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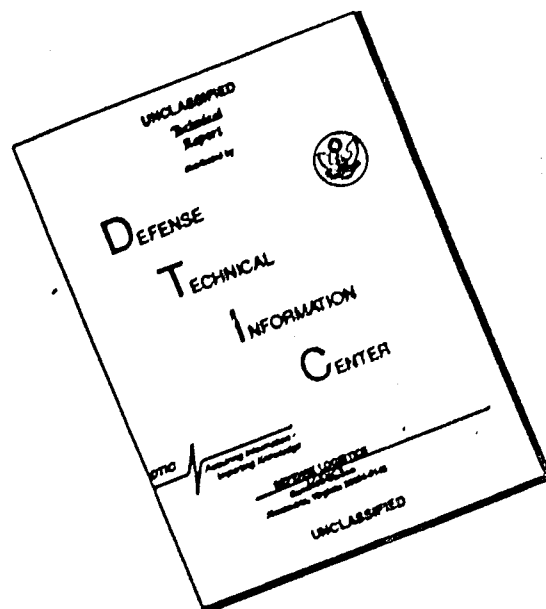
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 34TH ENGINEER BATTALION (CONSTRUCTION)
APO San Francisco 96384

EED-3

15 August 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR-65) For
Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

THRU: Commanding Officer
79th Engineer Group (Const)
APO US Forces 96491

Commanding General
20TH Engineer Brigade
APO US Forces 96491

Commanding General
United States Army Engineer Command (Prov)
ATTN: AVCC-P&O
APO US Forces 96491

Commanding General
United States Army, Vietnam
ATTN: AVHGC-DH
APO US Forces 96307

Commander in Chief
United States Army Pacific
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TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army (ACSFOR-DA)
Washington, D. C. 20310

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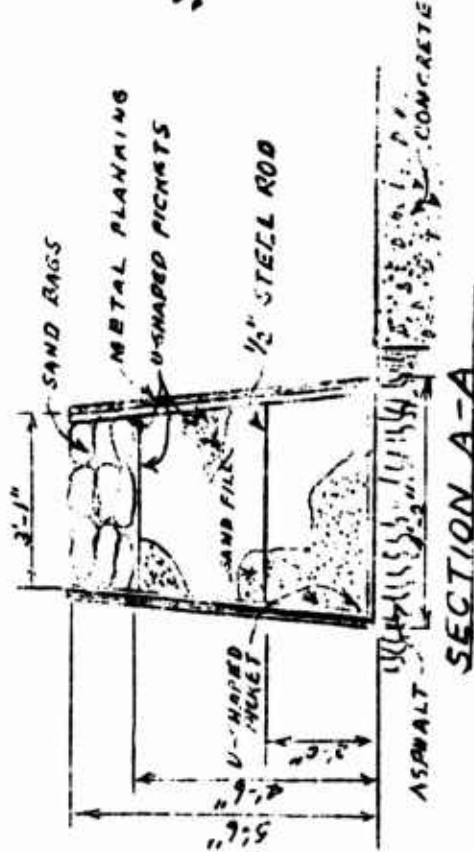
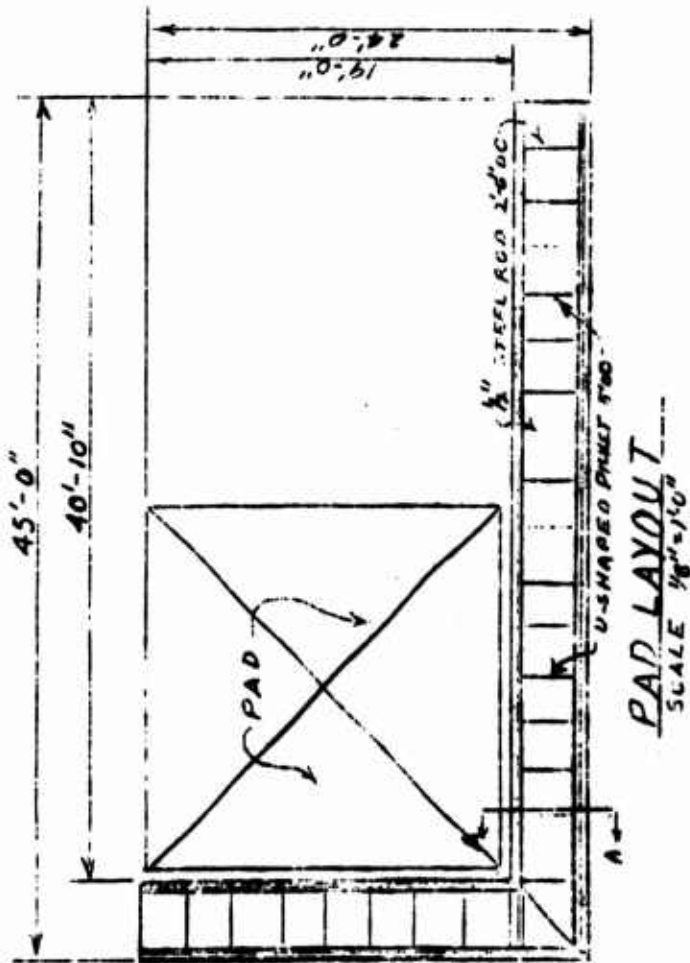
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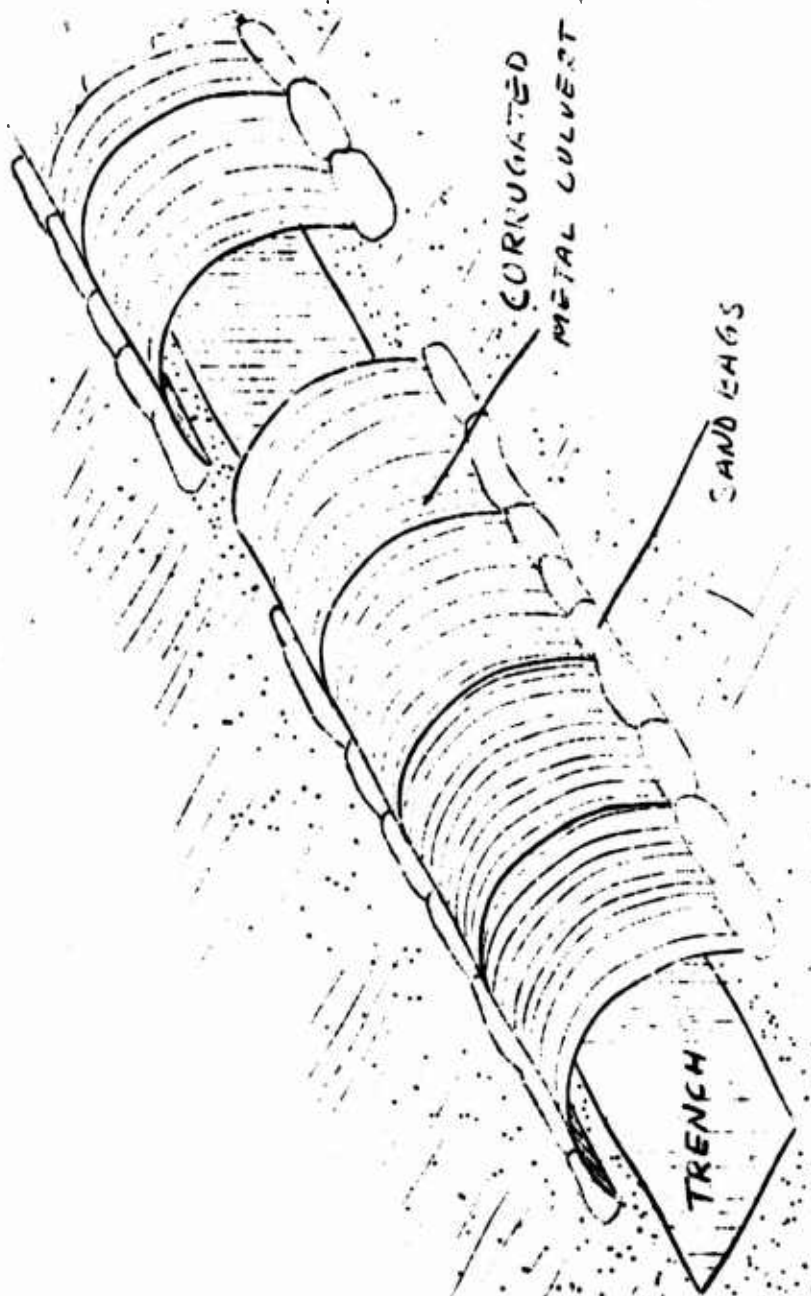


