

USS LCI (R) 706 Action Report of Anti-Aircraft Engagement of This Ship the Night of dated 18 May 1945

Places:

Nagakasuku Wan Eastern Okinawa Shima;

Units:

USS LCI (R) 706; USS-YMS 91; USS-YMS 434; Commander in Chief, United States Fleet, Commander LCI (R) Group Forty-Seven; Commander LCI (R) Flotilla Sixteen; Commander Task Group 53.3; ; Commander Task Force 53; Commander Amphibious Forces Pacific Fleet and Commander Task Force 51; Commander in Chief Pacific – Pacific Ocean Areas.

Persons:

Frederick S. Staley, Lieut. USNR, Commanding Officer, USS LCI (R) 706.

Keywords:

Pac. Flt. Conf. Ltr. 1 CL-45; attacked... by a lone Japanese Zeke; tracked by all pointers; brought under concerted A.A. fire; aircraft sunk; Japanese Rising Suns on his wings; unsuccessfully tried to suicide into us; Fire control and doctrine used were manual and visual; all rounds fired; pilot's greenhouse; Harbor Entrance Control Post duty by C.T.U. 52.9.7 and was directly attached to T.U. 52.20.4; witnessing ships; Area control at the time was flash Red Control Green; Flash conditions and controls; "sack-loving" ship's officers and men; "all clear"; self complacent attitude.

Synopsis:

This Action Report by the commanding officer of the USS LCI (R) 706 covers the day of 18 May 1945 in which the USS LCI (R) 706 was attacked by a Japanese Zeke aircraft. The USS LCI (R) 706 identified the Japanese Zeke and engaged and shot down the Japanese Zeke aircraft even though the Area control at that time was "flash Red Control Green". The Commanding Officer Lieutenant Frederick S. Staley offers an argument to the Commanders receiving this Action Report that it is difficult to make a decision during Area control "flash Red Control Green" to engage an enemy aircraft but the decision must be made quickly and decisively as Lieutenant Frederick S. Staley performed. Lieutenant Frederick S. Staley further states that the flash conditions and controls can be misinterpreted as a guarantee of security and lull officers and men into a complacent attitude that all is well.

LCI (R) 706/A16
Serial 47

U.S.S. LCI (R) 706
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Cal.

Advance Copy

18 May 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

Reg. No.	5780
R. S. No.	6 01640

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.
Via : (1) Commander LCI (R) Group Forty-Seven.
(2) Commander LCI (R) Flotilla Sixteen.
(3) Commander Task Group 53.3.
(4) Commander Task Force 53.
(5) Commander Amphibious Forces Pacific Fleet and
Commander Task Force 51.
(6) Commander in Chief Pacific - Pacific Ocean Areas.

Subject: Action Report of Anti-Aircraft Engagement of This Ship the Night of
18 May 1945.

Reference: (a) Pac. Flt. Conf. Ltr. 1 CL-45.

Enclosure: (A) Revised Form for Reporting A.A. Action by Surface Ships (Enclosure
(B) PacFlt Conf. ltr. 1CL-45. - p. 3

1. This vessel while at anchor within the channel entrance of Nagakasuku Wan Eastern Okinawa Shima was attacked at 1939 the evening of 18 May 1945 by a lone Japanese Zeke which approached us from the northeast.

2. Plane was audibly and visually tracked by all pointers who reported indisputable recognition of the enemy in the bright moonlight.

3. Plane when to our starboard was ordered brought under concerted AA fire by the bridge and twenty seconds later was seen to splash 200 yards abeam of us to port; aircraft sunk five minutes later after first showing the unmistakable Japanese Rising Suns on his wings.

4. Search and security details were posted throughout the night for survivor-wreckage but none appeared.

5. Enemy seemed oblivious to our presence and made no offensive maneuver until fatally engaged when the pilot attempted a wingover abaft our starboard quarter and unsuccessfully tried to suicide into us.

6. Fire control and doctrine used were manual and visual; all rounds fired were observed by the bridge to have entered pilot's greenhouse as plane did not explode but splashed heavily nearby.

7. At the time this ship was assigned Harbor Entrance Control Post duty by G.T.U. 52.9.7 and was directly attached to T.U. 52.20.4; ship was anchored by the stern and true bearing was 350 degrees with the wind 170 degrees true. Witnessing ships were the USS - YMS's 91 and 434 anchored nearby.

8. Ordnance performed excellently and ship's company commendably cool and business-like considering this was their first plane.

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Continued

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18 May 1945.

9. Area control at the time was flash Red Control Green and plane would
have most certainly attacked anchorage area if we had not engaged it.

10. Flash conditions and controls can be misinterpreted by "sack-loving"
ship's officers and men as a guarantee of security and "all clear"; such a self-
complacent attitude that all is well is just another example of the ostrich sticking
his head in the sand. It is still your primary duty to fight and defend your ship res-
pecting such flash conditions and controls to the degree that your actions will not
jeopardize other and greater units present. The decision when to open fire under such
conditions and controls is difficult to make but it must be made quickly and decisively
and subsequent action be taken as you have elected.

FREDERICK S. STALEY
Lieut. USNR.

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