

By JB/mgNARA, Date 9/92~~UNCLASSIFIED~~~~CONFIDENTIAL~~DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 269TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO 96353~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

15 MAY 67

OPERATIONAL REPORT-LESSONS LEARNED

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

A(v) Command.

1. (v) The primary mission of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company is to provide command, control, staff planning, and administrative supervision for the assigned Army Aviation units.

2. (v) Background.

(See also Inclosure 1, Chronology of Significant Events).

a. After activation on 1 July 1966, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion commenced receiving personnel and equipment and began unit training in August 1966. On 24-26 October 1966, the unit conducted its first field training exercise to determine whether or not the unit could operate under field conditions with organic personnel and equipment. Inspected on 26 October 1966 by a Third Army inspection team for unit readiness for overseas movement, the headquarters and headquarters detachment received a rating of operationally ready. On 1 and 2 November 1966, the operational readiness test was conducted by a test team from the 82d Aviation Battalion and concluded with the rating "combat ready." The unit began preparations for overseas deployment in October 1966, and all unit equipment was packed and shipped during December 1966. On 6 January 1967, the unit departed Pope Air Force Base, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, for the San Diego port of embarkation, embarked on the USNS General Nelson M Walker, and sailed on 7 January 1967. On 28 January 1967, the unit debarked at Vung Tau, Republic of Vietnam, and proceeded directly by CH-47 aircraft to Cu Chi.

b. Three significant problems were encountered during training and preparation for overseas movement.

(1) Personnel input was poorly phased in that critical cadre spaces were not filled immediately upon activation; for example, the S4 vacancy was not filled until 30 October—four full months after equipment began to arrive. In addition, replacements were being received until just prior to embarkation, a condition which severely complicated training.

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Group 4: Downgraded at
3 yr. intervals, De
classified after 12 yrs.

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(2) Equipment issue was likewise not phased to fit the unit production cycle. Several critical and sensitive items were received only shortly before the unit equipment was shipped, thus depriving the operators and staff of much valuable training in operation, maintenance, and employment.

(3) The receipt of the reorganization directive just seven days prior to the port date resulted in the organization's arriving in the theater of operations equipped in a manner far different from that authorized and short many items required for operation.

3.(v) Organization.

a. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company is presently organized under MTOE 1-256F USCONARC 2/67.

b. Two units were assigned to the battalion as of the end of the reporting period: the 116th Assault Helicopter Company at Cu Chi and the 187th Assault Helicopter Company stationed at Tay Ninh. Supplemental information on these units and their attachments is shown in Inclosure 2, Battalion Organization Chart.

c. The internal organization of the headquarters to meet commitments peculiar to the current operational environment while making maximum use of authorized assets is reflected in Inclosure 3, Headquarters Organization Chart.

4.(v) Personalities.

a. Commander.

Since activation on 1 July 1966, the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion has been commanded by:

Major Richard C Winesette, 01879110, Artillery, 1 July through 24 August 1966.

Lieutenant Colonel Byron E Sheppard, 039353, Artillery, 25 August 1966 through 4 March 1967.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert G Openshaw, 01339910, Infantry, 5 March through 29 March 1967.

Lieutenant Colonel Henry J Nagao, 02263161, Artillery, 30 March through 30 April 1967.

Lieutenant Colonel James H Merryman, 087566, Artillery, 1 May through present.

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b. Staff.

As of the close of the reporting period principle staff officers were:

Executive Officer: Major Dick E Roach, 0996308, Artillery.

S1: Captain John B Pearson, Jr, 05301157, Adjutant General's Corps.

S2: (None assigned).

S3: Lieutenant Colonel Arthur A Dalone, 094453, Infantry.

S4: Major James H McWhorter, Jr, OF 106186, Infantry.

c. Unit Commanders.

Through the reporting period the following officers commanded the units assigned to the battalion:

Headquarters Company:

Catain Darius D Grogg, 05306938, Chemical Corps.

116th Assault Helicopter Company:

Major Harold I Small, 094344, Transportation Corps.

187th Assault Helicopter Comapny:

Major Alfred B McClintock, 01933424, Transportation Corps.

5.(v) Command Facilities.

The battalion headquarters is housed in a U-shaped multiple tropical shelter in the Cu Chi base camp (See Inclosure 4, Headquarters Building). The structure has proved adequate, although somewhat cramped for space. The building was constructed after the arrival of the unit first occupied on 8 March 1967. Operational facilities are discussed under D below. The headquarters has not been required to displace to the field during the reporting period.

