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UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS ACTIVITIES
IN SOUTH VIETNAM, 1954-1963

A STUDY

Prepared for the Secretary of Defense

BY

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Draft Manuscript

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THE POSITION OF VIETNAM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

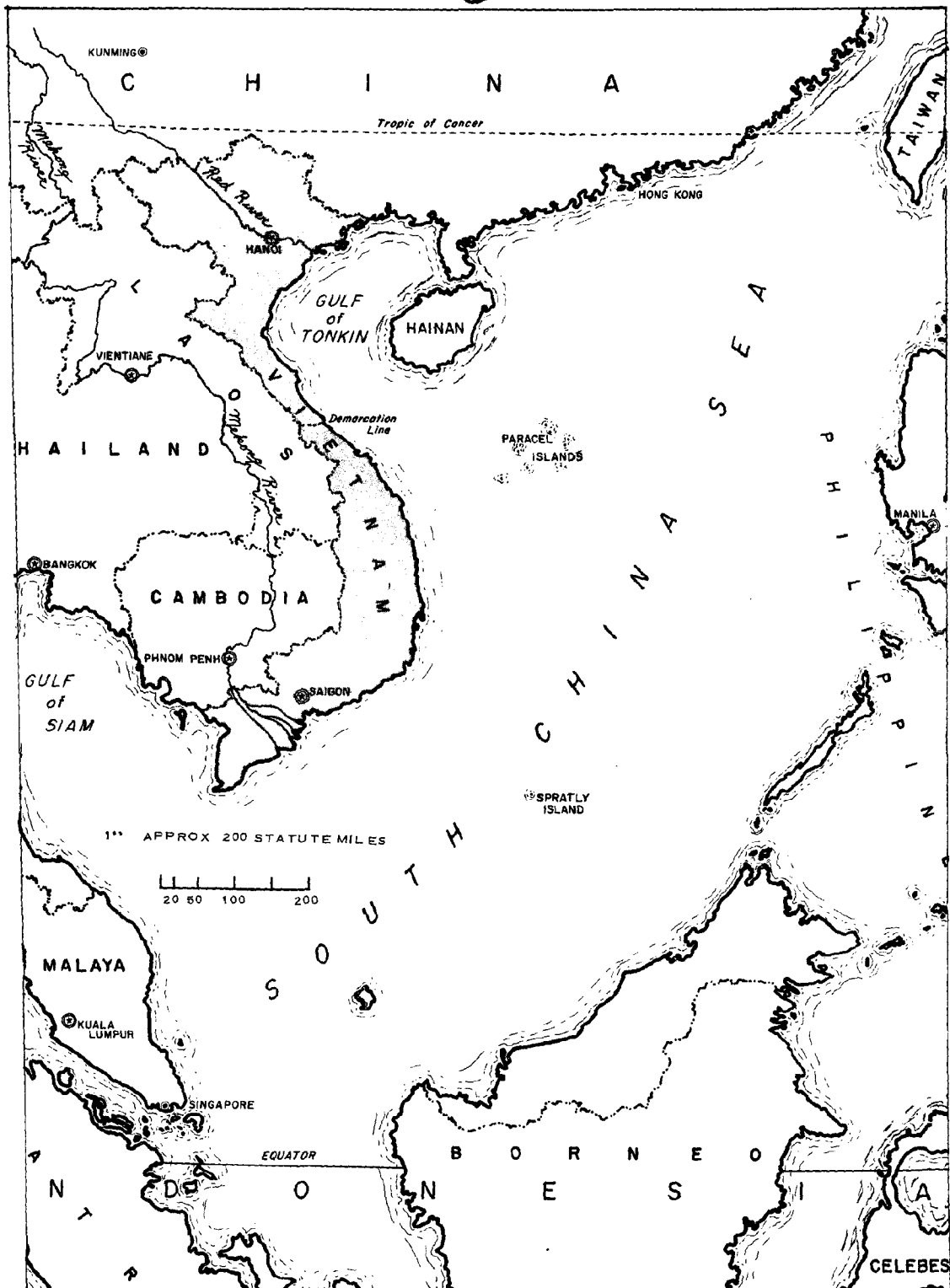


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PART I INTRODUCTIONHistorical Background

Legend has it that Vietnam existed as far back as 3,000 years before Christ. The first Viets, as the story goes, settled over a vast area from South China to what today is North Vietnam. In the latter region, the peoples united to form the kingdom of Nam Viet, which lasted until 111 B. C.; at this time Chinese invaders conquered the Viets and renamed the land Annam.

(1) Unless otherwise noted, the information for this part has been derived from: Foreign Area Studies Division, Special Operations Research Office, The American University, Washington, D. C., U. S. Army Area Handbook for Vietnam (Washington, D. C., 1962), hereafter SORO, Handbook; Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 30-53, Handbook on the North Vietnamese Armed Forces (U) (Washington, D. C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1961) [O, WHA; S&C #353452]; National Intelligence Survey, South Vietnam, Brief, Chapter 1, (NIS 43D) (Washington: Central Intelligence Agency, 1960, [S, NF]; Republic of Vietnam Study (DOD Pam 2-22) (Washington, D. C., rev. ed. 1959); Worldmark Press, Inc., The Worldmark Encyclopedia of Nations (New York, N. Y.: Harper and Brothers, 1960); Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams, A Political and Military Analysis (New York, N. Y.: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), hereafter Fall, Two Viet-Nams.

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After more than 10 centuries of domination, the Viets, under a general Ngo Quyen, defeated the Chinese in 938 A. D. and set up the independent country of Dai Co Viet. This state flourished for almost 1,000 years, during which time it successfully repelled Kublai Khan's Mongolian hordes, and expanded its borders south. There, the Kingdom of Champa (roughly, the land comprising the present South Vietnam) fell under the might of the Viets.

Just before the middle of the 16th century, the first of a long string of European explorers reached Vietnam. These newcomers soon found, in a struggle then existing between factions in the north and south for control of the country, ready markets for their products, especially weapons. Near the end of the following century, the strife was ended by a truce. As a result, trade subsided, and contact with the West dwindled, except in the case of the late-arriving French, who remained for religious and economic purposes.

Pursuit of these interests drew the French into the political affairs of Vietnam. By 1883, they had seized control and added Vietnam to their empire. Ten years later, the new overlord organized the Indochina Federation, which in addition to the Vietnam regions of Tonkin (north), Annam (central), and Cochinchina (south), included Cambodia and Laos.

Japan, the Asian confederate of Germany in World War II, supplanted France in Indochina after the fall of Paris in 1940. In 1945, however, when the conspirators themselves

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became the vanquished, Vietnam found itself again free, but unable to establish an effective government. In the hope of uniting his people, Emperor Bao Dai, on 23 August 1945, abdicated in favor of a strong and apparently nationalistic leader, Ho Chi Minh, who had gathered a huge following among the Tonkinese in the north. Ten days later, Ho ⁽²⁾ proclaimed the formation of a provisional government, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The right to reoccupy Vietnam after World War II had been granted France by the victorious Allies. On 21 September 1945, when the first occupation troops landed in the South, the Vietnamese, despite poor organization in that area (Saigon), rose up almost as one in protest. Resistance reached a peak in December 1946, when Ho Chi Minh's Viet Independence Party (Viet Minh) launched an attack in Hanoi against the French garrison, officially beginning the Indochina War. The conflict ended after the French military defeat in July 1954 through the efforts of a multi-nation conference at Geneva, Switzerland. One of the terms agreed upon there was the division of Vietnam, generally along the 17th parallel. Below the border was the

(2) In Vietnamese, Ho Choi Minh is correctly referred to as Ho rather than as Minh. In the same manner, Ngo Dinh Diem is referred to as Ngo; Americans popularized the incorrect reference, Diem. SORO, Handbook, p. 510.

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infant State of Vietnam; Bao Dai remained the Chief of State and Ngo Dinh Diem became premier. Above the border, Ho retained control.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam

North of the line dividing the two Vietnams, about 16,500,000 people live in an area of 61,000 square miles. That land, with its subtropical, hot and humid climate, centers about the 105th meridian in the eastern hemisphere and extends from 17 to just over 23 degrees north latitude. In addition to its common boundary with South Vietnam, North Vietnam borders Laos on the west, China on the north, and the Gulf of Tonkin on the east. Almost 500 miles long and from 30 to 300 miles wide, the country has the appearance of a mushroom with a curved stem. In the lower, trunk-like region, the narrow belt of coastal sand dunes gives way to a wider, flat, productive area that in turn rises abruptly into hills and mountains near the Laotian border. South from China, sylvan highlands diminish within about 100 miles into the fertile and very low Red River Delta.

Within this delta, which is about one-third of the land area of the nation, is the center of practically all economic activity in the Democratic Republic. About two-thirds of the people in the communist state make their living by rice farming in the lowland. In addition, there are ore and coal mines; power plants; transportation facilities; and factories producing

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iron and steel products, textiles, and some foodstuffs.

The economy of Vietnam had suffered greatly during the years of fighting that preceded partition. Thereafter, the Communist North found it impossible to trade for needed foodstuffs with the Democratic South, a food surplus area. To make up for this deficiency, Ho set out to increase production. This measure has failed to achieve desired standards, except for a small increase in rice yield. Attempts to strengthen the industrial base, supported heavily by Chinese Communist and Soviet-bloc technicians and equipment, have met with partial success only. Sabotage, hoarding, and black market activities indicate that the people do not take wholeheartedly to state control of agriculture and industry.

In the Democratic Republic, almost 9 out of every 10 people are peasants. They are ethnically Vietnamese--small, light-to-medium brown-skinned individuals with straight black hair, round heads, and broad faces--and derive their livelihood from farming (chiefly rice) and working in mines and factories. Buddhism is their religion.

Two other groups comprise the remaining 15 percent of the population. Of these, the Montagnard is the larger. Descendants of other Southeast Asians, these spirit-worshipping mountaineers farm, herd, and hunt; they are friendly, independent, and adept in some soldiering skills. Their number is close to two million. Chinese number about half of the

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100,000 foreigners in North Vietnam. Since 1950, the existence of similar-type governments in these two nations has favored continued Chinese immigration.

Providing the framework for an orderly system of government was one of President Ho's initial problems. The solution came in November 1946, when the first constitution was adopted. It was patterned after the Soviet example but well-covered with democratic and nationalistic facades. As a result, few people, even among the Vietnamese, were able to perceive the true identity of this regime. Those that did see, and subsequently took up opposition, were eliminated. (3)

For 14 years, the cover-up remained official, initially to obtain sympathy for the new movement, and then after the Geneva agreements, to gain international recognition for Ho's government. By 1960, he was satisfied with the status, so Ho unveiled a new constitution, which removed all doubts as to his affiliations. Although containing some freedom

(3) When the Vietnamese legislature met in March 1946, it consisted of many opposed to Ho Chi Minh's government. In October of that year, when the legislature reconvened, there were only 37 opposition members; when the constitution was adopted the next month, only two antagonists remained. Reduction of the opposition had been carried out by purges. SORO, Handbook, p. 221.

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(4)
exhibits, for which there were loopholes, this document was communism, pure and simple; its preamble denounced the United States and France, but lauded the Lao Dong, the Communist Party of North Vietnam.

Peculiar to United States custom is the length of sessions conducted by the legislature of the central government. The National Assembly, whose members are elected by universal suffrage, meets twice yearly, but for brief periods only. During the long recesses, a Standing Committee elected by the Assembly fills in. The Committee is empowered to act upon all legislative matters except amending the constitution. Like the Assembly, the Committee is powerless to make major policy decisions; these are rendered by a nongovernmental agency, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party. Approvals by the legislature follow automatically.

Senior executive in the Democratic Republic is the President, since 1945 Ho Chi Minh. This official is elected by the Assembly and assisted by a Council of Ministers of about

(4) The best example is Article 38 of the 1960 constitution: "The state forbids any person to use democratic freedoms to the detriment of the interests of the state and of the people." Official translations of the constitutions of both Vietnams appear in Fall, op. cit.

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30 men. This latter body, chosen by the president, proposes legislation, establishes administrative procedures, issues decrees, and annuls or revises decisions of lower executive groups.

In the judicial branch there are two basic courts-- People's Courts to try cases, and if needed, Courts of Appeals for review. Special Courts may be convened; military courts bring to justice armed forces violators. The People's Supreme Court hears some civil cases, but is responsible primarily for administering the judicial system.

Local government is controlled from the central capital in Hanoi. The country is divided into regions, zones, and provinces. The latter answer directly to Hanoi. Provinces are separated into cities and districts, and districts into towns and finally villages. At each local level, officials are responsible more for carrying out laws of higher authorities than they are for regulating the people within their own dominions. Each step down the ladder of local authority decreases the opportunity for freedom of initiative. At all levels of local rule, elected groups of 20 to 30 (People's Councils) discharge governmental business.

The strength of all governments in the Democratic Republic is derived from the compatibility of governmental and Communist Party structures. In the Hanoi regime, persons that hold the most important central government posts are the same people

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filling top party positions. In local governments, if by chance a party member does not fill an important position, the party assigns one of its own to "assist" the non-Communist official and to report on the amount of advice accepted.

The closeness of the relationship between party and governments is no less evident in the affiliation of the Lao Dong with the military establishment of the Democratic Republic. In fact, it is the extension of the party-government structure into the armed forces hierarchy that permits the party to control the military also.

