

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER

AD832559

LIMITATION CHANGES

TO:

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

FROM:

**Distribution authorized to U.S. Gov't. agencies and their contractors;
Administrative/Operational Use; 07 MAR 1968.
Other requests shall be referred to Office of the Adjutant General (Army), Washington, DC 20310.**

AUTHORITY

AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

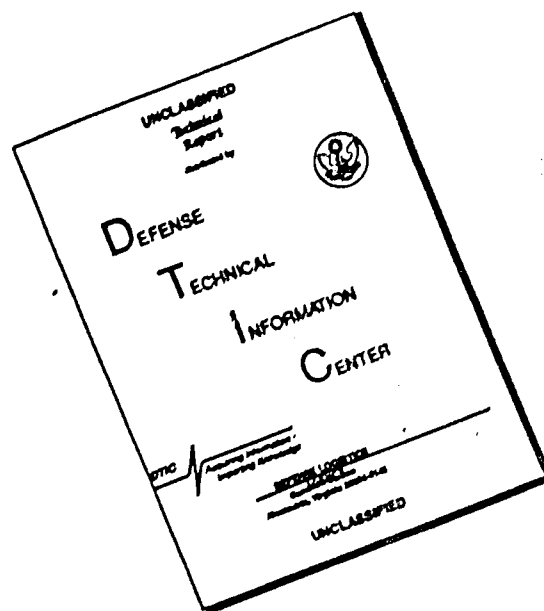
THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

THIS REPORT HAS BEEN DELIMITED
AND CLEARED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE
UNDER DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.20 AND
NO RESTRICTIONS ARE IMPOSED UPON
ITS USE AND DISCLOSURE.

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE;
DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED.

DISCLAIMER NOTICE



THIS DOCUMENT IS BEST QUALITY AVAILABLE. THE COPY FURNISHED TO DTIC CONTAINED A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PAGES WHICH DO NOT REPRODUCE LEGIBLY.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

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



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (30 Apr 68)

FOR OT RD 681216

3 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 13th
Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 January 1968 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

STATEMENT #2 UNCLASSIFIED

This document is subject to special export controls and each
transmittal to foreign government or foreign nationals may be
made only with prior approval of the Department of Defense.

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

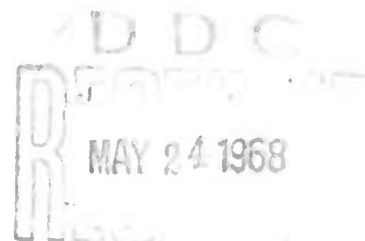
DISTRIBUTION

Commanding Generals

- US Continental Army Command
- US Army Combat Developments Command

Commandants

- US Army War College
- US Army Command and General Staff College
- US Army Adjutant General School
- US Army Air Defense School
- US Army Armor School
- US Army Artillery and Missile School
- US Army Aviation School
- US Army Chemical School
- US Army Civil Affairs School
- US Army Engineer School
- US Army Infantry School
- US Army Intelligence School



PROTECTIVE MARKINGS
CANCELLED
1 April 1969

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

AD832559

IV

3

11

—

•

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 13TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96215

AVBN-DC

7 March 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for period ending 31
January 1968 (RCS-CSFOR 67)

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

A. COMMAND

1. Organization: At the close of the reporting period the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion included:

- a. Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment
- b. The 114th Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 544th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 96th Signal Detachment (RL) assigned.
- c. The 121st Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 80th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 257th Signal Detachment (RL) assigned.
- d. The 175th Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 150th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 28th Signal Detachment (RL) assigned.
- e. The 336th Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 167th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 277th Signal Detachment (RL) assigned.

(See Organization and Stationing chart attached)

2. Significant Changes: The following significant changes occurred during the reporting period:

a. The 164th Combat Aviation Group was organized and activated by General Order Number 311, Headquarters, United States Army Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558, dated 14 December 1967. This General Order also organized and activated the 307th Combat Aviation Battalion, which was assigned to the 164th Combat Aviation Group. The following units of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion have been reassigned as follows:

- (1) The 13th Combat Aviation Battalion is now assigned to the 164th Combat Aviation Group.
- (2) The 5th, 52nd, 53rd and 62nd Quartermaster Detachments are now assigned to Headquarters, 307th Combat Aviation Battalion.
- (3) The 345th Airfield Detachment (Ops) with the 774th Medical Detachment (OA), and the Headquarters and 1st Section of the 13th Security Platoon attached is now assigned to Headquarters, 164th Combat Aviation Group.

