) to capture KUALA PENYU inlet for possible use as a small craft harbour.

86. The assault force which sailed on the morning of 19 Jun 45 was made up as follows:-

(a) ASSAULT WAVES.

- (i) Inf
2/43 Aust Inf Bn less two coys and sundry dets.
"C" Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn less one pl.
- (ii) Cav
2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn
- (iii) Arty
FOO's party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP
- (iv) Engrs
Tac HQ and one Pl 2/16 Aust Fd Coy
- (v) Sigs
Det 2/11 Cav (Cdo) Regt Sig Tp
Det 24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec
Det 2/43 Aust Cipher Sec
Det 9 Aust Div Sigs
- (vi) AASC
Det 2/14 Aust Tpt Pl
Det 2/28 Aust Sup Dep Pl
Det 2/156 Aust Gd Coy
- (vii) Misc
Det RAN Cdo 1 Aust Beach Gp
LO Bde HQ
One ALP

(b) FERRY SERVICE

- (i) One tp 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
- (ii) Remainder 2/43 Aust Inf Bn
- (iii) Det 2/3 Aust Fd Amb
- (iv) Det B Aust FS Sec
- (v) Det BBKAU

(c) Tac HQ 24 Aust Inf Bde accompanied the assault waves.

87. CO 2/43 Aust Inf Bn commanded the force after the landing.
88. The landing was supported by 2/12 Aust Fd Regt and 2/3 Aust Comp AA Regt (firing 3.7 in AA guns in a ground role) from LABUAN ISLAND. One LCM gun boat also provided sp.
89. The two inf coys landed and captured a beach head without opposition. They were followed by 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn which was floating res. The latter then exploited beyond the beach head and made contact with elements of the enemy along the telephone line NORTH of MENUMBOK, killing 3.
90. The ferry service then went into operation without incident.
91. CO 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was instructed to make the maximum use of aquatic hooks along the ELIAS river and the WEST coast of the peninsula. Two special patrols were ordered by the Bde Comd:-
- (a) a patrol consisting of 152 men with supporting weapons from within the Bn was to move to SIHOKOR 1899 with the task of:-
 - (i) obtaining intelligence of enemy str and disposn
 - (ii) reporting on topography as it affected mobility of troops on foot, vehs, guns and tracked vehs
 - (iii) reporting on possible assembly areas for a bn and on possible gun areas
 - (iv) reporting on the availability of native water craft;
 - (b) a patrol consisting of RAN Cdo party and escort with the task of reconnoitring possible beaches for re-supply on the WEST coast as far NORTH as SABANG 0905.
92. Patrols were water borne in landing craft; and, in the case of the patrol as in 91 (a) above, the patrol was organized for an assault landing, with one LCM gunboat for escort and sp fire.

93. Information received from the patrol along the sea coast resulted in SABANG being used, later, for the re-supply of the force which completed the capture of KLIAS peninsula; and, to some extent, determined the pattern of the latter operation.
94. The patrol to SINGKORAP found that the village was not as shown on the map; but, was actually part of KOTA KLIAS. Natives informed the patrol that the enemy who occupied KOTA KLIAS numbered 10/15. Thereupon, the patrol proceeded to KOTA KLIAS, attacked and captured the village, killing 10 enemy. Reports furnished by this patrol shaped the operations along the KLIAS river in the capture of BEAUFORT.

PATROLS - WESTON Area

95. 2/32 Aust Inf Bn reverted to comd 24 Aust Inf Bde following the landing at MEMPAKU. The bn was visited by Bde Comd and given the following roles:-
- (a) demonstrations for the purpose of deceiving the enemy into the belief that our main thrust was to be along the railway.
 - (b) waterborne patrols were to be sent along the PADAS river as far NORTH as KARANG 2591 with tasks which were identical to those in para 91 (a) above.
96. 2/32 Aust Inf Bn had already patrolled the lower reaches of the PADAS; and the patrol which was operating on 19 JUN 45 extended its sphere of operation. Again, results were positive enough to promote a decision to use PADAS river as an axis of adv and a L of C to BEAUFORT.

OPERATIONS OF 2/11 AUST CDO SQN

97. In its task of advancing to Tg NOSONG, 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn moved along the general axis of the telephone line to KARUKAN 1103. The terrain over which it moved was a mixture of mangrove swamp, broken but relatively open country and rough timbered country. Its speed of mov was relatively so fast that maintenance by any other means than by barge, to successive beach heads, was not possible. To maintain LT communications with

the Sqn was also out of the question, although an attempt was made to lay line during the advance to MELIKAI. It was obvious that a choice had to be made between slowing the rate of adv and establishing staging points with sig relay stations or depending upon the est of beach heads in advance of the leading troops and upon wireless communications.

98. The decision which was put into effect was based on the latter alternative. Patrols, up to one coy in strength, from 2/43 Aust Inf Bn were used to move by either the KLIAS river or the sea. These patrols landed and established temporary re supply beach heads to which the Sqn advanced and drew sups for the next stage. The following beach heads were the results of this policy:-

- (a) THE SPUR 981883 est on 20 JUN 45. This was used to resupply 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn and such elements of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn as had advanced to this line.
- (b) MUNGA 035945 est on 21 JUN 45. This point supplied 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn for their advance to KARUKAN.
- (c) SABANG 0905 est 22/23 JUN 45. 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn took over the beach head and operated it until the forward troops reached the objective area.
- (d) TEMPURONG 1511 est on 24 JUN 45 for the maintenance of F tp 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn which advanced to that point.
- (e) KUALA PENYU eventually became the maintenance beachhead for the force during its capture and mopping up of the remainder of the KLIAS PENINSULA.

99. It had been discovered that 2 Coy of 371 Ind Inf Bn was in the MEMPAKUL - KLIAS PENINSULA area. This enemy force was disorganised by the outflanking tactics adopted at the commencement of the op; and, 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn were only confronted with unco-ordinated opposition throughout their advance. Natives often brought information of the whereabouts of parties of enemy, whereupon the Sqn detached troops with tasks of destroying them. The latter was always carried out decisively.

100. Total casualties during the advance were:-
(a) Own 5 WIA
(b) Enemy 37 Killed 3 PW
101. The progress of the operation is shown on Appx D.

102. Command

24 Aust Inf Bde directed operations from LABUAN until 22 JUN 45 when Bde HQ moved to MEMPAKUL. Capt J. J. ROSE was given the task of co-ordinating the maintenance of the force until rear Bde HQ moved to BEAUFORT on 29 Jun when 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn passed from comd.

MOV OF 2/43 AUST INF BN TO KANDU AREA

103. As soon as it became apparent that the enemy on KELIAS PENINSULA were disintegrated, and as reports favoured an early offensive against BEAUFORT, 2/43 Aust Inf Bn were ordered to remain in areas from which they could be moved by barge, at short notice. 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn passed from comd 2/43 Aust Inf Bn to allow full attention to be paid to an advance EAST from KOTA KELIAS by the latter unit.
104. It was considered important to discover the suitability of the line of advance from KOTA KELIAS to KANDU quickly, for the following reasons:-
(a) There was no certainty that the enemy may not concentrate a force to hold the axis of the telephone line leading into BEAUFORT or to take position covering the PADAS river approach.
(b) It was necessary to know whether the KELIAS river could be used as a L of C if the enemy took counter offensive action to sever the PADAS river L of C; although, the aim was to use the PADAS river for the entire force.
105. 2/43 Aust Inf Bn, aided by some excellent coxwains of 593 EB & SR US Army provided answers to the above questions by moving river patrols beyond the bound of expectation to a bridge head at 267995.
106. As result favourable reports by river and land patrols, 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was ordered to move forward in strength.

107. By 22 JUN the battalion less two coys and sundry detachments was holding the locality 267995 while they patrolled forward and dealt with parties of enemy moving from the WEST. Simultaneously, a third coy was moving forward and arrangements were in hand to move guns up; but, the rapidity of the EASTWARD patrols' moves kept maintenance and movement plans altering quickly with the changing situation.
108. On 23 JUN, 2/43 Aust Inf Bn moved forward to KIBIDANG 2996 and had patrols well on the way to the PADAS river. The main events of the past two days were the routing of several small parties of enemy and the wild enthusiasm of the native population.
109. On 24 JUN the forward elements of the battalion had reached the village at 318928 and, from this time onward, the L of C became the PADAS river. The remainder of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn moved up, except those elements of the original battalion group - incl guns - which were still in transit from MEMPAKUL. The latter moved via the PADAS river.
110. Patrols from 2/32 Aust Inf Bn contacted 2/43 Aust Inf Bn on the afternoon of 24 JUN.
111. The movement of this bn was remarkable for its speed and justifiable audacity. Comms with Bde HQ were maintained by wireless and personal liaison by the Bde Comd who used a launch.
112. The launch played a distinct part in the speed of obtaining infm and acting upon it quickly. It was fitted with wireless sets and was large enough to carry the Comd and a small staff.

CONCENTRATION FOR ATTACK ON BEAUFORT

113. On 22 JUN 45 2/32 Aust Inf Bn commenced moving two coys up the PADAS river in order to conform with the Bde patrol programme.
114. As result of a telephone discussion between GOC 9 Aust Div and Comd 24 Aust Inf Bde, followed by signal communications, the following plan was undertaken:-

- (a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn less two coys was to relieve 2/32 Aust Inf Bn of the defence of WESTON. 2/28 Aust Inf Bn was to take over the role of 2/32 Aust Inf Bn with special emphasis to be placed on deceiving the enemy as to our intentions.
- (b) 24 Aust Inf Bde Gp was to concentrate astride the PADAS river in preparation for the attack on BEAUFORT:-
 - (i) 2/32 Aust Inf Bn was to assemble in square 2991 and be responsible for protection of approaches SOUTH of PADAS river and from PADAS VALLEY ESTATE 3387. It would also undertake patrolling for information in BEAUFORT area SOUTH of PADAS river incl.
 - (ii) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was to assemble in squares 3292 and 3192 and be responsible for protection of all approaches to the area NORTH of PADAS river. It would also patrol for information in the BEAUFORT area NORTH of PADAS river excl.
 - (iii) two coys of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn with small HQ under comd Maj D R JACKSON would move from LABUAN to take over protection of axis when the force commenced its final approach.
 - (iv) gun areas were chosen in area occupied by 2/43 Aust Inf Bn.
 - (v) arrangements were made for the forward move of up to two troops of tanks. Commencement of move to be subject to terrain reports.
 - (vi) maintenance area to be in billabong area 2791, incl MDS.
 - (vii) Bde HQ, as it arrived, would occupy area 289918. Meanwhile, Tac HQ would set up its sig centre at this point and would move forward by launch with one 22 W/T set as necessary to control operations (Actually Bde HQ did not finally concentrate until the capture of BEAUFORT, due to shortage of craft; but, adequate control was exercised with what portion did arrive).

