



**American Forces Vietnam Network**

**FACT SHEET**

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## I. Armed Forces Radio in Vietnam:

Prior to the more or less formal beginning of Armed Forces Radio in Vietnam on 15 August 1962, there was an uncoordinated, spontaneous effort on the part of American servicemen to provide American radio for themselves. This movement was not confined to the Saigon area but occurred throughout the Republic of Vietnam wherever troops and advisors were stationed. It is not possible to document the numbers and locations of these stations since no records were kept. The first radio network effort consisted of "informally", requisitioned equipment, assembled and operated from a BEQ in downtown Saigon.

Early in 1962 General Paul D. Harkins, Commander MACV, became aware of the need for entertainment and news. Permission was received to use 820KC in the Saigon area and four other frequencies for use up country. Later a WWII vintage tactical transmitter was donated by the Philippine AFRS and arrangements were made to co-locate it within the Vietnamese Radio Communication complex at Phu Tho.

Armed Forces Radio in Vietnam commenced operation on 15 August 1962 from studios located in the Rex Hotel, 145/147 Nguyen Hue Blvd, Saigon. On this day General Harkins made the following remarks:

When the Armed Forces Radio Service was created in 1942, it was a boom to the morale of our fighting men in World War II. Today many American servicemen are again far away from their homes and families in many locations and this continues and is perhaps even more important in light of the complexities of today's world. That Armed Forces Radio, Saigon, is on the air today, is a tribute to the fine work and splendid cooperation of many agencies and individuals, both Vietnamese and American. It is tangible evidence of the teamwork which characterizes our joint effort here. My personal thanks and gratitude go to all whose efforts have helped to establish this station.

It is my sincere wish that AFRS Saigon will uphold and enhance the outstanding reputation which the Armed Forces Radio Service enjoys throughout the world and that it will be a most successful medium of information, education and entertainment.

General Harkins thus highlighted the sole purpose for the existence of Armed Forces Radio and Television Service facilities anywhere in the world: "information, education and entertainment".

At first, almost all audio, transmitter and broadcasting equipment was borrowed from the U.S. and Vietnam military and civilian agencies. Spare parts and supplies were obtained from various military resources; military personnel operating the station were obtained from COMUSMACV personnel resources. The station was operated by a five-man crew, several volunteer announcers and newsmen. The first radio programs were transmitted 18 hours a day.

Because of the official status of AFRT, Vietnam, news was restricted to that originating from AFRTS-Los Angeles. However, due to propagation problems neither the AFRTS-LA transmitters at Delano nor Dixon, California, produced anything approaching a reliable signal in Saigon. This problem was solved by using the VOA station in the Philippines which relayed AFRTS-LA to Saigon for about two hours a day beginning at 1500 hrs. Reception via the Philippine relay was good and provided much of the news for AFRT, Vietnam.

By mid-August 1964 the studios and administrative personnel moved from the Rex hotel to the ground floor of the Brink BOQ. The Brink provided some improvement in operating space. Coincident with the move to the Brink, a Bauer one kilowatt transmitter was acquired through normal procurement channels to replace the tactical transmitter at Phu Tho. Significant improvement in both quality and signal strength was noticed with the installation of this transmitter.

Later MACV-J6 became increasingly aware of the need for improved radio coverage north and south of Saigon. USOM had some twenty "Provincial Radio Station" kits on hand which were purchased to provide radio coverage to the more remote provinces. An arrangement was made between J-6 and USOM to acquire the twenty radio stations in exchange for J-6 purchasing a 10KW transmitter complete with antenna and all accessories for use by the Government of Vietnam in Can Tho. These small 50W repeating transmitters were strategically placed throughout the Republic so that the majority of American troops could pick up the signal with transistor radios. The number of these repeating transmitters multiplied with the expansion of U.S. Forces.

During the months of September and October, 1964, a 50W Gates FM transmitter and a two-bay FM antenna were acquired. The source of this equipment is somewhat clouded; the crystals and antenna were cut for 99.9 M/cycles, hence the initial choice of that operating frequency in RVN.

In December of 1964 members of the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service staff made a visit to Vietnam to inspect AFRT facilities here. The following comments from their report depict AFRT's role at that time:

AFRT broadcasts in Vietnam emanate from studio facilities in Saigon, and are rebroadcast by eleven relay outlets throughout the country. According to MACV estimates, 94% of the assigned and deployed U.S. military personnel in Vietnam are within range of radio broadcast. The DOD team made personal observations at four of these outlets

and found the coverage to be inadequate due to the technical impairment by equipment.

