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AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (? Mar 68) FOR OT RD 681137 2 April 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 43d
Medical Group, Period Ending 31 January 1968

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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3

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 43D MEDICAL GROUP
APO 96240

AVBJ-GA-OI

31 January 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period
Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65)

THRU: Commanding General
44th Medical Brigade
ATTN: AVBJ-PO
APO 96384

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

The OPERATIONAL REPORT - LESSONS LEARNED of this headquarters for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1968 is forwarded in accordance with Army Regulation 1-19.


NORMAN J. COLE
LTC, MC
Commanding

FOR OT RD
681137

4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I, Significant Organizational Activities

SECTION II, Part I, Observations (Lessons Learned)

Operations

Real Estate

Aircraft Operations

SECTION II, Part II, Recommendations

Operations

Real Estate

Aircraft Operations

ANNEX

A. OPERATIONS

INCLOSURES

1. List of Assigned Units

~~2. Visitors to the Command~~ Withdrawn, Hqs, DA

5
AVBJ-GA-OI

31 January 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period
ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65)

SECTION I Significant Organizational Activities

A. During the entire 90 days report period, this headquarters accomplished its assigned mission of providing command, control, and administrative supervision of assigned and attached medical units located in II Corps Tactical Zone - South, RVN; and providing area medical support to include field-army-level hospitalization, evacuation and medical regulating for United States and Free World Military Assistance Forces operating in that area.

B. The infusion of aviator personnel was completed during the quarter. The infusion program objectives were to break up the rotational humps created by units arriving in country and to provide aircraft commanders to new units. Exchange of aviators with the 45th Medical Company (Air Amb), 68th Med Gp, was not feasible. The only available personnel to exchange had a July DEROS date, causing an exchange of one rotational hump for another. Exchanges were accomplished with other units.

C. The Civilian War Casualty program was officially started on 1 October 1967. On 7 January a special Letter of Instruction for the 91st Evacuation Hospital designated that facility as "The First Civilian War Casualty Hospital Operated by the 91st Evacuation Hospital" and a sign to that effect was erected. Coordination at Medical Group level was initiated between local province health officials, MILPHAP representatives, and USAID representatives which assisted in understanding the workings of these organizations and thus provided more rapid implementation of the program. The administrative processing of these patients is essentially an extension of normal medical regulating procedures with modifications as set out in 44th Med Bde instructions. Telephone communications has been this headquarters' most difficult problem, although there were other minor problems encountered which have been resolved without incident.

D. On 16 November, the advanced party of the 571st Medical Detachment (RA) arrived at Nha Trang, followed by the arrival of the main body on 22 November. The unit has been co-located with the 254th Medical Detachment, and maintains a single flight operations center in conjunction with the 254th Medical Detachment to receive requests for mission support and to control the dispatch of aircraft accordingly. Other than the single operations center, both units will operate independently.

E. On 21 December, the 945th Medical Detachment (KA) arrived for attachment to the 8th Field Hospital. This detachment was assigned to the 43d Medical Group on 12 December, but spent the period from 12 November to 12 December at Phan Rang and Phan Thiet in support of Operations Rose, and Klamath Falls.

F. On 29 November, the 161st Medical Detachment was sent TDY from Cam Ranh Bay to provide medical support for the staging area of the incoming 101st Airborne units at Bien Hoa. The 161st was subsequently relocated at Long Binh and was assigned to the 68th Medical Group.

6

G. The 1st Platoon of the 568th Clearing Company was sent TDY from Ban Me Thuot to Tay Ninh on 5 December to provide support to the 25th Division for approximately 60 days.

H. The new out of country evacuation system was officially implemented on 7 November. A conference had been held on 31 October to explain the new system to representatives of each of the hospitals. The new system requires the requesting hospital to submit patient information up through channels. Ultimately the FEJMRO designates and relays the destination hospital down through channels to the requesting hospital. The system has worked extremely well thus far.

I. A radio, AN/FRC 93 was installed at the 61st Medical Battalion and became operational on 13 October. Medical Regulating Procedures, and general lines of communication have been significantly improved and are far more efficient.

