

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion
APO San Francisco 96383

DATA-AVAIL

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion
for period ending 31 July 1968, RCS, CS FCR-65(R1)

Commanding Officer
160th Combat Aviation Group
APO San Francisco 96383

1. Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities

a. (U) The mission of the 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion is to provide tactical mobility for combat troops, supplies and equipment of the 101st Air Cavalry Division during the conduct of combat and air-mobile operations.

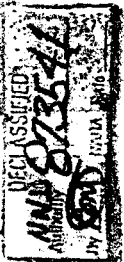
b. (C) Organizational changes: Effective 1 July, the 101st Aviation Battalion was redesignated as the 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion. On 20 July 1968, the 17th and 188th Assault Helicopter Companies were assigned and redesignated B and C companies respectively. The former B Company of the 101st Aviation Battalion was redesignated the 163rd GS Company and reassigned to the 160th Combat Aviation Group. The gunship platoons from A, B, and C were reassigned to the newly formed Delta (Aerial Weapons) Company.

The 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion consists of:

- (1) Headquarters and Headquarters Company
- (2) Company A, Assault Helicopter Company
- (3) Company B, Assault Helicopter Company
- (4) Company C, Assault Helicopter Company
- (5) Company D, Aerial Weapons Company
- (6) 4th Signal Detachment, assigned to Company C
- (7) 603d TC Detachment assigned to Company C
- (8) 722 Signal Detachment assigned to B Company
- (9) 613th TC Detachment assigned to Company B

c. (C) COMMAND: Significant Command changes during this quarter were:

1. LTC Paul B Snyder, 079101 assigned as Battalion Commander, 101st Aviation Battalion, effective 13 May 1968
2. LTC John E McGregor 079378, Battalion Commander, reassigned to Hq, MACV, effective 13 May 1968.



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3. Cpt Henry C Butner, OF103234, assigned Battalion S1, effective 1 July 1968

4. Captain Stanley J Souvenir, OF104298, Battalion S1, re-assigned to Delta Company, effective, 1 July 1968

5. Cpt Robert R Lefebvre, 0230074, assigned as Battalion S2, effective 1 July 1968

6. Major Herman V Ivey, 087180, assigned as Battalion S3, effective 14 July 1968

7. Major Donald E Ellis, OF113147, Battalion S3, reassigned to USARV, effective 16 July 1968

8. Major Alexander Balberde Jr, 097881, assigned A Company Commander, effective 1 July 1968

9. Major Benjamin J Mendes Jr, 095280, reassigned to HHC 160th Combat Aviation Group, effective 1 July 1968

d. (U) This unit was involved in OJT throughout this training period. During the entire reporting period elements of this battalion were involved in Operations Delaware, Carentan II, and Nevada Eagle.

e. (C) Combat Operations:

1. During this reporting period the battalion has actively supported the 101st Air Cavalry Division with administrative, logistical and combat assault missions. On 20 July this battalion reorganized into an Assault Helicopter Battalion. From that date thru 31 July 1968, it has conducted 17 Combat Assaults employing 8 to 15 helicopters on each assault.

2. LESSONS LEARNED

a. (U) Personnel

1. (C) Personnel shortages

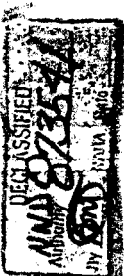
(a) Observation: Shortages of certain MOS's have occurred during the reporting period.

(b) Evaluation: The shortage of critical MOS's always seems to be a problem. The shortage of critical MOS's within the Battalion is slowly being relieved by division replacements. The 67N MOS has presented the greatest problem but allocations for AAMTAP school, conducted in country, is relieving this problem considerably.

(c) Recommendations: More in country schooling be established to relieve critical MOS shortage pending arrival of trained personnel from CONUS.

2. (U) Perimeter Defense

(a) Observation: The battalion has the requirement to furnish 30 guards for perimeter defense and 12 for internal security. Because aviation units are staffed only with those personnel essential



SUBJECT: Operation Report of the 101st Assault Aviation Battalion
for period ending 31 July 1968, 809, GSFOR-4 (R1)

to the support of aviation operations, the performance of perimeter security guard duties for Camp Eagle continues to impair the effectiveness of the unit by reducing the number of men who are available each day to perform the essential administrative, maintenance, and operational functions which keep the aircraft flying.

