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Monograph No 125 (Navy)
Surface Escorting Operations,
Dec 41 - Aug 45
Prepared by
Second Demobilization Bureau

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
FAR EAST COMMAND
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION, GENERAL STAFF
ALLIED TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER SERVICE

Translation Requested by G-2 HISTORICAL

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No.125 (Navy) Surface Escort-
ing Operations -- December
1941 - August 1945

PREFACE

Through Instruction No. 126 to Japanese Government, 12 Oct 45, entitled "Institution for War Records Investigation", steps were initiated to exploit military historical records and official reports of the Japanese War Ministry and the Japanese General Staff.* Upon the dissolution of the War Ministry and the General Staff, and the transfer of their former functions to the Demobilization Bureau, the general research job continued and resulted in the development of a series of historical monographs. Detailed instructions covering the preparation of these monographs were included in Memoranda 15 December 1945 and 21 November 1946, subject "Japanese Operational Histories".

The basic material contained in this operational record was developed by former officers, on duty in command and staff units within major units during the period of operations. It should be noted at once, that the enormous destruction by aerial bombardment and fire has practically wiped out the Tokyo records; much of this material was reconstructed from memory.

The paucity of original orders, plans and unit journals, which are normally essential in the preparation of this type of record, most of which were lost or destroyed during field operations or bombing raids rendered the task of compilation most difficult; particularly distressing has been the complete lack of official strength reports, normal in AG or G-3 records. However, while many of the important orders, plans and estimates have been reconstructed from memory and therefore are not textually identical with the originals, they are believed to be generally accurate and reliable. Further data as a result of continuing research and the occasional recovery of hitherto unavailable original documents will be covered in the subsequent publication of "supplements" by the Demobilization Bureau.

* The action under this memorandum and incidental detailed instructions, which followed, were initiated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, GHQ, charged with responsibility for execution of the program under G.O. No. 9, SCAP, 2 October 1945.

In order to protect the interest of the United States, in the exploitation of Japanese Military Information, sub-paragraph 4 of G.O. No. 9 further provided for the screening of enemy documents and established inventories in Japanese Governmental Archives. Careful examination of the first records submitted by the Japanese Government in the summer of 1946 detected a misconception on the part of the Japanese as to what should be included in comparative histories; in a memorandum issued by Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, on 21 November 1946, the Imperial Japanese Government was directed to record the operations of the Japanese forces more extensively. The G-2 Section thereafter assumed coordination of the entire program, including the establishment of a small historical research section within the ATIS (Allied Translator and Interpreter Section.)

**Surface Escorting Operations,
December 1941 -- August 1945**

Prepared in June 1949 by Liquidation Division,
Second Demobilization Bureau.

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Chapter I The Pre-war Situation

The naval plan for the protection of commerce was drafted by the members of the Second Section of the First Bureau of the Naval General Staff and when the plan was approved by the Chief of the Naval General Staff, it was confidentially shown to the major naval stations (CHINJUFU) and minor naval stations (KEIBIFU) (the minor naval stations were formerly called (YOKOBU); these two terms will hereinafter be used interchangeably) about December of the preceding year or January of the year as an annual policy (in the Navy, a new year in regards to training and operations began on 1 December of the preceding year and ended on 31 November of the year). Each naval station drafted its own commerce protection plan for the year in accordance with the above-mentioned policy and reported it to the central authorities, notified the naval stations and fleets concerned and confidentially instructed its subordinates relative to the plan. However, these were not detailed policies or plans for escorting and were not concerned with positive measures for immediate installation of facilities or disposition of personnel to engage in the tasks. In other words, it merely pointed out the course to be taken in escorting in the event of war. Actually, it would be safe to say that no definite preparation whatsoever had been made for escorting operations until immediately before the outbreak of war.

"The Annual Commerce Protection Plans of the Major and Minor Naval Stations" was a very simple document of only about 30 or 40 pages and its contents were generally as follows:

1. Policy for the execution of escorting operations.
2. Personnel and ship units available in time of war.
3. Outline of system and organization of escorting organs.
4. Routes
5. Ports of shelter
6. Reporting; communication and liaison.

The above statement may seem incredible, giving the impression that the Japanese Navy was unconcerned with escorting operations. The Naval General Staff, the Naval Staff College and various other schools zealously conducted analytical studies of the battle lesson that GREAT BRITAIN was greatly harassed by German submarine warfare in World War I, and many complete documents were published. The importance of escorting operations was common knowledge to the naval officers. The Naval General Staff and other authorities concerned often pointed out the shortcomings of our Navy in this field and endeavored to strengthen it, but the fact remained that the Navy was

with complete details, dispatched instructors and directly exerted its efforts to control the various sections.

The abovementioned operational plans enacted by the various naval stations were so concrete that they could be used as criteria for the daily escorting operations, but due to the absence of a guiding organ to assume overall control, the escorting methods differed considerably with the various naval stations. This was a cause of undue vexation for the escorted ships which had to digest the regulations of the various naval stations. Not only that, it was extremely inconvenient to transfer escort duties at the boundaries between sea areas under different jurisdictions.

As the Combined Fleet advanced and deployed its forces over a vast sea area by about April 1942, more and more ships plied between the homeland and the battle fronts to supply weapons, personnel, provisions, equipment and materials and transport homeward essential industrial raw materials and commodities, and the losses from enemy submarines increased at an alarming rate. Therefore, the 1st Surface Escort Unit for the southwestern areas (generally covering the South China Sea area south of FORMOSA and the Javanese Sea area) and the 2d Surface Escort Unit for the Pacific areas (generally covering YOKOSUKA, SAIPAN and TRUK areas) were activated as of 10 April and were placed under the command, respectively, of the commander in chief of the Southwest Area Fleet and the commander in chief of the Fourth Fleet; thus, these units, commenced their activities as units engaged exclusively in escort duties.

However, the strength which the Navy was able to muster after exhaustive efforts was ten obsolete destroyers, two torpedoboats and five converted gun boats, a total of 17 vessels, for the 1st Surface Escort Unit and four obsolete destroyers, two torpedoboats and one converted gun-boat, a total of seven vessels, for the 2d Surface Escort Unit. As this was far from adequate to escort the vast merchant fleet of that time, the authorities concerned were vexed.

Especially, the 1st Surface Escort Unit, which had much to do with Army and civilian ships, endeavored to accomplish its tasks by maintaining close contact with the Army Shipping Command at UJINA and various other shipping commands concerned. As for the civilian shipping circles, the various shipping companies, which had theretofore been independent, combined to organize the Shipping Management Association, effective 1 April. Thereupon, close contact was established by the Navy Ministry in TOKYO with the main office of the Association and in local areas, between the branch offices of the Association and the neighboring naval organs, for the protection of surface traffic.

The naval organs for the protection of surface traffic were exclusively responsible to all ships for their escorting; therefore, they had primary control in that matter, but as shown below, the extent to which they could enforce their control was varied and vague.

Civilian ships: --- These could be controlled almost freely. However, those of national importance were specially treated so as to meet their demands.

Army ships: --- The above organs had the primary control over these ships by agreement with the Army, but in view of the underlying idea of coordinated operations, the demands of the Army had to be met to a considerable extent.

Supply ships of the Combined Fleet: --- These could be controlled only when they joined convoys sponsored by organs for the protection of surface traffic. In other instances, these organs cooperated in their escorting by issuing warning or information or by specially dispatching escort vessels.

Other ships belonging to the Navy: --- These could be controlled totally by the order of the Navy.

There were also other ships of various categories; strictly speaking, even the ships listed above included different categories, and the extent to which control could be enforced varied with each category; therefore, the escorting authorities had to take great pains in effecting this control. But the reasons for their failure to assume powerful control over all shipping may be summarized in the following two points:

1. There were no judicial grounds for forcing strong orders upon the Army and civilian circles.
2. The escort forces were very weak and had not achieved good results; therefore, they were not able to take a firm stand.

Chapter III Developments from May 1942 to December 1942

The 1st Surface Escort Unit at first had its headquarters at SINGAPORE and performed escorting duties in the entire Southwestern Area, but due to its small force, all it could do was to carry out escorting between MOJI, TAKAO, MANILA and SINGAPORE. It gradually organized convoys and started control and guiding operations over the route by assigning escort ships to the convoys (though at the rate of only one obsolete destroyer or one converted gun-boat for a convoy of 10 or 20 ships).

The actual escorting of convoys proved that untold difficulties attended the escorting of a jumble of untrained merchant ships. Therefore, various countermeasures were taken and one of them was to have a navigation controller temporarily board the guide ship at the time of convoy organization to conduct on-the-spot guidance.

However, since not a single newly-constructed coast defense ship (especially for escort duties) was commissioned by the end of 1942 and the available strength remained almost the same as at the start of the war, the escort units were at great pains to defend against enemy submarine attacks which were mounting steadily.

The fundamental cause of this serious setback was that it became important for the Naval General Staff to take up the organization of forces in the order of urgency, which was always decided according to the operational policy of the time, --- for the Naval General Staff had to request strength from within the naval arms, which were generally inadequate as previously mentioned, --- and here, (TN: the Naval General Staff) did not fully realize that it should have secured a considerable proportion of strength for escort duties in spite of difficulties

and should have started the organization of the strength earlier by recognizing that such organization would take one or two years.

Without reference to the abovementioned circumstances; the menace of the enemy submarines against our surface supply lines was increasing and had already become too serious to neglect, to the extent that the escorting authorities, instead of idly complaining of their inadequate strength as in the past, made every effort to carry out everything, large or small, which took relatively little money and time to accomplish: such as the strengthening and increase of various organs concerned; the study and improvement of escorting methods; the designation of suitable routes; the acceleration of intelligence transmission and communicative liaison; the strengthening of lookout and communication equipment; the strengthening of anti-submarine weapons in escort ships and merchant ships; the utilization of mine barriers; the execution of education and training for seamen; the improvement of the treatment of seamen; etc. Nevertheless, our shipping losses by enemy submarines kept increasing as the days went by.

As the Combined Fleet was caught in a battle of attrition in the SOLOMONS and NEW GUINEA areas at that time, nearly all naval vessels, aircraft, weapons, equipment and materials and personnel were being thrown into this battle and there were signs that the shipping losses would grow to very serious proportions. The total losses during the first one year of the war were about 960,000 gross tons or only slightly above the prewar estimate, which put the monthly average at 70,000 gross tons; therefore, it was, indeed, inevitable that the start of the program for the huge expansion of the escort ship force and of the production of aircraft for exclusive use in escorting operations should have been shelved. Also, our Navy traditionally did not stress such aspects as defense and escort and felt that attack was the best defense, and that after all, the rear units had to persevere so that victory might be won at the critical fighting front. It was partly for this reason that the start of the abovementioned program and production was delayed although the need for it were recognized.

The 1st Surface Escort Unit Headquarters was first stationed at SINGAPORE for the reasons that it fitted the Navy's policy that the commander should be at the forward line, that it was convenient for contact with the Southern Army and for the transportation of oil to JAPAN and that the communication capacity and housing facilities in FORMOSA (at TAKAO or MAKO) were incomplete. However, when escort was actually conducted, many difficulties in execution of delicate escort duties arose due to poor contact with TOKYO; therefore, on the strong advice of the Naval General Staff, temporary office buildings were constructed in the vicinity of TAKAO in about September and the admiral's headquarters was moved there.

The 2d Surface Escort Unit, which was commanded concurrently by the commander of the 4th Base Force (at TRUK), performed escort duties along the route between the homeland and TRUK in cooperation with the YOKOSUKA Naval Station, but this escort operation was very weak because both the Surface Escort Unit and the Naval Station had only

a small force, which consisted of escort ships with short cruising range.

The Combined Fleet carried out escort duties, in accordance with the directive of the Navy Section of Imperial Headquarters, only in such case as transportation of large Army forces. The YOKOSUKA and SASEBO Naval Station facing the open seas successively started convoy navigation by using their small forces expediently as shipping losses occurred.

Anti-submarine, anti-aircraft and anti-mine warnings which had theretofore been separately transmitted from the various escort authorities to the ships sailing in their vicinities began to be transmitted from about October four times per day from the TOKYO Signal Unit after having been collected, screened and studied by the Naval General Staff. This measure eliminated an annoying factor of the past, namely the inconclusiveness of information on the enemy situation, as the ships were now able to learn the enemy situation in the passages to be navigated either by the messages received directly from torpedoed ships, by warnings transmitted from escort units in charge of local sea areas or by periodical warnings from the TOKYO Signal Unit.