Overall mission accomplishment and effectiveness in support of the Commander's Information, Education and Entertainment program are excellent in the Saigon area. AFRT Saigon is an essential command tool in reaching personnel. The effectiveness of AFRT radio broadcast to personnel stationed outside of the Saigon coverage area is greatly reduced by technical deficiencies of the equipment available.

At the time of this staff visit, the personnel complement at AFRT Vietnam had grown to 17, including 6 local national employees.

On Christmas Eve, 1964, Armed Forces Radio was airing Christmas music when suddenly the carols stopped. The Viet Cong had set off 250 pounds of explosive plastic at the Brink BOQ killing two and injuring scores of Americans. The AFRT network station, inside the hotel, was partially destroyed. Responding quickly, the AFRT staff managed to set up a temporary station and came up on the air with holiday carols within a few hours.

In early 1965, a study was made by MACV J6 which proposed that radio saturation coverage of the Republic could be achieved from four (4) fifty kilowatt stations. However, the Government of Vietnam withdrew the use of frequency 820 KH in the Saigon area, after all the equipment was purchased and in country. This event and some change in troop deployment caused a general re-examination of the originally proposed frequency and location plan. Ultimately, the locations selected were Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Pleiku and Cam Ranh Bay.

In February, while efforts were being made for greater coverage, radio programming also underwent change. Programming was expanded from 18 to 24 hours a day. The installation of FM equipment in Saigon and the commencement of special FM programming during afternoon and evening hours was another step toward expanded service.

## II. Network Building Begins:

Also in 1965 the U.S. Navy's Oceanographic Air Survey Unit operating out of Maryland was given a special assignment by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to fly C-121 Super Constellation aircraft as AM, FM and television transmitters for "research and other special projects". The planes were called Blue Eagle. In May, work was begun on Blue Eagle One for configuration as a high power communications and relay station. When completed, the aircraft was deployed to Vietnam to broadcast AM and short wave. Blue Eagle provided the 1965 Baseball World Series to servicemen in Vietnam and to ships at sea in the Pacific. This method of broadcasting proved to be very effective and popular.

During this time it was determined that television would significantly contribute to the U.S. policy objectives of rural pacification, urban stability, national unity, free world support and U.S. presence in Vietnam. In August special modifications were begun on Blue Eagle Two and Three. Their new configuration would enable them to broadcast television programming on two channels, as well as have various radio communications capabilities.

Deployed to Vietnam in January 1966, each had two television transmitters (200 watts each), AM (10,000 watts), FM (1000 watts) and short wave/single sideband with a four channel teletype hook up (10,000 watts, all simultaneously, if required). Each aircraft was also equipped with two video tape recorders, six audio tape recorders, two 16mm film projectors, and a small, live studio. United States Armed Forces personnel would receive American programs on Channel 11. The citizens of the Republic of Vietnam could view Vietnamese programs on Channel 9 from these flying transmitters.

Television finally made its debut in Vietnam on February 7, 1966. Announcing this service was a special program which included speeches by Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, and General William C. Westmoreland. This program was recorded on video tape in the airport terminal at Tan Son Nhut. Cables connected the cameras in the terminal with the Blue Eagle aircraft which was parked close by. Later a studio was set up in downtown Saigon to produce video tapes for Vietnamese broadcast. U.S. programming materials consisted principally of top U.S. TV network programs on 16mm film provided by AFRTS, Los Angeles.

Recognizing the value of TV, the Vice President of the United States placed strong emphasis on bringing Vietnamese programs to the most remote villager as a decisive factor in nation-building, in South Vietnam. As a result, the Key Station was tasked with providing engineering assistance to the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) for the purpose of building and placing into operation independent television stations for the Vietnamese Government. This was the first time any Armed Forces Network had been assigned a mission of such high level, international significance.

As the Blue Eagle flights continued, construction of a station at 9 Hong Thap Tu in Saigon commenced. During this period plans for a television network in Vietnam, improved radio broadcast facilities, and an increase in AFRT personnel were developed. Contracts were let for seven television vans. The biggest achievement during this period, was made on March 24, 1966, when a new two-way Pacific link was established between Saigon and AFRTS-LA by underwater cable. This enabled AFRT, Vietnam, to receive West Coast programming 24 hours daily, and meant that major sports events, important speeches and top-rated special events programs could be broadcast in Vietnam on a real time basis as they were heard over networks in the United States.

