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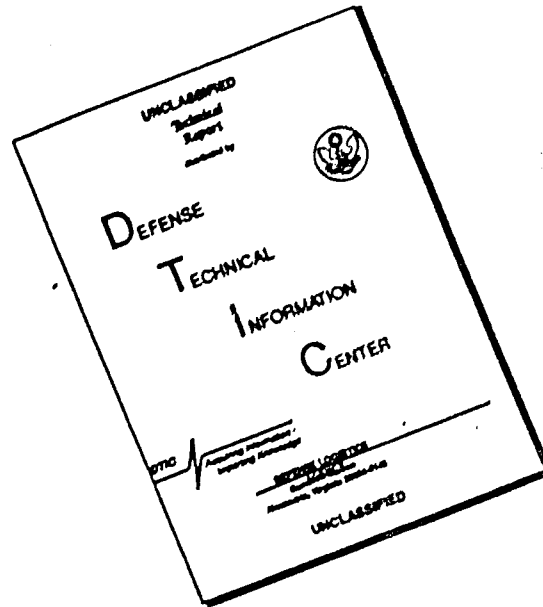
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310



IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (23 Apr 68) FOR OT RD 681161

2 May 1968

AD389876

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 11th
Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 January 1968 (U)

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Manual for the Control of Information." (U)

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to AGSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
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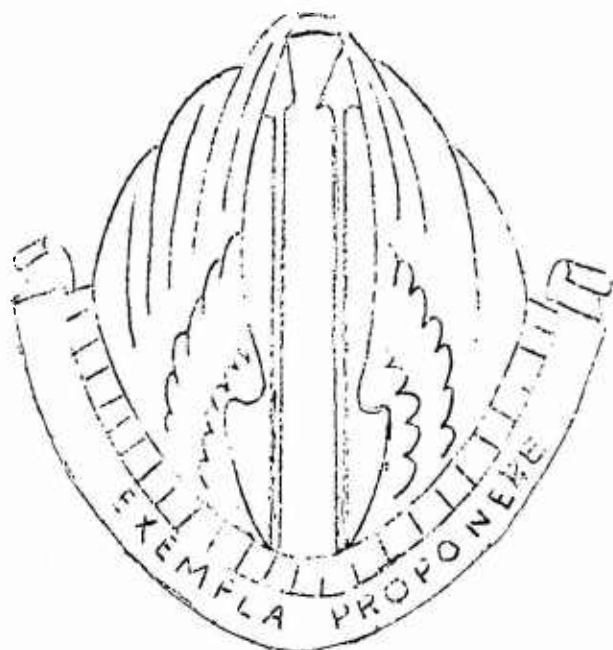
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OPERATIONAL REPORT

LESSONS LEARNED



11TH COMBAT

AVIATION BATTALION

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6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I

SIC FLIGHT ELEMENTS

	page
A. COMMAND.....	1
B. PERSONNEL, MORALE, DISCIPLINE, INFO, CIVIC PROGRAM.....	4
C. INTELLIGENCE.....	9
D. PLANS, OPERATIONS AND TRAINING.....	11
E. LOGISTICS.....	17
F. MAINTENANCE.....	21
G. AVIATION SAFETY.....	22
H. SURGEON.....	25

SECTION II, PART I

LESSONS LEARNED

A. PREFACE.....	26
B. PERSONNEL.....	26
C. INTELLIGENCE.....	26
D. OPERATIONS.....	26
E. TRAINING.....	32
F. LOGISTICS AND MAINTENANCE.....	33
G. AVIATION SAFETY.....	37
H. SURGEON.....	37

SECTION II, PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS.....	38
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1

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 11TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96289

"EXEMPLA PROPONERE"

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL)(RCS-CSFOR-65) For
Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968 (UIC WFAKTO)(U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

A. COMMAND.

1. (U) General.

a. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion continued to "Establish the Standard" among combat aviation battalions in Vietnam. The battalion supported the 1st Infantry Division with 22,916 hours, or 67 per cent of the total battalion flying hours for this period. The battalion supported the 1st Infantry Division on two major operations, Shenandoah II (which included the "Battle of Loc Ninh") and Lam Son 67. The three UH-1 companies assigned to the battalion averaged 159 per cent of the programmed flying hours for the quarter. The two CH-47 companies averaged 147 per cent of the programmed flying hours for the same period. The 184th Reconnaissance Airplane Company (O-1), reassigned to the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion on 15 January 1968, flew 7,206 hours during this quarter prior to detachment from this command. As a member of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, the "Non Stops" of the 184th Reconnaissance Airplane Company flew 29,997 hours from 19 March 1967 to 15 January 1968. Programmed for that period was 16,467 hours. The accident rate based on 100,000 flying hours was 9.9 for the same period (see inclosure 1, General Order 4).

b. The 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company was detached from the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion and attached to the 222nd Combat Support Aviation Battalion on 29 January 1968 (see inclosure 2, General Order 9). The 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company flew 3,717 hours during this quarter before it was detached from this command. From 14 June 1967 to 29 January 1968, the "Geronimos" flew 8,357 hours. Programmed for that period was 6,400 hours. This unit has not had an aircraft accident since its arrival in-country.

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AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WF KTO)(U)

c. On 31 December 1967, General Creighton W. Abrams, Deputy Commander, MACV, presented to the battalion the Valorous Unit Award during a battalion review at Phu Loi Army Airfield. The award was presented to the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion for extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations during the period 4 November 1966 to 20 November 1966 in Operation Attleboro between Dau Tieng and Suoi Da (see inclosure 3, General Order 4060).

d. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion is physically oriented to support the 1st Infantry Division. The geographical location lends itself to a close working, as well as social, relationship which adds significantly to the overall accomplishment of the mission. Personnel of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion understand the operating procedures of the 1st Infantry Division, have infinite knowledge of the terrain, know the location of all fire support bases, and understand the timing demanded by the division to insure tactical success on the field of battle. This, we believe, is the key to the COUP DE MAIN in modern day operations. For these reasons we feel it imperative that whenever tactically possible this battalion should support the 1st Infantry Division with its own organic units.

2. (U) Mission. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion provides:

a. Tactical army aviation support as directed by the 12th Combat Aviation Group to elements of U.S., RVN, and other Free World Military Assistance Forces within the III Corps Tactical Zone.

b. Command, control, administration, and communications to units assigned to the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion.

3. (U) Organization.

a. Current organization of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion is as shown in inclosure 4.

b. Organization of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion during this reporting period is shown below:

HQ and HQ Det, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion - Phu Loi

128th Assault Helicopter Company - Phu Loi

162nd Assault Helicopter Company - Phuoc Vinh

173rd Assault Helicopter Company - Lai Khe

*184th Reconnaissance Airplane Company - Phu Loi

9

AVGC-AC 1 February 1968
SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (VIC WFAKTO)(U)

- **205th Assault Support Helicopter Company - Phu Loi
- 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company - Phu Loi

*The 184th RAC (O-1) came under the control of the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion, Long Binh, effective 15 January 1968 (see inclosure 1).

**The 205th ASHC came under the control of the 222nd Combat Support Aviation Battalion, Vung Tau, effective 29 January 1968 (see inclosure 2).

4. (U) Command and Staff Structure.

- a. Current Command and Staff Structure is shown in inclosure 5.
- b. Significant changes in the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion Command and Staff Structure during this reporting period are shown below.

COMMANDER

(1) On 10 Nov 67, LTC William A. Hobbs replaced LTC Leo E. Soucek as Battalion Commander.

STAFF

(2) On 10 Nov 67, LTC Paul L. Stansel replaced LTC William A. Hobbs as Battalion Executive Officer.

(3) On 4 Dec 67, MAJ Herbert T. Sink, replaced LTC Neal C. Petree, Jr., as Battalion S-3.

(4) On 20 Dec 67, CPT Millard Burke replaced MAJ Ralph E. Naumann as Battalion S-1.

UNIT COMMANDERS

(5) On 22 Nov 67, MAJ Robert P. St. Louis replaced MAJ Herbert T. Sink as Commanding Officer of the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company.

(6) On 1 Jan 68, MAJ James E. Thompson, Jr. replaced MAJ Stokely L. Wilson as Commanding Officer of the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company.

(7) On 7 Jan 68, MAJ William H. McGee replaced LTC George W. Adamson as Commanding Officer of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

AVGC-AC

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WF KTO)(U) 1 February 1968

B. PERSONNEL, MORALE, DISCIPLINE, INFORMATION AND CIVIC ACTION.

1. (U) Personnel.

a. Statistical Summary of Records Processing Activities:

(1) Total Personnel Records Maintained - 1512

(2) Total Gains and Losses:

	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED MEN</u>
GAINS	93	171
LOSSES	108	246

(3) FST Extensions Processed: Officers - 3; Enlisted Men - 61.

b. Report of Difficulties Encountered and Action taken:

(1) Discussion.

During the period 31 October 1967 to 31 January 1968, accumulative errors were discovered in the personnel accounting system of this battalion. As a result of faulty justification of machine prepared unit rosters at the battalion level, and morning report errors at individual unit level, improper strength figures were consistently reported to higher command echelons. This inaccuracy resulted in a much lower input of replacement personnel than should have been programmed, creating a shortage of personnel.

(2) Action.

Upon discovery of these strength reporting errors, a program to correct strength figures was instituted and vigorously pursued. At battalion level, personnel rosters have been corrected as required. Unit commanders are maintaining closer supervision of unit morning report activities. These actions have resulted in a higher influx of replacement personnel and a lessening of the shortage of assigned personnel.

c. Reenlistment.

(1) First tour RE reenlistments increased significantly during this reporting period. During this quarter, first tour RE reenlistments stand at over 19.5 per cent compared with 10 per cent for the previous quarter. This upswing can be attributed to increased command emphasis in the re-up program.

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLI (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UTC WF KTO)(U)

(2) During this quarter one individual received the maximum variable reenlistment bonus (VRB) of \$10,000, tax free. This was a first for the battalion and possibly Vietnam.

d. Civilian Personnel. The local nationals are hired in two separate categories, permanent hire and daily hire.

(1) Permanent hire.. Each unit, after submitting requisitions through this headquarters to 12th Combat Aviation Group, is authorized to employ local nationals on a permanent basis.

(2) Daily hire. Daily hire are employed directly on a daily basis as required. They are used primarily for unskilled labor such as filling sandbags, constructing bunkers, and general police. Battalion allocation for the last quarter was 166,000 \$VN per month.

(3) Permanent hires and assistance in kind allocations as of 31 January 1968:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>PERMANENT HIRES AUTHORIZED</u>	<u>PERMANENT HIRES EMPLOYED</u>	<u>AIK FUND PER MONTH</u>
HHD, 11th C.B	11	41	33,000 \$VN
128th AHC	13	20	29,000
162nd AHC	14	14	29,000
173rd AHC	14	13	1st Inf Div
184th RAC	6	11	22,000
205th SHC	11	28	29,000
213th SHC	<u>12</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>24,000</u>
TOTAL	81	146	166,000 \$VN

2. (U) Morale.

a. The following awards and decorations were recommended and approved during this reporting period:

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLI (RCS*CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UTC WFMTO)(U)

(1) Recommended

	MOH	DSC	SS	LOM	DFC	SM	PS	BS"V"	ACM	ACM"V"	AM	AM"V"	PH	COA
NOV	0	0	0	0	16	0	13	13	31	0	305	16	10	8
DEC	0	0	1	0	19	1	26	6	36	6	456	7	6	0
JAN	1	1	4	0	16	0	17	2	48	9	429	16	25	1

(2) Approved

	MOH	DSC	SS	LOM	DFC	SM	BS	BS"V"	ACM	ACM"V"	AM	AM"V"	PH	COA
NOV	0	0	0	0	15	0	5	34	0	0	451	49	5	4
DEC	0	0	0	0	10	1	28	0	23	1	429	18	6	7
JAN	0	1	1	0	10	1	10	0	34	8	393	13	13	3

b. Awards and Decorations.

Emphasis is exerted on unit award officers to recognize with appropriate awards the accomplishments of lower ranking personnel. Morale is being brought to an all time high by the selective awarding of the Bronze Star, Army Commendation Medal and Certificate of Appreciation to all deserving individuals.

c. Athletic program.

Mission requirements demand extreme flexibility in scheduling athletic events. In spite of cancellations and rescheduled games it was possible to complete a volleyball tournament. Participants are proclaiming the merits of the program, spectator interest was high, and plans are being made to extend this activity into other sports.

d. Religious and Personnel Services.

The Battalion Chaplain is available for counseling every Wednesday at 1800 hours in the Chapel of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion at Phu Loi. He is available any other time by appointment. The Chaplain conducts weekly visits to the companies at Phu Loi; i.e., Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, the 128th Assault Helicopter Company, the 184th Reconnaissance Airplane Company, the 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company and the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company. The Chaplain visits the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company at Phuoc Vinh and the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company at Jai Khe on a bi-weekly basis, remaining with the company for a period of 24 hours.

13
AVGC-1C

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLI (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (VIC WF'KTO)(U)

The purpose of these visits are the following:

- (1) To become acquainted with the officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted men of the battalion.
- (2) To show the men that the Chaplain is interested in them and concerned about their problems.
- (3) To counsel the men concerning their complaints, their personal problems, and their religious needs.
- (4) To assist the commander in promoting morale and spiritual well being among the men of his command.

e. Religious Services.

Religious services of the three major faiths are available to all personnel within the command. Denominational services are scheduled for some personnel.

(1) Roman Catholic Chaplains from adjacent units provide services for our Roman Catholic personnel in all units of the battalion. Roman Catholics in Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, the 128th Assault Helicopter Company, the 184th Reconnaissance Airplane Company, the 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company and the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company may attend Confession at 0900 hours and Mass at 0930 hours in the Chapel of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion at Phu Loi. Roman Catholics in the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company may attend at 0800 or 1000 hours at the Chapel of the 3rd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division at Phuoc Vinh. Roman Catholics in the 173rd Helicopter Company may attend at 0730, 0815, 0930, 1100, and 1945 hours at various chapels of the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division at Lai Khe.

(2) Jewish personnel may attend services whenever the II Field Forces Jewish Chaplain comes to their vicinity. At present the Jewish Chaplain holds services on a monthly basis.