FOROTRO
681216

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(4) The 346th Airfield Detachment (Opns) with the 2nd Section, 69th Infantry Detachment (Ground Surveillance Radar); 1st Detachment, Pathfinder Platoon; and the 3rd Section, 13th Security Platoon attached is now assigned to Headquarters, 164th Combat Aviation Group

(5) The 347th Airfield Detachment (Opns) with the 41st Medical Detachment (OA), 1st Section, 69th Infantry Detachment (Ground Surveillance Radar), 2nd Detachment, Pathfinder Platoon, 2nd Section of the 13th Security Platoon, and the 78th Field Artillery Detachment (Counter-Mortar Radar) attached is now assigned to the Headquarters, 164th Combat Aviation Group.

3. Assumption of Command: The following commanders were assigned as indicated:

a. Major Carl H. McNair Jr. assumed command of the 121st Assault Helicopter Company from Major Robert C. Auers on 26 November 1967.

b. Major Royce M. Smithson assumed command of the 336th Assault Helicopter Company from Major Joseph N. Lesseau on 22 December 1967.

c. Major Dwane C. Watson assumed command of the 336th Assault Helicopter Company from Major Royce M. Smithson 10 January 1968.

d. LTC James L. Tow assumed command of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion from Col Robert L. McDaniel on 15 January 1968.

e. Col Robert L. McDaniel assumed command of the 164th Combat Aviation Group on 15 January 1968.

B. PERSONNEL, MORALE AND DISCIPLINE

1. Strength as of 31 January 1968 was as follows:

<u>AUTH (MANNING)</u>			<u>ASGD</u>		<u>PFD</u>	
	Non Avn	Avn	Non Avn	Avn	Non Avn	Avn
Off	39	204	39	201	39	192
WO	14	219	10	211	10	203
EM	2135		2351		2242	
TOTAL	53	2135 423	49	2351 412	49	2242 395

2. The battalion continues to have critical MOS shortages in the following fields:

67B20	68E20
67D20	68F20
68A10	68T20
68B20	

3. The number of approved recommendations for awards received during this period are shown by type and totals awarded:

SSM	1	BSM	35	PH	43
DFC	32	AM	1929	COC	14
SM	2	ACM	62		

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

5. During the majority of this reporting period the 107th Combat Aviation Battalion was provisional under the control of the 15th Combat Aviation Battalion, therefore, the above statistics apply to both battalions.

C. INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

During this period, the S-2, in conjunction with the S-2 Advisor at PHONG DINH Sector, instituted a weekly meeting of intelligence and counter-intelligence agencies in the Can Tho area. These meetings have provided for improvements in the exchange of information, and have resulted in closer cooperation among all agencies of the intelligence community.

D. PLANS, OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

1. During this reporting period the elements of the 13th CAB continued to provide the 7th, 9th and 21st ARVN Inf Div with aviation support. Direct support was also furnished to the IV Corps MACV Advisory Force, Special Forces and CORDS. These missions included command liaison, outpost resupply, medical evacuation, aerial escort, combat troop transport, reconnaissance and surveillance and direct fire support by the armed helicopter including the cobra. Statistics generated in support of the above missions are listed below:

	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>JAN</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
HOURS FLOWN	10,965	10,755	11,035	32,758
TOTAL SORTIES	26,178	27,198	26,688	80,784
VR SORTIES	201	238	311	751
TRANS HEL CBT SORTIES	11,409	10,199	10,070	31,678
ARMED HEL SORTIES	3,775	2,863	2,912	9,550
FIREFLY	83	94	123	300
VC KBAA	368	449	610	1,427
VC SAMBANS DESTROYED	455	843	597	1,895
VC STRUCTURES DESTROYED	366	802	704	1,872

