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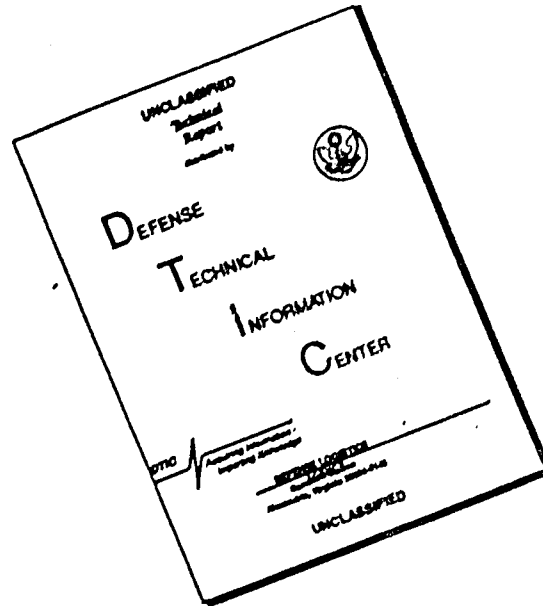
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310**



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (21 Sep 70)

FOR OT UT 702058

28 September 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 269th
Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1970 (U)

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 4b, AR 525-15. Information of actions initiated as a result of subject report should be forwarded to ACSFOR OT UT 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**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 269TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)
APO 96353
"DISCIPLINED PROFESSIONALS"

AVBACA-F-SC

14 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat) for the period 1 February through 30 April 1970 (U)

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1. Operations: Significant Activities

a. (U) Mission: During this reporting period there has been no change in the 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat) Mission.

b. (U) Organization: During this reporting period there has been no change in the organization of the 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat), present organization attached as Inclosure 1.

c. (C) Personalities:

(1) Commander: Lieutenant Colonel Joseph A. Josh, 304 30 9881, Infantry, no change.

(2) Staff: The principal Staff Officers during the reporting period were:

(a) Executive Officer: Major William E. Oakes, 414 56 7171, Armor, who replaced Major Walter D. Alexander on 28 April 1970, who replaced Major George A. Morgan on 6 March 1970.

(b) S-1: Captain Jeffery H. Thomason, 059 32 6137, Infantry, who replaced Captain Richard J. Ryan on 23 February 1970.

(c) S-2: Captain Joseph E. Saunders, 558 62 4227, Air Defense Artillery, who replaced Captain Robert W. Laycock on 2 April 1970.

(d) S-3: Major Paul L. Joplin, 431 74 2166, Air Defense Artillery, who replaced Major Walter D. Alexander on 13 March 1970, who replaced Captain Jeffery H. Thomason on 23 February 1970.

(e) S-4: Captain Robert Dowling, 263 88 6783, Infantry, who replaced Captain George P. McGee on 20 April 1970.

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(3) Subordinate Unit Commanders:

(a) Headquarters Company: Captain Glenn J. Bricker, 169 28 1309, Field Artillery, who replaced Captain Heyward C. Sauls on 16 March 1970.

(b) 116th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter): Major Gerald R. Kunde, 394 34 6505, Infantry, no change.

(c) 187th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter): Major John R. Gantt, 413 50 6015, Signal Corps, who replaced Major Purvis L. Parker on 7 February 1970.

(d) 242nd Aviation Company (Assault Support Helicopter): Major Allan W. Hammerback, 437 36 1031, Field Artillery, no change.

d. (C) Personnel and Administration:

(1) Maintenance of Unit strength: The total battalion strength as of 30 April 1970, is shown as inclosure 2. A summary of projected losses during the next 90 days is shown below.

Summary of Losses for the Next 90 day periods

	MAY	JUNE	JULY
Officers	9	5	4
Warrant Officers	6	5	6
ENLISTED	32	53	57

(2) Replacements have been requisitioned in accordance with current directives. The replacement program has functioned smoothly in regard to number of personnel authorized, but has not functioned properly in regard to MOS replacement. A lack of properly trained personnel has resulted in an extensive, "On The Job" training program, which not only denies us school trained personnel in key positions, but takes men away from work for which they are better qualified. During this quarter DEIOS dates for officers were advanced as much as 10 days; and for EN as much as 35 days. This was done to reduce the overall strength figure within USARV by 15 April 1970 and resulted in critical MOS shortages in some areas. Below is a summary of personnel gains and losses during the period 1 February 1970 to 30 April 1970.

(a) Assignments:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
21	43	270

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(b) Detention to CONUS:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
25	38	207

(c) Casualties Returned to Duty:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
1	1	3

(d) Casualties Evacuated:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
0	1	2

(e) Killed in Actions:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
0	0	0

(f) **KILLED:** Not as a result of hostile actions:

<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
0	0	0

(3) Reenlistments: During this quarter 3 personnel reenlisted in the battalion.

(4) Promotions: Promotions during this quarter were as follows:

<u>CPT</u>	<u>1LT</u>	<u>CW2</u>	<u>E-8</u>	<u>E-7</u>	<u>E-6</u>	<u>E-5</u>	<u>E-4</u>
7	2	24	0	1	5	87	102

(5) Reassignments: 31 enlisted personnel were administratively reclassified during the quarter. The primary reason for this action was upgrading of MOS skills, adjustments in MOS to jobs performed, and enlisted promotions.

(6) Retirements: There were no retirements although there was one reversion to retired status during the quarter.