At the top level, President Ho, the party leader, is the constitutional head of the armed forces. Control, however, is exercised by Commander in Chief of the Army, General Vo Nguyen Giap, who not only is a member of the party Political Bureau, but also is the Minister of National Defense. The National Defense Council, which makes military policy, is composed of Ho, Giap, and nine other permanent military and civilian officials; several of these nine are also party policy-makers. Within the military high command, the most powerful agency is the Political Directorate. Its primary function is to disseminate political information to the Army and to train officers to do this.

The entire armed force of North Vietnam is, in reality, the Army, the Peoples Army of Vietnam (PAVN), for there is no regular air element and only a limited naval coastal guard

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capability. In 1963, the PAVN had grown to over 300,000 from its 1946 level of 50,000. Its mission, although stated in the constitution as a protect-and-defend-the-homeland type, in practice is also political and economic. Military units assist in rice planting and harvest and in farm operations. In addition, the government uses the Army to propagandize new programs. To carry out its constitutional mission, the PAVN¹ is organized into Regular Forces, Militia (rural units), and Self-Defense Forces (urban units). The latter two are reserve groups.

Surprisingly, the PAVN has not been the prime force behind Communist activities in the South, for Hanoi has concentrated on political activity in its insurgency efforts.⁽⁵⁾ Ho's aim is to convert his enemy, and by revolution to gain control of his government. To accomplish this end, the Communists disrupt governmental operations, and in so doing create among the Southerners a disbelief in the capabilities of their rulers.

After the 1954 Geneva Agreements, many communists in the South moved to the North. There they were schooled by the party and sent back across the border, and in many instances to the towns where they had lived previously. In this manner, Hanoi created an extensive underground, and by 1957 was ready

(5) George K. Tanham, Communist Revolutionary Warfare (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961), p. 140.

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to begin a campaign of insurgency against the Southern government. The activity took the form of planned murder, initially of local governmental officials. Later, the killings were extended to schoolteachers, social and medical workers, and officials of foreign governments. It was estimated that South Vietnam has lost close to 13,000 state officials since the start of the slayings.⁽⁶⁾ The executioners usually were the Dich-Van, a party enforcement agency trained in the "psychology" of preparing people for Communist takeover.

Other deaths were attributable to the 25,000 PAVN troops and Communist irregulars operating in the South. Although Giap has found it unnecessary to send large tactical organizations across the border, he has infiltrated division staff personnel and small units into the South. The irregulars there belong to chiefs of administrative areas the Communists have created in South Vietnam. Ambush of small elements, raids on enemy villages and military installations, sabotage, and reinforcement of regular PAVN units for large-scale operations are the tasks assigned to these troops. Below the 17th parallel, control of the Communists' military activities, and in fact of all their efforts, is directed by Hanoi, but at present discharged by the resident affiliate of the party, the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam.

(6) Fall, Two Viet-Nams, p. 360.

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While the Democratic Republic was subverting the South, factions within its own ranks threatened to undermine the unity of the party and the state. The most significant menace came from the effects of the ideological rift between the two major Communist powers. Ho has attempted to steer a neutral course, siding neither with Russia nor China. Opposition to this policy was voiced publicly in December 1963 by Le Duan, a high party official. Another pro-Chinese Communist and a Political Bureau member, Truong Chinh, had for some time expressed similar views. These dissenters have called for a more vigorous prosecution of revolutionary activities against the South.

The Republic of Vietnam

Located in the eastern hemisphere, the Republic of Vietnam from its common boundary with North Vietnam extends south in a straight line distance for about 550 miles. From the capital city in the south central part, east to Manila it is 900 air miles; south to Singapore by air it is 650 miles from the capital. With the Democratic Republic, South Vietnam forms the eastern coastal rim of the Southeast Asian Peninsula. In size, the country is about 66,000 square miles, or slightly less than the state of Washington. In appearance, the nation looks like an inverted crescent.

The republic lies within the twin tropical monsoon belt of South Asia. From mid-May to early October is the wet season. The dry portion of the year is during four

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months beginning in early November. Temperature extremes range from the mid-50's to just over 100° F.; the hottest part of the nation is along the east coast in June, July, and August. Rainfall averages each year vary from 28 inches along the east central coast to about 10½ feet around Hue, near the 17th parallel. Rain occurs frequently in the wet season, not often in the dry. Local geographic features alter temperature and rainfall patterns. Violent thunderstorms take place in the hill country in April and May. Each year between July and November, about five typhoons will hit the east coast.

In the west, the country is bordered by Cambodia for about 600 miles, and continuing north, by Laos for another 300 miles. Both boundaries are difficult to defend, for the terrain is rugged and the dividing lines poorly defined and full of crossing points. Several of these branch off from the Ho Chi Minh trail, a series of paths originating in North Vietnam, going south through the eastern part of neutral Laos, and ending after 400 miles in South Vietnam. Between the start and finish of the trail, there are many paths leading east into portions of South Vietnam. Use of these routes bypasses the remaining land border, a 50-mile stretch with Communist Vietnam. This line is protected by a three-mile wide demilitarized zone on each side.

Bordering the eastern part of South Vietnam are two bodies of water. The Gulf of Tonkin, which originates in

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communist Vietnam, catches the northeastern tip of the republic. The rest of the eastern shore lies along the South China Sea. Rimming the southwest part of the country is the Gulf of Siam. In all, the very irregular coastline is about 1,500 miles long.

Approaches towards South Vietnam over water are hindered by a lack of hydrographic information, and may be endangered by wind storms. Lying close to the shore are shoals, reefs, islets, and rocks. Beaches frequently are flanked by stony headlands. Tide ranges are slight along the gulf coasts, but elsewhere vary from 3 to 12 feet. Greatest tidal differences occur near the mouths of the northern branches of the Mekong and the Dong Nai ~~Rivers~~, south and east of Saigon. Although there are many beaches along the extensive coastline, most are interrupted by streams and rock formations, and are backed by water bodies of diverse sizes. The most suitable landing beach for access to Saigon is almost 100 miles to the east, near Phan Thiet.

From the east is the best air approach to South Vietnam. During the storm season, however, water approaches are hazardous, but less dangerous than flights over the mountains of the west and north. Travels over these forested peaks encounter adverse weather frequently.

(See Fig. I-1)

Of the three military geographic regions in South Vietnam,¹ the Mekong Lowlands, the bottom-quarter of the nation, presents the most obstacles to land operations. In this flat, poorly-drained area the land is seldom more than 10 feet above the

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level of the sea. Numerous canals, rivers, and streams cut through the lowlands. The principal feeder of the delta is the Mekong River, which sources in Tibet. Before reaching South Vietnam, the Mekong branches into the Bassac River, which flows directly into the South China Sea below Saigon, and the Anterieur River, which itself splits into four rivers southwest of the capital before emptying into the same sea. Three other rivers also feed the great Mekong Delta.

The adverse geographic character of the delta demands extensive planning before undertaking military activities. The omnipresence of water limits off-road travel even in the dry season, and except near Saigon, makes difficult the construction of permanent-type installations. For cover and concealment, the best places are in the swamps and the inhabited areas. Helicopter-borne operations are somewhat limited by high temperature and humidity, seasonal storms, soft ground, and the depth of water in many of the large number of bodies of water. Cultivated lands in the dry season offer the best areas and time for such operations. For amphibious assaults, the Ha Tien area (at the southern limit of the Cambodian border) has the most usable beach; exits, however, are barely satisfactory even in the dry season.

Above the delta is a contrasting area of level and hilly, well-drained, tree-covered land. The Forested Plains makes up about 15 percent of the real estate in South Vietnam. This

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is the section of the country with the least annual rainfall (about 28 inches near Phan Rang on the coast). Patches of grass and dry crops (vegetables, cotton, and coffee) are scattered within the great stands of open forests. Most of the rubber plantations of the republic are in this region.

In the cultivated areas of the open forest are the locations most favorable for helicopter landings. Travel is restricted to the roads during the wet season, when hard rains cause the fields to flood. During the dry season, however, the land will support ground operations. The denser forests in the plains offer the most cover and concealment for military activities. Best beaches for amphibious landings in the Forested Plains are near Phan Rang.

About 60 percent of the nation falls within the classification of Forested Highlands. This geographic region is marked by forested hills and mountains with deep-sided valleys; rolling, open forests; and grasslands. On the average, the mountains peak from 2,000 to 6,000 feet; a few top 8,000 feet. Some of the mountain spurs running eastward jut into the sea, forming compartments at numerous places along the coast. The rugged nature of the highlands discourages population.

Throughout much of this region, ground operations are limited by the sharp relief and the heavy tree growth. Helicopter operations are hampered by the heavy vegetation, restricted visibility, rugged topography, and the high elevations.

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In the highlands, cover and concealment are the best in South Vietnam. Troops can maneuver readily in the valleys and on the plateaus, where vegetation is less heavy. Here, vehicles can travel off the roads most of the year. Scattered up and down the coast of this region are the best beaches in all Vietnam for amphibious assaults.

One area in South Vietnam is essential to the survival of the country. Most of the activity in the nation takes place in the delta city of Saigon and its environs. Here, close to 2,000,000 people live. It is the seat of the central government, the core of rice production, the focal point of transportation and telecommunications, the hub of national and international trading, and the heart of the budding industry of the nation. Internal routes to this area are three--one from the northern border, south along the coast (the traditional route); and two from Cambodia, east across the delta.

To move the products of their economy, South Vietnamese depend much upon the water. In the delta, and especially during the wet season, travel is largely by a vast system of canals, inland waterways, and natural drainage routes. The Saigon and Anterieur Rivers are navigable by ocean vessels and coastal steamers. In the north, the rivers are much less suitable; in fact, only sampans and junks drawing no more than six feet can travel these waters. There, rocks and silting are the chief navigational hazards; in the south, heavy silting hinders movement of deep draft vessels.

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Two ports handle a vast majority of the water-transported trade of South Vietnam. The only major port is Saigon. Here, most of the foreign trade is processed. There are facilities to support heavy military traffic; estimated capacity is 8,300 long tons per day. At Da Nang, 80 miles from the north border, the estimated capability is about 2,000 long tons daily. At this chief minor port, facilities are meager, designed to accommodate only small coastal steamers and to support light naval fleet units. At Saigon, however, there are four shipyards, large well-equipped shops, and drydocks for ocean-going ships. The capital port is well equipped for warehouse and POL storage.

(See Fig. I-3)
Major land routes originate in Saigon. The railroad system, government owned, has one line paralleling the east coast to within 10 miles of North Vietnam. It is a meter-gage, single-track, non-electric system capable of supporting axle loads up to 14 short tons. Ballast and ties are well maintained. The operating equipment has suffered from a lack of care. Both the deteriorated and the older rolling stock are being replaced gradually. Passing tracks and servicing facilities are located at numerous stations along the line.

The highway system encompasses national and local roads and gives the nation over 10,000 miles of surfaced roadways. National routes are usually hard surfaced; local ones are earth or gravel topped. Roads serve all parts of the country,

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but are much more prevalent in the delta. In the lowlands originates the most important highway in the nation, the coastal road in the east. Another north-south route follows the Mekong Valley into Cambodia and Laos. Passage over water barriers is by steel truss and reinforced concrete bridges. Over many of the large rivers there are combination rail and highway bridges. Traffic is delayed frequently by washouts and slow-moving native carts.

South Vietnam has one scheduled air carrier, which the government nationalized in 1959. A United States airline helped the government organize the system and train flight and maintenance crews. There are less than 100 civilian aircraft and about half that number of crews in the country. Airfields suited best for large operations are at Tan Son Nhut (northwest Saigon), Da Nang, and Nha Trang, the east-central seaport.

The first, serving the capital, handles the international flights. The asphalt and concrete runway there is 7,870 feet long. Lighting for the runway is not up to U. S. standards. At Nha Trang, the runway (asphalt) is 6,020 feet long. Here and at Da Nang the lighting is poor. Throughout the rest of the nation there are about 36 fields with runways over 2,000 feet in length. These are concentrated in the delta.

Also linking the country is a system of telecommunications. Much of the equipment is old and had been poorly maintained; there is a shortage of trained personnel to operate and maintain

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the system. ^{Most} ~~Best~~ efforts are in the radio field, the primary domestic means and the only international medium. The central government owns and operates all domestic telecommunications and supervises broadcasting. Telephone and telegraph serve the larger cities and towns. There are about two dozen radio stations, and special networks for aeronautical, coastal, meteorological, military, and police communications. Recently, there has been a strong effort to increase communications down the governmental line of authority to provide necessary information to village and hamlet officials.

Ethnically, the people in the South differ very little from those in the North. The Montagnards are more numerous in the North, the Chinese more heavily settled in the South, mostly in the lowlands. About 425,000 Cambodians (of the Khmer and Cham tribes), who have degenerated through the centuries into a backward and subservient people, live in the South.

Pursuits to sustain life vary little between the inhabitants of the two countries. In both nations most of the workers are delta rice farmers. Agriculture is more diversified in the South, owing to more favorable climatic conditions. Both in the North and the South, fishing is pursued to augment diet and increase employment. Economic ^{d. H. H. H. H. H.} ~~deviations~~ are few; the chief one is in the direction of development. The communist government has placed greater emphasis upon more efficiency in

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agriculture. South Vietnam is attempting to expand its small industrial base. Each nation depends upon heavy foreign aid to maintain its economy, which had been taxed by World War II and the civil war.