On April 13, 1966, the Viet Cong attacked Tan Son Nhut Air Base with mortars, damaging all Blue Eagle aircraft. Blue Eagle Two sustained two direct hits during the attack. Navy inspectors were flown to Vietnam to survey the damage. They decided that the aircraft could be repaired, but that it would take from 9 to 13 weeks.

With only one aircraft serviceable, TV programming was reduced to five days a week. Meanwhile, two American civilian technicians and three Air Force maintenance men from the heavy maintenance squadron at Tan Son Nhut started repairing the Blue Eagle aircraft. They dismantled and inspected the damaged aircraft, requisitioned parts, and with an average of 14 to 16 hours per man each day, worked until all Eagles were in flying condition. Blue Eagle Two resumed flying with its regular TV programming on May 11, exactly 28 days after the VC mortar attack, and at least 5 weeks ahead of the predicted repair time.

Meanwhile the television vans began to arrive in country and the difficult task of installing the van-type facilities was undertaken by a small number

of technicians. The first van was placed on Vung Chua Mountain in Qui Nhon and became operational on September 25, 1966. Within a month, on October 21, the second van went on the air from Monkey Mountain in Da Nang.

On October 25, the ground station facilities in Saigon were complete and commenced broadcasting of both U.S. and Vietnamese programs, thus eliminating the Blue Eagle transmission requirements for the Saigon area. A Blue Eagle continued to fly south of Saigon to service the heavily populated delta region with Vietnamese programming only.

The official opening ceremony for the new Saigon station was held on 31 October. Premier Nguyen Cao Ky and General W.C. Westmoreland participated in the opening day ceremonies. They simultaneously cut a ribbon (video tape) stretched between the main studio building and the transmitter building. On this auspicious occasion the cornerstone was laid for the new Vietnamese TV studio building; the actual construction of the THVN building did not begin until late May, 1967. At this time AFRT, Vietnam, became the first Armed Forces Radio service to present news broadcasts on the hour, 24 hours a day. A small group of newsmen covered local news information briefings, and the Vietnam war news providing current information often times ahead of commercial press. In addition, the news section supplied Vietnam war reports to the Armed Forces News Bureau in Washington for worldwide dissemination. This group provided an extremely valuable service to all American Forces while under threat of local terrorist activity. One such event occurred on the evening of December 23, while a Christmas Party was held at the new building. A few hours after the party started the station was brought under a small arms attack. (This was two years to the day after the attack on the Brink Hotel). Fortunately no friendly casualties were sustained and damage was light. Shortly after, other MP's arrived, and the enemy dispersed. Radio and news broadcasts continued uninterrupted. On another incident, on the night of February 8, 1967, the main studio building sustained light damage when a .38 or .45 caliber bullet came through the roof. The bullet had apparently been fired into the air during Tet celebrations, and entered the building directly over the newsroom. After piercing the ceiling, it went through two pages of news copy which were held by the duty newsman and impacted on his typewriter. Again no casualties were sustained. The bullet was later retrieved as a war trophy. The "bullet-riddled" news copy was posted on the wall as a memento.

Buildup of personnel throughout this period was rapid and usually outpaced the receipt and installation of equipment. The move of the radio and news section from the Brink to the new station commenced on January 2, 1967, and was completed on January 6. Programming for AM radio began at 0900 on the 6th. The FM format began on January 13. Initially the AFRT Vietnam personnel strength was 16 officers and enlisted. By the end of 1966, AFRT Vietnam had expanded to more than 150 men, and the total network authorized personnel strength of 161 officers and enlisted was reached early in 1967.

This year also brought the third television van to Vietnam which was installed on Dragon Mountain in Pleiku. The van became operational on February 1, 1967. Later, Van 4 arrived and was installed on Hon Tre Island, near Nha Trang. It was located on the island so that its beam could serve both Nha Trang and Cam Ranh Bay. Detachment 4 commenced broadcasting on March 13, 1967. The three remaining vans arrived in country within a short space of time. Van 5 was installed within the city of Hue, and began broadcasting on May 15, 1967. Van 6 was sent to Tuy Hoa, where it went on the air on May 26, 1967. Meanwhile

van 7 had been placed within the AFRT compound in Saigon to serve as a training unit for personnel assigned as replacements.

