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per 1473

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LESSONS LEARNED,

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Headquarters, USA REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS GROUP (VIETNAM)

APO San Francisco 96245

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SCCVRG-PO

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 Jul 66.
(RCS CSFOR-65)

TO: Commanding General
1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM)
APO 96307

18 OACSFOR

19 OT-UT-660227

1. Reference:

- a. AR 1-19.
- b. USARV Reg 870-2.
- c. 1st Sig Bde msg SCCVOP 107163.

2. Subject report is attached as inclosure 1.

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BRYAN COWAN
Col, SigC
Commanding

CY Furn:
CINC USAR PAC (1)
CG USARV ATTN: AVC (3)

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SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

1. (U) Office of the Commanding Officer

a. General Orders Number 6, dated 4 July 1966 redesignated USASTRATCOM-Vietnam as the USA Regional Communications Group (Vietnam). The assigned mission is to operate and maintain that portion of the Defense Communications System (DCS) and other Long Lines systems in support of U.S. Military and other Governmental activities as directed by competent authority.

b. In order to accomplish the above mission, 6 proposed tables of distribution and allowances were prepared and submitted for approval. The proposed TDA's are as follows:

| Present TDA's | Proposed TDA's |
|---|---|
| USA Regional Communications Group (Vietnam) | USA Regional Communications Group (Revised) |
| USASTRATCOM Facility, Phu Lam | USASTRATCOM Facility, Phu Lam (Revised) |
| USASTRATCOM Facility, Nha Trang | USASTRATCOM Facility, Nha Trang (Revised) |
| None | USASTRATCOM Facility, Danang |
| None | USASTRATCOM Long Lines Bn, North |
| None | USASTRATCOM Long Lines Bn, South |

c. USA Regional Communications Group (Vietnam) is presently re-organized and operating provisionally, under the proposed TDA's. Final approval of the proposed TDA's is expected during the next quarter.

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2. (C) ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

a. At the present time the Group Headquarters operates a centralized personnel branch which administers to approximately 1500 persons who are assigned to 29 separate geographical locations throughout Vietnam.

b. The first step in the decentralization of personnel records maintenance is the establishment of a Personnel Section at the USASTRATCOM Facility Nha Trang. This section will serve all the Military personnel assigned to the facility and is to become operational on 5 August 1966.

c. It is planned to activate two more Personnel Sections during the next quarter to service the USASTRATCOM Facility Phu Lam and the USASTRATCOM Long Lines Battalion North.

d. The primary benefits to be derived from this Decentralization of Personnel activities will be the reduction of handling time required to process personnel actions. The average round-trip mailing time from this headquarters to units outside the Saigon area is 200 hours. It will also eliminate the need for personnel to return to this headquarters for out-processing prior to shipment to CONUS. A reduction of 50% in the in-processing time required in Saigon prior to shipment up-country is also anticipated.

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3. (C) Plans and Operations Division

a. (U) Quality Assurance and Analysis

(1) To date little emphasis has been placed on circuit quality in the IWCS system. The quality control program at most tech controls is inadequate or non-existent.

(2) To relieve the problem of poor circuit quality and to improve the circuit controls portion of Quality Assurance a quality analysis section was added to the proposed TD of Regional Communications Group. The proposed TD provides personnel slots for 2 officers and 4 NCO's. Currently three military technician personnel have been assigned to this section and are now in the process of being trained in the use of the various test equipments utilized for DCA standard tests. This training will be completed on 20 August 1966.

