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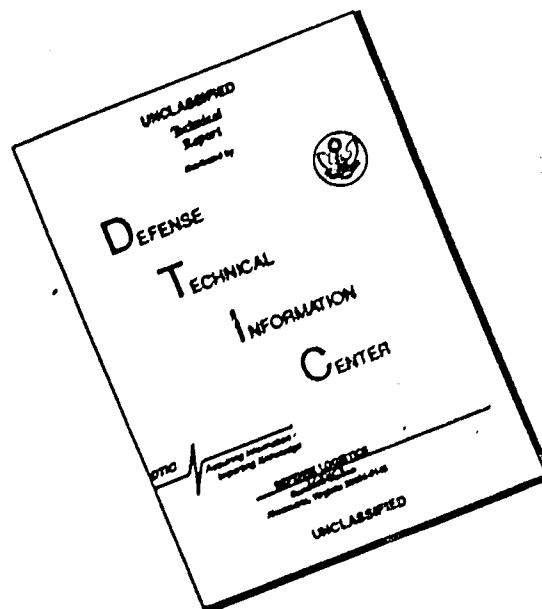
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (10 Jul 68) FOR OT RD 682136

17 July 1968

**SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 268th
Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1968 (U)**

SEE DISTRIBUTION

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manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited.

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 materials.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl

as

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268th Combat Aviation Bn

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AUG 16 1968

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 268TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96316

AVGD-E-SC

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(RL)(U)

See Distribution

1(c)Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities.(U)

(c) a. During this reporting period the unit participated in four major combat operations in support of the Capital ROK Infantry Division (CRID) and the 9th ROK Infantry Division (WHRID). These operations were as follows:

(1) On 9 February 1968, the 268th CAB provided aviation support for three battalions of the 26th ROK Infantry Regiment, CRID. Twenty-four UH-1 troop carrier helicopters and four CH-47 helicopters were employed to insert seven rifle companies, one recon company, one artillery battery, two Battalion TAC CP's and one Regimental TAC CP into six landing zones.

(2) On 28 February 1968, the 268th CAB employed thirty-two UH-1 troop carrier helicopters and six CH-47 helicopters in support of the 26th ROK Infantry Regiment, CRID. Eight rifle companies, four Battalion TAC CP's, one 4.2 mortar platoon and two 106 mm recoilless rifle sections were inserted into six landing zones.

(3) On 16 April the 268th CAB provided aviation support for an operation conducted by the 26th ROK Infantry Regiment, WHRID. Thirty UH-1 helicopters and six CH-47 helicopters were employed to insert thirteen rifle companies, three battalion TAC CP's and one artillery battery into thirteen landing zones.

FOR OT RD
682136

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AVGD-E-SC

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(R1) (U)

(4) On 20 April 1968 the 268th CAB provided aviation support for a Division (-) combat assault conducted by the CRID. The 268th CAB employed twenty-four UH-1 Helicopters and twelve CH-47 helicopters to insert twenty-two rifle companies and eight Battalion TAC CP's into twenty-three landing zones.

(C) b. In addition to the above operations, which were executed under control of the CO 268th CAB, numerous company size operations were conducted by the subordinate units of the battalion. These operations were controlled by the CO of the unit providing the tactical airlift.

(C) c. All operations conducted during this reporting period conformed to normal combat procedures prescribed by the CO 268th CAB, and within the guidance provided in the Operations Manual, 1st Aviation Brigade. No significant changes in policy or procedures were incorporated.

(C) d. With the onset of TET the enemy displayed a significant change in his combat tactics. This is reflected by the fact that he became increasingly bolder and aggressive, attacking in force during daylight hours as well as at night. He appeared to be willing to accept greater losses in personnel and equipment to achieve his objectives. However, since the end of the TET period the enemy has seemingly become more reluctant to engage either RCK Division in any large force. On several occasions the CRID received reports from Vietnamese villagers that enemy personnel had entered the village and demanded supplies for a large force nearby. Investigators produced negative results. It was determined by the G2, CRID, that this was a concentrated effort by the enemy to confuse friendly forces regarding strength and deployment.

(C) e. Training within the battalion is a continuous process. Because of the tactical commitment it is difficult to conduct regularly scheduled, formal classes. As a result, many classes are conducted at night, and extensive on the job training is conducted. Flight training and standardization is accomplished by assigning newer flight personnel to fly with the more experienced aircraft commanders.

