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C W HOFFMAN

CRITIQUE
LANCASTER II "JULY ACTION"

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS
BY

CG, TASK FORCE HOTEL

Today with your help we will analyze the Lancaster II "July Action" to determine what we did right and what we did wrong, what we did well and what we did poorly. Predictably, we will reflect both extremes.

Planning for the "July Action" commenced on 13 June when we received General DAVIS' warning order. Command interest in the area north and northwest of Camp Carroll was stimulated by persistent reports of enemy activity there, the most persuasive items being the reports of reconnaissance teams, which almost invariably made contacts. Further, we knew that the enemy had long enjoyed uncontested control over most of the area.

Early guidance told us that the necessary forces and resources to carry out the mission would be available during July. Thus, for want of a better name, we dubbed it the "July Action."

Forces available included two Marine infantry regiments -- the 3d and 9th Marines, the customary artillery units from the 12th Marines, and the 2d ARVN Regiment.

We presented our Task Force concept here on 5 July and gained General DAVIS' approval.

We initially planned a 16 July D-Day, following on the heels of a series of arclights. But on 15 July we learned that our arclight targets were deficient in intelligence justification and had been disapproved. Later our hopes were revived when PCV suggested we "slip" D-Day 24 hours in order to receive 10 arclights. We postponed our D-Day to 17 July but received no arclights in our area of operations. Through heavy application of tactical air and artillery, we sought to make up for the missing arclights.

Our "July Action" scheme of maneuver was one of quick area saturation, placing forces at a variety of locations -- including three battalions near the DMZ -- with plans to upset the enemy quickly and decisively.

The 9th Marines' zone included a wide swath of piedmont from the DMZ to Route 9. The 3d Marines' zone embraced the rugged National Forest Reserve area including Dong Ha Mountains and Mutters Ridge. The 2d ARVN Regiment's zone lay west and northwest of the Rock Pile through a [redacted] and sheer ridgelines.

The 9th Marines developed most of the enemy contact and accounted for most of the 311 NVA killed during the Lancaster July Action.

The 3d Marines opened a series of HLZs in the nearly impenetrable jungle near the DMZ, along Mutters Ridge and on the slopes of Dong Ea Mountain. The regiment also found the two phantom 75mm pack howitzers that had plagued Camp Carroll for nearly a year.

The ARVN Regiment proved that it could operate with equal competence in the mountains as it has in coastal areas. The unit functioned efficiently as a part of the Task Force Hotel team, covering their assigned area carefully. Here again we opened valuable LZs for probable future use.

At the conclusion of the first phase of the "July Action" we turned our attention to one main corridor that remained to be searched: The upper Cam Lo River Valley. Our intelligence caused us to expect to find much enemy activity there. In a move notable for its speed and audacity, the 3d Marines established Fire Support Base Joan (6 105mm howitzers and 3 155mm howitzers), Fire Support Base Margo (6 105mm howitzers) and LZ Becky.

All three locations were operational in short order.

But the enemy chose to avoid contact and we therefore cannot point at statistics to prove the value of the effort. Nevertheless, in penetrating this corridor, we demonstrated our ability to do so, and we opened up a half dozen new sites for future LZs and FSBs. We regard this as an important fringe benefit of such actions.

The Lancaster July Action convinced us that, although we knew a lot about how to prepare LZs in difficult terrain, we still had much to learn. We [illegible] about improving our techniques and methods for selecting and developing LZs and FSBs in rugged terrain. We will say more about this during the course of our critique.

Today's speakers will include the Task Force Hotel G-3, G-2, G-4, Air Officer, Fire Support Coordinator, and CEO. Regimental Commanders of the 3d Marines, 9th Marines and 12th Marines will also make some observations. I will be followed by Major DONOVAN, Task Force G-3.

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LANCASTER II JULY ACTION
I OPERATIONS

On 13 June CG Task Force Hotel received a concept of operations from CG 3d MarDiv to conduct a multi-regiment operation in the Lancaster II AO. The forces available were; 3d Marines, 9th Marines, and two battalions of 2d ARVN Regt. The discussion that follows elaborates on planning, coordination, execution, and lessons learned.

A. PLANNING

Based on guidance received, two courses of action were developed. In each, a helo/ground attack was considered and zones of action depicted. The courses of action were passed on to the USMC Regiments for consideration. The 2d ARVN Regiment was occupied with another operation but was fully briefed and given an opportunity to develop its own scheme later.

Additional guidance was received from CG 3d MarDiv and the north to south axis of advance was adopted as the primary course of action.

The scheme of maneuver was developed with regiments in helo/ground attack from the DMZ southward. One battalion sealed off the eastern boundary of the objective area by a series of blocking positions. Certain supportability factors needed detailed planning: Helicopter, logistics and artillery.

(1) Efficient use of all available helicopters was a major concern. Time tables were developed to provide for smooth assault and helo approach and retirement lanes were planned to expedite daily resupply traffic.

(2) Timely and sufficient resupply would result only by budgeting helicopters and planning tight control at the LSA.

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(3) Prime concern was the positioning of the artillery batteries so maximum fire support was available without impeding traffic.

Another important facet of our planning was frequent conferences. Several were conducted to gain mutual understanding by all participants. MAG-39 and other 1st Marine Air Wing representatives were active members on the majority of the conferences, and also visited almost daily to keep in close touch with the plans as they developed. Pilots and ground commanders made numerous visual reconnaissances of objective areas so each would be familiar with the terrain. 3d Marine Regt and Bn Co's made 32 VR's. 9th Marines made 28 . The most difficult task was to prepare helicopter LZ's in thick canopy. The 26 ARVN Regiment changed from a helibourne assault plan to ground attack because they could not find HLZ. The 3d Marines also modified their plan because of difficulty in finding HLZ.

B. COORDINATION

(1) For help results into air prepped HLZ's, a detailed brief was held by the Regiment, Bn staff, HMM-6 and squadron flight leaders. These members made an over flight of proposed zones so all parties were agreed. Then there was a debrief after the VR. An important member, the Division AO, was not at first included but after some lessons were learned he was included in future coordination conferences.

(2) Attempts were made to incorporate 26 ARVN representatives in the various staff sections for coordination. Only one ARVN officer was available and he observed in the FSCC/TACC.

(3) ARVN objectives were alphabetized. 9th Marines were even numbered and 3d Marines were odd numbered.

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C. EXECUTION

The Lancaster July Action commenced on 17 July 1968, D Day had been 16 July-extended 1 day for arclights which never were received. Six Battalions attacked the northern portion of Lancaster II AO on D-Day.

1. 3/9 was helilifted into LZ Sparrow YD 060660.

2. 2/9 was helilifted into LZ Wren YD 050650.

3. 1/9 walked into a blocking position vicinity YD 095650.

4. 1st and 3rd Battalions 2d ARVN moved by foot into vicinity YD 932537 and YD 952577.

5. 2/3 was helilifted into LZ Falcon YD 037641.

At 170745H, 3/9 completed their helilift into LZ Sparrow. K/3/9 at 1105H in the vicinity of YD 045656, made contact with an estimated NVA company. Initially they received heavy S/A fire and 45 rounds of 60mm mortars. They returned fire with organic weapons, artillery and called in air strikes. Other elements of 3/9 moved up and were engaged at 1115H; heavy contact continued until 1500H, then subsided. Results of the contact were 31 NVA/KIA, friendly losses were 7 KIA and 28 WIA (EVAC).

(1) E/1/9, vicinity of YD 090655, at 1410H, received 10 rounds of 82mm mortars resulting in 1 WIA (EVAC), the company commander. Then at 1722H, vicinity YD 090645, E/1/9 received 7 rounds of 82mm mortars resulting in 3 KIA and 8 WIA (EVAC).

(2) A/1/9, at 1420H, vicinity of YD 087650, received 4 82mm mortar rounds resulting in 5 WIA (EVAC) and 1 WIANE.

A recon team (Alexander) acting as pathfinders for the 2d Bn 3rd Marines was inserted in LZ Falcon. At 1142H, at YD 035640 they made contact with an estimated 15-20 NVA and received S/A fire, grenades and mortars. Recon killed 10 NVA and had 4 WIA (EVAC). Air strikes by A-4's and F-4's from

MAG 11 and 12 killed an additional 11 NVA. 2/3 continued with their plan to land at LZ Falcon and were all in the LZ at 1500H. The companies moved out to the west and at 1900H, E/2/3, vicinity YD 022639 received 20 rounds of 60mm mortars resulting in 2 KIA. L hour for 2/3 had been delayed in order to make extra preps.

The 2nd ARVN Regiment made no contact for the day.

D+1, 18 July. Contacts were light for Third Marines and Ninth Marines reported no contacts. At 1010H, 1/3 helilifted into its alternate LZ, Crow since LZ Gull was not considered ready. An NVA FO was spotted by elements of G/2/3 at 1530H, vicinity of YD 024648, the NVA was killed by a sniper team with the company. At 1735H, M/3/9 in the vicinity of YD 046656, found 60 lbs of TNT, five DH-10 mines and 13 NVA/KIA.

During the afternoon of 18 July, vicinity of YD 900550, 1st Battalion 2d ARVN, found many foxholes, enough for 1 NVA company and many Laotian cigarette butts. The area appeared to have been occupied in the last two days. 3rd Marines moved K/3/3 (rein) into LZ Cardinal at 1345H, to get a foothold on further operations west.

