

Harbor Defenses of San Francisco in WWII

3. Harbor Defenses of San Francisco.

a. AREA AND BOUNDARIES

- (1) References: See following USC&GS Quadrangles.
 - (a) Point Reyes.
 - (b) Tamalpais.
 - (c) San Francisco.
 - (d) San Mateo.
 - (e) Half Moon Bay.
- (2) The Harbor Defenses of San Francisco consists of forts and military reservations extending from Point Reyes on the north to Pillar Point on the south, a distance of approximately 50 miles.
- (3) The fort included within the Harbor Defenses of San Francisco are:
 - (a) Fort Winfield Scott.
 - (b) Fort Miley.
 - (c) Fort Funston.
 - (d) Fort Baker.
 - (e) Fort Barry.
 - (f) Fort Cronkhite.
- (4) Headquarters, HDSE, is located at Fort Winfield Scott.

b. MISSION

- (1) The mission of Harbor Defenses of San Francisco was as follows:
 - (a) To protect harbor facilities and shipping in San Francisco Harbor from enemy naval gunfire.
 - (b) To insure freedom of movement to our ships in entering or leaving the harbor.
 - (c) To deny to enemy ships access to the harbor.
 - (d) To support the defense against landing attack.
(Par(t) 6, Harbor Defense Projects for Harbor Defenses included in the San Francisco Bay Region, Chief of Coast Artillery, 1933.)
- (2) The mission of the harbor Entrance Control Post was to:
 - (a) Collect and disseminate information of activity in the defensive sea area (approximately the water area east of an arc from Duxbury Reef to Mussel Rock).
 - (b) Control of unescorted commercial shipping in the defensive coastal area (water area included in an circle 30 miles in radius from Point Lobos).
 - (c) Take prompt decisive action to deny enemy action in the defensive coastal area.
- (3) The mission of seacoast artillery was to carry out the mission of the command within the limitations of the armament assigned.
- (4) The mission of anti-aircraft artillery and automatic weapons was:
 - (a) Primary: To provide AA defense for Harbor Defenses installations.

- (b) Secondary: To supplement AMTB, beach, and land defense.
- (5) The mission of anti-motor torpedo boat weapons was:
 - (a) Primary: to deny access to the harbor to torpedo boats, landing barges, and other unarmored surface craft.
 - (b) Secondary: to supplement AA defenses when released to AA missions by the HD Commander.
- (6) The mission of submarine mine defense was to deny hostile vessels access to the Port of San Francisco by use of controlled submarine mines.
- (7) The mission of the land defense forces was:
 - (a) To defend Harbor Defense installations from attack by land or from airborne troops.
 - (b) To deny access to Harbor Defense installations against all forms of fifth column attack and to assist other Northern California Sector troops in the defense of the Sector against fifth column attack upon call from the Commanding General, Northern California Sector, Western Defense Command.

(c) ORGANIZATION

- (1) Tactical organization in effect upon the outbreak of war, 7 December 1941 to 27 January 1944:

<u>GROUPMENT</u>	<u>GROUP</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>
Command Post		Harbor Entrance Control Post
Mine Groupment	Group 2	Mines I and RF Batteries
	Group 3	
Funston Groupment	Group 4	Mortars
	Group 5	155mm TD
	Separate	16-inch battery
AA Groupment	Group 15	AA Searchlights
	Separate	AA Guns and AW's
Separate	Group 1	Major Calibar Batteries

- (2) Tactical organization in effect from 28 January 1944 to 15 September 1945:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Command Post	Harbor Entrance Control Post
Group 2	Rapid Fire Batteries
Group 3	Mines I, II, and III
Group 6	AMTB Weapons and Searchlights
Detection and Security Group	

d. ASSIGNMENT OF TROOPS.

