AUG-OCT 1967

CONFIDENTIAL

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

IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (7 Mar 58) FOR OT RD-674137 13 March 1968

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

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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1st Battalion, 82d Artillery
269th Combat Aviation Battalion
USAF Air-Ground Operations School

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AVHGC-DST (1 Nov 67) 4th Ind (C)
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 24 JAN 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1967 from Headquarters, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion (DU7A) as indorsed.

2. (C) Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Y" cords for C & C ship, page 68, paragraph B10; and page 96, paragraph G15: Nonconcur. The addition of mike cords to the crew member C-1611 interphone boxes has two undesirable effects. The first effect is that it tends to overload the system causing a loss in volume. The second effect occurs when a user keys the microphone, thereby keying all microphones on that cord. This induces additional noise into the system and can block the conversation if one mike is being struck by an airstream. Command Consoles, with four interphone positions for use of the passengers, are being provided aviation battalions and assault helicopter companies in RVN. Each battalion is authorized two and each assault helicopter company is authorized one. A large percentage of these consoles are on hand and additional consoles have been requested to completely equip all USARV Aviation elements consistent with current authorizations.

b. Reference item concerning operations in vicinity of Tan Son Nhut, page 120, paragraph L1: Concur. The flight restrictions in the Tan Son Nhut control zone have been published in letter: HQ, USARV, AVHAV-O, Subject: Letter of Transmittal, dated 30 October 1967.

c. Reference item concerning loss of transmission oil pressure, page 120, paragraph L2: Concur. This item will be given widest dissemination in the USARV Weekly Aviation Safety Summary.

d. Reference item concerning helmet visors, page 121, paragraph L3: Concur. Wearing of the clear helmet visors down is SOP in Vietnam. This item will be included in the USARV Weekly Aviation Safety Summary.

3. (U) A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

D. E. TUMAN
Major, AGC
144 Asst Adjutant General

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals
Declassified after 12 years
DOD DIR 5200.10 Applies

cf: HQ, 269th CAB
HQ, 1st Avn Bde

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1-177

15D

GPOP-DT(1 Nov 67) (U) 5th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967 from HQ, 269th Avn Bn (UIC: WDU7AA) (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 29 FEB 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

(U) This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C L Shedd Jr MAJ AGC
for K. F. OSBOURN
MAJ, AGC
Asst AG

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SECTION I—SIGNIFICANT UNIT ACTIVITIES

A. (C) Significant Events

1 (C) The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, proven the most aggressive and effective Combat Aviation Battalion in the Republic of Vietnam, has continued its incessant offensive operations against enemy forces in the III Corps Tactical Zone. Primarily in support of the three Brigades of the 25th Infantry Division, the 269th has conducted twenty-four airmobile operations during the ninety-day period of this report.[1] Against enemy forces the 269th has statistically pitted its helicopter companies in Battalion assaults once every eighty-nine hours during the entire span of the three month time frame. Upon completion of Battalion operations, subordinate units were generally released to continue airmobile operations at smaller unit level.[2] This recurrent operational cycle has afforded this Battalion ample opportunity to establish itself indubitably as the Combat Aviation Battalion conducting the most frequent and most successful airmobile operations in the combat theater today. Composed of three assault helicopter companies, one assault support helicopter company, and one reconnaissance airplane company, the 269th has sufficient resources to complete nearly any mission assigned to a combat aviation unit.

[1] Battalion operation: Combat assault comprised of a minimum of 2 assault helicopter companies, TAC Air, and Artillery support. The 269th has conducted large scale operations ranging from 2 to 6 assault helicopter companies, frequently requiring non-organic company and battalion attachments to come under the operational control of this headquarters.

[2] During the time frame of this report, the subordinate assault helicopter companies of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion flew a total of 192 company size combat assault missions in addition to the Battalion controlled operations.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

2.(C) Since the termination date of the last quarterly report, no changes have been made in the location of units. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters remains at CU CHI, as does the 116th Assault Helicopter Company. The 187th Assault Helicopter Company and the 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company, the Battalion's O-1 unit, are co-located at TAY NINH. The 188th Assault Helicopter Company, on 1 August temporarily located at PHU HIEP, Republic of Vietnam, supporting two Republic of Korea Divisions, has returned to its home of origin, DAU TIENG. The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company remains at BIEN HOA, pending completion of construction of CH-47 facilities at CU CHI.

3.(C) The geographical location of the assault helicopter companies has permitted a nearly permanent mission assignment of each company to a specific Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division. Whenever possible, it has been the Battalion's policy to assign the 116th Assault Helicopter Company missions supporting the 2d Brigade, the 187th missions supporting the 1st Brigade, and the 188th missions supporting the 3d Brigade. The proximity of the base camp locations of the assault helicopter companies to the supported infantry units' Areas of Operations is the least of the benefits derived from such an association. Of greater importance is the rapport established between Assault Helicopter Company Commanders and the supported Infantry Battalion Commanders. The policy establishes a mutual confidence between aviation commanders and the units and ground commanders and units, a confidence which is of utmost importance in maintaining operational stability during critical combat situations.

4.(C) The 188th Assault Helicopter Company, committed at PHU HIEP to

the support of the 9th Republic of Korea "White Horse" Division and the Capital Republic of Korea "Tiger" Division from 7 July 1967 through 21 August 1967, returned to its home base at DAU TIENG on 24 August 1967. During its assignment at PHU HIEP the 188th Assault Helicopter Company was under the operational control of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion, 17th Combat Aviation Group. From 1 August through 24 August the 188th had compiled a cumulative total of 6,054 sorties, logging a total of 1,780 flying hours in support of the Republic of Korea forces. 8,571 passengers were carried, and 1,013 tons of cargo were moved. Since the unit's return to III Corps Tactical Zone, its mission has been the same as the mission of the other assault helicopter companies of the Battalion, that of supporting the 25th Infantry Division's airmobile operations.

5.(C)The 116th and 187th Assault Helicopter Companies remained the primary airmobile support for the 25th Infantry Division. The 187th on many occasions supported elements of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, on one occasion as part of a larger Battalion controlled effort. All airmobile companies within the Battalion have conducted operations in conjunction with the 1st and 9th Infantry Divisions, ARVN forces, and personnel from Civilian Irregular Defense Groups. The 116th Assault Helicopter Company took part in joint exercises with the Australian Forces located in the BA RIA-VUNG TAU area of III Corps.

6.(C) The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company, newly arrived in country at the start of this reporting period, became fully operational on 15 September 1967. Lack of proper CH-47 parking and maintenance facilities at CU CHI, coupled with a general unpreparedness for a physical relocation of the 242d, has to date precluded the unit's movement from

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

BIEN HOA. Construction of revetments, preparation of parking and maintenance areas, and troop billeting arrangements are well astride the programmed progress schedule, however, and immediately upon the projects' completions the CH-47 unit will close on its new station. Presently, in support of the 25th Infantry Division, the CH-47 sorties are flown from CU CHI base camp to forward field sites. This requires daily flight time to be logged from BIEN HOA to CU CHI to BIEN HOA, to and from the unit's primary staging area. The company's physical movement to CU CHI will not only be a considerable convenience, but will also serve as a cumulative flight time controlling factor. During the 30 days following the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company's becoming operational, the unit had flown 1,602 hours for an average of 53 hours per day on the 16 organic aircraft. During the month of September, the other assault support helicopter companies assigned to the 12th Combat Aviation Group had flown the following hours and averages:

UNIT	HOURS	DAILY AVERAGE
205th	1120	36
213th	1154	37
200th	929	30
147th	988	32

The 242d, in its initial 30 days of operation, exceeded the highest time flown by any other assault support helicopter company in 12th Combat Aviation Group by nearly 500 hours. During the last sixteen days of October the average hours flown by the 242d has continued to rise. On a daily basis the 242d has committed an average of more than six CH-47

per day. Considering that this unit arrived in country less than two months ago, and all its ASL and PLL were not at 100% fill on arrival, the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company's performance has truly been outstanding.

7.(C)The 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company, having arrived in country during the previous quarter, has had its aircraft and crew fully operational for some time. Of primary concern to the unit was the construction of aircraft revetments. The 21st completed construction of aircraft revetments at TAY NINH Base Camp on 18 August 1967. Twenty-two aircraft parking spaces and four aircraft maintenance areas have been revetted. Six parking spaces and all maintenance areas have been improved by adding roofs over the center portion of the revetments, extending over the engine and wings of the parked aircraft. This provides protection from general weather conditions, thereby enhancing maintenance activities. Additional construction recently completed at the flight line has been an avionics repair shop, four platoon headquarters buildings, a technical supply office, and flight operations and administration building. Construction in the 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company contonement area continues, with a supply building, orderly room, and four barracks completed. A mess hall has been rehabilitated and four additional barracks are under construction.

8.(C)During the quarter of concern, 1 August through 31 October, the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion has again demonstrated, in directly supporting infantry ground forces fighting in one of the most hotly contested areas of Vietnam, that as a Combat Aviation Battalion, it

stands second to no other unit in the execution of its mission. The resolve of each individual within the Battalion is attested to by the statistical summation of the Battalion's achievements.

9.(C) From 1 August through 31 October 1967, the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion flew 132,553 sorties, logging a total of 37,261 accumulated flying hours. 146,984 passengers were carried and 15,161 tons of cargo were moved in support of ground forces. 216 Viet Cong were killed during the period by Army Aircraft of this Battalion. The 269th evacuated a total of 315 medical casualties.

10.(C) During the period the Battalion itself suffered 3 KIA and 59 WIA. 178 aircraft received combat damage from hits by enemy ground fire. Most of the hostile fire taken was so taken during a total of 90 days of combat assault missions in support of ground forces.

11.(C) The figures shown are continual evidence that the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion supports some of the most aggressive action in the war today. A further statistical account follows for your interest and perusal:

B. (U) Command.

1.(U) The primary mission of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters is to provide command, control, staff planning, and administrative supervision for its assigned aviation units. Subordinate assault helicopter companies have as their primary mission the airlifting of combat troops in airmobile operations, while the extension of surveillance and target acquisition capabilities of ground units is the purpose of the reconnaissance airplane company. The Battalion's assault support helicopter company provides a logistical and tactical airlift capability for movement of troops and supplies.

2.(U) Organization.

a. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion is composed of a Headquarters and Headquarters Company, three assault helicopter companies, one reconnaissance airplane company, and one assault support helicopter company (see Inclosure 1).

3.(U) Personalities.

a. Commander. During the entire period covered by this report the Battalion Commander has been Lieutenant Colonel JAMES H MERRYMAN, 087566, Artillery.

b. Staff. At the close of the reporting period the principal staff officers were:

(1) Executive Officer: Lieutenant Colonel IRWIN K COCKETT, 01930924, Infantry.

(2) S-1: Major STEPHEN J FERSCH, 0330196C, Infantry.

(3) S-2: Captain LYNDON E HOLLOMAN, 05309136, Signal Corps.

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COMMAND

(4) S-3: Major JOHN F ZUGSCHWERT, 094972, Artillery.

(5) S-4: Major GEORGE W MOSES, 073576, Infantry.

c. Unit Commanders. At the close of the reporting period the unit commanders of subordinate units were:

(1) Headquarters Company: Captain ERNEST D SPRINKEL, 04031017, Armor.

(2) 116th Assault Helicopter Company: Major CHARLES D FRANKLIN, 077026, Artillery.

(3) 187th Assault Helicopter Company: Major WILLIAM F BAUMAN, 068430, Infantry.

(4) 188th Assault Helicopter Company: Lieutenant Colonel JOHN H MCWHORTER, JR, OF106186, Infantry.

(5) 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company: Major ERNEST C STRUM, 04016954, Corps of Engineers.

(6) 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company: Lieutenant Colonel PAUL L STANSEL, 01931035, Armor.

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C. (U) Personnel and Administration:

1.(U) Maintenance of unit strength:

a. Battalion strength as of 31 October 1967: (See Inclosure 3).

b. Summary of projected gains and losses for the next 90 days: (See Inclosure 4).

2.(U) Personnel reports: Personnel reports are submitted in accordance with 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Regulation 335-1.

3.(U) Replacements: Replacements have been requisitioned in accordance with USARV Regulation 614-185 for officer personnel (5 months prior to DEROS for non-aviators and 11 months prior to DEROS for aviators); and USARV Regulation 614-202 for enlisted personnel (8 months prior to DEROS for senior enlisted personnel and 6 months prior to DEROS for grades E-1 through E-6 personnel). Replacements are requisitioned on the basis of authorized strength only.

4.(U) Personnel management:

a. Reclassification: Administrative MOS reclassification during the quarter totalled 138.

b. Assignments: Personnel assigned during the quarter were as follows:

OFFICERS	WARRANT OFFICERS	ENLISTED
29	40	221

c. Promotions: Promotions during the quarter were as follows:

OFFICERS

LTC	MAJ	CPT	1LT	2LT	CWO
2	2	2	1	0	1

ENLISTED

E-9	E-8	E-7	E-6	E-5	E-4
0	0	2	18	119	165

d. Retirement/reversion to retired status: 2.

e. Rotation to CONUS during the quarter:

OFFICERS	WARRANT OFFICERS	ENLISTED
12	5	131

f. Leaves during the quarter:

	OFFICERS	WARRANT OFFICERS	ENLISTED
Emergency	1	1	16
Compassionate	0	0	4
Special	0	0	17
Ordinary	1	4	18

5. (U) R & R for the quarter:

a. Forecasted/requested: 409.

b. Received: 312.

6. (U) Reenlistment program:

a. There were 6 reenlistments during the quarter.

b. The reenlistment program is published in the Battalion paper, "BLACK BARON RELEASE."

7. (U) Casualties during the quarter:

a. Return to duty:

OFFICERS	WARRANT OFFICERS	ENLISTED
5	14	23

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b. Evacuated from combat zone:

OFFICERS	WARRANT OFFICERS	ENLISTED
1	1	4

c. Killed in Action:

OFFICERS	WARRANT OFFICERS	ENLISTED
3	1	2

8.(U)Prisoners of War. Prisoners of war are turned over to the G2, 25th Infantry Division for safeguarding, processing and evacuation.

9.(U)Civilian personnel. Civilian personnel are hired from the abundant resources of indigenous personnel. The local nationals are hired through two distinct categories, permanent hire and direct daily hire.

a. Permanent hires. Each unit, after submitting requisitions through this Headquarters to 12th Combat Aviation Group, is authorized to employ local nationals on a permanent basis. These people are employed in numerous positions to include kitchen police, carpenters, handyman, exterminators, and secretaries.

b. Permanent hires are employed as follows:

UNIT	Number of Permanent Hires Employed
HHC, 269th Cbt Avn Bn	36
21st Recon Apl Co	8
116th Aslt Hel Co	20
187th Aslt Hel Co	18
188th Aslt Hel Co	9
242d Aslt Spt Hel Co	0
TOTAL	91

c. Direct daily hires. Direct daily hires are employed on a daily, as required, basis. They are used primarily for unskilled labor such as filling sandbags, general police, etc. Currently all units employ daily hires to aid in constructing aircraft revetments. Authorization to hire daily hires is obtained from 12th Combat Aviation Group Headquarters. Funds are allocated on a quantity basis to the Battalion. Each unit employed an average of 28 direct hires each working day during the 3d quarter, CY 1967. The wages paid vary from $VN 70 to $VN 85 per 8-hour work day. Local agreement requires 1 Vietnamese supervisor to be employed for each 20 Vietnamese laborers employed. In addition, it is necessary to have 1 US Army individual to supervise each group employed.

10. (U) Morale and personnel services.

a. Character Guidance. The Character Guidance Program is supervised by the Battalion Chaplain. Classes are held for the EM in those companies requesting them. Those who cannot attend are provided a written briefing sheet on each month's topic. This sheet is initialled and returned to indicate that it has been read. While this is not ideal, it allows the widest possible coverage when men cannot be released from essential duties to attend classes.

b. Religious services. Religious services of the three major faiths are available to all personnel within the command. There are also denominational services provided for some personnel.

(1) Catholic Chaplains from adjacent units provide services for our Catholic personnel in all units. Catholics in HHC attend Confessions and Mass in the 2d Brigade Chapel at 0830 or 1030 hours on Sundays.

Those in the 187th Assault Helicopter Company and the 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company may attend at 1400 hours on Sundays in the Memorial Chapel at TAY NINH. Mass is held at 1600 hours on Sundays in the Memorial Chapel at DAU TIENG and can be attended by men from the 188th Assault Helicopter Company. Personnel of the 116th Assault Helicopter Company attend Mass in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel on Sundays at 1030 hours. Several Masses are available to Catholics of the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company at BIEN HOA.

(2) Jewish personnel may attend services in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel at CU CHI on Fridays at 1900 hours and Saturdays at 0900 hours. Provisions are made to allow Jewish personnel to attend services for High Holy Days in SAIGON on TDY at no expense to the government.

(3) The Battalion Chaplain conducts Protestant services for the units as follows:

(a) 188th Aslt Hel Co: 1930 hours on Saturdays in the company mess hall.

(b) 187th Aslt Hel Co and 21st Recon Apl Co: 0830 hours on Sundays in the 187th Briefing Room.

(c) HHC, 269th Cbt Avn Bn: 1100 hours on Sundays in the Battalion Conference Room.

(d) Protestant personnel of the 116th Assault Helicopter Company attend services in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel at 0830 hours on Sundays. Protestants of the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company attend services in the mess hall of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion in BIEN HOA.

(4) The denominational services available are:

(a) Episcopal Holy Communion: 1130 hours on Sundays in the 25th Division Memorial Chapel.

(b) Lutheran Worship: 1300 hours on Sundays in 25th Support Command Chapel at CU CHI.

(c) Church of the Latter Day Saints: 0930 and 1030 hours on Sundays in the 116th Assault Helicopter Company Officers Club. Latter Day Saints services are also available in TAY NINH at 1800 hours on Sundays, and at DAU TIENG at 1400 and 1430 hours on Sundays in the Chapel.

c. Postal service. Postal service is provided by the 25th Infantry Division APO. Mail is delivered twice daily.

d. Special Services. An abundance of Special Services equipment is available to all the companies. Due to the 24 hours per day operations conducted by these units, a regularly programmed sports schedule is impossible. However, as much recreational time as possible is devoted to sports and crafts. In addition, movies are shown nightly to all companies.

11.(U) Discipline, Law, and Order.

a. There have been 8 Special Courts Martial during the 3d quarter CY 1967.

b. There have been no cases referred to General Court Martial.

c. There have been no Summary Courts Martial.

d. There have been two cases of confinement, both of which have been suspended.

12.(U) Headquarters management.

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PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

a. The Battalion maintains a daily courier, utilizing a UH-1D helicopter. This helicopter's normal schedule is 0800 to 1710 hours. Its route of flight includes two stops daily at 12th Combat Aviation Group Headquarters and at each of the subordinate companies, one before noon and one after noon.

b. Publications. A continual review of publications necessary but not on hand is being made. All requisitions more than 6 months old are being discarded and new ones are being drawn up.

c. Reproduction activities. Each unit has its own manually operated mimeograph machine which is constantly being used for numerous jobs. No backup is provided in the event of a breakdown. Each unit should have available a standby machine in order to preclude the halting of operations due to a breakdown.

13(U)Miscellaneous.

a. Safety program. The effectiveness of the unit's safety program is evidenced by the paucity of vehicle accidents.

b. General eduaation development. Facilities within the 25th Infantry Division for education development are adequate. (However, in the outlying subordinate units it is scarce).

c. Exchange facilities. Adequate exchange facilities are available to all units within the command. All exchanges are constantly improving.

d. Clubs and messes. At present all organic organizations have their own messing facilities. All companies have EM/NCO Clubs and two companies have Officers Clubs and two others have requests in at present

to establish Officers Clubs. The remaining two companies are awaiting moves to permanent locations prior to establishing their Officers Clubs.

14.(U)Command Information. The Command Information program of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion is extremely effective. Dissemination of Command Information material is accomplished largely through the Message Center facilities available. Material received from higher headquarters is broken down proportionately into unit distribution. Pertinent material from higher headquarters is extracted from the fact sheets and written in a journalistic style for incorporation into the Battalion newspaper, BLACK BARON RELEASE. At unit level, the Command Information topics are given in several ways: through formation briefings, bulletin board postings, and through the unit and Battalion newspapers. Under the tactical situation here in Vietnam, it has been difficult to conduct regular classes on Command Information. The most effective system is the one presently employed.

15.(U)Public Information. The Public Information program is oriented towards giving maximum coverage to the Battalion and the individual soldier. Daily aviation summaries are submitted by the units assigned. The summaries are combined and phoned into the USARV IO. The USARV IO in turn publishes a daily news report that is distributed to several large newspaper syndicates.

a. The summary often incorporates stories on individual feats as well as unit accomplishments. The results thus far have proven effective with considerable coverage being given to the BLACK BARONS.

b. There are several papers published throughout the chain

of command. Stories of a feature type and/or immediate news release stories are written to include names of units and individuals, and are forwarded through channels.

c. In the past it has been found that it is difficult to get stories published in higher echelon papers other than Group and Division level. Some stories have been published in magazines or higher level papers, but not enough to satisfy the stringent requirements self-imposed upon the Information Office.

d. A new system of forwarding copy to two and three separate sources in order to get maximum coverage is being initiated. All sources have proper authority to have stories "Cleared for Release." In addition, a local Battalion newspaper is published on a bi-monthly basis. The paper includes local items of interest, current news releases, Command Information, and a Chaplain's section for the purpose of Character Guidance.

