KODIAK NAVAL OPERATING BASE, TELEPHONE BUILDING
(Building No. 467)
(United States Coast Guard Integrated Support Command Kodiak)
U.S. Coast Guard Station, near Polaris Avenue
Kodiak
Kodiak Island Borough
Alaska

HABS AK-47-T
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
ALASKA SUPPORT OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
240 West 5th Avenue, Room 114
Anchorage, AK 99501

Historic American Buildings Survey

ARCHITECTURAL RECORDATION FORM HABS AK-47-T

HISTORIC NAME OF BUILDING: Building 467 - Telephone Building

SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF PROPERTY: United States Coast Guard Integrated Support Command Kodiak.

AHRS NO.: KOD - 704

COMPLETE ADDRESS (or PHYSICAL LOCATION): This building is located near the northwest corner of building 20 (Hangar II), within the parking lot next to Polaris Avenue (formerly Avenue 'E'). It lies within the boundaries of the Coast Guard Integrated Support Command Kodiak.

~~UTM:~~ Lat/Long: 57.739285, -152.504716

PRESENT USE: None

SIGNIFICANCE:
Constructed in 1943 by the main contractor at the Navy's base, Siems Drake Puget Sound, this utility vault served the Navy Base as a private branch exchange (PBX). It housed the telephone switching machinery for the Air Station. The vault is a one-story rectangular concrete structure with a flat roof, similar but smaller than Building 24. Building 467 retains its overall historic character and integrity. The building is within the period of significance, retains its overall integrity and is within the boundaries of and contributes to the revised National Historic Landmark at the site.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of erection: 1943

2. Architect: Unknown

3. Original and subsequent owners: The building has remained under ownership of the United States Government. It was originally managed by the United States Navy and then by the Department of the Transportation, United States Coast Guard.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: The construction contractor was Siems Drake Puget Sound of Seattle, Washington.

5. Original plans and construction: Limited maintenance records at USCG ISC Kodiak. No original drawings were found.

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6. Alterations and additions: Building 467 has had few character altering alterations. Its use as a PBX building became obsolete with the advances in equipment during the 1980s and 1990s. With the removal of the PBX equipment, the building has remained relatively unused, and allowed to deteriorate. Few, if any, modifications have been necessary.

B. Historical Context:

The United States Coast Guard Integrated Support Command at Kodiak Island, Alaska, is the original site of the Kodiak Naval Operating Base with the United States Army Forts Greely and Abercrombie in the near vicinity. These bases were the principal advance bases in Alaska at the outbreak of World War II. The site is approximately eight miles southwest of the City of Kodiak, the oldest permanent Russian settlement in Alaska. Construction at the site began in 1939 and the bases were formally established and operational by 1941. Two of the installations, the Naval Operating Base and Fort Greely, are adjacent to each other and are now one reservation administered by the Coast Guard. The Navy facilities were located between the head of Women's Bay and Buskin River and on Nyman Peninsula. Fort Greely's main developments were north of Buskin River, from Buskin Lake in the west to St. Paul Harbor in the east. A civilian contractor first carried out construction. Then, at the beginning of 1943, Naval Construction Battalions (Seabees) gradually took over all construction activities for both the Navy and the Army. Today, many World War II naval buildings remain standing and are used by the Coast Guard; however, few Army structures remain at the Fort Greely site.

On the eve of World War II, Congress, anticipating conflict with Japan in the North Pacific, authorized construction of Naval Air Stations in Sitka, Kodiak, and Dutch Harbor. Work began at Kodiak in 1939 and progressed furiously after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Japanese seizure of islands in the Aleutians, and other aggressions in the North Pacific, turned Alaska into a territory at war. Navy and Army troops, with their supplies, poured into Alaska. Kodiak, because of its protected harbor and shipping access, became one of the main depots supporting the air and sea war with Japan in the Aleutian Campaign.

