

For 4 August it may be generally said that FLASH msgs sent from the west Pacific were taking about an hour to reach the NMCC. Half of all msgs concerning the DS pat incident that day were received an hour and a half after origin. IMMEDIATE prec msgs took about an additional hour and half in transmission over FLASH.

V-48 Apparenty nothing was gained time wise by addressing msgs directly to the JCS for action rather than sending them as INFO copies. It is not known how much time was taken in bringing msgs addressed to CNO but not to JCS to the attention of NMCC pers/. Altho all of the messages sent by Maddox, except one, were of FLASH precedence. they were not necessarily relayed in that precedence.

Altho the median time for receipt of FLASH msgs were received to the NMCC was 57 minutes, 1/2 of these 43 while 1/2 took one hour 21 minutes or longer. These times were all considerably lessened in receipt at the Navy COMCTR in the Pen as compared with the Army Crypto Center in the Pen which passed them on to the NMCC. The median diff for FLASH msgs was 9 minutes faster to NAVCOMMCTR.

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In sum, from mid-March until early August 1964, the highest echelons on U.S. national decision-making authority had been deliberating ways and means to stop continued NVN covert assistance to the comm rebels operating in SVN and L. 2 by-products of these deliberations were available to aid the decision makers when it became necessary to formulate a response to the PT attacks on the USS Maddox in intl waters. These by-products were CINCPAC OPLAN 37-74 and the so-called "94 target list." The latter was a detailed assessment of targeting options in NVN from which decision-makers could choose among a wide range of retaliatory options.

NSC ;25 July

JCS 27 July - 30 July