

*Circular Report*

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HEADQUARTERS  
U.S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY  
(PACIFIC)  
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO (USSBS NO *463*  
(NAV NO *105*)

Place: KURE  
Date: 1 November 1945  
Time:

Division of origin: Naval Analysis Division

Subject: Escort of Shipping

Person interrogated:

Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI, Akira I.J. N., served as Chief of Staff of the Second Southern Expeditionary Fleet, April 1943 to February 1945 and Chief of Staff of the OSAKA Naval Station, February 1945 to August 1945.



Where interviewed: KURE

Interrogator: Written questionnaire prepared by Captain Steadman  
Teller, U.S.N.

Allied Officer present: Commander T. H. Moorer, U.S.N.

SUMMARY

Rear Admiral MATSUZAKI, Akira, I.J.N. estimates that 40 percent of the shipping losses in the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES were caused by submarines, 40 percent by mines and 20 percent by aircraft. Most of the large ships in the area had already been sunk by the time aircraft began to operate in considerable numbers. Low level bombing was the most effective form of aircraft attack. An attack on shipbuilding yards was effective in destroying small ships and facilities for repairing them.

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TRANSCRIPT

- Q. What were the most important causes of shipping losses in your area during the time you commanded the SOERABAJA Naval District?
- A. Ninety percent of all ships over 500 tons were lost to Allied attack. Some ships were salvaged and sunk the second time. I estimate the causes to be: Submarines - 40 percent, Mines - 40 percent, and Aircraft - 20 percent. The most serious form of air attack was low level bombing. Most of the vessels sunk by aircraft in my area were less than 500 tons since practically all the larger ones were sunk before aircraft began to operate in great numbers.
- Q. In what manner were escort vessels employed?
- A. Escort vessels were used primarily for defense against submarines. Because there was a shortage of escort vessels there was great loss in the usefulness of shipping.
- Q. When did it become impractical to continue supply of the following areas by ships and why: Western NEW GUINEA, TIMOR, AMBON, BORNEO?
- A. Air attacks made it necessary to stop shipping to NEW GUINEA and the eastern N.E.I. when you commenced operating aircraft from bases at BIAK and MOROTAI. Supply was stopped on the following dates: Western NEW GUINEA - May 1944, TIMOR - June 1944, AMBON - May 1944, BORNEO \* July 1944. Schooners were used to supply AMBON and TIMOR from SOERABAJA.
- Q. How did the destruction of shipyards in BORNEO, MAKASSAR and MALAYA by air attacks effect the shipping situation?
- A. Attacks on ship building at MAKASSAR and on the BORNEO coast were very effective. Not only did they destroy new vessels, but they also destroyed facilities for repairing those already in use.