

# SECRET

DIRECTIVE TO  
COMMANDER, AUSTRALIAN ARMY FORCE, VIETNAM  
OF  
MAY, 1965

(Annexes not attached)

## INTRODUCTION

1. At the request of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, and in consultation with the Government of the United States of America, the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia has agreed to provide military assistance to the Government of the Republic of Vietnam.

## TITLE

2. Your appointment is Commander, Australian Army Force, Vietnam (COMAAFV).

## COMPOSITION

3. The initial composition of your force is in accordance with Annex 'A'.

## COMMAND

4. Subject to the provision of this Directive, you are in overall command of units and personnel of the Australian Army deployed in the Republic of Vietnam.

5. You will be responsive to and under the operational control of Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV).

6. The Australian Infantry Battalion and Australian Logistic Support Company will be under the operational control of an appropriate United States brigade echelon. Control of other Australian Army units or detachments will be as agreed between you and COMUSMACV.

7. Australian Army units will not operate directly under Vietnamese Command.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMANDER AUSTRALIAN ARMY FORCE, VIETNAM

8. You are responsible for:
- a. The safety and well-being of AAFV.
  - b. Liaison on matters concerning your Force between Army Headquarters Canberra (AHQ) and Headquarters United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam

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## EMPLOYMENT OF AAFV

9. The Australian Infantry Battalion will be assigned tasks by the appropriate United States Formation Commander. These tasks could include:

- a. Security of a base area;
- b. Deeper patrolling and offensive operations as ordered;
- c. Reaction operations as ordered in conjunction with ARVN forces;
- d. Contingency planning.

10. The Australian Infantry Battalion will not be assigned responsibility for the security of an isolated area unless it is part of a larger US force.

11. The role of the Australian Army Advisory team, Vietnam (AAFTV) is to:

- a. Provide advisors to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces and para-military units and sub units in the field
- b. Provide individuals for integration as advisors or instructors in Special Force Teams
- c. Assist in the training of the ground forces of the Republic of Vietnam.

Suitably qualified personnel may be employed in the airborne role, including parachuting, in carrying out the above roles as necessary.

12. Subject to operational commitments and if requested by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, Australian Army personnel may be used to provide assistance to civil authorities in the event of flood and similar national disasters. You will advise AHQ of all such assistance requested or given.

13. Personnel of AAFV will not be used in aid of the civil power in civil disturbances without prior consent of the Australian Government. The responsibility for obtaining such consent rests with AHQ. Should civil disturbances occur all personnel of AAFV will take appropriate measures to safeguard themselves and government property, irrespective of the government of origin, entrusted to their care.

14. Employment in roles other than as in paragraphs 9 to 13 above will not be approved without prior consent to the Australian Government. The responsibility of obtaining such consent rests with AHQ. In particular you will ensure that tasks which may be allotted under paragraph 9c. above will not endanger the National interest of Australia or imperil unduly units of the Australian Army under your overall command. Redeployment

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of the battalion away from the general Bien Hoa area will be referred to AHQ.

## LOCATION

15. All element of AAFV will be stationed and will operate within the borders of the Republic of Vietnam. You will ensure that personnel under your command do not violate the territory of countries bordering the Republic of Vietnam.

16. Initially the battalion will be deployed in the BILH HOA airfield area under the operational command of 173 US Airborne Brigade.

17. The location in the Republic of Vietnam of member or of groups of AATTV will be decided by you, in accordance with the Directive and after consultation with the appropriate United States and Vietnamese authorities. Where political implications are involved you should consult the Australian Ambassador in Saigon.

## LOGISTIC SUPPORT

18. COMUSMACV is to provide logistic support of your force in accordance with the Military Working Arrangement with the US Forces which is attached.

## DISCIPLINE

19. Your disciplinary powers are stated in Annex 'C' of the Directive.

## FOREIGN AWARDS

20. Your attention is directed to Australian Military Regulations and Orders, Appendix 9.

## SECURITY CLEARANCES

21. You will provide COMUSMACV with a certificate stating that members of AATTV have current security clearances as follows:

- |                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| a. Officers                       | Top SECRET |
| b. Warrant Officers/<br>Sergeants | SECRET     |

22. You will submit special reports to AHQ by OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE signal:

- a. If the battalion is committed to a major operation under paragraph 9b. or c. above
- b. Should a member of AAFV be killed or be wounded in action
- c. On any incident of an unusual nature.

## REPORTS

23. You are to forward to AHQ, at weekly intervals a report by signal including:

- a. The employment and operations of the units and sub units under your command

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- b. The state of units and sub units under your command.

Copies of these reports will be provided by you to the Australian Ambassador in Saigon and to COMUSMACV.

## RELATION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR

24. The Australian Ambassador to the Republic of Vietnam is accredited by the Queen to the Chief of State of the Republic of Vietnam. He is the chief representative of the Australian Government and within the Republic of Vietnam has overall responsibility for relations between the two countries. He will not issue orders in relation to the operation or administration of A FV, but he should be kept fully informed on the force's activities and consulted on any matters likely to have political implications or to affect Australia's relations with the Republic of Vietnam or any other country.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH COMD AUSTARM FARELF

25. You are authorized to deal direct with Commander Aust Army Force FARELF on matters of common interest.

## DISTRIBUTION OF THIS DIRECTIVE

26. Copies of this Directive have been furnished to COMUSMACV and the Australian Ambassador to the Republic of Vietnam.

May 65

Major General  
Deputy Chief of the General Staff

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