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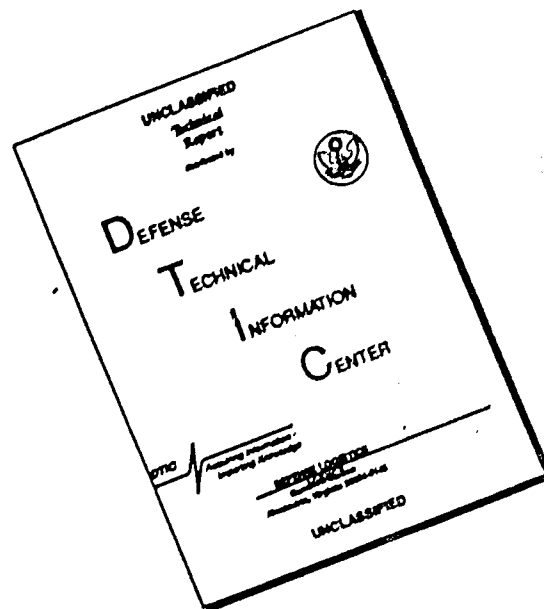
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⑥ Lessons Learned, HEADQUARTERS,
52D AVIATION BATTALION (U), ⑧
APO San Francisco 96318

AVGP-CC

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11 10 May 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report on Lessons Learned, 52D-00000-28 (R1) (U)

For quarterly period ending 30 Apr 66.

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

12 58p.

SECTION I: Significant Organization or Unit Activities.

1. (U) This report covers the period 1 January 1966 through 30 April 1966 and is submitted in compliance with AR 525-24 as amended by letter, subject: Quarterly Command Report, RCS CSGPO - 28(R1), dated 14 March 1966. Activities of subordinate units are included in this report.

2. (C) Type and number of aircraft authorized:

1 January 1966 - 6 April 1966:

a. UH1B	26
b. UH1B(A) (Armed)	36
c. UH1D	48
d. O1F	48
e. U6A	1

7 April 1966 - 30 April 1966

a. UH1B	26
b. UH1B(A)	45
c. UH1D	64
d. O1F	48
e. U6A	1

f. The 52d Aviation Battalion is based at Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN. Subordinate units consist of the following units located as indicated:

(1) Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment - Pleiku.

(2) 52d Airlift Platoon, redesignated on 1 February 1966 to 2d Platoon, 172d Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) - Pleiku. Equipped with UH1B aircraft.

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APR 30 1968

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(3) 119th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) - Pleiku. Equipped with UH1B aircraft.

(4) 155th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) - Ban Me Thuot. Equipped with UH1D aircraft.

(5) 161st Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) - Camp Lane, 15 miles West of Qui Nhon. Equipped with UH1D aircraft.

(6) 170th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) - Pleiku. Equipped with UH1D aircraft.

(7) 174th Aviation Company (Airmobile Light) - Camp Lane. Equipped with UH1D aircraft. This unit joined the battalion on 7 April 1966.

(8) 219th Aviation Company (Light Observation) - Pleiku. Equipped with O1F aircraft. This company supports the II Corps Visual Reconnaissance Program and is deployed in twelve separate locations throughout the II Corps Area.

3. (C) Operational statistics for the reported period appear below.

a. Total number of aircraft hours flown during reported period: 36,133 hours.

b. Total number of aircraft sorties flown during reported period: 80,160 sorties.

(1) Tactical and logistical sorties in support of Republic of Vietnam Forces (RVNAF) and US Forces: 78,156 sorties.

(2) Training and Maintenance sorties: 2003 sorties.

4. (U) Number of days engaged in operation and training during the reported period: 200 days.

5. (U) Training subjects stressed:

a. Aviator Training.

(1) Aviator Standardization.

(2) Armed Helicopter escort and suppressive fire tactics and techniques.

(3) Effects of density altitude on aircraft operations.

(4) Dash 10 procedures.

(5) Airmobile operations training.

(6) Visual reconnaissance.

(7) Aerial observer training.

(8) Flight safety training.

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(9) Night flying.

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b. Ground Training.

- (1) Crew served and individual weapons training.
- (2) Helicopter door gunner training.
- (3) Status of forces agreement.
- (4) Code of conduct.
- (5) Medical Training.
- (6) Escape and evasion training.
- (7) CBR Training.
- (8) Defense plans and alerts.

6. (C) Detailed description of especially significant operations or events.

a. Reception of the 174th Aviation Company (AML) and detachments.

(1) The advanced party for the 174th Aviation Company arrived at Camp Holloway on 26 March 1966. On 27 March they were moved to Camp Iano where the company would be based. Adequate mess facilities and personnel were provided by the 161st Aviation Company on a temporary basis for the purpose of feeding the unit until they were able to provide for themselves. The main body arrived in port at Qui Nhon on 4 April 1966 and was offloaded the same day. The company's 16 UH1D and 9 UH1B(A)'s were flown off the carrier on 7 April 1966. The 79th TC Co (Aircraft Maintenance) at Qui Nhon performed acceptance and safety of flight inspections on all aircraft. The unit was given a 30 day period to become operational. D-Day was established as 9 April 1966. On D+1, a team from Battalion Personnel moved to Camp Iano and processed all personnel and finance records for the company. The 52d Avn Bn OPLAN 3 prescribed the thirty day training program for the 174th's operational training. This training is progressing on schedule as of 30 April 1966.

b. The arrival at Camp Holloway of the 604th Transportation Company (DS). The 604th TC Company (DS), assigned to the 14th Transportation Battalion, but based at Camp Holloway, was hosted by the 52d Avn Bn. They were provided billets and messing facilities until they were able to provide for themselves. Their main body arrived at Camp Holloway on 15 March 1966.

7. (C) Summary of Major Tactical Operation: The past reporting period has been characterized by increased support with a commensurate decrease in day-to-day support for Sector, Special Forces and other administrative missions. An after-action report for each major operation conducted during the reporting period is attached as inclosures. Listed below in chronological order are all major operations with inclusive dates and inclosure number.

a. Operation Masher/Whitewing, 17 Jan - 17 Feb 66. Inclosure number 1.

b. Operation Garfield, 25 Feb - 24 Mar 66. Inclosure number 2.

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- c. Operation Tiger V, 23 Mar - 27 Mar 66. Inclosure number 3.
- d. Operation Lincoln, 25 Mar - 7 Apr 66. Inclosure number 4.
- e. Unnamed Operation in support of 22d ARVN Division, 14 Apr - 16 Apr 66. Inclosure number 5.
- f. Operation Longfellow, 11 Apr - 1 May 66. Inclosure number 6.
- g. Unnamed Operation in support of the 22d ARVN Division, 30 Apr 66. Inclosure number 7.

8. (U) Personnel and Morale Activities:

a. DEROS of Battalion Officers: Effective 15 April 66, a transfer of approximately 120 officers from one unit to another was made to equally distribute each company within the battalion, officer personnel departing this command during the same month. This infusion process allows each unit to lose officer personnel without losing the effectiveness of its operation at any one time.

b. Infusion 1st Cav Div: The 1st Cav Div effected the above infusion of the Division during April 1966. As a result of the infusion, this battalion received approximately 25 officers which were absorbed without appreciable turbulence.

c. Finance Operations

(1) Pleiku Finance Detachment (Provisional) was organized under GO40, Hqs, 1st Log Cnd, dtd 30 March 66. The office was opened for business on 1 April 66. Authorized strength is 2 officers and 8 enlisted men.

(2) Initial operations are as a Class B agent office. Its parent unit is the 13th Finance Detachment, Qui Nhon. The Pleiku Detachment will become an independent office, tentatively, on 21 May 66.

(3) Current services provided are as follows:

(a) Computation and payment of all types of pay and allowances, both during the month and on regular paydays, for non-divisional and non-MACV personnel.

(b) Conversion of currency. This includes providing piastres to agent officers, converting currency at the Finance Office, and converting MFC to U.S. currency at the New Pleiku airport for personnel departing on R&R and leave.

(c) Funding and examination of Imprest Funds for the 52d Aviation Battalion, Company A, 41st Signal Battalion and 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division.

(d) Processing documents affecting military pay, primarily allotment authorizations.

(e) Selling treasury checks of even denominations to postal officers and non-appropriated fund activities. When Pleiku Finance Detachment begins to operate as a separate, independent office, treasury checks will be sold to individuals for any amount exceeding \$99.99.

Page 4 of 16 pages

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

4

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d. Postal Activities:

(1) The 566th Army Postal Unit assumed operations of APO 96318 on 25 March 1966. Prior to this date, postal operations were handled by Air Force postal personnel. More than \$238,000.00 worth of money orders were sold at Camp Holloway during the month of April. Parcel post sales ran just over \$3,000.00. The APO 96318 received 1365 sacks, pouches and outside pieces during the same month. Additionally, 906 sacks, pouches and outside pieces were dispatched.

e. Special Services:

(1) Two USO shows performed for the battalion personnel during this period: The Ann Margret Show and the James Drury Show.

(2) A special project is under way to establish a recreation area at Lake Ben Ho. This is a jointly sponsored project with other units in the Pleiku area. The battalion is responsible for constructing Bar-B-Q pits and the life guard stands.

(3) A larger library building has been opened and sufficient numbers of books and magazines are being received.

f. Civic Actions:

(1) During the reporting period, the battalion was represented in both the II Corps Community Relations Council and the Pleiku Vietnamese-American Friendship Council.

(2) The basic construction of the Pleiku Orphanage was completed during this quarter and plans made to present the building to the Province in May 66. This is felt to be a significant accomplishment in that this battalion alone has carried this sizeable project from start to completion.

(3) The 155th Aviation Company in Ban Mo Thuot has continued to assist the Catholic Orphanage there.

(4) Several hundred pounds of clothing and medical supplies were donated by various individuals throughout the battalion and delivered to the Refugee Center at Tan Canh.

g. Religious Activities:

(1) During this reported period, the battalion was responsible for all Religious Activities in the battalion. A second Chaplain was assigned during the last month of the period. This provides the battalion with one Protestant and one Catholic Chaplain.

(2) During this period a total of 75 Religious Services were conducted with a total attendance of 1882.

h. Awards and Decorations: The following awards and decorations were presented during the period 1 January 1966 through 30 April 1966:

Legion of Merit	1
DFC	15
Bronze Star	18

Page 5 of 16 pages

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Soldiers Medal	4
Air Medal "V"	18
Air Medal	1284
Army Commendation Medal "V"	3
Army Commendation	28
Purple Heart	15

9. (U) Aviation Safety: The continued command emphasis on accident prevention has resulted in a minimum number of accidents within the 52d Avn Bn. During this period six accidents were recorded. Of these, three were minor and three were major accidents. Of the three major accidents, one was due to materiel failure. A second major accident was caused by a tin roof which was blown up through the rotor blades during take off causing the helicopter to crash. The third major accident was the result of losing rotor RPM on take-off from a confined area.

The 219th Avn Co (Fixed Wing) and the 2d Flt, 172d Avn Co had an accident free reporting period. Both units have been accident free since October 1965.

10. (C) Intelligence and Security:

a. Intelligence.

(1) General:

Considerable combat intelligence activity was generated during this quarter by an almost continual series of battalion-size operations. Constant liaison and exchange of intelligence was maintained with the intelligence agencies of the ARVN Airborne Division, 1st Air Cavalry Division, and U.S. Special Forces during Operation Masher/White Wing (Jan-Feb). Operations Garfield, Lincoln and Longfellow (Feb-Mar-Apr) necessitated close coordination of intelligence activities with the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. The close liaison established between the aviation battalion intelligence section and supported and adjacent units provided a continuous up-to-date intelligence picture for all aviation elements.

(2) Visual Reconnaissance:

A greatly accelerated VR program was initiated during this quarter. It was found that providing a tactical platoon of O-1 aircraft to supported units during combat operations yielded optimum results and responsiveness. In several instances, supported units were found to be relatively unaware of the full capabilities of VR aircraft, and has to be educated. Extreme flexibility of O-1 support was demonstrated during Operation Garfield, Lincoln and Longfellow. In many cases normal VR, radio relay, and artillery observation and adjustment missions were combined and accomplished by a single aircraft sortie.

It was found, during this period, that the use of armed reconnaissance teams consisting of one O-1 and two armed UH-1 aircraft working closely together could cover a great expanse of terrain in a very short time. When an area of suspected enemy activity was discovered it could be immediately probed.

CONFIDENTIAL

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by fire and results rapidly reported. This employment of O-1/UH-1 teams was extremely successful in the highlands where the terrain is a rolling and generally covered by heavy vegetation.

b. Security:

(1) Control of VN Personnel:

Considerable emphasis has been placed on all aspects of control of indigenous personnel. Close liaison and cooperation has been maintained with ARVN Military Security Service, Civilian Personnel Officer, VN National Police, and U.S. Counter Intelligence Agents. Four VC suspects were discovered and eliminated thru ARVN M.S.S. channels.

A strict search procedure has been implemented and has resulted in virtual elimination of all thievery and other attempts to take unauthorized items off-post.

(2) Physical Security and Defense:

A continuous daily emphasis on every phase of physical security and defense has periodically assessed weak points and areas requiring improvement. An aggressive night combat patrol program has been initiated during this reporting period. These patrols and ambushes conducted in the areas of likely enemy approaches surrounding Camp Holloway have paid dividends. During the recent coordinated VC attack on the Pleiku area, Camp Holloway was the only major installation not fired upon. Just prior to this enemy activity a U.S. night patrol from Holloway discovered and fired upon a group of VC who broke contact and fled. Upon checking the area the patrol found baskets containing CHICOM 82mm mortar rounds, charges and fuzes. It is felt this, in fact, deterred the VC element programmed to attack Camp Holloway.

c. Additional Activities - Reception of New Units:

(1) In April the 52d Aviation Battalion gained another new unit, the 174th Aviation Company (AMC). The battalion intelligence section provided the following to the new unit:

- (a) Complete basic load of maps
- (b) Current OB map of II Corps
- (c) Channels for receiving daily ISUM's and AA fire reports.
- (d) A complete security briefing and security procedures SOP.

(2) Upon arrival of the new unit an intelligence briefing was given which included all aspects of enemy situation, weather, terrain and escape and evasion techniques.

11. (C) Operational Activities:

a. Tactical Air Mobility Concepts. The concepts of conducting air-mobile operations in the battalion have necessarily been a subject of constant review. The increased capability of the enemy to mass more effective anti-aircraft weapons, and this increasing effectiveness has prompted the battalion to explore new ideas and concepts. The companies of the battalion have been encouraged to experiment with and develop new techniques and present them to the

CONFIDENTIAL

Battalion's quarterly Tactical Symposium which was conducted during April of this quarter. Primary purpose of this meeting of representatives (commanding officers, operations officers, and gun platoon leaders) of all subordinate units was to standardize tactical techniques and procedures both for more effective operations within the battalion and to facilitate the supported units planning and operations. The highlights of the meeting discussed are attached as inclosure number 8.

b. Reorganized Aviation Company: The Battalion was alerted on 16 March 66 to conduct a test on the reorganized aviation company that was to consist of 23 UH1D's and 8 UH1D(A)'s. The test began on 17 March and continued through 13 April 66. The results, conclusions and recommendations are listed in inclosure number 9.

c. Increased support of U.S. units. The battalion, beginning with Operation Garfield on 25 February 1966, has had a significant change in its mode of operations. In the past the battalion has normally supported only ARVN units with small operations of short duration. With the beginning of Garfield, the battalion has been in continuous support of U.S. units with only short breaks between major operations. The continuous support provided has greatly increased overall flying time and has consequently hampered the battalions maintenance program with an adverse effect on aircraft availability. All indications point to this steady pace continuing indefinitely. In addition to the effect that this increased support to U.S. units has had on this battalions operations and maintenance, it has had an adverse effect on the amount of support that this battalion has had and will have available with which to support the ARVN forces.

12. (C) Logistical Activities:

a. S-4 Activities:

(1) The reorganization of USARV into Support Commands under the 1st Logistical Command has proven very successful particularly in tactical resupply. This unit formerly dealt directly with the 1st Log Command in Saigon. Now, after extensive reorganization and instructions to subordinate units, supply procedures are beginning to become routine. The Qui Nhon Support Command has established a Pleiku Support Area adjacent to Camp Holloway. Pleiku Support Area provides all classes of supply, imprest funds, laundry, class A rations and repair facilities for all US Army elements in the Pleiku area. Additionally, they provide class I, III, and V to this unit when engaged in tactical operations anywhere within the Qui Nhon Support Command zone. The 155th Avn Co (HHC) is based and normally operates in the Nha Trang Support Command Area, and is supplied from Nha Trang Support Command. In the past it would seem that Pleiku was located at the end of the supply line. Between the pilferage and lost shipments and the opening and closing of the MSR to Qui Nhon we received little or nothing. Under the new system and the build-up of demand data and stockage at the Pleiku Support Area this unsatisfactory situation has been greatly alleviated. There continues a lack of construction materials such as cement, sandbags, lumber, asphalt and fixtures, etc. The lack of available tentage has compounded our billeting problem to an over-crowded condition throughout the battalion. During the quarter the assistance of the 1st Log Comd has relieved the battalion of the responsibility of maintaining eighteen prestock points for class III and V. We are presently involved in returning or turning in equipment which was formerly located throughout the II Corps CTZ. It is anticipated that by 1 June prestock points along with equipment and personnel will be maintained only at Kontum, Pleiku, Chao Rao and Ban Me Thuot.