(C) f. The exact number of days the unit participated in combat operations is unknown. However, the magnitude of the unit's combat operational commitment is exemplified by the seventy-eight combat assault missions in which the 134th AHC alone participated.

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AVGD-E-SC

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSPOR-65-(R1)(U)**(A) g. Problems confronted, solutions and recommendations.****(1) Sling loads:**

a. To reduce aircraft blade time and to enhance flight and ground safety, extensive use of slings in cargo transport has been incorporated. However, it was noted that the supported ROKA Divisions were not proficient in load preparations and sling loading procedures. To correct this situation classes were presented to G-4, S-4 and resupply point personnel. A marked improvement in sling load operation has resulted.

(2) Unpoliced resupply points:

~~127~~ a. Because of debris and loose equipment in the resupply points, the battalion experienced an excessive number of blade strikes. To eliminate this dangerous and costly problem, teams composed of unit operations officers, liaison officers, safety officers and G-4 representatives from the supported units, visited all the resupply points for the purpose of making corrections and providing guidance.

(3) Misunderstanding due to language barrier between US and third country forces.

a. Misunderstanding often occurs between US aviation personnel and the supported ROKA forces. In an effort to relieve this situation mimeographed sheets with translations of key phrases were distributed to the pilots. This action proved quite successful. However, communication by radio is in most cases virtually impossible.

b. To further promote good relations and eliminate misunderstanding between US and third country personnel, teams composed of the liaison officers and representatives of the supporting aviation units provided instruction to ROKA forces regarding the limitations and peculiarities of the helicopter.

(4) Lack of effective security procedures in the PZ.

a. ROKA forces normally organize a tactical pickup zone as if it were a secure area. A security force surrounding the PZ is seldom employed. Recommendations to provide a security force have generally gone unheeded. However, efforts to correct this situation continue under the 268th CAB sponsorship.

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14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(R1)(U)

(5) Personnel shortages:

a. Personnel shortages in key MOS, ie. aviators, 67W20, 45J20, 05C20, and 71B20 continue to exist. This unit strives to alleviate this situation by distribution of resources and OJT. However, the situation is critical in the areas listed above. Experienced personnel are being replaced by personnel with minimum training and experience. Tech inspectors, 67W, are arriving at the units with no experience with the type aircraft assigned to the units. OJT and S-4 courtesy visits are only partially effective and the maintenance effort continues to suffer. The lack of qualified motor maintenance and unit supply personnel materially effects these vital areas. Assistance visits by S-4 representatives have partially relieved this problem, but the effect of a lack of qualified personnel in the above areas remains obvious.

b. The 268th CAB is authorized by TO&E two officers and thirteen enlisted men in the pathfinder platoon. At present no officers and only seven enlisted men are assigned. The platoon is presently commanded by an E4. This situation imposes a considerable problem in organizing LZ's and PZ's during combat operations.

c. A request for additional liaison officers to be assigned to the battalion was approved by the C.O., 17th CAS. These liaison officers will enable the 268th CAB to improve coordination and to provide even more responsive aviation support. Establishing liaison at regimental level will greatly assist the operation of the Battalion Movement Control Center. Due to a shortage of officers qualified for the duty, no liaison officers have, as yet, been assigned to a NOKA regimental headquarters.

(6) Transfer of aircraft:

a. The transfer and receipt of UH-1 helicopters continues to be a problem. The aircraft are to be picked up four hours after the unit is notified that they are ready for issue. The pickup points are wide-spread over SVN and transportation to the pickup point is often quite difficult to acquire. In some instances when crews report to pick up the aircraft they find that it has been issued to another unit through a misunderstanding. Communications failure seems to be the primary contributing factor in this situation.

(U) h. There were no changes to the unit mission during this reporting period.

(U) i. There were no changes to the unit organization during this period.

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14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(R1)(U)

(C) j. Personnel changes within the command group and principal staff were as follows.

(1) Battalion Commander. LTC Wayne B. Sargent, 061761, replaced LTC Donald E. Mulligan, 079000. Effective date: 4 April 1968.

(2) Battalion Executive Officer. Major Richard I. Gillingham, 079299, replaced LTC Horace A. Bond, 01886977. Effective date: 21 April 1968.