D+2, 19 July. No contact was reported for this day as the units continued search of their ZOA. 3/3 (-) was helilifted into LZ Buzzard at 0930H. At 191000H, F/2/9, at YD 054679, found 11 graves with one NVA in each. The bodies were badly decomposed. At 1230H, D/1/3, in the vicinity of YD 015616, found 1 NVA skeleton. Then at 1913H, L/3/9, in the vicinity of YD 038649, found 8 graves with 2 NVA bodies in each. The bodies were badly decomposed.

At 191830H, I/3/3, in the vicinity of YD 028599, found 6 bunkers, one having a false bottom. Parts for a 75mm pack howitzer: One elevation mechanism, 2 wheels, 4 batteries and one pair of Russian field glasses (8X30) with case were found.

At 191630H, K/3/9, at YD 142654, found another NVA body. By dark on D+2, distribution of forces was as shown on this acetate.

D+3, 20 July. At 201000H, vicinity of YD 027602, I/3/3 found two disassembled 75mm pack howitzers and 26 rounds. D/1/3 at 1200H, vicinity of YD 016613, found 1 SKS rifle and the remains of one NVA. H/2/3, vicinity of YD 005645, spotted 11 NVA in the open and fired an artillery mission resulting in 6 NVA/KIA. The lack of enough AO's was now very evident.

At 201130H, G/2/9 in the vicinity of YD 053687 engaged an estimated NVA company in bunkers. The lead platoon of G/2/9 made contact and was pinned down by an enemy force that maneuvered to the west and brought fire to bear on the platoon. Friendly and enemy forces were in such close proximity, supporting arms could not be used initially. The platoon pulled back and conducted artillery missions and A/S. Results at this time were 1 KIA, 2 MIA and 11 WIA (EVAC). At 1600H, a squad from G/2/9, moved up and recovered the two MIA's who were found to be KIA. A total of 32 NVA were KBA, 3 NVA/KIA by ground forces and total friendly losses were 3 KIA and 12 WIA (EVAC). At 0800H, I/3/9, vicinity of YD 042655, found 3 NVA bodies who had been killed by S/A and shrapnel 3 to 4 days before. At 1530H, A/1/9 at YD 070655, received 15 rounds of 82mm mortars resulting in 1 KIA and 1 WIA (EVAC), both Kit Carson Scouts.

D+4, 21 July. Elements of 2/9 at 1330H, vicinity of YD 052685, received 6 rounds of 82mm mortars resulting in 1 KIA and 9 WIA (EVAC). At 1440H, F/2/9 spotted 35 NVA at YD 055689, moving west. They engaged them with S/A, 81mm, artillery fire and A/S. Results were 23 NVA/KBA and 10 killed by artillery fire. This contact prompted the Regimental Commander to ask permission to enter the DMZ area to pursue the NVA. This request

was forwarded by CG TF Hotel and CG 3d MarDiv. Higher authority was advised of Division Commander's intention to enter DMZ, south of Ben Hai and for less then 48 hours, if the situation so dictated. The occasion to enter the DMZ did not persist. At 0735H, K/3/9, at YD 038659, found 2 NVA bodies 4-5 days old. Other elements from 2/9, at 1050H in the vicinity of YD 060675, found 4 NVA killed by S/A, 3 AK-47's, 2 gas masks, 15 chicom grenades and assorted 782 gear and documents. L/3/9 at YD 038648 found 10 120mm mortar rounds and at YD 033649, they found 52 122mm rocket rounds. 1/9 in the vicinity of YD 063668 found 20 rounds of 107mm rockets. G/2/9 at YD 054686, found one NVA/KIA by S/A.

D+5, 22 July. At 221110H, F/2/9, vicinity of YD 059683, while searching the area of contact of 21 July found 5 NVA/KIA, ten weapons, 52 packs, 41 gas masks, 30 canteens, and assorted 782 gear. By dark on D+5, disposition of friendly forces was as shown on this acetate.

D+6, 23 July. During the day, 2/9 helilifted into LZ Carol, YD 056619 and 3/9 helilifted into LZ Rod YD 081606, both Landings were unopposed. At 1730H, 1/9 vicinity of YD 051642, captured one wounded NVA. There was no contact in the 3rd Marines AO.

D+7, 24 July. There was no contact reported. At 1150H, K/3/9, at YD 089612 found 19 graves approximately 24 hours old with one NVA in each. Then at 1213H, Kilo found 1 NVA helmet, 1 basket of rice, 3 RPG rounds, 260 rounds 82mm, 25 rounds of 61mm and 3 DH-10 mines. E/2/9, at YD 052625, found 96 graves approximately 2-4 months old, containing one body each. The graves were marked with aluminum signs. At 1500H, K/3/9, at YD 079623, had 5 Marines WIA (EVAC) and 1 WIANE from a surprise explosive device.

L/3/9 had a Marine detonate a surprise explosive device at XD 080597 resulting in 2 WIA (EVAC). 1/9 helilifted to VCB to relieve 1/4 of security of VCB and Ca Lu so that 1/4 could prepare for Canton II. Six 105 howitzers were helilifted into FSB Joan.

D+8, 25 July. There were no significant events in the objective area. 2/3 helilifted to Thon Son Lam. And 2d ARVN Regt ended their part of Lancaster July Action by helilifting into assigned objectives in the Canton II Action which 4th Marines already had underway.

D+9 26 July. There were no significant developments as the units continued to search their AO's. By dark on D+9, disposition of friendly forces was as shown on this acetate.

D+10, 27 July. No contact was reported, the action was highlighted by helilifts of 1/3 and two companies of 3/3 into LZ's Becky, XD 858614 and LZ Margo XD 901609 in the northwestern portion of the Cam Lo River Valley. Six flights of F/W prepped LZ Becky and 4 flights of F/W prepped LZ Margo. Both landings were unopposed. The 9th Marines continued to find many abandoned fortified areas.

D+11, 28 July. At 0711H, two Marines from 3/3 were WIA (EVAC) when they detonated a surprise explosive device vicinity of XD 900610. Then at 1415H, a patrol from L/3/3, in the vicinity of XD 900615, detonated one U.S. type M-14 mine resulting in 3 WIA (EVAC). 2/9 displaced to Quang Tri for the S.U.R.E. Program. At 1845H, C/1/12 was lifted into FSB Margo.

D+12, 29 July. Two Marines from A/1/3 at 0300H, in the vicinity XD 854614 were WIANE when they exchanged fire with one NVA outside the perimeter. L/3/3 had one Marine detonate a U.S. type AP mine resulting in 1 WIA (EVAC). 3/9 displaced to VCB and participated in the S.U.R.E. Program.

D+13, 30 July. There were no significant events as the 3rd Marines continued to search their Zone of Action.

D+14, 31 July. 1/9 completed search operations and was helilifted to VCB . Ninth Marines were phased out of the Lancaster July Action on this date to prepare for the Ba Long operation.

D+17, 1 August, D+18, 2 August. There were no significant events on either of these dates.

D+19, 3 August. Lancaster July Action came to close when opcon of 3rd Marines was passed to CG 3d MarDiv.

The cumulative casualties and equipment/supplies captured or destroyed are as shown on this chart.

FRIENDLY		ENEMY	
KIA	26	KIA	311
WIA (EVAC)	136	POW	1
WIANE	22	DET	1

Captured items included: 18 individual weapons, 7 crew served weapons 1084 bunkers destroyed, 1377 arty/rocket/mortar rounds captured/destroyed, 5138 small arms rounds, captured/destroyed, 6,350 pounds of rice captured, 30 mines or booby traps, 199 grenades, 2,260 pounds of explosive. Of special interest were two 75mm pack howitzers which had plagued Camp Carroll for some time. The 2d ARVN Regiment had no casualties or contact in the Lancaster July Action.

D. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED/LESSONS LEARNED

1. Our most essential lesson learned came early in this operation. Initially the Division AO's, who act as FAC (A), were not included in HLZ briefings and planning. This caused confusion in prepping a selected HLZ as AO's were not sure of exact locations. It is most difficult to relate

grid coordinates to terrain that is seared by craters, heavily vegetated and spider webbed by small streams not shown on the map. A wrong area was prepped and consequently 2/3 had to land in a 9th Marines HLZ requiring boundary changes. Solution: In planning a helicopter assault, the following CO's or representatives must be present: Bn Cmdr, helicopter Squadron Cmdr, Division AO, gunship flight leader and Regimental CO. After briefing the scheme of maneuver, all parties make a VR picking the exact ground and then relate it to the map. In this way, each representative can point out problems that must be solved. The infantry commander states whether it meets his tactical desires. The helicopter flight commander can be sure he has proper landing and departure clearances. The Division AO can recommend the amount of A/S required and finally the gunships are aware of how to lead transport helicopters to the HLZ.

2. Do not plan on elements of two different regiments landing in HLZ's in close proximity to each other or near Regimental boundaries. The fire support problem will persist as flight patterns or artillery missions mask the other units during the critical phase of helo assault. If HLZ's are hard to find, first locate suitable HLZ's, then make the boundaries.

3. When operating near the DMZ, a code word should be designated if a Bn/Regt commander anticipates the need to enter the DMZ. In this way, requests can be passed by uncovered means to gain approval.

4. Marines can and have blasted HLZ and artillery positions out of canopied forests considered unsuitable. Tremendous air ordnance was required to start the scars and a big field engineer task was needed to clear the trees and make it useable. A close coordination with the 1st MAW greatly

helped in fast development of these zones. These techniques have already been applied to Canton II and Ba Long. This concludes G-3 comments.