2. The significant operations during this period were the Dan Chi 315/D, Long Phi 9/144, and the Cuu Long 73/67.

a. 21st ARVN Inf Div, Search and Destroy Operation, Dan Chi 315/D, PHONG DINH Sector, Center of Mass WR520950. This operation was conducted 8-10 December in the CHUONG THEIN and PHONG DINH Sectors. Current intelligence at the time indicated the area of operation to be occupied by elements of the VC 303rd Main Force Bn and the Tay Do Provincial Bn. The 21st ARVN Inf Div was augmented by the attachment of two Ranger Bns. Twenty-one UH-1D Transports and 15 Armed Helicopters were utilized to lift UH1D combat troop loads of the 3/31 Inf Bn and 42nd Ranger Bn. Maneuver tactics were conducted in such a manner as to place two maneuver elements on both sides of a heavily wooded canal, which provided the foundation for a pincer type action. Air-strikes and armed helicopter suppressive fires were utilized in the LZ's. Shortly after landing, heavy contact was established and the Div Cdr elected to commit three additional Bns. The 2/31 Inf Bn, 43rd, and 44th Ranger Bns were immediately air lifted onto the flanks of the VC positions. Successful operations were conducted on 9 and 10 December. The 10 Dec operation was a successful night assault. In execution of the three day operation the elements of the 13th Combat Aviation Bn flew a total of 1,986 sorties, during

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

1080.2 flight hours in support of the 21st ARVN Inf Div. The results of the operation were **FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

200 VC KBA
256 VC KIA
7 VC Captured
9 VC Suspects
147 Sampans Destroyed
112 Structures Destroyed

VIET CONG SUPPLIES CAPTURED

47 Rifles
68 Submachine Guns
3 Mortars
5 Rocket Launchers
5 Grenade Launchers
Misc ammo, mines, commo wire, etc

b. 9th ARVN Inf Div, Search and Destroy Operation, Long Phi 9/144, VINH BINH Sector, Center of Mass at XS300800. On 18 and 19 December, this operation was conducted in two phases utilizing the lift and fire support capabilities of elements of the 13th CAB. In addition, two CH47's of the 147th Avn Co were utilized to transport one battalion and one Recon Co. Armed helicopters through reconnaissance by fire reported numerous enemy troops within the objective area in fortified positions. To reduce the effectiveness of enemy fire during the landing assault, a helicopter equipped with a smoke genator laid a smoke screen between the landing zone and the fortified objective area. In execution of the operation the transport helicopter lifed an equivalent of 4,600 troops. Results of the operation were as follows:

110 VC KIA
6 VC Captured
6 VC Suspects

VIET CONG SUPPLIES CAPTURED

29 Rifles
2 B40 Rocket Launchers
1 M79 Grenade Launcher
Assorted ammo and documents

c. 7th ARVN Inf Div, Search and Destroy Operation, Cuu Long 73/67, DINH TUCNG Sector, Center of Mass XS100550. The primary mission of the operation was to search out and reported intelligence targets consisting of an ammo factory and three arms caches. Further intelligence indicated that 1,000 VC, were located in the vicinity of XS1555, and that the major unit was the 261st Bn. This operation was conducted from 28-31 December. On the third day of the operation, 30 Dec, the 1/12 Regt was landed in a LZ in the vicinity of XS062485 which had been prepared with artillery and airstrikes. The first lift received intense enemy fire which immediately downed three transport helicopters. Following lifts were diverted to an LZ northwest of the "hot" LZ. After ARVN troops commenced ground assaults on the fortified VC position, a Dust-off aircraft was also shotdown while attempting to rescue the crews of the previously downed three helicopters. After two hours on the ground, the crew members of the four downed helicopters were finally rescued with the assistance of a helicopter equipped with a smoke generator. This aircraft laid a heavy smoke screen between the crew members and the fortified enemy tree line by making three smoke laying passes. Dust-off was able to pick-up the surviving crew members under the protection of the smoke screen.

4

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Results of the overall operation were as follows:

11 VC KIA
5 VC Captured

VICTORY CONG SUPPLIES CAPTURED

23 Weapons both automatic and semi-automatic
55 Rounds of 120mm mortar
119 Rounds of 60mm mortar
120 Anti-tank grenades
6000 Rounds of AK50
1580 Rounds of 12.7 anti-aircraft ammo
36000 Rounds of AK47 ammo
10000 Meters of WD-1 field wire
Misc minor supplies and documents

