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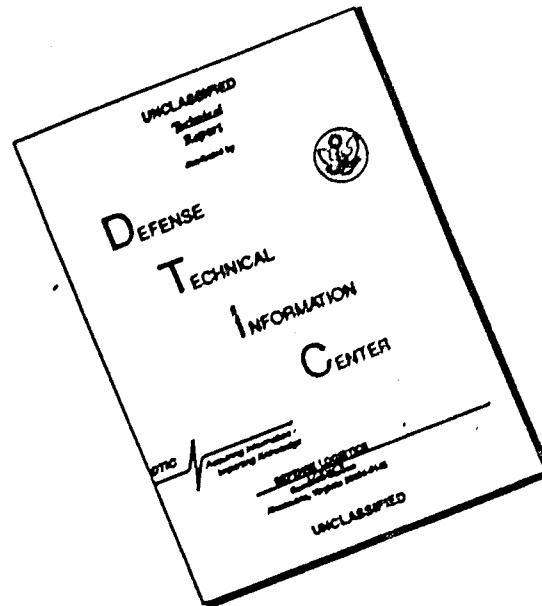
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (9 Oct 69)

FOR OT-UT-693137

70
11 31 Jul 69
12 27 p.
14 OCTOBER 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report (6) Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 3d Squadron
17th Air Cavalry, (U) (8)

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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

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Major General, USA
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9 Operational rept. for
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HEADQUARTERS
3D SQUADRON 17TH AIR CAVALRY
QUARTER ENDING
31 Jul 69

AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air
Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
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SECTION 1 Significant Activities

1. (U) INTRODUCTION:

a. MISSION: The squadron's basic mission has been that of providing reconnaissance, surveillance, security, and economy of force.

b. ORGANIZATION: The squadron is organized under TOE 17-95T dated June 1965 and USARPAC General Order 401 dated August 1968. In addition, RI/KD teams are attached (1 per air cavalry troop) by 12th Aviation Group General Order 55 dated July 1968 and General Order 60 dated August 1968. The current organization structure and unit locations are listed in inclosure 1 and 2.

2. (FOUO) PERSONNEL:

a. PERSONNEL CHANGES: Following is the command group and principle staff as of 31 July 1969, with the changes during the period:

HEADQUARTERS 3D SQUADRON 17TH AIR CAVALRY

LTC JOHN B. FITCH	CC	No Change	
MAJ BURNETT R. SANDERS II	XO	Replaced MAJ Robert H. Haley	1Jun69
MAJ ARTHUR S. DERVAES III	S3	Replaced MAJ Joseph L. Kulmayer	10Jul69
1LT DONALD W. HACKETT	S1	No Change	
CPT HAROLD A. HIUTZ	S2	No Change	

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SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

CPT LESTER R. BELL	S4	Replaced 1LT Lawrence J. Dipasquale	15Jun69
		Replaced CPT Stanley N. Gehler	1Jun69
CPT SCHUYLER N. CUNIFF	HHT CO	No Change	
CPT JAMES P. SKELTON JR.	MAINT OFF	No Change	
MAJ HAROLD L. SMITH	A Trp CO	Replaced MAJ Burnett R. Sanders II	31May69
MAJ WILLARD D. CONKLIN	B Trp CO	No Change	
MAJ BILLY J. SLUSHER	C Trp CO	No Change	
CPT WILLIAM C. WHITE JR.	D Trp CO	No Change	

b. UNIT STRENGTHS AS OF 31 JULY 1969: The squadron is authorized 85 Officers, 103 Warrant Officers, and 848 enlisted men. Assigned strength at the end of the reporting period was 120 Officers, 80 Warrant Officers, and 809 enlisted men (See Inclosure 3).

c. INFUSION: During the reporting period 20 enlisted men were exchanged for 21 enlisted men from other aviation units in furtherance of the infusion program to reduce rotational peaks. There were no officers or warrant officers exchanged during this period.

d. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS: One thousand two hundred and twenty-four awards were recommended within the squadron during the reporting period. One thousand and seventy-one were approved, 21 were downgraded and 750 are still pending (See Inclosure 4).

e. FRIENDLY LOSSES: Friendly losses for the period were nine KIA and 25 WIA. No personnel were MIA (See Inclosure 5).

3. (C) INTELLIGENCE: The squadron conducted extensive aerial reconnaissance and surveillance missions, providing its various control headquarters with valuable and timely information concerning the enemy. The Squadron's efforts were concentrated in Tay Ninh, Binh Duong, Hau Nghia, Gia Dinh, Long An, and Dinh Tuong Provinces and, to a limited extent, in Bien Hoa, Go Cong, Kien Hoa, Kien Phoung and Long Khanh Provinces. Attention centered on known and suspected enemy base camp areas and lines of communications. The intelligence gathered provided the basis for ground operations, tactical and strategic air strikes, and artillery strikes.

a. TERRAIN: The relief in the squadron area of operations ranged from flat delta in the south and as far north as Tay Ninh to gently rolling hills in Bien Hoa and Long Khanh Provinces. Drainage is provided by the Saigon, Nha Be, Dong Nai, Vam Co Dong, Vam Co Tay, and Mekong Rivers and their tributaries. Vegetation consists of extensive rice crops in the delta regions, extensive rubber plantations in parts of Tay Ninh, Binh Duong, and Long Khanh Provinces, and extensive broadleaved evergreen forests elsewhere.

(1) Observation and Fields of Fire: Observation and fields of fire ranged from extremely limited in the forested areas of Tay Ninh, Binh Duong, and Long Khanh Provinces to excellent in the delta areas.

