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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 145TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco, 96227

(19) OT-RD-660156

AVGC-CD

(11) 3 Aug[redacted]66

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Lessons Learned, HQ, 145th Combat Aviation BATTALION (U).

TO: See Distribution

APR 30 1968

(9) Operational rept. for quarterly period ending 31 Jul 66.

Section 1: (C) Significant Organization or Unit Activities.

A. (U) Reporting period is from 1 May through 31 July 1966 and is submitted in accordance with AR 525-24, 29 October 1959, USARV Regulation 870-2, 19 July 1966 and 12th Combat Aviation Group Regulation 870-1, change 1, 2, and 3. Activities of subordinate units are included as a section of this report.

B. (C) Mission: To augment the aviation support capability available to II Field Forces Victor and the Republic of Vietnam Forces operating within the III Corps ARVN Tactical Zone.

C. (C) Organizational Structure:

1. The 145th Aviation Battalion was reorganized in accordance with General Order Number 28, Headquarters United States Army, Pacific, dated 2 February 1966, with a reorganization effective date of 10 February 1966. The unit designation was changed to 145th Combat Aviation Battalion by paragraph 13, Commanders Notes Number 4, 1st Aviation Brigade, dated 17 June 1966. The Battalion is composed of the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, five aviation companies (three assault helicopter companies, one armed helicopter company, and one reconnaissance airplane company (O-1)), supporting maintenance, medical, signal avionics, and Pathfinder Detachments.

2. The three assault helicopter companies are organized under the provisions of TOE 1-77E and augmented by USARPAC General Order 262-65. However the A/501st and 68th Assault Helicopter Companies have received an augmentation VOCG 1st Aviation Brigade pending implementation of a revised TOE 1-77E, and presently consist of two airlift platoons (22 UH-1D troop carriers), one armed platoon (8 UH-1B armed helicopters) and one maintenance helicopter (UH-1D). The 118th Assault Helicopter Company presently has two airlift platoons (16 UH-1D troop carriers) one armed platoon (8 UH-1B armed helicopters) and one maintenance helicopter (UH-1B). The 197th Armed Helicopter Company is composed of three armed platoons (24 UH-1B) and one maintenance helicopter (UH-1B), and is organized under the provisions of TOE 1-47E, 1-77E, and augmented by USARPAC G.O. 3-18 dated 5 November 1965. The 74th Reconnaissance Airplane Company is organized under the provisions of 1-7D and has thirty-two O-1F and O-1D aircraft authorized, [illegible] on hand, by order of USARV G.O. 1156 dated 22 October 1965.

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3. The aviation assets of this battalion are allocated daily through the Army Aviation Element (AAE) of II Field Forces Victor Tactical Operations Center to support III (ARVN) Corps, and II Field Forces Victor which consist of the 1st (US) Infantry Division, 25th (US) Infantry Division and the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade. This Battalion frequently reinforces other aviation battalions of the 12th Combat Aviation Group when the lift requirements are beyond their organic means. This Battalion has also reinforced the aviation elements of the IV and II Corps tactical zone.

D. (C) Type and Number of Aircraft Assigned to the 145th Combat Support Battalion:

| TYPE | NUMBER |
|---|---|
| UH-1B | 51 |
| UH-1B/540 | 26 |
| UH-1D | 61 |
| O-1D | 22 |
| U-6A | 1 |

E. (C) Operational Statistics for this period.

1. Number of aircraft hours flown by the Battalion in support of III ARVN Corps aviation requirements:

| UNIT | MONTHS | | | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | MAY | JUNE | JULY | |
| 68th Aslt Hel Co | 1,757 | 1,976 | 1,882 | 5,615 |
| 74th Recon Airplane | 2,041 | 2,219 | 2,085 | 6,345 |
| 118th Aslt Hel Co | 2,181 | 2,048 | 2,021 | 6,250 |
| 197th Armed Hel Co | 1,387 | 1,582 | 1,446 | 4,415 |
| A/501st Aslt Hel Co | 1,662 | 1,717 | 1,965 | 5,344 |
| TOTAL | 9,028 | 9,542 | 9,399 | 27,969 |

2. Total number of sorties flown during this period: 69,700.

3. Number of Battalion size operations conducted by the 145th Cbt Avn Bn during this period:

| | Combat Assaults | Extractions | Repositions | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| May | 29 | 11 | 0 | 40 |
| June | 41 | 17 | 2 | 60 |
| July | 34 | 3 | 6 | 43 |
| Total | 104 | 31 | 8 | 143 |

4. Number of Passengers Airlifted:

| | |
|---|---|
| May | 22,764 |
| June | 28,097 |
| July | 29,115 |
| Total | 79,976 |

5. Number of Viet Cong personnel killed, and structures and sampans destroyed.

| | VC (KBA) | Structures (Dest) | Sampans (Dest) |
|---|---|---|---|
| May | 172 | 154 | 85 |
| June | 129 | 223 | 157 |
| July | 171 | 207 | 234 |
| Total | 472 | 584 | 476 |

F. (U) Number of days engaged in Training and Combat Operations During the Quarter: 92.

G. (C) Personnel

(1) Strength Break Down:

1 May 66 - 31 July 66

| | Officers | Warrant Officers | Enlisted | AGG |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HHD 145th Avn** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 22 | 2 | 87 | 111 |
| ASG: | 27 | 4 | 105 | 136 |
| **Scty Plt 145th Avn** | | | | |
| AUTH: | Ø | Ø | 47 | 47 |
| ASG: | Ø | Ø | 49 | 49 |
| **Co A 501st Avn** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 14 | 41 | 141 | 196 |
| ASG: | 24 | 23 | 135 | 182 |
| **118th Avn** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 14 | 41 | 141 | 196 |
| ASG: | 21 | 25 | 151 | 197 |
| **197th Avn** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 29 | 26 | 139 | 194 |
| ASG: | 21 | 22 | 143 | 190 |
| **68th Avn** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 14 | 41 | 141 | 196 |
| ASG: | 25 | 22 | 143 | 190 |
| **74th Avn** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 41 | 1 | 82 | 124 |
| ASG: | 32 | 4 | 89 | 125 |
| **151 Trans** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | 1 | 70 | 72 |
| ASG: | 1 | 1 | 80 | 82 |
| **94th Sig** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | Ø | 9 | 10 |
| ASG: | 1 | Ø | 12 | 13 |
| **573rd Trans** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | 1 | 70 | 72 |
| ASG: | 1 | 1 | 76 | 78 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **12[illegible]th Sig** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | Ø | 9 | 10 |
| ASG: | 1 | Ø | 11 | 12 |
| **93rd Med** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | Ø | 8 | 9 |
| ASG: | 1 | Ø | 10 | 11 |
| **571st Trans** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | 1 | 70 | 72 |
| ASG: | 1 | 1 | 70 | 72 |
| **774th Med** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | Ø | 8 | 9 |
| ASG: | 1 | Ø | 8 | 9 |
| **391st Trans** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | 1 | 70 | 72 |
| ASG: | 1 | 1 | 73 | 75 |
| **282nd Sig** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | Ø | 9 | 10 |
| ASG: | 1 | Ø | 10 | 11 |
| **430th Med** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | Ø | 8 | 9 |
| ASG: | 1 | Ø | 6 | 7 |
| **320th Sig** | | | | |
| AUTH: | 1 | Ø | 9 | 10 |
| ASG: | 1 | Ø | 11 | 12 |
| **563rd Trans** | | | | |
| AUTH: | Ø | Ø | 24 | 24 |
| ASG: | Ø | Ø | 21 | 21 |

(2) Problem Areas:

(a) Late receipt of Officer Assignment Instructions: a review of receipt of assignment instructions for the quarter shows that 9 officers received their instructions with 15 - 30 days remaining to DEROS and 5 officers received theirs with 15 or less days until DEROS. Late instructions for August already involve 6 individuals in the 1 - 15 day category, two of whom are further complicated with concurrent travel application pending to another o/s area.

A review of this should be conducted at higher headquarters to determine if other methods for reporting non-receipt could be more effective, or to provide a system to guarantee receipt of instructions NLT 30 days prior to DEROS.

