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Authority: E.O. 13526

By: NDC NARA Date: Dec 31, 2012

Contributed by William L. Williams

LST FLOT 5 / Al6-3  
Serial 000150

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
LST FLOTILLA FIVE  
AMPHIBIOUS FORCE SOUTH PACIFIC

(cwb)

c-o Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California

T\*O\*P    S\*E\*C\*R\*E\*T

7 July 1944.

From: Commander Task Group 53.16 (Captain G. B. Carter, U.S. Navy, Commander L.S.T. Flotilla FIVE).  
To : Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.  
Via: (1) Commander Task Force 53.  
(2) Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Report of Anti-Aircraft Action, TASK GROUP 53.16 - 17 June 1944.

Reference: (a) CinCPac Conf. Ltr. 20L-44.  
(b) Paragraph 5 (e) CTF 53 OpPlan Al62-44.  
(c) C.O., U.S.S. STEMBEL conf. ltr. Al6-3, serial 033, dated 18 June 1944. *micro ser. 78453*  
(d) C.O., U.S.S. HOLLY ltr. Al2-1/MSS, serial 0010 dated 26 June 1944. *micro ser. 78180*  
(e) C.O., U.S.S. ALOE conf. ltr. A9, serial 159, dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 78444*  
(f) C.O., U.S.S. LST 488 Top Sec. ltr. Al6-3, serial 6, dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 80717*  
(g) C.O., U.S.S. LST 241 Action Report, dated 17 June 1944. *missing*  
(h) C.O., U.S.S. LST 247 conf. ltr. Al6-3, dated 26 June 1944. *micro ser. 77986*  
(i) C.O., U.S.S. LST 118 conf. ltr. dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 77985*  
(j) C.O., U.S.S. LST 399 sec. ltr. A2-11, serial 70, dated 29 June 1944. *p. 10*  
(k) C.O., U.S.S. LST 207 sec. ltr. dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 78181*  
(l) C.O., U.S.S. LST 447 conf. ltr. Al2/Al6-3, serial 194, dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 78367*  
(m) C.O., U.S.S. LST 117 conf. ltr. Al2, serial 0152, dated 27 June 1944. *p. 18*  
(n) C.O., U.S.S. LST 219 Action Report dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 78449*  
(o) C.O., U.S.S. LST 269 Top Sec. ltr. dated 29 June 1944. *micro ser. 80979*  
(p) C.O., U.S.S. LST 343 ltr. A9-10, serial 216, dated 25 June 1944. *micro ser. 79131*  
(q) C.O., U.S.S. LST 70, ltr. Al6, dated 25 June 1944. *micro ser. 77688*

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- (r) C.O., U.S.S. LST 123 Action Report dated 17 June 1944. p. 27
- (s) C.O., U.S.S. LST 220 ltr. dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 78701*
- (t) C.O., U.S.S. LST 449, Action Report dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 79904*
- (u) C.O., U.S.S. LST 125, conf. ltr. A16-3 serial 183, dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 79471*
- x - (v) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 464 ltr. dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 139036*
- x - (w) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 465 Action Report dated 17 June 1944. p. 37
- (x) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 466 ltr. dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 79129*
- (y) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 467 ltr. dated 20 June 1944. *micro ser. 78363*
- (z) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 468 Top Sec. ltr. dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 79477*
- x - (aa) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 469 Action Report dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 78364*
- x - (bb) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 471 Action Report dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 79984*
- x - (cc) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 472 Action Report dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 79231*
- (dd) C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 473 ltr. dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 78365*
- (ee) C.O., U.S.S. PC 549 ltr. A9 dated 27 June 1944. *micro ser. 77991*
- (ff) C.O., U.S.S. PC 555 conf. ltr. dated 3 July 1944. *micro ser. 81752*
- (gg) C.O., U.S.S. PC 1125 conf. ltr. A9, serial 03, dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 79237*
- (hh) C.O., U.S.S. SC 504 ltr. dated 28 June 1944. *missing*
- (ii) C.O., U.S.S. SC 521 conf. ltr. dated 27 June 1944. *micro ser. 79242*
- (jj) C.O., U.S.S. SC 667 Action Report dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 78369*
- (kk) C.O., U.S.S. SC 724 ltr. dated 29 June 1944. *micro ser. 78451*