The Saigon station, housing the network headquarters and administration, supply and engineering sections, contained the main studio building with AM master control, FM master control, news room, three radio production studios, record library, TV film library, telecine and kinescope room, TV master control, and one large television studio. Other principal structures in the compound include a transmitter building which houses two 25,000 watt TV transmitters (channel 9 and 11), a 1000 watt AM radio transmitter and a 1000 watt FM transmitter, and a generator building which has three 200,000 watt sync generators, which provides power for the entire facility. An 80-foot television antenna, specially designed to radiate signals on both channel 9 and channel 11, is mounted atop a 300-foot steel tripod tower. The design of this antenna has increased the power output of the transmitters by an approximate factor of 10, with an effective radiated power of 240,000 watts covering Saigon and surrounding areas.

Although the number of radio transmitters had increased to at least 22, there were still areas in the country where an adequate radio signal could not be received. This problem was solved by the installation of five large radio transmitters throughout the country. Three of the five were 50,000 watt transmitters positioned at Cat Lo (for the Saigon and Delta area), Pleiku and Cam Ranh Bay. The remaining two 10,000 watt transmitters were located at Qui Nhon and Da Nang. These transmitters provided a 5 millivolt signal throughout most of South Vietnam. On June 1, 1967, the 10,000 watt radio transmitter at Da Nang became operational, thus making Armed Forces Radio and Television, Vietnam, a true network operation. In July, 1967, the name, "American Forces Vietnam Network" (AFVN) was adopted.

Shortly afterwards, a television station was installed at Phan Rang to serve American Forces personnel within a 100 square mile area. This unmanned repeater station became operational on 22 October 1967, bringing the television network into full operation. Estimates from "field strength" reports indicated at least 85 percent of U.S. Forces in the Republic of Vietnam were able to receive AFVN television programs. This was the first time that an Armed Forces television network had been established to serve United States Armed Forces in a combat zone.

As efforts were being made to install and improve the AFVN facilities, equal effort was placed on improving the program content for radio and television. Following the move to the new facility at 9 Hong Thap Tu, several additions were made to AFVN news services. The UPI press wire was replaced by the UPI "rip-n-read" radio wire. Contracts were signed for obtaining ABC Television News film, AP radiophoto service, and the AP Library Photo Service. ABC Television News service provided approximately 2000 feet of TV newsfilm monthly. The AP radiophoto service provided from 10 to 15 news photos daily, and the AP Library Photo service, 40 photographs of leading world personalities each month. All of these services were reproduced by the key station in Saigon and sent to the detachments within hours after receipt. Locally produced News, Sports, Weather and command information material consisted of 11% of the total schedule. One fifth of the total programming, fifty-five hours was devoted to command information subjects and United States and world information features. Approximately one hundred and eight command information announcements were aired weekly.

At the time of the Tet Offensive, the station was virtually completed. However, the Tet conflict inflicted so much damage on the station that it had to be completely rebuilt. The station became operational and formally turned over to the Republic of Vietnam on 19 November 1968.

Commensurate with construction of these installations, emphasis was given to professionally conducted on-the-air job training-operations, news cast directing, establishing a working on-the-job training-cross training program, production of command information spots and increased support of AFVN detachments. To promote creativeness on the part of production personnel, three entertainment type productions were initiated, each in a 30 minute time block. They were: "Nashville Vietnam" featuring Country and Western talent, "Starsearch" featuring selected military talent which praised individuals and their units throughout Vietnam, and "Strawberry Four" highlighting a local Vietnamese vocal and instrumental combo.

Network Radio also experienced a major sound overhaul. The product changed to the "Mod" sound to cater to the 75-80% of the listening audience under the age of twenty-five. Presidential election coverage was extensive using the AFNB line from Washington, D.C., to bring major network live coverage to Vietnam. The baseball World Series was carried live and re-capped later in the day for the benefit of those unable to hear live broadcasts. Later, live coverage was provided for all the major Bowl games, and AFVN Radio did a special countdown of the 100 songs of the year on New Years Eve. Live, remote broadcasts were originated from Tan Son Nhut for midnight Christmas mass celebrated by New York Archbishop Terrance Cooke and a morning service conducted by Evangelist Billy Graham. These broadcasts were aired throughout Vietnam were fed simultaneously to AFRTS Washington.