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The site selected for a Naval Air Station and Naval Operating Base was Women's Bay, south of the town of Kodiak, on Kodiak Island. It was designed to hold thousands of men and the equipment to service surface ships, submarines, and wheeled and amphibious aircraft. Massive earth-moving was required to carve out large runways, build numerous bunkers, dredge the harbor, and fill the land necessary for the base. To mobilize such men and equipment required experience. The federal government issued a cost-plus contract to a consortium of three major construction contractors, who took the name Siems Drake Puget Sound and immediately began assembling barge-loads of materials destined for Kodiak. The office of one of this century's premier industrial architects, Albert Kahn, designed hangars and other large buildings.

As the war progressed and the Navy's needs changed, construction of some planned buildings was canceled, and the materials diverted to Dutch Harbor and elsewhere to be closer to military action, according to then-Base Commander John Perry. By the end of 1943, the Aleutians were freed of Japanese control and combat forces moved to other areas of concern. Most of the troops and much of the equipment followed, and the Army facility at Kodiak (Fort Greely) was placed in caretaker status in December of 1944. The Naval Operating Base at Kodiak remained an important site for training and supplies throughout the war.

Despite its readiness, the Kodiak base saw no direct combat during World War II. It was operational on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and served as the base of operations for the Aleutian Theater of the War. The base provided supplies and reinforcements for the War in the South Pacific and provided air and sea patrols for the remainder of the War. As the historian Morison has noted, "During the rest of the war the Aleutians offer little of interest. . . But there was a constant improvement both of bases and of flying efficiency in these difficult northern areas. . . In any case, it was wonderful practice ground for armed forces; after a tour of duty in the Aleutians, every other field of action seemed good" (Morison, *The Two-Ocean War: A Short History of the United States Navy in the Second World War.* 271-272).

After 1943, when the Americans re-secured the Aleutian chain from the Japanese, Alaska was never again threatened by Japanese hostility. However, the war with Japan continued and naval, air, and land engagements in the South Pacific were reinforced by troops newly-freed from duty in Alaska. Within the larger context of Alaska's war effort Kodiak contributed greatly to both the Aleutian campaign and to America's continued race toward victory.

As the war moved south, Kodiak found itself further from combat and in an area of increased safety. Kodiak based air and sea patrols continued to monitor Japanese

movement for the duration of the war. The submarine base, however, was decommissioned in May of 1945. With the end of World War II, the Kodiak Naval Operating Base was still a contributing element of Alaska's defenses and became a minor player in the escalating Cold War with the Soviet Union.

With the conclusion of the War in 1945, Kodiak Naval Air Station remained under Navy control. By 1947, United States Coast Guard personnel were added to the base to provide search and rescue expertise to the Navy and to maintain several lighthouses and Long Range Navigational Aid (LORAN) stations around Kodiak. Three cutters were assigned to Kodiak by 1953 to conduct fisheries patrols. The responsibilities of the Coast Guard continued to increase with the construction of additional LORAN stations and an expanded fisheries law enforcement mission. The Navy moved most of its personnel out of Kodiak in 1969, and transferred the base to the Coast Guard in July of 1972.

By 1972 numerous World War II military buildings, particularly smaller temporary structures, had been dismantled or sold. However, numerous structures, because of the quality of their construction, remained in service into the 1970s. Today, ISC Kodiak is the Coast Guard's largest facility. The runway has been expanded and now handles all of Kodiak's commercial air transportation, including large jets. ISC Kodiak is the Host Command for several units within the Coast Guard including the Air Station Kodiak, Communication Station Kodiak, and an Electronics Support Unit. In addition, several other state and federal agencies are tenants at the site, including the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska Fish and Game, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Aviation Administration, NOAA Vessels, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Weather Service, U. S. Navy Special Warfare Group 1, U. S. Army Western Command, U. S. Postal Service, Kodiak Island Borough - Peterson School, and the Kodiak Electrical Association. Lastly, several private enterprises are tenants within the vicinity of the commercial airport.