16.(U)Home Town News Program. The Home Town News Release program has been inadequate in the past. The reason for this was the non-availability of the proper form, DA Form 1526. At present the program is being emphasized. The unit IO have been properly briefed and have available sufficient forms, guidelines, and materials to increase the Home Town program. The entire program is under a thirty-day observation period in an effort to ascertain what specific areas need to be stressed.

17.(U)Public Relations. There is not an effective public relations program as such. There has been minimum contact between local nationals and this Headquarters.

D. (U) Intelligence and Security.

1. (U) Production of Intelligence.

a. The detailed and comprehensive Intelligence SOP, published just prior to the beginning of this reporting period, has invaluably benefitted the battalion and assigned companies in establishing a sound and positive program encompassing all intelligence and security matters.

b. The Battalion Intelligence Section maintains very close liaison with the Intelligence Staffs of the 25th Infantry Division to obtain timely and essential elements of information. The latest reported information is obtained from these staff sections just prior to Battalion briefings. The Battalion S-2 obtains all available enemy information during the coordination briefing with the supported Brigades or Battalions. The enemy situation is verbally passed on to all commanders during Battalion briefings. Collecting information from various echelons provides the Battalion with fairly accurate information on enemy locations and strengths.

c. Aviation personnel continue to provide instant information on enemy activity and movement by rendering spot reports to the Battalion Operations Center when sightings are made. This information is relayed to the Intelligence Staffs of the 25th Infantry Division for evaluation and action as is deemed necessary.

d. Procurement of adequate photo coverage of selected landing zones continues to be a problem area. The photo coverage inventory in the 25th Infantry Division photo library only covers about one half of the DTAO. If Division cannot provide the desired coverage a visit is made to the III Corps Intelligence Section in SAIGON. Normally the coverage can be obtained from this office; however, a minimum of 3 to 5

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days is usually required. Very often the tactical situation does not allow this much advance notice.

e. The Battalion Intelligence Section discussed the problem of obtaining photo coverage with J3 Reconnaissance, 7th US Air Force Headquarters, which has the responsibility of flying aerial photo missions in this area. The Air Force does maintain complete coverage of this Battalion's AO. With the high priority assigned an aviation battalion, a complete photo mission of the desired area can be obtained in 24 hours. The coverage is dispatched by courier to the Battalion and the desired coverage is removed and mounted by the Intelligence Section, 25th Infantry Division. The unused portion of the mission is placed in the Division Photo Library.

f. Weather data received by this Headquarters often arrives too late to be passed to and used by the companies. Weather data received through the Signal channel has been discontinued because of its validity upon receipt. The most accurate and most frequently used source of weather information continuous to be the Air Force Detachment located at CU CHI. A weather aircraft is dispatched each morning that a Battalion exercise is scheduled to provide the Air Mission Commander with immediate accurate weather information. This data is utilized by the commander in making his decision on weather delays.

2.(U) Use of Intelligence and Information.

a. The Battalion has had many aircraft hit by ground fire in support of exercises being conducted by the 25th Infantry Division. To provide both the Battalion and the Division coordinates of the exact locations at which aircraft drew fire the intelligence section maintains

special hit maps covering key areas. Information plotted on the charts is:

(1) Aircraft location.

(2) Type of aircraft.

(3) Altitude.

(4) Air speed.

(5) Date/time group.

(6) Distance and direction of fire from aircraft.

(7) Aircraft heading.

(8) Type of fire received and number of hits.

(9) The above information affords the Battalion S-3 the opportunity of readily identifying areas from which concentrated fire has been received. This also results in guidance being issued not to over-fly certain areas unless necessary. The special hit maps are periodically shown to the Division Staff for study and action.

b. The intelligence information obtained from Division, Brigades, Battalions, and other sources continues to be of moderate benefit. Very rarely is intelligence data available confirming the presence of enemy forces in a landing zone area.

c. Weekly or bi-weekly intelligence reports or bulletins are not published by this headquarters. Intelligence must be timely and accurate in order to assist the commander. To provide him with the latest possible information, however, the Battalion has had its intelligence distribution disseminated daily. Distribution is made to all subordinate units by this headquarters. If items of interest are received by the Battalion

Intelligence Section, and sufficient copies for redistribution are not available, the information is reproduced and then distributed.

3.(U)Counterintelligence.

a. Destruction of unclassified waste continued to present occasional problems. The base camp has initiated a trash pick-up service resulting in printed matter being taken to an incendiary dump. To preclude this occurrence a large screened area has been constructed and all waste from the Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Company is destroyed by burning within this enclosure. This system is very effective with much time saved in that trash does not have to be separated.

b. Recently the Battalion has been given the authority to grant SECRET clearances providing a favorable Local Files Check and a National Agency Check have been completed. Stringent control must be exercised in granting clearances on a "need to know" basis and only after a thorough check of an individual's records have been made. In some instances the National Files Check was completed nearly two years ago. The individual's 201 file should reflect any derogatory information recorded since the National Check was made.

c. To insure that the Battalion Intelligence Section has properly implemented counterintelligence requirements, CI visits are made periodically by the 25th Division MI Detachment.

4. Miscellaneous.

a. Escape and Evasion quotas to attend the Jungle Survival School controlled by the Navy Department in the Phillipines are not of sufficient quantities to adequately provide trained personnel within the Battalion. A possible solution to this problem would be for the Army to establish

a similar course in some secure area within VIETNAM. Quotas could then be increased to Aviation Battalions, resulting in more trained personnel to implement this emphasized and very necessary program.

b. Prior to all Battalion Combat Assaults a coordination briefing is conducted by the supported unit. At this time an aerial reconnaissance is made of the selected landing zones. Intelligence reports normally indicate the presence of Viet Cong forces within the vicinity of the landing zones. During the aerial reconnaissance, conducted eighteen to twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled combat assault, the landing zones are orbitted for extensive periods of time to obtain necessary information to finalize the forthcoming plan. The enemy forces are certainly aware of the US tactics employed and, realizing a combat assault will be conducted in the area at some future date, probably withdraw their forces to prevent contact. Once helicopters begin circling a landing zone the element of surprise is lost. One possible solution to the problem would be to introduce large scale, detailed photographs into the photo system. Photos of the selected landing zones could be studied prior to any reconnaissance being made to determine the approach azimuth, obstacles, and other necessary information. If an aerial reconnaissance is still deemed necessary, this could be accomplished by making one flight over the landing zone area.

c. The Battalion Intelligence Section has initiated a program within the Battalion where 35mm slides and prints taken during Battalion Combat Assaults are displayed. Reproduction orders are received from all interested personnel who have not had the opportunity to view a combat assault or to take photographs while participating in one. The reproduction is done by Kodak for a reasonable fee.

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E. (U) Operations and Training.

1.(U) Operations.

a. Operations plans and orders. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion fully employs the standandard five paragraph OPLAN/OPORD for all Battalion controlled operations. Standardization of annexes and of the distribution system has facilitated preparation, reproduction, and distribution of plans and orders in as short a time as 90 minutes. Specific annexes have been added in the form of sketches of pick-up and landing zones, items determined necessary to be inserted in the OPORD from lessons learned. The habitual use of complete written orders for multi-company operations greatly simplifies the integration of non-organic aviation elements into an operation and insures the closest coordination of the aviation plan with that of the ground commander.

b. Supervision and coordination of tactical operations. In addition to the normal command, control, and coordination facilities found in all battalions, the 269th employs a permanent Battalion Operations Center (BOC) and a Battalion Command and Control helicopter. The Command and Control helicopter, commonly referred to as "C & C ship," is a UH-1H rotorcraft modified by the addition of a commander's console, AN/ASC-10, providing one additional UHF and two additional FM transceivers. This system affords commanders the luxury of much greater control through a selection of added communications channels.

c. Planning and integrating.

(1) Fire support in all airmobile operations conducted by this Battalion is coordinated through the Ground Commander and his Artillery Liaison Officer in the planning phase of an airmobile operation. Most expeditious control of artillery support has been found to be maintained

through direct contact between the supporting artillery FDC and the ground commander aloft in the C & C ship. It has been found also, that to insure continuity in command, the use of an alternate C & C is imperative.

(2) Pathfinder operations have continued on a basis consistent with tactical requirements. Pathfinders continue to organize pick-up zones for airmobile operations and maintain constant liaison between ground elements in the PZ and the Command and Control personnel. Pathfinders have been found more able to insure a successful operation in the PZ when they have been inserted into ground elements' positions on D-1. This affords the Pathfinder personnel sufficient time to brief ground forces on the location of loads, number of loads, pick-up formations, etc. This also insures that an aviation representative is present should any change arise affecting the tactical plan within the 12-24 hour period preceding the scheduled assault.

d. Overall command security. The physical security plans of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion and all subordinate units are integrated with the base camp defense plans of the major units garrisoned at CU CHI, TAY NINH, and DAU TIENG. Within the company areas themselves bunker complexes are constantly improved as are revetments for aircraft.

3.(U) Battalion Operations Center (BOC). The BOC operates on a continuous 24 hours per day basis. One officer and one enlisted man is on duty at all times during this period. Both are provided with FM-AM-UHF radio communications. These transceivers are a link to the Battalion's subordinate units, to the Army Aviation Element (AAE), to II Field Forces Vietnam Tactical Operations Center, and to the Assistant Division Aviation Officer (ADAO) at the 25th Infantry Division's Tactical Operations Center (TOC). Communication with the 25th Infantry Division is by sole-user

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telephone. Missions are received from AAE and assigned to the units by BOC. Daily operations are constantly monitored by the BOC, insuring that all necessary action to coordinate activities, react to emergencies, and submit required reports, is, in fact, taken.

4.(U)Training.

a. Training program.

(1) Training of Battalion personnel is in keeping with the operational requirements continually arising in an aviation unit. During the three month time frame the Battalion has received nine AAMTAP quotas for courses in the B, C, and D models of the UH-1 helicopter, and one quota for instruction in the T-53 engine. Two supply school quotas were received, and one quota for CH-47 maintenance. Two allocations were received for Jungle Environmental Survival Training (JEST), a survival course held at Manila in the Phillipines. One quota was given an aviator from the 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company, and one to an aviator from the 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

b. The programming of personnel to attend the special COBRA courses has begun. Four allocations were received in October, two for the AH-1G Avionics Maintenance Course, and two for the AH-1G NETT Course. Two allocations are programmed for November, both for the SAS COBRA Course.

c. On the 23d and 24th of October a training program was run at the 12th Combat Aviation Group Headquarters, LONG BINH, for company armorers. Special emphasis was placed on the M-16A1 rifle.

d. One individual from the 116th Assault Helicopter Company and one from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, attended a twenty hour course of instruction with the 25th

Infantry Division Artillery. The course studied was Adjustment of Artillery Fire, with a course duration of four days.

c. Aviation Training and Standardization.

(1) Primary training to newly assigned aviators is given at subordinate unit level. In-country orientations are given by company level instructor pilots, as are the various stages of training required to insure an aviator's proficiency in the techniques peculiar to combat operations in Vietnam.

(2) Standardization is maintained throughout the Battalion through 90-day standardization checkrides. These rides are given by company and battalion instructor pilots who insure adherence to the Battalion flight policies. Battalion standardization pilots continually monitor the standardization program by an aggressive policy of frequent flying with subordinate units.

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F. (C) Logistics

1.(U)Supply.

a. Supply procedures by Class.

(1) Class I supplies are still drawn from support units located at the base camps where the units of the Battalion are stationed. Most unit personnel consume all three meals at the unit mess hall except for the aircrews on missions. These personnel generally consume a "C" ration for the noon meal.

(2) Class III and IIIA supplies continue to be drawn from 25th Infantry Division and 1st Logistical Command facilities located at CU CHI, TAY NINH, and DAU TIENG. The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company in its present location at BIEN HOA Airbase obtains its Class III from the 64th QM and Class IIIA from the Air Force at BIEN HOA. During tactical operations Class IIIA is obtained primarily from the three main base camps at CU CHI, TAY NINH, and DAU TIENG, and a refueling point at DUC HOA. These refueling points are operated by the 25th Infantry Division with the 269th providing personnel to assist at DAU TIENG and CU CHI. On all operations out of the 25th Infantry Division area, Class IIIA support is provided by the supported unit. During the past three months, the 269th has participated in two operations requiring a forward refueling and re-arming point. The 116th Assault Helicopter Company provided a 4 man team and pumping equipment while the supported Brigade provided the required fuel and ammunition.

(3) Supported units continue to maintain their own property records and draw their Class II and IV supplies from DSU and Depot units of the 1st Logistical Command. The principal problems have been:

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LOGISTICS

(a) The time delay in moving vehicles from DAU TIENG and TAY NINH to CU CHI. This delay is caused by the requirement for these vehicles to move in scheduled convoys. The 188th Assault Helicopter Company stationed at DAU TIENG draws its support from the 228th DSU at TAY NINH, and all of the units located at TAY NINH draw their aircraft repair parts at the 20th Transportation Company in CU CHI, and bulk issues of supplies for their officer and EM Clubs are generally drawn in SAIGON.

(b) The shortage of Ballistic Helmets and Aircrewman Body Armor. The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company became operational on 15 September 1967 and has not received any Ballistic Helmets. Body Armor was provided by reapportionment of assets within the Battalion. Additional Body Armor is not forecast to be available until the 3d quarter of FY 68. A definite date for availability of Ballistic Helmets has not been established.

(4) Class V support for tactical operations is furnished primarily from refuel and rearm points operated by the 25th Infantry Division at CU CHI, TAY NIH, DAU TIENG, and DUC HOA. Class V other than that for aerial weapons systems and aircraft mounted machine guns are drawn by the units from ASP located at CU CHI, DAU TIENG, and TAY NINH.

b. Shortages of several critical items of equipment required redistribution within the Battalion to meet minimum operational requirements. These items were:

(1) Aircrewman Body Armor.

(2) M-24 Aviator Protective Masks.

c. The units of the Battalion have requested permission to turn in

unneeded TOE or MTOE equipment in accordance with USARV Regulation 310-32. Other excess equipment has been turned in or redistributed within the Battalion to meet existing shortages.

(1) Since the Battalion's mission is primarily combat support, very little enemy equipment is captured by organic units. Those items which are picked up by unit personnel are turned in to the supported unit or disposed of through S2 channels.

(2) Transportation and Troop Movement.

(a) The 188th Assault Helicopter Company returned to DAU TIENG from PHU HIEP during the week of 21 August. Their equipment and personnel, except aircraft and aircrews, were transported by Air Force C-130 and C-123 Aircraft.

(b) The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company arrived in country during the month of August. Personnel and 70,000 pounds of RED TAT equipment arrived between 9 and 12 August in C-141 aircraft. Transportation to the unit's temporary location at BIEN HOA was provided by the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. The CH-47 aircraft and 12 conex containers containing RED TAT equipment associated with aircraft maintenance arrived on the USS Core at VUNG TAU on 10 August. The aircraft were off-loaded and remained at VUNG TAU until 11 September due to engineer work in progress on the parking and maintenance areas at BIEN HOA. The 12 conex containers were moved to BIEN HOA by organic aircraft. The remainder of the unit's TOE equipment arrived at SAIGON port on 22 August and was moved to BIEN HOA primarily on organic transportation as the area transportation command was able to provide only two vehicles. WABTOC equipment was not diverted when the unit's stationing was changed and arrived at QUIN NHON. The equipment was trans-shipped to NEW PORT by LST.

No major damage or loss of equipment was incurred by the 242d during their deployment. This was primarily due to the outstanding manner in which the unit prepared its equipment for shipment, supervised the loading and off-loading, and provided security for their equipement during all phases of off-loading and trans-shipment.

c. The Battalion does not normally engage in unit movements except for change in stationing of a unit. As a result all movement of vehicles is normally controlled by the unit or on an individual vehicle basis. Vehicles moving from DAU TIENG and TAY NINH are included in regularly scheduled convoys operated and controlled by the 25th Infantry Division.

3.(U) Maintenance and repair, except aircraft.

a. The principal problem area encountered in maintenance of vehicles and power equipment has been the lack of qualified personnel at the unit level, particularly motor sergeants. Three of the companies do not have qualified motor sergeants at the present time and replacements have not been available through personnel channels.

b. The supply of repair parts for both vehicles and power equipment has not prevented accomplishment of unit missions. However, deadline for parts rates are high for vehicles and generators, running 22-25% for generators and 18-20% for 2½ ton trucks. Supply of repair parts other than deadline items has been a problem. As an example, the 116th Assault Helicopter Company, upon completion of a reconcilliation with their DSU on 14 October, had 563 valid due-ins for 37 supported vehicles. Close coordination with DSU and periodic reconcilliations are being utilized to attempt to remedy this situation.

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4.(U) Services.

a. Emphasis has been placed on utilization of proper priorities in requisitioning of equipment. The priority 02 requisition does not fulfill the intended purpose due to obvious past abuse by many units in the Republic of Vietnam.

b. Civilian labor has been utilized with the Battalion primarily to construct aircraft revetments and personnel shelters.

c. Permanent construction plans have been submitted for all units of the Battalion and have been approved by the base planning boards. The facilities for an assault support helicopter company have been constructed at CU CHI during this period. The 554th Engineer Battalion provided MER to include a mess hall, latrines (burn-out type), showers, access roads, maintenance hardstand, aircraft revetments and parking areas, landing pads, and materials for self-help construction of billets. Aircraft revetments and sandbag protection of troop billets were two major projects accomplished by all assigned units during this period.

d. The majority of repair and utility requirements are still accomplished by the units since unit mess halls and the Battalion Headquarters are the only permanent buildings which have been accepted by PA&E for R & U responsibility. A major problem area has been the supply of water for showers and unit mess halls. The water trailer provided each unit is totally inadequate for this purpose, and support units do not have the capability of providing this service. The requirement has been met by converting fuel trucks to water trucks. In addition, the recommended MTOE for units submitted to 1st Aviation Brigade in October

includes a 1,000 gallon water truck for each company size unit.

e. The permanent construction plans for the units assigned to the Battalion include billets, latrines, central power supply, and maintenance facilities such as wash racks, grease racks, etc. Aircraft maintenance hangers are also on request for all units. Hangers and wash racks will not be built at DAU TIENG and TAY NINH, however, until the contonement areas are upgraded from their present status of field contonement areas.

f. Property on reports of survey has been primarily individual weapons and equipment lost from aircraft which have crashed or have been forced down by hostile fire. Command emphasis has been placed on these two areas in an attempt to reduce loss. The loss of individual weapons has occurred at TAY NINH and DAU TIENG where security problems are greatly increased by the Base Commanders' requirement that all personnel have their weapons on their persons or immediately available at all times.

g. The quality and quantity of Class I rations and food service support has been excellent throughout the Battalion during the reporting period.

h. Fire protection is provided by extinguishers or water barrels located in the unit areas. Base fire fighting sections are located at all posts. There has been no loss of life or equipment due to fires during the past 3 months.

5.(U)The supply and logistical support within the Battalion is decentralized with each company maintaining its own property books and dealing directly with its support activities. This system has been

dictated by the dispersion of the units which makes consolidation of supply activities impossible. As a result, the S4 serves primarily to consolidate reports, advise and assist the units, and plan for future operations. The decentralized system does present problems in control and proper supervision of unit supply activities. Centralization, however, is impossible because of the separation of the units and the number of supporting units involved.

6(v) Rear area security and area damage control are incorporated into the base defense plans at each unit's location, and are under the control of the installation commander.

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G. (U) Signal.

1. (U) Communications installation and operation.

a. Installation of the KY-8 into the Battalion FM Net was established with the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company on 26 September 1967. The Battalion Net, including all companies, is scheduled to be operating in the secure mode upon the arrival of the KY-8. The use of the secure net with the one company has afforded the BOC the luxury of immediately retransmitting daily missions without encoding the contents. This has eliminated the possibility of error in addition to saving critical time. The non-secure FM net will be discontinued upon the complete transition to the secure means. The Battalion and each company will continue to operate a separate station on different frequencies, allowing aircraft to contact the desired station. This concept will change once the aircraft are equipped with the KY-28. The KY-28 are being introduced into the supply system on a listed basis and this Battalion is scheduled to receive eleven on 1 November 1967.

b. An AN-VSC-2 single side band radio has been issued to the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company, and the 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company is scheduled to receive one set under the new concept of issuing radio equipment. The Assault Helicopter Companies are to be issued one MRC-119.

c. To preclude the excessive noise generated by the VRC-24, an Aircraft UHF (providing excellent results) has been installed in the Battalion Operations Center. The VRC-24 is maintained for back up and contingency plans the Battalion may become involved in.

d. Telephone communication within the Battalion has changed very little. One sole-user circuit from the BOC to 242d Assault Support

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Helicopter Company Operations has been installed. Direct lines from the CU CHI switchboard have been installed to the Battalion S3 and S4.

e. A work order has been approved authorizing the installation of an air conditioner in the Battalion Communication Center upon the availability of the set. This should preclude some of the maintenance problems experienced in the past.

2(U)Accuracy of SOI creates constant problems. The 12th Combat Aviation Group's SOI contain frequencies all divisions within the Group area. Very often these frequencies are changed without 12th Group's receiving notification. A possible solution would be for each Aviation Battalion to report all frequencies changed by units operating in its area immediately to 12th Group. A time delay of two to three days would still be experienced before the published change would be issued or entered into all SOI.

