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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DAAG-PAP-A (M) (14 Nov 73) DAMO-ODU

5 December 1973

Expires 5 December 1974

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Inactivation After
Action Report, HMB, 52d Arty Gp, Period Ending 15 June 1971

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1. The attached report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with para 4b, AR 525-15.
2. The information contained in this report is provided to insure that lessons learned during current operations are used to the benefit of future operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material, as appropriate. This report should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.
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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 52d Artillery Group for Period Ending 15 June 1971

2. (U) Lessons Learned: Commander's Observation, Evaluations and Recommendations.

- a. Personnel: None
- b. Intelligence: None
- c. Operations:

(1) Observation: As the number of U.S. Artillery units decrease, mission requirements for these assets have not decreased in a proportionate degree.

(2) Evaluation: Due to reduced U.S. Artillery assets, particularly heavy artillery batteries, units must displace frequently to meet the most critical threats throughout the Group AO. Side effects of this frequent displacement include increased maintenance and ammunition resupply problems and often inadequate site/pad preparation.

(3) Recommendation: That Artillery Commanders be alert to a need for frequent moves on short notice in order to provide maximum coverage of area where heavy fighting occurs.

d. Organization:

(1) Observation: Due to maintenance problems and requirements for remaining U.S. Artillery to cover larger areas, it is not always possible to maintain firing battery unit integrity.

(2) Evaluation: The tactical situation of increased combat activity and reduced U.S. Artillery assets combined with maintenance problems of heavy artillery and coupled with the requirement for rapid response to artillery support requirements has necessitated the switching of gun sections between batteries and the formation of provisional platoons and batteries. On occasion this can be accomplished only by drawing on the resources of different batteries for equipment and personnel. Problems encountered in forming provisional units include administration and supply of personnel and equipment separated from their parent battery, unit designation, radio call signs and command responsibility.

(3) Recommendation: That commanders be prepared to form provisional platoons, utilizing howitzers/guns from different batteries and designating provisional unit commanders when necessary, to increase the flexibility of unit operations.

(4) Command Action: D/7-15 FA, consisting of 1x8" howitzer from Battery A and 1x8" howitzer from Battery B, was formed to provide additional operational flexibility. The designation "D Battery" was chosen for the platoon to facilitate the use of SOI call signs already in print and to deceive the enemy.

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Period Ending 15 June 1971 RGS: CSFOR-65 (R-3)

e. Training:

(1) Observation: The ability of firing batteries to move, shoot and communicate from field locations is noticeably degraded following extended periods of time in permanent base camps.

(2) Evaluation: Failure to periodically exercise battery RSOP procedures results in a stagnant condition, fostering a false sense of capability and loss of unit proficiency in vital operational areas.

(3) Recommendation: That firing batteries should be exercised as a complete unit, to include all RSOP procedures, at least every 30 days.

(4) Command Action: Units of the 52d Group that have not made tactical displacements during the reporting period have conducted RSOP training in the form of artillery raids.

f. Firing Pads for Heavy Artillery.

(1) Observation: Monsoon weather conditions have caused extensive problems with the firing pads for heavy artillery in temporary positions.

(2) Evaluation: There exists a problem to devise a cheap, quick method of constructing firing pads which will hold up for heavy artillery firing in continuing wet weather. Wet conditions over extended periods, results in the firing pads becoming a mire of mud. If this condition is allowed to continue the weapons would bottom out resulting in damage to the hull.

(3) Recommendation: When occupying a temporary firing position, engineer support should be obtained to provide a grading for drainage and temporary firing pads.

(4) Command Action: Close liaison has been established with the supporting combat engineer battalion to solve this problem.

g. Communications: None

h. Material:

(1) Observation: Since February 1971 there has been excessive downtime for M107 and M110 heavy artillery weapons. This problem mainly arose from greatly increased firing and movement in support of tactical operations.

(2) Evaluation: During the months of February through June, 7-15 FA has displaced to numerous field locations in support of ARVN operations. From 1 Jan 71 to 31 May 71, 7-15 FA fired over 25,000 rounds of 175mm and 8"

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of which the majority of 175mm was Zone 3. This exceeds the total number of rounds fired for the calendar year of 1970. Often these field locations have unimproved pads which, during the rainy season, virtually become impossible to fire from effectively and safely. Distances involved between batteries and direct support maintenance units has increased deadline time considerably; this is also the case with the battalion maintenance in their efforts to help bring these deadlined guns up to operational status.

(3) Recommendation:

(a) In order to cut down on repair time for those deadlined guns a mobile contact with highly used spare parts should be on the road constantly. This team should consist of a track-automotive specialist, an artillery specialist and an officer who can act as liaison to direct support.

(b) Acquaint section personnel with their individual duties in maintaining their particular weapon. Classes should be held using appropriate TM's and taught by a qualified technician, e.g. 63d Maintenance Battalion Artillery Warrant Officer.

(c) Expedite repair parts by consolidation of FL's and liaison visits to DS units. Requisitioning parts which have high deadline rate far enough ahead of time so that they will be on hand when it becomes necessary to use them. Set up a system of communication between batteries and the battalion supply point so that there will be no question as to exactly what part is needed at the fire base.