(b) Non-receipt of Enlisted Assignment Instructions: During the last 30 days of the quarter, receipt of enlisted assignment instructions has become a problem. Two enlisted men had not received assignments until after their July DEROS, even though they were properly reported on regular

advanced oversea returned list (AOR). These individuals were retained approximately one month beyond DEROS. Recommend that the current procedures calling for ten day notification of non-receipt be changed to 20 or 30 days. Corrective actions have been initiated by higher headquarters prior to the publishing date of this report.

(c) The assigned strength of aircraft mechanics has been overall slightly less than TOE authorized, while a 5% overage is permitted. Many personnel filling these positions are directly from AIT and are considered inadequately trained or proficient to perform required maintenance. Units have initiated training programs to overcome this weakness.

H. (U) Aviation Safety:

1. The 145th Combat Aviation Battalion flew a total of 27,969 hours during this reporting period and experienced the following aircraft losses and/or mishaps:

| | |
|---|---|
| Combat losses | 3 |
| Major accidents | 5 |
| Minor accidents | 0 |
| Incidents | 4 |
| Forced landings | 6 |
| Precautionary landings | 0 |

2. The 145th Combat Aviation Battalion accident rate for the reporting period is 18.0 per 100,000 flying hours as compared to the USARV rate of 24.2 (May and June).

3. The following is a compilation of date indicating fatalities or injured as a result of hostile ground action or aircraft accidents.

| | Officer | | Warrant Officer | | Enlisted Men | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Combat | Non-Combat | Combat | Non-Combat | Combat | Non-Combat |
| Fatalities | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Injuries | 9 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 17 | 1 |

I. (C) Intelligence:

1. During May and June there were two reports of airbursts in the area of airmobile operations; both in the vicinity of Cu Chi/Duc Hoa. No comfirmation of any anti-aircraft weapon larger than 50 cal (12.7mm) has been made.

2. Elements of the First Inf Div captured two complete and parts of a third 20mm gun northeast of Phu Loi. These were marked as being of American manufacture and were evidently part of the armament system from a crashed fighter aircraft. They had not been modified for AA use.

3. Hit reports increased slightly during the quarter. There is evidence that the Viet Cong Main Force units have been conducting training in anti-aircraft firing to include the methods of computing "Lead Distance" and vulnerable areas of helicopters.

4. The ChiCom/Japanese 70mm Howitzer was used in harassing and probing action against Trai Bi base camp on two occasions during July. From the number of rounds expended (over 200) it can be deduced that the Viet Cong supply of ammunition for these weapons has increased, since previously only 25 - 30 rounds had been used in any engagement.

5. The increased cloudiness, low ceilings, and poor visibility of the wet monsoon season caused six airmobile operations to be delayed from one to three hours, and one to be postponed for 24 hours.

J. (C) Operations:

1. General:

(a) The aviation tasks performed by this Battalion are varied and range from multi-ground combat battalion airmobile assaults and extractions, in which all elements operate as a Battalion Team, to single aircraft missions of observation, courier runs, and all manner of administrative and logistical missions.

(b) The aviation assets of the Battalion are under operational control of II Field Forces Victor. II Field Forces Victor allocates on a daily basis a number of aircraft to III ARVN Corps in support of its administrative and tactical requirements. The remainder of the aviation assets are then available for allocation for the support of US Forces in the III Corps Sector. On occasion Battalion assets are employed in support of the adjacent II and IV Corps. The assets of the Battalion are controlled by the Battalion Operations Center through the assignment of missions to individual companies within the Battalion.

(c) Initial Battalion planning and coordination with the supported unit determines the number of troop carrier helicopters required for the conduct of an airmobile operation. Normally whenever the tactical requirement dictates the use of sixteen or more troop carriers, the operation will be coordinated, planned and controlled by the Battalion. Fifteen troop carriers or less required for an operation will normally be coordinated and directed at company level. A typical lift element for Battalion size operations consist of ten troop carriers (UH-1D) and four armed (UH-1B) helicopters. The usual Battalion airmobile operation consists of two - four lift elements. Other aircraft which comprise the Battalion airmobile task force are: Command and Control Helicopter, a forward area maintenance recovery team, a standby recovery aircraft, a medical evacuation helicopter, five to eight additional armed helicopters for reconnaissance, prestriking and marking the landing zone and one O-1D (fixed wing) aircraft to perform radio relay, weather advisory and surveillance.

2. Type:

(a) "Lightning Bug": A mission that is flown during the hours of darkness by a three aircraft team consisting of one aircraft equipped with a powerful searchlight to spot targets and two gun ships to engage the targets.

(b) Gunship Support: Gunship teams daily provide on station firepower to road convoys, conduct strikes against enemy emplacements,

installations and shipping. They are also employed around the clock on an immediate (5 minute) alert for the security of Bien Hoa Airbase complex (Dong Nai Sensitive Section). Gunships have been effective in breaking VC attacks, ambushes, and are a significant factor in the security of U.S. and ARVN installations from attack.

(c) Special Missions: The Battalion has been directed by MACV, through II Field Forces Victor, to conduct several special missions involving the employment of special tactics and techniques. Of particular interest is "Operation Market Time". This is a joint operation involving the U.S. Navy and U.S. Army aviation. It was initiated in early March 1966 and has continued throughout this reporting period. The primary mission is to conduct off shore patrols and surveillance in order to enforce curfews and prevent Viet Cong infiltration, movement, and resupply along the Delta estuarine coast and across the major rivers of the Mekong Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ). The armed helicopters in support conduct their flights from off shore landing craft and support river patrol craft and forces ashore with fire support as required. To properly support this operation, the aviation assets of various units within the Battalion have been used. By doing this, all assigned units gain an insight on such operations and it does not materially reduce the capabilities of any one company.

3. Significant Battalion Operations: During the reporting period the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion conducted one hundred and forty three Battalion size operations (104 combat assaults, 31 extractions, and 8 repositionings). Within this reporting period two hundred and sixty one company sized operations were conducted. These operations consisted of 153 combat assaults, 35 extractions, and 73 repositionings and were in support of the III ARVN Corps, 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade, 1st (US) and 25th (US) Infantry Divisions and II Corps and IV Corps requirements. Six After Action Reports are included as inclosures 1 through 6; paragraph 5, Comments and Recommendations, within these reports discloses major problems encountered.

After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 31-66
After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 32-66AA
After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 33-66
After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 36-66
After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 38-66
After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 49-66

K. (C) Logistics:

1. Prestocks of Class III and V support are maintained at nine ARVN airfields in the III Corps Area. These supplies serve as normal operating stocks and emergency stocks to support III ARVN Corps operations. The 145th Combat Aviation Battalion does not have the capability to provide its own logistical support (Class III and V) while in support of ARVN forces and relies upon these prestocks. Use of the prestocks for logistical support enables the Battalion to respond rapidly and provide airlift support to the ARVN for both preplanned and rapid reaction type operations. On occasion it is necessary to utilize the prestocked supplies in support of American forces. When prestocks are used in support of American forces it is necessary for the supported organization to replenish supplies.

a. Refueling is accomplished at these airfields by utilizing either 500 gallon bladders or 55 gallon drums and portable pumping



refueling large ne

equipment. The 500 gallon bladders are positioned in line and an entire flight element (ten to sixteen aircraft) is refueled in a matter of minutes without shutting down. This method has proved to be extremely effective in refueling large numbers of aircraft during battalion multi-lift operations. Refueling has also been accomplished by loading 55 gallon drums on 2½ ton trucks and pumping fuel directly into the aircraft. Availability of trucks limit this type of operation and refueling time is lengthened by aircraft shutting down.

b. Each of the nine prestock points submit a daily report of the status of Class III and V supplies on hand to Headquarters, III ARVN Corps. These reports are closely monitored by III ARVN Corps and the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. Additional supplies are requisitioned when the amounts on-hand are depleted down to or below a predetermined reorder point. Reorder points for each prestock point have been established on the basis of combat experience. Class III and V supplies are transported to five of the prestock points by convoy and to four prestock points by air. In many instances availability of Air Force aircraft will dictate the length of time required to bring prestock levels up to the desired prestock level.