115. Great credit must go to the G Staff of 9 Aust Div for the elasticity with which they adapted themselves to the situation and the promptness with which our requisitions for subs and movement of force were answered. Again, the value of personal liaison, by the DAQMG Maj E C WILLIAMS, was a factor in speeding up the operation.
116. An outstanding feature of this phase and the next was the superb quality of the patrolling of both forward battalions. Patrols operated with audacity and efficiency. The fact that they made contact WEST of BEAUFORT did not satisfy them. They destroyed small parties of enemy and penetrated deeply into the area. While receiving assistance from natives, they did not rely upon native information but verified it or not by obtaining first hand information. From the enemy's viewpoint, the exploding of dumps here and there the disappearance of his personnel and the failing of line comms in the few places where they existed only suggested to him, it has been revealed, that there was a raiding party of 300 Australians operating from KOTA KLIAS while another 300 were trying to advance from WESTON.
117. A native informer who had associations with the contractor for meat supply to the JAPANESE in BEAUFORT gave valuable information. He supplied information which yielded the intelligence that the enemy meat ration strength was 625. This was based on an average supply of 125 katis of meat per day and the statement that 5 JAPANESE drew a ration of one Kati.
118. A diagram showing the movement of units during this phase appears as Appx E.

THE APPROACH

119. Between 24 JUN and 26 JUN, units completed their concentration and adjusted their dispositions so as to be within quick striking range of BEAUFORT. This was particularly necessary in the case of 2/32 Aust Inf Bn which reported that the dry ground in their concentration area was limited to a narrow levee along the river and that the apparent approach from PADAS VALLEY ESTATE was one through bad swamp.

120. By 26 JUN 45, the disposns were shown in Appx F.
121. 2/32 Aust Inf Bn were made responsible for cutting the railway between BEAUFORT and PADAS VALLEY ESTATE. They were to stop any move from WESTON; but, were to allow trains moving SOUTH from BEAUFORT to proceed. The object of the latter was to save stock from possible demolition. Accordingly, a coy was positioned at 338877. It patrolled SOUTH to PADAS VALLEY.
122. 2/43 Aust Inf Bn placed an outpost in position, where it commanded the approach along the railway from the NORTH.
123. On 26 JUN the enemy was contacted at PADAS VALLEY and two were killed.

PLAN FOR THE ATTACK

124. It was appreciated that:-
- (a) the strength of the enemy in BEAUFORT area was in the region of 600 to 650;
 - (b) the fact that there were NO outposts and that some of the forward enemy posns were held lightly indicated that the enemy was not expecting an attack from the direction of KANDU;
 - (c) the fact that numerous enemy parties were found outside the town area indicated that part of the garrison, at least, was scattered on various missions;
 - (d) the enemy defended localities were as shown on Appx G;
 - (e) the defences were sited to cover the PADAS river and the two railway lines where they run, roughly parallel, from EAST to WEST, with the main posn on the high ground at the EAST end of the town;
 - (f) the earlier the attack could be launched, the greater would be the opportunity of catching the enemy unprepared and unco-ordinated;
 - (g) the capture of the two spurs at 375895 and 374887 would be best effected by outflanking moves;

- (h) the capture of spur 374887 would be the easier and would influence the battle for the northern part of the town favourably;
- (i) artillery would be more effective and gain more surprise if placed in support of forward troops on call;
- (j) in order to maintain a reserve to deal with a possible back flow of enemy from WESTON, as well as to influence the battle, the seizure of the SOUTH bank of the PADAS river should precede the attack on the NORTH.

125. In consequence, the plan was as follows:-

- (a) 2/32 Aust Inf Bn was to attack with two companies and seize spur 374887 and railway terminus 3687 by outflanking moves. At the same time, one company was to guard the approach along the railway from the SOUTH and one company was to hold the railway bend 3490. 2/12 Aust Fd Regt would support the attack with 12 guns on call (two more were being offloaded from a barge, at the time);
- (b) following the success of the above, 2/43 Aust Inf Bn would attack using two companies to seize spur 375895 and high ground 370904 by outflanking attacks from the NORTH while one company exerted frontal pressure. 2/12 Aust Fd Regt would support the attack with 14 guns, on call.
- (c) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn would take over protection of the axis on the NORTH of the PADAS river, with one company, and protection of the Main Dressing Station and gun areas with the second company.

126. The routes taken by companies of each battalion is shown on Appx H.

EXECUTION OF ATTACK - SOUTH OF PADAS

127. "A" Company 2/32 Aust Inf Bn captured the railway terminus after slight contact but encountered opposition immediately EAST of it. The Company suffered one killed and two wounded and two enemy dead were

counted. One enemy Light Machine Gun was captured. The enemy withdrew.

128. No enemy were reported from PADAS VALLEY area.
129. "D" Company 2/32 Aust Inf Bn moved through squares 3688 and 3788 to point 374887 without contact; but, it appeared that approximately 60 enemy who were in position at 365901 and other positions along the SOUTH bank of the PADAS river were cut off but escaped through the thick timber.

EXECUTION OF ATTACK - NORTH OF PADAS

130. 2/43 Aust Inf Bn moved "D" Company forward at first light to secure an important position astride road junctions 361907 and 360904. The object of this was to ensure the seizure of this position, before the breaking of surprise by the attack of 2/32 Aust Inf Bn. Also it formed part of a frontal feint. Patrols operated from this area.
131. At 1400 hours the attack commenced when two companies - "B" and "D" - pushed along the WOODFORD ESTATE road which commences at 360905. The track junction 373918 was seized without opposition.
132. "B" Company then commenced to move to the feature BARNEY 380912 and "D" Company advanced to capture OCTOPUS feature 370902. After success by "D" Company, "A" Company moved to capture an important spur at 368901. "C" Company was Battalion reserve.
133. "C" Company 2/28 Aust Inf Bn occupied the general area 361908, to enable the whole of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn to move forward with security.
134. The advance of "B" Company was handicapped by the dense timber and rough terrain. This Company actually performed a notable physical feat in making the progress that it did. They reported their position as approximately 380908 at 1730 hours, and were urged to push as far SOUTH as possible before dark.

135. "D" Company encountered opposition at 370903. It performed with its usual vigour and gained control of the spur 372901 by 1815 hours. As the opposition had been unco-ordinated, it was desirable to maintain the impetus, despite approaching darkness and light rain. The Company was, therefore, directed to seize the high ground at 372896. As this meant moving off commanding ground, "C" Company of 2/32 Aust Inf Bn was moved across the river, subsequently, to hold the ground already won.
136. "D" Company captured its objective at last light. Concurrently with this move, "A" Company captured features astride the road junction at 367903. The advance of "A" Company was opposed; but, as in the case of "D" Company, the opposition was unco-ordinated. Shortly before last light, "D" Company had captured ground covering the open portion of the town from the WEST at 365902. Although mopping up continued well into the night, the town was reported as secured.

ENEMY COUNTER ATTACK

137. However, during the night 27/28 JUN the enemy appeared at close quarters to both "A" and "D" Companies and developed a counter-attack, the plans of which have since been captured. On the 2/43 Aust Inf Bn's front, the counter-attack was pressed vigorously; but, on 2/32 Aust Inf Bn front the enemy appeared to abandon the project. See Appx J.
138. "D" Company of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn became isolated and casualties were suffered by both "A" and "D" Companies. Six attempts were made by the enemy to overcome "D" Company. Capt GLOVER, the Company Commander was wounded but continued to command his Company until next day, after the situation was cleared.
139. "B" Company 2/43 Aust Inf Bn were out of communication all night and their whereabouts was not known.
140. Shortly after first light 28 JUN, the enemy renewed his attacks and our forward companies came under heavy machine gun fire which caused casualties. Our troops replied with mortar and medium machine gun fire and silenced the opposition. Artillery was not used.

because of the possibility of "B" Company 2/43 Aust Inf Bn coming down from BARNEY and closing with the enemy. Efforts to clear a way to "D" Company were successful at 1100 hours but the town area was still under enemy machine gun fire.

141. At 1030 hours "B" Company came on the air and reported its position as 377899, in possession of the centre of a system of tracks. "B" Company were impressed with urgent necessity of attacking SOUTH and were ordered to secure the track system with one platoon and to effect a junction with "D" Company with the remainder of the Company.
142. Meanwhile, feverish efforts were being made by 2/16 Aust Fd Coy to land one troop of tanks of 2/9 Aust Armd Regt and bring them forward. The enemy, it transpired, was aware of this.
143. "B" Company fought its way forward but could not reach "D" Company, as a small gorge separated the two companies. Pte STARCEVICH distinguished himself by wiping out four enemy machine gun positions single handed, in the advance of "B" Company.
144. The position on 18 Platoon "D" Company was particularly serious as they were now reduced to half strength.
145. In A Company area close fighting was in progress. Pte KELLY of this company was responsible for killing 6 enemy in hand to hand fighting, although he was shot in the leg and slashed with a sword, across one shoulder. He finished an encounter by firing his Owen Sub Machine Gun one handed and put other enemy to flight.
146. The Commanding Officer 2/43 Aust Inf Bn then decided to withdraw his forward troops slightly and concentrate artillery fire on the enemy. This was done at 1800 hours. The tanks were now ashore at 364905; but, several obstacles had still to be crossed.
147. The enemy was thrashed with artillery and mortars during the night 28/29 JUN; and, commenced to withdraw. "B" Company situated on the track centre had a busy night killing parties of ones and twos, as the enemy executed his normal night withdrawal tactics. Splendid fire discipline was displayed by "B" Company, in that single shots were fired instead of random bursts of light machine gun etc fire. One platoon

is accredited with 21 enemy killed with 21 single shots, fired at ranges of 5 to 15 yards.

148. The 29 JUN was a day of mopping up, with the help of tanks, and re-organization.
149. It was evident that the delayed approach of "B" Company 2/43 Aust Inf Bn had influenced the enemy's counter attack plan, in that he was unaware of the threat to his flank; but, the wide outflanking tactics were eventually responsible for success.
150. Artillery fire was used throughout the first day of the attack, on successive positions as they were encountered; and, it is interesting to note, in the enemy's counter attack plan, that all of our guns were pinpointed by direction of sound, that time of flight had not been studied and that we had been accredited with using JAPANESE tactics by firing at short range. It is possible that the enemy did not accredit the fact that guns were moved by river and pictured them as being brought up by railway..
151. The fact that the ground in the town area was soft and swampy almost caused the decision to land tanks to be cancelled; but, the view was taken at Brigade Headquarters that the news of their landing would be an inspiration to our troops and would have the opposite effect on the enemy. The number of obstacles to be crossed precluded their full use; but, they were a minor factor in the success.
152. There were some good examples of junior leadership, quick appreciation, excellent use of small arms and individual heroism in this battle.

