

CCS
3000

Commandant

16 JAN 1970

Chief of Staff

Loran-A Station, French Frigate Shoals

1. The attached two folders containing all the background material on French Frigate Shoals Loran Station problems are forwarded for your information.
2. It has been well established that the Department of Defense desires continuation of the Loran-A coverage afforded by French Frigate Shoals, Kauai, Hawaii and Johnston Island. Elimination of French Frigate Shoals will reduce the coverage to the point where it is of no practical use around the main islands. Constructing the Loran-A station at Kure and eliminating the station at Kauai will give good coverage along the island chain except for the main island, but the coverage will be of very doubtful reliability due to the length of the synchronizing paths.
3. In all of our reviews we have forgotten two salient points:
 - a. The commercial air and surface users have not been addressed. By surface users I mean fishermen who work out of all the inhabited islands of the Hawaiian chain, and by air users I mean such short-haul airlines as Aloha Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines. I do not feel that we can unilaterally turn off the station and reduce the coverage along the islands without at least consulting these commercial users.
 - b. The monitor location for a Loran-C chain was explored in great detail when the chain was installed. French Frigate Shoals is in the center of the Kure, Johnston Island leg of the chain. It also monitors the Hawaii, Johnston Island leg. If French Frigate is decommissioned it will mean a duplicate installation of monitor stations in Kure and Kauai in order to effect an accurate, continuous monitoring operation on both legs of the Loran-C chain.
4. Therefore, the problem boils down to a series of requirements:
 - a. If we disestablish French Frigate Shoals and keep Kauai, our coverage is useless for the island chain and for the northern ADIZ.
 - b. If we install a station again in Molokai, we have improved somewhat the coverage along the chain, but not on the northern ADIZ, and we still have the problem of the Loran-C monitor station. Incidentally, we just completed the sale of our land near the leprosarium -- 10 acres may be almost impossible to obtain.


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c. Eliminating Kauai and French Frigate Shoals and installing a Loran-A slave station in Kure will give a very unreliable Loran-A system and will still not satisfy the Loran-C monitor problem except by the installation of two monitor stations.

5. The cost of any of the above will approximate the repair of French Frigate Shoals and, except for plan (c), will be equally expensive to operate on a normal maintenance program. Under the circumstances, I see no other alternative but to continue the operation of French Frigate Shoals and to include in the FY 1972 budget funds at least for the partial repair of the deteriorated bulkhead.

T. R. SARGENT

Encl: (1) Two folders from OAN on French Frigate Shoals


TRSARGENT:eac
16 Jan 1970