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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Headquarters, 101st Aviation Battalion (Assault Helicopter)
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-1.V-1-E

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

TO: Commanding Officer
160th Aviation Group
APO San Francisco 96383

TO: Commanding General
101st Airborne Division
APO San Francisco 96383

SECTION 1

Significant Unit Activities:

1. The mission of the 101st Aviation Battalion (Assault Helicopter) is to provide tactical mobility for combat troops, supplies and equipment of the 101st Airborne Division during the conduct of combat and airmobile operations.

a. During the ninety-two day period from 1 August 1968 through 31 October 1968, covered by this report, the 101st Aviation Battalion has been continuously employed in combat operations in support of 101st Airborne Division Operations Somerset Flan and Nevada Eagle. Sufficient concurrent training was conducted to insure that assigned personnel were properly prepared to support the battalion mission.

b. The 101st Aviation Battalion was the only assault helicopter battalion supporting the 101st Airborne Division during the reported period. Consequently, assault helicopters and gunships of the battalion habitually operated throughout the division area of operations as indicated on the map at Inclosure 5.

2. During the reported period, the battalion flew 17,675 hours. This exceeded the USARV flying hour program for the battalion for that period by some 1,677 hours. Aircraft flying hours and availability by month were as follows:

a. UH-1H Aircraft

Month	Avg Acft Asgd	USARV Program Hr	Hours Flown	Avg Availability
August	55	4070	5526	67%
September	56	4366	4561	46%
October	57	4292	4318	50%
Totals:	56	12,728	14,405	54%

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b. UH-1C Aircraft

<u>Month</u>	<u>Avg Acft Asfd</u>	<u>USARV Program Hr</u>	<u>Hrs Flown</u>	<u>Avg Availability</u>
August	22	1270	1189	42%
September	19	1102	729	33%
October	16	928	752	35%
Totals	19	3300	2670	36%

3. Other significant accomplishments of the battalion during the reported period were as follows:

Combat Assaults:	Total tasks: 21,416
Company: 149	Tons of Cargo: 2,921
Battalion: 15	Number of Passengers: 40,251
Total: 164	Total Sorties: 61,445

4. 46 Incidents of ground fire were recorded, of which 15 occurred during combat assaults. Identification of incidents by mission is as follows:

Gunship Close Support:	8 Incidents
Armed Escort:	11 Incidents
Visual Reconnaissance:	3 Incidents
Troop Carrier Operation:	7 Incidents
Resupply:	15 Incidents
Downed Aircraft Recovery:	2 Incidents

5. Results of 101st Aviation Operations:

a. 101st Aviation Battalion losses:

(1) Personnel

	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Total</u>
Combat	21	6	27
Non Combat	4	2	6
Totals:	25	8	33

(2) Aircraft

	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Total</u>
Combat	20	4	24
Non Combat	5	8	13
Totals:	25	12	37

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b. Enemy losses credited to the 101st Aviation Battalion:

- (1) Personnel killed: 135
- (2) Personnel captured: 1
- (3) Weapons captured: 1
- (4) Structures damaged or destroyed: 2
- (5) Sampans damaged or destroyed: 6

c. Enemy/101 Avn Bn kill ratio: 22 to 1

A. COMBAT OPERATIONS:

1. During the reported period, the 101st Aviation Battalion supported the 101st Airborne Division in two major operations:

- a. Somerset Plain (4-20 August 1968)
- b. Nevada Eagle (1 August - 31 October 1968)

2. Operation Somerset Plain: This operation was conducted by the First Brigade, (Reinforced), 101st Airborne Division, and consisted of a reconnaissance in force of the A Shau Valley (YD3602-YC4691) with the mission of destroying the enemy and his supplies, disrupting enemy operations in the valley, and creating barriers to the enemy's use of key trails and defiles in the area. The 101st Aviation Battalion provided assault helicopter and gunship support throughout the operation. (See After Action Report at Inclosure 3)

a. Mission of 101st Aviation Battalion: To assault and extract by air three US and two ARVN battalions into the A Shau Valley; to sustain these units logistically and administratively by air throughout the operation; to provide aerial command and control, visual reconnaissance, and gunship cover and close support for ground forces.

b. Date operation started and ended: 4-20 August 1968.

c. Location: Thua Thien Province on Vietnam 1:50,000 mapsheet 6441; area of operations as indicated on the map at Inclosure 5

d. Forces involved:

(1) US Forces: 101st Aviation Battalion
160th Aviation Group Pathfinder Teams

(2) Other Forces: None

e. Name of commander: LTC Paul B Snyder

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f. Concept of the Operation: See after Action Report at Inclosure 3

g. Execution: See After Action Report at Inclosure 3.

3. Operation Nevada Eagle: This operation was conducted by the 101st Airborne Division throughout the reported period. It consists of continuous actions throughout the division area of operations to destroy the enemy and his supplies, disrupt his activities and to achieve military control of the area. The 101st Aviation Battalion provided assault helicopter and gunship support throughout the reported period.

a. Date operation started and ended: 15 May 1968 and continues to date.

b. Mission of unit during operation: To provide assault helicopter, gunship, administrative and logistical aviation support to the division as requested.

c. Location: Thua Thien Province on Vietnam 1:50,000 mapsheets 6441, 6541, 6641, and 6442; area of operations as indicated on the map at Inclosure 5.

d. Name of Commander: LTC Paul B. Snyder

e. Forces Involved:

(1) US Forces: 101st Aviation Battalion
160th Aviation Group Pathfinder Teams

(2) Other Forces: None

f. Concept of the Operation: 101st Aviation Battalion support of Nevada Eagle envisioned the concurrent conduct of combat assault, logistical, and administrative operations by centralized control of battalion aircraft, and allocation of available resources on a mission priority basis in general support of the division.

g. Execution:

(1) Disposition of Forces: The battalion Headquarters Company, Company A, Company B, and Company D were located with Division Headquarters and support units at the division base at Camp Eagle (YD8016). Company C was located with the Second Brigade, 101st Airborne Division at LZ Sally (YD6526). Unit command post locations were as follows:

HHC: YD807165
CoA: YD808167
CoB: YD821156
CoC: YD639274
CoD: YD829167

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All aircraft were habitually based with their units. Staging aircraft to other locations for extensive periods of time, or even overnight, was not required or practiced.

(2) Employment of Forces

(a) Battalion aircraft flew in support of the 101st Airborne Division on a 24 hour basis throughout the area of operations as indicated at Inclosure 5. Limited support was also provided for selected XXIV Corps special missions, such as gunship and troopship support of Foreign Observation Base operations.

(b) A 24 hour Battalion Operations Center (BOC) was maintained which received all flight missions from the division Aviation Group (160th Aviation Group). Missions were allocated to subordinate companies by the battalion, and performance of all flights were monitored and controlled by the battalion.

(c) Routinely, an assault company Ready Reaction Force (RRF) of 5 troopships, two escort gunships and one command and control console aircraft was constituted each day to perform preplanned and immediate troop movements throughout the division area of operations. The RRF was augmented to as many as fifteen troopships to perform specific trooplifts. When a requirement for more than fifteen troopships was defined, the battalion coordinated, planned and executed the mission as a battalion operation, employing two or more companies.

(d) In addition to logistical resupply and administrative missions which accounted for the bulk of the 15023 hours flown in support of Operation Nevada Eagle, the battalion executed 152 company and battalion size combat assaults.

(e) The versatility of the battalion was demonstrated by the diversity of special operations conducted concurrently with the execution of the basic battalion mission. These missions included:

1. Command and Control console aircraft for division senior command and staff officers
2. Long Range Patrol (LRP) Operations
3. Foreign ~~Observation~~^{OPERATIONS} Base (FOP) support missions
4. Convoy Cover
5. Visual Reconnaissance
6. Fire fly night illumination and surveillance.

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7. Flare Illumination
8. Night Observation Device (NOB) surveillance missions
9. Chemical spray (insecticide and defoliation)
10. CS riot control agent drops
11. Medical Evacuation
12. Armed Helicopter close fire support
13. "Sniffer" personnel detection surveillance
14. Psychological Operations loudspeaker and leaflet drop missions.
15. Armed Helicopter med evac and heavy lift escort

(3) Major Actions:

(a) Three major actions occurred during the reported period involving the 101st Aviation Battalion in support of Operation Nevada Eagle.

1. Vinh Loc District (10-24 Sep 68)
2. Nam Hoa District (15 Sep - 14 Oct 68)
3. Phu Vang Sector (26 Sep - 10 Oct 68)

(b) Vinh Loc District:

1. Situation:

a. Terrain: Vinh Loc District as depicted at Inclosure 5 is characterized by flat sandy beaches along the coast with rice paddies inland. Numerous fishing villages are located throughout the district.

b. Weather: During the initial air assault and throughout the operation, visibility and ceilings were good for air operations. Rain showers were encountered periodically but did not hinder the operation.

c. Enemy

I. Enemy forces in Vinh Loc District were reported as local VC units not exceeding company size, which were armed with mortars, automatic weapons and individual small arms.

II. Numerous agent reports indicated that a sizeable enemy force was located throughout the district. The report was

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substantiated on 4 September when 3 Regional Forces companies of Vinh Loc District were pinned down by intense enemy fire. Gunships from Company D, 101st Aviation Battalion supported the RF Companies killing 10 enemy while the RF companies claimed 7 kills. The RF suffered 1 KIA and several wounded.

III During and after "Typhoon Bess" agent reports stated that the enemy was moving into the district from the lowlands which were underwater. No friendly forces had been through the area since the 1968 TET Offensive.

3. Results of Vinh Loc

a. The operation terminated on 20 September, with a total of 970 enemy suspects apprehended, yielding 370 POW's. The joint US-Vietnamese force killed 153 Viet Cong. 178 weapons were captured. The operation severely damaged the Viet Cong infrastructure in Vinh Loc District. Friendly casualties were light.

b. The 101st Aviation Battalion received credit for 14 kills during the Vinh Loc District Action.

(c) Nam Hoa District

1. Situation:

a. Terrain: The Nam Hoa action area of operations is characterized by extremely rugged terrain with mountains rising above 3000 feet. Double and triple canopy is prevalent throughout the area, which is cut by deep valleys. The valleys are generally punctuated by open fields, or covered by tall grass and woodlands of varying density.

b. Weather: Visibility and ceilings were good throughout the operation with intermittent rain showers and early morning fog being encountered in the valleys.

c. Enemy Situation: Information received from ralliers, detainees and agents during the Vinh Loc Operation, and Marine Long Range Patrol Teams operating in the area indicated that the mountainous jungle area south of Highway #1 was a sanctuary for the 4th NVA Regiment and elements of the 22d Regiment (AKA 5th Worksite) and probably harbored vast stores of supplies and equipment. The enemy forces in this area were trained NVA soldiers armed with rockets, mortars, heavy and light automatic weapons, along with individual weapons.

2. Operation:

a. The first Brigade launched a reconnaissance in force operation in the southeast portion on Nam Hoa District to ferret out the enemy, his supplies, and equipment. Fire Support Bases (FSB) were established at **QUICK** (YD907035), and **BOISE** (YC943968) to support the operation. A Brigade Forward Command Post was established at FSB **ANZIO** (YD925095).

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b. On 15 September, the 101st Aviation Battalion executed airmobile assaults of the 1/327 Infantry into a landing zone at YD913897 and the 2/502 Infantry into a landing zone at YD905997. The 101st Aviation Battalion subsequently supported the First Brigade for the duration of operations in the area.

3. Results of Nam Hoa

a. There was no resistance to the initial assault, and the enemy generally avoided contact throughout the operation. Many enemy camps were found, and moderate amounts of food, equipment, and weapons were captured. Persistent pursuit of the enemy denied him the opportunity to prepare and launch attacks against friendly forces.

b. The 101st Aviation Battalion was credited with 20 enemy killed during this operation.

(c) Phu Vang Sector

1. Situation:

a. Terrain: The Phu Vang Sector Area of Operation is depicted at inclosure . It is characterized by flat coastal plains and rice paddies, dissected by hedge rows and numerous streams. The district is heavily populated in the northwestern sector.

b. Weather: Throughout the operation the weather was very favorable for airmobile operations. Intermittent rain showers and early morning haze were encountered along the coast with no detrimental effect on the operation.

c. Enemy Situation: Enemy forces in the Phu Vang district consisted of local Viet Cong units not exceeding company size with cadre of the Viet Cong Infrastructure attached. They were armed with mortars, automatic weapons and small arms.

2. Operation

a. The Phu Vang Operation was a cordon, search and clear action conducted by the Second Brigade in conjunction with the 1/54th ARVN Infantry Battalion, Regional Forces/Popular Forces, National Police, and other para-military forces. The 2/17 Cavalry Squadron assisted in closing the cordon. Because the area was heavily populated and infiltrated by friendly elements, no preparatory fires were delivered against the landing zone areas.

b. On 26 September, the 101st Aviation Battalion air assaulted the 1/54th ARVN Infantry Battalion into two landing zones at

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YD787237 and YD787232. Throughout the following days until the operation ended on 10 October, the 101st Aviation Battalion continued to support the Second Brigade with logistical resupply, saturation patrol trooplifts, combat assaults, and armed helicopter close support.

3. Results of Phu Vang

a. A total of 887 enemy suspects were detained and screened resulting in 174 prisoners of war. Of these prisoners 98 were confirmed as Viet Cong. Combined military and police forces killed 96 enemy and captured 161 weapons and 22 tons of rice. The enemy's infrastructure in Phu Vang was damaged, and he was deprived of badly needed food supplies. There was no resistance to airmobile operations, and friendly casualties were light.

b. No enemy losses were credited to the 101st Aviation Battalion during this operation.

(4) Results of Nevada Eagle

(a) Enemy Losses:

1. Personnel Killed: 135
2. Personnel captured: 1
3. Weapons Captured: 1
4. Structures damaged or destroyed: 2
5. Sampans damaged or destroyed: 6

(b) 101st Aviation Battalion Losses during Nevada Eagle

1. Aircraft

a. Damaged

<u>Date</u>	<u>SN</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Mission</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Casualties</u>
18 Aug 68	66-16121	UH-1H	YD617332	Resupply	Grenade	1 WHA
18 Aug 68	67-17268	UH-1H	YD810235	Resupply	Gnd Fire	None
25 Aug 68	66-16342	UH-1H	YD867055	Cbt Aslt	Bld Strike	None
28 Aug 68	66-1116	UH-1H	YD685143	Cbt Aslt	Bld Strike	None
25 Sep 68	66-1116	UH-1H	YD990970	Resupply	Gnd Fire	None
25 Sep 68	66-16226	UH-1H	YD985979	Resupply	Gnd Fire	1 KHA
27 Sep 68	66-1011	UH-1H	YD634342	Cbt Aslt	TR Strike	None
28 Sep 68	66-16348	UH-1H	Classified	FOB	Gnd Fire	None
2 Oct 68	65-179	UH-1C	YD071685	Armed Esc	Gnd Fire	None

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<u>Date</u>	<u>SN</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Mission</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Casualties</u>
5 Oct 68	66-17121	UH-1H	Z0020980	Resupply	Stump in LZ	None
16 Oct 68	66-15092	UH-1C	Classified	FOB	Gnd Fire	None
29 Oct 68	65-9525	UH-1C	ZD118015	Armed Esc	Gnd Fire	2 WNH
31 Oct 68	66-1115	UH-1H	Classified	FOB	Gnd Fire	None
31 Oct 68	67-17979	UH-1H	Classified	FOB	Gnd Fire	None
			b.	Destroyed		
25 Aug 68	67-17513	UH-1H	YD867055	Cmt Aslt	Collision	1 WNH
4 Sep 68	65-9471	UH-1H	YD638277	Reposition	Weather	None
21 Sep 68	65-15668	UH-1H	YD815613	Armed Esc	Overweight	1 WNH
28 Sep 68	66-532	UH-1C	Classified	FOB	Gnd Fire	None
4 Oct 68	67-17665	UH-1H	YD809165	IRRP	Mech Fail	None
24 Oct 68	66-16128	UH-1H	ZC126937	Resupply	TR Strike	2KNH/2WNH

c. Summary of Aircraft Damaged and Destroyed during Operation Nevada Eagle

I Gunships

	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Total</u>
Hostile	3	1	4
Non Hostile	0	2	2
Total:	3	3	6

II Troopships

Hostile	7	0	7
Non Hostile	4	3	7
Total	11	3	14

III Aggregate

Hostile	10	1	11
Non Hostile	4	5	9
Total:	14	6	20

2 Summary of personnel casualties during Operation

Nevada Eagle

	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Total</u>
Hostile	21	6	27
Non Hostile	4	2	6
Total	25	8	33

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4. Problem Areas

a. Utilization of Aircraft

(1) Discussion

(a) Careful analysis of aircraft utilization in the 101st Airborne Division indicates that optimum utilization of aircraft flight hours is frequently not made. This is especially true in the case of aircraft assigned to support maneuver battalion logistical requirements. Detailed surveys, conducted over a six day period, of daily mission profiles during the reported period revealed that flight time is often wasted on inefficient, nonessential, and even redundant sorties. Such mismanagement causes aircraft mission times to be routinely extended to allow completion of the logistical support mission.