(3) This section will promulgate and disseminate quality control standards which are submitted by DCA through STRATCOM channels. They will monitor all quality control programs and conduct surveys and tests. One of the prime functions of this section will be to maintain circuit layout records, which DCA provides as a standard, in conjunction with tests performed on the circuit. The results of tests will provide information upon which to base corrective and/or upgrading actions to assure quality circuits.

b. (U) AN/TRC-29- A 45 channel AN/TRC-29 radio system was installed between Danang and Monkey Mtn and tested on 10 May 66. Cutover of circuits was accomplished at 2100 hrs, 11 May 66. This system was installed as an interim measure to provide adequate communications into the Danang area during the relocation of the Danang terminal of the Danang-Pleiku AN/MRC-85 system, to Monkey Mountain.

c. (U) AN/MRC-85- The relocation of the AN/MRC-85 heavy tropo equipment on the Danang-Pleiku system from Danang to Monkey Mtn and circuit cutover was completed on 18 May 66.

d. (U) VFTG Equipment- The relocation of the VFTG equipment from the tech control van to the S-141 shelter at Cam Ranh Bay was completed on 23 May 66. This equipment was relocated to the S-141 shelter in order to provide more space for expansion and upgrade of tech control facilities at Cam Ranh Bay.

e. (C) Danang Relay- Formal planning started on 8 Jun 66, for the engineering, installation and operation of a 48 line major relay and a 25 line MDRC at Danang. Formal approval was received for 50,000 sq meters of land at Danang for this installation. Personnel requirements to man this new installation have been submitted. Planning is still in progress on this project with a target date of a 24 line relay by 1 Oct 66.

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f. (C) AN/MRC-98- Responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the AN/MRC-98 sites at Vung Tau, Cam Ranh Bay and Danang was transferred from the Air Force to the Army on 1 July 66. Phase-in of Army personnel at these began on 25 Jun 66, for the purpose of inventory and manning. Page Engineering will continue to provide Operations and Maintenance of these AN/MRC-98's for the Army, until permanent IWCS facilities are phased in.

g. (U) AN/TSC-48 & 50- One each AN/TSC-48 and one each AN/TSC-50, transportable, 18 line, teletype tape relay van and communications security van has arrived at TSN. The original AN/TSC-48 & 50 utilized as an interim tape relay facility at Nha Trang, have been returned to CONUS for rehabilitation. A contingency plan is being developed, to provide instructions for utilization of this equipment.

h. (U) USARV Relay Cutover- Based on a study by DCA and MACV J-6, a decision was made ~~that~~ to deactivate the USARV Minor Relay at Tan Son Nhut and reterminate its circuits at the Phu Lam DCS. Coordination was effected with USARV Signal with reference to circuit re-termination and equipment requirements to accomplish this takeover on an expedited basis. Installation of the necessary COMSEC equipment at the Phu Lam facility to accept these circuits was begun on 15 June 1966. This installation is presently in progress. A slight delay is being caused due to the non-availability of some necessary installation material such as KW-7 cabling, remotes, etc, however Hq STRATCOM, Washington D.C. has been notified and it is anticipated that the target date of 1 Sept will be met.

i. (U) Major Communications Control Centers (MCCC) and Area Communications Control Centers (ACCC).- A decision was made by the 1st Signal Bde to establish a focal point between the Army operated portion of the DCS and DCA, to assist in Communications Control. This concept involved a central control center, colocated with DCA, to receive all reports from distant centers and to control the re-establishment of communications in event of disruption. This focal point was established as the Command Communications Control Center Agency (CCCCA), a subordinate element of the 1st Signal Bde Staff. In each major communications area, a sub-control station was needed. These were designated as Major Communications Control Centers (MCCC), consisting of a management element and a control element. To provide for better control on each end of the system, one more subcontrol station was needed. These were designated as Area Communications Control Centers (ACCC). The mission of the ACCC's are identical to the MCCC's but reduced in scope to include a lesser number of circuits.

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j. (U) Following the decision to establish the MCCC's and ACCC's on an expedited basis, actions were taken to obtain personnel and equipment to operate and maintain these control facilities. MCCC's were activated at Phu Lam, Tan Son Nhut & Nha Trang on a minimal basis until the necessary personnel and equipment can be secured for complete activation.