3. Utilization of Armed Helicopters. Can Tho, Vinh Long, and Soc Trang AAFs continue to be extremely vulnerable to enemy ground and mortar attacks as well as do other existing Army Airfields. The immediate reaction capability and fire power availability of Armed Helicopters is a vital asset to the protection of these installations and aviation assets thereon. The gunships have provided excellent defense simply by their presence in the immediate area of the airfield. Although the effectiveness of their being overhead cannot be quantitatively measured, intelligence reports repeatedly indicated that attacks have not been made for fear of gunship retaliation. With night illumination being provided by helicopter flare ships, the gunships have been able to accurately locate enemy and friendly positions and to place discrete machine gun, rocket, and 40mm grenade fire into enemy strongholds and advancing elements within 100 meters of friendly forces. Furthermore, gunship fires have prevented the VC from withdrawing or diverting their direction of attack until friendly ground reinforcements could be brought in.

Comparing other means of firepower available in the IV CTZ, gunships offer a distinct advantage over artillery and USAF/VNAF close air support. Artillery fires are generally not available and quite often inaccurate and/or excessively slow in responsiveness. Armed helicopters can engage the target while observers are attempting to adjust the artillery. In the case of mortar attacks against airfields, armed helicopters have repeatedly engaged the enemy firing position within two minutes from the time the attack began. Armed helicopters are in the best position to easily observe and select other targets of opportunity. Fighter bomber support is grossly impractical in some cases since the only VNAF installation in the Delta is at Binh Thuy and the nearest USAF installation is at Bien Hoa. Immediate type airstrikes have taken as much as one hour. Even "Spooky", the armed AC-47 flare ship, must come from Binh Thuy unless it is on station by prior request on or near the installation under attack. Its use is further dependent upon the conditions of darkness. The principal advantages of armed helicopters being available on site and responsive to support ground units are readily apparent; however, other congenit factors such as weapons system compatibility, maneuverability, longer station times, target discrimination and the estimate of Command and Control, accentuate the effectiveness of armed helicopters in the direct fire support role. In the counterinsurgency environment where targets are fleeting and sometimes almost undetectable, the armed helicopter must standby until a satisfactory hard target can be found.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Armed helicopter fire support can be furnished by approximately 40 people, discounting the operations and back-up maintenance. Comparatively speaking, an artillery battery or fighter squadron to similarly support in depth could require a manning level which is perhaps five times greater.

4. Training within the 13th Avn Bn is being conducted as follows:

a. Decentralized training continues to be conducted at company level. Mandatory training as directed by DA and USARV is presented as operational commitments allow. Training is normally scheduled during the early evening hours to allow for maximum attendance of flight crews and mechanics. Due to the limited availability of training aircraft, most flight training, to include orientations, qualifications, visual and instrument proficiency, and aircraft commander checkouts is conducted concurrently with operational missions. Quarterly standardization checks, given by unit standardization pilots, continue to be scheduled for all aviators as well as monthly proficiency rides.

b. Transition training for VNAF aviators continues. Six VNAF aviators completed flight training and were graduated in December. An additional seven VNAF aviators began training on 15 December with a completion date set during March 1968. Since completing the required transition, they have participated as unit members, flying all type missions with the exception of those as command helicopter pilots.

c. AH-1G (Cobra) transition training (NETT) originally scheduled to begin in late January for personnel of battalion units programmed for the AH-1G has been set back to a date later this year, due to a change in the order in which units will receive this aircraft. NETT training will include quotas for pilot transition, airframe, engine and armament mechanics. Also scheduled for training are avionics and stabilization augmentation system repairmen.

E. LOGISTICS

1. Class I Distribution: In July 1967, Class I Distribution to Can Tho, Soc Trang and Vinh Long changed from Saigon to Can Tho. Prior to that date, aircraft scheduling originated in Saigon. Thereafter, requests for air movement became the responsibility of this headquarters since these rations were primarily for 13th CAB units. Scheduled aircraft were frequently cancelled, apparently for priority cargo. As a result there were occasions when Soc Trang and Vinh Long did not have Class A rations. Frequently organic helicopters were diverted to Can Tho after completing combat operations to pick-up rations. Statistically, Air Force aircraft met schedules approximately 10% of the time. MACV teams throughout the Delta changed to field ration messes and the transportation problem persisted. In November, a system of "Dedicated Aircraft" was established. This system gave the Class I point two C-123 aircraft twice a week to distribute rations. This solved the transportation problem which had been previously plagued the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion.