(c) Recommendations: Ground units within the Division should be responsible for providing perimeter defense for aviation units.

b. (C) Operation

1. UH-1H Utilization

(a) Observation: UH-1H aircraft are continuing to be over committed within the division.

(b) Evaluation: Throughout the reporting period, the 101st Assault Helicopter Battalion has exceeded its flying hour program, due primarily to administrative and logistical missions. In many cases several UH-1 sorties could be combined into 1 CH-47 sortie. Unsatisfactory mission reports are prepared and forwarded to higher headquarters when aircraft utilization is considered improper or inefficient.

(c) Recommendations:

(1) Maximum of eight hours of total mission time per aircraft per day except during tactical emergencies.

(2) More consideration should be given to load planning for cargo that could be hauled by CH-47's.

(3) Administrative personnel movements should be planned with ACL of at least five when possible.

(4) The aircraft should, when possible, be released early enough for daily operational maintenance to be performed during daylight hours.

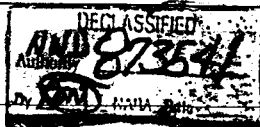
2. (C) UH-1G Utilization

(a) Observation: The gunships of this unit are scheduled for Special Forces FOB Missions.

(b) Evaluation: FOB missions have been flown where, due to aircraft endurance, only 15 minutes on station was possible. Rugged terrain with extremely high density altitudes on these missions seriously limits performance of the aircraft. Under these conditions, a UH-1G's best performance is a 200 to 300 feet per minute climb rate at 60 knots. This exposes the crew and aircraft to effective enemy fire and reduces its capability for evasive action.

(c) Recommendations: The AH-1G armed helicopter is capable of performing this mission. It should be used.

c. (C) Training: The training requirement within the battalion is continuous. As new personnel arrive, each unit insures that adequate training is accomplished prior to their being committed to combat. The Battalion is presently involved in administering in-country check outs to DLT Troop, 1st Cavalry. Prior to the reorganization of the battalion, A Company performed administrative and logistical missions.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
COMPANY A 101ST ASLT HEL BATTALION (AIR CAV DIVISION)
APO San Francisco 96383

2 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS CSFOR - 65)

Section I: Significant Unit Activities.

1. Personnel - On the job training has been continuous to overcome personnel shortage. A complete shuffling of personnel has been accomplished due to the re-organization of the company. The total strength is increased but no additional or insurmountable problems are envisioned during this phase of transition. Unit strength has remained at least 5% above MTOE authorized strength. The areas of greatest concern during this period has been proper personnel actions. The more significant problems that we have not been able to overcome at this level have been.

a. Request for orders in the following areas:

(1) Flight orders; Enlisted crew personnel have been flying for the past 6 to 8 months but do not have flying status orders.

(2) DEROS or ETS orders received; Personnel leaving RVN have not been able to out process properly for lack of orders. Hold baggage cannot be shipped, dependents cannot prepare for movement to new duty station and this causes a morale problem.

b. Financial arrangements:

(1) Personnel unable to straighten out financial problems because the finance team is only available on a certain date in Division forward area.

(2) Having main finance facilities in Division rear hinders personnel from immediate corrective pay action problems and this necessitates a loss of 5 - 7 days for personnel concerned to go to Division rear to resolve this. The loss of key personnel during this period can hinder a units operational capabilities.

2. Operations

a. During the time period beginning 1 May and ending 31 July 1968, A Company flew a total of 5,668 hours in support of the 101st Division. Elements of the Division that were supported included the First, Second, and the Third Brigades of the 101st Division, and the Third Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division.

b. The above elements were supported in Operation Nevada Eagle, which has continued throughout the period of this report.

c. Alpha Company of the 101st Aviation Battalion provided combat support in the areas of logistical and troop movements. During the period of this report more than 1,300 tons of supplies were delivered to troops in the field. Alpha Company has also provided night mortar watch and firefly missions.