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PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

Building 467 is similar to but smaller than building 24. It is a small one-story, nearly square concrete structure with a flat roof measuring 16' x 18' overall. The building is constructed of reinforced cast-in-place painted concrete, with no windows. This PBX Telephone vault was built in 1943; while its basic structure is in tact, most of the building's original equipment it once housed has been removed. It retains its hollow steel frame door with period doorknob and lock, 3 of its 4 original light fixtures, and an original glass fuse box housing 4 fuses.

1. Architectural Character: This building is a simple cube-like concrete box with an overall utilitarian character.

2. Condition of fabric: This building is in poor condition; much of the concrete has deteriorated and broken off, especially on corner edges, and at the joining of the roof and walls. On the northeast corner near the slab an approximately 1'x2' hole has been gouged out, ostensibly to provide crude access for utilities from outside.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: This single story building is basically rectangular in shape (16'x18' overall) and contains a total of 216 interior square feet.

2. Foundations: The building's concrete walls (may) rest on continuous spread concrete footings. The floor is 8" thick reinforced concrete. Finish floor elevation is approximately at grade.

3. Walls: The 12" thick steel reinforced cast-in-place concrete walls are approximately 9' high.

4. Structural system: The building is steel reinforced cast-in-place concrete. The steel reinforced concrete roof slab is 12" to 14" thick, and directly poured onto the walls at the building's edges.

5. Entry Corridor: Pedestrian access to the building is from the west face of the building through a 3'x7' opening, into a covered exterior 3'x11' corridor, which leads to a 3'x7' steel door.

7. Openings - doorways and windows: There is one door at the north end of the building. The door is a hollow steel frame with a steel panel, bisected by a single horizontal steel plate strut. It measures 3'-0" x 7'-0". It retains its original bronze hardware: Knobs, art deco style escutcheon plate, thumb turn lock and keyed lock. The building has no windows.

8. Roof: The flat roof is covered with several layers of bituminous built up roofing covering the concrete slab. There is an approximately 6" wide, integrally poured concrete drip edge that forms a continuous cornice band around the roof edge. There are no visible roof penetrations.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor Plan: The floor plan is open, with a 3'-4" square by 5'-5" deep equipment pit at the eastern end of the building.

2. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted concrete. 3 of 4 bronze circular light fixtures remain.

3. Flooring: Exposed concrete.

4. Mechanical: None.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: This building is located near the northwestern corner of Hangar II, on Polaris Avenue (formerly Avenue 'E') within the Air Station.

2. Historic landscape design: The building sets within an asphalt-paved parking lot on the north side of Hangar II.

3. Outbuildings: None

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original architectural drawings: Limited maintenance records at USCG ISC Kodiak. No original drawings were found.

B. Early views: None found.

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C. Interviews: None conducted.

D. Bibliography:

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Wall, Glennie Murray. *Integrated Support Command Kodiak Historic Resources Management Plan, Kodiak, Alaska.* U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Coast Guard, Maintenance & Logistics Command Pacific, Alameda, California. 1993.

E. Likely sources not yet investigated: None.

F. Supplemental material: None.

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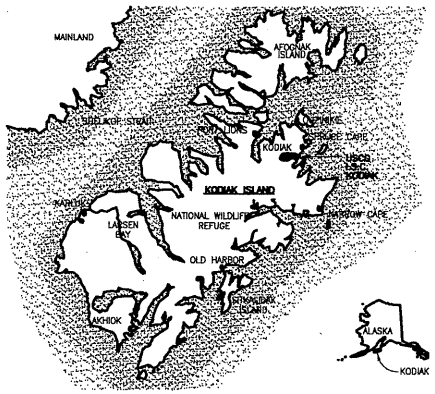

LOCATION MAP KODIAK ISLAND
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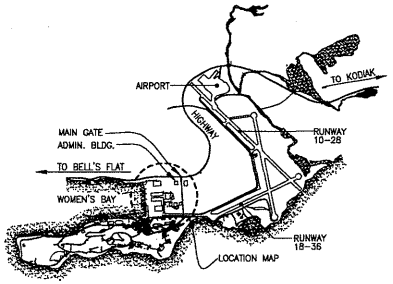