EXPLOITATION

153. Following the capture of the town, the Brigade Commander changed the tactics to:-
- (a) the enemy was to be pin pointed by vigorous patrolling;
 - (b) contact was to be maintained constantly, except for applying artillery fire;
 - (c) maximum fire was to be applied to enemy positions, as they were located;

- (d) the enemy withdrawal was to be followed up quickly.

This was described as "pin, hit with fire power and follow up".

154.

The enemy offered resistance on the following lines:-

- (a) against exploitation by 2/43 Aust Inf Bn:

area JIMPANGA on knolls at 381889

- (b) against exploitation by 2/32 Aust Inf Bn:

(i) the line; high ground in square 3990 to 412898 - the enemy was particularly stubborn in this area; and, after air strikes, artillery and fire from a rocket battery, on feature JUMBO 3990, 2/32 Aust Inf Bn had to employ encircling tactics to remove a pocket at 412898. The enemy suffered heavy casualties in this area;

(ii) the line of high ground on the 41 000000 - Here again the opposition was increasingly stubborn; but, the excellent impetus of 2/32 Aust Inf Bn in again outflanking the position took them to the line of MONTENIOR BESAR. "C" Company under Maj J.C. HENDRY MC performed well in this operation. The enemy at 410893 were out of it but escaped.

- (c) Against 2/28 Aust Inf Bn, which had now arrived and relieved 2/32 Aust Inf Bn:-

the line: island at 427889 to track junctions on feature 435387.

155.

The latter line was laid down as the limit of exploitation. It will be seen that it corresponds to the neck of a funnel which opens to the NORTH, along MONTENIOR BESAR, and to the WEST, along the PADAS river. The enemy is thus held on a narrow front.

156.

Some first class patrols by 2/28 Aust Inf Bn have dealt severe blows to enemy outposts and patrols; and, although the enemy initiative is showing signs of recovery, the continuation of air strikes, artillery fire and patrol attacks causes obvious depressions in the trend of his aggressiveness.

157. A native report claims that it took the enemy a day and a night to evacuate his casualties after one air strike.

158. Appx K shows our final dispositions.

CLEARING THE BEAUFORT - WESTON RAILWAY LINE

159. During the capture of BEAUFORT, "B" Company 2/32 Aust Inf Bn patrolled offensively towards LUMADAN.

160. A recent intelligence report states that 300 enemy were made responsible for the delay of our advance from WESTON; and, that this force commenced to move to BEAUFORT when the signs of battle appeared in their rear. "B" Company encountered this force at LUMADAN; and, by employing artillery, caused them to retire EAST, leaving a small rear guard in the area 3280.

161. As the enemy withdrew from 2/28 Aust Inf Bn, a platoon contacted with the tactics of a forward platoon in an advance. Fire from 4.2 inch mortars was used with accuracy and good effect, particularly when fired by members of 2/3 Tank Attack Regt who were well trained in their use.

EXPLOITATION NORTH

162. Two Companies 2/28 Aust Inf Bn extended their protective role to the occupation of BEAUFORT ESTATE, up to the line of rising ground at 3795.

163. As a side line, they dealt with a force of enemy which was cut off WEST of BEAUFORT. This force employed evasive tactics from the beginning and finally it split into small parties. They became known as "The Phantoms", as they appeared at odd places around the town of BEAUFORT at night. Their numbers were reduced by regular hunting tactics; but, their original strength is only based on native information - between 30 and 150.

164. 2/32 Aust Inf Bn was given the role of the capture of PAPAR, after its relief by 2/28 Aust Inf Bn. It commenced its advance on 6 JUL 45.

BATTLE CASUALTIES

		OWN		ENEMY		
		KIA	WIA	KILLED	KILLED	PW
		PROB				
165.	(a) <u>MEMPAKUL to PADAS river</u>					
	(i) 2/32 Aust Inf Bn	-	2	5	5	-
	(ii) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn	-	1	54	16	7
	(iii) Others	-	-	-	-	-
	(b) <u>ATTACK on BEAUFORT</u>					
	(i) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn	-	2	-	-	-
	(ii) 2/32 Aust Inf Bn	5	3	6	-	-
	(iii) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn	4	31	93	3	2
	(iv) Others	-	1	-	-	-
	(c) <u>EXPLOITATION</u>					
	(i) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn	-	6	21	-	5
	(ii) 2/32 Aust Inf Bn	2	3	23	2	1
	(iii) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn	3	6	27	2	-
	(iv) Others	-	-	2	-	-

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART III

SUPPORTING ARMS

ARTILLERY

166. Throughout the LABUAN -BEAUFOR campaign the brigade has been continuously supported by 2/12 Aust Fd Regt

167. LABUAN

(a) Guns and mortars in action

Guns in action	25 prs 25 pr II	20
Mortars 4.2 inch		4

(b) Ammunition expenditure

25 pr HE	12659
SMOK	87
STAR	20
4.2" mortar HE	83

168. WESTON

(a) General

The landing at WESTON by 4/32 Aust Inf Bn was supported by 23 Fd Bty consisting of 4 x 25 prs and 4 x 4.2 inch mortars.

(b) Ammunition expenditure

25 pr HE v	725
SMOK	58
4.2 in mortar HE	43

169. MEMPAKUL

(a) General

The landing of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn was supported by 62 Fd Bty plus 8 x 3.7 Hy AA guns from LABUAN. 62 Fd Bty subsequently moved to the MEMPAKUL area.

(b) Ammunition expenditure

25 pr HE	673
3.7 AA HE	800

170. BEAUFORT

(a) General

(i) Movement of guns to the BEAUFORT area presented considerable difficulties mainly due to lack of craft for the movement of guns and the paucity of gun areas. However, by careful reconnaissance suitable areas were found and the guns were ferried in as craft became available.

(ii) No guns were used during the advance to BEAUFORT and when required in the battle for the town, surprise was complete.

(b) Guns in action

26 Jun	12
27 Jun	16
29 Jun	20

(c) Ammunition expenditure

25 pr HE	2,252
SMOK	4

ENGINEERS

171. LABUAN

(a) General

2/7 Aust Fd Coy was placed in support 24 Aust Inf Bde for the landing at LABUAN. This company had been part of the normal brigade group during training and a high degree of co-operation was achieved.

(b) Summary of Tasks carried out

(i) Mine clearing parties were taken into consideration during planning and allowed for in the assault waves.

(ii) All tanks were accompanied by sappers. Bulldozers on the basis of two per squadron were allotted under engineer control.

(iii) A considerable amount of road repair and maintenance was necessary as the advance continued.

- (iv) Owing to the road demolitions caused by the enemy, it was necessary to construct many bridges.

Details of the main construction is given in sub para (c) below.

(c) Bridging

- (i) One BAILEY bridge D5. 70 ft with 2 x 20 ft ramps.
- (ii) Three FLB class 24 each 42 ft
- (iii) One BAILEY bridge D3. 50 ft with 2 x 10 ft ramps.
- (iv) In addition to the above, many bridges over culverts etc were built with local resources.
- (v) In all, approximately 18 gaps of a major nature were bridged.

172.

WESTON

(a) General

2/32 Aust Inf Bn landed at WESTON under exceptional arrangements and was supported by one platoon of 2/15 Aust Fd Coy and one platoon of 2/16 Aust Fd Coy all under command of Maj R THOMAS, OC 2/16 Aust Fd Coy.

(b) Tasks

- (i) Owing to the extreme difficulty encountered in landing LVT (4)s engineer assistance was necessary to make exits from the landing point.
- (ii) Initial improvement to railway line to permit of use by hand trolleys. This was subsequently improved to take jeeps.
- (iii) Opening of two gravel quarries for use on the road and hard standings in the area.
- (iv) Water supply.

173.

MEMPAKUL

(a) General

- (i) There was little time for planning this operation, as it was of necessity mounted very quickly. Engineer reconnaissance was, however,

carried out by OC 2/16 Aust Fd Coy in an AUSTER over the area.

- (ii) One platoon 2/16 Aust Fd Coy supported 2/43 Aust Inf Bn during the operation.

(b) Tasks carried out

- (i) Establishment of aBMA.
- (ii) Construction of crossings across swamp behind the beach and the development of jeep track in that area.
- (iii) Several barge off loading points were established on the eastern side of the peninsula on the KLIAS river as units and patrols advanced.
- (iv) Water supply.

174.

BEAUFORT

(a) General

- (i) 2/16 Aust Fd Coy less one platoon plus one platoon of 2/15 Aust Fd Coy was in support during the advance to, and the battle for BEAUFORT.
- (ii) Owing to the use of the river lines of communication, engineer tasks were limited during the advance to, assistance to infantry, reconnaissance and the establishment of barge off loading points.

(b) Tasks carried out

- (i) As per sub para (a) (ii) above.
- (ii) A jeep track was constructed from 333915 to railway line at 354906.
- (iii) A tank off loading point was established at 361902 and a track prepared for the tanks to BEAUFORT.

MEDICAL

175.

- (a) Throughout the whole campaign the brigade has been supported by 2/3 Aust Fd Amb. Despite numerous difficulties in transportation by sea and movement overland, the services rendered by the field ambulance have been of the highest.

- (b) Details of battle casualties are shown in Part I para 74 and Part II para 165.
- (c) Following number of personnel were evacuated sick during the period 10 - 29 Jun incl:-
- (i) LABUAN 1 offr 42 ORs
 - (ii) MEMPAKUL c 2 offr 10 ORs
 - (iii) WESTON 1 offr 15 ORs
 - (iv) BEAUFORT 27 ORs

GENERAL

176. (a) In addition to the above, the following units and sub-units were under command or in support of the brigade throughout:-

B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt
C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn
HQ 2/156 Aust Gen Tpt Coy
2/14 Aust Tpt Pl
2/28 Aust Sup Dep Bn
2/122 Aust Bde Ord Bn Pk
2/122 Aust Bde Wksp

- (b) The co-operation and liaison between units and sub-units of the brigade group has been noticeably good and is reflected in the successes which have been achieved.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART IV

LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PLANNING AND LOADING - SHIPS

177. Theoretically, planning at the Bde level commences with an allotment of shipping and a firm OOB. In practice however, it is considered that this is unlikely to occur. The allotment of ships is made and the OOB fluctuates with the progress of the tactical planning. Further, the detailed examination of terrain and beach intelligence calls for alteration of the shipping, in the sense that limits are placed upon the use of certain types of ships and craft. The latter, in effect, though not in numbers of ships still available, alters the amount of ship and craft space available to serve the tactical plan.
178. It cannot be seen that this is avoidable; but, the result is that much work on the part of staff officers is wasted, with each change. At the bde level, this means a succession of planning and replanning. At bn level, plans, tables and nominal rolls cannot be finalized until the last alteration becomes the final one. Therefore, there is need for a system which will enable additional resources in staff, clerks and typewriters etc to be placed at the disposal of Bn etc HQs during the last few days before embarkation. The solution to the problem would appear to be an increase in the MLO's staff.
179. In any case, the recent operation proved that one MLO and one bde staff officer could only cope with the allotment of force to ships and the loading of ships, by working most of the twenty four hours of the day. As the BM is the logical officer to work with the MLO, the comd is deprived of much of his assistance in other aspects of planning. An assistant MLO is considered necessary.
180. In a larger scale operation, with a short sea voyage involved, much of the above would not be so apparent.