(b) The resulting situation impacts unfavorably on aviation operations in three areas:

1. Flying hours on the aircraft are increased without a commensurate return in utilization. Since flying hours are geared directly to a maintenance man hour requirement, this means that flight operations are inefficient since they require a considerably greater maintenance and flying hour investment to accomplish the mission. This deprives the 101st Airborne Division of badly needed flight hours which could be devoted to other missions.

2. Extension of aircraft missions often results in the helicopter departing at daylight, and returning to its base after dark. The result is that no time is available to perform necessary maintenance during daylight hours. This compounds the maintenance man hours per flight hour problem discussed above.

3. Finally, continuous use of the aircraft throughout the day and into the evening does not permit the aircrew to get the proper rest and food to keep them at peak efficiency. This creates a potentially hazardous situation, and increases the likelihood of an aircraft accident.

(2) Action Taken: The 160th Aviation Group and Division G3 have taken action to reduce the misutilization of aircraft. A message was published by division on 28 October which strongly emphasizes the need for proper planning in the use of aviation assets. Subordinate units have been instructed to submit a well documented Unsatisfactory Mission Form in cases where they believe that the mission for which the aircraft was extended is not sufficient to merit the use of the aircraft.

b. Flight Operations

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(a) Logistical and administrative support missions accounted for the vast majority of aircraft flight hours flown during the reported period. Perhaps the greatest single factor affecting the conduct of these missions was hazards associated with operating aircraft from inadequate landing zones.

(b) Common shortcomings of landing zones battalion aircraft were required to use while performing logistical and administrative support missions were:

1. Landing Zones too small for safe operation of the aircraft into it.
2. Loose, blowing debris and equipment in the vicinity of the landing zone.
3. Obstructions in the landing zone such as stumps, holes mounds of earth, and items of equipment.

(2) Action Taken: Through an aggressive program of instruction and education of ground personnel to aviation requirements, coupled with frequent safety inspections of logistical resupply landing zones, conditions are beginning to show improvement.

B. TACTICS AND TECHNIQUES:

1. Tactics and techniques used by this battalion during the reported period were conventional and represented no innovations to current doctrine in Vietnam.
2. A Combat SOP was published for the Battalion during the reported period. The basic SOP is attached at Inclosure 4 to provide detailed information on the methods by which the battalion accomplished its mission.

C. TRAINING:

1. Ground Training: Sufficient ground training was conducted during the reported period to meet essential requirements and to sustain the operational capability of the unit. Because of the low experience level of enlisted personnel being assigned to the battalion, particularly in the clerical, supply, and maintenance fields, extensive on the job training is required to bring their performance up to minimum acceptable standards. The requirement for this training necessarily degrades the mission capability of the battalion. In addition to on the job training, formal instruction was conducted in the following areas:

- a. Command Information
- b. Code of Conduct
- c. M16 Rifle Firing

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- d. CBR
 - (1) Riot control agent exposure
 - (2) Use and care of Protective Masks
 - (3) Operation of E8 Gas Dispenser
- e. Physical security and Ground Defense
- f. Field Sanitation
- g. Vietnamese Customs

2. Aviation Training: Normal training was accomplished to include initial orientation of newly assigned aviators and quarterly standardization training of pilots. Special emphasis has been placed on training of door gunners and proficiency in the techniques of flying during the periods of heavy precipitation, low ceilings, and reduced visibility which will be prevalent during the coming winter monsoon in the I Corps Tactical Zone.

3. Formal Schools: Maximum use of school quotas were made. The following quotas were received:

<u>Course</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Personnel Attending</u>
UH-1 Airframe	10 Days	Vung Tau	4 EM
AH-1G Gunnery	21 Days	Bien Hoa	2 Off
Tech Sup Spec	10 Days	Vung Tau	5 EM
T53-i13 Engine	10 Days	Vung Tau	7 EM
T53 Engine	10 Days	Vung Tau	3 EM
Jungle Environmental Survival School	3 Days	Phillipines	5 Off

D. OPLANS AND OPORDS:

The following Operations Orders were published by the battalion during the reported period.

1. OPORD 2-68

a. Situation: During the period 4-20 August 1968, the First Brigade (Reinforced), 101st Airborne Division, conducted Operation Somerset Plain in the A Shau Valley (See After Action Report at Inclosure 3.) The 101st Aviation Battalion provided assault and gunship helicopter support for the operation.

(2) Mission: The mission the 101st Aviation Battalion was to air assault four battalions of infantry into the A Shau Valley and to provide resupply, repositioning and lift of a reserve battalion on order.

2. OPORD 3-68

a. Situation: Same as OPORD 2-68.

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b. Mission: The mission detailed by this OPORD was the extraction of combat forces from the A Shau Valley to terminate Operation Somerset Plain.

3.. OPORD 4-68

a. Situation: During the period 10-20 September 1968, the Second Brigade conducted a cordon, search and clear operation in Vinh Loc District, (See Section 1, Par 3,g,(3),(b), this report).

b. Mission: The mission detailed by this OPORD was the conduct of simultaneous air assaults of two infantry battalions and subsequent trooplift and logistical support of the operation by the 101st Aviation Battalion.

E. ORGANIZATION: See attached organization chart at Inclosure 1.

F. CHEMICAL:

1. Chemical Operations.

a. A total of two Riot Control Agent (CS) drops, twenty two defoliation, and twelve insecticide missions for a total of 36 chemical support operations were performed by the 101st Aviation Battalion during the reported period.

b. Tactical E8 35mm cartridge CS launchers were installed for the purpose of perimeter defense in the 101st Aviation Battalion sector of the Camp Eagle perimeter. There are two E8 launchers per bunker for a total of eight.

c. Atropine injectors were issued on the basis of three per individual mask assigned, in compliance with 101st Airborne Division regulation 750-50, par 6, dated 4 July 1968. Requisitions for M-13 treatment kits and M1E1 water proof bags were also submitted.

2. Training:

a. Units were exposed to CS riot control agent to maintain minimum training requirements. Concurrently, inspection and fitting of all individual protective masks was accomplished. These activities are scheduled on a monthly basis.

b. Personnel were trained in the firing, operation, and safety precautions for the E8, CS launchers installed on the bunkers.

c. Personnel were briefed on NVA/VC use of apomorphine gas, its symptoms, effects, and actions to be taken when exposed to it.

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G. INTELLIGENCE:

1. Operation Nevada Eagle (1 Aug - 31 Oct 68)

During the reported period the 101st Aviation Battalion supported the 101st Airborne Division commencing 15 May 68 and continues to date.

a. Terrain: The 101st Airborne Division's Area of Operations is depicted at Inclosure 5 and consists of an open rice paddy environment along the coast similar to the Delta area. In the intermediate area between the mountains and the coastal plain are large expanses of rolling and broken terrain. On the interior, rugged mountains rise to 4,000 feet often covered by double and triple tiered jungle canopy.

b. Weather: Weather forecasts are received from USAF OL-4 Det 32, 5th Weather Squadron attached to the 101st Airborne Division. The weather data provided was adequate, up to date and very useful during this operation. The weather was generally favorable for air operations during the reported period. During the period 4-8 September "Typhoon Bess" passed thru the area of operations hindering air operations for approximately 48 hours due to heavy precipitation and high winds. No aircraft damage was sustained as a result of the storm.

c. Enemy Situation: Elements of the 4th NVA Regiment, 22d NVA Regiment (AKA 5th Worksite), 9th NVA Regiment, 803d NVA Regiment, Viet Cong local force companies and Viet Cong guerillas were encountered during the reported period. The enemy employed evasive tactics throughout the reported period, avoiding major contacts with friendly forces. He did launch rocket and mortar attacks against allied installations and fire bases, inflicting minor damage and casualties.

d. Intelligence Sources:

(1) The following sources of gathering intelligence data were utilized throughout the reported period.

(a) Observation by aircrews operating daily throughout the area of operation.

(b) Analysing Joint Services Fire Incident and Damage Reports of other Aviation Units.

(c) The daily Division Intelligence Summary

(d) Coordinating with the supported unit prior to heliborne operations.

(e) Extracting pertinent information from the division Order of Battle books.

(f) Ground tactical maps and charts of the area of operations.

(2) The intelligence sources were an asset in planning and conducting airmobile operations throughout the area of operations and proved

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to be timely and accurate.

e. Enemy Losses:

(1) During the reported period the 101st Airborne Division has been credited with 1,132 enemy killed.

(2) During the reported period the 101st Aviation Battalion has been credited with 135 enemy killed.

(3) Operation Nevada Eagle has kept the enemy on the run, denying him time to set up or launch major attacks against friendly installations and fire bases. The loss of large amounts of food, weapons and ammunition has greatly reduced his effectiveness.

2: Operation Somerset Plain: During the period 4-20 August 1968, the 101st Aviation Battalion supported the 101st Airborne Division on Operation Somerset Plain in the A Shau Valley.

a. Terrain: The area of operation for Operation Somerset Plain as depicted at Inclosure 5 consists of intermediate to high mountains with dense undergrowth forest with double and triple tiered canopy being the dominant form of vegetation. Numerous perennial and intermittent streams dissect these mountains. Slopes are generally from 40 to 60% with some slopes as severe as 100% (45 degrees). The width of the A Shau Valley varies from approximately 300 meters at grid coordinates YD363032 to two to three kilometers near A Lubi. The average width is one to two kilometers. The topography along the valley floor is flat to gently rolling; mean elevation is approximately 500 meters.

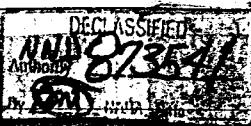
b. Weather: Weather played a most important role in this operation due to fog in the early morning hours and severe thunderstorms in the afternoons. Weather received from the USAF OL-4 Det 32, 5th Weather Squadron, attached to the 101st Airborne Division was not satisfactory for the following reasons:

(1) During the first two to three days of the operation the forecasting was done from Camp Eagle, approximately 38 kilometers away from the valley. This was impractical due to mountainous terrain between the two locations.

(2) On about the third day a weather observer-forecaster was placed at Eagle's Nest (YD406036) so that he could see the valley and forecast timely and accurate weather data. This was not successful due to Eagle's Nest location on top of a high mountain. The location was obscured by clouds and fog the majority of time during the operation, making an estimate of weather conditions in the valley next to impossible.

(3) Fire Support Base Berchtesgarten (YD427013) was utilized

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for the last 5 days of the operation with forecasts improving some, but again due to adverse weather this location was occasionally impracticable.

e. Enemy Situation: Elements of the 280th Air Defense Regiment, 6th NVA Regiment and 29th NVA Regiment were encountered during the operation, however, only sporadically. The enemy employed harrassing hit and run tactics, avoiding major engagements with friendly forces. Due to prolonged and extensive ground reconnaissance of the valley prior to the operation, it is felt that the enemy withdrew from the area and left a small force behind to hinder and harass friendly forces while avoiding major contacts.

d. Intelligence Sources:

(1) The following sources of gathering intelligence data were used for Operation Somerset Plain:

(a) Tactical maps and charts of the area of operations

(b) Visual Recon flights by elements of this unit and the 1st Air Cavalry Division.

(c) USAF Visual Recon flight reports

(d) Analysing Joint Services Fire Incident and Damage Reports of other aviation units.

(e) Extracting pertinent information from the Division Order of Battle books

(f) Utilizing Picto Maps for planning and setting up the Stage Field Area and Pick Up Zones.

(g) Utilizing photo maps of the valley, (current black and white mosaics) to pick out the Landing Zones and provide the airmen with a complete LZ terrain picture.

(h) 1st Air Cavalry Division After Action Report of their operation in the valley provided much needed data on anti-aircraft gun positions, types of anti-aircraft fire received in the valley, as well as detailed descriptions of numerous landing zone areas.

2. These intelligence sources were invaluable in planning and conducting this operation.

e. Enemy Losses

(1) The 101st Airborne Division was credited with 82 enemy killed during Operation Somerset Plain.

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(2) No enemy losses were credited to the 101st Aviation Battalion during this operation.

(3) Operation Somerset Plain invaded an enemy stronghold area. Sizeable quantities of weapons and ammunition were captured and stronghold complexes were destroyed. Visual reconnaissance of the valley within seven days after the operation terminated, showed the enemy complexes were rebuilt and there was enemy activity throughout the area. It is unlikely that the operation impaired the enemy operations in the area.

H. PERSONNEL:

1. As of 31 October 1968, the strength of the 101st Aviation Battalion was as follows:

a. Unit breakdown

<u>Officers</u>	<u>HHC</u>	<u>Co C</u>	<u>Co B</u>	<u>Co C</u>	<u>Co D</u>
Auth:	13	11	11	11	17
Asgd:	15	16	17	17	11

Warrants

Auth:	2	36	36	36	14
Asgd:	2	31	29	33	21

Enlisted

Auth: 81 148 148 148 128
Asgd: 84 151 166 166 142

b. Redapitulation

<u>Aggregate</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Warrants</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Total</u>
Auth:	63	124	653	840
Asgd:	76	116	709	901

c. Replacements

(1) During the reporting period, the battalion received the following replacements:

<u>OFFICER</u>	<u>WARRANT</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
17	42	212	271

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(2) The majority of enlisted replacements were in MOS 67N. Although the personnel were school trained, the experience level was low. This necessitates extensive on the job training.

