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GDS per DoD 5200.1-r; Adjutant General's Office [Army] ltr dtd 29 Apr 1980

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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (16 Apr 70) FOR OT UT 701174 22 April 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group (Combat), Period Ending 31 January 1970 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

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contents
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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 4b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, 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
as

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MAY 15 1970

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 12TH AVIATION GROUP (COMBAT)
APO San Francisco 96266

AVBACA-SC

11 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group
(Combat) for Period Ending 31 January 1970 (MCS CSFOR-65)
(RI)(U)

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1. (C) Operations: Significant Activities.

a. General:

(1) The 12th Aviation Group (Combat) activities during this reporting period had only a few significant changes from the previous reporting period. The aircraft support package remained essentially the same except for two evaluations that were conducted, one a thirty (30) day evaluation of division level management of assault helicopter company assets, and the other a ninety (90) day evaluation of maximum sustained productivity of assault helicopter companies and air cavalry troops at 100% TO&E strength.

(2) The statistical results of the 12th AG(C) aviation activities during the period are shown below:

(a) Rotary Wing	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Hours	39,122	43,187	41,358	123,667
Troops Lifted	205,428	224,153	206,932	636,513
Tons Cargo	27,811	31,179	27,593	86,583

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(b) Fixed Wing	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Hours	8,094	8,372	10,352	26,818
Troops Lifted	3,122	2,996	2,849	8,967
Tons Cargo	126	147	142	415

(c) Crewmember
Casualties

Crewmembers WIA	21	28	15	64
Crewmembers KIA	13	5	1	19
Crewmembers MIA	2	0	0	2

(d) Enemy Killed by Air 316 346 305 . 967

b. Mission: No change.

c. Organization:

(1) "D" Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry was relocated from Bien Hoa Air Base (Army) to Di An 31 December 1969.

(2) "A" Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry was placed OFCON to DMAC IV CTZ on 3 January 1970.

(3) See attached organizational chart and stationing list (Incl 1 & 2).

d. Personnel:

(1) On 15 Nov 69 COL JOHN C. HUGHES replaced COL LEO D. TURNER as Commanding Officer, 12th AG(C).

(2) On 17 Nov 69 LTC ROBERT W. HUEBNER assumed duties as Group Executive Officer vacating the S-3 slot which LTC GORDON T. CAREY filled.

(3) On 10 Jan 70 M.J WILLIAM H. LUTHER assumed duties of S-1, replacing M.J RONALD C. VINES.

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(4) On 11 Jan 70 MAJ ROY G. ELLINGTON assumed duties of S-2 replacing MAJ JIMMY J. MCGRAW.

(5) On 14 Jan 70 LTC ROBERT D. BAETZ assumed duties of S-3 replacing LTC GORDON T. CAREY.

(6) On 19 Jan 70 CSM JAMES A. TAYLOR replaced CSM HAROLD L'VENDER as Sergeant Major of 12th AG(C).

e. Unit Strength: Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group (Combat) as of 31 January 1970:

(1) Military:

Officers		WO		EM		TOTAL	
Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H
26	28	1	9	69	141	96	178

(2) Civilians:

D/C		VN		3rd Nat'l		Contractor		TOTAL	
Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H
0	1*	8	8	0	0	0	1**	8	10

* AVCOM - Attached

** Lycoming - Attached

f. Aircraft Status: As of 31 January 1970:

	UH-1D/H	OH-6A
TOE	0	3
*1st Avn Bde	2	2
Fill Goal		
On Hand	1/1	0

g. Training: No change.

*Ltr, HQ 1st Avn Bde, Subj: Aircraft Authorization, dtd 3 Sep 69

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(R2) (U)

h. Security and Intelligence: The S-2 Section developed two situations this quarter from which we were able to learn a great deal about the enemy and his current activity.

(1) The S-2 Section initiated the use of a daily intelligence map. The map is posted in all 12th AG(C) units and contains information received from 11 Field Force Vietnam. The three reports on the map are "Sniffer", Red Haze (Infrared), and Other Intelligence Reports. The coordinates are posted at S-2, Headquarters, 12th AG(C), and then teletyped direct to each battalion/squadron. We have found the intelligence map to be an effective means around which commanders can plan missions and operations. All 12th AG(C) pilots can use the information to plan routes of flight, safe altitudes, and to always be aware of heavy enemy concentration.

