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

IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (26 June 68) FOR OT RD 682097 2 July 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 57th Transportation Bn, Period Ending 30 April 1968 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

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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 ACSFOR 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

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 57TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TRUCK)
APO 96269

AVCA DN-57-00 30 April 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968. Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65 (R-1)

THRU: ✓Commanding Officer, 26th General Support Group, APO 96269

Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Da Nang, ATTN: AVCA-DNG-CO, APO 96337

Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA-CO-O, APO 96384

Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375

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

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

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATIONAL OR UNIT ACTIVITIES

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

1. (U) Command: Lieutenant Colonel Reginald Deagle was Battalion Commander 1 February 1968 thru 11 April 1968. On 12 April 1968 Lieutenant Colonel Chester T. Henderson assumed command of the Battalion.

2. (U) Personnel, Administration, Morale and Discipline:

a. The strength of the Battalion as of 30 April 1968 is as follows:

	OFF	WO	EM
AUTHORIZED	42	10	1516
ASSIGNED	35	7	1560
90 DAY LOSSES	6	1	110

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b. (C) During the reporting period the Battalion received its share of casualities. Heading the roster of casualities was Lieutenant Colonel Reginald Deagle who was wounded in action on 1 April 1968 on QL 9 near Cam Lo when two mortar rounds exploded almost simultaneously, one on each side of his 1/4 ton vehicle. In total the Battalion had 11 men killed and 25 men wounded in action. All 11 men killed were members of the 446th Transportation Company. They were in the billet area of the company at Dong Ha when an enemy rocket hit the area on the morning of 8 March 1968, killing 9 instantly and wounding 17. Two of the 17 subsequently died. The other eight wounded in action received their wounds from enemy mines, rockets or mortar rounds.

c. (U) There were no Courts Martial in the Battalion and 13 Article 15's were administered during the reporting period.

3. Operations:

a. (U) The Battalion Headquarters disembarked from the United States Naval Ship LST 629 at the Bridge Ramp in Da Nang on 1 February 1968. This was the beginning of a new phase of operations for the Battalion, destined to play an important role in the history of tactical operations in Northern I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam.

b. (U) The Battalion Headquarters proper remained in a casual status in Da Nang until 12 February 1968. During this time an advance party made terrain reconnaisances of the Quang Tri-Dong Ha area looking for an area to locate the Headquarters and 2 truck companies. Meetings were held several times with the Quang Tri Base Coordinator in an effort to obtain necessary land to locate the units. There was no space to be had and the advance party returned to Da Nang to report its findings.

c. (U) On 8 February 1968 the decision was made to locate the Battalion Headquarters in Phu Bai at the Gia Le Combat Base with a detachment of the Operations Section at Dong Ha. Major Harry H. Poarch, Battalion Operations Officer, and an advanced party departed Da Nang for Phu Bai on 9 February 1968. Captain James C. Cohen, Battalion Maintenance Officer, arrived in Phu Bai on 11 February 1968 with 50 per cent of the Headquarters personnel. The following day Lieutenant Colonel Reginald Deagle arrived with the remainder of the Battalion Headquarters. Captain Daniel P. Cronin and two enlisted men were dispatched to Dong Ha to conduct operations immediately at that location.

d. (U) The Battalion Headquarters remained in a casual status at Phu Bai preparing for the arrival of attached units when instructions were received to move the Headquarters to Dong Ha with the objective of locating in Quang Tri as soon as possible. The Headquarters moved to Dong Ha on 23 February 1968, locating at Dong Ha Combat Base, where operations were already in full swing in support of the 1st Air Cav and 101st Airborne some 10 miles South of the Demilitarized Zone. It was from this location that the Battalion made its first impressions in the pages of history of the Vietnam conflict.

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e. (C) The first units attached to the Battalion were the 57th Transportation Company (Light Truck), 61st Transportation Company (Medium Truck Petroleum), a Platoon of the 538th Transportation Company (Medium Truck Petroleum), a Platoon of the 360th Transportation Company (Medium Truck Petroleum), 446th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) and the 585th Transportation Company (Medium Truck). Initially the 57th Transportation Company and the 446th Transportation Company performed the mission of transporting cargo supplied by Force Logistical Support Group-Bravo in Dong Ha to Landing Zones Betty and Sharon, located West of Quang Tri, Landing Zone Jane west of Hue Long, and Camp Evans located 27 miles to the Southeast of Dong Ha. The 61st Transportation Company (Medium Truck Petroleum) performed the mission of moving bulk POL products to the same destinations. An additional mission was that of assisting the Marine Corps in the clearance of the River Ramp in Dong Ha. The 585th Transportation Company located at Gia Le continued to support Force Logistical Support Group-Alpha in Phu Bai.