(7) Civilian Personnel: There has been no change in the civilian personnel program administered by the battalion. Permanent hire personnel levels continue to be allocated by 12th Aviation Group (Cbt) IAW USARV Regulation 690-7.

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(8) Awards and Ceremonies: Twenty-three (23) awards ceremonies have been held during the quarter. A change of command was held on 16 March 1970 in which CPT Glenn J. Bricker assumed command of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat), also on 7 February 1970 Major John R. Gantt assumed command of the 187th Assault Helicopter Company located at Tay Ninh.

(9) Morale and Personnel Services:

(a) The R&R program is continually stressed throughout the Battalion. During the quarter the Battalion received 186 and filled 142 allocations.

(b) Leaves granted during the quarter were as follows:

	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
Emergency	2	2	8
Compassionate	0	1	0
Special	4	6	30
Ordinary	14	24	55

(c) Postal Services: Postal services have continued to be excellent thereby greatly assisting the morale of the battalion personnel.

(10) Discipline, Law and Orders: During the past quarter the following disciplinary actions have been conducted:

- (a) Special Court Martial - 1
- (b) Summary Court Martial - 0
- (c) General Court Martial - 0
- (d) Article 15 Impositions - 43
- (e) Article 32 Investigations - 0

(11) Marriage to Foreign Nationals: There was one marriage to a foreign national during this quarter.

(12) Exchange Facilities, Clubs and Messes: No change during this quarter.

(13) Information Activities: During the period February 1970 to April 1970, this battalion submitted 350 home town news releases and each month has shown an increase in the number submitted. This battalion realizes the significance of home town news releases in maintaining a high level of morale.

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Another inspirational device is the stories submitted to Stars and Stripes of which one article was published during the month of April. Another method of recognizing achievements of personnel in the battalion is through the Battalion newspaper, the Black Baron Release. This newspaper is a bi-weekly publication which stimulates interest in the battalion functions.

e. (U) Intelligence and Security:

(1) Throughout the reporting period the intelligence section continued its mission of gathering, analyzing, and disseminating timely and accurate intelligence information from all reliable sources. This information is disseminated to all subordinate units and the Battalion Staff to assist in the accomplishment of the assigned mission.

(2) Through recent inspections of company level intelligence sections, it has been noted that more emphasis needs to be placed on these areas. Therefore, a thorough inspection is conducted monthly with assistance visits made when they are requested. Additionally, the intelligence sections have been made aware that command emphasis is being placed on the areas of security and the timely reporting and dissemination of enemy activity in the area of operations.

(3) Recently, background investigations on indigenous personnel employed by units of the battalion were initiated. At the present time 84 percent of the personnel have submitted the proper paper work. Problems were encountered in that the format of the paper work and proper number and type of pictures to be submitted changed without notification. This involved re-doing much of the work but the process is progressing smoothly at this time. It is estimated that from the time the paper work is submitted, it will take three (3) to four (4) months for the proper checks to be completed. Therefore, this project will not be completed until approximately 1 September 1970.

f. (C) Operations:

(1) The 116th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter), which is located in Cu Chi, and the 187th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) which is located in Tay Ninh, provided support to the 25th Infantry Division and the 25th ARVN Division during the reporting period. The following is a breakdown of the support provided to each.

116th Aviation Company - 95% for 25th Inf Div

5% for 25th ARVN Div

187th Aviation Company - 97% for 25th Inf Div

3% for 25th ARVN Div

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(2) The 242nd Aviation Company (Assault Support Helicopter), continued to support the 25th Infantry Division and IIFV during this period. Each day they provided six (6) aircraft to support III Corp as directed by IIFV.

(3) The tactics employed by both the 116th Aviation Company and the 187th Aviation Company, during the reporting period, have been the same. The companies have been operating in both platoon and company size operations. In recent weeks both units have been employing the platoon size operations due to the tactical situation.

E. (U) Trainings:

(1) During the last quarter, the 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat) continued to utilize the in-country training facilities of the 25th Infantry Division. There were 178 people sent to the school by the Battalion. The subjects taught in the school are enemy weapons, mines, booby traps, patrolling, land navigation, ambush and counter ambush techniques. In addition, this battalion receives allocations to refresher training in these subjects to enable personnel to better cope with the defense of the base camp. This is a two (2) hour block of instruction emphasizing perimeter defense and is run in conjunction with the other training.

(2) The following Army Aviation Refresher Training School (AARTS) quotas were received and filled by personnel from the battalion.

<u>COURSE</u>	<u>SHC</u>	<u>116th</u>	<u>187th</u>	<u>242nd</u>
T-53-L-13 Engine		1		
UH-1D/H Airframe			1	
CH-47 Airframe				4
Tech Supply	1			
PLL Clerk		2	2	2
Tech Inspector		1	2	
Enlisted Amnment			1	
Officer Amnment			1	
CH-47 SIS				3

(3) Aviator Training and Standardization:

(a) Two (2) allocations for AH-1G Transition and two (2) allocations for AH-1G IP Course were received and filled by the 187th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter).

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(b) One (1) allocation for UH-1 Instructor Pilot Training was received and filled by 116th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter).

(c) Two (2) allocations for CH-58A Transition were received and filled by 187th Aviation Company and HHC 269th Aviation Battalion respectively.

h. (U) Logistics:

(1) Due to a fire in the Headquarters and Headquarters Company mess hall, the building was almost a total loss with all TO&E equipment destroyed. Replacement of all the mess equipment was accomplished within ten (10) days with completion of the new mess hall following five (5) days later.