3. Training and Organization

a. Training within the Company was centered on the concept and utilization of the Airmobile Company. Classes have been given on formation flying and the complete conduct of Airmobile Operations. Several training missions were flown to familiarize aircraft crews with the air-bile concept.

b. Aircraft crews have training with Long Range Patrol elements of the Division to familiarize themselves with the techniques of Long Range Patrol insertions and extractions.

c. Several classes have been conducted on escape and evasion by personnel trained at the Jungle Survival School in the Philippine Islands.

d. Alpha Company was reorganized as a result of the Division's reorganization into an Air Cavalry Division. As a result of the new organization as an Airmobile Company, Alpha Company relinquished the combat section under its control to the newly formed 1st General Support Company. In the future the present lift strength of Alpha Company will be augmented by additional UH-1H aircraft.

e. All crew personnel were transferred to the 1st General Support Company along with the combat aircraft to maintain aircraft and air crew integrity. Alpha Company's strength was brought up with the arrival of newly assigned aviators.

4. Intelligence

a. Current intelligence information is received by the Assistant Operations Officer. The situation is then passed on to the aviators by air crew reference by aviators. The Assistant Intelligence Officer is assigned a task open not in use.

b. Weekly briefings by the Intelligence Officer are conducted in addition to those given prior to each mission. The weekly briefing is also given to the company non-commissioned officers to keep them current with the current situation.

c. Aircrew reports are also passed to the Operations Officer for use by the aviators. The suspected or actual location of enemy fire as noted by aviators during the course of their mission are also passed on to the Intelligence Officer for dissemination to the aviators.

d. All intelligence information received from the aviators is passed immediately to the Intelligence Officer. Several times have been missed to insure that the information is passed on to the Intelligence Officer. All intelligence information pertaining to enemy activity is passed immediately to the Intelligence Officer. The Intelligence Officer is also responsible for the dissemination of intelligence information to the aviators. The Intelligence Officer is also responsible for the dissemination of intelligence information to the aviators.



5. Maintenance;

a. No significant discoveries have been made since the last quarter, however, the FOD program has been effective with no engine loss to FOD during this period.

6. Safety:

a. Continuous emphasis on safety is placed on all aspects of the operations. By continuous indoctrination this program has led to an accident rate below the USARV programmed schedule. All discrepancies and deviations noted are corrected on the spot. Lackadaisical performance is not tolerated and reprimands have been administered to violators.

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Section III Commander's Observations and Recommendations

1. Personnel

a. Significant Successes and Accomplishments:

(1) With the reorganization from an Air Mobile Company under MTOE 1-57G to an Assault Helicopter Company under MTOE 1-158T no significant accomplishments have been noted. The transition of personnel into key slots were accomplished rather easily and the quality of the people maintained was relatively high. Due to loss of MTOE slots numerous individuals with fine qualities were transferred.

(2) Transfer of personnel was accomplished smoothly due to early coordination with the gaining unit and Battalion S-1. Personnel shuffle was commenced 30 days prior to actual day of transfer with periodic reviews conducted to keep it up dated.

b. Major Problem Areas:

(1) Of highest concern was maintaining the highest quality individuals in the company and yet, take into account the DEROS hump.

c. Recommendations:

(1) It is highly recommended that quality be tempered with continuity. Some highly qualified personnel will have to be transferred and those less qualified retained in order that continuity be maintained.

2. Operations:

a. Significant Successes and Accomplishments:

(1) Company was able to function as a highly geared Assault Helicopter Company with only 10 days of training. Areas of primary concern was conducting operations with and utilizing light fire team support. The ground units supported were eager to learn, train and conduct air mobile operations.

b. (Problem Areas) Major concern was the loading and unloading of troops in LZ's and FZ's. Without pathfinder control and organization in the FZ and LZ operations were sometimes hampered due to time delays and poor organization of the troops for pick up in the FZ. However, this problem is being overcome with each succeeding operation.

c. Recommendations:

(1) Utilization of Pathfinders in FZ's and LZ's greatly minimizes the down time in the FZ and LZ. The Flight and Airmobile Commander knows the conditions of and the situation in the LZ and FZ continuously as well.

(2) Continuous training for, and critique after, improves the performance in conducting these operations.

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3. Training and Organization:

a. No significant accomplishments were noted in this area. All it requires is hard work and confidence by the individual aviators in the unit. This confidence was attained through hard training and blackboard exercise. During the hours crews were not flying Direct Combat Support Missions.

b. Major Problem Areas:

(1). None were significant that intensive training was required while other Direct Support Missions had to be performed.

4. Logistics

a. Major Problem Areas:

(1). Logistical support for aircraft parts have proven inadequate at times.

