



NOTE

NAVFAC DA NANG, DET DELTA, COMSEC 705 TEAM FOUR

Conducted COMSEC monitoring operations from a COMSEC van on the YRBM 20 (Yard Repair Berthing and Messing) barge located anchored near the town of Chou Doc.

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The YRBM 20, known as the Delta Hilton, was a floating Brown Water Navy base in Vietnam. In 1969 and 1970 it was located on a wide spot in the Bassac River, the west tributary of the Mekong River a mile south of the town of Chou Doc in Chou Doc Province and very near the Cambodian border.

YRBM stands for "Yard Repair Berthing and Messing" It is not self propelled. A barge tied to the stern had diesel outboards to move the YRBM when needed when tugboats were not available. It also functioned not unlike a pocket helicopter carrier supplying fuel and ammo continuously for days in support of nearby air operations. The local town of Chou Doc had a gravel airstrip, a communication station on a nearby mountain and a MACV detachment and Army Bar near the high Sea Wall that looked like an old French foreign Legion Fort. The YRBM 20 had Freezers and Refrigerators and at times was the best dining spot in the Province. The YRBM 20 were vulnerable to mines, A swimmer could float down the river in the 1 to 6 knot current and place the mine on the hull.

In the day time the bow watch would shoot under any debris or water plants floating near with a carbine. At night an outboard motor boat would circle and the bow watch would randomly toss concussion grenades into the river. When the current stopped in the dry summer season there was also a stern watch on the with a carbine and grenades. Detachments assigned to the YRBM 20 patrolled the French-built border canals nearby. One canal ran between the Bassac River through Tinh Bien to Ha Tien. Another ran to the Mekong River.