(2) The Battalion goal was to refortify all the billets within the battalion area with permanent revetments replacing the temporary sandbags. A goal of 30 April was set and with the exception of a few officer's billets which require maintenance to the building, this goal was met.

(3) The maintenance tents at the 116th and 242nd Aviation Companies motor pools have been replaced with semi-permanent structures. The canvas tents were replaced with a corrugated steel structure. Lighting and electrical outlets were installed and a concrete floor laid.

(4) To insure the battalion's constant high state of maintenance and material management, a battalion CMMI team was formed. In the past 90 days, six (6) CMMI's have been administered by the battalion team. All areas were inspected utilizing the 1st Aviation Brigade CMMI checklist and were found to be satisfactory.

(5) Intra-battalion competition is held monthly in the following areas:

- (a) Mess
- (b) Unit Supply
- (c) Motor Pool
- (d) Driver and Vehicle
- (e) Crew Chief

It is felt that improvement has been shown in these areas by the units due to the keen sense of competition among them. Additionally, in the areas of Best Driver and Vehicle and Best Crew Chief, a \$25.00 gratuity is awarded the winner.

i. (U) Aircraft Maintenance

(1) During this reporting period the 116th Avn Co (Assault Helicopter) has flown four (4) UH-1 aircraft into the 22nd periodic inspection and project (3) additional aircraft will attain 2200 hours during the next reporting period. The 187th Avn. Co. (Aslt Hel) has flown two UH-1 aircraft into the 22nd periodic inspection during the last month of this period. One (1) aircraft will be returned to the 187th Avn. Co. (Aslt Hel) within twenty-five (25) days, while the other will probably be retrograded due to the lack of personnel to inspect and repair the aircraft. All UH-1 aircraft that have been turned in for the 22nd periodic inspection have been down for maintenance and inspection twenty-two (22) to thirty-three (33) days. This is not an acceptable down time due to mission requirements. Many solutions have been studied, but as yet none have been acceptable.

(2) During the reporting period, the 116th Avn. Co. (Aslt Hel) has dropped below the Brigade proposed fill in UH-1D/H aircraft and at the present the outlook appears slim on receiving a replacement in the near future. The 187th Avn. Co. (Aslt Hel) at the close of this period is at Brigade fill on UH-1H aircraft. During the last month of this reporting period the unit received two (2) AH-1G Cobras over Brigade fill. The two (2) Cobras have given the unit the capability of having at least four (4) flyable gunships on a daily basis.

(3) During the month of April, HHC turned in one UH-1D due to extensive maintenance and obtained one (1) OH58-A. The outlook to fill HHC with the OH58-A's during the next few months does not appear good, so a UH-1 aircraft has been requested through 12th Avn Gp to provide the necessary aircraft at Battalion Headquarters to accomplish our mission.

(4) The 242nd Avn Co (Aslt Spt Hel) has had difficulty during the months of March and April in keeping aircraft available due to the high flying time required during this period. During this time two (2) OH-47A's were down fourteen (14) and sixteen (16) days respectively for complete secure radio modification. This down time limited the unit's ability to properly schedule aircraft. The last three weeks of this period flying time was reduced and has improved the availability of aircraft.

j. (U) SIGNALS

(1) During the last reporting period, an AN/GRC 122 Radioteletype was installed. The teletype set has been inoperative due to the lack of an adequate power source. On 28 April 1970 P&E installed a 110V 60 Amp AC Line to provide power for its operation.

(2) A 10KW Generator was installed to provide emergency power for the Battalion Operations Center, Communications Center, and Mess Hall.

k. (U) Surgeons:

(1) The 541st Medical Detachment (OA) Dispensary in Tay Ninh has been completed and air conditioned and now provides full outpatient facilities and flight physical capabilities.

(2) The 269th Aviation Battalion medical dispensary has acquired a Farnsworth Lantern color vision testing apparatus which makes it one of the few medical facilities in Vietnam to be so equipped. Also a new optical projector has been obtained. The past 60 days has seen a steady decrease in total outpatient visits at both dispensaries indicating a low non-effectiveness rate due to disease and accidents in the command.

l. (U) Aviation Safety:

(1) The 269th Aviation Battalion has flown more than 21,000 hours during the reporting period. During this time we have experienced two accidents giving us an accident rate for this period of 9.8. The first accident was caused by an ARVN walking into a tail rotor and the subsequent loss of control of the ship. The second accident was a result of suspected material failure.

(2) A special school for company safety officers was initiated at Long Binh by 1st Aviation Brigade. All unit safety officers within the battalion will attend the course during May. This should increase the efficiency of the safety program at the company level by providing to non-school trained company safety officers instruction in aviation safety management and accident prevention.

m. (U) Chaplain:

(1) Religious services for the three major faiths are available to all personnel within the command. Denominational services are also available for various Protestant denominations. Services for Roman Catholic personnel are provided by chaplains from the 25th Infantry Division. Roman Catholics in HHC, 269th Aviation Battalion have a mass in the battalion Air High Chapel; the 242nd, the 116th and the 187th Aviation Companies attend mass in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel at Cu Chi and the 3rd Brigade, 25th Division Memorial Chapel at Tay Ninh respectively, due to the close location of each to the individual companies. Jewish personnel in the units located at Cu Chi base camp attend services in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel. Special arrangements are made for those at Tay Ninh. All Jewish personnel are provided arrangements to attend special days of obligation, such as Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Passover. The Battalion Chaplain conducts Protestant worship services for the units as follows:

(a) HHC, 269th Aviation Battalion, Sunday 1100 hours, Battalion Air High Chapel.