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AVGC-B

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(UIC-WAAMAA)

(2) Obstacles: Neither natural nor artificial obstacles in the TAOR had any effect on squadron operations.

(3) Cover and Concealment: The enemy has limited natural cover, however, he is an expert at building tunnel and bunker complexes which provide him excellent protection against direct and indirect fire as well as air strikes. The enemy has excellent concealment in jungle and plantation areas as well as among nipa palm and pineapple trees which frequently line rivers and canals in the delta areas. He also makes use of darkness and camouflage to conceal his movement or presence in an area.

(4) Key Terrain: Highways 1, 4, 15, and 20, and the Dong Nai, Saigon, Vam Co Dong, Vam Co Tay, and Mekong Rivers together with their major tributaries are considered key terrain. The highways are selected because of their importance as lines of communications, not only for military traffic but for civilian traffic as well. The major rivers also serve as important lines of communication and enable allied forces to ship large quantities of materials. For the same reason, these rivers form important lines of communication for the enemy.

(5) Avenues of Approach: The following VC/NVA avenues of approach into the squadron area of operations are considered significant:

(a) Parrots Beak (XS 310920), and the Vam Co Tay River.

(b) Parrots Beak (XS 310920), Bo Bo Canal, Pineapple Plantation (XS 580900), and Saigon.

(c) Ba Thu (XT 270030), My Thang Dong (XT 440020), Tan Nhut (XS 700830), and Saigon.

(d) Angel's Wing (XT 310130), An Ninh (XT 400130), Hau Nghia Swamp, and Saigon.

(e) Angel's Wing/Ba Thu, Vam Co Dong River, Pineapple Plantation, and Saigon.

(f) Fishhook (XT 580900), Michelin Plantation, Boi Loi Woods, Saigon River, Binh My (XT 530180), and Saigon.

b. WEATHER: During the reporting period the squadron area of operation was under the influence of the southeast monsoon. During May the weather was generally excellent. Beginning in the latter part of June, the wet season set in with heavy showers and thunderstorms usually occurring in the afternoons and evenings. This condition prevailed on through July. Friendly operations were hampered to a certain extent by low ceilings, periodic showers and thunderstorms. Temperatures during the period ranged from minimums of 71 to 78 degrees to normal maximums of 80 to 98 degrees, although maximums in the low 100's were not infrequent.

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(UIC-WAAMAA)

4. (C) OPERATIONS: The 3/17 Cav area of operations was primarily in the central, southern, western and eastern areas of III Corps Tactical Zone (See Inclosure 6). The squadron, with its troops OPCON and/or in direct support of several different units during the reporting period, conducted reconnaissance, security, surveillance and economy of force operations throughout the major portion of the III Corps Tactical Zone. The general area of operation of the squadron elements extended from the Cambodian border on the west and northwest, the III Corps boundary and War Zone D on the east and the Song Hau Giang River on the south. This period was characterized by numerous mission changes. A Troop provided support to the Capital Military Assistance Command (CMAC); Bien Hoa Tactical Area Command (BHTAC); and the Royal Thailand Army Volunteer Force (RTAVF). B Troop remained direct support 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division. C Troop provided support to the 25th Infantry Division; 1st Infantry Division; 18th ARVN Division; BHTAC; Task Force Doyle (Xuan Loc area); and the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. D Troop remained OPCON to BHTAC during the reporting period for use in the defense of Bien Hoa as well as a ready reaction force for the II Field Force long range patrols.

a. SIGNIFICANT OPERATIONS:

(1) On 1 May 69, A/3/17 (-) continued to provide direct support to CMAC, with two hunter-killer teams in direct support to BHTAC. B/3/17 continued direct support to the 9th Inf Div. C/3/17 continued direct support 25th Inf Div.

(2) On 2 May 69, A/3/17 elements engaged one VC resulting in one KBA at XS 874848. C/3/17 hunter-killer teams were credited with four VC KBA at XS 165424.

(3) On 8 May 69, A/3/17 aero rifles engaged several VC at YT 445305 resulting in one VC KIA and three possible KIA. B/3/17 elements were credited with one VC KBA at XS 662578. Elements also accounted for two additional KBA at XS 685528.

(4) On 10 May 69, A/3/17 hunter-killer teams were credited with four VC KBA and twenty bunkers destroyed at YT 054563. C/3/17 engaged several VC at XT 154467 resulting in three VC KBA.

(5) On 11 May 69, A/3/17 (-) was released direct support CMAC, and placed direct support BHTAC with one Firefly team direct support CMAC. Alpha Troop detained four eligible males at YS 082946. B/3/17 hunter-killer teams were credited with two VC KBA at XS 339761. C/3/17 was released direct support 25th Division and placed direct support Senior Advisor, 18th ARVN Div. Elements engaged a suspected enemy base camp at YT 490410 resulting in 10 VC KBA.

(6) On 12 May 69, B/3/17 made contact with the enemy, destroyed a .30 caliber machine gun, and were credited with seven VC KBA at XS 490706. C/3/17 elements engaged several VC at XT 499152 resulting in 10 KBA. Further significant results were 11 KBA at YT 499191.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

(7) On 13 May 69, B/3/17 was credited with two VC KBA at XS 490706, and three KBA at XS 490710.

(8) On 15 May 69, A/3/17 engaged several VC at YS 083963 resulting in two VC KBA. B/3/17 aero rifles performed a sweep in the vicinity of XS 488698 resulting in one VC KIA, two AK-47 rifles, one NVA radio and seven documents captured. Elements were further credited with one VC KBA at YT 538105 and six VC KBA at YT 400051.