(3) Protestant personnel may attend services conducted by the Battalion Chaplain at 1030 hours in the Chapel of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. In addition to the regular Sunday worship service, the Battalion Chaplain provides Bible Study on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday at 1900 hours; religious motion pictures and a hymn service on Monday at 1900 hours, and choir rehearsal and a hymn service on Friday at 2000 hours. All of these activities are held in the Chapel of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion at Phu Loi. Protestants in the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company may attend services at 0800, 0915, 1015 and 1100 hours at various chapels of the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division at Lai Khe. Bible study for

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLI (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (VIC WP VTO)(U)

Protestants at Lai Khe is held at 1830 hours each Sunday at Hibbs Memorial Chapel.

(4) The denominational services available are:

(a) Episcopalian Holy Communion: 1500 hours, Sunday, on a monthly basis at the 1st Division Artillery Chapel at Phu Loi.

(b) Church of Latter Day Saints: 1430 hours each Sunday and 1930 hours each Thursday at the Chapel of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion.

f. Special Services.

Two USO shows were sponsored within the battalion during this reporting period. Improvements on the swimming pool remain a continuous project. A new diving board and water system are being installed. One day room has been completed and construction has started on a second. The emphasis that is placed on securing, distributing and maintaining special service equipment is instrumental in keeping morale at a high level within the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion.

g. Club Facilities.

Officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men clubs are currently in operation in all company size units of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. These facilities are constantly expanding in their effort to provide the maximum in services for the welfare of the members of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion.

3. (U) Discipline.

	Summary Court	Special Court	General Court	Art 32 Inves
NOV	1	1	0	0
DEC	2	1	0	0
JAN	1	4	0	0

4. (U) Information.

a. Information personnel attempt to provide press coverage for all noteworthy events occurring within the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. Submitted during the reporting period were 92 daily summaries, 104 hometown news releases and ten feature stories. Continued liaison with news media has given the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion greater recognition in radio, television and newspaper coverage.

15

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RGS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFATO)(U)

b. Continued emphasis has been placed on hometown newspaper releases for individuals within the battalion. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion goal is that every individual in each unit, sometime during his tour, will have at least one hometown news item released. This recognition of each person within the battalion for a job well done, or for unusual accomplishments, has resulted in added zeal in routine jobs at all levels.

c. A new method of introducing key personnel, both officer and enlisted, to the members of the individual units has been initiated. A complete page of each edition of the battalion's bi-weekly newspaper "THE AVIATOR" is devoted to a key person, giving background, experience, and some personal data. This information dissemination has promoted a feeling of belonging for incoming personnel. Additionally, "THE AVIATOR" is orientated toward recognition of the accomplishments of the lower ranking enlisted personnel of each unit.

5. (U) Civic Action.

a. All companies of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion hosted Christmas parties for Vietnamese employees and their families in December. A total of 1,400 Vietnamese attended these parties. Approximately 50,000 \$VN were supplied from the 12th Combat Aviation Group Civic Action Imprest Fund in support of these holiday activities. The 5th Special Forces Group supplied 1,000 gift kits in support of the battalion effort. It is felt that great strides were made in the pacification program by including these people in our Christmas celebrations.

b. Plans are underway to construct playground equipment for installation in school yards in the Phu Loi - Phu Cuong area. This equipment will be constructed from salvage material with labor on a volunteer basis from the men of this battalion.

c. Units of this battalion continue to support the Saint Joseph Leprosarium with transportation and voluntary contributions.

d. The kindergarten school located at Lai Khe, continues to receive the support of the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company, and is maintaining its capacity enrollment of 110 students.

C. INTELLIGENCE.

1. (C) Significant Activity.

The Viet Cong (VC) has employed a new tactic during the last three mortar attacks against this installation. The weapons were set on top of the ground as opposed to digging firing pits.

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WPAKTO)(U)

No apparent attempts were made to conceal muzzle flash, or the location of the weapons, while firing. The Viet Cong move in quickly, fire a short, intensive volume of fire and depart the area immediately. Unless the muzzle flash or the movement of personnel is observed, the firing position cannot be located by aerial observation.

2. (C) Production of Intelligence.

The battalion intelligence section (S-2) maintains close liaison with 5th Infantry Division (ARVN) G-2 and 1st Infantry Division Base Defense at Phu Loi to exchange timely and essential elements of information. This has proven valuable to the defense of this installation, during Viet Cong "TET" offensive. Enemy efforts have been to reconnoiter, attack, and overrun this base camp. We have furnished 1st Infantry Division Base Defense with current order of battle (OB) studies concerning VC/NVA reconnaissance tactics and techniques, VC/NVA night operations, VC/NVA attacks on fixed installations and VC/NVA employment of supporting weapons in the attack. The 5th Infantry Division (ARVN) G-2 has been furnished current OB concerning reorganization of the Viet Cong Military Region IV plus OB Viet Cong Dong Noi Regiment, which is a constant direct threat to the security of Phu Loi Base Camp.

3. (C) Perimeter Security.

a. The battalion perimeter defensive bunker line has been substantially reinforced in depth. Secondary and blocking positions, with overhead protection, have been incorporated into the perimeter defensive plan. The perimeter is echeloned in three distinct lines; the battalion primary perimeter defensive bunker line, secondary position bunkers and blocking position bunkers respectively. Primary positions are manned by the battalion security platoon. Secondary and blocking positions are manned by the battalion composite rapid reaction force (RRF). The RRF furnishes a dismounted reserve in addition to manning defensive positions. Revision of 11th Combat Aviation Battalion OPLAN 4/67 reflects these changes.

b. Two or more fougasse positions have been emplaced in front of each primary bunker in the battalion's sector. They are command detonated, electrically, from the bunkers. Each fougasse position consists of a sealed 55 gallon drum of thickened fuel, laid broad side facing the target area. Two WP grenades and 2 1/2 pounds of TNT are placed at the broad side base to propel the thickened fuel over the target area. Sandbag tamping of the 55 gallon drum on three sides, leaving the target area side untamped, controls the direction of the blast. Eight turns of primer (detonating) cord is wrapped around the center of the 55 gallon drum to insure rupture. The blast area covered from one fougasse position is approximately 70 by 70 meters.

CONFIDENTIAL

17

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFAKTO)(U)

D. PLANS, OPERATIONS AND TRAINING.

1. (C) Plans.

a. The Battalion Operations Center (BOC) operates on a 24 hour basis. One officer and one enlisted man is on duty at all times during this period. Missions are received from the II Field Forces V Army Aviation Element (AAE) and are assigned to the units of the battalion by BOC. To aid in the performance of their mission BOC has to have quite an extensive communication network to include radios and telephones. The primary means of communications to battalion units stationed at Phu Loi is telephone, with FM radio as a backup. For the two assault helicopter companies located at Lai Khe and Phuoc Vinh, the primary means being FM radio, with telephone as an alternate. Additionally the BOC has a sole user telephone circuit with the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion liaison officer stationed with the 1st Infantry Division in the Army Aviation Control Center (AACC) at Lai Khe.

b. BOC responsibilities:

- (1) Receive and screen missions from higher headquarters.
- (2) Assign missions to appropriate organic units within the battalion.
- (3) Maintain a constant knowledge of available resources and the progress of scheduled missions.
- (4) Maintain a detailed journal of daily events.
- (5) Initiate the procurement of recovery aircraft for extraction of downed aircraft.
- (6) Receipt of aircraft hit reports, casualty reports.
- (7) In the event of enemy ground, mortar or rocket attack:
 - (a) Alert all units of alert status, type attack, and keep abreast of the situation.
 - (b) Launch one light fire team (LFT) and put one LFT on five minute standby.
 - (c) Submit situation reports to higher headquarters.

2. (C) Operations.

- a. Operations during the past quarter ranged from platoon

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CONFIDENTIAL

18

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFANTO)(U)

through battalion size. The majority of which were ten ship company size operations. There were several battalion controlled 20 and 30 ship operations. In all of the company and battalion size operations conducted with the 1st Infantry Division, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion did not have a ship receive a single hit from enemy fire. This period included the Loc Ninh operation. This is attributed to the outstanding preparation of all landing zones by the 1st Infantry Division and the training and skill of the aviators of this battalion.

b. Thorough planning and coordination has proven to be the key in each operation. The control for each battalion size operation is provided by two separate instrumentalities, the Battalion Operations Center (BOC), and the command and control aircraft. BOC coordinates the liaison between aviation and ground units and, in conjunction with the Battalion Commander and his S-3, designates the aviation assets which will support a given ground unit. The command and control element supervises the execution phase and normally includes the aviation battalion commander and his S-3. Installed in the command and control ship is an AN/ASC-10 console. This allows the ground commander tremendous communications latitudes heretofore impossible. He has at his disposal two FM transceivers and one UHF transceiver. With this array of communications equipment, the ground commander has the capability of uninterrupted communications to higher and subordinate headquarters.

c. During the past 90 days, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion participated in the following 1st Infantry Division major combat operations - Lam Son 67, Shenandoah II and Attalla.

(1) Operation Lam Son 67 was a continuous operation conducted jointly by the 1st Infantry Division and the 5th ARVN Division throughout the reporting period. Units of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion conducted 59 assault operations and numerous administrative lifts in support of this operation. Total support for this offensive by the three assault helicopter companies and the two assault support helicopter companies consisted of 9,070 sorties, 31,094 passengers, 4,556 tons of cargo and 2,638 hours flown.

(2) Operation Shenandoah II terminated 19 November 1967. The most significant event of this offensive operation was the "Battle of Loc Ninh" and its carryover into the Bu Dop and Song Be areas. Several North Vietnamese Army regiments surrounded the Loc Ninh airfield with the overall objective to overrun and occupy. They were successful in the destruction and occupation of the ARVN Compound but failed to penetrate the Special Forces Compound. At dawn, units of the 1st Infantry Division and the 5th ARVN Division were air assaulted into the battle area where they instantly closed with and destroyed the enemy, killing over 1,000 and forcing the remainder to retreat. Estimates of WIA's and

CONFIDENTIAL

19

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (MCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68(UIC WFAKTO)(U)

KIA's dragged away by a defeated enemy doubled the body count figure. Fifteen combat assaults were supported by units of this battalion during the battle period 29 October through 8 November 1967. Chinook requirement from this battalion continually exceeded the normal daily commitment of 12 aircraft and reached a total of 20 on one day. Total support for Operation Shenandoah II consisted of 5,769 sorties, 16,573 passengers, 3,253 tons of cargo and 2,000 hours flown.

(3) Operation Attalla began 10 January 1968 and terminated on 27 January 1968. The highlight of this operation was 25 January when the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion performed several combat assaults. This was a battalion effort utilizing 30 lift aircraft, all from the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. CH-47's from the battalion provided logistical support for the troops that were inserted. In support of these lifts, 2,848 troops and 235 tons of cargo were flown in 383 hours. To date, support given the 1st Infantry Division for Operation Attalla is as follows: 8,567 sorties, 20,865 passengers and 2,869 tons of cargo flown in 2,283 hours.

(4) Operation Overwatch was initiated on 19 November 1967 and terminated 10 January 1968. Aviation support from the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion totaled 16,241 sorties, 37,953 passengers, 7,338 tons of cargo and 4,509 hours flown.

(5) "Operation Holly" was one of the most pleasant missions assigned to this battalion during this quarter. This consisted of the air lift of the Bob Hope Show from Long Binh to Lai Khe on 24 December, and to Bear Cat on 25 December. The 205th and the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Companies and the 128th Assault Helicopter Company transported elements of the 1st Infantry Division from field locations to Lai Khe to view the show on the 24th of December. The three companies flew 150 sorties, 59 hours, 2,500 passengers and three tons of cargo during this operation.

d. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion augmented the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion support of the 25th Infantry Division on Operation Yellowstone. The three assault companies of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion were committed for ten lift aircraft and a heavy fire team each, plus a maintenance spare, while the two assault support helicopter companies committed ten CH-47's each. Total battalion support for the first day of this operation was 709 sorties, 1,448 passengers and 476 tons of cargo flown in 339 hours.

e. During this reporting period, two special operations were supported by the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company. On 2 through 11 November 1967, Operation Rapid Fire III was conducted with the 5th Special Forces, using a base of operations at Ham Tan. During the

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCB-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WPAATO)(U)

period 14 to 26 November 1967, Operation Rapid Fire IV was conducted in an area southeast of Phuoc Vinh, which allowed the "Vultures" to continue the operation from their home station. This was the only time an aviation company of this battalion deployed to a field location and operated independently during this quarter. It is worthy to note that the move went smoothly. This operation was an excellent change of pace for the "Vultures" which previously had been oriented to ten aircraft landing and pickup zones and large scale operations. The general concept of operation was based on the insertion and extraction of reconnaissance teams consisting of six men each and of ambush teams consisting of 20 men each. In almost all cases, the landing zones were only large enough for a single aircraft. On occasion, the teams had to be extracted by McGuire rigs at night from openings in the jungle canopy while under enemy fire. This operation put a keen fighting edge on an already spirited flying outfit. The after action report was submitted by the 5th Special Forces. The following statistics were extracted from that report.

Total Time		Tasks		Sorties	
<u>UH-1D</u>	<u>UH-1C</u>	<u>UH-1D</u>	<u>UH-1C</u>	<u>UH-1D</u>	<u>UH-1C</u>
105 hrs	45 hrs	109	53	325	98

21

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-1C

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORILL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFAATO)(U)

f. 11th Combat Aviation Battalion Statistical Summary.