(3) S-1. 1 LT Bruce H. White, 05337829, replaced CPT Robert R. Young, 04046588. Effective date: 4 April 1968.

(4) S-2. MAJ Curtis S. Crouch Jr., 080222, assigned S-2. Effective date: 1 May 1968.

(5) S-3. MAJ Bobby J. Maddox, 082767, replaced MAJ Ronald H. Emery, 082322. Effective date: 1 March 1968.

(6) CO 48th AHC. MAJ Jerry L. Fleming, 075355, replaced MAJ John Fordham. Effective date: 11 February 1968.

(7) CO 129th AHC. MAJ Ronald H. Emery, 072322, replaced MAJ Curtis S. Crouch Jr., 080222. Effective date: 1 March 1968.

(C) k. Unit Strengths as of 30 April 1968.

(1) Military

Subordinate Unit	Officer		WO		EM		Total	
	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H
HHC 268 CAB	21	21	2	3	86	119	109	143
342 ASD	1	1	0	2	20	27	21	30
433 Med. Det.	1	2	0	0	9	8	10	10
48 AHC	15	12	52	39	152	148	219	199
390 Trans. Det.	1	0	1	1	70	48	72	49
279 Sig. Det.	1	1	0	0	6	6	7	7
286 Med. Det.	1	1	0	0	9	9	10	10
129 AHC	15	19	52	37	152	150	219	206
394 Trans. Det.	1	1	1	1	70	62	72	64
296 Sig. Det.	1	0	0	1	9	5	10	6

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AVGD-E-SC

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(R1)(U)

(1) Military (Con't)

Subordinate Unit	Officer		WO		EM		Total	
	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H
134 AHC	15	8	52	32	152	143	219	183
618 Trans. Det.	1	1	1	0	70	60	72	61
832 Sig. Det.	0	1	1	0	8	8	9	9
335 AHC	15	14	52	48	152	164	219	226
166 Trans. Det.	1	1	1	1	70	61	72	63
234 Sig. Det.	0	1	1	0	8	7	9	8
180 ASHC	12	12	24	14	148	133	184	159
403 Trans. Det.	1	1	1	1	80	58	82	60
268 CAB	103	97	241	180	1271	1216	1615	1493

(U) 1. Aircraft Status as of 30 April 1968 (See Tab 1).

(U) m. Operational Results as of 30 April 1968 (See Tab 2).

2. (C) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. (U) Personnel - None.

b. (C) Operations

(1) Observations

A recent night "TAC E", which involved extraction of the 173rd Brigade (LRRP), in contact, indicated the necessity for standardized procedures in the insertion and extraction of Long Range Recon Patrols.

(2) Evaluation

Insertion and extraction of LRRPs under combat conditions require close coordination between the aviation element and the LRRP to insure success. Improper procedures can result in aircraft being exposed to ground fire for prolonged periods of time and increases the possibility that the LRRP will be discovered and engaged by an enemy force.

(3) Recommendations

It is recommended that an SOP for insertion and extraction of LRRPs be established. (See inclosure 3 for SOP established for the 268th CAB and the 173rd Airborne Brigade).

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AVGD-E-SC

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(R1)(U)

(4) Observation

During mortar and rocket attacks on Phu Kiep AAF it was observed that crews of the armed helicopter reaction force were unable to move to the aircraft without exposing themselves to the enemy fire.

(5) Evaluation

A means by which armed helicopter crews can reach their aircraft quickly and in relative safety should be incorporated.

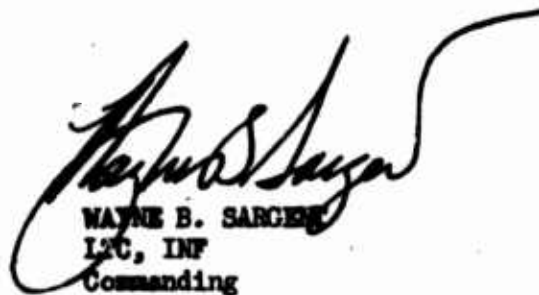
(6) Recommendation

The armed helicopter reaction force should be positioned away from the prime target area and communications established between the force and the headquarters having authority to launch the force. The reaction force should be prepositioned nightly and placed on a five minute standby.