6.(v) Chronology of Significant Events.

See Inclosure 1, Chronology of Significant Events.

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By JB/mgNARA, Date 9/92**UNCLASSIFIED****B.(v) Personnel and Administration.****1. Maintenance of unit strength:****a. Strength. (See Inclosure 5, Unit Strengths--30 April 1967).****b. Replacements:**

Personnel replacements are processed through the battalion personnel section prior to release to the units.

2.(v) Personnel management.**a. Personnel procedures:**

(1) Inasmuch as the majority of personnel are assigned by MOS against specific vacancies, classification activities are minimal. 155 individuals were assigned during the period.

(2) Individual finance records are maintained at the battalion personnel section for all assigned personnel.

(3) Administrative MOS reclassification actions during the period totalled 43.

b. Prisoners of war: The nature of the operations conducted by the battalion makes the capture of prisoners unlikely. Standing procedures call for enemy who might be in the hands of operating elements to be turned over to the supported US unit as expeditiously as possible.

c. Civilian personnel:

Local national daily-hire civilian personnel are used by the battalion as general labor in all unit areas (see also paragraph E4d below). A total of 80 are presently so employed. Funds are allocated from higher headquarters on a month-by-month basis, and the laborers are controlled, guarded, and administratively handled by the using units.

3.(v) Morale.**a. Personal services:**

(1) Leaves and rest and recuperation (R & R) are handled in accordance with existing directives. 18 R & R quotas were received during the period; of these 16 were filled.

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(2) Religious services are conducted by chaplains of the 25th Infantry Division, there being no chaplain assigned to this organization.

(3) Recreational activities available within the unit are somewhat less than adequate. Motion pictures are shown in the headquarters area nightly; however, requisitions for athletic and recreation equipment have so far not been filled.

b. Awards and decoration.

During the period the following awards were made in the battalion:

	<u>RECOMMENDED</u>	<u>AWARDED</u>
Bronze Star Medal (Valor)	2	2
Bronze Star Medal (Service)	5	2
Air Medal	58	23
[REDACTED] Medal (Service)	11	2
Purple Heart	2	2

4.(v) Headquarters management.

a. Message center operations:

An administrative message center is operated in the headquarters along with a daily courier service to all units and to 12th Combat Aviation Group headquarters.

b. Publications and forms supply.

The availability of publications, particularly those published within USARV and its subordinate echelons, is reaching an acceptable level. The organization was hampered for some time after arrival in country by the lack of an up-to-date library of such publications. In addition, many requirements for recurring reports and other actions were based on electrically-transmitted messages dated prior to the unit's arrival, copies of which are not available and the requirements of which, in some cases, have been discovered only through omission with attendant recriminations.

5.(v) Safety (other than aviation).

a. Electrical power is obtained from various sizes of portable

5 **UNCLASSIFIED**

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gasoline-driven generators. Initially, field lighting sets were used to distribute current throughout the area. Poles to maintain the lines were not available nor erected until the onset of the first tropical thundershowers. A soldier on guard duty received an electrical shock from a cable submerged in water lying on the ground. Had electrical or telephone poles and wiring been included in the WABTOC package, or prestocked in country, this problem would have been eliminated. Many valuable man hours were expended in improvising poles from shell casings in order to raise the wires off the ground to preclude personnel electrocution and fires from short circuits.

b. Operator manuals outline specifications for grounding of electrical power-producing equipment, but parts manuals fail to provide adequate materials to meet specifications. Parts requisitioned prior to departure from CONUS were not received. If proper grounding equipment were included as part of OEM, these problems could be eliminated.

c. On two separate occasions enlisted personnel of lower grades accidentally discharged .45 caliber pistols while clearing or cleaning the weapons. In most instances only officer and NCO personnel receive familiarization and qualification on this weapon and other side-arms. Under tactical conditions, necessity may require an inexperienced enlisted man to operate or maintain this type firearm. Handling of all firearms should be incorporated into a soldier's training, from basic to discharge from service, to eliminate this problem.

d. No instruction on international road signs is incorporated into POR training for motor vehicle operators prior to unit deployment. This could have posed a safety problem had the 269th been assigned to an area with dense civilian traffic governed by international and Vietnamese road signs. Personnel required to operate motor vehicles upon arrival in country could have added to the toll of accidents from confusion over road signs and other unfamiliar traffic ordinances. Proper training and licensing prior to unit departure would eliminate this potential hazard in units deploying in the future.