2. Class III and V Handling: The 13th CAB is responsible for the receiving, storing, and issuing of Class III and V products at 14 airfields in the

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Delta. These pre-stock points have been established to facilitate combat operations throughout the Delta. This headquarters was augmented with four QM (KD) POL detachments of eight men each to handle the aviation POL requirements at the various stagefields. The handling of Class V products has been performed by the assignment, as excess, of ammo handlers to this headquarters in December 1966. In November 1967, a survey team consisting of representatives from USARV, Logistical Command, Saigon Support Command, and 53rd GS GP visited all fields in the Delta to determine personnel requirements and feasibility of 1st Log Command to assume these Class III and V responsibilities. It was determined that the QM detachments would adequately fulfill the POL requirements at the stagefields. Furthermore, an ordnance detachment of 28 men and one warrant officer was recommended to handle the Class V requirements. Thus, the operational control of these detachments would remain under the control of this headquarters. The need for POL and ammunition handlers is essential in the conduct of airmobile operations in the Delta. The battalion is awaiting approval of the recommended ordnance detachment mentioned above.

F. INFORMATION: NONE

G. SIGNAL

1. During the report period, the Avionics Retrofit (ZYR) Program was reestablished. During the first part of the period experience with this program indicated a need for tighter controls on aircraft scheduled for retrofit and improvement in communication between the retrofit site and Battalion Headquarters. Lines of communication were defined with aircraft being scheduled through maintenance channels. The Signal Officer maintained a log with the retrofit status of each aircraft in the Battalion. All units were required to make delivery of completely operational aircraft to the retrofit site. With these changes a significant improvement in the flow of aircraft through the retrofit site was noted.

2. An FM antenna similar to the antenna used by the 9th Avn Bn, 9th Inf Div as described in USARV Command Communications (Nov 67), has been constructed and placed into operations by this unit. The antenna was mounted on a 50 foot mast and is operated with an AN/VRC-46. Range was improved approximately 25% with the new antenna system.

3. At the request of the Commander, Mr. Dan Welschons, Electronics Command Representative with the 34th General Support Group visited this unit on 11-13 Jan 68. The purpose of his visit was to investigate problems in airborne FM communications. Mr. Welschons determined that the problems were common to Vietnam. He recommended improved alignment procedures and adherence to aircraft start and radio warmup procedures. The failure rate of FM radios has been reduced.

H. SURGEON

1. The Tet Offensive resulted in numerous injuries and several deaths at all installations of this battalion. Full appreciation of extent of injuries can only be realized by combining casualty figures for all units utilizing the

10

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

airfield dispensary. For example, 33 casualties were handled by the Can Tho Flight Dispensary facility from 31 Jan 63 to 8 Feb 63, and casualties continue.

2. Can Tho's usual emergency room proved inadequate in size for the number of casualties handled so several other rooms were quickly equipped with essential materials, which were on hand. This was done quickly and efficiently without difficulty, except for limited lighting facilities which will be mentioned later. Vinh Long and Soc Trang had to modify existing emergency room facilities also and as a result were also capable of handling their casualties

3. During the Tet hostilities Vinh Long dispensary became more than a Flight Dispensary when the medical staff (a U.S. Navy Surgical Team) of their Province Hospital was forced to share their facilities. One request for extra equipment for their needs in caring for civilians and ARVN soldiers was answered in hours thru coordination between Can Tho's surgeon and IV Corps Medical Advisor. The surgical team was able to move back to the Vinh Long Province Hospital within a few days.

I. SAFETY

1. Fifteen reportable aircraft accidents occurred during this period which constituted an upward trend over the previous quarter (13 accidents) and reflects accumulative accident rate of 36.7 for the current Fiscal Year. One major trend, in-flight failure of the T-53 turbine engine, has been established as a cause factor in forty-seven percent of the accidents during this period. Predominate causes of the engine failures were foreign object damage and failure of the number three and four bearings.

2. The crew errors associated with accidents follow the normal pattern and have not been excessive when considering the assigned mission and experience level of the crews. Approximately eighty-five percent of the operational aviators in the units are recent graduates of flight school with limited flying experience, knowledge of the aircraft, and ability to handle in-flight emergency situations.