181. Other factors which go to aggravate the fluctuating quantities of force and ships are:-

- (a) The incidence of a long interval between the assault convoy and the first follow up convoy. With a period of five or more days between the two, all those personnel and that equipment for which there are functions during the interval, must be landed with the assault convoy. This means congestion in the beach head before time allows an expansion of the latter. It also means that the field for miscalculation in allotting ships' space in the assault convoy is increased. A solution to this would appear to be the planning of a follow up convoy which should be timed to arrive at a time when units being transported in such convoy, are required to commence work etc according to their tasks. It should have some elasticity in its convoy plan, so that its time of arrival at the beach head may be regulated according to the tactical situation.
- (b) The fact that there are insufficient ships to provide a reserve of ships' space at bde and bn level. This tends to raise a minor adjustment to a major alteration and causes some disorganization in last moment cases.
- (c) Lack of standardization in ships' deck space due to special fixtures and special stores being acquired by individual ships' masters as a personal enterprise. This upsets the loading of ships when using plans and templates. There should be a strict control in the interests of standardization, by the NAVY. Failing this, the naval comd concerned should be in a position to warn MLO's of special fixtures of individual ships; or, the MLO should be able to inspect each ship before planning its load.
- (d) When loading ships, the loading plan should be calculated in cubic measurements and deadweight and NOT only in deadweight. Stores etc which have a tactical significance cannot always be shuffled from ship to ship without upsetting the tactical plan. If it occurs that some ships are loaded

with stores of high conversion rates from dead weight to cubic measurement, there is a danger of essential stores being shut out. Thus there will be last minute changes in the loading plans which may become cumulative throughout the whole convoy. This actually happened in the recent op.

(e) The practice of adding "a few more personnel", tons or vehs, after the allotment of force to ships is complete. If a ship's load is to be well planned, there must be a definite target date after which there will be no more additions. In one case, during the last operation, a party of allied soldiers was loaded on a LST which was already loaded to capacity. They carried stretchers and other comforts which displaced more than a proportionate number of assault troops.

182. Explosives and POL should be loaded with non inflammable stores, so that bulkheads of non inflammable stores can be built around the dangerous cargo and so assist in localising any fire on the ship.

183. Tarpaulins should be provided on LST, to allow maximum number of troops to sleep on deck.

184. Scales of essential stores, mostly accommodation stores, which were carried by most units other than infantry battalions included items which were far in excess of what was required to enable a unit to function efficiently for 14 days. Some units refused to accept, even temporarily, a lower standard of comfort to that which they regarded as normal. Infantry units accept a lower standard of comfort than other units by reason of the nature of their roles; but, they resent the inequality of sacrifice when it comes to a reduction of stores etc to meet special circumstances.

185. It is suggested that Fowler Stoves, Soyer Stoves, WILES cookers, cots folding etc could be quite easily brought forward in follow up stores and thus allow of more mobile loading of essential force stores.

COMMUNICATIONS

186. Planning

In the planning area, a separate set of communications is necessary for planning staffs only.

187. Line Communications

- (a) Speed in laying cable must be considered in relation to the need for protecting the cable from damage. The hastily laid line should be regarded as the exception. When tracked vehicles and tanks are operating with forward troops, it is likely that hastily strewn line will result in the slower establishment of communications than if the line is raised at the outset. 2/43 Aust Inf Bn used a simple device for stapling line to trees with speed and efficiency.
- (b) The number of linesmen carried on the establishment of the brigade signal section is not sufficient. It is recommended that an increase of three be made, making a total of eleven.

188. Wireless Communication

- (a) When embarking for operations, units require a complete new set of SCR 536 and 108 Mk III sets. After a training period, these sets tend to break down very quickly.
- (b) In country where long range patrols are being undertaken it is considered that each battalion should be allotted at least three No 22 sets.
- (c) Training of all officers in the use of wireless is an essential.

MISCELLANEOUS

189. Coloured photographs

It is considered that coloured photographs should be available down to Bde HQs, for the study of beach conditions.

190. Vehs

When vehs have been waterproofed, it is desirable to have others, not part of the force equipped, to serve units until and during embarkation.

191. Rehearsal

Rehearsals of the tactical plan, on models, proved of value. The rehearsal of disembarkation, forming up and moving to the shore in landing craft was essential; among other features, it enabled the comd to test his control of the Bde reserve.

TACTICAL

192. Minor tactics etc

- (a) No new lessons were learned in the various operations of OBOE SIX. There were mishaps which were due to failure to observe old lessons; but, comds were prompt in correcting these. The main failures in adherence to training were:-
- (i) Some patrols failed to lay line, and relied entirely on RT. This may be sufficient in many cases; but, it is unwise when the outcome of a battle depends upon obtaining information promptly.
 - (ii) Officers who had not been with the bde during recent training were unable to use RT procedure or the RT code. The security of many senders lapsed as time went on.
 - (iii) Unit sitreps were thoughtlessly composed, ambiguous, infrequent and vague, in some cases.
 - (iv) Units tended to forget their normal administration procedure, on the score of pressure of operations. Organisation of Bn HQ is at fault when this happens. It is useless to train for operations if the system that results from such training is not maintained.
 - (v) The first impulse of the soldier when first encountering the jungle in operations - to crowd into one small locality - was evident when the brigade adopted defence, at the conclusion of the last phase in the operation.
 - (vi) There were instances where ground in relation to vegetation was not studied, with costly results. CO's should revise this study.
- (b) On the other hand, appreciations, verbal orders and patrolling were good. Fire control was much improved with other campaigns; and, care of arms and equipment was good.
- (c) After taking stock of the situation, officers who had previously tended towards perimeter defence developed the technique of mutually supporting localities.

- (d) Speed, aggressiveness tempered with commonsense and good bushcraft were evident in the cases of successful coy attacks.

193. River patrols

It is considered unnecessary to pay too much attention to the novel aspect of LCM patrols. The craft merely took the place of MT in assisting patrols to get within patrolling distance of the objective. LCM's are too noisy to permit surprise, and they are vulnerable. Success, in these operations, was largely due to the commonsense of patrol leaders who questioned natives before taking such risks as approaching an objective at the risk of being ambushed.

194. Pioneer Pls

- (a) In this campaign, Inf Pns Pls played an important part which was complementary to that of engineers. With engineer assistance and supervision, they carried out minor engineer tasks in addition to their normal unit tasks.
- (b) It is considered that, with a little more training and with access to such equipment as bulldozers and power saws, pioneers could relieve engineers of such tasks as:-
- (i) preparing a L of C for light traffic
 - (ii) bridging with native timber
 - (iii) assisting tanks forward
 - (iv) disarming minefields and booby traps
 - (v) construction of stores shelters

Although textbooks lay down that, in the early stages of defence and in the attack, engineers may be decentralized, but, should be concentrated as soon as tasks demanding their concentrated effort are decided upon, it is considered that tropical warfare provides an early necessity for the latter. Their work appears more effective when engineer sub-units are under a central control from the outset.

- (c) An example of the above lies in the case where, for tactical necessity, a battalion is given a role involving a wide outflanking move. Engineer comds are reluctant to deploy sub-units for work of a temporary nature - particularly when the development of a main L of C is also in progress. At the same time, it may be vital that the bn should have a temporary L of C. On other occasions, during an advance on a two bn front, it is difficult to declare which of two lines of advance is likely to become the main L of C pending tactical developments. In the latter case, too, engineer opinion has been expressed that the decision to develop a L of C should not be such as to cause an unnecessary use of engineer equipment and labour. Where time is an essential tactical factor, as it so often is, immediate action is of greater importance than long term planning.
- (d) The solution to such problems has been in the employment of Inf pioneers. Their work has often to be done over again, for technical reasons; but, they certainly are capable of providing mobility for their parent battalions, in their rapid non-technical style, using such native materials as they are able to find. If they were trained to a standard whereby they were able to use simpler types of equipment, it is felt that the use of their labour would be more economic and would allow engineer sub-units to remain centralized.

195.

Weapons

- (a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn found a preference among its sub-units for firing 4 sec grenades from a discharger cup. The air burst of the grenade is claimed to be effective during a gaining of contact and on occasions when the enemy is not in constructed emplacements with overhead cover.
- (b) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn has invented a semi-circular magazine for the OSMG. It holds 70 rounds and, in performance, fires without creeping off the target. Specifications have been submitted to higher authority.

RESTRICTED

APPX "A"

Copy No. 15.....