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1.(v) Production of intelligence.

a. Essential elements of information pertaining to organizations of this type are limited primarily to information of ~~enemy antiaircraft capabilities and weather~~. Additional requirements are generated as needed and are generally designed to exploit the wide-ranging visual observation capability inherent in the operating assault helicopter companies.

b. Collection activities on a day-to-day basis include spot reports and hostile fire reports from the operating units. Specific visual reconnaissance efforts are directed toward pickup and/or landing zones and other areas of importance to impending operations.

c. Heavy reliance is placed on the units supported by this battalion, primarily the 25th Infantry Division, for providing current intelligence items, such as aerial photographs, which are beyond the battalion's organic capability.

d. Excellent operational weather forecasting has been provided by ~~Operating Location 2, Detachment 32, 5th Weather Squadron, USA~~ stationed at Cu Chi.

2.(v) Use of intelligence and information.

a. No attempt has been made to develop sophisticated or long-range intelligence at the battalion level. Ground fire information has been portrayed in order to provide the operations officer and units with a picture of areas where ~~enemy antiaircraft activity has been heavy~~. Such information, as well as spot reports of other enemy activity, are exchanged regularly with the 25th (Division) Aviation Battalion and with the G2, 25th Infantry Division.

b. Weather information is received daily through normal distribution to all elements; advisories of severe weather expected are disseminated immediately upon receipt through operations communications channels.

c. Prior to planned operations, all available information of the enemy, area, and weather is screened and comprehensive intelligence briefings are conducted for both the planners and the participating units.

3.(v) Counterintelligence.

All personnel of the headquarters and headquarters company had ~~been assigned~~ security clearances, properly validated, upon arrival in

By

JB/mG

NARA, Date

9/92**UNCLASSIFIED**

country. Validations up to SECRET are handled within the battalion by authority delegated the battalion commander by the Commanding Officer, 12th Combat Aviation Group, while TOP SECRET clearances are forwarded to 1st Aviation Brigade for validation. Reassignment of personnel, changing position requirements, and new arrivals have combined to require the following numbers of security actions during the period:

a. Validations:

(1) TOP SECRET	10
(2) SECRET	11

b. Final clearances granted:

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c. Interim clearances granted:

(1) TOP SECRET	2
(2) SECRET	6

d. Cryptographic access authorizations granted:

(1) TOP SECRET	10
(2) SECRET	8
(3) CONFIDENTIAL	9

e. Local files checks concluded: 49.

4(v) Map procurement and distribution.

The battalion headquarters left CONUS with a complete basic load of up-to-date maps. Units arriving subsequently have not been so fortunate; therefore, map supply has been a large part of the headquarters intelligence activity. The large areas traversed by aviation units pose a major problem in providing the required coverage, and the resulting bulk, with its attendant storage and cataloging difficulties, has been an obstacle just now being overcome. So far, the battalion has dealt directly with the 547th Engineer Platoon (Map Depot) in Long Binh and has provided unit distribution of maps to the arriving companies.

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By JB/mgNARA, Date 9/92~~UNCLASSIFIED~~D.(v) Operations and Training.1.(v) Organization.

a. Recommendations for organization and equipment: A comprehensive study of battalion organization and equipment requirements, based both on deficiencies in existing authorization documents and on requirements peculiar to the present operational environment, was in progress at the end of the reporting period.

b. Reception of units.

(1) During the reporting period the battalion hosted the 187th Assault Helicopter Company arriving in the theater from CONUS. The main body closed on 13 March 1967, and that unit is presently stationed at Tay Ninh. Coordination with 53, 12th Combat Aviation Group, provided for in-country training for all aviators and crew members. All aviators assigned to the 187th were sent to companies organic to the 11th and 145th Combat Aviation Battalions for a two week period to receive their initial in-country flight orientation. They also performed normal missions with these units during the period. All missions were flown in the same type aircraft to which the aviators were assigned in their own organization. Crew chief and gunners were assigned to other units for a one week period of in-country orientation, again on aircraft of the same type to which they were normally assigned. This training, which started within four days after the arrival of the main body, greatly assisted in getting the unit operational at the earliest possible date. It also afforded the personnel remaining in the unit an opportunity to draw all required equipment and prepare their base camp area for the arrival of aircraft. The individual in-country phase of training was conducted from 15 through 29 March 1967. During the period 1 through 10 April, platoon-level training was conducted by assigning 5 aircraft with crews to the 116th Assault Helicopter Company on a daily basis to perform assigned missions. The key personnel of the 187th were allowed an opportunity during this period to finalize their SOP's and to coordinate their activities with elements of the battalion staff. The unit became fully operational on 11 April 1967.