		NOV	DEC	JAN	TOTAL
HOURS FLOWN	UH-1	7,478	8,840	8,472	24,790
	CH-47	2,423	2,620	2,419	7,462
	O-1	2,620	2,947	1,143	6,710
	Total	12,521	14,407	12,034	38,962
SORTIES FLOWN	UH-1	21,429	28,211	26,685	76,325
	CH-47	7,401	7,855	8,295	19,551
	O-1	1,907	2,200	1,064	5,171
	Total	30,737	38,266	30,644	105,047
PASSENGERS TRANSPORTED	UH-1	42,180	63,018	56,678	161,876
	CH-47	28,208	30,665	27,206	86,079
	Total	70,388	93,683	83,884	247,955
CARGO TONS HAULED	UH-1	899	703	483	2,085
	CH-47	12,657	11,819	12,916	37,392
	Total	13,556	12,522	13,399	39,477
MEDICAL EVACUATIONS		114	157	133	404
AIRCRAFT RECOVERED	UH-1	21	14	28	63
	OH	4	0	2	6
	O-1	1	1	0	2
	AH-1G	1	0	0	1
	Total	27	15	30	72
AMMUNITION EXPENDED	7.62mm	625,874	705,376	674,775	2,006,025
	2.75mm	2,417	4,642	3,376	10,435
	40mm	8,230	9,055	8,875	26,160
ENEMY LOSSES	VC KIA (CONF)	26	50	22	98
	VC KIA (EST)	24	27	17	68
	Structures Destroyed	9	10	45	64
	Sampans Sunk	5	2	0	7
	FRIENDLY SUMMARY	US WIA	5	6	25
	US KIA	3	5	3	11
	Aircraft Hit	7	6	23	36
	Aircraft Destroyed	2	3	4	9

22

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: CHLL (RCS-CBFCR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFAATO)(U)

3. (C) Training.

a. The specialized training of the men of the battalion is a continuing process. Fourteen enlisted men have advanced their knowledge of the technical aspects of helicopter maintenance during this reporting period, through attendance of the AMTAP courses in B, C and D model UH-1 helicopters. Twelve enlisted men attended AMTAP courses in CH-47 maintenance. Three quotas were also filled for the AMTAP supply course.

b. Four quotas were filled for Jungle Environmental Survival School held in the Philippines. One allocation went to each of the following units; Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, the 128th Assault Helicopter Company, the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company and the 184th Reconnaissance Airplane Company.

c. A 16 hour block of instructions was conducted by the Battalion Surgeon on Field Sanitation. These classes were attended by 18 enlisted men.

d. Aviator standardization and training.

(1) Each newly assigned aviator is given an area orientation flight and individual instruction on the techniques peculiar to the combat environment in Vietnam. He is then given a proficiency check ride by a unit instructor pilot before being cleared for operational flight. The orientation and proficiency checkrides are accomplished at unit level by the unit instructor pilots.

(2) Standardization is maintained in each unit through 90 day standardization check rides. Every 90 days, each aviator is checked by the unit instructor pilot to insure that all habits and techniques he has learned in the preceding three months are in keeping with all safety practices.

(3) A comprehensive check ride is given to an individual before he is designated as aircraft commander, to insure that he possesses the knowledge, ability and sound judgement necessary to perform the duties and assume the responsibilities of this important position.

e. In-country orientation of the 101st Airborne Division.

(1) During the past quarter, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion was assigned the mission of giving in-country training and orientation to the subordinate units of the 101st Airborne Division. Training effort went primarily to the 3rd Brigade, but was also given to the 2nd Brigade and 2/17 Cavalry. Helicopter pilots from the 101st Aviation Battalion were temporarily assigned to the various assault companies of this battalion for in-country orientation and training in airmobile techniques.

CONFIDENTIAL

13

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSEFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFAATO)(U)

(2) The assault helicopter companies and the Pathfinder Detachment of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion received the mission of training the infantry units of the 101st Airborne Division in heliborne assault techniques under combat conditions. These techniques included extractions, load management, formations, combat assaults, use of gunships, eagle flights, and on loading and off loading techniques.

(3) A Mobile Training Team from the 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company gave classes to representatives of the 101st Airborne Division on sling load techniques, radio procedures, utilization of CH-47 type aircraft, organization of landing and pickup zones and limitations and capabilities of various type nets and slings.

(4) The Pathfinders provided on the spot supervision while the units were practicing the techniques under actual combat conditions.

(5) A statistical summary of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion's training program is as follows:

(a) The assault helicopter companies of this battalion flew 4,616 sorties, 12,373 troops and 775 hours while working with the 3rd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division.

(b) The assault helicopter companies of this battalion flew 1,870 sorties, 4,831 troops and 367 hours while working with the 2nd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division.

(c) While working with the 2/17 Cavalry, the assault helicopter companies flew 139 sorties, 319 troops and 27 hours.

(d) The assault support helicopters of this battalion flew 622 sorties, 1,481 troops, and 958 tons of cargo and 101 hours in general support of the 101st Airborne Division.

(6) The training and combat supervision given to the subordinate units of the 101st Airborne Division was so intensive that within three weeks (18 December 1967 thru 7 January 1968) from their arrival in-country, they were considered combat ready and were participating in combat operations.

E. LOGISTICS.

1. (U) Actual supply and logistical transactions within the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion are primarily company level activities. Each company maintains its own property books, to include separate property books for each of its detachments. Each company deals directly with the supply support activity, using their own unit identification code and

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (VIC WF.MTO)(U)

submitting their own requisitions. The battalion S-4 serves primarily to supervise, consolidate reports, advise and assist the units, provide liaison to higher headquarters, and to keep the battalion commander informed of the status of the units in the areas of supply, motor maintenance, ammunition, POL, weapons, and base development.

2. (U) Supply.

a. Supply procedures by class.

(1) Class I: Battalion S-4 operates a ration breakdown point for battalion units located at Phu Loi. Other battalion units are supported directly from the Class I point at their base camp locations.

(2) Class II & IV: All units of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion receive Class II and IV support from the 266th Supply and Service Battalion at Long Binh. This presents a problem to the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company at Phuoc Vinh and the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company at Lai Khe due to the distance and convey requirement.

(3) Class III: During tactical operations, the units refuel at the most convenient POL dispensing point in the operational area. Refueling at the unit base camp is accomplished by organic tankers. The units at Phu Loi receive Class III from the 758th Supply and Service Company. The 162nd Assault Helicopter Company and the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company are supported by the 101st Airborne Division and the 1st Infantry Division respectively.

(4) Class V: All units of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion receive Class V support from the 3rd Ordnance Battalion ammunition point at Long Binh. Once again the transportation is a problem for the units at Lai Khe and Phuoc Vinh.

b. Camouflage uniforms were requisitioned for the pathfinders. Since this is a new item in the supply system early arrival of this uniform is not expected.

c. A shortage of body armor exists within the battalion. Body armor was collected from the assault support helicopter companies of this battalion and turned in to 12th Combat Aviation Group for issue to new units arriving in-country. The assault support helicopter companies presently have enough armor for only six complete crews. This creates a problem when over six CH-47's are committed from each unit.

d. Classes were set up at battalion level for each company PLL clerk. During the period 20 November 1967 through 2 December 1967, classes were given on Monday through Friday mornings. The classes were very worth while and are planned again in June or July.

23
AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORILL (ACS-CBFUR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFAUTO)(U)

e. Seventeen reports of survey were initiated during the period 1 November 1967 to January 1968, of which six were administrative type surveys. Most of the equipment lost or damaged during this period was flight gear or weapons belonging to pilots or crew members. Of the 18 weapons lost, damaged, or destroyed, ten were .38 caliber pistols. Hostile fire and aircraft accidents continue to be the major cause of lost or damaged equipment.

f. Ballistic helmets continue to be in short supply, especially for men that wear a size seven hat or larger. Some men are still wearing APH-5's as a result of this shortage.

g. Reports. Fourteen different recurring reports were processed through the S-4 and forwarded to higher headquarters. These reports were broken down as follows: one daily, eight monthly, three quarterly, and two semi-annually.

3. (U) Inspection Trips.

a. An inspection team from the S-4 section inspected each of the units during the month of December. These inspections pointed out short-comings or deficiencies in the following areas: supply, motor maintenance, POL, ammunition, conox utilization, materiel readiness, PILL, and weapons security. A follow up inspection is planned for February.

b. Most units were found to have an excessive number of conox containers on hand. Instructions were given on disposition of excess conox containers.

c. Some units were having problems computing their basic load of ammunition. FM 101-10-1 does not provide information on many weapons systems used by aviation companies. These units were instructed to use quantities as they were computed prior to leaving COMUS. In those cases where there had been a change in weapons or weapons systems, or previous computations proved inadequate, the unit commanders were instructed to establish their basic load based on a usage factor until information could be received from higher headquarters.

d. The accumulation of unauthorized weapons was a problem within the battalion. The most common weapon found was the M1 carbine, however, all types of U.S. manufactured weapons were accumulated. The unit commanders were informed of the proper method of turning in unauthorized weapons.

e. As a result of the fire and explosion of the Lai Khe ammunition storage area a detailed inspection of unit ammunition storage areas and their POL storage areas was conducted. Detailed instructions were given to the units on corrective action to be taken.

4. (U) Motor Maintenance.

a. The lack of qualified personnel continues to be a problem in the area of motor maintenance. Four units do not have qualified motor sergeants, and all the units are short mechanics and engineer equipment repairmen. Only 25 per cent of the motor maintenance people within the battalion are school trained.

b. Certain repair parts and direct exchange items have been in short supply, among these have been brake shoes, wheel cylinders, wheel bearings, universal joints, and starters. Brake lining was found on the local economy and purchased through the Imprest Fund.

c. The deadline rate of the 2 1/2 ton and 5 ton multifuel trucks is approximately 25 per cent. However, we had been alerted to expect a shortage of repair parts for multifuel engines some two months ago.

d. Inspections reveal that the lack of first echelon or operator maintenance is probably the biggest and most unnecessary problem in motor maintenance. This is even more of a problem in those areas such as the POL sections where the vehicles are not returned to the motor park. Command emphasis was placed in this area and all units have a sound system of motor maintenance.

e. Training, close coordination with direct support units, periodic inspections of all units, and strong emphasis on maintenance has been stressed to reduce and eliminate some of the problems encountered in the motor maintenance area.

5. (U) Construction.

a. The 173rd Assault Helicopter Company at Lai Khe received their first permanent billets after two years in tents. The buildings were built by the engineers with the assistance from the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company. The billets are of tropical design with wooden floors.

b. The 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company completed their NCO quarters and started construction on their BOQ's. These buildings were constructed entirely by self help.

c. The 128th Assault Helicopter Company and the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company have new aircraft maintenance hangers. Both were designed and constructed with interior lighting. Floodlights were installed as an interim measure for the 128th Assault Helicopter Company and the supplies are on requisition for the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

21

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORL (HCS-CR-65) For Qtr ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC PARTO)(U)

d. An aircraft maintenance hanger for the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company is under construction with a completion date of April 1968. They also had two tropical billets constructed which houses all their enlisted personnel in permanent type billets.

e. Headquarters Detachment constructed a tropical building for the pathfinder detachment and a new day room. Improvements were made in the Battalion Headquarters building and the adjacent bachelor officers quarters.

F. MAINTENANCE.

(U) Significant activities.

1. During the past three months, the battalion has experienced higher total flying hours, utilization rates, and average hours per aircraft than in previous reporting periods. During this reporting period the utilization of UH-1D helicopters averaged 189 per cent and CH-47 helicopters, 149 per cent based on 60 and 50 flying hours per aircraft per month respectively. UH-1B and C aircraft averaged 89 per cent on 60 hours per aircraft per month.

2. The UH-1 companies received nine UH-1D's replacement aircraft in an effort to maintain a level of 21 UH-1D and eight UH-1B and C aircraft per company. At the end of the period, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion was short a total of 11 UH-1D's and one UH-1B. Adequate UH-1D and UH-1C float aircraft in the supporting aircraft maintenance company exists and replacements for aircraft down for extensive maintenance have been available.

3. One UH-1D and one CH-47 safety of flight inspection was received during the period of November 1967 thru January 1968, which required temporary grounding of the aircraft. The inspections were completed without adverse effect on operational commitments.

4. There has been considerable improvement in the availability and application of penoprine around unit maintenance areas and holipads. Dust continues to remain a serious maintenance and safety problem, as aircraft operate daily in areas of loose dirt and sand.

5. Due to an increase in the number of aircraft being supported by the supporting aircraft maintenance battalion, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion is experiencing a slower turn around time on aircraft work ordered to the transportation direct support company.

6. Project ZYR (Avionics Retrofit Program) was initiated in November 1966 with a projected completion date of December 1967. The program has now been extended until 30 June 1968. At the present time,

28

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORELL (RCS-CSTOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WF.AKTO)(U)

the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion has 21 UH-1D, 8 UH-1B, 14 UH-1C, and 23 CH-47 aircraft completed, and 15 UH-1D, 2 UH-1C, and 9 CH-47 aircraft remaining to be retrofitted by June 1968.

7. Hanger facilities under construction for two of the four presently assigned companies, will materially increase maintenance productivity during the rainy season.

8. The 605th Direct Support Company supplied a listing of special management items issued to each unit technical supply, for reconciliation on repairable turn-ins.

9. The MOS 68G20 (Sheet Metal Repairman) will not be available in abundant quantities for some time to come. Authorization for two civilian contract sheet metal repairmen per transportation detachment has been approved. This augmentation of the civilians should greatly reduce the sheet metal work load.

10. The 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company aircraft are approaching the 12th periodic inspection. A civilian contract team will be in-country on or about 15 February 1968 to assist in the 12th periodic inspection of all CH-47 aircraft. They will be in-country for approximately 120 days.

11. USAF SOAP (Spectrographic Oil Analysis Program). Units within group have been designated to participate in a 30 day test phase with the Bien Hoa Air Force Base SOAP Laboratory. If the test is completed satisfactorily, the units will have access to closer test facility and fast turn around of samples.

12. Statistics for the summary of performance for the period of this report are attached as inclosure 6.

G. AVIATION SAFETY.

1. (U) Plans and Programs. The present safety program within the battalion differs little from any other safety program with the exception of the outstanding degree of command emphasis and support given to it. The basic thought behind the program is that every man in the battalion is a safety officer. The validity of this thought is evidenced by the constant awareness and participation of every individual in the safety program and has resulted in a sharp reduction of accidents from the month of October, with six major accidents, to January, when only one major accident occurred.

2. (U) Procedures. Safety is a command responsibility. The Aviation Safety Officer of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion works

29

AVFC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFANTO)(U)

directly for the Battalion Commander as a Special Staff Officer. The Battalion Commander has given his full support, and actively takes part in the Aviation Safety Program. During his Commander's Conferences a portion of the time is regularly allotted to the discussion of safety, cause factors, recent accidents, and preventive measures to be taken to eliminate needless waste of lives and equipment. In all operations, whether it be combat assaults or administrative missions, he demands the highest standards of discipline and professionalism at all times. Working directly for the commander, the battalion aviation safety officer is involved in every facet of the battalion's operations. He maintains close liaison with the Flight Surgeon, maintenance, training, and operations, just to name a few. He flies regularly with all units of the battalion to monitor aviator and crew standardization and in-flight procedures. Regular staff visits acquaint the units with the latest changes and updated flight safety information.