(9) On 16 May 69, B/3/17 accounted for one VC KBA at XS 659735; two VC KBA at XS 967457; and two VC KBA at XS 008423. C/3/17 elements made enemy contact resulting in 14 VC KBA at YT 392045.

(10) On 17 May 69, A/3/17 aero rifles were credited with one VC KIA at XT 893252. In further activity, elements engaged a bunker complex igniting one secondary explosion at XT 891250. B/3/17 elements accounted for one VC KBA at XS 678646 and two VC KBA at XS 677646.

(11) On 18 May 69, A/3/17 elements engaged several enemy resulting in eight VC KBA at YT 283026. B/3/17 was credited with three VC KBA at XS 576565 and an additional two VC KBA at XS 703586. C/3/17 elements accounted for two KBA at YT 531098.

(11) On 19 May 69, A/3/17 was released direct support BHTAC and placed direct support CMAC and the RTAVF. Alpha Troop detained three personnel at XS 943835 and apprehended an additional detainee at XS 952830. B/3/17 elements were credited with one VC KBA at XS 670660, three VC KBA at XS 670662 and two VC KBA at XS 622684.

(13) On 20 May 69, A/3/17 aero rifles detained one eligible male at XT 809083 and five additional detainees at YS 059802. B/3/17 elements had several enemy contacts throughout the day with the following significant results: One VC KBA at XS 482471; one KBA at XS 170458, two detainees at XS 120460, two VC KBA at XS 202470, five VC KBA at XS 222472, two VC KBA at XS 683540 and two VC KBA at XS 730513.

(14) On 21 May 69, B/3/17 had scattered contacts with the enemy resulting in one VC KBA at XS 660569, one VC KBA at XS 552759 and two VC KBA at XS 527682.

(15) On 22 May 69, A/3/17 was placed direct support BHTAC and remained direct support to CMAC and RTAVF. A Troop aero rifles picked up one detainee at YS 000812, two detainees at XS 974892 and a fourth detainee at XS 981884. Elements were also credited with one VC KBA at XS 002483. C/3/17 was released direct support BHTAC and placed direct support 2nd Bde, 25th Inf Div, and Senior Advisor, 18th ARVN Div. Elements were credited with one VC KBA at XT 496137.

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(UIC-WAAMAA)

(16) On 24 May 69, A/3/17 engaged one VC resulting in a KBA at XS 585934. B/3/17 hunter-killer teams engaged and destroyed 36 rockets at XS 198417. Elements were also credited with one KBA at XS 659732 and one KBA at XS 555265.

(17) On 26 May 69, B/3/17 made contact with the enemy on three occasions. The first at XS 684782 resulting in one VC KBA, an additional KBA at XS 720571 and the heaviest contact at WS 918594 resulting in 14 VC KBA.

(18) On 27 May 69, A/3/17 was released direct support BHTAC and remained direct support CMAC and RTAVF. Elements engaged several VC resulting in eight VC KBA. B/3/17 made contact with the enemy in scattered engagements with the following results: One VC KBA at XS 360815, one VC KBA at XS 473679, three VC KBA at XS 455677 and three VC KBA at XS 705765. C/3/17 was credited with one VC KBA at XT 595305 and one possible KBA at XS 473992.

(19) On 28 May 69, C/3/17 hunter-killer teams engaged personnel in a suspected base camp resulting in five VC KBA at XT 566281 and were credited with one VC KBA at XT 510000.

(20) On 29 May 69, B/3/17 engaged the enemy on several occasions with the following results: Two VC KBA at XT 675645, two VC KBA at XS 602726 and one VC KBA at XS 714637.

(21) On 1 Jun 69, A/3/17 was credited with three VC KBA at XS 584916. B/3/17 elements engaged two VC in uniforms resulting in two VC KBA at XS 537589. At WS 860468, a B Troop LOH engaged four VC resulting in four VC KBA. Elements were also credited with four KBA at XS 595773 and one KBA at XS 612681. C/3/17 were rifles were credited with 10 VC KIA at XT 614253.

(22) On 3 Jun 69, A/3/17 elements engaged two personnel at XT 816095 resulting in two NVA KBA. B/3/17 elements were credited with three VC KBA at XS 795704. C/3/17 hunter-killer teams engaged an enemy element at YT 148232 resulting in five VC KBA. One KBA was also recorded at XT 546165.

(23) On 4 Jun 69, C/3/17 engaged a VC base camp in the vicinity of YT 082398 resulting in eight VC KBA.

(24) On 5 Jun 69, C/3/17 was released direct support 2/25 Inf Div and placed direct support 1st Inf Div. Elements remained direct support BHTAC.

(25) On 6 Jun 69, B/3/17 made contact on several occasions with the enemy with the following significant results: Four VC KBA at XS 648738, one VC KBA at XS 653742 and an additional four VC KBA at XS 607529.

(26) On 7 Jun 69, C/3/17 was released direct support 1st Inf Div and placed direct support Task Force Doyle in the Xuan Loc area. Elements also remained direct support to BHTAC. Hunter-killer teams engaged an estimated 15 VC resulting in eight VC KBA and one command bunker destroyed at XS 341976.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

(27) On 10 Jun 69, B/3/17 engaged several VC in the vicinity of XS 614703 resulting in four VC KBA.

(28) On 14 Jun 69, A/3/17 was placed direct support to BHTAC and remained direct support CMAC and RTAVF. C/3/17 was released direct support BHTAC.