f. (U) A LOTS operation, established at Utah Beach, located on the coast of the Gulf of Tonkin, became operational on 23 March 1968. Units attached to the Battalion had the missions of beach clearance, local haul to Landing Zones Betty, Sharon and Jane and line haul to Camp Evans. The 363rd Transportation Company (Light Truck) was the first unit to arrive on the beach 4 March 1968 followed shortly thereafter by the 63rd Transportation Company (Light Truck), 863rd Transportation Company (Light Truck) and the GOER Company (Provisional). As transportation requirements at the beach increased the Battalion assets were augmented by moving the Headquarters and 2 platoons of the 57th Transportation Company (Light Truck) to the beach from Dong Ha. Also, 10 Kenworth tractors and trailers operated by Vinnell Corporation, civilian commercial truck operators, were moved to Utah Beach from Cam Ranh Bay on 25 March 1968. These vehicles, with a capacity to transport 35 short tons per trip utilizing trailers, proved their value many times over. They were used primarily for transporting cargo to Quang Tri, Dong Ha and Camp Evans with a secondary mission of beach clearance.

g. (U) On 15 March 1968 the Headquarters and 1 platoon of the 572nd Transportation Company (Medium Truck) were attached to the Battalion. Arriving in Da Nang on 12 March 1968 from Long Binh, the company had 1 platoon of the 566th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) attached from Cam Ranh Bay. Moving over QL 1 from Da Nang to Dong Ha, the company arrived 21 March 1968.

h. (C) Operation Pegasus, an operation of the 1st Cavalry Division (Air Mobile) to relieve the North Vietnamese Army pressure on the embattled and beleagured Khe Sanh, commenced on 1 April 1968. The Battalion had the mission of transporting 5,000 short tons of cargo to Task Force McDonald located at Landing Zone Stud near Ca Lu by D-Day and to make daily resupply runs thereafter. The Battalion also moved the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Brigades of the Division to Landing Zone Stud from 28 March to 1 April 1968. A total of 9,732 short tons of all classes of supply were transported utilizing trucks of all light and medium truck companies of the Battalion from both Utah Beach and Dong Ha. QL 1 to Dong Ha and QL 9 to Landing Zone Stud was the main supply route for the operation. Complicating the transportation of supplies was the fact that the entire route from Dong Ha to Landing Zone Stud lies within artillery range of the Demilitarized Zone.

As the route was within a Marine Corps Area of Operation, tactical air cover and security troops for convoys were furnished by the Marine Corps. Four twin 40 MM tracked vehicles and two Quad-50 gun trucks were furnished by the 1/44th Artillery for security. The Battalion, in accomplishing this mission in an outstanding manner, was subjected daily to enemy small arms, mortar and rocket fire. For the operation the Battalion was also augmented by 30 M52 tractors and 12 ton stake and platform trailers from the United States Marine Corps.

i. (C) As Operation Pegasus came to an end on 12 April 1968 the Battalion began moving troops of the 1st Cavalry Division from Ca Lu to Camp Evans and Landing Zones Jane and Sharon. Operation Delaware, southwest of Hue in the A Shau Valley, was commenced on 16 April 1968. In support of the operation the Battalion made daily resupply runs to Camp Evans moving all classes of supply.

j. (C) To give the Battalion better operational control of its units, an operations section was established at Utah Beach on 24 March 1968 under the direction of Major Billy J. Kiser, Battalion Executive Officer. On 1 April 1968 the Battalion Headquarters, after being assigned to the 26th General Support Group, moved to the location of the Group at Camp Kruger in Quang Tri. An Operations Section, under the direction of Captain Daniel P. Cronin, Assistant Operations Officer, remained in Dong Ha to coordinate operations from that location.

k. (C) The 515th Transportation Company (Light Truck) and the 585th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) were attached on 24 April 1968 and 17 February 1968 respectively. Located in Phu Bai and supporting Force Logistical Support Group-Alpha, the 515th Transportation Company has the mission of ramp clearance of the River Ramp in Hue. The 585th Transportation Company performs the missions of ramp clearance and local haul of both bulk POL products and Class I thru V cargo to Camp Evans.

l. (C) At the close of the period the Battalion had 10 companies and 1 civilian truck operator attached for operation control. Plagued by enemy interdiction of road ways, late, and in some cases no, daily road openings, and traffic congestion, the Battalion was faced with a monumental task in controlling the large number of units attached to it. All personnel of the Battalion displayed their dedication to duty and determination in getting the mission accomplished in an outstanding manner.