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UNITS EMPLOYED

3D MARINES (REIN)

1ST BN 3D MARINES

2ND BN 3D MARINES

3D BN 3D MARINES

3D BN 12TH MARINES (REIN)

9TH MARINES

1ST BN 9TH MARINES

2ND BN 9TH MARINES

3D BN 9TH MARINES

2ND BN 12TH MARINES

1ST AIR'S FROM 2ND ARVN

2ND ARVN REGIMENT

1ST BN 2ND ARVN

3D BN 2ND ARVN

D/S ARTILLERY BATTERY

G/S ARTILLERY

4TH BN 12TH MARINES

BRAVO PLATOON 1ST 8" HOW, BTRY.

1ST 155 PROVISIONAL GUN BTRY (-) (2

155 GUNS; 2 8" HOWITZERS)

BRAVO BATTERY, 2ND BATTALION, 94TH FIELD ARTY.

DIVISION AO'S

VMO-6

MAG 39 - 36

MAG 11, 12, AND 13

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II INTELLIGENCE

A. GENERAL.

1. The area of operation encompassed terrain utilized by the enemy for over a year with minimum friendly interference. He was therefore able to construct and maintain elaborate base areas to support transient infiltration groups and operational combat units. The most recent occupants of the area were major elements of the 320th NVA Division, 164th Artillery Regiment, and the 27th Independent Regiment.

Early in the planning for this action, it was concluded that timely coordination of the collection effort and positive dissemination of information was mandatory to its success. Therefore, additional emphasis was placed on those facets by endeavoring to establish daily contact liaison between the Task Force Hotel G-2 Staff and the units participating in the action. In addition, a daily special intelligence summary covering only the area of the action was disseminated, a summary which accentuated that day's collected information in that area. These two means of dissemination proved to be the keys to the successes enjoyed by the intelligence effort.

B. INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION.

1. In support of the Lancaster II July Action, the following intelligence sources were utilized:

a. Aerial photography

b. Infra-red (Airborne)

c. Aerial observation.

d. Sensor devices.

e. Prisoners of war.

f. Captured documents and equipment

g. Ground reconnaissance.

2. Aerial photography.

a. Vertical photographic coverage was provided each regiment for pre-D-day planning. In addition, forward-firing oblique photography of pre-selected landing zones was provided prior to D-day.

b. During the action, ten additional photographic missions were flown in the AO with immediate supplementary readouts provided to the Task Force regiments. These readouts were valuable in their identification of the locations of enemy facilities and fortifications.

c. On three of four occasions, photography of that area immediately forward of occupied phase lines was attempted. Each of these three missions had to be aborted, however, because ground troops were in contact and it was inadviseable to effect check fires. The fourth attempt succeeded by prohibiting the firing of VT-fused shells.

3. Infra-red (Airborne). Infra-red (Airborne) was employed to assess enemy strengths and dispositions and therefore to provide targeting information. During the course of the action, ten infra-red reports were received, interpreted, and exploited.

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4. Aerial observation. Aerial reconnaissance was conducted from UH1B, OH6 and CH47 aircraft. The aircraft provided extensive reconnaissance both of the AO and of the enemy artillery belt north of the DMZ. Air assets were employed for HLZ selection, surveillance, and target acquisition. Briefs and debriefs of crews of fixed-wing aircraft were completed over the DASC communications nets, a system which proved to be adequate under the circumstances. Rotary wing aircraft were briefed and debriefed daily at VCB. These contact briefs were supplemented by passing developing intelligence information and requests over the DASC nets to the aircraft while they were on station.

5. Sensor devices. Use was made of previously-emplaced sensors in the upper Song Ba River Valley for target acquisition and for estimating the enemy's use of this terrain corridor. Three additional sensor strings of three sensors each were emplaced by reconnaissance teams in the northeast corner of the AO. These devices were monitored on the 15th of July and the information provided was exploited by artillery fire. Because the devices became hypersensitive, however, further readouts were not made.

6. Prisoners of war.

a. Interrogation support was provided by attaching one interrogation-translation subteam to each operating regiment. One additional subteam was located at VCB.

b. Only one prisoner was captured during the action, and therefore the true potential of the Task Force PW exploi-

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tation capability was not realized.

7. Captured documents and equipment. The action resulted in the capture of significant amounts of enemy equipment and munitions. Included in the captures were two 75mm pack howitzers and 255 surface-to-surface rockets. Documents captured were of minimal number, but those captured substantiated the use of the AO by the 27th Independent Regiment and the 320th NVA Division.

8. Ground Reconnaissance. 3rd Force Reconnaissance Company and 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion were called upon to execute 39 patrols in support of the action. These patrols did not restrict themselves to the classic surveillance mission historically associated with reconnaissance units, but also assumed missions involving pathfinding, stay-behind, recon screen, and the covert emplacement of sensor devices.

a. During the planning phase, it was estimated that a sizeable force occupied the northeast corner of the AO, and that this area was serving as a principle enemy north-south access route. In order to confirm this estimate and provide a pre-D-day and post-D-day monitoring capability of the three main trails, three sensor insertion missions were scheduled. Two teams were inserted by helicopter on the 11th of July (vic YD0065 and YD0365). A third team walked to their sensor placement site (vic YD0665) from C-2 on 12 July. The center team of the three sighted the enemy during sensor implacement and drew heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire (including

.50 cal. machine gun fire on extraction). The other two teams observed positive indications of enemy use of their respective areas. Notwithstanding the possibility of enemy interdiction, all sensor devices were emplaced and the teams extracted without sustaining any friendly casualties.

b. At 170930 July, reconnaissance team "Alexander" was inserted into LZ Falcon (vic YD 035640) to act as pathfinders for a helicopter landing by 2/3. Contact was made with an estimated 15 - 20 NVA. As a result of the discovery of the enemy's presence, the landing was delayed so that additional preparation fires could be placed on the enemy positions. The assault landing was carried out without friendly casualties, although a number of helicopters did receive ground fire.

c. In order to provide surveillance and a fire direction capability to the rear of friendly forces as they moved south, two reconnaissance teams were inserted (vic YD057665 and YD041662) on 21 July. Recon teams remained in this area until 25 July. During that time, they made four sightings of enemy troops moving south, and conducted fire missions to break up enemy formations.

d. Two recon teams were inserted on 18 July to act as a screening force for engineers during the construction of LZ Cardinal (vic XD939611). One team was emplaced to the north, the other to the south of the zone. During the evening of 18 July, recon team "Bulldozer" (the southernmost team) detected enemy soldiers moving toward them. The team directed

supporting arms on these formations, and no further interference resulted that evening. A search of the area the morning of the 19th revealed blood trails and bits of black pyjamas. During this incident and thereafter, work continued uninterrupted on LZ Cardinal.

C. DISSEMINATION. In order to ensure the timely exploitation of intelligence information, the following means were employed in addition to those previously discussed:

1. Daily INTSUM's were sent electrically and by special courier.

2. Spot reports were transmitted by land line and by radio.

3. Daily formal briefings were presented to the Commanding General, Task Force Hotel and his staff.

4. As requested, special briefings were presented to other interested parties.

D. LESSONS LEARNED.

1. Photographic needs should be expressed as early as possible in the planning stage to ensure delivery on a timely basis.

2. Prisoners of war and documents are of inestimable value and the lack of them during an operation deprives all units of needed information. A concerted effort must be made by all units to obtain these sources.

3. Timely dissemination of information is at least as important as any other phase of the intelligence cycle. The transmission duplication of this information is desirable to ensure receipt by the using unit.

III LOGISTICS

A. HELICOPTER RESUPPLY PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

The goal of the logistics system during the Lancaster II (July) action, was to provide the required supplies to the units at the time and place requested.

STATISTICS FOR LANCASTER II JULY

Total lifts 1,711
CH46 1,361
CH53 350
Most lifts per day 146 on 22 July
Average CH46 lifts per day 75.5
Average CH53 lifts per day 19.4
Total weight 5,362,180 lbs
Average weight per day 297,899 lbs
Most weight one day, 465,000 lbs on 24 July

This in no way taxed the LSA which has the capability to handle in excess of 500,000 lbs daily.

During this action, 16 different units both Infantry and Artillery, were resupplied by helicopter from the LSA at Vandegrift Combat Base. The helicopter resupply effort was time oriented to provide supplies when requested by the unit. The coordination necessary to accomplish this type resupply is complicated but must be done to allow ground commanders to complete tactical moves as planned.

During the first three days of the operation a lack of coordination, late establishment of priorities and slow reaction to potential problem areas caused reduced helicopter resupply support, particularly the return of nets, this was caused by an incomplete schedule, helicopters arriving late for the resupply mission and communication difficulties. By D+3 these

problems were essentially solved.

As the operation progressed techniques were developed which resulted in the establishment of a Logistics Operation center at the LSA which materially improved Logistic Support to units in the field. An SOP to standardize procedures at the LOC was prepared and a draft copy is attached. The SOP provides for the greatest degree of flexibility in logistic support by coordinating unit representatives in the LOC, supply status at LSU, the Shore Party operating the LSA and aircraft support available to the logistic mission.

It is recommended that in future operations an LOC be established at the LSA and that it function in accordance with the proposed SOP.

B. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED/LESSONS LEARNED.

Problems such as police of LZs, inadequate preparation of LZs and radio net discipline are of a continuing nature and require constant command attention. These areas created some concern but were kept within manageable proportions.