3(U)Avionics.

a. Personnel strength assigned to the Avionics Detachments presents a very bleak outlook. Each detachment is short two to three of the authorized eight or nine enlisted men. To temporarily alleviate extreme personnel shortages in some detachments and to maintain an equal strength in all detachments, personnel have been transferred between detachments. If school trained personnel are not assigned in the near future, avionics will begin to lag below the accepted standard.

b. The Avionics Detachments have established excellent shop areas. The four authorized vans are positioned in a square with a predetermined distance between them. A structure has been built over all vans, allowing a much larger maintenance area. The entire area is air

conditioned by using authorized air conditioners.

c. Calibration of avionics test equipment continues to be a problem area. Calibration teams have been scheduled to visit the detachments for the purpose of calibrating all test equipment; however, these visits have never been made. Arrangements have been made in the past with the calibration team at BIEN HOA to calibrate necessary items. The BIEN HOA team prefers that the Mobile Calibration Team calibrate equipment in the field.

d. Obtaining repair parts through normal channels is almost impossible in some instances. On many occasions Avionics repair parts have been found collecting dust in bins at certain supply levels. Experience indicates that some personnel receiving these items do not know what to do with them and store them somewhere out of the way. Items being referred to are forced issue repair items accompanying new equipment. These items definitely should be entered into the supply system. This would prevent cannibalization of many items of equipment.

4.(U) Communications Security is practiced in the Battalion with average results. To provide for more stringent communications security the changing of call signs and frequencies, on a monthly basis, has been proposed. It is felt that the benefit gained by changing frequencies and call signs would be lost in the confusion created. The crucial final minute of a combat assault prior to landing is hardly the time to check an SOI for a unit's new call sign. This problem could very easily exist if several companies were participating in a combat assault shortly after the call signs had been changed.

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H. (U) Aviation Safety.

1.(U)Plans and Programs. The present safety program differs little from any other program with the exception of the outstanding degree of command emphasis and support given to it. This is evidenced in the sharp reduction of accidents from the month of July, with 10 major accidents, to September, when only 2 accidents occurred. This feat is remarkable when you consider that the flight hours of exposure have risen from slightly over 7000 hours to a high of 12,059 hours. Correspondingly, the accident rate per 100,000 hours has dropped from 128.2 to 43.6.

2.(U)Procedures. Safety is a command responsibility. From the Battalion Commander the Aviation Safety Officer obtains the limits of his authority. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Commander has given his full support and actively takes part in the aviation safety program. He regularly sets aside a portion of his Commander's Conference to identify a probable accident causation. He demands the highest standards in combat operations, striking the keynote of professionalism and discipline at all times. The Battalion Aviation Safety Officer directs his energies in numerous directions. Close liaison must be maintained with operations, training, maintenance, and the Flight Surgeon, to mention a few. Review of aircraft accidents is a vital source of ideas for the future prevention of accidents, and a source that is the most time consuming. Regular overnight staff visits acquaint the units with the latest flight safety information. These visits also provide a mutual exchange of ideas between the Aviation Safety Officer and the personnel of subordinate companies.

3.(U)Publications. In the past quarter the Aviation Safety Officer has begun publishing a bi-monthly letter that includes safety areas of interest, notes on -10 changes, safety slogans, etc. It has been well received.

The major publication, however, was entitled "A Guide to Management of the Accident Investigation," a document the contents of which the title depicts quite well.

4.(U)Training. The individual companies have instituted an adequate training program to qualify pilots for in-country missions and as Aircraft Commanders. Safety in training is integrated into this program.

5.(U)Inspection. The Aviation Safety program was rated satisfactory in a recent AGI.

6.(U)Accident Investigation (Summary). A total of 9 major accidents were sutained during the reporting period. Two of the accidents resulted in fatalities. A summary of accidents is included in this document as Inclosure 2.

7.(U)Escape and Evasion. Regular classes have been given on this subject. To date there have been no actual E and E.

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I. (U) Aviation Medicine.

1.(U) Treatment - Aid Station operations. The 431st Medical Detachment operated an aid station at CU CHI rendering aviation medical support to aviation personnel on an area basis. The 154th Medical Detachment operated a medical dispensary at DAU TIENG rendering aviation medical support in that area. Also during this period the 541st Medical Detachment was assigned to the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion with the mission of providing aviation medical support in the TAY NINH area. The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company received its medical support from outside the Battalion, from the consolidated flight dispensary at BIEN HOA.

2.(U) Preventive Medicine and Immunizations. Preparation for an AGI brought preventive medicine measures to a peak during this period with immunizations being brought very nearly to the desired 100% level throughout the Battalion. Also, the flu shot, recommended by the Surgeon General for October, was given throughout the command. The weekly program of malaria prophylaxis of USARV has been complied with. All companies resorted to the issuing of condoms for VD control during this same period. Further observation was made by company commanders and the Battalion Flight Surgeon that flying requirements placed upon the companies above the recommended 2500 aircraft hours per month resulted in pilot fatigue, maintenance personnel fatigue, and aircraft fatigue. Recommendations were made through Battalion to 12th Combat Aviation Group and aircraft hours were reduced until no company exceeded 3000 hours in September. Subsequently, there has been much improvement of morale and aviators have appeared far less fatigued. However, there remains tremendous stress on maintenance units to keep old and worn aircraft flyable when almost insurmountable problems exist in doing so.

3.(U)Flight Physical Qualification. Annual flight physicals continue to be waived throughout USARV. However, persons entering flight status for the first time are expected to complete the required physical examination. All persons entering units must be cleared by a flight surgeon before participating in aerial flights. CU CHI, because of the availability of medical facilities, is the center for flight physical examinations for the CU CHI, TAY NINH, and DAU TIENG areas.

4.(U)Medical Evacuation. Aeromedical evacuation continues to be the primary and almost exclusive mode of medical evacuation. The clearing company continues to be habitually by-passed in favor of the evacuation or field hospital. Slicks from combat assault helicopter companies seem to be more readily available and able to evacuate casualties in a more timely and efficient manner than the Dust-off aircraft. Pilots act very knowledgeably in carrying out this serious responsibility.

5.(U)Training. All companies have models posted in their operations, demonstrating the contents of airplane aid kits. During this twelve week period approximately sixteen corpsmen from Battalion medical resources received extensive on-the-job training in intensive and pre-operative care techniques while spending three weeks at the 93d Evacuation Hospital in LONG BINH. This program has contributed substantially toward increasing the proficiency of the Battalion's medical support. All personnel are licensed ambulance drivers. The two flight surgeons attended two Group Surgeons meetings during this period. They were brought up to date on the fitting of ballistic helmets, reporting of casualties, the treatment of venereal disease with its peculiar resistance in Vietnam, and the uniqueness of aviation medical support with its need to remain organic

to aviation units.

6.(b)Medical supplies and equipment. All standard, expendable medical supplies are readily available through either the 25th DMSO or directly from the newly opened 32d Medical Depot in LONG BINH. Non-standard, non-expendable items have been difficult to obtain during this quarter because of the unpredictable course medical organization is taking in Vietnam as to the duplication of medical resources.

7.(u)Sanitation. Throughout the Battalion the tremendous and constant problem of disposal of human waste has been placed upon the medical detachments and section. During the past quarter the three detachments have needed only to supervise the burning of waste and the cleaning of latrines since Vietnamese civilians have been hired to do the labor. All companies have constantly been making improvements in their mess operations, latrines, urinals, drainage, and living conditions. Inspections are carried out monthly, informally, and recommendations made for further improvements. For the most part these recommendations have been complied with.

8.(u)Public Health. Aviation personnel going on R & R or DEROS are checked to be free of communicable disease and issued prophylactic malaria tablets as necessary. Dogs have been reduced in number throughout the command in accordance with USARV direction. General procedures of public health are outlined and implemented by the Preventive Medicine Officer of the 25th Infantry Division.

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SECTION II-- LESSONS LEARNED (U)

INTRODUCTION

(U) The LESSONS LEARNED, the section of this report which constitutes the major portion of this document, have been obtained primarily from debriefings held immediately following each operation conducted by the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion. Present at these debriefings were the Battalion Commander, the Battalion Executive Officer, the Battalion S3, and all other members of the Battalion primary and special staffs who participated in the conduct of the operations.

(U) Many LESSONS LEARNED were also submitted by subordinate elements of this Battalion. Reference to the unit submitting the comment has been made prior to each item's listing. Other references, you will find, identify the debriefing of a specific operation. By identifying the source it is hoped that the reader will be more able to discern information which is applicable generally to Battalion operations from information which would be more pertinent to a Company or a smaller unit's efforts. Certainly, however, most entries are inter-related, and all well worthy of note.

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A. (U) Planning.

1. (U) Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: Operations-SAIGON/ORIENTAL RIVERS.

Discussion: The SAIGON and ORIENTAL RIVERS are the two primary waterways in the WESTERN sector of III Corps. Recent company size operations disclosed that in conducting combat assaults into landing zones adjacent to these rivers, approaches by the lift ships are being made directly over the rivers themselves. Certain tactical considerations may require that this be done; however, such requirements occur much less frequently than we, in fact, commit the error. The primary concern, of course, is in the fact that the larger waterways and their tributaries are the transport routes for Viet Cong supplies and personnel. Subsequently, these rivers and canals, as the VC lines of communication, are VC infested. Inbound to a landing zone an approach over a river bend or parallel to a river at a constant rate of descent or low level accomplishes at least the following. It initially exposes the flight over an area which has a higher enemy count per 100 square meters than would otherwise be the case. Secondly, it affords the VC an unnecessary advantage in point targets. Also, well placed rounds into a helicopter over water create innumerable problems in aircraft recovery. Thirdly, and of most importance, a tactical blunder of this type could conceivably reap such havoc on a flight confronted with heavy automatic weapons fire, that crewmember survival could be expected to be minimal. The increased use of the .50 caliber machinegun in WESTERN III Corps makes such an occurrence far from an improbability.

Observation: Commanders should insure that, when planning flight routes into landing zones in the proximity of waterways, overflights at low level or on final approach not be made. An alternate route in nearly all cases can be found.

2.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 25-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Continual indoctrination.

Discussion: While in orbit over a selected landing zone, a ground commander informed the Air Mission Commander that the ground troops would be inserted into the landing zone in 15 minutes. This was impossible to accomplish since the ground commander had his forces in a pick-up zone on standby, aircraft were shut down, also on standby, and the pick-up zone was 19 flight minutes away. The problem was soon resolved when the existing conditions were reassessed and a new landing zone time selected.

Observation: It is continually apparent that even though Army Aviation has come of age, the doctrines and intricacies of airmobility are not yet thoroughly understood. The case in point is merely a token reminder that constant guidance to supported ground elements is necessary to insure the success of airmobile operations.

3.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Use of "H" hour.

Discussion: A series of weather delays in the operation resulted in subsequent time changes in the Sequence of Events. The new times were transmitted in the clear over UHF and FM Battalion frequencies during the ensuing attempts to effect a new coordination. Recent intelligence reports indicate a growing radio transmission intercept capability possessed by the VC in III Corps Tactical Zone. Our transmitting of critical airmobile assault times, coupled with the VC intercept capability, combine to create a potentially serious security threat.

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PLANNING

Observation: The use of the coded "H" hour in a Battalion OPORD, and its subsequent "H plus," should a delay occur, would deny the enemy knowledge of the exact time of an insertion.

4.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Discretion changing plans.

Discussion: The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion had recently acquired a smoke dispensing aircraft which was used on all Battalion operations. The ship was not available for this assault, however, due to required maintenance having to be performed. Efforts were made to obtain smoke assistance from an adjacent unit with no immediate results. During the conduct of the operation a smoke ship reported to the Command and Control aircraft that it was in the AO and available. Not having been briefed on the tactical plan, the smoke ship crew required excessive guidance over the air to determine what was to be its part. Once the assault force was on final for the LZ, the smoke aircraft began its run. Instead of emitting a full stream of smoke screening the LZ, the smoke crew jettisoned two smoke pots which served no purpose whatsoever.

Observation: Since no smoke ship was planned to participate in the operation, the arrival of one with a crew having no knowledge of the concept of the operation lent little more to the tactical success than unnecessary confusion. Radio traffic was transmitted in excess at the expense of command and control, and no benefit was gained from the presence of the aircraft in the AO. The point to consider is not specifically referenced to the smoke ship, but rather to the acceptance into an operation of an element not briefed nor in any way ready to take part in the conduct

of the assault. It is generally more prudent to conduct an airmobile operation strictly in accordance with published OPORD than it is to vary these plans, adding or deleting elements.

5.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 27-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 1 September 1967.

Item: Adjacent Aviation Battalion unit representation at briefings.

Discussion: Airmobile support to the 25th Infantry Division is given by the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion. On recent operations extensive efforts were required to brief the 25th Aviation Battalion aircraft flying in the tactical area where the 269th was conducting operations. On occasions the 25th Division's observation aircraft would fly dangerously close to artillery preparations, airstrikes, etc, requiring repeated advisories from the 269th C & C element.

Observation: Representatives from aviation units habitually having aircraft in the planned AO should be invited to attend operation briefings. These representatives, upon returning to their units, can brief the tactical situation to all crews expecting to fly in the operational area on D-day.

6.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 29-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 11 September 1967.

Item: Coordination of artillery in adjacent AO.

Discussion: The flight routes planned for the insertion of 3d Bde elements during this operation were routed in close proximity to the geographical boundaries of an adjacent artillery advisory zone. Since

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the flights were not actually taken into the other advisory area, no attempt was made to check for possible artillery or airstrikes near the zone borders. While the lift aircraft parallelled the advisory control zone limits, an airstrike and artillery preparation began in two locations uncomfortably close to the flight route. Of particular danger was the presence of high performance aircraft making bombing runs through a scattered cloud condition in generally the same airspace as the airmobile force.

Observation: In all instances when Battalion operations are conducted in close proximity to the boundaries of adjacent artillery advisory zones, information on airstrikes and artillery preparations being conducted or planned to start during the time frame of the operation should be obtained by the C & C element. Since it is difficult for the C & C personnel to stay abreast of the artillery advisories from two zones, the alternate C & C may be given the responsibility to monitor the adjacent warning net and advise the primary C & C of any potential problems.

7.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 31-67, in support of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, 12 September 1967.

Item: Map coverage.

Discussion: Following today's mission a subsequent mission was assigned to one aviation company of the Battalion. At the coordination briefing the unit commander failed to have map coverage of the area since the AO was in a completely different sector of the III CTZ.

Observation: Lead aircraft of company flights should be equipped with map coverage of the complete AO in the III Corps Tactical Zone. The reasons are obvious.

8.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 33-67, in support of 1st Bde, 25th Inf Div, 17 September 1967.

Item: Weather and aircraft concentration.

Discussion: The insertion of the 1st Brigade into the HOBO WOODS area, NORTHWEST of CU CHI, required 93 Army aircraft. A one hour weather delay caused 93 aircraft to be parked at CU CHI for approximately 50 minutes while waiting for weather to change. Since CU CHI has been the recipient of a number of mortar attacks in the past, the possibility of an attack at such a time, with such a lucrative target, is worth consideration.

Observation: Weather delays create a situation wherein Army Aviation elements are highly vulnerable to mortar or recoiless rifle attacks. When planning weather delay increments, serious consideration should be given to the amount of ground time resulting once all aircraft finally close at the staging base. Extended time brackets may be invitations to disaster.

9.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 33-67, in support of 1st Bde, 25th Inf Div, 17 September 1967.

Item: Time hacks.

Discussion: Though time hacks were given continually prior to and during the conduct of this operation, not all of the supporting elements participating were still aware of the correct time. Some elements, including the Artillery, were as much as one and one-half minutes off.

Observation: In airmobile operations a necessity exists for precise accuracy in complying with the time schedule published in Operation Orders. A one and one-half minute's error in an artillery preparation's termination is totally unacceptable. In the event incorrect timing is evident during any portion of an operation, all possible efforts must be made to rectify

the situation.

10.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: S3 Sub-sections.

Discussion: The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, in its rapid expansion in size and responsibility, has realized a requirement for staff separation in the S3 section of Battalion Headquarters. Too often in recent operations, LNO instruction required key staff personnel to attend coordination briefings for upcoming operations at the same time as these same key officers were, in fact, controlling combat assaults as the Command and Control elements. The inability to accomplish both assignments simultaneously predicated the decision to establish two distinct S3 sub-sections, arbitrarily entitled "A" and "B," each armed with equivalent delegated authority.

Observation: The establishment of two S3 teams has provided the Battalion Headquarters with the flexibility of not only conducting successful airmobile operations, but also simultaneously guaranteeing responsible representation at coordination conferences held by the supported infantry elements planning other operations. A policy, resultant from the establishment of a two-team system, requires that the team attending the coordination briefing be the team which prepares and publishes the Operations Order and mans the Command and Control aircraft and alternate during the conduct of the assault. This insures definitive continuity in the planning and execution of the operation and establishes a mutual confidence between the AMTF Commander and the respective Team "A" or Team "B" Air Mission Commander.

11. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Refueling priority.

Discussion: In forward refueling locations set specifically to operate during airmobile operations, gunships arriving to refuel are frequently cut out of refueling positions by other ships with a less important mission. Gunships are generally at refueling points to refuel as quickly as possible and to return on station.

Observation: Gunships should be given a refueling priority at all POL locations. When a fire team arrives, other aircraft with individual ship missions waiting for fuel should permit the gunships immediate access to the POL points.

12. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Contingency POL.

Discussion: An operation involving aircraft from six companies, numerous fire teams, and numerous C & C aircraft, required that a supply of POL be stored in advance at a forward POL point. The operation ran into extensive contingency plans, however, and a shortage of fuel was soon realized. Prior planning could readily have alleviated the situation through the use of the Battalion's organic aircraft and organic refueling capability.

Observation: Had a CH-47 from the 242d ASHC been placed on standby with two 500 gallon donuts of JP-4 rigged for slinging, the fuel shortage would never have existed. As soon as required, two donuts could be deposited at the forward position. Two more could be prepared at a base

POL point to be taken to the forward position immediately upon the return of the CH-47. In this way there need never be a shortage of fuel in any available operation. The CH-47 supply train affords the required speed and flexibility to establish POL points any place at any time.

13.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 37-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 October 1967.

Item: POL.

Discussion: In Battalion operations conducted from DAU TIENG, a requirement frequently exists to refuel a company prior to the start of an airmobile assault. Three fuel pumps are located at DAU TIENG serving six fuel lines. These pumps, hand-crank started, often are difficult to put into operation when fuel is initially required. A delay of 5 minutes resulting from a crew chief's inability to start a pump can cause an unacceptable delay in the start of an airmobile assault.

Observation: In the event refueling will be a known requirement prior to an operation, an S-4 representative will accompany the Pathfinder elements to the staging area on D-1 to insure that upon the arrival of the assault helicopter company on D-day all pumps are running and JP-4 is available in sufficient quantity to satisfy all the needs of the operation.

14.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 37-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 October 1967.

Item: Attendance at coordination briefings.

Discussion: The company gun platoon representative sent to the Battalion coordination briefing and reconnaissance was not the individual responsible for the gun platoon during the combat assault the following

day. It is felt that full advantage of the coordination briefing and reconnaissance flight cannot be realized without the presence of the gun platoon leader, or assistant platoon leader, whoever, in fact, will lead the gun platoon or lift aircraft into the landing zone on the assault.

Observation: Since it is the Battalion policy that either the gunship platoon leader or his assistant will lead the gunships on every Battalion size combat assault, logic dictates that the individual leading should attend the briefing. It is therefore mandatory that the individual who will lead the assault will also attend the briefing.

15.(v) Source: Debriefing, Operation 37-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 October 1967.

Item: "Daisy Cutters."

Discussion: In III CTZ, in operations NORTH of DAU TIENG, TAY NINH, and in WAR ZONE C, geographical features are such that good landing zones can be located merely by a map reconnaissance. The terrain is generally dense jungle with clearings of various shapes dispersed sporadically throughout the area. Some of these clear areas are what could be best described as "perfect" landing zones. It has been the tragic experience of aviation companies in the past, however, that these "perfect" landing zones are the probable locations of a network of Viet Cong mines and boobytraps. These mines, often command detonated, have been placed in trees as well as on the ground to counter heliborne assaults. To detonate such mines in a landing zone before an airmobile operation is conducted is the best defensive measure against these weapons. The usual method, of course, is to employ an airstrike and/or artillery preparation in hopes that round impact and fragmentation will detonate the mines.

One very effective weapon is the Air Force's "Daisy Cutter." This weapon, designed to detonate just above the ground, shears trees, shrubbery, and generally razes any vertical object in the landing zone, including mines.

Observation: During coordination conferences or whenever contact is made with an Air Force FAC or LNO, the "Daisy Cutter" should be requested by name as a type of ordnance to be expended in any landing zone suspected to be mined.

16.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Use of standard release points on eagle flights.

Discussion: Whenever eagle flight operations are planned for a prolonged period of time in one area but landing zones are not definite, specific points on the periphery of the operational area are chosen in advance as release points and designated by number. This facilitates the dispatch of the flight to the most opportune point to begin the final approach to the landing zone. It also eliminates confusion and wasted time in issuing instructions to both the flight leader and the fire team leader. After the proposed landing zone has been identified by both the mission commander and the fire team leader, the essential instructions to be issued by the mission commander are shown in the following example:

> "BLACKHAWK LEAD, proceed to RP-2. Turn to a heading of 270 degrees. The gunships will lead you in. Formation is heavy left. Right-break out of the LZ."

Observation: This method is in keeping with the principle of simplicity. Because the release point is known in advance even though the landing zone is not, extended radio conversations and coordinating

instructions for the slicks and gunships are eliminated. This allows the Mission Commander to devote more time and attention to the full range of his duties. Multiple planned release points also afford flexibility to the mission commander to change approach routes quickly and easily when changes in landing zones are dictated by weather conditions, the enemy situation, or the desires of the Airmobile Force Commander.

B. (U) Command and Control.

1.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 30-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 12 September 1967.

Item: Unity of Command.

Discussion: As airmobile operations become more complex and involve multiple infantry battalions, infantry battalion commanders, in the habit of having their own C & C aircraft, still request individual ships.