Page 8 of 16 pages

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(2) This unit was tasked with sponsoring the 174th Avn Co (AML) which arrived in Qui Nhon in early April. Work orders were submitted for construction of necessary facilities. Engineer construction of ramps and helipads has been completed. Requisitions for expendables, class II(A), IV and IV(A) were submitted to Qui Nhon Support Command. Coordination for unloading troops, equipment, interim transportation, water, fuel and other requirements was accomplished both prior and after the arrival of the advance party of the unit.

(3) This unit was also tasked with sponsoring the 604th Transportation Co (DS) which arrived in Qui Nhon in mid-February. Work orders and requisitions were also submitted in preparation of the arrival of this unit to be billeted at Camp Holloway. Coordination of unloading and movement to the Floiku area was accomplished both prior and after the arrival of the advance party. The unit went to work and constructed its perimeter adjacent to the Camp Holloway fence and engineer effort commenced to construct ramps, hardstands and hangar buildings.

(4) Despite the shortage of some critical construction materials some progress was made in continuing construction of buildings and other installations at Camp Holloway, Ban Mo Thuot and Phu Tai location. A new dispensary for Camp Holloway was completed. A water storage facility of 50,000 gallons capacity is nearly complete. A pipe line to a new water source was installed along with required pumping and purifying equipment. Many other miscellaneous works were accomplished such as construction of additional bunkers, renovation of roads in preparation for the rainy season. It is anticipated that, due to the buildup and the material shortage, even less construction work will be accomplished during the next quarter.

b. Maintenance Activities:

(1) The assignment of an additional airmobile company during the quarter, in addition to the two assigned during the last part of the previous quarter presented several problem areas. Two of the units arrived with minimum essential equipment, therefore a limited maintenance capability hampered effective operations during the period. Although a portion of the equipment was received, there are several major items still intransit which continue to block an effective maintenance program.

(2) During the quarter the UH1B 540 rotor system came into operation within the command. One unit discovered the teflon bearings were failing. The fleet was grounded until new bearings could be obtained from CONUS and installed on all systems. The failure was determined to be the result of improper preservation methods used when preparing the aircraft for overseas. No further failures occurred after bearing replacement.

(3) Units within this organization have devised several quick change units for use in recovering downed aircraft. They are used as a temporary fix so that the aircraft may be flown back to the base camp where repairs may be completed. These include:

(a) Quick connect fuel tank. Projectiles penetrating the fuel tank have caused aircraft to be forced down in the landing zones or while enroute. A long range fuel tank has been fitted with flexible tubing of sufficient length to run from the cargo compartment along the exterior of the aircraft to the engine compartment. Through use of the connections there the tank is connected directly to the fuel filter system, leaving the damaged tank completely out of the system. This can be accomplished in a matter of minutes, thereby allowing the aircraft, to be flown providing other major damages are not sustained.

-Page 9 of 16 pages-

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(b) Quick connect oil cooler. The UH1B operational time is extremely limited when the oil cooler is damaged. A quick change cooler, to be fitted externally on the heater door was devised. Flexible tubing was then routed through the cowling fire access doors to the engine oil pump outlet and engine oil tank inlet. The installation requiring a maximum of fifteen minutes time allows the aircraft to be flown provided there are no major damages sustained.

c. Medical Activities:

(1) General:

(a) This past quarter saw a sizeable expansion in the battalion medical facilities. With the arrival of two new airmobile companies about the first of the year, their medical detachments became operational immediately. The 756th Med Detachment set up to support the 161st Company at Phu Tai and the 755th joined with the 94th Detachment and 52d Medical section to form the consolidated Camp Holloway dispensary.

(b) The new 100'X20' medical dispensary was finally completed late April. This new spacious building plus a personnel compliment now up to full TOE strength should greatly facilitate the medical support we now provide for some 2000 troops.

(c) The transition from the 12th Aviation Group to the 17th Aviation Group in April was carried out smoothly. Liaison activities with the group surgeon section seem to be improved as compared with previous association.

(2) Health of the Commands:

(a) There have been no remarkable incidents of serious diseases or injuries to report. Self limiting respiratory and gastrointestinal disorders continue to be our most commonly seen complaint.

(b) Reports of several case of cholera among the nearby Montagnards during April 66 prompted us to immunize all American Personnel who had not received the shot in the five previous months as well as all indigenous workers on the compound. No cases of the disease occurred at Holloway.

(c) A second daily sick call has been set up at 1330 hrs. this is done to help accommodate the ever expanding number of troops on the compound as well as to provide an additional flexibility in medical support.

(d) The VD rate has risen rather sharply this period. This is believed due to the influx of many new prostitutes in the Pleiku area as well as the emergence of many cases of penicillin resistant gonorrhea due no doubt to the prophylactic penicillin program. The program has recently been streamlined to some degree of having the prostitutes report to one central location for their shots rather than having the medical team go around to each bar and brothel.

(e) The dental clinic has moved into the old dispensary, thus markedly improving this physical facilities. They have acquired a second dentist, a dental x-ray unit and a high speed drill to aid them in providing prompt and efficient dental care for the area.

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(3) Veterinary Data:

The veterinary corps has bolstered their coverage and are now able to provide bimonthly visits to the Pleiku area. A tremendous increase in pets has been noticed at Hoi An all of which must be vaccinated and leashed or are subject to disposal from the compound.

(4) Preventive Medicine Data:

In February 66, the battalion provided an NCO and EM from each company for a brief course in field sanitation given by the Preventive Medicine Team from An Khe. This team also began providing monthly visits to assist in the sanitation inspection of the water plant, local ice plants, garbage and sewage disposal, mess halls, barber shop and latrines.

(5) Supplies:

The bottleneck in supplies have been for the most part resolved. The 32d Medical Depot in Qui Nhon now seems to be able to provide us with necessary supplies within a reasonable time frame.

SECTION II: Lessons Learned and Commanders Recommendations

1. (C) Lessons Learned:

a. Item: DEROS adjustment.

Discussion: The rapid buildup of troops in this theatre has created an acute personnel problem that has undoubtedly affected all units. Large numbers of personnel, both officer and enlisted, become eligible for rotation at the same time. With the input of three airmobile companies since December 1965, this battalion has almost doubled in strength.

Lesson Learned: That immediate adjustment through transfer of personnel, both officer and enlisted, must be made throughout the battalion in order to stagger rotation dates and minimize the affect of personnel losses within each company. Although mass transfer of personnel from every unit has a temporary adverse effect on morale and imposes a large workload on administration initially, it has proved to be of great benefit in maintaining the highest possible operational effectiveness under existing conditions.

b. Item: Aircraft performance in the Central Highlands

Discussion: This battalion has experienced several incidents during the reporting period. Most of these incidents could be properly described as "poor judgement" type accidents, however, inexperience and continuous stressful operating conditions were contributing factors. Density altitude and its effect on aircraft performance has been a principal contributing factor. On many days the density altitude exceeds 5000 feet. This reduces considerably the ability of helicopters to perform. This condition requires reduced loads and increased alertness on the part of the aviators concerned.

Lesson Learned: The use of the "go-no-go" card is the best method available under any given condition to determine reserve power available. All aviators must be knowledgeable and proficient in the use of this method, and must periodically be required to demonstrate proper use of this procedure.

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c. Item: Aviator Fatigue.

Discussion: This reporting period has seen a sharp increase of prolonged field operations, placing an increased load on the individual aviator. Units have been required to operate in the field continuously for several weeks. It is not uncommon for aviators to log 6 to 8 hours flying time daily.

Lesson Learned: That commanders at company, platoon and section level must continually monitor each aviator's flight time and be alert to detect signs of fatigue. The flight surgeon must also take an active interest in this area. Each aviator should be given periodic breaks to relieve the pressure and allow him to recuperate physically when and if possible.

d. Item: Pinnacle Approaches.

Discussion: Most aviators have a tendency to make their approaches to pinnacles too shallow. This type of approach has three distinct disadvantages; it forces the pilot to operate in the area of maximum turbulence for a longer period during the approach, it restricts visual surveillance of the landing area at the critical period just before touchdown by requiring a flare, and lastly, full effect of the low reconnaissance (short final) is lessened by reduced visibility and lower angle of sight allowing less reaction time with which to abort, should it be necessary.

Lesson Learned: That initial entry for a pinnacle approach should range from normal to a steep angle of approach commensurate with wind conditions. This gives the aviator maximum advantage and reduces the possibility of error to a minimum.

e. Item: Use of fire producing ordnance in LZ preparation.

Discussion: Fires in the landing zone are often started by the prestrike by Air Force and/or Artillery. Armed helicopters sometimes start fires with the 2.75 inch rockets and tracer ammunition during suppressive fire. The worst fires are started by napalm and white phosphorous. Napalm will invariably start fires while white phosphorous will probably start fires, but its own characteristic white smoke is another serious hazard. Smoke makes it difficult for armed escort helicopters to cover a landing formation. It often obscures the landing zone, making a safe landing extremely difficult and sometimes impossible. Upon occasions, the ground troops have been forced by fire to abandon an LZ. On one occasion a disabled, but only slightly damaged helicopter was completely destroyed by fire started from napalm used during the prestrike.

Lesson Learned: When the area in and around an LZ is likely to burn, restrict the type of ordnance to be used during the preparation to that least likely to cause fire; ie: fragmentation bombs, CBU's, cannon fire, high explosive with fuze VT, etc.

f. Item: Congested Landing Zones.

Discussion: Throughout the areas of operation in the Central Highlands, landing zones are often small and inadequate. Normal procedure for the U.S. units that this battalion support is to co-locate the infantry battalion command post with a security force of company size and the battalion's direct support artillery battery. Upon initial occupation the security force is placed in the LZ first. Thereafter the remainder of the elements are lifted in. Where the LZ is small, subsequent lifts have become hazardous because of the congested conditions caused by CH-47's unloading artillery. This further reduces the usable area within an LZ.

Page 12 of 16 pages

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Lesson Learned: During occupation of a small LZ, it was learned that all troop lifts into the LZ should be completed before the CH-47's are allowed to start lifting artillery. It is often necessary for the first troops into improve the LZ by cutting away trees, brush, etc.

g. Item: Use of Helicopter Door Gunners.

Discussion: During the reported period, for the first time, missions have been flown without door gunners. There are numerous points for discussion in the question that asks, "are door gunners necessary in the troop carrier helicopters?" By removing the door gunners an additional troop space is made available, while the firepower provided by him is sacrificed.

Lesson Learned: That door gunners are essential for some types of missions, and that they should continue to be authorized on the basis of one per helicopter. The decision to use door gunners must be made on a mission basis after full consideration is given to the mission, tactical situation, formation to be flown and other factors. Aside from the added protection that the door gunner provides in flight he is important as an "Assistant crew chief". He relieves the crew chief of a great part of the work that must be done in order to properly maintain his helicopter for the rigorous operational requirements.

h. Item: Crew Chief and Door Gunner Safety.

Discussion: Crew chiefs and door gunners will occasionally loosen their belts to more comfortably adjust their firing position. On one occasion, the crew chief had loosened his seat belt on a landing approach. The aircrew had trouble during the final stages of the landing and crash landed, rolling on its side. The crew chief was the only injury. He was thrown out of the air and pinned beneath it.

Lesson Learned: That crew chiefs and door gunners must keep their seat belts snugly adjusted.

i. Item: LZ Identification.

Discussion: While the procedure described below has always been practiced by this battalion, it is felt worthy of comment. In a multilift operation it is often difficult for subsequent elements, flights or companies to locate the exact LZ location due to prestrike smoke and dust or due to excessive interval.

Lesson Learned: That this problem can be eliminated if the lead ship in each element drop yellow smoke upon departure.

j. Item: Decreased Fuel Consumption.

Discussion: Another procedure consistently practiced by this battalion, but thought of possible value to newly formed aviation units and as a teaching point for UH-1 helicopter transition training is strict observance of "Dash 10" procedures as they apply to reducing RPM for cruise flight to 6350.

Lesson Learned: That fuel consumption can be reduced as much as 100 pounds per hour by exercising rigid RPM control when maximum power is not required.

k. Item: Employment of OLF aircraft during major operation.

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Discussion: During the reported period, the OLF aircraft has again proved its value. On 10 March, during Operation Garfield, OLF support was increased from two aircraft to six. The results of the increased visual reconnaissance, artillery observation and other type missions performed were quickly recognized by the supported units and have been demanded during subsequent operations.

Lessons Learned: That immediately responsive OLF support in sufficient quantity can greatly increase the operational effectiveness of the ground unit. That the OLF is capable of performing a variety of essential missions not suited for other aircraft. During the course of operations a procedure that proved to be effective was in employing a light gun team with an OLF to search specific areas of interest. By using the OLF to control the search of the gun team and vector them to specific targets, their armament could be effectively employed to develop a target or destroy it if within their capability, otherwise the OLF would call additional fire from artillery or Air Force to engage the target.

1. Item: Employment of CH-47 Aircraft.

Discussion: For the first time, this battalion has employed CH-47 aircraft, attached from the 1st Air Cavalry Division and the 147th Aviation Company (AML). The capabilities that this aircraft possess are essential to the aviation support required by the U.S. units supported during this reported period. In addition to their primary role of lifting and resupplying artillery, they have been of immeasurable value to this battalion by providing immediately responsive aircraft recovery. On several occasions recoverable aircraft would have been lost had they not been quickly recovered by the CH-47's. For one portion of Operation Lincoln, the CH-47's were detached from this battalion and made available on a mission request basis to the supported Infantry Brigade. This created certain problems in coordination and planning over which the Aviation Battalion Commander had no control. Support was not as responsive as desired by the Brigade and at one time during the occupation of a small LZ, aircraft landing was disrupted by the unexpected arrival of three CH-47's which were performing the artillery lift into the same LZ.

Lessons Learned: That all Army aircraft with the possible exception of "Dust Off" be under the operational control of the Aviation Commander responsible for aviation support to the operation.

2. (C) Commander's Recommendations:

a. Problem: Non-Receipt of Assignment Instructions

Background: During April 1966, the 52d Security Platoon lost approximately 70 enlisted personnel through DEROS. Assignment instructions to CONUS were not received for 65 of these personnel. They were assigned to Oakland, California, without further assignment instructions. This created personal problems and inconvenience to the individuals concerned and to the Oakland Army Terminal Facility.

Recommendation: That the USARV G-1 look into this problem area as I feel sure that it must be theatre wide.

b. Problem: That newly assigned aviators are arriving in this command untrained in the UH1B(A) helicopter.

Page 14 of 16 pages

CONFIDENTIAL

14

CONFIDENTIAL

Background: Armed helicopters are consistently operated at maximum gross weight. An extremely fine touch is required to fly this aircraft, especially in the Central Highlands, not to mention the gunnery proficiency required. In order to become an operational Armed helicopter aviator, an extensive training burden is placed on the operational companies before full value is realized. Before being released as an aircraft commander, three to four months training is required.

Recommendation: That consideration be given to sending approximately 30% of the student aviators through gunnery training prior to assignment to this theatre.

c. Problem: Lack of aerial photography capability.

Background: In February 1966, several aerial polaroid cameras with reproducing and enlarging equipment were received by this battalion's S-2. The equipment was made available by the U.S. Army Limited War Lab, ACTIV, for test purposes. The cameras were extensively and profitably used during combat operations in February and March at which time they were required to be returned. The capability of taking a photo, or series of photos, and immediately reviewing the results upon return from reconnaissance flights is of immense value to the battalion. Photos obtained during pre-operations landing zone reconnaissances and used during aviation briefings were a very effective supplement to map and terrain analysis.

Recommendation: That the Aviation Battalion and Company TOE provide for similar polaroid equipment for use as described above.

d. Problem: Lack of immediately responsive helicopter recovery capability.

Background: The recent insurgent employment of heavier and more accurate anti-aircraft fire has pinpointed the need for a recovery capability that is immediately responsive to the aviation commander. Recently, the means of acquiring recovery aircraft to extract downed aircraft had been cumbersome except during those operations when CH-47 aircraft were under operational control of this battalion. This has caused recovery efforts to be delayed for extended periods of time.

Recommendation: That a more responsive request channel be provided this battalion for aircraft recovery. In-country communications further delay present procedures for obtaining aircraft recovery. I recommend that each aviation battalion maintenance officer be authorized direct request channels to the nearest unit with recovery capability.

e. Problem: Shortage of "Hot End" Inspection Kits.