4. Training: Due to operational committments only limited training was scheduled during the reporting period. Training was integrated so as not to disrupt operations.

5. (U) Intelligence: A daily intelligence briefing was presented by Security, Plans and Operations, 26th General Support Group. Information pertinent to Battalion operations was disseminated to all units as appropriate.

6. (U) Logistics:

a. M16A1 Rifles were issued to the 63rd Transportation Company (Light Truck), 446th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) and the 863rd Transportation Company (Light Truck) during the period.

b. (U) Seven Armored Truck Cargo, 2½ Ton M35A2's were received by the Battalion. These vehicles were assigned to the 57th Transportation Company (Light Truck), 446th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) and the 572nd Transportation Company (Medium Truck). Used initially for convoys in support of Operation Pegasus the trucks are now used for security on all convoys.

c. (C) The following equipment was turned in as combat loss during the period:

2 M35A2 2½Ton Cargo Trucks
6 M54A1 5Ton Cargo Trucks
4 M52A2 5Ton Cargo Tractors
3 M127 12Ton Trailers
1 M131 Tanker

Road mines were the major cause of combat losses.

7. (C) Organization: See Annexes A, B and C.

SECTION 2

COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (U) Personnel, Administration, Morale and Discipline:

Item: Personnel Services to Remote Units.

Observation: A Battalion courier was utilized to effect communication and coordination between the Headquarters and Personnel Services Center.

Evaluation: In view of the fact that distribution channels proved erratic within the time frames required by correspondence and, particularly since personnel correspondence is not readily adaptable to radio or telephone communication, a courier was continually required to travel between Personnel Services Center and Battalion Headquarters.

Recommendation: Personnel Services Detachments or Teams should be located in proximity to areas requiring extensive personnel services.

2. (U) Operations:

Item: Capabilities of Truck Companies

Observation: Paragraph 7-11, FM 101-10-1, Staff Officers Field Manual, gives capability estimate for long range planning for line haul of light and medium truck companies as follows:

5 Ton Company 45 Veh X 6T X 2 T/A = 540 STONS/day
12 Ton S&P Company 45 Veh X 12T X 2 T/A = 1080 STONS/day

Evaluation: Actual experience with degrading factors such as enemy interdiction of roadways resulting in late, and in some cases no, daily road openings, traffic congestion on narrow roads and limited material handling equipment at off load sites has established that only 1 trip per day to be more realistic for operations in the Republic of Vietnam. Therefore, for planning purposes, the following computations should be used:

5 Ton Company 45 Veh X 6T X 1 T/A = 270 STONS/day
12 Ton S&P Company 45 Veh X 12T X 1 T/A = 540 STONS/day

Recommendation: The above factors should be evaluated for their effect on the planning capabilities of truck companies for line haul as cited in FM 101-10-1.

Item: Highway Regulation of QL 1 between Hue and Phu Bai

Observation: Daily convoys from Dong Ha to Camp Evans, Landing Zone Sharon, Landing Zone Jane and Utah Beach and convoys from Utah Beach to these same destinations results in two way traffic on QL 1. Convoy escorts are provided by 504th and 545th Military Police Battalions. With the great number of vehicles moving in convoy along QL 1, convoys are often delayed for lack of Military Police escorts. Delays are often long enough to preclude unloading and turnaround of vehicles in the same day. At times convoys have been stopped along QL 1 in open country for several hours waiting on road clearance, another convoy to pass, or another convoy to join.

Recommendation: That highway regulating points be established to regulate all traffic, issue highway clearances for convoys before they depart from secure areas and advise personnel concerned as to road conditions. Convoys from this Battalion pass through areas of operations belonging to several different units. In view of this recommend that Highway Regulating Teams be assigned to the highest command in order to control all traffic on QL 1.

Item: Internal convoy communications.

Observation: Truck Unit Tables of Organization and Equipment for transportation truck companies authorize only one radio control vehicle for each platoon of twenty trucks. However, to properly control convoys experience has shown that convoys can be controlled more effectively with two control vehicles per platoon. On several occasions to overcome the shortage of control vehicles radio sets PRC-25 were borrowed from other units

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and placed in the hardened 2½ tons accompanying the convoy or in the recovery vehicles. These additional radios, when available, greatly facilitated the control of the convoy and helped overcome the shortage of control vehicles.