(29) On 15 Jun 69, B/3/17 accounted for five VC KBA in the vicinity of XS 735650. C/3/17 was released direct support 18th ARVN Div and placed direct support 1st Bdo, 25th Inf Div.

(30) On 18 Jun 69, B/3/17 night hunter team engaged a sampan at XS 305430 resulting in a secondary explosion. Hunter-killer teams engaged four VC in the vicinity of XS 367938 resulting in two VC KBA and one VC WIA. A subsequent aero rifle insertion resulted in the WIA and three AK-47 rifles being captured. C/3/17 elements were credited with six VC KBA at XT 052658.

(31) On 19 Jun 69, C/3/17 firefly team supported defense of FSB Washington under ground attack, resulting in five VC KBA at XT 143570. Elements engaged a VC element at XT 302407 resulting in an additional five VC KBA. A C/3/17 Cobra received fire from the area of XT 243504 which was subsequently engaged resulting in eight VC KBA, one mortar possible destroyed and two automatic weapons destroyed. At XT 163401, a Charlie Troop light fire team supported ARVN Marines in contact resulting in 30 VC KBA, one machine gun destroyed.

(32) On 21 Jun 69, C/3/17 was released direct support 1/25 Inf Div and placed direct support 199th Lt Inf Bdo and 18th ARVN Div.

(33) On 23 Jun 69, A/3/17 aero rifles detained four eligible males at XS 936835. B/3/17 established contact with the enemy in a suspected rear service area at XS 660530 resulting in three VC KIA by the aero rifles and 14 VC KBA by the hunter-killer teams.

(34) On 25 Jun 69, B/3/17 hunter-killer team engaged the enemy in the vicinity of XS 660525 resulting in two VC KBA. An additional KBA was recorded at XS 656527. Elements were credited with one KBA at XS 658526. C/3/17 elements were credited with three VC KBA and four possible KBA at YT 538239.

(35) On 26 Jun 69, A/3/17 hunter-killer teams engaged two NVA vicinity of XS 982823 resulting in two NVA KBA. B/3/17 elements engaged the enemy at XS 451841 resulting in three KBA. A further engagement at XS 451841 resulted in three VC KBA and four AK-47's captured. Elements also had two VC KBA at XS 630792.

(36) On 29 Jun 69, B/3/17 made several enemy contacts with the following results: Two VC KBA at XS 735607; two VC KBA at XS 723668; two VC KBA at XS 619799 and five VC KBA at XS 724605.

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AVGC-B

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(UIC-WAAMAA)

(37) On 2 Jul 69, B/3/17 hunter-killer teams engaged five VC resulting in two VC KBA at XS 868765. A Bravo Troop LOH engaged one VC resulting in a KBA at XS 867768. In a further contact, elements were credited with three VC KBA at XS 645726. A final engagement resulted in one KBA at XS 865765.

(38) On 3 Jul 69, B/3/17 elements made several enemy contacts with the following significant results: Two VC KBA at XS 716637; two VC KBA at XS 633802; one VC KBA at XS 633807; three VC KBA at XS 640726; five VC KBA at XS 671590 and two VC KBA at XS 640826. C/3/17 engaged a small enemy force in the vicinity of XS 304850 resulting in one VC KBA and two possible KBA. D/3/17 elements found 16 Chicom grenades during a sweep operation at YT 133265.

(39) On 5 Jul 69, A/3/17 hunter-killer teams engaged a hut with bunkers resulting in two 25 pound bags of rice, two 55 gallon drums destroyed and one VC KBA at XS 062793. Elements also detained four personnel at XS 978815. B/3/17 elements engaged an estimated platoon in the open at XS 411875 resulting in 11 VC KBA. A further engagement resulted in one VC KBA and one VC POW at XS 411875. C/3/17 provided one hunter-killer team in support of Navy elements in the Rung Sat Special Zone.

(40) On 7 Jul 69, A/3/17 was released direct support BHTAC and remained direct support CMAC and RTAVF. C/3/17 was released direct support 199th Lt Inf Bde and 18th ARVN Div and placed direct support BHTAC.

(41) On 8 Jul 69, B/3/17 established several enemy contacts with the following significant results: One VC KBA at XS 468462; two VC KBA at XS 633523; one VC KBA, one NVA radio, one hut destroyed with secondary explosion at XS 468462. One additional KBA at XS 620710.

(42) On 9 Jul 69, A/3/17 was placed direct support BHTAC and remained direct support CMAC and RTAVF. C/3/17 was released direct support BHTAC and placed direct support 1st Bde, 25th Inf Div.

(43) On 13 Jul 69, B/3/17 established scattered enemy contacts with the following results: One VC KBA at XS 811698; one KBA at XS 657686; three KBA at XS 663683; one KBA at XS 657686; two KBA at XS 811698; one KBA and one POW at XS 726694.

(44) On 14 Jul 69, B/3/17 began a three day maintenance standdown. Bravo Troop displaced from Dong Tam to DiAn during the period 14 Jul to 16 Jul 69. A/3/17 and C/3/17 provided one team each to 3/9 Div during this period.

(45) On 17 Jul 69, B/3/17 resumed direct support 3/9 Div. Elements engaged five VC at XS 745637 resulting in five VC KBA.

(46) On 19 Jul 69, A/3/17 hunter-killer teams engaged several targets in the vicinity of XS 564903 resulting in one hut, one bunker destroyed and four possible VC KBA.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-B

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(47) On 22 Jul 69, C/3/17 LCH received fire at XT 185278. Elements engaged the area resulting in three VC KBA.

(48) On 24 Jul 69, C/3/17 was released direct support 1/25 Div and placed direct support OG, 199th Lt Inf Bde.