(b) 116th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) Sunday 1015 hours, EM Mess Hall.

(c) 187th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) Sunday
1930 hours, Crusader Mess Hall.

(d) 242nd Aviation Company (Assault Support Helicopter)
Sunday, 0845 hours, Muleskinner Day Room.

Attendance at Protestant and Roman Catholic services has increased, the result of greater command emphasis.

(2) The Battalion Chaplain has continued a program of education and consultation. An initial briefing and letter of welcome are given to all new arrivals. The Chaplain also conducts daily visits to subordinate units to better avail himself to all personnel who may need his assistance, in addition to holding regular office hours for private consultation. A "Chaplain's Corner" is maintained in each unit's orderly room, making Bibles, crosses, rosaries, religious medals, "T.S." cards, and religious tracts and pamphlets available to everyone.

(3) Memorial services are held for all personnel who lose their lives while in this command. These services are normally conducted by the Battalion Chaplain. In cases of Roman Catholic personnel, a priest is also present to say the Requiem Mass. These services are held in the Division or Brigade Memorial Chapels, or in the area of the unit concerned. As of February the Chaplain has assumed the additional responsibility of conducting the base camp Lutheran service. This service is held on Sunday at 0930 hours in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel.

(4) Character Guidance classes are held each month on a topic prescribed by higher headquarters. The Chaplain conducts these classes for subordinate units whenever such instruction is requested through S-3. In addition, a supplemental orientation sheet is prepared by the Chaplain, and distributed in sufficient numbers to the unit training officers for use by all officers and enlisted men unable to attend these classes.

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

a. (U) Personnel:

(1) Property Book Officer

(a) **OBSERVATION:** A TOE Position for a property book officer is not currently authorized units organized under MTOE 1-77G.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The lack of a TOE position for a property book officer necessitates the assignment of a rated aviator as a full-time additional duty making fewer aviators available to share the already demanding high aviator flying hour program. The detailed officer is usually not trained or experienced in the operation of a unit supply nor the maintenance of the unit property book, further compounding an already undesirable situation.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That action be taken to revise the TOE to include position of a school trained, non-rated property book officer for all aviation units which must maintain a separate property book.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** A letter is being submitted through channels requesting an MTOE change.

(2) Change in flight status positions due to new MTOE 1-258G 3/69

(a) **OBSERVATION:** MTOE 1-258G, dated January 1968, authorized 16 Helicopter Flight Engineers, 16 Crew Chiefs, and 16 Gunners. This MTOE provided an excellent means for an outstanding Crew Chief to advance to Flight Engineer thus providing an incentive for potential Reenlistees. Retention and morale of crew members is a must if the mission of the Chinook Company is to be successfully accomplished. This MTOE has been changed by MTOE 1-258G PO3, dated March 1969, to eliminate the Crew Chief positions making all 16 Crew Chief positions Gunner positions. At the present time Gunners are normally obtained from any number of different career fields and MOS's. Department of the Army Schools provide as many as 130 (67U20) Helicopter Mechanics each month. This means only a few can be assigned to the CH-47A Helicopter Company. Due to the grade structure of this new MTOE, it is virtually impossible for a Helicopter Mechanic to become a crew member. On the job training is not available unless he becomes a gunner and this would be a gross misuse of school trained personnel.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The need for trained helicopter crew members is an increasing problem in this unit. The time necessary to train a flight engineer is very lengthy and the only realistic process is through numerous flights with qualified Flight Engineers.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** The present MTOE 1-258G dated March 1969 should be changed to reinstate the Crew Chief position. This will eliminate the need for 16 Gunners and will cause a great uplift in crew member morale.

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(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** A letter through 1st Aviation Brigade to USARV dated 24 November 1969 requesting reinstating of E-5 Crew Chief slots has been submitted. No answer has been received.

b. (U) Intelligence: None

c. (C) Operations:

(1) Selection of landing zones during the Hot/Dry Season

(a) **OBSERVATION:** The selection of landing zones (LZ's) for helicopters is especially critical during the hot/dry season.

(b) **EVALUATION:** Care must be taken to avoid those LZ's which may be dusty and those which have recently been "burned out" by grass fires to preclude loss of visual contact with the ground. Landing immediately after artillery preps can also be extremely critical due to the large amounts of dust and smoke. LZ's situated in "Rome Flow" cuts are extremely hazardous.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Air Mission Commander and Airmobile Task Force Commander work closely together in the selection of the landing zone. That whenever possible, LZ's having vegetation be selected over those without vegetation or those which have recently been "burned out".

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** This unit has initiated the recommendation as a matter of SOP.

(2) Artillery Preparation of Landing Zones (LZ's)

(a) **OBSERVATION:** This unit has experienced a number of recent instances of mined LZ's resulting in combat damage to aircraft and injury to personnel.