3. Participation in the Nomex flight glove evaluation has been completed. Examination of the questionnaires indicates that the glove is superior to the present issue in most respects and is desired by all participants for issue as standard.

J. MAINTENANCE: During this report period the average hours flown on aircraft in the Assault Helicopter Companies increased. Based on percentage of Department of Army Flying Program of 60 hours per aircraft, UH-1B and UH-1C "Gunships" flew 148% and UH-1D "Slicks" flew 193%. A corresponding increased workload was created for the unit maintenance sections and the repair parts supply system.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SECTION II. PART I

A. PERSONNEL: NONE

B. OPERATIONS

1. Item: Use of AC-47 (Spooky) for night operations.

Discussion: During operation Dan Chi 315/D conducted on 9-10 Dec, a mortar attack on Vi Thanh resulted in a night assault into the suspected mortar positions. The support provided by the USAF and VNAF AC-47 (Spooky), which was on call or on station throughout the operation during the period of darkness, was readily available to illuminate the assault landing zones.

Observation: The illumination of the landing zones for the night assaults and extractions was invaluable and contributed greatly to the accomplishment of the mission. The use of the AC-47 (Spooky) aircraft with its endurance and its large flare load contributed to the success of the night operation.

2. Item: Communication between FAC and the C&C aircraft.

Discussion: During a search and destroy operation conducted on 2 Dec in the vicinity of WR220260, the Air Force FAC's UHF radio became inoperative and an airstrike was being initiated in conjunction with an airlift. The lack of communications following the initial clearance from the C&C resulted in the airstrike being flown extremely close to the transport helicopters.

Observation: Airstrikes operating in conjunction with troop lifts must maintain constant radio communications between attacking aircraft, FAC and C&C aircraft. A back-up radio capability in both the FAC and C&C aircraft is necessary to insure continuous radio communications. For emergencies, supporting aircraft should be made aware of the C&C operating frequencies.

3. Item: Availability and distribution of operational maps.

Discussion: As a minimum, operational maps should be available for the following aircraft:

Command and Control
Transport Lead
Transport Tail
Each Armed Helicopter

If the supporting unit is not provided operational overlays in sufficient time to allow the unit to prepare its own maps prior to H-hour, the supported unit should provide appropriate maps in accordance with the minimum recommended above.

Observation: When assigned a mission for which operational overlays are not available the day before, the supporting unit should be alerted as to the known or anticipated geographical areas of operations by map sheet numbers, so that extra maps can be carried by the supporting unit.

12

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

4. Item: Reduction of reaction time for immediate reaction force missions.

Discussion: Recently a mortar attack occurred at 0145 hours. All crews were alerted and at their duty stations shortly thereafter. The assault helicopter company was alerted for an immediate reaction force mission by the Sector TOC. Planning began immediately and key aviation personnel briefed. A request for aviation assets was made by the Sector TOC through Division to Corps. Final authority and mission assignment was not given until 0310.

Observation: Consideration should be given to the use of a "flash channel" with which the local TOC could obtain assets directly from Corps in the event of a requirement to deploy an immediate reaction force.

5. Item: Problems involved when conducting airmobile operations with US Army and VNAF CH-34's.

Discussion: Airmobile operations were conducted by this unit on the 9th through 15 January 1963 using US Army Helicopters and VNAF CH-34's with USAF advisors. This is the first known instance where US Army and VNAF troop carrying helicopters have worked together on the same operation. Since the VNAF CH-34's had never participated with US Army Aviation elements on an airmobile operation, problems in coordination, terminology, language, communications, tactics, techniques and logistical support for VNAF CH-34 helicopters were encountered. Specific minor problem areas were as follows:

a. Lack of understanding of techniques (ie, following instructions for approaches to landing zones, departure instructions, etc.)

b. Lack of understanding of formations (ie, straight trail, staggered trail, Vee's of five, etc.)

c. Lack of understanding of terminology used by US Army Aviation elements.

d. Language problem when the USAF advisor was not on board the lead aircraft.

e. Logistical support to the CH-34 helicopters at the staging area (ie, AVGAS, maintenance, repair parts, etc.)