(2). Requisitions for time change components anticipated and submitted as far as 90 days in advance of the required delivery date were not received, requiring an EDP status to develop. This results in unnecessary down time for the aircraft in the fleet. Eventually the availability rate of the unit deteriorates and their ability to accomplish the mission is unsatisfactory.

b. Recommendations:

(1). That maximum effort be exercised in meeting required delivery dates to minimize EDP requests.

(2). That DS back-up units be located within a reasonable radius of DS units. This engages the logistical system and the responsiveness necessary for an effective flow of parts to the users.

5. Maintenance:

a. Significant Accomplishments and Successes: The FOD rate for this quarter is zero. Much emphasis has been placed on preventing FOD.

b. Major Problem Areas:

(1). The coordination of maintenance activities has been accomplished by direct liaison. With arrival of elements in this AO, company maintenance operations changed drastically due to split maintenance operations. The forward support platoon (B / 801st) was deployed forward, less essential tools and supplies to exercise adequate maintenance during operations. A complement of the service platoon was also deployed forward with 30 day basic load of supplies and equipment. The service platoon was further assigned the mission forming at Phuoc Vinh, in support of five aircraft further reducing the effective operating capabilities of the remaining elements.

(2). During the redeployment of the company, no letters of agreement were established between static maintenance facilities to provide for evacuation and "one stop repairs" to augment a thoroughly reduced service platoon.

(3). The following problems have been experienced on a continuing basis:

- (a). Reduced life of MH-1 rotor blades to erosion by sand
- (b). Fuel contamination by sand and fine dust
- (c). Reduced life of all servo components and most bearings due to sand.



(1.) The following problems to Vietnam or combat operations have been noted:

- (a) High engine oil temperature caused by MH-4-236921.
- (b) High 12 gear box oil pressure.
- (c) Hazardous conditions still primarily in 1-13 engines.

c. Ammunition

(1) During the past three months the efficiency and responsiveness to repairs has had a lot to be desired. We have been forced to bypass the direct support unit in favor of other line units to maintain mission ready gun systems.

(2) The lack of qualified armament repair personnel, shortage of armament repair parts at direct support level has produced considerable air armament problems.

d. Technical Supply

(1) Lack of the new MH for 2nd level maintenance created a serious shortage of MH items. At this time we are only at 40 percent MH on all static supplies. MH and other critical repair parts are in extremely short supply. To date the average down time for MH or 1100 TDG items is in excess of 40 days. The company is extremely short authorized supply personnel.

e. Real estate

(1) The nonavailability of real estate and facilities has been a most perplexing problem. No land is presently available to extend existing maintenance work areas.

(2) Areas presently assigned have been developed to their maximum potential without jeopardizing safe and efficient operations. Requests for suitable semi-permanent, or permanent structures has met considerable delay in approval, and at this time is still without action.

(3) To further add complexities to the real estate problem, provisional companies are being organized under the new division tailoring. This places in addition to the initial request for real estate, additional requirements for adequate facilities to conduct 3rd level support under the MH rule.

(4) In summary, the overall success or failure of the entire aviation program is directly related and dependent upon substantial considerations to facilities requests. Without real estate, and facilities, organization cannot be completely effective nor can a highly efficient and co-ordinated operation be established.

2. Class III. The division continues to underestimates their true total requirements in support of the aviation program. Fuel alone cannot be expected to fully support the enormous general requirements in this area. We have been supplementing the very limited quantities of PH items by personal contacts and lateral requisitions of aviation units within the AO.

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G. Recommendations

(1) It is highly recommended that a re-evaluation be made of the aircraft maintenance support available and that which is required to sustain an effective program for the accomplishment of the ground command's mission.

6. Safety

a. Significant Success and Accomplishments:
None

b. Problem Areas:

(1). Flight Helmets

- (a). Shortage of ballistic flight helmets, especially in larger sizes.
- (b). Chin straps, nape straps and visors are items that need replacing periodically and are in short supply.

(2). Flight Uniforms

- (a). Flight gloves are in very critical supply and a large number of crew members have been required to fly without them because they were not available. A small number has been received by supply and issued, however, the climate and working conditions cause the gloves to wear out quickly. Emphasis should be placed on continuous resupply of this item.
- (b). This unit received a limited number of Nomex flight uniforms in June, however we still do not have enough for issue to each flight crew member.

c. Recommendations:

- (1). It is recommended that flight clothing requirements be granted O2 priority designator and all efforts be expanded in supplying these items in required quantities on a timely basis.