Thus the escorting and anti-submarine operations became more complex, but there was no organ or unit to unify and guide these operations. As a result, the 2d Section of the Naval General Staff had to guide even the practical phases of the operations and had gradually begun to handle more matters. Meanwhile, the enemy submarine activities in the home waters had necessitated the expansion and strengthening of the inner front operations and defensive operations. As these operations had always been deferred and many of the organs concerned had been neglected, it was necessary to create a new section in order to push vigorously for their preparedness. Thus, the 12th Section of the Naval General Staff, effective 10 Oct 42, became independent of the 2d Section and took charge of the following duties under the chief of the 1st Bureau:

- (1) Part of the operational planning (inner front operations, defense plans (including the defense of occupied territories) and plans for the protection of surface traffic).
- (2) Some of the items pertaining to wartime organization (items pertaining to inner front operations and defense).
- (3) Some of the items pertaining to the strength necessary for national defense (items pertaining to inner front operations and defense).
- (4) Some of the items pertaining to the dispatch, duties and actions of naval vessels and units anticipating operational actions (items pertaining to inner front operations and defense).
- (5) Items pertaining to the defense, martial law and wartime guarding of the national territory.

About this time, "The Principle for the Protection of Surface Traffic During the Greater East Asia War" was promulgated by the Naval General Staff and the operational principles concerning the protection of surface traffic were unified thereby. This "Principle", which incorporated the battle experiences of the 1st and 2d Surface Escort Units and the various naval stations, showed the details of

our Navy's operational principle for surface traffic protection by expanding and filling up in detail the annual plans decided before the war and by even intervening in the practical phases of the surface traffic protection. The contents of this "Principle" consisted of general rules, policies, jurisdictional areas, rendezvous points and ports of shelter, direct escorting, warning service, communication liaison, reporting, and glossary of terms.

As regards the escorting of Army ships, the Navy held the controlling power based on the principle of joint Army-Navy operations in the case of direct escorting effected by dispatching a naval force in accordance with an agreement between the Naval General Staff and the Army General Staff, while in the case of indirect escorting, the Navy, as a rule, cooperated with the Army.

Chapter IV The Developments from January 1943 to October 1943

Due to necessities of complementing the navy-requisitioned vessels lost in the Guadalcanal, Solomons, and New Guinea areas, as well as of urgent transport to the various areas necessary for the establishment of strategic defense positions, not only the release of vessels in general scheduled to be returned to the people after the completion of the offensive operations in 1942 was suspended, but in December of the same year another requisition of about 400,000 gross tons of vessels for army and navy use was made. This caused undue hardship to civilian navigation, necessitating the greatest increase in navigation efficiency. On the other hand, since the beginning of 1943 the damages inflicted by enemy submarines was seldom below 10,000 gross tons a month.

Hardly any increase was seen in the effective naval escort strength in the past year, it remaining practically the same as before. Thus, the navy, responsible for surface escort, was hammered by the demand to raise navigation efficiency and minimize ship losses and was completely distraught.

The navy at that time, was strongly aware of the fact that the main power in combat lies in air strength, and as for shipbuilding, aircraft carriers steadily increased in number. In this war, the country's shipbuilding in general was in the navy's charge and the predetermined goal of merchant shipbuilding (about 1,200,000 gross tons in 1943) had to be achieved. Moreover, the military administration was pressed by such urgent demands as issuing top priority to submarine construction to create opportunities through a huge increase of submarines, or giving foremost consideration to armored transport ship construction since transport formed the basis for the entire operation.

The requests of the Naval General Staff for war vessels changed often, but this was in a way unavoidable in view of the rapid changes in the war situation and, more often than not, the priority rating was revised so that the Military Administration, which was receiving these requests and painfully manipulating even without them, was overburdened, and various losses were incurred as a result.

In view of the above situation, the persistent demand for increasing escort-ship building (immediate construction of 360 escort ships) by the 12th Section of the Naval General Staff did not materialize readily. But in June 1943, through the strenuous efforts of the Military Administration authorities, the materials were obtained somehow and the immediate construction of about 40 coast defense ships for the present was decided on. Those concerned with escort matters counted heavily on this and fervently hoped that these ships would be built in time for the war. Meanwhile the escort sections were not vainly waiting for the mustering of strength, but small scale improvements in escort methods, system, training, facilities and crew treatment were being made through the constant efforts of all sections, and steady improvement was seen.

The problem in the last year was the defect in the discharge of escort duties arising from the fact that each naval station and the Combined Fleet was protecting the sea areas under its own jurisdiction in its own way. Much inconvenience was involved in assuming the task at the boundary lines of the respective jurisdictional areas. This required complicated communications and much time and labor. Moreover inconsistency in communications was frequent and not infrequently losses were sustained during that time. Again, as for especially important ships, the Navy General Staff had to issue special instruction whenever they were to be escorted from one area to the other (but the 1st and 2d surface escort units were permitted to enter and leave freely other jurisdictional sea areas within the zone prescribed).

In order to solve this question, the Naval General Staff, taking into consideration the transport authorities' demand for raising the operation rate of ships to a maximum, unrestricted navigation insofar as possible; the demand for the elimination of ship losses; the duty of the navy; and enemy submarines activities, which could be expected at present and in the future, though it was considered unreasonable from the present effective strength, finally decided to enforce consistent escort throughout the sea areas, and published on 1 June "The Principles for the Protection of Surface Traffic During the Greater East Asia War (the first revision)". The contents of this book consisted of general rules, escort policy, jurisdictional areas, sea lane control, sea lane jurisdiction, direct escort, indirect escort, disposition when enemy is confronted, salvage, warning service, communication liaison, reports and a glossary of terms. These described in greater detail than in the former issue. Especially the navigation system (approximate course) is fixed, the duties thereof are clearly defined, and the units concerned, irrespective of their assigned sea areas of protection, were authorized to carry out escort duties consistent with the prescribed navigation system. The naval stations and the Combined Fleet each had a separate chain of command as in the past.

Note: The paragraph: "Salvage" of "The Principle for the Protection of Surface Traffic during the Greater East Asia War. (first revision)" provided for the standard of action to be taken by shipping and escort ships at the scene of a disaster. In the case of a four-vessel convoy, two

ships were to retire immediately, one was to remain as a neutralizing ship and to be on the lookout with escort ships and one was to engage in rescue work as a salvage vessel. It also stipulated the measures to be taken in case of a convoy of more than five vessels. The senior officer of the convoy was to issue an order as to the time to leave the scene. The various rescue operations were not mentioned.

Thus, it was made possible for each escort force to continue escort consistently over a considerable distance from the departure port to the destination (intermediate port) by organizing a convoy with shipping of various types assembled from various areas, and the defects in the past were rectified considerably.

As for the strength of escort ships at the time, the "MATSUMA", the first coast defense ship built under the previous year's ship-building program, was assigned to the task unit on 23 March and 15 vessels and some subchasers were added by the end of November. However, due to the loss of some escort ships, the increase in the total escort strength was so small that it was impossible to provide direct escorting completely for convoys which were carrying out the demands for urgent and large-scale transportation.

Naturally, a strong desire was voiced in transportation quarters for an increased shipping operation rate. Especially, the swift transportation to JAPAN of oil from the SINGAPORE area and iron ore from HAINAN Island began to be demanded by the operations quarters. However, there was no hope for the rapid increase in escort strength, while the increased activity of enemy submarines made it impossible to relax navigation control. Consequently, with the idea of eliminating the waste of time by bringing shipping and escort into closer co-ordination, the 12 Section of the Naval General Staff, in assembling the central authorities from the Army, Navy and civil quarters, convened the Joint Transport Control Conference (SOGO UNKO TOSEI KAIGI) in TOKYO about the 25th of every month, beginning in July, for the purpose of effecting consonance in transport and escort for the following month and informing the concerned units thereof beforehand.

This system shortened the ships' stay in the home ports and facilitated the plans of the escort units. Under this system, the task units complied with the demand from the central authorities insofar as the local situation permitted. Though revisions in the schedules of the various organs and the defects of ships hampered the smooth enforcement of the system, the contact between the Army, Navy and civil quarters became much closer and the action which ships took till they reached the rendezvous point became more systematic.

The 1st Surface Escort Unit, especially, organized oil and iron convoys at the same time and formed high speed convoys, sometimes with the addition of high speed vessels for transporting army and naval troops, and thereby strengthened the escort, and the convoys were to effect insofar as possible non-stop navigation from NOJI to SINGAPORE or to HAINAN Island with the aim of raising the ship operation rate.

Thus, everything was done to meet the two demands of preventing shipping losses and raising the operation rate to the maximum. Nevertheless, the shipping losses caused by enemy submarines increased steadily until they amounted to over 120,000 gross tons a month in about September and October and the losses of personnel and materials being transported climbed to a staggering figure.

Despite the desperate efforts of both the central and the local authorities to prevent shipping losses, the situation did not improve at all; instead, it went from bad to worse. Therefore, the 12th Section of the Naval General Staff recognized the necessity of establishing, at any cost a powerful overall headquarters to command the escort and of rushing thereby the solution of the pending issues, and as the Section was exerting efforts for the realization of these objects, a strong call for the strengthening of surface escort arose from the Army and civil quarters. So, although there were great difficulties in connection with personnel and expenditure and considerable opposition in the Navy, the General Escort Command was finally organized on 15 November. This command took over and enlarged further the central businesses relative to the task of escort which the 12th Section of the Naval General Staff had formerly handled for convenience sake, and at the same time the headquarters assumed unified command of all escort operations (except those of the Combined Fleet). At this time, the chain of command was changed as shown in Annex 2. Thus, the 12th Section of the Naval General Staff took charge of part of the operational plans (inner front, defense and surface traffic protection), which were its original duties, and the surface escort system was ostensibly completed.

Other matters of note relative to the surface traffic protection during this period were as follows:

- 10 January: The navigation control officer was renamed navigation commanding officer and his authority was expanded.
- 1 April: Upon completion of the new office buildings at TAKAO, the MAKO Naval Station moved to TAKAO; only, the defense unit and the Construction and Repair Department remained at MAKO.
- 25 May: The inspector of auxiliary transport was renamed the commanding officer and his authority was expanded.

Chapter V

The Developments from December 1943 to March 1945

Following its establishment, General Escort Command immediately undertook to carry out vigorously the various measures which had hitherto been neglected. On 10 December, it placed the 901st Air Group, a newly organized special escort air unit, under its command and bolstered its strength by including the OTAKA, the KUMOTAKA, the

UMITAKA and the KAMITAKA, all converted aircraft carriers.

Special efforts were directed to anti-submarine attack by aircraft, the establishment of safe sea areas with mine barriers, and the instruction and training of escort ships and seamen, and a number of concrete measures were enforced through the cooperation of various schools and research stations.

No command relation existed between the Combined Fleet and General Escort Command; they were entirely independent of each other.

At that time, the damage inflicted upon ships by enemy submarines was rapidly increasing, exceeding 200,000 gross tons every month after November and the future looked gloomy.

General Escort Command frantically undertook to cope with the situation, but found both the preparedness of strength and organization lagging about one year behind the prevailing war situation; therefore, it had to overcome great difficulties to make up for lost time.

With the coming of 1944, the general war situation became even more critical and in February TRUK came under large-scale enemy air raids. Thereupon, pressed by the dire need to strengthen immediately the defense set-up of the Mid-Pacific Areas, large-scale emergency transport to the SAIPAN, TRUK and PALAU areas was begun in early March. Because this route was a mid-ocean route with hardly any suitable ports of shelter and difficulty in obtaining land-based aircraft for escort, as many escort ships as possible were concentrated in these areas and the number of escort ships assigned to one convoy was increased.

In order to control these ships directly, the convoy navigation officer and the cruiser TATSUTA, which was then engaged in training in the Inland Sea, were used at first, but, as the establishment of a headquarters solely in charge of escort duties was deemed necessary, the Specially Established Escorted Convoy Headquarters was organized on 8 April to control convoys for escort.

However, since the Navy was short of personnel at that time, the headquarters was formed with much difficulty by appointing a retired officer of rear admiral rank as commander or by temporarily appointing members of the Naval General Staff, staff officers of General Escort Command, Navy Ministry officials and instructors of various naval schools as staff officers.

Thus, until SAIPAN was first raided by hostile planes in the middle of June, the Navy literally carried out desperate escort duties and, during this period, a member of the Naval General Staff who served as a provisional staff officer and a staff officer of General Escort Command died in action.

After the enemy invasion of SAIPAN, the route detouring the PHILIPPINE Islands to PALAU by way of DAVAO was the only one left for the supplying of the Inner South Seas, while emergency transport from YOKOSUKA to CHICHIJIMA and IWOJIMA was continued.

With the advance of the enemy, shipping losses resulting from enemy aircraft attacks increased, reaching such fantastic figures as 300,000 gross tons in January and 520,000 gross tons in February, and causing great anxiety to the Emperor.

At last, on 17 March, the Army-Navy joint conference to study surface escort matters was held in the presence of the Emperor, who, at the end of the conference, advised the Army and Navy to cooperate closely to tide over the difficult situation.

Ship losses decreased in April, but suddenly increased again in May.

Meanwhile, the high command, failing to achieve satisfactory results in the 'A-Go' Operation of June, commenced preparations for the 'SHO-Go' Operation.