REFURBISHMENT PLAN

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INCL # 2

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TEMPORARY MORTAR TRENCH



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SECTION I: Significant Organization or Unit Activity

1. General:

a. The 34th Engineer Battalion (Construction) arrived at Bien Hoa, Vietnam on 2 May 1967. The battalion closed into its new home at 1430 hours, and immediately began preparing its defensive positions. The battalion continued to make its perimeter less vulnerable to penetration by improvement of fortifications.

b. The battalion was initially assigned to the 159th Engineer Group. On 1 July 1967, it was reassigned to the 79th Engineer Group. The battalion has been fully employed on Group and Engineer Command directed projects. Primarily, the projects have been; construction and repair of Lines of Communications (LOC), construction of Minimum Essential Requirements (MER) for newly arriving units to the Bien Hoa area. It has continued the development and construction of Drainage Systems, Helicopter Pads and Antimortar Revetments, Aviation Hangars, varying size Cantonment Areas, Service Clubs, EM Clubs, Mess Halls, and a Brigade Supply Facility.

c. The 34th Engineer Battalion has provided limited platoon size operational support to Combat Engineer Battalions in the 79th Engineer Group. The rock crushing section has been attached to the Group Light Equipment Company. The battalion's civic action program has consisted of supporting major Commands in their CA program with equipment and technical advice during this quarter.

d. Since arrival in Vietnam and during this quarter the battalion has constructed ten miles of new road; rehabilitated five and one half miles of existing roadway; constructed 93,838 Sq Ft of tropical buildings, warehouses and storage sheds; hauled and compacted 106,341 Cu Yds of fill and laterite; constructed one and one half battalion size and one company size MER; placed 1422 Cu Yds of concrete; installed 6000 LF of tactical wire; relocated two thousand meters of security berms for the 173d Airborne Brigade; demined 440,000 Sq Ft of Airfield Runway construction site and assembled and installed 3000 feet of corrugated metal culvert.

2. Command:

a. The 34th Engineer Battalion was reactivated on 1 July 1966 at the United States Army Armor and Artillery Firing Center, Fort Stewart, Georgia under General Order number 233, Headquarters, Third United States Army, Fort McPherson, Georgia.

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b. The battalion is organized under TOE 5-115E. On July 1, 1966 the battalion consisted of one Warrant Officer and four Enlisted Men. By the end of September 1966, the battalion was 78% filled but still experienced a critical shortage of junior and senior grade noncommissioned officers. Prior to deployment to the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) the battalion's strength was bolstered to 93.41%. Many lower grade enlisted positions were filled from AIT units on post.

c. The Command structure of the battalion from organization thru this reporting period has been as follows:

BATTALION COMMANDER:	LTC JOHN C. COLEMAN (CE), 28 Jul 66 - Present
HEADQUARTERS COMPANY:	CPT CHARLES L. MILLS (ARTY), 9 Aug 66 - 31 Jul 67
COMPANY "A":	CPT JERRY D. MILLETT (CE), 4 Aug 66 - 15 May 67 CPT ROOSEVELT SCOTT JR (TC), 16 May 67 - 31 Jul 67
COMPANY "B":	CPT CARL D. THRASHER (ARTY), 4 Aug 66 - 12 Jul 67 CPT ROGER C. STROM (CE), 13 Jul 67 - 31 Jul 67
COMPANY "C":	CPT CARL HIRSCH (INF), 15 Aug 66 - 3 Dec 66 CPT LARRY K. SIETZ (CE), 3. Dec - Present

d. POM and Deployment:

(1) During the month of July 1966 and early August 1966 the 34th Engineer Battalion continued to be filled with Officers,

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Noncommissioned Officers and Enlisted Men. By August 18, 1966 all companies (Hq, A, B, C, D) had received their initial personnel and were organized. The battalion's strength at the end of August was approximately 70%.

(2) A severe shortage of personnel with significant construction experience plagued the battalion. By the end of August, 27 of 31 Officers and 6 of 7 Warrant Officers were present for duty. The officer distribution was as follows: sixteen (16) Engineer, four (4) Artillery, one (1) Infantry, one (1) Transportation, one (1) Adjutant General, one (1) Armor, and one (1) Chemical Corps. Nearly half of the warrant officers assigned were newly appointed with less than two months in grade. Even more acute was the serious NCO gap at squad and platoon level. Less than one half of those authorized in grades E-5 and E-6 were assigned. The lower echelon leadership gap became more critical as training picked up momentum. The problem of NCO shortage still exists. The pressure has been eased by several means. First the Battalion engaged in extensive after-duty training for officers, NCO's and potential NCO's. The post was responsive to special training needs and several utility classes were given by Fort Stewart civilian personnel. Secondly, outstanding individuals were identified and developed rapidly into E-5 squad leaders. Most of the men promoted were young and energetic and had little time in service. Frequently, waivers were used to the maximum and successively by grade to produce squad leaders. Promotions to grade E-6 were limited by lack of qualified individuals. Thirdly, the battalion received some NCOs from retired personnel returning to active duty. With but a few marked exceptions the effectiveness of these personnel was disappointing. The leadership gap, particularly at squad and section level, is even more painful in RVN. The vast amounts of engineer troop construction, engineer assistance and self-help projects aggravate the need for experienced NCOs who can handle a job with minimum supervision.

(3) During the period 29 August 1966 thru 22 October 1966 the battalion conducted an eight (8) week combined Advanced Individual Training and Basic Unit Training Program. It was followed by eight (8) weeks of Advanced Unit Training from 24 October 1966 to 17 December 1966. During these training periods the battalion conducted two Tactical Marches and five field exercises. The first was a seven (7) mile night tactical march on 7 September 1966. The second was a fifteen (15) mile daylight tactical march on 18 November 1966 as a culmination of a three day FTX.

