

Activities of the Coastal  
Information Section, Domestic  
Intelligence Branch, O.N.I.  
Op-16-B-8.

(Remarks made to students at the Naval Intelligence  
Training School)

Part I

MISSION AND TASKS OF SECTION

It is a real pleasure to welcome the students of the Naval Intelligence Training School to the Coastal Information Section. During your visit to this Section we hope to give you a good general idea of the mission and tasks of the Section; and some idea of the charts, files and records which are maintained. This talk will be divided into three parts:

1. A statement of the mission and tasks of the Section, its major liaisons and principal sources of coastal information.
2. A brief discussion of the small craft problem, and the method of classifying alien owned and suspicious small craft reports.
3. An explanation of the wall charts maintained by Section B-8, the method of plotting information received regarding suspicious activities in coastal zones, and the method of filing such information.

Some of you may be assigned to Coastal Information work in District Intelligence Offices or in zone offices located on the coast. Others will be assigned to investigative work, some to Commerce and Travel work, etc. Regardless of your assignment, you will find that the activities of the Coastal Information Section are closely related to the work of other sections of the District Intelligence Office particularly the Security, Investigations, Commerce and Travel, and Counter Subversion Sections. Whether your assignment is in the District Intelligence Office or in a Zone Office and whether or not you are specifically assigned to Coastal Information duty, you will undoubtedly find many opportunities to assist the Coastal Information Section by supplying information of interest to that section, by disclosing new sources of coastal information, and by other means. It is essential that a widespread network of informants be built up to assist in safeguarding our coastal zones, and each of you can play his part in this endeavor.

After giving you some idea of the mission of this Section I will discuss some of the primary sources of coastal information.

The mission of the Coastal Information Section is:

- (a) To receive, evaluate and disseminate all information relating to the following activities in the coastal areas of the United States, its possessions and offshore naval bases:

(1) Presence, activities and movements of suspicious vessels, including submarines and aircraft.

- (2) Loitering of vessels.
- (3) Scuttling of vessels.
- (4) Sabotage of vessels.
- (5) Presence of mines and other obstructions to navigation.
- (6) Attacks.
- (7) Sinkings.
- (8) Diversion of cargo at sea.
- (9) Vessels off their scheduled routes.
- (10) Presence and activities of enemy vessels, submarines and aircraft.
- (11) Presence and activities of suspicious radio stations located in coastal areas.
- (12) Disloyal service rendered by persons in this country to enemy men-of-war, auxiliaries, or aircraft in the coastal zone.
- (13) Suspicious activities of small craft in coastal waters.
- (14) Other information concerning activities in the coastal area.

(b) While the term "coastal areas of the United States" has not been specifically defined, it is assumed that it includes coastal areas of the United States and its possessions, and all offshore naval stations. The interests of the Section must also necessarily extend to activities which, while not actually within the coastal areas, are so near thereto as to be important from the standpoint of local defense and coastal frontier defense.

(c) The broad objective of the Section may also be defined as the rendering of an Intelligence service to Operations, to provide Operations in the Navy Department and in the Naval Districts with all information which can be obtained through the facilities of ONI, concerning the reported coastal activities.

If this mission is to be accomplished successfully the necessary liaisons must be established in the districts through which information may be obtained. Loyal informants must be available in every city, town and hamlet along our coastline, who will be alert to anything that appears inimical to the welfare of the United States.