(49) On 25 Jul 69, B/3/17 elements engaged two VC evading at XS 638658 resulting in two VC KBA. A night hunter team made enemy contact at XS 459685 resulting in six VC KBA.

(50) On 27 Jul 69, C/3/17 made enemy contact in the vicinity of YT 550200 resulting in seven KBA.

(51) On 28 Jul 69, B/3/17 elements engaged an unknown number of VC at XS 594717 resulting in eight VC KBA.

(52) On 28 Jul 69, A, B, and C/3/17 were released of all commitments and placed OPCON to CMAC for reconnaissance and security missions in support of President Nixons' visit to Saigon and DiAn.

(53) On 30 Jul 69, A/3/17 returned direct support CMAC and RTAVF, and B/3/17 returned direct support 3/9 Inf Div. C/3/17 was placed direct support BHTAC.

(54) On 31 Jul 69, A/3/17 was placed direct support BHTAC and remained direct support CMAC and RTAVF. C/3/17 was released direct support BHTAC and placed direct support OG, 199th Lt Inf Bde.

b. SUMMARY: While flying 18,968 sorties, the squadron lifted 15,302 troops, 66 tons of cargo, and was credited with 604 enemy KIA, 343 structures destroyed, and 130 sampans destroyed (See Inclosure 7). During the quarter, the squadron was engaged in numerous small scale operations but visual reconnaissance remains the primary mission.

5. (U) TRAINING: During this reporting period, the squadron had maximum participation in all allocated school courses. All new in-country replacements received training at the 1st Infantry Division Replacement Training Center, located at DiAn.

a. All training within the squadron was conducted with no loss in the operational status of the unit.

b. Training days - 0
Tactical moves - 1
Operational days - 92

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AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

c. School quotas filled by squadron during the period:

OH6A Airframe	4
T-63 Engine	6
T-53-L-13 Engine	2
Escape and Evasion	1
Aircraft Armament Subsystems - Enlisted	1
UH1H Airframe	1
AH1G Airframe	2
In-Country Replacement Training	147
AH1G Transition	1
OH6A Transition	2
Instructor Pilot - OH6A	3
Instructor Pilot - AH1G	2
Instructor Pilot - UH1H	1

6. (c) LOGISTICS:

c. AMMUNITION TYPE

ROUNDS EXPENDED

Ctg. 5.56mm Ball	36,731
Ctg. 7.62mm 4 Ball 1 Tracer M-60	182,032
Ctg. 7.62mm Mini-gun	996,185
Ctg. Cal .45 Ball	350
Ctg. 50 Cal Inc	2,900
Ctg. 40mm Illum WS Para	55
Ctg. 40mm HE	291
Ctg. 40mm HE Cobra	53,019
Ctg. 81mm Mortar, Illum	117
Ctg. 81mm Mortar Srk, WP	227
Ctg. 81mm Mortar HE	1,130
Ctg. 106mm RR HEP-T	18
Fuze, Gren, Hand, Offensive	823
Gren, Hand, Frag M-33	139
Gren, Hand, Frag, M26A1	517
Gren, Hand, Incendiary	140
Gren, Hand, Offensive	948
Gren, Hand, Srk, HC	248
Gren, Hand, Srk, WP	2,151
Gren, Hand, Srk, Yellow	758
Gren, Hand, Srk, Green	490
Gren, Hand, Srk, Red	517
Gren, Hand, Srk, Violet	744
Gren, Hand, Srk, CS	159
Rkt 2.75IN Flechette	240
Rkt 2.75IN Heat	120
Rkt 2.75IN 17 lb VT	211

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operation 1 Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMLA)

Rkt 2.75IN 10 lb VT	224
Rkt 2.75IN 10 lb HE	21,013
Rkt 2.75IN 17 lb HE	3,326
Rkt 2.75IN Motor	44
Mino, Anti-Personnel, Claymore	12
Signal, Illum, Ground WS/Para	30
Flare, Illum A/C	17
Charge, Demo, BIK, C-4	7 1/2 lbs
Charge, Demo, BIK, TNT 1 & 4 lb	353 ft
Cap, Blasting, Non - Electric	353
Fuze, Blasting Time	10 ft

b. AIRCRAFT STATUS: Squadron aircraft status at the end of the reporting period was as follows:

Aircraft	Authorized	On Hand
UH-1H	29	24
AH-1G	27	26
OH-6A	30	27

(See Inclosure 8)

7. (U) SAFETY:

a. During the reporting period there were six accidents involving squadron aircraft. A brief account of these accidents follows:

(1) B Troop, AH-1G, 1 May 1969: Aircraft had just taken off and was on climb out. Witness said aircraft began a rapid decent, appeared to level out at tree top and then crashed into trees and caught fire. The cause was determined to be pilot error.

(2) B Troop, AH-1G, 1 May 1969: Aircraft in cruise flight yawed left, engine tach dropped to zero. Entered autorotation and was unable to jettison external stores. Autorotation unsuccessful, landed hard and rolled on left side. Failure of atomizer. The primary cause of the accident was pilot error with a contributing cause of atomizer failure.

(3) C Troop, OH-6A, 12 May 1969: At approximately 75 feet and 50 knots, RPM surged causing rotor overspeed, the pilot pulled in power to counter the overspeed. Aircraft then lost power and pilot was forced to land in a thinly wooded area. One main rotor blade, tail rotor assembly, tail rotor drive shaft, tail boom and main rotor head damaged beyond repair. The cause of the accident was high side governor failure.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. PCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

(4) C Troop, OH-6A, 16 May 1969: Aircraft was on a low level VR. RPM blew off and pilot tried to regain his RPM. RPM continued to bleed off and aircraft settled into the trees causing STRIKE damage. The cause was determined as a low side governor failure.