Aug 45

24 AUST INF BDE ORDER OF BATTLE

(Issued with 24 Aust Inf Bde Report on Operations Aug 45)

HQ

HQ 24 Aust Inf Bde
Det 3 Aust Ops Report Team
Det ATIS
Det B Aust FS SEC

CAV

2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

ARTY

2/12 Aust Fd Regt less one troop
Two SFCP Naval Bombardment Gp

ENGRS

2/7 Aust Fd Coy
2/24 Aust Fd Pk Coy

SIGS

24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec (less det)
Det 2/43 Aust Cipher Sec
Det B Sec Sigs 9 Aust Div
Det 2/9 Aust Cav (Cdo) Regt Sig Tp
2/12 Aust Fd Regt Sig Sec

INF

2/28 Aust Inf Bn
2/43 Aust Inf Bn
C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn
2 Pl A Coy 2/1 Aust Gd Regt
2/32 Aust Inf Bn

AASC

2/14 Aust Tpt Pl
2/28 Aust Sup Dep Pl
HQ 2/156 Aust GT Coy

MED

2/3 Aust Fd Amb (incl Surgical Team)
Det 2/8 Aust Dental Unit

ORD

2/122 Aust Bde Ord Fd Pk

AEEME

2/122 Aust Bde Wksp
2/76 Aust LAD (Type J)
2/61 Aust LAD (Type D)

MISCELLANEOUS

Det 9 Aust Div Postal Unit
One Sec 9 Aust Div Pro Coy
LO HQ 9 Aust Div
Det Directorate Public Relations and Press
YMCA Army Rep
Observers

UNITS UNDER COMD - CORPS TPS

B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt
Det 2/9 Aust Armd Regt Sig Tp
Det Sqn sub Bk 2/9 Aust Armd Regt Ord Fd Pk
Sqn Sec 2/9 Aust Armd Regt Wksp
Det 2 Aust Mil Ldg Gp
Det 34 Aust FS Sec (EE)
Det 2 AAPIU

BASE UNITS

One LAA Tp

US AND BRITISH TPS

Det 727 Amphibian Tractor Bn
Det SRD
Det British Borneo Civil Affairs Unit

UNITS IN SUPPORT - RAAF UNITS

One Air Sp Party
Two Air Liaison Parties

UNDER COMD FOR LANDING

DIV TPS

Alternative HQ 9 Aust Div
Rear HQ 9 Aust Div
Recco Party HQ 9 Aust Div
Adv Party Sigs 9 Aust Div
Det 3 Aust Ops Report Team
Det Directorate Public Relations and Press
2 Flw 1 Mob Met Sqn less Det
Det Op Research Sec
HQ RAA 9 Aust Div
HQ RAE 9 Aust Div
Sigs 9 Aust Div less det
2/45 Aust Cipher Sec less dets
A Coy 2/1 Aust Gd Regt less three pls
Det ATIS
B Aust FS Sec less Dets
4 Aust Visitors and Observers Sec
9 Aust Mil History Fd Team less det
HQ Comd AASC

CORPS TPS

2 Aust Mil Ldg Gp less dets
B Tp 1 Aust Naval Bombardment Gp less dets
13 Aust Wireless Sec (Hy)
2 Aust Wireless Sec (Lt)
Det 2 AAPIU
34 Aust FS Sec (EE) less dets
Air Courier Service

BEACH II

1 Aust Letch Gp less det.

BASE I'S

Recce Party HQ 8 Aust Base Sub Area
Recce Party 2/3 Aust Comp AA Regt
Det 2/1 Aust Mech Eqpt Coy

RAAF UNITS

HQ 1 TAF RAAF Recce Party
Comd Post 1 TAF
1 TAF Air Support Sec
Assault Ech Telecom Unit
Assault Ech 4 RIMU
9 TMO Det
Service Police Unit
16 Air Op Flt less det
Assault Ech 111 MFCU
163 RADAR Sta
316 RADAR Sta
Det 4 RIMU
Det Air Fmn Sig Unit
Adv HQ 1 TAF
Technical Air Int Unit
4 Wireless Unit (RAAF)

US TPS

Det Boat Bn 593 EB & S Regt.

24 AUST INF BDE OUTLINE PLAN

(Issued with 24 Aust Inf Bde Report on Operations Aug 45)

Reference Maps : LABUAN NORTH 1:50,000
 LABUAN SOUTH 1:50,000
 LABUAN 4 miles to 1 inch
 MIRI 4 miles to 1 inch

INFORMATION1. Topography

(a) Refer Terrain Studies 89 and 90.

(b) Place Names

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| (i) Township area | LABUAN |
| (ii) Main airfield in squares 8285 and 8234 | STRIP No 1 |
| (iii) Emergency Landing Ground in square 7688 | STRIP No 2 |
| (iv) Bomber dispersal bays at SOUTH end of STRIP No 1 | AIRCRAFT PARK |
| (v) Government House 827839 | FLAGSTAFF |
| (vi) House (was formerly red roofed) 804825 | HARDY'S |
| (vii) Point 806827 | KISMET |
| (viii) Peninsula WEST of VICTORIA HARBOUR | PEN |
| (ix) 20 metre feature in squares 7989 and 7988 | PRINT |
| (x) 20 metre feature in square 8090 | SFUD |
| (xi) 20 metre feature at 800913 | SAUSAGE |

(c) Beaches

From RAMSAY Pt 828821 to LABUAN will be known as BROWN BEACH. Other beach designations are shown on Appx A.

2. Enemy

(a) Information as to enemy strength on LABUAN is scanty. Present figures are:-

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (i) Front line troops | Nil |
| (ii) Protective Troops | 160 |
| (iii) Base troops capable of defensive roles | 795 |

- (iv) Others 45
- (v) AA guns 9 light
8 heavy
- (vi) Coastal defence guns 1 possible

(b) Reinforcement of the area is possible from:-

- (i) JESSELTON where enemy strength is estimated at 4000, possibly now increased by movement from SANDAKAN and KUDAT.
- (ii) KENINGAU where enemy movement has been reported recently.

3. Own Forces

- (a) 9 Aust Div less 26 Aust Inf Bde Gp, supported by naval and air forces is carrying out simultaneous assault landings on the SOUTH coast of LABUAN ISLAND and on BRUNEI PENINSULA, with a view to capturing and securing BRUNEI BAY and approaches to it.
- (b) Maintenance areas are to be established on LABUAN ISLAND.
- (c) Exploitation NORTH and SOUTH is to be undertaken immediately following the success of initial landings. Maximum use of water L's of C will be made in support of such exploitation.

4. 9 Aust Div Plan

(a) Assault Troops

- (i) LABUAN ISLAND - 24 Aust Inf Bde Gp less 2/32 Aust Inf Bn.
- (ii) MUARA ISLAND - BRUNEI PENINSULA - 20 Aust Inf Bde Gp.

(b) Tasks

- (i) 24 Aust Inf Bde Gp is to land on BROWN BEACH, secure a beach head, capture STRIP No 1 with all possible speed, secure a covering position from inclusive mouth of S KERUPANG at 826872 to inclusive road junction 816865 thence to inclusive road junction 796863 including all areas to the SOUTH and prepare for subsequent operations.
- (ii) 20 Aust Inf Bde is to carry out simultaneous landings on GREEN BEACH and RED BEACH, secure MAURA ISLAND, seize BRUNEI PENINSULA, seize the line Bt TABUR BINTANG - BRUNEI TOWN and prepare for subsequent operations. (Ref map MIRI 4 miles to 1 inch).

(c) Divisional Reserve

- (i) 2/12 Aust Cdo Sqn
- (ii) 2/9 Aust Armd Regt less three squadrons
- (iii) Two flame thrower troops 2/1 Aust Armd Bde Recce Sqn.

- (iv) 2/32 Aust Inf Bn
- (v) A Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn
- (d) Beach Maintenance Area

1 Aust Beach Gp is to establish a BMA in the area
COLLIER HEAD - RAMSAY Pt - LABUAN - FLAGSTAFF 826838.

INTENTION

- 5. 24 Aust Inf Bde Gp will land on BORWN BEACH and capture covering position NORTH of STRIP No 1, with a view to:-
 - (a) Securing LABUAN port facilities and STRIP No 1 in the quickest possible time.
 - (b) Preparing for further operations.

METHOD

- 6. Summary
 - (a) The landing will be with two assault battalions in LVT's supported by tanks, and 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn plus a proportion of armour in reserve.
 - (b) The operation will be in three phases :-
 - (i) PHASE ONE

Assault battalions will capture the line
Tg TARAS 845840 - AIRCRAFT PARK - FLAGSTAFF.
 - (ii) PHASE TWO

2/43 Aust Inf Bn will capture STRIP No 1 and exploit NORTH, while 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn prepares to capture PEN.
 - (iii) PHASE THREE

2/28 Aust Inf Bn will capture the line - road junction 806863 - road junction 796863; and both 2/43 Aust Inf Bn and 2/28 Aust Inf Bn will secure the Divisional covering position. 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn will complete the capture of PEN.

Note:-The launching of the attack on PEN may take place in an earlier phase than as shown, if the opportunity presents itself.

PHASE ONE

- 7. Forward Troops
 - (a) RIGHT - 2/43 Aust Inf Bn
 - (b) LEFT - 2/28 Aust Inf Bn
- 8. Groupings
 - (a) 2/32 Aust Inf Bn

with under cmd:-

8. (a) Contd.

Two troops B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt
Det 2/7 Aust Fd Coy
Det 24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec
One pl C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn
Sec 2/3 Aust Fd Amb

With in support:-

Two FOO parties 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
LO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One Troop 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP

(b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn

with under comd:-

One troop B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt
Det 2/7 Aust Fd Coy
Det 24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec
One pl C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn
Sec 2/3 Aust Fd Amb

with in support:-

Two FOO parties 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
LO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One troop 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP

(c) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

with under comd:-

One pl C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn
Sundry detachments

with in support:-

One FOO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP.

9. Landing Beaches

(a) BROWN TWO - 2/43 Aust Inf Bn LT

(b) BROWN ONE - 2/28 Aust Inf Bn LT

10. Objectives

(a) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn - AIRCRAFT PARK

(b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn - FLAGSTAFF and LABUAN.

11. Tasks

(a) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn will land and capture Tg BATU 835830, Tg TARAS 845840 and AIRCRAFT PARK. It will then prepare to capture STRIP No 1 without delay.

(b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn will land and capture LABUAN and FLAGSTAFF simultaneously. It will then hold a firm base at FLAGSTAFF and be prepared to act as Brigade Reserve for PHASE TWO.

12. Bounds

ONE - RED LINE - for reorganization

TWO - The line Tg BATU - COCONUT PATCH 822827 - LABUAN

THREE - The line of the objective
See Appx A attached.

13. Boundary

Intersection of BROWN TWO BEACH and BROWN ONE BEACH - BEND in ROAD 829831 - ROAD JUNCTION 830840 - all inclusive to 2/43 Aust Inf Bn, as per Appx A.

14. Routes

(a) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn - general direction parallel to EAST coast to SPUR 834837 thence to objective.

(b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn - cross country on a general bearing 11 degrees TRUE with portion of force and coastwise to LABUAN.

15. Fire Support

(a) Naval See Appx (NOT attached)

(i) Preliminary bombardment of enemy gun positions in conjunction with air strikes - see also Appx Air Bombardment. (NOT attached).

(ii) Bombardment of coast line from inclusive Tg TARAS to LABUAN.

(iii) Bombardment of AIRCRAFT PARK - FLAGSTAFF - HARDY'S - HAMILTON Pt.

(iv) Fire on call through SFCP's.

(v) Direct support by light craft.

(b) Artillery

(i) Two troops 2/12 Aust Fd Regt will land with assault troops, in LVT's, for support of both assaulting battalions.

(ii) Remainder of 2/12 Aust Fd Regt will land and be available to support the Brigade.

Note:- It is estimated that the whole Regt will NOT be in action until H plus 90; but, from H plus 45 onwards, two batteries and an increasing number of guns of the third battery should be available.