- (1) Upon the outbreak of the war, all stations and installations of the Harbor Defenses of San Francisco were manned by 1200, 7 December 1941. During the following weeks many reports were received of enemy ships or submarines within or near the defensive sea area; however, none of highways reports were verified from other sources although the information appeared to be very positive at the time.
- (2) The land area beach defenses of the Harbor Defenses were augmented by the addition of two battalions of infantry, one in the Fort Barry area and the other south of the Golden Gate. The land defense was strengthened by organizing and installing entanglements, slit trenches, and clearing fields of fire for automatic weapons.
- (3) The submarine mine project was only partially installed on 7 December 1941. The Mine Command made exhaustive efforts to place additional groups of mines during the first months of the war. Their efforts were hampered by extremely bad weather conditions during the months of December and January. The mine vessel L-745 was grounded and sunk by heavy seas on the night of 14 December which resulted in the commanding General, Northern California Sector, directing that mine work be held up until the weather moderated.
- (4) The difficulty of identifying planes approaching the Bay Area resulted in frequent AA alerts and blackouts of the Harbor Defenses. All AA units were under the tactical control of IV Fighter Command as exercised through San Francisco AA Groupment.
- (5) The alert status of this command was intensified prior to the Battle of Midway, May 1942, when the location and intentions of an enemy carrier task force were unknown. On 29 June 1942, a Navy blimp reported an enemy mine-laying submarine operating at the west end of the main channel as evidenced by many submerged mines in the area. The main channel was closed for approximately five hours while sweeping operations were conducted. The main channel was again closed on 5 April 1943 when the "Manuel Espanose", 258 tones, loaded with dynamite sunk in that area due to natural causes. The North Channel was not open to traffic until the wreck was cleared.

This status was employed in the North Channel from 30 June 1942 to 31 May 1943. During the period that such automatic firing status was used, 10 mines fired in the north field and 3 in the south field, all attributed to spurious armings.
- (6) In order to prevent entry into the harbor of undetected surface vessels or submarines, mines in the North and South Channels were placed on contact power during periods of reduced visibility and after dark.
- (7) Isolated incidents of slight damage to installations were recorded, such as cutting of communications lines and breaking open of store rooms and a magazine, but after investigation it was found that all such incidents were attributed to malicious mischief rather than to sabotage. A few unauthorized persons were apprehended on military reservations, but were released after investigation by the Provost Marshal.

f. MODERNIZATION PROGRAM.

- (1) Authority and Date of Commencement. An intensified program for the modernization of the Harbor Defense of San Francisco was instituted on 5 September 1940 and continued until December 1943. (Secret Ltr, WD TAG, File AG 660.2(9-16-40) M-WPD-M, to the CG NCA, dated 26 September 1940, Subject: "Modernization of Harbor Defense Projects, Continental United States.")
- (2) Extent of Work. The extent of work authorized for the modernization program included the following:
 - (a) One (1) new 16-inch battery (Battery construction No. 129).
 - (b) Two (2) new 6-inch batteries (Battery construction No's. 243 and 244).
 - (c) Overhead protection for the existing 12-inch long range batter (Battery Wallace).
 - (d) Construction of new and modernization of certain existing command and fire control structures (Harbor Defense, Groups, Battalions, and Battery Command Stations; Signal Stations; and Base End Stations).
 - (e) Installation and construction of appropriate communications and their appurtenances (submarine and subterranean cables, fire control switchboards, manholes and radios).
 - (f) Procurement of fire control equipment.
 - (g) Procurement of the necessary land areas of the carrying out of the Modernization Program.
 - (h) Salvage of outmoded armament upon completion of the new batteries.
- (3) Subsequent Modernization Projects.
 - (a) As the war progressed certain separate projects were initiated by the War Department to provide new types of defenses to meet changing conditions and to improve existing defenses no covered in the original modernization program. The more important of these projects are as follows:
 - 1 Seacoast fire control radars. (Secret Ltr, WD TAG, File AG 413.68 (10-16-41)WC, to the CG WDC, dated 3 Nov 1941, subject: "Surface Craft Detectors, SCR-296.")
 - 2 Seacoast surveillance Radars. (Secret Ltr, WD TAG, File AG 413.44(5-4-42)MC, to the CG WDC, dated 13 May 1942, subject: "Radio Set SCR-582 Central Surveillance Detector.")
 - 3 Anti-Motor Torpedo Boat Defense. (Secret Ltr, WD TAG, File AG 660.2(12-12-42)MSC-E, to the CG WDC, dated 21 Feb 1942, subject: "Defense of Harbors Against Motor Torpedo Boats.")
 - 4 Revision of Underwater Defense Project. (Secret Ltr, WD TAG, File AG 660.3(9-20-42) OB-S-E, to the CG WDC, dated 20 October 1942, subject; "Revision of Underwater Defense Projects.")
- (4) Completion of Modernization Program. The work outlined above for both the initial and subsequent modernization projects were substantially completed by December 1943 with the exception of battery construction of No. 129 which was suspended due to changes in Harbor Defense doctrines and battery con-