Background: Hot end Kits for the T-53 engines are requisitioned by aircraft serial number 150 flying hours prior to installation. They are placed on priority O5 requisition. At 50 flying hours prior to installation, the priority is increased to O2. When the aircraft comes due for inspection without having obtained the kits an EDP requisition is initiated.

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Recommendation: That Hot End Kits as well as other high usage items be stockpiled or more effectively programmed into the theatre so as to meet such priority orders and ship times presently established under current supply regulations.

Robert L. Cody

ROBERT L. CODY
Lt Col, Inf
Commanding

9 Incl.

1. After Action, Masher/WhiteWing
2. After Action, Garfield
3. After Action, Tiger V
4. After Action, Lincoln
5. After Action, Unnamed Operation, 14-16 Apr 66
6. After Action, Longfellow
7. After Action, Unnamed Operation, 30 Apr 66
8. Aviation Tactical Symposium
9. Test Results, Reorganized Airmobile Company

Page 16 of 16 Pages

CONFIDENTIAL

16

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

AVGP-CC

10 March 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation "MASHER/WHITE WING"

TO: Commanding Officer
17th Aviation Group
ATTN: S-3
APO US Forces 96240

1. Mission Background: On 17 January 1966, the 52d Aviation Battalion was alerted by Field Forces Vietnam to support II Corps (ARVN) in operation MASHER. Operation MASHER was a joint US/ARVN operation conducted in North-eastern Binh Dinh Province. The battalion was notified that an additional Airmobile Light Company would be attached for the first 72 hours of the operation.

The battalion commander made a preliminary reconnaissance of the operational area and requested that Phu Cat airfield, coordinates BR 920480 be allocated to the 52d Aviation Battalion as a base for the operation. This request was granted. Plans were made to place a battalion liaison officer in the II Corps forward and the Airborne Brigade (ARVN) CCCC's. On 25 January 1966, elements of the battalion headquarters with necessary personnel and equipment were moved by CV-2 to Phu Cat. The battalion received word that the attached company would be the 68th Aviation Company (AML) from Vung Tau. A liaison officer established contact on 25 January 1966. On 26 January 1966 the battalion commander, staff and the 119th Aviation Company closed into Phu Cat. A liaison visit and landing zone reconnaissance was conducted by the battalion commander, S-3 and personnel from the Airborne Brigade (ARVN).

The 155th Aviation Company and the 68th Aviation Company closed into Phu Cat 271500 January 1966. An operational briefing was conducted by the battalion commander and the staff for all unit commanders, operation officers and platoon leaders at 271700.

2. The following is a summary of events:

17 January. FFV alerted the battalion for operation MASHER.

19 January. The battalion S-3 and S-2 attended a preliminary coordination meeting at the II Corps headquarters. Units represented were the 1st Air Cavalry Division, II Corps (ARVN), the Airborne Brigade (ARVN), USAF and the 52d Aviation Battalion.

20 January. The battalion S-3 and S-2 made an area reconnaissance with the II Corps G-3 and G-4 advisors. A tentative landing zone was selected in the vicinity of coordinates BS 879125. Planning and coordination was initiated to use the Bong Son soccer field, coordinates BR 862959 as a battalion forward refueling and rearming point. Through mutual agreement with all participating elements, the Bong Son airstrip would not be used as a staging field by either the 52d Aviation Battalion or the 1st Air Cavalry Division. The airfield would be kept open for Air Force and Army fixed wing aircraft.

CONFIDENTIAL

Encl 1

17

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- 25 January. Headquarters Detachment moved the stagefield party to Phu Cat by CV-2. A liaison officer from the 68th Aviation Company established contact with the battalion.
- 26 January. The battalion commander and staff closed at Phu Cat 261000. The 119th Aviation Company closed at 261500 with thirteen (13) UH1B and six (6) UH1B(A). Contact was made with the S-3 advisor to the airborne brigade (ARVN) and a landing zone reconnaissance was conducted with members of the brigade staff.
- 27 January. The Commanding General of the Airborne Brigade (ARVN) and the U.S. Senior Advisor were picked up at Qui Nhon 271200. The 52d Aviation Battalion Commander, the Commanding General of the Airborne Brigade and Senior Advisor made an area reconnaissance. A battalion loading zone party placed individual helicopter landing markers in the loading zone and briefed members of the airborne brigade to effect expeditious loading and have a minimum ground time for loading of subsequent lifts. The troop loading zone was established at coordinates BR 882996. The 155th Aviation Company closed at Phu Cat at 1400 with twelve (12) UH1D, six (6) UH1B(A) and one (1) UH1D (wrecker) helicopters. The 68th Aviation Company closed at Phu Cat at 271500 with twelve (12) UH1D and six (6) UH1B(A) helicopters. At 1700 an operational briefing was conducted by the battalion commander and the staff. The battalion commander and S-3 returned to a forward CP co-located with the airborne brigade to maintain close coordination with the brigade.
- 28 January. "D" Day. The loading zone party departed at 0630 hours, to be on station to receive the lift units. Starting at 0715, the three airmobile companies departed Phu Cat at thirty minute intervals. Each unit stopped at the forward refueling point to top off. All units closed into the staging area by 0930 hours. The initial LZ landing time was delayed for two hours due to fog and low ceilings. An artillery preparation began at 1100 hours, ending just prior to the first landing at 1200 hours. 52d Aviation Battalion departed the loading zone at 1152 hours arriving in the LZ, coordinates BS 903150 at 1200 hours. Subsequent LZ times were 1219, 1240 and 1300 hours. Approximately one thousand (1000) troops were lifted in four (4) lifts. Light ground fire was received. No hits were sustained. A USAF prestrike was not available due to low ceilings and rain showers. Naval gun fire assisted in the artillery preparation. Upon completion of the third lift the 119th Aviation Company returned to Phu Cat and went on standby. The 68th Aviation Company made the final lift and returned to Phu Cat for standby. The 155th Aviation Company refueled, rearmed and went on standby in the loading zone for a possible lift of the reserve. At approximately 1830 hours, one (1) UH1B(A) received hits from ground fire while escorting a medical evacuation helicopter. The damaged helicopter made a successful landing in a secure area and was recovered on the following day. The decision was made to keep one (1) company in the vicinity of the Airborne Brigade each day to meet resupply and short fuze mission requirements. Two (2) troop carrier and two (2) armed helicopters remained each night at the brigade command post for emergency missions and medical evacuation escort. All other aircraft returned to Phu Cat each night.

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- 29 January - 1 February: The battalion supported the Airborne Brigade in routine resupply, reconnaissance, and medical evacuation. No airmobile operations were conducted from 29 January thru 1 February. The 68th Aviation Company was released 010800 February. On the morning of 1 February the battalion closed out stagefield operations at Phu Cat and moved the headquarters plus the 119th and 155th Aviation Companies to coordinates BR 882996, near the Airborne Brigade command post. The battalion closed into the new location at 011200 February.
- 2 February. Sniper fire had been received frequently on the approach path to the staging area, vicinity of coordinates BR 887992. At 021700 hours the 119th Aviation Company was employed to lift an eagle flight. Eighty (80) troops were lifted into the area and extracted thirty (30) minutes later. Light ground fire was received going into the area. No hits were received. While returning the eagle flight to their original location, one (1) UH1B(A) received a hit from ground fire injuring the co-pilot in the lower portion of the back. The co-pilot was evacuated to Qui Nhon.
- 3 February. The battalion conducted an AIA, lifting the 1st Battalion of the Airborne Brigade. The battalion elements consisted of the 155th and 119th Aviation Companies utilizing ten (10) UH1D, eleven UH1B and twelve (12) UH1B(A) helicopters. The pickup site was at coordinates BS 830061. Four hundred seventy (470) troops were lifted in three (3) lifts into an LZ along the beach at coordinates BS 928077. The first LZ landing time was at 1010 hours, subsequent times were 1030 and 1050 hours. Light ground fire was received on the initial landing, no hits were taken. The USAF provided overhead aircover for the operation. At 1330 hours the 155th Aviation Company was employed to lift an eagle flight from Task Force Alpha, coordinates BS 908125, to an LZ at coordinates BS 922113. Seventy two (72) troops were lifted in one (1) lift. At 1500 hours an extraction was made returning the eagle flight to the pickup location. No ground fire was received during the operation.
- 4 February. The 155th Aviation Company was committed to escort Prime Minister Ky and party with eight (8) UH1D and four (4) UH1B(A) helicopters. The party was escorted from Qui Nhon to Quang Ngai with several intermediate stops enroute. Prime Minister Ky decorated eight (8) crew members from the battalion for valor for a night medical evacuation mission flown 28 January 1966.
- 5-6 February. The battalion was directed by FFV to support the 1st Air Cavalry Division 5-6 February. The 119th Aviation Company was utilized in numerous general support missions consisting mostly of resupply and command liaison missions. The 155th Aviation Company was alerted for troop lift into the An Lao valley. The An Lao operation was delayed due to inclement weather. At 061300 February the 155th Aviation Company was released to return to home station at Ban Me Thut. The decision was made that one (1) AML company could provide adequate support to the Airborne Brigade. The battalion headquarters terminated operations in the Bong Son area leaving the 119th Aviation Company to support it. The 119th Aviation Company reverted to support of the Airborne Brigade on 7 February.

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- 7 February. The 119th Aviation Company lifted elements of the 6th Battalion, Airborne Brigade to secure an area for survey party at coordinates BS 930060. Two hundred thirty (230) troops were lifted in four (4) lifts from a pick up site at coordinates BS 989080 to an LZ at coordinates BS 930060. First LZ time was 0800 and subsequent landing times were at 0820, 0850 and 0915. Light ground fire was received, but no hits were taken.
- 8 February. The 119th Aviation Company lifted elements of the 6th Battalion, Airborne Brigade in an ALA from coordinates BS 886032 to an LZ at coordinates BS 930050. Three lifts were made lifting one hundred forty-four (144) troops in three (3) lifts. First LZ landing time was 0800, subsequent times 0820 and 0900 hours. No ground fire was received during the operation.
- 9 February. The 119th Aviation Company lifted elements of the 6th Battalion, Airborne Brigade in an ALA from coordinates BS 890069 to an LZ at coordinates BS 935060. One hundred sixty (160) troops were lifted in three (3) lifts. First LZ time was 0800 hours, subsequent times 0825 and 0855. One (1) UH1B(A) received damage to the main rotor from ground fire, there were no injuries. After the landing zone was secured, a Navy survey party of fourteen (14) personnel was lifted into the LZ. The Navy party was extracted at 1310 hours.
- 10-12 February. The 119th Aviation Company flew numerous resupply and command liaison missions for the Airborne Brigade. No troop lifts were made 10-12 February. On 12 February the 119th Aviation Company was released to return to home station with the main party, leaving two (2) UH1B and two (2) UH1B(A) in general support of the Airborne Brigade. The company closed into Camp Holloway at 1530 hours.
- 15 February. The battalion received instructions from FFV at 1030 hours to send six (6) UH1B and two (2) UH1B(A) from the 119th Aviation Company to the Airborne Brigade at Bong Son. Further information was received at approximately 1300 hours to send the entire company. Action was initiated to recall aircraft out on missions, and at 1540 hours eight (8) UH1B and three (3) UH1B(A) were dispatched to Bong Son.
- 16-17 February. The 119th Aviation Company flew general support type missions, consisting mostly of resupply and troop movement. No assaults were flown 16-17 February and the company was released from the brigade at 171200 hours.

3. Summary of Statistical Data:

a.	UNIT	HOURS	SORTIES	PAX	#CARGO	MED EVAC
	119	585	2111	2266	82,400	10
	155	335	1140	1393	104,400	135
	68	228	490	733	61,800	27
TOTAL:	1148	3,741	4,402	248,600	172	

- b. The 219th Aviation Company (Light Observation) provided four (4) O1F aircraft for continuous radio relay for the Airborne Brigade. Two hundred thirteen (213) sorties, and two hundred forty-two (242) hours were flown during the operation.

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4. Logistics: Logistical Support for this operation was excellent. On D-7 initial contact was made with the G-4 advisor II Corps (ARVN) and tentative logistical requirements were discussed. On D-5, the S-4 of the battalion made direct contact with the 1st Log Command at Qui Nhon. Class I was to be supplied as needed on a daily basis. Class III A was requested at the rate of 20,000 gallons daily, to be adjusted as mission requirements dictated. One half of this POL was to be delivered to the battalion's rear base at Phu Cat, the other half to the immediate vicinity of Bong Son (BR 864962). The ASR for Class V A was to be delivered daily in equal proportions to Phu Cat and Bong Son. All resupply was to be effected by ground transportation. The S-4 section, including POL and ammo handlers, arrived at Phu Cat on D-2. Immediate liaison was made with the commander of the 1st Log Command Forward Supply Area at Phu Cat, and resupply commenced on D-1. On D Day, of particular note, was the refueling of three airmobile companies (60 aircraft) in less than one hour, using a 5000 gallon tanker and three 1200 gallon tankers. After D Day, Class III A and V A requirements for the battalion were minimal and daily re-supply was adjusted with the 1st Log Command. Stagefield equipment was displaced and recovered using a total of 16 CV-2 sorties. The following significant supplies were expended on the operation:

Class I	Class III A	Class V A
4100 "C" rations	89,500 gal JP-4	1750 rds 40 MM
	2,500 gal 115/145	1300 rds 2.75 Rkt
		95,000 rd 7.62 MM Link

DISTRIBUTION:

CG, FFV
CO, 17th Avn Gp

Robert L. Cody, Maj, USA
for ROBERT L. CODY
Lt Col, Inf
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

AVGP-CC

25 March 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report, OPERATION GARFIELD

1. MISSION BACKGROUND:

On 21 February 1966, the 52d Aviation Battalion was alerted by I Field Forces Vietnam to participate in Operation Garfield. The Battalion's mission was direct support of the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, with three airmobile companies. Initially, Garfield was to be a joint US/ARVN operation with the 23rd ARVN Division participating. The time frame was 25 Feb - 8 Mar. It was to be conducted in the northern Darlac Province, west of Highway 14. The ARVN Division did not participate and the area of operation was later extended north into the southern edge of Pleiku Province. The termination date was extended to 24 March 1966.

2. The following is a day-by-day summary of events:

21 February: At 1100 hours, the battalion commander and the staff visited Ban He Thuot for a preliminary coordination meeting with the 23rd ARVN Division and 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division.

22 February: At 0800 hours, a coordination meeting of the battalion staff was held to discuss the operation. At 2000 hours, the battalion operation order (OPORD 4) was published.

25 February: At 0800 hours, the battalion headquarters commenced its move to Ban He Thuot. It closed at Ban He Thuot City Airport and was operational at 1300 hours. The 170th Aviation Company closed with 12 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s at 1400 hours.

26 February: The 119th Aviation Company closed with 13 UH1B's and 6 UH1B(A)'s at 1515 hours.

27 February: At 0900 hours, the 155th Aviation Company conducted an assault, lifting A Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, from Ban He Thuot East to an LZ at AQ 852192. The lift consisted of 160 troops and was accomplished in two successive lifts, completed at 1000 hours. An adequate airstrike of the LZ was conducted and there was no ground fire received during the landing. At 2030 hours, the battalion conducted a briefing for the next days operation.

28 February: Beginning at 0900 hours, the 119th, 155th and 170th Aviation Companies, conducted assault landings with A, B, and C Companies, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, into their LZ's at AQ 828227, 794213, and 827215, respectively. Total lift consisted of 470 troops, six 81mm mortars and 1500 lbs of ammunition. This lift was completed at 1100 hours. There was no enemy ground fire. Upon completion, the 170th Aviation Company returned to Ban He Thuot East to standby for reinforcement, resupply and reconnaissance. The other two companies returned to Ban He Thuot City. The 170th Aviation Company conducted extensive resupply to the forces in the field. Also, they dispersed four platoon sized elements, and as their last mission, extracted 10,000 lbs of captured rice.

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1 March: At 0900 hours, all three companies with a total of 20 UH1D's, 12 UH1B's and 14 UH1B(A)'s landed 376 troops from B and C Companies, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, into an LZ at AQ 795240. This move took two lifts. Immediately following this, the 119th Aviation Company displaced 26 troops from AQ 833206 to AQ 825185. The 170th Aviation Company displaced 72 troops from AQ 805183 to AQ 825185. These lifts were completed at 1145 hours, at which time all three companies stood by at AQ 825185. At 1200 hours all aircraft lifted 257 troops of A and B Companies, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry into two LZ's at AQ 875193 and AQ 885205 respectively. Following this lift, 180 troops of A Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry were lifted from AQ 825185 to AQ 861254. The 119th and 170th Aviation Companies remained in the operational area and conducted resupply of all elements. They were released at 1800 hours and returned to Ban Me Thuot City. There were no incidents during the day.