Shortly after Christmas 1968, AFVN News was instrumental in the release of three U.S. servicemen held prisoner by the V.C. In late December 1968, messages concerning the POW's were broadcast over AFVN to the Viet Cong concerning proposed dates, times and places for the release. This was probably the first time an Armed Forces Radio had ever been used to talk directly to an enemy.

#### IV. The Network Grows:

Throughout the next spring AFVN continued to enhance its capabilities. The Armed Forces Radio and Television Service in Los Angeles negotiated with CBS for video tape copies of the daily Walter Cronkite TV Show. Arrangements were made for AFVN to receive a daily shipment of the CBS syndicated show from AFRTS. Actualities from the show, gathered by CBS correspondents throughout the world, have been used on the AFVN News casts since 27 April 1969. AFVN News kept the American soldier abreast of the news via several live coverages direct from the States such events as President Nixon's eight-point peace plan. Apollo 10's liftoff, reports from its lunar orbit, and splashdown were heard live by thousands of servicemen in Vietnam. AFVN News followed President Nixon's Midway trip, with live coverage of both his speech at the Air Force Academy and his presentation at General Beadle college. AFVN listeners heard the President announce the 25,000 man troop reduction at the historic Midway conference.

On June 8, 1969, seven miles south of Da Nang, a tragic event took the lives of three enlisted men from the Saigon Key Station. Their jeep struck a land mine killing all three. The AFVN newsmen had been filming the last episode of a six-part series on the activities of the military chaplain in Vietnam.



By the summer of 1969, the network was nearly complete. Besides the Saigon Key Station, the network included seven detachment located at strategic sites throughout the Republic, five broadcasting television and radio, and two transmitting only television. The characteristics of the network included two 50,000 watt AM transmitters located at Cat Lo and Pleiku serving to Saigon, the Delta areas and the Central highlands. Another 50KW transmitter took care of the Nha Trang/Cam Ranh Bay area. A 10,000 watt AM stations was operational at Qui Nhon, Da Nang and Nha Trang/Cam Ranh Bay, and a 1,000 watt station served the Quang Tri area. Four FM stations served Vietnam with 100,000 watts in Saigon, 35,000 watts in Pleiku, Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay. FM stereo was programmed for Saigon and Da Nang. The American Forces Vietnam Network had TV stations operating on Channel 11 in Saigon (Network Key Station), Qui Nhon, Da Nang, Pleiku, Nha Trang/Cam Ranh Bay, Tuy Hoa, Quang Tri and Channel 13 in Chu Lai.

By August plans became reality to enhance detachment production capabilities and enable them to better serve their local commanders and information offices. Each detachment was being equipped with two studio cameras for live TV broadcast productions.

To support all of the requirements of these detachments, news and production personnel in Saigon worked at a feverish pace throughout the summer. The month of July 1969 saw successful coverage of the historic Apollo 11 mission. Working closely with network news and operations branches, television received video tapes of daily space events via special jet from the Philippines and, working around the clock, prepared duplicate copies for immediate "scatback" distribution to each of the seven up-country television detachments. As a result, daily Apollo 11 events were aired to most of the country-wide audience within 24 hours.

August 1969 was a month for distinguished visitors to Vietnam. To provide the latest coverage to the troops in the field, AFVN news provided special coverage. General Earle Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stopped in Vietnam and the News Department was on hand to record his comments. General Leonard Chapman, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, paid a visit to the Marines fighting in Vietnam. The news NCOIC filed a special report and interview with the General from the Vietnamese Marine Training Center at Tu Duc. Congressman Sikes, Chairman of the House of Appropriations Committees also spoke to AFVN News reporters in August as he was returning to the U.S. after a fact finding trip to Vietnam. Extensive coverage of the August, Vietnam travels of Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, Chief, Naval Operations, was provided by AFVN cameramen. Later in the month Secretary of the Army Stanley Resor held a planeside press conference in which AFVN news participated.

Two speeches of vital interest to all U.S. Forces in the Republic were aired during September 1969. On 20 September, AFVN aired the Nixon and Laird special. Again on September 27, President Nixon's speech on troop cut-backs in Vietnam and the new draft system were also aired on the full Network.

Stereo FM music became a reality in Vietnam with Saigon beginning stereo broadcast on 14 October 1969. On 11 November 1969, Da Nang, Detachment 2, began broadcast of stereo music over FM.