(3) The overage of personnel is the result of early repositioning to offset the large number of personnel with November and December DEROS dates. Anticipated losses for November and December are as follows:

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>E7.8.9</u>	<u>E6 and Below</u>	<u>Total</u>
16	19	9	106	150

d. Reenlistment: During the reporting period, there were no reenlistments in the battalion, although 44 enlisted men and 4 warrant officers have requested extension of their Foreign Service Tour.

e. During the reporting period, the battalion received enlisted promotions through division channels as follows:

<u>E9</u>	<u>E8</u>	<u>E7</u>	<u>E6</u>	<u>E5</u>	<u>E4</u>
1	0	4	22	30	4

f. During the reporting period, the following casualties were sustained:

(1) Operation Somerset Plain (4-20 Aug 68)

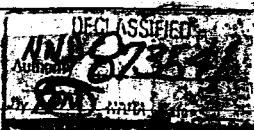
(a) Wounded, Non Hostile

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>Duty</u>
5 Aug 68	Kennedy, Donald P	SF5	RA17736985	Co A	Crew Chief
8 Aug 68	Klein, Howard M	W01	WB157591	Co A	Pilot

(b) Wounded, Hostile Action

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>Duty</u>
4 Aug 68	Murphy, Gilbert D	W01	WB160661	Co C	Pilot
4 Aug 68	Clark, Larry L	W01	WB158773	Co C	Pilot
4 Aug 68	Burton, Robert V	SGT	RA16841314	Co C	Gunner
4 Aug 68	Gaskins, Curtis	W01	WB158812	Co C	Pilot
4 Aug 68	Parrish, James C	SP5	US53451731	Co C	Crew Chief
4 Aug 68	Perry, Ronald C	MAJ	082221	Co D	Pilot
4 Aug 68	Searls, Michael D	SP4	RA11564936	Co C	Crew Chief
4 Aug 68	Wheeler, Paul W	CW2	WB155741	Co C	Pilot

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(c) Killed, Non-Hostile Action: None

(d) Killed, Hostile Action

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>Duty</u>
4 Aug 68	Kim, Harry	SP4	RA18847961	Co C	Crew Chief
8 Aug 68	Higbee, Gary L	CPT	05420467	Co D	Pilot
8 Aug 68	Ovaitt, Richard A	WO1	W3160363	Co D	Pilot
8 Aug 68	Bartlett, Charles D	SP5	RA11363873	Co D	Crew Chief
8 Aug 68	Leach, Dickie L	SP4	RA1980074	Co D	Gunner

(e) Summary, Personnel Casualties, Operation Somerset Plain

	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Total</u>
Hostile:	8	5	13
Non-Hostile:	2	0	2
Total:	10	5	15

(2) Operation Nevada Eagle (1 Aug 68 - 31 Oct 68)

(a) Wounded, Non-Hostile

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>Duty</u>
29 Sep 68	Roberts, David A.	1Lt	05250349	HHC	Asst S4
29 Oct 68	Tuel, Kenneth R	SP5	US54927514	Co C	Crew Chief

(b) Wounded, Hostile Action

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>Duty</u>
16 Aug 68	Hall, Omer	SP4	RA67128434	Co C	Gunner
18 Aug 68	Netcalfe, Timothy	CW2	W3154425	Co C	Pilot
23 Aug 68	McCloud, Carroll	SP4	RA13761556	HHC	Supply Clerk
23 Aug 68	Freeman, Walter	SP5	RA14961888	HHC	Medic
23 Aug 68	Chimenti, Allen	SGT	RA11565255	HHC	RTT Tm Chief
23 Aug 68	Kelly, Willie	SSG	RA15650076	HHC	Mess SGT
23 Aug 68	King, Dale	SP4	RA16860507	Co A	Tech Sup Sp
23 Aug 68	Brooks, Bobbie	PFC	RA11704341	HHC	Supply Clerk
24 Aug 68	Steinbach, Richard A	SP4	RA114111289	Co D	Gunner
24 Sep 68	Waddell, Edgar C Jr	1LT	05342130	Co B	Pilot
29 Oct 68	Wood, Thomas B Jr	CW2	W3157467	Co D	Pilot
29 Oct 68	Johnson, Sherman	SSG	RA15637374	Co D	Gunner

(c) Killed, Non-Hostile

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>Duty</u>
24 Oct 68	Riley, Robert	W01	W3159386	Co C	Pilot
24 Oct 68	Sparks, David	SP4	RA16916965	Co C	Gunner

(d) Killed, Hostile Action

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>Duty</u>
25 Sep 68	Blain, Dennis K	PFC	TA11915689	Co A	Gunner

(e) Summary, Personnel Casualties, Operation Nevada Eagle

	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Total</u>
Hostile	13	1	14
Non Hostile	2	2	4
Total	15	3	18

(f) Summary, Personnel Casualties, Operation Nevada Eagle and Somerset Plain

	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Total</u>
Hostile	21	6	27
NonHostile	4	2	6
Total	25	8	33

2. Other Personnel Activities

a. USARV IG Inspection

(1) On 10 and 11 October 1968, HHC and A Company were inspected by the USARV IG Team. Some of the major areas covered were: administration, control of ration cards (MACV Forms 333), Unit Funds, CBR, operations, supply activities, maintenance, medical, and communications.

(2) The only major discrepancy was a MWO which had not been accomplished on the M60 machine guns. This MWO is a Third Echelon responsibility as it requires the weapon to be rechambered. No formal report on the findings of the IG has been received.

b. Finance Activities

(1) Normal monthly pay day activities are followed with a minimum of pay complaints. These complaints are handled expeditiously by Pay Complaint Teams sent out monthly by Division Finance

(2) On 21-22 October 1968, all Military Pay Certificates were converted to a new series. Although this was a two day operation, it was completed with no problems.

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c. Religious Activities:

(1) A Catholic Chaplain was assigned to the 160th Aviation Group and has made regular visits to the battalion throughout the reporting period. No difficulties arising from unavailability of a chaplain have come to the attention of this command.

(2) Schedule of Religious services convenient to the Battalion are as follows:

	<u>Division Prayer Chute (Div HQ)</u>	<u>326 Engr Bn</u>
Protestant	0900 1100	1000
Catholic	0745 1000	1100
Episcopal	1300	0900

d. Maintenance of Discipline, Law and Order

(1) During the reporting period, this Battalion processed 31 disciplinary actions as follows:

Special Courts-Martial: 3
Summary Courts-Martial: 2
Battalion Article 15's: 2
Company Article 15's: 24

(2) Legal matters, taken as a whole and with consideration given to existing circumstances, are handled expeditiously and within the provisions of regulations.

e. The following is a record of assignments of key positions within the battalion

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
Bn CO	Snyder, Paul B	LTC	12 May 68-Present
Bn XO	Allman, Bernard R	LTC	3 Jan 68-3 Sep 68
	Replaced by:		
	Jones, John L Jr	MAJ	7 Sep - Present
S1	Butner, Henry C	OFT	7 Jul 68-30 Sep 68
	Replaced by:		
	McDonald, James L	CW2	5 Aug 68-30 Sep 68
	Replaced by:		
S2	Blackburn, Sonny	CPT	1 Oct 68-Present
	Position Vacant		
S3	Ivey, Herman V	MAJ	14 Jul 68-Present

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<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
S4	Cotter, Paul L	MAJ	4 Apr 68- Present
Staff Maint	Cobb, Jerome L	CW2	4 Jul 68-15 Sep 68
Replaced by:			
	Parker, Murry E	MAJ	16 Sep 68-Present
Bn Surgeon	Thomas, John W III	CPT	10 Nov 67-Present
Avn Safety Off	Blackburn, Sonny	CPT	28 Sep 67-Present
Signal Off	Graffius, Earl D	1Lt	3 Sep 68-Present(Freq. vacant)
HHC CO	Souvenir, Stanley J	CPT	1 Aug 68-Present
Co A CO	Balberde, Alexander Jr	MAJ	1 Jul 68-Present
Co B CO	Addis, Daniel A	MAJ	1 Jul 68-Present
Co C CO	Dreher, Henry E	MAJ	1 Jul 68-Present
Co D CO	Perry, Ronald C	MAJ	1 Aug 68-Present
SGT Major	Coxwell, Wesley	SGM	7 Dec 67-Present

I. LOGISTICS:

1. Logistical Support of Major Operations : Logistical support used during the period August through October 1968 was characterized by two distinct operations. The first was Operation Somerset Plain which took place during the period 4 through 20 August. The second was Operation Nevada Eagle which went on continuously from 1 August through 31 October 1968.

a. Operation Somerset Plain: This operation, which involved heli-lift of 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division troopers and 1st ARVN Division troops into the A Shau Valley, had three distinct logistical support phases. The first phase started 5 - 7 days before D Day and ended on D + 2. It involved the build up of the ASF and re-fueling facilities at FSB Birmingham. The second phase was between the troop insertion and extraction when combat support missions were flown; and the third phase was the troop extraction and the clean-up which followed.

(1) First Phase: A build-up of ammunition at the ASF at FSB Birmingham started almost a week before the first troops were lifted in. An officer and seven EM of the 101st Aviation Battalion were moved to FSB Birmingham to break out ammunition and spot it at points on the armed helicopter parking/re-arm pad. Support personnel (Class III) were directed to establish the JF-4 refueling area for lift ships and CH-47's, and by D Day had a 15 point UH-1 and 4 point CH-47 refueling facility operation. During phase 1, Aviation Battalion personnel at FSB Birmingham were fed two hot meals and one C ration meal per day. On D Day and D + 1, the level of activity was hectic at the stagefield. A fork lift and two "mules" proved to be of great assistance in distribution of the large quantity of ammunition at the ASF. By D + 2, the heli-lift insertion had been completed and a routine of resupply was established.

(2) Second Phase: During the period 4 - 20 August, logistical support of troops involved in the operation was confined to normal

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resupply by Brigade "log" ships and ration resupply of those few Aviation Battalion personnel and Pathfinders at FSB Brimingham, but most of the aviation support personnel and equipment were withdrawn. During Phase 2, a JP-4 fuel tanker was employed at the gunship pad to refuel cobras.

(3) Third Phase: Extraction of the troors was completed with a minimum logistical support force operating refueling and rearming at FSB Birmingham. However, the ammunition which was left at the Birmingham ASF after the operation was over required considerable effort to dispose of as directed. The ASP was cleaned and finally closed on 24 August.

(4) Total fuel and ammunition requirements for the 101st Aviation Battalion for Operation Somerset Plain, which encompassed the period 4 through 17 August 1968, were:

(a) Fuel: 16,520 gallons, JP-4

(b) Ammunitions:

2.75 inch rockets: 1994 rockets
7.62mm: 214.000 rounds

b. Operation Nevada Eagle: This operation was characterized by routing logistics support of the Aviation Battalion by the Battalion Supply and Maintenance Section. However, the activities which took place were geared toward an adjustment of all property transactions to the airmobile concept ("T" series TOE); and therefore represents a change from the last reporting period.

2. Organization for Support: The organization of the Battalion Supply and Maintenance Section is discussed below. Experience has shown that it is advantageous to operate the battalion supply activities separately from the battalion maintenance activities. For that reason, in the 101st Aviation Battalion, these similarly related activities operate as two separate sections.

a. Battalion Supply Section (TOE1-156T)

<u>TOE Paragraph</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>Auth</u>
1	Bn S4	CPT	64010	1
6	Bn Supply Tech	WO	761AO	1
6	Bn Supply Sgt	E-7	76K4F	1
6	Petr, Stor Sgt	E-6	76W4F	1
6	Ammunition Sgt	E-6	76Y4P	1
6	Equip Rcs Clerk	E-4	71B20	1
6	Repair Its Spec	E-4	76K30	1
6	Reports Clerk	E-4	71B20	1
6	Supply Spec	E-4	76K20	1
6		E-4	76A10	1

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b. Battalion Maintenance Section(TOE 1-156T)

6	Avn Maint Off	CFT	64723	1
6	Auto Maint Tech	WO	631A0	1
6	Bn Maint Sgt	E-6	63B40	1
6	Technical Insp	E-6	67W40	1
6	Card Punch Insp	E-4	74B20	1
6	Powerman	E-4	32B20	1
6	Reports Clerk	E-4	71B20	1
6	Transceiver Equip Oper	E-4	05P20	1
6	Trans Supply Spec	E-4	76K20	1
6	Wheel Veh Mech	E-4	63B20	2
6	Card Funch Oper	E-3	74B20	1
6	Wheel Veh Mech Helper	E-3	63A10	2

c. The Battalion Supply Office executes all supply activities for the five companies of the battalion. During the reporting period, the battalion completed reorganization to the airmobile configuration, with the exception of KE Maintenance detachments, which are being formed and will be added to a later date. In the supply area, this reorganization was accomplished by three separate actions:

(1) The closing out of B and C Company's property books. When the Division converted to airmobile configuration, two UH-1 equipped airmobile companies were assigned to the 101st Aviation Battalion by USARFAC CO#325. These companies were the 17th and 188th Assault Helicopter Companies of the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion. Both units maintained property books for TOE, TM, and separate detachment property. During August, these property books were closed out at company level and property accountability transferred to the battalion property book. This process did not apply to the KD and RL maintenance detachments. Since the USARFAC General Order de-activated these but did not activate any new unit in their place, the property books for these units remains at company level and is maintained by the company Supply Officer.

(2) Requisition of property for newly activated Aerial Weapons Company (D Company): The Battalion's Aerial Weapons Company was organized by USARFAC General Order #325 on 1 July 1968. Initial requisitions for property were submitted with the new Division project code (RVA) on 27 July. The company participated as a unit for the first time in Operation Somerset Plain. During August, only a few items of equipment which had been requisitioned became available for issue to D Company. The officers and men became operational in their company area on borrowed and second-hand equipment. When, by mid-September, the majority of the critical command controlled requisitions for D Company had not been filled, Battalion Supply submitted AF-1 (Follow-up) requisitions on 16 September and again on 22 October 1968.

(3) Requisition of new TOE equipment and redistribution of TOE property within the battalion. On 20 August, the command controlled

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items authorized under new TOE were requisitioned utilizing the project code "RVA". On 10 September requisitions were submitted for the remainder of the authorized (but not on hand) property. To date, approximately 10 percent of the property has been issued. Since there was a considerable disparity between what TOE equipment each of the companies had in August and what they were authorized by the new "T" Series TOE, an evaluation was made of the assets of each company. After preparation of a "spread sheet", the Battalion Supply Office was able, in September, to direct a redistribution of TOE equipment between the companies which brought each unit closer to their authorized "T" Series TOE equipment. D Company was the recipient of most of the excess property turned into Battalion S4, and the remainder was redistributed to companies where shortages were indicated. The program has never been fully completed, mostly because much of the excess equipment turned in was marginally serviceable or unserviceable. However, all units complied with the spirit of the directive. KD and RL detachment equipment was not included on the "spread sheet" because the units were not 'assigned' to the battalion.

d. In addition to property received through regular supply channels, equipment has been issued to this battalion since 1 August through maintenance supply channels. Items such as "Safari Lights", a commercial lamp purchased to assist helicopter maintenance crews perform night maintenance in the absence of maintenance light sets, were issued in September through tech supply channels. Signal and "Ensure" items also are issued in this manner. Many arrive directly from AMMC, Saigon, with no documentation for transfer. This unit has received UH-1 tool sets, ARC-102 radios, smoke generator sets, firefly light sets, AN/ASC-11 command consoles, and other items of new equipment by this means. These items were subsequently entered on the property book by inventory adjustment.

3. Material Services:

a. Supply

(1) Class I: Each company of this battalion has its own account with Division Class I. The Battalion Supply Office does not operate a ration breakdown. This battalion's units operate from fixed locations at Camp Eagle and LZ Sally, and consume primarily A and B rations. The battalion S4 section maintains a three day basic load of C rations for the companies, and each company maintains a basic load of "C"'s which varies in quantity from 82 cases in HHC to 163 cases in the airlift companies. The consumption of C rations by battalion personnel over the period August through October 1968 was minimal, except during the period of Somerset Plain. The HHC CO was directed to provide C rations for battalion support troops at FSB Birmingham. However, he eventually fed 160th Aviation Group personnel, Pathfinders, members of 1/9th Cav, and 82d Airborne perimeter guards for whom adequate logistical support apparently was not provided. As a result, nearly 55 cases of Headquarters Company C rations were consumed between 4 August and 24 August. The monthly Food Service Personnel Status Report was initiated by 160th Aviation Group Food Service Section in August and has become a monthly requirement for submission by the S4 Section.

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(2) Class II and IV: The majority of supply transactions during the reporting period concerned Class II and IV items. The long awaited aviator flight gear and protective equipment arrived in August (because of the aggressive efforts of the property book officer and a company supply officer who went to get it). The majority of the items went to B, C, and D Companies. During September, 120 ballistic flight helmets were received on a requisition which had been submitted at Bien Hoa in December 1967. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd/82nd Brigade Aviation Sections came to the Battalion Supply Office to request flight gear which they had been unable to obtain through their respective supply offices. Hard-to-obtain items which were received and issued were NOMEX flight suits and gloves, leather boots, crewman's body armor, gunner's armor seats, and flying helmets. Rain suits were received and issued during October. Some M8A1 matting, sand bags, and pickets were received and issued to companies for construction of helicopter revetments during September, but most barrier materials and lumber were not available due to priorities for issue going to infantry and artillery units at fire support bases (FSB).