3. (U) Publications. The Aviation Safety Officer has begun publishing a monthly letter, in conjunction with the Battalion Aviation Maintenance Officer, which includes notes and tips on aviation safety, latest changes in procedures, safety slogans, etc.

4. (U) Training. Each individual company has an outstanding standardization program, conducted in accordance with applicable regulations, to qualify newly assigned pilots for in-country missions and eventually as aircraft commanders.

5. (U) Inspections. A minimum of once each quarter, the Battalion Safety Officer conducts a survey of subordinate units utilizing the United States Army Board for Aviation Accident Research (USABAR) Safety Survey Check List. These surveys are made a matter of record and follow-up action is taken on all deficiencies. Informal spot inspections are made weekly by the aviation safety officer whenever he visits a unit.

6. (U) Accidents. A total of six major accidents were sustained during the reporting period. Four of the accidents resulted in fatalities. The following is a summary of occurrences sustained during the reporting period.

<u>ACCIDENTS</u>		<u>INCIDENTS</u>	
Tail rotor strike	2	Vehicle antenna strike	4
Lost RPM	1	Gunner fired into cockpit	1
Engine Failure	1	Compressor stall	1
IFK in dust	1	Hovered into tree	1
Sling load struck ground	1		1

AVGC-RO

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLA (RC5-CSPOR-65) for Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFMATJ)(U)

FORCED LANDINGS

PRECAUTIONARY LANDINGS

Engine failure	6	Lost xnsn oil pressure	2
Low side governor fail	1	FOD	2
Short shaft failure	1	Hydraulic failure	3
Fuel control failure	1	Tail rotor drive shaft failed	1
Contaminated fuel	1		

7. (U) Accident Cause Factor. During this reporting period the accidents sustained by the battalion can be grouped into three main cause factor, all of which were pilot induced.

a. Loss of RPM: Due to poor pilot technique, overloading, and downwind takeoffs and landings.

b. Tail rotor strike: Caused by abrupt flare coupled with a fast rate of closure close to the ground.

c. IFR in dust: With the advent of the dry season comes an increase in dust. Landing in a dusty area and improper pilot technique on takeoff causing loss of visual reference to the ground.

8. (U) Preventive Measures to Eliminate Cause Factors.

a. Basic loads were prescribed by the battalion for all type aircraft and are strictly adhered to.

b. The trail formation with its inherent dangers is only used when the tactical situation dictates. When it is used, the aviation commander is required to brief the supported ground commander on the inherent danger of this formation and place emphasis on the advantages of heavy right, heavy left, and staggered trail formations. If the trail formation is used, greater distance between aircraft and a slower rate of approach into the landing zone will be used.

c. A specified minimum of two rotor diameters between aircraft while in any type of formation is mandatory.

d. A hover check is made by each aircraft prior to a takeoff. The only exception to this is on a combat assault. The four, ten and 20 foot hover checks are the ones prescribed. In addition each aviator is required to demonstrate his proficiency during each 90 day check ride.

e. When an air mission commander deems that a landing zone or a pickup zone is unsafe, he insures that the supported ground unit commander is BRIEFED, UNDERSTANDS, AND IS WILLING TO ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY for using the landing or pickup zone.

AVGC-..C

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLA (NCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WMLMTC)(U)

9. (U) The safety goal established by the Battalion Commander for the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion is zero (0) accidents. This goal is felt to be attainable, but not without the help of every man in the unit. The safety program is established and is maintained in this battalion by constant example, education, and discipline as evidenced by the continued lowering of the accident rate. The rate for this reporting period is 14.4 as compared to the previous reporting period's rate of 22.3 per 100,000 flying hours.

H. SURGEON.

1. (U) Treatment. Medical resources of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion remain relatively unchanged. The work load has been reduced somewhat since the 50th Medical Clearing Company has been stationed at Phu Loi. Hospital and X-Ray facilities are now available on post and this increases the effectiveness of medical units. The battalion dispensary continues to provide 24 hour medical coverage for all aviation personnel.

2. (U) Preventive Medicine. An active preventive medicine program is in operation and involves the following areas:

- a. Malaria prophylaxis.
- b. V.D. Control.
- c. Immunizations.
- d. Vaccination of dogs and other pets.
- e. Sanitation. Through monthly inspections of mess halls, clubs, latrine facilities, etc.
- f. Monitoring of flight hours as part of the fatigue control program.

There has been no problem in this battalion with any of the major communicable diseases.

3. (U) Construction. A medical bunker has been constructed adjacent to the battalion dispensary. This has been equipped with medical supplies and provides a secure area for emergency medical care during mortar and rocket attacks.

32

CONFIDENTIAL

..VGC-AC
SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFMATO)(U) 1 February 1968

SECTION II, PART I

LESSONS LEARNED

A. (U) PREFACE. Found in this section will be the new and different experiences of this battalion which are unique to this reporting quarter. The previously reported lessons learned will not be restated unless a new technique or innovation has come to light during this reporting period.

B. (U) PERSONNEL. NONE

C. (U) INTELLIGENCE. NONE

D. (C) OPERATIONS.

1. (C) Item: Employment of Mk 24 Flare from UH-1D aircraft.

a. Discussion: The 162nd Assault Helicopter Company had the opportunity to experiment with and evaluate the Mk 24 flare employed from a UH-1D command and control aircraft. While working on a special mission which required immediate availability of illumination to extract troops in contact at night, it was found that in many cases the United States Air Force C-47 flare aircraft arrived too late to insure tactical success. It was apparent that an interim measure had to be devised which would fill the gap between the time the UH-1D helicopters arrived and the arrival of an air force flare aircraft. Initially, the hand-held L312 White Star parachute flare was employed from the command and control aircraft. They were fired from an altitude of 800 feet above the terrain by the gunner or crew chief. The results were marginally effective, the disadvantages being that: the duration of light is only 30 seconds; the command and control aircraft must fly at a low altitude to employ these flares; the short duration of light requires the use of many flares; and that the crew chief or gunner could accidentally fire the flares into the helicopter rotor blades. The second flare tested was the Mk 24 aircraft parachute flare. These were employed from the command and control aircraft at an altitude of 2,000 feet above the terrain. Both timers were set at their lowest setting, five seconds and ten seconds respectively. The flare ignites at an altitude of 1500 feet and burns out at approximately 400 feet. Fifteen of the Mk 24 flares were carried on the command and control aircraft. This is equal to almost 40 minutes of illumination when employed singly, or 20 minutes when employed in pairs. The flares were dropped from the aircraft by one man in the cargo compartment. The lanyard was secured to a snap link which was fastened to a cargo tiedown ring on the floor of the aircraft. There were no disadvantages found in this method of employment.

b. Observation: The methods used here have proven extremely successful. The main employment considerations are to insure that the

CONFIDENTIAL

23

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr ending 31 Jan 68 (CIC WFMTO)(U)

Flares are released on the downwind side and to the rear of the landing aircraft to insure that the flare does not blind the pilot while on final and that the parachute portion of the flare does not become a hazard to flight.

2. (C) Item: Tactical Employment of a Command and Control Flare Aircraft, Light Fire Team, and 20 Man Heliborne Security Force at Night.

a. Discussion: Based on the splendid results obtained while using the command and control aircraft as a flare ship for night extraction, the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company further amplified its employment by using this aircraft in an aggressive posture rather than in a defensive one. It has been stated that the terrain belongs to US Forces during the day and to the Viet Cong during the hours of darkness. The question then arises, "How do we interrupt the movement of supplies, equipment, and personnel during the hours of darkness?" A method used by the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company was as follows. Known enemy river crossing points, well-used Viet Cong roads and trails, and probable cache sites, were plotted on a map. In conjunction with the security force commander, an order of priority was assigned to each location. The pilots and the crews were briefed. The general concept of the operation was that the command and control (C&C) aircraft, with MK 24 flares aboard, enters the area of operations at 3500 feet, all flares set to ignite at 1500 feet. The C&C aircraft is followed by a light fire team flying at 1,000 feet above the terrain, followed two minutes later by four UH-1Ds which contain the 20 man security force. The C&C aircraft proceeds to the first target area and drops a flare from 3,500 feet. As the flare ignites, the gunships roll in to take under fire any enemy that may be in the open. If the force taken under fire is a small one, the security force is inserted using full doorgun suppression and gunship protection, to retrieve prisoners and intelligence information.

b. Observation: This tactic was used on two different nights. Although no specific enemy were killed or wounded, it is felt that this particular concept could be employed with a high probability of success if the time and a free-fire area of operations could be established.

3. (C) Item: Utilization of the Assault Support Helicopter.

a. Discussion: The demand for CH-47 support is increasing daily. This is primarily due to an increase of military ground units, the inaccessibility of forward area locations which dictate movement by air, and the greater distances involved that preclude the use of ground transportation. As a result of the great demand and the limited availability of assets, it is imperative that our present resources be utilized to the maximum extent possible. To insure effective utilization of CH-47 aircraft between the 1st Infantry Division and the 11th Combat Aviation

CONFIDENTIAL

34

CONFIDENTIAL

AVCC-1.C

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLA (RCS-CSPOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFA.RTO)(U)

Battalion a "key" is devised nightly. The "key" is a printed form which states the assigned aircraft, mission number, reporting location, number of sorties, and reporting time. The aircraft commander responsible for the mission advises his unit of his progress, reporting start time and completion time of each mission (see inclosure 7, Sample "Key"). It is prepared in the following manner. All check requests from subordinate units of the 1st Infantry Division are submitted to the Division Army Aviation Control Center (DAACC) daily. The request includes the reporting location, time, FM frequency, call sign, number of sorties, type cargo, and name of the responsible individual. The requests are then checked to insure that it is in fact a mission suitable for the CH-47. After all requests have been received by DAACC, a consolidated aircraft request is submitted to the Army Aviation Element (AAE) at II Field Forces, Vietnam. After AAE determines the number of CH-47 aircraft to be allocated for support of the 1st Infantry Division, the "key" is finalized. All reporting times and locations are listed, each sortie is assigned a number, and each CH-47 mission is placed on the "key", accounting for an hour by hour breakdown of aircraft. Additionally, it allows for refueling every hour and thirty minutes and a shut-down every three hours and fifteen minutes for a maintenance check.

b. Observation: The "key" utilized by the 1st Infantry Division insures proper utilization of the aircraft by insuring that valuable time is not lost through faulty scheduling and non-productive back hauls. The tremendous hauling capacity of a CH-47 makes it a resource that cannot be wasted.

5. (C) Item: Dust Control in Secure Landing Zones and Pickup Zones.

a. Discussion: During the dry season in Vietnam, there is a definite need for some type of dust control apparatus to suppress or eliminate the dust problem which exists in pickup zones, landing zones, night defensive positions, and fire support bases. This problem was encountered daily by the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion while supporting the 1st Infantry Division. The division's mission of securing Highway 13 necessitated the location of numerous fire support bases and night defensive positions along the highway between Lai Khe and Quan Loi. The nature of these bases eliminated the possibility of the pickup zone or landing zone being located within the perimeter. The highway was the logical choice for the landing zones and pickup zones. The narrow road bed dictated a trail formation for the assault aircraft and the unpaved surface compounded the dust problem. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion has partially solved this problem by equipping a CH-47 helicopter ("Oiley") with an apparatus to be used as a dust suppressor in designated areas (see inclosure 8, Dust Control Apparatus 'Aerial').

CONFIDENTIAL

35

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFAKTO)(U)

b. Observation: This apparatus is new and has been employed by this battalion 12 times to date with outstanding results. It has been found that maximum spray time is approximately 4 1/2 minutes. Due to the limited spray time, close coordination is needed between "Oiley" and the ground unit. Snake grenades are used to mark the extremities of the area to be sprayed. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion will continue to use "Oiley" whenever tactically possible. We have not had the opportunity to employ this apparatus in a defoliant role but it is felt that it will be just as effective as it is in the dust suppressor role. Continued evaluation of this system will be reported in future ORLL's. We have also tested this apparatus in a ground role; i.e., lifting the equipment and penaprime to a designated area, dismounting the helicopter, and spraying a specific area (see inclosure 9, Dust Control Apparatus 'Ground').

5. (C) Item: Prevention of Accidental Fires in Fire Support Bases Caused by Snake Grenades.

a. Discussion: During the current dry season there have been two serious incidents, where fires have destroyed or partially destroyed fire support bases. The fires were caused by snake grenades being blown into areas of dry vegetation by the rotor wash of assault and assault support helicopters. A number of tests were conducted to determine the feasibility of landing helicopters without the use of snake grenades. Guides wearing brightly colored jackets proved ineffective because they could not be seen at sufficient distances. Sandbags covered with panel markers were also ineffective for the same reason. It was determined that snake was absolutely essential to positively identify pickup and landing zones from an altitude of 3,000 feet and a distance of three to five kilometers. This is absolutely necessary when the aviator is unfamiliar with the area. Additionally, this is the only feasible way to provide specific guidance to CH-47 pilots when they are emplacing loads such as artillery pieces or Class V that have to be landed at pre-selected points. One method tested to reduce the hazard was to dig holes in the ground and place the snake grenade in them. This technique proved impractical due to the fact that in most areas the ground is too hard to be penetrated with an entrenching tool and in a fast moving situation the number of holes necessary precluded their use. A snake holder was then developed. It was formed from a 12 inch section of eight inch howitzer casing, welded to a 12 inch square of 1/8 inch sheet metal to provide a stabilized base. The snake grenade is dropped into the mouth of the shell casing which contains the sparks and flames that are emitted. The container satisfies the requirement of identifying the landing zone from a distance and eliminates the fire hazard. The sheet metal base prevents the shell casing from tipping over due to rotor wash.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

26

AVGC-110

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORL (RC6-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFMATU)(U)

b. Observations: The Pathfinders of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion have made extensive use of this container since its development. It is felt that this has prevented the recurrence of fires in landing zones and pickup zones, while allowing the best method of marking to be used.