(b) **EVALUATION:** These mine instances habitually occurred in landing zones which were not preped by artillery, air or gunship strikes. Certain units refrain, almost totally, from the use of LZ preps - the enemy rapidly evaluates the ground units method of operation and selects likely LZ's in which to plant mines. This is an especially successful enemy tactic when the LZ availability is limited within an AO, or when a unit uses the same landing sites on a recurring basis.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Air Mission Commander stress the necessity of LZ preparation to the Airmobile Task Force Commander. This is especially critical when the selection of the LZ is limited as described above.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** This unit has implemented the recommendation but with limited success. Because of the reluctance of the Airmobile Task Force Commanders to use artillery, Air Mission Commanders in this unit are stressing the use of organic gunships for LZ preps.

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(3) Aviator Flying Hour Program

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Current regulations prohibit aviators from flying more than 140 hours in a 30 day period. This limitation has placed a stress on the management of aviator's flying within the unit.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The 140 hour limitation, compounded with the high rotation rate of aviators during the months of Jan-Mar 70, made it extremely difficult to comply with the 140 hour limitation. The introduction of a large number of new, inexperienced aviators placed an extremely large burden on the remaining, more experienced personnel. A 60 percent turnover of aviators was experienced during this period.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That an effort be initiated to spread the DEROS "hump" more evenly to preclude recurrence of this situation one year from now. Aircraft Commanders should be designated by the Commander when he is satisfied that an aviator is capable of being an AC. The hours required for an individual to become an AC should be reduced to 150 hours.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** As the newly arrived aviators reached a level of proficiency at which they were capable of commanding the aircraft, they were assigned as a Pilot-in-Charge, even though the minimum criteria of 300 hours had not been achieved. The Commander and Flight Surgeon monitored daily all aviators whose 30 day total exceeded 120 hours. During this critical period, no aviator exceeded the 140 hour total limit.

(4) Combat Extractions:

(a) **OBSERVATION:** While conducting airmobile operations for a unit which employs the tactic of combat extractions several UH-1 aircraft were damaged, one heavily damaged, due to premature detonation of claymore mines.

(b) **EVALUATION:** Combat extractions require close coordination between several key individuals. Precise time reporting by the lead aircraft and extreme discipline by the troops on the ground is necessary. In the above observation, prior coordination was not accomplished.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** Air Mission Commanders should fully discuss the combat extraction with the Task Force Commander. If a decision is made to employ the tactic, time should be taken to make positive coordination and derive a complete understanding of procedures. Lack of understanding and procedures could result in loss of life and equipment.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** All procedures for a combat extraction have been explained to the Aviators of this Unit. Air Mission Commanders have been instructed to ask Task Force Commanders of probable plans for a combat extraction at each initial briefing, and each time an extraction is to be performed the Task Force Commander again confirms his course of action.

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(5) Mid-Air Collisions

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Marginal weather conditions increase the possibility of mid-air collisions during airmobile operations requiring positive control of all aircraft in the operational area.

(b) **EVALUATION:** When conducting airmobile operations under marginal weather conditions, this unit has encountered problems with visiting aircraft overflying the operational area without making radio contact with the Air Mission Commander. This resulted in a mid-air collision between C & C aircraft and a cobra gunship. Weather was a major factor.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** Higher headquarters place added emphasis to insure supported commanders make the required radio calls upon entering the AO to observe airmobile operations.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** This command has brought this to the attention of supported unit commanders in the past and will continue during the forth coming wet season.

(6) Marginal VFR Flights

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Aircraft have continued to fly at normal airspeeds upon entering areas of reduced visibility.

(b) **EVALUATION:** Maintaining normal airspeeds under low visibility conditions is poor practice since there is less time to react to avoid other aircraft or obstructions at higher airspeeds.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** Aviators should be cautioned to reduce airspeed under conditions of poor visibility just as they would reduce speed in an automobile under similar conditions.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** A change will be made to the Battalion SOP covering the problem.

(7) Approaches to Inundated Areas

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Tail rotor blades have struck the water on approaches to inundated areas.

(b) **EVALUATION:** Water offers no resistance to the tail "stinger" permitting the tail to lower sufficiently to allow the tail rotor to strike the water resulting in sudden stoppage of the tail rotor and loss of directional control. This is a result of an excessively high airspeed and/or low flare.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That all aviators be made aware of this and instructions be given on how to avoid such situations. For example, when making an approach to an LZ/PZ that is inundated with water,

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terminate the approach to a hover, allowing sufficient altitude for a flare to be executed.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** This command has initiated action to disseminate this information.

(8) Forward Staging Areas:

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Several instances have occurred in which additional blade hours were unnecessary due to the necessity for rearming/refueling at out-of-the-way locations.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The utilization of available staging areas in the TACR is a necessity to eliminate needless flying and conserve fuel and valuable blade hours, thereby facilitating rapid accomplishment of the mission. Presently, it is not necessary to conduct any operation outside of the maximum range of twenty-five statute miles from a refueling point within the AO.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That supported ground unit commanders consider the establishment of adequate refueling and rearming points in the vicinity of their troop bases or mission areas to insure continuity of the requested support. That the Air Mission Commander be readily aware of the TACR's forward staging facilities and be able to advise the flight of the most expeditious means to refuel and rearm as necessary. That all members of this unit be knowledgeable of the locations and capabilities of the present and newly established forward staging areas within the TACR. That the established facilities are and remain free of debris and are adequately maintained.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** The AMC be required to report to Operations the adequacies and discrepancies of the forward staging areas utilized upon completion of the daily operations.