(iii) Allotment of FOCs

2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn - one
2/28 Aust Inf Bn - two
2/43 Aust Inf Bn - two

(iv) Allotment of SFCP's

2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn - one
2/28 Aust Inf Bn - one
2/43 Aust Inf Bn - one

(c) 4.2 in Mortars

One troop 4.2 in mortars will be landed and manned by 2/12 Aust Fd Regt, with the assault waves. Its task will be to fire on point targets during the period from the cessation of naval gun fire until the availability of two batteries 25 prs.

(d) MMG

(i) "C" Coy HQ 2/2 Aust MG Bn will land with HQ 24 Aust Inf Bde.

(ii) The following guns will be under comd units:-

One pl - 2/28 Aust Inf Bn
One pl - 2/43 Aust Inf Bn
One pl - 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

16. Reserve

(a) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn with under comd

one pl C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn

with in support

FOO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SRCP.

(b) B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt less three troops.

17. Probable Role of Reserves

(a) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn will:-

(i) act as a floating reserve;

(ii) when ordered to land, probably land on BROWN TWO BEACH;

(iii) after landing, move to the area BEND in road 829831 and be prepared to move at short notice.

(iv) A likely role is: to embark in LVT's formerly used to land 2/32 Aust Inf Bn and secure HARDY'S by an amphibious operation launched from point 813832. This operation will be supported by MMG's from the near shore only and by 2/12 Aust Fd Regt.

(b) B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt less three troops will:-

(i) land on BROWN ONE and BROWN TWO BEACHES;

(ii) move to area COCONUT PLANTATION 826827;

(iii) be prepared to reorganize the whole squadron or to reinforce troops under comd forward battalions;

(iv) be prepared to attack as an Assault Echelon in PHASE TWO.

18. Armour

(a) Allotment

- (i) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn - one troop
 - 2/43 Aust Inf Bn - two troops
 - Bde reserve - B Sqn less three troops.
- (ii) Liaison offr from Sqn HQ will remain with Bde HQ throughout the operation.

(b) Water Gap

All tanks will be waterproofed to enable them to land through approximately 4 ft of water.

(c) 3 in How

Troops allotted to forward battalions will be on normal basis of 2 x 2 pr tanks and one 3 in How tank per troop.

(d) Marrying Up

Will take place on near shore.

19. Amphibians - LVT4

(a) General

2/28 Aust Inf Bn and 2/43 Aust Inf Bn will land in LVT4's.

(b) Allotment

2/28 Aust Inf Bn - 25 - to include 5 for artillery and two for 4.2 in mortars.

2/43 Aust Inf Bn - 23 - to include 5 for artillery.

(c) Rally Area

On completion of initial tasks with forward battalions LVT4's will rally in following areas :-

(i) LVT with 2/28 Aust Inf Bn LT - area 819826

(ii) LVT with 2/43 Aust Inf Bn LT - area 833826 except that 9 LVT will remain with 2/32 Aust Inf Bn and move to area Tg BATU 836630 and be prepared to carry out task with 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn as per para 17 (a) (iii) and (iv) (subject to availability of LVT after H hr).

PHASE TWO

20. Summary

- (a) It is intended that this phase will be a continuation of PHASE ONE, subject to co-ordination, following reports on success of PHASE ONE.
- (b) The capture of PEN by 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn may be ordered to commence prior to or following the commencement of this phase.

21. Forward Troops

2/43 Aust Inf Bn.

22. Grouping

(a) 2/43 Aust Inf Bna

with under comd:-

B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt less two troops
Det 2/7 Aust Fd Coy
Det 24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec
C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn less one pl
Sec 2/3 Aust Fd Amb

with in support:-

Two FOO parties 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One LO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP

(b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn

with under comd:-

One troop B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt
Det 2/7 Aust Fd Coy
Det 24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec
Sec 2/3 Aust Fd Amb

with in support:-

Two FOO parties 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One LO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt

(c) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

with under comd:-

One pl C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn
Nine LVT4's 727 Amphibian Tractor Bn if
available.

with in support:-

One FOO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP.

23. Objectives

2/43 Aust Inf Bn - STRIP No 1 inclusive.

24. Tasks

(a) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn will:-

- (i) capture the area of STRIP No 1;
- (ii) mop up the area COAST LINE at mouth of
KERUPANG 826872 to inclusive road junction
816865 to inclusive road junction 816860 to
WEST edge of STRIP No 1 inclusive;
- (iii) secure this area against counter attack
and be prepared for movement on orders from
this HQ.

(b) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn will:-

Hold the line ROAD JUNCTION 830840 excluding to
MACARTHUR ROAD at 820841 inclusive, until ordered
to move.

25. Synchronization
2/43 Aust Inf Bn will make preparation to move at the earliest possible time; and will advise this HQ when ready.
26. Supporting Fire
(a) Naval
Naval units are to support the advance of 2/43 Aust Inf Bn by fire under control through SFCP's.
(b) Field Artillery
(i) 2/12 Aust Fd Regt will support the attack.
(ii) Allotment of FOOs and SFCPs
As for PHASE ONE
(c) MMGs
(i) "C" Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn less one pl will be under comd 2/43 Aust Inf Bn.
(ii) One pl will remain under comd 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn.
27. Reserve
(a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn will hold the line road junction 830840 to MACARTHUR road at 820842 and be prepared to move two coys as Brigade reserve. Preparation for PHASE THREE will be undertaken.
(b) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn will remain in position at area 829831 subject to orders to the contrary - see para 20 (b).
(c) One troop B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt will occupy a position at road junction 834840 and be prepared:-
(i) to reinforce either flank;
(ii) to deal with counter measures by the enemy from the area EAST of STRIP No 1.
28. Armour
Allotment
B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt less two troops under comd 2/43 Aust Inf Bn.
One troop under comd 2/28 Aust Inf Bn
One troop in Brigade Reserve.
29. Amphibians
Nine LVT4's will come under comd 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn if available. See para 19 (c) (ii).

PHASE THREE

30. Forward Troops

- (a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn
- (b) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

31. Objectives

- (a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn - road junction 806863 and road junction 796863.
- (b) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn - HARDY'S and adjacent sub features.

32. Groupings

- (a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn

with under comd:-

One troop B Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt
Det 2/7 Aust Fd Coy
Det 24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec
Sec 2/3 Aust Fd Amb

with in support:-

Two FOO parties 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One LO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP.

- (b) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn

with under comd:-

Det 2/7 Aust Fd Coy
Det 24 Aust Inf Bde Sig Sec
C Coy 2/2 Aust MG Bn less one pl
Sec 2/3 Aust Fd Amb

with in support:-

Two FOO parties 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One LO party 2/12 Aust Fd Regt
One SFCP

- (c) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn

As for PHASE TWO.

33. Tasks

- (a) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn will:-

- (i) secure objectives;
- (ii) mop up the area in rear of objectives including the timber edge 804853 to 795853;
- (iii) liaise with 2/43 Aust Inf Bn and effect mutual support on the objective line.

- (b) 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn will

- (i) on orders from this HQ, mount an amphibious attack on HARDY'S, from point 813832, with the object of capturing dominant features on PEN and subsequently clearing the whole area of enemy;

OR

- (ii) alternatively, on orders from this HQ, advance in rear of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn to the area in square 8085 and commence an advance in the direction of Pt HAMILTON with the object of capturing HARDY'S and adjacent dominant features on PEN; and, subsequently clear the whole area PEN of enemy.

34. Boundaries

- (a) Between 2/43 Aust Inf Bn and 2/28 Aust Inf Bn:
The line :-

road junction 830840
thence along COAL Pt ROAD to
road junction 816865

- all inclusive to 2/32 Aust Inf Bn.

- (b) Between 2/28 Aust Inf Bn and 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn;
The line:-

TIMBER EDGE from 804853 to 795853

- all inclusive to 2/28 Aust Inf Bn.

- (c) If 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn are to advance through 2/28 Aust Inf Bn, the boundary as in (b) above will NOT become operative until 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn has passed over it.

35. Synchronization

No move will be commenced by forward troops until ordered by this HQ; but, units will be ready to move at short notice as from the conclusion of PHASE ONE.

36. Supporting Fire

- (a) Naval

Naval units are to support the advance of 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn controlled through SFCP's

- (b) Artillery

2/12 Aust Fd Regt will:-

- (i) maintain one battery on call by 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn;
- (ii) support the advance of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn;
- (iii) at the earliest convenient time, register the following targets:-

Road and track junction 813888
Road and track junction 815887
Bend in road 784881
Road and track junction 790874.

- (iv) Allotment of FOOs and SFCP's

As for PHASE ONE.

- (c) MMGs

Same as for PHASE TWO.

37. Reserve

- (a) "B" Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt less one troop will rally in the area 830855 after completion of PHASE TWO and be prepared.
 - (i) to move in support of 2/28 Aust Inf Bn;
 - (ii) deal with enemy counter measures.
- (b) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn will:-
 - (i) secure the line KERUPANG RIVER mouth at 826872 - road junction 816865 - inclusive road junction 816860:
 - (ii) maintain one coy ready to move as Brigade Reserve.

38. Armour

- (a) One troop "B" Sqn 2/9 Aust Armd Regt will be under comd 2/28 Aust Inf Bn.
- (b) Remainder as in para 37 above.

39. Amphibians

Nine LVT4 of 727 Amphibian Tractor Bn will (if available):-

- (a) transport 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn to objective area, if required;
- (b) rally astride road at 818834 at conclusion of (a) above or upon departure of 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn by land route;
- (c) maintain 2/11 Aust Cdo Sqn, until required by parent unit.

40. Exploitation

- (a) Limit of exploitation as follows:-
 - (i) 2/43 Aust Inf Bn
Line COAST at 824887 - road and track junction 813887.
 - (ii) 2/28 Aust Inf Bn
Road and track junction 805888 - road and track junction 790873.
- (b) Boundary
Line from road junction 816866 - road junction 805889 all inclusive 2/32 Aust Inf Bn.

COMMON TO ALL PHASES

41. Engineers

- (a) 2/7 Aust Fd Coy will be under comd 24 Aust Inf Bde for the assault landing until centralized control under the CRE is effected.

(b) 2/7 Aust Fd Coy will provide:-

- (i) sufficient personnel and two bulldozers for assistance of tanks in the assault;
- (ii) two sections - one to each 2/28 Aust Inf Bn and 2/43 Aust Inf Bn, for support in the nature of demolition of obstacles and enemy strong posts.

(c) Detachments as in (b) (i) above will marry up with tanks on the near shore and land with the arm'd troops to which they are attached, with the exception that two bulldozers will land separately in early waves.

41. (d) In addition, subject to approval of 9 Aust Div, the following tasks will be effected:-

- (i) Reconnoitre and prepare subsidiary tracks or clear existing tracks of debris.
- (ii) Develop water supply.
- (iii) Be prepared to assume locality defence if circumstances warrant it.