6. (C) Item: Use of Smoke Pots when Screening Landing Zones.

a. Discussion: The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion was supporting the 1/26th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, on a combat assault in the vicinity of Quan Lai. The battalion smoke ship, "Smokey", was being used to screen one side of the landing zone. The airborne task force commander directed that smoke pots be dropped at intervals along the side of the landing zone to augment the smoke screen. Initially the smoke drifted away from the landing zone; however, there was a wind shift and it became evident that the smoke was not moving away from the landing zone but instead was drifting back over the landing zone. One lift of 20 ships had landed prior to the landing zone becoming completely obscured. The AAF commander felt that his troops on the ground were in jeopardy and instructed the air mission commander to land the second lift of 20 ships 400 meters to the east. This necessitated using a landing zone that had not been prepared by tactical air or artillery and required the troops to move a greater distance to link up.

b. Observation: The use of "Smokey" in conjunction with smoke pots must be thoroughly evaluated prior to actual use. The advantages and disadvantages must be recognized to prevent a similar incident. The smoke pots burn for 15 minutes and emit a smoke screen that is of greater density than the screen from the smoke ship. The "no-wind" condition allowed the smoke to remain in one location, thus obscuring the landing zone. The recommended wind conditions for the employment of smoke is three to five knots. This allows the smoke screen to move with the wind but is not fast enough to disperse the screen. Smoke pots should be used only to augment the smoke screen by "Smokey" when there is a prevailing wind and a smoke screen of greater density and longer duration is required.

7. (C) Item: Mortar Watch Flying Time.

a. Discussion: The 184th Reconnaissance Airplane Company was required to perform an average of four mortar watch missions per night. On numerous occasions the flying time per mission exceeded nine hours. While flying this mission, a pilot and observer sometimes flew 3 1/2 hours per sortie with little more than a refueling break before the next takeoff. This schedule left no time for aircraft maintenance; also the pilot and observer efficiency decreased toward the end of the mission. In January, II Field Forces AAF recommended that O-1 aircraft not be flown in excess of six hours during a 12 hour period of time.

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJ CT: ORL (RCS-OSFOR-65) For Rtr landing 31 Jan 68 (VIC WFAKTO)(U)

In turn, the supported units began to program the flying time of the O-1 aircraft so that the aircraft would be flying only during the most critical hours of the night. At other times the aircraft were maintained ready for take off should an attack occur.

b. Observation: By flying shorter flights, the efficiency of both pilot and observer remains high throughout the mission and the aircraft was maintained in a higher state of readiness. In case of an enemy attack the aircraft is ready to take off and has maximum station time so that refueling in the middle of a mission will not be necessary.

8. (C) Item: Observers in the O-1 During Night Operations.

a. Discussion: In some cases little or no instructions are given to observers pertaining to the mission they are required to perform. An unqualified or inexperienced observer in an O-1 aircraft on a night mission can impair the ability of a unit to react to enemy action. On one occasion, during an attack on a night defense position, an inexperienced observer was unable to direct the artillery fire and had a great deal of trouble operating his radio. The pilot, who was both familiar with the area and trained in observer work and adjustment of artillery, completed the mission. Since this incident, the pilot flying the night mission makes sure that the observer knows how to operate the radios and is familiar with the aircraft safety harness, parachute, and procedures for their use. All supported units have been advised to use only experienced observers on night missions, to brief them thoroughly and to familiarize them with the area of operations and the techniques of artillery adjustment. The observers are encouraged to plot friendly locations on their maps. Supported units have also been urged to train observers in daylight so that they will be proficient in normal daylight operations before attempting night observation.

b. Observation: Since realizing the complexity of night observation, supported units are insuring that observers are familiar with their mission and the area of operations. The observers and pilots are now working in a better spirit of cooperation, realizing that they are both part of an essential night operations team.

9. (C) Item: Extensive Preparation of Landing Zones.

a. Discussion: For the past year it has been standing operating procedure within the 1st Infantry Division to extensively prepare all planned landing zones before the insertion of heliborne forces. The usual preparation consists of three air strikes with CBU-12, napalm, 500 and 750 pound bombs. The duration of the strikes are from 20 to 40 minutes. At the termination of the tactical air strike, there is an extensive artillery preparation lasting between 15 and 25 minutes.

CONFIDENTIAL

38

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLE (RCS-CSFOR-65) for Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFLATO)(U)

Immediately following the artillery and seconds before the troops are landed, there is a two minute gunship preparation. As a direct result of this extensive preparation the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion has not received any hits, or had an aircraft shot down in the landing zone in the past year, while working with the 1st Infantry Division.

b. Observation: The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion has a great deal of experience working with other divisions in Vietnam. It has been our observation that solely because of the extensive preparation of the landing zones by the 1st Infantry Division, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion has had fewer combat losses of men and aircraft. It is realized that the same methods of employment of air, artillery and gunships in the Delta area would have a different effect due to the longer range fields of fire and populated areas (see inclosure 10, Combat Operation After Action Report)

10. (C) Item: Selection of Landing Zones.

a. Discussion: During a recent operation in the Delta Region, a company of this battalion received numerous aircraft hits from concealed positions surrounding the landing zone. This occurred in spite of the fact that an extensive preparation of the landing zone was made by tactical air, artillery and gunships. The aircraft hits and subsequent damage were a direct result of landing in close proximity to an area which afforded the enemy cover and concealment when other suitable landing zones were available close to the one selected. In this particular case the enemy was deployed in extremely well built and well camouflaged bunkers which were not detected.

b. Observation: On each combat assault, consideration must be given to the point of touchdown in relation to the concealment afforded the enemy. If the ground tactical plan allows for a choice of landing zones, the air mission commander must select an area of open terrain which affords a greater degree of protection to the troops and landing aircraft (see inclosure 11, Combat Operations After Action Report).

E. (C) TRAINING.

Item: Use of Mobile Training Teams (MTT) to Train New Units in Proper Utilization of CH-47's.

1. Discussion: The MTT has been used by the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion to train new units and personnel in the proper utilization of CH-47 helicopters with outstanding results. The team consists of two aviators from one of the CH-47 companies, a team of pathfinders, and a sample of rigging equipment used in the Republic of Vietnam. The instruction covers capabilities and limitations of the chinook, proper

CONFIDENTIAL

31
CONFIDENTIAL

AVG-4
SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSAR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (VIC WFAATO)(U) 1 February 1968

rigging and loading techniques and means of utilizing the aircraft to its maximum potential. After classes are held, practical exercises in the rigging and loading of all types of loads are conducted. The pathfinder personnel are extremely important in the practical exercise portion. Their knowledge of rigging techniques and solutions to everyday problems enhanced the instruction tremendously. These classes are usually conducted at brigade level and attended by battalion S-4 and company personnel who are responsible for resupply. This training is not conducted on a one time basis; it is recurring instruction that keeps the supported units abreast of new developments and ideas. It also provides for training of new personnel in the units.

2. Observation: Units that have used the ITT for training of their personnel are considerably better oriented toward CH-47 operations. They receive the maximum performance from their aircraft as shown by more tons carried and less hours flown. These mobile training teams are available to any supported unit on request.

F. (C) LOGISTICS AND MAINTENANCE.

There are few new problems in the field of logistics. Most problems in this area are recurring and will probably continue. However there are several worthy of note.

1. (C) Item: Ration Support at Forward Locations.

Discussion: It has been the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion experience that when a unit is operating from a forward location it might be more feasible to open a new ration account than to transport rations over great distances. For example, when the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company moved from Phuoc Vinh to Ham Tan, rations were not available at Ham Tan and the distance from home station precluded the unit from flying in rations on a daily basis. Therefore the S-4 established a ration account at the nearest Class I point which was at Vung Tau. Arrangements were made for the 222nd Combat Support Aviation Battalion to deliver the rations from Vung Tau to Ham Tan daily.

2. (C) Item: Care and Cleaning of Individual Weapons.

a. Discussion: We have found that frequent inspections is the only reliable method of insuring that personnel take proper care of their individual weapons. Some units have built arms rooms and require all weapons to be secured there when not in use. Where the tactical situation permits, we recommend that this method be used. In those cases where the tactical situation dictates that individual weapons be readily available, the unit commanders must require frequent inspections of all weapons. The assumption that men in a combat zone does not have to be told to keep

CONFIDENTIAL

40

CONFIDENTIAL

AVCO-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFMATO)(U)

his weapon clean is wrong. There are always these individuals that will neglect their weapons even to the point of allowing them to become inoperable.

b. Observation: Frequent inspection of individual weapons is an absolute must.

3. (C) Item: Shortage of Aviation Supply Parts.

a. Discussion: The 605th Direct Support Unit (DSU) has an average demand satisfaction rate of 50 per cent. Demand satisfaction reflects the number of requests received which match the authorized stockage list (ASL) and that are filled immediately from stock on hand. This we believe is not an acceptable figure. The 605th Direct Support Unit has an average demand accommodation rate of 80 per cent. This information indicates that 80 per cent of the items requested are authorized for stockage by the DSU. This indicates how well the DSU is managing its stocks to satisfy their customers requirements. A low fill of the number of requisitions matching the ASL indicates that the DSU is not requisitioning in a timely manner and/or is not receiving replenishment stockage supplies to satisfy the customers initial demand. During this period, the low demand satisfaction is due to the increased number of requests which is directly related to the number of hours flown. The UH-1D aircraft have flown 189 per cent of the flying hour program, the UH-1C aircraft have flown 103 per cent of the flying hour program, and the OH-47 aircraft have flown 149 per cent of the flying hour program.

b. Observation: The shortage of parts is primarily due to the hours flown in excess of the programmed flying hours. These hours have placed a greater load on the supply than it is designated to accommodate.

4. (C) Item: Low Power Engines.

a. Discussion: A study of low power has been made in-country over the past year. The data obtained on this study indicates that at least 90 per cent of low power problems can be contributed to foreign object damage and dirty engines. Some engines have been cleaned by using solvent. This has been accomplished by dumping solvent in the compressor and considering it a cure all, with no follow up inspection. This may or may not be enough to clean the baked on grease in the compressor. In many cases solvent alone is not enough to clean the compressor and walnut shells must be used to complete the job. The best time to clean the engine is when oil and dirt first begin building in the compressor. This can happen anytime during engine operation. When grease or oil begins to leak into the inlet of the engine, a light film of oil is left which collects dirt and over a period of time this results in a power loss.

41

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WF.ATO)(U)

b. Observation: The engine inlet must be kept clean and free of oil and dirt at all times. This is accomplished by daily inspections and regular cleaning.

5. (C) Item: Armament Direct Exchange System.

a. Discussion: Sufficient armament direct exchange (DX) systems are not available to replace systems turned in on work order. Consequently when a system is turned in on work order you may or may not receive a replacement. Procurement action has not kept pace with the need and a mounting shortage of systems for exchange has resulted.

b. Observation: A lack of replacement armament systems and repair parts makes the aircraft as well as the gun systems ineffective. A ready source of direct exchange of complete systems should be available. Worn or broken systems should be turned in and new or rebuilt systems immediately placed on aircraft.

6. (C) Item: Turn in of Crash Damage Aircraft.

a. Discussion: If an aircraft has received extensive combat damage or crash damage, which takes over 30 days to repair, the aircraft should be turned in immediately to DSU backup maintenance. The turn in will make the unit eligible for the issue of a replacement aircraft and clear the property books.

b. Observation: Units have been slow in the turn-in of crash damage aircraft thereby denying themselves the use of that aircraft and/or the replacement aircraft. Timely turn-ins will keep a unit with more flyable aircraft. During the last month of the quarter the turn-in of aircraft from the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion was outstanding; in every case the turn-in was accomplished in less than 24 hours.

7. (C) Item: Flying Hour Program.

a. Discussion: The flying hour program for the UH-1 aircraft in the Republic of Vietnam is 60 hours per month per aircraft and the OH-47 aircraft flying hour program is 50 hours per month per aircraft. This program has not been adhered to because of mission requirements. The problem is just how long and how much can it be exceeded without adversely affecting availability. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion has averaged 189 per cent utilization on UH-1D aircraft and 103 per cent utilization on UH-1B and UH-1C aircraft and 149 per cent utilization on OH-47 aircraft during the past quarter. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion has been able to support the mission by 24 hour maintenance, cannibalization, and extensive lateral search for aircraft parts with sister units and other support areas. There is a daily requirement for

CONFIDENTIAL

42

AVCC-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORILL (AOS-0000-05) For Str Landing 31 Jan 68 (UIC 00000)(U)

technical supply officers to fly to another unit in search of parts, after following normal supply channels. The response of the logistical system has not been fast enough to cope with the accelerated flying operation. Requirements are being placed daily on the logistical system in the form of demands. Until the logistical system can meet the requirements, there is a definite need for a realistic flying hour program which can be flown and maintained. The aircraft are accumulating hours at an accelerated rate which often leads to longer scheduled maintenance and increased unscheduled maintenance. The maintenance personnel work an average daily shift of 12 to 15 hours. Once a flying hour program has been established, it should be flown. Command emphasis in this area is very important and necessary. The flying hour program of 60 hours per month for UH-1 aircraft and 50 hours per month for CH-47 aircraft appears to be low based on past utilization figures.

b. Observations: In order to support the present flying hour program, a 24 hour maintenance schedule is required. To accomplish this maintenance schedule the personnel are divided between the day and night shift. The night shift and part of the day shift personnel are frequently reduced further due to the requirement for personnel to perform company duties such as interior and bunker guard. Also with a split maintenance shift, the requirement for mess facilities to operate on a continuous basis exists. The present flying hour program for the UH-1 aircraft is 60 hours per month and the CH-47 is 50 hours per month. At the present utilization of 189 per cent, the UH-1 companies are required to perform a minimum of 28 periodic inspections (PE) per month. The CH-47 company operating at the present utilization of 148 per cent is required to perform 12 periodic inspections per month. To perform the periodic inspection, three days are required for the UH-1. The CH-47 requires 1 1/2 days on odd periodic inspections and three days on even periodic inspections. In addition, the 6th and 12th periodic inspections are extensive. To perform the 6th periodic inspection requires ten days and the 12th periodic inspection requires 15 days. The availability of parts is less than desired thereby causing controlled cannibalization to be a vital method of securing requested parts. As necessary as the cannibalization program is, it also increases the work load of mechanics and time required to return the aircraft to a mission ready status. The increase in the current flying hour program, increases the rate of scheduled maintenance and also the rate of unscheduled maintenance is increased proportionately. Within this realm of increased flying hours, frequency of scheduled maintenance has increased almost two fold while the required time to complete maintenance has not decreased proportionately. The work team's effectiveness has decreased due to outside requirements such as company interior and bunker guard duties.