(3) Class III: JP-4 Aviation fuel is dispensed at the UH-1 refueling site next to the Camp Eagle control tower. JP-4 fuel tankers receive fuel at the Class III vehicle point in the vicinity of the CG helipad. Bulk petroleum products are requested by companies and issued on requisition placed with support Command Class III point. Bulk POL aviation products were handled by 101st Airborne Division FSA (Task Force Lane) through mid-September. Only twice since 1 August have units not been able to get the oil or lubricant they needed exactly when they needed it. The amount of JP-4 dispensed by organic fuel trucks during Operation Somerset Flain was 16,520 gallons. The monthly total of JP-4 dispensed by organic battalion fuel trucks during the period 1 August through 31 October is:

August: 78,900 gallons
September: 65,000 gallons
October: 88,370 gallons

Average monthly expenditure of packaged POL products during the reported period was:

MIL-L-7808 oil - 950 quarts
MIL-L-23699 oil - 930 quarts
Grease, Acft 786 - 5 cases
MIL-G-25537 (GOB) - 10 cases
MIL-S-753 Solvent - 1550 gallons

(4) Class V: A considerable amount of ammunition was pre-stocked at FSB Birmingham for support of armed helicopters participating in Operation Somerset Flain. Over 1,800,000 rounds of 7.62mm "minigun" ammunition was prestocked as well as over 3,000 2.75" rockets (ten and seventeen pound warheads) and 4,000 rounds of 40mm (M-5 subsystem) rounds. At the completion of the Operation, 1,200,000 rounds of 7.62mm had not been expended and were divided between D/101st Avn Bn and D 1/1 Cav. The total ammunition

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allocation included the requirement to supply rockets and mini-gun ammo to B Troop of the 1/9th Cav, 1st Cav Division (Arimobile) which was under operational control of the 101st Airborne Division for the Operation. Total ammunition expenditure by elements of this battalion for Operation Somerset Plain was:

2.75" rockets: 1994 rockets
7.62mm MG: 314,000 rounds
40mm (M-5): 4969 rounds

During the seventy day period following Operation Somerset Plain, issue and expenditure of ammunition has been routine. During September, an NCO was assigned to Battalion Supply Section to fill the position of Ammunition Sergeant. He has assisted units in issue and turn-in of ammunition. In October, the battalion was visited by a USARV IG Inspection Team. Very few discrepancies were noted in the storage and administration of ammunition stocks. The team noted that this battalion compared favorably with other units at Camp Eagle in the processing of ammunition expenditure data utilizing COLED-V reporting procedures. Total armed helicopter ammunition expenditure for the three month period was as follows:

August: 2.75" rockets: 2506
7.62mm MG: 409,150
40mm (M-5): 5.050

September: 2.75" rockets: 1722
7.62mm MG: 334,000
40mm (M-5): 4.028

October: 2.75" rockets: 2323
7.62mm MG: 387,000
40mm (M-5): 3,892

b. Services.

(1) Laundry and bath: Each company of this battalion at Camp Eagle has utilized the FX concession laundry rather than the Quartermaster laundry at Gia Le during the reported period. Charlie Company, at LZ Sally, utilized a quartermaster laundry available to units in that portion of the division area of operations. Ready-made showers have been made available to battalion units by Seabees at Gia Le Base. Since 1 August, each unit has been issued at least two four hole latrines and two four head showers.

(2) Fire Prevention:

(a) The two fire trucks issued to the battalion during July were turned in to maintenance during August. These vehicles were driven to Camp Eagle from Nha Trang by two resourceful enlisted men who spent nearly 30 days "on the road" with a minimum of money and instructions. When the vehicles arrived at Camp Eagle they were short nearly all accessories and needed maintenance. However, they were rejected because USAF HQ had directed

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that the fire trucks be issued to this battalion. The fire truck Bravo Company brought to the battalion has continued to function effectively over the reported period.

(b) Fire extinguishers have been in critically short supply, particularly the CO₂ foam type, since this unit arrived at Camp Eagle. There is a limited CO₂ recharge capability at Marble Mountain Airfield Fire Station, but small vehicular and generator type fire extinguishers cannot be recharged there. Some relief in this area came when 50 CO₂ type fire extinguishers arrived in a shipment of CONEX's from the rear area during October. Hand pump water type fire extinguishers have been available in enough quantities to provide companies with these for use in billeting areas.

(3) Transportation: The only significant transportation activity which occurred during the reported period was the movement by sea of 49 CONEX's from Bien Hoa to the battalion forward area at Camp Eagle in late September. The CONEX's, which arrived at Camp Eagle in early October, had been loaded with personal baggage of members of HHC and A Company who had left their gear at Bien Hoa when the move was made to Camp Eagle. In addition, the CONEX's contained tents and other TOE property and expendables which the Battalion Property Book Officer had been issued by DSO Rear during August. The 49 CONEX's were loaded and ready for shipment by mid-September. After several false starts, a ship was obtained to transport them to Da Nang. Necessary arrangements were made, and the ship departed Saigon on 26 September. After trans-shipment from Da Nang to Tam My and off-loading there, the 39th Truck Company provided the necessary transportation from port of debarcation to Camp Eagle. Forty-five CONEX's arrived on 7 October, and three more CONEX's and two 1800 gallon tanks arrived in the battalion area on 22 October. Further distribution of the CONEX's is planned as follows: A Company, 12; D Company, 20; HHC, 10; 160th Avn Gp, 6; 163rd GS Co, 1.

4. Maintenance:

a. Aircraft Maintenance

(1) The maintenance concept envisioned for this battalion was the performance of organizational through limited Direct Support maintenance in each company with organic Service Platoon and an attached Direct Support Transportation Corps KE Team. This organization was started during the period but is still not completed in that the general orders have not been published which activate the KE Teams for companies other than Company D. The Company D Team arrived without officers, qualified noncommissioned officers, and supervisors.

(a) Sufficient supervisory personnel (officers and non-commissioned officers) are not available in any of the companies to properly supervise maintenance performance.

(2) Authorized tool sets, which were not received through

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proper requisitioning procedures, were telephonically released in forced issue status. The tool sets arrived at Camp Eagle incomplete and uncontrolled. Requisitions for tool sets for the other three companies in preparation for activation and assignment of authorized KE Teams have not been filled.

(3) During the reported period back up Direct Support maintenance for Company A and part of Company D was furnished by Company A, 5th Transportation Battalion (AMS), at Red Beach (Da Nang). Neither unit was able to furnish the desired maintenance response. Excessive downtime was experienced when aircraft were evacuated to back up direct support facilities.

(4) Organization for maintenance was unsatisfactory for several reasons: inadequate facilities, improper or lack of any lighting capability, lack of maintenance shelters, and very limited hardstand. These inadequacies have been overcome by the units to a degree during the dry season, but these deficiencies pose serious problems for the coming winter monsoon.

b. Aircraft Technical Supply

(1) This support has also been split between the 339th Transportation Company (DS) and 58th Transportation Company (AMS). The supply response has been inadequate. Approximately 1927 normal requisitions (non EDP) were submitted during the period with only 667 of these requisitions filled. The lack of timely response on normal requisitions, combined with an average 35 per cent zero balance in AS+ and PLL lines greatly increases the amount of EDP requisitions. Approximately 980 EDP requisitions were submitted during the period. EDP items are received on a timely basis (1 to 12 days).

(2) Those items issued from DSU stocks are also delivered on a timely basis for normal requisitions, however, when DSU stocks are zero balance and passing action is required, excessive time is required to receive the parts. This excessive time delay greatly contributes to an increased amount of EDP requisitioning

(3) Each company also suffers the lack of experienced technical supply personnel. This shortage increases requisitioning errors, and requires an undue amount of supervision by maintenance supervisors, which in turn degrades their capability to perform other supervisor duties.

c. Ground Support Equipment:

(1) Organizational maintenance for automotive, signal, engineer and other equipment was performed by the individual companies. Direct support maintenance was furnished by the 801st Maintenance Battalion (DS), 101st Airborne Division. Equipment repair ranged from poor to excellent depending upon receipt of repair parts and secondary end items. 3KW, 5KW and 10KW AC generators have been extremely difficult to maintain because installation power demands have required usage beyond their design capability, and repair parts are in chronic short supply. $\frac{1}{2}$ Ton, $\frac{3}{4}$ ton and $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton trucks

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which required major assembly repair or replacement, such as engine, transmission, or differential, have accumulated excessive non-operational ready time.

(2) During the reported period, the average zero balance in PLL for most equipment has ranged from 25 to 35 percent among the companies. The average fill time on requisitions ranges from fair to very poor; EDP items take from 2 to 17 days, priority 05 averages 22 days, and priority 12 and above requires from 1 to 6 months.

5. Other areas of support.

a. Expendable Supplies: During August, before DSO (Rear) closed out and moved to Camp Eagle, a workable system for issue of adequate expendable supplies to division units was virtually non-existent. DSO (Forward) sent liaison personnel to Da Nang to purchase for Camp Eagle units at the Da Nang Self Service Supply Center, and the goods usually came up by convoy. However, once they got to Camp Eagle, they were placed in CONEX containers in the Class II and IV yard and issued on a first come-first serve basis. As a result, many units were not informed of arrival of expendables, and items like toilet paper, paper plates, and cups, were in critically short supply in this battalion. To add to the confusion, DSO (Rear) maintained a well stocked self service supply center at Bien Hoa which maintained bins for major units. When this battalion submitted a "want-list" for self-service items, the goods would be filled from available stocks and placed in the battalion bin. Seldom were the goods shipped forward to Camp Eagle and only by sending representatives to the rear could the units receive their expendable supplies. The expendable supply situation improved at Camp Eagle during September when DSO (Forward) began sending four or five unit representatives each month to the self service supply center in Da Nang to buy on account. The goods would be placed in boxes, marked, taped, and sent forward to the Class II and IV yard for issue to the units. A refinement in that system came in early October when each company of the battalion had an opportunity to send a representative to Da Nang Self Service Supply Center with a weekly CH-47 mission set up by 160th Aviation Group to buy tools for aircraft mechanic tool kits.

b. Storm Damaged Equipment: On 4, 5, and 6 September, a typhoon with winds of 50 knots lashed Camp Eagle. A considerable amount of rain fell during that period, and the combination of the wind and the rain resulted in a large percentage of battalion tentage and other gear being classified "storm damaged". Sixteen new GP Medium tents were issued to companies to replace tents which were rendered unserviceable during the storm. One latrine in D Company was replaced as a result of the storm.

c. Combat Damaged Equipment: Only one rocket/mortar attack by the enemy affected the battalion area during the three month period covered by this report. Two GP Small tents and one GP Medium tent were damaged as a result. GP Medium tents were issued to HHC as a result of the combat damage.

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6. Base Camp Operations.

a. Living Quarters: During September, Phase I WABTOC construction was begun with the fabrication of wooden floors, walls, and overhead frames for GP Medium tents by the SeaBees. Initial guidance on the number to be issued, based on number of personnel assigned, was 10 personnel per tent. However, because of the onset of the rainy season, an effort was made by the Division Base Development Officer to get as many Division personnel as possible into WABTOC shelters. A decision was made to initially construct WABTOC shelters only on the basis of 16 personnel each, regardless of rank. A breakdown on those kits constructed in unit areas is as follows:

HHC - 7
A Co - 13
B Co - 18
C Co - 35 (includes Phase II construction also)
D Co - 21 (includes KE Team, but none constructed to date)

Phase II construction of living quarters WABTOCs will be geared to 10 EM and 6 officers per tent, and will include corrugated metal roofing instead of using tentage.

b. Offices: To date, no formal construction has been started on office WABTOCs. Phase II construction will include office WABTOCs and the breakdown is 13 for HHC and 11 for each line company. This does not include tech supply offices, clubs, or dayrooms.

c. Maintenance Hangars: During October, 11,500 square feet of floor space aircraft maintenance hangars were approved for construction in each company area. This will include office space for tech supply and tool rooms built into the back of the hangar. However, MACV has not released the funds for construction of these yet and there is no programmed date for start of construction.

d. Programmed Construction: D Company is programmed to occupy the hill directly south of their present unit area. Horizontal construction will be performed by the 27th Engineer Battalion and will include leveling a take-off strip measuring 100 feet by 800 feet, and construction of an aircraft maintenance area for the Aerial Weapons Company. A planning conference was held on 22 October with members attending of Division aviation units and engineers. The purpose of the conference was to confirm priorities of construction for planned projects. D Company's priority was confirmed as number three for horizontal construction by the 27th Engineer Battalion.

e. Maintenance Hardstand: Because adequate hardstand for maintenance at Camp Eagle is not always available, plans were developed in September to apply 2000 bundles of M8A1 matting to the areas at Camp Eagle designated as maintenance hardstand areas (13,000 square feet per company for

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motor pools, and 18,000 square feet per company for aircraft maintenance).

f. Mess Halls: Concrete slabs were laid during October for 250 man mess halls in each unit area. Vertical construction is programmed for these mess halls during November by the SeaBees.

g. Planned location of KE Teams was discussed during September. The 39th TC Det (now the KE Team for D Company) arrived in late September. Company A's KE Team, when it becomes available, is programmed to occupy the area now utilized by A Co, 5th TC Bn.

7. Problems

a. Item: Non-availability of certain self service supplies.

b. Discussion: The marginally effective system of obtaining self service supplies has consistently failed to offer certain items which units of this battalion constantly require. These items include, but are not limited to:

(1) Aerosol insecticide. This battalion has not been able to obtain insecticide during this entire reported period. Due to the emphasis placed on the prevention of malaria within this Division, this shortage presents a serious problem.

(2) Brooms: With the construction of the plywood floored VIBCO tent frames, brooms in quantity have become a necessary item. They have not been available during the reported period.

(3) Manifold carbon paper: Manifold carbon paper, which was available prior to 1 August, has not been available since then.

(4) Miscellaneous Tools: There has been a lack of availability of tools for aircraft and automotive mechanics tool boxes for the past eight months. The problem has become critical within the last three months, as quantities on hand have continued to diminish.

c. Action taken: This unit sends a representative to the Da Nang Self Service Supply Center each week to purchase the required expendables on account.

J. CIVIL AFFAIRS:

1. No civic action projects were executed by the battalion during the reported period.

2. Mandatory instruction on Vietnamese customs was conducted for officer and warrant officer personnel in the battalion.

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K. PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS:

During the reported period the 101st Aviation Battalion supported 101st Airborne Division psychological operations by flying approximately 50 leaflet drop and loudspeaker broadcast missions. The effectiveness of these missions is not known.

L. MEDICAL:

1. Medical operations in support of the 101st Aviation Battalion (AH)

a. Operation Somerset Plain:

(1) On 29 July 1968, one aidman from the Battalion Medical section accompanied the advance party which set up the rearming point at Fire Support Birmingham to support Operation Somerset Plain. His duty was the care and treatment of advanced party personnel as a unit aidman.

(2) On 3 August 1968, a forward aid station was set up and maintained at the rearming point. This station was manned by the Battalion Flight Surgeon, the section NCOIC, a clinical specialist and an aidman. It was operational from 3 August through 6 August 1968. A variety of combat related and other medical problems were handled during this period. Aid station personnel also established temporary latrine and urinal facilities. Following peak activity of this period, the forward aid station was dismantled and equipment returned to the Battalion area using organic ground transportation. One medical aidman was left with the rearming personnel.

(3) During the height of the extraction phase (17-18 August 1968) the forward aid station was re-established. All personnel and equipment returned to the Battalion on 18 August 1968.

(4) All support for the forward aid station was provided by organic personnel and equipment. Clearing facilities from the 326 Medical Battalion were available at FSB Birmingham, although they were not used. Medical evacuation was also available through organic battalion aircraft.

b. Rocket Attack, Camp Eagle, 23 August 1968:

On 23 August 1968, at approximately 1800 hours, a 122mm rocket impacted approximately six meters from the Battalion aid station. Seven persons were treated for injuries directly or indirectly related to the incident. Four persons required evacuation. One person was evacuated using organic Battalion aircraft to the 22nd Surgical Hospital at Hu Phu Bai. The three other injured persons were evacuated by organic land transportation to D Co 326 Medical Battalion Clearing Company at Camp Eagle.

2. Base Camp Medical Statistics: During the 90 day period from 1 August to 31 October 1968, the following significant items have been noted:

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a. During the period 1 August through 31 August 1968, there was a marked increase in diarrheal disease. 102 cases were treated during this period. An epidemiological survey was conducted by Division Preventive Medicine.

b. With the onset of the monsoon season a marked increase in skin rashes has occurred. September was the month with the most cases, having a total of 68.

c. During the period of 1 October through 26 October 1968, there has been a significant increase in the number of respiratory infections. 54 cases as of 26 October 1968. The majority of cases are of viral origin.

3. Statement and Discussions of Command Health: The health of the Command has been excellent. Of the three significant medical problems mentioned above, diarrheal disease significantly affected the functional strength of the Battalion. All three problems have been self-limiting and of short duration.

M. SIGNAL:

1. Communication Administration and Training

a. All commanders were familiarized with their responsibilities for communications economy as outlined in 101st Abn Div Regs 105-10 and 105-12.

b. A communications review board was established consisting of the Bn XO, S1, and Bn Signal Officer. They conduct periodic inspections to insure efficient and proper use of telecommunications services in the battalion.

c. Cross training to increase depth of experienced personnel was done while accomplishing line communications maintenance missions.

d. The 160th Aviation Group Crypto Section was established in early September and the Crypto account was transferred from this headquarters. The necessary assistance and training for Group Crypto personnel was provided.