Observation: Although these deficiencies caused some confusion and delay initially, a thorough briefing with a discussion on terminology and flight formations with the USAF VNAF advisors pointed up most of the problem areas and the VNAF efficiency and performance showed steady improvement throughout the operation. The problems of logistical support for CH-34 helicopters at the staging fields still exist. AVGAS facilities at the airfields and staging areas are limited and refueling is slow. There are no qualified maintenance personnel or replacement parts for the CH-34 helicopter located at the staging area and it is necessary to return the CH-34's to their home field (Binh Thuy Air Base) to refuel and conduct maintenance checks. This causes lost flight time in the operational area because of the distance involved to get to and from the staging fields. Continued coordination to improve response time and logistical problems should further enhance the airmobile capabilities of the VNAF and make future joint operations more efficient.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

C. TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION: NONE

D. INTELLIGENCE

Item: Timely intelligence information.

Discussion: Information on enemy locations and movements forwarded to this headquarters in the form of INTSUMS, both daily and weekly, arrive too late to be of significant value. Due to possible attacks on the airfields occupied by the battalion headquarters and subordinate units, more timely information was required. To solve this problem, daily contact was established with each of the local intelligence agencies in Can Tho. Similar contacts were made at Soc Trang and Vinh Long by the subordinate units.

Observations: These contacts have provided airfield installations with the timely information needed and proved extremely valuable at the end of this reporting period which saw the beginning of the Viet Cong Tet Offensive.

E. LOGISTICS

Item: Unit Deployment to RVN.

Discussion: Incoming units have experienced operational readiness date delays because of general cargo shipment delays. Crowded port facilities and insufficient water transportation has caused delays in delivery of general cargo from port to destination as much as one month. This caused a two week delay in the last incoming unit's becoming operationally ready.

Observation: Recommend general cargo be shipped in advance, anticipating a two to four week delay for a delivery to reach final destination.

F. SAFETY: NONE

G. MAINTENANCE: NONE

H. SIGNAL: NONE

I. SURGEON: NONE

SECTION II, PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Section I para E2. Recommend that a LB ordinance detachment be assigned to 164th Combat Aviation Group to handle ammunition stocked at IV Corps Airfields.

2. Section II, part I, para A2. Recommend that airfield security be provided by units of adequate strength which are specifically assigned that mission.

1 Incl
as v

James L. Tow
JAMES L. TOW
LTC, INF
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION

- 1 - Thru Channels to ACSFOR DA (Original Copy)
- 2 - Thru 164th Combat Aviation Group to ACSFOR
- 1 - CO, 164th Combat Aviation Group
- 2 - CINC, USARPAC
- 3 - CG, USARVN
- 1 - CG, 1st Aviation Brigade
- 1 - S-3 Operational File
- 1 - S-3 Organizational Historical Files

ADJ-6 (10 Apr 67) 1st Ind

Subject: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for period ending 31 January 1967
(AGC 65-165)

MAR 16 1968

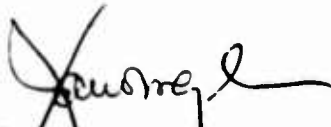
1. 1st Aviation Brigade, AF 96384

2. Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, AF 96375
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, AF 96352

3. Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, AF (AGC 65-165),
Washington, D.C. 20310

This Headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 13th Combat Aviation
Battalion, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents.

1. The following:


JAMES M. GOLDMANN
1LT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

16
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

AVHGC-DST (7 Mar 68) 2d Ind (FOUO)

CPT Arnold/rb/LBN 4485

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for period ending 31
January 1968 (RCS-CSFOR 67)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 31 MAR 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, 13th Combat Aviation Battalion (WCRGAA) as indorsed.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning Class III and V handling, page 6, paragraph E2; and page 11, paragraph 1. USARV requested an Ordnance Detachment, Team BB, through joint and service channels on 9 December 1967. A unit is programmed in DEPSTAR; however, DA has given no deployment date.

b. Reference item concerning unit deployment to RVN, page 11, paragraph e: Nonconcur. Arrival of cargo ahead of a unit could create problems of shipment and receipt by the unit. Even with good prior planning, workload variances experienced in all areas of transportation influence the ability to meet RDD's. A two week delay may be undesirable, however it is not considered as excessive. Efforts are being made to increase the RVN intra-coastal and inland waterway assets which should improve responsiveness in cargo movements in RVN.