(9) Eagle Flight Concept:

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Operations using an "Eagle Flight" concept are very flexible and afford the Task Force Commander a means of area saturation on a daily basis, minimizing enemy infiltration. However, methods of employment are varied creating flight safety risks if certain minimum standard flight rules are not adhered to. Violations of such rules have been observed and are mistakenly considered safe by various units because of a lack of knowledge concerning flight principles and employment.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The employment of "Eagle Flights" have resulted in misunderstanding between the supported and supporting units. Flight principles which must be understood and followed by the supported unit are: Two basic formations are used - trail and staggered trail; the helicopters should always land into the wind; aircraft cargo limitations must be adhered to; the flight will utilize a RP landing to an unsecure LZ or PZ; and, the suitability of PZ's and spacing of the troops

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in the PZ's must be adequate. The primary mission of the gunships must also be understood. The primary mission of the gunships is to cover the flight. Secondary missions include: visual reconnaissance, and immediate aerial cover for the ground troops. All unsecured LZ's and PZ's will have gunship cover provided. Violations and misunderstandings of the above have occurred, resulting in marginal performance by the supported and supporting units.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that all tactical units utilizing airmobile assets familiarize themselves with "Eagle Flight" operations and all aspects of flight previously mentioned. It is further recommended that all Air Mission Commanders thoroughly brief the Task Force Commander and a complete understanding is reached prior to the initiating of the mission. All maneuver size units should have a thorough understanding of the PZ selection and basic helicopter formations.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** Presently Air Mission Commanders are thoroughly discussing the fundamentals of this type operation with the Task Force Commanders prior to the initiation of the mission. Further, an information pamphlet is being produced explaining these fundamentals. This publication will be distributed to the units being supported.

(10) Backhauls (Preparation)

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Numerous times supported units have haphazardly rigged their backhauls from forward location.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The lack of attention paid to rigging of backhaul loads has resulted in total or partial loss of equipment.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That more care be given to the rigging of loads to be moved either to forward or backhaul positions.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** Operations personnel in command and staff channels will be responsible for insuring that loads are properly rigged for pick-up.

d. (U) Logistics:

(1) Unit Stockage of Aircraft Intensively Managed Items (AIMI)

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Shortage of certain parts on the AIMI list have increased the NCRS rate for this unit.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The 187th Aviation Company is physically displaced from its supporting DSU which is located in Cu Chi. On many occasions, it has been necessary to hold an aircraft down for an extra day waiting for only one AIMI item while the item is obtained on the next days maintenance parts run. Had the item been readily available at the unit tech supply, the aircraft could have been returned to service at least 24 hours earlier. With the current critical OR rate prevailing

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in assault helicopter units, this could mean the difference in being able to meet the next days commitment.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That units displaced from their DSU's be permitted to stock one item each of critically selected ADMI components to reduce the current high MORS rate.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** A letter has been initiated through command channels requesting that this unit be authorized to stock selected ADMI items. A follow-up letter is in the process of being prepared

(2) $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton M151 (Jeep)

(a) **OBSERVATION:** The right (passenger) side windshield of the M151 has been broken on numerous occasions.

(b) **EVALUATION:** This occurs due to inert movement of the passengers seat when a passenger has to enter the back of the vehicle.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** All drivers be given a briefing on this problem.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** Included in unit's SOP will be a note to each driver making him responsible for informing all passengers of this possible hazard.

e. (U) **Communications:** Rodent damage to wiring in CH-47A Helicopters

(a) **OBSERVATION:** During recent weeks, there has been a number of CH-47A Helicopters in the 242nd Avn Co (Aslt Spt Hel) down with wiring problems.

(b) **EVALUATION:** Inspection of the problem area shows that rats or other sharp fanged rodents have been feasting on the plastic insulation cover of the wiring in the helicopter. When the insulation is removed, a short occurs thus causing electrical units to malfunction.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** Some means be devised to eliminate the rodents or preclude them from consuming the wiring insulation.

(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** Traps are now being used and have been fairly successful in alleviating this problem.

4 Incl
1-269th Avn Bn (Cst)
2-Unit Strength
3-Operational Statistics
4-Aircraft Status

Joseph A. Josh
JOSEPH A. JOSH
LTC, INF..
Commanding

AVBACA-30 (14 May 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 269th Aviation
Battalion (Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS-
CSPOR-65 (RI) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 12TH AVIATION GROUP (COMBAT), APO 96266 26 May 1970

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

In compliance with USARV Reg 525-15, the Operational Report - Lessons
Learned of the 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat) for the period ending
30 April 1970, is forwarded.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

in Robert Zindelle @ Cpt M.
MICHAEL E. BOLIN
Captain, EN
Acting Adjutant

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AVFBC-RE (14 May 70) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 269th Aviation Battalion
(Combat) for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HQ, II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266

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

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with the Operational Report - Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1970 from Headquarters, 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat).

2. (C) The following comments are provided:

a. Reference items concerning "Property Book Officer", page 11, paragraph 2a(1), and "Change in Flight Status Positions Due to New MTOE 1-258G 3/69", page 11, paragraph 2a(2). The reporting unit has been advised to submit, for consideration, a request for MTOE change in accordance with AR 310-49, dated March 70.

b. Reference item concerning "Artillery Preparation of Landing Zones (LZ's), page 12, paragraph 2c(2). Preparation by artillery has long been used for effectively suppressing fire and detonating hastily emplaced booby traps and mines in the landing zones. Employment of aerial rocket artillery or escort gunships for this purpose, when field artillery is available, diminishes the flexibility of firepower available to the maneuver commander after troop insertion has been accomplished. However, there will be times when tactical considerations may militate against lengthy landing zone preparations by field artillery.