2. Operational Communications: (See Diagrams A-H at Inclosure 2)

a. Diagram A illustrates Killer switch board circuit diagram. Note that connections to C Company must go by wire and microwave shots through division headquarters (Kangaroo) to the Second Brigade (Kayo), then by wire to C Company. There are no means of direct telephone communications to C Company from Battalion.

b. Diagram B illustrates hot lines from Battalion operations center to A, B, and D companies, and to 160th Aviation Group Operations. C Company,

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located at LZ Sally with the Second Brigade, has no hot line from battalion operations. These hot lines provide an immediate and uninterrupted means of wire communications between operations centers, and should be installed.

c. Diagram C is one of A Company's outgoing switch circuits. A Company is located adjacent to the battalion headquarters, and therefore needs no other outgoing circuits for backup communications to the battalion. Their wire lines are comparatively simple to maintain due to the short distance between switchboards.

d. Diagram D illustrates B Company's outgoing switch circuits. Due to B Company's location, approximately one and one half miles from battalion headquarters, the company needs more outgoing circuits for a back up means of wire communications with the rest of the battalion.

e. C Company 's outgoing circuit diagram is illustrated in diagram A. C Company is located with the Second Brigade at LZ Sally. Communication between LZ Sally and Camp Eagle is accomplished through microwave shots.

f. Diagram E illustrates D Company's outgoing circuit diagram. D Company is located in the same vicinity as B Company and therefore needs additional switch circuits for the same reason as B Company.

g. Diagram F is of the battalion operation center radio control net. The battalion controls all assigned aircraft through the company operations sections. Company Operations Sections perform flight following of their assigned aircraft and report to Battalion Operations when necessary.

h. Diagram G illustrates company UHF flight following nets. This net provides companies with control of their own aircraft.

i. Diagram H illustrates secure communications net between battalion operations and C Company in the Second Brigade area. This was established to make up for not having a hot line or direct switch communications to battalion.

3. Initially installed ground electrical cables supplying HHC power was discarded in favor of hatflex 12-2 ground type N M electrical wiring strung and mounted on 4" X 4" wooden poles. This was necessary due to large power losses from many connections, and the deterioration of the cables due to weather, age, and ground contact.

4. Radio Maintenance: Battalion flight operations are conducted on a 24 hour basis, which causes radios and equipment to be in continuous use. There are two types of radios in this category; FM, VRC 12 series radios, and UHF, VRC 24 radios. The FM radios are the easiest to maintain, due to the fact that they are designed for easy maintenance with quick change module. However, due to prolonged periods of continuous operation, these radios have had frequent maintenance problems. The VRC 24 radios are not as easily maintained. There are no spare or float radios to replace them when down for maintenance. Maintenance down time on these radios has run anywhere from several days to several weeks, and even months.

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N. ENGINEER:

1. Drainage: During August and September, with the advent of the rainy season in the I Corps area, everyone at Camp Eagle became concerned with drainage. The large holes which were bulldozed to put the living quarters tents in at the beginning of the dry season, soon filled with water. Most of the drainage construction effort which took place in the units was carried out by personnel from the units who lived in these tents and had a personal interest in good drainage. Engineer equipment (backhoe, bulldozer, grader and front loader) was utilized when available.

2. Revetment construction: During September estimates of the amount of M8A1 matting needed to construct revetments for helicopters of this battalion were submitted to G4. The following figures were developed for the amount of matting needed:

a. One H-model revetment (50'x20'x5.5') (Parallel type) will require 128 sheets of M8 per revetment. That breaks down to 64 sheets per revetment and 64 sheets per parking area within the revetment.

b. One C-model revetment (50'x25'x4.8') (L-shaped) will require 112 sheets of M8A1 per revetment. Breakdown is 48 sheets per revetment and 64 per parking area within the revetment.

c. A, B, and C Companies will require 2560 sheets of M8A1 matting each (183 bundles) for revetments and 960-8 foot pickets.

d. D Company will require 2128 sheets or 152 bundles of M8A1 matting and 576-8 foot pickets to complete their revetments.

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SECTION 2

Part I - Observations (Lessons Learned)

A. PERSONNEL: None

B. OPERATIONS: See After Action Report at Inclosure 3

C. TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION: None

D. INTELLIGENCE: None

E. LOGISTICS:

1. Item: Maintenance of wire Communications Lines

a. Discussion: Maintenance of communication lines from Killer switch to Bravo and Delta companies present a continuing problem due to the distance the wire lines must be strung and the areas of heavy vehicular traffic that these lines must cross. This causes numerous breaks and many maintenance man hours. Most of the authorized load of wire was used in maintaining these lines by the end of September.

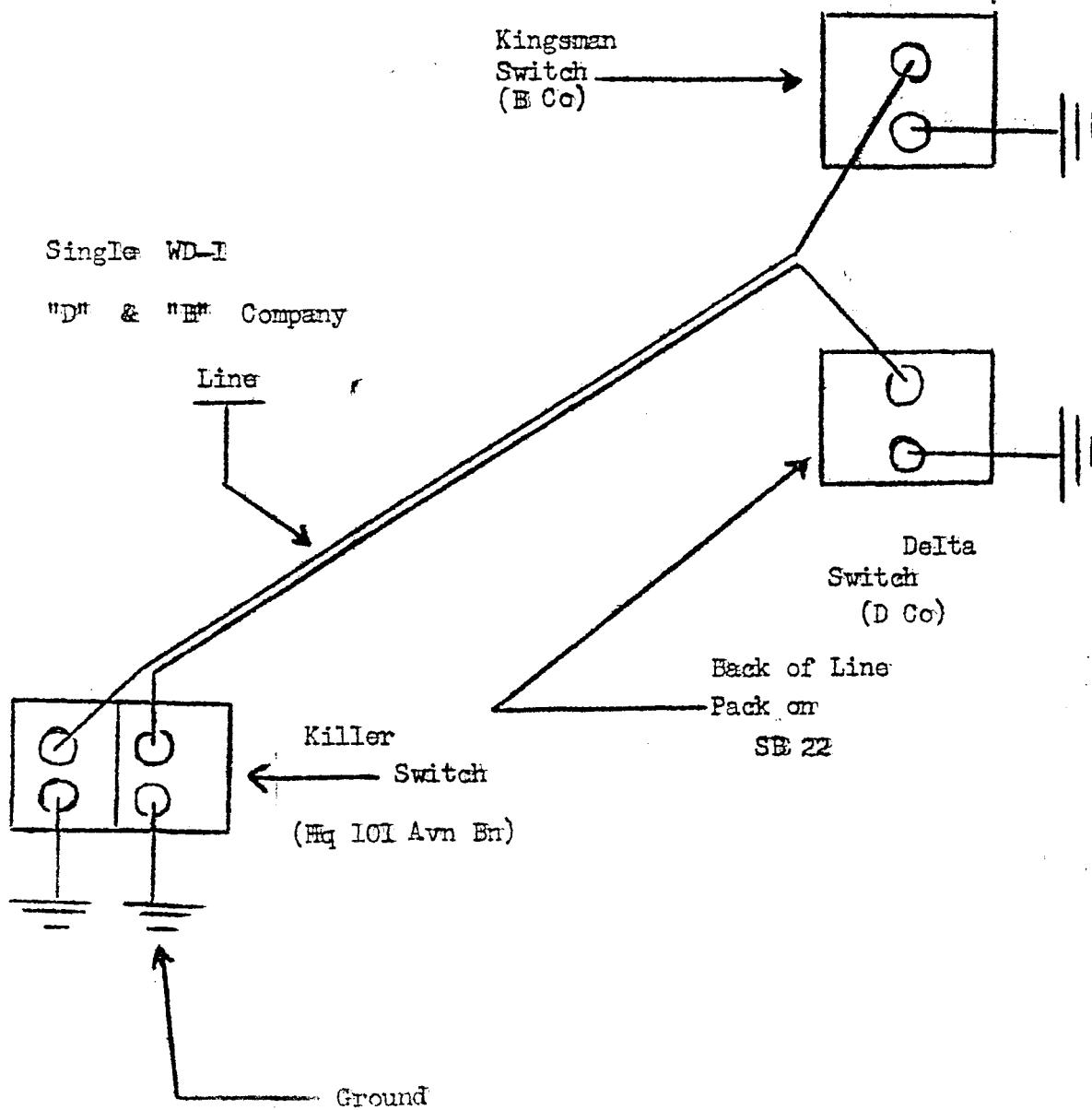
b. Observation: The lines were routed along the immediate inside of the perimeter and under culverts to stay clear of road crossings. The existing wire supply was not sufficient to provide the required number of lines. The use of phantom circuits was employed to economize on wire. (See diagram below for illustration of phantom circuits). A disadvantage of phantom circuits is that a single break will cause total loss of service to two parties rather than one in the standard circuit. When wire is in short supply, however, phantom circuits provide a good solution to the problem of stretching available wire resources.

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Phantom Circuit

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2. Item: Stockage of Class V at Forward Staging Areas

a. Discussion: An initial estimate was made that 25 armed helicopters would be utilizing rearming facilities at FSB Birmingham forward staging area in support of Operation Somerset Plain. That figure included the Cobras of B Troop, 1/9th Cav which was in direct support of the 101st Airborne Division at that time. Since the cavalry troop became operational at FSB Birmingham a week early, ammunition began to be stocked in large quantities at the ASF during the last week of July. The initial stockage level was exceedingly heavy because there was no apparent experience factor for the amount of ammo needed to support such an operation. In fact, more ammunition was returned to Camp Eagle unused than was used during the two weeks of the operation. More than 1,200,000 rounds of mini-gun ammunition was stocked but not used at FSB Birmingham and was subsequently returned to Eagle where it was divided between D Company, 101st Avn Bn, and D Troop, 1/1 Cav. Other categories of ammunition were also overstocked at FSB Birmingham. A major effort had to be expended to clean up the gunship re-arm point at FSB Birmingham, in spite of the fact that the point was policed day by day. This was caused by aircrews who left banding, crates, and brass on the perimeter at the re-arm points. In addition, perimeter guards threw C Ration boxes and other trash around the ASP.

3. Observation: For future operations involving personnel of the Aviation Battalion operating a re-arm point, the quantity of ammunition to be prestocked at an ASF for use of gunships will be "safesided" low until an experience factor is established on which to base routine ammunition requests. In addition, a thorough police call will be held upon closing the point each day by the personnel operating the re-arm pad. The ammo points, the pits, the ramp and the perimeter will be thoroughly policed. Unserviceable ammunition will be segregated carefully and turned in or disposed of daily. Efforts will be made by the point crews to keep the entire area in a high state of police.

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SECTION 2

Part II - Recommendations

A. PERSONNEL:

1. Subject; Administration of Military Justice
2. Discussion:

a. Due to the increasing complexity of the UCMJ, this unit has lost cases because of technicalities that most officers are unaware of except in retrospect. An officer should give judicial matters top priority, yet because of the full duty schedule of duties which demand his time, he is unable to master or stay abreast of the constantly changing field of military justice.

b. The lack of knowledge could be partially alleviated by mandatory classes conducted by the Staff Judge Advocate Section. These classes would consist of discussions on the general points of military law and new decisions of the Court of Military Appeals that would have direct bearing upon this unit's legal activities.

3. Recommendation: That classes on military law be initiated within the 101st Airborne Division with mandatory attendance by all officers.

B. OPERATIONS: (See After Action Report at Inclosure 3).

1. Subject: Reconnaissance and Security Missions

a. Discussion:

(1) Prior to the reorganization of the 101st Airborne Division under the airmobile concept, army aviation helicopter support missions were flown by general purpose and assault helicopter units. As the only assault helicopter battalion assigned to the division after reorganization, the 101st Aviation Battalion assumed a remarkable variety of missions. Many fall within the traditional cavalry role of reconnaissance and security. Among these are Long Range Patrol (LRP) operations, Foreign Observation Base (FOB) operations, convoy cover, firefly illumination and reconnaissance, Night Observation Device (NOD) surveillance, and "sniffer" personnel detection reconnaissance missions. These missions are clearly a function of air cavalry, which merely extends the reconnaissance and security capability of ground cavalry by means of aircraft operating in the ground environment.

(2) Prior to the arrival of air cavalry units in the 101st Airborne Division, the 101st Aviation Battalion necessarily performed these cavalry missions in addition to its primary air assault mission. With an air cavalry unit now assigned to the division, however, continued performance of cavalry missions by the 101st Aviation Battalion is inefficient. Continued

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performance of these missions by an assault helicopter battalion merely degrades its capability to perform its mission for which it is designed. The air cavalry troop is specifically organized and equipped for reconnaissance and security missions.

(3) Although D Troop, 1/1 Cav has assumed nominal responsibility of LRF operations, D/1/1 Cav continues to lean heavily upon the expertise of 101st Aviation Battalion aircrew to actually perform the difficult and dangerous insertion and extraction operations. Two aircraft of the 101st Avn Bn are chronically in support of LRF operations. D/1/1 Cav will not perform the operation.

(4) Although several unsatisfactory mission reports have been submitted in connection with 101st Aviation Battalion support of FOB operations, the battalion continues to be required to support FOB with daily commitments of troopships and gunships. UH-1C gunships assigned to the 101st Aviation Battalion should not be assigned to FOB missions. The UH-1C is inadequate for the task, which demands a high speed armed escort capable of long endurance and rapid, powerful maneuvers at extremely high density altitudes. Use of the UH-1C gunship on FOB frequently requires the escorted troopships to slow down to allow the gunships to keep up, thus increasing their exposure to enemy fire. UH-1C gunships cannot carry sufficient fuel, and are incapable of climbing rapidly enough to negotiate the rugged terrain in which they must operate. The UH-1C cannot successfully negotiate the high density altitude, fast, steep turns which optimum armed escort for FOB operations often demand. The AH-1G Cobra gunship is capable of performing the mission more effectively than the UH-1C and with a substantially greater margin of safety for aircraft and crew. AH-1G Cobras are assigned to D/1/1 Cav; they should perform the FOB mission.

(5) NOD missions are clearly in the province of division reconnaissance and security. Along with firefly and sniffer recon missions, NOD operations are controlled by the division G2 and should be performed by the eyes of the division—the cavalry.

(6) Convoy cover is one of the oldest cavalry missions. It is uneconomical and inefficient to use UH-1H aircraft to perform a mission better suited to a LOH or white team.

b. Recommendation: That divisional cavalry units be assigned the responsibility for performing cavalry missions, to include:

- (1) Long Range Patrol operations
- (2) Foreign Observation Base operations
- (3) Night Observation Device missions
- (4) Firefly reconnaissance missions
- (5) Sniffer personnel detection reconnaissance
- (6) Convoy cover.

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2. Subject: Observer Aircraft in a Combat Assault Operation Area
a. Discussion:

(1) On combat assaults of ten lift ships or more, the C&C aircraft must devote the majority of its attention to coordinating each phase of the assault. Everything the command and control aircraft does will affect the operation in one way or another. He should have to provide a minimum of attention to dodging other aircraft. On the larger lifts, it is not uncommon to have three to four observer aircraft in the area.

(2) The problem arises when each commander concerned has his own helicopter and starts orbiting near the C&C aircraft. His orbit is not necessarily behind the C&C, parallel to it, or even above it. The problem now becomes one of the C&C aircraft dodging the others in his orbit area and having to devote less attention to controlling the air assault. The insertion of troops into a remote area is a highly coordinated and intricate operation; the air mission commander on the C&C aircraft should be able to devote most of his attention to it.

(3) On large pre-planned operations an orbit area is set aside for VIP aircraft that does not interfere with C&C aircraft. Each party concerned can then accomplish his mission with minimal problem of mid-air collision.

(4) When an operation is in progress and an observer wishes to watch, he should contact the C&C aircraft and request an orbit area. He can then be given an area from which to observe, or possibly a higher altitude above the operational area.

b. Recommendation: That observer aircraft use the published orbit area and/or altitude, or contact the command and control aircraft to request an orbit area.

