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~~SECRET COMINT CHANNELS~~

DA - 708

FUTURE OF AUM352 (PARA 3 OF YOUR 301740)

PRESENT PLANS FOR AUM352 ARE THAT UNIT SHOULD MAINTAIN CURRENT CAPABILITY AT LEAST AS LONG AS 1ATF HQ CONTINUES IN EXISTENCE. RECENTLY ANNOUNCED NON-REPLACEMENT OF ONE BATTALION WOULD NOT AFFECT ROLE OF 1ATF HQ, HENCE NO RPT NO CHANGES IN ROLE OR STRENGTH OF AUM352 INTENDED AT THIS STAGE.

2. WE HAVE NOT ATTEMPTED TO DEVELOP DETAILED PLANS FOR ADJUSTMENTS TO AUM352 CAPABILITY TO MEET ANY FURTHER RUNDOWN IN 1ATF. OUR RESPONSE TO ANY NEW SITUATION WOULD DEPEND ON CIRCUMSTANCES AT TIME AND WOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF EFFECTS NOT ONLY ON SIGINT SUPPORT TO AUSTRALIAN FORCES BUT ALSO ON OVERALL SIGINT EFFORT IN VIETNAM. IN LATTER CONTEXT WE WOULD OF COURSE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO CONSULT WITH NSA BEFORE FIRING UP ON ANY PLANS, BUT WE HAVE TO RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS TOPIC ON WHICH RAPID POLITICAL DECISIONS MIGHT VERY MUCH LIMIT OUR OPTIONS. WE SHALL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF ANY DEVELOPMENTS.

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QAR 31/9/118

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DEFENCE SIGNALS
DIVISION