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(4) A summary of Field Exercises is as follows:

(a) 4 - 8 October 1966 - Operation Train Fire. Battalion conducted a five day field exercise. Training was conducted in motor movement, bivouac security, field communications, and weapons firing (TF). The battalion displaced by night motor march conducting training in night movement, operations and ambush drill.

(b) 17 - 21 October 1966 - Operation Rattler Roost. Battalion conducted a five day field exercise. Training was conducted in motor movement, communications, security of bivouac and job sites, and TO&E missions.

(c) 16 - 18 November 1966 - Operation Coral Caper. Battalion conducted a three day field exercise. Training was conducted in motor movement, communications, security of bivouac and job sites, TO&E mission projects, infantry tactics, and tactical foot marches. An alert was called at 0300 hours, 16 November 1966 to initiate the field exercise. On the second day the battalion reorganized as infantry and moved by motor march to a forward assembly area and trained in infantry tactics. The battalion returned from the FTX by performing a 15 mile tactical march.

(d) 29 November - 2 December 1966 - Operation Boa Boat. Battalion conducted a five day field exercise with training conducted in motor movement, communications, security of bivouac and job sites, and TO&E mission projects with emphasis on roads, airfields, and multi-shift operations. Battalion reorganized as infantry and trained in infantry tactics.

(e) 23 - 24 January 1967 - Operation Timber Test. Battalion conducted a two day field exercise with training in motor movement, field communication, bivouac and job site security, double shift operations on projects, and infantry tactics.

(f) 13 - 17 February 1967 Operation Got Ready. Battalion conducted a five day field exercise (ORT) with training in motor movement, field communications, bivouac and job site security, double-shift operation on TO&E missions projects, CBR, and infantry tactics. A Southeast Asian environment was assumed and training conducted in ambush drills, POW procedure, short suspense projects, minefield installations and removal, timber bridge construction, and engineer reconnaissance missions. D Company was displaced by night motor movement. A total of 32 projects were assigned and all but 2 were completed during four and a half days. The battalion was once again reorganized as infantry and conducted training in infantry tactics.

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(5) The battalion's training was initially hampered by the shortage of publications and equipment. The first two field problems were conducted with borrowed equipment. Equipment was borrowed from the US Army Reserve Motor Pool at Fort Stewart. All of the borrowed equipment was obsolete and non-standard. Consequently, minimum training objectives for ordnance vehicle operators were met. During the first two field exercises no engineer equipment was on hand. Training was relegated, primarily to Combat Engineer Tasks and those construction tasks not requiring heavy engineer equipment.

(6) Late October 1966, the battalion received its first shipment of engineer equipment. The battalion was committed to post perimeter and interior roads construction. Operation of equipment was scheduled by shift to obtain maximum training value from limited pieces of engineer equipment assigned. Even with double shift operation of equipment, operators did not obtain desired proficiency on engineer equipment prior to deployment.

(7) Certain critical items of engineer equipment were short throughout the training cycles. Examples of such items are cranes, 250 cfm air-compressors, and pneumatic tool sets; radios, wood working sets and pioneer tool sets.

(8) The original Equipment Readiness Date was 20 January 1967 and Personnel Readiness Date was 20 February 1967. However, equipment receipt was very slow and early in December 1966 the battalion was notified of a deployment slippage. The new Equipment Readiness Date was 20 April 1967. The battalion went into a more extended training schedule and some leaves were granted during the Christmas holiday period to help assure everyone a leave prior to deployment. This reduced the leave hump during loadout for deployment overseas. After the holiday season the battalion went into a recycled AIT and AUT. The objectives were to better prepare for deployment and to train assigned filler personnel. Except for weapons qualification, training was terminated with a pre-AIT, ORT on 17 February 1967. During and after the recycled training, work projects were sought to develop MOS skills with particular emphasis on development of equipment operator proficiency.

(9) The battalion received a final alert for overseas shipment on 6 March 1967. We began to disengage from post projects. Equipment Readiness Date (ERD) was confirmed for 20 March 1967, Personnel Readiness Date (PRD) was 10 April 1967. Some members of the Advance Party, WAPTOC Ship guards, and equipment ship guards

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were immediately granted leave. Plans were implemented initially to insure every man who had not taken a leave during the Christmas holidays a minimum of fourteen (14) days leave. Later, all personnel were given opportunity to take leave. Approximately one fourth of the personnel went on leave during the first week after receiving the alert. After that a phased step-up of leaves was granted to coincide with equipment and personnel readiness. Every man was POM qualified prior to going on leave. M-16 rifle qualification was conducted while loading out to qualify late filer personnel. The range remained open until one day prior to departure.

(10) In order to standardize packing a company was designated to pack and prepare one of each type of equipment to be shipped. Each company appointed a POM Officer and NCO to coordinate and insure standardization throughout the packing exercise. Responsibility for POM packing and preparation was kept at platoon and section level. All equipment except that normally transported on twenty-five ton trailers was driven to the Savannah Port in a "ready to ship" status. Final equipment and vehicular processing was accomplished by small teams from each company initially and then one small composite team as loading neared completion.

(11) During the packing and loading, items of equipment such as banding machines, and small scales were in short supply because of the volume of packing and loading. Wooden crates were made for tools and other non-fragile items. They were then banded to beds of trucks and trailers. Most of the battalion's generators were crated and then banded onto truck beds. PLL tires were placed in the bowls of Clark 290 Scrapers. A metal bar was spot welded through the tires to retain them in the bowls. Many such techniques were used to save ~~CONEX~~ space.

(12) Vehicle processing was made difficult due to the late exchange of old 3/4 ton trucks for new ones and gas driven 2 1/2 ton trucks, M35 for M35A2 multi-fuel types.

(13) Supply functions were complicated by rapid filling of previously requisitioned POM supplies. Many TA 50-901 items not authorized in RVN had to be turned-in. The battalion deployed with approximately 3,500 line items of PLL and 1,800 lines of ASL. Many items were not received until a few days prior to departure from the States. This was caused partially by late requisitions, i.e. these items could not be requisitioned because of insufficient information on the make and type of equipment being received from our requisitions.

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(14) "A" Company was made responsible for receiving, documenting, stenciling, and delivering to Port all equipment received during the last two (2) weeks in CONUS, regardless of future company assignment. This expedited the processing of new equipment, or equipment that was laterally transferred to our battalion during the last days in CONUS. A few items of equipment and tool sets were received so late that they were shipped directly to port without being inspected. Upon arrival in country these items were found to be issued without necessary publications and in some cases were found to be inoperable or incomplete.

(15) Close coordination with Post Transportation, the Savannah Port Authorities and a liaison trip to Oakland Port by the Assistant S-3, proved invaluable. The equipment moved to port by company size task forces. The entire move was completed to the port of debarkation without accident or incident.

(16) Two 4 man teams and one 2 man team of enlisted personnel in the grades E-5 and below were selected to accompany the three ships carrying equipment. Higher ranking NCO's were better utilized aboard the troop ship and later in country to prepare for pickup of equipment from the Port of Saigon.

(17) The battalion mess halls had the problem of operating while preparing for movement. To ease this situation, mess personnel were sent on early leaves whenever possible. Closing of mess halls coincided with personnel leaves. All mess halls were closed and cleared by the end of March. Personnel not on leave were satellited upon a Post Consolidated Mess.