VICINITY MAP
SUPPORT CENTER – KODIAK
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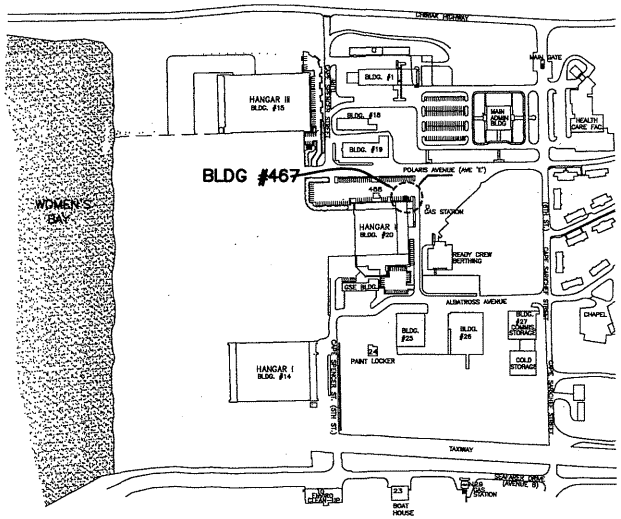

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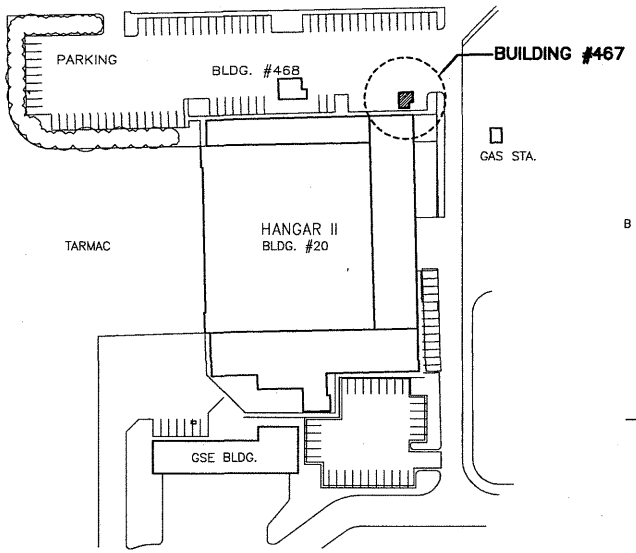
2	AS-BUILT FLOOR PLANS, ELEVATIONS, SECTIONS AND DETAILS



SITE PLAN
SCALE: N.T.S.

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98122 206.623.6832

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ISSUE		
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DRAWN BY: MEF
EDITED BY:
CHECKED BY: JEB
SCALE: AS NOTED PLOT SCALE: 1:1

SHEET TITLE
STRUCTURE DOCUMENTATION
ISC KODIAK
KODIAK ALASKA
BUILDING 467
CIVIL
COVER & SITE PLANS

REVIEWED BY:	REVIEWED BY:	REVIEWED BY:
TEAM LEADER	PROJECT EIC	
COMMANDING OFFICER		DATE

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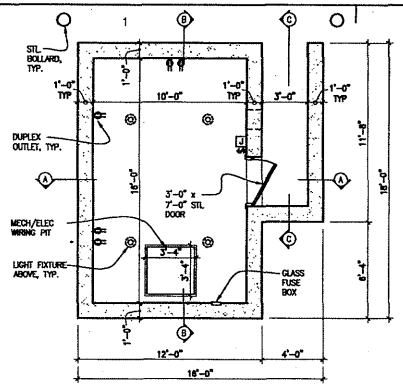

1 AS-BUILT FLR PLAN - BLDG 467
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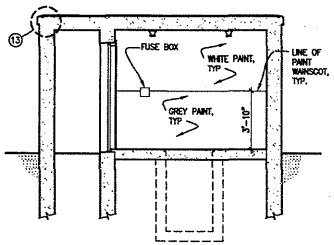

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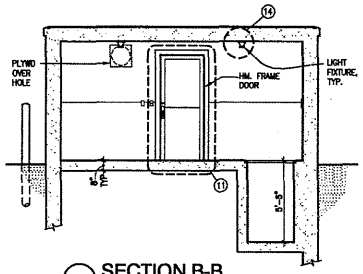