On several occasions communication between helicopters and helicopter support teams was difficult to establish.

It is recommended that battalion representatives at the LSA contact units to notify HSTs that aircraft are enroute and to be prepared to contact the aircraft. Additionally the LOC prepares a daily pilot information sheet which contains LZ coordinates, name, frequency and call signs for the days resupply operations. This typed paper is handed to each pilot on his first mission of the day at the LSA. The tower radio operator is then able to inform pilots of their destination by coordinates, call sign and frequency simply by saying

the line number of the unit to which the lift is going. As an example if a load of MCI is programed for a certain battalion, He might say to the pilot "one load of Class I for line 6". The pilot looks at his paper and easily identifies his destination.

Although the Task Force Hotel Communication Officer will address this subject in greater detail the importance of designating a regimental LZ common net cannot be over emphasized. Each regiment must have its own LZ common net and the LSA must have a seperate net to control aircraft in the LSA.

As previously stated our goal is to provide the required supplies to the unit in the field at the time and place requested. It is realized that units cannot forecast all of their needs but the large number of late afternoon add-on requests caused considerable difficulties as the sun went down. The LOC will maintain the flexability to respond to these requirements but the greater the lead time for resupply the smoother the system will work. However, there was no deadline imposed on units for add-on requests. Requests were accepted as late as 1800 for delivery that day. As a result there were no emergency resupply requests during Lancaster II July which testifies to the flexibility of the LOC concept.

It is recommended that units estimate and plan logistic resupply requirements to minimize late add on requests.

It is interesting to note that toward the end of the operation most units were receiving hot chow, cold milk and cold

drinks daily. Some of these desirable items were delivered even though we had the added logistics load of the 4th Marines on Canton II overlapping with Lancaster II.

A shortage of water cans initially caused minor resupply problems. Division G-4 made 10,000 plastic water containers available at Vandegrift Combat Base. These containers materially improved the ability to resupply units with water in a timely manner.

It is recommended that units requisition sufficient water cans to maintain their authorized allowance. That plastic water containers of the 2½ gallon and 6 gallon type be available as a substitute item.

We must be prepared to utilize resupply means other than helicopters. In one instance two companies of first battalion Ninth Marines were resupplied by APC towing Army ammo trailers. These trailers are of sturdier construction than ours with a lower and heavier suspension system giving them more stability for rough terrain. They can be towed by any heavy prime mover in our inventory including tanks, 6X6 trucks or dozers. Future planning must consider all methods of resupply.

Three separate and distinct types of resupply were encountered during this action. The first type required resupply to battalions moving from night defensive positions to objectives which were reached in the late afternoon. This operation required early morning resupply and retrieval of nets to enable the battalion to move on schedule. When the objective was secured and an LZ prepared the late afternoon resupply was commenced. During the period these operations were conducted, helicopter requirements were greatest in the early morning and late afternoon; reduced during midday. Figure 1. illustrates helicopter requirements to support a battalion on the move for a normal days operation. Note that the battalions have scheduled resupply for 0700 - 0900 and 1500 - 1600. It should also be noted that this operation was conducted during extremely hot weather.

The second situation provided resupply to units that developed a base of operations containing an LZ. During these operations helicopter resupply leveled out, resulting in a continuous resupply schedule throughout the day. Frequently these units established OP's in terrain that required small unit resupply, resulting in as many as seven different LZ locations.

The third situation was the initial supply of a fire support base, 18-23 CH53 lifts were required. Daily resupply to the artillery positions averaged seven CH53 lifts.

Based on statistics accumulated during the July action the following planning factors have been developed which apply when aircraft operate in less than a 10 mile turn around distance.

1. A battalion on the move requires an average of 10 CH46 lifts per day. These lifts must be scheduled early in the morning and late in the afternoon so as not to adversely effect the tactical situation. It requires two CH46 aircraft per battalion to accomplish this resupply.

2. Units that utilize a fixed LZ for a period of time require an average of 8 CH46 lifts per day delivered at any time. Two CH46's can deliver this cargo in approximately one hour.

3. Fire support bases require 18-23 CH53 lifts the first day and an average of seven CH53 lifts per day thereafter. Each aircraft has the capability of delivering four lifts per hour.

ENGINEER

A. CONSTRUCTION OF FIRE SUPPORT BASES

During the period of 17 July to 3 August 1968, two fire support bases were built. FSB Joan and FSB Margo by the Third Marines.

FSB Joan was built in a small valley where vegetation consisted mainly of tall grass and bushes. The Engineer effort was provided by Bravo Co. 3d Engineer Bn. A TD-6

Dozer was sent by Task Force Hotel to do the necessary excavation. Because of the light vegetation, the engineering effort went smoothly and the base was constructed easily in two days. For a fire direction center Task Force Hotel supplied an 8X8 foot prefabricated bunker.

FSB Margo was built in rolling hill terrain with gun positions at the base and sides of a hill. The vegetation consisted mainly of bamboo and grass on the site with trees around the position. The engineer effort was provided by Bravo Co. 3d Engineer Bn. All gun positions and ammo pits were dug by hand using demolitions (C-4) to loosen the earth. The only trees cut were those masking the fire of the guns. The position was completed in 24 hours using 38 engineers, hand tools and demolitions. There were no major engineer problems encountered during the construction.

Throughout the AO many landing zones were cut by infantry battalions. Task Force Hotel sent a team of engineers to the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 2nd ARVN Regiment to construct landing zones for a troop lift. At these zones some difficulty was encountered with the size of the trees and the density of the forest. All work was done with demolitions and hand tools. Each zone was completed in 24 hours.

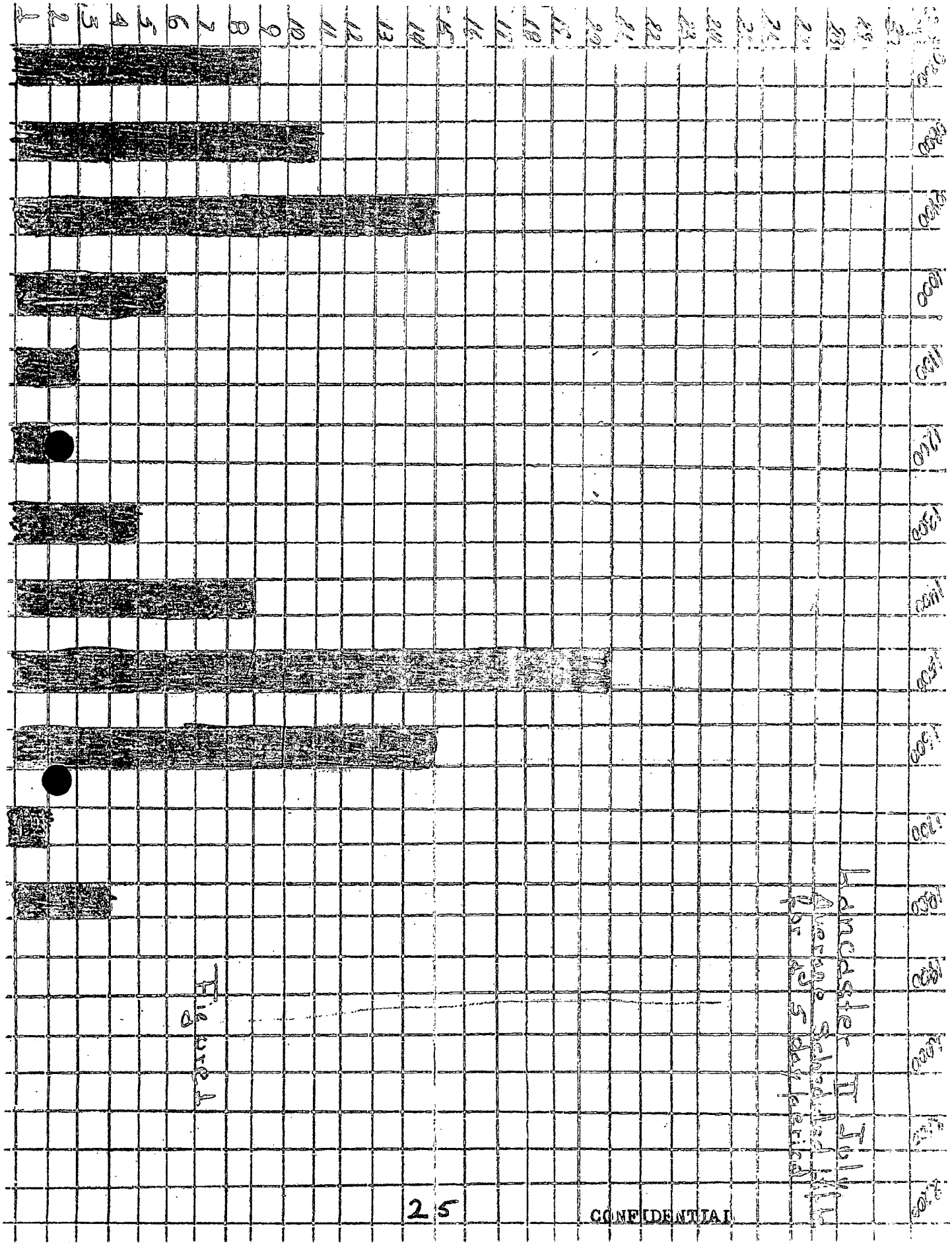
B. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

The major problem encountered at the ARVN landing zones was the size and hardness of the trees which had to be blown. More demolitions than estimated had to be employed for effectiveness. Difficulty in securing the charges to the trees was

met because of the solidness and shape of the TNT blocks and the lack of binding material. This was remedied by taking strips of green bamboo and using them to secure charges. C-4 strip charges would have been more effective because of their cohesive sides and the rapidity with which they can be employed.