4. (U) 1st Brigade Signal School

a. A requirement exists for 351 technical controllers to meet planned commitments within the 1st Signal Brigade. Currently there are 77 technical controllers in-country with an anticipated 100 technical controllers due in from CONUS by December 1966.

b. In order to alleviate the personnel shortage, the Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade, tasked the USA Regional Communications Group with the establishment and operation of the 1st Brigade Signal School on a continuing basis.

c. The 1st Brigade Signal School commenced operations on 31 July 1966. Classes are scheduled for a duration of 18 days. The first class consisted of 26 personnel.

d. It is anticipated that the school will be expanded to include carrier equipment and Microwave training.

e. Instructors for the school consist of personnel representing USA Regional Communications Group, CCCCA, DCA-SAM and Philco Corporation.

SECTION II

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ITEM 1 - Target Dates

Failure to meet target dates set for activation of communications equipment and installations.

Discussion: Problems were encountered in the availability and transportation of equipment in sufficient time to comply with target dates for activation of communications projects. In most cases items necessary to install or activate a particular project must come from COMUS. Obtaining a given item poses difficulty, and, once the item is obtained, transporting it from COMUS to Vietnam and from port of entry in Vietnam to its final location amplifies the problem. Air transportation cannot always be obtained and surface transportation is very slow.

Observation: Target dates should be established for activating communications equipment and installations, based on consideration of availability of equipment, its location and transportation factors involved.

ITEM 2 - Data Terminal Coordination Circuits

Failure to have telephones installed on the data terminals so that maintenance and operator personnel could coordinate their actions to eliminate outages more quickly.

Discussion: Problems have been encountered in coordination between the transmission and the receive terminal site when there is an equipment outage. Communication systems in Vietnam have been inadequate for this purpose due to the heavy amount of traffic which they handle. A direct line between the two terminals would enable the maintenance personnel to determine the source of trouble as soon as an outage occurred. This would especially be true at tributary sites where they have limited sources of experienced maintenance personnel and must therefore depend on the MDRC's for guidance and direction.

Observation: Phones should be installed on all data transmission terminals to expedite the restoration of data circuits and reduce outage time.

ITEM 3 - Low Power Efficiency

Discussion: Several sites have had consistent power problems because of low efficiency of the power systems. The problem has created demands for larger generator capacity and better qualified power technicians.

Observation: Contract personnel were brought in to study power distribution systems. Recommendations of contract personnel will enable construction of more efficient power systems with reliable back-up power. Increasing

the efficiency of existing systems will ease the demand for more generator capacity.

ITEM 4 - Inadequate Test Equipment

Discussion: The quality control program of the tech controls has been degraded by the lack of proper equipment which has resulted in insufficient and inadequate tests at the controls.

Observation: A list of necessary test equipment has been sent to STRATCOM-Washington. This list outlines that test equipment required to perform all quality tests required by RCM. Recommendation to STRATCOM-Washington was also made to provide more like items of equipment for simultaneous testing on separate circuits. Upon receipt, all the test equipment will be made available to ICG controls.

ITEM 5 - Improper programming of Personnel

Discussion: This Facility has experienced unnecessary breaks in continuity because replacements are not programmed evenly throughout the year. It is necessary in a complex operation such as this in to have a small number of officer and key NCO's who are acquainted with facility operations present at all times instead of completely replacing all such personnel in a two month interval.

Observation: Action is required at DC level to insure this continuity.

ITEM 6 - Low morale of Military Police assigned to positions of static security.

Discussion: A lack of variety in the routine of an MP assigned to a static security police force tends to cultivate disinterest with consequent low morale and effectiveness.

Observation: By rotating MP personnel and providing more variety in their assigned duties this situation may be improved.

ITEM 7 - A/C condenser breakdown

Discussion: Water cooled condenser coils, unless constructed otherwise, are highly susceptible to corrosion by rusting due to the humid conditions in Vietnam. When breaks do occur a considerable amount of refrigerant is lost and must be replaced.