After that eight-year period of civil strife, not only the impetus to economic recovery but also the beginnings of a strong central government came about from a single event -- the emergence of Ngo Dinh Diem as a political figure. In June 1954, he accepted the premiership under the weak Bao Dai. Then, in a display of political prowess, the premier gradually took on the authority of the governmental leader. On 26 October 1955, following approval by a national referendum, Ngo proclaimed the formation of the Republic of Vietnam with himself as President.

Exactly one year later, he approved the Constitution for the Republic. This document guarantees civil and economic rights, but permits restriction of the former in times of national emergency. ^{This instrument also} ~~The constitution~~ gives extremely broad powers to the President. Patterned after the Constitutions of the United States and France, it creates separate legislative and executive branches of the central government.

The executive arm is headed by the President, who with the Vice-President, is elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term. Administration of executive affairs is carried out at the Presidency, the executive office of the

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President. Here, the head of state is assisted by a number of special advisors, whose activities are supervised by the Secretary of State at the Presidency. Aiding also is the Cabinet Council, made up of 12 state and 3 coordinating secretaries. Other agencies, created for special purposes, assist the President in carrying out internal policies mainly, and are known as Inter^{er}departmental Committees.

Legislation for the nation is considered by the 123 elected deputies of the unicameral National Assembly. By law, this body may meet for no more than six months each year. During sessions, standing committees process proposed laws. A simple majority is sufficient to vote a bill into law; to override a veto, three-fourths vote is required. Although the broad powers of the legislature appear to limit executive authority, President Ngo experienced little difficulty in having his legislative desires met.

Article 4 of the Constitution guarantees a judiciary of independent character; the affairs of justice are administered, nonetheless, by the Secretary of State for Justice. Copied from the French, the South Vietnamese court system has a Supreme Court of Appeals, three lower courts, and special courts. There is in addition a constitutional provision for a Special Court of Justice to judge impeachment proceedings against only the very highest officials of the land. Chapter VIII of the Constitution provides for a judicial procedure to

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determine constitutionality of laws, decrees, and administrative regulations.

Carrying out national policies is the most important task of local governments. South Vietnam is organized into 42 provinces, ^(see Fig. I-4) and these into districts, cantons, villages, and hamlets. In addition, the country is divided into four regions that supervise the activities of provincial governments within their domains. The backbone of local administration is found at the province level. The authority here is vested solely in a chief, appointed by the President. In effect, then, the provincial government is an extension of the central government authority. At the village level, a council of at least three (village chief, police chief, fiscal officer) exercises administrative functions, although the province chief appoints the village councilors and controls their fiscal activities.

One provision of the Constitution asserts that it is the duty of each citizen "to defend the Fatherland...." By law, the militia of the Republic is bound to defend the sovereignty of the nation and to cause its pacification. According to the Constitution, the President is the supreme commander of the armed forces. Execution of military matters is exercised by the Department of National Defense. Within the department are two directorates, one titled Departmental Services and the other called Logistical Services, and the Central Agencies.

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Functioning as one of the latter is the Armed Forces General Staff, headed by the Chief of the General Staff, who is assisted by the Chief of Staff, Armed Forces General Staff. In November 1962, President Ngo directed a realignment of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF). He established Army, Navy, Air Force and Special Forces Commands as the major subordinate units of RVNAF and assigned detailed duties for the Joint General Staff. He also ordered into being a Joint Operation Center to control RVNAF operations.

Since its formation, the Republic of Vietnam has been faced with unrest. Even while his government was being formed, President Ngo was saddled with religious sect uprisings, near Saigon. These he put down quickly with armed force. By this time, however, communists were busy inciting the landless farmers to call for a more rapid redistribution of land promised by the government. In October 1956, a new land reform program was announced. Progress in breaking up the great plantations created years earlier was slow; Saigon announced that communist guerrilla activities, which increased noticeably in 1959, had hampered prompt redistribution.

In September 1961, the central government instituted a different kind of land reform. This type, which involved giving people to the land rather than giving land to the people, was called the Strategic Hamlet Program. In many instances, it required people to move to preselected, fortified,

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and protected areas. An improvement over an earlier project, the Strategic Hamlet Program aimed to eliminate communism, disunity, and underdevelopment.⁽⁷⁾ In conjunction with this vast undertaking--about 11,000 hamlets to be constructed before the end of 1964--a National Campaign Plan was devised to destroy all V. C.⁽⁸⁾ in the South and return control of the entire country to the established government. This was a three-phased operation to unite all governmental forces against known or suspected V. C. Until mid-1963, the campaign maintained the scheduled pace, then a series of incidents halted most all programs in the nation.

What caused the government great concern was the return of demonstrations by Buddhists calling for religious freedom. By late August 1963, these exhibitions, which were attracting large followings, had caused President Ngo, a Catholic, to

(7) Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Summary of Highlights, 8 Feb 1962-7 Feb 1963 [TS, NF; S&C # 3006], p. 97 [S,NF], hereafter MACV Sum Rept.

(8) V. C. is an abbreviation for Viet Cong, which itself is a shortened form to refer to a Vietnamese Communist operating in the South. The previously used popular word for Vietnamese communists was Viet Minh, which was the front organization during World War II and until 1951, when the Lao Dong Party replaced the Viet Minh. SORO, Handbook, p. 512.

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proclaim martial law. A little later, the demonstrations abated, so the ban was lifted. By that time, however, increased V. C. activity created greater political unrest. Finally, on 1 and 2 November, a military junta headed by Major General Duong Van Minh overthrew the government. Both the president and his top adviser met their deaths during the crisis.

The new regime vested supreme executive and legislative authority in the coup leader. He, in turn, pledged to fight communism and guerrillas, to respect religious freedom, and to return the government to civilian control as soon as possible. ⁽⁹⁾ His start was shaky--during 5-11 November, V. C. activity reached its 1963 high, there was disunity in the regime, and the government was unable to establish any basic policies or develop one significant new program. Then, just as 1963 was running out, the communist Liberation Front revived talk of the neutralist solution to Vietnamese troubles. This, the country had violently opposed almost ten years earlier during the Geneva Conference, which created the two Vietnams.

(9) Central Intelligence Agency Current Intelligence Weekly Summary. (Washington, 8 Nov 1963), p. 6. [C,NF].

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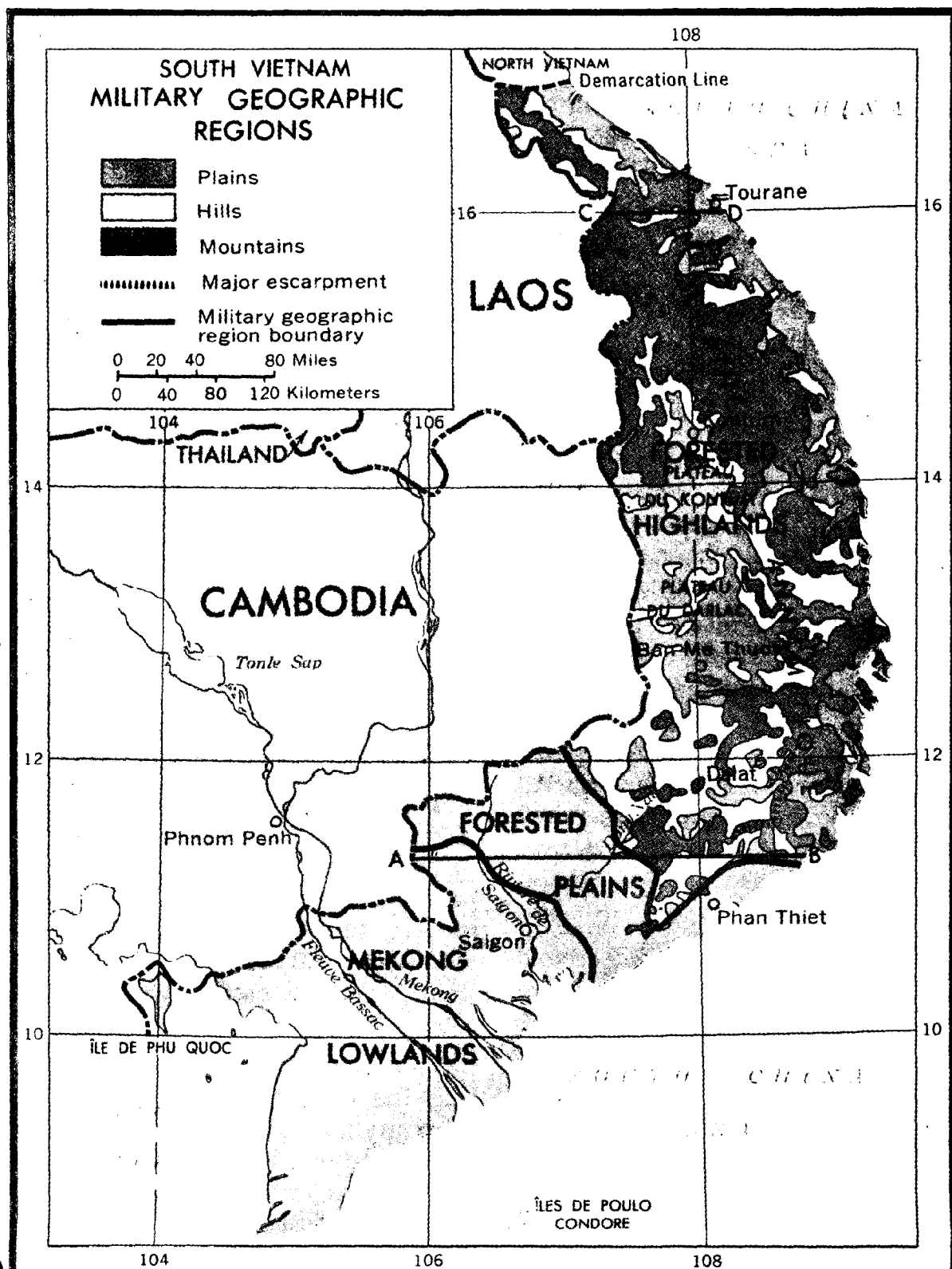