(2) The S-2 Section conducted a study of the possible relationship between North and South Vietnamese holidays and high points in enemy activity. The study revealed that TET, Ho Chi Minh's birthday, Election Day, and the seasonal festivals were all holidays to which 1969 high points in enemy activity could be related. The study was reproduced, distributed to company level, and became a regularly scheduled troop briefing.

(3) S-2 Statistics:

(a) The classified repository and distribution facility operated by the S-2 Section processed approximately 16,583 incoming and outgoing pieces of CONFIDENTIAL material and 65 incoming and outgoing SECRET documents.

(b) During the period, a total of 165 security clearances were processed.

1. Safety:

(1) During this reporting period, the 12th AG(C) accident rate decreased substantially. The group experienced twelve accidents in November, four in December, and five in January. The rates during these months were 25.0, 7.9, and 10.0 respectively. There has been a significant decrease in all types of accidents, especially pilot error, during this reporting period. There has also been a decrease

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in fatal accidents and strike accidents. The emphasis on aviation safety has increased in the 12th AG(C) with the implementation of the profile concept. With the profile, units evaluate their aviators, checking such areas as judgement, maturity, attitude, skill, and fatigue. Also, Battalion Commanders review their accidents with the Group Commander. All aspects of the accident are discussed with the Battalion Commander explaining actions taken to preclude future accidents of this type.

(2) The 12th AG(C) had one mid-air collision during this reporting period, causing four fatalities. During this reporting period there were ten accidents as a result of pilot error and eleven accidents due to material failure. The weather during this reporting period was good. Emphasis is being placed on areas of operation where dust is a problem. All units are evaluating their respective areas of operation and are taking action to suppress dust where it is or could become a hazard to safe flight. The 12th AG(C) has also set up a color slide briefing for all incoming aviators. This briefing is comprehensive and starts the aviator out with a positive attitude concerning flying safety in RVN.

j. Logistics: No change.

k. Medical:

(1) During the latter half of November and the entire month of December, the group was operating with sixty percent of its normal strength of flight surgeons. Most of those on the job were relatively new in-country. This resulted in some compromise in aero-medical and sanitation surveillance, a situation which should be avoided in the future. During January sufficient replacements arrived in-country to fill all critical positions.

(2) Conferences are now being held monthly for all flight surgeons to facilitate exchange of information and dissemination of policy changes from this headquarters. Separate monthly conferences are also being held for the medical NCO's and medical records specialists in an attempt to improve medical administration and reporting of medical statistical data.

(3) During this quarter, a 12th AG(C) Environmental Sanitation

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Form was distributed to all commanders and surgeons. This form provides a standardized means of assessment of sanitary conditions; and provides specific guidance, with references, for corrective action. It is to be used monthly by flight surgeons for inspections in each unit.

(4) Medical personnel have been assisting all units in monitoring the effectiveness of their malaria prophylaxis programs through the use of the Wilson-Edeson Urinary Chloroquine Test.

(5) During January, this office was able to demonstrate concrete indicators of significant fatigue in one aviation unit within the group. This was accomplished through the use of medical statistical data, and served to indicate the importance of such data in continuous aero-medical surveillance.

1. Religious Activities:

(1) The Chaplains in group total seven. All battalions are covered by their Chaplain and these positions are TO&E. Additional coverage for denominational groups not represented by the assigned Chaplain is provided by Chaplains in neighboring units.

(2) Troop visitation and contact by Chaplains continues to be emphasized this quarter. As required, all replacement and rotating enlisted personnel are interviewed by their Chaplain. Office hours for counseling are scheduled, and appointments are made as required.