(18) The main body of the battalion departed Hunter Army Air Field, Savannah, Georgia on 10 April 1967 under the Command of the Battalion Executive Officer. Nine commercial aircraft were used to transport the main body to Oakland Army terminal. The entire battalion, minus Advance Party along with Red and Yellow TAT, was aboard the USNS Geiger by noon 11 April 1967. The battalion arrived at Qui Nhon Vietnam on 29 April 1967. It debarked at Vung Tau on 2 May 1967. After completely closing shop at Fort Stewart, the Advance Party of twenty-five officers and enlisted men under command of the Battalion Commander departed on 19 April and flew to Vietnam by C-130 Aircraft, arriving on the 21st of April 1967.

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(19) Aboard ship, the battalion conducted limited training on the ship's Sun Deck. It included character guidance, weapons inspection and instructions, current events, Vietnam affairs, personal hygiene and command information.

(20) Our journey to the cantonment area was fairly uneventful. A 500 man battalion mess was almost completed when we arrived. Soon after opening the new mess hall, the Mess Sergeants began to see that the spare parts which had been shipped over were going to run short. The authorized 45 day stockage could not be replenished fast enough on items like stove parts, utensils and cleaning supplies.

(21) The heat also presented problems of storing and preserving food stocks. After two weeks in country a large reefer was built which reduced the storage problem.

(22) The first week in country, while waiting on equipment to arrive, the battalion continued the development of minimum essential requirements in the cantonment area. Much effort was expended on sand bag revetments around the sleeping areas. Also, temporary mortar trenches were constructed. As time permits, more durable and effective 65 man above ground bunkers are being built. (See Incl 3).

(23) The first ship load of equipment arrived on 11 May 1967. The equipment was immediately deprocessed and committed to the construction of the Bien Hoa By-Pass road. The remainder of the equipment arrived on 14 May 1967 and 21 May 1967. One ship took fifty-five days to reach Vietnam. Close coordination with port officials made it possible to pinpoint location of the ships and arrival dates. Two teams were organized to work in twelve (12) hour shifts to unload the ships and prepare equipment for off-loading. The dock crew was ready to move the equipment clear of the docks. This crew also tied down whatever load was placed on the vehicular equipment and moved it by convoy to the Cantonment area. A second crew was organized to separate the equipment by companies as it arrived in the unit area. Only minor equipment damage was sustained from shipment. No equipment was inoperative because of shipping damage. The distance from port to the cantonment area was eighteen (18) miles. Five-Ton Tractors and lowbeds were used to transport heavy equipment, "Z" CONEXES, and crates.

3. Personnel, Administration, Morale and Discipline.

a. The 34th Engineer Battalion (Construction) was deployed to Vietnam with full authorization of officers. The enlisted strength was 810 assigned of 867 authorized with 93.4% of the assigned deploying. The battalion deployed with men having 90 or more days prior to ETS.

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The first officer rotated after 91 days in country. Within the first 100 days in Vietnam, the battalion lost through reassignments; the Adjutant, the Operations Officer, one Company Commander and the EEMO. None of these positions had immediate replacements except for the Operations Officer, whose replacement arrived one week later. Other replacements were initially obtained from within the battalion.

b. Currently, the officer rotation problem is being painfully adjusted by an Officer exchange between battalions in the parent 79th Engineer Group. The enlisted rotational hump is also being adjusted by transfers, currently at an average of thirty men per month.

c. Disciplinary problems in the battalion have been negligible. No problems have been encountered with curfew violations even under long periods of alert status requiring restriction to cantonment areas. The most serious breach of discipline has been sleeping on guard.

d. Religious services are available on the Bien Hoa Army and Air Force Base Complex for all faiths. Protestant services are held in the 500 Man Mess in the Cantonment area. Catholic Services are held at the 173d Airborne Brigade Chapel at Bien Hoa. Jewish Services are held at the Second Field Forces (II FFV) Chapel, approximately six (6) miles away.

e. The moral fiber of the battalion has been generally strong. Church attendance has been good. A cooperative, fraternal attitude exists throughout the organization.

f. Morale of the unit has been and continues to remain exceptionally high. Indications are that a busy soldier is a happy soldier in RVN. The battalion works seven (7) days per week with soldiers getting one day off every fourteen days. Sunday mornings are reserved for training and religious activities.

g. Limited in-country R&R to Vung Tau is available to deserving individuals. Initial applications have been made for out-of-country R&R by the battalion.

h. It took approximately thirty days to establish a Sundry Fund. Interim recreation tents, in which beer was permitted, were established by companies until an Enlisted Men's Club could be established in the cantonment area. There are no Officers and NCO Clubs in the Battalion Cantonment area. An Officer and NCO Club is available less

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than one half mile away at Engineer Command.

i. Effort is made to keep the troops on post. The combined 173d Open Mess Association sponsors live floor shows featuring foreign and American entertainers very frequently. Unit cook outs are held often, and unit sports are encouraged.

j. There are many recurring and special feeder reports required. Because of the new environment and several changes in command headquarters almost all SOPs, policies and procedures had to be changed.

4. Intelligence and Counterintelligence:

a. The battalion receives daily operational intelligence briefings from the 173d Airborne Brigade Tactical Operations Center (TOC). Periodic intelligence information is received from the 79th Engineer Group. Spot reports of enemy activity are immediately dispatched to TOC and 79th Group.

b. The battalion developed and operates a laterite pit approximately one and one-half miles from the cantonment area. Enemy activity encountered has been limited to sniper fire. The battalion provides its own local security at the laterite pit. Normal engineer reconnaissance has been conducted during this quarter.

5. Plans, Operations and Training:

a. The Advance Party upon arrival in Vietnam on 21 April 1967 immediately established liaison with the 159th Engineer Group. In addition to seeing that our cantonment MER was being met, it also planned for the immediate employment of the battalion upon arrival in country.

b. The major hampering factor during the first week and a half in country was the late arrival of engineer equipment. There were ample plans, jobs and people, but few, if any, dozers, graders, hammers, etc. Equipment simply is not available for borrow from units in country.

c. Until equipment arrives in country, the organization is relegated to sand bagging, hand ditching, cantonment improvement and other menial tasks. Essential ordnance vehicles for rations, mail and water were acquired from other engineer battalions and separate companies until our vehicles arrived. While the battalion was without equipment, major efforts were directed toward assigning projects to companies, making BCM's for new projects, reconnaissance, and units transferring projects to us.

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d. The battalion has engaged primarily in standard (tropical) military construction. There is a continual and increasing need for earth work. Because of torrential downpours during the monsoons every building must be placed on a pad well above the existing grade

e. A resumé of projects assigned to the battalion follows:

(1) Relocation of a Brigade Supply Facility: Consists of the construction of perimeter and interior roads, buildings, large covered storage warehouses, one of which was 40 X 255 feet in size, ammo area, hardstands, POL storage and Chinook helicopter pads.

(2) VNAF Runway: Facility for the Vietnamese Air Force. Consists of rehabilitating the existing runway and surfacing with M8A1 matting over a waterproof membrane.