struction No's. 243 and 244 both awaiting the delivery of gun tubes. The cost of the modernization program in the HD SF was approximately \$10,000,000.

4. Civilian Defense.

- a. When the Northern California Sector was reorganized on 1 May 1942, a Civilian Defense Sector was set up in the operations section of the Sector. One of the Assistant Chiefs of Staff, G-3, handled Civilian Defense matters in addition to his other duties. Initially, contact was direct to the state or local government and civilian organizations concerned or the Ninth Regional Office of Civilian Defense. (Restricted Ltr, WD TAG, File AG 381 (4-22-42)MC-I-I, April 22, 1942, Subj: "Defense of Continental United States," as amended by Restricted Ltr, Hq WDC and Fourth Arm, File 381 (G-3), Nov 20, 1942, Subj: "Defense of the Continental United States.")
- b. On 1 April 1942 the Ninth regional Officer of Civilian Defense started the process of decentralizing its functions by setting up sector offices corresponding to military sectors within the combat zone, with a deputy Regional Director in charge of each sector.
- c. In compliance with instructions issued by Headquarters Western Defense Command and Fourth Army (Ltr, Hq WDC & 4th A, File 384 CD, 28 March 1942, Subj: "Decentralization of the Ninth Regional Office of Civilian Defense."), all direct contact with state or local government and the Ninth Regional Office of Civilian Defense was stopped.
- d. By 1 September 1942 the civilian defense duties had so increased that it was necessary to organize a separate Civilian Defense Section and appoint a full time Civilian Defense Officer.

HISTORY OF NCS-WDC ASSIGNMENT OF TROOPS TO HDSE
ANNEX NO. 1 TO APPENDIX NO. 4

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>ACTIVATED</u>	<u>INACTIVATED OR TRANSE.</u>
<u>6TH CA (HD)</u>				
Hq Battery	Fort Scott	HECP (Army)	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Hq Btry 1st Bn	Fort Scott	HECP (Army)	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Hq Btry 2d Bn	Ft Cronkhite	G-1 Station	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Hq Btry 3d Bn	Fort Miley	G-3 Station	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Hq Btry 4th Bn	Fort Barry	G-2 Station	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery A	Fort Scott	Mines II and III	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery B	Fort Scott	Btry Crosby	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery C	Ft Funston	Btry Davis	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery D	Fort Scott	Btry Chamberlin	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
	Fort Miley	Btry Lobos		
Battery E	Ft Cronkhite	Btry Townsley	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery F	Fort Baker	Mines I	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery G	Fort Barry	3-inch AA	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery H	Fort Barry	Btry Rathbone-McIndoe	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44