C. LESSONS LEARNED

When clearing trees in a dense forest area engineers should carry enough string, rope or other suitable binding material to aid in setting demolitions, especially when using TNT. When estimating demolitions for the larger trees common to the Lancaster AO, special consideration should be given to the type and hardness of the wood to be blown.



LANCASTER II JULY ACTION
III AIR

A. GENERAL

1. The main characteristic of this operation from the standpoint of air was the requirement for close coordination and planning between air and ground. This requirement was met in that numerous meetings, briefings, and joint planning conferences were held with appropriate representatives present.

B. FIXED WING OPERATIONS

1. Fixed Wing air support was adequate and responsive altho the single management concept has reduced its flexibility. "Add on" air must come from the hot pad and this of course limits the choice of ordnance.

2. A brief summary of fixed wing operations is as follows: A total of 781 close air support sorties were flown in support of Lancaster July Action covering 10 assault landings, and expending 1187 tons of ordnance. TPQ operations both day and night totaled 167 sorties expending 395 tons of ordnance. The following BDA is reported:

KBA	67
Secondary explosions	21
Fires	12
Bunkers	104
Caves	1
Rocket sites	62
Structures	11
AA positions	1
Fighting holes	12
Mortar positions	3
Road cuts	1
Trench line	475 meters

3. The greatest single limiting factor in Lancaster July Action from an air standpoint was the shortage of observation aircraft. The reason for this shortage was aircraft availability. This problem can only be rectified by the acquisition of adequate spare parts and replacement aircraft.

4. Task Force Hotel had requested a substantial series of arclight missions prior to D-day. These requests however, were denied. Fortunately through experience gained during a previous operation, Robin North and South, the Scheme of Maneuver in Lancaster July was not tied to the arclight. Consequently, by substituting organic supporting arms and hot pad air, adverse effects from not receiving planned arclight were minimized.

5. One noteworthy problem with regard to fixed wing air is the requirement to submit requests by 1200 on the day prior. This places an unrealistic handicap on the ground commander, particularly during a highly

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mobile operation that requires instant reaction. In many cases plans are not even finalized until very late in the day.

C. HELICOPTER OPERATIONS

1. By and large the helicopter side of the picture worked very well. As previously mentioned by the CH-46 helicopters contacted over 1730 lifts transporting more than 4.8 million pounds of supplies and equipment. The daily average of cargo transported during Lancaster July was 268,000 lbs. It is significant to note that simultaneously with supporting Lancaster July involving of course the 3rd, 9thMarines and 2nd ARVN Regiment, Task Force Hotel also supported the 4th Marines, Canton II, and five fire support bases.

2. The most important factor in the success of this operation was the technique of asset management used by Task Force Hotel. All assets were controlled and dispatched at the Task Force level.

D. LESSONS LEARNED

1. Lessons were learned throughout the operation. The most significant was the need for a CH-46 and UH1E gun medevac package, assigned to and controlled by the Task Force in support of the operation. During the first days of Lancaster July a request was received for the evacuation of an emergency case and several priorities. Unfortunately because of battle damage there were no available aircraft for this mission under the Task Force's control. The request was forwarded to Dong Ha in accordance with standing procedures. The regular medevac package had just been dispatched on another medevac and the result was a substantial delay of over 3 hours and 40 minutes. Steps were taken immediately to acquire and position a medevac package at VC8. This procedure commenced the following day.

2. The concept of a roving gun package was another lesson learned. This provides for two airborne UH1E Gun ships in the Task Force Hotel area to be used as required. It eliminates the need to "chain" a section of guns to a specific mission which might not require their services all of the time. This gun package is always in communication with the DASC and may be dispatched by the DASC upon the authority of CG Task Force Hotel or his designated representative.

3. The establishment of a ZIPPO Team is a major step toward addressing the problem of landing zone preparation. We saw the need for it in Lancaster July. It has since been developed, and proved to be very valuable in the initial phases of Scotland II Bravo. The ZIPPO (zone Improvement/Preparation Projects) consist of one helicopter assault flight leader, one UH1E pilot qualified as a TAC(A), one O-1 pilot and one A.O., the senior member being assigned as ZIPPO. The purpose of the team is to proceed as an integral package to brief with the supported unit. The ZIPPO is qualified to represent air with regard to the selection,

evaluation, preparation and/or improvement of potential landing zones and fire support basis. It is identified as a team and will be assigned to a unit or area as appropriate throughout the completion of the assigned task to include the heliborne assault if such is the case. This concept provides for continuity throughout the duration of the mission.

E. COMMENTS

1. Maximum utilisation is an essential factor in asset management. This requires that aircraft "deadhead" time be kept to a minimum. This can be achieved by coordination through the logistical channels wherein return loads (empty water cans etc.) are programmed to coincide with incoming resupply.

2. The problem of reduced production as a result of aircraft availability and/or weather is ever present. While this problem cannot be accurately predicted it can however be anticipated and plans made accordingly. A seemingly vigorous and adequate resupply program can suddenly grind to a sickening halt as a result of poor weather or lack of aircraft. To lessen the impact, all units should assign strict priorities to each load with the idea that possibly three or four loads may be the sum total received. The Task Force C-4 has initiated a "wave" or "round robin" supply cycle to allow each unit to get at least one load prior to starting the second wave. This is flexible to respond realistically to the overall needs of the deployed unit.

F. PROBLEM

1. It is desirable for aircraft to be able to check in with one control agency and receive complete instructions and clearances. This however, is not always possible due to unexpected communication failures and delays. The DASC is an air control agency that comes under the direction of the Commanding General, 1st MAW. As such, it is governed in its operations by certain regulations. This agency did however, deviate from its normal procedures with regard to low and slow flying aircraft during Lancaster July. This deviation permitted the handing off of helicopters and C-1's to the Regimental FSCC's for clearance control with regard to navaplanes.

2. There were still instances wherein flights failed to RIO with the DASC. This results in complete inability on the part of the DASC to maintain an account of aircraft under their control. It is recommended that without exception all flights RIO with the controlling DASC. In cases where direct communications is not possible due to terrain etc., reports should be relayed. Additionally the DASC must be informed whenever the posture of the flight changes.

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V ARTILLERY/FIRE SUPPORT COORDINATION

A. Artillery Support. Fires provided by Direct Support and General Support Artillery were considered to be highly satisfactory. Artillery units were able to support the action of troops adequately from the positions utilized. No major problems were experienced.

B. Counterbattery and Countermortar Operations. Ground units reported incoming artillery on only one occasion. Counterbattery fires were delivered on the suspected hostile artillery position under observation of an aerial observer.

Active enemy mortar positions were successfully engaged by organic mortars and direct support artillery.

The employment of extensive artillery suppression fires (pre-emptive) during the operation may have contributed significantly to the enemy's failure to employ his artillery to a greater degree. It is again, the view of our not being able to evaluate our efforts toward this type of artillery suppression. The fact that the enemy did not shoot more indicates that the plan may have been successful.

C. Fire Support Coordination

1. General. The employment of helicopters and fixed wing aircraft in great numbers, combined with the requirement for extensive artillery fires raised anticipations that the fire support coordination during the Iadrang/July Action would be a continuing problem.

In an effort to minimize the coordination problems, several conferences were held with the participating ground units, aerial observers, and helicopter transport units.

Through these detailed discussions, methods were decided upon which were considered to best alleviate the coordination problems. It is felt that these conferences were extremely beneficial.

2. Air/Artillery. Lancaster July Action showed a marked increased in the successful simultaneous attack of targets by air and artillery. Additionally, with exceptions, check fires were considered to be minimal throughout the operation. Contributing factors were considered to be the detailed coordination effected at regiment and battalion level and the effective control of attack aircraft by the ground units through airborne controllers.

The coordination of artillery and rotary wing aircraft showed a marked improvement over previous operations of this magnitude. The standard doctrine of helicopter approach and retirement lanes and restrictive fire plans was utilized. As agreed upon by the the commanders of the infantry units, artillery units, and helicopter transport units, a plan was developed. This provided for a continuous and smoothflow of helicopters with relative safety while the artillery units maintained the required support to the maneuver elements.

Additionally, the approach and retirement lanes gave a vital assist to DASC and regimental ALO's in the control of resupply and medevac aircraft.

An overall factor which contributed to air/artillery coordination was the co-location of the Task Force FSCC and DASC. The co-location significantly reduced time delays and enabled the FSCC and DASC to better understand each other's procedures and [illegible] problems.

One incident that received previous discussion was related to the close proximity of 3d and 9th Marine units and future unit location in difficult terrain during the initial stages of the operation. This was solved through re-orientation of attack aircraft flight patterns and increased distance between the concerned units.

3. Coordination with the 2d ARVN Regiment. Coordination of artillery fire and air support with the 2d ARVN Regiment produced no problems that warrant discussion.

4. Communications. FSCC communications proved to be unsatisfactory too frequently. This occurred in spite of continued efforts by Task Force Communication personnel.

When total FSCC communication failures occur it is necessary that the regiments be prepared to assume lateral coordination and clearance responsibilities. Additionally, the regiments must have cognizance or control of all aircraft operating in the regiment's zone of action to allow the total coordinating process to continue.