In many cases these informants will be members of the Naval Establishment, or of the Coast Guard such as keepers of lighthouses, crews of light vessels, ~~Coast Guardsmen at life boat stations~~, Navy personnel assigned to radiobeacon stations, personnel of the Coast Guard patrol vessels, both harbor and offshore patrols, of the Navy's Inshore Patrol vessels, harbor entrance control post personnel, Coast Guard, Navy and Army air patrols, and also vessels attached to the Fleet. Liaisons must be maintained with the Customs Service as their men are in continuous and close touch with maritime activities. Immigration inspectors who board incoming vessels, inspectors stationed at the Canadian border, and the Immigration Border Patrol are other sources for information. The Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation is able to provide much information about merchant vessels and the crews of such vessels. The Maritime Commission is another prolific source of information about American-flag vessels. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the M.I.D. have a large staff of operatives working on espionage and counter espionage activities and these organizations are also a source of coastal information. A primary source of information regarding aeronautical activities is the Civil Aeronautics Administration. The Federal Communications Commission has a force constantly monitoring the air waves to detect unauthorized radio stations that might be operating in a manner inimical to the interests of the country.

The foregoing covers most of the important government agencies from which information may be received. There are also numerous sources of civilian information which should be developed such as trustworthy members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and members of yacht clubs, officials and members of fishermen's associations, marine supply stations, shipping companies, shipping agents, ship chandlers, stevedores, airline pilots, coastal pilots, tugboat companies, local civilian defense organizations, and other civilians who are known to be reliable.

This may sound like an impressive list of sources of information but if we are to do our job successfully, information from all these sources must be filtered through the Naval Intelligence organization.

It is also necessary of course that we furnish to all other government agencies mentioned above, information which is of interest to them.

Information concerning coastal activities which originate in any section of a District Intelligence Office should be sent, through proper channels to the B-8 Section of the District Intelligence Office whose job it is to secure all possible information as quickly as possible, evaluate the information in the light of past experience or the known reliability of the informants, and pass it along with the least possible delay to other elements of the Naval District Organization and of the Army organization in the district which should be cognizant; then, through the chain of command, to other interested districts and the Navy Department. Here in Washington the information is given further dissemination according to the nature of the information received.

This brings us to a discussion of the principal activities which are now being carried on by the B-8 Section in the Department at Washington. The specific tasks now being performed by this Section may be divided into three general categories:

(a) Inspecting and assisting in the organization of Coastal Information activities in the Naval Districts. These activities of the Section have consisted primarily of the following:

(1) Preparation of a Coastal Information manual, explaining in detail the mission, tasks, liaisons and other organization requirements of Coastal Information Sections in the districts.

(2) Personal inspection of Coastal Information Sections in the districts by the officer-in-charge of the Section. During these inspections, the officer-in-charge of the Section has conferred with Commandants, Staff Officers, District Coast Guard Commanders, and personnel of the Coastal Information Sections with regard to the physical organization of the Section in the Naval Districts, the effective coordination of its work with that of the District Operations Officer and Commander Inshore Patrol, establishment of effective liaisons with other governmental agencies and private sources of coastal information, arrangement of satisfactory communication facilities for the handling of coastal information, and methods of procedure in regard to the proper handling and dissemination of reports received in the Coastal Information Sections.

(3) Preparation of directives dealing with various aspects of coastal information work in the naval districts.

(b) Receiving, evaluating, and disseminating reports of coastal activities which are received in OPNAV.

To prepare for the effective handling of information concerning coastal activities which is received in OPNAV, the necessary liaisons have been established with other branches of the Navy Department to assure the prompt receipt of copies of all reports and dispatches relating to activities in the coastal area. The Section has developed wall charts for the plotting of Coastal Information reports, with adequate filing facilities for information required in the evaluation of such reports. This will be explained in detail later in this talk. It is contemplated that the Coastal Information Section will obtain and forward to appropriate naval districts all information received in both Domestic and Foreign Branches of ONI, which might be useful in the evaluation of Coastal Information in the districts concerned.

The Coastal Information Section maintains close contact with Op-38-W in connection with all matters relating to coastal activities.

To facilitate the prompt handling of reports of activities in the coastal areas the work of the Section is handled by three units covering the following geographic areas:

(1) North Atlantic--this unit has cognizance of all activities of the Section originating in or pertaining to the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th naval districts, and outlying naval bases in the North Atlantic.