Battery I	Fort Barry	Btry Smith-Guthrie	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery K	Fort Barry	Btry Wallace	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery L	Fort Barry	Btry Mendall	Before 7 Dec 41	25 Apr 44
Battery M	Fort Barry	AA Searchlights	Before 7 Dec 41	25 Apr 44
Battery N	Fort Scott	SC Searchlights	Before 7 Dec 41	18 Oct 44
Battery O	Fort Miley	Underwater Detection	10 Jan 42	Jun 42
<u>2D BN, 18TH CA (HD)</u>				
Hq Battery	Ft Funston	Funston Group & Station	Before 7 Dec 41	25 Apr 44
Battery D	Ft Funston	Btry Bluff	Before 7 Dec 41	25 Apr 44
Battery E	Ft Funston	Btry Howe	Before 7 Dec 41	25 Apr 44
Battery F	Fort Miley	Btry Chester	Before 7 Dec 41	25 Apr 44
<u>130TH CA BN (AA)</u>				
Hq Battery	Fort Scott	AACP	1 Apr 42	25 Apr 44
Battery A	Fort Baker	AA Searchlights	1 Apr 42	25 Apr 44
Battery B	Ft Cronkhite	3-inch AA Guns	1 Apr 42	25 Apr 44
Battery C	Fort Barry	3-inch AA Guns	1 Apr 42	25 Apr 44
Battery D	Ft Funston	3-inch AA Guns	1 Apr 42	25 Apr 44
<u>266TH CA BN (HD)</u>				
Hq Battery	Fort Barry		12 Apr 42	14 May 42
Battery A	Fort Barry	6-inch BC Guns	12 Apr 42	14 May 42
Battery B	Fort Barry	6-inch BC Guns	12 Apr 42	14 May 42
Battery C	Fort Barry	6-inch BC Guns	12 Apr 42	14 May 42
<u>283D CA BN (HD)</u>				
HQ Battery	Ft Funston		11 Mar 43	8 May 43
Battery A	Fort Miley	6-inch Navy Guns	11 Mar 43	8 May 43
Battery B	Ft Funston	155mm GPF	11 Mar 43	8 May 43
Battery C	Ft Funston	155mm GPF	11 Mar 43	8 May 43
<u>6TH CA BN (HD)</u>				
Hq Detachment	Fort Scott	Fort CP	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery A	Fort Baker	AMTB Weapons	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery B	Fort Scott	AMTB Weapons	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
<u>172d CA BN (HD)</u>				
HQ Detachment	Fort Barry	Gate CP	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery A	Fort Barry	Btry Rathbone-McIndoe	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery B	Fort Barry	Btry Smith-Guthrie	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery C	Fort Miley	Btry Lobos	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
<u>173D CA BN (HD)</u>				
HQ Detachment	Fort Baker	LIME CP	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery A	Ft Funston	Btry Davis	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery B	Ft Cronkhite	Btry Tomsley	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
<u>174TH CA BN (HD)</u>				
Hq Detachment	Fort Miley	MINE CP	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
Battery A	Fort Scott	Mines II and III	18 Oct 44	
Battery B	Fort Baker	Mines I	18 Oct 44	15 Sep 45
<u>HD OF SAN FRANCISCO</u>				

Hq Battery	Fort Scott	HECP (Army)	18 Oct 44
Battery A	Fort Scott	SC Searchlights	15 Sep 45
Battery B	Fort Barry	Btry Rathboone-McIndoe	15 Sep 45
Battery C	Fort Barry	Btry Smith-Outhrie	15 Sep 45
Battery D	Fort Miley	Btry Lobos	15 Sep 45
Battery E	Fort Scott	AMTB Weapons	15 Sep 45
Battery F	Fort Baker	AMTB Weapons	
15 Sep 45			
Battery G	Fort Baker	Mines I, II, and III	15 Sep 45
Battery A,	Fort Baker	Mines I, II, and III	18 Oct 44
(174th CA BN)			
4th Mine Planter Battery	Fort Baker	US Army Mine Planter "ELLERY W. NILES"	Before 7 Dec 41
11th Mine Planter Btry	Fort Baker	US Army Mine Planter "SAMUEL M. MILIS"	Before 7 Dec 41
21st Mine Planter Btry	Fort Baker	US Army Mine Planter "HORACE F. SPURGIN"	Before 7 Dec 41