2.(v) Training.a. Aviator training and standardization:

Upon arrival in theater this unit attached its most qualified instructor pilot to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion for in-country orientation and training. Upon the completion of this training he was qualified as a standardization instructor pilot. During the period 1 through 10 April he worked with the best qualified

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By JB/mG NARA, Date 9/92**UNCLASSIFIED**

aviators of the 187th Assault Helicopter Company and qualified their instructor pilots, aircraft commanders, and standardization instructor pilots.

b. Schools:

(1) Specialist schools are available at the Army Aircraft Maintenance Technical Assistance Program School, 765th Transportation Battalion, at Vung Tau for the required training of specialist personnel on various aircraft and armament systems. During the reporting period the following personnel attended the AAMTAP School in the courses indicated:

(a) UH-1D Mechanic 1 EM

(b) UH-1C(540) Mechanic 1 EM

(2) The organization took advantage of escape and evasion training at the Jungle Environmental Survival Training Course at Clark Air Force Base, Phillipines, by sending 2 officers to attend the course.

3.(v) Operations.

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is linked to the assigned units and to the Army Aviation Element (AAE), II Field Force Vietnam Tactical Operations Center (TOC), by sole-user telephone circuits providing very responsive communications. Missions are received from AAE and assigned to units and daily operations are monitored by the BOC, which also takes necessary action to coordinate activities, react to emergencies, and to submit required reports.

(2) Continuous liaison is maintained with the 25th Infantry Division and its subordinate elements, particularly the 25th Aviation Battalion, in order to keep abreast of the current tactical situation, to gain maximum time in planning for impending operations, and to provide the supported units with technical advice and planning assistance in the use of Army Aviation.

c. Chemical: At present time the only chemical operations this unit has become involved in is the use of smoke grenades and a UH-1B modified to lay smoke. Yellow smoke grenades which are not satisfactory for marking pickup zones and landing zones have been in short supply. A modified UH-1B is not assigned to the battalion and action has been taken to acquire one. The 25th Aviation Battalion, co-located at Cu Chi, does have such an aircraft available; it has been provided to this headquarters on an as-needed basis.

d. Pathfinder operations: Pathfinders have been utilized on almost a daily basis since the unit became operational. The pathfinder detachment received in-country training by working with the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion pathfinder detachment during the initial phases of Operation JUNCTION CITY. They are committed daily upon request of the companies and accompany the unit from the pre-mission briefing through the final stages. They have operated pickup and landing zones on combat assaults/insertions and extractions as well as on resupply missions. The pathfinders are inserted by helicopter in most cases but have accompanied the ground units into pickup and landing areas when required. The pathfinders have greatly assisted both aviation and ground units in the conduct of airmobile operations.

e. Overall command security.

Unit plans for physical security are integrated into the plans of the assigned installations. Bunker complexes have been constructed in the living and working areas and little additional incentive toward their completion was required after mortar attacks in the battalion headquarters area on 15 March and 10 April 1967.

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E(v) Logistics.

1.(v) Supply.

a. Class I, III, IIIA, and V supplies are drawn through the 25th Division supply offices at Cu Chi for the units at this station. The outlying units are similarly supported by the major support element of their location.

b. Class II and IV supply accounts have been established with the 506th Field Depot in Saigon by HHC and the 116th Assault Helicopter Company, with the units making periodic pickups; while the 187th Assault Helicopter Company at Tay Ninh is satellite on the local support unit for these categories of supply.

c. The headquarters and headquarters company remains short a number of TOE line items as a result of the reorganization just prior to departing CONUS. These items are on requisition and their issue is expected momentarily.

d. The organization is awaiting issue of several non-standard or special items of equipment such as ~~REFLY~~ illumination kits, 2.75-inch rocket torque wrenches, and night maintenance lights, authorizations for which have either been just recently received or are special in nature.

e. Units arrive with complete individual field equipment and weapons. When an individual is transferred within country and his equipment goes with him, there is no equipment for the pipeline replacement, or there is a time lag in getting this equipment. Two courses of action are evident; either have a complete issue of field equipment made at the replacement company for a four-month period while the new unit builds a stock, or authorize excess (15%) field equipment for the deploying unit.

