

Remarks of LCDR L. J. BLACK, Jr., Commanding Officer, USCG Loran-A Technical Assistance Detail, Manila, at graduation exercises of the Loran Orientation Course Class 01-75, 18 April 1975.

It is an extreme pleasure and an honor to be invited here today to address the initial Loran Orientation Course Graduating Class 01-75. The graduation of this class marks the beginning of (what we of the United States Coast Guard hope will be) a continuous external Loran training program ultimately contributing to an ability on the part of the Philippine Coast Guard to completely maintain the Loran system without the assistance of the United States Coast Guard.

I take this opportunity to give you, the graduating class, a synoptic background of this system of navigation which you are being trained to operate.

Loran is an acronym from the term long range navigation.

In 1940, the United States Army Signal Corps proposed requirements for a precision navigational equipment for guiding airplanes. The criteria for this equipment was that it be extremely accurate at a maximum distance of 500 miles and at an altitude of 35,000 feet and that the best accuracy be at 1000 feet altitude at 200 miles. Experimentation was started, and in 1941, Massachusetts Institute of Technology commenced tests. In 1942, two United States and two Canadian stations started regular service. The first shipboard receiver was installed on the Battleship NEW YORK in that same year.

By the end of 1942, 45 receivers were in use; and by the end of the following year, the United States Coast Guard had assumed full responsibility for the system, and about 40 US ships as well as some Royal Canadian naval ships had receivers installed. Charts were then made available, and the Loran system was considered operational.

During the remainder of World War II, Loran continually expanded to meet the requirements of the allied forces. The service area was expanded at a rate of 10 million square miles per year between 1942 and 1944. After 1944, with full acceptance of the system, the expansion rate increased to 40 million square miles a year. By VJ day, the nighttime service area covered about 70 million square miles.

It is significant to note that by 1945 Loran was in use, nightly, as navigation for bombing over Germany.

In the years immediately following World War II, the world-wide Loran-A system was reconstructed to reflect the shift to peacetime conditions. Loran stations whose usefulness was limited to the war-time effort were decommissioned, and many temporary stations built during the war were replaced by modern, permanent plants.

New developments were continually incorporated into the system during the 1950's and 1960's, and over the years, the Loran system has been gradually expanded to provide coverage along the entire United States coastline.

Through cooperation with the International Civil Aviation Organization and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, new stations have been established overseas to meet the growing needs of the international community. In addition, several US built Loran-A chains have been turned over to foreign governments, including Japan and the Republic of the Philippines.

As of January 1972, a total of 83 Loran-A stations were providing sky wave coverage over approximately 74% of the Northern Hemisphere. Forty-two of these stations were operated by the United States Coast Guard with the remainder being operated by NATO countries and other governments.

The Republic of the Philippines' Loran-A system, consisting of five stations located on Batanes Island, at Naulo Point, on Talampulan Island, on Tarumpitao Point, and on Little Panay Island, provide precise all weather navigation capability in the Republic and South China Seas. The Coast Guard of the Republic of the Philippines assumed responsibility for this system in April, 1971, and the United States Coast Guard established a Loran-A Technical Assistance Detail, Manila to assist as necessary.

You may now ask - we know what it does, but of what significance is Loran to the Republic of the Philippines?

Loran, for many vessels and aircraft, is the only means of all weather navigation in the Philippine and South China Seas areas. Loran is also utilized as a backup system, as well as a means of updating other systems. It is of significant note that Loran is a system that can be of use to any nation, and that there is an international commitment and a national security requirement on the part of the Republic of the Philippines to insure the integrity of the Loran signal.

You, the Loran station operators and technicians, are tasked with this tremendous responsibility. This becomes increasingly significant in light of the effort on the part of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to take a greater and more decisive role in today's world.

As pointed out, Loran plays an integral part in this effort, and it is imperative that Loran station personnel are aware of its contribution to Philippine goals within the international community.

Once again, I congratulate you as graduates of the Loran Orientation Course and hope that knowing more about the job you will be or are presently performing will enhance your feelings for the system.