Observation: During large-scale airmobile operations involving 2 infantry battalions or more, the Air Mission Commander, at coordination meetings, should stress the importance of one C & C aircraft with only the Brigade Commanding Officer and his staff on board. This accomplishes, first, assured unity of command, in that one and only one commander is at the helm of the airmobile assault, and second, logistically, two more aircraft, aircraft which would have been assigned to Battalion Commanders, can be released to support the insertion. Once the airmobile assault is completed, aircraft can then be assigned to individual Battalion Commanders in support of their smaller unit missions.

2.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 31-67, in support of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, 12 September 1967.

Item: Phase out time.

Discussion: During this operation, the C & C aircraft had direct control over both UH-1 and CH-47 units. Once the airmobile operation terminated for the UH-1, effective control of CH-47 still had to be maintained. No time had been defined to indicate when CH-47 control would be turned over to the infantry. As a result, the C & C ship was required to stay on station a full 45 minutes past what was planned as a departure time by aviation elements.

Observation: In a situation as described on the preceding page, a definitive phase out time should be established at earlier coordination meetings. This would prevent unnecessary problems in control chages.

3.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 32-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 16 September 1967.

Item: Misuse of C & C.

Discussion: Four Viet Cong were spotted by the ground commander from the C & C aircraft while conducting an airmobile operation. The ground commander, when he saw that gunships were unable to engage the target, sought to engage the target with the C & C aircraft.

Observation: The ground commander was advised by the Air Mission Commander that engaging an enemy target by the C & C aircraft could well result in the loss of all commanders on board, an Army helicopter, and if lost at a critical time, the success of the airmobile assault. A decision to engage an enemy target by a C & C aircraft during the conduct of an airmobile assault is, at best, highly imprudent.

4.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 33-67, in support of 1st Bde, 25th Inf Div, 17 September 1967.

Item: C & C back-up.

Discussion: The present policy in command and control is to have the C & C ship backed up by an alternate C & C aircraft. The infantry commanders, however, are in the primary C & C. The possibility of an engine failure or combat loss is always present. If the alternate C & C were to carry a back-up infantry command crew on board to insure continuity of effort in the airmobile assault, the loss of the primary C & C would not

hinder the conduct of the operation. Presently, subordinate commanders are carried on board 25th Infantry Division organic aircraft. However, in operations conducted by this Battalion, the placing of subordinate infantry Battalion Commanders in another aviation battalion's aircraft further divorces alternate commanders from the tactical situation.

Observation: To insure maximum depth of control in airmobile operations, both the primary and alternate Command and Control aircraft should carry infantry commanders or their designated representatives. It is further of paramount importance that the alternate infantry commander be on board the aircraft carrying the alternate Air Mission Commander. To preclude added confusion, both the C & C aircraft and the alternate should come from the same Aviation Battalion Headquarters. To separate command otherwise in airmobile operations is nothing less than folly and certainly potentially deprives ground forces of their right to full and competent command at all times in a tactical combat situation.

5.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 33-67, in support of 1st Bde, 25th Inf Div, 17 September 1967.

Item: Fuel on board C & C aircraft.

Discussion: The fuel limitation of two hours on the C & C ship, coupled with the expected duration of the airmobile operation, resulted in a refueling during an important airstrike. This necessary return for fuel prevented the AMTF Commander from observing this airstrike, thereby denying him first hand assessment of the results.

Observation: The need for a larger on-station capability for C & C aircraft exists. One possible solution is the installation of auxiliary fuel tanks which would substantially increase flight time.

6.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Excessive aircraft in AO.

Discussion: In recent operations, especially large scale airmobile operations, numerous aircraft have been entering the AO to observe the conduct of assaults, airstrikes, artillery, etc. In most cases such aircraft identify themselves as entering the AO and request an orbit altitude at which to fly. A number of aircraft occupying the same airspace, with all pilots intent on observing goings on on the ground, pose the the singular aviation hazard of a mid-air collision. In conjunction, as assigned altitudes invariably change, the C & C aircraft, the only ship with a responsibility in the area, often must alter its course, putting itself out of position at crucial times, to avoid a near miss with an observing party.

Observation: In large airmobile operations this problem could be alleviated by informing the AMTF Commander, usually a Brigade Commander, of the inherent problems created when Division personnel arrive in the AO to observe. Courtesy dictates such aircraft not be turned away if a ground commander is on board, but with the assistance of the Infantry Brigade Commander, the number of such ships could be significantly reduced even prior to the beginning of an operation.

7.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: C & C aircraft within range of hostile fire.

Discussion: The C & C aircraft of a Battalion Commander subordinate to the AMTF Commander in today's operation was struck by enemy fire while

9(U) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Monitoring artillery nets for combat assaults.

Discussion: Artillery preparations of landing zones sometimes become ineffective because of the time lag between the time of the last round and the time the lift aircraft touch down in the landing zones. Normally time limits are set for the preparations but numerous items can cause delays. Monitoring the artillery net is very helpful to the Air Mission Commander since he can hear first hand the progress of the artillery preparation and so maneuver the lift ships and gunships to have them on station and on target at the desired time without delay.

Observation: UHF is normally designated for the Air Mission Command and Control, unit FM nets for internal control, and VHF for gunship control. An aircraft's FM set in the Air Mission Commander's ship may be used effectively for monitoring the artillery net.

10(U) Source: Lessons learned, 188th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: "Y" cords for C & C ship.

Discussion: The "Y" cords on the C & C ship have only one "push to talk" button per cord. A hazardous condition was found to exist in that the crew chief or gunner could not get access to the mike button in time to initiate warning of other aircraft in the area of operations.

Observation: Push to talk buttons will be spliced into the "Y" cords for each headset.

11(U) Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: C & C procedures.

flying at an altitude known to be within range of Viet Cong automatic weapons.

Observation: Pilots of C & C aircraft should use discretion in the area and altitude in which they choose to fly their aircraft. The loss of a Battalion or Brigade Commander as a result of negligence on the part of an aviator is an offense most grave in nature. Not only is the loss of life involved, but also the success of the operation. Aviators, knowing fire to have been taken from a specific area, must make the ground commander aware of the impending hazard of flying within effective range of the weapon.

8.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Coordinating USAF airstrikes during combat operations.

Discussion: During a recent operation the ground unit was engaged in heavy contact and had been pinned down by heavy automatic weapons, M-79, and small arms fire. The unit had requested an airstrike and an Air Force aircraft was dispatched almost immediately. However, the AMTF Commander was unable to communicate with the FAC due to incompatible radio frequencies. This left the responsibility with the Air Mission Commander who coordinated and instructed the Air Force FAC where the airstrike would go. The Air Mission Commander had been listening and was deeply involved in the ground tactical plan, giving advice when requested. Being alert he was able to grasp the situation, effect coordination, and employ the resources effectively.

Observation: Air Mission Commanders must keep up with the AMTF Commander and his ground plan and be able to step in effectively when requested to do so.

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COMMAND AND CONTROL

Discussion: During a recent company size operation a C & C party briefed supporting aviation elements of operations to be conducted in a specific AO. The briefing consisted of information pertaining to pick-up zones and landing zones to be used upon the completion of more immediate insertions and extractions. Rules of suppression for an extraction were understood as rules of suppression for what in fact was the next insertion. Confusion ensued with action taken, the effects of which could have been most undesirable.

Observation: When conducting airborne briefings for aircraft supporting an operation, instructions should be limited whenever possible to the insertion or extraction next to be executed. Rules of suppression, directions for landing, and other pertinent data transmitted in reference to later assaults may be construed as pertinent to the next immediate portion of the operation. When discussing rules of suppression especially, a wrong inference with its subsequent results could be quite tragic.

12.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: Target identification.

Discussion: A recent incident involving ground commanders aboard a C & C aircraft disclosed that emphasis should be placed on target identification. In the case in point a ground commander was not able to identify a target to a gun team specifically because he could not find an obvious reference point identifiable to both himself and the gunship pilot. It should be remembered that a ready reference point is always on board Army helicopters. The colored smoke grenade is the easiest item to use in identifying a point on the ground, and is generally stored in

the crew chief's and gunner's station. The smoke grenade need not be dropped directly on the target. If one's control is such as to enable him to drop smoke on targets with consistent accuracy, he should consider himself gifted. In most cases the marking smoke grenade is at best only near the target. In order to identify target locations to gunships:

(1) Drop smoke.

(2) Give the distance from the smoke to target.

(3) Give:

(a) Either an azimuth heading from the smoke to the target, e.g., 090 degrees from smoke;

(b) Or an approximate directional reference, e.g., EAST of the smoke, SOUTHWEST of the smoke, etc.

(4) A typical transmission identifying a target follows:

(a) "STINGER 96, this BLACK BARON 3. Target is a concrete bunker 500 meters SOUTH of RED smoke."

(b) "STINGER 96, this BLACK BARON 3. Target is a gun emplacement 800 meters on a 120 degree heading from smoke."

Observation: While on board the C & C aircraft, ground commanders can get compass headings from the "directional gyro," a heading indicator instrument readily visible to passengers once shown its location. There are two directional gyros on the instrument panel of a UH-1 helicopter, one in front of each pilot. One procedure which should be completely shunned is the use of the clock system. Identifying a target as being "3 o'clock, my position," means nothing to the gunship pilot. This is especially true if you are not the only ship in the area and the gunship has not positively identified your aircraft. Likewise, the use of "lefts" and "rights" is terribly inaccurate. The only positive system is a heading

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in degrees from a reference point and an estimated distance to the target.

13.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Photo reconnaissance of landing zones.

Discussion: In multi-company airmobile assaults which have landing zones in close proximity to one another, it is difficult for flight leaders to pinpoint their touch down areas. This problem is compounded in the rice paddy areas of III CTZ where it is extremely difficult to differentiate a specific rice paddy from another specific rice paddy when both are situated in a huge expanse of nothing but rice paddies. The problem of identification exists not only for [illegible] aircraft flight leaders, but also for gunship pilots marking the landing zones. The use of 1:25,000 picto coverage is of great assistance, and is of primary importance in preventing landing zone identification from being a major problem in such terrain. Photo coverage of the area containing the multiple landing zones has proven to be of significantly greater value to key personnel, however, and when available, has greatly assisted pilots in their study of the terrain.

Observation: To date copies of landing zone photos have been difficult to get. The capability of having sufficient copies to distribute to all flight leaders and gunship pilots involved in an operation is very desirable, though presently a near impossibility. To have the print on board the lead ship of each flight would preclude any misidentification of landing zones and obviously be a step forward in airmobile operations. It is recommended that a study be made to provide such copy equipment as is necessary to reproduce photo coverage at Aviation Battalion level.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

The most recent operation consisted of six assault helicopter companies, six fire teams, two alternate C & C aircraft, and one smoke ship, creating a requirement for 15 photos covering six landing zones. This Battalion had one photo available which truly is insufficient quantity to satisfy the Battalion's needs.

14(v) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Eagle flight combat assaults.

Discussion: Excessive reconnaissance of landing zones prior to an assault often produces an operation with negative results. A highly effective operation recently conducted employed the scheme of two flight leads identifying their separate landing zones from about 4000 meters out. The two flights of five (5) landed at two separate landing zones 1000 meters apart with the gunships capping the open end. This operation caught the Viet Cong completely by surprise and little ground fire was encountered. The heavy fire team kept a tight orbit around the two landing zones at low altitude and closed all escape routes. Results of the operation were 16 enemy body count for the fire team and six enemy body count for the Infantry.

Observation: Operations of this nature, without prior reconnaissance or preparation should only be conducted when the Air Mission Commander and the ground commander are in complete accord as to its advisability.

C. (U) . Reconnaissance.

Source: Lessons learned, 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company.

Item: Visual reconnaissance.

Discussion:

a. Many hours have been flown at altitudes below 1500 feet absolute in an attempt to locate enemy elements. At times, observers have requested the aviator to contour at tree top level or lower in open areas. Below 500 feet absolute the aircraft is needlessly exposed to ground fire unless it is flown below 50 feet. Below 50 feet any target observed is passed too quickly for the observer to get any more than a fleeting glance at it, requiring additional passes over the target.

b. Aircraft flying between 500 and 1500 feet are still vulnerable to ground fire and have little luck spotting targets due to the relatively high relative motion between the ground and observer. In addition the aircraft engine noise serves as an early warning to enable enemy elements to take cover.

Observation:

When flying at or above 4000 feet, the aircraft is not audible to personnel on the ground. If the observer has binoculars, he can scan the ground below him in great detail at his leisure. Trenches, foxholes, personnel, etc, are easily spotted using binoculars because of the relatively stable air at this altitude. Recently, 15 Viet Cong were spotted holding a conference in a small clearing. The aircraft orbitted directly over them at 4500 feet for approximately 45 minutes awaiting clearance to fire. The Viet Cong were apparently unaware that the aircraft was in the area. The observer had time to accurately plot the coordinates, resulting in fire for effect on the second round. Recommend consideration of flying visual

reconnaissance missions at 3000 feet or higher unless the mission or weather requires a lower altitude.

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D. (U) Artillery.

1.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Artillery coordination.

Discussion: The salient problem this Battalion is recurrently faced with in airmobile operations is insuring a cut off of artillery support at the proper time, i.e., in accordance with the operation's Sequence of Events. The importance of an artillery fire direction center's computing the projectile's time of flight to preclude impact after the scheduled RP time cannot be over-stressed. During coordination briefings the following points should be impressed on the AMTF Commander and the supporting unit's ALO:

a. Unless a drastic change occurs in the tactical situation, once an airmobile force passes the RP inbound, it is committed to the landing zone. Artillery must be planned to terminate no later than the scheduled RP time since entering the final approach course to the landing zone at this moment is the marking gunship and the smoke dispensing aircraft. All rounds must be on the ground at this point in the operation.

b. A change or delay in artillery timing at the scheduled RP time results in the unnecessary delay of a 4 minute flight orbit, the time normally required to turn a formation of lift aircraft 360 degrees.

c. Artillery units must keep the Artillery LNO abreast of the conduct of missions at all times. Of utmost importance is the ability of the LNO to relay to the Air Mission Commander the time at which the final rounds were fired, the time of flight of projectiles, and the confirmation from FDC that all rounds are on the ground.

Observation: Close scrutiny of the planned artillery support of an

airmobile operation is required at coordination briefings. The crucial importance of timing in the conduct of airmobile assaults must be continually emphasized to all supported and supporting elements.

2.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 27-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 1 September 1967.

Item: Terminating artillery preparations of landing zones.

Discussion: A scheduled landing zone time of 1230 could not be met because the supporting artillery, after a delayed start in its planned preparation, did not terminate its firing on schedule. The artillery, continuing to impact in the landing zone after the scheduled RP time, resulted in the lift aircraft executing two full orbits and inserting the ground troops at 1238, eight minutes late.

Observation: A continuous requirement exists to stress at coordination briefings, with artillery LNO present, the importance of precision in timing artillery preparations in accordance with the planned Sequence of Events of the airmobile force.

3.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 33-67, in support of 1st Bde, 25th Inf Div, 17 September 1967.

Item: White phosphorous and final artillery preparations.

Discussion: During the final artillery preparation of a landing zone in support of this operation, the supporting artillery unit fired two rounds of white phosphorous into the impact area. Since the WP fell into the landing zone just three minutes before the scheduled landing time for the lift ships, sufficient time did not pass for the smoke to dissipate. Mixed with the gray haze created by the detonation of the previous rounds

of the preparation, the composite smoke and haze partially obscured the landing zone for the inbound aircraft.

Observation: In airmobile operations white phosphorous should be included in the final preparations of a landing zone under the following conditions:

a. At the specific request of the AMTF Commander.

b. At the specific request of the Air Mission Commander to identify the last round fired into the landing zone.

c. In no quantity greater than one round.

4(b) Source: Debrieifing, Operation 33-67, in support of 1st Bde, 25th Inf Div, 17 September 1967.

Item: Artillery control.

Discussion: When artillery is massed in a large operation, control of individual batteries becomes more difficult. In this operation, an individual FO requested that fire be placed on a specific target. The target was never cleared through the C & C aircraft, and when fired, was completely unexpected by the AMTF Commander. Fortunately, all aircraft were airborne at this time and clear of the flight path of the projectiles.

Observation: During an airmobile assault it is imperative that all artillery FDC understand that no missions will be fired unless the missions have been cleared through the C & C aircraft.

ARTILLERY

5.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Unplanned artillery support.

Discussion: Artillery support for this operation was planned to be fired from two of three possible Fire Support Bases within artillery range of the landing zone. No mention of artillery support from the third base was ever made by the Artillery LNO. During the conduct of the mission, however, artillery was called in to prepare the landing zone, and was found to be fired from the unplanned FSB. This had negligible effect on the flight, however, since flight routes were not interfered with.

Observation: Though no effect was realized on the airmobile mission by the use of the third FSB, it is quite clear that all FSB with artillery capable of reaching the target area should be considered in flight planning. Should the third FSB have fired concentrations having trajectories crossing the planned flight routes, adjustments to flight paths would have caused delays in time, and possibly unnecessary confusion within our aviation elements. All artillery FSB should be noted on operation overlays and considered active in flight planning.

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E.(U)Gunships.

1.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 25-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Loss of gunship lead.

Discussion: The loss of an organic assault helicopter company's gun platoon leader, wounded on an assault, resulted in the disorganization of gunship elements. The C & C aircraft resultantly was forced to place the mark for the inbound assault force. A loss of the C & C aircraft in the landing zone would have depleted the airmobile force by an Air Mission Commander, and an Infantry Battalion Commander and staff.

Observation: Briefing of all gunship Aircraft Commanders should necessarily be more thorough to insure that all subordinate gun Aircraft Commanders are aware of details of operations. The risk of having to use the C & C aircraft to mark a landing zone is unacceptable.

2(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Gunship SOP.

Discussion: The marking gunship in this Battalion size operation followed its company's SOP in that, leading the lift aircraft inbound to the landing zone, it attempted to maintain ten rotor discs separation ahead of the lead lift ship. The thought behind this method is the belief that more protection can be afforded the lift aircraft if a gunship is very close to the formation and directly ahead of it. Spacing is maintained between the marking gunship and the slicks through communication with the lift ship leader. Problems arise, however, in that this procedure completely denies the ground commander any lattitude or flexibility in the positioning of his ground forces.

Observation: By having the gunship lead the flight by 30 seconds or more, when the mark is dropped, should it be long or short, the ground commander still has an opportunity to alter his plan. By spacing the lead lift ship away from the marking gunship by 30 seconds or more, the Command and Control ship can still vary the actual touch down point of the air-mobile force.

3.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 28-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 September 1967.

Item: White phosphorous signal.

Discussion: A five minute gunship preparation of the landing zone was planned to follow an artillery preparation of 20 minutes duration. The artillery mixed white phosphorous with the final rounds fired. The white phosphorous was not called for by the C & C elements, nor was it planned to identify the final rounds fired. The gunships supporting the operation, however, turned inbound to begin their own preparation, thinking that the white phosphorous rounds were the last rounds fired.

Observation: To gunship pilots, white phosphorous projectiles, when fired into a landing zone, should signify merely that the artillery preparation is still being conducted. When confirmed by the C & C aircraft that the white phosphorous rounds are in fact the last rounds to impact in the landing zone, and only when confirmed by the C & C, may gunships turn inbound for their preparation runs. Gun platoon personnel should be briefed on this procedure and the policy instated throughout the Battalion.

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4.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 30-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 12 September 1967.

Item: Location of gunships.

Discussion: Gunships of one of the assault helicopter companies participating in this assault, when asked today if they were "in position," answered in affirmation. When told to proceed inbound to prep, however, they were, in fact, 2 flight minutes away from where the C & C ship expected them to be.

Observation: Battalion operation orders will henceforth include detailed instructions indicating specific orbit areas for gunships, areas to be capped by fire teams, and targets to be attacked on preparation runs. This will insure that all aviation elements are fully aware of exact responsibilities with reference to gunship location and targets.

5.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 32-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 16 September 1967.

Item: Gunship preparation.

Discussion: While waiting for the arrival of lift aircraft during this assault, the gun platoon leader designated to mark the landing zone maneuvered out of position for a proper preparation run. As the flight reported the RP inbound, the gun platoon leader, out of position, made his gun run in the wrong area, accomplishing nothing toward effective support of the inbound assault force.

Observation: An orbit point must be exactly located for the lead gunship to orbit to insure his timing and orientation are perfectly geared to the landing zone and the location of the inbound assault force.

6.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 32-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 16 September 1967.

Item: Use of rockets on point targets.

Discussion: During the conduct of this operation the ground commander requested gunship destruction of a chimney/smokestack by rockets. The target was engaged repeatedly with little success, and since gunship ordnance was nearly expended, the target was not destroyed at all.

Observation: Ground commanders should be advised of the capabilities of rockets. These are not extremely accurate weapons, nor are they, in fact, effective against structures such as the chimney described or concrete bunkers. They are primarily area weapons systems.

7.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Gunship reconnaissance.

Discussion: By flying at a lower level gunships have a considerable visual reconnaissance capability. Once a target is spotted, however, discretion should be used to determine the weapons system required to attack it. During this operation, a hard target, a reinforced concrete bunker, was discovered. Knowing little could be done with standard armament systems available on helicopters against a fortification of this type, a FAC, on station, was relayed data and directed to take the target under attack.

Observation: Air Force ordnance proved effective against a target which would have been unscathed by Army weapons systems. Serious consideration should be given to the employment of all ordnance available to insure the weapon which is committed is suitable to destroy the target.

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8.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 35-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 27 September 1967.

Item: Gunship instructions.