On 9 August, the Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet assumed command of the forces of the General Escort Command and the naval stations concerned, with regard to the following:

- (A) Matters especially necessary for the execution of the 'SHO-Go' Operation and the preparations therefor.
- (B) Matters requiring special control for the execution of surface traffic protection and antisubmarine operations.

These are shown in chart form in Annex 3.

In July, enemy aircraft based in CHINA began to harass the southwest shipping route under the 1st Surface Escort Unit's charge. Since this matter, considered from every angle, was extremely important for our country, the commander of the 1st Surface Escort Unit and all those under him made desperate attempts to protect ships in defiance of the combined attacks of aircraft and submarines, but with the war situation becoming increasingly unfavorable for us, their efforts were to no avail. The 'SHO-Go' Operation which took place in October on the sea east of the PHILIPPINES also failed to turn the tide in our favor and the enemy was approaching home waters. After November, the SAIPAN- and CHINA- based enemy aircraft began raiding the homeland and with the dropping of magnetic mines even coastal navigation was exposed to great danger and surface traffic was greatly hampered. As a result, the supply of commodities and materials within the country dwindled rapidly, causing even more difficulty in the livelihood of the people.

The ever-increasing loss of ships was so great that it could not be replaced by new ones and, what was worse, the excellent ships that remained were practically all requisitioned by the Army and Navy on several occasions beginning in August to meet the demands of operations.

Consequently, there was the bad resultant effect that as the quality and quantity of private vessels dropped, escort became increasingly difficult. However, during this period, the unfavorable war situation was rapidly becoming aggravated, and the demand for operational transport and the transport to replenish combat strength was felt even more acutely, and especially, oil was in such urgent demand that every drop counted as long as the Southwest shipping route was available.

In January 1945, the Army and Navy high command ordered urgent oil transportation, as operational transportation, giving impetus to the existing escort service,

Hereupon, under the operational guidance of the commander in chief of General Escort Command, a desperate oil transportation operation was launched in the face of intense attacks of enemy submarines and aircraft, in which

all crew members of the transports left ports with grim determination, the Army and Navy assembled in that area as many aircraft as the war situation permitted, and the Combined Fleet, as well as nearby army and navy units, made every possible effort to cooperate therein. About 300,000 kiloliters of oil was transported at great sacrifice by the time the order to suspend operations was issued in 14 March, due to the OKINAWA battle.

Escort ships constructed according to the construction plans for the fiscal year 1943 (from April 1943 to March 1944), totalling 43, and for the fiscal year 1944 (from April 1944 to March 1945), totalling 188, were successively commissioned, and by March 1945, about 130 new coast defense ships joined the active units.

However, since their construction lagged far behind the prevailing war situation, they were unable to overcome enemy submarines, and considerable loss was sustained from enemy submarines, aircraft and mines as the war grew in intensity.

However, as it became necessary to strengthen the organization with the increase in coast defense ships, in July 1944, the 1st Escort Division was organized of four coast defense ships and assigned to the 1st Surface Escort Unit; in November, the 101st Escort Squadron was organized of six coast defense ships with the training cruiser KASHII as a flagship and assigned to General Escort Command; on 10 December, the 1st Surface Escort Unit was raised to the status of First Surface Escort Fleet, and the number of escort divisions and escort squadrons (named the 101st and 102d Escort Squadrons) gradually increased.

During this period, air forces in charge of escort duties and anti-submarine training units became very active, while the Shipping Lookout Replacement and Training Department was established, various schools made considerable progress in the study of escort operations, and various kinds of reference books thereon were compiled; thus, real activity for escort operation appeared to have finally embarked in the right direction.

The ill-defined chain of command and control of movements of army, navy and civilian vessels anchoring in the harbor was believed to have been a cause of the increase in losses otherwise preventable at the time of air-raids upon TRUK in February 1944 and PALAU at the end of March and it was anticipated that disasters of this nature might occur in other ports in the future. Therefore, with the Army, "the Army - Navy Central Agreement for the Retiring of Vessels in the Event of Enemy Air-raids" was established and issued about May of the same year.

This stipulated the senior naval commander stationed in a harbor likely to be attacked by enemy aircraft were to decide beforehand on the retiring positions of vessels at anchor and at the time of air-raids, army, navy and civilian ships were to take orderly action in accordance with his directives.

Notes on surface traffic escort during this period in addition to those mentioned above are as follows:
1 Feb 44: The 931st Air Group was organized and assigned to the General Escort Command

- The Shipping Lookout Replacement and Training Department was established: located in YOKOHAMA, took charge of the education, training, personnel affairs and payment of personnel serving as lookouts on the ship.
- 20 February: The 951st Air Group was assigned to General Escort Command
- 10 April: The newly-created 4th Surface Escort Unit, placed under the command of the HASEBO Naval Station, was stationed at ANAMI OSHIMA and took charge of escort between KAGOSHIMA and OKINAWA.
- 20 May: The newly-created 3d Surface Escort Unit, placed under the command of the YOKOSUKA Naval Station, was stationed at TOBA and took charge of escort between the TOKYO-YOKOHAMA and KOBE-OSAKA Areas.
- 10 July: The newly-created 1st Escort Division was assigned to the 1st Surface Escort Unit.
- 18 July: The 2d Surface Escort Unit was removed from the war organization.
- 1 August: The anti-submarine training unit was organized and assigned to the KURE Defense Squadron.
- 20 August: The 31st Destroyer Squadron was organized and assigned to the Combined Fleet. This squadron was in charge mainly of mobile anti-submarine operations.
- 5 September: The 11th Escort Division was organized and assigned to the 1st Surface Escort Unit.
- 10 October: The government promulgated the general principles of a seamen administration organization to establish the government official status of the seamen.
- 20 October: The 12th and 21st Escort Divisions were organized and assigned to the 31st Destroyer Squadron and 1st Surface Escort Unit respectively.
- 15 November: The newly-organized 101st Escort Squadron was assigned to General Escort Command.
- 5 December: The 31st Escort Division was organized and assigned to the 1st Surface Escort Unit.
- 1 Jan 45: The 102d Escort Squadron was organized.
- 20 January: The 103d Escort Squadron was organized. The government promulgated the Seamen's Mobilization Order and the order to establish the government official status of seamen.

Chapter VI Developments from April 1945 to the End of the War

With the battles in the PHILIPPINES unfavorable to JAPAN, IWOJIMA in the hands of the enemy and OKINAWA in danger, the Supreme Command finally decided to push preparations for the decisive battle in the homeland and to effect a Japan-Manchuria-China self-sustenance setup; and the army was to carry out, under the name of "decisive battle transport", forceful transport of provisions and material from KOREA to the Japan Sea coast of JAPAN by utilizing powered sailing vessels. Since the vessels in general had been diverted to the Japan Sea routes with the change in the war situation the 1st Surface Escort Units and MAIZURU Naval Station afforded protection to these vessels with direct or indirect escort.

Prior to this, General Escort Command laid a mine barrier in the northern part of the East CHINA SEA, maintained strict look-out along the patrol lines of the vessels and aircraft, and made every effort to prevent the incursion of enemy submarines. However, they penetrated the lines, were rampant even in the JAPAN SEA, and threatened our last supply line in close cooperation with the aircraft. Here, the defense of the KOREA Strait became a matter of grave concern, and as a result the Seventh Fleet was organized on 10 April and charged with the defense of the strait, as well as cooperating in army transportation. The Seventh Fleet, then under the Combined Fleet, consisted of the mine laying force, the mine sweeping force, the Shimonoseki Defense Unit and four coast defense ships, and the headquarters was composed mainly of the concurrently assigned personnel of the First Escort Fleet Headquarters which had moved to MOJI at that time.

The naval stations accelerated the rapid establishment of shuttle boat bases in preparation for the decisive battle in the homeland and began shuttle transport by powered sailing vessels. The 3d Surface Escort Unit, under the command of the YOKOSUKA Naval Station, and the 4th Surface Escort Unit, under the command of the SASEBO Naval Station, were reorganized into a special attack squadron and undertook preparations for special attack operations.

On 25 April, the General Navy Command was organized to unify the command of all the naval units and the General Escort Command was placed under its command.

Prior to this, a plan to organize a headquarters for unified domestic transport with the idea of raising the shipping operation rate to a maximum had been under discussion in the Army, Navy and civil quarters concerned, but various difficulties had been hampering its realization. Pressed by the urgency of the war situation, however, the Inspectorate General of Maritime Transportation was finally organized on 1 May, with its headquarters at ICHIGAYA, TOKYO. Admiral NOMURA Naokuni was appointed Inspector General and the staff was made up of army, navy and civilian personnel, and unified domestic transportation was planned and conducted.

With the promulgation of the Volunteer Combat Unit Command Order for the general public about this time, shipping circles were authorized to designate a ship captain commander of a shipping volunteer combat unit. The Order was also construed to mean that the Shipping Lookout Unit personnel (Navy) and the Shipping Artillery Unit personnel (Army) on board could be brought without question under the command of the captain; theretofore this had not been clear.

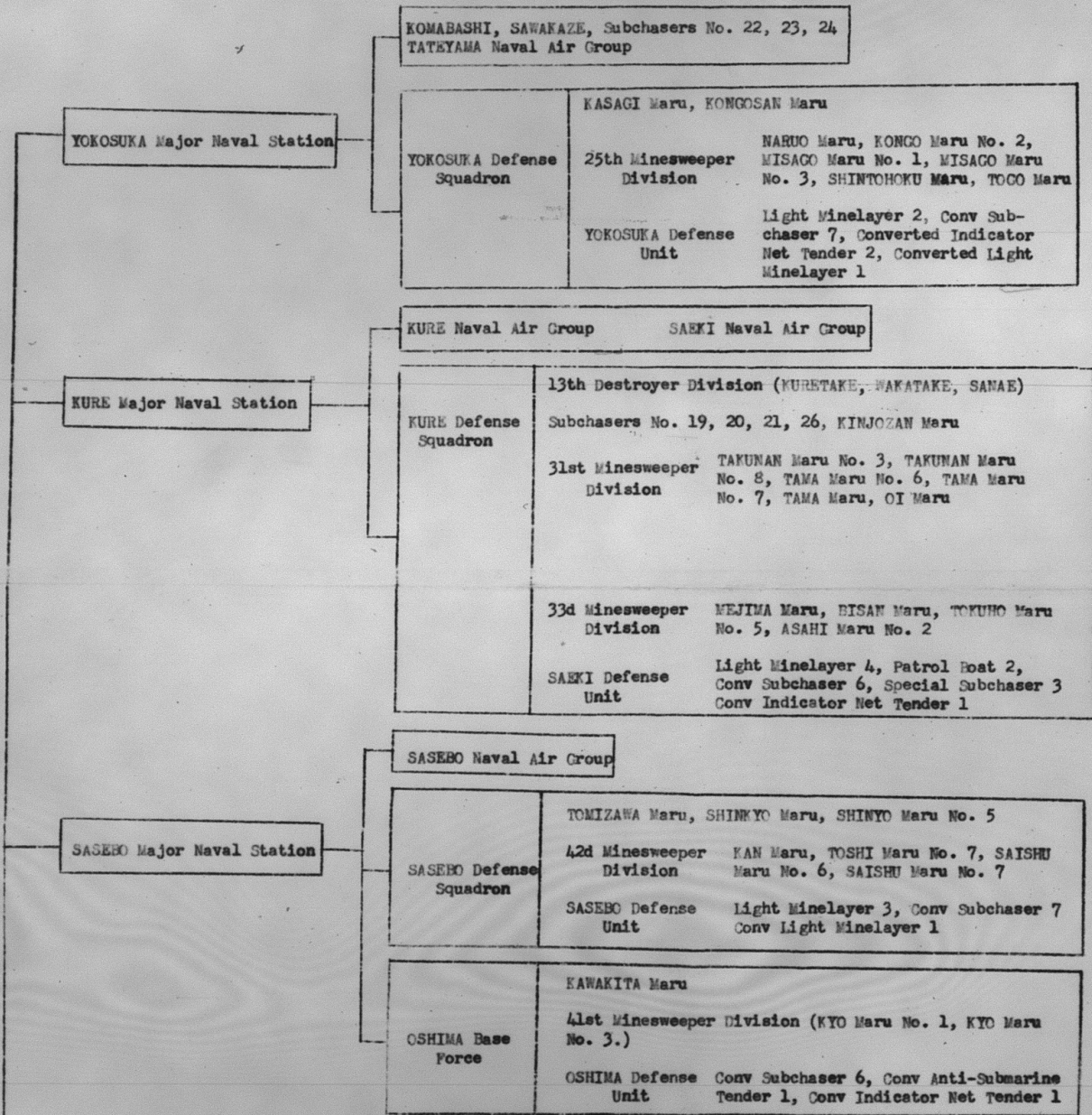
Thus, in order to make clear at this opportunity the authority of the captain and give it full play by incorporating the above-mentioned order, the "Wartime Shipping Disposition Standards" and the "Wartime Shipping Administrative Regulations" were drafted, but the war ended before they were promulgated.