(2) The Gulf Coast and Caribbean--this unit has cognizance of all activities of the Section originating in or pertaining to the 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th and 15th naval districts and outlying naval bases in the Caribbean and South Atlantic.

(3) Pacific--this unit has cognizance of all activities of the Section originating in or pertaining to the 11th, 12th, 13th (including Alaska), 14th and 16th naval districts, and outlying naval bases in the Pacific.

(c) Handling of certain collateral matters which logically fall within the scope of the Section, which include the following:

(1) The receipt, evaluation and recording on cards, of reports received from District Intelligence Offices and the Coast Guard concerning alien owned and suspicious small craft operating in the coastal waters of the United States and its possessions. The interests of the section in this matter, which is closely related to the security of coastal areas, has resulted in close cooperation with representatives of the Treasury Department and the development of plans for more effective control of these vessels. This will be covered more fully later in this talk.

(2) The preparation and maintenance of card records listing the armament of foreign merchant vessels which have been inspected at American ports.

X The closest possible cooperation must be maintained between the Commerce and Travel Section and the Coastal Information Section in Washington and in the Districts. Many of the functions of these two sections are so closely related that a clear distinction as to which Section has jurisdiction over them is sometimes difficult. The manuals of organization and procedure issued by these two sections, which are available in District and Zone Intelligence offices, outline in detail the functions of the two sections and may clarify many borderline cases.

The scene of more active operation in coastal intelligence work is of course in the naval districts. In each naval district, with one exception, there is an active Coastal Information Section whose mission and tasks resemble those of the section in ONI.

The Coastal Information Section in the Naval District Intelligence Office works very closely with Headquarters of the Inshore Patrol, which comprises the local defense force for each naval district. In many naval districts the Coastal Information Section is physically located adjacent to the office of the Commander, Inshore Patrol. In all cases, arrangements have been made for the Coastal Information Section to receive reports on coastal activities which come into the Inshore Patrol Headquarters. The Coastal Information Section, in turn, furnishes Inshore Patrol Headquarters with all information which it receives.

The Coastal Information Section in the naval district must also maintain close contact with the District Operations Officer, the District Communication Officer, the Port Director (an officer of the Naval Transportation Service), and with appropriate officers of the Army. These contacts are necessary to insure that all information which the Coastal Information Section obtains and which is of interest to the elements of the Army and Navy responsible for local defense, is promptly communicated thereto. Here again, is an illustration of the statement previously made that the ultimate purpose of Coastal Information activities is to provide an Intelligence service to Operations.

## PART II

REPORTS ON SMALL CRAFT

As previously mentioned, the problem of small craft operating in our coastal waters is one which comes under the cognizance of this Section. During peace time, the Navy Department has no authority to restrict the operation or prohibit the operation of such craft, other than in defensive sea areas such as Pearl Harbor, Manila Harbor, etc. However, the Navy Department is concerned regarding the possibility of the use of small craft for activities in our coastal area which are inimical to naval interests. Such activities might involve contact with unfriendly vessels in the coastal area, attempts at sabotage, espionage and similar activities. In the event of war, these craft would constitute a serious hazard to our security. Along certain parts of our coast, particularly the West Coast and the Florida Coast, there is a considerable number of these small vessels, some of whose operators and crews are suspected to be of questionable loyalty.

The security problem presented by the unrestricted operation of small craft has long been recognized by the Navy and Coast Guard, as well as by other federal authorities. Efforts to pass legislation which would more effectively control the movements of small craft and the crews of such vessels have not been successful. The result has been that little positive action could be taken and most small craft have been free to depart from and to reenter American ports and harbors with little or no control over their movements. This does not mean, however, that efforts have not been made to list alien owned and suspicious small craft operating in our coastal waters.