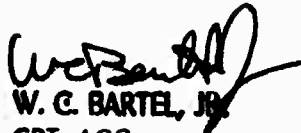
c. Reference items concerning "Forward Staging Areas", page 15, paragraph 2b(8), and "Backhauls (Preparation)", page 16, paragraph 2c(10). The S3/S4 of the reporting unit should coordinate these actions with the S3/S4 of all supported units to insure that the recommendations are carried out in an attempt to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of CH-47 operations. These actions should also be covered in the battalion SOP of the reporting unit and a copy of the SOP provided to the supported units to further inform them of the requirements.

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AVFBC-RE (14 May 70) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 269th Aviation Battalion
(Combat) for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)(U)

d. Reference item concerning "Rodent Damage to Wiring in CH-47A Helicopters", page 17, paragraph 2e. The action being taken by the unit to reduce the number of rodents from helicopters is possibly the best and quickest method as a short run solution. Additionally, emphasis must be given to general control measures in the helicopter parking areas. Anti-coagulants, which are readily available through installation repair and utility sections, have proven to be an effective bait in reducing the number of rodents in and around fixed installations. A long-term solution to the problem will require a report of rodent damage through aviation channels to Material Command for possible development of a chemical or other type retardant.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


W. C. BARTEL, JR.
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

CF:
CG, 1st Avn Bde
CO, 269th Avn Bn (Cbt)

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AVRAGC-O (14 May 70) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of the 269th Aviation Battalion
(Combat) for the period 1 February through 30 April 1970, ACS
CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96364 18 JUN 1970

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVRAGC-DGT,
APO 96375
Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPCP-DT,
APO 96558

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned from the 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat) and concurs, with the following exceptions:


a. Para 1i(2), page 8: Nonconcur. During this reporting period the 12th Aviation Group (Combat) has consistently been filled with UH-1D/H model aircraft IAW the 1st Aviation Brigade fill goal.

b. Para 1i(3), page 8: Nonconcur. The outlook for 100% fill of the battalion headquarters, with CH-53A, is good. The 12th Aviation Group (Combat) should be at 100% fill on CH-53A helicopters by the end of June 1970.

c. Para 2d(1), page 16: Nonconcur. Aircraft Intensively Managed Items (AIMI) are either high dollar items or are critically short in supply world wide and must be managed at the highest level. It is not feasible to stock these items with individual aviation units.

2. The following comment is pertinent: Para 1i(1), page 8. The criteria for retrograde and procedures for the 18th FHP for CH-47 helicopters and the 22d FHP for UH-1 helicopters have been changed by letter, Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, dated 29 May 1970. UH-1D/H aircraft requiring in excess of 1,000 maintenance man hours and CH-47 aircraft requiring in excess of 2,500 maintenance man hours will be retrograded to CONUS for overhaul. It is expected that contract teams will have the capability to perform all future 18th and 22d FHP's. The unit will work order the FHP to the designated DBU and the aircraft will not be turned in unless it exceeds the criteria outlined above. Units are expected to maintain their aircraft on a continuous basis and not allow the accumulation of excessive deferred maintenance.

FOR THE COMMANDER


WARREN A. PETERSON
CPT, AGC
ASST AG

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AVHGC-DST (14 May 70) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned of the 269th Aviation
Battalion (Combat) for the period 1 February through 30
April 1970. (U)

Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375 07 JUL 1970

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

1. (U) This Headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1970 from Headquarters, 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat) and concurs with comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. (C) Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Mid-Air Collisions," page 14, paragraph 2c(5): concur. Studies conducted by USABAAR indicate that the majority of mid-air collisions is caused by a lack of alertness by aircraft crew-members. Airmobile operation orders and briefings should contain procedures for the control of air traffic over the operational area. An article on this subject will be published in the August 1970 edition of the USARV Aviation Pamphlet. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

b. Reference item concerning "Approaches to Inundated Areas," page 14, paragraph 2c(7): concur. Approaches to inundated areas should be normal approaches, thereby negating the requirement for a low flare of such proportions that would cause a tail rotor strike. This matter will be reemphasized to all aviators by its insertion in the USARV Aviation Safety Weekly Summary. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

c. Reference item concerning "Rodent Damage to Wiring in CH-47A Helicopters," page 17, paragraph 2e, and paragraph 2d, 2d Indorsement: concur. The use of traps and anti-coagulants, both of which are readily available, can best control the rodent population in aircraft parking areas. A vector control officer can supervise this program. Unit has been so advised.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



Clark W. Stevens Jr.
Captain, AvC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
1st Avn Bde
269th Avn Bn

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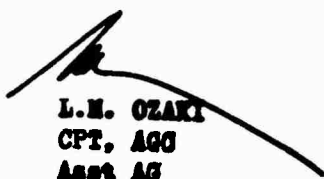
GPOP-DT (14 May 70) 5th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 269th Aviation Battalion (Combat) for
Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 24 JUL 70