(3) Drainage Structures: Consists of a series of culverts and channels designed to provide drainage to a helicopter landing field.

(4) 3631 Man Cantonment Area: Self help construction of a Brigade size base camp.

(5) 329 Man Cantonment Area: Self help and MER for an artillery battalion.

(6) Microwave Relay Station: Consists of three quonset huts to be erected for a signal battalion relay station.

(7) Road Maintenance: Continuous maintenance of eight (8) miles of road on the entire Bien Hoa Army Complex. Includes repairs of culverts and headwalls.

(8) Road Construction: Consists of widening and adding shoulders to existing three (3) miles of road in the Bien Hoa Army Complex.

(9) Demining Operations: Consists of demining 440,000 Sq Yds of area North of the existing airfield and believed to contain antipersonnel mines.

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(10) Service Club: Completed the interior ceiling and walls of a service club. Installed electrical and plumbing facilities, bars, kitchen, barber shop and other club facilities.

(11) 1000 Man Cantonment Area: Self help construction to an aviation battalion for development of a cantonment area.

(12) 905 Man Cantonment Area: Development of the 34th Engineer Battalion Cantonment area. Low priority with 5% construction effort authorized.

(13) Highway #1 Repairs: Consists of patching pot holes along 3.5 miles of a Vietnamese main highway.

(14) Bituminous Hardstand: Consists of placing six (6) bituminous hardstands as tests for designed asphalt mixtures.

(15) ARVN Housing: Requisition and delivery of construction materials for continued development of Army of the Republic of Vietnam family housing.

(16) Tennis Court: Provide aid and technical assistance and earth work for construction of a tennis court in the II Field Forces area.

(17) Helicopter Revetments: Place antimortar revetments for helicopter protection (See Incl 1).

(18) II Field Forces Helipads: Construct 2 Helipads for the II Field Forces.

(19) Minimum Essential Requirements for newly arrived units: Two (2) MER areas are presently being developed in the Bien Hoa Army area. These consist of basic road construction and drainage systems for the cantonment area. Also showers, and latrines are provided.

(20) Special Forces Motor Park: Consists of building a motor park for the Special Forces compound.

(21) 1275 Man Cantonment: Self help project consisting of technical aid and assistance for construction of a battalion sized cantonment area.

(22) II Field Forces Bunkers: Precut and positioned 2 bunkers for the II Field Forces Area.

(23) Flight Line Facilities at Phu Loi: The construction of three aviation hangars, two steel and one wooden.

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(24) Bien Hoa By-Pass Road: Construction of a one mile road which included three 72" corrugated metal culverts with concrete headwalls.

(25) Observation Tower in Bien Hoa: Constructed and placed an observation tower on an existing water tower.

(26) Lai Khe Earth Moving Project: Provides direct support to Co "B", 168th Engineers in a road and helipad building project.

(27) Quarry Section: Provides direct support to the 557th Light Equipment Company in the operation of a Quarry at Xom Tam.

f. Standard military construction plans are different in each engineer group. Minor deviations from standard plans are allowed within Groups with the expressed approval of Group Commanders. The base development plan of an area is strictly followed. No structures, regardless of size can be constructed without approval from the base development board.

g. Certain skills and equipment are always in demand in RVN. Draftsman, designers and surveyors are constantly utilized. Surveyors are employed continuously because of the vast amount of earth work, engineer troop construction and self help troop construction. Concrete mixers, water distributors, asphalt kettles and travel plant mixers are all constantly in demand.

h. Water distributors are especially important. They are used night and day hauling potable water for the battalion's use. Water is trucked from centrally located potable wells. The wells are maintained by an engineer utility company. Water distributors are further needed for dust control even during the monsoons.

i. Probably the most vital construction principle to be emphasized during AIT, BUT and AUT should be DRAINAGE. Training must emphasize that the first plan of a project in RVN should be a drainage plan. Down pours often come suddenly and unexpectedly. A good drainage plan can mean the difference in equipment returning to work within hours or weeks. The need for drainage must be emphasized at operator level, as well as among the officers.

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j. Training of equipment operators prior to deployment should be geared to maximize operator stick time. The following types of equipment especially require competent operators: crane, grader, tractor (rubber wheeled) with scraper (particularly spread dumping) and the dozer.

k. Development of a perimeter security plan to coincide with that of the major tactical unit on base is fundamental. The fluidity of the enemy situation requires many changes to the plan. The battalion defends approximately 2400 feet of the 173d Airborne Brigades perimeter. This requires a rather large guard force (48 persons) at night. It is reduced to 12 by day.

l. Formal training has been reduced to character guidance and Command Information and selected classes each given twice a month on Sunday mornings. Occasionally a platoon size unit is sent to a one week jungle school conducted by 173d Airborne Brigade. Also continued proficiency in all weapons, explosive mines and claymores is maintained by range firing during inclement weather. Because of the close proximity of villages to the cantonment areas, shotguns and M-79's have proven desirable for use on perimeter guard as an augmentation to our automatic weapons.

6. Logistics:

a. All classes of supply except construction materials are requisitioned through the First Logistical Command at Long Binh. No major difficulty has been experienced in obtaining supplies. Non combat units are low priority for issue of jungle fatigues and boots, even though the unit may be authorized them.

b. The Self Service Supply Store; Acetate, cardboard and reproduction paper have been critically short for some time. The different types of reproduction machines used in RVN makes bartering difficult. Units should obtain adequate quantities of this items before deploying overseas.

c. Construction Materials: Construction materials are requisitioned through Pacific Architects and Engineers in Saigon. Experience has shown that construction supplies such as electrical and plumbing items; corrugated metal roofing, nails for corrugated metal roofs and various assortments of bolts are critically short. These items must be requisitioned as soon as a project is directed for any assurance of receiving them in time. It is recommended that units deploying overseas carry a supply of varying sizes of construction bolts as basic load requirements. Engineer Battalions in RVN operate under the old system of stacking and issuing construction materials (II & IV yard system). Engineer troop construction and self help troop construction supplies

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are procured, stored and issued for projects by the battalion S-4. The biggest problem encountered in stacking large quantities of construction supplies is limited haul capability. Five ton tractor trucks are constantly used for hauling these materials there by reducing the haul capability of construction equipment. The administration and maintenance of the construction material yard is enormous. These materials are O&MA (operations and maintenance accounts) and MCA (Military Construction Account) funded.

7. Force Development: None

8. Command Management:

a. Projects and missions assigned to the 34th Engineer Battalion are managed by the battalion operations officer. The functions of S-2 are under the control of the S-3. Daily command and operations meetings are held. Equipment is coordinated to insure efficient utilization on priority projects.

b. The battalion is primarily responsible for base construction of the Bien Hoa Army Area. It performs engineer troop construction and provides technical assistants and equipment for self-help construction. Assistance to self-help is also being provided to a Transportation Battalion at Cat Lai. During the quarter, the battalion provided operational support to the 1st Engineer Battalion and the 168th Engineer Battalion both at Di An. Construction support was provided as follows: (1) Quarry Section attached to the 557th Light Equipment Company at Xcm Tam and (2) an Earth Moving platoon to Company B, 168th Engineer Battalion at Lai Khe. The battalion has detached one General Construction Platoon for construction of aviation hangars at Phu Loi.

c. Fundamentally, the construction effort has been toward Lines of Communication (LOC's), base camp development and supply facilities.