Discussion: All instructions received by gunships upon which action can be taken to engage enemy targets must be received from the C & C aircraft. Often, however, other aircraft in the area mark targets and give specific instructions to gunships indicating not only a location, but also, at least, an implication to engage the target. This confuses gunship pilots and requires immediate remedial action by the C & C personnel to insure that only proper targets are engaged and in a priority established by the ground commander.

Observation: At coordination briefings all personnel to be involved in airmobile operations should be continually reminded of the procedure required to insure proper target identification and engagement. Targets should be marked and spotted, but reported only to the C & C party. The AMTF Commander, and only he, may approve the engagement of ground targets. Once airborne, personnel identifying targets directly for target engagement should be advised by gunship Aircraft Commanders to contact the C & C elements with this information.

9.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 37-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 October 1967.

Item: Gunships armed with white phosphorous rockets.

Discussion: A gunship making a preparation run on the landing zone fired white phosphorous rockets into a tree line directly adjacent to the touch down point of the inbound lift aircraft. Prevailing winds

moved the smoke over the landing zone obscuring the mark. The expected results partially occurred. The flight leader had extreme difficulty in identifying his touch down point, a degree of confusion followed, and immediate rectifying vector control had to be initiated by the C & C aircraft. A particular hazard developed as the white phosphorous expanded and began to engulf the second flight of ten ships, at that time only five rotor discs behind the first flight of ten.

Observation: Battalion operation orders will indicate the type ordnance to be carried by gunships armed with rocket launching systems.

10.(v) Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: Gunship weapons employment.

Discussion: In planning Battalion size operations, little emphasis is placed on the designating of targets for specific weapons systems. This results in an almost arbitrary engagement of enemy targets by aircraft having weapons which are not always best suited for the destruction of such targets. Often rockets rake a tree line while an M-3 system remains in a gunship orbit area awaiting further instructions. Though both systems are efficient, one is certainly better suited for a tree line or a point target than is the other.

Observation: In the planning phase of Battalion operations, particular emphasis should be placed on designating specific targets for weapons systems. The planning for and utilization of gunships as weapons systems capable of delivering varied ordnance, rather than merely as gunships, is an immense stride forward in the conduct of the airmobile assault.

The commander who insures that specific mission assignments are given to weapons systems is the commander who will soon realize a substantial decrease in enemy fire received and aircraft lost from combat damage.

11.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: M-5 weapons system.

Discussion: In 38 consecutive Battalion operations, the weapons systems proven to be most effective in the terrain and operational environment of III CTZ is the M-5.

Observation: In planning for weapons systems to be mounted on aircraft deploying to the III Corps area, RVN, it is advisable to program an increase of the 40mm guns per gun platoon. The present allowance is 2 systems per 8 aircraft. An increase to 3 would be more satisfactory. Systems used in conjunction may be whichever are desired. However, coming to III Corps, M-5 systems are a must.

12.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Selection of Gun Platoon aviators and crews.

Discussion: Gun platoon aviators and crews in this unit are selected from in-country experienced personnel assigned to a slick platoon. As a matter of policy, no aviator or crew member is assigned directly to the gun platoon without first being assigned to a slick platoon and proving himself worthy of this additional responsibility.

Observation: This method of selection has proven to be highly successful as evidenced by the gun discipline of the 116th Assault Helicopter Company gun platoon. This not only adds prestige to a gun platoon

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

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

Item: Gunship night operations.

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

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

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F. (U) Suppression.

1.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 30-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 12 September 1967.

Item: FCL suppression and formations.

Discussion: One landing zone was apportioned into two sections, a landing zone EAST and a landing zone WEST. The approach course was EAST to WEST with the first insertion into landing zone EAST. Full suppression was authorized on both insertions, with a FCL separating landing zone EAST from landing zone WEST. The second insertion into landing zone WEST was made by necessity in a trail formation of 20 ships. The resultant length of the flight precluded full effective suppression simultaneously expended from all ships due to the long passage time of the aircraft over the FCL.

Observation: When a FCL separates adjacent landing zones, it is important to either bring the flights into a landing zone in smaller groups, i.e., 5 or 10 at a time, and deny the enemy targets restricted from firing by the FCL, or, if possible, change the formation from a lengthy trail to a more compact column of heavy rights, lefts, echelons, or even V's.

2.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Door gunner suppression.

Discussion: After arriving in Vietnam, this company adhered to the priciple of firing only the outside guns of ships in formation. It was realized, however, that the fire power available for the protection of the troop carriers was thus cut in half. In view of this fact, and as a result of the heavy volume of enemy fire received, full suppression using

all guns on the troop carriers was tested, refined, and adopted by this company.

Observation: Full door gunner suppression involves the following factors in order to achieve maximum benefit with safety:

a. The formation discipline must be strictly observed. An absolute minimum of two rotor discs separation must be maintained and three discs separation is preferred.

b. Full door gunner suppression can be granted by the Mission Commander only when in fact the formation is being strictly maintained.

c. The aircraft commander must aggressively control the fire of his inside door gunner in regard to other ships in the formation. As a portion of this control, the gunners must be thoroughly briefed and explicitly directed when and where to fire.

d. The fire of the inside door gunners must be directed down to pass under the flight paths of the other troop carriers.

e. A high degree of gunner skill and training is required.

f. Inside door gunner suppression must be cut off prior to the final landing flare.

3.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Door gunner suppression.

Discussion: During Eagle Flight operations it is desired that maximum suppression be utilized in pick-up zones where ground troops have received fire from one side. In this situation, when the Airmobile Force Commander desires that his troops be picked up in trail, the ships land between the friendly troops and the source of the enemy fire. This allows the five outside gunners to continue suppression all the way down final

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approach, throughout touch down and loading, and on take off and climb out. The ground troops load the aircraft from one side only and the gunner on that side, of course, does not fire.

Observation: The additional time required to load from one door only has proven almost negligible while the benefits derived from the continuous suppression have been noteworthy. In the instances where this tactic has been used, no enemy fire has been received by the ships, although fire had been received by the ground troops just prior to extraction. This tactic can be logically extended to the use of staggered trail formations by landing the columns on each side of the troops, and having them load from the inside of the columns only while continuous suppressive fire is maintained by the outside guns.

G. (U) Communications and Signal

1. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Excessive communications traffic.

Discussion: Too much company traffic is generally transmitted on Battalion UHF during an airmobile operation. At a crucial time such as an RP or landing zone time, the jamming of frequencies with unnecessary traffic is an operational hazard.

Observation: Commanders should ensure that inter-platoon transmissions are given on Company FM frequencies.

2. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Alternate frequencies.

Discussion: During this operation a requirement existed to switch all aviation elements to an alternate frequency. Though this was entered in the OPORD, no set method was instated to have all units transfer channels.

Observation: Effective immediately a code word transmitted on guard to all Battalion elements will indicate that a transfer to alternate frequencies must be made immediately.

3. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Radio technique.

Discussion: A general observation in the conduct of aviation support in RVN is that aviation personnel tend to be apologetic without due cause. Transmissions of "I'm sorry, but...," instill doubt in the ground commander's mind. In addition, transmissions should be as brief as

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intelligible.

Observation: Never apologize. Think before you transmit.

4.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 29-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 11 September 1967.

Item: Chinook operating frequency.

Discussion: Chinooks, after the completion of Huey insertions in combined operations, were instructed by the departing C & C aircraft to contact the infantry command elements for instructions on an infantry Brigade Command frequency.

Observation: The Brigade Command frequency was so cluttered with transmissions that supporting elements were unable to make effective contact, much less function under infantry control. An alternate frequency for ground to air contact and control should be allocated to aircraft by the infantry during the conduct of Chinook resupply missions.

5.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 35-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 27 September 1967.

Item: Incomplete reports by Aircraft Commander.

Discussion: Incomplete reports are being rendered by lift aircraft commanders when they are in receipt of hostile fire or have spotted an enemy. A most recent example consisted of a report by an aircraft commander that he had spotted a Viet Cong running. Nothing more was initially reported. A number of transmissions later, transmissions from the flight leader to the C & C ship, to the gun leader, and back through the chain, disclosed that the VC spotted was running, did in fact have a weapon and pack, and was moving in a specific direction when referenced

from the flight path of the lift ships. The transmission time required to obtain the complete data to effectively engage the target consumed about 50 seconds. During these 50 seconds, the enemy disappeared.

Observation: Complete data transmitted initially by the aircraft commander to his flight leader would have precluded several unnecessary radio transmissions and probably would have resulted in an enemy body count. It is recommended that aircraft commanders be thoroughly briefed before each mission as to what is required in a transmission identifying a target to be engaged. The correct reporting of such data is an aviator training matter to be monitored continually by unit commanders. Brevity and accuracy in radio transmissions is one of the operational refinements distinguishing a well-disciplined assault helicopter company.

6(v) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Broadcast of receipt of enemy fire.

Discussion: On final to the landing zone, the aircraft commanders in this company place the radio selector in the UHF position during company operations. When enemy fire is received, the chalk number and the direction to the fire is immediately broadcast.

Observation: This procedure results in extremely fast reaction by the escorting gunships. This method is faster that the use of smoke alone and results in accurate and effective suppressive fires against the source of enemy fire.

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COMMUNICATIONS AND SIGNAL

7.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: AN/ASC-11 Commander's Console.

Discussion: The AN/ASC-11 Commander's Console, as issued, is unsatisfactory for command and control. There are three major limitations.

a. Only one position is provide for the Mission Commander to monitor the console FM radios. It is mandatory that both the Mission Commander and the pilot have the capability to monitor and transmit over these radios.

b. Only two intercom/transmit positions are available to the ground commander. "Y" cords can be utilized to give additional positions, but this is unsatisfactory because all microphones on the "Y" cord are hot during transmissions. A minimum of three independent positions are required by the ground commander.

c. The Commander's Console does not provide a second UHF capability for the C & C aircraft. This can be overcome by installation of a float UHF radio. To be satisfactory the console should be issued with a UHF radio installed.

Observation: Correction of these major deficiencies is considerably beyond the capabilities of organic Signal detachments. Only by correction of the above limitations, however, will the AN/ASC-11 provide satisfactory service.

8.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company.

Item: Radio frequencies for control in landing zones and pick-up zones during tactical artillery moves.

COMMUNICATIONS AND SIGNAL

Discussion: Many artillery batteries desire to control the CH-47 on the Artillery Command Net. This has resulted in excess traffic on a net which was being utilized to control aircraft traffic into a landing zone. Many delays have occurred when commanders have used the radio not at the critical time when an aircraft was nearing the landing zone and needed guidance from the ground. Secondly, by using the same frequency at the pick-up zone and the landing zone, especially on short distance moves, too much traffic is on one net and confusion will exist.

Observation: Control of aircraft at the pick-up zone should be on the aviation unit frequency. Control at the landing zone should be on the pathfinder frequency.

9(U) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: AN/ARC-54.

Discussion: A great deal of difficulty has been experienced with binding gears on certain modules of the receiver-transmitter unit, resulting in low or zero power output and frequency drifts.

Observation: It has been found that the application of a drop of light weight oil to the RF power amplifier slug rack gears and guides has greatly reduced the gear binding and wear. Undesirable effects have not been noticed to date.

10(U) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: AN/ARC-54.

Discussion: Continuous cycling resulting in a constant tone in the headphones is often caused by binding stresses in the mechanical drive.

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Observation: This condition was eliminated by a thorough cleaning with alcohol and straightening the pins on the seeking switches S-701 and S-702.

11.(U)Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: AN/ARC-54.

Discussion: Experience continues to disclose misalignment to be the major cause of failure, resulting directly from vibration while in flight. The misalignment occurs when the slugs in the tuning coils change positions.

Observation: To assist in overcoming this deficiency a drop of candle wax is placed on the screw seats of L602, L603, L609, L612, and L615 of the RF amplifier. This procedure has significantly reduced the maintenance work load.

12.(U)Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Floor microphone switches.

Discussion: "Hot microphones" are often caused when the contacts are shorted due to moisture collecting on the bottom of the floor microphone switch.

Observation: It has been found that by coating the contacts with grease or an oily substance this condition is suppressed.

13.(U)Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Avionics float.

Discussion: In many instances Avionics detachments arrive in country with only a small percentage of their authorized float. Efforts

were made to obtain the necessary float by requisitions. Requisitions were returned, however, indicating that an avionics float was not authorized for specific items.

Observation: Float equipment on several new communication systems has not arrived in country, thereby seriously affecting the support provided to the supported unit. It is highly recommended that at least part, if not all, float equipment be issued prior to a unit's departing CONUS.

14.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Initial parts stockage of supply shelter AN/ASM-147A.

Discussion: The repair parts received with the AN/ASM-147A contained many parts needed for general support repair. Many items known to have a high turnover rate, such as modules for radios, control head knobs and lights, and helmet repair parts were not included.

Observation: The prepack concept should continue, but it is recommended that part inclusion be based on direct support usage factors.

15.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 187th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Requirement for UH-1D modification.

Discussion: Any UH-1D assigned to an assault helicopter company is subject to be used as a C & C aircraft. The aircraft must have the capability of providing the ground commander and his staff entry into the aircraft communications system. Two methods have been employed to provide this service:

a. A "Y" cord is placed in the aircraft for each passenger

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not to exceed two. This method has proven to be undesirable in that the capability of two-way communications between the pilot and crew is eliminated. The crew's push to talk button is utilized by the passengers.

b. The preferred method is to locally fabricate and install an additional cord on each of the C-1611's used by the crew. This method allows the pilots and crews to maintain constant two-way communications.

Observation: It is recommended that the second method be adopted as a modification and installed in all aircraft. This would eliminate the excessive time expended in obtaining and installing these cords at detachment level.

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H. (U) Formations

1.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Flight formations.

Discussion: One company in the Battalion was not familiar with 180 degree pedal turns, nor was it familiar with the meaning of "5 rotor discs separation."

Observation: All companies should be familiar with Battalion SOP, and in the event the company is newly arrived in country, priority should be given to becoming intimately familiar with Battalion SOP.

2.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 29-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 11 September 1967.

Item: Chinook formations.

Discussion: Chinook pilots making multiple lifts with two aircraft from the same landing zone invariably resupply in individual sorties. Into a field location where gunship cover is required for the inbound Chinooks, it is difficult to break off a cap of one Chinook to escort another in.

Observation: The problems of gunship escort to Chinooks can be remedied by having a close formation of Chinooks inbound to a landing zone. If this be done, fire teams need not split, but rather can afford maximum protection to a CH-47 flight of two by covering both at once.

3.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 37-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 October 1967.

Item: Formations into landing zones.

Discussion: Some landing zones are quite naturally covered to

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a degree by isolated trees, shrubs, or, in some cases, crater holes. Frequently the flight leader cautions the flight on final of the hazards spotted in the landing zone. This transmission is normally followed by instructions to pilots to "pick their spots." It appears that too often pilots feel this is sufficient lattitude to warrant breaking formation. In today's operation one aircraft touched down a full one hundred meters from the flank of the flight.

Observation: Commanders should insure that all aviators understand that the instructions to "pick a spot" are not synonymous with "disband." Flight integrity through the maintenance of a formation must be maintained. "Pick your spot" merely indicates that caution and discretion should be used in the point of touch down.

4(U) Source: Lessons learned, 188th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Formations.

Discussion: Recently this unit has supported ARVN units which have been exposed to very few airmobile operations. As a result they encountered considerable difficulty in preparing for pick-up in the pick-up zone. During and after the operations the Air Mission Commander discussed items which would have been of greater benefit had they been covered during the planning and preparation phase of the airmobile operations.

Observation: It would be extremely helpful to all ground commanders if a packet could be assembled showing the different formations used for pick-up and landing. This packet should also contain information on how to form for pick-up considering winds and flight routes. This packet could be taken on coordination missions and given to the supported unit as an aid in preparation of their airmobile mission.

I. (U) Pick-up Zones

1. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 27-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 1 September 1967.

Item: Troops not in pick-up zone.

Discussion: At pick-up time on this operation, infantry elements were not located in the correct area, causing considerable confusion and hazarding the success of the airmobile assault.

Observation: To preclude a similar occurrence:

a. A sketch of the landing zone and pick-up zone will be inserted into operations orders, a copy of which will be forwarded to the ground commander.

b. An officer or senior NCO will be attached to the supported infantry unit the day before the operation to insure proper organization within the pick-up zone.

c. The infantry Battalion Commander will be informed by the aviation representative of any obviously imminent delays in the positioning of ground troops.

d. On all coordination briefings the S3 or Assistant S3 will physically show his infantry counterparts the exact geographical areas designated as the operation's pick-up zones.

2. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 28-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 September 1967.

Item: Priority of aircraft in airfields with towers.

Discussion: On a number of operations originating at airfields with towers, problems arose on tower clearances given to aircraft not involved in the operation at hand. In these instances these clearances adversely affected the take off or landing times of airmobile companies

involved in time-critical airmobile assaults.

Observation: The agency controlling the tower should be advised of operations upcoming at its airfield. A priority should be established for lift aircraft involved in the operation over other transient ships.

3.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 28-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 September 1967.

Item: Weather decisions.

Discussion: On several occasions with Battalion operations staging out of smaller areas such as DAU TIENG airstrip, the Battalion was forced to accept a considerable weather delay. With this delay 50 aircraft were located in the vicinity of one short runway. A large group of aircraft such as this, shut down in a small area, presents a lucrative target for Viet Cong mortars.

Observation: Whenever possible weather decisions should be made early enough to preclude having so high a concentration of aircraft shut down in one area as a result of IFR weather. A mortar attack at such a time could be devastating.

4.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 29-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 11 September 1967.

Item: Flights returning to pick-zones.

Discussion: On occasions of successive lifts of multi-companies from the same pick-up zone, flight leaders are not returning to the same location. The problem of loading infantry troops is greatly magnified if lift companies fail to return to the exact location of pick-up on subsequent lifts. The infantry anticipates specific lift companies at

specific locations in a pick-up zone. If, in fact, the required company is on the left side, instead of the right side of a runway, as expected, confusion ensues.

Observation: Flight leaders should insure that lift aircraft return to the exact touch down point of the first pick-up on all subsequent lifts.

5.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 29-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 11 September 1967.

Item: Perpendicular parking of lead ships.

Discussion: The lead aircraft of a lift company occasionally turns perpendicular to the flight path of his ships on touch down to a pick-up zone. The intent here, of course, is to allow the platoon leader the opportunity to observe the loading of troops and the status of aircraft. This has caused confusion, however, to ground troops boarding the flight, since ground troops have difficulty identifying the cocked lead aircraft as part of the flight and an aircraft to be loaded. With the lead ship turned 90 degrees, the tendency exists for the first two loads to converge on the second aircraft with a ripple effect down the line.

Observation: Lead ships of lift companies, after terminating an approach to a pick-up zone, should touch down in the same direction as all other chalks in the flight. This will preclude any confusion in the crucial minute habitually allowed for loading troops.

6.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 29-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 11 September 1967.

Item: Change of pick-up zone.

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PICK-UP ZONES

Discussion: During this operation one Battalion Commander, in changing the location of his designated pick-up zone, failed to inform the aviation elements in support. Pathfinders exerted a maximum effort to rectify the situation as best they could, but with limited time available considerable confusion ensued, even until five minutes prior to take off time.

Observation: All Infantry Brigade and Battalion Commanders must be made aware of the problems created if pick-up zone locations are arbitrarily changed without notifying the supporting aviation unit. Certainly, if a pick-up zone must be changed due to a tactical situation, aviation units will adjust. However, at least we must stress with the infantry the critical importance of making us aware of changes. A delay in the pick-up zone invariably results in a late landing zone arrival, which subsequently reflects directly on our professional competence.

7(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 31-67, in support of 199th Light Infantry Brigade, 12 September 1967.

Item: Traffic pattern.

Discussion: When staging out of forward airfields such as GO DAU HA, where sod or dirt runways exist, but no towers, aircraft invariably take off and land in any direction determined by aircraft commanders to be appropriate. This constitutes a definite aviation hazard.

Observation: The operations order should have enclosed as an annex a sketch of the airfield/pick-up zone, to insure one landing direction in the traffic pattern used.

PICK-UP ZONES

8.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Early arrivals.

Discussion: When operations orders are published, the Sequence of Events indicates at what time assault helicopter companies are to arrive at their designated pick-up zones. Since departure times from base camps to the pick-up zones are left to the discretion of the individual assault helicopter company commanders, they frequently depart so as to insure an early arrival at the pick-up zone. The intent of stipulating arrival times in the pick-up zones is to limit the exposure time of so lucrative a target as one or more assault helicopter companies shut down in a small area. The early arrival of lift aircraft denies us the luxury of minimizing the exposure time of our flights in the pick-up zones.

Observation: If assault helicopter company commanders desire to depart their base camps early, and they arrive at the pick-up zone early, it would be prudent to orbit at a known distance from the pick-up zone, breaking the orbit and turning inbound so as to touch down at the time designated in the Sequence of Events. The establishing of such an orbit policy will additionally serve as a training vehicle to instill a greater degree of discipline in compliance by subordinate units to Battalion directives.

9.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 35-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 27 September 1967.

Item: Pathfinder reports.

Discussion: In large multi-company airmobile operations consisting of two, three, or more lift companies staging from one pick-up zone, it

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has been found that not always are full flights of aircraft required for the lift. Often the ground units have insufficient loads to fill all the aircraft in a flight. Rather than have the extra ships touch down with the flight in the pick-up zone, it is on occasion more expeditious to have aircraft orbit, or perhaps send them forward to the next secure pick-up zone, to await the inbound main body. This relieves congestion in the pick-up zone and precludes the hazard of having aircraft unnecessarily down in an area vulnerable to enemy mortar or recoilless rifle attack.