CONFIDENTIAL

43
CONFIDENTIAL

AVGS-AC

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-OSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WF.KTO)(U)

G. (C) AVIATION SAFETY.

Item: Night Safety at Poorly Lighted, Uncontrolled Airstrips.

1. Discussion: Some airstrips utilized by reconnaissance airplanes during the course of a night mission are poorly lighted, have tower operations only during daylight hours, and have a refueling crew. On a night mission in November a pilot made a hard landing on a 1,500 foot pierced steel planking (PSP) strip that had only eight lights randomly spaced, including taxi lights. Permission was obtained to use a lighted strip 20 minutes away until the runway lighting could be improved. When the ground commander learned that his mortar watch ship was no longer based at his headquarters, the runway lighting system was improved. When a fixed wing pilot asked for directions to a refueling area on an airfield, the tower was closed and no fuel crew available. An airfield service refueling crewman familiar only with rotary wing aircraft came to assist. After guiding the pilot to the fuel point, the refueler walked into the propeller and cut his arm seriously. All night missions were then scheduled to start in daylight hours so that a pilot flying to a field for the first time would have tower control for landing and could reconnoiter the field before dark, familiarize himself with the location of fueling points and any potential safety hazards.

2. Observations: By arriving for the mission before dark, the pilot can contact the tower and make necessary arrangements to take care of any contingency while everyone concerned with the airfield is still on duty and the airfield is fully operational. This means of preparing the field crew for the night mission has resulted in less time lost for refueling and a safer operation for both pilot and ground crew.

H. (U) SURVEILLANCE. NONE

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC 1 February 1968
SUBJECT: ORLL (RCS-CSFOR-65) For Qtr Ending 31 Jan 68 (UIC WFAKTO)(U)

SECTION II, PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS

NONE.

11 Incl

- 1. ~~12th-CAG-CO-4~~
- 2. ~~12th-CAG-CO-9~~
- 3. ~~USARV-CO-4060~~
- 4. Current Organization
- 5. ~~Com and Staff Structure~~
- 6. Maintenance Statistical Summary
- 7. Sample "Key"
- 8. Dust Control Apparatus (Aerial)
- 9. Dust Control Apparatus (Ground)
- 10. Cbt Opn After Action Report, 13 Jan 68
- 11. Cbt Opn After Action Report, 21 Jan 68

William A. Hobbs
 WILLIAM A. HOBBS
 LTC, INF
 Commanding

Withdrawn, Hqs, DA

DISTRIBUTION:

- 2 copies to CO 12th Combat Aviation Group
- 1 copy to CG 1st Aviation Brigade
- 3 copies to DCG USARV
- 2 copies to CG USARPAC
- 2 copies thru CO 12th Combat Aviation Group to ACSFOR DA
- 1 copy thru channels to ACSFOR DA
- 1 copy to CO 145th Combat Aviation Battalion
- 1 copy to CO 214th Combat Aviation Battalion
- 1 copy to CO 222nd Combat Support Aviation Battalion
- 1 copy to CO 269th Combat Aviation Battalion
- 1 copy to CO 308th Combat Aviation Battalion
- 1 copy to CO 210th Combat Aviation Battalion
- 1 copy to CO 3d Armed Sqdn, 17th Air Cav

AVGC-SC (1 Feb 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) for Period
Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96266 10 March 1968

THRU: Commanding General, II FFORCEV, APO 96266

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

1. (U) One copy of 11th Combat Aviation Battalion's Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) (RCS CSFOR-65) for the period ending 31 January 1968, is forwarded in compliance with USARV Regulation 1-19, dated 3 November 1968.

2. (U) This headquarters has reviewed subject report and the following comments are made:

a. Reference: Section I, paragraph E 4a, page 20: Kotor sergeants and mechanics. The Personnel Inventory Report submitted as of 31 January 1968 reflects an auth of 21 and assigned 23 for MOS 63B and C.

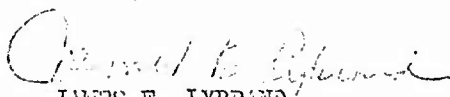
Engineer Equipment Repairman. Subject report reflects 9 authorized and 4 assigned as of 31 January 1968. This figure is comparable to the other units within this Group.

School Trained. The end results of school trained personnel versus on-the-job training is not considered of significant importance since adequate supervisors are assigned.

b. Reference: Section I, paragraph H 9, page 22: The MOS Inventory for 31 January 1968 reflects a shortage of 5 Sheetmetal repairmen out of an authorization of 24. This has been a shortage throughout the Group but the addition of 2 civilians per maintenance detachment should help to alleviate this problem.

c. Reference: Section II, Para: I, paragraph D 5, page 28: Dust suppression continues to be a major problem, particularly during the dry season. It is apparent that dust suppression in forward areas is unsatisfactory. USARV UNCLASSIFIED message AVMAV-S 32604, dated 18 Jan 68, directed all commanders to "Review their priorities for soil stabilization to assure timely and continuing dust control in accessible forward operating areas as well as helicopter base areas." Every effort is being made to eliminate this problem.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JAMES E. LYBRAND
Major, Infantry
Asst Adjutant

39

46

AVFBC-RE-H (1 Feb 68) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending
31 January 1968. (RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC WFAKTO) (U)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 14 MAR 1968

THRU: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBA-C, APO 96307

Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DH, APO 96375

Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

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

1. Subject report is forwarded.
2. This command has reviewed the attached ORLL of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion and concurs with the report with the following exceptions:
 - a. Page 30, para 7a. Non-concur. The last sentence should read: In January, II Field Force AAE recommended that O-1 aircraft not be flown in excess of six hours during a 24 hour period of time.
 - b. Page 31, para 9a. Repetitive extensive preparation of Landing Zones eliminates any surprise effect and also gives the enemy an indication of intentions. Preparations are desirable but not to the extent that they become stereotyped.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

E. M. McGrath
E. M. McGRATH
CPT, AGC
Asst AC

41

CONFIDENTIAL

AVBA-C (1 Feb 68) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL)(RCS-CSFOR-65)
For Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968 (UIC WFAKTO)(U)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384 MAR 27 1968

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375
Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GFOP-OT, APO 96558

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

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed subject report, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents as indorsed with the following comments.

2. (C) Sec II, para 5a, page 29: This headquarters dispatched a message, AVBA-F 127089, subject, Grass Fire Hazards, dated 21 December 1967, that provides suggestions to eliminate this hazard. The use of a pit, dug in the vicinity of the sling load, to hold the grenade in nonflammable surroundings is a simple solution not requiring special equipment.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



FRED R. ZIMMERMAN
Major, AGC
Adjutant General

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DOWNGRADED AT 8 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AT 10 YEARS.
DOD 41-100.10

48

AVHGC-DST (1 Feb 68) 4th Ind CPT Arnold/raf/LBN 4485
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL)(RCS-CSFOR-65) For
Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968 (UIC WFAKTO)(U)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 29 MAR 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1968 from Headquarters, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion (WFAKAA) as indorsed.

2. Concur with report as indorsed. Report is considered adequate.

3. Correct Unit Identification Code is WFAKAA.

4. A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

C. S. Nakatsukasa

C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Copies furnished:
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HQ 11th Cbt Avn Bn

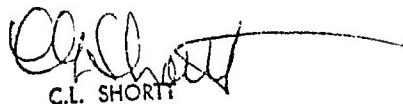
49
GPOP-DT (1 Feb 68) 5th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, for
Period Ending 31 Jan 68 (RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC: WFAKTO)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 12 APR 1968

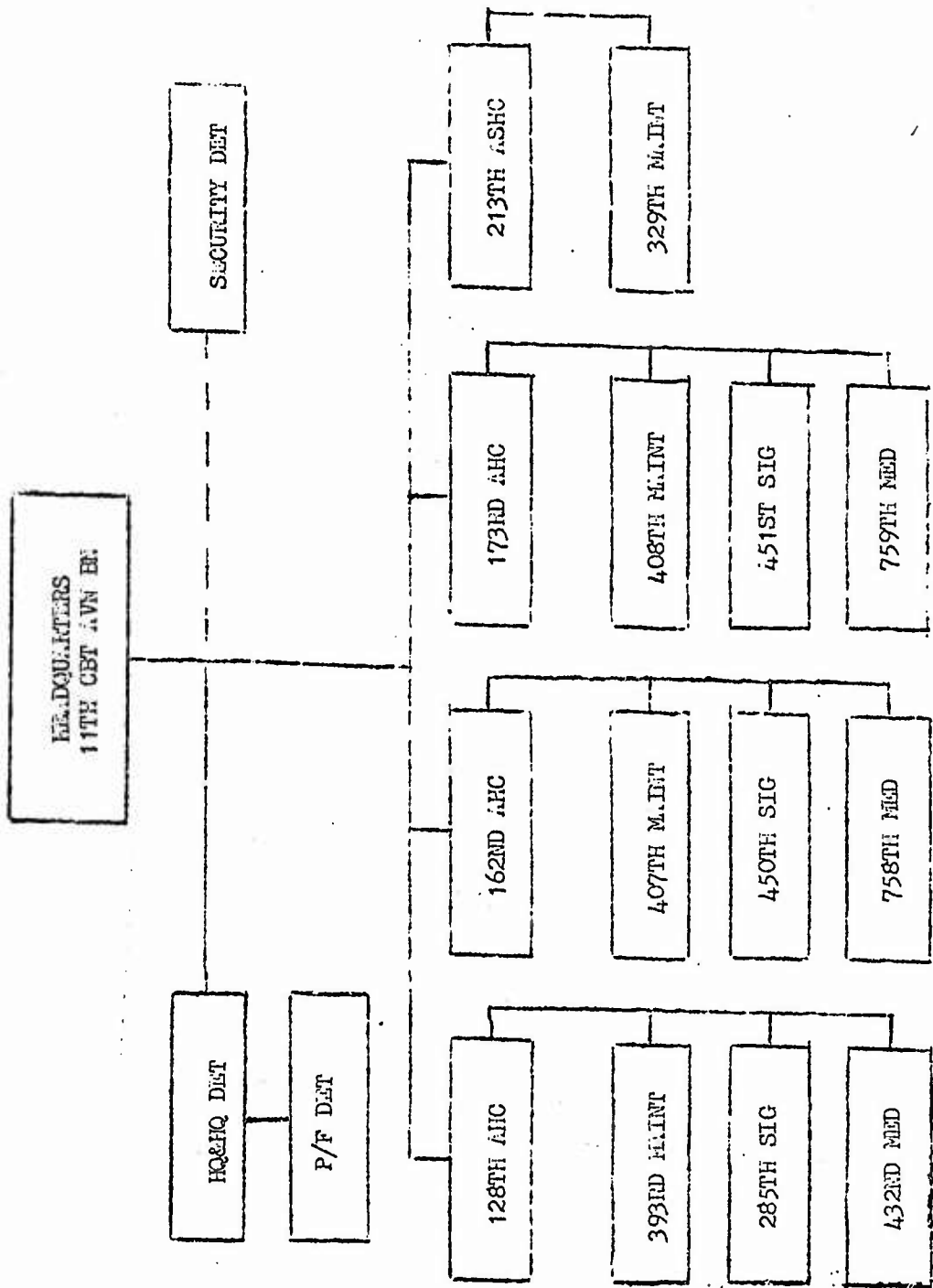
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


C.L. SHORT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

50



Incl 4

44

51

MAINTENANCE STATISTICAL SUMMARY

<u>TYPE AIRCRAFT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>JAN</u>
<u>HOURS FLOWN</u>			
UH-1B, C	1025	1422	1317
UH-1D	5853	6673	6414
CH-47	2421	2403	2365
O-1	2891	3212	
<u>AVAILABLE (PER CENT)</u>			
UH-1B, C	70	72	80
UH-1D	75	78	78
CH-47	71	75	74
O-1	72	85	
<u>EDM (PER CENT)</u>			
UH-1B, C	23	21	15
UH-1D	18	15	14
CH-47	19	16	17
O-1	25	15	
<u>EDP (PER CENT)</u>			
UH-1B, C	7	7	5
UH-1D	7	7	8
CH-47	10	9	9
O-1	3	0	

Incl 6

45

INDEX

ACFT 1	0730 DA 53 1	0600 XT925195 64 1	0930 NORMALY 57 1	1000 XT925195 60 1	1030 DA 67 1	1130 DA 69 1	1300 DA 58 4	1400 DA 59 4	DA 68 1
ACFT 2	0800 XT715334 55 1	0830 LK 62 1	0900 DA 73 2	1015 LK 75 2	1045 LK 76 1	1400 LK 77 1	1500 DA 74 1	1530 DA 65 1	1600 DA 66 1
ACFT 3	0745 QL 36 1	0815 XT745395 79 2	1000 LK 56 4	1330 LK 80 4	1400 LK 78 2	1500 LK 63 2	1745 XT860227 86 1	1800 DA 35 2	1815 DA 33 4
ACFT 4	0730 XT709381 88 1	0800 LK 94 1	0900 LK 92 2	0930 LK 40 1	1000 LK 96 1	1300 DA 98 2	1500 DA 47 1	1545 PL 38 2	1700 DA 37 1
ACFT 5	0745 LK 89 1	0815 LK 91 1	0915 QL 95 1	0945 QL 42 1	1000 An Loc 97 1	1345 QL 48 1	1500 QL 99 2	1600 LK 44 2	1645 LK 53 2
ACFT 6	0700 DA 90 2	0800 PL 93 3	0930 LK 43 1	0945 LK 45 1	1015 LK 46 2	1100 PL 41 1	1400 DA 39 2	1500 DA 51 4	1630 DA 54 2

46

Incl 7

52

53

DUST CONTROL APPARATUS (AERIAL)

1. Equipment required for aerial spray/defoliation:
 - a. Two military standard 100 GPM pump
 - b. Two 500 gallon fuel bladders
 - c. One spray apparatus (see included photographs)
2. The rig is connected to the cargo hook and secured to the hook beam with 2 tie down straps.
3. One fuel bladder is loaded first, then one pump, the second pump and the last fuel bladder (see diagram).
4. Crew requirements:
 - a. Aircraft commander and pilot
 - b. Crew Chief
 - c. Gunner
 - d. Pump men (2)
5. Flight technique:
 - a. The rig is horizontal to the bottom of the fuselage, secured in place by a rope. Once the aircraft is airborne the rig is lowered to hang vertical below the aircraft.
 - b. Approach the area (road) to be sprayed into the wind. Flying low enough to cause the rig to be 3--5 feet above the ground. Distance above the ground will be judged by the flight engineer.
 - c. The flight path over the area should be sprayed one side of the road at a time, thereby covering both ditches.
 - d. The air speed should be 3 - 10 knots.
 - e. The best time of day to spray is early morning while the moisture is still in the air.