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- (ll) C.O., U.S.S. SC 727 ltr. FRB.rcw  
dated 17 June 1944. *p. 43*
  - (mm) C.O., U.S.S. SC 1273 ltr. A16-3,  
serial 79-44, dated 30 June 1944. *p. 48*
  - (nn) C.O., U.S.S. YMS 136 ltr. JE-201-44-db  
dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 77999*
  - (oo) C.O., U.S.S. YMS 195 sec. ltr. A16-3  
serial 0081, dated 28 June 1944. *micro ser. 82060*
  - (pp) C.O., U.S.S. YMS 184 Action Report  
dated 17 June 1944. *p. 56*
  - (qq) C.O., U.S.S. YMS 216 conf. ltr. A12-1,  
serial 281, dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 79912*
  - (rr) C.O., U.S.S. YMS 237 ltr. dated 28  
June 1944. *micro ser. 78454*
  - (ss) C.O., U.S.S. YMS 242 sec. ltr. A16-3,  
serial 41, dated 17 June 1944. *micro ser. 81754*

Enclosure:

|     |           |      |
|-----|-----------|------|
| (A) | Reference | (c). |
| (B) | Reference | (d). |
| (C) | Reference | (e). |
| (D) | Reference | (f). |
| (E) | Reference | (g). |
| (F) | Reference | (h). |
| (G) | Reference | (i). |
| (H) | Reference | (j). |
| (I) | Reference | (k). |
| (J) | Reference | (l). |
| (K) | Reference | (m). |
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| (M) | Reference | (o). |
| (N) | Reference | (p). |
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| (S) | Reference | (u). |
| (T) | Reference | (v). |
| (U) | Reference | (w). |
| (V) | Reference | (x). |
| (W) | Reference | (y). |
| (X) | Reference | (z). |

*See  
references*



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(Y) Reference (aa).  
(Z) Reference (bb).  
(AA) Reference (cc).  
(BB) Reference (dd).  
(CC) Reference (ee).  
(DD) Reference (ff).  
(EE) Reference (gg).  
(FF) Reference (hh).  
(GG) Reference (ii).  
(HH) Reference (jj).  
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(JJ) Reference (ll).  
(KK) Reference (mm).  
(LL) Reference (nn).  
(MM) Reference (oo).  
(NN) Reference (pp).  
(OO) Reference (qq).  
(PP) Reference (rr).  
(QQ) Reference (ss).

1. The several reports, reference (c) to reference (ss), TASK GROUP 53.16, engaged in the subject action are collected and forwarded herewith, enclosures (A) to (QQ). They describe fully this action. Report from U.S.S. AGENOR (ARL-3) detached from this GROUP 23 June 1944, is not now at hand, but will be forwarded when received.

2. The observations contained in the various reports are in general supported by the GROUP COMMANDER. GROUP COMMANDER recalls observing four (4) planes attack the formation, and destruction of three by GROUP's gunfire, credit for which cannot be given to any individual ship or ships, but to all ships of the GROUP.

3. Attention is invited to the long range at which plane attacking STEMBEL dropped its torpedo. Drop was clearly observed by the TASK GROUP COMMANDER and estimated to be at a range of 4000 yards, if not greater, giving STEMBEL ample opportunity to maneuver to avoid. This attack on STEMBEL was an entirely misleading indication of what the attack on convoy by other planes was to be, for same was pressed home to within 500



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yards or less of the target. For these planes that so pressed home their attacks their destruction was inevitable. However, such was not accomplished till after planes had dropped their torpedoes, certain vessels of the convoy being obliged to maneuver to avoid being hit, all of which, acting in accordance with doctrine, did so do successfully, save U.S.S. LCI(G) 468 which did not, most probably because of casualties suffered by bridge personnel from gunfire from either attacking planes or own ships or both, and because of close range at which torpedo was dropped.