2 March: At 0700 hours the 170th and 119th Aviation Companies conducted an assault with B Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, from AQ 825185 to AQ 814207. A ten minute artillery preparation was placed on the LZ. Next, C Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, was lifted from AQ 825185 to an LZ at AQ 815218. There was also an artillery preparation on this LZ. Both assaults were conducted without incident. A total of 205 troops were lifted. Upon completion of these lifts, both companies were employed in resupply to all elements, and upon completion of resupply the units landed earlier were extracted back to AQ 815218. Aircraft were released and returned to Ban Me Thuot City at 1835 hours.

3 March: At 0730 hours the 170th Aviation Company with 12 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s conducted an assault landing of 72 troops, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry into an LZ at AQ 848292. At 1300 hours, the 170th and 119th Aviation Companies, with a total of 12 UH1D's, 9 UH1B's and 10 UH1B(A)'s, conducted a placement into the same LZ at AQ 848292. There were three lifts required in lifting 392 troops of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. The 170th Aviation Company suffered a hard landing during the afternoon causing incidental damage to the landing gear of a UH1B(A).

4 March: At 0800 hours, the 119th, 155th and 170th Aviation Companies with a total of 22 UH1D's, 10 UH1B's and 12 UH1B(A)'s, airlifted a total of 508 troops, six 81mm mortars and two 4.2 inch mortars of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, from AQ 8217 into one LZ at AQ 767327. This assault was completed in three lifts. An adequate Air Force prestrike was conducted prior to landing. During the remainder of the day, the 170th conducted two Eagle flights of 42 and 55 troops into LZ's at AQ 806294 and AQ 808345 respectively, in support of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. The 170th extracted these troops between 1600 and 1700 hours. The 119th supported the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry with one Eagle flight of 42 troops into an LZ at AQ 861336. They were later extracted from the same LZ. Extensive resupply to all elements was accomplished during the day. There were no incidents.

5 March: The 119th Aviation Company with 10 UH1B's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 11 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s supported the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, respectively. They conducted several Eagle flight assaults and extractions plus resupply for each of the battalions during the day. All aircraft operated until dark before being released. A total of 902 troops and 25 tons of cargo were lifted during the day.

6 March: At 0800 hours, the 119th with 10 UH1B's and 6 UH1B(A)'s, the 155th with 11 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 12 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s, picked up 525 troops, six 81mm mortars, two 4.2 inch mortars and 3000 lbs of cargo from AQ 769327 and in three successive lifts airlanded them into an LZ at AQ 945553.

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6 March: This LZ was situated next to the Bantengard Village at Boun Brieng. There were no incidents upon landing. Upon completion of this move the 170th conducted resupply of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. The 155th conducted two company lifts, one of 100 troops and another of 160, both in the vicinity of AQ 936424. Next, the 155th airlifted another company of 172 troops into an LZ at AQ 979423 in two successive lifts. These lifts were in support of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. At 1515 hours, the 155th lifted 155 troops of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, in two successive lifts into two LZ's at AQ 875202 and AQ 855203. At 1800 hours, the 155th extracted the company that was landed in the LZ at AQ 936424. At 1440 hours, three CH-47 type aircraft of the 226th Aviation Company (AHC), arrived at Ban Ho Thuot City and were placed under operational control of the 52d Aviation Battalion. Their primary mission to be the movement of and resupply of artillery.

7 March: At 0730 the 119th with 6 UH1B's and 6 UH1B(A)'s moved to AQ 945552 to support the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, for possible reaction lifts. The 170th with 12 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s moved to AQ 848292. The 155th stood by at Ban Ho Thuot (City) with all but its armed helicopters which provided convoy cover to the 3rd Brigade, 25th Division's main body from Ban Ho Thuot (East) along highway 14 north to AQ 950550. The three CH-47's moved two artillery batteries from AQ 848292 to AQ 946552. This lift commenced at 0730 and was completed at 1100 hours.

8 March: The 155th went on a 20 minute ground alert for Project Delta and was released from Operation Garfield. This commitment was scheduled to continue through 17 March 1966. The 119th Aviation Company with 9 UH1B's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th Aviation Company with 11 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s lifted 365 troops, four 81mm mortars and 2400 lbs of ammunition from AQ 848292 to an LZ at AQ 955644. This took three successive lifts with first LZ time of 0800 hours. After refueling, a 62 troop security force was lifted into an LZ at AQ 873528 by the 170th Aviation Company. Both Companies then lifted 165 troops from B Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, to an LZ at AQ 831547. An artillery preparation of this LZ was adequate. Upon completion of B Company, A Company with 171 troops was lifted into the same LZ. The CH-47's lifted one battery from AQ 946552 to an LZ at AQ 872528. This was accomplished between 0730 and 1100 hours, the two companies (A and B-companies, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry) were extracted to AQ 946552. This was completed with all aircraft released at 1930 hours.

9 March: Beginning at 0700 hours, the 155th Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s lifted 130 troops from Boun Brieng to an LZ at AQ 792473 in two lifts. At 0800 hours the 170th Aviation Company with 9 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s lifted 44 troops from Boun Brieng to an LZ at AQ 784603 in one lift. At 0830 the 170th conducted an Eagle flight in the vicinity of AQ 820618. While the flight commander was making a low pass of the intended LZ, it received automatic weapons fire from four separate locations. Three rounds struck his aircraft causing minor damage. The flight was aborted while the gun crews destroyed one weapon and neutralized the other three. As soon as the helicopters cleared the area, tactical air conducted strikes on the enemy positions. At the conclusion of the air strike, the 170th conducted two lifts into LZ's at AQ 792621 and AQ 813634. Each lift consisted of 42 troops. During the remainder of the day, the 170th conducted troop displacements and resupply to include emplacement of four 4.2 inch mortars at AQ 827618. The 119th was not employed that day.

10 March: At 0800 hours, the 155th with 8 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s and the 119th with 8 UH1B's and 5 UH1B(A)'s lifted 71 troops into an LZ at AQ 827618. At 0830 they lifted B and C Companies, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, consisting of 400 troops into two LZ's at AQ 775638 and AQ 785615 respectively. Two CH-47's lifted B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery, from AQ 945552 to an LZ at AQ 827618.

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10 March: This lift commenced at 0745 and was completed at 1100 hours. Beginning at 1400 hours, the 155th lifted B Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, from AQ 945552 to an LZ at AQ 155725. This lift consisted of 208 troops and was accomplished in four lifts. There were no incidents this day.

11 March: At 0800 hours the 170th with 8 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s lifted the Battalion CP element, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, consisting of 100 troops into an LZ at AQ 140706. Following this lift, A and C Companies were lifted into two LZ's at AQ 182668 and AQ 187728, respectively. A Company consisted of 175 troops and was moved in three lifts starting at 1030 hours. An artillery preparation with fuze VT proved effective and successfully precluded forest fire in an area very susceptible to fire. All lifts were conducted low level with a guide aircraft at altitude. C Company was moved in three lifts beginning at 1230 hours and completed at 1430. It consisted of 165 troops. The same type LZ preparation was conducted with equal success. There were no incidents. The 155th supported the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, with 9 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s. They conducted platoon lifts and troop displacements during the morning and extracted C Company at 1500 hours and placed them at AQ 943552. This action took four lifts. Both airmobile companies were released at 1800 hours. At 0800 hours, three CH-47's lifted C Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery, to an LZ at AQ 140708. This lift was completed at 1100 hours.

12 March: The 170th Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s conducted platoon sized lifts and resupply for the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. The 119th Aviation Company, with 8 UH1B'S and 6 UH1B(A)'s supported the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. They also conducted Eagle flights and resupply.

13 March: Beginning at 0800 hours, the 155th Aviation Company with 8 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s lifted one ARVN Company consisting of 110 troops from Ban Me Thuot City Airport to an LZ at AQ 856834. This company was employed to secure a proposed Brigade CP site. The movement was made in one lift. Following this, the 155th and the 119th supported the two Infantry Battalions with platoon sized lifts into multiple LZ's, resupply and later extractions of the troops lifted during the morning. The 170th Aviation Company displaced from Ban Me Thuot to Camp Holloway in anticipation of the northward movement of the Garfield Area of Operations.

14 March: The 170th Aviation Company with 10 UH1D'S and 4 UH1B(A)'s conducted an airlanded assault of C Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, consisting of 105 troops. The company was picked up at AQ 826616 and airlanded in an LZ at AQ 203443. Immediately following, the mortar platoon and a security platoon consisting of a total of three 4.2 mortars and 67 troops was landed in the same LZ at 0950 hours. These elements were extracted back to AQ 826616 beginning at 1500 hours and closed at 1705 hours. The 119th Aviation Company displaced from Ban Me Thuot City to Camp Holloway to be prepared to support Operation Garfield from that location. At 1400 hours, the 155th extracted the ARVN Security Company of 110 troops from AQ 856834 back to their home station at Ban Me Thuot. This extraction was conducted in one lift. The 170th Aviation Company experienced a hard landing at 1400 hours at the Buon Brieng Airfield. Incidental skid damage was incurred. There were no injuries.

15 March: Beginning at 0730 hours the 155th Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th Aviation Company with 9 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s conducted airlanded assaults of all elements of the 1st Battalion 14th Infantry. Units were picked up from multiple LZ's and landed as follows: "I" Company and the Battalion CP were landed at AQ 113662, D Company at AQ 132703 and C Company with the heavy mortar platoon at AQ 129638. Total troops moved were 656 plus ammunition and equipment.

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15 March: Two CH-47's displaced C Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery, to an LZ at AQ 113682. All elements were closed into position at 1240 hours. The 155th continued in support of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, conducting resupply. The 170th shifted its support to the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. At 1230 hours the 170th reacted to lift reinforcements in relief of a platoon in heavy contact at AQ 806625. Upon landing in the LZ, heavy ground fire was encountered, hitting three aircraft. One pilot was killed and two other crewmen injured. One aircraft was forced to land at Boun Brieng and was later overcured.

16 March: Today the 155th Aviation Company commenced a test to determine the feasibility of a proposed reorganization of the TO&E 1-77E. The 170th Aviation Company attached its third platoon consisting of 7 UH1D's and assigned personnel to the 155th to bring it up to the desired strength of personnel and equipment for the test. The test company consisted of 23 UH1D's and 8 UH1B(A)'s. This test was for a 30 day period, and henceforth, when reference is made to the 155th and 170th Aviation Companies, their organization will consist of the changes described above. For Operation Garfield today, the 170th with 4 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s reinforced with 5 UH1B's and 2 UH1B(A)'s from the 119th Aviation Company went to AQ 826617 to support the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. The 155th Aviation Company with 14 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s went to AQ 114683 in support of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. Several platoon sized lifts were conducted for both Battalions throughout the day. The companies resupplied all elements in the field and there were no incidents during the day.

18 March: Today the 155th with one platoon of 6 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 4 UH1D's and 2 UH1B(A)'s supported the Brigade. The 119th Aviation Company remained at Camp Holloway for maintenance. Both companies resupplied all elements during the morning. At 1300 hours both companies airlifted C Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, from Boun Brieng to an LZ at AQ 019758. Two sorties of CH-47's were used to move the heavy mortar platoon into the same LZ. This was completed at 1345 hours. At 1400 hours, C Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry was extracted from an LZ at AQ 784613 to Boun Brieng. This was accomplished in two lifts. Aircraft conducted the remainder of resupply and were released at 1700 hours. There were no incidents.

19 March: Beginning at 0730 hours, the 155th with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s resupplied 4.2 mortar ammunition to the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, at AQ 783614. At 0900 hours, it conducted an airlanded assault of B Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, consisting of 140 troops. The company was picked up at AQ 828618 and landed at AQ 767598. An air prestrike of the LZ was used, but due to low fuel the fighters had to strike 30 minutes too early. A five minute artillery preparation was fired. This preparation was ineffective due to inaccuracy of fires, however, the decision was made to land the troops using gun ship suppressive fire. The troops were landed in two successive lifts without incident. At 0915 hours, one CH-47 sortie was used to lift the heavy mortar platoon from AQ 828618 to a secure LZ at AQ 783613. The remainder of the day was spent in resupply and one AA troop displacement. At 1330 hours, during the troop displacement, one UH1D of the 155th Aviation Company experienced an engine failure while on final approach and made a forced landing resulting in damage to the skids. There were no injuries.

20 March: The 155th Aviation Company with 15 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s started the days support by resupplying the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. At 1030 hours, I Field Forces Vietnam, directed the 52d Aviation Battalion to dispatch the 155th back to Ban He Thuet as soon as possible to conduct an urgent mission in support of Special Forces in the Boun Ea Yang area. The 119th was called to Boun Brieng to replace the 155th in support of the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. The 119th arrived at 1400 hours with 8 UH1B's and 5 UH1B(A)'s, but were directed to join the 155th, to reinforce them.

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20 March: The remainder of the resupply for units in the field was conducted by CH-47.

21 March: The 155th Aviation Company continued their support of the Special Forces in the Buon Ea Yang Area while the 119th with 7 UH1B's and 3 UH1B(A)'s supported Operation Garfield. During the morning normal resupply was conducted plus one platoon sized lift of 44 troops and the heavy mortar platoon of the 1st Bn, 35th Inf. At 1600 hours an airlanded assault of B Co, 14th Inf, was conducted into an LZ at AQ 775643. This landing was made in six successive lifts and was completed at 1730 hours. The 119th was released at 1815 hours. At 1630 hours, three CH-47's airlifted A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery, into the same LZ with B Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. This took 11 sorties and was completed at 1900 hours. There were no incidents.

22 March: Beginning at 0730 hours, the 155th with 10 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s began by extracting elements of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. A and C Companies and the Battalion CP were dropped at Buon Brieng. Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery, was extracted from the same LZ starting at 1230 hours. It was also moved to Buon Brieng. Because of maintenance difficulties, there was only one CH-47 available. It took a total of 11 sorties and was completed at 1530 hours. At 1415 hours, B Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, was assault landed at an LZ at LC 773626. This lift consisted of 185 troops and half of the heavy mortar platoon. It was accomplished in three lifts. Other activities included resupply of all elements in the field. There were no incidents.

23 March: The 155th Aviation Company with 12 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s provided support today. A total of three platoon sized lifts were accomplished including one for the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. Each lift consisted of approximately 45 troops. The one conducted for the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, was extracted later in the day. Resupply was accomplished for all units in the field. Two CH-47's resupplied the artillery with six sorties. All aircraft were released at 1730 hours. There were no incidents today.

24 March: The 170th Aviation Company with 3 UH1D's provided the only support for Operation Garfield today. All other aircraft in the battalion were committed on other operations. These three aircraft resupplied all elements and were released at 1900 hours. Two CH-47's were committed to Garfield at 1000 hours, however at 1015 hours they were directed to Ban Lo Thuot to lift ARVN Artillery to the vicinity of Bu Proeng and were not released until 1745 hours. Operation Garfield was terminated effective 242400 April 1966.

3. SUMMARY OF STATISTICAL DATA:

	<u>Troop Sorties</u>	<u>Armed A/C</u>
Total Missions	336	176
Total Hours	2578	1128
Total Cargo	610 tons	
Total Troops	19474	
Total Sorties	10132	3439

b. The 219th Aviation Company (Light Observation) provided two O1F's from the start of the operation until 10 March. On 10 March the O1F support was increased to six for the remainder of the operation. Primary missions flown were visual reconnaissance and artillery fire direction. Other type missions consisted of radio relay, convey surveillance and command liaison.

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b. A total of 301 sorties and 407 hours were flown resulting in 204 significant sightings being made. A total of 28 artillery missions were fired from the OIF's on known or suspected enemy concentrations resulting in an estimated 35 enemy killed.

4. LOGISTICS:

Logistical support for the 52d Aviation Company during Operation Garfield was outstanding. On D-3, "A" rations from Qui Nhon Support Command were drawn for 425 troops. Further rations were drawn as required. Class III was to be drawn at the rate of 20,000 gallons per day initially, and to be later adjusted by mission requirements. At the beginning Class IIIA and VA were flown to Ban Le Thuot City Airport where the aircraft were based. Fuel was dispensed by organic 1200 gallon tankers. On D+5 the operation was moved to Buon Brieng. Class IIIA and VA was then moved from Ban Le Thuot to Buon Brieng by air. Demand for Class IIIA continued to be heavy after D Day. The one significant problem encountered was non-availability of nylon cargo slings which were needed for Class IIIA movement by CH-47. The following significant supplies were expended on the operation:

Class I

12,700 "A" rations

4,600 C rations

Class V.

1800 rounds 2.75 rockets

140000 rounds 7.62 mm

2000 rounds 40mm

Class IIIA

294,360 gal JP-4

11,632 gal Av gas

5. LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Item: Restricted stagefields.

Discussion: During Operation Garfield, three airmobile companies were employed to support the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. There were three different stagefields utilized throughout the operation. Out of the three fields, only one was large enough to provide sufficient room for simultaneous operation of all aircraft of the three companies. The others became extremely congested, endangering both aircraft and personnel on the ground. This restricted space did not allow proper spacing. This often caused confusion with the supported forces, and increased control measures on the ground.