On March 10, 1941, the United States Coast Guard sent out a directive to all District Commanders requesting reports on alien owned vessels. Another directive issued by the Coast Guard on June 6, 1941, requested all District Commanders to submit reports on all vessels classified in the district records as "suspicious". On July 1, 1941, the Chief of Naval Operations requested the Commandants of all Naval Districts to submit reports on suspicious vessels. Reports on suspicious vessels operating in the coastal waters of the United States or its possessions, and in foreign waters adjacent thereto are also received from numerous other sources, such as Naval Attaches, Naval Observers, the FBI, MID, the Treasury Department, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, captains of merchant vessels, port captains, local police authority and other local, state and federal authorities and private citizens or agencies.

The increase in the volume of such reports has given rise to the need of a systematic system of cross referencing which would provide information regarding the name of the alien-owned small craft, the name of the owner, the nationality of the owner, and some indication as to whether or not the vessel is suspicious. A method has been developed by the Coastal Information Section for classifying such vessels, which we will explain to you at this time.

To begin with, we decided to classify miscellaneous small craft owned by aliens into two categories (1) those to which no suspicion attaches; (2) those which have been engaged in suspicious activities, or whose owners are suspected of anti-American activities. In this category, we may also include vessels owned by American citizens who are engaged in subversive activities.

Separate files are maintained with regard to each category of alien-owned small craft which I have described, and the reports are numbered serially according to the date submitted. If a report contains reference to more than one small craft, only one serial number is assigned to the report. A prefix appears before the serial number to indicate the Naval District, since all reports are filed according to Naval Districts. In the case of a suspicious vessel, the prefix "OO" appears between the number of the Naval District and the serial number of the report since we file such reports in a separate file. Thus, no conflict appears between identical serial numbers which may relate two separate craft; one, suspicious, and the other not suspicious.

When a report is submitted on an alien-owned craft of the first category (alien-owned but not suspicious), a 3 x 5 card is prepared in triplicate and filed as follows:

- (1) Name of craft--filed alphabetically.
- (2) Name of owner--filed alphabetically, according to the surname of the owner. This classification will ~~prevent~~ <sup>REVEAL</sup> the ownership of more than one craft by the same owner.
- (3) Nationality of owner--a separate classification is maintained for each nationality, i.e., Japanese, German, Italian, Greek, etc. Such a classification will provide a ready reference for all small craft owned by aliens of any particular nationality.

In the event the report indicates that the alien-owned craft is suspicious, the 3 x 5 cards are prepared in quadruplicate, and the card definitely indicates that the craft is suspicious. A brief statement of reasons for considering the craft suspicious are included under "Remarks" on the card. Three copies of the card are filed in the manner which has just been described to you, and the fourth copy is filed alphabetically according to the name of the vessel, under the classification of "suspicious craft."

More than one report may be received at different intervals with respect to the same small craft. As such reports are received, they are attached to the original report in order that the file on the same craft may be kept intact, and the same serial number assigned to the original may be assigned to subsequent reports on the same craft.

As new reports are received, the files are searched to ascertain whether the craft has been carded previously. If not, cards are prepared, and if a previous report has been received, it is handled as described. If a report is received on a craft previously reported and carded, and if more



detailed information is desired, the card index file will show the serial number of the report, which can then be located immediately in the files under the serial number.

We have suggested to the various Coastal Information Sections in the districts that a similar filing system be adopted, but we have left it to the discretion of the District Intelligence Officer to determine whether he wishes to adopt our method of filing or one which more nearly meets the needs of his district.

After listening to this explanation of the method of carding alien-owned and suspicious small craft, you may wonder what we propose to do with this information. Until recently, it appeared that the principal value of these cards would be to have available a list of all suspicious small craft in the event it became necessary, during a time of war, to either seize the vessels or to place them under close surveillance. Quite recently, there has occurred a new development which may make such information very useful.

