



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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (7 Mar 58) FOR OT RD-674137

13 March 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 269th
Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1967 (U)

AD 33842

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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
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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assignment but also insures that quality personnel are assigned to the gun platoon.

13. Source: Lessons learned, 188th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Gunship night operations.

Discussion: Two gunships with complete crews were lost as a result of losing visual contact with each other at night. The "wing" gunship of the team had habitually flown lower than the team leader to silhouette the lead ship against the sky. This procedure also afforded the wing man an unrestricted fire area in the event the leader was taken under enemy fire. The hazard involved was that the wing ship was the first to recognize a loss of contact, and once recognizing it, until visual contact was again established, the wing ship could not readily change altitude. This problem of loss of visual contact was further amplified by the combat requirements to mask all navigation lights.

Observation: A procedure was established directing that the wing man maintain a flight level at least 150 feet higher than the team leader until a target is actually engaged. This policy improves night visual contact with the references available on board the aircraft, i.e., navigation lights or beacon. This also allows the wing man to immediately initiate a climb should contact be lost, precluding the hazard of a mid-air collision.