- (U) c. Training - None
- (U) d. Intelligence - None
- (U) e. Logistics - None
- (U) f. Organization - None
- (U) g. Other - None

3 Incl

- 1. Tab 1
- 2. Tab 2
- 3. Tab 3



WAYNE B. SARGENT
LTC, INF
Commanding

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AVCD-SC (14 May 68) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(R1) (U)

Headquarters, 17th Combat Aviation Group, APO 96240 24 May 1968

TO: Commanding General, I Field Forces Vietnam, APO 96350

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 268th Combat Aviation Battalion.

2. (C) The following comments and recommendations on Section I and II are submitted for review and/or approval.

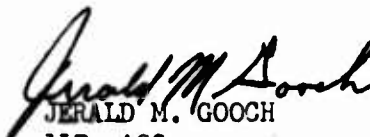
a. Reference item concerning personnel shortages in MOS 05C20, Section I, para 1, g, (5), a, page 4: Concur. It is recognized that the 268th CAB is presently short six 05C20's. Other battalions of the 17th CAG are also short this MOS and separate action has been initiated through personnel channels to effect priority of assignment in this MOS.

b. Reference item concerning Transfer of Aircraft, Section I, para 1, g, (6): Concur. Four hours is a target which was set up during the TET Offensive in order to get aircraft off of fields where security was marginal. Experience has indicated that twenty-four to forty-eight hours between notification and pick-up is more realistic.

c. Reference item concerning insertion and extraction of Long Range Recon Patrols, Section II, b, (1): Concur. It is recommended that each aviation unit work out SOP's concerning (LRRP) operations with patrol units they habitually support. Proper procedures and understanding between units will greatly enhance the success of the operation.

d. Reference Reaction Time for Armed Helicopter crew reaction force, Section II, b, (4): Concur. Every unit must develop SOP's to react in the fastest possible time to launch an effective reaction force during an installation attack.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JERALD M. GOOCH
1LT, AGC
Adjutant

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AVFA-GC-OT (14 May 68) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period
Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam, APO 96350 4 JUN 1968

TO: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96307

Concur.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

John R. Cooke 1LT AGC
for ROBERT C. GABBARD
1LT, AGC
ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL

Copy furnished:
17th Cbt Avn Gp

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AVBA-C (14 May 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period
Ending 30 April 1968, HCS CSFGR-65 (B1) (U)

Headquarters, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96324

JUN 16 1968

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPCP-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 the report, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents as indorsed.
2. (U) The following additional comment is considered pertinent:

Paragraph 1g(6), page 4. It is the desire of the 1st Aviation Brigade that aircraft be transferred as rapidly as possible to minimize the loss of the flying time due to the aircraft awaiting pick-up. As a result the 1st Aviation Brigade policy is that units have 24 hours to pick up aircraft from a losing unit. Notification is generally made by telephone or radio to expedite the transaction.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



J. D. SEGAL

1LT, AGC

ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL

14

AVHGC-DST (14 May 68) 4th Ind (U) CPT Arnold/dls/LBN 4485
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 268th CAB for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65-(R1)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 18 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, 268th Combat Aviation Battalion.

2. Concur with report as submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

C. S. Nakatsukasa
C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Avn Bde
HQ 268th CAB

15

GPOP-DT (14 May 68) (U) 5th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 268th Cbt Avn Bn for Period Ending
30 April 1968, RCS CSF01-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96358

28 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 indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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266TH CAB AIRCRAFT STATUS
30 APRIL 1968

14 May 1968

Subordinate Unit	UH1B		UH1C		UH1E/H		CH-47		CH-23		UH6A	
	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H
48th AHC	8	7			23	22						
129th AHC	8	7			23	25						
134th AHC			8	7	23	13						
339th AHC	8	7			23	23						
180th ASHC							16	16	2	0		
WMC					1	1					1	1

Tab 1

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Tab 1

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266TH CAB OPERATIONAL STATISTICS
QTR ENDING 30 APRIL 1968

14 May 1968

Subordinate Unit	Serries Flown	Troops Lifted	Cargo Lifted (Tons)	Heavy KIA	Structures		Sampans		Aircraft Confirmed Loss		Aircraft Damaged	
					Dam	Des	Dam	Des	Cbt	Acc	Cbt	Acc
48 AHC	46,010	37,873	1776.0	50	99	127	2	6	0	3	14	2
129 AHC	73,748	102,449	6345.8	213	257	367	9	22	0	1	11	1
134 AHC	22,287	287,606	9845.0	70	40	8	0	2	1	0	8	0
335 AHC	17,307	29,733	917.0	43	37	63	1	2	0	0	3	0
180 AHC	12,240	42,653	14,027.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AHC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