4. (a) Many of the automatic weapons of L.S.T. were obscured by pontoon side carry equipment and by friendly vessels, handicaps which must be accepted when so loaded and so formed when engaging torpedo planes, especially with planes flying so close to the water's surface as these did. In this connection TASK FORCE COMMANDER will probably recall that when mounting GROUP in Guadalcanal removal of a certain number of automatic weapons from L.S.T. was entertained in order to satisfy cargo requirements.

(b) The TASK GROUP COMMANDER considers a torpedo plane a most difficult target to stop, let alone destroy. That gunfire from automatic weapons could not succeed in stopping or destroying planes at such close ranges BEFORE they dropped their torpedoes bears out this statement. It is thought, however, this fire undoubtedly impaired the attacking planes' efficiency, and caused certain of them to drop their torpedoes wide of their marks. In this connection it is the firm conviction of the writer that barrage balloons would have further embarrassed attacking planes, certainly to the extent that they would not have pressed home their attacks to such close ranges. Where air coverage cannot be provided the carrying of barrage balloons is strongly recommended. The writer has observed the efficacy of balloons in torpedo plane attacks upon L.S.T. off Bougainville, B.S.I. on November 17, 1943, L.S.T. being so equipped; planes did not press home their attacks to anywhere near such close ranges as was done in this case.

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5. (a) U.S.S. LCI(G) 468 was hit on the starboard bow by a torpedo launched from a Japanese torpedo plane at about 1758 KING, 17 June 1944, Latitude 13°-01' N., Longitude 148°-12' E., resulting in about 50 feet of her bow being blown off, and the ship taking a decided list to port. Immediately thereafter rescue work was taken in hand by LCI(G)'s 466 and 472. In rescuing survivors from the explosion none was found in the water, and the only casualties that were not either dead or missing were four (4) suffering from minor wounds which were given first treatment aboard LCI(G) 468. Rescuing survivors and attending wounded presented no problem, same being readily and easily taken care of by the LCI Group Medical Officer. At this writing all wounded give every indication of a full and complete recovery. Report of casualties is contained in reference (z).

(b) The work of salvaging was immediately taken in hand by LCI(G)'s 472 and 466, and by repair personnel from U.S.S. AGENOR (ARL-3). LCI(G) 468's watertight integrity aft of Frame 42 was unimpaired and floatability of vessel good. Vessel was taken in tow by U.S.S. HOLLY (AN-19) at about 2300 KING 17 June 1944 and the tow steamed with the GROUP throughout remainder of the night with salvage personnel remaining aboard to prosecute this work. On the morning of 18 June AGENOR was ordered alongside to expedite the salvage work. During the late morning bogies were reported and rather than encumber AGENOR or HOLLY with this tow in the face of further attack by the enemy, salvage operations were ordered discontinued, and HOLLY directed to cast LCI(G) 468 loose.

(c) In view of the prospective operations of this vessel against the enemy and because the explosion rendered her entirely useless for participation therein and in order not to encumber the GROUP with a tow when moving in against enemy opposition, and because repairs to restore LCI(G) 468 to duty were extensive and impracticable for accomplishment

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*From*  
*CTG 53.16*  
*162702*  
*COMLSTFLOT 5*  
(cwb)

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in an active combatant area where facilities for such were not available, the TASK GROUP COMMANDER regretfully ordered STEMBEL to sink LCI(G) 468. Sinking of LCI(G) 468 was accomplished at 1256 KING 18 June 1944, Latitude 13°-38.5' N., Longitude 148°-37.2' E., firing 15 rounds of 5"/.38 projectiles. The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. LCI(G) 468 is to be congratulated on the excellent manner in which closures were effected to insure the watertight integrity of his ship. It is believed that LCI(G) 468 could have remained afloat indefinitely.

*G. F. Carter*  
G. F. CARTER.

Copy to:  
C.O., U.S.S. LCI(G) 468.



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