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

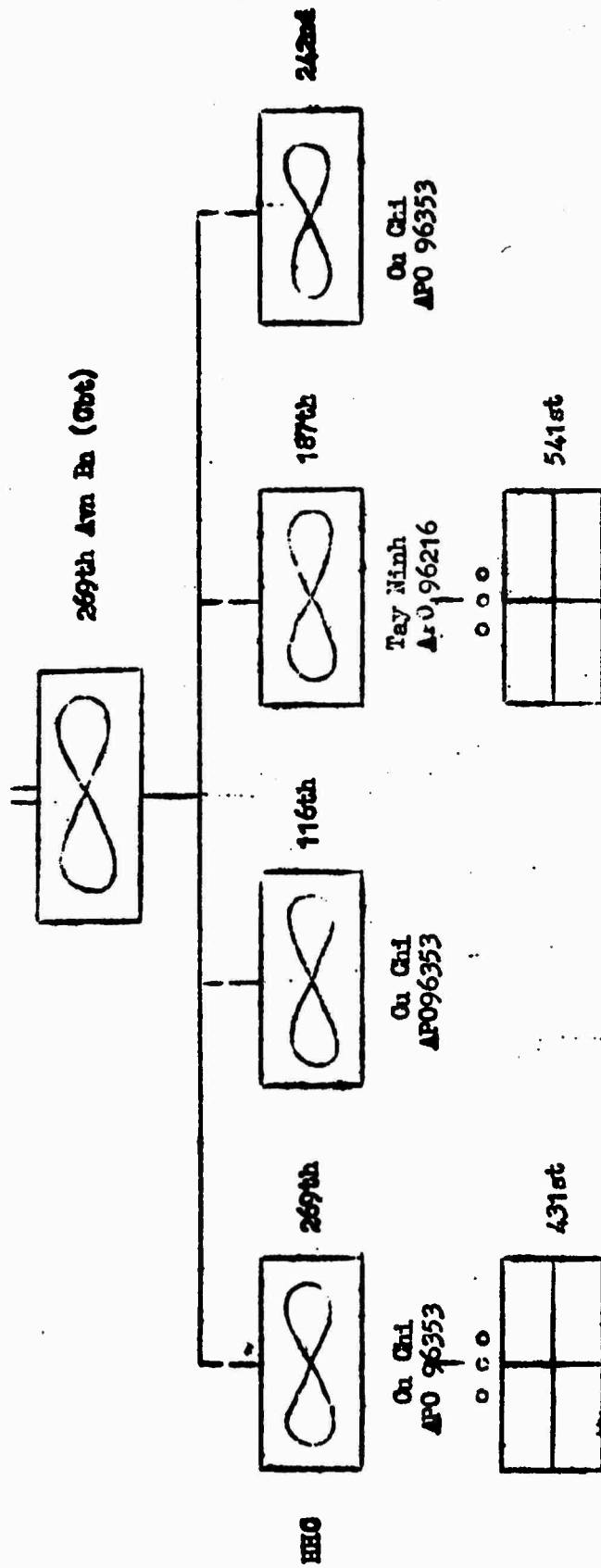
This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



L.M. OZARI
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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INCLOSURE I (C) (269th Avlation Battalion (Combat))

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**UNIT STRENGTH
HEADQUARTERS, 269TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)
AS OF 30 APR 70**

<u>MILITARY</u> <u>Subordinate Unit</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u> <u>AUTH ASG</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u> <u>AUTH ASG</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u> <u>AUTH ASG</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>AUTH ASG</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
116th Total	17 21 17	47 47	218 202 202	282 277 277	CU CHI
187th 541st Med Total	17 1 18	47 0 47	218 7 225	282 7 290	TAY NDM TAY NDM
242nd Total	14 14	23 23	227 202	264 228	CU CHI
HHC 431st Med Total	19 1 20	3 0 3	85 7 92	107 7 115	CU CHI CU CHI
<u>TOTAL 269TH</u> <u>PERSONNEL</u>	<u>62</u> <u>68</u>	<u>120</u> <u>127</u>	<u>762</u> <u>717</u>	<u>951</u> <u>912</u>	<u>CC/TN</u>

INCLOSURE 2 (C) (Unit Strength as of 30 Apr 70)

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Incl 3

**OPERATIONAL STATISTICS
HEADQUARTERS, 269TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)
QUARTER ENDING 30 APR 1970**

UNIT	SORTIES FLOWN	TROOPS LIFTED	TONS CARGO	VC KIA	STRUCT DEST	A/C COM LBS	A/C COM DAM	A/C ROCKET DAM	FLYING HOURS	COMBAT ASSAULT DAYS
116th	34,151	61,354	28	146	142	—	15	0	7857	86
167th	28,597	60,162	96	26	5	—	11	3	7591	85
242nd	13,135	33,596	24,115	0	0	—	0	0	3719	1
BN TOT	75,893	155,112	24,239	172	147	—	26	3	19,167	172
BN AVG PER MO	25,298	51,704	8080	57	49	—	8	1	6389	—

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INCLOSURE 3 (C) (Operational Statistics)

Incl 4

AIRCRAFT STATUS
HEADQUARTERS, 269TH AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)
AS OF 30 APR 70

UNIT	UH-1B/C		UH-1D/H		OH-58A		OH-47		AH-1G	
	AUTH	ASG	AUTH	ASG	AUTH	ASG	AUTH	ASG	AUTH	ASG
HQ, 269TH AVN BN (CPT)	0	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	0	0
116TH AVN CO (ASLT HEL)	8	6	22	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
187TH AVN CO (ASLT HEL)	0	0	22	21	0	0	0	0	6	8
242ND AVN CO (ASLT SPT HEL)	0	0	0	0	2	0	16	16	0	0

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INCLOSURE 4 (C) (Aircraft Status)

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

CONFIDENTIAL

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

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