3. A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JOHN V. ETCHELL
Captain, AG
Assistant Adjutant General

Copy furnished:
HQ 13th Cmbt Avn Bn
HQ 1st Avn Bde

THIS PROTECTIVE MARKING
IS CANCELLED 1 APRIL 1969

14
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

17
GPOP-DT (7 Mar 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 13th Cbt Avn Bn for Period Ending
31 January 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 18 APR 1968

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

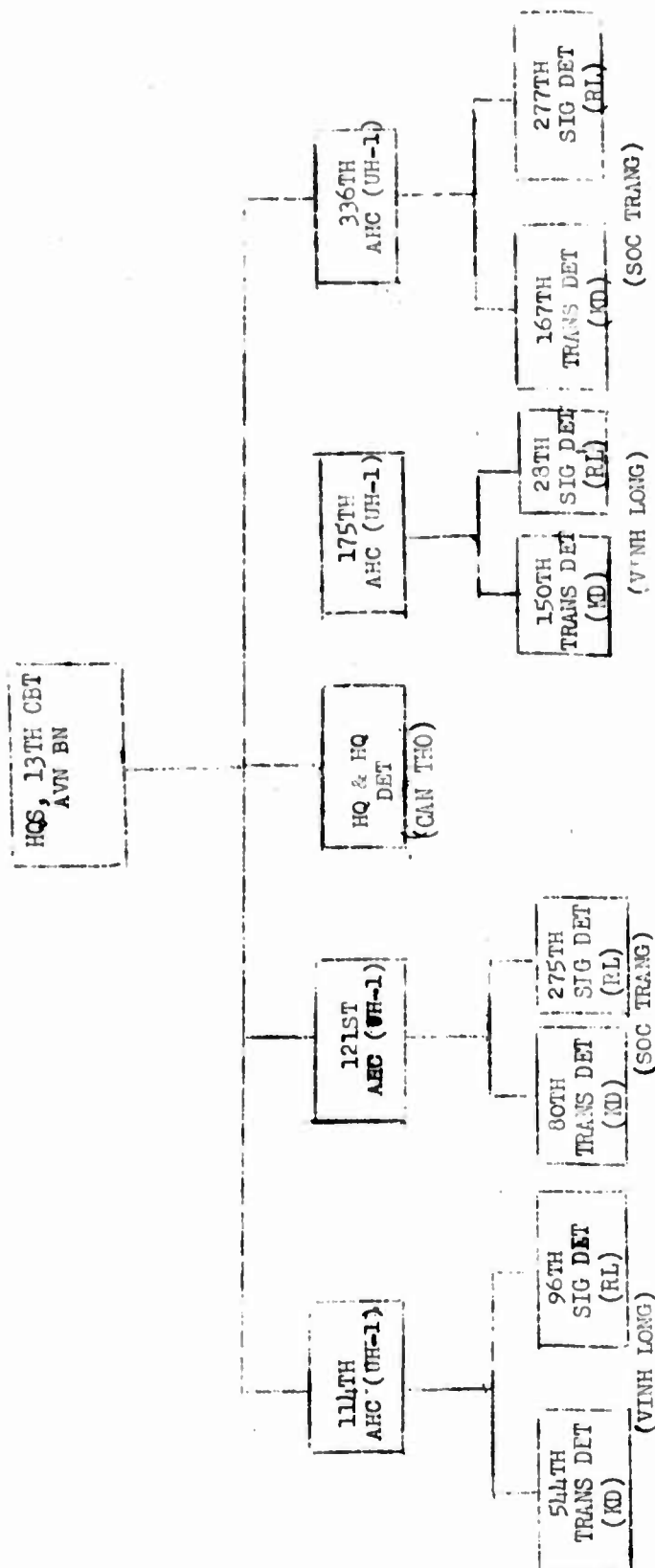
This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C.L. Shortt

C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

ORGANIZATION AND STATIONING



Incl 1

UNCLASSIFIED
Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

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

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION For Official Use Only	
		2b. GROUP Can: 1 April 1969	
3. REPORT TITLE Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Hqs, 13th Combat Aviation Battalion			
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Nov 67-31 Jan 1968			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) CO, 13th Combat Aviation Battalion			
6. REPORT DATE 7 March 1968		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 17	7b. NO. OF REFS
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		8b. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 681216	
b. PROJECT NO. N/A		9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
c.			
d.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			