Fig I-2

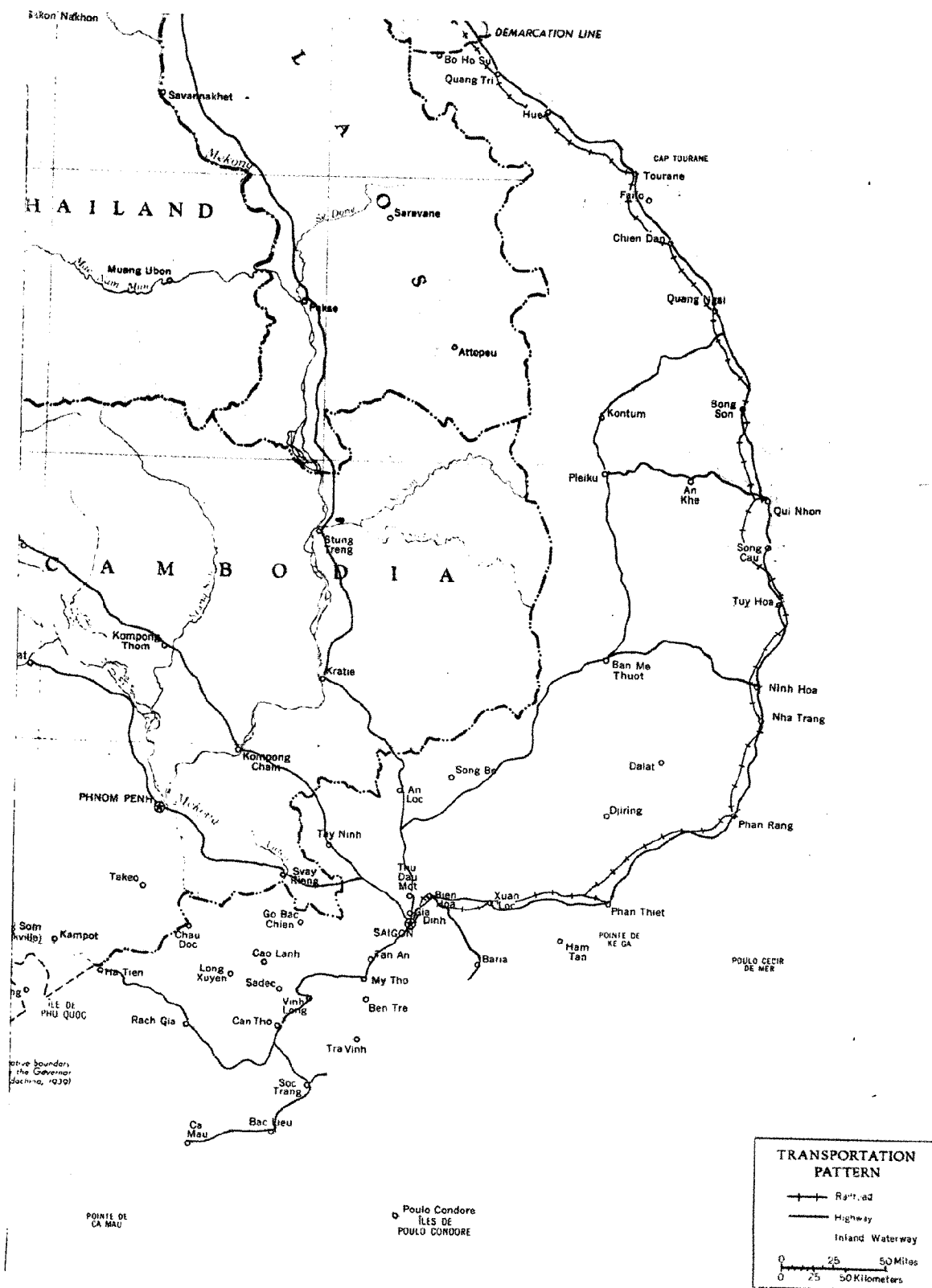


Fig. I-3

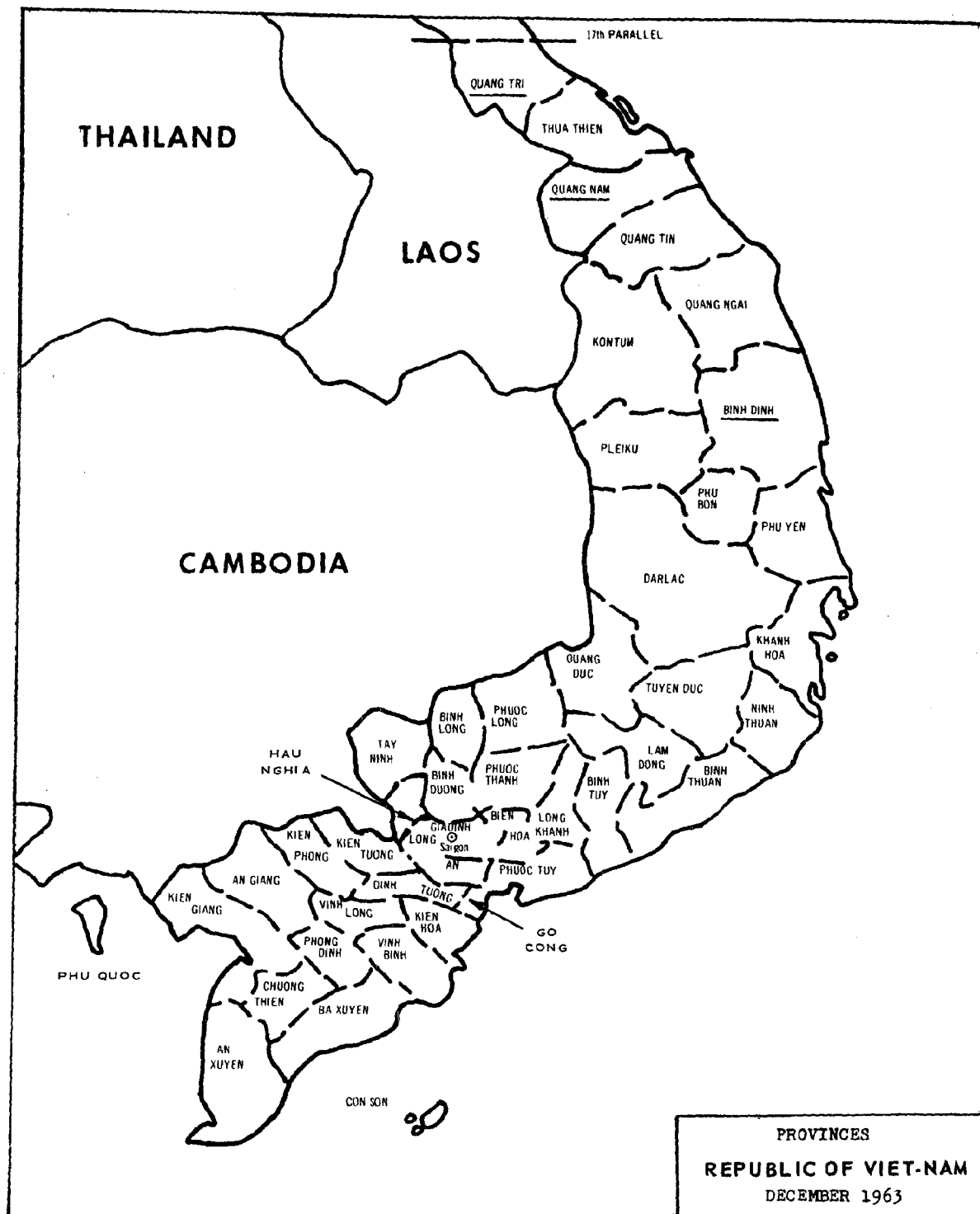


Fig. I-4

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PART II

U. S. MARINES AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE OPERATIONS⁽¹⁾U. S. Marines and the Vietnamese Marine Corps

At the commanding general's weekly staff briefing held on 30 June 1954 at Headquarters, FMFPac, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, announced, "A new billet has been authorized by the Commandant of the Marine Corps with MAAG, Saigon. Lieutenant Colonel Croizat has been ordered to the Far East to fill this billet."⁽²⁾ When he reported in, Lieutenant Colonel Croizat became the first U. S. Marine to work with the Military Assistance Advisory Group in Saigon. This activity, which had been

(1) Unless otherwise noted, information for this section was derived from: CinCPac Comd Hist 1962 [TS,NF; S&C 3059]; COMUSMACV Sum of Highlights dtd 20Mar63 [TS,NF; S&C 3006]; Sr Mar Adv ltr to CMC dtd 24Jan64, Subj: Historical data, VNMC [C; S&C 258337], hereafter Sr Mar Adv ltr; Maj Gary Wilder interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC dtd 20Apr64 (HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC) [S,NF]; Capt Richard B. Taylor interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC dtd 10Apr64 (HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC) [S,NF]; and Capt Frank Zimolzak interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC dtd 20Apr64 (HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC) [S,NF].

(2) CG, FMFPac Command Diary, Jul-Sep54, dtd 11Oct54, [C].

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established shortly after the completion of a United States survey mission to Southeast Asia in 1950, ⁽³⁾ was responsible for planning and administering United States military assistance ⁽⁴⁾ to the French forces combatting Ho Chi Minh's communists.

When the French were defeated in 1954, the aid was given to the armed forces opposing Ho.

Lieutenant Colonel Croizat had been ordered to Vietnam as the adviser to its Marine Corps. Since the Vietnamese Marine

(3) Major General Graves B. Erskine had been detached from command of the 1st Marine Division to head the military group of the Joint State-Defense Mutual Defense Assistance Program Survey Mission to Southeast Asia. ~~American Legation~~, Saigon (MDAP), "MDAP Monthly Report Number 1, September 20, 1956," p. 1, [S;NHD].

(4) In April 1954, U. S. Marines of attack squadron VMA-324 had delivered 25 attack aircraft from the carrier USS Saipan, anchored in Tourance (Da Nang) harbor, to the French at the airport, southwest of the city. Accompanying the planes were 59,000 pounds of spare parts and maintenance material and a maintenance crew. C. O. VMA-324 ltr to C. O. MAG-21, dtd 24May54 (Ser 014-54, NHD). Commander of the Squadron was Lieutenant Colonel Julius W. Ireland, who ~~was~~ Colonel Ireland in 1962, commanded the Marine helicopter ~~task~~ unit based at Da Nang.

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Corps (VNMC) had not yet been organized when he reported aboard on 2 August 1954, the Marine officer was dispatched on a vastly different mission instead. He reported to Haiphong, the port for the North Vietnam capital. Here this French-speaking Marine assisted in planning and executing the movement of over 800,000 Vietnamese refugees from Haiphong to South Vietnamese ports. Other Marines, from FMFPac, contributed their French language abilities to aid the afloat phase of the movement.

While Lieutenant Colonel Croizat was assisting in the evacuation, and later directing it, the Government of Vietnam (GVN) was organizing its Marine Corps. On 13 October, the ¹⁹⁵⁴ announcement was made that a Corps of Marines had been established effective 1 October. Most of its 1,137 officers and men came from existing French elements. Initial units formed were a landing battalion, a river patrol company, a river group, a ranger group, and a field support group. Organized as a component of the naval forces, the VNMC was responsible for maintaining security on rivers and canals; it had also the mission of conducting amphibious operations along the coast and on rivers.

It was late February before the Marine adviser could return to Saigon to assume his role. He soon discovered that his task was complicated by two problems--the presence of French military advisers and the unavailability of the Marine units for formal

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training. The first difficulty was soon overcome when the Vietnamese expelled the French Navy officers from the combined French-United States training organization. The latter problem has never been solved, owing to the constant field deployments that favored VNMC units.

On 20 June 1955, the 1st Landing Battalion was ordered to the field to quell uprisings among dissident religious sects southwest of Saigon. There it stayed, except for five days, until 7 February 1956. Shortly after that, the VNMC was reorganized. Significant changes were the formation of the 2d Landing Battalion and a 4.2-inch mortar company, and the addition of a Headquarters and Service Company. Strength was increased to 1,837; most of the new troops came from existing ARVN units.

In preparing for the planned expansion of the VNMC, the Senior Marine Adviser had requested in September 1955 three more U. S. Marine advisers. Two (one captain and one master sergeant) were sent. They reported during the summer of 1955. The following year, the enlisted adviser billet was changed to an officer position. This alteration permitted the assignment of one U. S. Marine advisory officer to each VNMC battalion. The senior adviser was then able to provide more guidance to the Vietnamese Marine Commandant ^{and} his staff. Lieutenant Colonel Croizat's advice on Vietnamese Marine and Navy matters extended

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to the Vietnamese Navy, the Minister of the Defense, and to
(5)
President Ngo himself.

For about three years, the Vietnamese Marine Corps existed as a two-battalion regiment. The lack of a third infantry unit to influence a tactical situation, to furnish relief for combat-weary elements, or to provide realistic training, was a source of concern to the U. S. Marine advisers. There were, in addition, other problem sources. Few of the Vietnamese officers and senior NCOs had been school-trained. During this era of the VNMC, U. S. Marines succeeded in starting a formal school program for these two groups. In 1958, the VNMC began sending officers to Basic School, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico. In this period also, the Vietnamese were persuaded by their advisers to place more emphasis on marksmanship training. The U. S. Marine-inspired awards program for outstanding Vietnamese Marine shooters was adopted by many of the Vietnamese Army units.

Personnel and logistical headaches of the VNMC were worked out by close collaboration between Vietnamese and U. S. Marines. The Americans encouraged voluntary enlistments to help reduce

(5) Chief MAAG, VN ltr to CMC ca Jul56, Subj: Letter of Commendation in the Case of Lieutenant Colonel Victor J. Croizat, U. S. Marine Corps. (File case, Col V. J. Croizat, Pers Dept, HQMC).

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illiteracy problems. To improve the maintenance of equipment, advisers instituted schooling and inspections. Shortages of equipment appeared occasionally, but this problem could usually be prevented if the U. S. Marine ensured that follow-up action on requisitions had been taken by the unit commander.

Field operations continued to be the prime assignment given the Vietnamese Marines. Several expeditions against the Viet Cong stand out. During December 1958 and January 1959, in An Xuyen province, a mosquito-infested region in the extreme south, the 1st Battalion killed and captured a number of military and political leaders. In addition, the Marines captured food, weapons, ammunition, and a training center. Very few cases of malaria and no Marines killed or wounded attested to the soundness of the training, the supervision of the leaders, and the spirit of the men. (6)

A few months later, the 1st and the 2d Battalions both were in the field. The former utilized four companies (the fourth was a reinforced weapons company) in widely-scattered, independent

(6) This successful field experience had in fact boosted morale, and so did a report that later reached the ears of the Marines. The information heard was that an ARVN unit had been unsuccessful in the same area just before the 1st Battalion arrived.

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operations in An Xuyen Province in May 1959. More than 200 casualties were inflicted by this battalion and a Civil Guard unit. In Vinh Binh province (between the Bassac and the Co Chien Rivers), one company of the 2d Battalion killed 18 of the enemy and captured over 100 others. These were the final operations before another expansion of the VNMC took place.

Activated on 1 June 1959, this enlarged organization became known as the Marine Corps Group. Its 2,276 Marines were formed into the Group Headquarters, Administrative and Service Company, and three landing battalions. Significant in the reorganization was the attainment of administrative self-sufficiency, an increase in the Corps' combat potential, and the addition of the third battalion. With the three infantry battalions, the Marine Corps advisers were ready to implement a realistic training program. They were thwarted, however, by an offsetting increase in the number of field assignments given the VNMC.

Conducting amphibious operations was one of the missions assigned to the Marine Corps Group. In August and again in September 1961, a battalion, reinforced by artillery,⁽⁷⁾

(7) In July 1961, a fourth battalion and the first artillery, a 75mm howitzer battery, were added to the Group, whose strength was increased to 3,321.

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combined an amphibious landing exercise with a land combat assignment. Location of the activity was in the flooded forest region of southwestern Ca Mau peninsula, where ARVN intelligence had reported the Viet Cong were active. For each operation the concept was the same--a prepositioned element, with artillery, would sweep towards the sea simultaneously with the push inland of the rest of the boat-landed battalion, supported by naval gunfire.

Results for each of the operations were similar, too---very little combat success. It was perhaps the extremely difficult nature of the swampy terrain that precluded, even before the expedition began, the possibility of victory. The Vietnamese Marines and Navy were of the opinion, however, that there were (8) no Viet Cong in the area.

