

The Director also acted as a member of the Air Staff dealing with combined operations questions, while the Military Member was an integral part of the Staff Duties Directorate at G.H.Q.

The responsibility for all training for combined operations passed to the Headquarters Indian Expeditionary Force (I.E.F.) on its formation in April 1943, but it soon became apparent that this was not satisfactory. Force commanders were only charged with training of forces allotted to them for a specific operation, whilst at G.H.Q. it was necessary that the future policy governing combined operations should be formulated and preparations made to carry it out. Moreover advice was constantly being sought by my planning staff on combined operations questions in connection with the many plans under consideration.

An immediate re-organisation of the Combined Operations Directorate was therefore essential so that it could resume its proper functions. I took the first opportunity of discussing this with the Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Fleet, and early in August the Chiefs of Staff approved of a Rear Admiral as Director, and a Captain R.N., a Brigadier, and an Air Commodore as Deputy Directors of a reconstituted Directorate of Combined Operations at G.H.Q. of the India Command.

The responsibilities of the Directorate were laid down as follows:—

(a) In all matters of combined operations to advise the Supreme Commander, South-East Asia Command and Commander-in-Chief, India, and to give direct counsel to such other authorities as might be authorised from time to time.

(b) To maintain close liaison with the Chief of Combined Operations and other D.C.O.'s and to disseminate doctrine regarding combined operations.

(c) To guide all preliminary training in combined operations. To control basic training for the assault, for all three services at combined training centres and landing craft wings of the R.I.N., including the training headquarters and staffs in planning and preparation of operations.

(d) To advise on the organisation and equipment of all forces detailed for the assault in a combined operation. This included direct contact with the Senior Officer Assault Ships and Craft.

(e) To advise on any special training required by troops to be landed over beaches.

(f) To arrange for the trial and development of landing crafts and specialised equipment for combined operations; to make recommendations for their provision; and to develop special technique in combined assault. These matters were to be treated with particular reference to the waters and terrain likely to be encountered in operations in South-East Asia.

(g) To advise the Joint Intelligence Committee of any special type of information required, or action to be taken in connection with combined operations.

(h) On the appointment of Force Commanders for a combined operation, to render them assistance in every way possible.

18. *Training for Combined Operations.*

The provision of landing craft and stores for combined operations, and the maintenance of equipment were made the responsibility of the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia Command.

The question as to whether the Director of Combined Operations (India) should remain under the Commander-in-Chief India or should transfer to the South-East Asia Command was also discussed at length, and it was agreed that it was better that he should remain under the Commander-in-Chief India, at any rate for the time being.

Rear Admiral E. H. Maund was appointed by the Admiralty as Director on the 25th August, and arrived in India on the 16th October.

In the meantime future training policy had not stood still.

The question of giving basic and refresher training to amphibious divisions with their naval and air components was investigated in detail. There were two main problems. The basic and refresher training for those divisions in India, and the refresher training for those divisions who must come to India from other places before operations could be mounted. Two overriding factors affected these problems, the monsoon and the difficulty of moving large bodies of troops over great distances on the already overstrained railways of India.

We already had one combined training centre on the West coast near Bombay. As training had to be complete by early December of 1944, a second centre was clearly necessary, and Cocanada on the East coast, though by no means ideal, was selected as the only practical site available.

The Cocanada Training Centre was developed to provide wet-shod training for an assault brigade group and a beach group, together with their quota of divisional, corps and army troops, and their R.N. and R.A.F. components.

These two centres represented the limit of India's capacity in the matter of combined operational training facilities. Even for the second centre it was not possible to find in India the requisite officers for the instructional staff.*

19. *Manpower and Craft for Combined Operations.*

As regards actual hands for the special formations required, large numbers of Royal Navy personnel entered the country during the period of this Despatch. In addition the Royal Indian Navy continued to train crews for landing-craft.

Originally the R.I.N. were to train sufficient personnel for three assault brigade groups, but it was found that landing craft crews for two brigade groups was the most that could efficiently be produced from India at the present time.

Two afloat exercises took place during October and November whilst large "wetshod" exercises were prepared for December.

In the past our training had suffered from lack of sufficient landing craft, but during the period of this Despatch they came into the country in good number. There was still however

* See under the general head of 'Training' above regarding collective training of amphibious formations in both combined operations and jungle warfare.