3. Subject: Artillery Fire Support for Airmobile Operations

a. Discussion:

(1) In conducting air assaults with various units of the 101st Airborne Division, marked differences have been observed in the employment of fire support for airmobile assault. For assaults into areas not expected to be hostile, insufficient attention is sometimes given to fire support plans to insure that fire support will be timely, adequate and accurate if needed. Where assaults are planned into hostile areas, the quantity of fire support planned and delivered is usually adequate, but the coordination, control and accuracy of this support often leaves much to be desired.

(2) Units which seem to be most successful in employing arti-

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lery support are those which use available time to work out the most precise and detailed artillery support plans possible. These plans are then verified by sending an artillery forward observer out to register all preparatory, supporting and on call fires whenever possible. This is most important, because only by actually adjusting fires can the commander be assured that they will actually fall as planned. Because of the speed and precision of air assault, and the close proximity in which supporting fires must fall to be effective, erratic fires may be disastrous to the assault force on one side, or ineffective on the other.

(3) The use of intermittent white phosphorous rounds to mark supporting fire concentrations is particularly effective, especially for the gunships which must work in close proximity to these concentrations as they cover the troopships and reconnoiter ahead of advancing ground troops.

b. Recommendations: That the following procedures be required of all units conducting airmobile operations:

(1) Careful and detailed planning of fire support, whether or not an artillery preparation is to be actually fired.

(2) Registration of all fires planned whenever possible.

(3) Use of white phosphorous marking rounds to indicate the location of supporting concentrations being fired during the execution of the trooplift.

4. Subject: Coordination of Timing During Airmobile Operations

a. Discussion:

(1) The precision of fire support and flight discipline contemplated for air assault operations require that troopships touch down within plus or minus ten seconds of the specified landing zone time. To achieve this degree of perfection and yet maintain continuous tube artillery, aerial rocket artillery, and escort gunship fire on and around the landing zone until the moment that the troops debark from the troopships, it is essential that all elements participating operate on precisely the same time track.

(2) During conduct of combat assault operations with the Division RRF it has been noted that as much as ten minutes variance in "official" time between the various battalions supported has been encountered. In cases where combat assaults are conducted one immediately following the other, the ten minute change between units may mean excessive problems in coordination of aircraft, as they may still be refueling from a previous mission, or otherwise be unable to adjust to the new time.

(3) The official time in the Republic of Vietnam, according to the USARV directive, is AFVN radio. All times for operations should be standardized with this time. Since all units are unable to receive AFVN

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radio, the division and each brigade should give subordinate units an official time hack on demand, using the AFVN time as a standard.

(4) In any case, the airmobile task force commander should be prepared to furnish an accurate time hack on demand at least an hour before the operation begins, so that all fire support and maneuver elements of the task force may be precisely coordinated. Failure to have such coordination has caused unacceptable errors in timing on airmobile operations during the reported period.

b. Recommendation:

- (1) That an official time be maintained at division, using the AFVN standard.
- (2) That all brigade and battalion headquarters be able to obtain an accurate time hack from division on demand.
- (3) That all battalion headquarters be prepared to furnish accurate time hacks to supporting and subordinate units, on demand.

C. TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION:

1. Subject: Company Intelligence Section:

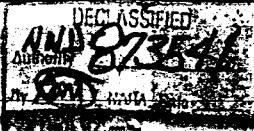
2. Discussion: In reorganizing under TOE 1-155T (Airmobile Division Assault Helicopter Company) from TOE 1-77G (Non-divisional Assault Helicopter Company) the slots for a unit intelligence officer and NCO were deleted. The requirements for intelligence activities, however, remain the same. All incoming personnel must be given a security briefing, clearances must be obtained and enemy situation maps showing current ground fire information must be maintained for the aircrews. Intelligence information from higher headquarters must be evaluated and disseminated within the unit. Flight crews must be debriefed and significant information passed to higher headquarters.

b. All the duties formerly handled by the intelligence officer and NCO must now be accomplished by the flight operations officer and the operations sergeant. This means there is one officer and one NCO to handle both operations and intelligence. In a unit where operational commitments normally run 24 hours a day, seven days a week, this places an undue burden on these personnel. Previously, the intelligence officer was also the assistant operations officer and could share the job of handling operational commitments. It is normally advisable to have an officer present in operations whenever unit aircraft are flying. This is not possible with only one officer in the section.

3. Recommendation: That the positions of intelligence officer and intelligence NCO be restored to TOE's of the helicopter companies of the airmobile division.

D. INTELLIGENCE: None

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E. LOGISTICS:

1. Subject: Signal Supply

a. Discussion: The biggest problem in communications in the past, and at present, is obtaining all kinds of supplies and repair parts. Badly needed items are wire, radio parts, batteries, polcs, generator parts, telephone parts, switchboard parts, paper tags, and many others. These items have been on requisition for weeks, and in many cases, months. Establishing and maintaining communications is becoming considerably more difficult without the necessary equipment.

b. Recommendation: That a thorough review be made of supply procedures and operations at higher headquarters to determine and resolve the problems which are preventing effective supply of badly needed signal items.

2. Subject: De-activation of KD Detachments

a. Discussion: The KD Trans and Maint detachments and two RL Signal Avionics Repair Detachments were de-activated by USARPAC GO#325. Although the detachments (603d and 613th TC and 4th and 722d Signal Avionics Detachments) were de-activated, no similar or corresponding unit was activated in their place. Consequently the personnel and equipment were not assigned to any organization. The effective date of the de-activation was 1 July 1968. To date, no instructions have been received by this battalion as to disposition of property of these units. Meanwhile, there is no effective control over the property. The unit cannot requisition property because their UIC was de-activated and returned to Department of the Army along with the unit designation. There is a continuing problem on how and where to report the detachment's equipment on the 2406 reports for maintenance. Battalion Supply personnel do not have the authority to control the property of these detachments nor can they properly submit requisitions for them using their former UIC because it no longer exists officially.

b. Recommendation: That Division G4 query USARV Headquarters to determine the status of these detachments. Further recommend that if disposition or re-activation is not soon forthcoming, that the property of the detachments be assigned to the company they formerly supported to ensure more positive control and maintenance.

3. Subject: Initial Requisition of TOE Equipment.

a. Discussion: On 27 July 1968, requisitions were submitted for TOE equipment for D Company, 101st Aviation Battalion. Command controlled items were submitted as well as requisitions for other TOE items. Although the Division project code for new requisitions "RVA" was not initially applied to these requisitions, it was applied by the DSO before the requisitions were hand carried to the DSO (Rear). These requisitions were received, and some processed by DSO (Rear). The majority were cancelled with no explanation.

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After several weeks of attempting to discover why they were cancelled, a representative of the Battalion Supply Office went to the rear and found that the 2765-1's which had been submitted had the document identifier "AOA" on them. A new requirement arose in the meantime that all requisitions referred to depot have the document identifier "AOE". The requisitions were returned. After that was straightened out, several additional weeks went by with no advice on status. So, on 16 September, AF-1's were submitted and status received by 30 September indicating that certain 2765-1's had been referred to the 506th Field Depot. Then by October, no command controlled equipment had been issued to D Company on the initial requisitions, more AF-1 cards were submitted on 22 October. To date, the status of at least 50% of the original requisitions is in doubt, only a few of the many line items have been filled, and D Company personnel live and perform their mission on borrowed and cast-off equipment. D Company's command controlled items have appeared on the last three Battalion FLR Reports. The same situation is true of the requisitions submitted for equipment (under RVA code) in August because of the conversion to airmobile. To date, 19 line items have been filled for 195 requisitions.

b. Recommendation: That the Division G4, in conjunction with DSO, initiate action to determine where the equipment is located that is authorized for D Company, 101st Aviation Battalion. Further, recommend that Division G4 require support activities that hold this battalion's requisitions to submit up to date status on each one.

4. Subject: Deficiencies in Aircraft Maintenance Organization Personnel, Equipment, and Facilities

a. Discussion: A multitude of problems continue to plague aircraft maintenance in the 101st Aviation Battalion.

(1) General Orders activating KE maintenance detachments for A, B, and C Companies have not been received to date. Consequently initial TOE Equipment requisitions, particularly for tool kits, cannot be processed and filled. This situation has been going on for four months.

(2) The KE detachment for Company D arrived without officers, non-commissioned officers, or qualified supervisors. A sufficient number of qualified maintenance officers are not available to adequately supervise aircraft maintenance in the companies. The same is true of experienced intermediate NCO supervisors. Technical supply personnel are inexperienced.

(3) Conditions under which maintenance must be performed are unsatisfactory. There is no hardstand for maintenance. Maintenance shelters are inadequate or nonexistant. Lighting for night maintenance is inadequate.

(4) Requisition fill times are unsatisfactory, making parts stockage levels inadequate, and causing abuse of EDF requisition procedures. Back-up direct support maintenance sources require excessive time for completion of maintenance tasks.

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b. Recommendation: That immediate action be taken by higher headquarters to accomplish the following:

- (1) Obtain general orders activating KE detachments
- (2) Obtain critically needed KE detachment equipment whether or not activation orders are forthcoming.
- (3) Assign experienced personnel to battalion:

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>MOS</u>
(a) Aircraft Maintenance Officers	Cpt	64823
(b) Aircraft Maintenance Supervisor	E-6	67N40
(c) Senior Helicopter Repairman	E-5	67N20
(d) Aircraft Repair Parts Specialist	E-5	76T20

(4) Obtain and construct aircraft maintenance shelters and field maintenance light sets on the basis of three per company.

- (5) Construct hardstand in maintenance areas.
- (6) Provide two 30KW or larger generators for each aviation company.
- (7) Review supply procedures and implement necessary steps to improve repair parts supply.

Paul B. Snyder
PAUL B. SNYDER
LTC, ARTY
Commanding

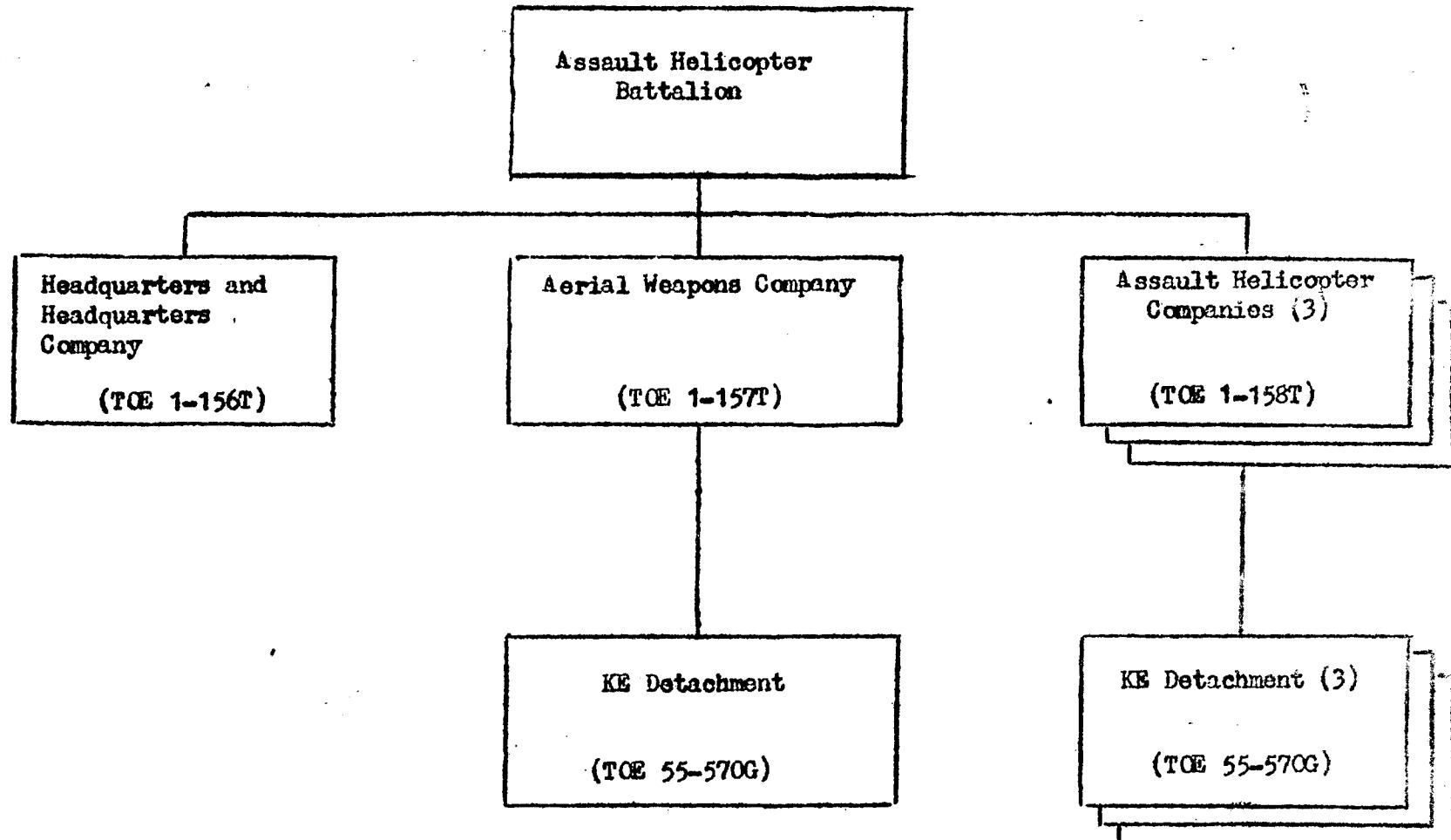
Incl

- 1-Organization Chart
- 2-Radio and Wire Communications Diagrams
- 3-After Action Report-Somerset Plain
- 4-Combat SOP
- 5-Area of Operations Map

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ASSAULT HELICOPTER BATTALION, AIRMOBILE DIVISION (TOE 1-155T)

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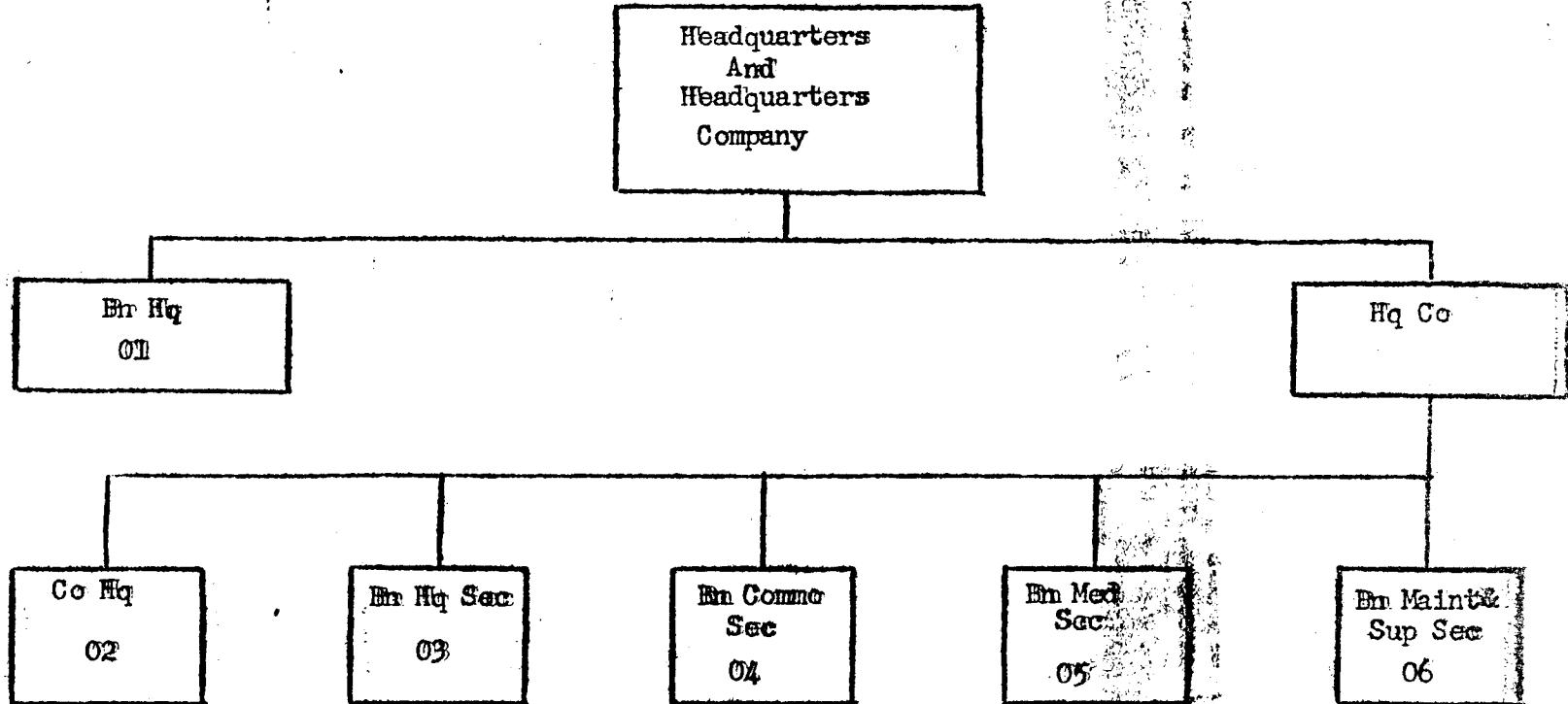