Logistical advice rendered by the U. S. Marine advisers was producing hoped-for results. Numerous inspections of garrison troops and those returning from the field revealed that an increased amount of attention was being given to care of equipment. Replacement items were being requisitioned promptly. Commanders began to show more concern about the slow receipt of requested items. There was one problem, however, that defied solution--the repair of worn-out, World War II trucks. The

(8) ALUSNA Saigon 151115Z Aug61 to CNO [S,NF;DIA].

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source of this trouble was removed by the acquisition of new vehicles for the Group.

Advisers of the Marine Corps Group maintained their organizational status quo through the July 1961 VNMC additions. Shortly thereafter, planning was begun to increase the U. S. military organization in Vietnam to a level necessary to support the growth of the RVNAF and its program of greatly increased activity against the Viet Cong. The enlarged advisory organization for the Vietnamese Marines would be known as the Marine Advisory Division.⁽⁹⁾

Although the organization of the division had been approved in December 1961, the additional advisers did not begin reporting in until February 1962. By May the final (19th) billet had been filled; the division was then fully prepared to carry out its greatly enlarged mission. By that time also, the Marine Corps Brigade, created on 1 January 1962, was combatting the Viet Cong, training its new elements, (formed into an Amphibious Support Battalion, and getting up to its authorized strength of 6,109.⁽¹⁰⁾ Of the Vietnamese Marine organizations,

(9) General data on the organization and mission of the Marine Advisory Division and the duties and names of its members is found in Appendix (A).

(10) General data on the organization and mission of the Marine Corps Brigade is found in Appendix (B).

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the Brigade is the closest in structure to the U. S. Marine Corps.

The new U. S. Marine advisers in the Division era had the benefit of more extensive preparation for their assignments than their predecessors had. The background for the post-1961 advisers included completion of Junior School at Marine Corps Schools and of a U. S. Army counterinsurgency course. After assignment, but before departing for Vietnam, they received 28 days schooling in military assistance operations and from 125 hours to five months instructions in the French language. Upon arrival in Saigon, the advisers were given two days of administrative briefings and orientation before release to the advisory division.

Another major change in the advisory program occurred early in 1962. In January, CinCPac authorized, with GVN concurrence, the U. S. advisers to accompany the units they advised into the field within RVN borders. "This authority was intended to permit the advisers to help the RVN commanders in operational, signal, and logistical matters, in establishment and operation of aerial resupply, and in providing additional communication advice and support. Although the U. S. advisers were armed when in the field, CinCPac directed that they would not participate in combat except for their self-preservation."⁽¹¹⁾

(11) CinCPac, Comd Hist, op. cit., p. 155 [S,NF].

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During 1962⁶² and 1963, Marine advisers to infantry battalion commanders went to the field 53 times on combat and security missions. In the first year, each infantry battalion engaged the Viet Cong at the rate of one day out of each three. In addition, combat support elements of the Brigade reinforced Marine units of many of the operations. On several other missions, the support elements reinforced non-Marine units. Water-borne attacks (raids mostly) were prominent in 1962, but seldom executed the following year. In addition to the amphibious raids, units of the VNMC participated in helicopter assaults and searches; area sweeps to locate and destroy the VC; area clear and hold operations in connection with strategic hamlet construction; hunter-killer operations (moving force pushes towards blocking elements); and area pacification, in which Marine units swept an area, held it, and instituted civic action to win over (back) the inhabitants.

Field time in 1963 was almost doubled for the Vietnamese Marines. Each infantry battalion spent 59 percent of its time in missions against the Viet Cong and on security operations. This figure does not include the operational assignments of the combat support units. The artillery in particular was heavily committed throughout the year. Vietnamese Marines killed 385, wounded 41, and captured 371 of the enemy during the year. Brigade losses were 83 killed, 405 wounded, and one missing. The ratio of Viet Cong to VN Marines killed in 1963

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was five to one; in 1962 the proportion had been 3.5 to 1. In 1962 and 1963, the Vietnamese captured and destroyed large amounts of enemy war-and propaganda-making material.

Security and combat assignments numbered 31 in 1963. As a part of the VN general reserve, the Brigade was employed that year more as a land than as an amphibious force. The most significant capability demonstrated that year was the successful operation of a provisional regiment, reinforced by most of the Brigade's support elements, in a helicopter assault into a VC logistics area. Later in the year, a provisional regiment was again organized. It operated successfully as a part of a larger force. On four occasions units of the VNMC were employed in furtherance of the strategic hamlet program. (12)

(12) When a Brigade unit was assigned to assist in a strategic hamlet project, there were three major tasks involved: clearing the enemy from the area, planning for the hamlet defenses, and providing security during the building process. Other activities--helping in the construction, providing medical aid, stimulating the hamlet economy through purchases of food and laundry services, teaching defense of the hamlet, and assisting families in moving into the new area--kept all the Vietnamese busy. Capt. D. R. Christensen, "Dateline...Vietnam", Marine Corps Gazette, v. 47, no. 9, (Sep63), p. 5.

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In 1963 there was one operation that no U. S. Marines took part in. This was the overthrow of the government on 1 and 2 November. (13) The coup ended early on the second day when the 4th Battalion took the Palace.

In two years of accompanying VNMC units into combat, U. S. Marine infantry battalion advisers observed that the small unit tactics they themselves had been taught were the ones, with modifications at times, that proved successful for the Vietnamese commanders. Since the units were in combat a significant part of each year, much of the training and advice was given under fire. Marine advisers noted mistakes of their commanders and offered corrective suggestions. The U. S. Marines observed that consecutive assignments to similar missions produced excellence in that type of operation, and at the same time reduced the need for advice.

(13) In two previous coup attempts, VNMC units had taken part. A battalion was rushed to guard several key buildings immediately after the Presidential Palace was bombed on 27 February 1962. On 11 November 1960, half of one battalion joined with the anti-government forces while the other part fought with the loyal troops.

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U. S. Marines with MACV and MAAG Staffs

When, early in 1962, the United States military aid to South Vietnam was increased to support President Ngo's greatly expanded efforts to defeat the communists in his nation, Washington established the United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Its commander, General Paul D. Harkins, U. S. Army, had direct responsibility for all U. S. military policy, operations, and assistance to that country.⁽¹⁴⁾ His Chief of Staff was Major General Richard G. Weede, who had relinquished command of the 1st Marine Brigade in February, 1962.

In all, 21 billets had been allocated to Marines in MACV. Within the Chief of Staff section, Major General Weede was assisted by a naval captain, two Marine officers and three Marine enlisted. A Marine colonel was the deputy chief of staff, J-2. In each of the staff divisions, J-3 through J-6, a U. S. Marine officer served as a branch chief. Other Marines, ~~officers and enlisted~~ were also assigned to positions in these divisions. One Marine was a project officer for the Joint Operations Evaluation Group, Vietnam. The Military Assistance Command Marines represented only six percent of the MACV

(14) CinCPac Command History, 1962, op. cit., p. 153 [S,NF]. responsibilities are noted on the page cited and the following one.

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strength, but as General Weede concluded, "...we are spread
thinly, but in the right places." (15)

Another U. S. Marine was assigned to a staff billet under the operational control of MACV; he was a research and development project officer for a Department of Defense agency. On the MAAG staff one Marine colonel served as the deputy chief of staff to the MAAG Chief, Major General Charles J. Timmes, U. S. Army. In the J-3 division, a Marine lieutenant colonel headed the plans branch.

(16)

U. S. Marines and Military Aid

In the furnishing of military equipment to the armies of foreign nations, the Department of Defense has fixed service responsibilities generally along the lines that the services involved will provide the items peculiar to it. For the Marine Corps, this policy has meant amphibious and air-ground assault equipment. In Vietnam, however, there have been few requirements for such items. Instead, the Marine Corps input has

(15) C/S, HQMC, memo to DistList, dtd 26Jul63, Subj: Marine Corps General Officers Symposium, 1963 (Ser 007A20763) [S].

(16) Information for this section was derived from Sr Mar Adv ltr to CMC, op. cit., and file on Foreign Training Program, MAP and Non-MAP, Foreign Students, FY 1961, 1963 and 1964 (TrngBr, G-3 Div, HQMC).

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been with general supply items, of which electronic equipment has been the most costly.

To help make the military assistance to the Vietnamese Marines of more value, the Commandant of the Marine Corps approved a program for the training of VNMC officers (initially) at U. S. Marine Corps facilities. In these places, the Vietnamese Marines learned about USMC training methods, tactics and techniques, and a little of the equipment. Upon returning home, they then were not only better able to understand the advisers, but also more able to instruct their own Marines.

Since 1958, Vietnamese Marines have attended courses of instruction at U. S. Marine installations. The initial group went to Basic School, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico. Nearly 100 officers have received instruction at Quantico since then. Some of these 100 later attended orientation briefings at the San Diego Recruit Depot and took on-the-job training with a 1st Marine Division infantry battalion at Camp Pendleton, California. In recent years, other VNMC officers received unit supply schooling and on-the-job training in small unit logistical operations at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Enlisted Marines were trained at U. S. Marine facilities also. In June 1961, authorization was given for the training of 10 Vietnamese Marines at the Recruit Depot, San Diego, and

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at Camp Pendleton for individual combat training. During the next year, 23 enlisted Marines from the Republic of Vietnam were schooled in weapons repair and the handling of ammunition at Marine Corps Schools. At west coast U. S. Marine Corps activities, these same 23 received further instruction in recruit, drill instructor, and individual combat training. In 1963, a marksmanship course was added.

Vietnamese Marine officers and enlisted underwent on-the-job training with units of the Okinawa-based 3d Marine Division beginning late in 1963. That Ryukyn^{ua} island was the latest addition to the outside-Vietnam training of Vietnamese Marines conducted by officers and men of the U. S. Marine Corps.

U. S. Marines in Research and Development Efforts

Working as a project officer-adviser for a Department of Defense research and development field unit in Vietnam was one Marine officer. The initial Marine assigned, Lieutenant Colonel Marion C. Dalby, was the motivating force behind the establishment of two projects *in 1962*.

Lieutenant Colonel Dalby introduced into South Vietnam a light, bonded, styrofoam, fiber glass boat, called Dong Nai by the Vietnamese, that had once been tested by the U. S. Navy. Issued to Vietnamese combat units, the boats, each propelled by a 40 horsepower engine, increased the amphibious capability and improved mobility, but proved insufficiently rugged to

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withstand frequent beachings. The South Vietnam Naval Shipyard subsequently renovated the boats. They were then reissued to the combat units. Although these craft were improved, and many were still being used, they did not meet all the requirements. A newly designed boat was expected to replace it.

This Marine officer's other R&D contribution was a method for identifying craft travelling the hundreds of waterways in South Vietnam. He proposed that certain easily recognizable and identifiable information on the thousands of junks in the land be published in a Vietnamese-English Manual. By comparison of a junk of questionable identity with the appropriate information in the manual, an observer can tell if the boat warranted more investigation. By this method, many V. C. would be limited to their travel. This completed project has served well its purpose.

U. S. Marines and Mobile Training Teams

Another R&D project was conducted by a Mobile Training Team, a group that spends a short time in South Vietnam for a specific or technical purpose. This Marine team came to the Mekong Delta to determine the suitability of the amphibian truck (DUKW) to operate in that region. The results of the team's work produced sufficient evidence to doubt the wisdom of introducing the vehicle into the assistance program.

Other training teams of Marines went to South Vietnam. One team was from the Landing Force Training Unit, Pacific. This Coronado, California-based group of Marines presented in 1962 and 1963 expert instruction in the conduct of amphibious

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operations to Vietnamese Marine and Navy audiences. Another U. S. team, this one joint Marine-Army, served as advisers on a combined study group. Another all-Marine mobile training team is performing a mission with the U. S. Army 23d Special Warfare Aviation Detachment.

Early in 1962, a team of four officers and three enlisted was organized at Camp Pendleton to study the training and operating methods of Father Hoa. This man, a Chinese priest, was leader of a village in the midst of a V. C. controlled area in southwestern Ca Mau peninsula. In the entire republic, no villagers had been more successful than Father Hoa's people. His ability to survive ~~in~~ that area and even take the fight ~~to~~ ^{TO} the enemy was attributed to good intelligence, excellent planning, and timely and professional execution of the plans.

(17)

U. S. Marines on Orientation Tours

A program to permit Marine Corps company grade officers and staff noncommissioned officers stationed in the Western Pacific area to participate in orientation and indoctrination tours in South Vietnam got underway in May 1961. The following May, assigned quotas were transferred to the Marine Expeditionary

(17) Information for this section was derived from File folders Nos. 3305.2, 3305.4, and 3305.6 (OpBr, G-3 Div, HQMC) [TS,NF] and from Lt. Col. Milton A. Hull interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC dtd 10Jan64 (HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC) [S,NF].

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Unit that had landed in Thailand. Monthly until August, 20 Marines went to South Vietnam to observe operations.

In June 1963, a new program of visits to the republic was launched. For company grade officers, and later for staff non-commissioned officers, visits were of one month's duration for on-the-job training. The 3d Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing each sent four Marines for training in combat patrols, ambush missions, and search and clear and helicopter-borne operations. That year, quotas were filled in June, July, November, and December.

A different and much shorter type of visit was the Job Related Orientation (JRO) program for field grade officers. JRO, which began in November 1963, permitted each month eight Marine officers to spend four days in South Vietnam (and four in Thailand). Since the billets were reserved for field grade officers that held key staff and command positions, this program was limited to briefings, reconnaissance, and observation appropriate to these positions.