2. The 68th Assault Helicopter Company moved to Bien Hoa from Vung Tau during the period 10 July 1966 to 17 July 1966. The unit's ground vehicles and major items of equipment were moved to the Saigon Port by LST and barge. The move from Saigon Port to Bien Hoa was accomplished by motor transport. The unit did not have access to its priority equipment such as maintenance tools while enroute, however was able to continue flying a normal number of missions daily through the combined efforts of Battalion Maintenance personnel. The inability to obtain sufficient transportation to immediately move unit equipment from Saigon Port to Bien Hoa delayed completion of the move. It is recommended that unit moves of this nature be given a high priority on transportation in order to maintain unit integrity and to minimize disruption of the unit's capability to conduct sustained operations.

L. (C) Communications:

1. The FM spectrum is so crowded in Vietnam that only Battalion size units have separate frequencies. As a result airmobile companies have been faced with sharing frequencies. In most instances they have been able to amicably cope with the situation. All units should have new family FM radios by the end of 1966 and the greatly increased number of available frequencies should solve this communications problem.

2. Telephone service was greatly improved in the Battalion by the installation of an AN/MGC-9 switchboard. This replaced the cumbersome stacked SB-22 switchboards previously used. Service should be even more improved by the beginning of 1967 when Bien Hoa Long Distance and Bien Hoa Local switchboards achieve their projected expansion programs. When those two expansions are completed the Battalion Communications Section should no longer be required to operate a switchboard.

3. The acquisition of two AN/PRC-4 back-pack UHF radios during the last quarter has greatly facilitated the establishment of forward CP's. The amount of transportation space required to move the commo section forward element to the CP's was cut in half since no generator or fuel

supply is required for the AN/PRC-4.

4. Communication elements required at forward area CP's have been drastically reduced since the Pathfinder Detachment has become fully operational. Since Pathfinder elements have radios at all stage fields and pick up zones, the additional radio stations operated by the commo personnel should be sent to forward areas only on extended operations of one day or more duration. An example of an operation where commo personnel are required is one in which an assault is made in the morning and the aircraft standby at a forward field for an afternoon extraction.

5. There has been a marked improvement in communications conducted on Battalion nets.

M. (U) Civil Affairs:

1. During the first quarter of the year an aggressive Battalion Civil affairs program was organized. After the initial buildup and during this period the individual companies seized the initiative, supplemented the projects and have carried them forward with little staff supervision.

2. A recapitulation of the Battalion's contribution to the economic and social development of Vietnam during the reporting period is as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. | Food | 191,471 Pounds |
| b. | Clothing | 2,315 Pounds |
| c. | Soap | 4,681 Bars |
| d. | Money | 1,603 $ US |
| | | 86,765 $ VN |
| e. | Water | 52,600 Gallons |
| f. | School Supplies | 575 Pounds |
| g. | Toys | 580 Pounds |
| h. | Medical | 5,262 Patients |
| i. | Education | 7,054 Student Hours |
| j. | Miscellaneous | 1,301 Quarts Milk |
| | | 372 Diapers |
| | | 300 Baby Bottles |
| | | 210 Pounds Nursery & Dispensary items |
| | | 918 Toothbrushes |
| | | 197 Towels & Wash Cloths |
| | | 900 Pounds Building Supplies |
| k. | Transportation | 455 Refugees |
| | | 30,900 Pounds Personal Belongings and Relief Supporters |

l. Emergency Civilian Medevac 27 persons

N. (U) Training

1. There is a continuing training requirement for each unit of the

Battalion in order to maintain a high state of readiness and professionalism. The rapid personnel turn over in units aggravated this requirement. Due to the heavy operational committments, much of the prescribed training is performed in conjunction with operational requirements.

2. During the reporting period the Battalion assisted in training the Royal Australian Task Force assigned to the Vung Tau - Baria area. The training consisted of familiarizing the ground forces with airmobile operations and limited area orientation for the members of the task force air arm. The Battalion received the first two classes of US Navy personnel to train as replacement crews for Operation Market Time. This training consist of transitioning the pilots into the UH-1, familiarizing the crews in the maintenance requirements, and armament systems and on the job training in armed helicopter tactics.

3. Battalion training memorandums provide the nucleus from which necessary training is conducted. However due to the heavy daily committment of Battalion resources, increased emphasis was placed on the unit commanders to conduct his aviation training while in the performance of normal missions.

4. A Battalion Aerial Gunnery Training Program was established to facilitate training of armed helicopter crews and newly assigned gunners. A competition has been planned to determine the "top gun" crew in the Battalion.

O. (C) Goals for the Coming Quarter:

1. All companies within the Battalion will conduct their airmobile operations as directed by the Battalion SOP to insure the standardization, in so far as practical, of airmobile operations.

2. Army Construction Projects at Bien Hoa Air Base.

(A) An overall Base Development Plan, which incorporates the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion's FY 66 funded projects and proposed FY 67 construction requirements was submitted through Air Force channels to MACV and through Army channels to USARV. The base development planning includes facilities at Bien Hoa Airbase for all 145th Combat Aviation Battalion elements except the 74th Recon Airplane Company. The overall plan includes:

(1) Aircraft maintenance facilities for four helicopter companies.

(2) Motor maintenance facilities and parking space for five company sized units.

(3) Administrative, supply and medical facilities for four helicopter companies and Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment.

(4) Helicopter parking areas for 123 helicopters.

(5) Staging area for airmobile assault operations.

(6) Battalion Headquarters complex.

(7) Billeting for 228 Officers and 1127 Enlisted Personnel.

(8) POL parking area.

(9) Community facilities.

(B) Project 78D (The initial construction phase for the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion at Bien Hoa Airbase) was scheduled for completion by 15 June 1966. This project is currently approximately 75% completed and

includes:

(1) Administrative facilities for two Assault Helicopter Companies.

(2) Billeting for two Assault Helicopter Companies and Hq & Hq Detachment, 145th Combat Aviation Battalion.

(3) Motor Pool facilities for two Assault Helicopter Companies.

(4) Helicopter maintenance facilities for two Assault Helicopter Companies.

(5) Mess facilities for five company sized units.

(6) Dispensary facilities for three company sized units.

(7) Central generator power plant and water sewage systems compatible with future planning of up to five company sized units.

(C) Construction of the FY 66 funded projects for the 145th Cbt Avn Bn at Bien Hoa Airbase is scheduled to commence during 1st quarter FY 67 and includes:

(1) Two helicopter maintenance hangars and a hardstand parking ramp for 50 helicopters. (Maintenance facilities for two companies are presently located on the North-South runway at Bien Hoa Airbase. This runway is currently also being used as a parking area for one Assault Helicopter Company. The VNAF has requested that this North-South runway be released as soon as possible for use as a fixed wing runway. Completion of the FY 66 funded helicopter hardstand parking area will permit the early release of this area to the VNAF).

(2) An aircraft maintenance hardstand area.

(3) Two operations buildings.

(D) Construction of required facilities at Bien Hoa Airbase will enable this Battalion to:

(1) Establish the headquarters on a military installation adjacent to the troop housing area.

(2) Billet officers of this Battalion on a military installation near the headquarters and work area.

(3) Consolidate all elements of this Battalion except one fixed wing aviation company at one location for more effective command and control.

(4) Provide billeting and administrative facilities for two additional Assault Helicopter Companies. (These companies are currently located at Bailey Compound Bien Hoa Airbase. The area is extremely congested and unsuited for continued troop occupancy. VNAF has requested the area be released by 1 Jan 67 for their use for construction of new VNAF facilities).

(5) Provide administrative and supply facilities for Hq & Hq Det, 145th Combat Aviation Battalion.

(6) Provide motor pool facilities for two additional Assault Helicopter Companies and Hq & Hq Det.

(7) Provide parking area for 24 JP/4 and 6 MOGAS tankers.

(8) Provide mess facilities for Battalion Officers and NCO's.

(9) Provide community facilities (chapel, theater, dental, PX and snack bar annex, and recreational facilities) for the Battalion.

(10) Provide dispensary facilities for two additional Assault Helicopter Companies.

3. Physical Security

(A) The physical security effort of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion may be divided into two major subareas of interest. These areas are the Battalion Passive Defense and Active Defense Plans.

(1) The Passive Defense structure of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion improves daily as additional anti-mortar bunkers are constructed. The goal of this program is to have bunker space available to each individual both in his living and working areas. This goal has been achieved by the 118th and A/501st Assault Helicopter Companies, the other Battalion units should complete their projects early in this quarter.