Prior to commencement of the Lancaster July Action, measures were taken to provide the regiments with lateral coordination and clearance authority and control of aircraft operating within the regiments' zone of action.

This system proved to be highly efficient and permitted uninterrupted air and artillery support to the maneuvering units during communications breakdowns at the Task Force level.

5. Lessons Learned

1. In large scale operations, approach and retirement lanes and restrictive fire plans positively reduce coordination problems.

2. Coordination of artillery and air is enhanced through the co-location of the FSCC and DASC.

3. Regiments must have cognizance or control of all aircraft operating in support of the regiment to allow a flexible coordination system.

VI COMMUNICATIONS

A. SUMMARY

In an effort to apply those communications lessons learned from previous operations, the following three radio nets were established, in addition to normal tactical radio nets.

(1) A Landing Zone Common net was assigned to each of the regiments

(2) A Helicopter Assault Frequency was assigned to each of the regiments.

(3) A Logistical Support area common frequency was assigned to the LSA so that all helicopters knew what frequency to contact the LSA on. The purpos of three (3) nets is to spread out all traffic to helicopters and keep nets uncluttered.

Communications from Vandegrift Combat Base is a challenge due to the terrain that surrounds the base. As a step to correcting the problem of broadcasting out of the valley, a twenty-five (25) pair cable has been installed from the top of Signal Hill, to the main command bunker of the Task Force. On this cable is carried both VHF and UHF radio traffic plus radio relay. Both air and ground portions of the Task Force are currently employing this cable facility.

B. PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

1. Problem. It became apparent just prior to the commencement of the Lancaster July Action that the air nets were not as efficient as could be.

Solution. A Task Force Tactical Air Request net was initiated by the Task Force FSCC. Stations on this net were the Task Force FSCC, the 3rd Marines FSCC, and the 9th Marines FSCC.

This net was used in lieu of the Task Force monitoring the TACP net of each of the regiments.

2. Problem. Due to an unusually high precentage of down time on radio relay, the Task Force Tactical net became overcrowded with various types of traffic which needed to passed.

Solution. To overcome this overcrowding, additional equipment was obtained by the Task Force, so that in future operations, if for any reason radio relay goes down, or becomes overcrowded, all necessary traffic can be passed on a circuit that parallels the Task Force tactical net. To accomplish this the Task Force will activate both its primary and alternate frequencies on the Task Force tactical net.

BRIG GENERAL
CO, TASK FORCE HOTEL

I would like to comment briefly on three topics: fire support coordination, logistics and preparation of LZs and Fire Support Bases.

With respect to fire support coordination, we created a noteworthy problem by using an LZ close to the boundary between the Marine regiments. While I have some handy alibis that explain how we got ourselves into this difficult situation, I will resist the temptation to make excuses and observe that, having created an awkward fire support coordination situation, we unscrambled our mess rapidly. With this one sour note, the remainder of our fire support coordination was sweet harmony. We maintained this harmony while moving 4.8 million pounds of supplies in 1711 helicopter sorties, while executing 10 battalion-size helicopter assaults while delivering 10,000 tons of bombs and rockets in 982 close air support sorties, and while firing 48,809 rounds of artillery. And all this activity occurred in an area of about five by eleven nautical miles.

Next, logistics: Describing the "July Action" supply operation tells an important but incomplete story of the logistics effort at Vandegrift Combat Base. For while supplies flowed by helicopter to the 3d Marines, 9th Marines, and 2d ANGLN Regiment, they also continued to flow -- on a slightly reduced scale -- to the 4th Marines and to the two big firebases at Cates and Shepherd. I make this point to emphasize the capability at Vandegrift of our Logistics Operations Center to manage and our ISA to handle the logistics support of 10 or 11 deployed infantry battalions and associated artillery. The 3d Marine Division has a tremendous asset in Vandegrift Combat Base. We have not seriously strained its capability even when moving over half a million pounds per day.

Finally on preparation of LZs and Fire Support Bases: the "July Action" taught us that, with effort and energy properly focused on a selected location, we can prepare LZs, build FSB's, virtually anywhere. The tougher the terrain, the more vital the systematic application of resources. But we now reject the notion that there are areas too difficult to capture.

When we commenced our "July Action" planning, our experience with LZ's in the target area ranged from unimpressive to undetectable. Today we claim intimate knowledge of a substantial number (OVERLAY of LZ's and FSB's). Without fanfare, we now can launch combat forces at many points throughout the area.

Our action also reminded the enemy that he has no safe havens and, in destroying many of his bunkers and caches, we complicated his buildup in the area. Most important, perhaps, our pioneering greatly facilitated our return whenever we choose.

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HEADQUARTERS

Task Force Hotel

3rd Marine Division (Rein), FMF

Vandegrift Combat Base

BJ: Standing Operating Procedures for Task Force Hotel

Logistic Operation Center

HEADQUARTERS
Task Force Hotel
3rd Marine Division (Rein), FMF
Vandegrift Combat Base

T/F/H 0 P4400.1
DCB/jhk

TASK FORCE HOTEL ORDER P4400.1

From: Commanding General
To: Distribution List

Subj: Standing Operating Procedures for Task Force Hotel Logistic Operation Center

Encl: (1) Locator Sheet

1. Purpose. To establish procedures which will provide for the timely resupply of units from Vandegrift Combat Base.

2. Background. The Task Force Hotel Logistic Operation Center provides a coordination center where units being resupplied from Vandegrift Combat Base may maintain their logistic Resupply Sections. Facilities for units to install both radio and telephone communications are available. Task Force Hotel G-4 maintains a watch officer in the LOC who has communications available to co-ordinate the activities of unit S-4 representatives, Task Force Hotel Air Officer, Shore Party, LSU, and Division G-4 representatives at Vandegrift Combat Base.

3. Action. Units under the operational control of Task Force Hotel will comply with the instruction contained here-in for re-supply from Vandegrift Combat Base.

4. Recommendations. Comments and recommendations for improvement of this SOP are invited.

5. Certification. Reviewed and approved this date.

DISTRIBUTION:

M. C. DALEY
Chief of Staff

LOCATOR SHEET

Subj: Standing Operating Procedures for Task Force Hotel Logistic Operation center.

Location: _____
(Indicate the location(s) of the copy(ies) of this publication)

Enclosure (1)

RECORD OF CHANGES

Log completed change actions as indicated.

Change Number	Date of Change	Date Received	Date Entered	Signature of person entering change

Table of Contents
Section I

APPENDIX A

SECTION I

101. GENERAL. Units under the operational control of Task Force Hotel must be prepared to utilize helicopter resupply while engaged in field operations. The Task Force Hotel Logistic Operations Center functions as a coordination point for unit logistic representatives, aircraft allocation, supply status and logistic support area capabilities. In order to implement effective helicopter supply, it is essential that each unit have a complete knowledge of the procedures outlined in this SOP.

102. RESPONSIBILITY.

1. It is the responsibility of the unit commander to ensure that requests for routine helicopter resupply are forwarded to the Task Force Hotel G-4 in the LOC by 1600 the day prior to the resupply requirements.

2. The Task Force Hotel G-4 represents the Commanding General in all matters relating to Helicopter resupply. This includes coordination and liaison with the Air Officer, DSA, the Escort Party Company operating the DSA, and unit logistic representatives. The G-4 will advise the Air Officer of lift requirements and recommend the number and types of aircraft to be employed for the following days resupply operations.

SECTION II

201. TASK FORCE HOTEL LOGISTIC OPERATIONS CENTER. The Logistic Operations Center (LOC) is located at the Logistic Support area (LSA) at Vandegrift Combat Base. Task Force Hotel G-4 will maintain a watch officer at the LOC to coordinate the helicopter resupply of units under the operational control of Task Force Hotel.

202. COMMUNICATIONS. Task Force Hotel will maintain a radio net linking the LOC with Vandegrift DASC and the Air Operations Center. An additional radio net with LSA tower, transmitted into the LOC via speaker will enable battalion representatives to advise battalions that aircraft are enroute to their respective LZ's. Trunk lines will be available to LSA and Hotel switch boards (units must provide instruments for lines within the LOC bunker). A "hot line" will be available between the LOC and LSA tower for coordinating instructions.

203. REGIMENTAL AND BATTALION S-4 REPRESENTATIVES. Each regimental and battalion being supplied from Vandegrift LSA must maintain an S-4 representative in the LOC to co-ordinate resupply between the LSA and battalions in the field. Adequate communication between representatives and battalions in the field is mandatory. Each representative must monitor his net in order to ascertain and disseminate the following information:

(1) LZ condition (Clear, ready to receive aircraft).

(2) HST on net and correct frequency.

(3) Correct coordinates, call sign and frequency of LZ HST.

(4) Notify battalion that supplies are enroute to LZ.

204. PRIORITIES.

1. Priorities will be established and governed by the following:

a. Emergency Resupply: Requires immediate delivery without which the mission can not be accomplished and loss of life would probably result. The request must be approved by the regimental commander, in the case of separate battalions by the battalion commander, or by the regimental commander exercising operational control.

b. Priority resupply: The LOC watch officer will schedule priority resupply as soon as possible consistent with other resupply schedules.

c. Routine resupply: Resupply requests for the next day will be scheduled and dispatched as requested consistent with aircraft availability, emergency and priority requests and weather conditions.