There was another undertaking that put U. S. Marines into South Vietnam for brief tours of various activities there. In April 1962, the U. S. Army extended to the Marine Corps an invitation to fill vacancies on Department of the Army senior officer orientation trips to certain foreign countries. Three colonels from Headquarters Marine Corps subsequently visited

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several Southeast Asian lands, including South Vietnam.

In still another way, U. S. Marines went to South Vietnam to observe. Forming this group were those charged with various responsibilities in the execution of the U. S. assistance efforts to that country. Heading the list was the Commandant; included were general officers from the Pacific area and from the Department of Defense. Other senior Marine officers, ground and aviation, from the Pacific area, made brief visits to South Vietnam.

U. S. Marines and Communication Training

Of the Marines in South Vietnam, the second largest group is Detachment "A", 1st Radio Company, FMFPac. These Marines reached the country in January 1962; at that time and until 15 May 1963, the detachment was designated Sub-Unit #1, 1st Composite Radio Company, FMFPac.

During the entire period, these communication Marines were integrated into the U. S. Army 3d Radio Research Unit at Pleiku, about 40 miles southeast of the point where Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam are contiguous. Although these Marines were in the country primarily for training, they contributed significantly to the overall effort of U. S. forces in South Vietnam. (18)
Personnel assigned to this detachment rotate to their parent

(18) C/S, HQMC memo, op. cit.

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unit every four months. Occasionally, these Marines were augmented for brief stints by 3d Marine Division personnel.

U. S. Marines and Embassy Duty

Not altogether apart from the U. S. Marine assistance to the military forces of South Vietnam is the part played by Marines performing duty at the American Embassy. One such Marine is the officer designated the Assistant Naval Attache/ Assistant Naval Attache for Air.

By far the more numerous of the Embassy Marines are the security guards. (19) First assigned to posts under the present Security Guard Program in 1949, (20) Marine Security guards

(19) Information for the remaining portion of this section was derived from T/O No. 6366 dtd 17Mar53, 9Aug54, Sep55, and Jan and Sep57; T/O No. 5015 dtd 9Apr and 9Dec57; T/O No. 5152 dtd 6Mar and 17Aug62 and 21Oct63; SNCOIC, Mar Security Gd Det, Saigon, VN, Incident Rept, Incident Rept Folder, (Incident Rept and Inspection Rept file, Co F, HqBn, HQMC) and Joint State Dept-Co F, HqBn, HQMC handout, Growth and Development of the Marine Security Program, ca. 1963 (Co F, HqBn, HQMC).

(20) Although Marines had served with the Federal government foreign service organization for many years, President Theodore Roosevelt was the first to "legalize" the use of Marines for embassy and legation guards. The Foreign Service Act of 1946 authorized assignment of Marine and Navy enlisted as custodian under State Department supervision.

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arrived Saigon early in 1953. Their number at that time was 12; their primary mission was to protect all classified and administratively controlled material within the embassy. A secondary task was to protect government property and to carry out other assigned duties. About 30 months after the Saigon post was established, the number of security guards there was increased to 15. A second increase, in October 1963, put the total up to 19.

That year the embassy Marines were the most active in their 10 year history. In the summer, the mass demonstrations that were of great concern to the GVN were also a source of problems to the Marines. Threatening crowds gathered outside American buildings. On several occasions, religious demonstrators sought asylum within the sanction of the embassy walls. One time a Vietnamese policeman pursued a Buddhist monk into the embassy grounds and attempted to drag him outside, but was prevented in doing so by a Marine guard.

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PART III

USMC Helicopters Committed

It was decided at the JCS-SecDef meeting on 16 January 1962, that CinCPac could "downgrade" his "military posture" to increase existing American support of the South Vietnamese military forces' operations and training.⁽¹⁾ One aspect of this decision was the implied authorization for CinCPac to send to South Vietnam additional helicopter units if they were needed; at the beginning of 1962, there were three U. S. Army helicopter companies in the country.

Both CinCPac and CHMAAG-Vietnam were to investigate and make a joint determination of whether the need for the additional units existed. As a result of his investigation, CinCPac concluded that there was a valid requirement for a fourth Army light helicopter company to support RVN operations in the Mekong Delta region, and recommended that one be sent. Since the unit was to be based in an isolated area, CinCPac asked also that a maintenance-avionic-medical package be sent to support the helicopter unit.⁽²⁾ On 6 March, the Secretary of Defense approved this recommendation, subject to GVN concurrence,

(1) JCS 171212Z of Jan62, cite JCS 2935, to CinCPac [S; S&C #00012623].

(2) CinCPac 280217Z of Feb62 to JCS [S].

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and JCS assigned to the Army the responsibility for providing the package and the unit.⁽³⁾ Accordingly, the 33d Transportation Light Helicopter Company at Fort Ord, California, was alerted for the move and assigned a departure date of 18 April.⁽⁴⁾

Two days before CinCPac submitted his recommendation to JCS, CHMAAG-Vietnam---with COMUSMACV concurrence---had recommended to Admiral Felt that nine Marine helicopter pilots be assigned to Army helicopter companies in South Vietnam on a temporary duty basis for a period of 60-90 days. The purpose of this assignment would be to familiarize the Marine pilots with the nature of operations in that country and provide them transitional training in the Army's H-21s.⁽⁵⁾

When CinCPac asked for his opinion on 28 February, Lieutenant General Carson A. Roberts, CGFMFPac, immediately replied, expressing the Marine Corps' desire to contribute to the U. S. effort in South Vietnam, and agreeing that the experience gained by the Marine pilots assigned there would be helpful. He stated also what he felt were disadvantages to the proposal. The Marine

(3) JCS 061838Z of Mar62 (cite JCS 3523) to CinCPac [S;NHD]; GVN concurrence for this deployment was given on 20 March, as COMUSMACV 200331Z of Mar62 indicates [S].

(4) DA 022253Z of Mar62 (cite DA 910701) to CinCPac and CincUSAR-Pac [S;NHD].

(5) CHMAAG-Vietnam 260945Z of Feb62 to CinCPac [C].

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commander believed that adoption of the plan would mean that his pilots would be flying a type of helicopter unfamiliar to them instead of the ones that they would operate if entire Marine Corps squadrons were ever committed in the area. Also, the piecemeal assignment of these flyers would reduce the combat-ready stance of the squadrons from which they were drawn.

Lieutenant General Roberts then made a counterproposal which he believed would be mutually beneficial to MAAG-Vietnam and to the Marine Corps. He suggested that a complete Marine Corps helicopter squadron (24 HUSs), with supporting elements from MAG-16 on Okinawa, be moved to Vietnam to replace the Army helicopter company in the I Corps area ^{in the North.} The Army unit would then be redeployed. Advantages accruing from his proposal included:

1. Additional helicopter support for Vietnam.
2. Experience in the type of operations then current in the country for an entire squadron, rather than for individual pilots.
3. Operational experience for Marine Corps units in the area to which they would be committed should certain U. S. or SEATO contingency plans be implemented.
4. The Marine squadron and its support elements, logistically supported by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, would be almost entirely self-sufficient, thus obviating

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any need for logistical support by either CHMAAG-Vietnam or
(6)
COMUSMACV.

Possibly influencing the decision of CGFMFPac was a suggestion made to him by Major General Richard G. Weede, USMC, Chief of Staff, USMACV. He said that the invitation for assignment of individual Marine pilots for training "was in consonance with the policy of participation in South Vietnam by all the services," and Lieutenant General Roberts could either send the individual pilots or initiate a request that he be permitted to
(7)
send a complete squadron. He decided upon the latter.

On the same day that CGFMFPac made his proposal, CinCPacFlt sent a message to CinCPac---then in Bangkok---strongly recommending
(8)
that the CGFMFPac proposal be approved and implemented. CinCPac, in turn, solicited the opinion of COMUSMACV, and reiterated the point that this deployment would give Seventh Fleet Marines operational experience in an area where they would be committed if long-range plans went into effect. Equally important, he added, was the fact that the deployment of the Marine squadron to Da Nang in the I Corps area would permit Army

(6) CGFMFPac 280113Z of Feb62 to CinCPacFlt [S].

(7) MajGen Richard G. Weede interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, dtd 18Jul63, [S,NF].

(8) CinCPacFlt 282044Z of Feb62 to CinCPac [S].

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helicopter companies to concentrate their operations in the II and III Corps areas, ^{in the Central and Southern parts of the country,} and would facilitate their logistic support. (9)

In reply, COMUSMACV generally concurred with the CGFMFPac proposal. He objected, however, to the suggested deployment of the Marines to Da Nang. This objection stemmed from the belief that relocation of the Army 93d Helicopter Company from the I Corps area would adversely affect what appeared to be the beginning of a successful series of operations in the north. COMUSMACV had anticipated that, when the future tempo of Army operations at Da Nang permitted, the Marines---initially to support III Corps from Soc Trang---would displace the Army unit. More important, COMUSMACV continued, Marine HUSs at Da Nang could be expected to perform more satisfactorily in the higher altitude of the north than had the H21s of the Army. In addition, the Army's supply and heavy maintenance support was concentrated in the II and III Corps area, and the Marines could receive direct seaborne resupply while they were in the north. (10)

(9) CinCPac Bangkok Th 050340Z of Mar62 to COMUSMACV [S;NHD].

South Vietnam was divided into three areas of military responsibility, to each of which was assigned an army corps. See ^{Fig II-1a} ~~Appendix A~~. Da Nang is the base for helicopter operations in the I Corps area.

(10) COMUSMACV 080941Z of Mar62 to CinCPac [S].

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CinCUSARPac did not concur with the proposed assignment of the Marine squadron to Vietnam. One of his several arguments was that this deployment would introduce "another supply and maintenance feature into the III Corps Area."⁽¹¹⁾ As shall be seen, this argument, as well as his recommendation that the 81st Light Helicopter Company---then in Hawaii and trained in mountain, jungle, and troop transportation operations---be deployed instead of the Marines, was dealt with by CinCPac on 14 March.

At this point in the pre-deployment planning, Headquarters Marine Corps indicated that there would be no objection to the assignment of a Marine helicopter squadron to Vietnam, provided another did not have to replace it at Futema, home base of the two helicopter squadrons in the 1st MAW.⁽¹²⁾ The Commandant said that he would become concerned at any increase in the number of Marine Corps helicopters required for assignment in addition to units already committed to operating and training forces.

(11) CinCUSARPac 092100Z of Mar62 to CinCPac [S;NHD].

(12) Dir, DivAv, HQMC, Briefing Item, dtd 14Mar62, for CMC Weekly Conf, Subj: Assignment of Marine Helicopter Squadron to CHMAAG Vietnam [S]. On a rotational basis, there was always one squadron with the Seventh Fleet in support of the latter's special landing force, a reinforced infantry battalion from the 3d Marine Division (Reinf), FMF, on Okinawa.

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According to long-range Marine Corps planning, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing would not be assigned any more medium transport helicopter squadrons (HMMs) until 1964.⁽¹³⁾ The two squadrons assigned to the wing were part of the operational forces assigned to CinCPac, who had been assured by JCS in January, however, that his forces would be immediately brought up to strength if any portion of them were committed elsewhere at any time that a contingency arose.

In order to investigate the needs of COMUSMACV at first hand, CinCPac went to Vietnam to discuss the matter thoroughly with General Harkins. At the conclusion of these discussions on 14 March, Admiral Felt and General Harkins sent a message to JCS, to whom they made joint recommendations and indicated the factors which influenced their thinking.⁽¹⁴⁾ In considering the JCS January decision, and in an attempt to implement it as it related to immediately increased American military commitments in South Vietnam, they concluded that it would be desirable to deploy one of the Marine helicopter squadrons in WestPac rather than the Army squadron already alerted. An important factor in this conclusion was the ready status of the Marines. The HMM could be on station and ready for

(13) DivAv, HQMC, memo to AsstCofS, G-3, HQMC, AAP-3-1p, 008D4962 dtd 9Feb62, Subj: Helicopter Program for S. E. Asia (U), [S].

(14) CinCPac 140712Z of Mar62 to JCS [S].

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operations under COMUSMACV on 15 April---at the conclusion of SEATO Exercise TULUNGAN---while the helicopter company nominated by the Department of the Army would not even have left the United States until three days later. Both senior commanders agreed that the Marines would be stationed in the delta region for the time being; for the reasons enumerated above, the Army company in I Corps area would be replaced at a later date by the Marines.

Admiral Felt answered CinCUSARPac's argument concerning the introduction of additional supply and maintenance problems with the Marine deployment by saying that logistical support "is something that can be handled relatively easy by Marines."⁽¹⁵⁾ The recommendation to JCS that the assignment of the HMM be approved was reinforced by the irrefutable argument that utilizing trained and ready forces already stationed in WestPac would be the most expedient and satisfactory solution to an urgent problem. The message concluded with an additional proviso stating that, if requirements arose for the deployment of a fifth helicopter unit in South Vietnam, the 81st Helicopter Company would be nominated and replaced in Hawaii by the 33d.

(15) Ibid.