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HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY, ASSAULT HELICOPTER BATTALION, AIRMObILE DIVISION (TOE I-I56T)

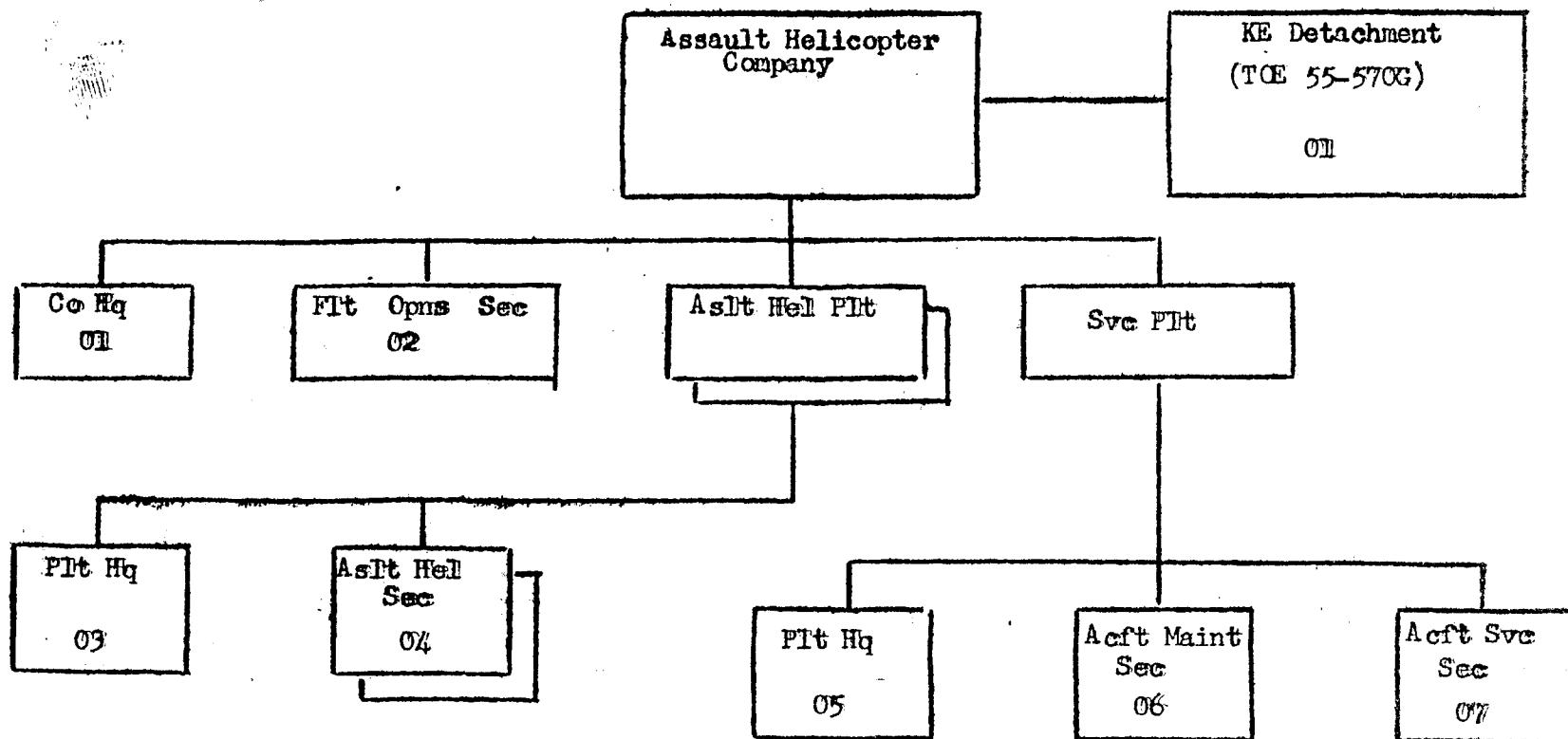
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ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANIES (3), ASSAULT HELICOPTER BATTALION, AIRMOBILE DIVISION (TOE 1-156T)



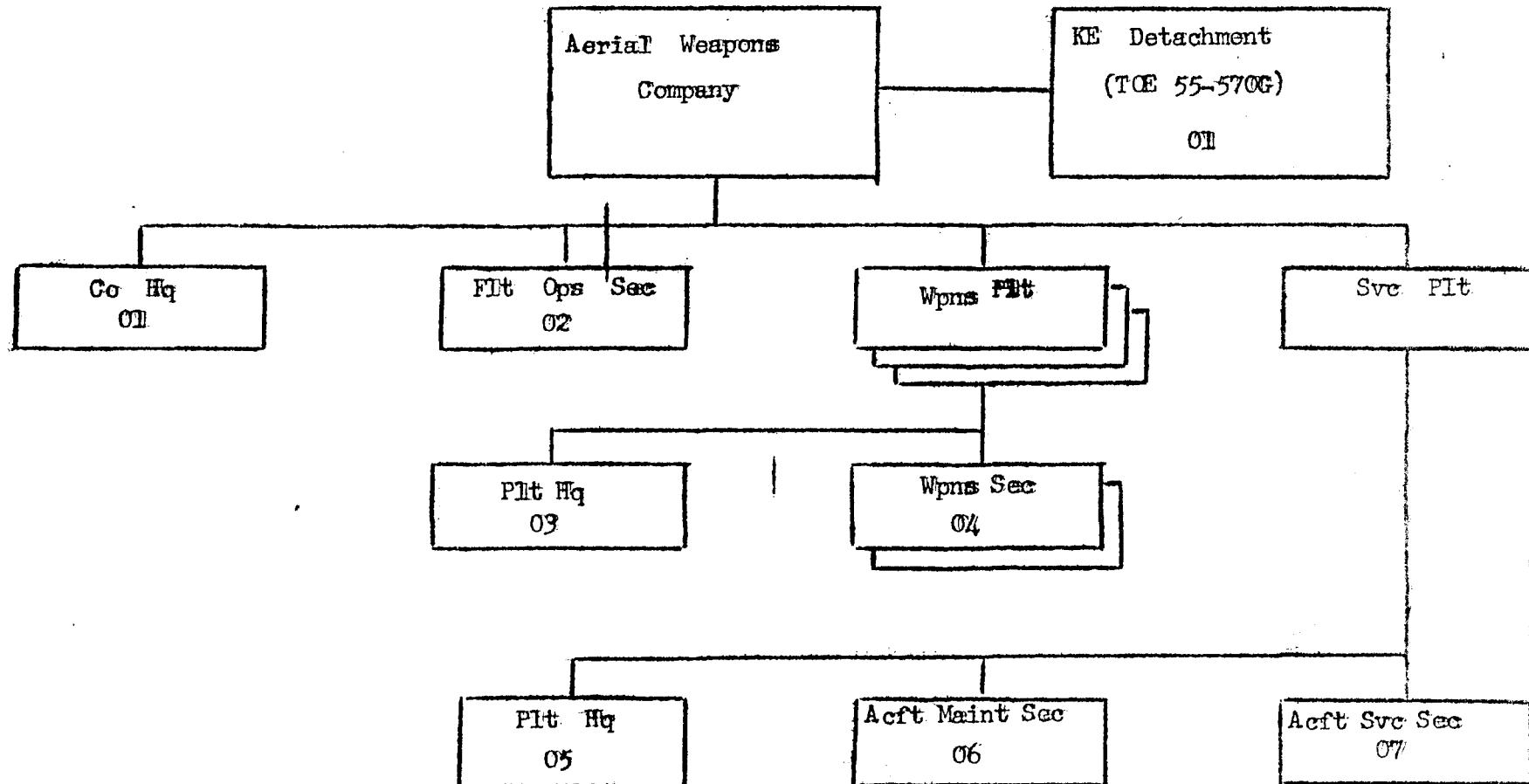
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AERIAL WEAPONS COMPANY, ASSAULT HELICOPTER BATTALION, AIRMOBILE DIVISION (TOE D-157T)



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RADIO AND WIRE
COMMUNICATIONS
DIAGRAMS

Diagram A. Battalion outgoing circuit diagram

Diagram B. Battalion Operations hot line circuit diagram

Diagram C. Alpha Company outgoing circuit diagram

Diagram D. Bravo Company outgoing circuit diagram

Diagram E. Delta Company outgoing circuit diagram

Diagram F. Battalion Operations FM radio net

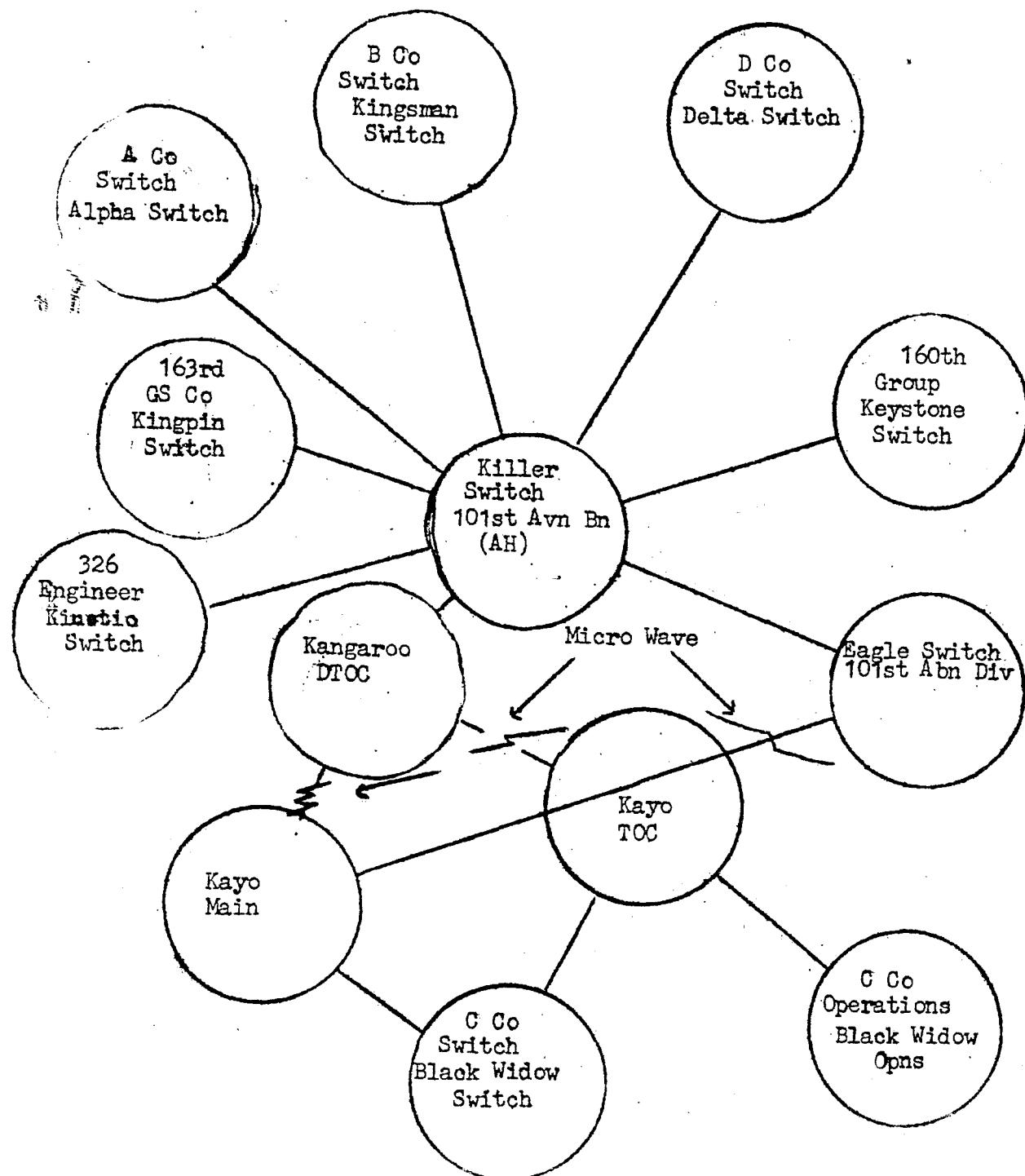
Diagram G. Battalion UHF flight following net

Diagram H. Battalion Operations secure radio net

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DIAGRAM A



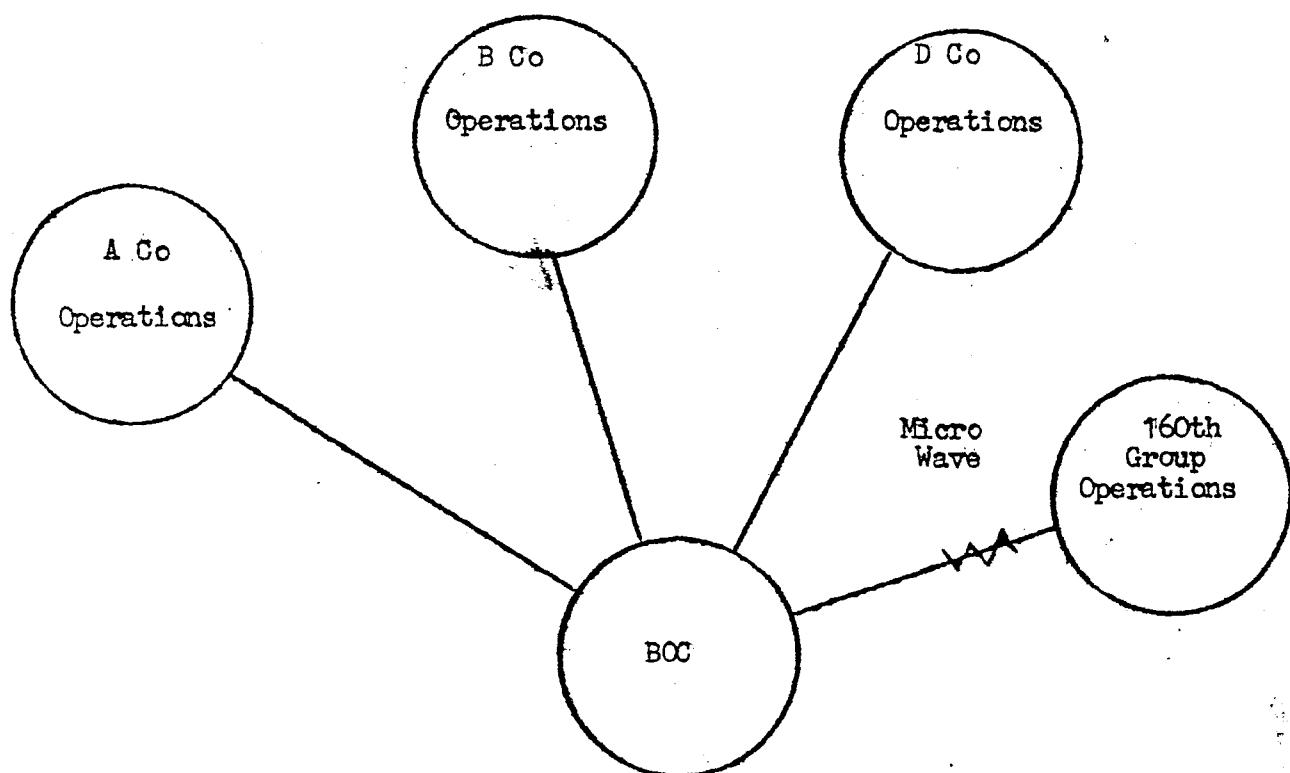
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DIAGRAM B



