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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

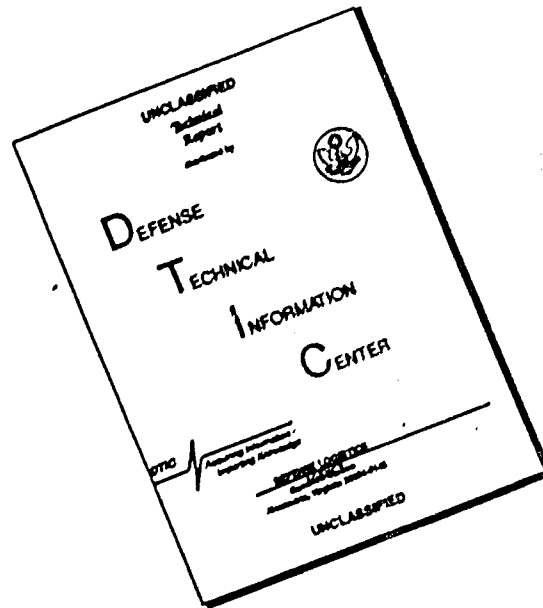
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 31ST ENGINEER BATTALION (C)(A)  
APO San Francisco 96491

AVEGBALCC

4 November 1971

SUBJECT: Operational Report -- Lessons Learned, 31st Engineer Battalion (C)(A)  
Period Ending 31 Oct 71, RCS CSFOR -- 65 (R3)

TO: Commanding Officer, 159th Engineer Group, ATTN: AVEGB-OP, APO 96491  
Commanding Officer, USAFENGRCOMDV, ATTN: AVCC-MO, APO 96491  
Commanding Officer, USARV, ATTN: AVHDO-DO, APO 96375  
Commander-in-Chief, USARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96588

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

AD 907852

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*Wash: D @ 20310*  
*Asst. Chief of Staff*

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Inclosure 3  
712063

Subject: Operations Training Lessons Learned, 31st Engineer Battalion (C)(A)  
 Period: Training 31 Oct 71, 1st CSFOR -- 65 (A)

1. Lessons Learned: Observations, Evaluations, And Recommendations

a. Personnel: None

b. Intelligence:

(1) Security of Plans

(a) OBSERVATION: During the 60th Land Clearing operation in Hau Nghia the Security Forces consisted of RF/PF forces. The following days cut plans would be discussed with the security commanders at an operations meeting the evening before the next days operations. The unit came under small arms fire and RPG fire as they entered the cut area, on several occasions.

(b) EVALUATION: The enemy appeared to know when and where to make contact with the land clearing companies, indicating a security leak.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Coordination for the next days cut operation should be discussed and finalized in the morning of the cut when RF/PF forces are utilized.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Requested RF/PF units be replaced with American mechanized units for security.

c. Operations:

(1) Security Forces for Land Clearing

(a) OBSERVATION: The RF/PF Infantry forces which secured the 60th LC Company during the Trang Bang, Ha Nghia province cut, proved to be undesirable. The foot security could not move as fast as the plows or react quickly enough to turn the enemy under immediate fire, thus leaving the plows unsecured.

(b) EVALUATION: The Infantry security could not protect the plows. The plows proceeded at a rate faster than the security. In addition they were constantly exposed to falling trees, booby traps and mines.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Forces used to secure Land Clearing operations should be mechanized.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Placed organic APC's and gun bearing M548 in cut to pull security. Requested that infantry be replaced by armored cav unit.

(2) Heavy Equipment Towing:

(a) OBSERVATION: There is often a requirement for recovering either an 830 wheeled tractor or a 10 Ton tractor truck and there is seldom an M8C or 10 ton wrecker available. To compensate for this units often use another 10 ton or an 830 bolt it and tow the inoperable vehicle using chains.

(b) EVALUATION: Often when the prime-mover is connected in a rear to front combination with a disabled 830 or 10 Ton, there is lack of lateral stability causing the towed vehicle to enter the lane used by opposing traffic. This was found to be true even at speeds of 7 to 10.

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November 1971

Subject: Operation Cut -- Lessons learned, 31st Engineer Battalion (C)(A)  
Reference: 1 Dec 70, 1968 EOPOR -- 15 (13)

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend that a bobtail 330 be used for recovery operations in lifting the blade of the disabled 330 or to the bumper of the disabled 141 Pan. The towing 330's blade can be raised if the 141 Pan or the disabled vehicle is lifted off the ground. Lifting shackles should be used to assist in the operation. The 330 can then easily tow at 10 mph to next area.

(d) **AVAILABILITY:** All NCO's and officers were made aware of this procedure.

#### (1) **RECOMMENDATION:** For Land Clearing Companies

(a) **OBSERVATION:** The Land Clearing Companies uncover many dud rounds and other explosive devices in their operations.

(b) **AVAILABILITY:** These explosives must be destroyed where they are found. An M108 or M109 should be in constant use.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That 2 trained demo-specialist be made organic to the Land Clearing Company.

(d) **AVAILABILITY:** Two demo-specialists have been placed with each Land Clearing Company in the zone. These demolition specialists were taken from the combat engineer companies.

#### (2) **RECOMMENDATION:** Control in Land Clearing Operations

(a) **OBSERVATION:** A command and control helicopter (cut LOH) for the Land Clearing Commander is absolutely essential to the clearing operation.

(b) **RECOMMENDATION:** The cut LOH needs a cut LOH to guide the plows through the initial trace, to control the operation throughout the day, particularly in emergency and daily terrain, to reconnoiter the future cut areas, and to estimate and regulate the progress made in the cut.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That a cut LOH be provided on a daily basis, with a minimum of 4 hours blade time, to the Land Clearing Company Commander.

(d) **RECOMMENDATION:** All possible emphasis is placed on obtaining a daily cut log in the initial stages of planning in any cut operation.

d. Graduation: None

c. Training: None

d. Logistics: None

#### (1) **Equipment**

(a) **OBSERVATION:** The 3/4 ton dump truck, M708, can be used effectively on low class roads, where 5 tons are too heavy to be utilized.



31st Engineer Group, 1st Ind  
Operational Report, Lessons Learned, 31st Engineer Battalion  
(C) (A) Period ending 31 Oct 71, CS SFOR-65 (R3)

27 NOV 1971

31st Engineer Group, APO 96491

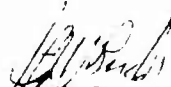
1. Commanding General, USA MFG OSDV, ATTN: AVCC-40, APO 96491  
Commanding General, USAV, ATTN: AVHIO-00, APO 96375  
Commander-in-Chief, USAFAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96588

2. Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, DC 20310

1. The significant activities and lessons learned have been reviewed and  
an adequate description of the unit's operations during the period.

2. Reference Lesson Learned, "Security Forces for Land Clearing", Section  
2, para C(1). Concur. Following the Trang Bang, Hau Nghia Province out-  
where the ARVN infantry security was replaced by a troop from the 2/11 ACR,  
this policy has been implemented in MR III, and the land clearing companies  
have been secured by ARVN or ARVN armored cavalry units. This has proven to  
be the most effective method for securing land clearing units. No action  
by USAFAC or USAV is recommended.

3. [Illegible]

  
JOHN F. McBRIDE  
CPT, CE  
ASST Adjutant

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14 NOV 71 10 00 AM Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, HQ 31st Engineer  
Battalion (C)(A), Period Ending 31 October 1971,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R3)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558

30 NOV 71

TO: HQDA (DAFD-7A) WASH DC 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

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