(The End)

Annex 1

At the beginning of War (8 Dec 41):

1. Commanders in chief of all fleets, major naval stations and minor naval stations are fully responsible for escort and anti-submarine operations in waters under their command.
2. During this period, forces were not organized for the sole duty of escorting.



SASEBO Major Naval Station

SASEBO Defense Squadron

42d Minesweeper Division KAN Maru, TOSHI Maru No. 7, SAISHU Maru No. 6, SAISHU Maru No. 7
 SASEBO Defense Unit Light Minelayer 3, Conv Subchaser 7, Conv Light Minelayer 1

OSHIMA Base Force

KAWAKITA Maru
 41st Minesweeper Division (KYO Maru No. 1, KYO Maru No. 3.)
 OSHIMA Defense Unit Conv Subchaser 6, Conv Anti-Submarine Tender 1, Conv Indicator Net Tender 1

MAIZURU Major Naval Station

KATORI Maru
 MAIZURU Naval Air Group

MAIZURU Defense Squadron

SANTO Maru
 35th Minesweeper Division SAISHU Maru No. 1, SAISHU Maru No. 2, BANSHU Maru No. 51, HAKATA Maru No. 6
 MAIZURU Defense Unit (Conv Subchaser 3, Conv Indicator Net Tender 1)

OMINATO Minor Naval Station

ISHIGAKI, KUNAJIRI, HACHIJO, OKIKAZE

1st Destroyer Division (KAMIKAZE, NUMAKAZE, NAMIKAZE)

SHINKO Maru No. 2, ZUIKO Maru, CHITOSE Maru

27th Minesweeper Division

CHOYO Maru, CHOYO Maru No. 2, SONOBE Maru, YOSHIDA Maru, TAMAZONO Maru No. 1, TAMAZONO Maru No. 2

OMINATO Defense Unit

{ Conv Subchaser 6, Conv Indicator Net Tender 1, Conv Light Minelayer 1

OMINATO Naval Air Group

OSAKA Minor Naval Station

32d Minesweeper Division

{ SENYU Maru No. 2, SENYU Maru No. 3, TAKASHIMA Maru No. 2, TAKASHIMA Maru No. 3, RYOYU Maru No. 12, EGUCHI Maru No. 3

KII Defense Unit (Conv Subchaser 2, Conv Indicator Net Tender 1)

KOMATSUJIMA Naval Air Group

CHINKAI Naval Air Group

CHINKAI Minor Naval Station

CHINKAI Defense Unit

MINEKAZE, RYOTOKU Maru

32d Destroyer Division (ASAKAZE, FUYO, KARUKAYA)

48th Minesweeper Division

{ DAITO Maru, DAISEI Maru, KAIYO Maru No. 1, MAIYO Maru No. 3

49th Minesweeper Division

{ NITTO Maru No. 17, NITTO Maru No. 18, TAMURA Maru, RIKUZEN Maru

CHINKAI Defense Unit (Converted Subchaser 6)

RASHIN Base Force

SEIKYO Maru, HAKKAI Maru

RASHIN Defense Unit (Conv Subchaser 1, Conv Indicator Net Tender 1)

Emperor
 Naval General Staff

MAKO Minor Naval Station

SENYO Maru, CHOHAUZAN Maru
 44th Minesweeper Division CHOUN Maru No. 6, CHOUN Maru No. 7, TOSHI Maru, TOSHI Maru No. 2
 MAKO Defense Unit (Conv Subchaser 8, Conv Indicator Net Tender 1, Conv Light Minelayer 1)

PORT ARTHUR Minor Naval Station

JUZAN Maru
 50th Minesweeper Division (SHONAN Maru No. 16, TAKUNAN Maru No. 1)

Third Fleet

SHIRATAKA, AOTAKA
 21st Minesweeper Division (Minesweepers No. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)
 1st Subchaser Division (Subchasers No. 1, 2, 3)
 2d Subchaser Division (Subchasers No. 13, 14, 15)
 1st Base Force
 1st Gunboat Division (MEIKO Maru, MYOKEN Maru, KANKO Maru, HUSHO Maru, CHOSA Maru)
 51st Subchaser Division (KYO Maru No. 12, KYO Maru No. 13, TOKO Maru No. 1)
 52d Subchaser Division (TAKUNAN Maru No. 5, SHONAN Maru No. 17, FUKUEI Maru No. 15)

WAKATANA
 21st Torpedo-Boat Division (CHIDORI, MANAZURU, HATSUKARI, TOMOZURU)
 11th Minesweeper Division (Minesweepers No. 13, 14, 15, 16)
 30th Minesweeper Division (Minesweepers No. 17, 18)
 2d Base Force
 21st Subchaser Division (Subchasers No. 4, 5, 6, 16, 17, 18)
 31st Subchaser Division (Subchasers No. 10, 11, 12)
 2d Gunboat Division (MANYO Maru, FUKUTSU Maru, TAIKO Maru, OKUYO Maru)
 3d Gunboat Division (NAMPO Maru, KISO Maru, ASO Maru)
 53d Subchaser Division (KYO Maru No. 2, KYO Maru No. 11, KOREI Maru)
 54th Subchaser Division (SHONAN Maru No. 1, SHONAN Maru No. 2, CHOJA Maru)
 Minesweepers No. 19, 20

4th Gunboat Division (SEIKYO Maru, EDO Maru)

47th Minesweeper Division
 Division No. 18, TAMURA Maru, RIKUZEN Maru
 CHINKAI Defense Unit (Converted Subchaser 6)

RASHIN Base Force
 SEIKYO Maru, HAKKAI Maru
 RASHIN Defense Unit (Conv Subchaser 1, Conv Indicator Net Tender 1)

Emperor

Naval General Staff

Combined Fleet

Fourth Fleet

2d Gunboat Division (MANYO Maru, FUKUTSU Maru, TAIRU Maru, OKUYO Maru)

3d Gunboat Division (NAMPO Maru, KISO Maru, ASO Maru)

53d Subchaser Division (KYO Maru No. 2, KYO Maru No. 11, KOREI Maru)

54th Subchaser Division (SHONAN Maru No. 1, SHONAN Maru No. 2, CHOJA Maru)

Minesweepers No. 19, 20

3d Base Force

4th Gunboat Division (SEIKYO Maru, EDO Maru)

13th Minesweeper Division (TAKASAGO Maru, TAMAZONO Maru No. 3, TORISHIMA Maru, ADAKA Maru)

55th Subchaser Division (GANJITSU Maru No. 1, SHOWA Maru, SHOWA Maru No. 3, SHOWA Maru No. 5)

16th Air Group

4th Base Force

5th Gunboat Division (KEIJO Maru, SEIKAI Maru, NIKKAI Maru)

6th Gunboat Division (CHOAN Maru No. 2, CHOKO Maru No. 2)

14th Minesweeper Division (TAMA Maru, TAMA Maru No. 2, HAGOROMO Maru, NOSHIRO Maru No. 2)

56th Subchaser Division (TAMA Maru No. 8, TOSHI Maru No. 3, KOTOBUKI Maru No. 5)

57th Subchaser Division (TAKUNAN Maru No. 2, SHONAN Maru No. 15, KOKKO Maru)

58th Subchaser Division (SHONAN Maru No. 8, TAKUNAN Maru No. 1, KOEI Maru)

17th Air Group

5th Base Force

7th Gunboat Division (SHOTOKU Maru, KOCYOKU Maru)

15th Minesweeper Division (TAMA Maru No. 2, FAN Maru, No. 3)

59th Subchaser Division (SHONAN Maru No. 5, SHONAN Maru No. 6, SHOFUFU Maru)

60th Subchaser Division (KYO Maru No. 8, KYO Maru No. 10, SHUKO Maru)

18th Air Group

6th Base Force

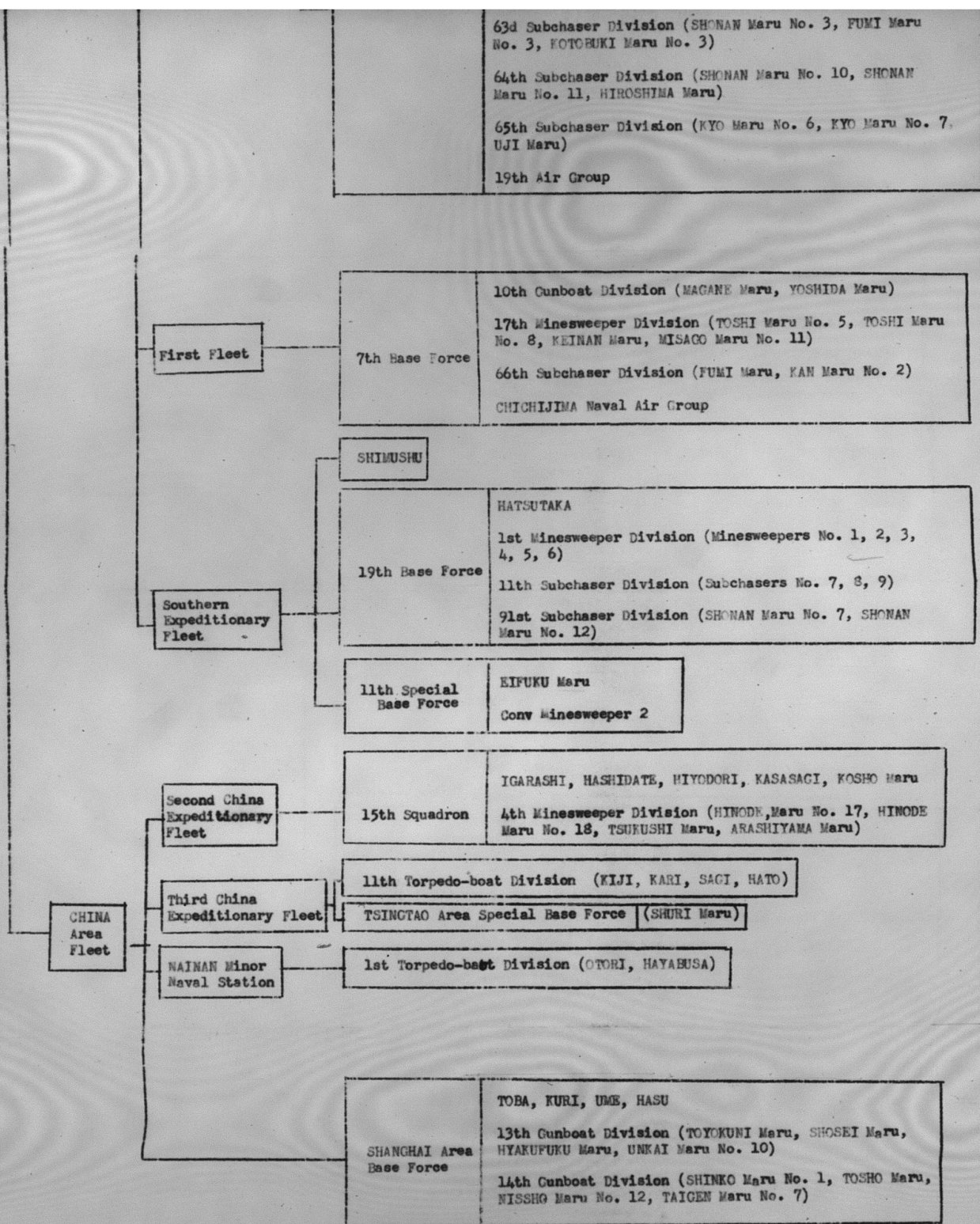
8th Gunboat Division

16th Minesweeper Division (IKUTA Maru, NAGATA Maru, DAIDO Maru, TAMA Maru No. 3, TAMA Maru No. 5, SHOWA Maru No. 7, SHOWA Maru No. 8)