2.(v) Transportation and troop movement.

a. Since arrival the headquarters company has moved, in addition to its own loads, approximately 150 tons of supplies and equipment in support of incoming units.

b. Movement during the initial phase of the unit's arrival was a problem area because of the lack of large trucks to handle the whole shipment in one haul. This entailed leaving guards and vehicles on the dock with no quarters or ration facilities. This remains a problem in normal unit supply activities but is expected to be solved by an additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton truck to be provided either through a station support TA or by MTOE.

By

JB/MG

NARA, Date

9/92**UNCLASSIFIED****3.(v) Maintenance and repair.**

a. Immediately upon arrival in the Republic of Vietnam a vigorous program was initiated to develop troop areas and messing facilities, along with a battalion headquarters complex. Motor vehicles of the unit were used daily in support of these requirements with maintenance sometimes deferred in favor of higher-priority requirements.

b. Aviation maintenance program: The battalion aviation maintenance program was initiated upon arrival of the battalion aviation maintenance officer on 13 March 1967. The present program is divided into two parts. First is advice and assistance. The battalion aviation maintenance officer attends maintenance meetings at 12th Combat Aviation Group and 34th Aviation Maintenance Group. Through direct contact and meetings of the battalion maintenance officers, trouble areas are discussed and courses of action decided upon. This program enables everyone to profit through a mutual exchange of information. The second part is the constant monitoring of the maintenance and supply status within the companies. Often the battalion aviation maintenance officer is able to detect improper programming of maintenance or supplies and take timely action to eliminate the problem. The means of accomplishing this are a review of the Aircraft Daily Status Report and the Daily Equipment EDP (Down for Parts) Report and liaison visits.

c. Unit maintenance areas are plagued with both dust and rain because of inadequate maintenance shelters and a requirement for 24 hour maintenance operations. Pending construction programs and additional maintenance tents are expected to give some relief.

4.(v) Services.**a. Reception of Units.**

(1) A checklist has been established by the battalion to assist in unit reception. The basic problem is in vertical construction and maneuvering prior to unit arrival. It is exceptionally difficult for unit commanders to approve construction for a unit not yet arrived while pressing requirements exist for units already located on an installation. The maximum accomplished to date is ground preparation of parking, maintenance and contonment areas and construction of latrines, mess and showers. This was accomplished for the 187th Assault Helicopter Company at Tay Ninh, except that ground preparation of unit parking and maintenance areas was not completed.

(2) The arrival of troops prior to arrival of WABTOC packages causes double shipping in many cases. Tentage and cots are spotted prior to unit arrival by the senior and/or sponsoring unit,

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By JB/mg NARA, Date 9/92**UNCLASSIFIED**

then the incoming unit's organic equipment arrives a few weeks later. Arrival of the WABTOC and unaccompanied TAT ahead of, or concurrent with, the advance party could preclude this duplication of effort.

(3) Numerous items of station property are ordered in advance of unit arrival by sponsoring and/or senior units. This places a burden on the headquarters and headquarters company dimension, as far more supply transactions are required than are normally expected of a company supply operation. (60 to 80 lines of equipment). Some of this burden could be avoided by advance transfer of signature authority by the incoming unit to the host unit and early establishment of accounts.

b. Construction: Base development plans have been developed and coordinated with each installation presently occupied or scheduled for occupation. 12th Combat Aviation Group standards were used as guidelines and modified to meet the allocations and criteria of the installation commanders. Horizontal development plans are now approved for all areas and permanent base developments are in the process of coordination.

c. Driver Training: Procedures for establishing safety programs within tactical units were outlined in a written SOP to the units assigned or attached to the battalion in March 1967. However, in some instances, vehicle operator personnel had not been instructed in identification of international road signs, which posed a potential accident hazard. Only personnel previously briefed in traffic procedures in the Republic of Vietnam have been allowed to travel ~~alone~~ away from base camp; other personnel have been administered tests as time permits. The battalion has operated in this manner from 28 January 1967 to the present.

d. Labor: Civilian labor in large amounts, approximately fifty per company, is required by units initially arriving in country. This service is initially of unskilled types to assist in final area preparation, sandbag filling, ditching, and fortification. As the unit becomes operational this can be phased down to a R&U-type operation to improve, repair, and replace, and requires a more highly-skilled worker. The R&U function will remain a unit level requirement until the unit is into buildings accepted by PA&E for maintenance and repair. To date, none of the battalion buildings has been accepted by PA&E.