Observation: To effectively control the number of aircraft sent to a pick-up zone location, constant monitoring of the number of loads to be transported is required by Pathfinder elements at the pick-up zone. Reports of the number of loads to be lifted by each assault helicopter company on subsequent lifts must be relayed to the Command and Control aircraft as soon as the information is available.

10.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 37-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 9 October 1967.

Item: Spare aircraft in pick-up zone.

Discussion: Operations orders continually require that each assault helicopter company involved in a Battalion operation have an additional aircraft available to serve as a maintenance spare. A requirement arose to use the maintenance spare as the lift aircraft were departing for their initial insertion. The spare aircraft could not be immediately notified since its location on the airfield was not known. Since a few minutes passed before the aircraft could be found, started, loaded, and airborne, one flight of lift ships consisted of nine instead of the

scheduled ten aircraft. The problem ensuing is not only one of getting the desired number of personnel into the landing zone on the first lift, but also, should the ship which fails to depart have an Infantry Comapny Commander or other key personnel on board, unnecessary and critical problems might result once the ground troops are inserted.

Observation: To preclude such occurrences:

a. All spare aircraft will start engines and remain at flight idle at the same scheduled time as the lift aircraft start.

b. All Aircraft Commanders will monitor appropriate frequencies immediately upon starting aircraft.

c. The gunner from each spare aircraft will post himself with Pathfinder detachment personnel controlling loads. When instructed, the gunner may return to his ship, informing the Aircraft Commander of the location of the aircraft and load which he is to replace.

d. Operations orders will specify the location of the spare aircraft in the pick-up zone to insure their parking in close proximity to the Pathfinder elements.

e. In the event lift aircraft enter a pick-up zone for an initial troop pick-up from an airborne orbit point, spare aircraft will remain in orbit, monitoring the Pathfinder FM frequency, as well as the Battalion UHF Command net, to insure that, if and when needed, they need only descend to the landing zone and replace the grounded chalk.

11.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 38-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 12 October 1967.

Item: Marking permanent pick-up zone.

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PICK-UP ZONES

Discussion: The second lift during this operation was delayed an extra minute as a result of unequal spacing of infantry personnel chalks in the pick-up zone. The aircraft, attempting to maintain a required minimum spacing between ships, could not reach the load designated for the last three ships in the flight. A slight confusion ensued with infantry personnel running toward the last three ships, loading at random, and losing any planned load integrity.

Observation: The problem of controlling chalk spacing in the pick-up zone habitually used by infantry elements for airmobile operations can best be resolved by placing marking stakes with chalk sequences correctly spaced along the permanent pick-up zone area. By so doing the problem of exact location of loads and the spacing between them can be eliminated.

J. (U) Landing Zones

1.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 26-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 30 August 1967.

Item: Landing zone identification.

Discussion: The use of yellow smoke in an early morning insertion to the EAST serves of little benefit. The glare of the sun, plexiglas scratches, etc, preclude identification of yellow smoke on an approach to the EAST.

Observation: SOP should reflect this recognized deficiency in the use of yellow smoke.

2.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 27-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 1 September 1967.

Item: Landing zone mark.

Discussion: On the marking run into the landing zone on the initial insertion of this operation, only one mark was dropped by the lead gunship. It did not ignite and created a potentially serious error in the positioning of the incoming flight.

Observation: The use of 2 marks from the lead gunship is mandatory. In addition the backup of a wingman familiar with the proper location of the mark is added insurance. Should either mark by the lead ship not ignite, the wingman would be in position to drop a 3d and 4th round.

3.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 36-67, in support of 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 28 September 1967.

Item: Marking wet landing zones.

Discussion: Problems have been encountered by gunships marking wet landing zones. The smoke grenades in use, when wet, take considerably

longer to have the color come up than when ignited over dry ground. A portion, in fact, never ignite, an occurrence which causes serious problems in airmobile operations. It has also been found that yellow and red smoke is easier to spot when dropped in a wet area than is green and violet.

Observation: When marking a wet landing zone, it is advisable to mark with yellow or red smoke, as these colors continually seem easier to recognize visually in a marshy or wet area. If the landing zone is completely submerged, as are some landing zones in the III CTZ during the rainy season, and point accuracy in the touch down spot is not a dire necessity, consideration can be given to the use of a white phosphorous rocket round in the landing zone as a mark. Of course, if white phosphorous is used, care must be taken to insure placing the round in position only after an analysis has been made of the full effect of wind on the smoke itself.

4(v)Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: Air controlled approach.

Discussion: The problem of a flight leader having difficulty in identifying a landing zone is a recurrent one. Though prior planning, reconnaissance, and the use of smoke grenades are standard procedures within this Battalion, it has been found that maximum benefit can be derived from gunships by having a gunship lead the flight into a landing zone. For example, a report from the flight leader that he is one minute from the RP is sufficient notice to have the marking gunship turn toward the RP to meet the flight. Radio contact is established between the flight leader

and the marking gunship when the marking gunship transmits his position relative to the lift aircraft. A typical contact when the lift ship reports the RP consists of, "HORNET LEAD, this is STINGER 96, (marking gunship), in a tight left turn, your 2 o'clock level." At this time the flight leader can make visual contact with the gunship. A further transmission from the gunship to the flight gives the lift leader the final heading from his present position to the landing zone. On final to the landing zone, the marking gunship reports the following:

a. "400 meters from the mark."

b. "100 meters from the mark."

c. "Mark is out." (The mark is dropped on the touch down point).

d. "LZ is hot/cold." (A report of any fire received).

The reports of distances from the position where the mark is to be placed and the marking gunship afford the flight leader the luxury of being able to positively identify his landing zone a few seconds sooner than had he had to wait until the mark was dropped. Immediately upon receipt of the "400 meters" report, he, the flight leader, can scan for his touch down point and appraise the entire landing zone.

Observation: Though difficulty in identifying a landing zone is only occasionally experienced by flight leaders, every effort must be made to insure that the one rarely occurring error be precluded. The above system can best be described as an air cotrolled approach, similar to a GCA, in that the marking gunship in fact funnels the lift aircraft into a landing zone. The systematic reports by the gunship serve to accomplish the following:

a. Insure positive landing zone identification even before the mark is thrown.

b. Preclude a confusion normally associated with a failure of the mark to ignite, since through radio communication the flight leader identifies where the mark should have been dropped.

c. Should the ground commander desire greater surprise for his assault by not positively identifying the landing zone with a smoke grenade, the flight leader can, when in receipt of the report that the "mark is out," identify the point over which the gunship is at that instant, and shoot his approach to that point. Not dropping a smoke grenade as a mark affords the ground commander maximum surprise by denying the enemy knowledge of the exact location of the landing zone. A dropped smoke grenade is proof positive of an inbound flight, while a gunship at low level is nothing more than a gunship overflight.

5(U) Source: Lessons learned, 188th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Marking of landing zones.

Discussion: It has been brought out during discussion of combat assaults that the time taken to describe and locate the desired landing zone in several instances was excessive and possibly compromised the impending assault.

Observation: The possibility of arming the Command and Control aircraft with two small rocket pods would enable the C & C ship to mark the landing zone with one round of white phosphorous and the gunships could immediately bring the area under fire, thereby reducing the possibility of a compromise of the landing zone. It is understood that this technique could only be used when suppression by gunships is authorized.

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LANDING ZONES

6.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Discussion: Marking of wet landing zones, targets, or other areas with smoke is often a difficult task since the grenade submerges, causing extensive delays in the smoke billowing. On a recent mission in the delta such was the problem. To eliminate this a beverage can opener was used to perforate the smoke grenade canister. Results were instant smoke in a great volume, but of shorter duration. However, it did serve the purpose and assisted in accomplishment of the mission.

Observation: Should such difficulties be experienced this method of perforating the smoke canister can be used effectively.

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K. (U) Miscellaneous

1.(U)Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: Infusion.

Discussion: Present infusion programs in Vietnam are on occasion quite inadequate and seriously detrimental to the operating efficiency of the units involved. Specific reference is made to instances wherein aviators are infused from newly arrived companies with less than a year in country. An infusion program is established basically for two reasons. Primarily, it is desirable to attain an immediate combat experience level within the new unit. The assignment of a number of experienced aviators accomplishes this to a degree. Secondly, it is necessary to vary the rotation dates of the assigned personnel of a new unit to CONUS. This is also accomplished, but to an even lesser degree. The critical problem resulting from taking aviators from a unit with less than a year in country is that it leaves that unit short of experienced personnel, personnel who are just barely reaching the proficiency level wherein they themselves can even be considered "experienced." What in fact is accomplished is that a unit striving for operational stability in its early months in Vietnam has its few experienced resources depleted by the infusion process, with the only return being an input of no experience whatsoever. The other unit, newly arrived, is in turn acquiring aviators with a level of experience not nearly sufficiently high to be of significant benefit.

Observation: A much better solution would be realized if an infusion policy were established assigning aviators to new units from

companies established in country for well over a year. In this way maximum benefit can be derived from the exchange by both units involved. A unit which has been in RVN for over a year has achieved operational stability and has the quantity and developed quality of personnel from which it can select individuals who would be of benefit to the new unit and yet retain sufficient talent to readily absorb the loss.

2.(v) Source: Lessons learned, 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company.

Item: Employment of observation aircraft in teams of two aircraft.

Discussion: BLACK ACE pilots supporting 25th Division (ARVN) operations in the DUC HOA area have enjoyed considerable success by employing a team of two Bird Dogs to locate enemy troops and emplacements for engagement by artillery and/or armed helicopter fire teams. Enemy emplacements in this area are well-concealed and camouflaged and are very difficult to see from the usual reconnaissance altitude of 1500 feet or above. These targets can be detected from low level flight altitudes but accurate plotting of their location is difficult due to lack of prominent terrain features visible from altitude. By employing two aircraft, one flying at low levels (approximately 50 feet above the terrain) and the other at 1500-2000 feet, excellent results have been obtained. The observer in the low level aircraft locates and describes the target to the observer in the higher aircraft who then accurately plots the target's location. The pilot of the higher aircraft maintains radio communication with the supported ground unit and appropriate flight following agency. This technique has been especially successful when used in conjunction with an armed helicopter fire team. During the last

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30 days a Viet Cong body count of 30 confirmed KIA has been obtained by armed helicopters working with BLACK ACE aircraft in the DUC HOA area. BLACK ACE aircraft have not been hit by enemy fire while using this technique.

Observation: Employment of Bird Dog aircraft in teams of two is recommended where targets are difficult to detect from normal altitude and low level flight is required.

3.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 27-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 1 September 1967.

Item: Entry into Fire Support Base.

Discussion: An aircraft resupplying a FSB established in support of this operation made an approach to the center of the FSB, throwing dust and dirt on troops eating a noon meal in a location directly adjacent to his touch down point.

Observation: Discretion in landing supplies into a troop location should be constantly stressed by subordinate unit commanders. This not only prevents unnecessary harrassment of ground elements, but also insures a reasonable degree of safety.

4.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 27-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 1 September 1967.

Item: Aborts.

Discussion: The question arose during the debriefing of this operation concerning aviation elements' aborting a landing zone insertion once committed from the RP.

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Observation: The dictates of the ground commander remain the guidance. If he chooses to insert, air elements are committed; if he chooses to abort, we abort.

5(v) Source: Debriefing, Operation 34-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 22 September 1967.

Item: Aircraft destruction.

Discussion: A gunship from an organic assault helicopter company received sufficient .50 caliber weapons fire to cause it to crash. Having extracted the crew and the salvagable radio equipment, nothing remained but a ruined hulk of a helicopter. The decision was made by the Air Mission Commander to destroy the aircraft for reasons based on the tactical ground plan, the security of the recovery ship, the condition of the aircraft, and the length of time the recovery operation would have required. The infantry ground commander sought to remain in the AO not more than 3 hours, after which he wanted his troops extracted. The crash site was not secure, nor was it expected to be secured to allow recovery operations to begin. The estimate from the recovery team indicated that at least 4-5 hours would be required to get the aircraft extracted. Finally, the weighing of one CH-47, subject to the same ground fire which downed the UH-1, against the value of the scrap metal on the ground, dictated that the Air Commander destroy the crashed ship immediately

Observation: Four points which must be considered by each Air Mission Commander prior to directing the destruction of an aircraft are:

a. Ground tactical plan.

b. Time required to extract.

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c. Security of CH-47.

d. Condition of the crashed aircraft.

6.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Employment of smoke by helicopter during extractions from a hot pick-up zone.

Discussion: During an extraction of 2 companies from the IRON TRIANGLE, smoke was employed to deprive the enemy of a view of the loading aircraft. Due to the loading time required the smoke dissipated and was almost ineffective. During the final extraction the Air Mission Commander had the smoke ship dispense a small amount of smoke to give protection to the slicks in the pick-up zone. Then the smoke ship re-positioned itself to lay the final smoke screen for the ships departing the pick-up zone. The pick-up zone was hot, but no hits were received by the lift aircraft.

Observation: Smoke is a valuable asset to the Air Mission Commander when used effectively. When using smoke during extractions, insure that there is sufficient smoke employed for the landing and loading in the pick-up zone. Loading time permits the smoke aircraft to re-position itself, then employ the smoke along the initial smoke line, and continue on for the departure route.

7.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company.

Item: Preparation of loads.

Discussion: Missions in support of an engineer unit were never ready when the aircraft arrived. The ground units would have only the

first load out of many loads ready when the aircraft arrived. Aircraft were waiting as much as an hour for loads to be prepared. A visit by the Operations Officer with the S3 and Executive Officer of the Engineer Battalion revealed the fact that the Battalion mission requests were erroneously made. As an example, a request was sent to Division for 12 sorties between 0800 and 1200 hours. The Battalion meant they wanted the sorties spread over the four hour period. Division interpreted the request as meaning they would have 12 sorties ready for pick-up at any time between the hours of 0800 and 1200, and assigned two aircraft from 0800-0930 to complete the mission. Only the first sortie was ready at 0800 hours.

Observation: All units utilizing Chinook support should be instructed to be very specific in their requests, to include how many sorties at what specific times. Units should have all sorties ready before the time requested to facilitate scheduling of aircraft.

8.(v)Source: Lessons learned, 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company.

Item: Tactical missions, such as artillery moves, sandwiched between general support missions.

Discussion: Recently an artillery battery move was scheduled for four CH-47 aircraft to commence 15 minutes after the same aircraft were scheduled for resupply missions to another location. Last minute changes to the artillery mission had to be briefed over the radio and resulted in confusion and delay in the artillery move.

Observation: For scheduling purposes, the CH-47 should have a

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minimum of thirty minutes ground time to refuel and coordinate last minute changes with the Flight Leader and Aircraft Commanders, prior to conducting a mission of a different type from the last.

L. (U) Safety

1.(U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 31-67, in support of 199th Light Infantry Brigade, 12 September 1967.

Item: Operations in vicinity of TAN SON NHUT.

Discussion: The flight path of lift aircraft followed a routing close to the ILS and GCA approach course to TAN SON NHUT's Runway 25.

Observation:

a. Care should be given to insure flight routes and altitudes sufficiently restrictive to guarantee clearance of IFR high performance aircraft traffic inbound to TAN SON NHUT.

b. The SAIGON traffic pattern should be published and printed with reference to control zones, as is the BIEN HOA traffic pattern.

2.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: Loss of transmission oil pressure.

Discussion: On two different occasions during the month of September, aircraft of this Battalion received fire from enemy positions, resulting in a loss of transmission oil pressure. Within a short time after the loss of transmission oil, the transmission "froze." In one of the two cases this resulted in the severing of the mast and fuselage from the main rotor.

Observation: Immediately upon noting the loss of transmission oil pressure, all aviators should attempt to land the aircraft in the nearest safe area.

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SAFETY

3.(U) Source: Lessons learned, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters.

Item: Helmet visors.

Discussion: The policy of wearing the helmet visors down on all combat assaults was adopted by this Battalion. On final to landing zones, the Flight Leader reminds the flight that visors should be down and harnesses locked.

Observation: Since this policy was adopted, five members of this unit have had eye injuries prevented by the visor's deflection of fragments of metal and plexiglass shards.

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M. (U) S2

Source: Lessons learned, S2.

Item: Photographs of landing zones.

Discussion: Photo coverage of selected landing zones is procured for all Battalion combat assaults. The photographs are obtained from G2 Air, 25th Infantry Division, III Corps MI in SAIGON, II Field Force Vietnam, and the 73d Aviation Company at VUNG TAU. The photos are used during the Battalion briefings and provide the commanders with a true depiction of the area. The point of touch down of the lead aircraft and direction of approach are marked on the photographs. Upon completion of the Battalion briefing the photographs are lent to the companies' gun platoons which mark the landing point for the lead ship during a combat assault.

Observation: Photo coverage has proven to be most desirable and beneficial to the commanders, operations officers, and particularly to the gunship pilot providing the mark. This has resulted in extreme accuracy in delivering the ground units to their exact desired location.

N. (U) S3, Training

Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Orientation and training of newly assigned aviators.

Discussion: Directives from higher headquarters outline requirements for standardization, orientation, and training of newly assigned pilots, but mission requirements preclude raw training as such in the required amounts. III Corps normal missions and other general support missions are the prime type missions available to the unit for the accomplishment of necessary training. Combat assault operations tend to produce "follow the leader" type pilots and do not require the aviators to think for themselves. General support missions do require pilots to exercise their own judgement, for they necessarily are required to clear artillery and accomplish the pre-flight and in-flight planning for each sortie. Pilots who are proficient in general support missions are normally outstanding on combat assaults. Extended periods of combat assault operations deny the unit valuable training of Aircraft Commanders, potential Aircraft Commanders, and newly assigned pilots.

Observation: Companies should be scheduled for general support type missions 2 or 3 times a week. This would afford the unit an opportunity to establish a continuous training cycle to attain and maintain a satisfactory pilot proficiency level.

0. (U) S4

1.(U)Source: Debriefing, Operation 38-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 12 October 1967.

Item: Dry season operations.

Discussion: An approach to DAU TIENG Airfield at 0445 hours on this operation indicated to the C & C ship personnel that the dust problems peculiar to the start of the dry season are an extreme hazard to aircraft operations. In the final stages of a night approach, at termination, dust was blown in such quantity that it caused the aircraft's crew to lose visual ground reference.

Observation: The change of seasons from wet to dry in III CTZ seems quite long in duration. The effects of the change, i.e., the drying of ground in higher places, occurs quite rapidly, however, creating problems which all too suddenly are realized. To insure that airfields from which rotary wing aircraft continually operate do not suddenly become hazardous to aircraft ground operations, plans should be made sufficiently early to surface the airfield with a dust controlling agent. "Pema-prime," a crude petroleum-asphalt product, is presently a solution. The importance of early programming of engineer support for this mission cannot be over-stressed.

2.(U)Source: Lessons learned, S4.

Item: Receipt of equipment by newly arrived units.

Discussion: The receipt of unit equipment by newly arrived units requires strict compliance with procedures developed as a result of past experiences in order to prevent loss or excess damage to equipment. These procedures should be initiated by the sponsoring unit and should follow

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S4

the sequence listed below.

a. Notify unit prior to deployment from CONUS to make necessary arrangements for unit personnel to accompany all shipments of unit equipment to include WABTOC packet.

b. Upon arrival of the advanced party assign a project officer from within the Battalion who has either been involved in receipt and off-loading of an incoming unit or has received a briefing on the procedures. If no experienced personnel are available, the project officer should be sent to the receiving port area transportation office for a thorough briefing on port procedures and method of obtaining in-country transportation for trans-shipment of equipment.

c. The arriving unit must be thoroughly briefed on the necessity for providing unit guards for their equipment at all times until the equipment arrives at the final destination. This includes having personnel accompany all in-country shipments.

d. If the unit main body does not arrive until after its equipment, the sponsoring unit must provide sufficient personnel to act as drivers and guards.

e. Any loss or suspected pilferage of equipment during shipment must be reported to the sponsoring Battalion headquarters as soon as it is discovered.

f. Unit personnel to include a responsible officer should be present during off-loading and should make the personnel performing the off-loading aware of his presence.

Observation: These procedures were followed by the 21st Recon-

naissance Airplane Company and the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company. Neither unit sustained any loss or major damage to equipment during shipment and receipt.

3.(v) Source: Lessons learned, S4.

Item: Resupply of fuel to tactical refueling sites.

Discussion: During several recent exercises a problem arose with the resupply of JP-4 to tactical refueling sites. These sites are set up to support a particular operation, and based on the tentative plan, coordination is made with the supported unit to provide a given amount of fuel on site. The supported unit normally makes coordination several days in advance to have the fuel delivered. Last minute changes to an operation plan or unanticipated requirements for gunship support can cause the supply to be depleted prior to completion of an operation. Storage and transportation requirements prevent overstocking of the refueling point to meet any contingency. Resupply of JP-4 is the responsibility of the supported unit. However, due to the rapidity with which the requirement can change, and the lead time required for surface transportation of fuel, they have not been able to react with sufficient speed to meet the requirement.

Observation: The 269th has placed the requirement on the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company to have 2 each 500 gallon collapsible drums rigged for sling load and prepared for use on call. These full drums would be delivered to the refueling site and exchanged for 2 empty drums to start a refueling shuttle by CH-47. In addition, closer coordination will be maintained with the supported unit S4 to insure that

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he is aware of any anticipated increase in requirements.

4.(U)Source: Lessons learned, S4.

Item: Construction requirements for programmed units.

Discussion: The present system for requesting construction projects for incoming aviation units is inadequate for the following reasons:

a. The requirement is placed on the sponsoring unit to request all necessary construction for incoming units. Quite often the sponsoring unit does not have any personnel who are familiar with the procedures required in determining what facilities are required and what agency is responsible for supplying these facilities. The initial request is usually incorrect and sent to the wrong agency.

b. Since a maximum lead time is necessary for programming of construction, it is important that all requests be submitted expeditiously and be correct upon initial submission.