For some months there has been under consideration a plan for the stricter supervision of all vessels operating in the territorial waters of the United States and the crews of such vessels. Regulations were drafted pursuant to the President's proclamation of a national emergency dated June 27, 1940, to accomplish this purpose. These amendments to the "Anchorage Regulations" were approved by the President on October 7, 1941, and became effective Oct. 29, 1941. Briefly stated, these new regulations provide that the owner, agent, or master of each vessel must secure from the Captain of the Port (a Coast Guard Officer) a permit to leave the port and to operate the vessel, such permit to prescribe the areas in which the vessels will be allowed to operate. Another provision of the regulations requires persons on board such vessels to carry an identification card. In order to secure a permit, the owner, agent, or master of a vessel must submit to the Captain of the Port an application for a permit to operate. In addition to furnishing information regarding the vessel and the owner of the vessel, the application must state the purpose for which the vessel is to be operated and its destination or the area in which it will operate. An operating permit would definitely limit the area in which the vessel would be allowed to operate, and the presence of the vessel in any other area would be sufficient grounds for the revocation of the permit. Any infraction of other port regulations or activities inimical to the interests of the U.S. would be grounds for the revocation of the permit. The permit to operate would have to be carried on the vessel at all times. Discretion is given to the Captain of the Port, acting under the supervision of the Commandant of the Coast Guard, to refuse to grant a license to operate if it would be inimical to national defense. We expect to work out an arrangement with the Coast Guard and Captains of Ports, whereby the District Commandants would keep the Captain of the Port advised of all suspicious vessels, so that all such information may be taken into consideration before a license to operate is granted.

In addition to the permit to operate, the amendments to the "Anchorage Regulations" will require each person on board a vessel to carry an identification card which would contain such identifying data as name, signature, fingerprint, date and place of birth, nationality, alien registration number (in case of resident aliens) height, weight, color of hair

and eyes, such card to be furnished by the Captain of the Port, or in lieu thereof such identification data as will be acceptable to him. Failure of any person on board a vessel to have proper identification card would be grounds for the revocation of the permit to operate. Wide discretionary powers are given to the Commandant of the Coast Guard to modify these requirements in certain cases. Here again, in the case of identification cards, the Navy will no doubt cooperate closely in furnishing the Captain of the Port with the names of persons operating or sailing on small craft whose activities are considered suspicious, in order that the Captain of the Port may decide whether to issue an identification card.

When you return to your districts and take up your duties, we urge you to be on the lookout for any suspicious small vessels or members of crews of such vessels, and if any are found, report your information to the District Intelligence Officer without delay, in order that a thorough investigation may be made. Let me emphasize that the use of the word "suspicious" in connection with these boats means that they are suspicious from the standpoint of the Navy. Activities of suspicious small vessels not having a naval interest should be referred to the proper governmental agencies, for example, cases involving smuggling of goods would be referred to the Customs Bureau; smuggling of aliens into the United States would be referred to the Immigration Bureau; espionage activities would be referred to the F.B.I., etc.

CHARTS AND FILES

Now that you have a background as to the mission and task of the Coastal Information Section, and the type of information received, let us go a step further. You know, of course, that reports reach us through a number of sources. Currently, the principal ones are the Naval Districts, Naval Attaches, (through Op-16-F), Coast Guard, M.I.D., F.B.I., Bureaus of the Treasury and Commerce Department, the Federal Communications Commission, individual citizens, officers and crew members of merchant ships, privately owned aircraft, etc. In turn, we enlist the aid of certain of the foregoing agencies when we initiate an inquiry. Our current sources of information and liaisons will, no doubt, grow more numerous in the event of hostilities.

Small craft activities have been covered in this talk. The following discussion, therefore, will be confined to reports relating to the presence, movements, and activities of suspected, belligerent, or enemy vessels, surface or subsurface, and any suspicious activities carried on in coastal waters and areas.

What are the problems? There are five principal factors to be considered upon receipt of a report:

1. EVALUATION
2. DISSEMINATION
3. PLOTTING
4. FILING
5. EVALUATION FILE

1. Evaluation: Does this report confirm or relate to an earlier report? If so, how and why? Is it reliable? Is it relevant? Is it significant? Is it important? Is it timely? These and other related factors are brought together in order that the complete picture may be passed along to the appropriate liaisons, for instance, Ship Movements Division, Communications Division, Naval Districts Division, etc.