On November 28, 1969, by satellite and with prior arrangement with AFVN's sister network, AFFN (Philippines) thousands of U.S. servicemen were able to view the

"splashdown" of Apollo 12 within a few hours after the actual history-making event via delayed video tape.

Armed Forces Vietnam Network was soon to experience several more "firsts". The first remote broadcast in Vietnam was undertaken when the Bob Hope Christmas Show was televised live from Long Binh, on 28 December 1969, and on 9 February 1970 it was announced that the program A Study of Walt Disney, by AFVN, won the 1969 annual Army broadcast Competition in the AFVTS Network Key Station category. The first in-country city-to-city (Saigon to My Tho to Vinh Long to Can Tho) microwave transmission system was installed on 1 April 1970 to provide television coverage to servicemen in the Mekong Delta.

On 15 June 1970 students protested at AFVN. Sign-carrying students from Saigon University demonstrated for three hours Saturday afternoon near the American Embassy and the Armed Forces Vietnam Network (AFVN). An American sergeant, who had his jeep fire bombed, was beaten with sticks and stoned, and rescued by AFVN personnel and later medivaced to a downtown dispensary. Broadcast, newsmen and cameramen at AFVN were put on "red alert", ready to defend the station's compound which is around the corner from the U.S. Embassy. Wisps of tear gas floated into the radio and television station's studios, but broadcasts continued.

The year 1970 also saw the completion of the AFVN Network. A fifty watt repeater transmitter was installed at Detachment 6 and commenced operation on 22 May providing AFVN radio to the Tuy Hoa area. Television studio facilities were completed and became operational at both Detachment 7 Chu Lai on May 17 and at Detachment 1, Qui Nhon, on 26 May. The Qui Nhon station also gained video tape replay capability for the first time on 7 June 1970. The three U.S. Navy Blue Eagle NC-121 Super Constellations flew their last regular missions over Vietnam on 30 September 1970 after nearly five years of providing radio and television programs to American and Vietnamese under Project Jenny. The Blue Eagle job has been taken over by ground stations of AFVN and the Vietnamese Government. Two of the Super Connies returned to their home at NAS Patuxent River, MD, while one remained at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon as a back-up for the ground stations.

A television translator site was installed at Camp Evans. The purpose of this site was to rebroadcast the television signal of Detachment 5, giving it the largest television audience of any AFVN detachment. Meanwhile Detachment 2 assumed responsibilities for broadcasting TV to the Chu Lai area on Channel 13 ( a translator site) on 15 December 1970.

On Saigon, during the last week of May 1970, a special series was prepared as part of National Drug Abuse Prevention Week. One special, Anything You Want To Now About Drugs, But Don't Know Who To Ask, won first place of the Army sponsored Keith L. Ware award in the "Special Broadcast Achievement" category. A thirty minute summary was produced in June 1970 on American activities into enemy sanctuaries across the Cambodian border. This special entitled, Cambodia: 60 Days, won the Keith L. Ware award in the "Television" category.

In the summer of 1970 more than 1,000 U.S. servicemen "talked back" to their radio and television sets, and the American Forces Vietnam Network listened. The purpose of the survey covering AM and FM radio and television was to determine what U.S. servicemen liked to watch and listen to, when they could watch and listen, and how good the reception was. The result of that monologue was a revamped programming schedule reflecting GI tastes and preferences. Nine programming changes resulted from the audience opinion survey conducted from

the audience opinion survey conducted from July through September 1970. The changes included the addition of more "underground" music on AM radio and increased television sports coverage during the football season. In addition, FM broadcasting was extended to 24 hours at the Da Nang station on 9 January 1971.

#### V. Redeployment Forces Change:

By the following summer U.S. forces began dramatic redeployments with changes being imminent for AFVN. In July 1971, AFVN was brought under USAFV for funding purposes. Previously, funding was administered directly by the Pacific Area Command in Hawaii. AFVN continued to mail all millstrip requisitions to the Sacramento Army Depot; however, an IBM general purpose card containing funding data had to be submitted to USAFV.