(3) Aviation units have the unique responsibility of erratic work loads and unscheduled work hours. Opportunities for worship are less frequent than other men in Vietnam. Duty sections are often smaller and scattered. As a partial answer to this situation, a new program titled "Prime Time For God" will be starting in February. This program will call for a shift of emphasis from Sunday morning services to worship/fellowship gatherings in the evenings. By scheduling the services outside normal duty hours, it is hoped more personnel will be able to attend.

(4) The Group Chaplain has frequently visited the Battalion Chaplains and all the company areas to provide supervision, coordination, and support for Chaplain activities. Each month one of the battalions host a Character Guidance Briefing and Training Conference for all Chaplains in group.

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(5) Chaplain activities in group for this quarter can be summarized as follows:

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>OCCASION</u>	<u>CHANGE FROM LAST QUARTER</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u>
Group Worship	551	+17%	15,699
Religious Education	260	+ 7%	3,276
Pastoral Visits (Includes Counseling)	17,784	+73%	N/A
Character Guidance	159	+31%	17,295
Civic Action	233	+73%	N/A

(6) Increases in all these figures is to be expected. The outstanding increase in the category of Pastoral Visits is indicative of an increased activity by the Chaplains in meeting and contacting the men as they work and live. Increased emphasis is also being given to hospital visits by the Chaplains, and the Group Chaplain accompanies the Group Commander to all memorial services possible.

m. Signal:

(1) During the quarter, the group Signal Office continued normal signal functions. The Group SOI was possibly compromised on 4 December 1969 due to loss of an aircraft containing an SOI. The reserve SOI was successfully put into effect by midnight of the day of possible compromise.

(2) The use of secure voice equipment (NESTOR) was the main significant activity of the quarter. Surveys revealed a gross lack of utilization of available equipment. An aggressive indoctrination and instructional program, coupled with strong command emphasis has significantly increased the use of secure voice equipment.

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

a. Personnel: None.

b. Intelligence: None.

c. Operations:

(1) Evaluation of Assault Helicopter Companies at 100% TOE Strength

(a) OBSERVATION: The aircraft availability in the 116th AHC and 118th AHC showed a steady decline during the 100% fill evaluation.

(b) EVALUATION: The 100% fill evaluation being conducted by 12th AG(C) to determine how many hours an assault helicopter company can fly has resulted in the 116th AHC and 118th AHC flying over 3600 hours during the first 30 days of the 90-day evaluation. During this time, the 116th AHC had the most significant drop in aircraft availability rate, from a high of 84% to a present 68%. The high flying program by both companies has resulted in an increase in Periodic Inspections and more significantly, in unscheduled maintenance.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the flying hours be reduced in both companies to a more manageable level of approximately 3000 to 3100 hours per month.

(d) COMMAND ACTION TAKEN: A meeting was held between 12th AG(C), 25th Infantry Division, 3/9th Infantry Division, and II Field Force Vietnam, and an agreement was reached to limit the flying hours and aircraft committed per day.

(2) US Army Aviation Firing Incidents

(a) OBSERVATION: Some ground unit commanders, platoon leaders, platoon sergeants, patrol leaders, etc., have called for US Army helicopter fire support when in close contact with enemy forces without adequate knowledge of the helicopter gunships' ordnance capabilities and inherent dangers.

(b) EVALUATION: This unit has experienced three (3) US Army aviation firing incidents during this reporting period which can be directly attributed to the supported ground element calling for fire support too close to their positions without realizing the minimum safe firing distances and inherent dangers of the ordnances involved, especially the 2.75 inch

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group
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folding fin aerial rocket. Suppressive fire by aerial rockets has been requested at distances from friendly positions that are within the lethal range of the warhead involved. Fire support has also been requested in close proximity to friendly positions located in heavily wooded areas where employment of aerial rockets can produce ricochets and air bursts which greatly increase the radius of the beaten zone and lethal effects of the weapon.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That personnel responsible in support ground units for requesting and directing US Army aviation fire support be trained in the capabilities and limitations of helicopter gunship ordnance.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: All aviators of this command will be repeatedly reminded of the capabilities and inherent dangers of helicopter weapons systems and their employment. The Group SOP is being revised to include minimum safe firing distances and employment of all weapons systems of this command.