(5) A Troop, AH-1G, 9 June 1969: Aircraft was at about 150 feet approaching Bearcat for fuel. Aircraft was seen to make a climbing left turn and appeared to enter autorotation. Aircraft settled into 40 foot rubber trees, tail first. Aircraft was evacuated to Cu Chi. The cause was pilot error due to fuel exhaustion.

(6) C Troop, OH-6A, 13 June 1969: Aircraft was flying straight and level when it started to receive fire. Pilot made a descending S turn in an attempt to fly low level. Aircraft did not recover at level flight, hit the trees and crashed. Pilot was dead when rescue personnel arrived. The cause of the accident is classified as unknown.

b. SAFETY RECORD (MAY, JUNE, JULY)

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TOTAL HOURS</u>	<u>ACCIDENTS</u>	<u>RATE</u>
HHT	977	C	00.0
A	6107	1	16.8
B	6126	2	32.5
C	6108	3	49.1
3/17 ACS	19318	6	31.0

c. SUMMARY: The squadron completed FY 69 with an accident rate of 46.1 per 100,000 flying hours. This is a great reduction from the rate of 52.3 for the first half of FY 69. This is due, largely, to command emphasis within the squadron.

8. (U) CIVIC ACTION:

a. The squadron continues to emphasize civic action projects. Main efforts are concentrated in aid to Bethany Orphanage located in Ho Nai, Bien Hoa Province. Bethany is the home of some 125 parentless children and faces a constant struggle to obtain food, clothing, and adequate shelters for housing and schooling. The squadron continues to help the orphanage along these lines.

b. The squadron has donated approximately 195,290 VN\$ to a building fund administered by the 12th Combat Aviation Group Chaplain. This money is being used to help pay for a new stone and brick classroom building at the orphanage. This replaces an antiquated wood structure now being used. These donations come through contributions on payday and through the Chapel offerings.

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AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

c. Approximately 8000 pounds of food, 80 pounds of clothing, and 15 pounds of health items have been taken to the orphanage in addition to 100 health kits and 100 school kits.

d. One hundred children from the orphanage were brought to 3/17 Headquarters in DiAn for a day of entertainment. Each child was provided a soldier for the day. The children were fed, given toys, and taken to a carnival of games sponsored by Headquarters, A and C Troops. Each child was also presented a picture of himself/herself piloting a static helicopter. The day ended with a program of native songs and dances by the children.

e. Plans for the future include:

- (1) Building 90 desks and benches for the new classrooms.
- (2) Acquisition of a pump for use at the newly-drilled well.
- (3) Continued financial aid for the new building.
- (4) Continued food and material assistance.
- (5) Another visit to DiAn by the children.

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AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMTA)

SECTION 2

Lessons Learned

Commander's observations, evaluations, recommendations, and command actions.

1. (U) PERSONNEL:

a. **OBSERVATION:** There has been a shortage of critical personnel during the periods of increased rotation. Constant monitoring must be made of personnel rotations to preclude losses in excess of accepted standards.

EVALUATION: During a unit's first year in country it is imperative that a carefully planned infusion program be instituted to evenly distribute personnel losses. However, peak rotational periods will continue to appear during the second year in country as a result of these infusion programs. The following program was instituted by this squadron in its second year in country to equally distribute its losses. As new personnel arrive in the squadron, a review is made of each troop's strength by MOS. Projected peak periods of rotation in this MOS and closely related MOS's are checked. After those two factors are considered, the new individual will be assigned to the troop which has a rotational peak month in this particular MOS. Simultaneously an individual from the same troop with a like MOS and with a DEROS in the peak month is re-assigned to another troop. This process is very desirable in that it creates a minimum of personnel turbulence since only one man is displaced. After only a few months of application, each troop should reach a point of equilibrium in personnel losses.

RECOMMENDATION: Active programs as described above should be carried out to level rotational peaks within units rather than relying entirely on infusions to correct peak losses.

COMMAND ACTION: The above described program has been initiated by this squadron.

b. **OBSERVATION:** There is a shortage of communications personnel within the squadron.

EVALUATION: Each troop communications section is vital to the success of the tactical mission in that it must be capable of performing a dual role of command and control for each troop and providing the squadron with timely and accurate intelligence. Each air cavalry troop is presently authorized six communications personnel. The squadron is presently operating at 75% of its authorized communications personnel.

RECOMMENDATION: That emphasis be placed on this shortage through command channels in an attempt to supply units with their authorized communications personnel. It is further recommended that units assigned intelligence gathering missions receive priority in the assignment of communications personnel.

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AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMLA)

COMMAND ACTION: The squadron S1 and communications officer have made continuous efforts through command channels to obtain communications personnel which the squadron is authorized.

2. (C) OPERATIONS:

OBSERVATION: During the period of time covered by this ORLL, it was observed by the scout pilots that an overall change of enemy anti-aircraft tactics are being employed in certain areas of operation. While operating in the vicinity of the Vam Co Dong River from XS 4799 to XT 4308, it was noticed that a much higher percentage of aircraft hits were sustained in proportion to the number of contacts made. Battle damage was characterized by multiple hits taken, often five to fifteen hits, as opposed to a usually much lower number averaged during previous operations in the same area. It was noticed that enemy fire was taken at much closer range than previously experienced, and that usually two or three automatic weapons were employed from the same area rather than from dispersed positions. Sporadic fires from dispersed positions had been the previous enemy tactic. The most noticeable characteristic of the new aircraft engagement methods is that the concentrated fire is delivered from the loft front of the aircraft and from a point almost directly below the aircraft when a crew chief/gunner is utilized in the right rear seat.