Observation: It is recommended that the engineer section at 1st Aviation Brigade be utilized to help alleviate this problem. Upon receipt of notification of the proposed location for an incoming unit, one of the members of this section should be sent to the sponsoring unit to:

a. Insure that the project officer is adequately briefed on the requirements and has the appropriate references available for submission of requirements.

b. Coordinate with the base development board to insure an adequate area is available for the incoming unit.

c. Determine the engineer requirements for construction of required facilities, and coordinate with the supporting engineers to determine if they can program the facilities by the projected arrival date. If available support appears inadequate to meet the requirements, make an estimate of the additional time or support required to complete the required facilities.

d. Upon completion of the liaison visit, he should make a brief report stating:

(1) Whether an adequate area is available at the programmed installation.

(2) What additional support will be required to meet the required completion date.

(3) Any additional problem areas he anticipates will require action at Brigade level. These would include such items as re-consideration of location and possible delay on arrival date for the new unit.

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P. (U) Maintenance

1. (U) Source: Debriefing, Operation 27-67, in support of 3d Bde, 25th Inf Div, 1 September 1967.

Item: Smoke ship maintenance.

Discussion: Recent operations have proven conclusively the benefit of the smoke aircraft. The requirement to have this aircraft mission ready predicates that such maintenance priority be established as would guarantee immediate attention to repairs on this ship at all times.

Observation: The smoke ship should have a priority 1 for maintenance.

2. (U) Source: Lessons learned, 116th Assault Helicopter Company.

Item: Training of crew chiefs.

Discussion: Newly arriving crew chiefs assigned to this unit are assigned to either the service platoon or the 392d Transportation Detachment. The duration in the assignment varies with the individual's background and his ability to learn. This period generally averages six to eight weeks.

Observation: This time spent in aircraft maintenance has proven to give invaluable experience to personnel who will shortly assume duties as crew chiefs. The crew chief not only gains knowledge of his aircraft but also gains an appreciation of the problems encountered by maintenance in a combat environment. Further, this eliminates crew chief maintenance that must be performed by maintenance elements.

3. (U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: Spare parts stockage from supporting DSU.

Discussion: The 20th Transportation Company (DS) became operational

on 1 June 1967, and throughout the reporting period continued to increase ASL parts stockage to support the three assault helicopter companies within the Battalion. Although steady improvement is being made, spare parts shortages continue to force an additional cannibalization work-load.

Observation: Newly activated DS units should be provided a more realistic ASL upon arrival and not be required to build on ASL based on demand data.

4.(U)Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: T53 L-13 engines.

Discussion: A considerable amount of maintenance man-hours are expended in replacing L-13 engines every 300 hours. Not only the preparation of the engine for installation but also the cleaning, preservation, and transportation problems involved, particularly for outlying units, are time consuming.

Observation: Maximum effort should be made to provide special tools and training required to the organic DS detachments to permit the units to perform their own hot end inspections.

5.(U)Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: T53 L-13.

Discussion: Performance of the L-13 engine in this Battalion has been very satisfactory. Oil consumption has not been a problem. Only apparent weakness of the L-13 is its susceptibility to FOD damage. All premature removals of L-13 during the reporting period have been a result of FOD.

Observation: Investigate improved methods of engine inlet protection.

6.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: Tail rotor hub inspections.

Discussion: Change in the tail rotor hub inspection requirements from 300 hours to 100 hours has created many lost days of availability. To date, only one location, VUNG TAU, RVN, can perform the required inspection in this area. Time lost in handling and transportation is considerable.

Observation: More inspection facilities should be provided.

7.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: Maintenance of UH-1B gunships.

Discussion: EDM percentage has continued to increase on UH-1B gunships. Primary time loss items were repair of both the obsolete XM-16 weapons system and fatigue skin cracks on the UH-1B helicopter. During the reporting period one aircraft was evacuated to CONUS for repair because of excessive structural cracking.

Observation: Revive the UH-1B Depot Exchange program at the earliest possible date.

8.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: Transmission dampener mounts.

Discussion: Numerous incidents of cracked transmission dampener mounts have been found in all assigned assault helicopter companies. Shortages of items have forced units to use back-up maintenance support

units to fabricate replacements.

Observation: Investigate possibility of strengthening these mounts to preclude such widespread failures.

9.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: Prepack parts stockage.

Discussion: The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company deployed to RVN during July and August 1967. Information provided from Sharpe Army Depot to the 242d indicated that the unit's prepacked ASL was approximately 85% filled at the time of deployment. Upon receipt of prepack in RVN, stocks were inventoried and the percentage of fill was determined to be 40% instead of 85%.

Observation: Advise all deploying units to inventory prepack conexes prior to shipment to insure that an accurate status is known and the corrective action can be accomplished prior to the unit's becoming operational.

10.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Maintenance Officer.

Item: Dispersion of helicopters.

Discussion: To reduce the possibility of damage to aircraft from mortar attacks, a dispersion plan requiring a minimum of 150 feet between aircraft has been established for all helicopters parking with revetments of appropriate height and design. At DAU TIENG Airfield space limitations force helicopters to be parked throughout the post area. Problems associated with maintenance in these distant parking areas are:

a. Minimum supervision of maintenance crews.

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b. Lack of sufficient organic lighting to support several work areas.

c. Unprepared areas surrounding the parking locations restrict access of support equipment.

In addition, a limit as to the number of aircraft necessitates some maintenance to be performed in the revetment area.

Observation: Additional night lighting sets should be provided all aviation units in RVN required to operate under these conditions.

Q. (U) Aviation Medicine

1.(U)Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Flight Surgeon.

Item: Personnel complain of itching after showers in all areas of the command.

Discussion: On many occasions water samples have been taken and the water has been shown free of micro organisms.

Observation: It is felt that the ubiquitousness of fungal organisms, especially in clothing, infect the skin generally and are stimulated to itch by the shower water; it is not believed that the skin is infected by the water itself.

Recommendation: All laundry that will come in contact with human skin should be washed well, with soap and water and clothes should be thoroughly dried, preferably sun-dried.

2.(U)Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Flight Surgeon.

Item: There is observed in the 116th Assault Helicoptor Company and HHC, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, an extremely high rate of skin infections besides the subjective itch described above. These infections are fungal or combined fungal-yeast infections.

Discussion: These infections occur widely and persist an extremely long time despite thorough and adequate medical treatment, other than the controlled and supervised laundering of clothing.

Observation: It has been observed that where medical treatment has failed and a patient washes his own clothing, paying particular attention that he washes them well with soap and water and that he dries clothes thorougly in the sun, his rash will then disappear. When clothes are sent to either the presently established Quartermaster laundry or to

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CU CHI private laundries, the rash reappears. In most cases aviation work responsibilities prohibit the men from doing their own laundry and the rash persists.

Recommendation: Hootch maids should be allowed to do laundry. Clothes lines and wash areas with adequate water supply should be provided to accomplish this. Otherwise, problems of Quartermaster and the CU CHI laundries should be rectified.

3.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Flight Surgeon.

Item: There exists a very resistant strain of Neiseria Gonococcus in Vietnam.

Discussion: Treatment of gonoccal uretheritis with penicillin or tetracycline alone inevitably results in recurrence of signs and symptoms of the disease. Drugs must be combined and given in recommended doses as noted below for CU CHI.

Observation: No recurrence results after the treatment scheduled below.

Recommendation: Treatment schedule: procaine penicillin, 1.5 million units intramuscularly, twice a day for five days. Tetracycline, 250mg by mouth four times a day for five days.

4.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Flight Surgeon.

Item: Uneconomical use of medical personnel and equipment under present TOE for aviation units in Vietnam.

Discussion: The Department of the Army has established that there should be one medical OA detachment for each aviation company and a

battalion medical section in each battalion. In RVN presently the working concept is to assign one OA detachment per two aviation companies. The use of Army aviation in Vietnam in its supporting role has been far different and greatly increased from what was expected when medical support was planned originally.

Discussion: Under the present organization in Vietnam an OA detachment does not need to have a laboratory specialist or as many medical aidmen. The allocated equipment is too meager for accomplishing the mission of providing comprehensive aviation medical support. With one OA detachment per two companies, one company is overly covered while one is neglected medically. Furthermore, there is no flexibility of control of medical resources with medical personnel organic at the company level.

Recommendation: A battalion medical platoon should be established from resources of OA detachments and dispersed in sections with deploying companies. The battalion should provide one large dispensary to provide comprehensive aviation medical support. Each section in support of a company away from the battalion location would provide aid station type support.

5.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Flight Surgeon.

Item: A flight surgeon, in an aviation battalion, is rendered almost ineffective by the cumbersome and almost unreasonable assignment of functioning through the S-4 in advising the Commanding Officer.

Discussion: Because the S-4 is mainly concerned with aircraft, maintenance, roads, vehicles, ordnance, etc, he forgets about medical needs and leaves this until last in his considerations. Aviation medical

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support places much responsibility jointly upon commanding officer and flight surgeon, which leaves little place for anyone between them. An S-4 is not sensitive to the same things a commanding officer is and therefore does not react appropriately.

Observation: Some aviation battalions have the surgeon serving directly under the commanding officer, reporting trhough the executive officer for convenience. This has been judged more satisfactory.

Recommendation: The battalion should, on a trial basis, employ the flight surgeon as a staff officer reporting to the commanding officer through the executive officer rather the S-4.

6.(U) Source: Lessons learned, Battalion Flight Surgeon.

Item: Aviation requires a special type of medical support with personalized contact being rendered individual aviators on a regular basis and thus should be organic to aviation battalions.

Discussion: There is much duplication of medical resources in Vietnam with aviation dispensaries being involved quite frequently. It does not help aviation medical support for it to consolidate with non-aviation medical units. However, aviation units can consolidate with each other as well as non-aviation medical units can consolidate.

Observation: Experience in Vietnam to date has shown that as many as three aviation battalions can work efficiently and economically in the same facility while maintaining the integrity of an aviation dispensary.

Recommendation: At CU CHI the 25th Aviation Battalion and the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion should combine medical resources in establishing a consolidated flight dispensary which will render comprehensive aviation medical support on an area basis to CU CHI, TAY NINH, and DAU TIENG.

SECTION II

PART II

Commander's Closing Comment (U)

(U) Item: Operational Report--Lessons Learned.

Discussion: The compilation of data for this report has been a tedious process requiring extensive debriefings following Battalion operations, submission of input data from primary and special staffs and all units at subordinate level, and a considerable and scrupulous editing of much material. Certainly, all this documented information is not pertinent to each aviation unit involved in combat operations. However, should some of the data, when extracted, serve of benefit to a company or battalion, the efforts expended will have been well worth the while.

Observation: The documenting of our lessons learned has afforded this Battalion a keen introspection into problems recurrently encountered by a combat aviation battalion in a tactical environment. It has also substantially assisted in improving the operational procedures of this unit. It is my hope that in the future commanders will place additional emphasis on the importance of the documentation of the difficulties encountered in combat operations and the techniques discovered in their satisfactory resolution. It is a commander's duty to have recorded all such data which directly affects the success of his unit in combat. The mutual exchange between commanders and staffs

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of compilations of this nature can assist immeasurably in the development and continued success of Army Aviation in the Republic of Vietnam.

James H Merryman

JAMES H MERRYMAN
LTC, Arty
Commanding

Distribution:
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CO 214th Cbt Avn Bn
File (3 cy)

Inclosures:
1-The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion
2-Summary of Accidents
3-Strength Status
4-Gains and Losses for Next 90 Days
5-Glossary of Terms

143-1

AVGC-SC(15 Nov 67) 1st Ind (U) 24 DEC 1967
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) for Period Ending 31 October 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96266 22 November 1967

THRU: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) One copy of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion's Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) (RCS CSFOR-65) for period ending 31 October 1967, is forwarded in compliance with USARV Regulation 1-19, dated 3 November 1967.

2. (U) This headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, and the following comments are made:

a. Reference Section I, paragraph G. 3. a., page 43. Avionics personnel are currently five (5) to ten (10) percent overstrength with the exception of radar slots which are not being filled. These slots are not filled as there is no requirement for radar personnel. There has never been a real shortage of avionics personnel in the group. However, some battalions have failed to report correct MOS requirements which caused temporary shortages in that battalion. Malassigned personnel are still a problem as the group is presently 10% overstrength in avionics MOS's.

b. Reference Section I, paragraph G. 3. c., page 44. The mobile calibration team has visited this unit twice. The unit's failure to turn in equipment and failure to notify the team of changes in equipment and unit locations per USARV Regulation 750-25 has caused most of the problems.

c. Reference Section II, Part I, paragraph G. 14., page96. Initial parts stockage for supply shelter AN/ASM-147A was made by ECOM on a guess basis. No unit has reported any recommendations for changes to the stockage list.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

James D. Patton

JAMES D. PATTON
CPT, TC
Asst Adjutant

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AVFBC-RE-H (1 Nov 67) 2d Ind (U) 24 DEC 1967
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFU TO) (U)

DA HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266

THRU: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBA-C, APO 96307

Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DH, APO 96375

Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) Subject report is forwarded.

2. (U) This command has reviewed the attached report and concurs with the comments and recommendations as modified by the 1st Indorsement, with the following comments and exceptions:

p 17, para C,3, Replacements. Replacements for nonaviation officers are requisitioned 8 months rather than 5 months prior to the DEROS of incumbents. (USARV Reg 614-185)

p 96, Item 15, Requirement for UH-1D modification. Non-concur. While it is possible for more than one aircraft within an assault helicopter company to be used in the command and control role, two or three aircraft in each lift platoon should easily satisfy normal requirements. Modification of all UH-1D aircraft does not appear to be justified.

p 113, Infusion. The primary objective of infusion is to eliminate rotational "humps" within units as expeditiously as possible. A secondary objective is to provide personnel with in-country experience to newly arrived units. If these objectives are to be achieved, it is obvious that personnel must be moved into and out of units during the first year in country.

Section II, p 134, para Q,1, Concur. The mechanism suggested for itchiness after showering is speculative. Several facts are known:

a. Some individuals are allergic to the soap or starch used by civilian laundries. They will have itchiness and rashes on the clothed surfaces of the skin, but not on the exposed surface of the skin. Laundry service which has sufficient water to rinse out detergents and other irritants is the only solution.

b. While potable water is not absolutely essential for showers and laundries, its use is recommended whenever possible because using potable water will reduce the incidence of minor skin rashes and infections.

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AVFBC-RE-H (1 Nov 67) 24 DEC 1967
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFU TO) (U)

Section II p 134, para Q,2, Any system of laundering clothes which provides for an adequate amount of soap, water and air drying in the sun would be beneficial.

Section II, p 135, para Q,3, Nonconcur. Intramuscular procaine penicillin is the basic treatment for gonorrhea. However, procaine penicillin is cleared out of the body rapidly. To prolong the action of penicillin, Probenecid (Benemid) can be given, 250 mg QID. This drug slows the excretion of penicillin and may obviate the need for tetracycline or other antibiotics.

Section II, p 135, para Q,4, Nonconcur. The medical detachment OA is organized to provide primary medical support on an area basis, with the usual allocation of one per 1000 troops without organic medical support. Rather than fragment and disperse one or more of these OA detachments to fit the particular requirements of the aviation battalion, it would seem more appropriate to implement a MTOE for the existing medical section.

Section II, p 136, para Q,5, Nonconcur in part. It is agreed that the surgeon should have access to the commander on purely medical problems. The battalion surgeon is a special staff officer who normally functions under staff supervision of the S4. The stated problem apparently results more from the personalities involved than from the staff organization.

Section II, p 137, para Q,6, Nonconcur. The decision as to whether or not to consolidate medical facilities is always based upon factors which are limited to the local geographic area. Accordingly it is impossible to make a standard recommended procedure applicable to all areas. Nonconcurrence with this recommendation is not intended to imply disagreement with any proposed action to consolidate the aviation medical facilities of the 25th and 269th Aviation Battalions, but rather to nonconcur with any recommendation that stipulates the consolidation of all such facilities without regard to the local situation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

R. E. WAMBSGANSS
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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AVBA-C (1 Nov 67) 3rd Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFU TO) (U)

JAN 1 1968

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375
Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army (ACSFOR DA), Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, considers it to be adequate and concurs with the contents as indorsed.

2. (U) The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Reference Section II, Part I, para G7, pg 93: The AN/ASC-10 console satisfies this commander's requirement. What is required for communications in a C&C aircraft is usually the opinion of the mission commander and varies among individuals. The AN/ASC-11 console provides sufficient communications capability for most missions.

b. Reference Section II, Part I, para O4, pg 127: At the present time the 1st Aviation Brigade engineering section in conjunction with their combat aviation group counterparts makes liaison trips to each base prior to a new units arrival. However, due to the changes involved in stationing plans, the liaison visit is often made to the wrong location. The problem of sufficient lead time is a continuing one. With engineer effort being critical in all areas of RVN, it is not feasible to expend this effort unnecessarily. Therefore, the engineer command will not start construction until the new units station is definite. This means that construction often cannot be initiated until the new unit is in country.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

JAMES M. GOLDMANN
1LT, AGC
Asst Adjutant General

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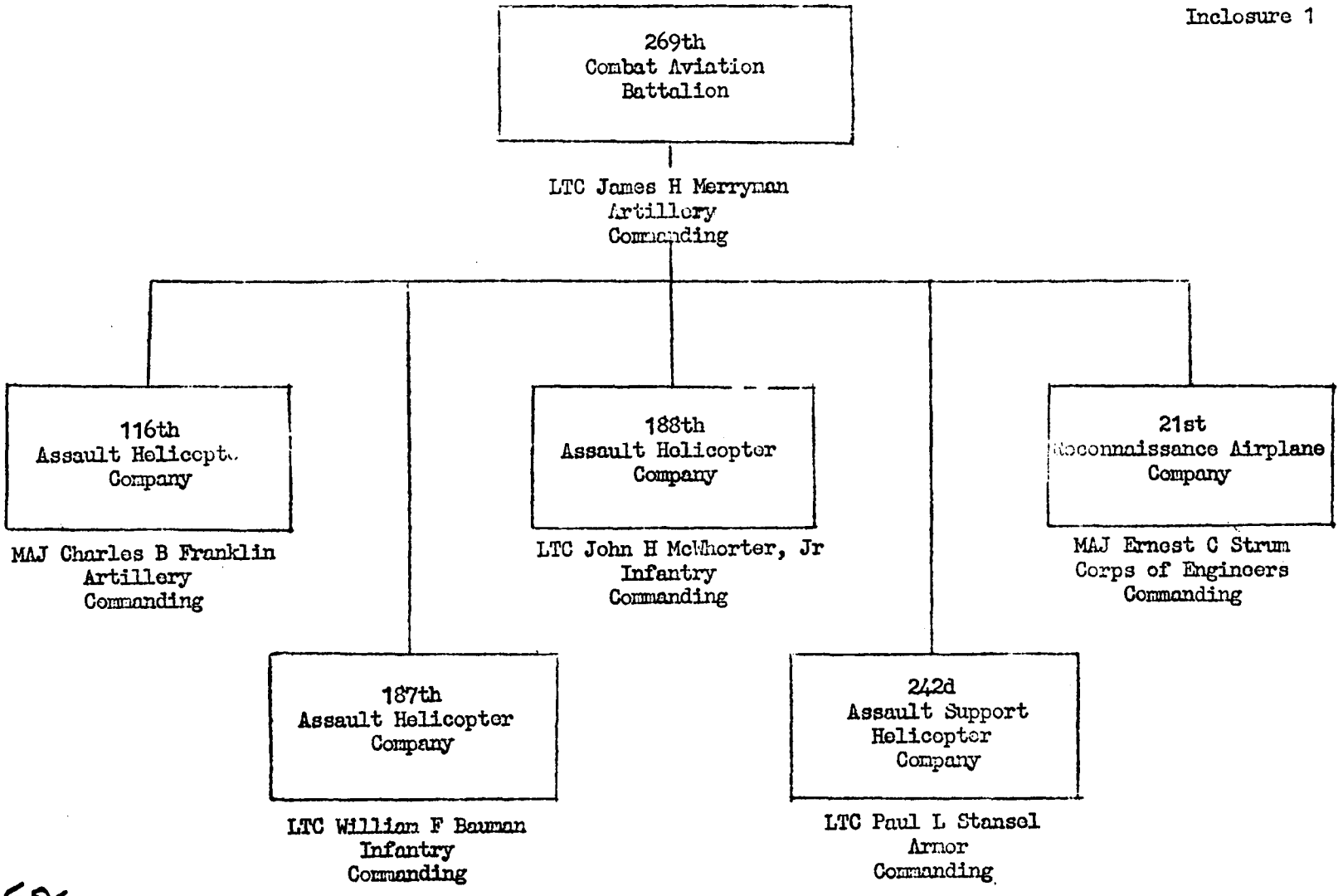
Inclosure 1



Inclosure 2

Resume of Accidents

Aug			
5	01-G	Pilot in-country checkout; ground loop on landing.	(Pilot Factor)
13	UH-1C	Gunship had refueled and rearmed while hovering for takeoff; aircraft struck ground and rolled inverted.	(Pilot Factor)
21	UH-1D	Engine failure on approach to landing zone.	(Material Factor)
Sep			
12	UH-1D	Aircraft No 2 ship in trail formation landing in pick-up zone; excessive flare caused tail rotor to strike ground; hard landing resulted.	(Pilot Factor)
27	UH-1D	Aircraft on resupply mission to NUI BA DEN Mountain (elevation 3300'); aircraft began losing RPM on final, attempted go-around and crashed.	(Pilot Factor)
Oct			
5	UH-1D	Aircraft landing in LZ on troop extraction; tail rotor struck partially hidden dike, resulting in hard landing damage.	(Pilot Factor)