101st Aviation Battalion BOC

Hot Lines

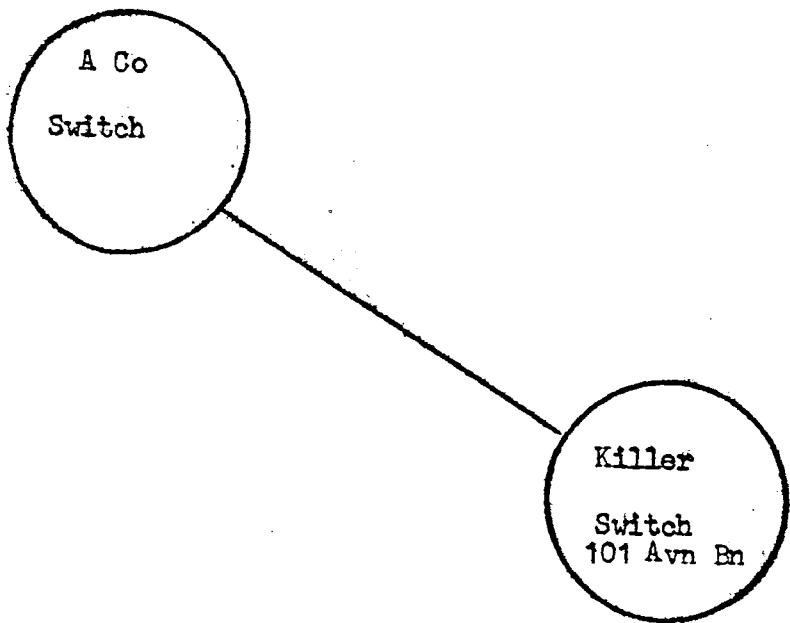
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DIAGRAM C



A Co

Outgoing Circuit

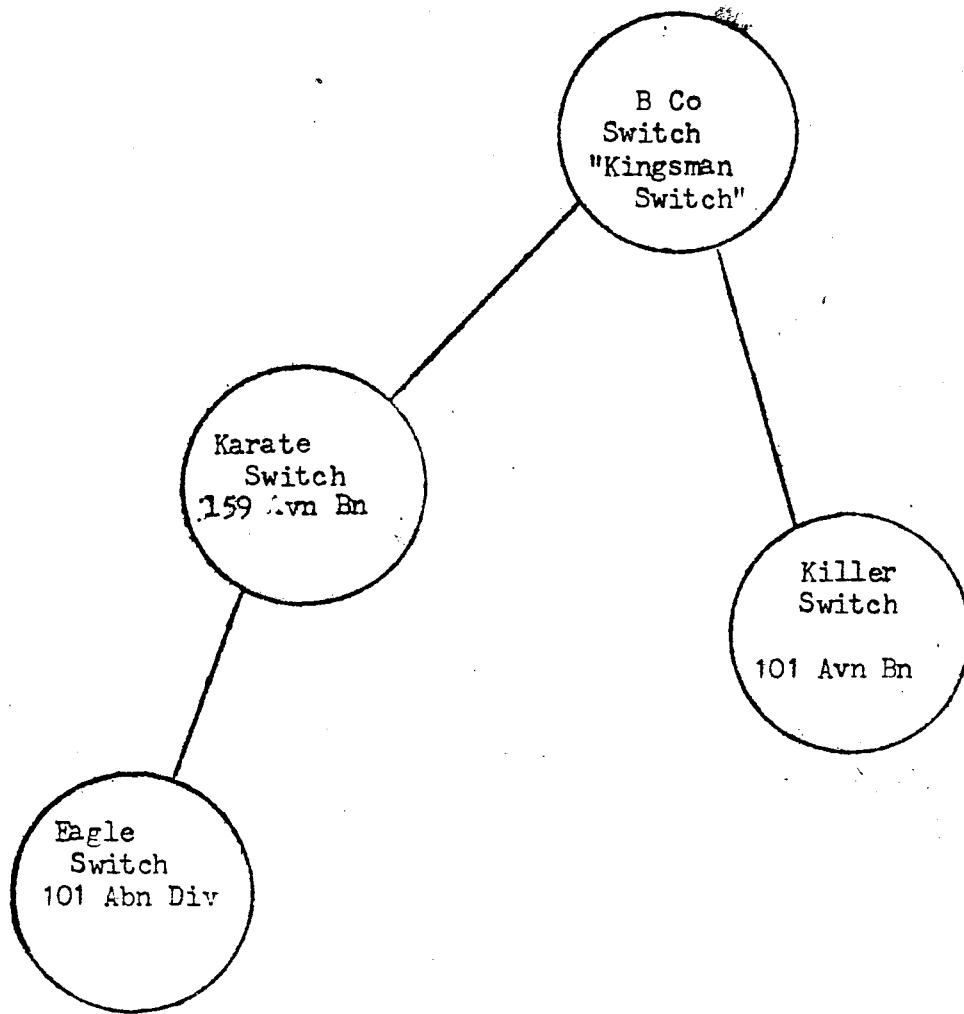
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DIAGRAM D



B Co

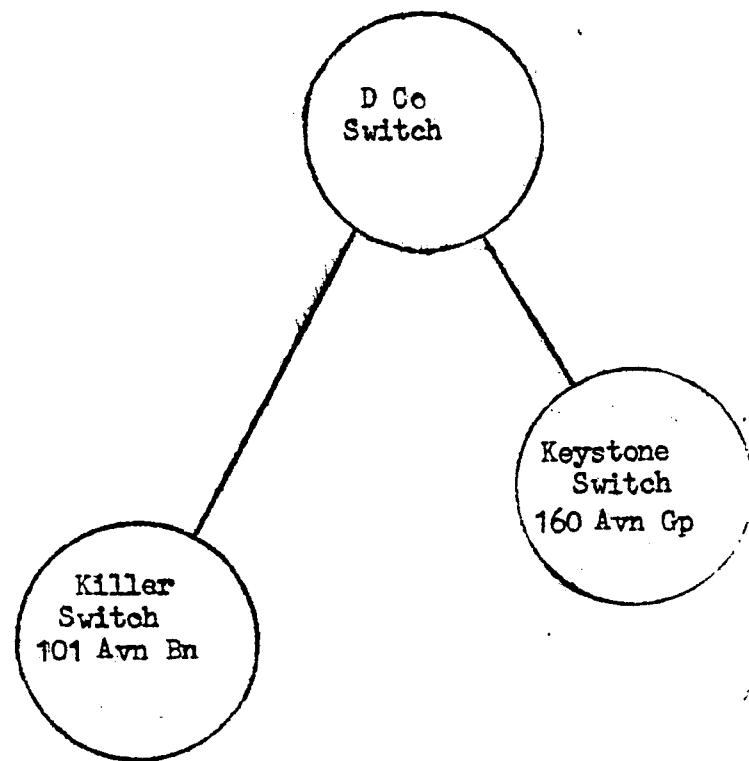
Outgoing Circuits

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DIAGRAM E



D Co
Outgoing Circuits

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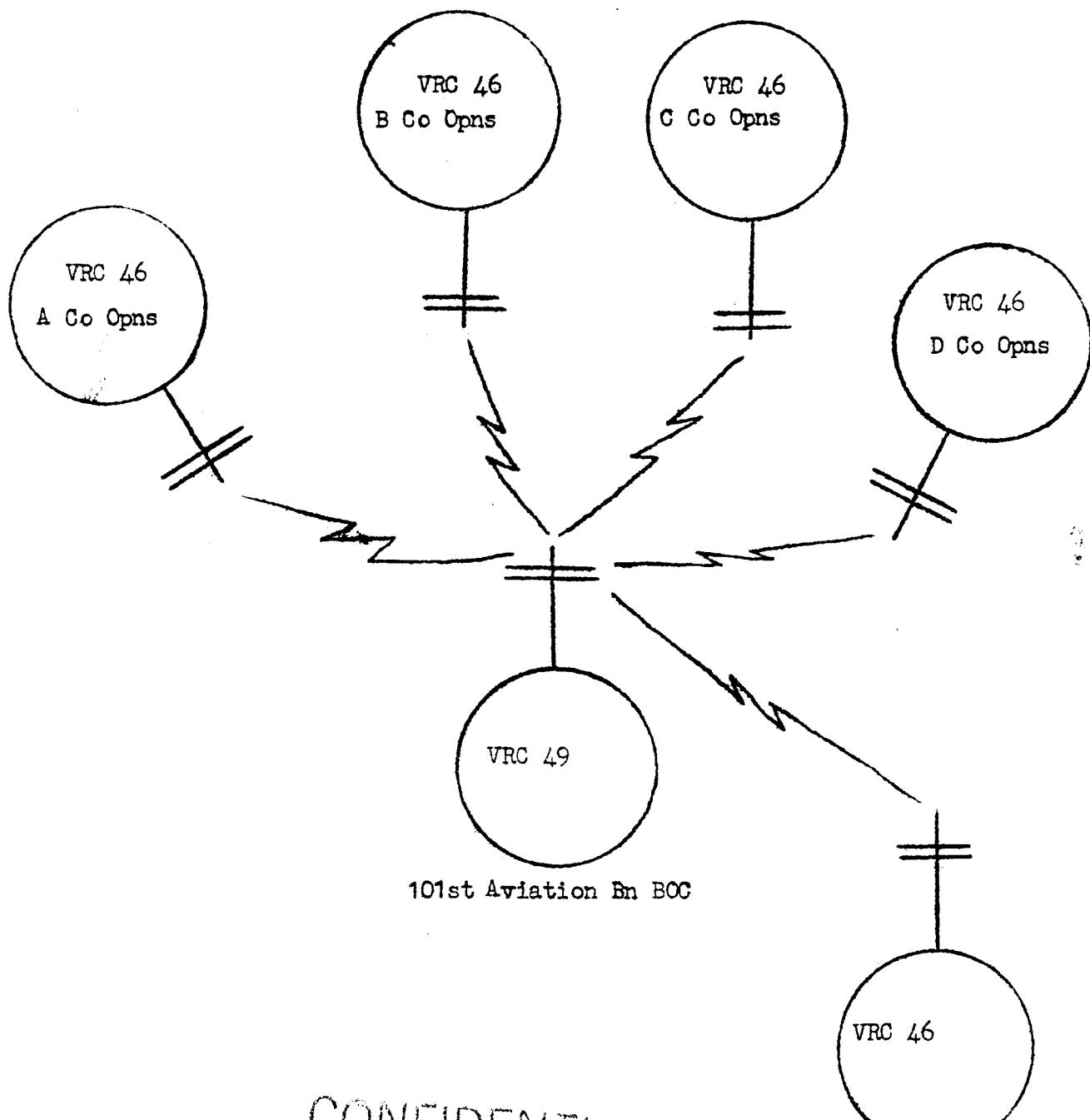
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DIAGRAM F

Operations Net



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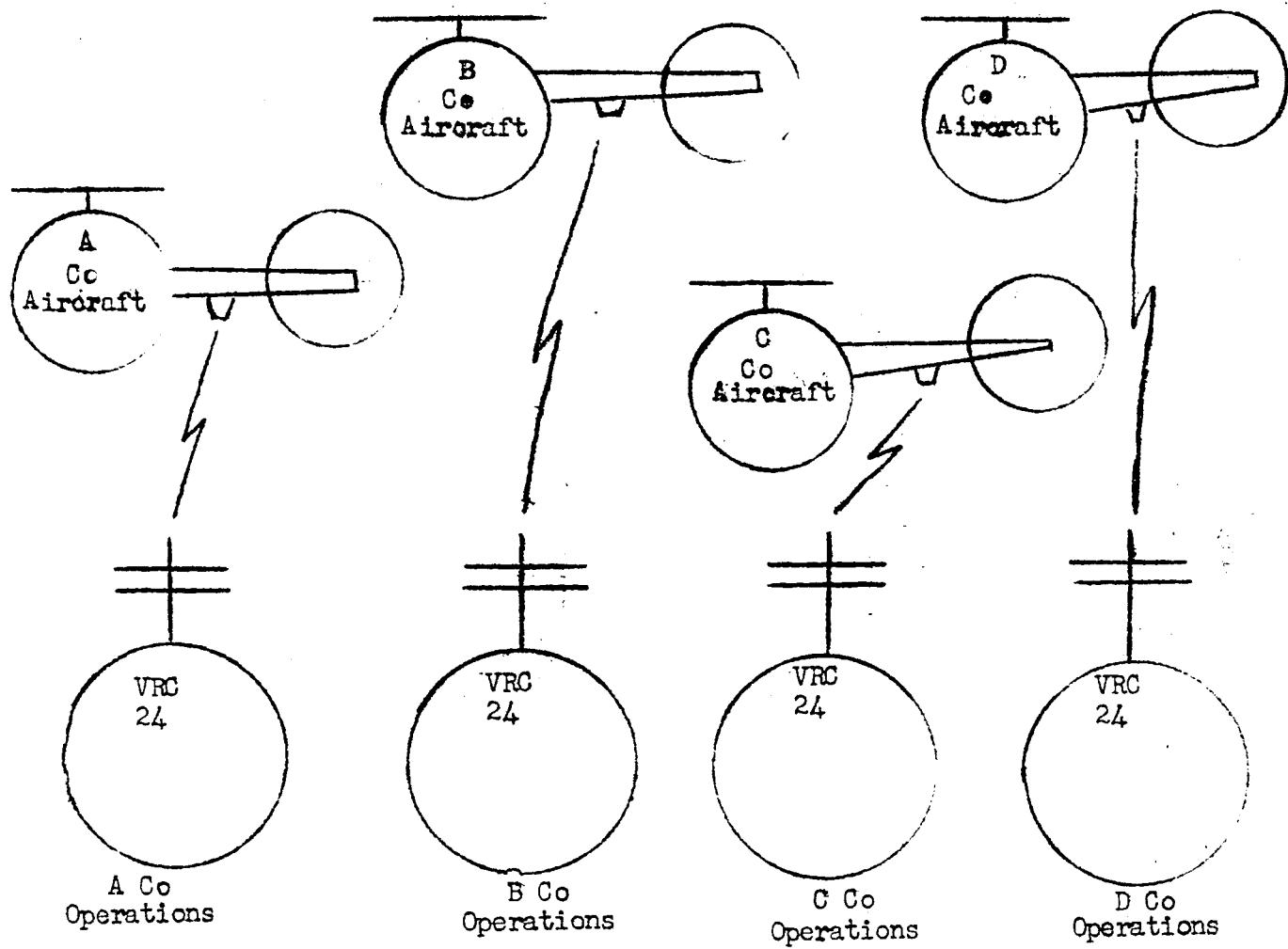
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DIAGRAM G

Flight Following Net



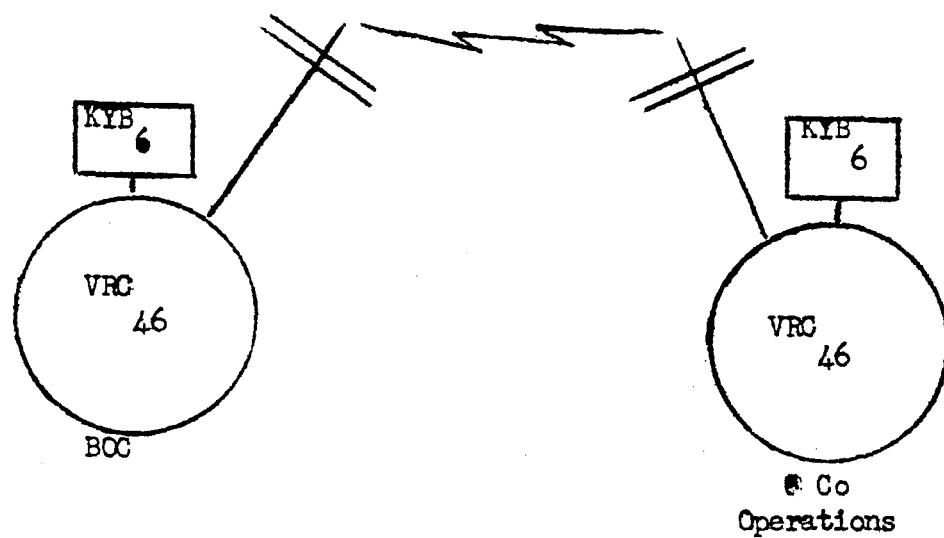
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DIAGRAM H
Secure Net



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