2. Dissemination: To whom should this report go? Naturally, its nature determines this. An unidentified submarine is reported sighted in the Caribbean, and its position given. After it is determined that no American submarine was in that area at the time, the report would be passed to Op-38 (Ship Movements Division) for action, to F-7 (Latin American Section), 10ND and 15ND, and possibly 8ND for information. Then, take the case of a suspected Nazi radio station reported active on the coast of Florida. This would go to Op-20 (Communications Division) for action, to the F.C.C. and the Coast Guard in order that monitoring stations could be put to work in tracking down the station, and, if not already cognizant, 7ND would receive a card.

3. Plotting: On the charts maintained in this Section are plotted the significant reports received. Colored pins are used to distinguish ship nationality, submarines, and suspicious activities. A small white tab is attached to each pin. On one side of the tab the file number of the report is noted, and on the other side the date of the initial report received. It is a matter of only a moment to extract from the files the complete file to which the pin relates.

Plotting is desirable not only to afford visual reference, but to assist in evaluating and corollating subsequent reports. It may present a complete picture of suspicious vessels and activities with respect to location, and thus make it possible to discern tie-ups and relationships which might exist.

4. Filing: To obtain the best results in the quickest manner, the files must be simple and workable. Too, they must be set up in order to allow for expansion. Our Master File is currently divided into 28 index (or main) headings, and a related subdivision is made under each. This subdivision is given a range of numbers, for instance, 1 to 20, for charting and index purposes. One main heading and its attendant subdivisions is shown below:

SUBMARINES, SUSPICIOUS OR ENEMY

160.....Alaska  
 161.....East Coast  
 162.....General  
 163.....Gulf Coast  
 164.....North Atlantic  
 164a.....South Atlantic  
 165.....Other Caribbean  
 166.....Panama  
 167.....West Coast  
 168.....Western Pacific  
 169.....North Pacific  
 169a.....South Pacific

In explanation, an enemy submarine is reported near Panama. This report would be given the number 166.1, indicating the first report received under this heading. Subsequent reports would receive the numbers 166.2, 166.3, and so on. If, however, a series of reports are received on an identical matter, they all would carry the same file number. For example, 166.1.

5. Evaluation File: This is divided into three regional areas, i.e., Atlantic, Gulf Coast and Caribbean, and Pacific. All information of interest to the 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th, and 15th Naval Districts, for instance, is contained in one file, and is what might be called "monograph information." Let us take, for example, reports from naval patrols which have visited the various islands surrounding Panama. These reports may have included comments regarding possible harbor and port facilities, as well

as landing fields, in these isolated areas, possible layouts for radio stations, etc. A study of such reports answers the question of good "hide-out" bases from which enemy ships and aircraft could operate. If a series of enemy raids were occurring in the Panama area, by the use of the Evaluation File, combined with other information available, we might readily determine the point or points from which these enemy vessels were operating and guide our own naval forces thereto.

These are the five main steps. Evaluation is related to correlation; dissemination, to the necessary liaisons for action and information; plotting, to both evaluation and location; and, of course, the Evaluation File is related to the other four.

(An explanation was given to the officers and agents attending the Training School of the method of plotting on charts information received from domestic and foreign sources.)

In addition to the files containing information on all suspicious activities reported in the coastal areas, the evaluation data file and the card records of alien-owned and suspicious small craft which have also been explained to you, this Section also maintains card records listing armament parts from merchant vessels inspected at American ports, such as this sample card which you may wish to examine. This information is made available to the Ships Movements Division.

We hope that during this brief talk we have been able to give you some idea of the activities of the Section. No doubt many of you have questions to ask regarding our work, and we welcome such questions at this time.