With U.S. Forces stand-down in the Delta the Can Tho station closed in September 1971. A similar project had been completed in July when the Tuy Hoa station was closed. Radio and television service to the few United States forces remaining in both the Chu Lai and Tuy Hoa areas was provided through the implementation of a broadcast systems configuration which was developed and implemented to automatically rebroadcast radio and television. These actions themselves continued to maintain morale in the effected areas, while saving the United States Government an estimated three quarters of a million dollars in operational costs per year. These closures involved many high dollar items which were either returned to the Sacramento Army Depot, transferred to APTS units in other countries, or, if the equipment was unserviceable, disposed of at local level.

Consistent with the further drawdown of U.S. Forces in the Republic, the radio and television detachments of Nha Trang and Quang Tri were relocated. In August and September, Detachment Four moved from Nha Trang to Cam Ranh Bay. AM service was not interrupted during the move; TV was on-air by 24 September and FM by 7 November 1971. Detachment Five began moving in the fall of 1971 from Quang Tri to Hue as a modified radio and television detachment. Situated on the grounds of the Vietnamese radio and television station in Hue the detachment also assumed the additional mission of broadcasting information and entertainment to the troops of Camp Eagle. This necessitated coordination with the 101st Airmobile Division prior to and after beginning broadcasting. Limited FM and TV were operational by 24 November 1971. FM broadcasting was expanded to 24 hours on 27 December.

Throughout this period troubleshooting maintenance teams visited the detachments at their new locations for the purpose of giving technical support and guidance. This course of action significantly reduced down time and projected equipment outages during the relocation moves and insured the continued logistical support and quality of both equipment maintenance and broadcasting. While the engineers were working on these relocation projects, a new disaster hit Detachment 2. On 23 October Typhoon Hester knocked AFVN, Da Nang, off the air for several days. Although FM and TV towers were blown down, the quick initiative and thoroughness of the maintenance teams returned FM to the air on 26 October, TV was restored on 28 October and AM by 29 October.

Although strengths and budgets had been reduced, production activities continued. AFVN covered the Bob Hope Show for the third consecutive year in December 1971. Tape and film copies were distributed throughout Vietnam and Thailand to APTS

stations for broadcast to U.S. forces. A special production, 1971: GI Christmas was also produced and forwarded to all detachments.

Meanwhile in December, the radio van at Camp Eagle was moved into the AFVN compound in Hue alongside the TV van. This also provided multiple production utilization. An FM transmitter was flown from Detachment 1 at Qui Nhon to Hue and on Christmas Day 1971 FM music was broadcast to the Hue/Phu Bai area. During the remaining days of December 1971 and throughout January 1972, both radio and television broadcasts from AFVN, Hue, were received from the DMZ in the North to the Hai Van Pass in the South. This was the first time the entire region north of the Hai Van Pass had ever received such broadcast service. However, as military units phased out of the region, Detachment Five also began to reduce its production capacity. On 14 February radio and television broadcast terminated from Hue and the equipment transferred to THVN as a result of low audience density and a lack of security.

Simultaneously, the Qui Nhon Detachment was phased down in conjunction with troop redeployments. Radio terminated on 14 February and television on 22 February 1972. As at Hue, the equipment was transferred to the Government of Vietnam.

The hope expressed by General Harkins on August 15, 1962, for Armed Forces Radio Vietnam has been a reality for both radio and television. This reality is exemplified by the announcer who reminds his listeners daily that American Forces Vietnam Network is "... continually striving to bring the best in information, education and entertainment". AFVN has truly served the "American fighting man from the Delta to the DMZ".