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Inclosure 2
(Continued)

Oct			
11	UH-1D	Aircraft attempted landing to river boat; lost RPM and crashed into river.	(Under Investigation)
13	UH-1D	Functional test flight for engine change; aircraft crashed and burned.	(Under Investigation)
17	UH-1D	Lead aircraft on combat assault; on termination of approach, the aircraft tumbled forward, landing inverted in canal.	(Under Investigation)
21	CH-47A	Material failure of aft pivoting actuator; 3 aft rotor blades struck fuselage on shutdown.	(Material Factor)

Inclosure 3

HEADQUARTERS
269TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION

STRENGTH STATUS

UNIT	LOCATION	AUTHORIZED STRENGTH				ASSIGNED/ATTACHED STRENGTH			
		OFF	WO	EP	AGG	OFF	WO	EP	AGG
HHC, 269TH	CU CHI	21	2	86	109	27	1/1	125/13	153/14
21ST RECON CO	TAY NINH	32	1	95	128	25/3	2	97/3	124/6
622D SIG DET	TAY NINH	0	1	8	9	1	0	7	8
116TH ASLT HEL CO	CU CHI	15	52	152	219	18	40	147/8	205/8
283D SIG DET	CU CHI	1	0	9	10	1	0	8	9
392D TC DET	CU CHI	1	1	70	72	1	1	58	60
431ST MED DET	CU CHI	1	0	8	9	0	0	10	10
187TH ASLT HEL CO	TAY NINH	15	52	152	219	13	45	177/3	235/3
1ST SIG DET	TAY NINH	0	1	8	9	1	0	6	7
602D TC DET	TAY NINH	1	1	70	72	1	1	57	59
188TH ASLT HEL CO	DAU TIENG	14	53	152	219	19	40	143/5	202/5
4TH SIG DET	DAU TIENG	0	1	8	9	1	0	6	7
154TH MED DET	DAU TIENG	1	0	8	9	1	0	8	9
603D TC DET	DAU TIENG	1	1	70	72	0	1	61	62
242D ASLT SPT HEL CO	BIEN HOA	13	25	143	181	16	10/1	152	178/1
621ST TC DET	BIEN HOA	1	1	80	82	0	1	79	80
GRAND TOTAL		117	192	1119	1429	125/3	142/2	1141/32	1408/37

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Inclosure 4

SUMMARY OF GAINS AND LOSSES FOR NEXT 90-DAY PERIOD (U)

LOSSES

	30-DAY	60-DAY	90-DAY
OFFICERS	3	8	20
WARRANT OFFICER	6	13	22
ENLISTED	41	82	194

GAINS

	30-DAY	60-DAY	90-DAY
OFFICERS	2	5	10
WARRANT OFFICERS	9	13	19
ENLISTED	37	78	183

Inclosure 5

Glossary of Terms

1. Airmobile Combat Assault (CA): The lifting of combat troops by helicopter into an unsecure landing zone. Enemy resistance is probable.
2. Airmobile Extraction: The lifting of combat troops by helicopter from terrain in which the enemy has the capability to resist. Resistance can be expected to increase as each lift is made and the friendly force's perimeter becomes smaller.
3. Airmobile Task Force (AMTF): The air lift and ground maneuver elements required to conduct an airmobile operation.
4. Airmobile Task Force Commander: The commander who exercises control of all elements of an Airmobile Task Force; usually the ground force commander.
5. Airmobility: Tactical mobility afforded a ground maneuver force by helicopters; the capability of a ground force to tactically deploy through the air, implies tactical integrity in loading.
6. Army Aviation Element (AAE): A liaison element from the supporting unit for coordination and planning of aviation operations. This element is found at I Field Force Vietnam, II Field Force Vietnam, and at ARVN Corps.
7. Armed Helicopter (Gunship): A helicopter equipped with an attached weapons system which is fired by the pilot or co-pilot.
8. Company Lift: A unit of lift helicopters, capable of lifting the assault elements of a rifle company in one lift.

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9. Eagle Flight: Heliborne infantry troops on air alert to perform immediate reaction missions for a ground commander.

10 Flight: Two or more aircraft with a common mission under the command of a designated flight leader.

11. Heavy Gun Team: Three armed helicopters operating as a tactical element.

12. Landing Zone (LZ): A specified area for landing helicopters to debark troops and/or cargo in, or in support of, an airmobile assault.

13. Lift Helicopter (Slick): A helicopter used for the purpose of lifting troops and/or cargo.

14. Light Gun Team: Two armed helicopters operating as a tactical element.

15. Air Mission Commander: An officer designated to command aviation elements on a specific mission or operation.

16. Platoon of Aircraft (Plat): Two sections or more of aircraft under command of a platoon commander.

17. Release Point (RP): A geographic point, recognizable from the air, at which a flight arrives in proper formation and then proceeds to designated area under less centralized control.

18. Smoke Ship: A UH-1 helicopter especially equipped with a smoke generator capable of laying a thick cylinder of smoke along the aircraft's flight path.

19. Surveillance: A continuous and close watch over a specific route, area, or point for information of the enemy.

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Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

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3. REPORT TITLE
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4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)
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5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)
CO, 269th Combat Aviation Battalion

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13. ABSTRACT

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UNCLASSIFIED
Security Classification

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

IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (7 Mar 58) FOR OT RD-674137 13 March 1968

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

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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Regraded unclassified when separa
from classified inclosure.

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

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

Item: Gunship night operations.

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

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

a. Insure positive landing zone identification even before the mark is thrown.

b. Preclude a confusion normally associated with a failure of the mark to ignite, since through radio communication the flight leader identifies where the mark should have been dropped.

c. Should the ground commander desire greater surprise for his assault by not positively identifying the landing zone with a smoke grenade, the flight leader can, when in receipt of the report that the "mark is out," identify the point over which the gunship is at that instant, and shoot his approach to that point. Not dropping a smoke grenade as a mark affords the ground commander maximum surprise by denying the enemy knowledge of the exact location of the landing zone. A dropped smoke grenade is proof positive of an inbound flight, while a gunship at low level is nothing more than a gunship overflight.

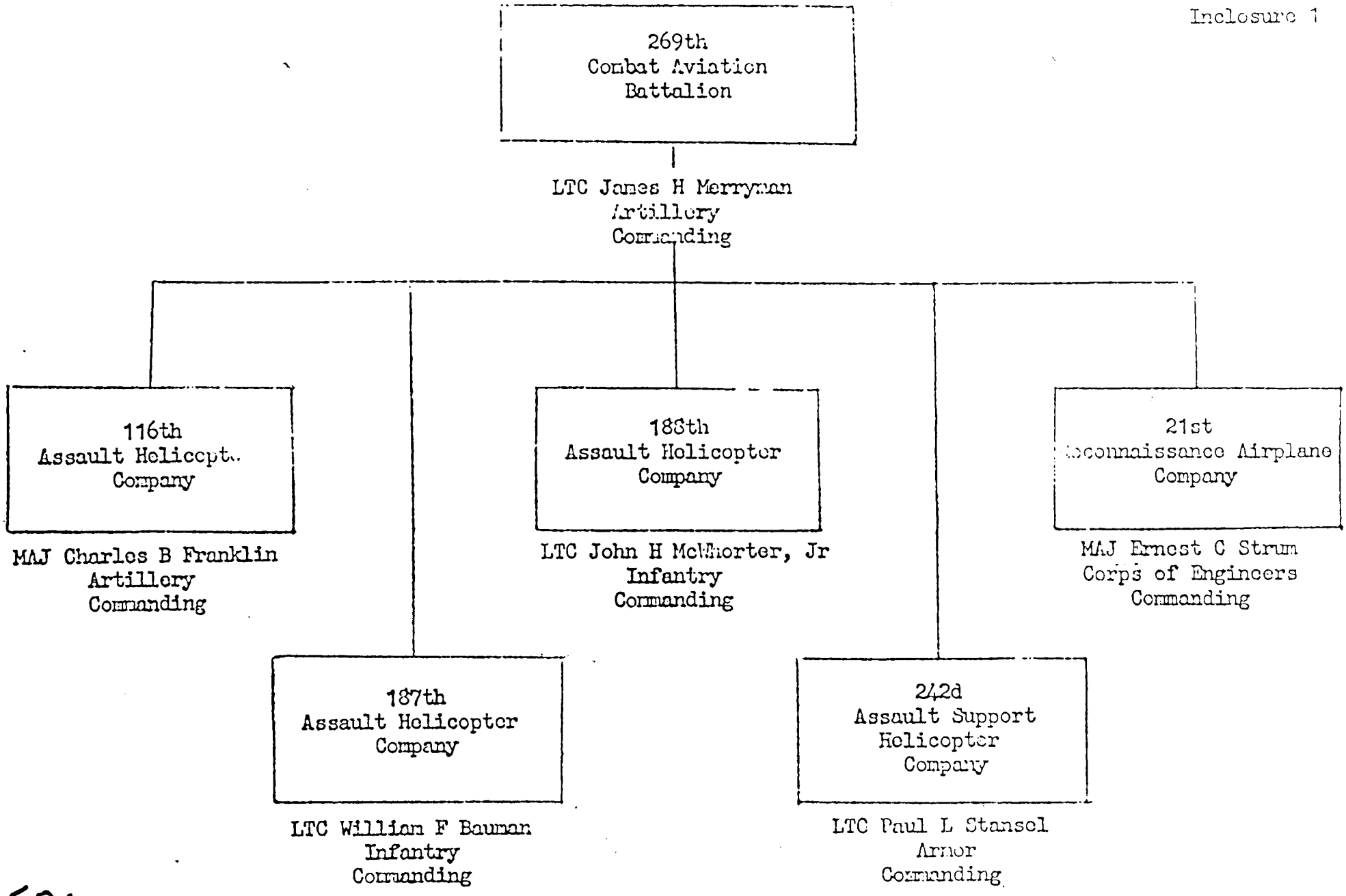
5. Source: Lessons learned, 188th Assault Helicopter Comapny.

Item: Marking of landing zones.

Discussion: It has been brought out during discussion of combat assaults that the time taken to describe and locate the desired landing zone in several instances was excessive and possibly compromised the impending assault.

Observation: The possibility of arming the Command and Control aircraft with two small rocket pods would enable the C & C ship to mark the landing zone with one round of white phosphorous and the gunships could immediately bring the area under fire, thereby reducing the possibility of a compromise of the landing zone. It is understood that this technique could only be used when suppression by gunships is authorized.

Inclosure 1



1-5/

Resume of Accidents

Aug			
5	01-G	Pilot in-country checkout; ground loop on landing.	(Pilot Factor)
13	UH-1C	Gunship had refueled and rearmed while hovering for takeoff; aircraft struck ground and rolled inverted.	(Pilot Factor)
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Oct			
5	UH-1D	Aircraft landing in LZ on troop extraction; tail rotor struck partially hidden dike, resulting in hard landing damage.	(Pilot Factor)

A. (C) Significant Events

1. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion, proven the most aggressive and effective Combat Aviation Battalion in the Republic of Vietnam, has continued its incessant offensive operations against enemy forces in the III Corps Tactical Zone. Primarily in support of the three Brigades of the 25th Infantry Division, the 269th has conducted twenty-four airmobile operations during the ninety-day period of this report.[1] Against enemy forces the 269th has statistically pitted its helicopter companies in Battalion assaults once every eighty-nine hours during the entire span of the three month time frame. Upon completion of Battalion operations, subordinate units were generally released to continue airmobile operations at smaller unit level.[2] This recurrent operational cycle has afforded this Battalion ample opportunity to establish itself indubitably as the Combat Aviation Battalion conducting the most frequent and most successful airmobile operations in the combat theater today. Composed of three assault helicopter companies, one assault support helicopter company, and one reconnaissance airplane company, the 269th has sufficient resources to complete nearly any mission assigned to a combat aviation unit.

[1] Battalion-operation: Combat assault comprised of a minimum of 2 assault helicopter companies, TAC Air, and Artillery support. The 269th has conducted large scale operations ranging from 2 to 6 assault helicopter companies, frequently requiring non-organic company and battalion attachments to come under the operational control of this headquarters.

[2] During the time frame of this report, the subordinate assault helicopter companies of the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion flew a total of 192 company size combat assault missions in addition to the Battalion controlled operations.

2. Since the termination date of the last quarterly report, no changes have been made in the location of units. The 269th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters remains at CU CHI, as does the 116th Assault Helicopter Company. The 187th Assault Helicopter Company and the 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company, the Battalion's O-1 unit, are co-located at TAY NINH. The 188th Assault Helicopter Company, on 1 August temporarily located at PHU HIEP, Republic of Vietnam, supporting two Republic of Korea Divisions, has returned to its home of origin, DAU TIENG. The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company remains at BIEN HOA, pending completion of construction of CH-47 facilities at CU CHI.

3. The geographical location of the assault helicopter companies has permitted a nearly permanent mission assignment of each company to a specific Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division. Whenever possible, it has been the Battalion's policy to assign the 116th Assault Helicopter Company missions supporting the 2d Brigade, the 187th missions supporting the 1st Brigade, and the 188th missions supporting the 3d Brigade. The proximity of the base camp locations of the assault helicopter companies to the supported infantry units' Areas of Operations is the least of the benefits derived from such an association. Of greater importance is the rapport established between Assault Helicopter Company Commanders and the supported Infantry Battalion Commanders. The policy establishes a mutual confidence between aviation commanders and the units and ground commanders and units, a confidence which is of utmost importance in maintaining operational stability during critical combat situations.

4. The 188th Assault Helicopter Company, committed at PHU HIEP to

the support of the 9th Republic of Korea "White Horse" Division and the Capital Republic of Korea "Tiger" Division from 7 July 1967 through 31 August 1967, returned to its home base at DAU TIENG on 24 August 1967. During its assignment at PHU HIEP the 188th Assault Helicopter Company was under the operational control of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion, 17th Combat Aviation Group. From 1 August through 24 August the 188th had compiled a cumulative total of 6,054 sorties, logging a total of 1,780 flying hours in support of the Republic of Korea forces. 8,571 passengers were carried, and 1,013 tons of cargo were moved. Since the unit's return to III Corps Tactical Zone, its mission has been the same as the mission of the other assault helicopter companies of the Battalion, that of supporting the 25th Infantry Division's airmobile operations.

5. The 116th and 187th Assault Helicopter Companies remained the primary airmobile support for the 25th Infantry Division. The 187th on many occasions supported elements of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, on one occasion as part of a larger Battalion controlled effort. All airmobile companies within the Battalion have conducted operations in conjunction with the 1st and 9th Infantry Divisions, ARVN forces, and personnel from Civilian Irregular Defense Groups. The 116th Assault Helicopter Company took part in joint exercises with the Australian Forces located in the BA RIA-VUNG TAU area of III Corps.

6. The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company, newly arrived in country at the start of this reporting period, became fully operational on 15 September 1967. Lack of proper CH-47 parking and maintenance facilities at CU CHI, coupled with a general unpreparedness for a physical relocation of the 242d, has to date precluded the unit's movement from

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

269TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION STATISTICAL SUMMARY

1-31 AUGUST 1967	116TH	187TH	188TH	21ST
SORTIES	8337	8403	7519	2345
FLIGHT HOURS TOTAL	3050	2991	2247	3121
FLIGHT HOURS D (H) MODEL	2427	2317	1990	0
FLIGHT HOURS B (C) MODEL	623	674	257	0
PASSENGERS CARRIED	18211	15182	10885	5
CARGO TONS	114	97	1106	0
VC KBAA	77	34	2	0
VC WBAA	0	0	0	0
STUCTURES DESTROYED		20	0	16
SAMPANS DESTROYED	2	3	0	0
AIRCRAFT COMBAT DAMAGE	9	42	14	9
AIRCRAFT HITS	9	42	14	9
US KIA	0	0	1	0
US WIA	5	15	8	0
MED EVAC	24	44	38	0
COMBAT ASSAULTS	28	29	3	0

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

269TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION STATISTICAL SUMMARY

1-30 SEPTEMBER 1967	116TH	187TH	188TH	21ST	242D
SORTIES	7458	7402	8379	2347	2599
FLIGHT HOURS TOTAL	2719	2753	2797	2653	937
FLIGHT HOURS D (H) MODEL	2125	2098	2225	0	0
FLIGHT HOURS B (C) MODEL	594	655	570	0	0
PASSENGERS CARRIED	16271	11488	13194	0	9733
CARGO TONS	42	120	119	0	3564
VC KBAA	20	1	12	0	1
VC WBAA	0	0	1	0	0
STRUCTURES DESTROYED	1	16	20	0	0
SAMPANS DESTROYED	0	14	2	0	0
AIRCRAFT COMBAT DAMAGE	14	20	9	4	8
AIRCRAFT HITS	14	20	9	4	8
US KIA	0	1	1	0	0
US WIA	5	2	1	1	4
MED EVAC	50	21	22	0	2
COMBAT ASSAULTS	26	23	24	0	3

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

269TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION STATISTICAL SUMMARY

1-31 OCTOBER 1967	116TH	187TH	188TH	21ST	242D
SORTIES	9590	10793	9399	2358	5624
FLIGHT HOURS TOTAL	2862	3222	3197	3150	1562
FLIGHT HOURS D (H) MODEL	2234	2546	2373	0	0
FLIGHT HOURS B (C) MODEL	628	676	824	0	0
PASSENGERS CARRIED	19792	15623	19608	0	24992
CARGO TONS	117	135	151	0	9596
VC KBAA	28	24	16	1	0
VC WBAA	0	0	0	0	0
STRUCTURES DESTROYED	0	2	9	23	0
SAMPANS DESTROYED	0	0	4	5	0
AIRCRAFT COMBAT DAMAGE	11	16	6	9	7
AIRCRAFT HITS	11	16	6	9	7
US KIA	0	0	0	0	0
US WIA	10	3	5	0	0
MED EVAC	43	20	26	0	25
COMBAT ASSAULTS	23	13	20	0	0

(4) S-3: Major JOHN F ZIRSCHWERT, 094972, Artillery.

(5) S-4: Major GEORGE W MOSES, 073576, Infantry.

c. Unit Commanders. At the close of the reporting period the unit commanders of subordinate units were:

(1) Headquarters Company: Captain ERNEST D SPRINKEL, 04031017, Armor.

(2) 116th Assault Helicopter Company: Major CHARLES D FRANKLIN, 077026, Artillery.

(3) 187th Assault Helicopter Company: Major WILLIAM F BAUMAN, 068430, Infantry.

(4) 188th Assault Helicopter Company: Lieutenant Colonel JOHN H MCWHORTER, JR, OF106186, Infantry.

(5) 21st Reconnaissance Airplane Company: Major ERNEST C STRUM, 04016954, Corps of Engineers.

(6) 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company: Lieutenant Colonel PAUL L STANSEL, 01931035, Armor.

(a) The time delay in moving vehicles from DAU TIENG and TAY NINH to CU CHI. This delay is caused by the requirement for these vehicles to move in scheduled convoys. The 188th Assault Helicopter Company stationed at DAU TIENG draws its support from the 228th DSU at TAY NINH, and all of the units located at TAY NINH draw their aircraft, repair parts at the 20th Transportation Company in CU CHI, and bulk issues of supplies for their officer and EM Clubs are generally drawn in SAIGON.

(b) The shortage of Ballistic Helmets and Aircrewman Body Armor. The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company became operational on 15 September 1967 and has not received any Ballistic Helmets. Body Armor was provided by reapportionment of assets within the Battalion. Additional Body Armor is not forecast to be available until the 3d quarter of FY 68. A definite date for availability of Ballistic Helmets has not been established.

(4) Class V support for tactical operations is furnished primarily from refuel and rearm points operated by the 25th Infantry Division at CU CHI, TAY NIH, DAU TIENG, and DUC HOA. Class V other than that for aerial weapons systems and aircraft mounted machine guns are drawn by the units from ASP located at CU CHI, DAU TIENG, and TAY NINH.

b. Shortages of several critical items of equipment required redistribution within the Battalion to meet minimum operational requirements. These items were:

(1) Aircrewman Body Armor.

(2) M-24 Aviator Protective Masks.

c. The units of the Battalion have requested permission to turn in

unneeded TOE or MTOE equipment in accordance with USARV Regulation 310-32. Other excess equipment has been turned in or redistributed within the Battalion to meet existing shortages.

(1) Since the Battalion's mission is primarily combat support, very little enemy equipment is captured by organic units. Those items which are picked up by unit personnel are turned in to the supported unit or disposed of through S2 channels.

(2) Transportation and Troop Movement.

(a) The 188th Assault Helicopter Company returned to DAU TIENG from PHU HIEP during the week of 21 August. Their equipment and personnel, except aircraft and aircrews, were transported by Air Force C-130 and C-123 Aircraft.

(b) The 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company arrived in country during the month of August. Personnel and 70,000 pounds of RED TAT equipment arrived between 9 and 12 August in C-141 aircraft. Transportation to the unit's temporary location at BIEN HOA was provided by the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. The CH-47 aircraft and 12 conex containers containing RED TAT equipment associated with aircraft maintenance arrived on the USS Core at VUNG TAU on 10 August. The aircraft were off-loaded and remained at VUNG TAU until 11 September due to engineer work in progress on the parking and maintenance areas at BIEN HOA. The 12 conex containers were moved to BIEN HOA by organic aircraft. The remainder of the unit's TOE equipment arrived at SAIGON port on 22 August and was moved to BIEN HOA primarily on organic transportation as the area transportation command was able to provide only two vehicles. WABTOC equipment was not diverted when the unit's stationing was changed and arrived at QUIN NHON. The equipment was trans-shipped to NEW PORT by LST.