(2) The Active Defense Plans of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion are based upon the Bien Hoa Air Base Defense Plan which is a joint USAF/VNAF Document. This Plan is being rewritten with a special annex for the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. Elements of this Battalion augment the inner defense ring of Bien Hoa Air Base by manning a series of defensive bunkers along the perimeter of our Battalion Flight Line area. Monthly practice alerts are held during which all bunkers are manned and defensive plans checked.

(B) The 145th Combat Aviation Battalion Security Guard is in the process of passing from the control of the individual companies to centralized control by a Battalion Officer of the Guard. A study has been completed of all Battalion Security Guard Posts and the reorganization of these posts is presently in progress. Direct coordination has been made both with the USAF and VNAF to insure a properly integrated security program.

4. Through the conduct of quarterly service inspections, with increased emphasis on supply procedures, this Battalion should increase its aircraft availability by insuring that requisitions are submitted in a timely manner in accordance with current supply procedures and adequate follow-up actions are being taken.

Section II
Part 1 (U) Lessons Learned

A. Item: Administrative Procedures for Processing Awards

Discussion:

This Battalion processes an average of more than 1,000 individual awards recommendations each month. Each recommendation requires several clerical and administrative actions (dating, logging, correcting, proof-reading, verifying, filing, indorsing, forwarding). Approved awards returned through Battalion require almost as many steps in processing. The task of handling these awards is monumental.

Observation:

A revised filing system greatly reduced processing steps. The awards clerk worked for two weeks to make individual file folders for each man recommended for awards. All information necessary to process subsequent awards is maintained in the individual file which is separate from the man's 201 file. An awards data sheet is completed for all new arrivals and this is maintained by the awards clerk. Even with this time-saving system, processing of awards in an aviation battalion of this size is a tremendous administrative burden. Since Air Medals comprise the bulk (91.1%) of awards presented in the Battalion and a definite criteria is established for the award it is recommended that Battalion Headquarters be given the authority to approve the award thereby eliminating much of the administrative burden.

B. Item: Restricted Combat Assault

On numerous occassions this Battalion has been required to make combat assaults into areas not classified as secure.

Discussion:

On occassion this Battalion has been required to make combat assaults into insecure areas without benefit of landing zone preparation by artillery or air strike and where suppressive fire by organic weapons was not feasible due to the distant possibility of injuring friendly Vietnamese civilians. These situations place the airmobile commander in the untenable situation of having to abort the mission, prepare the landing zone with organic weapons without regard to civilian loss of life or proceed into the landing zone without preparation and be guided only by the normal rules of engagement.

Observation:

Aborting a mission is highly undesirable and only executed as a last resort. Suppressing an area with organic guns with indifference to the effect on the local populace, who may be friendly, is not compatible to American tradition and training of the US Soldier. Allowing troop carriers to proceed into a non-secure landing zone without prior preparation

of any kind, restricted to the rules of engagement is inviting disaster and is indefensible except in highly selective instances. Methods must be developed and employed which will give us more positive information and indications of the actual enemy situation in and around the landing zone prior to the committment of the troop carriers into such areas. This is primarily a problem of education and close coordination between the supported and supporting elements of an airmobile operation. Long range patrols terminating in the landing zones prior to the assault can be very helpful in this respect, holding the airmobile force on standby until ground units make positive contact thus disclosing the area as hostile in which case a full combat assault with all available preparation may be employed, or holding the airmobile force on standby until the ground element arrives in the area of the landing zone thus enhancing the security of the area and increase the probability of a successful air landing within the rules of normal engagement.

C. Item: Control and Coordination of Artillery

Discussion: While artillery fires are rigidly controlled during airlanded assaults, this is not true during the resupply phase immediately following the assault. In multiple ground operations, more than one FDC with assigned sectors are utilized. Artillery information is given over the same frequency utilizing different call signs for the different areas. A still different call sign is used for dissemination of artillery firings in the area surrounding the base airfield. Frequently, these three areas are in such close proximity that the aviator has a difficult time corelating this information in a timely fashion.

Observation: That there be a central control, when proximity permits and a cross-feed of information be utilized.

D. Item: Security of Landing Zones

Discussion: On several occasions elements of this Battalion have been directed into landing zones that have been secured by reconnaissance forces. Many times the aircraft received fire while approaching the landing zone but were not able to return the fire because of friendly elements on the ground.

Observation: Reconnaissance forces are not usually capable of adequately securing areas surrounding the landing zone to the extent of insuring approach paths free of enemy fire. If reconnaissance forces are used to secure the landing zone they must conduct their recon and withdraw to the landing zone, to provide close security for landing aircraft. Reconnaissance forces must be prepared to mark their outermost limits of position to permit the escort aircraft to strike and suppress the area without endangering friendly forces.

E. Item: Use of C & C Ship During the Conduct of Company Sized Operations

Discussion: On company sized operations it is often difficult for the aviation commander to effectively control the operation if his position is physically within the lift element.

Observation: The aviation commander can exercise better control of the

operation from a C & C aircraft. The control group in the C & C aircraft should be organized along the lines of the control group of the C & C aircraft employed in a Battalion sized operation.

F. Item: Extraction of Heavily Engaged Units

Discussion: On several occasions commanders have elected to extract troops heavily engaged with an enemy force.

Observation: While absolutely necessary on occasions operations of this nature are extremely hazardous and should be thoroughly evaluated for the possible loss factor of helicopters, crews and troops prior to execution.

G. Item: Use of Compatable Frequencies Between Aircraft and Ground Units

Discussion: On several missions, supported ground units have utilized radio frequencies which could not be reached by the organic communications of supporting aircraft. This has caused the necessity of carrying extra radios aboard the aircraft in order to communicate.

Observation: Army Aviation Liaison Officers should make supported ground units aware of organic aircraft communications capability and preplan the use of frequencies compatible to both the ground element and supporting aircraft.

H. Item: Decca Relocation

Discussion: The flight log display head of the Decca system has been installed on the top, middle portion of the instrument panel. In this position it obscures the vision of the pilot in cross-panel formation flying and of either pilot in formation landings.

Observation: That the flight log display head be repositioned to the bottom left of the instrument panel on the co-pilot's side.

I. Item: Reduced Visibility in Refueling Areas

Discussion: On many occasions airmobile operations have been staged and the aircraft refueled in extremely dusty areas. While it is not always possible to utilize an ideal area, certain areas that are used on a frequent basis can be improved. Rapid refueling requires parking in close proximity to other aircraft and causes a hazardous condition.

Observation: Areas that are used habitually for staging and for refueling be treated for dust control.

J. Item: Smoke Grenades Utilized for Marking Landing Zones

Discussion: The smoke grenade presently in use does not have a flotation capability. Therefore, upon impact and subsequent submersion in water covered landing zones, the grenade is rapidly extinguished. This grenade also has a fast burning fuse element providing a limited time for identification and planning.

Observation: A smoke grenade with an inherent capability to float and a longer burning sequence would allow more time for identification on the part

of troop carrier aircraft and would provide a marking capability of the landing zone regardless of the extent of water coverage on the LZ.

K. Item: Distribution of Supplies

Discussion: Some articles, particularly canned foods and fancy soap or toilet articles distributed to refugee villages through civic actions programs have turned up in local markets for sale at rather high prices.

Observation: To preclude this, items have been distributed in smaller quantities in closer conformance with actual needs at more frequent intervals.

L. Item: English Classes

Discussion: Teaching English to Vietnamese takes much time and does not reach very many students.

Observation: Some units are picking the brightest students at English classes and training them as instructors. This is in keeping with the self-help aspect of civic actions and relieves U.S.Soldiers of some of the teaching load. These more advanced students also assist in MEDCAP II activities as interpreters or teachers of health and sanitation practices.

M. Item: Obtaining Food for Distribution

Observation: Some units have been obtaining food for distribution from damaged lots at ration breakdown points. Also, large quantities of captured foods, especially rice, have been obtained from ground units. This helps the needy Vietnamese and it relieves ground units of part of the tedious task of destroying captured food.

Part II (U) Recommendations: Recommend that items discussed in paragraph 5, Comments and Recommendations, of inclosures 1 thru 6 and Section II, Part I of this report be considered for possible inclusion into tactics doctrine or policy.