Recommendation: That Radio Set AN/PRC-25 be issued on the basis of one per truck platoon to transportation truck companies in the Republic of Vietnam.

3. (U) Training: None

4. (U) Intelligence: None

5. (U) Logistics: None

6. (U) Organization: None

CHESTER T. HENDERSON
LTC, TC
Commanding

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AVCA DN-GTO (30 Apr 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968, Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65 (R-1)

DA, HEADQUARTERS 26TH GENERAL SUPPORT GROUP, APO 96495, 7 May 1968

TO: Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Da Nang (PROV), ATTN: AVCA DNG-GO, APO 96337

1. This headquarters concurs with all observations, evaluations and recommendations contained in attached report.

2. Forwarded for your comment.

Stanley Tesko

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as

STANLEY TESKO
COL, ORDC
Commanding

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AVCA-DNG-GO-H (30 April 68) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968. Reports Comtrol Symbol CSFOR-65 (R-1)(U)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY SUPPORT COMMAND, DA NANG (PROV), APO San Francisco 96337 19 MAY 1968

Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA-GO-O, APO 96384

1. (U) The 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) spent thirty-five days of the reporting period in unit moves and fifty-five days in mission operations for a total of ninety days.

2. (U) The Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968 from the 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) and the 1st Indorsement of Headquarters, 26th General Support Group have been reviewed and are considered adequate with the following comments:

a. Section 2, Paragraph 1, Personnel Services to Remote Units. Personnel Service Teams were deployed from the Personnel Services Center of this command to the geographical location of each major subordinate command headquarters on 9 May 1968. This was to provide improved response to personnel service needs of the various organizations located in remote areas. Prior to this deployment, which followed the arrival of the 400th Personnel Service Company, this headquarters, as well as major subordinate command headquarters, relied upon mail and couriers, both scheduled and on demand. The latter was used for high priority items.

b. Section 2, Paragraph 2, Capabilities of Truck Companies. The utilization of one (1) turn around per day is normal for planning purposes in RVN. The use of 12 tons per S&P is not realistic enough. The 57th Transportation Battalion averaged 7.5 tons per load per S&P for the month of April 1968. Unless only communications or construction material is to be handled, a figure of 9 tons per S&P would provide a more realistic computation.

c. Section 2, Paragraph 2, Highway Regulation of QL 1 between Hue and Phu Bai. A request to assign highway regulating teams to PCV was sent to the Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF). III MAF has stated that PCV has formally requested four (4) highway regulating teams be assigned for road control in NICTZ.

d. Section 2, Paragraph 2, Internal Convoy Communications. The requirement for an additional radio per platoon appears valid. Better convoy operations and consolidation of communications assets would produce

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AVCA-DNG-GO-H (30 April 68) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968. Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65 (R-1)(U)

some of the desired control. The 57th Transportation Battalion should take interim action to request a 180 day temporary loan of required equipment. No action will be taken by this headquarters until the 57th Transportation Battalion has initiated an MTOE for the radios and requested a 180 day loan for the equipment.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

R.E. Sleek

R.E. SLEEK
CW2, USA
Asst Adjutant General

AVCA GO-O (30 Apr 68) 3rd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968. Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65 (R-1)

DA, Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96384 31 MAY 1968

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by Headquarters, 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 is forwarded.

2. Pertinent comment follows: Reference Section 2, paragraph 2a, Capabilities of Truck Companies. Concur with the unit's evaluation on the degrading effects of insecure routes, traffic congestion and off-loading delays. In addition to this reduction from two to one turnarounds for line haul, experience has also shown that the average payload for the light truck (5T) and the medium truck (Cargo) is 5 and 10 tons, respectively. This is a result of configuration (palletization) and the low density of much of the cargo hauled. These new factors were officially recognized in the MACV Transportation Resources Evaluation published and distributed last February and should be used for all RVN planning. No further action is required by this headquarters.

3. Concur with the basic report as modified by indorsements. The report is considered adequate.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

ROBERT W. MUNSON
1 LT AGC
Asst AG

TEL: LBN 2684

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26th Gen Sup Gp
USASUPCOM, DNG (PROV)

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AVHGC-DST (30 Apr 68) 4th Ind (U) CPT Arnold/hga/LBN 4485
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968. Report Control Symbol CSFOR-65 (R-1)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 3 JUN 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 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 57th Transportation Battalion (Truck) as indorsed.

