

Coastal Communication System Project in Southern Part of Viet Nam

Ensuring the safety of ship navigation and enabling prompt response to maritime accidents by modernizing the coastal communication system

[External Evaluator]

Viet Nam-Japan joint evaluation team 2008¹

Rating

Effectiveness, Impact	a	Overall Rating A
Relevance	a	
Efficiency	b	
Sustainability	a	

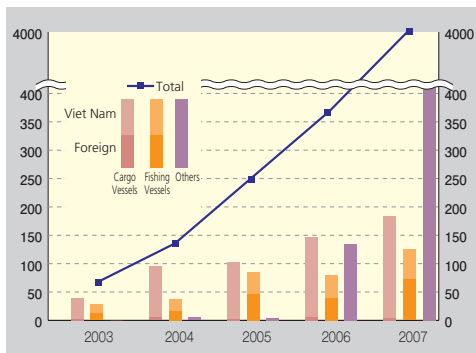
Project Objectives

To ensure the safety of ship navigation on international and domestic sea routes and to enable prompt response to maritime accidents by the establishment of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS: stipulated by the 1988 amendments to the 1976 SOLAS Convention) in the southern part of Viet Nam, thereby contributing to the promotion of the shipping and fishing industries.

Outline of the Loan Agreement

- Loan amount / Disbursed amount: 1,866 million yen / 1,490 million yen (total)
- Loan agreement: March 2000
- Terms and conditions: 1.8% interest rate; 30-year repayment period (including a 10-year grace period); general untied
- Final disbursement date: January 2007
- Executing agency: Ministry of Transport (MOT), Viet Nam National Maritime Bureau (VINAMARINE)

Number of Maritime Facilities Assisted by Coastal Radio Communication System (2003-2007)



1. The ex-post evaluation of this project was conducted jointly with the Vietnamese government. The joint evaluation team for this project has 10 members, including 9 Vietnamese evaluators (from MPI, MOT, the executing agency, other organizations concerned, and the evaluation consulting firm) and Keishi Miyazaki, a Japanese external evaluator from OPMAC Corporation.
 2. SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) Convention: International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
 3. SAR (Search and Rescue) Convention: International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue
 4. Automatic Identification System (AIS) is an information and communications system that utilizes maritime VHF frequencies to send and receive data including the ship's identity, type, position, course, speed, navigational status and other safety-related information both between suitably equipped vessels and between suitable equipped vessels and shore stations. The SOLAS Convention requires AIS to be fitted aboard all ships of 300 gross tonnage and upwards engaged on international voyages, cargo ships of 500 gross tonnage and upwards not engaged on international voyages and all passenger ships irrespective of size.

Effects of Project Implementation (Effectiveness, Impact)

With the introduction of GMDSS, Viet Nam became able to observe the provisions of the SOLAS Convention² and the regulations of SAR Convention³. Expansion of the coverage area also enabled communication with large ships in the open sea in almost all ocean areas and with small ships in inshore areas.

The number of communications transmitted through the Viet Nam Coastal Communication System has grown annually, and the amount of information such as navigational warnings, search and rescue information, meteorological forecasts and weather forecasts provided by VISHIPEL (the operator of the coastal radio communication system) has nearly doubled between 2003 and 2007. The number of maritime facilities assisted by the coastal radio system has increased near 10 times from 362 in 2006 to 3,454 in 2007. According to the beneficiary survey, improved communications between ships to shore and ships to ships, expansion of the coverage area, improved accessibility and quality of information were recognized as project effects.

There are still many constraints in the existing implementation capacity in SAR activities in Viet Nam and strengthening of its capacity is required. However, this project has a positive impact on strengthening SAR activities in Viet Nam and has supported the establishment of favorable conditions for investment in and development of the maritime sector in Viet Nam.

Therefore, this project has largely achieved its objectives, and its effectiveness is high.

Relevance

This project has been highly relevant with Viet Nam's national policies both at the times of appraisal and ex-post evaluation. This project was carried out as the second phase of the "Coastal Communication System Project (L/A signed: 1996)" which was implemented through a Japanese ODA Loan project to assist the coastal communications system in the northern part of Vietnam, from Da Nang northward.

Efficiency

Although project cost was lower than planned, project period was longer than planned; therefore the evaluation for efficiency is moderate. The following factors were pointed out as the reasons for the delays: a prolonged period for surveying the locations of the coastal radio stations and preparing bidding documents; a prolonged period for approving the technical design, bidding documents and evaluation results; and an additional period spent on procurement of the Automatic Identification System (AIS)⁴ equipment.

Sustainability

No major problem has been observed in the capacity of the executing agency, nor its operation and maintenance system; therefore, sustainability of this project is high. Technical cooperation by JICA experts dispatched to Viet Nam Maritime Communication and Electronics Company (VISHIPEL) also contributed to such high sustainability of the project. The O&M agency is VISHIPEL, which is a state-owned enterprise under VINAMARINE and MOT.

Conclusion, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

In light of the above, this project is evaluated to be highly satisfactory. Major lessons learned from this project are the effective combination of construction and O&M training for infrastructure projects and the necessity for strengthening the close coordination among related authorities during the preparation stage.

A major recommendation to the Vietnamese Government is to establish detailed and practical guidelines to improve SAR coordination. Recommendations to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Provincial People's Committees are the promotion of maritime safety education for fishermen and the improvement of the coastal communication equipment of fishing boats.

*All ex-post evaluation reports including this can be referred to in JICA's website, "Evaluations"→"Ex-post Evaluation (ODA Loan)" ([URL:http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/evaluation/oda_loan/post/](http://www.jica.go.jp/english/operations/evaluation/oda_loan/post/))