205. REQUESTS.

1. Requests will be submitted to the LOC watch officer no later than 1600 on the day prior to the date of the requested resupply, utilizing the format contained in appendix A, figure 1. The frequencies, call signs and coordinates submitted must be correct to reduce delay in resupply delivery. Frequencies must not exceed 51.90 MHZ. Frequencies for air ground communications must be in .1 MHZ steps. For example the frequency 56.95 is not compatable with current aircraft radios.

2. Emergency or priority resupply requests may be submitted at any time utilizing the add-on request format contained in appendix A figure 2.

3. When cargo has been staged, netted and slung, unit representatives will submit an illustrated listing of lifts in the format contained in appendix A figure 3.

4. Cancellations will be accepted at any time. Cargo that has been staged prior to cancellation should be promptly removed from the LSA.

206. STAGING CARGO.

1. Supplies being helicopter lifted from the LSA must be staged in lanes designated by the (Shore Party) Officer in Charge of LSA operations at least four hours prior to scheduled resupply. In the case of lifts scheduled prior to 0200, supplies will be staged in nets and/or cabled before 2200 on the day prior to the scheduled lift. Water cans, containers and supplies returned to the LSA from battalion positions will be removed from the LSA ramp as expeditiously as possible to eliminate the possibility of injury to personnel or damage to aircraft.

2. Units requesting helicopter lifts from positions other than a designated LSA will be responsible for the timely staging, netting and slinging of cargo from such positions.

3. All nets, slings, and cables will be promptly returned to the LSA to insure continuity of operations.

4. CH46 lifts will not exceed 2,400lbs. CH53 lifts will not exceed 8,000lbs.

207. LSA/SHORE PARTY.

1. The Shore Party company commander is responsible for the operation of the LSA.

2. The LSA is divided into pad A and B. Each pad has eight staging lanes which will be assigned to units resupplying from the LSA. The layout of Vandegrift LSA is illustrated in appendix A figure 4.

3. Unit representatives will avoid contacting shore party personnel in the LSA tower. Requests concerning lifts will be submitted to the LOC watch officer.

4. The shore party Landing Zone OIC at the LSA is responsible for inspection of loads in nets and slings and will advise battalion representatives of discrepancies.

208. MONITORING.

1. The LOC will monitor, by radio, operations at the LSA and will forward information to the LSA tower concerning emergency, priority, add-ons or changes in daily scheduled lifts.

2. The G-4 will provide, daily, to the LSA a consolidated schedule of resupply lifts in the format contained in appendix A figure 5.

3. The LOC will maintain a status board displaying the following information:

a. Aircraft availability

b. Cargo staged

c. Cargo netted and/or slung

d. Lifts completed/lifts remaining

This information will be obtained from the shore party LSA tower radio net monitored in the LOC.

4. The LOC will provide daily to pilots fragged for the resupply mission a sheet showing LZ coordinates, call sign, frequency. This facilitates passing destination information to aircraft without compromise. A sample format is illustrated in appendix A figure 6.

209. INCOMPLETE MISSIONS. Any mission that cannot be completed due to non-availability of aircraft or below minimum flight conditions will be rescheduled by the LOC.

SECTION III

301. GENERAL

1. In planning for helicopter resupply missions, unit commanders should take into consideration the possibility that once the resupply mission commences, the mission may be stopped and the aircraft diverted should a higher precedence emergency arise. In addition, full consideration should be given to the below listed factors.

a. Loss of lift capability during hot weather.

b. Vulnerability of the helicopter to ground fire necessitating secure landing zones and the immediate surrounding area.

c. Possibility of having to wave off a helicopter from the landing zone to preclude its loss to enemy ground fire.

SECTION IV

401. CONCEPT OF LOGISTIC SUPPORT. Unit S-4 sections in the field should determine the logistic requirements and submit them to unit S-4 representatives at LSA Vandegrift Combat Base by 1500 daily. Unit representatives at Vandegrift Combat Base may draw Class I, III, IV and V supplies at LSU Vandegrift Combat Base. Class II must be drawn at Dong Ha and transported to Vandegrift Combat Base by vehicle in convoy. 3d Marine Division G-4 Forward at Vandegrift Combat Base, will assist unit S-4 representatives with motor transport requirements to move supplies from LSU to the LSA.

Shore Party personnel at the LSA will designate staging areas and provide nets, slings and cables for cargo lifts. Helicopter resupply requests and staging reports are explained in Section II of this SOP and should be submitted to the Task Force Hotel G-4 watch officer in the LOC.