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On 19 March, JCS approved all ^{the} ~~of~~ CinCPac-COMUSMACV
 (16) recommendations and steps were taken by responsible
 authorities to put them into effect. On that same day,
 CinCPac ordered CinCPacFlt to deploy a Marine helicopter
 squadron to South Vietnam, and further authorized direct
 liaison between the latter command and COMUSMACV. (17) In turn,
 CinCPacFlt notified the Commander, Seventh Fleet, of the de-
 (18) cision (19) and directed him to take appropriate action.

Since the squadron to be deployed would be taken from the
 1st MAW, its commander, Major General John P. Condon, who also
 functioned as CTG 79.3 was directly informed of the move on 22
 March. (20) At this time, ComSeventhFlt directed him to es-
 tablish liaison with COMUSMACV in order to obtain the infor-
 mation needed to plan for the HMM deployment. Major General
 Condon received this directive at his wing headquarters on
 Mindoro, while Exercise TULUNGAN was underway. (21) Because

(16) JCS 192142Z of Mar62, cite JCS 3699, to CinCPac [S].

(17) CinCPac 210412Z of Mar62 to CinCPacFlt and COMUSMACV [S].

(18) CinCPacFlt 212048Z of Mar62 to ComSeventhFlt [S].

(19) CinCPacFlt 220416Z of Mar62 to ComSeventhFlt [S].

(20) ComSeventhFlt 221426Z of Mar62 to CGFirstMAW [S].

(21) Col John F. Carey interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC,
 at MCS, Quantico, Va., dtd 13Apr64.

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the wing commander was an information addressee on most of the very considerable message traffic concerning the planned deployment, his staff was able to prepare for the move concurrently with wing participation in a major exercise.

There were few major problems, and not many more minor ones, incident to mounting out the Marines for this operation, which was given the code-name SHUFLY. The wing was familiar with steps to be taken in preparing a package such as SHUFLY, and knew what its composition should be; the Marine air command had had previous experience in providing a force such as this during the Laos commitment. The only refinements to be made for SHUFLY were those imposed by its mission and the place to which it was assigned. A matter of concern initially was the fact that the units to be committed to SHUFLY were still deeply involved with TULUNGAN when the order to execute the deployment was given. Fortunately, the affected elements of the wing's normally widespread command were close at hand, and had a two-week period---between the end of the exercise and their estimated time of arrival in South Vietnam---in which to make necessary arrangements.

As a result of the information garnered by the liaison officers he had sent to South Vietnam during Exercise TULUNGAN, Major General Condon was able, on 30 March, to give ComSeventh-Flt a nearly-complete picture of the way that the deployment was

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to be conducted. It was determined that an airstrip at Soc Trang, located 85 miles southwest of Saigon, was to be the base of operations for HMM-362 (Lieutenant Colonel Archie J. Clapp, commanding), the squadron designated for SHUFLY. The wing was to provide all personnel and facilities to operate the field. Logistical support of the unit would be maintained through the normal USMC/USN channels, except for Classes I, III, and III (A). Rations, PX supplies, etc., and Class I supplements were to be picked up at Saigon; general-purpose fuels and lubricants, and aviation POL would be delivered directly to the field.

On the initial date of the Marine arrival at Soc Trang, an ARVN infantry battalion and two 4.2-inch mortar companies would be given the responsibility for the field's security. The wing commander suggested that the most efficient chain of command for SHUFLY would have the Marine unit directly under the operational control of COMUSMACV, while the wing retained administrative control. Major General Condon proposed that the SHUFLY unit, to be designated Task Unit 79.3.5, should be organized into three task elements: Headquarters (TE 79.3.5.0), comprised of the task unit commander (a colonel), seven other officers, and six enlisted Marines; HMM-362 (Reinf) (TE 79.3.5.1), consisting of 63 officers, 196 enlisted, 24 HUS, 3 OE, and 1 R4D; and, Detachment, MABS-16

(22) CG First MAW 300700Z of Mar62 to ComSeventhFlt [S].

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(TE 79.3.5.2), having 18 officers and 193 enlisted. The squadron reinforcement was the approximately 50 additional maintenance personnel and the additional maintenance equipment coming from H&MS-16, as well as the three OE observation aircraft and one R4D transport. The latter was to be used for liaison and ration runs between Soc Trang and Saigon.

In addition to the usual housekeeping gear to be taken to South Vietnam by the MABS sub-unit, it was assigned a TAFDS (tactical airfield fuel dispensing system) and a MATCU (Marine airfield traffic control unit) which was equipped with TACAN (tactical air navigation) and GCA (ground control approach) systems. This equipment was included in the SHUFLY package to enable the transport aircraft of VMGR-152 to land at Soc Trang with essential supplies and gear, regardless of the weather. On a long-range basis, the helicopters would utilize these navigational aids at night and in foul weather.

The organization for SHUFLY was based on the premise that close and constant liaison with COMUSMACV, III Corps, and the division with which the squadron would be operating would be of paramount concern at all times. Therefore, Colonel John F. Carey, the task unit commander, was made responsible for this liaison function and for all security matters, external communications, and basic administration. The squadron would then be able to concentrate on the necessary detailed operational planning for missions. The conduct of all flight operations

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and maintenance were to be within the province of the squadron; the MABS detachment would be responsible for all normal base support and field operations.

Major General Condon concluded his report by indicating that on about 9 April---eight days after the exercise had ended---the backload airlift for TULUNGAN would phase into an airlift for all elements of SHUFLY with the exception of the squadron. The lift aircraft would be augmented, until 12 April, by five transports from 3d MAW. It was anticipated that all of the field and house-keeping facilities would be in place at Soc Trang by the 14th. With the assistance of HMM-261, HMM-362 (Reinf) would offload from USS Princeton (LPH-5) at first light on 15 April, when the ship would be in the vicinity of the coast closest to Soc Trang. The proposed fly-in satisfied a JCS and Department of State requirement that conspicuous offloading in the Saigon area was to be avoided. (23)

ComSeventhFlt approved the 1st MAW proposed plan on 3 April, ordering CTG 79.3 to transfer TU 79.3.5 to COMUSMACV on 15 April and to provide SHUFLY with whatever supply and administrative support it needed. In this same message, the fleet commander ordered appropriate commanders to provide an escort of destroyers for the Princeton and an inconspicuous air cover when the LPH

(23) JCS 291549Z of Mar62, cite JCS 3840, to CinCPac [S];
CinCPac 072135Z of Apr62 to JCS replied to above [S].

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arrived and began to offload. The aircraft were not to approach closer than 20 miles to South Vietnam unless they were required. (24)

Following ComSeventhFlt approval, on 4 April, CTG 79.3 (25) notified the fleet commander that CTU 79.3.5 was formed; the task group commander also issued Operation Order 302-62 activating the SHUFLY task unit. The order repeated what had been in the proposed plan; in addition, the task unit commander was to establish his headquarters at the Marine Corps Air Facility, Iwakuni, Japan, as soon as possible to prepare for the deployment. Colonel Carey's administration and logistics (26) instructions were to be issued at a later date.

On 1 April, when TULUNGAN had ended, HMM-362 backloaded to Princeton, which then steamed north to Okinawa, stopping first at Subic Bay. Here the squadron began an around-the-clock exchange of ^{those} aircraft ^{of} ~~the~~ HMM-261 ^{that} ~~whose~~ ~~Shoppers~~ had a longer operational period before they were scheduled for overhaul. Once the exchange was completed, the LPH continued on to Ryukyus to pick up the remainder of the squadron's personnel and gear. At 1st MAW headquarters, Iwakuni, the task unit

(24) ComSeventhFlt 030918Z of Apr62 to CTF 76 and CTG 79.3 [S].

(25) CTG 79.3 041046Z of Apr62 to ComSeventhFlt [S].

(26) CTG 79.3 041244Z of Apr62 to CTU 79.3.5 [S].

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headquarters had only a week to prepare before it was to leave for Soc Trang. In Japan, Colonel Carey and his staff, with the assistance of the wing staff, worked out airlift details with VMGR-152. The task unit also had to coordinate the moves of the MATCU--approximately 350 air miles distant at Atsugi--and the MABS detachment, then at the MAG-16 headquarters at Futema. After loading the additional squadron personnel and gear at Okinawa, Princeton steamed from Buckner Bay on 10 April, arriving at a position about 20 miles off the coast of Vietnam at dawn on 15 April, when the SHUFLY choppers were launched for the fly-in to Soc Trang.

While the operating units prepared the tactical facets of the SHUFLY deployment, personnel sections on various Marine command echelons were concerned with two problems--the first was one of long-standing; it had not been resolved as of 15 April 1962, and only partially solved in April 1964. This matter, involving the question of giving per diem and combat awards to Marine helicopter and support units in South^{East} Asia, arose in March 1961, when MABS-16 was deployed to Udorn, Thailand. Awards procedure was established before the SHUFLY operation began, but the per diem problem is still a subject undergoing study at HQMC. ⁽²⁷⁾ Satisfactory resolution of this

(27) Dir, DivAv, Briefing Item dtd 11Apr62 for CMC Weekly Conf, Subj: Per Diem for Helicopter and Support Units in SEA [S].

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matter will find favor among those Marines who were in the units deployed to Thailand and South Vietnam, as well as among those who will be deployed under somewhat similar circumstances in the future.

The second problem also had two elements: establishment of the length of the duty tour for the squadron assigned to SHUFLY, and replacement of that squadron in Seventh Fleet by the deployment of a third HMM to WestPac. Following considerable discussion by the commands concerned, it was determined to adopt the plan proposed by CGAirFMFPac. ⁽²⁸⁾ Namely, that after completion of a tour of approximately six months in South Vietnam, the squadron then assigned to SHUFLY would be replaced by the other HMM permanently deployed in WestPac. ⁽²⁹⁾ When ComSeventhFt lost HMM-362, he requested its replacement by a third ⁽³⁰⁾ squadron. CinCPacFt stated that if a contingency demanded, arrangements would be made for the deployment of a HMM with Princeton one year earlier than the one originally planned for ⁽³¹⁾ March 1964. This statement was tempered with the comment

(28) CGAirFMFPac 092252Z of May62 to CGFMFPac [S].

(29) D/CofS (Air) memo to CofS. HQMC, AA-Z-1bm, 008B13162, dtd 11May62, Subj: HMM Deployment to West Pac [S].

(30) ComSeventhFt 150308Z of Mar62 to CinCPacFt [S].

(31) CinCPacFt 101914Z of Apr62 to ComSeventhFt [S].

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that this early deployment would require CMC authorization. The Commandant did not authorize this early deployment because he felt that the HMM at that time could not be adequately supported on a continuing basis unless the following could be increased by the Marine Corps: procurement of helicopters; helicopter pilot training rate; personnel strength; and, operating funds.⁽³²⁾ Because a contingency situation never arose at any time in the interim period, the March 1964 deployment date held firm.

(32) CMC 071410Z of May62 to CGFMFPac [S;HQMC].

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IV. SHUFLY OPERATIONS AT SOC TRANG (15Apr-14Sep62) ⁽¹⁾

Part IV concerns SHUFLY operations in the southern delta region of South Vietnam, from mid-April to mid-September, 1962. Based at Soc Trang throughout this time, the task unit operated in the ARVN III Corps area ^(see Figures II-1A and II-1B) ~~(see enclosure (1))~~ for a tactical map of the region ^{and a chart showing the chain of command}. The Soc Trang operation is covered as follows: (A) description of the area of operations, (B) organization of the camp and airfield, (C) missions flown, including

(1) Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: Task Unit 79.3.5 Command Diaries 9Apr-30Jul62 and 31Jul-5Nov62; Marine Corps Operations Analysis Group (MCOAG) Study 1 05-63, Characteristics of U. S. Marine Corps Helicopter Operations in the Mekong Delta, dtd 12Mar63; CG, 1st MAW SHUFLY Operational Summaries (OpSums), Nos. 1-21, Apr-Sep62; Marine Corps General Officer Symposium, 1963, Tab M, Summary of Presentation on Southeast Asia, HQMC Memo 007A20763, dtd 23Jul63; 1st MAW Area Study 1-56, Indochina, dtd 15Feb56; CG, 1st MAW Ltr of Instruction, SHUFLY, dtd 12Nov62; Col John F. Carey, USMC, Interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, dtd 13Apr64 (Current Studies File, HistBr, HQMC); Capt Richard B. Taylor, USMC, Interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, dtd 13Apr64 (Current Studies File, HistBr, HQMC); "Shu-Fly Diary," by LtCol Archie J. Clapp, USMC, United States Naval Institute Proceedings, v. 89, no. 10 (Oct63)

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combat support and administrative/logistical, (D) developmental activities, including tactics, techniques, and equipment, and (E) the end of operations at Soc Trang, including the last missions and the movement to Da Nang.

Description of the Area of Operations

Soc Trang lies in Ba Xuyen Province, South Vietnam, 85
(2) miles southwest of Saigon. It is in the heartland of the Mekong delta, 15 miles inland from the South China Sea and 8 miles south of the Bassac Flueve, the southernmost branch of the Mekong River. Both the airfield and the town are named Soc Trang--the field is located $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles southwest of the town, which has a population of some 12,000 people.

The Mekong delta forms the rice basket of South Vietnam. It is a flat plain, laced by thousands of ditches and canals, with rice paddies flooded during the summer rainy season. The Mekong River, the world's seventh longest (2800 miles), splits into four branches as it flows through the delta.