9. Inspector General:

a. Inspection: Shortly after arrival in RVN the USAECV (P) Inspector General made a follow-up inspection of a POM inspection conducted by the Dept of the Army IG in CONUS prior to the departure of the organization. All areas of interest were found to be satisfactory.

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b. IG complaints: (1) One formal complaint was registered during the period. A specialist fifth class equipment operator (MOS 62F40 - crane operator, MOS 62E40 - equipment operator) complained to the Department of the Army IG by letter that he was not kept busy enough, and that he wanted to operate a crane or dozer rather than the truck to which he was assigned. Investigation disclosed that he was no longer qualified to operate cranes or dozers due to his slow manual reactions, probably caused through age (i.e. subject EM was 48 years of age). Because of his knowledge of equipment and their operation, he was utilized as an equipment supervisor, which satisfied his complaint.

(2) Several informal complaints were received by the Acting IG. Through investigation and discussion with the parties concerned, acceptable solutions were reached within the organization.

10. Information:

a. The battalion receives the following newspapers: The Army Reporter, The Observer, The Castle Courier, The Pioneer, during the month. The Pacific Stars and Stripes is distributed daily through the 79th Engineer Group by courier. Magazines include Army Commander's Digest, and Army Digest. Magazines are plentiful in the Post Exchanges.

b. Each company has been issued a television set through Special Services, and although not on items of issue, radios are available in the Post Exchanges.

c. Home Town News Releases are submitted on personnel promotions, awards, civic actions or other special projects.

11. Civilian Personnel:

a. Vietnamese employees were needed shortly after arrival in country. After receiving authorization for appropriated fund employees, the first step was to decide what types of jobs were necessary. In conference with company commanders, a proposed TD was drawn up for both OMA and MCA as follows:

KP's	52
Clerk Typists	10 (Especially useful in unit typing and book keeping for company house girls and other native personnel).
Parts Clerks	2
Mechanics	30

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Laborers	16
Interpreters	2
Latrine Attnd's	5 (For burn-out latrines)
Carpenters	80 (Useful in the Battalion Prefab Shop).
Laborers	10
TOTAL MCA	90

d. Due to overall reduction of Vietnamese employees in Vietnam, our employees were gained by transfer from other units in the Bien Hoa area. No new hires are allowed at present until old employees are rehired. Transfers and other personnel actions are under the jurisdiction of an area CPO, which is located in Long Binh and reports to a similar component in USARV Headquarters. In addition, house girls are employed and funds are set up under the provisions of USARV Reg 230-2. One girl is hired for each tent in the cantonment area. A system was developed to keep track of the employees working hours and other personnel administration by utilizing a few Vietnamese typists in the CPO. The battalion was also given authorization to hire 94 daily-hire Vietnamese to be paid at a rate of 90 piasters per day. These people are utilized on sand bag filling, erosion control and other common labor jobs.

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**SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR-65) for
Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967**

PERSONNEL - CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

SECTION 2 Part I, Observations (Lessons Learned)

ITEM: Security Threat from Indigenous Personnel.

DISCUSSION: It is known that the Vietnamese may try to bring weapons, ammunition, etc in an attempt to sabotage the cantonment area.

OBSERVATION: A thorough search (shake down) and count of persons entering and leaving the cantonment area was instituted not only for weapons check, but also for such things as marijuana and items stolen from troops. Significant pilferage has been detected and eliminated. While no weapon or bomb introduction has been attempted, the shakedown procedure is a positive deterrent.

ITEM: Preparing Permanent Hire TD.

DISCUSSION: We experienced many problems in making an effective permanent hire TD. The proposed TD was changed several times fundamentally for two reasons: (1) Even though TD's from other units were available the companies were initially not thoroughly convinced of their value to the battalion. TD's proposed were inadequate. (2) Some skills were generally not available, such as carpenters, mechanics etc.

OBSERVATION: A period of adjustment is necessary before units can properly evaluate and understand utility of VN employees and the optimum number for tasks required.

ITEM: Insufficient Time Between POM Leave and Deployment.

DISCUSSION: The over-riding problem in the preparation for overseas movement was the limited time for loading and POM leave. This was caused by an accelerated deployment date. There was little time between the last day of POM leave and the movement date. Some personnel returned only hours before aircraft loading time.

OBSERVATION: It was not known until immediately prior to movement who would be absent from their unit or dropped from the rolls because of failure to return to his unit. Another use for the increased time between POM leaves termination and movement date, is that it enables those individuals who have moved dependents to correct their DA Form 41

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PERSONNEL - CIVILIAN PERSONNEL (Cont'd)

to reflect the new address of their dependents. It is recommended that POM leave be terminated at least three days prior to the actual deployment date. This would allow time for final record adjustments.

ITEM: Complicated Movement Instruction.

DISCUSSION: The preparation for overseas movement was also complicated by the multitude of different documents giving instructions on processing personnel and equipment.

OBSERVATION: Ultimately, the agency actually responsible for movement, Oakland Army Terminal, wins out, and its instructions supplement out dated instructions contained in AR 220-10. It is recommended therefore that AR 220-10 be completely revised and up-dated. A liason visit to your port of debarkation is worth while.

ITEM: Lost Identification Tags and Cards.

DISCUSSION: The value of keeping up with dog tags and identification cards should be stressed. More than one hundred (100) dog tags were replaced during the week prior to movement. In most cases dog tags were left at home from POM leave.

ITEM: Notice of Change of Address.

DISCUSSION: There were problems concerning mail, especially among those individuals who failed to notify their publishers, i.e. (newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals) informing them of their expected change of address. Magazines cannot be forwarded overseas (AR 65-75).

OBSERVATION: The Fort Stewart Postal Officer was forced to destroy many of these periodicals. This could have been avoided if publishers had been notified of the change of address prior to deployment.

CONSTRUCTION - OPERATIONS - TRAINING

ITEM: Use of Laterite:

DISCUSSION: Laterite lens' (often only 2 or 3 feet thick) are generally underlain by heavy clay necessitating good judgement and extremely close control of scraper operations to preclude pickup of excessive clay and incorporation of same into the project.

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CONSTRUCTION - OPERATIONS - TRAINING (Cont'd)

Laterite with excessive clay particles is unfit for road surfaces or filling operation. Any type of laterite placed when more than a little above OMC is unworkable. Also laterite placed in wet subgrade becomes fluid and unusable. Wet laterite requires extensive drying time before it is workable. The drying process is greatly accelerated by aerating.

OBSERVATION: Laterite borrow must be carefully controlled to preclude introduction of excessive clay or excessively moist laterite (such as dozer stockpiled laterite for scooploaders that is subjected to heavy rains while in loose condition). It should be placed in thin layers and immediately compacted. This is particularly necessary during the monsoon period. Under favorable conditions, laterite can be compacted with any type of compaction equipment. It is most important to insure top seal utilizing smooth wheel rollers or pneumatic tire roller, when rain is imminent. This will protect it from the water. The top layer can be scarified later and the lower layers compacted properly without loss of time due to drying. Top layers of laterite that cannot be compacted before a rain can be covered with a rain cover. T17 membranes will suffice. This cover must be inspected frequently and not allowed to remain in place any longer than is necessary because of condensation.