Lesson Learned: By close coordination and detailed planning, much can be done to eliminate the confusion that arises in restricted stagefields or load zones, however, when possible it is better to phase the airmobile companies so that no more than one will be on the ground at one time. It was learned that maximum utilization could be effected by assigning one airmobile company to each infantry battalion in direct support whenever the airlift requirements would permit. This would position the aircraft in the field, so that they would be immediately responsive to the supported battalion and at the same time keep the aircraft out of the stagefield at Brigade except for resupply pickup and when aircraft require refueling.

b. Item: Small LZ's

Discussion: During Operation Garfield it was often necessary to operate into and out of small and restricted LZ's. Sizes would vary from one ship in size and larger.

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Discussion: Due to high density altitudes (often going above 5000 feet), high barriers, etc, operational requirements of the supported ground forces had to be closely considered before committing a unit to some of these LZ's. On one occasion 4.2 inch mortars were landed in a small LZ that was too small to extract them from. A CH-47 had to be used to lift this mortar platoon out.

Lesson Learned: The Aviation Commander must be thoroughly familiar with the supported unit's plans and requirements and must work closely in order to properly advise the unit commander and assist him in formulating future plans.

c. Item: Lack of Artillery Cargo Slings.

Discussion: At the beginning of Operation Garfield there were no slings available for lifting the 105 Howitzer and all artillery had to be internally loaded. This required more time and effort in order to move a battery. Later in the operation two slings became available and greatly facilitated movement, however, these slings soon wore out and no more were obtainable.

Lesson Learned: That CH-47s are not come equipped with necessary slings and nets. The supporting unit must provide these items.

d. Item: Infantry Battalion field CP landing zones became congested and restricted helicopter operations and artillery firing.

Discussion: Manual procedure for the supported infantry battalion was to locate the battalion CP with a company sized security force and the direct support artillery battery. On several occasions the LZ was too small to accommodate all of these elements and still allow unrestricted helicopter operations into the LZ. This often occurred during the landing of subsequent elements into the LZ. Once the security was placed in the LZ, the artillery would start to be lifted by CH-47, and meanwhile, troop carriers would still be lifting the remaining elements. This creates hazardous operating conditions until all elements are in. Later during resupply and/or troop lifts from this LZ, artillery fire is often interrupted or aircraft are required to hold until artillery fire has ceased.

Lesson Learned: That the battalion CP must be placed in a large LZ where possible. When this is not possible, all troop lifts into the LZ must be completed prior to lifting artillery in. Later, definite contact between all aircraft and the artillery must be established upon approaching LZ.

e. Item: Proper planning for future operations.

Discussion: This is a constant problem and will continue to hinder the proper and efficient use of helicopters in support of any unit during a sustained operation. On many days, the plans for the next days operations were not made until after dark. This precluded proper reconnaissance and coordination, or delayed the operation until such reconnaissance and coordination could be effected the next morning.

Lesson Learned: That persistent liaison with the Brigade S-3 and/or Battalion S-3's to work out plans as early as possible in order that proper reconnaissance and coordination could be made the afternoon before the next days operation.

29
CONFIDENTIAL

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

AVDP-CC

6 April 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation "TIGER-5"

TO: Commanding Officer
17th Aviation Group
ATTN: S-3
APO US Forces 96240

1. Mission Background: On 17 March 1966, the 52d Aviation Battalion was alerted by I Field Forces Vietnam, to support the Capital ROK Division in operation TIGER-5. Operation TIGER-5 was a search and destroy mission conducted in eastern Binh Dinh Province, with a follow up mission to protect the rice harvest. The battalion was directed to pull one company from operation GARFIELD and to support operation TIGER-5 with two airmobile companies.

The battalion executive officer was designated as mission commander and established liaison with the ROK Division on 13 March 1966. An initial coordination briefing was conducted followed by an aerial reconnaissance of the operational area for the selection of loading and landing zones. The 119th Aviation Company was alerted for movement to Phu Tai, staging with the 161st Aviation Company at Lane Heliport.

2. The following is a summary of events:

17 March. I FFV alerted the battalion for Operation TIGER-5.

18 March. The Bn EXO and S-3A attended an initial operation briefing at the ROK Division Headquarters. The Cavalry Regiment was to be the unit lifted in the beginning of the operation. The 161st Aviation Company was alerted for the operation.

19 March. The Bn EXO and S-3A coordinated with the ROK Cavalry Regiment. An area reconnaissance was made, selecting an LZ at CR 026 453. The loading zone was established at BR 934 473. Coordination was also made with the 1st Infantry Regiment for possible airmobile operations in the later phases of the operation.

22 March. Battalion headquarters elements and the 119th Aviation Company closed into Phu Tai (Lane Heliport) at 1400 hours. The 161st Aviation Company completed an infiltration movement of one (1) infantry company and communications equipment to the ROK Division forward command post. Four (4) UH1D's were used over a three (3) day period to complete the operation. An operational briefing for the AIA on 23 March was conducted by the battalion EXO and S-3A.

23 March. At 0615 hours the battalion EXO and S-3A departed Lane Heliport with the loading zone party. The 119th and 161st Aviation Companies closed into the loading zone at 0645 hours with ten (10) UH1D, ten UH1B and nine (9) UH1B(A) helicopters. The first lift departed the loading zone at 0705 hours and landed in the LZ CR 026 453 at 0710 hours, 2d LZ time was 0725 hours. Two lifts were made lifting

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGP-CC

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation "TIGER-5"

CONFIDENTIAL

April 1966

approximately two hundred twenty (220) troops. The USAF provided an adequate prestrike of the LZ. One hit was received from ground fire, no casualties were taken. Upon completion of the ALA, headquarters personnel from the Cav Regt and the 2d Bn Cav Regt were lifted to a forward command post on hill 94, BR 978 440. Five (5) C&C and eight (8) resupply helicopters were dispatched to the division for the remainder of the day. This C&C and resupply requirement became a daily commitment for the remainder of the operation. At 1600 hours the battalion received an unexpected request to extract one hundred seventy five (175) troops from CR 033 457 & BR 934 473. An additional seventy (70) troops were lifted from the division command post on hill 78 BR 991 422, to BR 915 449. A warning order was received from I FFV to support the 22d Infantry Division (ARVN) on the morning of 25 March 1966. Following the (ARVN) mission, the battalion was to return to support of the ROK Division at 251200 hours.

- 24 March. The battalion EXO and S-3A made an LZ reconnaissance with the CO, 41st Inf Regt (ARVN) SA, and USAF F&C. Two (2) LZ's were selected for an ALA to be conducted at 251000 hours. An operation briefing was conducted at 1845 hours for the 119th and 161st Aviation Companies.
- 25 March. The battalion supported the 41st Regiment, 22d Infantry Division (ARVN) in an operation opening highway 1 to Bong Son. The battalion utilized nine (9) UH1D, nine (9) UH1B, and nine (9) UH1B(A) helicopters. The operation was conducted by utilizing an initial landing zone at Phu Cat airfield BR 915 456, to an LZ at BR 912 847. The 2d and 3d lifts were staged from the Phu My airstrip BR 898 677. The 3d lift was landed in a separate LZ at BR 928 822. A total of four hundred (400) troops were lifted in three (3) lifts. The 1st LZ time was 1000 hours, subsequent lifts at 1025 and 1105 hours. One (1) UH1B(A) received one (1) hit from ground fire, no injuries were sustained. The USAF provided an adequate prestrike of both LZ's. All aircraft returned to Lane Heliport for rearming and refueling by 1200 hours. The battalion resumed support of the ROK Division for the remainder of the day committing eleven (11) UH1D and nine (9) UH1B troop carriers. The entire effort was in support of C&C and resupply to the deployed elements of the division.
- 26 March. The battalion supported the ROK Division with routine C&C and resupply aircraft, no airmobile operations were conducted.
- 27 March. The battalion began the day with normal C&C and resupply support to the division. At 1200 hours, all aircraft were committed to extract the division forward command post and the cavalry regiment forward command post back to their respective base camps. Upon completion of this movement, the 119th Aviation Company was released to return to Pleiku. The 161st was to continue aviation support to the ROK Division as it continued in the mission of protecting the rice harvest.

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGP-CC

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation "TIGER-5"

6 April 1966

CONFIDENTIAL

3. Summary of Statistical Data:

<u>UNITS</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO (tons)</u>
119	262	1,434	1,415	119
161	309	1,350	2,249	237
TOTAL:	571	2,784	3,664	356

4. Logistics: Logistical support for operation TIGER-5 was provided by the Qui Nhon Support Comd. Class I supplies were drawn on D-3 for over 300 officers and men and stored at Lano Heliport. Daily resupply of class I was picked up as required thereafter. Class III A was requested and delivered at the rate of 10,000 gallons (JP-4) daily to be adjusted according to mission requirements. The lone exception to this was a requirement for Class III A and V A which developed for a half day operation in the vicinity of Phu Ly BR 893 677, Liaison was effected and a 5000 gallon tanker was dispatched. Response and cooperation from the 1st Log Command in this instance was excellent. Following D-day, requirements for Class III A and V A dropped by approximately 30%. On D+5 all starofield equipment was recovered to Camp Holloway. The following were expended on the operation.

Class I 1500 means - Class III A 35,000 gal JP-4 - Class V A 350 40mm link 500 2.75 rockets, 30,000 7.62 link.

5. Lessons Learned:

ITEM: Fire support coordination center.

DISCUSSION: The ROK Division does not establish a central FSCC for a multi-regiment operation. Each regiment separately operates its own FSC in the fire direction center for its own area of operation. A fire coordination line was established and an effort was made to relay artillery advisories to the division forward CP. However on several different occasions near misses were experienced when unannounced artillery fires were placed in areas where helicopters were operating.

OBSERVATION: It is imperative that a system be established where aircraft operating in the forward area can receive notice on planned and unplanned artillery fires. An effort was made to do this by placing a battalion forward control station with the division CP. In several instances this was not adequate. A solution was to put a liaison officer with each regiment FSC for the sole purpose of relaying artillery and air strike warnings in the regiments area of operation. It is recommended that the ROK Division be encouraged to establish a FSCC for future operations.

ITEM: Night illumination (Flare Ship)

DISCUSSION: The battalion received a standing requirement for a standby flare ship each night for the operation. On three occasions the flare ship was launched on request only to find a USAF aircraft already on station providing illumination.

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGP-CC

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation "TIGER-5"

CONFIDENTIAL

6 April 1966

OBSERVATION: It was recommended that requirements for flare aircraft be placed on the USAF. Due to the limited amount of flares that a helicopter can carry it is more practical for a larger fixed wing aircraft to perform this mission. Helicopter utilization should be limited to an emergency use in the event other means are not available.

Robert L. Cody

ROBERT L. CODY
Lt Col, Inf
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

AVGP-CC

8 May 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation Lincoln

1. Mission Background: Operation Lincoln imposed no change to aviation support provided to Operation Garfield. Mission requirements consisted of three airmobile companies in support of the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. Operation Lincoln began as a joint operation with 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division on the south and two brigades, 1st Air Cavalry Division on the north. The area of operation was the southern half of Pleiku Province. Initially, the 3d Brigade CP and the aviation stage field remained at Boun Brieng. On 31 March, the stagefield was moved from Boun Brieng to Duc Co. At the same time the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division went under operational control of the 1st Air Cavalry Division and remained so until termination of Operation Lincoln on 7 April 66.

2. The following is a summary of events:

- 25 March: Operation Lincoln commenced at 001 hours, 25 March 66. All supported units were tactically disposed as they were upon termination of Operation Garfield. The 155th Avn Co with 12 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s conducted three platoon sized lifts of 44 troops each in support of the 1st Bn, 35th Inf. The remainder of the day was spent resupplying both battalions. At 1600 hours the Bn Commander, his S-3, ALO and the Artillery Commander, conducted a reconnaissance of a new area of operations for the 1st Bn, 14th Inf. Two LZ's were selected for all elements of the battalion and its supporting artillery battery. At 0900 hours, A Company, 501st Aviation Company, with 12 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s moved into Ban Mo Thuot City Airfield and came under operational control of the 52d Aviation Battalion. The key officers were briefed at 0930 and given the remainder of the day to set up Camp. At 1600, the Company Commander was taken on reconnaissance of the area of operations in preparation for their employment the next day.
- 26 March: Beginning at 0800 hours, the 155th Avn Co with 15 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s and "A" Co, 501st Avn Bn with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s, lifted "C" Co, 1st Bn, 14th Inf consisting of 155 troops. Troops were picked up at AQ 774643 and landed at AQ 125487. This was accomplished in one lift. At 0900 hours, "B" Co, 1st Bn, 14th Inf consisting of 144 troops was picked up at the same PZ and airlanded at AQ 078541. At 0915 hours, three CH-47's lifted "A" Btry, 2d Bn, 9th Arty from AQ 774643 to AQ 125487. The Arty Btry move was completed at 1115 hours. At 1100 hours, "A" Co, 501st Avn Bn resupplied the 1st Bn, 14th Inf from Boun Brieng to AQ 125487, and then lifted the CP element of 33 troops and three loads of equipment into the same LZ. At 1200 hours all aircraft were used to lift "A" Co, 1st Bn, 14th Inf, consisting of 152 troops, from a PZ at AQ 774643 and landed in the LZ at AQ 125487. During the afternoon "A" Co, 501st Avn Bn remained with the 1st Bn, 14th Inf to provide lift for possible reaction, and conduct resupply. The 155th Avn Co supported the 1st Bn, 35th Inf with three platoon lifts, two platoon sized extractions, all of approximately 44 troops each. They also resupplied all elements of the battalion.
- 27 March: The 155th Avn Co with 6 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s supported the 1st Bn, 35th Inf with three platoon sized lifts and conducted resupply. "A" Co, 501st Avn Bn supported the 14th Inf with three platoon sized lifts and resupply. All aircraft were released at 1700 hours.

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- 28 March: The 155th Avn Co with 9 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s and "A" Co, 501st Avn Bn with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s lifted the 1st Bn, 35th Inf from Boun Brieng into the four LZ's at AQ 926686, AQ 855838, AQ 825796 and AQ 778786. These moves took five lifts beginning at 0730 hours and were completed at 1100 hours. A total of 506 troops were lifted. "A" Co, 501st Bn, provided 4 UH1D's to lift "C" Co, 1st Bn, 14th Inf from AQ 125487 to Boun Brieng to provide security for the brigade headquarters. "A" Co, 501st Avn Bn was released to return to home station at 1200 hours. The 155th resupplied both battalions. At 0900 hours, three CH-47's were used to lift "A" Btry, 2d Bn, 9th Arty from Boun Brieng to an LZ at AQ 855838. This lift took 12 sorties and was completed at 1200 hours.
- 29 March: The 155th Avn Co with 12 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s and the 119th Avn Co with 9 UH1B's and 5 UH1B(A)'s supported the move of the 1st Bn, 14th Inf, from the two LZ's at AQ 125487 and AQ 210315 to AQ 204763 and AQ 243804. The move commenced at 0730 hours, and was completed at 1100 hours. Total lift consisted of 546 troops and required five lifts, four by the 155th Avn Co and one by the 119th Avn Co. Three CH-47's moved "C" Btry, 2d Bn, 9th Arty from AQ 125487 to AQ 210315. This move took three hours and consisted of 13 sorties, commencing at 0745 hours. During the remainder of the day, the 155th Avn Co resupplied the 1st Bn, 14th Inf.
- 30 March: The 155th with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s supported both battalions today. One platoon of 5 UH1D's and 2 UH1B(A)'s supported the 1st Bn, 35th Inf, with one company sized lift of 90 troops from AQ - 210315 to an LZ at AQ 205304. In addition to this lift, three platoon sized lifts of about 40 troops each were into and later extracted. The other platoon of 5 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s supported the 1st Bn, 14th Inf with three platoon sized lifts of about 44 troops each. Both platoons resupplied their respective battalions and were released at 1300 hours.
- 31 March: The 155th Avn Co with 11 UH1D's and the 119th Avn Co with 3 UH1B's (attached from the 170th Avn Co) supported the displacement of the 1st Bn, 14th Inf and the 1st Bn, 35th Inf from their field location to Duc Co Airfield. The 1st Bn, 14th Inf consisting of 360 troops were lifted first beginning at 0730 hours and completed at 1100 hours. Three CH-47's lifted "A" Btry, 2d Bn, 9th Arty from its field location to Duc Co. This required 13 sorties and was completed at 1130 hours. There were no incidents.
- 1 April: The 155th Avn Co with 14 UH1D's, 4 UH1B's (attached from the 119th Avn Co) and 6 UH1B(A)'s airlifted the 1st Bn, 14th Inf, consisting of 365 troops, from Duc Co to an LZ at YA 804082. This lift was begun at 1230 hours, consisting of 4 lifts from Duc Co to an LZ at ZA 940049. Six CH-47's lifted "A" Btry and "B" Btrys, 2d Bn, 9th Arty from Duc Co to the respective LZ's listed above. Artillery lifts started at 1500 hours and were completed at 1800 hours. There were no incidents during the day.
- 2 April: The 170th Avn Co with 6 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s lifted "C" Co, 1st Bn, 35th Inf, consisting of 125 troops, from Duc Co to ZA 940049. This lift commenced at 0800 and was completed in three lifts at 0930. After this lift, the aircraft conducted extensive resupply of all elements in the field. The 155th Avn Co displaced from Ban Mo Thuot to Camp Holloway, closing at 1300 hours.