2. Concur with report as submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

for Jerry E. Hendrick
C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Copies furnished:
HQ, 1st Log Cmd
HQ, 57th Trans Bn (Truck)

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GPOP-DT (30 Apr 68) 5th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ 57th Transp Bn (Truck) for Period Ending 30 Apr 68, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 18 JUN 1968

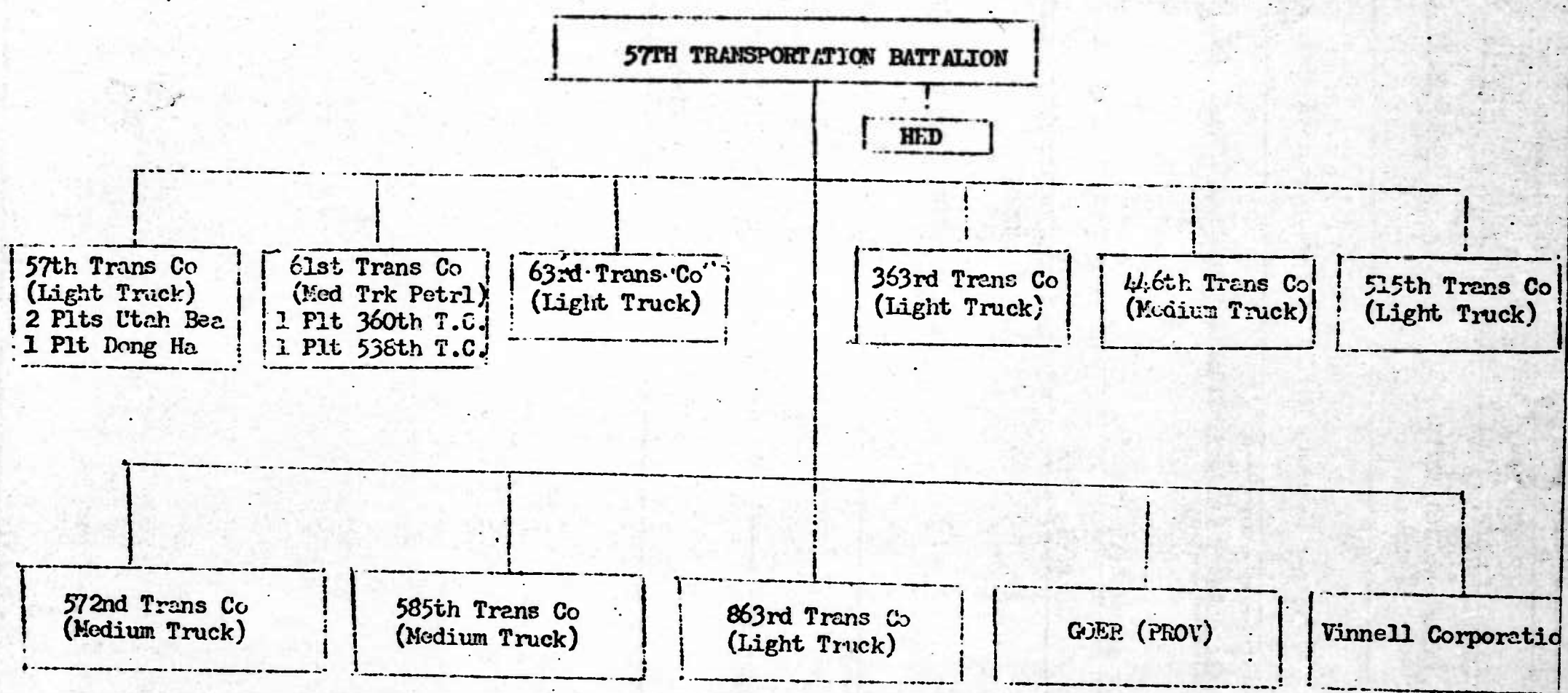
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



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ANNEX A

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3. REPORT TITLE

Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Hqs, 57th Transportation Battalion (U)

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES *(Type of report and inclusive dates)*

Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Feb - 30 Apr 68.

5. AUTHOR(S) *(First name, middle initial, last name)*

CO, 57th Transportation Battalion

6. REPORT DATE 30 April 1968	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 15	7b. NO. OF REFS
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13. ABSTRACT

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