Incl 8

47

54

DEST CONTROL APPARATUS (GROUND)

1. Equipment required for ground spray.
 - a. One 100 GPM pump.
 - b. Two 500 gallon fuel bladder (spray apparatus see inclosed photographs).
 - c. Spray apparatus (see inclosed photographs).
2. Bladders are carried externally to the area and placed in center of the area to be sprayed. 150 feet of hose is attached to the spray rig.
3. Mixture: 50% penaprime and diesel fuel. For a more permanent pad use a second application of 60% penaprime and 40% diesel.

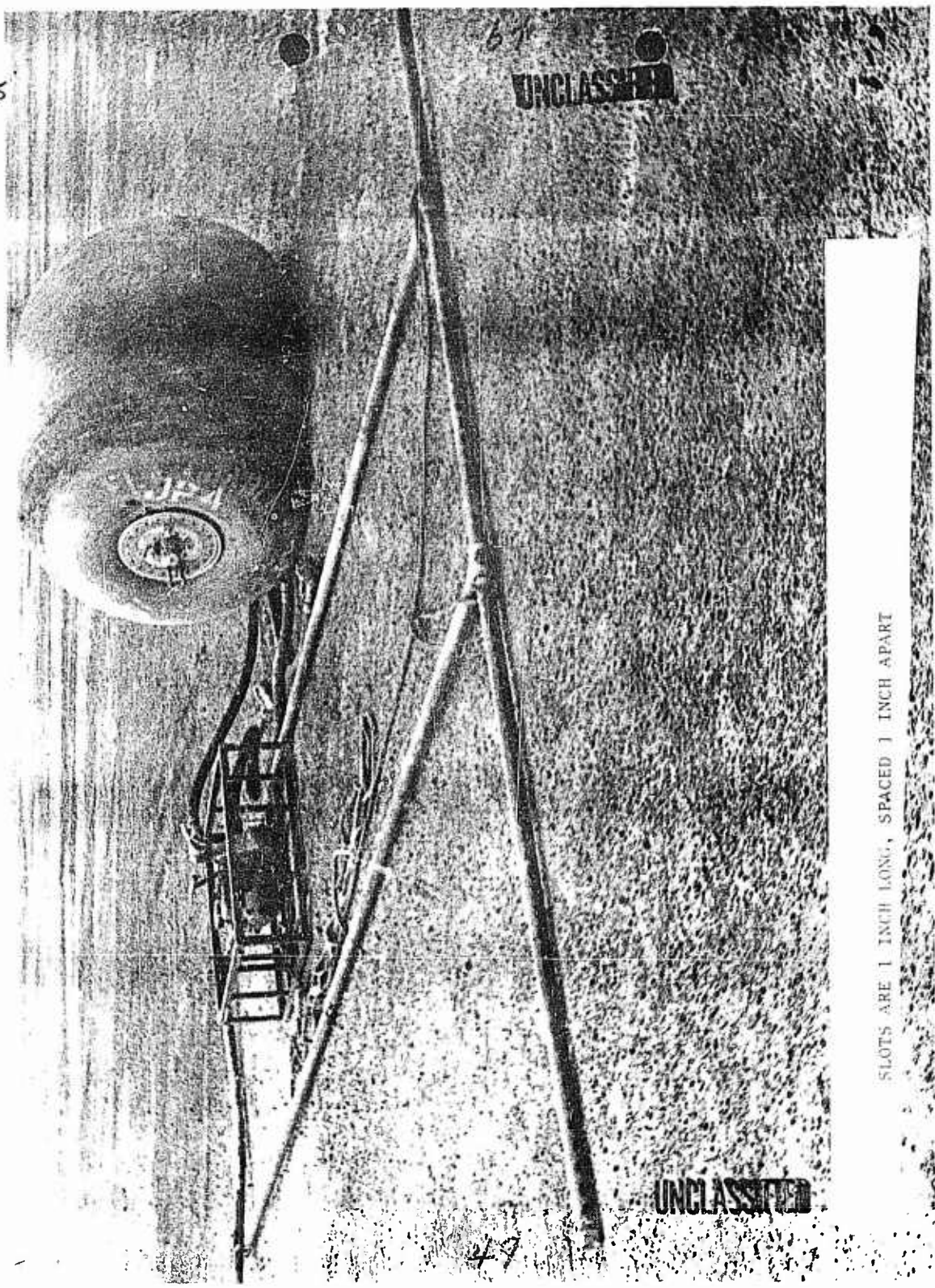
Incl 9

48

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67

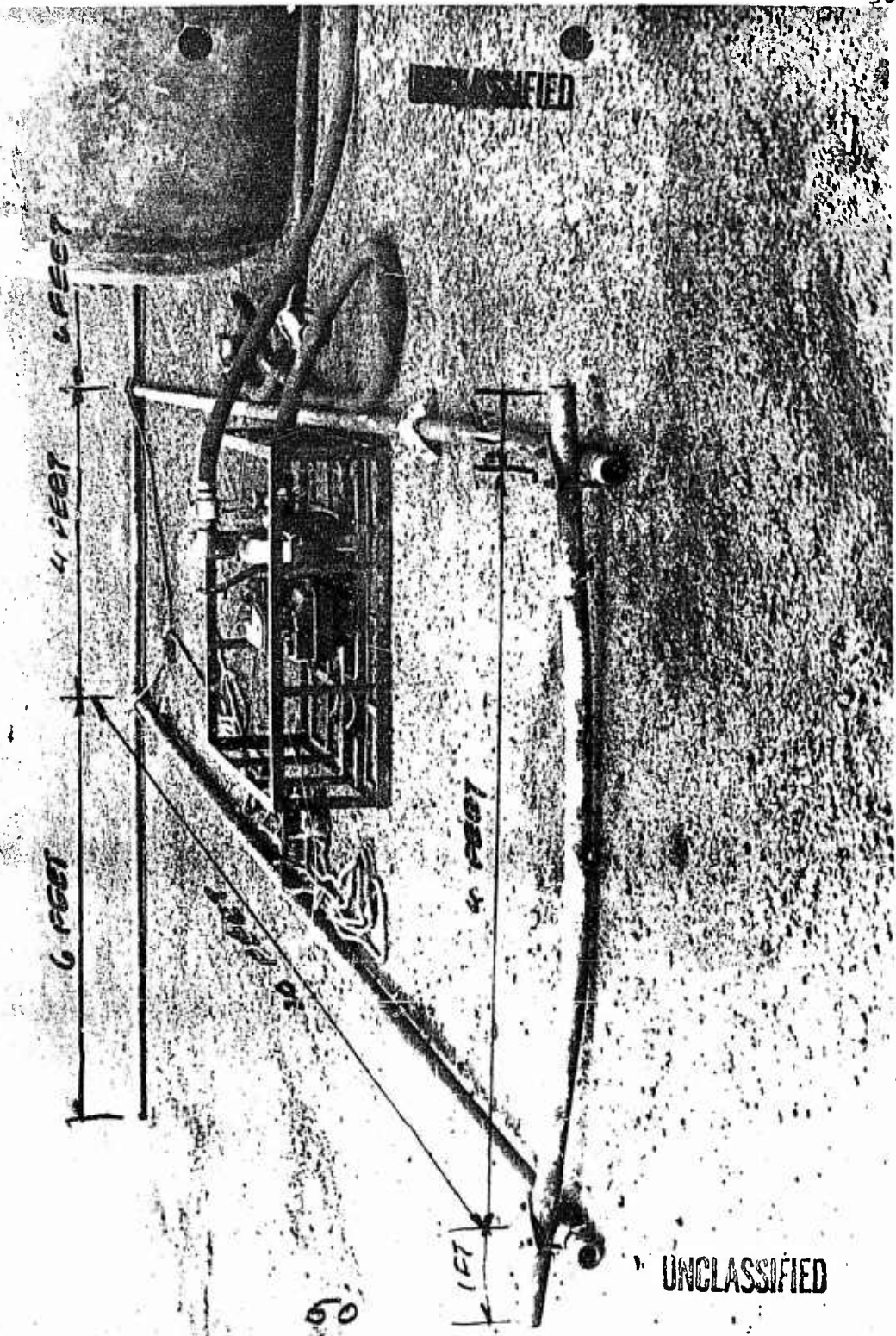
UNCLASSIFIED



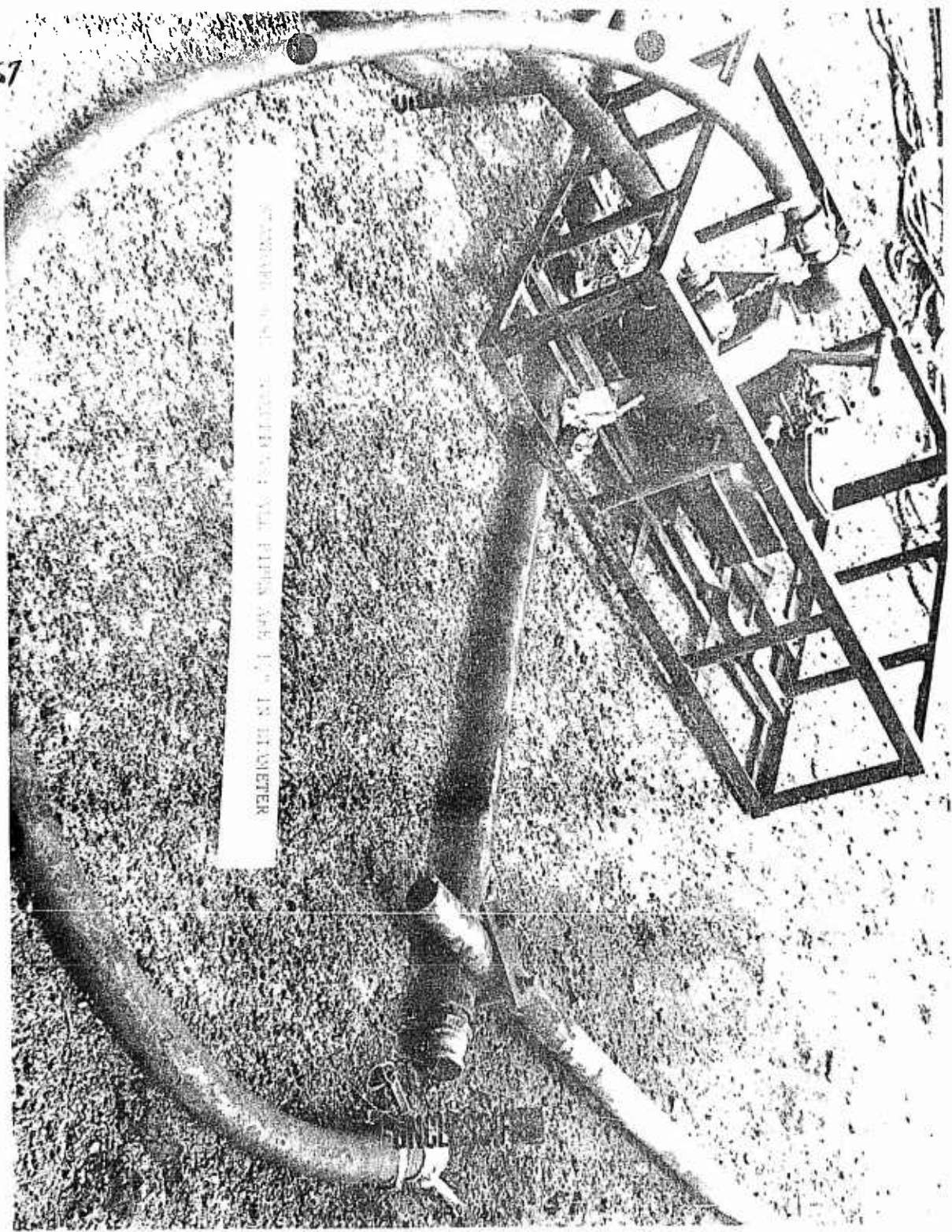
SLOTS ARE 1 INCH LONG, SPACED 1 INCH APART