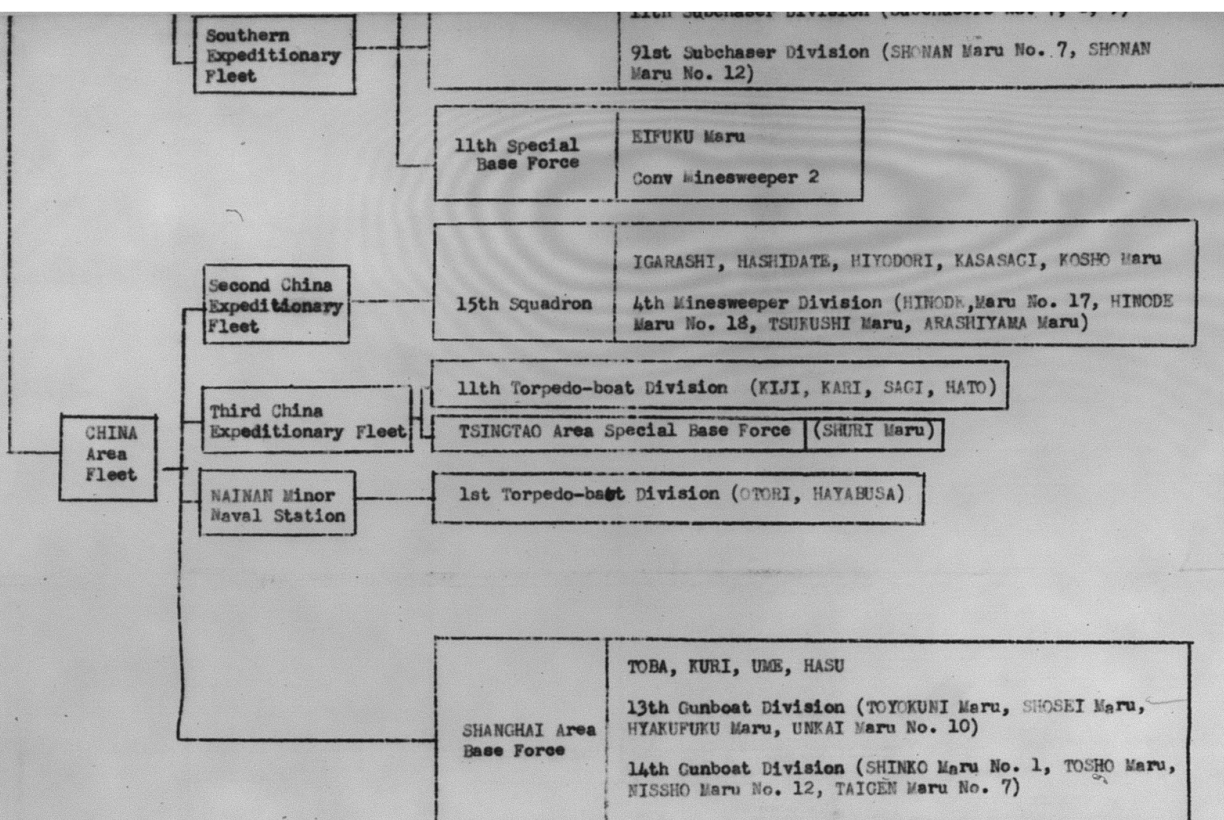
62d Subchaser Division (TAKUNAN Maru No. 6, TAKUNAN Maru No. 7, HASHIRA Maru)

63d Subchaser Division (SHONAN Maru No. 3, FUMI Maru No. 3, KOTOBUKI Maru No. 3)

64th Subchaser Division (SHONAN Maru No. 10, SHONAN Maru No. 11, HIROSHIMA Maru)



Reference 1. The destroyers and aircraft attached to the forces other than those given in the above table were committed to escort and anti-submarines patrol duties, during offensive operations.



- Reference
- The destroyers and aircraft attached to the forces other than those given in the above table were committed to escort and anti-submarine patrol duties, during offensive operations.
 - | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Conv Subchaser | Converted Subchaser |
| Spec Subchaser | Special Subchaser |
| Conv Minesweeper | Converted Minesweeper |
| Conv Indicator Net Tender | Converted Indicator Net Tender |
| Conv Anti-submarine Net Tender..... | Converted Anti-submarine Net Tender |
| Conv Light minelayer | Converted Light minelayer |
 - | | | | |
|-------|------------------|-------|---------------------|
| ————— | Chain of command | ————— | Chain of Assistance |
|-------|------------------|-------|---------------------|
 - There may be some discrepancies in the above table as the data were hastily compiled from various sources.

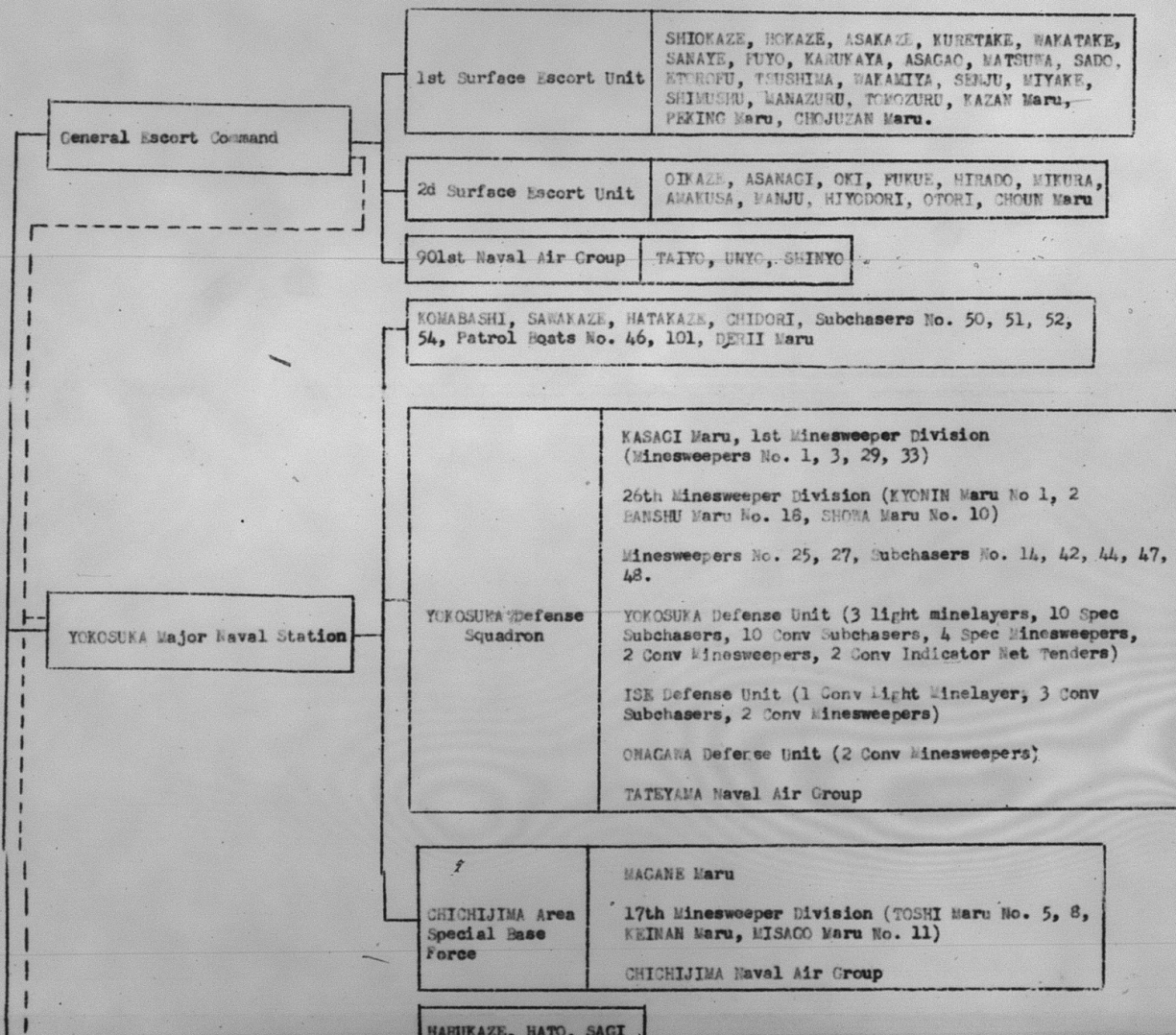
After General Escort Command was organized in 1943 (as of 15 November).

(1) The commander in chief of the General Escort Command was under the direct command of the Emperor; he not only commanded directly assigned units but also directed each naval district commandant and guard district commandant concerning escort duties and antisubmarine operations as well as emergency salvaging of ships.

(2) The Commander in Chief of the General Escort Command and the Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet cooperated with each other.

(3) An officer senior to the Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet and Commander in Chief of the CHINA Area Fleet was appointed commander in chief of the General Escort Command.

(4) During this period, regular antisubmarine ships and small craft were reinforced gradually and converted ships were being removed from the organization of escort units.



TATEYAMA Naval Air Group

CHICHIJIMA Area
Special Base
Force

MAGANE Maru

17th Minesweeper Division (TOSHI Maru No. 5, 8,
KEINAN Maru, MISAGO Maru No. 11)

CHICHIJIMA Naval Air Group

HARUKAZE, HATO, SAGI
FURE Naval Air Group

KURE Major Naval Station

KURE Defense
Squadron

IKI, Minesweepers No. 17, 18, Patrol Boat No. 31

31st Minesweeper Division (TAKUNAN Maru No. 3, 8, TAMA Maru
No. 6, 7, TAMA Maru, OI Maru)

33th Minesweeper Division (MEJIMA, Maru, BISAN Maru,
TOKUTOMI Maru No. 5, ASAHI Maru No. 2, MIYO Maru, YIRI
No. 5

34th Minesweeper Division (YACHIYO Maru, KOZAN Maru,
TOKUNO Maru No. 10, AOI Maru

SAEKI Defense Unit (4 light minelayers, 1 Cablelayer,
4 Spec Subchasers, 18 Conv Subchasers, 2 Conv Indicator
Net Tenders, 1 Conv Antisubmarine Net Tender)

SHIMONOSEKI Defense Unit (2 Conv Subchasers, 1 Conv
Indicator Net Tender)

SAEKI Naval Air Group

MINEKAZE

SASEBO Major Naval Station

SASEBO Defense
Squadron

TOMITSU Maru, Minesweeper No. 15, Patrol Boat No. 38

43d Minesweeper Division (HAKATA Maru No. 7, HIMESHIMA
Maru, HOEI Maru, CHOUN Maru No. 8, CHITOSE Maru, (T
illegible) Maru, YAN Maru, TOSHI Maru No. 7)

SASEBO Defense Unit (2 light minelayers, 1 Cablelayer,
2 Spec Subchasers, 1 Conv Subchaser, 1 Conv Indicator
Net Tender

OSHIMA Defense Unit (2 light minelayers, 3 Conv Sub-
chasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender

SASEBO Naval Air Group

MAIZURU Major Naval Station

35th Minesweeper Division (SAISHU Maru No. 1, 2, 51, HAKATA Maru No. 6)

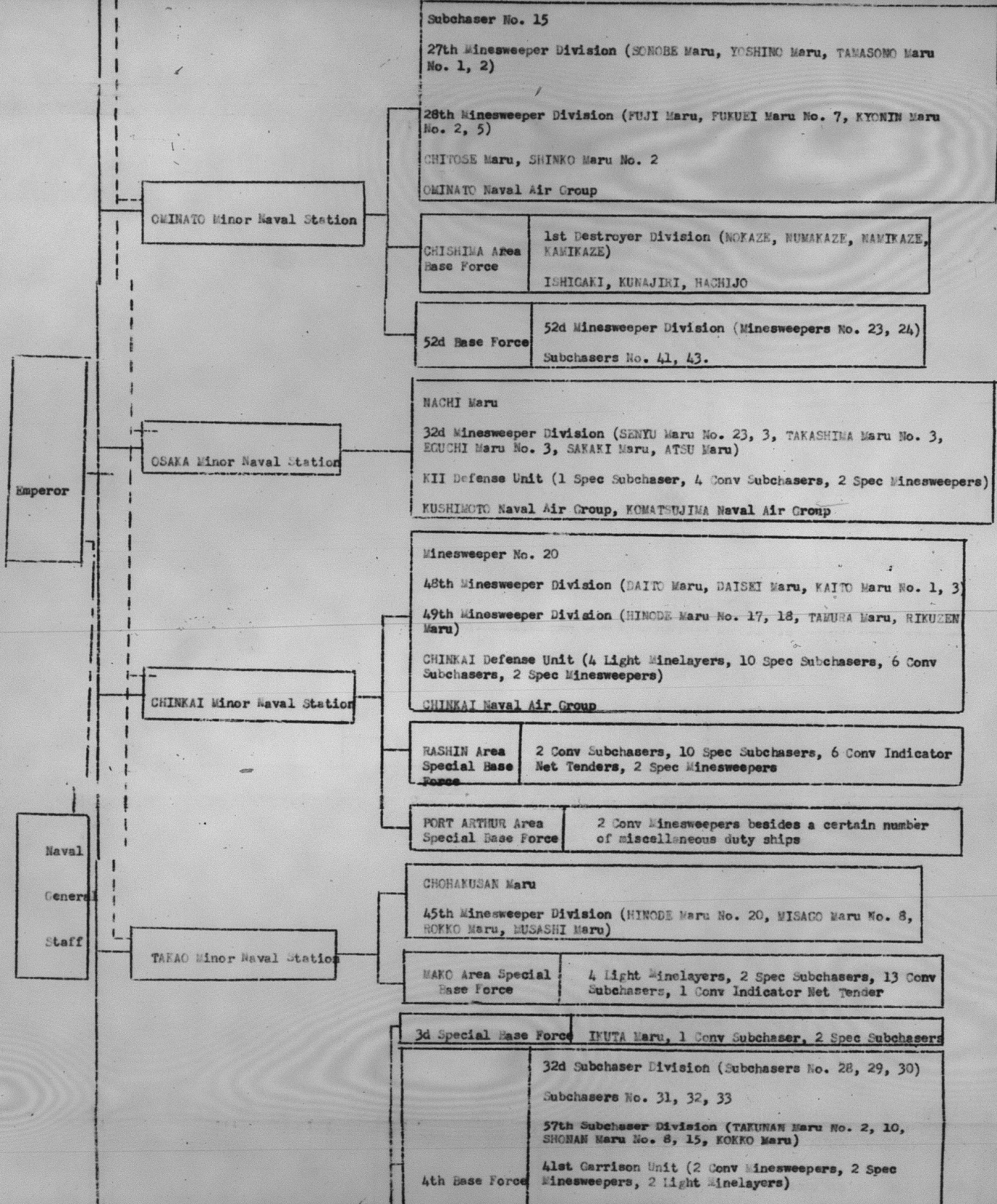
MAIZURU Defense Unit (4 light minelayers, 1 Cablelayer, 3 Conv Subchasers,
2 Spec Minesweepers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender)