By

JB/mG

NARA, Date

9/92

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F. (v) Information.

1. (v) This headquarters has taken steps to print a semi-monthly informal newspaper. The first edition is attached as Inclosure 6.

2. (v) The Troop Information/Command Information program is handled by unit commanders, with normal or routine items being covered in daily formations, while special items of interest are handled through formal periods of instruction.

3. (v) Home town news releases are being submitted on all new arrivals. To date, fifteen releases have been sent forward. During the reporting period ten releases on awards and decorations have also been made.

4. (v) Public relations are handled by the major installation commander, the 25th Infantry Division. To date, no public relations activities have been undertaken by this headquarters.

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G.(v) Signal.

1(v) Communications installation and operations.

a. Radio.

(1) The following radio nets are operated by the battalion with stations as indicated:

(a) Battalion Command Net FM---

BOC (NCS).

CO } Vehicular or aircraft radios with
S3 } operated away from CP.

Each subordinate aviation company.

Used for normal daily command and control communications and for stagefield and pickup and landing zone control during operations.

(b) Battalion Command Net UHF---

BOC (NCS).

CO } Airborne radio during operations.
S3 }

Subordinate units during operations.

Aircraft as necessary.

Used for normal daily aircraft control; as primary battalion command net during operations.

(c) Battalion Admin/Log Net FM---

Battalion Administrative Center (NCS).

Units and aircraft as necessary.

Used for routine administrative traffic and for control of the daily battalion courier aircraft.

(2) In addition, the BOC operates in or monitors the following nets:

(a) 12th Cbt Avn Gp Command Net FM for command and administrative traffic.

By JB/mGNARA, Date 9/92

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(b) 25th Inf Div Command Net FM for tactical information and local security.

(c) 25th Avn Bn Command Net FM for liaison and tactical information.

(3) FM radio has provided good service for nearby stations, but with outlying stations much trouble has been experienced in obtaining satisfactory communications. Efforts continue toward improvement through different antenna arrangements.

b. A secure land line teletype circuit has been established between the battalion and 12th Cbt Avn Gp. The circuit is used for both operational and administrative traffic. In addition, teletype traffic is exchanged among other battalions of the group through a patch board at the group commander; a capability that has been very useful.

c. Telephone communication is broken down into three major categories:

(1) Sole-user circuits provide direct communication between the BOC and the headquarters listed below:

(a) AAE II FORCE TOC.

(b) ADAO, 25th INF Div TOC.

(c) 116th Aslt Hel Co.

(d) 167th Aslt Hel Co.

These circuits are prepatched and do not go through any switchboards.

(2) Common user trunks have been established from the 269th Cbt Avn Bn switchboard to the 25th Avn Bn switchboard, the 116th Aslt Hel Co switchboard, and to the Cu Chi switchboard. There are five trunks terminated in the battalion switchboard.

(3) Local circuits which service the demands of the headquarters. The battalion is only authorized one SB-22 switchboard with a total capacity of 12 lines. Of these twelve, five are trunks, leaving a total of seven local lines to be used by the battalion headquarters company. This is totally inadequate for a headquarters of this size with its present operational mission.

2(v) SOI's published by the signal officer, 12th Cbt Avn Gp, are received in quantities of ten for the battalion headquarters and twenty-five for each company. Changes are issued by 12th Cbt Avn Gp promptly.

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By

JB/mG

NARA, Date

9/92

UNCLASSIFIED

3.(v) The signal detachments attached to the companies possess the personnel, facilities, and equipment to maintain the avionics (FM, UHF, and VHF communications) equipment in the aircraft.

4.(v) Direct support maintenance is almost nonexistent. The 61st Maintenance Battalion providing direct signal support has only one repairman and he is not qualified to repair many items. The equipment then has to be evacuated and is gone for several weeks. A maintenance fleet has not been established for IX of signal items. This results in loss of communications when equipment is lost for long periods of time.

5.(v) Signal supply is adequate on the existing equipment. However, much is needed that the TOE does not provide for.