ITEM: Concrete Building Slabs:

DISCUSSION: The monsoon season offers very few acceptable opportunities for placing concrete. This is caused by both the rain in large quantities and the intense heat between rains.

OBSERVATION: One method utilized to protect the concrete is the use of prefabricated covers, stretched and nailed on gabled-end wooden frames. Slabs may be protected and worked continuously under the covering. A second method is to place a ring beam, then construct the sides and roof of the building. This provides protection for placing the slab, after which the building can provide its own protection from effects of rain. Neither of these two methods will protect the concrete from heat. Screeding and finishing must be prompt since the heat causes concrete to set more quickly. Also close attention must be given to proper curing to avoid surface dusting and crazing.

CONSTRUCTION - OPERATIONS - TRAINING (Cont'd)

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ITEM: Computing BOM and use of Construction Materials:

DISCUSSION: Because of evident shortages of plumbing and electrical materials it is necessary to submit BOM's well in advance of construction starting dates. Another problem is temporary shortage of particular lengths of lumber. Many construction crews find themselves without sufficient lumber, although proper estimates were made for the area to be covered. The latter shortage is due to a discrepancy in the length of boards drawn from S-4. When nailers are at five foot intervals, twenty foot boards or ten foot boards are needed. If eight or twelve foot boards are issued there is a large increase in the loss factor.

OBSERVATION: BOM's must be completed as soon as possible before construction begins. BOM's should also state required dates of delivery to avoid delays in construction. Rechecking of BOM's is also imperative to insure accuracy in quality and that all items are requested. S-4 should be consulted when preparing a BOM to ensure that proper lengths of material are available.

ITEM: Corrugated Culvert Installation:

DISCUSSION: CONUS units expecting to deploy overseas should emphasize in their training the installation of corrugated metal culverts. The most common deficiencies are backfill, sufficient culvert extension lengths, constructions of concrete block headwalls, and inadequate fill over culverts.

OBSERVATION: There is much culvert to be installed. Corrugated metal type is the most commonly used. Proper training before deployment can substantially reduce the maintenance effort and the need for replacing recently installed culvert.

ITEM: Road Maintenance and Pot hole repair:

DISCUSSION: Test were conducted using two methods and four material designs. One method used involved cutting, squaring and cleaning pot holes to approximately twelve inches depth before placing a patch design. The second method used was to place the designed mix without pot hole preparation. The following patch designs were used: (1) A cement, sand and gravel (1½ inch minus) dry mix with 1:3:5 proportions; (2) A base course of three inch minus gravel, four inch layer of compacted laterite and a two inch layer of three-eighths inch minus gravel; (3) A compacted laterite shot with peneprime, and (4) A laterite base with six inches of well graded gravel compacted.

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CONSTRUCTION - OPERATIONS - TRAINING (Cont'd)

OBSERVATION: The most critical factor is pot hole preparation. Although all patch designs produced positive results, the combination of cement, sand and gravel had best results.

ITEM: Helicopter Revetment Construction.

DISCUSSION: Currently, revetments designed to protect parked helicopters and small fixed wing air craft from mortar attacks are being constructed.

OBSERVATION: Attached as inclosure #2 is a type design currently being constructed by the 34th Engineer Battalion. The design requires a large welding effort but is extremely durable, economical of materials and is effective. Using four oxygen-acetylene units, the rate of construction is about one and one half revetments per day.

ITEM: Man Power Erection of Prefabricated Forty (40) foot trusses.

DISCUSSION: The twenty ton truck mounted crane was used initially in lifting forty foot trusses onto the buildings. The crane was used because the primary consideration was weight. Soon it became apparent that the crane was efficient, but not always available (for building construction) thus delaying construction. In addition heavy rains often make site access for positioning the crane difficult.

OBSERVATION: It was found that men standing inside the structure could manually lift the full trusses or (with fewer men) the half trusses onto the wall panels or wall panel and center beams and stand them upright with poles and guy ropes. This proved so efficient that cranes, even when readily available, are now seldom used for truss placement on low (8' or 10' wall) structures.

ITEM: Errors Found In the Carpenter's Rule.

DISCUSSION: It was discovered that errors of one-sixteenth inch to one-eighth inch existed in prefabricated panels and trusses for buildings. The carpenter's rule (wood) had errors in length as much as one-eighth inch in fifty-seven inches.

OBSERVATION: Steel tapes are recommended over carpenter's rules for accuracy.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR-65) for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

ITEM: Prefabricated Component Errors.

DISCUSSION: It was found that an error as minor as 1/16" (one sixteenth inch) in a 10 feet long wall panel became significant in a long buildings such as a 270 feet long warehouse visibly affecting alignment between concrete in bedded items, wall studs, and trusses.

OBSERVATION: To adjust for possible minor errors in modular prefabricated components, such as wall panels, a 50 feet tape should be used to detect cumulative errors and permit adjustment by shortening or lengthening every fourth or fifth panel.

ITEM: Battalion Prefabrication Shop.

DISCUSSION: Battalion prefabrication shops are necessary in RVN. Most structures are standard tropical buildings with varying modifications. The shop uses indigenous personnel, who are authorized under military construction authorization (MCA), and supervised by our own personnel.

OBSERVATION: Construction is continuous and ample stocks of standard building parts are always available. Rapid construction and more efficient use of troop labor has resulted from the facility.

ITEM: Pilferage of Emplaced Construction Materials.

DISCUSSION: In response to pilferage reports from other units, sand bag headwalls were promptly shot with asphalt materials to limit reusability and lessen possibility of pilferage. However, when the final concrete pour had been completed on some massive headwalls on which we had worked several days and nights near a village, all personnel pulled off the site at about 2100 hours one evening. Upon returning to the site at daybreak we found the forms had been removed and the form material stolen. It was fortunate that no cracks or damage occurred in the "green" concrete.

OBSERVATION: Forms must be protected from pilferage until concrete has set.

ITEM: Ditch Erosion.

DISCUSSION: Upon initially undertaking construction in an existing cantonment area, some new roads were constructed in sandy soil with vee

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CONSTRUCTION - OPERATION - TRAINING (Cont'd)

ditches larger and more gently sloped than similar ditches observed in the area. When the monsoons hit, acute erosion occurred. The fact that similar erosion occurred in the previously existing ditches was no consolation.

OBSERVATION: Large capacity pan ditches are almost a necessity in sandy erosion prone soils in this monsoon environment. Observed drainage provisions on existing roads is not a valid guide since much of the observed road net may have been constructed subsequent to the last monsoons.

LOGISTICS - MAINTENANCE

ITEM: Authorized Stockage List.

DISCUSSION: The unit shipped with a thirty (30%) per cent shortage of maintenance ASL. This caused a minor hardship because these parts are not available in country. The main items consumed have been steering knuckles (CV) for wheeled vehicles, both ordnance and engineer, repair kits for front hydraulic cylinders, filters of all types, spark plugs and batteries. Roads are very hard on tires.

OBSERVATION: If at all possible, stock these items in excess by special permission before deployment to Vietnam. The deadline rate can be substantially reduced.