J. An organizational listing as of 31 January 1968 is attached as Inclosure.

7
SECTION II PART I: OBSERVATIONS (LESSONS LEARNED)

A. OPERATIONS:

In order to prevent duplication of effort on the part of project officers at the various higher echelons of command, the DISCUSSIONS, OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS pertaining to Operations ROSE AND KLAMATH FALLS were not repeated in this report. They may be found in the After Action Reports indicated as follows, which were forwarded to the same headquarters as this report.

Letter, this headquarters, AVBJ-GA-OI, 8 December 1967, subject: After Action Report, with copies furnished to CG, 44th Med Bde, ATTN: AVBJ-PO; HQ, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DH; HQ, MACV, ATTN: GROF-MH; and ACSFOR, DA.

Letter, this headquarters, AVBJ-GA-OI, 16 January 1968, subject: After Action Report, with copies furnished to CG, 44th Med Bde, ATTN: AVBJ-PO; HQ, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DH; HQ, MACV, ATTN: GROF-MH; and ACSFOR, DA.

B. REAL ESTATE:

ITEM: Acquisition of Real Estate

DISCUSSION: Units are assigned locations in RVN that require acquisition of real estate from ARVN and/or VNAF authorities. "Dust Off" units generally operate from airfields and airstrips already in existence. In order to acquire permission for utilization of parking space and a base of operations, close liaison with local Real Estate Officers in negotiating formal agreements is essential, as is coordination with Senior Advisors to ARVN and VNAF authorities by the Real Estate Officer.

OBSERVATION: Real Estate Officers require the unit's request be submitted their office for indorsement to the final approving authority for occupancy of requested real estate, without benefit of close personal contact with the senior advisors concerned.

C. AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS:

ITEM: Short Shaft Failures

DISCUSSION: Helicopter units in the Republic of Vietnam who are operating with the UH-1H helicopter are experiencing considerable difficulty with the overheating of the short shaft. This in turn causes metal buildup and pick out on the gear teeth of the shaft. This condition requires the replacement of the short shaft which is expensive and also in short supply. Helicopter ambulance units are experiencing considerable down time on helicopters awaiting replacement parts for these failures.

OBSERVATION: This unit has experienced one short shaft failure shortly after arriving in country. It was found during inspection of the item that proper packing with the correct amount of grease had not been accomplished when the aircraft was reassembled after shipment overseas. This caused the shaft to

8

C. AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS (CONT)

overheat and cause its failure. The increased torque on the drive train of the UH-1H helicopter caused by the larger L-13 engine demands greater emphasis on the need for proper lubrication of parts and more frequent inspections for wear. At present the short shaft is required to be inspected and re-pack every 100 hours during the periodic inspection. In an effort to cut down on part failures and time lost on aircraft, this unit has been inspecting and repacking the short shaft every 50 hours. Since this policy has been in use we have not experienced any further problems in over 1200 hours of flying time on the unit's aircraft.

ITEM: Personnel Rescue Hoist

DISCUSSION: Several parts of the Personnel Rescue Hoist seem to be causing repeated failures during prolonged operation of the hoist. The two most prominent problems seem to be frayed and broken cables and overheating and failure of the electrical control boxes and motor. Repair parts for the hoist are in short supply and replacement hoists are not available in country. The proponent of this item has had considerable experience in the testing and evaluation stages of the Rescue Hoist in CONUS and has taken a particular interest in the item since arrival in the Republic of Vietnam.

OBSERVATION: In discussing hoist operation and maintenance problems with helicopter crews which utilize the hoist, it is evident that sufficient training has not been given these crews on the operation limitations and maintenance necessary to prolong the useful life of the hoist. In general the information found in TM 55-1520-210-20, Chapter 4, Section II Para 4-185 to 4-201 and TM 55-1520-210-10, Chapter 6, Section X, Para 6-72 to 6-77 is not widely known to helicopter crews, and is not being followed. The hoist is not receiving daily and periodic inspections to insure safety devices are in proper adjustment and hoist is in a serviceable condition. Cable guides that are out of adjustment result in a high percentage of the cable failures observed. Operating the hoist at slow speeds for extended periods of time and not allowing the hoist motor sufficient time to cool between multiple lifts results in overheating and electrical failure. This unit has had no problems or difficulties with the Personnel Rescue Hoist.