Observation: Air cooled condensing units were substituted and a spare supply of Freon-22 maintained.

ITEM 8 - Screening messages (Quality Control)

Discussion: When routing messages to automatic relay centers, it has been observed that messages had too many format errors, which although capable of being passed to manual relays were automatically stopped at the automatic relays.

Observation: A Quality Control program was initiated using extra monitoring units to thoroughly screen all messages destined for automatic relay.

ITEM 9 - Requisitioning of spare parts.

Discussion: The great number of spare parts used in a facility of this size and the accompanying difficulty of preparing messages containing long lists of equipment with associated multi-digit Federal Stock Numbers all of which were susceptible to garble, made it mandatory that an easier way be found.

Observation: All spare parts and P&L are recorded on data cards and requisitioning is accomplished by transmission of said cards over data circuits, with an improved efficient operation.

ITEM 10 - Requirements for metal working equipment.

Discussion: The continuous installation of new equipment and reconfiguration of operational areas requires a great amount of metal work (conduits, panels, breaker boxes, etc.). This is now accomplished in local metal shops at excessive cost to the U.S. Government.

Observation: The requisitioning of a welding kit was effected to relieve this situation and increase the capability of the installation team.

ITEM 11 - Requirement for auxiliary switchboard power

Discussion: During power outages it is essential that the overseas switchboard remain operational, thus a battery supplied back-up is needed.

Observation: Equipment for a battery room has been requisitioned and is programmed.

ITEM 12 - Requirements for lights during power outages

Discussion: The majority of the lights in the commcenter are not connected to the no-break power system and are off during a power outage. These lights are essential for repairmen and operational personnel.

Observation: An emergency light system will be installed. The equipment arrived in Hawaii on 10 August and is expected to arrive Saigon by 20 August. Installation will be completed by 15 September 66.

ITEM 13 - More efficient configuration of Satecom Vans.

Discussion: During certain periods when personnel are not available to adequately man all three vans and at the same time accomplish other tasks, there was a decrease in the efficiency of operations.

Observation: By reconfiguring the transmitter, receiver and Operations

van into a T-shape (all one structure) we were able to conserve man power, thus releasing more men for other duties.

ITEM 14 - Inadequate training of Comm Gen Specialists.

Discussion: Whenever new Comm Gen personnel are received they must be trained more extensively in certain areas such as; (1) formatting; (2) operating signals, and (3) equipment recognition (esp. FCC-70's).

Observation: The Traffic Division has had to place an experienced NCO on duty as training NCO and all new men are trained on the above listed subjects, with a loss of time for all concerned.

ITEM 15 - Lack of warehouse space

Discussion: The great number of installation parts, project materials and spare parts in constant usage necessitate that an adequate storage area be provided on or near the Facility to reduce exposure to the elements (rain and dirt), and reduce the difficulty of securing, accounting for, and transporting them when stored in the metropolitan area.

Observation: Warehouses should always be included as part of the initial design of a large communications complex. In this instance we are constructing a semi-permanent warehouse on Facility ground.

SCCVOP (16 Aug 1966)

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966
(RCS CSFOR-65)

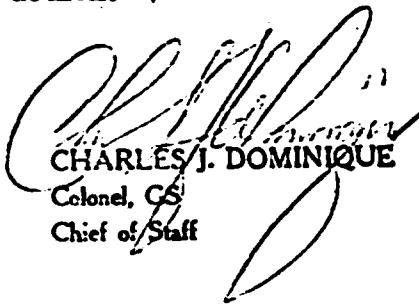
HEADQUARTERS, 1ST SIGNAL BRIGADE (USASTRATCOM) APO San Francisco 96307

19 AUG 1966

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20315

1. Concur in observations and recommendations.
2. Items pertaining to matters within this command have been
extracted for study and necessary action.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


CHARLES J. DOMINIQUE
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

1 Incl
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13. ABSTRACT

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