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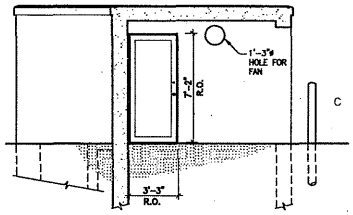

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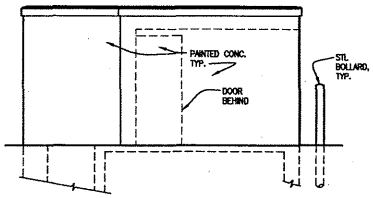

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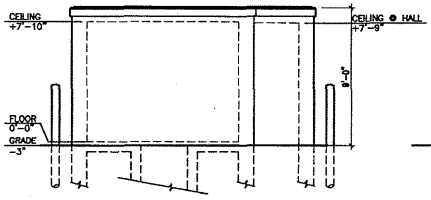

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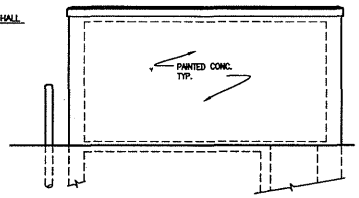

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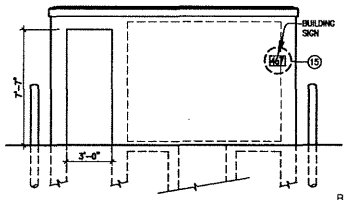

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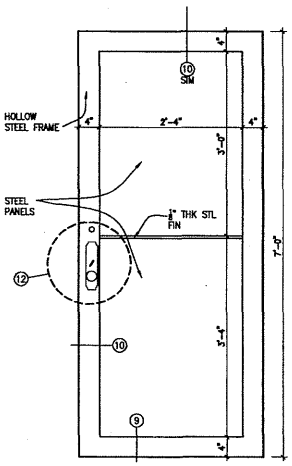

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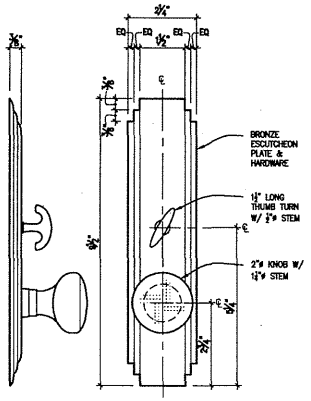

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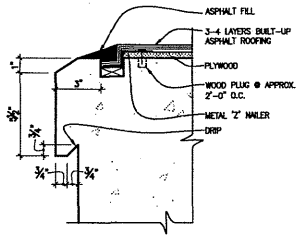

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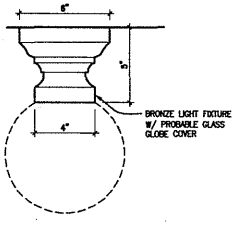

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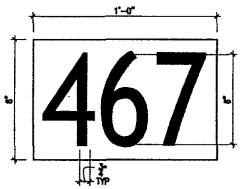

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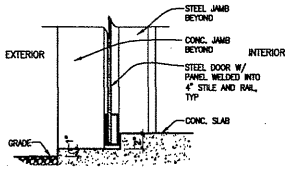

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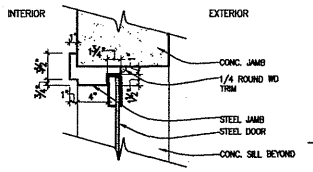

10 DOOR JAMB (HEAD SIM.)
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ISSUE		
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DRAWN BY: MEF
EDITED BY:
CHECKED BY: JEB

SCALE: AS NOTED PLOT SCALE: 1:1

SHEET TITLE

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ISC KODIAK
KODIAK ALASKA
BUILDING 467
ARCHITECTURAL
AS-BUILT CONDITIONS

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TEAM LEADER		DATE

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