48 AHC - Aircraft Loss: 1 UH1B (Accident), Aircraft damaged: 8 UH1B (Combat), 2 UH1D (Accident), 6 UH1H (Combat)

129 AHC - Aircraft Loss: 1 UH1D (Accident), Aircraft damaged: 1 UH1D (Accident), 9 UH1B (Combat), 2 UH1D (Combat)

134 AHC - Aircraft Loss: 1 UH1H (Combat), Aircraft damaged: 2 UH1C (Combat), 6 UH1H (Combat)

335 AHC - Aircraft Loss: 1 UH1H (Accident), Aircraft damaged: 2 UH1B (Combat), 1 UH1H (Combat)

Tab 2

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 268TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96316

AVGD-E-SC

15 May 1968

SUBJECT: Standardization of LRRP Insertion/Extraction Procedures (U)

Commanding General
173rd Airborne Brigade
ATTN: Deputy Commander
APO 96316

- (C) 1. The recent night TAC "E", which involved extraction of the 173rd Brigade (LRRP), in contact, indicated the necessity for closer standardization procedures between the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion and your Brigade.
- (C) 2. The sequence of events on this night extraction was:
- a. TAC "E" declared by 4/503rd Infantry shortly after dark; LRRP's in contact in eastern sector of Bolling; weather 300 feet ceiling and 3/4 mile visibility (variable less).
 - b. Gunships launched within five minutes after declaration of TAC "E"; gunships on station in vicinity of LRRP's ten minutes later; Gunships unable to locate LRRP's exact position due to low visibility, no light signals from the ground, inability to home on FM radio signals and lack of understanding between gun pilot lead and LRRP leaders attempt to vector aircraft.
 - c. Slicks and slick flare ship launched within 30 minutes after declaration of TAC "E"; slicks on station in vicinity of LRRP's ten minutes later; slicks unable to locate LRRP's due to the same problems as in 2b. Gunships, slicks and flare ship on station for 50 minutes dropping total load of flares, flying in a search pattern with running lights, searchlights and landing lights on up to the point of critical fuel.
 - d. LRRP's finally located by slick flight lead hovering at 20 feet and 20 knots with landing and searchlights on, searching all open areas for a possible PZ. Flight lead drew fire on extraction due to the excessive search and tenuous flight situation.
- (C) 3. Coordination with the S-3, 4/503rd Infantry was conducted the following day and the following SOP was established between the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion and the 4/503rd Infantry:

TAB 3

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AVGD-E-SC

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Standardisation of LRRP Insertion/Extraction Procedures

- a. In as far as possible, the same aircraft crew, flight lead and gunship cover that inserts is responsible for extraction.
 - b. The PZ for planned extractions will be reconned by flight lead during daylight hours and after dark, when tactically feasible.
 - c. Exact PZ location and required PZ time must be given by the troops to be extracted.
 - d. LRRP ground FM radio must be utilized by flight lead to guide his flight.
 - e. Steering instructions from the LRRP leader must be in relationship to the aircraft flight path and given in terminology i.e., "turn left, stop turn, continue present heading, turn right, stop turn, turn right 90 degrees." Clock method of direction is too confusing to a pilot in flight, particularly under marginal conditions.
 - f. As the LRRP position is compromised by a flight of helicopters in the immediate vicinity, ground illumination of various types must be used by troops to be extracted in order that gunships can support by fire and slicks can identify exact PZ.
 - g. Troops to be extracted must form a circle in the PZ and provide final protective fire outbound from the PZ as the flight is on approach. Not only will this fire suppress the enemy, but it will assist in exactly defining the PZ. Further, gunships will be aided in identification of the friendly position permitting maximum gunship cover.
 - h. After troops are on board, all available weapons, must be used to suppress the enemy as the flight is on takeoff.
- (U) 4. It is hoped that the above procedures will be an initial step toward more professional support by the 268th Combat Aviation Battalion to your Brigade.

Tab 3

WAYNE B. SARGENT
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

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