By

JB/mG

NARA, Date

9/92

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H. (v) Medical.

1. (v) Field-Aid Station operation:

a. Treatment facilities and activities have been consolidated between the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the 116th Assault Helicopter Company because no flight surgeon is assigned to the 116th. The consolidated facility has been placed in the area of the 116th Assault Helicopter Company because the preponderance of personnel served are located in the 116th area.

b. Treatment for the 187th Assault Helicopter Company is being provided by the 45th Surgical Hospital (MUST) at Tay Ninh inasmuch as that company, unlike others in the command, has no assigned medical detachment.

2. (v) Flight physical qualification: The requirement for flight physicals has been much less than expected and has therefore freed the battalion flight surgeon, to a considerable extent, for other duties.

By JB/mG NARA, Date 9/92

SECTION II

COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PART I

OBSERVATIONS--LESSONS LEARNED (u)

(v) No observations are considered appropriate for inclusion in this report other than those contained in Section I. As of the date of preparation of the report the organization was just emerging from the stage where most of the lessons learned and expedients employed were the product of other units' experience.

PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS

A.(v) Command.

During preparation for overseas movement (POM) care should be taken to:

1.(v) Provide for an orderly phasing of personnel into newly-formed units, with critical cadre arriving first, followed by less-skilled or less-critical individuals. (para A2b(1)).

2.(v) Ensure that adequate equipment is on hand to enable training to be completed prior to embarkation. (para A2b(2)).

3.(v) Avoid, wherever possible, "dockside reorganizations" so that personnel can be thoroughly trained prior to embarkation in the assignments they will fill in the theater of operations. (para A2b(3)).

B.(v) Personnel and Administration.

1.(v) Newly-assigned to a command should be provided with a complete and up-to-date library of required publications to preclude lost motion and false starts. Further, an effort should be made to incorporate "one-of-a-kind" messages requiring reports or other action into permanent directives at the earliest practicable time. (para B4b).

2.(v) Equipment sufficient to establish adequate electric power transmission networks should be provided units immediately upon arrival in country in order to forestall duplication of effort and to ensure personnel safety. (para B5a).

3.(v) Proper grounding equipment should be included in the basic issue items list with all electric power generators. (para B5b).

4.(v) Thorough instruction must be provided personnel in the handling of individual weapons before they are allowed to use or care for those weapons. (para B5c).

By JB/mgNARA, Date 9/92**UNCLASSIFIED**

5.(v) Instruction in foreign area driving, to include recognition of international and indigenous road signs and familiarization with the rules of the road in the area of interest, should be included in POM training programs. (para B5d).

C.(v) Intelligence and Security.

None.

D.(v) Operations and Training.

None.

E.(v) Logistics.

1.(v) Provision should be made to provide for immediate issue of field (TA 50-901) equipment to replacements upon arrival at units in country. The present allowances of one set per individual assigned should be flexible as strengths fluctuate. (para E1e).

2.(v) WABTOC packages should be shipped so as to be available subsequent to the arrival in country of unit advance party but if possible prior to the arrival of the main body. This would enable units to prepare areas expeditiously and thus enhance operational readiness and at the same time reduce "Scrounging." (para E4a(2)).

F.(v) Information.

None.

G.(v) Signal.

Direct support units should be provided the capability, possibly through augmentation, of repairing all equipment organic to units being supported. In addition, maintenance float stocks of radios and related items would drastically reduce communications outages. (para G4).

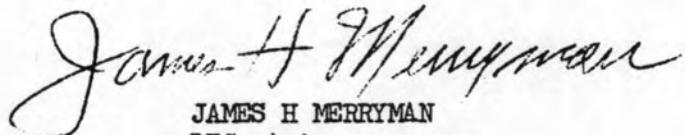
H.(v) Medical.

1.(v) Priority for assignment of flight surgeons should be to operating units, both from the standpoint of immediate need and in recognition of where the great preponderance of individuals--particularly aviators--are located. (para H1a).

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2(b) The attachment of a medical detachment to aviation companies stationed at remote locations is necessary if adequate medical service is to be provided. (para H1b).



JAMES H MERRYMAN
LTC, Arty
Commanding

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Inclosures:

- 1-Chronology of Significant Events
- 2-Organization Chart
- 3-Commanders Organization Chart
- 4-Headquarters Building
- 5-Unit Strengths--30 April 1967
- 6-Unit Newspaper

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