ITEM: Critical Equipment Shortage.

DISCUSSION: The unit departed CONUS without the Maintenance Platoon's trailer mounted shop set and the repair parts van. Due to wet conditions in RVN, the storage and protection of vital repair parts posed a problem.

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LOGISTICS - MAINTENANCE (Cont'd)

OBSERVATION: Until these items of equipment arrived in country, conex containers were used to store repair parts.

ITEM: Red Ball Requisition:

DISCUSSION: The turn-around time for red ball request has been between 15 and 25 days in most cases.

OBSERVATION: It is often necessary to take action to obtain the parts through exchange with other units or by utilizing the controlled cannibalization point which serves your area.

ITEM: POM Equipment marking and packing.

DISCUSSION: Information on packing, crating and stenciling is too general. Detailed information on these items should be made available well in advance of movement so complete planning can be accomplished. Necessary equipment, i.e. lowboys with chains and binders, should be programmed in the overall movement plan to facilitate easy location for use at the port of debarkation. In addition, packing space can be conserved by filling cargo beds of vehicles and trailers.

OBSERVATION: Battalion should standardize detailed POM instructions well in advance of alert for deployment. A visit to the port of embarkation is imperative. Plans should be devised, so that material and equipment required first at the debarkation point are loaded last. This should include vehicle parts, and items packaged for security but readily available for use upon arrival.

ITEM: Prescribed Load List.

DISCUSSION: PLL preparation was delayed because equipment was not on hand. There is no means of making out a PLL for any equipment until it is on hand, because there is no certainty of the make or model you will receive. Requisitions are not very good substitutes for parts.

OBSERVATION: PLLs could be prepared sooner if make and model of equipment could be determined prior to receipt of the equipment.

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EBD-3

15 August 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR-65) for
Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

OTHER (MEDICAL)

ITEM: Need for a Surgeon.

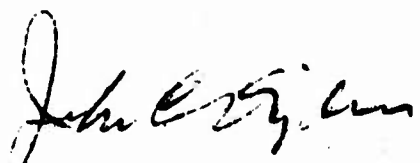
DISCUSSION: In preparing for overseas movement, it is almost essential that a Battalion Surgeon be assigned to a deploying unit, and function with the unit in its preparation. He should be available for the procuring of necessary medical supplies which in his estimation will be necessary for accomplishing the mission of the medical section. This responsibility should never be delegated to a lesser official. The surgeon alone can best determine what he will need and what he will not need. The Battalion was without a surgeon until four days prior to deployment.

OBSERVATION: After arriving in country without proper supplies, much time is needlessly spent requisitioning these supplies.

SECTION 2 PART II. Recommendations:

NONE

- 3 Incl
WD, HQS, DA. Organization Diagram
2. Revetment Plan
3. Temporary Mortar Trench


JOHN C OGILVIE
LTC, CE
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

- 2 - CINCUSARPAC, ATTN: GPCP-CT (Air Mail)
3 - CG, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DH (Mail)
6 - CG, USAECV (F), ATTN: AVCC-P&O (Courier)
4 - CG, 20th Engr Bde (Courier)
25 - CO, 79th Engr Gp (Const) (Courier)

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EGE-CO (15 Aug 67)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR-65) for the
Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

DA, Headquarters, 79th Engineer Group, APO 96491 22 August 1967

TO: Commanding General, 20th Engineer Brigade, APO 96491


1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by the 34th Engineer Battalion has been reviewed and is considered adequate. The following addition is made to paragraph 2c, Section I.

Company "D"

CPT Richard Chandler (CE)

18 Aug 66 - 31 Jul 67

2. The observation made in Section I, Para 5j, cannot be overemphasized. Sufficient operator training to produce competent equipment operators is essential. The lack of fully trained operators, particularly when they must operate heavy equipment in public areas, limits productivity and results in a higher deadline and accident rate.


JOSEPH A. JANSEN
Colonel, CE
Commanding

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AVBI-OPN (15 Aug 67) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR-65) for Quarterly
Period Ending 31 July 1967

DA, Headquarters, 20th Engineer Brigade, APO 96491, 1 September 1967

TO: Commanding General, USAECV(P), ATTN: AVCC-P&O, APO 96491

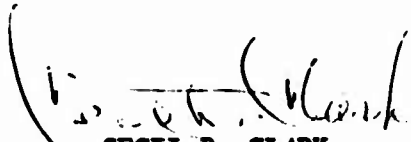
1. The subject report, submitted by the 34th Engineer Battalion, 79th Engineer Group, has been reviewed by this headquarters, and is considered comprehensive and of value for documentation and review of the reporting units activities and experiences.

2. This headquarters concurs with the submitted report, with the following comment:

Reference section 2, part I, Logistics: USCONARC letter,
Subject: Logistics Instructions for Deployments to USARPAC, now requires
units to requisition PLL concurrently with applicable major items when
make/model is known either from TOE and/or NICP advice.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Copy furnished:
CO, 79th Engr Gp


CECIL D. CLARK
Major, CE
Adjutant

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AVCC-P&O (15 Aug 67) 3rd Ind CPT Whitley/wvo/LBN 4581
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Quarterly Period
Ending 31 July 1967

27 SEP 1967

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY ENGINEER COMMAND
VIETNAM (PROV), APO 96491

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DH,
APO 96375

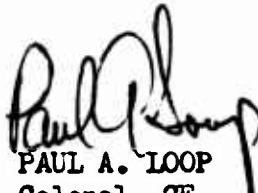
This headquarters concurs with the 34th Engineer Battalion's ORLL report as written, subject to the following comments:

1. Reference Section 1, paragraph 6c, page 14: Periodic shortages of specific items of construction material are expected to continue. There appears to be little value in deploying engineer units to RVN with other than WABTOC items, due to the limited shipping space, and the fact that individual construction missions are unpredictable.

2. Reference Section 2, Part I, page 24, item concerning authorized stockage list: Concur. CINPAC has authorized a 90-day ASL for units deploying to Vietnam.

3. Reference Section 2, Part I, page 25, item concerning red ball requisition: Concur for emergencies only. Modifying PLL's and creating continuing demands on the system is the long-range solution to the problem.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


PAUL A. LOOP
Colonel, CE
Chief of Staff

3 Incl
nc

Info cys furn:

CG, 8th US Army, ATTN: Engr
CG, 20th Engr Bde
CO, 79th Engr Gp
CO, 34th Engr Bn

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AVHGC-DST (15 Aug 67) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
31 July 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (U)

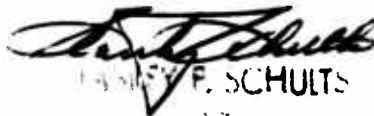
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 July 1967 from Headquarters, 34th Engineer Battalion (Construction) (WDEAA) as indorsed.

2. Concur with basic report as indorsed. Report is considered adequate.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JAMES E. SCHULTS

Asst Adjutant General

3 Incl
nc

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GPOP-DT(15 Aug 67)

5th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967
from HQ, 34th Engr Bn (Const) (UIC: WZNA) (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558

8 0 00 1967

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

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding
indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



K. F. CSLOUGH

MAJ, AGC

Asst AG

3 Incl
nc