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- 3 April: The 155th Avn Co with 6 UH1D's and 5 UH1D(A)'s, conducted on platoon lift of 42 troops, one 45 troop displacement, and extracted 120 troops of "D" Co, 1st Bn, 35th Inf. After these troop lifts, the aircraft resupplied all elements as required to include 1000 gallons of diesel fuel to the Recon Co, 3d Bn, 4th Cav.
- 4 April: The 155th Avn Co with 12 UH1D's and 5 UH1D(A)'s, the 170th Avn Co with 6 UH1D's and 5 UH1D(A)'s and the 119th Avn Co with 5 UH1D's and 3 UH1D(A)'s all supported the 3d Brigade, 25th Inf Div today. The 155th Avn Co lifted the 1st Bn, 35th Inf, consisting of 473 troops, from initial field locations to two LZ's at YA 835058 and YA 853016. Lift of this battalion began at 0730 hours and was completed in five lifts at 1100 hours. Three CH-47's lifted "D" Btry, 2d Bn, 9th Arty, into YA 835058. This move required 11 sorties and was completed at 1200 hours. The 119th Avn Co and 170th Avn Co conducted resupply to all elements. All aircraft were released at 1730 hours.
- 5 April: The 155th Avn Co with 8 UH1D's and 2 UH1D(A)'s supported the brigade today with resupply and one platoon sized lift for the 1st Bn, 35th Inf.
- 6 April: The 155th Avn Co with 8 UH1D's and 4 UH1D(A)'s supported the brigade with resupply today. No other lifts were required.
- 7 April: Operation Lincoln terminated at 0700 hours today. The 155th with 16 UH1D's and 4 UH1D(A)'s, the 170th Avn Co with 5 UH1D's and 4 UH1D(A)'s and the 119th Avn Co with 5 UH1D's and 2 UH1D(A)'s airlifted all elements of the two battalions from the field locations to Duc Co. The troop lift began at 0730 hours and was completed at 1130 hours. A total of 1046 troops were lifted. Upon completion of the troop extractions, the 52d Avn Bn was released from support of Operation Lincoln and all aircraft returned to home station. The 155th Avn Co was released to return to Ban Me Thuot at 1300 hours.

3. Summary of Statistical Data:

	<u>Troop Carriers</u>	<u>Armed A/C</u>
a. Total Missions	111	51
Total Hours	1544	395
Total Cargo	834 tons	
Total Troops	8861	
Total Sorties	4299	920

b. The 219th Aviation Company (Light Observation) continued to fly six OLF aircraft to support Operation Lincoln. Procedures employed during Operation Garfield were not changed. Visual recon was the primary mission flown with artillery observation as second priority. Radio relay was not assigned as a separate mission, but was accomplished by using the aircraft that was on station working with the artillery. This was possible due to the low volume of traffic required. Convoy escort was a common mission for the 219th Avn Co.

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When the supported unit moved by contract, an aircraft was assigned to escort duty with an artillery observer on board. Firepower available through the use of the O1D rocket armed aircraft proved to be most effective in either developing a potential target or destruction of small targets such as structures, crew served weapons, etc. A total of 332 hours were flown by the 219th Avn Co with 213 sorties. A total of 193 significant sightings were made. A total of 23 Artillery missions were fired resulting in an estimated 28 killed.

4. Logistics: Logistical support for the 52d Avn Bn continued to be excellent. On 1 April the logistical base was moved from Boun Erieng to Duc Co. Resupply of fuel and ammunition was made easier at this location due to more space and capability at Duc Co to land C-130 type aircraft. All classes of supply flown into Duc Co. Due to reduced requirements during the last phase of the operation at Duc Co and overstock of JP-4 and ammunition was on hand upon termination. This required extraction. The following significant supplies were expended during the operation:

Class I

6,500 "A" rations

2,460 "C" rations

Class III

103,440 gal JP-4

5,650 gal Av gas

Class VI

760 rounds 2.75" rockets

65000 rounds 7.62 mm

840 rounds 40 mm

5. Lessons Learned:

a. Item: Small LZ's

Discussion: Again, the problem of LZ's that were too small or restricted to operate safely in arose as it did during Operation Garfield. Due to a limited number of LZ's in the operational area, it was necessary to make LZ's for resupply and for troop extractions. The small amount of power equipment possessed by the supported unit caused this to be a difficult and time consuming job. Quite often, the LZ would not be made large enough and would delay operations until more work was done. On one occasion it was impossible for a medical evacuation aircraft to enter the LZ because it was not large enough.

Lessons Learned: That close coordination between aviation and the supported unit be made before selection of a proposed LZ and during the engineer work in preparing an LZ. In this way the suitability of the LZ to both parties is assured and effective operational planning can be done based on accurate estimates as to when an LZ will become useable.

b. Timely Planning during this operation was much improved over Garfield and this resulted in more effective aviation support throughout the operation.

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

17 April 1966

AFTER ACTION REPORT, UNNAMED OPERATION, IN SUPPORT OF II CORPS

1. On 10 April 1966, this headquarters was alerted to support the 22d ARVN Division with two airmobile companies. The following is a narrative description of this operation.

a. 13 April 1966: The Battalion Executive Officer and Assistant S-3 conducted reconnaissance of the operational area. Reconnaissance party consisted of the ARVN Battalion Commander, his HQ scout report, the battalion S-3 Air and FAC. Also, the lead aviation unit commander, his operations officer and gun platoon leader followed in a second aircraft. LZ and alternate LZ's were selected and final coordination made.

b. 14 April 1966: The 119th Aviation Company with 10 UH1B's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 161st Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s supported the 2d Battalion, 41st Regiment, 22d ARVN Division, by airlanding 310 troops in two LZ's at BR 967 656 and BR 968 829. The troops were picked up at Phu Cat, BR 912 456. The first lift was landed in LZ BR 967 656, at 0902 hours using all aircraft from both companies. The 119th led the assault with the 161st following at a two minutes interval. Upon touchdown in the LZ, the 119th lost one UH1B when it hit a dyke obscured by intense dust and rolled on its side. The crew chief received minor injuries. All crew members were immediately evacuated. Also, during the 119th's initial landing, while on a firing pass, one armed UH1B(A) received small arms fire, sustaining damage to the tail rotor cable. This aircraft completed the second lift before losing complete tail rotor control, whereupon it proceeded to Qui Nhon and made an emergency landing without further damage. After completing the first lift both units returned to Phu Cat to pick up second lifts. The 161st completed lifting the troops into the first LZ at 0925 hours for a total of 230 troops in that LZ, while the 119th picked up 80 troops in two lifts and landed them in the second LZ. There were no incidents on the subsequent lifts, and they were completed at 0945 hours. After all lifts were completed the 161st landed at Phu Mo for standby to lift a possible reaction force. The 119th returned to Phu Cat and Camp Iano to support resupply of the 1st ROK Division. The 119th was released to return to Pleiku at 1430 hours.

c. 15 April 1966: The Battalion Executive Officer and the S-3 accompanied by the same personnel taken on recon on the 13 conducted recon for the next days proposed operation. A primary and alternate LZ were picked and final coordination accomplished.

d. 16 April 1966: The 161st Avn Co with 9 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th Aviation Company 9 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s supported the 2d Bn, 42d Regt, 22d ARVN Div, in Phase II of an unnamed operation East of Highway 1 and North of the Phu Cat Mountain in Binh Dinh Province. At 0900 hours immediately following excellent artillery and US Air Force strikes in and around the landing zone located at CR 005 654 the first lift touched down.

GROUP-4

Downgraded at 3 year intervals;
Declassified after 12 years.

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End 5

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A total of 320 troops were picked up at BR 967 668 and landed in two lifts. The last lift touched down at 0912 hours. One UH1D and three UH1B(A)'s from the 170th Aviation Company and two UH1B(A)'s of the 161st Aviation Company were damaged by small arms to include automatic weapons fire. There were two minor injuries to personnel of the 170th Aviation Company. One of the three UH1B(A)'s of the 170th was forced to land in the LZ. The crew and critical equipment were evacuated and the aircraft was rigged for slingload evacuation. At 1315 hours the downed aircraft was picked up by a CH-47 from the 1st Air Cav Div.

After emplacing the troops all aircraft stood by at Phu Ho at BR 894 666 for possible reaction. At 1230 hours the order was given to extract all of the troops emplaced during the morning. This was accomplished in two lifts from two pick up zones. There were 75 troops located at the LZ used this morning and 245 troops located in a PZ at CR 004 637. The first ships were in the pick up zone at 1300 hours and at 1317 hours all troops had been extracted. During the extraction ground fire was received from East of the Northern most LZ. One UH1B(A) of the 170th was shot through the tail rotor drive shaft and forced to land at Phu Ho. No other aircraft were hit during this extraction. A stagefield with fuel and ammunition was established at Phu Cat at BR 914 458. All aircraft were released at 1400 hours.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

William B. Wash

WILLIAM B. WASH
Major, Armor
Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

AVGP-CC

8 May 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report, OPERATION LONGFELLOW

1. MISSION BACKGROUND:

a. On 13 April 1966, the 52d Aviation Battalion was alerted that it would provide three airmobile companies in support of Operation Longfellow. This was to be a joint US/ARVN operation conducted from 17 April 66 for three weeks in the northern part of Kontum Province. Task forces consisted of two US battalions of the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, and two battalions, 42d ARVN Regiment, 24th Special Tactical Zone. The objectives of this operation was twofold, first, to conduct search and destroy operations in the area of operations, and to provide security for US and ARVN Engineers while they repaired Highway 14, from Tan Canh to Dak Pek. US Forces would operate generally west of the north-south highway, while ARVN forces operated east. Two airmobile companies were given priority of support to US forces and one to ARVN forces. The three companies selected were the 119th, 155th and 170th Aviation Companies.

b. A reconnaissance of the area of operations was conducted on 13 April and the stagefield was laid out with members of the 3d Brigade staff, coordinating with the American senior advisor at Tan Canh. It was decided that one airmobile company would remain at Tan Canh while the other two would move to Pleiku (Camp Holloway) each night. Dak To Airfield was selected to be the logistical base and refueling would be established there. At 1900 hours, on 13 April, the battalion staff met for its planning conference. The battalion operations order was published on 14 April. On 15 April, the ground convoy moved from Camp Holloway to Tan Canh Airfield and became operational at 1800 hours.

2. The following is a summary of events:

16 April. The 155th Aviation Company with 12 UH1D's and 6 UH1D(A)'s arrived at Tan Canh at 1000 hours. The 119th Aviation Company with 6 UH1B's and 2 UH1D(A)'s arrived at 1225 hours. At 1230 hours, the 155th Aviation Company lifted 81 ARVN troops from Tan Canh to Dak Pek. On the return trip, 124 refugees were extracted to Dak To. At 1230 hours, 3 CH-47's of the 228th Aviation Company were available to the 52d Aviation Battalion. During the afternoon, they lifted B Battery, 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery from Tan Canh to Dak Pek. At 1300 hours, the 119th Aviation Company and the 155th Aviation Company conducted an airlanded assault of 85 troops of the 1st Battalion, 42d ARVN Regiment. Troops were loaded at Tan Canh and landed in an LZ at YB 909 335. The 119th Aviation Company was released to return to Pleiku at 1600 hours. At 1645 hours, the 155th Aviation Company lifted 60 ARVN troops from Tan Canh to Dak Pek. On the return trip 75 refugees were extracted to Dak To. The 155th Aviation Company was released at 1800 hours. They remained at Tan Canh.

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17 April. This was "D" Day. The 119th with 7 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s, the 155th with 11 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 9 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s lifted the 2d Bn, 35th Inf from Tan Canh Airfield to an LZ at YB 897 369.

The lift consisted of 429 troops. The lift commenced at 0800 hours and was completed at 1200 hours. Following the troop lifts, resupply was conducted to all elements in the field. Three CH-47's of the 147th Avn Co arrived at Tan Canh at 1800 hours. They were attached to the 52d Avn Bn for the operation. The 119 and 170th were released to return to Pleiku at 1800 hours.

18 April. Beginning at 0600 hours, the CH-47's airlifted "A" Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery, from Tan Canh to YB 897369. The move took 13 sorties and was completed at 0900 hours. The 119th with 6 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s, the 155th with 11 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 7 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s made up the aircraft support for Longfellow today. Beginning at 1000 hours the 119th and the 155th conducted an airlifted assault of "A" Company and the Recon Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry. This assault was made in two lifts into an LZ at YB 899395. Concurrently, the 170th conducted an assault in support of the 403d Scout Company (ARVN). The 85 troops were airlifted at YB 95451. At 1700 hours the 170th extracted this company back to Tan Canh. Upon completion of the landing of the Scout Company, the 170th returned via Tou Morang Camp and moved "C" Company, 1st Battalion, 42d Regiment (ARVN) to the Tan Canh Airfield. A total of 90 troops were lifted. At 1400 hours all three companies commenced lift of 1st Bn, 35th Inf. Troops were loaded at Tan Canh and landed at YB 899430. Four lifts were required to lift the 435 troops. Concurrently, the 3 CH-47's moved "C" Btry, 2d Bn, 9th Arty from Tan Canh to the same LZ at YB 899430. The Artillery move was completed at 1800 hours and all other aircraft were released at 1900 hours. During the day, seven aircraft were damaged, two of which were totally destroyed. There were no injuries to personnel. The 119th lost one destroyed by a fire in the LZ when it became disabled by striking its tail rotor in bamboo. The 170th lost an aircraft when its tail rotor came off in flight, causing it to crash land. The 155th had two aircraft receive minor damage from bamboo blade strikes as did three of the 170th Avn Co. In addition to the seven aircraft damaged in this battalion, one CH-47 received minor skin damage when it landed on a stump in the LZ.

19 April: The 119th with 4 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s, the 155th with 11 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 5 UH1D's made up the airlift support today. The only support rendered was extensive resupply of all elements in the field and small platoon sized lifts of troops within each battalion's area of operation.

20 April: The 119th with 4 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s, the 155th with 11 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 9 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s made up today's support. The 119th was used to resupply all elements throughout the day. The 155th and 170th performed a combat assault in support of the 2d Battalion, 35th Infantry. The helicopters extracted "D" Company from a PZ at YB 893368 and landed it at YB 841430, beginning at 0730 hours. This lift consisted of 157 troops. Upon completion of this lift, the 155th dropped out and returned to Tan Canh to prepare for an ARVN lift at 1000 hours. The 170th continued by extracting the Recon platoon, 2d Battalion, 42d Regiment (ARVN), consisting of 102 troops to an LZ at YB 934523. LZ time was 1000 hours. As the helicopters touched down in the LZ, 50 caliber fire was received. One UH1D received two hits causing minor damage and wounding both pilots, one seriously. Upon completion of this lift, the 155th rejoined the 170th Aviation Company and the remainder of the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry was lifted to two LZ's at YB 841460 and YB 806467. A total of 556 troops of this battalion were lifted. In addition 164 troops of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry were lifted to YB 773526 and 2 CH-47's moved "A" Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery to YB 841480. All aircraft were released at 1300 hours.

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21 April. The 119th with 2 UH1D's and 1 UH1B(A), the 155th with 11 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 7 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s supported Longfellow today. The 155th lifted 297 troops of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry from their field location to two LZ's at YB 772 526 and YB 313 515. The first LZ time was 0745 hours. One UH1D received minor damage when its tail rotor struck a tree in the LZ. Three CH-47's lifted "A" Battery, 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery to YB 772 526. This move commenced at 0830 and was completed in 12 sorties, at 1130 hours. The 170th and 119th Aviation Companies lifted 83 troops of the 42d Scout Company, 42d Regiment from Tan Canh to an LZ at ZB 097 416. The LZ time for this lift was 1000 hours. At 1045, the same aircraft extracted 100 troops of the 1st Company 1st Battalion, 42d ARVN Regiment, from a PZ at YB 922 487. Although 50 caliber fire had been received on D+3 when this company was landed, no fire was received during the extraction. All aircraft were released at 1830 hours.

22 April. The 155th Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s provided the only support to Longfellow today. The 170th and 119th were released to support operations for Pleiku Sector in reaction to a mortar and recoilless rifle attack on the New Pleiku Airfield the night before. At 0930 hours, two CH-47's commenced the move of "B" Battery, 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery from Dak Pek to an LZ at coordinates YB 925 590. The move required 12 sorties and was completed at 1320 hours. At 1000 hours the 155th conducted an airlanded assault with the 42d Scout Company and the 3d Company, 42d ARVN Regiment. The assault was made in two lifts to an LZ at ZB 046 555. During the afternoon, the 155th conducted extensive resupply to all US units in the field. Aircraft were released at 1900 hours.