MAIZURU Naval Air Group

Subchaser No. 15

27th Minesweeper Division (SONOBE Maru, YOSHINO Maru, TAMASONO Maru
No. 1, 2)

28th Minesweeper Division (FUJI Maru, FURUEI Maru No. 7, KYONIN Maru
No. 2, 5)



Subchaser No. 15

27th Minesweeper Division (SONOBE Maru, YOSHINO Maru, TAMASONO Maru No. 1, 2)

28th Minesweeper Division (FUJI Maru, FUKUEI Maru No. 7, KYONIN Maru No. 2, 5)

CHITOSE Maru, SHINKO Maru No. 2

OMINATO Naval Air Group

OMINATO Minor Naval Station

CHISHIMA Area Base Force

1st Destroyer Division (NOKAZE, NUMAKAZE, NAMIKAZE, KAMIKAZE)

ISHIGAKI, KUNAJIRI, HACHIGO

52d Base Force

52d Minesweeper Division (Minesweepers No. 23, 24)

Subchasers No. 41, 43.

OSAKA Minor Naval Station

NACHI Maru

32d Minesweeper Division (SENYU Maru No. 23, 3, TAKASHIMA Maru No. 3, EGUCHI Maru No. 3, SAKAKI Maru, ATSU Maru)

KII Defense Unit (1 Spec Subchaser, 4 Conv Subchasers, 2 Spec Minesweepers)

KUSHIMOTO Naval Air Group, KOMATSUJIMA Naval Air Group

Emperor

Minesweeper No. 20

48th Minesweeper Division (DAITO Maru, DAISEI Maru, KAITO Maru No. 1, 3)

49th Minesweeper Division (HINODE Maru No. 17, 18, TAMURA Maru, RIKUZEN Maru)

CHINKAI Defense Unit (4 Light Minelayers, 10 Spec Subchasers, 6 Conv Subchasers, 2 Spec Minesweepers)

CHINKAI Naval Air Group

CHINKAI Minor Naval Station

RASHIN Area Special Base Force

2 Conv Subchasers, 10 Spec Subchasers, 6 Conv Indicator Net Tenders, 2 Spec Minesweepers

PORT ARTHUR Area Special Base Force

2 Conv Minesweepers besides a certain number of miscellaneous duty ships

Naval General Staff

TAEAO Minor Naval Station

CHOHANUSAN Maru

45th Minesweeper Division (HINODE Maru No. 20, MISAGO Maru No. 8, HOKKO Maru, MUSASHI Maru)

MARO Area Special Base Force

4 Light Minelayers, 2 Spec Subchasers, 13 Conv Subchasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender

3d Special Base Force

INUTA Maru, 1 Conv Subchaser, 2 Spec Subchasers

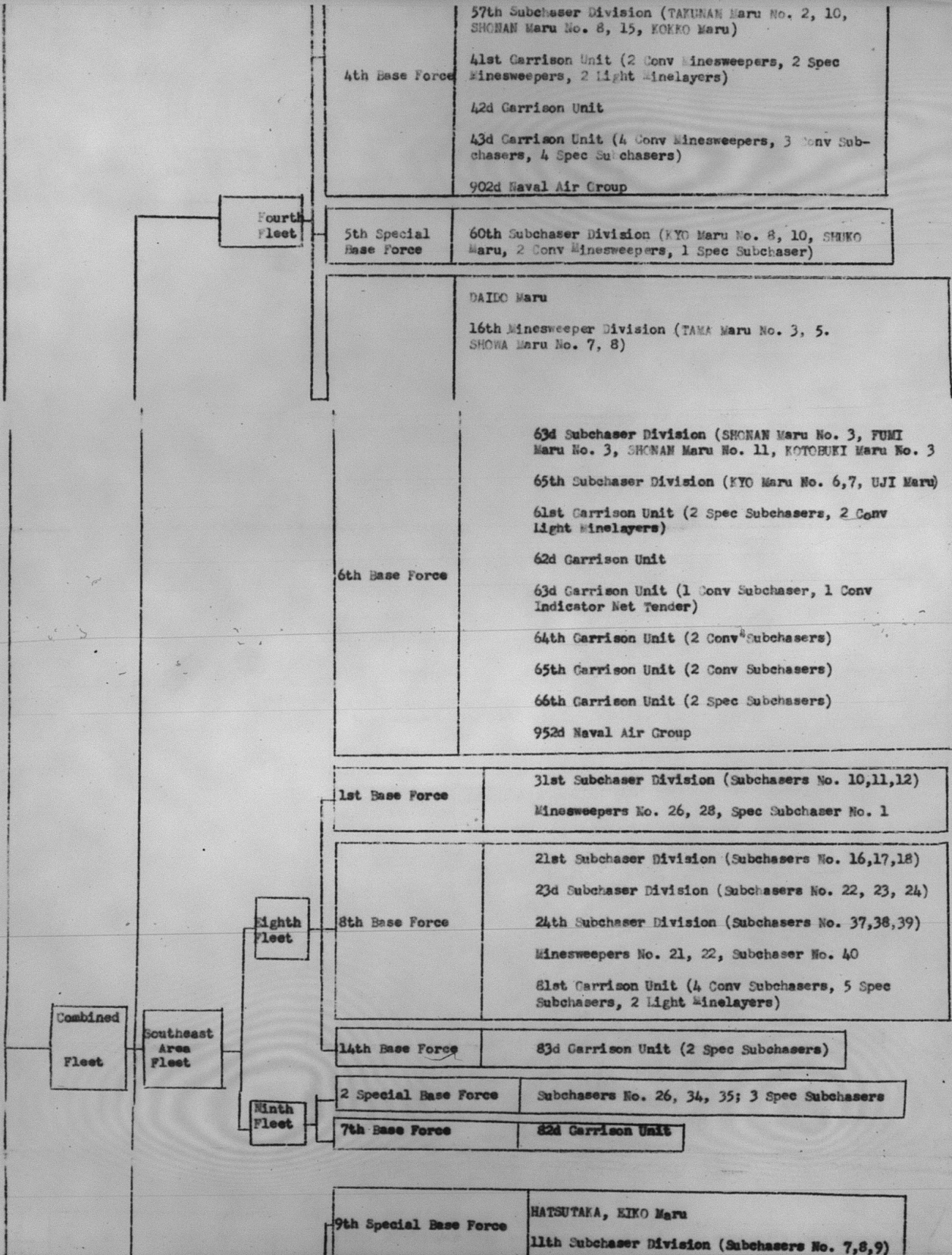
4th Base Force

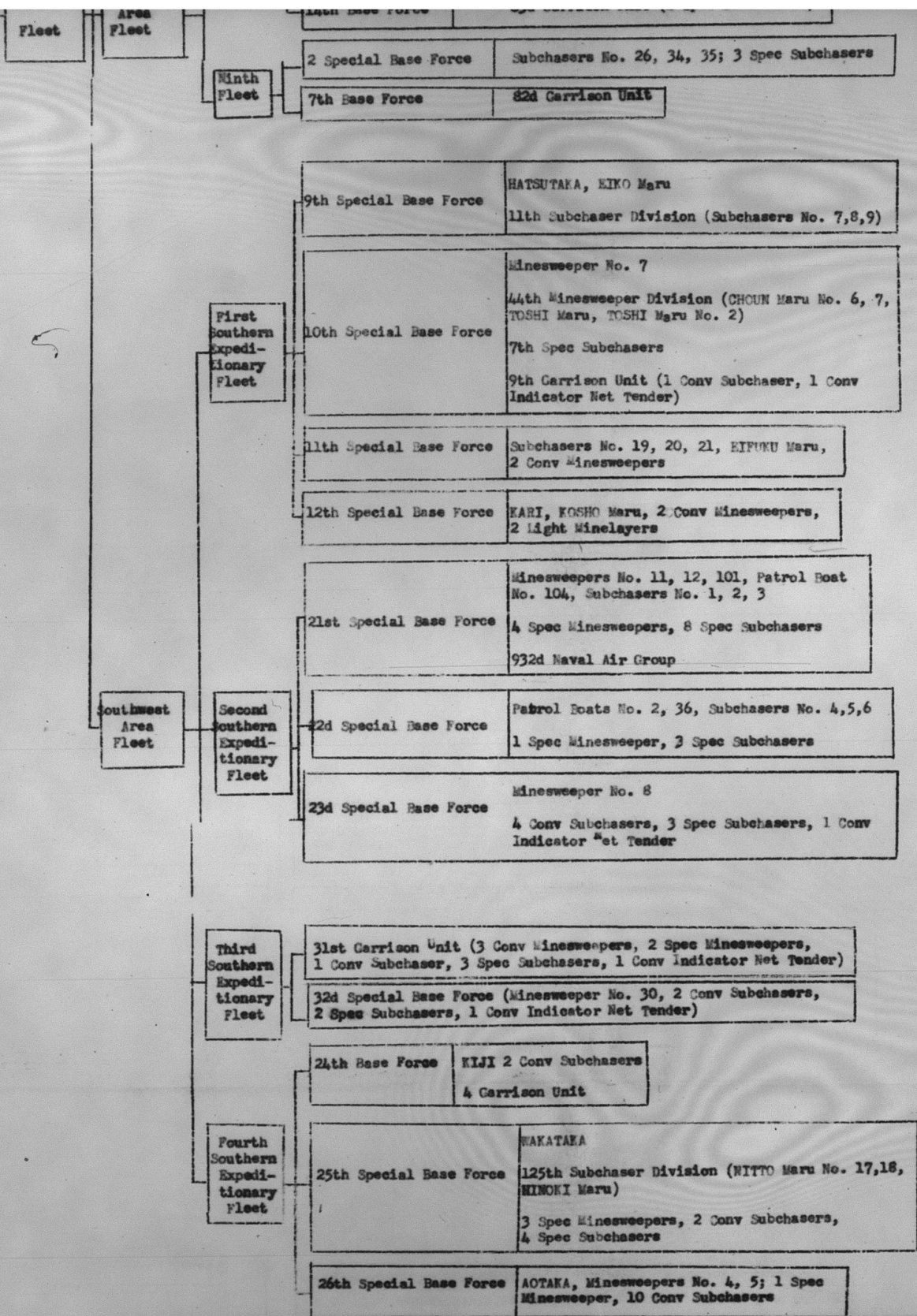
32d Subchaser Division (Subchasers No. 28, 29, 30)