Walter F. Jones
WALTER F. JONES
Lt Col Artillery
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

"SPECIAL"

HEADQUARTERS
145TH AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96227

AVAW-FC 17 May 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 31-66, 16 May 1966

TO: See Distribution

1. TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. Battalion Headquarters:

145th Aviation Battalion Command and Control Helicopter
74th Aviation Company (-)
197th Aviation Company (-)

b. 1st Flight Element: 118th Avn Co (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

c. 2nd Flight Element: A Co 25th Avn Bn (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

d. 3rd Flight Element: A Co 501st Avn Bn (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

e. 4th Flight Element: 116th Avn Co (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

f. 5th Flight Element: 68th Avn Co (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

INCL 1

g. Support Element:

145th Aviation Battalion Communications Section
145th Aviation Battalion Maintenance Section
145th Aviation Battalion Pathfinder Detachment
56th Transportation Company (Maint) (-)
254th Medical Detachment (Air Amb) (-)

2. MISSION: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers, armed helicopters, surveillance and control aircraft for the 2nd Brigade 25th Infantry Division, in the conduct of airmobile assaults into two landing zones, (LZ THUNDER coordinates XT 524346 and LZ LIGHTNING coordinates XT 542328) 15 miles northwest of Cu Chi in order to execute search and destroy operations against Viet Cong Forces, supplies, and installations.

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS:

a. Battalion combat and supporting elements closed the Cu Chi staging area 160645 May 1966 for final briefing and organization for combat.

b. Two one hour weather delays caused by low ceilings and limited visability, pushed the take off time back to 0915. From 0915 to 1039 (termination) this operation proceeded exactly as planned.

c. Both artillery and Tactical Air preparation proved effective. Armed helicopter and troop carrier offensive fires were also very effective and contributed greatly to the success of this airmobile assault and minimized the number of hits taken by the troop carriers.

d. The 74th Aviation Company provided one O-1D for radio relay, weather advosory, and surveillance throughout the operation.

e. The 197th Aviation Company provided 6 UH-1B (Armed) helicopters and conducted flight route and surrounding area reconnaissance, landing zone marking and prestrike and participated in the delivery of offensive fires.

f. In support of this operation the 145th Aviation Battalion provided one O-1D airplane and 90 helicopters flying 113 hours and 300 combat sorties. There were three helicopters hit by ground fire and one casualty among the flight crews.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 170645 | 145th Avn Bn (Reinf) closes Cu Chi |
| 0650 | Operations Officers report to adapt forward CP for final briefing. |
| | - Two hour weather delay- |
| 0835-0905 | Tac Air prestrike accomplished |
| 0905-0925 | Arty Prep LZ THUNDER |
| 0915 | 145th Avn Bn departed Cu Chi |
| 0925-0930 | 197th Avn Co prestruck, reconnoitered, and marked LZ THUNDER |
| 0930 | 1st Assault Landing LZ THUNDER |
| 0943 | 145th Avn Bn arrived Cu Chi, loaded and departed |
| 0953 | 197th Avn Co reconnoitered, prestruck and marked LZ LIGHTNING |
| 0958 | 1st Assault Landing LZ LIGHTNING |
| 1010 | 145th Avn Bn arrived Cu Chi loaded and departed |

1026 2nd Assault Landing LZs THUNDER and LIGHTNING

1039 145th Avn Bn closed Cu Chi, refueled and released (-A/25, 118th and 116th)

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

Refueling was conducted at Cu Chi utilizing 25th Division resources.

5. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Only four aircraft were authorized in the area of operations prior to the first airmobile assault, (10; aloft OID, C&C CG Inf Div, C&C 12th Aviation Group, and C&C 145th Aviation Battalion) however the following aircraft were observed in the area of operations; two OV-1s, one U-6A, 4 UH-1Ds and two H-23Gs. These aircraft flew through artillery gun target. lines and over LZs THUNDER and LIGHTNING on numerous occasions. This created both a serious safety hazard and may have compromised the landing zones of the airmobile operation. Aircraft not participating in the airmobile operation should not be operated in the area of operations without the approval of the Air Mission Commander and even then must be briefed on the artillery fires, tactical air and the ground tactical plan.

Horst K. Joost

HORST K. JOOST
Lt Col Infantry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS
145TH AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96227

AVAW-FC 23 May 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 32-66AA, 21 May 1966

TO: See Distribution

1. TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. Battalion Headquarters:

145th Aviation Battalion Command and Control Helicopter
74th Aviation Company (-)

b. 1st Flight Element: A Company 501st Aviation Battalion (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

c. 2nd Flight Element: A Company 82nd Aviation Battalion (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

d. 3rd Flight Element: 116th Aviation Company (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

e. Support Element:

145th Aviation Battalion Communication Section
145th Aviation Battalion Maintenance Section
145th Aviation Battalion PATHFINDER Detachment
56th Transportation Company (-)
254th Medical Detachment (Air Amb) (-)

Incl 2 20

2. MISSION: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers, armed helicopters, surveillance and control aircraft for the 173rd Airborne Brigade, in the conduct of troop repositioning from Bien Hoa to LZ AMAZON (coordinates YS 397627) beginning 220630 May 1966.

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATION:

a. Battalion combat and supporting elements closed the Bien Hoa (SNAKEPIT) staging area 220530 May 1966 for final briefing and organization for combat.

b. Initial flight elements departed the Bien Hoa (SNAKEPIT) enroute LZ AMAZON at 0630. The first two lifts from Bien Hoa to LZ AMAZON proceded as planned however the third lift took small arms fire in the vicinity of RP DULUTH. The fourth lift was rerouted to avoid this fire by utilizing the return route inbound to LZ AMAZON. This route required seven additional minutes flying time and was utilized with the concurrence of the Airmobile Task Force Commander.

c. The 74th Aviation Company provided one O-1D for radio relay, weather advisory, and surveillance throughout the operation.

d. In support of this operation the 145th Aviation Battalion provided one O-1D and 45 helicopters flying 97 hours and 88 combat sorties. No aircraft were hit and there were no casualties among the flight crews.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 220530 | 145th Avn Bn closed SNAKEPIT |
| 0540 | Final Briefing |
| 0630 | 145th Avn Bn loaded and departed SNAKEPIT |
| 0651 | 1st lift arrived LZ AMAZON |
| 0742 | 2nd lift arrived LZ AMAZON |
| 0810 | 145th Avn Bn arrived SNAKEPIT and refueled (1400 lbs) |
| 0855 | 145th Avn Bn loaded and departed SNAKEPIT |
| 0916 | 3rd lift arrived LZ AMAZON |
| 1014 | 4th lift arrived LZ AMAZON |
| 1017 | 145th Avn Bn released |

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

a. Supply:

(1) Refueling was conducted at Bien Hoa utilizing Battalion resources with the exception of two JP/4 tankers which were arranged for from A/82nd Aviation Battalion.

(2) A total of 7100 gallons of JP/4 were required for the operation.

b. Maintenance:

(1) The following aircraft from Co A/82nd Aviation Battalion encountered problems as indicated:

21

(a) UH-1D, SN 64-13736, was reported to have experienced

a compressor stall upon landing in the SNAKEPIT. A high E.G.T. was noticed enroute to SNAKEPIT. The aircraft was unable to continue with the mission and was towed off the ramp.

5. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

After arrival at LZ AMAZON the ground troops attempted to cross the road, being utilized as the landing zone, in front of the landing helicopters. This created a hazardous condition in that the following lift elements were forced to alter their final approached to avoid the troops. Recommend troops remain in place till last flight element in the flight serial takes off or until they are cleared by PATHFINDER personnel to proceed.

"First In Vietnam"

HORST K. JOOST
Lt Col Infantry
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS
145TH AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96227

AVAW-FC 20 May 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 33-66, 20 May 1966

TO: See Distribution

1. TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. Battalion Headquarters:

145th Aviation Battalion Command and Control Helicopter
74th Aviation Company (-)
197th Aviation Company (-)

b. 1st Flight Element: 68th Aviation Company (AML):

9 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

c. 2nd Flight Element: A Company 25th Aviation Battalion (AML):

9 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

d. 3rd Flight Element: A Company 501st Aviation Battalion (AML):

9 UH-1D Helicopters
2 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

e. 4th Flight Element: 118th Aviation Company (AML):

9 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

f. Support Element:

145th Aviation Battalion Communication Section
145th Aviation Battalion Maintenance Section
145th Aviation Battalion Pathfinder Detachment
56th Transportation Company (Maint) (-)
254th Medical Detachment

INCL 3 23

2. MISSION: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers, armed helicopters, surveillance and control aircraft for the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division in the conduct of an airmobile extraction and combat assault operation from PZ TOM (coordinates XU 666239) to LZ CHARLIE (coordinates XU 629308) 10 Km north of Cu Chi in order to execute search and destroy operations against Viet Cong forces, and installations.