(3) Decrease in Accident Rate

(a) OBSERVATION: The 12th AG(C) set a record for the lowest accident rate in a calendar month during the month of December 1969, with a 7.9 rate and four (4) accidents.

(b) EVALUATION: Increased emphasis on aviation safety through the profile concept along with the comprehensive in-country briefing of all incoming aviators appear to be the prime reasons for the significant decrease in aircraft accidents within the group.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That continued emphasis be placed in the above mentioned areas along with aviation maintenance and the standardization program to insure the lowest accident rate possible.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Battalion Commanders meet with the Group Commander to discuss each of their accidents and explain actions taken to preclude recurrence. Well-done letters are sent to aviators who successfully negotiate in-flight emergencies.

d. Organization: None.

e. Training: None.

f. Logistics: None.

g. Communications:

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(1) Use of Point of Origin Codes and Shackle Codes

(a) OBSERVATION: The use of Point of Origin Codes and Shackle Codes as taught at USAVNS proves to be an insecure means of encoding numerals and map coordinates. Recent capture of an enemy radio intercept team reveals that these codes are readily "broken" by the enemy.

(b) EVALUATION: The use of such "low level" codes is unauthorized, and leads to a false sense of security. Their use evolved over the years as an expediency and are currently being taught at USAVNS.

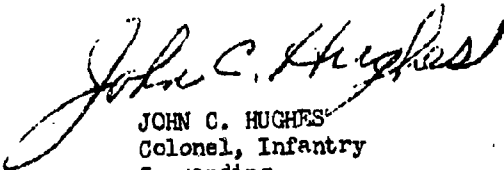
(c) RECOMMENDATION: The Aviation School should teach, demonstrate, and use authorized KAC Codes during the tactics phase of instruction. Use of "low level" codes should be prohibited Vietnam-wide.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: The Director of Instruction, USAVNS, has been informed of this observation. The authorized KAC codes have been distributed in sufficient quantities to all subordinate units within 12th AG(C). Command Letter, subject Communications Security, dated 20 January 1970, directs the use of the KAC codes and prohibits the use of Point of Origin Codes and Shackle Codes.

h. Material: None.

i. Other: None.

2 Incl
as
Incl 2 wd HQ, DA


JOHN C. HUGHES
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

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- 2 - CINCUSARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558
- 2 - CG, 1st Avn Bde, ATTN: AVBAGC, APO 96384 (INFO)

AVFBC-RE-H (11 Feb 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group (Combat)
for Period Ending 31 January 1970 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R2) (U)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 2 MAR 1970

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

Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC(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 Headquarters, 12th Combat Aviation Group for the period
ending 31 January 1970.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



B. G. MACDONALL
ILT, AGC
Asst AG

AVBAGC-0 (15 Feb 70) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group (Combat)
for Period Ending 31 January 1970 (RCS CSFOR-65) (RI) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384 12 MAR 1970

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375
Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
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.

2. The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Paragraph 1k(5), page 6, discusses the use of medical statistical
data as indicators of fatigue. There is no standard, reproducible test
of fatigue for field use. The conclusions drawn and action taken were
probably correct for the 116th Assault Helicopter Company, but they were
based on a comparison of medical data before and after an operational test
designed to push men and machines to their maximum. No new method of
measuring fatigue has developed that could be applied to the Brigade pop-
ulation on a continuing basis.

b. Inclosure 1, the 273d Heavy Helicopter Company is shown as an
Assault Support Helicopter Company.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ARTHUR W. LITTLE
CPT AGC
Asst AGC


AVHGC-DST (11Feb70) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group (Combat)
for the Period Ending 31 January 1970 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R1) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 20 MAR 1970

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

This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1970 from Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group (Combat) and concurs with the comments of indorsing headquarters.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


L. D. MURRAY
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
12th Avn Gp (Cbt)
HQ 1st Avn Bde

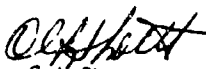
GPOP-DT (11 Feb 70) 4th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 12th Aviation Group (Combat) for
Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 31 MAR 1970

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. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
AMM AG

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