23 April. The 155th with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s conducted resupply during the morning. At 1400 hours, the 42d Scout Company and the 3d Company, consisting of 160 troops were extracted from a PZ at ZB 044 553 and returned to Tan Canh. A small arms fire was received during take-off from the LZ, however, there were no aircraft hit.

24 April. At 0900 hours, the 170th Aviation Company with 8 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s lifted "C" Company, 2d Battalion, 35th Infantry, from YB 795 416 to an LZ at YB 816 475. At 1300 hours, a CIDG Company of 133 troops was extracted from YB 733 555 and returned to Dak To Airfield. The extraction took three lifts and was completed at 1500 hours. After this extraction, resupply was made to all US elements in the field. During resupply one UH1D had partial power loss and made a hard landing, resulting in incidental skid damage. There were no injuries.

25 April: The 170th Aviation Company with 7 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s extracted 233 troops of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, from YB 774527 and lifted them to an LZ at YB 917536. LZ time was 0830 hours and was preceded by 10 minutes of artillery and 10 minutes of air prestrike. At 0930 hours two CH-47's moved "C" Battery, 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery from YB 774527 to YB 917536. The artillery move took 13 sorties and was completed at 1530 hours. The remaining security force was extracted at 1600 hours. Additionally, the 170th displaced "B" Company, 2d Battalion, 35th Infantry from YB 843482 to YB 869407. LZ time was 1330 hours and the lifts completed at 1430 hours. A total of 21.6 tons of ammunition and supplies were lifted in resupply.

26 April: Beginning at 0830 hours, the 170th with 9 UH1D's and 6 UH1B(A)'s displaced "A" Company, 2d Battalion, 35th Infantry, consisting of 135 troops and 7000 lbs of cargo, from YB 869493 and YB 843482 to one LZ at YB 873599. The lifts were finished at 1000 hours. After this was completed 60 troops were lifted from YB 817473 to YB 843482 to provide security for the artillery located there. During the afternoon, the 2d Battalion, 35th Infantry (minus) was extracted from their field locations and landed at YB 927546.

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This move was in preparation for an assault to be conducted on 27 April 66. A total of 434 troops and 16,700 lbs were moved by UH-1 helicopters while the CH-47's moved "A" Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery. At 1830 hours, 115 troops and 9000 lbs of cargo were extracted from a PZ at YB 843482. This extraction was accomplished by 3 CH-47's and 9 UH1D's and completed at 1945 hours.

27 April: The 119th with 4 UH1B's, the 155th with 8 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 9 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s were employed in a mass lift of joint US/ARVN Forces. A total of 280 US troops and 80 ARVN troops and 1700 lbs of equipment was lifted. The US troops from 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry were lifted from YB 927546 to an LZ at ZB 018551. The ARVN of the Scout Company, 42nd ARVN Regiment, were lifted from Dak Sut to ZB 926546. Three CH-47's lifted "A" Battery, 2nd Battalion, 9th Artillery into the same LZ. First LZ time for these lifts was 0830 hours, and all lifts were completed by 0950 hours. The second phase of the operation was the airlanding of 220 troops of the 42nd ARVN Regiment and 132 troops of "B" Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry into an LZ at ZB 045551. This was begun at 1130 hours and completed at 1230 hours. At 1500 hours, the 170th extracted "A" Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry from YB 873599 and landed them at YB 927546.

28 April: The 155th Aviation Company with 2 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s supported Longfellow today. The 155th Aviation Company's two UH1B(A)'s were utilized to escort a convoy moving from Tan Canh to Pleiku. The 170th Aviation Company conducted a troop placement in support of the 1st Bn, 35th Inf. "C" Co, 1st Bn, 35th Inf was lifted from Tan Canh Airfield to ZB 018551, while "A" Co, same battalion was extracted from Dak Sut to the Tan Canh Airfield. The lifts consisted of 135 troops in "C" Co and 138 troops in "A" Co. At 1800 hours it was learned that 39 ARVN troops would not be able to reach their preplanned position before dark and required extraction. Three resupply UH1D's were diverted to effect this extraction. The troops were picked up at ZB 069568 and flown to ZB 076560. The extraction was completed at 1845 hours. One UH1B(A) was hit by ground fire. No injuries and only minor damage was incurred.

29 April: During the day, the 170th Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s conducted resupply. At 1730 hours, a patrol of 47 troops were extracted from ZB 047540 to an LZ at ZB 014533. At 1800 hours, "A" Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry, a total of 119 troops, was extracted from ZB 978567 and landed at Tan Canh Airfield. As the aircraft dropped the troops at Tan Canh, they were loaded with supplies and resupplied the units in the field on the return trip. All aircraft were released at 1940 hours.

30 April: The 155th Aviation Company was released from Operation Longfellow today to support an operation on the coast. The 119th with 8 UH1B's and 4 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th with 9 UH1D's and 4 UH1B(A)'s began at 0630. The mission today was to extract all troops and equipment back to home station. In addition to the two airmobile companies, 2 CH-47's were used to extract two batteries of artillery. A total of 752 US troops, 302 ARVN troops and two batteries of artillery was extracted back to Tan Canh. All lifts were completed at 1315 hours. Operation Longfellow terminated at 1200 hours today.

1 May. The 119th Aviation Company with 8 UH1B's and 4 UH1B(A)'s and the 170th Aviation Company with 6 UH1D's and 3 UH1B(A)'s supported the move to home station by standing by at Tan Canh with an 88 man troop reaction force. As soon as the lead convoy element reached Pleiku, the reaction force was flown to Pleiku where it stood by until the last element closed.

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3. The 219th Aviation Company (Night Observation) provided 6 OLF's in support of Operation Longfellow. During the fourteen day operation, a total of 371 hours were flown in support of the VR program, artillery observation, radio relay and other missions. A total of 229 sorties were flown with 345 significant sightings made.

4. Logistical support during Operation Longfellow was excellent. The battalion received all classes of supplies from the 1st Log Command. Individuals responsible for supply of Class III and IIIA and Class V and VA did an outstanding job supporting this battalion.

a. The only problem encountered was the normal confusion encountered on the first day of operations. From then until termination of the operation, logistics resupply went very smoothly.

b. The battalion S-4 employed some new procedures for refueling and rearming during this operation:

(1) Gunships were parked separately from the troop carriers and refueled by two tankers. If necessary they could be rearmed simultaneously. The troop carriers were refueled by three 100 GPM pumps, servicing two aircraft at a time.

(2) Ammunition was prestacked at locations throughout the gunship refueling area. Ammunition was also prestacked at each of the fixed refueling locations for rearming the door guns of the troop carriers.

(3) Signs were erected throughout the refueling areas as a general reminder of safety practices to be followed during refueling and rearming.

c. The following amounts of supplies were consumed during the fourteen day operation:

(1) Class I: "A" Rations 1540 meals

(2) Class IIIA: 168,900 gal JP-4

(3) Class VA: 40mm 1500 rds

7.62 156,000 rds

2.75 1500 rds

5. Lessons Learned:

a. (1) Item: Arrangement of battalion's tactical CP.

(2) Discussion: During this operation the Bn tactical CP was co-located with the Bde CP, which is SOP, however, in addition to the Bn CP, the battalion liaison officer was in a separate location. Traffic from the brigade and ARVN CP came into both offices for action. Quite often one would have to seek the answer from the other causing some delay and confusion.

(3) Lessons Learned: That both the tactical CP and battalion liaison officer should work out of the same tent so that close and continuous coordination can be effected.

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b. (1) Item: Use of "hard" ordnance to prestrike LZ's that are susceptible to fire.

(2) Discussion: On several occasions, fire in the LZ as a result of the prestrike created a hazardous condition to both the troops on the ground and the helicopters operating in and out of the LZ. On one occasion, the battalion lost a UH1B when it became disabled in the LZ and was later destroyed by fire started by napalm used in the prestrike.

(3) Lesson Learned: That the battalion will not accept napalm, white phosphorus, or other fire producing ordnance on prestrike of an LZ that is likely to burn. It is desired that only fragmentary bombs, CBU's, and cannon fire be used. In addition to the fire hazard, there is danger of smoke from the fire obscuring the helicopters approach into the LZ.

c. (1) Item: Overcrowding of LZ's upon initial occupation.

(2) Discussion: That has been a continuous problem throughout operations with the 3d Bde, 25th Inf. Only during the initial deployment of the 1st Bn, 35th Inf did this situation develop during Longfellow. Immediately after the first lift was placed in the LZ, the CH-47's began lifting artillery into the LZ. This restricted the size of an already small LZ to one that became hazardous for helicopter operations. In a situation like this, it is much better to complete all troop lifts into the LZ prior to bringing in the artillery, provided the tactical situation will permit.

(3) Lesson Learned: That rigid control of the CH-47's must be enforced to keep them out until time for them to enter the LZ.

6. The following is a statistical summation of aircraft operations:

- a. Total Missions: 201
- b. Total Hours: 1,969
- c. Total Cargo: 507 tons
- d. Total Troops: 9,685
- e. Total Sorties: 5,235

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

INGP-00

8 May 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report UNITED OPERATION IN SUPPORT OF ARVN AIRBORNE
BRIGADE, 30 April 1966

1. MISSION BACKGROUND:

On 26 April 1966, the 52d Aviation Battalion received instructions from I Field Forces Vietnam, to support the 22nd ARVN Division with two airmobile companies on a one day operation, scheduled to be conducted on 1 May 1966. On 27 April 1966, the operation was rescheduled for 2 May 1966. On the morning of 29 April 1966, the battalion was alerted that the operation would be conducted on 30 April 1966. Permission to pull an airmobile company from Operation Longfellow was obtained. It was decided that the 155th Aviation Company, would be pulled from Longfellow and with the 161st Aviation Company conduct this operation. The battalion S-4 was alerted to stockpile sufficient fuel and ammunition at English Field, coordinates BR 878996, near the village of De Duc.

2. The following is a general description of the operation:

29 April: At 1500 hours the battalion staff conducted a reconnaissance of the operational area. The reconnaissance party consisted of the lead company commander, his operations officer, the ground task force commander, his advisor, the three ground company commanders, their advisors and the FAC. Specific LZ's, approach and departure routes for each, alternate LZ's and desired prestrike areas were selected during the reconnaissance. Upon return to English Airfield, the stagefield was laid out and landing plans established.

30 April: The 161st Aviation Company with 10 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s and the 155th Aviation Company with 9 UH1D's and 5 UH1B(A)'s closed in the stagefield at 0730 hours. Air Force prestrike of the first LZ at BR 867629, commenced at 0740 hours. The first lift of 162 troops was landed at 0800 hours. Prestrike of the second LZ, located at BR 865796, commenced at 0810 hours. A total of 280 troops were landed in this LZ. This first lift landed at 0830 hours. All aircraft were used on the first lift with only the aircraft of the 161st being used on the second. Prestrike for the third LZ located at BR 876779, commenced at 0940 hours. A total of 442 troops were landed in this LZ. The first of three lifts landed at 1000 hours. The last lift was completed at 1045 hours. All aircraft returned to the stagefield, refueled and stood by. The 155th was released to return to home station at 1200 hours. The 161st continued to stand by for possible retention until 1600 hours, at which time they were released. There were no incidents during the operation.

3. A summary of the operational data is listed below:

- a. Total missions: 1
- b. Total sorties: 412
- c. Total troops: 872
- d. Total hours: 167

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4. Logistical Support:

a. Mission requirements forced the S-4 to request tactical emergency logistical supply to support this operation, however, sufficient fuel and ammunition were delivered to the staging field on the afternoon of 29 April.

b. The following amounts of Class IIIA and VA were expended during the operation:

- (1) Class IIIA: 11,200 gal JP-4
- (2) Class VA: 4Qm - 400 rds
7.62 - 45000 rds
2.75 - 150 rds

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

AVOP-CC

28 April 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Aviation Tactical Symposium

1. Background: An Aviation Tactical Symposium was held 11 April 1966, at Camp Holloway, in conjunction with the Battalion Commanders monthly Commanders Conference. The discussion was directed primarily toward current tactical air mobility concepts within the battalion. The symposium was attended by company commanders and armed platoon leaders who had been given an agenda for consideration prior to the conference.

2. The following are the subjects discussed, and the highlights brought out on each subject:

a. MISSION PLANNING

(1) For a one company operation supporting US troops the following should be present for the initial planning meeting: ideally, the aviation company commander, the operations officer, the gun platoon leader, the liaison officer, the ground unit commander, the ground unit S-3, the FAC and the artillery liaison officer. If the mission is in support of ARVN or ROK forces, the advisor and/or interpreter should be included.

(2) The elements of the operation that should be known by the aviation mission commander before the reconnaissance are the tactical plan, the number of troops, the type and number of supporting weapons to be moved, the time frame expected by the ground commander, the type of prestrike to be employed, the weather delay acceptable to the ground commander, the enemy situation and whether a standby or extraction is planned.

(3) The reconnaissance should be conducted as late as possible and still with adequate time to effect necessary coordination. This will normally be the afternoon of the day before the lift.

(4) The aerial reconnaissance party should consist of the aviation mission commander, his operations officer, the gun platoon leader, the FAC and/or artillery forward observer, the ground unit commander (advisor and/or interpreter if ARVN or ROK unit) and the pathfinder team leader if it is to be a night assault. The equipment for the reconnaissance should include a polaroid camera and a pair of binoculars if available. The camera is an excellent means of producing current pictures of the LZ's for use in briefing both aviation and ground personnel concerned.

(5) A light gun team should be utilized on the aerial reconnaissance. This provides the gun platoon leader an opportunity to become familiar with the LZ, the alternate LZ and the surrounding terrain. It also provides protection for the reconnaissance aircraft.

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AVGP-CC
SUBJECT: Aviation Tactical Symposium

28 April 1966

(6) The reconnaissance aircraft should not circle the desired LZ and if a low pass is required it should consist of only one pass. Several areas should be reconnoitered for deceptive purposes.

(7) Some of the most important items to coordinate while in the air are the exact location of the LZ as approved by both the aviation commander and the ground commander, the approach and departure routes, the best formation and direction of landing, the free fire zones and where preparation and suppressive fires should be placed.

b. MISSION EXECUTION:

(1) For the company level mission the best technique for armed escort is to accompany the troop carriers from the pick-up zone to the landing zone on the initial lift and then orbit near the LZ and wait for subsequent lifts. This provides immediate responsive aerial fire support for the troops already on the ground. When the weather is marginal or the troop carriers have a short turn around, it may be better for the armed ships to escort the troop carriers both ways.

(2) The best mixture of gun teams seems to be that of a heavy team on each side of the company formation, the lead ship being an M-5 system followed by two M-16 systems or one M-3 system.

(3) It is generally agreed that door gunners may be dropped on combat assaults without losing significant firepower. This puts more ground troops in the LZ in less lifts, subsequently reducing the exposure time of the helicopters on the ground. This means that the aircraft commander, pilot and crew chief must be more observant while landing in the LZ to avoid ~~obstacles~~ small trees and bushes, and that the crew chief be positioned on the outside door to the formation flow.

(4) The gun ships should orbit at an altitude dictated by the terrain and turn around time, generally from 400 feet and lower with climbing turns on cross wind leg.

(5) A prestrike of the LZ is desirable to the aviation commander on all missions where such fire is not precluded by the friendly situation. The type prestrike; air, artillery, or both depends upon the terrain, weather, situation and resources available. If the prestrike is to be conducted by artillery it is generally recommended that the first volley be fuze V.T. to catch the enemy out of their holes. This should be left to the discretion of the artillery commander.

(6) It is desired that the air prestrike be made by A-1 type aircraft with "hard" ordnance (no napalm or WP), and that the A-1's lead the helicopters into the LZ utilizing 20mm on a strafing run. On occasion terrain or the nature of the target will dictate another type aircraft and ordnance.

(7) During an artillery prestrike, the desired time for lifting the prestrike is either 30 seconds before LZ time or when the armed helicopters are within rocket range of the LZ. The degree of coordination between the flights and the artillery is not satisfactory at the present time, but is constantly improving, particularly with US artillery.

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SUBJECT: Aviation Tactical Symposium

28 April 1966

(7) Under any situation the aviation commander must have direct communications with the artillery for control, of fires.

(8) The airlift mission commander should be in position to see the prestrike and must have the authority to decide whether to continue the mission, abort, or go to the alternate LZ depending upon adequacy of prestrike and ground situation.

(9) The length of the prestrike depends on the area, terrain and type ordnance available. It is agreed that the short violent prestrike with troop carriers landing immediately afterwards is the desired procedure.