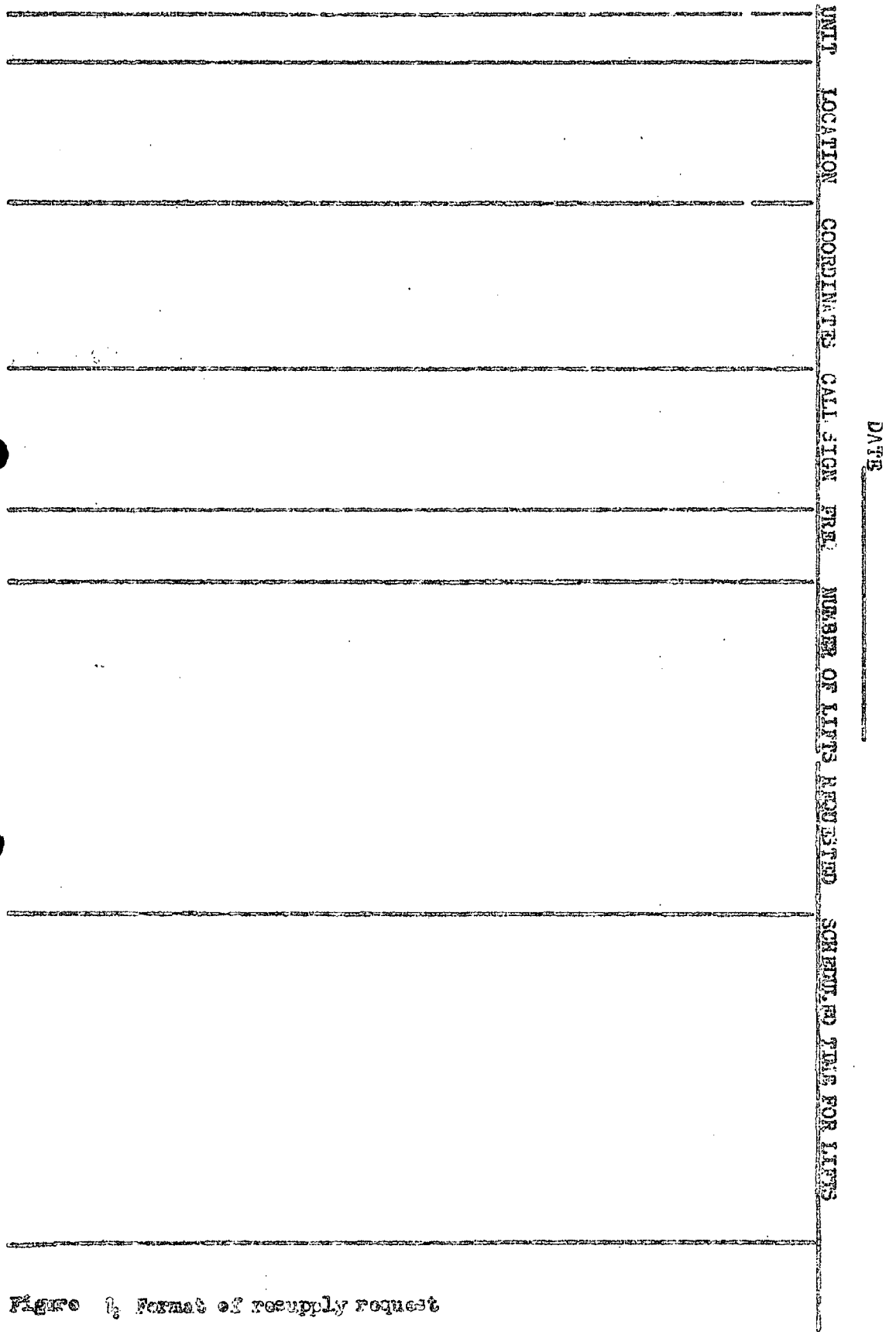


Figure 4. Format of resupply request

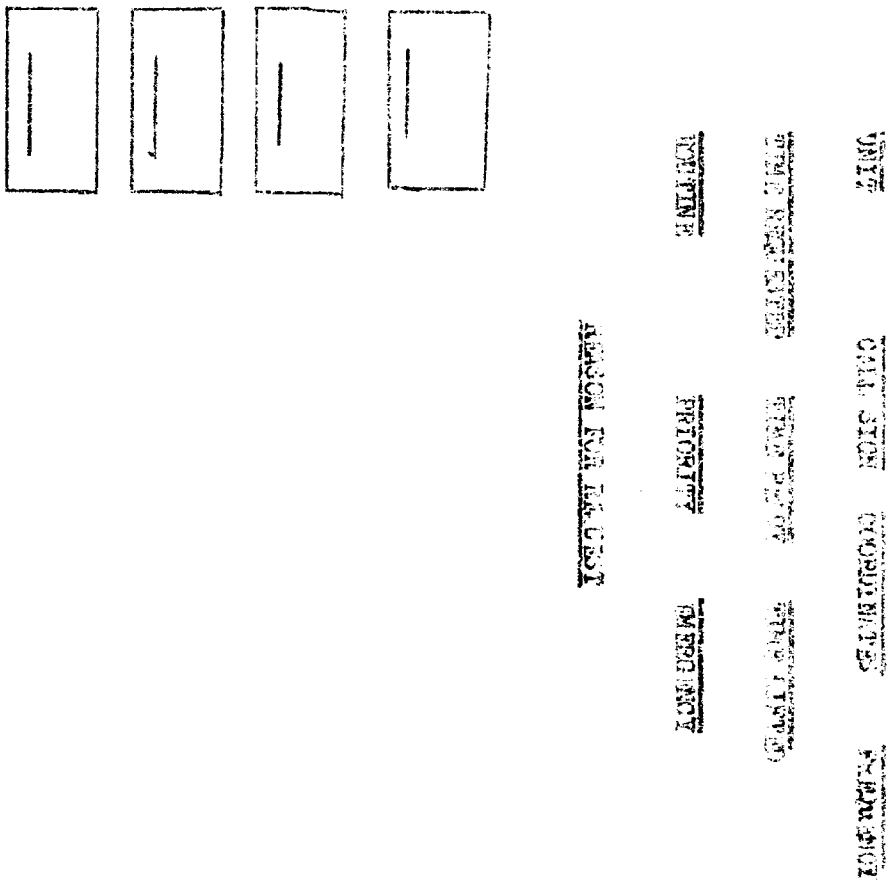


Figure 2: Format of Mid Conference Bulletin request

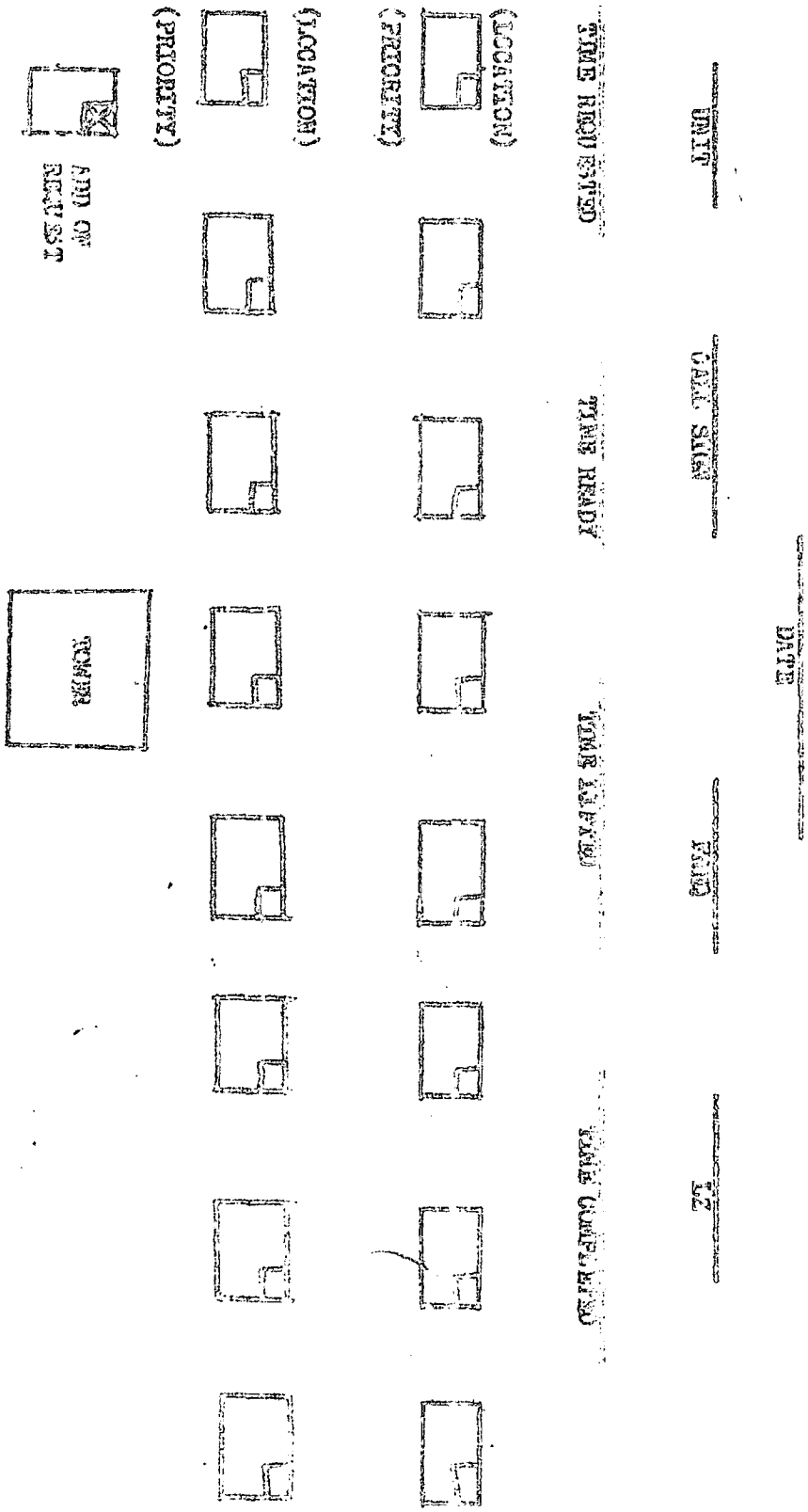
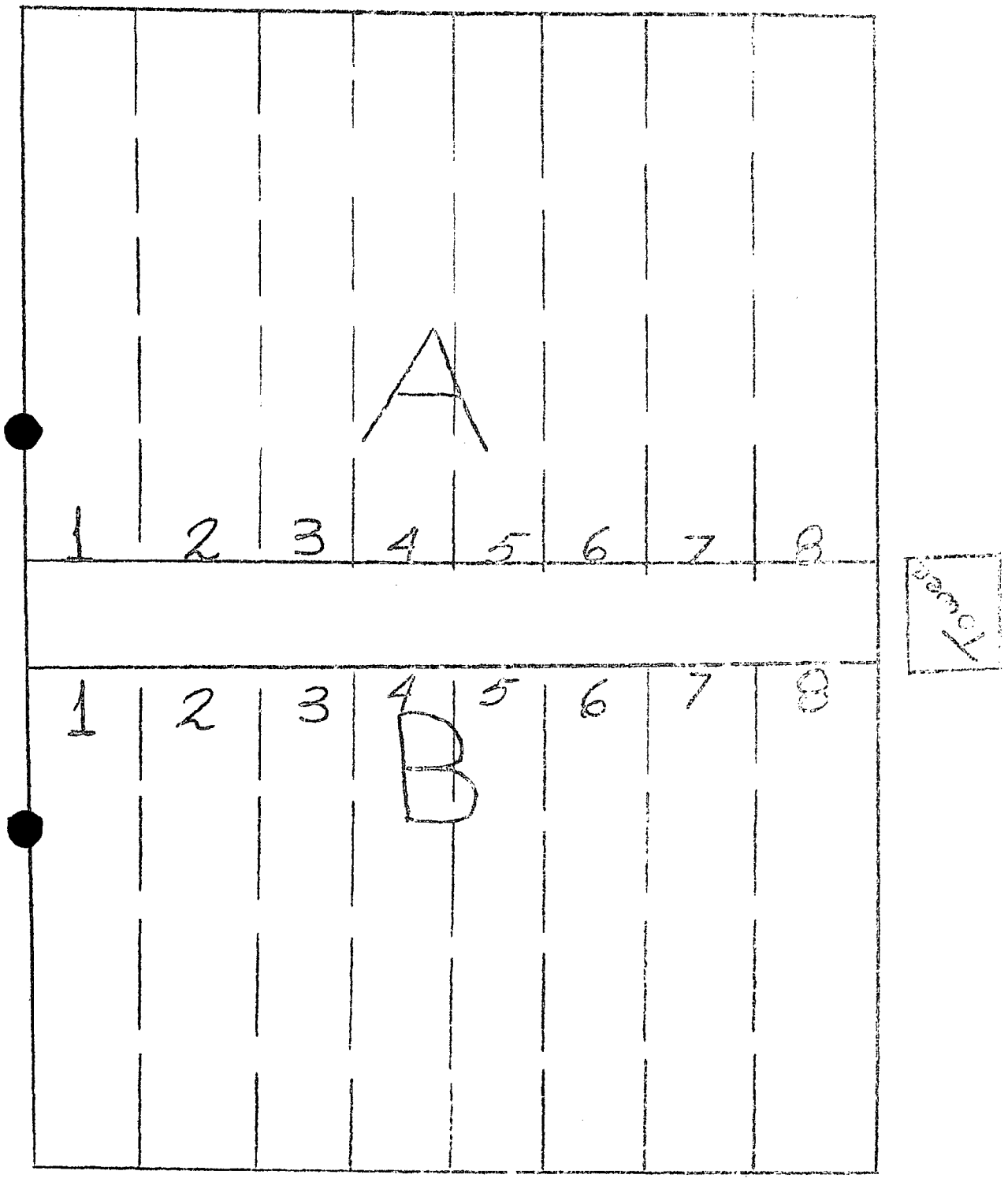


Figure 3: Format for report of staged cargo



A 4

FIGURE 4

DATE

TIME	UNIT	OUTGOING	RETURN	CHANGE
0700				
0800				
0900				
1000				
1100				
1200				
1300				
1400				
1500				
1600				
1700				

53 LIFTS

Figure 5: Format of daily scheduled lifts

DATE_____

LINE #	UNIT	UNIT CALL SIGN	FREQUENCY	COORDINATES	POSITION

Figure 6: Format of pilots daily LZ call sign/frequency information sheet