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS:

a. Battalion combat and supporting elements (-) closed the Bien Hoa (SNAKEPIT) staging area 200650 May 1966 for final briefing and organization for combat.

b. Flight elements departed Bien Hoa enroute to PZ TOM for troop extraction at 0957 after a two hour weather delay. 145th Aviation Battalion Pathfinder Detachment preceded the lift elements into PZ TOM and prepared the troops for immediate loading upon arrival of the troop carriers. This task was smoothly and professionally done while under constant hostile fire.

c. The initial airmobile extraction from PZ TOM was preceded by close artillery support of defending ground elements. Heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire was received by all 145th Aviation elements through out the day's operations. 145th Battalion Command and Control Group directed flight elements around areas of heavy hostile fire, and directed armed helicopter strikes against point targets.

d. The 74th Aviation Company provided one O-1D for radio relay, weather advisory, and surveillance throughout the operation. In addition, the aloft aircraft located numerous point targets including several Viet Cong in the open 1 Km west of LZ CHARLIE.

e. The 197th Aviation Company provided 5 UH-1B (Armed) helicopters and conducted flight route and surrounding area reconnaissance, and landing zone marking and prestrike. Throughout the morning numerous point targets, to include Viet Cong in the open and automatic weapons positions, were engaged and two Viet Cong were killed at (coordinates XT 614297).

f. In support of this operation the 145th Aviation Battalion provided one O-1D airplane and 54 helicopters flying 153 hours and 495 combat sorties. A total of 415 troops were extracted from PZ TOM and landed by combat assault into LZ CHARLIE. There were a total of 18 hits received by organic 145th Aviation Battalion aircraft. Three aircrew members were wounded in action.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 200650 | 145th Avn Bn closed SNAKEPIT |
| 0700 | Final Briefing |
| | ////02+06 WX DELAY ///// |
| 0957 | 145th Avn Bn departed SNAKEPIT |
| 1013 | 145th Avn Bn landed at pick-up site |
| 1000-1015 | Tac Air prepared LZ CHARLIE |
| 1015-1025 | Arty prepared LZ CHARLIE |
| 1015 | 145th Avn Bn (Reinf) loaded and departed |
| 1025-1030 | 197th Armed helicopters reconoitered, prestruck and marked LZ CHARLIE |
| 1030 | 1st Combat assault LZ CHARLIE |
| 1057 | 2nd Combat assault LZ CHARLIE |
| 1107 | 145th Avn Bn (Reinf) released |

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

a. Supply:

(1) Coordination was made with 25th US Division airfield commander for the refueling and rearming of armed helicopters.

(2) Troop carriers required no refueling during the operation.

b. Maintenance:

(1) The following aircraft from Co A/501st Aviation Battalion, encountered problems or combat damage as indicated.

(a) UH-1D, SN 64-13595, received a small arms round through underside of aircraft and right fuel cell. Another round was taken through the main rotor blade. Aircraft returned to home station for repairs.

(b) UH-1D, SN 64-13560, received a small arms round through stablizer bar. Aircraft returned to home station for repairs.

(c) UH-1D, SN 64-13528, received small arms rounds through landing light into bulk head, lower right windshield, lower left windshield, heater compartment and one round through pilots left pedal. Aircraft returned to home station for repairs.

(d) UH-1D, SN 64-13563, received one round through the underside of aircraft into cargo compartment causing minor damage, aircraft returned to home station for thorough inspection.

(e) UH-1D, SN 64-13678, received a round through the underside of aircraft into pilots foot rest. Aircraft returned to home station for repairs.

(f) UH-1B, SN 63-12924, received a round through the tail boom and out through the tail rotor drive shaft. Aircraft was flown to home station for repairs.

(g) UH-1B, SN 64-12997, received a round through transmission bulkhead. Aircraft returned to home station for repairs.

(2) The following aircraft from the 68th Aviation Company encountered problems or combat damage as indicated:

(a) UH-1D, SN 64-13808, received a round through underside and floor of aircraft. Aircraft returned to home station for repairs.

5. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Security by the 2nd Battalion 14th Infantry at PZ TOM extended only to the edge of the wood line in most places around the pick up zone. This made it possible for Viet Cong Forces to get in close to friendly forces and place direct fire on the pick up zone. This could have hampered the operation and was a contributing factor to the number of hits taken by the troop carriers. Recommend security elements be initially placed so as to preclude hostile direct fire into pick up zones on future extraction operations.

"First In Vietnam"

HORST K. JOOST
Lt Col Infantry
Commanding

Department of the Army
HEADQUARTERS, 145TH AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96227

AVAW-FC 4 June 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 36-66
3 June 1966

TO: See Distribution

1. TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. Battalion Headquarters:

145th Aviation Battalion Command and Control Helicopter
74th Aviation Company (-)
197th Aviation Company (-)

b. 1st Flight Element: 68th Aviation Company (AML):

6 UH-1D Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

c. 2nd Flight Element: 116th Aviation Company (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

d. 3rd Flight Element: 173rd Aviation Company (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
2 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

e. 4th Flight Element: A Company 25th Aviation Battalion (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
3 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

f. Support Element:

145th Aviation Battalion Communication Section
145th Aviation Battalion POL Section
145th Aviation Battalion Maintenance Section
145th Aviation Battalion PATHFINDER Detachment
56th Transportation Company (Maint) (-)
254th Medical Detachment (-)

INCL 4

2. MISSION: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers, armed helicopters, surveillance and control aircraft for the 25th (ARVN) Division and 25th (US) Infantry Division in the conduct of airmobile assaults into eight landing zones, (LZ's NAN, MIKE, ZEBRA, LOVE, TWO, SIX, THREE and FOUR) in order to execute search and destroy operations against Viet Cong forces, supplies, and installations.

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATION:

a. Battalion combat and supporting elements closed Cu Chi staging area 030555 June 1966 for final briefing and organization for combat.

b. After a one hour weather delay, flight elements departed Cu Chi enroute to the troop loading site at Bao Trai at 0815 hours. The 145th Aviation Battalion PATHFINDER Detachment had preceded the lift elements to Bao Trai and prepared the troops for immediate loading upon arrival of the troop carriers. The Bao Trai airstrip was utilized as a pick up zone.

c. The initial airmobile assaults into LZ's NAN, MIKE, ZEBRA, and LOVE went as planned, with moderate enemy fire being received south of LZ LOVE. The Command and Control helicopter directed changes to the established flight route to avoid enemy fire vicinity LZ LOVE.

d. The airmobile assaults of the 2nd Brigade 25th (US) Division against LZ's TWO, THREE, and FOUR went as planned with one additional lift which was directed into LZ SIX. The additional lift was needed due to a shortage of aircraft.

e. The 74th Aviation Company provided one O-1D for radio relay, weather advisory, and surveillance throughout the operation.

f. The 197th Aviation Company provided 5 UH-1B (Armed) helicopters and conducted flight route and surrounding area reconnaissance, landing zone marking of eight LZ's and prestrike and lead element escort.