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

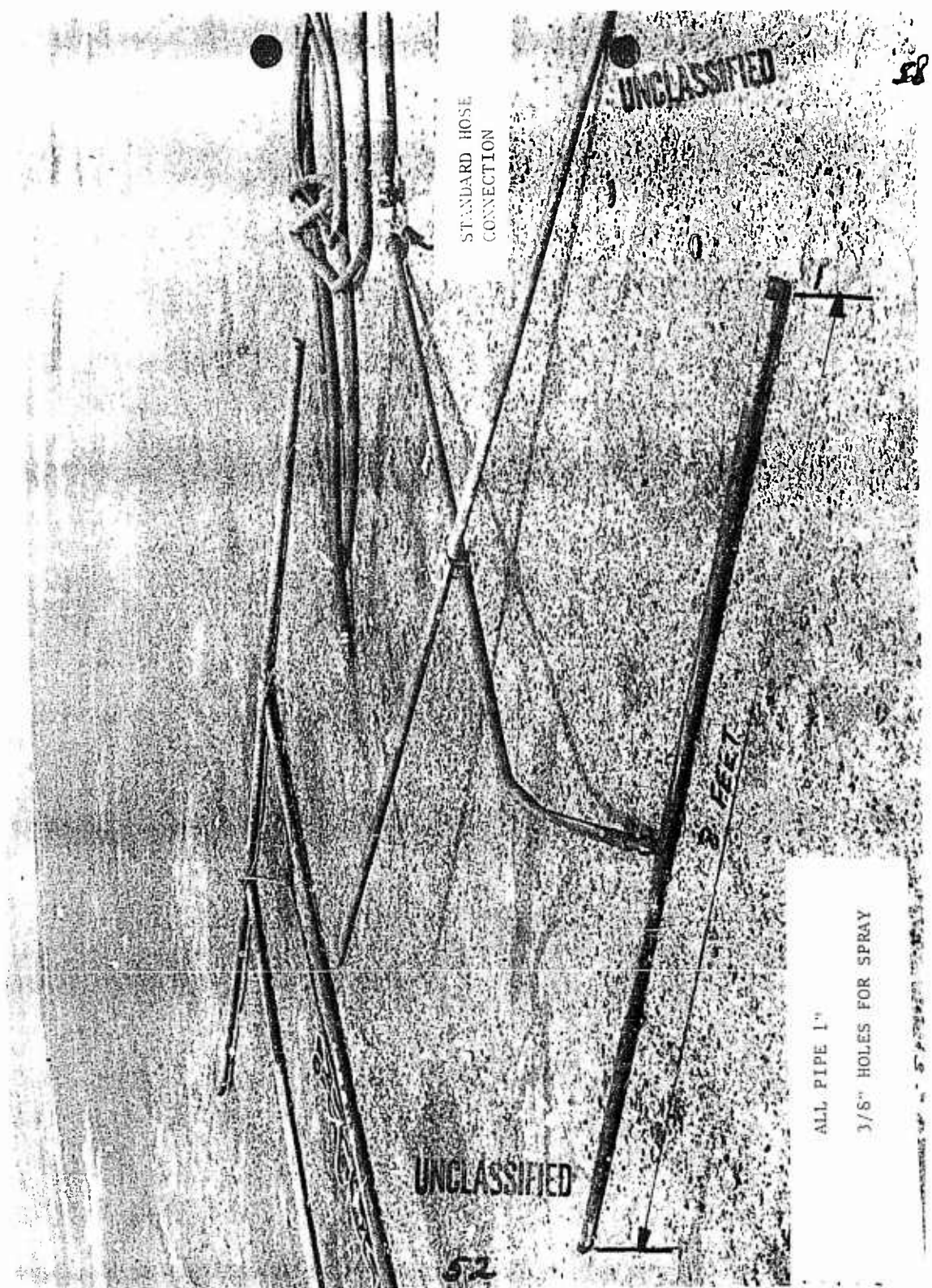


57



STANDARD METRIC GAUGE
VAL. FIFTEEN AND 1/2 IN. DIAMETER

57



STANDARD HOSE CONNECTION

UNCLASSIFIED

58

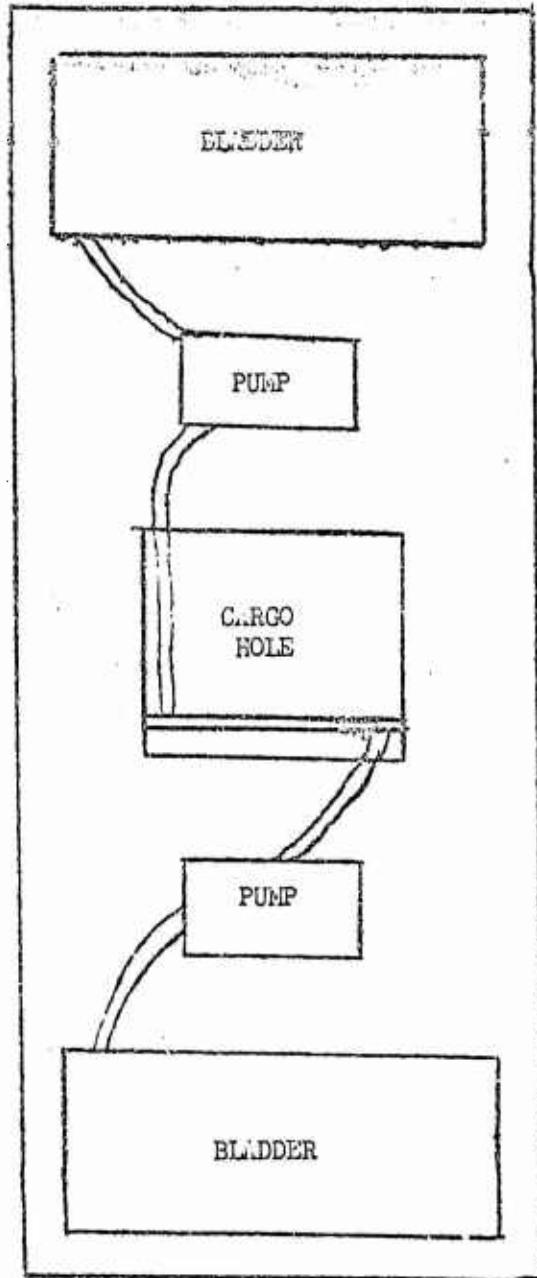
8 FEET

ALL PIPE 1"
3/8" HOLES FOR SPRAY

UNCLASSIFIED

52

INTERNAL LOADING
OF
PUMPS AND BLADDER



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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 11TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO 96289

"EXEMPLARY PROPOSALS"

AVCC-AC

13 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report (U)

THRU: Commanding Officer
12th Combat Aviation Group
ATTN: AVCC-SC
APO 96266

TO: Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
ATTN: AVBL-C
APO 96384

1. (U) Type Operation: Insertion Reinforcing
2. (U) Date: 8 January 1968
3. (U) Location: XS 873677
4. (U) Reporting Unit: 173rd Assault Helicopter Company, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion
5. (U) Supported Unit: 9th Infantry Division
6. (C) Intelligence Information: Enemy were concealed in well built bunkers. They had very good fire discipline and held their fire until the slicks landed. The enemy fire was devastatingly accurate. There were at least five bunkers with automatic weapons, small arms, and RPG's.
7. (U) Mission: Insertion
8. (C) Concept: "B" Co, 2/60 Infantry Division was inserted into a rice paddy area 25 miles South of Saigon at 1800 hours, 8 January 1968 by 14 UH-1D helicopters to reinforce other 9th Division units in contact.

Downgraded at 5 year intervals
Declassified after 12 years
DOD DIR 5200.10

54

Incl 10

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62

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AVGC-AC

13 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report (U)

9. (C) Execution: Ten (10) UH-1D lift ships, a spare, a C&C and a heavy fire team from the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company departed Lai Khe on a tactical emergency for the 9th Infantry Division at approximately 1400 hours 8 January 1968. In the vicinity of Tan Tru, Daring 6, the Battalion Commander of the 2/60 Infantry, was contacted and the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company proceeded to extract "B" Co, 2/60 Infantry from field positions vicinity coord XS 685 598. During the extraction, UH-1D 851 suffered a tail rotor failure caused by enemy fire and crashed causing some damage. The Pipe Smoke recovery ship was summoned and made a routine recovery shortly thereafter. During this time Cougar 6 contacted Robin Hood 6 and instructed him to contact EMU 6 who was AMC for a two assault helicopter company lift of "B" Company into a LZ vicinity coord XS 875 673 from French Fort. Upon arrival at French Fort it was determined that Cougar 6 had designated himself AMC at 1800 hours. Fourteen UH-1D helicopters departed French Fort for the insertion under the control of Cougar 6. Two heavy fire teams consisting of the Crossbows and the Taipans were to prep and cover. Samson 6 was unable to adjust the artillery on the LZ and called for a check fire. He instructed Cougar 6 to prep with the fire teams. The Crossbows made one pass but did not hit the LZ. Immediately thereafter, the ships were directed to land. On touchdown, heavy fire was received on all sides by automatic weapons and rockets (RPG). UH-1D 866 after off loading its passengers was hit in the left front door by an RPG round, critically wounding the pilot. In the ensuing ground action the other three crew members were wounded. UH-1D 893 was hit and lost oil pressure. The AC landed about a mile NE of the LZ. The crew was picked up by UH-1D 687. UH-1D 981 was hit in the cyclic and the pilot received a hit in his foot. UH-1D 5982 was hit in the left windshield. UH-1D 081 was hit seven times and lost all hydraulics and the pilot was hit in the right leg by fragments. UH-1D 090 was hit in the leading edge of the main rotor blade. All ships but 866 and 893 were instructed to fly to Tan An for refueling and standby. Subsequently, about 2130 hours, they were released. All ships were inspected and flown back to Lai Khe except 866 which was left in the LZ, 893 NE of the LZ, and 081 and 090 which were not flyable and were left at Tan An. These four aircraft were extracted the following day. The Crossbows were retained on station by Cougar 6 until approximately 0130 hours, 9 January 1968 and were then released.

10. (C) Results:

a. Personnel Losses:

KIA ONE
WIA Nine

b. Material Losses:

UH-1D 866 and 851 turned in to 605th Field Maintenance

c. Enemy Losses:

Unknown

55

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6

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AVGC-AG

13 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report (U)

11. (C) Administrative Matters;

- a. Duration of Operation: 1445, 8 Jan 68 - 0130, 9 Jan 68
- b. Communications were excellent
- c. Medical evacuation could not be started before 2100 due to heavy enemy fire in the LZ.

12. (C) Lessons Learned: The LZ was not preped because of poor organization and control. An hour was wasted before the C&C lifted off to make the insertion and by then it was almost dark in spite of the fact another C&C ship was available. Apparently because of darkness setting in and troubles in coordinating the prep, no prep was made on the LZ. Because the LZ was not preped, the ships were caught in a murderous crossfire.

13. (C) Recommendation: Troop ships should not be allowed to land in an insecure area without adequate suppression and preparation.

WILLIAM A. HOBBS
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

56

3
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64

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 11TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96289

"EXEMPL. PROPOSURE"

AVGC-AC

21 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (U)

THRU: Commanding Officer
12th Combat Aviation Group
ATTN: AVGC-SC
APO 96266

TO: Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
ATTN: AVBA-C
APO 96384

1. (U) Type Operation: Insertion.
2. (U) Date: 17 Jan 68.
3. (U) Location: XS567935
4. (U) Reporting Units: 162nd Assault Helicopter Company and 173rd Assault Helicopter Company, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion.
5. (U) Supported Unit: 4/49 Infantry, 25th ARVN Division.
6. (C) Intelligence Information: At least two (2) machine guns and numerous small arms were fired from well-fortified bunker positions. The enemy was concealed along the tree lines and held their fire until the slicks were on short final. Fire was accurate and many hits were taken.
7. (U) Mission: Insertion.
8. (C) Concept: 70 sorties of the 4/49 Infantry, 25th ARVN Division, were inserted into the vicinity of coordinates XS 567935 about one mile SW of Duc Hoa at 0745 hours, 17 Jan 68 by ten (10) UH-1D aircraft.

Incl 11

57

*Downgraded at 8 year Intervals
Declassified after 12 years
DOD DIR 5200.10*

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65
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AVGC-AC

21 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (U)

9. (C) Execution: Ten (10) UH-1E lift ships, a spare, a C&C, two (2) light fire teams from the 173rd Aslt Hel Co, and a smoke dispensing ship departed Lai Khe in support of the 4/49 Infantry, 25th ARVN Division. On 17 Jan 68 at 0745 hours the 173rd Aslt Hel Co made a combat assault in the vicinity of coordinates XS 569935. Preparation of the LZ consisted of tactical air (a flight of F-4s) dropping napalm, 500-lb bombs, and 20mm suppressive fire on the tree lines and stream lines around the LZ. This was followed by a 5-minute artillery prep (6-105mm and 2-152mm howitzers) surrounding the LZ. Two (2) LFTs were employed on a 3-minute prep on both sides of the LZ and then led the first flight of five (5) slicks into the LZ. Smokey, the smoke dispensing ship, suppressed along the stream ahead of the slicks. The gunships put out the mark twice and did not receive fire, nor did Smokey. Landing direction was north. The slicks received fire primarily from the east when they landed. Four of the five ships were hit; and one, although hit, medically evacuated casualties to the 12th Evac Hospital at Cu Chi. The second flight of five was instructed to go around and orbit. A second air strike of A-1Es was employed along the stream from which the fire had been received, again dropping 500 lb bombs. All ordnance was on target. Immediately following, Smokey laid another smoke screen and the second flight of five landed in the LZ to reinforce the troops in contact. Again four of the five slicks were hit and wounded were medically evacuated to Cu Chi. The other aircraft landed at Duc Hoa. One UH-1D (#66-16081) that had been hit while in the LZ and flown back to Duc Hoa, exploded in the engine-transmission area and flying debris damaged UH-1D #65-10092. This left three slicks (including the spare) flyable in addition to the C&C. Based on the lack of flyable aircraft, the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company was released and the RRF company, the 162nd Aslt Hel Co, was committed. A tactical emergency was called and the 162nd Aslt Hel Co reported to Duc Hoa at 1100 hours. In coordination with the ground commanders the RRF company inserted a blocking force of twenty (20) sorties at XS 577947 after a 10-minute artillery prep, a 2-minute prep and a smoke screen laid down by Smokey on the northwest side. Landing direction was 220°. The blocking force was then inserted into an LZ at XS 582938 after a 10-minute artillery prep and a 2-minute gunship prep. Smokey was employed on the left (SE) side and in front of the slicks. The ground troops came into contact after the first five sorties were on the ground in both locations. The aircraft were fired at; however, no aircraft hits were taken by any of the 162nd Aslt Hel Co ships. At 1100 hours two ARVN OH-34s were called on station by the ground commander to extract ARVN WAs and KAs. However, neither aircraft could land because of hot LZs. They departed the area at approximately 1230 hours. Using Bao Trai (XT 527043) as a pickup zone, a blocking force was then inserted at XS 532972 and XS 539972. There were ten (10) sorties inserted into each location after a 10-minute

2

CONFIDENTIAL

58

66

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-AC

21 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

artillery prep and 2-minute gunship prep. Both LZs were cold. Smokey was used to screen the left flank and front of the landing aircraft. The RRF company was released at 1430 and returned to Phuoc Vinh.

10. (C) Results:

a. Personnel Losses:

KIA None
WIA 8

b. Material Losses:

8 aircraft hit and damaged. Of the 8 aircraft hit each received from 2 to 13 rounds. The majority of the rounds were received in the forward cockpit area with a few rounds in the transmission and tail boom sections. Five of the aircraft required Pipesnake recovery. Two of the aircraft that received hits were further damaged when the transmission and head of UH-1D #66-16081 separated from the aircraft. Part of the debris hit and damaged UH-1D #66-10092.

c. Enemy Losses:

Unknown

11. (C) Administrative Matters:

- a. Duration of Operation: 0730 - 1430 hours, 17 Jan 68.
- b. Communications were excellent.

12. (C) Lessons Learned: The VC have extremely good fire discipline. They did not fire at the gunships that made two passes to mark the LZ nor did they at the smoke ship, but waited until the slicks were on the ground. They occupied bunkers which were well constructed and well concealed requiring direct hits from heavy ordnance to destroy them.

WILLIAM A. HOBBS
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

59

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