(d) If available, use 10-ton low-boy to help move M107's instead of roadmarching.

(e) Improving firing pads helps to increase the life span of the lock-out system and other critical components of the M107's.

(f) Utilize command emphasis at the battery level to assure that daily preventative maintenance is in fact being performed in accordance with TN 9-2300-216-10.

i. Other: None.

James M. Wroth
JAMES M. WROTH
COL, FA
Commanding

AVGG-OP

SUBJECT: Inactivation After Action Report of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 52d Artillery Group (U)

PROBLEM AREAS/LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Lateral Transfers:

(1) Problem: Lateral transfers for equipment were not approved early enough to facilitate close-out of property books.

(2) Evaluation: Although an agreement was made between the Supply Officer, S4 Section, USARMYF MR II Artillery and the PBO, HHB, 52d Arty Group as to the type, quantity and disposition of property which was to be laterally transferred, the final action on these transfers was not known until after the PBO departed for Cha Rang. The approved lateral transfers were not received until 19 June although it had been agreed that they would reach this unit prior to 1200H on 15 June. No individual was sent to HHB, 52d Arty Group to physically take possession of the property. A supply NCO from USARMYF MR II Artillery who was sent to this unit to assist and observe during stand-down processed the paperwork, inventoried the equipment and then had to leave for Cha Rang Valley to finish the paperwork since the unit had already departed Arty Hill. This has caused delay and difficulty in clearing the unit property book. Additionally, the finally approved lateral transfers differed from those anticipated, thus causing last-minute juggling of property between transfer and turn-in.

(3) Recommendation: That the gaining organization expedite lateral transfer paperwork to have final approved documentation prior to the unit stand-down date.

b. Transfer of the AUTOSEVOCOM Station:

(1) Problem: Failure to complete transfer of this item prior to unit stand-down resulted in the gaining unit not being able to use this item until interim approval was obtained.

(2) Evaluation: The transfer of the AUTOSEVOCOM Station was coordinated one month in advance of stand-down, but due to administrative delays approval had not been obtained prior to stand-down.

(3) Recommendation: That provisions of AR 105-26 be followed to preclude occurrence of this problem.

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c. Technical Inspection of Equipment:

(1) Problem: The DSU took excessive time to TI equipment, requiring some items to be TI'd at Cha Rang Valley.

(2) Evaluation: This problem was due mainly to improper planning and the programming of insufficient personnel to accomplish the required task on the part of the DSU.

(3) Recommendation: That qualified unit personnel be allowed to assist the DSU in the TI process and the SCRAM-coding of equipment.

d. Time Schedule:

(1) Problem: Insufficient time was planned between the stand-down date and the dates of unit movement and departure of personnel.

(2) Evaluation: Only two days were allotted between stand-down and movement to Cha Rang Valley for turn-in. Four to five days would have been better. Similarly, departing personnel were programmed for release three to four days too early in the cycle. These errors in planning caused hardships on remaining personnel.

(3) Recommendation: That a minimum of 15 days be allocated for the stand-down period and that planners make provision for unexpected delays. In short, avoid overly optimistic estimates of the time required for known task.

e. Tie-down requirements for equipment transport:

(1) Problem: Time was lost when equipment had to be re-banded to trailers to meet transportation requirements.

(2) Evaluation: Sufficient information regarding tie-down/banding requirements was not obtained until all equipment had been initially secured to flatbed trailers. Consequently all items to be re-banded to meet transportation requirements.

(3) Recommendations: That transportation units be contacted in sufficient time to insure that exact requirements for the securing of items to be transported are known and that the proper equipment for the tie-down process is on hand.

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Headquarters Battery, 52d Artillery Group (U)

2. Documentation:

(1) Problem: After arrival at Cha Rang Valley, communications paperwork for SCRAM was found to be incorrect.

(2) Evaluation: The list of equipment which requires SCRAM paperwork at the 62d Maintenance Battalion was incorrect. The battalion also informed personnel from this unit that the customer receipt copy of a DA 2407 work request showing the equipment to be in DS maintenance was adequate for receipt of turn-in credit at the Keystone turn-in facility. This was found to be incorrect, resulting in this unit having to make several trips taking DS paperwork to the 98th LEM to receive turn-in credit for communications items.

(3) Recommendation: That the supporting maintenance battalion as well as the departing unit attend detailed briefing by the turn-in facility to insure that proper administrative procedures will be followed.


JAMES M. WROTH
COL, FA
COMMANDING

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Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D		
<i>(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)</i>		
1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) HQ DA DAMO-ODU, Washington, D.C. 20310		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified
		2b. GROUP
3. REPORT TITLE Lessons Learned, OELL and Inactivation After Action Report, III B, 52d Arty Gp, Period Ending 15 June 1971 (U)		
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) Operational Report - Lessons Learned Report, 15 June 1971		
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) COL. James M. Wroth, Commander		
6. REPORT DATE 14 June 1973	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 9	7b. NO. OF REFS
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	8b. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 711198	
8c. PROJECT NO N/A	8d. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
9. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A	12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY HQ DA, DAMO-ODU, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT		

DD FORM 1473
1 NOV 65

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