42. Anti-disease

Full anti-disease precautions will be effected, particularly in regard to the treatment of water for consumption and cleansing.

ADM

43. Instructions will be issued later.

INTERCOMN

44. Bde HQ will be established

(a) Afloat

Bde HQ	-	Ship
Duplicate HQ	-	Ship

(b) Ashore

(i) Bde HQ will land on BROWN TWO BEACH and follow the route:-

Road junction 825825
Track junction 829829
to area Road junction 825835

(ii) Further instructions will be issued.

S H W C PORTER Brig.
Comd 24 Aust Inf Bde.

DISTRIBUTION

9 Aust Div

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1 - 2

CAPTURE OF THE POCKET BY 428 AUST INF BN - LABUAN IS OPERATIONS JUNE 1945

REF MAP LABUAN SOUTH 1:25000

MAP REF JUNG FOY-BAKER 809861

A COY
INITIAL CAPTURE OF LYON
RIDGE 16 JUN →
FINAL ASSAULT AND CAPTURE
NORMAN RIDGE 21 JUN →

C COY
PL ATTACKS DDD
FINAL COY ASSAULT AND
CAPTURE LUSHINGTON
RIDGE 21 JUN →

D COY
CLEARING OF ENEMY
POCKET EASTMAN SPUR
17 JUN →

LEGEND
□ LOCATED BY UNIT
] DITCHES
▣ BERRY TRAP ALONG BONES
○ H.M.C.
↔ C.A.S.



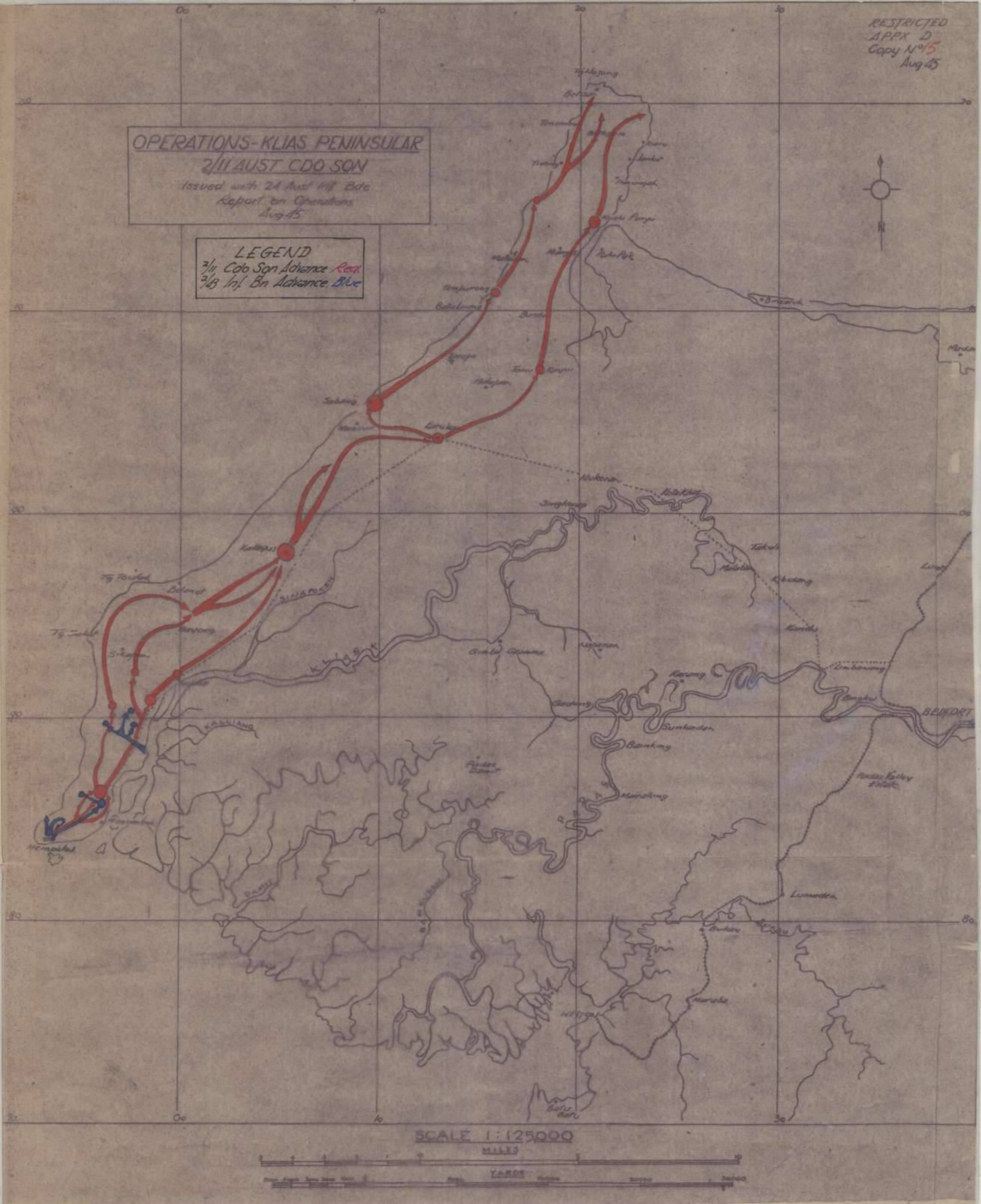
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VI 10 FT

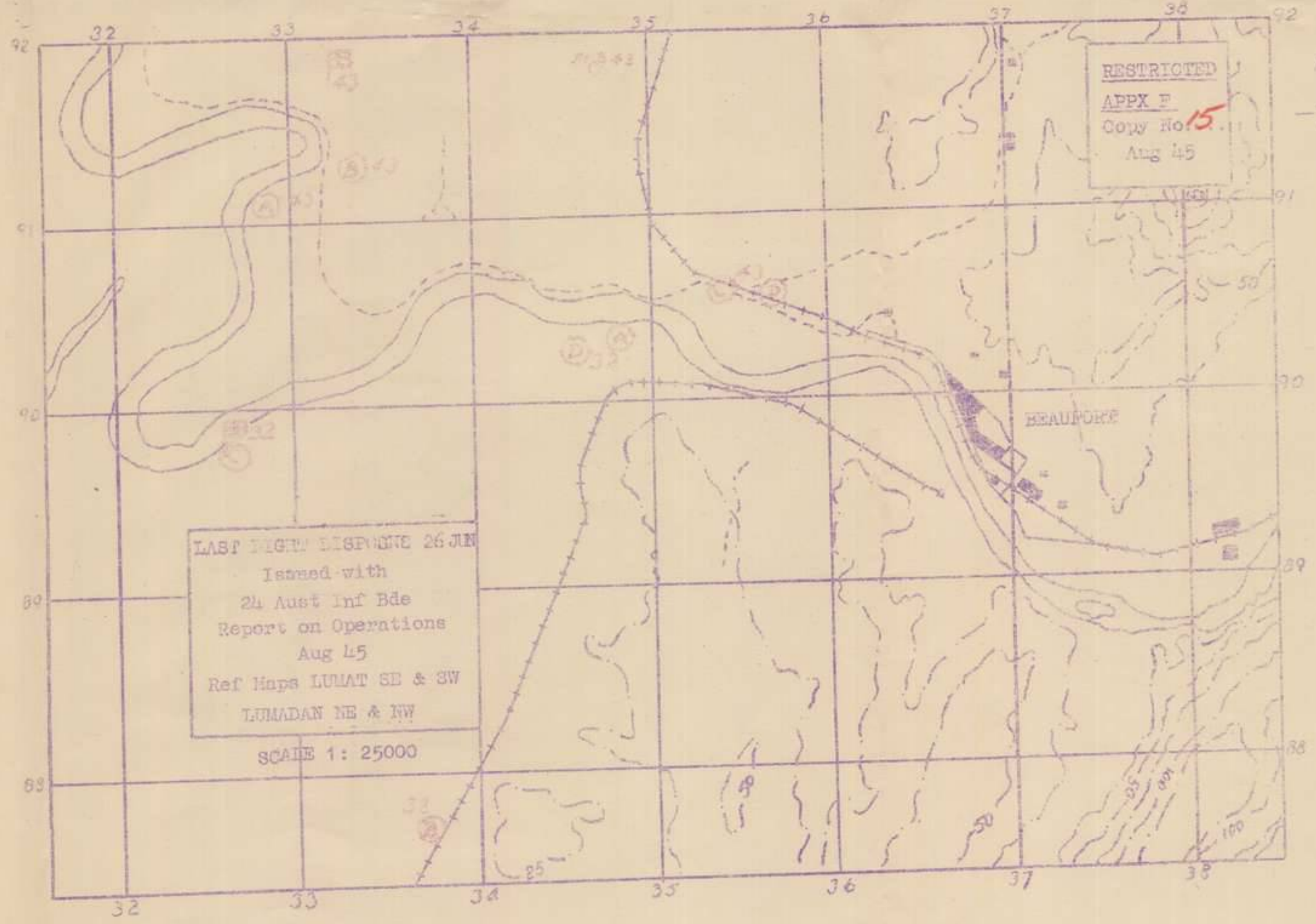
2

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APPX D
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Aug 45