g. In support of this operation the 145th Aviation Battalion provided one O-1D aircraft and 53 helicopters flying 126 hours and 398 combat sorties. Four aircraft received hits and no crewmen were wounded.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 0555 | 145th Avn Bn closed Cu Chi |
| 0600 | Final Briefing |
| | ///1 hour WX Delay//// |
| 0815 | 145th Avn Bn departed Cu Chi |
| 0822 | 145th Avn Bn loaded and departed Bao Trai enroute LZ's NAN & MIKE |
| 0755-0810 | Arty prep LZ's NAN, MIKE, ZEBRA, and LOVE |
| 0810-0825 | Tac air prep LZ's NAN, MIKE, ZEBRA, and LOVE |
| 0825-0830 | 197th armed helicopters reconnoitered, prestruck and marked LZ's NAN & MIKE |
| 0830 | 1st assault landing LZ's NAN (2 flt elms) & MIKE (2 flt elms) |
| 0843-0848 | 197th armed helicopters reconnoitered prestruck and marked LZ LOVE |

| | |
|---|---|
| 0848 | 2nd assault landing LZ's NAN (1 flt elm) MIKE ( 1 flt elm) and LOVE (2 flt elm) |
| 0857 | Two flight elms released to Cu Chi for refueling (1200 lbs) |
| 0907 | 3rd assault landing LZ's LOVE (1 flt elm) and ZEBRA (1 flt elm) |
| 0922 | 145th Avn Bn arrived Cu Chi, refueled (1200 lbs) |
| 1049 | 145th Avn Bn loaded and departed Cu Chi |
| 1055-1100 | 197th armed helicopters reconnoitered prestruck and marked LZ TWO |
| 1117-1122 | 197th armed helicopters reconnoitered prestruck and marked LZ SIX |
| 1122 | 1st assault lift LZ SIX (4 flt elms) |
| 1141-1146 | 197th armed helicopters reconnoitered prestruck and marked LZ's THREE and FOUR |
| 1146 | 1st assault lift LZ's THREE and FOUR (2 flt elms each) |
| 1210 | 2nd assault lift LZ's TWO and SIX (2 flt elms each) |
| 1234 | 2nd assault lift LZ's THREE and FOUR (2 flt elms each) |
| 1245 | 145th Avn Bn arrived Cu Chi, refueled |
| 1330 | 3rd assault lift LZ SIX (4 flt elms) |
| 1400 | 145th Aviation Battalion released |

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

a. Supply:

(1) Refueling and rearming was conducted at Cu Chi (25th US Division Airfield) for all aircraft except armed ships from the 197th Aviation Company.

(2) Coordination was made with the airfield commander at Cu Chi for the use of 10 tankers to refuel troop carriers and 500 gallon bladders to be rigged for the refueling of all armed ships.

(3) Coordination was also made with G-4 Advisor, 25th ARVN Division, Duc Hoa for the refueling of all armed ships.

(4) On 1 June 1966, the 145th Aviation Battalion POL Section transported three (3) fuel transfer pumps to Cu Chi and assembled them in preparation for the operation. Personnel to operate the equipment were returned to Cu Chi at 0545 hours, 3 June 1966.

(5) A total of 12,000 gallons of JP/4 were required for the operation to include 1500 gallons used at Duc Hoa.

b. Maintenance:

(1) The following aircraft from the 116th Aviation Company received combat damage as indicated.

(a) UH-1D, SN 64-13502, received a small arms round through engine compartment lodging in the starter. Aircraft remained at Cu Chi under going repairs.

(b) UH-1D, SN 64-13512, received a round through the lower left windshield and entered console. Another round entered under the co-pilot's door and lodged under co-pilots seat. Aircraft being repaired at Cu Chi.

(c) UH-1B, SN 64-13953, received automatic weapons fire ( 4 rounds) through the tail rotor drive shaft. Aircraft was down at Cu Chi undergoing repairs.

c. Medical:

No casualties were reported as a result of this operation.

5. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Tactical air initially prestruck area 1000 meters to the west of LZ MIKE during Phase I of this operation. Adjustment was made through the Air Liaison Officer aboard the 145th Aviation Battalion Command and Control aircraft. Recommend that Tactical Air pilots be briefed utilizing a recent photo-map whenever possible.

b. During the last portion of Phase II of this operation cargo loads (mortars, ammunition and rations) were dumped next to the pick up sites with insufficient personnel available to load aircraft. 145th Aviation Battalion PATHFINDERS were utilized to aid ground units in loading equipment. Recommend that sufficient personnel be formed into loading teams to insure swift efficient loading at pick up sites.

"FIRST IN VIETNAM"

Horst K. Joost

HORST K. JOOST
Lt Col Infantry
Commanding

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 145TH AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96227

AVAW-FC 8 June 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report of 145th Aviation Battalion Operation 38-66, 8 June 1966

TO: See Distribution

1. TASK ORGANIZATION

a. 145th Aviation Battalion Command and Control Helicopter
197th Aviation Company (-)
74th Aviation Company (-)

b. 1st Flight Element: 118th Aviation Company (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
2 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

c. 2nd Flight Element: A Company 501st Aviation Battalion (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

d. 3rd Flight Element: A Company 25th Aviation Battalion (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
2 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

e. Support Elements:

145th Aviation Battalion Communication Section
145th Aviation Battalion POL Section
145th Aviation Battalion Maintenance Section
145th Aviation Battalion PATHFINDER Detachment
56th Transportation Company (Maint)(-)
254th Medical Detachment (Air Amb)(-)

2. MISSION: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers, armed helicopters, surveillance and command and control aircraft for the 25th (US) Infantry Division in support of extraction operations conducted from PZ PATRICIA back to the base operations at Cu Chi.

INCL 5 31

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS:

a. Battalion combat and supporting elements assembled at the Bien Hoa (SNAKEPIT) at 070630 June 1966 to receive the final briefing and complete organization for combat.

b. The 118th Aviation Company and A/501st Aviation Battalion departed the "SNAKEPIT" at 0735. A Company 25th Aviation Battalion joined the other two flight elements over ACP SPONGE and became the third flight element.

c. The 145th Aviation Battalion PATHFINDER Detachment preceded the lift elements into PZ's SILVER, GOLD and PZ #2 to insure that expeditious and uninterupted troop loading was accomplished upon arrival of the troop carriers.

d. The initial extractions from PZ's SILVER and GOLD, and the airmobile assault landings into LZ's 1, 2, 3, and 4 were conducted as planned; however, due to a lack of required troop carriers an additional extraction was required from PZ SILVER with subsequent airmobile assault landings into LZ's 1 and 2. There was no hostile fire received in the vicinity of the PZ's or LZ's.

e. The extraction of the 25th (US) Infantry Division from PZ # 2 was accomplished without incident, with one flight element reporting small arms fire just north of the pick up zone.

f. The 74th Aviation Company provided one O-1D for radio relay, weather advisory and surveillance throughout the operation.

g. The 197th Aviation Company provided 5 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters and conducted flight route, surronnding area and landing zone reconnaissance and landing zone marking of the four LZ's.

h. In support of this operation the 145th Aviation Battalion provided one O-1D aircraft and 39 helicopters flying 112.5 hours and 365 combat sorties. There were no aircraft hit nor aircrew casualties sustained.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 0620 | Closed SNAKEPIT |
| 0630 | Final Briefing |
| 0735 | 145th Avn Bn (-) departed SNAKEPIT |
| 0750-0800 | Arty prep LZ # 1 |
| 0800 | 145th Avn Bn (Reinf) arrived PZ SILVER |
| 0800-0805 | 197th armed helicopter recon, prestruck and marked LZ # 1 |
| 0805 | 1st combat assault landed LZ #1 |
| 0808-0813 | Arty prep LZ # 2 |
| 0813-0818 | 197th armed hel recon, prestruck and marked LZ #2 |
| 0818 | 1st combat assault landed LZ # 2 |
| 0831 | 145th Avn Bn (Reinf) arrived PZ GOLD loaded and departed |
| 0831-0841 | Arty prep LZ # 3 |
| 0841-0846 | 197th armed hel recon, prestruck and marked LZ # 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 0846 | 1st combat assault landed LZ # 3 |
| 0858-0907 | Arty prep LZ # 4 |
| 0907-0912 | 197th armed helicopter recon, prestruck and marked LZ # 4 |
| 0912 | 1st combat assault landed LZ # 4 |
| 0918 | 145th Avn Bn (Reinf) arrived Cu Chi refueled (1200 lbs) |
| 1020 | 145th Avn Bn departed Cu Chi |
| 1030 | 1st extraction PZ # 2 |
| 1052 | 2nd extraction PZ # 2 |
| 1105 | 145th Avn Bn (Reinf) arrived Cu Chi released on order |

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

a. Supply:

(1) The 145th Aviation Battalion S-4 representative was located at Cu Chi during the operation.

(2) Coordination was made with the U.S. 25th Division at Cu Chi for use of 8 tankers for refueling of the aircraft in support of the operation.