ITEM: Aircraft Field Stand-by Maintenance

DISCUSSION: Field stand-by's remote to the operations and maintenance base (100 nautical miles) posed maintenance problems incident to intermedicate inspection requirements. The unit was faced with one of two courses of action. 1) Fly the aircraft back to base thereby accumulating 2 hours flight time (round trip) or 2) accomplishing the inspection in the field. It was not always possible to rotate aircraft in the field to coincide with inspections because of low remaining time on the replacement aircraft, non-availability of replacements etc. Due to relatively inexperienced crew chiefs, it was desired to have an inspection team and a technical inspector carefully inspect the aircraft to assure its continued satisfactory operation until the next inspection.

5

9

C. AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS (CONT)

OBSERVATION: The maintenance officer (if available, otherwise another aviator) flew the inspection team and technical inspector to the field site to perform required maintenance. While the aircraft was down for inspection, the medical coverage was provided by the aircraft which flew the team into the field site. All known spare and repair parts, torque wrenches, lubricants, special tools, oil sampling bottles, etc, that might be required accompanied the team. This solution assured the highest quality maintenance commensurate with mission requirements and unit assets and provided better workload scheduling for major inspections and component changes.

6

SECTION II PART II: RECOMMENDATIONS

A. OPERATIONS:

See Item "A", OPERATIONS, in Section II, Part I

B. REAL ESTATE:

RECOMMENDATION: The unit requesting acquisition of real estate should urge the Real Estate Officer to personally hand carry each request to the senior advisors, and a representative of the requesting unit should accompany the real estate officer on his initial visit to the senior advisors in order to insure all accommodations requested are all-inclusive and sufficiently explained. Further, that some degree of personal contact with the ARVN or VNAF representative be established.

C. AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS:

RECOMMENDATION: Units with UH-1H helicopters inspect and repack short shafts every 50 hours. During inspection and repack, insure "O" rings are free of cuts and signs of wear to preclude loss of needed grease to high temperature gears. Also during repack insure proper amount and type of grease is used.

RECOMMENDATION: Units operating the Personnel Rescue Hoist insure a thorough training cycle is given all aircraft and maintenance crews to include an understanding and knowledge of information found in TM 55-1520-210-10 and -20. Hoist be given preflight daily along with aircraft and also inspected after each lift to insure serviceability.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend that all Helicopter Ambulance Units similarly committed utilize this method in conducting intermediate inspections on committed aircraft.

11
AVBJ-1 (31 Jan 1968)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period
Ending 31 Jan 1968 (A S OOFOR-65) (43d Medical Group)


HEADQUARTERS, 44th Medical Brigade, APO 96384

24 Feb 1968

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHCC-DST,
APO 96375

1. The contents of the basic report have been reviewed.
2. The following comments pertaining to the recommendations in Section II, Part II (page 10) are submitted:
 - a. Reference paragraph B. Concur.
 - b. Reference paragraph C. Concur with all recommendations regarding aircraft operations. These lessons learned will be disseminated to all 44th Medical Brigade aviation units for inclusion in operational procedures as appropriate.

TEL: LBH 2909/2494


GLENN J. COLLINS
Brigadier General, MC
Commanding

cc: 43d Medical Group

AVHGC-DST (31 Jan 68) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending
31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 27 FEB 1968

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1968 from Headquarters, 43d Medical Group (BG9A) as indorsed.
2. Concur with report as indorsed. Report is considered adequate.
3. A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



CHARLES A. BYRD
Major, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Copy furnished:
HQ 44th Med Bde
HQ 43d Med Gp

13
GPOP-DT (31 Jan 68) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 January
1968 from HQ, 43d Med Gp (UIC: WBG9AA) (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 21 MAR 1968

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

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



K. F. OSBOURN
MAJ, AGC
Asst AG

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ANNEX A (Operations) to Operational Report - Lessons Learned for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65)

The following is a brief discussion of tactical operations supported during the period 1 November 1967 - 31 January 1968.