(10) It is generally agreed that an alternate LZ is not essential and has only been used on two occasions in the past year. The decision to use an alternate LZ (if available) normally comes after the first lift of troops have been dropped into the primary LZ or on initial lift when the primary LZ is obscured. Close coordination with the ground unit commander must be effected and he must concur in the decision to use an alternate LZ.

(11) The best formations in the Central Highlands are determined by the size and shape of the LZ, however the best formation is one that is compressed from front to rear as much as possible and places maximum number of troops on the ground in the first lift.

(12) The best altitude between the PZ and LZ is 1500 feet MSL or above, if possible. If this altitude can not be attained, low level flight is preferable.

(13) The weather decision for the airlanded assault is always made by the airlift commander. The weather decision for the air prestrike is made by the FAC. The decision to delay the ALA should be made as late as possible, but in time to allow the ground commander time to execute his alternate plan of attack, if desired.

(14) The acceptable daylight weather minimums are determined by terrain, enemy situation, available supporting fires and other variables. If the air prestrike is utilized the desired weather at the LZ is at least 1500 feet and 3 miles visibility. If an artillery prestrike is used, the weather at the LZ and enroute should be at least 500-1. This is a sufficient altitude to utilize the armed helicopters and observe the artillery preparation of the LZ. The urgency of the mission may reduce the acceptable weather minimums. This remains the airlift mission commanders decision.

(15) Low level formation flights should be conducted only as required; ie, poor weather, short turn around time from PZ to LZ, or for security reasons. The best method for low level navigation is to use either a C&C ship or a fixed wing ship as a vector aircraft. The formations used for low level flight should be the same as those used for other missions. The armed ships should fly as close as possible to optimum support altitude during low level operations.

c. COMLAND and CONTROL:

(1) For a company level operation the following personnel, as a minimum, should be included in the C&C aircraft:

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AVGP-CC
SUBJECT: Aviation Tactical Symposium

28 April 1966

(1) The Aviation Company Commander, the Ground Unit Commander, (Advisor), the Artillery LNO and/or FAC, the Ground Unit S-3.

(2) The C&C aircraft should operate in the company UHF net, the ground units FI net and the VHF net with the armed ships. The troop carriers should operate in company UHF and FI nets. The armed helicopters should operate in the company UHF and VHF nets and the ground units FI net.

(3) The C&C aircraft should be positioned above the LZ (off to the side) so as to observe the prestrike and to control the fire. It can then go into the LZ on a subsequent lift to drop off the ground command party if they desire.

(4) An alternate mission commander should always be designated. He can be either the platoon leader leading the formation, the executive officer in the rear of the formation or anyone else as long as he is in an aircraft other than that occupied by the mission commander.

(5) It is recommended that the C&C aircraft be a troop carrier (slick) equipped with FI, UHF and VHF radio capability.

(6) The OIF type aircraft can best be utilized by the aviation company for marking LZ's, vectoring the troop carriers, visual reconnaissance of the approach and departure flight routes, and in the direction of artillery fires.

3. Night Operations:

a. Additional factors to be considered during the planning phase for a night operation are:

(1) One aviator for each aircraft should have an instrument rating either fixed or rotary wing, preferably rotary wing.

(2) All aircraft should have necessary instruments sufficient for instrument flight.

(3) Pathfinder teams should be available to mark and light the LZ.

(4) Sufficient moonlight or starlight to identify the LZ if (3) above is not feasible.

(5) Previous night flying experience in country.

b. The desired weather minimums for night operations are 3000 feet ceiling, 5 miles visibility and a visible horizon.

c. The type formation to be employed in night operations depends on the size and shape of the LZ. The staggered trail formation is possibly the easiest formation to fly under night conditions.

d. The best lighting on the helicopters for night operations is the navigation lights on steady dim, with the bottom of the navigation lights taped.

Page 4 of 6

CONFIDENTIAL

51.

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGP-CC
SUBJECT: Aviation Tactical Symposium

28 April 1966

e. Lighting in the LZ, if possible, should consist of each side and end to show the general outline and limits. A light for the lead aircraft would be desirable as would a visual glide slope.

f. The best way of navigating to the LZ would be by a LF/LF homer set up by a pathfinder team. The next most desirable means of navigation would be by a vector aircraft.

g. Night operations are much more feasible in the coastal lowlands than in the central highlands. Beach operations, especially, offer no particular problem in the lowlands.

4. Miscellaneous:

a. The primary difference between US, ROK and ARVN forces in conducting airborne operations is communications. There is no problem communicating with the US forces. The ROK forces are the most difficult to work with since the ARVN forces have US Advisors with whom to communicate. All communications with the ROK must be made through interpreters.

b. The following loads are recommended on combat assaults under normal conditions with full fuel loads:

	ARVN	ROK	US
UH1B	5	5	4
UH1D	6	8	7

These loads may be adjusted according to density altitude, fuel load, and the size of the PZ and LZ.

c. Each door gunner should carry 400 rounds of 7.62 ammunition each. The M-5 kit should carry 150 rounds. The M-16 kit should carry 1000 to 1200 rounds of 7.62mm per tube with a full load of rockets.

d. Multi-company operations include little or no changes to procedures employed during one company sized operations, except that command and control is accomplished by the battalion commander or his representative. The command and control element normally consists of the battalion commander and his S-3, with the senior company commander designated as the alternate mission commander. Necessarily multi-company operations require more detailed planning and coordination to insure smooth operations.

5. Conclusions:

That this symposium has been of significant value to both battalion and company representatives. It has brought together the thinking on tactics and techniques throughout the battalion and should help in standardizing operational procedures as much as possible. Aside from improving operational effectiveness, standardization is considered of utmost importance to the supported ground units. It facilitates their planning and improves employment of aviation resources during combat operations. It is proposed that similar discussions be conducted at least every three months. This serves to update tactical procedures and will help to familiarize newly assigned personnel with the battalion's tactics and techniques.

23

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGP-CC

SUBJECT: Aviation Tactical Symposium

28 April 1966

5. Conclusions:

New methods and ideas approved by the battalion commander will be incorporated in the battalion's Airmobile SOP.

Robert L. Cody
ROBERT L. CODY
Lt Col Inf
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS
52D AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96318

AVGP-CC

SUBJECT: Test Aviation Company

TO: Commanding Officer
17th Aviation Group
ATTN: S-3
APO US Forces 96240

1. The 52d Aviation Battalion was instructed on 15 March 1966 to begin the test of a reorganized Aviation Company (AML) on 16 March 1966. The 155th Aviation Company (AML) was designated as the test company and augmented with the following equipment from the 170th Aviation Company, to bring them up to the desired test strength.

a. Aviators MOS 1981	14
b. Crew Chiefs	7
c. Door Gunners	7
d. UHED	7
e. Mechanics	3 (service platoon)

One UH1B(A) A/C #38672 was deleted from the test company.

2. The test began with the company in support of the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Operation Garfield). During the test period, 15 March to 15 April, the test company has participated in Operation Garfield, Lincoln and has continued their support of the 23d Division (ARVN).

3. The following test data is submitted:

a. Flying Hours: UH1D 1659.5 UH1B(A) 397.6 TOTAL 2057.1
b. Troops Lifted: 10,328
c. Cargo Lifted (in tons): 321.5
d. Aircraft Flyable (Aver): UH1D 20 UH1B(A) 7 Pct. 84%
e. Aircraft Mission Ready (Aver): UH1D 17 UH1B(A) 7 Pct. 75%
f. Personnel: (Average for month)

	Aviators	EM
Assigned:	62	208
Transit:	2	47

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	Aviators	IN
TDX:	1	4
Leave:	1	1
DNIF (Hosp):	2	2
Present for Duty:	56	154

4. The test aviation company has participated in 13 combat assaults during the test period. These assaults have ranged from platoon to company size. The Landing Zones have ranged from 1 ship size up to as large as 50 ship size. The formations used have been varied and have included V's of 3's, 5's, staggered trail, and V's heavy left and heavy right. The formations have been dictated by the size and shape of the LZ, as is always the case in the Central Highlands of Vietnam.

5. Certain conclusions have been determined by this headquarters with respect to the parameters outlined in the test directive.

a. Organization:

(1) Are personnel and grade adequate to support additional aircraft? The personnel and grade structure are deemed adequate to support the additional aircraft, with the exception of the service platoon. (see para 8 c recommended changes to service platoon).

(2) Are changes in TO&E equipment required? The TO&E as modified for the test is inadequate in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Eighteen UH-1D troop carriers are incapable of lifting the assault elements of a U.S. rifle company. Environmental factors in the Central Highlands area do not permit each UH-1D to lift 8 troops. High density altitude, restricted pick up and landing zones generally limit the aircraft load to an average of 6 troops, and this is with a reduced fuel load. A seventh troop may be added by dropping the door gunner. Assuming 18 available UH-1D's a maximum troop lift of 126 is provided. Under ideal conditions of the above stated limiting factors, with minimum fuel load and unrestricted loading and landing zones, it is possible to lift the 139 man assault elements with 18 UH-1D's. These conditions seldom exist in this area of operations. It is recommended that the company be provided with two (2) additional UH-1D helicopters (one with crew) for a total of 25. They would be broken down into three platoons of eight (8) each and one (1) in the service platoon to use as a wrecker. With 25 UH-1D's available, the company should be able to keep 20 (80%) of the troop carrying helicopters mission ready and therefore be able to lift the combat assault elements of a U.S. rifle company.

(3) What is the best organization for Command and Control? The company has been organized, for command and control, into four (4) platoons. Three (3) lift platoons and one (1) armed platoon. The company has had no trouble with command and control utilizing this type organization. The company has made simultaneous lifts into three LZ's and the commander has had excellent control of the operation. On operations under battalion control, this company has been responsive and easily controlled. The extra platoon provides greater flexibility during operations using multiple landing zones.

(4) Can the organization support the normal missions assigned a U.S. rifle company? The reorganized aviation company can easily support the normal missions of a U.S. rifle company with the exception as listed in paragraph 5(a) above.

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(5) What effect does the reduced aviator to aircraft ratio have on daily aviator availability? The reduced aviator to aircraft ratio has had no significant effect on the company's ability to man their mission ready aircraft. In order to completely test the capabilities of this company, and determine what effect there may be, the Battalion's policy on aviator flying time (i.e; upon reaching 90 hours within any 30 day period an aviator must be checked by the flight surgeon and cleared for further flight duty, and that no aviator will fly more than 110 hours in any 30 day period) has been set aside. Each aviator going beyond these specified limits has been closely observed to preclude endangering the aircraft due to crew fatigue.

b. Tactics:

(1) Can eight (8) UH1B(A) adequately perform the escort and fire suppression role during combat assault operations and other special missions assigned to the test company? The company was directed to test the feasibility of conducting assaults utilizing only five (5) UH1B(A)'s. Five UH1B (A) helicopters in the escort role are unable to provide what is considered minimum essential suppressive fire support to a company in the assault. The coverage provided by a heavy gun team (3 armed ships) on the one flank of the company formation is adequate. The light gun team (2 gun ships) provides only approximately 70% coverage on the other flank. This is particularly true when lifting troops into LZ's accommodating only 3-6 aircraft. In such cases the need for continuous coverage is prolonged causing an even greater problem to the light gun team. It is recommended that the TO&E be changed to reflect nine (9) UH1B(A)'s authorized. This would give the company the capability of heavy gun teams on combat assaults.

(2) To what extent are present tactics, formations, or concepts changed as a result of the test company organization? The present tactics, formations, and concepts of this battalion, have undergone no appreciable change due to the reorganization of the test company.

(3) Determine the extent to which door gunners are required during combat assaults, direct combat support, and other combat support missions. It is generally agreed that door gunners may be eliminated on combat assaults; that they should be utilized on both direct combat support and other combat support missions, depending on the enemy situation enroute and at the destination; that in view of these considerations a reduced gunner augmentation be implemented. It is recommended that this augmentation be twenty (20) gunners per company. This would provide one (1) gunner for each UH1B(A) and still provide enough for the UH1B's utilized on missions other than combat assaults. It is believed that support of ARVN forces present other conditions which may make it advisable to deploy door gunners in most such operations.

(4) Determine to what extent aviator and aircraft availability is effected. Mission ready aircraft availability has been effected by the test company. The company has maintained approximately 56 aviators per day present for duty and has been able to man mission ready aircraft.

6. Determine the adequacy of aircraft maintenance.

a. The test of the maintenance capabilities of the company was conducted using the following parameters for maintenance activities.

(1) The service platoon would not be augmented with equipment or personnel.

(2) No special attempt would be made to keep the unit at 100 percent strength. Normal personnel gains and losses would remain in effect so that a true maintenance picture would be presented.

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(3) The maintenance manpower expenditure would be based on ten (10) productive hours per individual, seven days weekly.

(4) Maintenance personnel would not be excused from normal unit details of activities, i.e., KP, R&R, guard, etc. Additionally, those duties such as motor maintenance, ammunition handling and other duties necessary for mission accomplishment, were performed by assigned mechanics due to shortages of other MOS skills.

(5) Overflow organization maintenance would be work ordered to the field Maintenance Detachment.

b. During the first portion of the test period, extended employment of the unit in support of Operations Garfield/Lincoln caused an extremely high utilization of aircraft and flying time. The total utilization daily of all mission ready aircraft resulted in the loss of unit ability to schedule an effective maintenance program. This then reduced the daily operational capability from eighty (80) percent to fifty (50) percent. The maintenance shops were filled and sufficient personnel were not on hand to perform work on all non-flyable aircraft. As has been stated in previous reports, overflow maintenance was shifted to the Maintenance Detachment. The average daily organizational maintenance manhour input from the Detachment for the entire period was approximately 140 hours.

c. Mission requirements, during the later portion were reduced somewhat which allowed for effective maintenance scheduling. Availability of mission ready aircraft showed a decided increase, however, all personnel were required to perform at maximum productive capability in order to produce the desired results. It is doubtful that sustained efficiency or satisfactory maintenance would be the rule when personnel are continuously pushed to the limits of their capability.

d. There is no requirement for TOME augmentation of the supporting maintenance detachment. Occasions will arise when a third echelon maintenance backlog will become a reality, however, available direct support units will be capable of absorbing the third echelon work overloads during peak periods.

e. During the test period, the following conclusions were made, in regards to maintenance.

(1) The test airmobile company cannot maintain a high availability rate during total available aircraft employment for longer than two weeks without suffering a serious reduction in capability.

(2) There is no requirement for augmentation of the supporting field Maintenance Detachment.

(3) A requirement exists for augmentation for the service platoon.

7. Conclusions:

The 52d Aviation Battalion has come to the following conclusions as a result of the data compiled by the reorganized aviation company during the test period.

a. The concept of the heavier airmobile company, capable of lifting the assault elements of a U.S. rifle company, is agreed with.

b. The augmentation packages to the present airmobile companies, should be tailored to particular units to allow for variances in environmental factors.

c. It is believed that the supported U.S. units will, in time learn to appreciate and tailor their own Standing Operating Procedures to the enhanced capabilities of the reorganized aviation company.

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d. The service platoon of the airmobile company, as now organized is incapable, of accepting the workload of the additional aircraft.

e. The concept of the reduced aviator to aircraft ratio will present no problems to the reorganized airmobile company.

f. The concept of the reduced armed helicopter support, i.e. five (5) UH1(A)'s in support of a company size combat assault, is impractical as sufficient suppressive firepower is not provided by the light gun team.

8. Recommendations:

a. It is recommended that the reorganized aviation company be enlarged to twenty-five (25) UH1D troop carriers and nine (9) UH1B(A) helicopters. The two additional troop carrying helicopters will provide the company with the ability to keep enough helicopters (20) mission ready to be able to lift the combat assault elements of a U.S. rifle company in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. The one additional UH1B(A) provides the company with the ability to keep two heavy gun teams (6 UH1B(A)) mission ready. It is necessary to have two heavy gun teams to provide adequate support for the troop carriers, especially when operating into small LZ's as is the rule rather than the exception in the Central Highlands.

b. The units operating in the Delta and Coastal regions of Vietnam generally operate into larger LZ's and with lower density altitude than do the units in the Central Highlands. It is recommended that the augmentation to the airmobile company be tailored to allow for variances in environmental factors.

c. It is recommended that the service platoon be augmented with the following personnel and equipment:

2 Helicopter Mechanics	67M20	E-5
2 Helicopter Mechanics	67M20	E-4
1 Technical Inspector	67M20	E-5
4 Tool Kits, General Mechanics		

d. It is recommended that the reorganized company aviator strength be 62. This is below the desired 1.9 (based on 25 UH1D's and 9 UH1B(A)'s) aviator to aircraft ratio as stated in the test directive.

e. It is recommended that the gunners, normally under the operational control of the two organic airlift platoons, be placed directly under the control of the gunner platoon sergeant. He will assign all gunners to UH1D's when it is deemed necessary in the interest of crew safety by the operations officer. The gunners assigned to the Armed Platoon will remain under the operational control of that platoon.

s/ ROBERT L. CODY
Lt Col, Inf
Commanding

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