(3) Rearming and refueling of the 197th Aviation Company was accomplished at Duc Hoa using pre-stocks.

b. Maintenance:

(1) The 145th Aviation Battalion Maintenance representative was located at Cu Chi during the operation.

(2) No maintenance problems or combat damage was encountered as a result of this operation.

c. No casualties were reported.

5. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: During the conduct of one of the extractions from PZ GOLD, friendly artillery fired across the flight route in the vicinity of PZ # 2. Artillery fire came from vicinity of Trang Bang. Recommend that continuous follow up action be conducted to insure that previously cleared flight routes remain open during the entire operation.

"FIRST IN VIETNAM"

HORST K. JOOST
Lt Col Infantry
Commanding

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEAD QUARTERS, 145TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco, 96227

AVAW-FC 19 July 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report of 145th Combat Aviation Battalion Operation 49-66, 12 July 1966

TO: See Distribution

1. TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. Battalion Headquarters:

145th Combat Aviation Battalion Command and Control Helicopter
74th Reconnaissance Airplane Company (O-1) (-)
197th Armed Helicopter Company (-)

b. 1st Flight Element: A Company 82nd Aviation Battalion (AML):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

c. 2nd Flight Element: A Company 501st Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1)(A):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

d. 3rd Flight Element: 118th Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1)(A):

10 UH-1D Helicopters
4 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters
1 UH-1B (Maint) Helicopter

e. Support Elements:

145th Combat Aviation Battalion Communications Section
145th Combat Aviation Battalion POL Section
145th Combat Aviation Battalion Maintenance Section
145th Combat Aviation Battalion PATHFINDER Detachment
56th Transportation Company (Maint) (-)
Medical Company (Air Amb) (-)

2. MISSION:

The 145th Combat Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers, armed

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helicopters, surveillance and control aircraft for the 173rd Airborne Brigade. These aircraft were utilized by the 4th Battalion 503rd Airborne Infantry in the conduct of three combat assault lifts into LZ GERONIMO and by the 1st Battalion 503rd Airborne Infantry in the conduct of airmobile extractions from LZ's MARS, SATURN and JUPITER and combat assaults into LZ's PAT and MIKE.

3. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS:

a. Battalion combat and supporting elements closed Frizzell Field (Bien Hoa) 120555 July 1966 for final briefing, organization for combat, refueling and troop loading.

b. 145th Combat Aviation Battalion PATHFINDER Detachment initially supported troop loading at Frizzell Field and in addition, preceded the lift elements to assist in troop loading at LZ's MARS, JUPITER and SATURN. A PATHFINDER communications element was also positioned at Xuan Loc airfield to assist in control of gunship refueling operations.

c. Initial combat assault lifts departed Frizzell Field at 1000 after a three hour weather delay, enroute to LZ GERONIMO. Extractions were then made from LZ's MARS, JUPITER and SATURN with combat assaults into LZ's PAT and MIKE. Artillery preparation was utilized on LZ's PAT and MIKE prior to their being marked by the 197th Armed Helicopter Company. Lift elements then returned to Frizzell Field, refueled and executed one combat assault into LZ GERONIMO. No prestrikes were utilized during the day, however after the extractions from LZ's MARS, SATURN and JUPITER, final lifts engaged in suppressive fire upon leaving the LZ's.

d. The 74th Reconnaissance Airplane Company provided one O-1D for weather advisory, radio relay and surveillance throughout the operation.

e. The 197th Aviation Company provided 5 UH-1B (Armed) Helicopters and conducted flight route and surrounding area reconnaissance, and landing zone marking.

f. In support of this operation, the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion provided one O-1D airplane and 49 helicopters flying 104 hours and 315 combat sorties.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

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|---|---|
| 120555 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn closed Frizzell Field |
| 0600 | Final Briefing |
| ////////////////// | 3 hour weather delay ////////////////// |
| 1000 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn loaded and departed Frizzell Field |
| 1026 | 1st combat assault LZ GERONIMO |
| 1037 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn arrived PZ MARS loaded and departed |
| 1032-1042 | Artillery prep LZ PAT |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1042-1047 | 197th Armed Helicopter Company reconnoitered and marked LZ PAT |
| 1047 | 1st combat assault LZ PAT |
| 1056 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn arrived LZ JUPITER loaded and departed |
| 1107 | 2nd combat assault LZ PAT |
| 1118 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn arrived LZ SATURN |
| 1113-1123 | Artillery prep LZ MIKE |
| 1123-1128 | 197th Armed Helicopter Company reconnoitered and marked LZ MIKE |
| 1128 | 1st combat assault LZ MIKE |
| 1150 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn arrived Frizzell Field and refueled |
| 1220 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn loaded and departed Frizzell Field |
| 1246 | 2nd combat assault LZ GERONIMO |
| 1247 | 145th Cbt Avn Bn released |

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

a. Supply

(1) Refueling and rearming of all troop carriers was conducted at Bien Hoa with armed aircraft refueling and rearming at Xuan Loc.

(2) Battalion POL personnel were transported to Xuan Loc to establish rapid refueling stations using 500 gallon bladders and fuel transfer pumps.

(3) A total of 6600 gallons of JP-4 was used during the operation.

b. Maintenance

(1) Battalion maintenance representative was located at Frizzell Field throughout the operation.

(2) No maintenance problems or combat damage were encountered as a result of this operation.

c. Medical

(1) Battalion surgeon with 2 medmen and ambulance were present at Frizzell Field for the operation.

(2) No casualties were reported or treated as a result of this operation.

5. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The last combat assault lift from Frizzell Field to LZ GERONIMO

was cancelled due to the fact that the airmobile force (4th Battalion 503rd Airborne Infantry) had fewer troops to lift than initially planned. Recommend that supported units make every effort to determine their exact strength figures prior to the final coordination meeting.

Walter F Jones

WALTER F. JONES
LtCol Artillery
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:
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2 1st Avn Bde
10 173rd Abn Bde
2 12th Cbt Avn Gp
1 CO 145th Cbt Avn Bn
1 S-3 Files

AVGC-SC 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966
Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO San Francisco 96491

THRU: ~~Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96491~~

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

1. Forwarded herewith are 2 copies of Operational Report on Lessons Learned of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion in compliance with USARV Reg No 870-2, dated 19 July 1966.

2. I strongly indorse all the recommendations of the commander.

3. The following problem areas require particular attention:

a. Late receipt of officer assignment instructions:

(1) Within the past 90 days, there has been an increasing number of excessive delays in the receipt of assignment instructions for officers within this command. There have been instances of officers not receiving orders until within 15 days of DEROS. This places a serious handicap upon the officer and his dependents in relocating, particularly when the following assignment is to another overseas theater with concurrent travel. This matter was brought to the attention of the USARV I.G. during a recent inspection of this headquarters. The I.G. was provided with 7 specific examples of individuals within 30 days of DEROS still awaiting orders.

(2) This area is indeed detrimental to the morale of this command. I request that the matter receive immediate command attention.

b. Non-receipt or late receipt of enlisted assignment instructions.

(1) The same difficulty as was discussed in the preceeding paragraph is also frequently appearing within the enlisted ranks except on a more critical basis. Again within the past 90 days, there have been several cases of enlisted personnel not receiving their instructions until after their DEROS and frequent examples of orders arriving within 15-30 days of DEROS. This headquarters has been forced to send personnel specialists to USARV in an attempt to search for these orders, which has in some cases proven to be successful. The problem may lie in several areas, for example, recent change of unit on the part of the individual, recent promotion which forces DA into re-assigning the individual, a

DOWN GRADED UNCLASSIFIED WHEN
SEPARATED FROM CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE

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145th Av. Bn

GPOP-MH (14 Jan 66) 3d Ind (C)
SUBJECT: Command Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 December 1965, Report Control Symbol CSGPO-28 (R1) (U)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 2 MAR 1966

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) Forwarded herewith is the Quarterly Command Report of the 145th Aviation Battalion.

2. (C) This headquarters took action 12 Jan 1966 to obtain AN/PRC-41 radios to replace VRC-24 UHF radios mentioned as unsatisfactory.

3. (C) The reorganization of the 145th Aviation Bn was authorized by DA message 728272 DTG 161415Z August 1965, but was held in abeyance pending receipt of a TUCR requesting inactivation of the 6th and 7th Airlift Platoons.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

M. S. KNASIAK
MAJOR, WAC
ACTING ASST AG

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

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