EVALUATION: Due to the consistent level of battle damage sustained as a result of the new methods of engagement, it is assumed the enemy has been better trained in anti-aircraft tactics. Because of the frequency of contacts made during reconnaissance missions, it is believed that the enemy has been encouraged to engage aircraft more aggressively than in the past.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that evasive tactics and contact methods as employed by hunter-killer teams be emphasized and that pilots be informed of the new methods of engagement.

COMMAND ACTION: Hunter-Killer tactics were immediately reviewed by the scout pilots as a result of the changing nature of enemy contact methods. Higher airspeed during low-level reconnaissance was initiated as well as more defensive maneuvering in the area of operation.

3. (U) TRAINING: None

4. (U) INTELLIGENCE: None

5. (U) LOGISTICS AND MAINTENANCE:

a. OBSERVATION: It has been observed that the armament control panel lights in the gunners cockpit of the AH-1G are too bright for night flying when the instrument lights are adjusted to a satisfactory level of intensity.

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CONFIDENTIAL

AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

EVALUATION: Since the AH-1G is frequently used for night missions, maximum night vision for the gunner is absolutely necessary. The present single-rheostat system in the gunner's cockpit is used for controlling the intensity of both the flight instruments and the armament control panel lighting systems. When the flight instrument lights are adjusted to the proper level of intensity, armament control panel lights are too bright. Conversely, when the armament control panel lights are dimmed to an acceptable level, the intensity of the flight instrument lights is not sufficient.

RECOMMENDATION: That a separate rheostat for the flight instruments and the armament control panel be installed in the AH-1G. This would allow each system to be separately regulated to a satisfactory intensity of brightness.

COMMAND ACTION: An EIR has been submitted for this modification.

b. OBSERVATION: Due to the lack of a UHF Radio Control Head in the front seat of the AH-1G, the pilot/gunner of an AH-1G cannot change the frequencies on the UHF radio.

EVALUATION: In an emergency situation, a radio is of utmost importance. If the aircraft commander were to be incapacitated, the pilot would have to take control of the aircraft. As a minimum, he should have the capability of changing to the UHF guard radio frequency, so that an emergency could be declared.

RECOMMENDATION: That a remote control head for the UHF radio be factory installed in the front seat of the AH-1G to enable the pilot/gunner to change the frequency of the UHF radio.

COMMAND ACTION: All tactical radios in the AH-1G are kept on troop frequencies whenever possible so the pilot/gunner can always reach a station on either FM or UHF in an emergency. An EIR has been submitted through channels to have a remote control head installed in the gunners cockpit.

c. OBSERVATION: There is a shortage of barrier filters for the OH-6A aircraft.

EVALUATION: This shortage in the supply of barrier filters subtracts from the safety margin of the aircraft and reduces its combat effectiveness. The filters are in critical demand as they wear out much sooner when used in the OH-6A during a normal scout mission. This is due to the dust and FOD accumulated during low level flight. As the filters become worn and accumulate dirt, there is a reduction in air intake. It is believed that this is a contributing cause of recent fuel control problems in the OH-6A.

RECOMMENDATION: That an effort be made to increase the supply of barrier filters to units which continually use the OH-6A for low level flight. A satisfactory supply would be to have two barrier filters for each OH-6A. This would allow the OH-6A crew chief to rotate the filters each day and properly clean the one not in use.

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AVGC-B

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(ITC-WAALWA)

COMMAND ACTION: All efforts have been made by squadron maintenance through supply channels to obtain additional barrier filters.

d. OBSERVATION: The present attitude indicator in the OH-6A aircraft is not adequate to withstand the stresses of continuous visual reconnaissance operations required of this type unit.

EVALUATION: The structural limitations of the present OH-6A attitude indicator apparently cannot withstand the continuous unusual attitudes, rapid movements, and "G" forces exerted on the aircraft during normal visual reconnaissance missions. These conditions result in excessive precession of the gyro, instability of the gyro mechanism, and a faulty attitude indication. Incorrect attitude indication is a flight safety hazard which becomes extremely critical during night flight and inadvertent IFR conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: That the present attitude indicator in the OH-6A be modified or replaced by one which is structurally capable of withstanding the stresses of continuous visual reconnaissance missions.

COMMAND ACTION: An EIR has been submitted by this squadron.

6. (U) ORGANIZATION: None

8 INCLOSURES

1. Unit Organization
2. Unit Locations
3. Unit Strengths
4. Awards & Decorations
5. Friendly Losses
6. Operations Map
7. Operational Results
8. Aircraft Status



ROBERT A. ARNET
LTC, Armor
Commanding

Incls 1 - 6 wd HQ, DA

DISTRIBUTION:

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- 3 - Commanding General, USARV
- 5 - Commanding Officer, 1st Avn Bde
- 15 - S3 3/17 Cav

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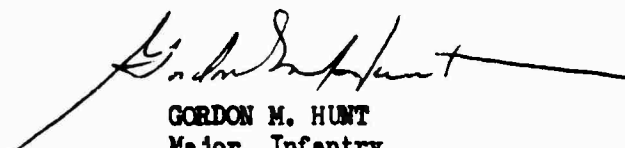
AVBACA-SC (31 Jul 69) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air
Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 12TH AVIATION GROUP (COMBAT), APO 96266 24 August 1969