### CHRONOLOGY

- Aug 15, 1962 - Armed Forces Radio Vietnam commenced operation.
- Autumn, 1964 - AFRS Vietnam moved from Rex Hotel to Brink BOQ.
- Dec 24, 1964 - VC exploded 250 pounds of plastic in Brink BOQ, partially destroying AFRS Vietnam facilities.
- Feb, 1965 - AFRS Vietnam expanded programming from 18 to 24 hours daily.
- Feb 7, 1966 - First regularly scheduled television program in Vietnam broadcast from Blue Eagle aircraft.
- Mar 24, 1966 - Two-way Pacific link made between Saigon and AFRTS Los Angeles by underwater cable.
- Apr 13, 1966 - VC attacked Tan Son Nhut air base with mortars, damaging all Blue Eagle aircraft, one extensively. TV programming reduced to five days weekly.
- May 11, 1966 - Blue Eagle repairs completed. Full TV schedule resumed.
- Sep 25, 1966 - First television van station in Vietnam became operational in Qui Nhon.
- Oct 21, 1966 - Second television van station in Vietnam became operational in Da Nang.
- Oct 25, 1966 - Ground station TV facilities in Saigon became operational, thus relieving Blue Eagle aircraft of broadcasting U.S. and Vietnamese programming in the Saigon area.
- Dec 24, 1966 - VC stage small arms attack on new AFRT facilities at 9 Hong Thap Tu in Saigon; Station sustained light damage.
- Jan 2, 1967 - Move of radio and news sections from the Brink BOQ to new AFRT facilities at 9 Hong Thap Tu commenced.
- Jan 6, 1967 - Move of radio and news sections completed. Radio programming originating from new station commenced at 9:00 a.m. this date.
- Feb 1, 1967 - Third television van station in Vietnam became operational in Pleiku.
- Feb 8, 1967 - Accidental small arms fired in Key Station. Light damage and no casualties sustained.
- Mar 13, 1967 - Fourth television van station in Vietnam became operational in Nha Trang.
- May 15, 1967 - Fifth television van station in Vietnam became operational in Hue.
- May 26, 1967 - Sixth television van station in Vietnam became operational in Tuy Hoa.
- Jun 1, 1967 - First 10,000-watt radio transmitter for AFRT became operational in Da Nang.
- Jul 1, 1967 - Use of AFRT designation dropped. Commenced use of AFVN (American Forces Vietnam Network) designation.
- Oct 22, 1967 - Unmanned repeater operational in Phan Rang. "Field strength" reports indicate 85% of US Forces can receive AFVN TV.
- Dec, 1967 - Holiday season marked by production activities to include recording of the Bob Hope Christmas Special.
- Dec 11, 1967 - Det 4, Non Tre, suffers heavy mortar attack, moderate damage to buildings sustained.
- Jan 7, 1968 - Det 2 radio transmitter facility at Red Beach takes 200 punctures from fragment rocket attack. Severed transmission line repaired under enemy fire in two hours. Moderate damage but no casualties sustained.
- Jan 31, 1968 - Det 1, Qui Nhon, mess hall took enemy fire. No damage  
- Det 5, Hue, attacked by NVA regulars withstanding small arms and light motor attack.

- Feb 4, 1968 - Det 5, Hue, overrun by NVA regulars. Casualties: 1KIA; 5 taken prisoners.
- May 3, 1968 - Key Station suffers considerable damage from 110 lbs of TNT parked near compound.
- Dec, 1968 - AFVN News instrumental in release of three US POW, broadcasting messages to the VC concerning proposed dates, times, places for the release.
- Apr 28, 1969 - AFVN begins regular use of CBS News Water Cronkite Show.
- Jun 8, 1969 - Three AFVN newsmen killed by land mine south of Da Nang after filming a documentary on the military chaplain in Vietnam.
- Aug, 1969 - Detachments receive studio cameras to provide live TV broadcasts.
- Oct 14, 1969 - Key Station begins stereo FM music broadcasts.
- Nov 11, 1969 - Det 2, Da Nang, begins stereo FM music broadcasts.
- Dec 28, 1969 - First live remote produced Bob Hope Christmas Show from Long Binh.
- Jun 15, 1970 - Student protestors demonstrate near AFVN compound. One US serviceman rescued by AFVN personnel after fire bombing.
- Sep 30, 1970 - Blue Eagles fly last regular mission after 5 years of service to American and Vietnamese.
- May, Jun, 1970 - Award winning, Anything You Want to Know About Drugs, But Don't Know Who To Ask and Cambodia: 60 days, were produced.
- Jan 9, 1971 - 24 hours FM broadcasting initiated at Da Nang.
- Jul-Sep, 1971 - Tuy Hoa & Can Tho stations close with rebroadcast transmitters installed.
  - Det 4, Hon Tre Island, moved to Cam Ranh Bay Air Base; TV on-air by 24 September, FM broadcasting on 7 Nov; AM service continued uninterrupted.
- Oct 23, 1971 - Typhon Hester causes considerable damage to Det 2, Da Nang.
- Nov 24, 1971 - Det 5, Quang Tri, moved to Hue; operational for limited FM & TV broadcasting.
- Feb 14, 1972 - Det 5, Hue terminates broadcasting transferring equipment to THVN (Vietnamese Government TV).
  - Det 1, Qui Nhon, terminates broadcasting; all equipment is also transferred to THVN.