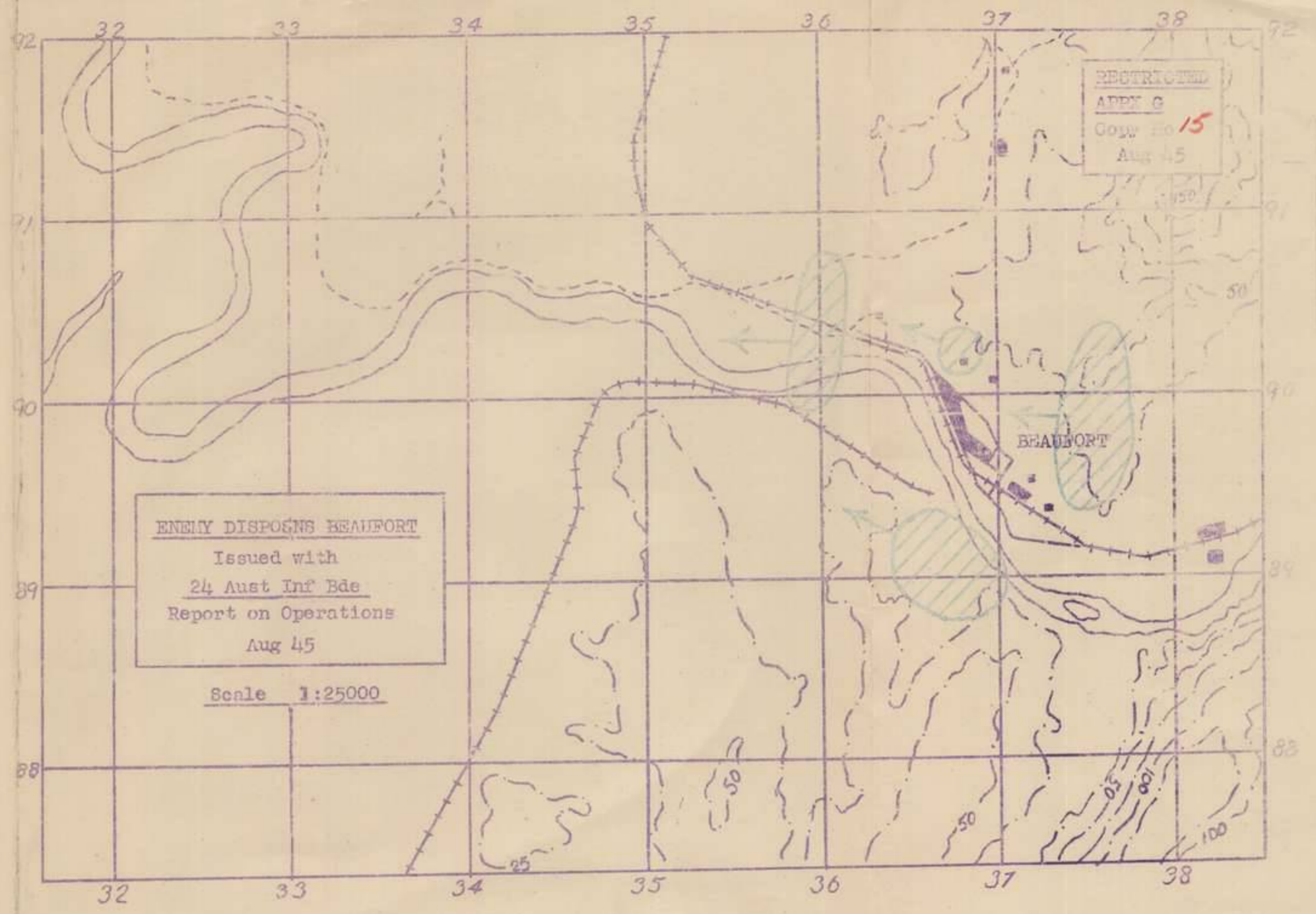
OPERATIONS-KLIAS PENINSULAR
2/II AUST CDO SON
Issued with 24 Aust Inf Bde
Report on Operations
Aug 45

LEGEND
7/II Cdo Sqn Advance Red
7/43 Inf Bn Advance Blue





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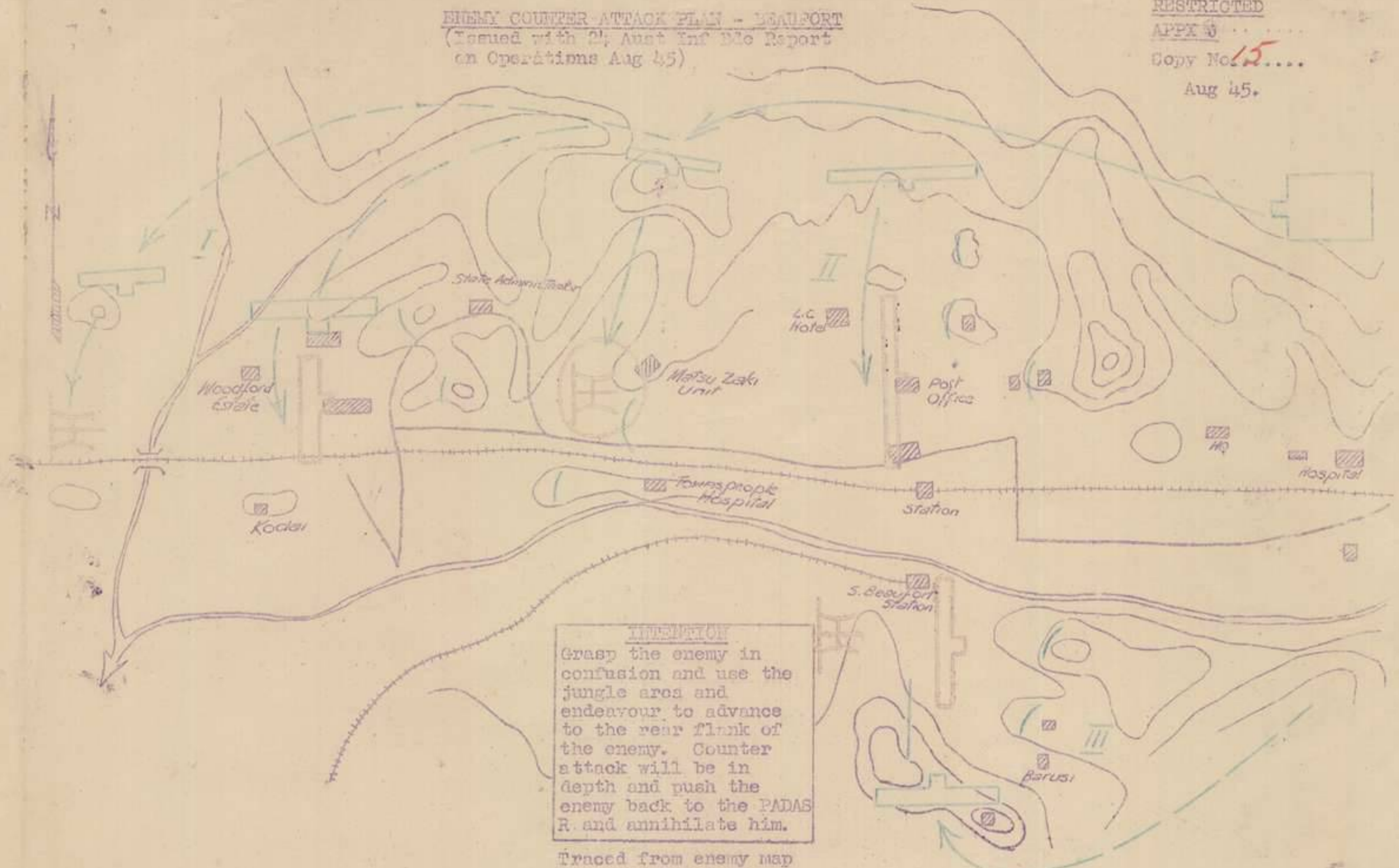
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ENEMY COUNTER-ATTACK PLAN - BEAUFORT
(Issued with 2nd Aust Inf Bde Report
on Operations Aug 45)

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APPX 3

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Aug 45.



LAST LIGHT DISPOSNS

30 Jun 45

Issued with

24 AUST INF BDE

Report on Operations

Aug 45

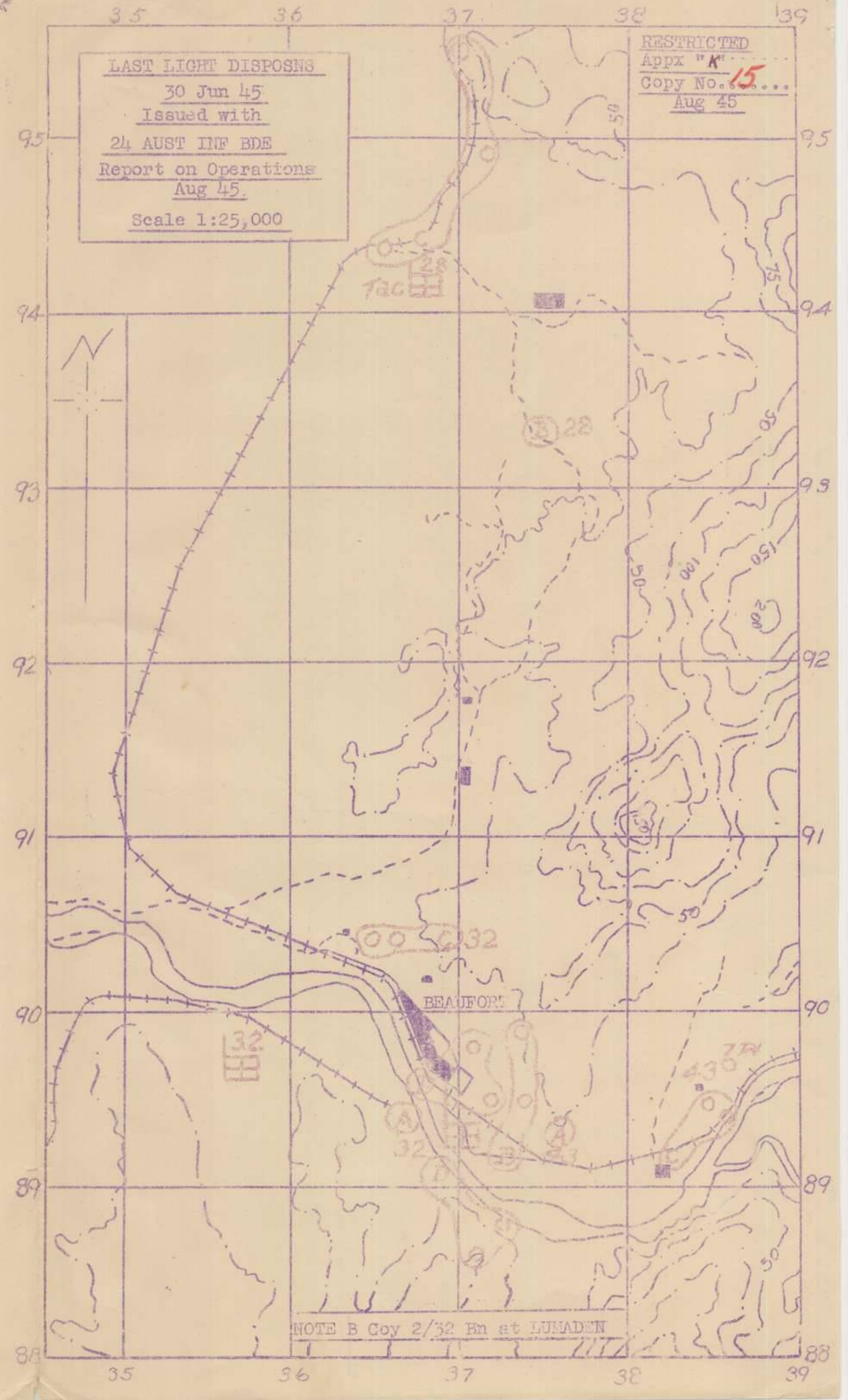
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Aug 45



NOTE B Coy 2/32 Bn at LUMADEN