TO: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266

In accordance with USARV Reg 525-15, the Operational Report - Lessons
Learned of the 3/17th Air Cavalry Squadron, for the period ending
31 July 1969, is forwarded.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



GORDON M. HUNT
Major, Infantry
Adjutant

AVFBC-RE-H (3 Sep 69) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry
for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (UIC-WAAMAA)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 5 SEP 1969

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

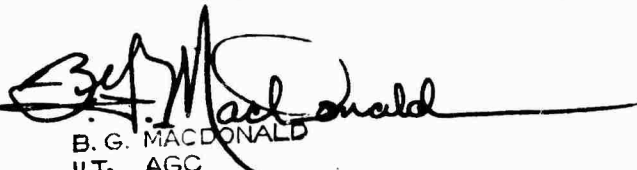
Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVBGC(DST), APO 96375

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

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

This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with the Operational Report -
Lessons Learned of the 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for the period ending
31 July 1969.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


B.G. MACDONALD
ILT, AGC
Asst AG

AVBAGC-O (31 Jul 69) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air
Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384 SEP 1969

THRU: 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

1. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and concurs with the
contents as indorsed.

2. The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Section I, paragraph 7a, page 11 and 12, submits brief discussions
of unit aircraft accidents. Records kept by this headquarters indicate
that the unit experienced 7 accidents during the reported period. The
omitted accident occurred on 7 Jun 69. An OH-6A crashed and was destroyed
when the observer dropped an armed white phosphorous grenade inside the
aircraft. The 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry recognizes the omission of
this accident from this report.

b. Section I, paragraph 7b, page 12, addresses the safety record for
May, June and July. Accident statistics in paragraph 7b should be changed
as follows to incorporate the accident stated in paragraph 2a above:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ACCIDENTS</u>	<u>RATE</u>
B	3	49.0
3/17 ACS		36.3

c. Section I, paragraph 7c, page 12, summarizes the accident rate for
the 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry for FY 69.

(1) The accident rate for the 3/17 ACS for FY 69 adjusted to include
the accident stated in paragraph 2a above is 43.8 per 100,000 flying hours.

(2) The 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry has been informed of the revised
rates.

AVBACC-O (31 Jul 69) 3d Ind **SEP 1969**
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air
Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

d. Section II, paragraph 1b, page 14, addresses personnel shortages. No valid evaluation can be made regarding the shortage of communications personnel since the frame of reference is too vague to facilitate any judgment. This unit has been advised to submit specific MOS's for evaluation and possible corrective action by this headquarters.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ARTHUR W. LITTLE
CPT AGC
Asst AG.

CF
3/17th ACS

AVHGC-DST (31 July 1969) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of 3d Squadron, 17th Air
Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (RL)
(UIC-WAAMAA)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 2 2 SEP 1969

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 July 1969 from Headquarters, 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry.
2. Reference item concerning "There has been a shortage of critical personnel during the periods of increased rotation," section II, page 14, paragraph 1a; concur. Infusion programs accomplished by using personnel from the replacement stream is a valid solution in resolving a rotational hump. Such a system is used by this headquarters in accordance with the USARV Controlled Infusion Program.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



C. D. WILSON
1LT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
3d/17th Air Cav
1st Avn Bde

GPOP-DT (31 Jul 69) 5th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 3d Squadron, 17th Air
Cavalry for Period Ending 31 July 1969, RCS
CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 29 SEP 69

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

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


C. L. SHORT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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HEADQUARTERS
3D SQUADRON 17TH CAVALRY
QUARTER ENDING
31 Jul 59

Pl 7

OPERATIONAL RESULTS, QUARTERLY ORLL

UNIT	Sorties Flown	Troops Lifted	Cargo Tons	Enemy KIA	Structures Dest	Stamps Dest	Aircraft Confirmed Strike	Aircraft Damaged
HQ TROOP	977	1941	26	0	0	0	0	0
A TROOP	6066	7193	6	60	5	188	3	15
B TROOP	5982	5922	0	297	19	91	6	35
C TROOP	5943	246	34	247	1	56	3	16
D TROOP	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
3/17 CAV	18968	15302	66	604	25	343	12	66

AIRCRAFT LOSS AND DAMAGE:

A Troop	Aircraft Loss:	OH6A - 2, AH1G - 1, UH1E - 0	Aircraft Damage:	OH6A - 9 AH1G - 3 UH1E - 3
B TROOP	Aircraft Loss:	OH6A - 5, AH1G - 1, UH1E - 0	Aircraft Damage:	OH6A - 23 AH1G - 8 UH1E - 4
C TROOP	Aircraft Loss:	OH6A - 3, AH1G - 0, UH1E - 0	Aircraft Damage:	OH6A - 11 AH1G - 4 UH1E - 1
D TROOP	Aircraft Loss:	UH1H - 0	Aircraft Damage:	UH1E - 0

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HEADQUARTERS
3D SQUADRON 17TH CAVALRY
QUARTER ENDING
31 Jul 69

AIRCRAFT STATUS, QUARTERLY ORLL

SUBORDINATE UNIT	<u>UH1H</u>		<u>OH6A</u>		<u>AH1G</u>	
	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>O/H</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>O/H</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>O/H</u>
HQ TROOP	5	5	0	0	0	0
A TROOP	8	7	10	9	9	8
B TROOP	8	6	10	9	9	9
C TROOP	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>
SQDN TOTAL	29	24	30	27	27	26

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

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		3b. GROUP
		4
3. REPORT TITLE		
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Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 May 69 to 31 July 69.		
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CO, 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry		
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26

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