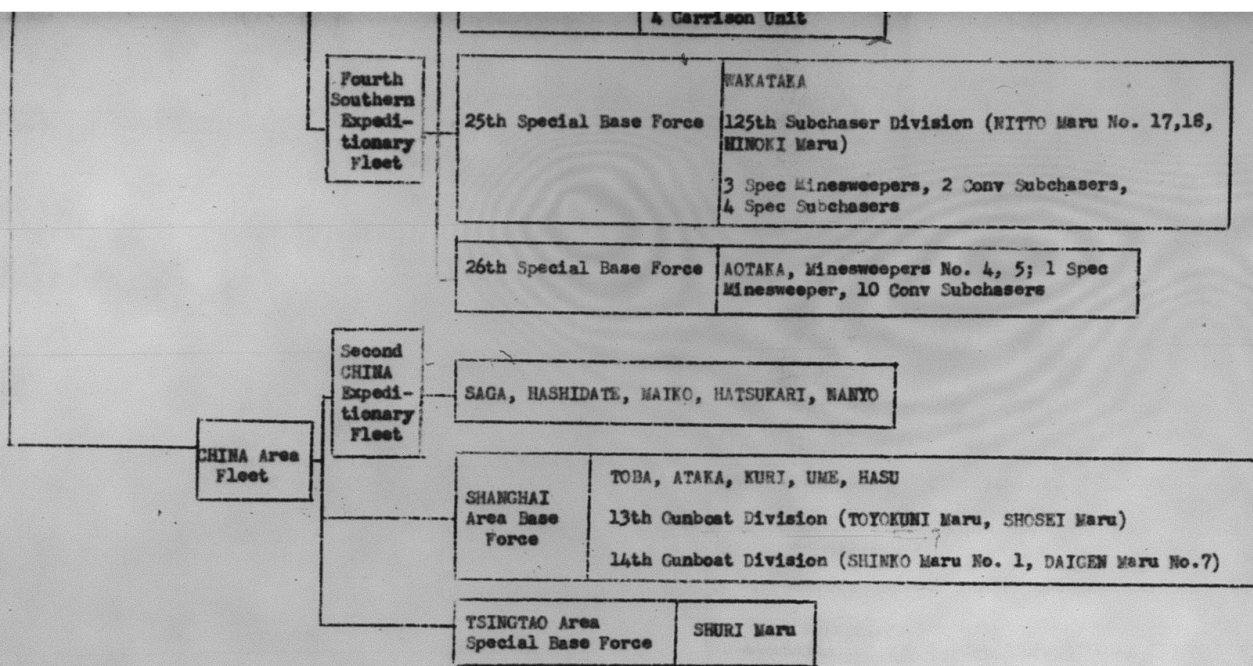
Subchasers No. 31, 32, 33

57th Subchaser Division (TAKUNAN Maru No. 2, 10, SHONAN Maru No. 8, 15, KOKKO Maru)

41st Garrison Unit (2 Conv Minesweepers, 2 Spec Minesweepers, 2 Light Minelayers)







- Remarks:
- Besides those above ships and craft, destroyers and aircraft attached to each unit cooperated in escort as well as antisubmarine patrol duties while executing their own tasks.
 - Some of the small ships requisitioned (chartered) by each unit were armed and used in antisubmarine patrolling.
 - Conv Subchaser --- Converted subchaser.
Conv Minesweeper --- Converted Minesweeper.
Conv Indicator Net Tender --- Converted Indicator Net Tender.
Conv Antisubmarine Net Tender --- Converted Antisubmarine Net Tender.
Conv Small minelayer --- Converted Small minelayer.
Spec Subchaser --- Special Subchaser.
Spec Minesweeper --- Special Minesweeper.
 - Chain of command. ----- Chain of delegated command
----- Chain of assistance.
 - There may be some discrepancies in the above table as the data were hastily compiled from various sources.

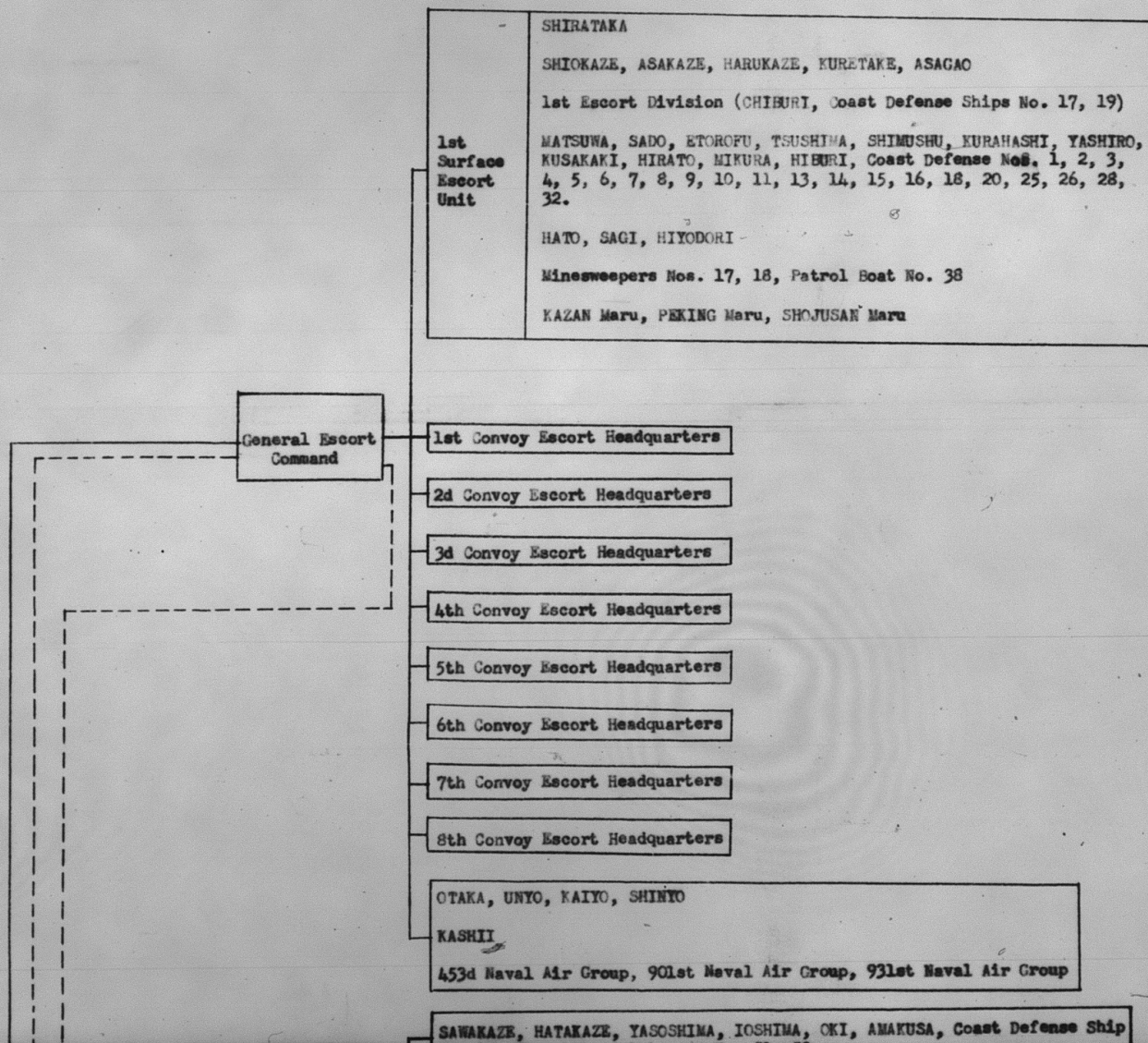
Annex 3

As of 21 Aug 44.

1. On 9 August the commander in chief of the Combined Fleet assumed command of the forces of the General Escort Command, the concerned naval stations, and on 21 August, the China Area Fleet, in regard to the following matters:

- a. "SHO-GO" operation and matters especially necessary for its execution.
- b. Matters especially requiring control for the execution of surface traffic protection and anti-submarine operations.

2. An officer senior to commanders in chief of General Escort Command and the commander in chief of the China Area Fleet, was appointed commander in chief of the Combined Fleet.



OTAKA, UNYO, KAIYO, SHIMYO

KASHII

453d Naval Air Group, 901st Naval Air Group, 931st Naval Air Group

SAWAKAZE, HATAKAZE, YASOSHIMA, IOSHIMA, OKI, AMAKUSA, Coast Defense Ship No. 12, CHISHIMA, Subchasers No. 51, 52.

YOKOSUKA Major Naval Station

YOKOSUKA Defense Squadron

1st Minesweeper Division (Minesweepers No. 13, 29, 33)

Minesweepers No. 25, 27. Subchasers No. 42, 44, 47, 48

SARUSHIMA

YOKOSUKA Defense Unit 13 Conv Subchasers, 8 Sp Subchasers, 2 Conv Minesweepers, 4 Minesweepers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender

ONAGAWA Defense Unit (2 Conv Minesweepers)

TATEYAMA Naval Air Group

CHICHIJIMA Area Special Base Force

2 Conv Subchasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender

CHICHIJIMA Naval Air Group

3d Surface Escort Unit

KOMABASHI, Coast Defense Ship No. 4, Subchaser No. 14, Patrol Boat No. 46, HARIU

26th Minesweeper Division (KYONIN Maru No. 1, 2, YAWATA Maru No. 1, SHOWA Maru No. 10)

ISE Defense Unit (3 Conv Subchasers, 2 Conv Minesweepers, 1 Conv Minelayers)

KURE Naval Air Group

KURE Major Naval Station

KURE Defense Squadron

YURISHIMA, NUWASHIMA

33d Minesweeper Division (MEJIMA Maru, BISAN Maru, TOKUHO Maru No. 5, ASahi Maru No. 2, MIYO Maru, FURI Maru No. 5)

34th Minesweeper Division (YACHIYO Maru, KOZAN Maru, TOKUHO Maru, No. 10, AOI Maru)

SAEKI Defense Unit (2 Sp Minelayers, 18 Conv Subchasers, 3 Sp Subchasers, 2 Conv Indicator Net Tenders)

SHIMONOSEKI Defense Unit (2 Conv Subchasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender)

Anti-Submarine Training Unit 2 Obsolete submarines, 11 Newly-built coast defense ships, 1 Newly-built minesweeper, 1 Newly-built Subchaser, 1 Newly-built Minelayer

SAEKI Naval Air Group

TAKASHIMA

SASEBO Defense Unit (9 Conv Subchasers, 5 Sp Subchasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender, 1 Sp Minelayer)

SASEBO Naval Air Group

Emperor

Emperor

Naval
General
Staff

SASEBO Major
Naval Station

TAKASHIMA

SASEBO Defense Unit (9 Conv Subchasers, 5 Sp Subchasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender, 1 Sp Minelayer)

SASEBO Naval Air Group

4th Surface
Escort Unit

TOMITSU Maru, TOMOZURU, MANAZURU, Coast Defense Ship No. 30, Minesweeper No. 15, Subchasers Nos. 49, 58.

OKINAWA Naval Air Group

OKINAWA Area
Base Force

TSUBAME

43d Minesweeper Division (HAKATA Maru No. 7, HIMESHIMA Maru, HOEI Maru, CHOUN Maru No. 8, CHITOSE Maru, NIURA Maru, KAN Maru, TOSHI Maru No. 7)

OSHIMA Defense Unit (3 Conv Subchasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender)

MAIZURU Major
Naval Station

ARAIZAKI

35th Minesweeper Division (SAISHU Maru No. 1, 2, BANSHU Maru No. 51, HAKATA Maru No. 6)

MAIZURU Defense Unit (3 Conv Subchasers, 1 Sp Minesweeper, 1 Indicator Net Tender, 2 Sp Minelayers)

MAIZURU Naval Air Group

OMINATO Minor
Naval Station

NOMI, FUKUE, Subchaser No. 15, ISHIZAKI, CHITOSE Maru, SHINKO Maru No. 2

52d Minesweeper Division (Minesweeper No. 23, No. 24)

28th Minesweeper Division (FUJI Maru, FUKUEI Maru No. 7, KYONIN Maru No. 3, No. 5)

OMINATO Defense Unit (5 Conv Subchasers, 2 Sp Subchasers, 2 Conv Minesweepers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender, 1 Sp Minelayer)

SOYA Defense Unit (2 Conv Subchasers, 2 Sp Minesweeper, 1 Sp Minelayers)

OMINATO Naval Air Group

OSAKA Minor
Naval Station

NACHI Maru

32d Minesweeper Division (SENYU Maru No. 1, No. 3, TAKASHIMA Maru No. 3, EGUCHI Maru No. 3, SAKAKI Maru, ATSU Maru)

KII Defense Unit (9 Conv Subchasers, 3 Sp Subchasers, 2 Sp Minesweepers)