BOLLING - - A search and destroy operation conducted by the 173d Abn Bde. Two air ambulances provide area support within the AO, and the 91st Evac Hosp provides the primary non-divisional medical treatment support. The 440th Med Det (RB) provides ground ambulances at the C. P. Med Co, 173d Bde, to transport routine patients for further evacuation outside 173d Bde control. The 8th Field Hospital receives overflow patients from the 91st Evac Hosp, and those patients requiring specialty care not available at the 91st. Operation BOLLING is still in progress.

ROSE - - A search and destroy operation conducted by the 3/506 Abn Inf to neutralize enemy elements in the area of operations. The 61st Medical Battalion provided the 2nd Platoon of the 568th Med Co (Clr) which was located at Phan Rang, and two ground ambulances from the 418th Med Co (Amb) which were co-located with the Clr Plt. The 945th Surg Team (KA) was located within the Clr Plt and provided surgical augmentation to the Plt. Initially, two helicopter ambulances were provided by the 254th Med Det (RA), to cover the assault phase of the operation. On D+1, one aircraft was left on site with the Clr Plt and the other returned to home station. Definitive hosp care was provided by the 8th Fld Hosp in Nha Trang. Operation ROSE terminated on 31 November 1968.

KLAATH FALLS - - A search and destroy operation conducted by the 1/101st Abn Div. Initially, the 945th Med Det (Surg Team KA) was located within the composite clearing station (Co C, 15th Med Bn, 1st ACD augmented by medical personnel from 1/101st Clearing element) at Phan Thiet. Three helicopter ambulances were field sited at Phan Thiet, one of which was subsequently moved to Field site at SONG MAO and remained there approximately two weeks. Two ground ambulances from the 418th Med Co (Amb) were moved to Phan Thiet to provide ~~air~~ evacuation facility. Until 20 Dec back-up hospitalization was provided from 68th Medical Group resources due to proximity of hospitals to the area of operations. On 20 Dec 67, fixed wing evacuation was arranged and the 8th Field Hospital in Nha Trang provided back-up hospitalization until termination of the operation on 8 Jan 68. Two Field Medical Regulators were stationed within the Clr to report patients for evacuation and coordinate use of 68th Group hospitals thru 44th Medical Brigade. They were equipped with AN/FRC 93 SSB radio. Operation KLAATH FALLS terminated on 8 January 68.

McLAIN - - At 192400 Jan 68, Operation BYRD terminated and Operation McLAIN was initiated with the same mission and AO. McLAIN is a revolutionary development operation conducted initially by the 2/7th Bn TF. The operation is supported by an advance section of the 2/568th Med Co (Clr), augmented by the 3/506th Bn aid station. Two air ambulances provide area support within the area of operations.

16

Patients are primarily brought to the 68th Medical Group's medical facilities due to their proximity to the area of operations. Personnel of the 2/568 Clr (-) (Adv) were trained to provide a field medical regulator to coordinate for evacuation and use of the 68th Medical Group hospitals thru the 44th Medical Brigade. Opn McLAIN is still in progress.

17
WVBJ-GA-OI

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period
Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65)

31 January 1968

Assigned Units as of 31 January 1968

HQ, 43rd Medical Group

6th Convalescent Center

8th Field Hospital

9th Field Hospital (HU)

523rd Field Hospital (HU)

874th Medical Detachment (RB)

67th Medical Detachment (KF)

98th Medical Detachment (KO)

551st Medical Detachment (KH)

933d Medical Detachment (KE)

945th Medical Detachment (KA)

126th Medical Detachment (OA)

575th Medical Detachment (MB)

HQ, 61st Medical Battalion

7th Medical Detachment (MA)

128th Medical Detachment (OA)

136th Medical Detachment (MA)

221st Medical Detachment (MB)

241st Medical Detachment (MB)

349th Medical Detachment (MB)

13

Inclosure 1

AVBJ-GA-OI

31 January 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period
Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65)

418th Medical Company (Amb)

568th Medical Company (Clr)

668th Medical Company (AC)

91st Evacuation Hospital (SmbL)

440th Medical Detachment (RB)

50th Medical Detachment (RA)

254th Medical Detachment (RA)

571st Medical Detachment (RA)

14

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CO, 43d Medical Group

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13. ABSTRACT

15