FUSHIMOTO Naval Air Group

KOMATSUJIMA Naval Air Group

CHINKAI Minor
Naval Station

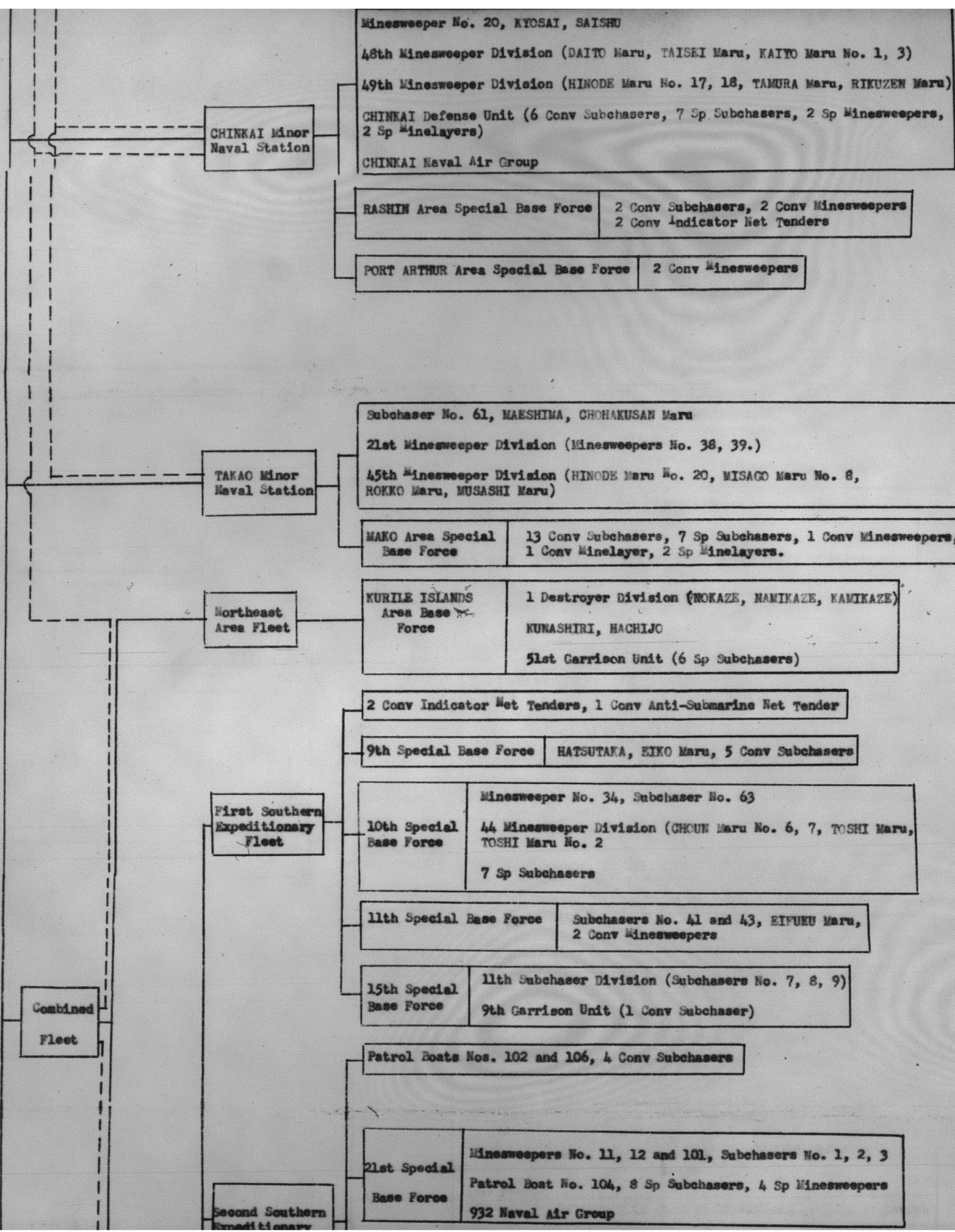
Minesweeper No. 20, KYOSAI, SAISHU

48th Minesweeper Division (DAITO Maru, TAISEI Maru, KAIYO Maru No. 1, 3)

49th Minesweeper Division (HINODE Maru No. 17, 18, TAMURA Maru, RIKUZEN Maru)

CHINKAI Defense Unit (6 Conv Subchasers, 7 Sp Subchasers, 2 Sp Minesweepers, 2 Sp Minelayers)

CHINKAI Naval Air Group



Minesweeper No. 20, KYOSAI, SAISHU

48th Minesweeper Division (DAITO Maru, TAISEI Maru, KAIYO Maru No. 1, 3)

49th Minesweeper Division (HINODE Maru No. 17, 18, TAMURA Maru, RIKUZEN Maru)

CHINKAI Defense Unit (6 Conv Subchasers, 7 Sp Subchasers, 2 Sp Minesweepers, 2 Sp Minelayers)

CHINKAI Naval Air Group

CHINKAI Minor Naval Station

RASHIN Area Special Base Force

2 Conv Subchasers, 2 Conv Minesweepers
2 Conv Indicator Net Tenders

PORT ARTHUR Area Special Base Force

2 Conv Minesweepers

TAKAO Minor Naval Station

Subchaser No. 61, MAESHIMA, CHOCHAKUSAN Maru

21st Minesweeper Division (Minesweepers No. 38, 39.)

45th Minesweeper Division (HINODE Maru No. 20, MISAGO Maru No. 8, ROKKO Maru, MUSASHI Maru)

MAKO Area Special Base Force

13 Conv Subchasers, 7 Sp Subchasers, 1 Conv Minesweeper, 1 Conv Minelayer, 2 Sp Minelayers.

Northeast Area Fleet

KURILE ISLANDS Area Base Force

1 Destroyer Division (NOKAZE, NAMIKAZE, KAMIKAZE)
KUNASHIRI, HACHIJO
51st Garrison Unit (6 Sp Subchasers)

First Southern Expeditionary Fleet

2 Conv Indicator Net Tenders, 1 Conv Anti-Submarine Net Tender

9th Special Base Force

HATSUTAKA, EIKO Maru, 5 Conv Subchasers

10th Special Base Force

Minesweeper No. 34, Subchaser No. 63

44 Minesweeper Division (CHOUN Maru No. 6, 7, TOSHI Maru, TOSHI Maru No. 2)

7 Sp Subchasers

11th Special Base Force

Subchasers No. 41 and 43, EIFUKU Maru, 2 Conv Minesweepers

15th Special Base Force

11th Subchaser Division (Subchasers No. 7, 8, 9)
9th Garrison Unit (1 Conv Subchaser)

Patrol Boats Nos. 102 and 106, 4 Conv Subchasers

Combined Fleet

Second Southern Expeditionary Fleet

21st Special Base Force

Minesweepers No. 11, 12 and 101, Subchasers No. 1, 2, 3
Patrol Boat No. 104, 8 Sp Subchasers, 4 Sp Minesweepers
932 Naval Air Group

Southwest Area Fleet

Second Southern Expeditionary Fleet

21st Special Base Force	Minesweepers No. 11, 12 and 101, Subchasers No. 1, 2, 3 Patrol Boat No. 104, 8 Sp Subchasers, 4 Sp Minesweepers 932 Naval Air Group
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22d Special Base Force	Subchasers No. 4, 5, 6, Patrol Boats No. 2, 36 and 106, 3 Sp Subchasers, 1 Sp Minesweeper
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23d Special Base Force	Minesweeper No. 8, 9, Conv Subchasers, 3 3 Sp Subchasers
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24th Special Base Force	2 Conv Subchasers 4 Guard Unit (2 Sp Minesweepers)
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Third Southern Expeditionary Fleet

KARATSU, HAYABUSA, Minesweeper No. 28, KISO Maru
21st Destroyer Division (Subchasers No. 16, 17, 18, 23, 37, 38)
Subchasers No. 19, 20, 21, 31, 32, 36 and 45, Patrol Boats No. 103,
105 and 107, 6 Conv Subchasers.
31st Garrison Unit (1 Conv Subchaser, 3 Sp Subchasers, 3 Conv Minesweepers,
2 Sp Minesweepers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender)

32d Special Base Force	Minesweeper No. 30, Subchaser No. 55 2 Conv Subchasers, 2 Sp Subchasers, 1 Conv Indicator Net Tender
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25th Special Base Force	WAKATAKA 125th Subchaser Division (NITTO Maru No. 17, 18, HINOKI Maru 6 Conv Subchasers, 4 Sp Subchasers, 3 Sp Minesweepers)
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Fourth Southern Expeditionary Fleet

26th Special Base Force	AOTAKA, KIJI, Minesweeper No. 45, Subchasers No. 53, 60. Eight Conv Subchasers, 1 Sp Minesweeper
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28th Base Force	Subchasers No. 26, 34, and 35.
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CHINA Area Fleet

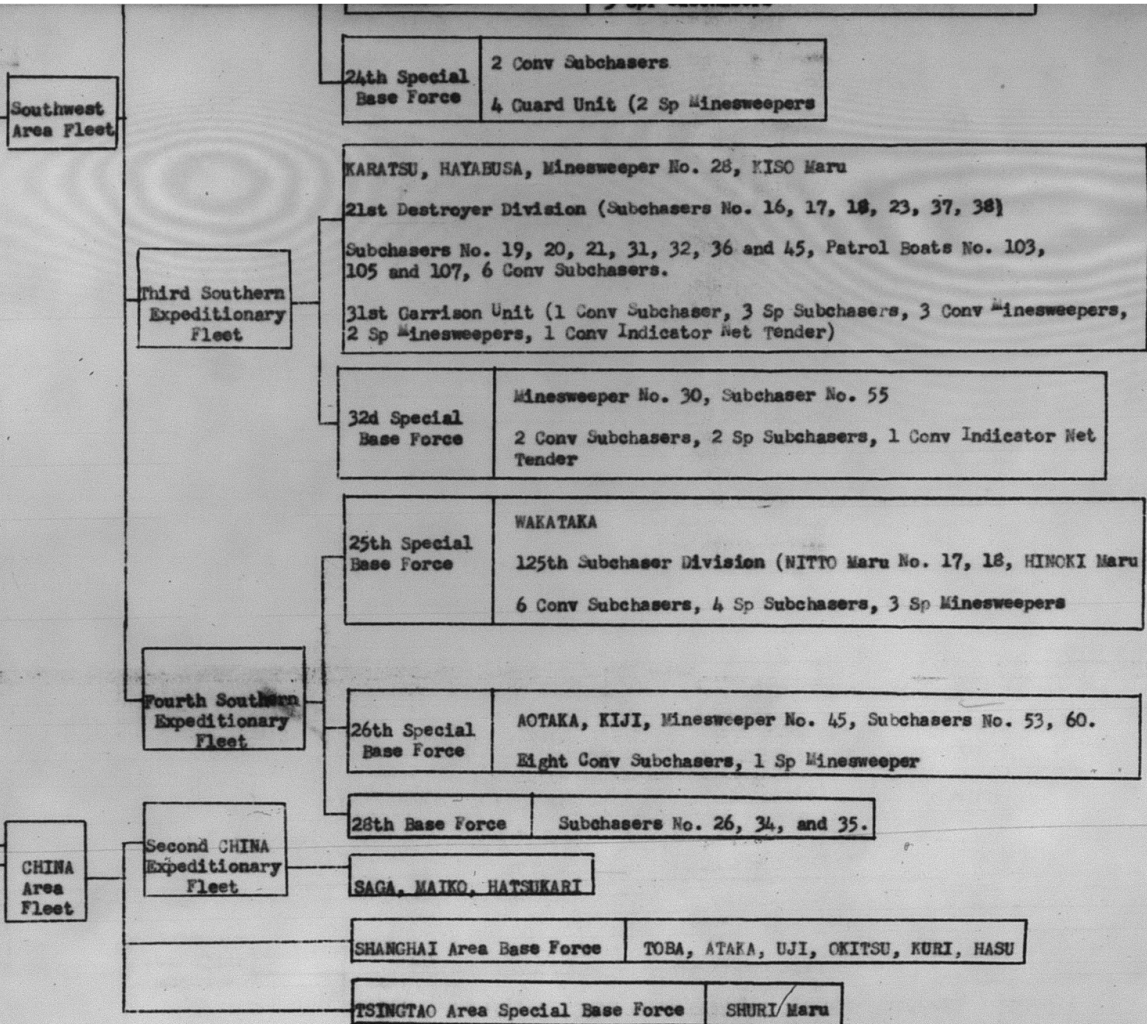
Second CHINA Expeditionary Fleet

SAGA, MAIKO, HATSUKARI

SHANGHAI Area Base Force	TOBA, ATAKA, UJI, OKITSU, KURI, HASU
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TSINGTAO Area Special Base Force	SHURI Maru
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- Remarks:
- Besides the above vessels, destroyers and airplanes attached to each unit cooperated in escort and anti-submarine patrol while executing their own tasks.
 - Also, there were small ships which were requisitioned (chartered) by each unit and armed and used for escort and anti-submarine patrol.
 - Conv Subchaser --- Converted Subchaser.
Conv Minesweeper --- Converted Minesweeper.
Conv Indicator Net Tender --- Converted Indicator Net Tender.
Conv. Anti-submarine Net Tender --- Converted Anti-submarine Net Tender.
Conv. Minelayers --- Converted Minelayer.
Sp Subchaser --- Special Subchaser
Sp Minesweeper --- Special Minesweeper



- Remarks:
- Besides the above vessels, destroyers and airplanes attached to each unit cooperated in escort and anti-submarine patrol while executing their own tasks.
 - Also, there were small ships which were requisitioned (chartered) by each unit and armed and used for escort and anti-submarine patrol.
 - Conv Subchaser --- Converted Subchaser.
Conv Minesweeper --- Converted Minesweeper.
Conv Indicator Net Tender --- Converted Indicator Net Tender.
Conv. Anti-submarine Net Tender --- Converted Anti-submarine Net Tender.
Conv. Minelayers --- Converted Minelayer.
Sp Subchaser --- Special Subchaser
Sp Minesweeper --- Special Minesweeper
 - Command channels, Delegated command channels, ----- Assistance channels.
 - There may be some discrepancies in the above table as the data were hastily compiled from various sources.

Chart Showing Increase and Decrease in Shipping Tonnage During the Pacific War