In a normal year, the delta farmers grow enough rice to feed the nation, with some left over for export. Fish and vegetables add to the people's diet. Rubber is the leading monetary export, though a charcoal industry thrives in the southernmost part of the Ca Mau peninsula and brisk trade is

(2) All distances in Parts IV and V will be given in nautical miles, which are in common usage in Marine aviation.

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conducted up the coast to neighboring Cambodia. Water buffalo do most of the heavy work, pulling primitive implements as they have done for hundreds of years. Cattle, pigs, and poultry make up most of the country's livestock.

The weather varies--from hot and wet to hot and dry. The summer rainy (monsoon) season extends from mid-May to early October; humidity is very high during this time. The monsoons are not continuous torrents, but are similar to thunderstorms in the United States--intense but relatively brief. Annual rainfall averages 77 inches.

Late in the fall the rain stops; for the next six months, many of the inhabitants of outlying areas live off water stored in large earthenware crocks. The rice paddies dry up; water in the smaller canals gets lower each day until it is gone. In the searing sun the land turns hard as concrete.

The Marine task unit operating area was made up of the entire Mekong River delta, stretching from the Saigon complex southwestward to the tip of the Ca Mau peninsula, and from the South China Sea westward to the Cambodian border. Mangrove swamps, which fringe the entire coastal area, and rain forests cover 10 to 15 percent of the delta.

In the rainy season, numerous unfordable waterways limit land transportation and explain the extensive use by the natives of river craft--small boats and rafts. The rice paddies are interlaced with earthen dikes and irrigation canals, which keep

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them inundated with 18-24 inches of water.

Settlements straddle the canals and rivers, and are generally linear in form. Larger communities often occur at junctions of waterways. Bamboo brakes and clumps of other tropical trees are found around villages and canals, the depth of growth usually extending 50-300 yards on either side of the canal or village. Rice fields begin at the tree lines.

Radiating from Saigon along the coastal fringe of the delta are two railroads and five all-weather roads. One such road runs past the airstrip at Soc Trang. The strip was built by the Japanese, but had deteriorated, along with the hangar and surrounding buildings. The Marines were able to use the runway and ramp area, the hangar, and one other small building upon their arrival, though the hangar was open on one side and the roof leaked. Everything else they brought with them and housed in tents, which they set up in the immediate vicinity of the hangar and flight line. (A photograph showing the airfield and the surrounding area is shown as ^{Figure II-6} ~~enclosure~~ (-)).

During their stay at Soc Trang, the Marines had the only operating squadron permanently based there. They shared the airfield, however, with Army, Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) security forces, some 250-350 men strong. In addition, detachments of the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) helicopter and attack aircraft were based there from time to time for joint operations. The U. S. Army, U. S. Air Force, and others used

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the field as a refueling stop.

Organization of the Camp and Airfield

The leading elements of Task Unit 79.3.5 (Code Name SHUFLY) arrived at Soc Trang airfield on the morning of 9 April 1962. At 0830H⁽³⁾ a Marine R4D-8, a Douglas twin-engine transport, touched down carrying Colonel John F. Carey, the task unit commander, and his staff element. (The R4D remained under operational control of TU 79.3.5 throughout the delta operation, flying a variety of support missions and making a daily run to Saigon for supplies.)

After landing, the crew of the R4D parked it to one side, but kept the radio warmed up to give landing instructions to the Marine GV-1 Hercules transports, scheduled to arrive soon. At 0900, the first of the four-engine turboprop craft appeared, piloted by Major General John P. Condon, 1st MAW Commander, and Colonel Robert O. White, Commander of VMGR-152, the transport squadron. In fifteen minutes the first plane had unloaded and departed. Seven more of the Hercules workhorses followed at 30-minute intervals, each one carrying more than 20,000

(3) H indicates the local time zone in South Vietnam. ^{Most of} Washington and the eastern United States is in zone R, 13 hours (and one day) away; at 6:00 a. m. on Sunday in Washington it is 7:00 p. m. Monday in South Vietnam.

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pounds of men and equipment--the first increments of MABS-16 Sub-unit #2 (TE 79.3.5.2) and its gear. Lieutenant Colonel William W. Eldridge, Jr. commanded the men of the task element --its first job was to provide an operational airfield, complete with living and working facilities, in five days. On 15 April, HMM-362, with 24 helicopters and three fixed-wing observation planes, would arrive to begin operations.

To get the transports unloaded, an air freight terminal was established at once, operated by personnel of the air freight section. Using the fork lift which had arrived on the first GV-1, the section unloaded each transport plane as soon as its four-bladed propellers windmilled to a stop. During the buildup from 9 to 15 April, GVs from VMGR-152, based in Japan at 1st MAW Headquarters, Iwakuni, and from VMGR-352, based at 3d MAW Headquarters, El Toro, California, flew 50 sorties into Soc Trang. Reversible pitch propellers, anti-skid brakes, and rough-field landing gear allowed the silver giants, flown by veteran transport pilots, to land with a full load and stop on the rough, 2,850 foot strip.

"I can't praise the support of Colonel White's transport squadron enough," commented Colonel Carey concerning SHUFLY. (4)

"Their splendid support continued throughout the operation,

(4) Col John F. Carey interview by HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, dtd 13Apr64 (South Vietnam Current Studies File, HistBr, HQMC).

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and they never failed to deliver when called upon."

While the transports hauled in the men and material, the work of setting up the field and the camp began. The hangar was put in shape for use by aircraft maintenance and repair, a communications office was set up in a small building, and everything else went into tents--some 75 of them. By midnight on 12 April the utilities section (1 officer, 20 men) had completed construction of plywood decking, screening, and strong backing for the tent city. Every office and department had adequate space, and there were canvas quarters ready for every man.

Water was an immediate problem. A purification system was set up within the camp, and the water itself was brought in from Soc Trang. By 11 April, 9,000 gallons of purified water was ready for use, and field laundry and shower units were in operation. The Marines continued to transport water and purify it during their stay at Soc Trang; when they moved north to Da Nang in September the U. S. Army 93d Helicopter Company moved to Soc Trang. The Army hired a contractor to dig a well during the summer to provide water for the 93d.

The Marine mess hall served its first hot food on 15 April. An outdoor mess had been set up upon arrival; it moved indoors when the rainy season began. The quality of food remained high during the entire Soc Trang operation. Fresh supplies were flown in daily from Saigon via the R4D. By

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28 April mess tables had been built, and on 12 May the GV's brought in 15 refrigerators--a most welcome item, immediately put to use. In the sweltering heat, a cool drink provided a considerable boost to morale.

Field heads were in operation by 12 April, an ARVN bulldozer assisted in their construction. Special care had to be taken because of the high water table during the rainy season. Five field-type heads, consisting of concrete culverts, three meters in depth ($1\frac{1}{2}$ meters above ground, $1\frac{1}{2}$ below), were constructed. All joints were sealed with concrete, and earth was pushed up by the bulldozer, providing an elevated area and making the facilities both sanitary and useable during the rainy season.

A 75 kw diesel-powered generator, backed by another, provided electrical power for the camp. The utilities section maintained these units and installed all internal electrical wiring throughout the base.

The task unit supply section arrived with the leading elements and set up shop in the hangar. Field shoes, socks, utility uniforms, and underclothing were available almost immediately at a "cash sales" facility that was soon set up. Aircraft replacement parts were ordered through normal channels and delivered twice weekly by a GV-1 on Flight Five, a regularly scheduled support flight from Iwakuni that arrived on Mondays and Thursdays.

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Two officers and 30 men made up the communications section, which also arrived on 9 April with the leading elements. That same day, a detachment of seven men departed for Saigon to establish radio and teletype terminals there. The radio section was soon operating its single sideband radios, netting with the 1st MAF in Japan, MAG-16 on Okinawa, and the detachment in Saigon. Phone patch capabilities with these stations were provided on 10 April.

A communications center was set up in one of the field's few permanent buildings, where a crypto center was installed. By 10 April, on-line crypto machines had been installed and netted with Saigon, and normal radio-teletype communications were established. The Saigon detachment set up similar facilities in tents at the ARVN III Corps headquarters. After six weeks, the detachment moved into more permanent housing.

During the SHUFLY operation at Soc Trang, an average of slightly less than 500 personnel--about 90 officers and 400 men--comprised the task unit. Of these, eight officers and six enlisted made up Colonel Carey's headquarters detachment; 18 officers and 193 enlisted comprised the MABS-16 sub-unit; 63 officers and 196 enlisted made up the reinforced helicopter squadron (HMM-362), which arrived on 15 April. The administrative handling of this group, including postal services, special services, medical and dental services, chaplain services, public information (PIO), liberty, and rest and

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recreation (R&R) was the responsibility of the personnel section (S-1). Navy doctors, dentists, and corpsmen, as well as chaplains, were attached to the task unit, as they are to all Marine organizations.

By 10 April, a post office had been established, with mail being received and dispatched twice weekly via GV-1s. Money order services were available for the men, also. Special services facilities were nearly nonexistent at Soc Trang, but Marine ingenuity took their place. Within three weeks, service clubs for enlisted men, staff-noncommissioned officers, and officers were in operation. Movies were first shown four weeks after the Marine arrival--it took that long for the unit to get on the Army/Air Force film distribution circuit.

The United States Ambassador to South Vietnam approved a visit to Soc Trang by representatives of the press and news media on 16 April. Eight newsmen made a short tour of the installation, accompanied by Lieutenant Commander Gerard P. Zornow, USN, assistant PIO, MACV. Subsequent visits of this nature^{were} approved by MACV and included some noted authors and correspondents, among them Captain Robert Asprey, contributing editor of the Marine Corps Gazette, and Dickey Chapelle, female writer and author of What's A Woman Doing Here?

Once the immense task of setting up the field and getting the operation under way was complete, the biggest remaining problem was liberty for the men. By the end of April, HMM-362

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had had no real liberty in 10 weeks--they had been on maneuvers prior to being assigned to SHUFLY. Soc Trang was neither safe nor satisfactory--it was small and limited in facilities, and several Viet Cong had been discovered there carrying grenades and explosives. Marines were allowed to go to town only on official business or on escorted sightseeing tours. Saigon, with its acute billeting shortage, high prices, and potential trouble spots, was undesirable. Once again Colonel White's refueler-transport provided the answer--R&R trips for the men to Okinawa, Hong Kong, and Japan on a basis of one week on R&R for each eight weeks in Vietnam.

The acquisition and use of complete, current intelligence proved to be one of the biggest problems of the intelligence section (S-2) in the delta operation. The responsibility, however, for the dissemination of this intelligence belonged to the senior echelons--MACV, III Corps, and the supported ARVN Divisions--and the problem was an operational one, not concerned with organizing the airfield. It will be covered in Part C, Missions Flown.

Falling under operations (S-3) in organizing the airfield were traffic control, tower facilities, and radar. Marine Air Traffic Control Unit-68 (MATCU-68), one of the Marine Corps' mobile packages for just such an operation as Soc Trang, arrived on the first day with four officers and 40 men. They had the TACAN in operation the same day. TACAN is a navigation

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aid, an electronic homing device by which an aircraft can tell at all times both the magnetic heading and the distance to the station. The pilot's cockpit presentation includes a needle which points to the station, giving him the heading, and a window which shows the distance in nautical miles.

On 10 April, the control tower and ground-controlled approach (GCA) radar were in operation. The tower utilized primary and backup ground-to-air radios, while the GCA unit had radar sets on each end of the runway to permit instrument landings in either direction. The field was ready for all-weather operation on the second day.

Security was a matter of prime concern at Soc Trang. Viet Cong guerrillas were expected to attempt to infiltrate the airfield area in order to sabotage the installation. To provide maximum security for the camp and flight line area, the Marines organized a 40-man guard which maintained roving patrols and security posts between sunset and dawn. A permanent sergeant of the guard was in charge, and the men came from the squadron and the sub-unit. No separate Marine security force was attached while the squadron was at Soc Trang.

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A network of concertina wire, trip flares, and tactically emplaced machine guns was set up at once around the field. The Marines were responsible for their immediate camp and flight line area, and their sentries and roving patrols were posted there. An ARVN security battalion of 250-350 men, based at the Soc Trang field along with the Marines, was responsible for providing security beyond the Marine area. The ARVN posted sentries in the field boundary areas, and put listening outposts 100-300 yards out in the rice paddies each night. In addition, an ARVN mortar battalion operated in the Soc Trang area a good deal of the time, and provided additional security. Within a month of arrival, attack alert drills had reduced reaction time of the task unit to less than five minutes. Day and night drills were coordinated with the ARVN security forces, and their mortar battalion provided illumination in the night exercises.

No incidents of sabotage or infiltration occurred during the Soc Trang operations. There was one scare, however. At 2030 on 5 July, the task unit received a warning from the Chief of Ba Xuyen Province that an estimated 300 Viet Cong were in the vicinity and moving in the direction of the Soc Trang airstrip. A warm reception was prepared, but the attack never came.

Besides supply, which has already been mentioned, one of the major functions of the logistics section (S-4) was aircraft

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maintenance. Maintenance personnel made up about 90 percent of the total enlisted strength of the helicopter squadron. Their job was to keep the aircraft ready to fly. How well they did this is covered in Part C, missions flown.

By 12 April a Tactical Airfield Fuel Dispensing System (TAFDS) was set up and ready for operation. The system, a Marine Corps development for operations in forward areas, is a mobile fuel farm. It includes a collapsible rubber bag which holds 10,000 gallons, pumps, filters, separators, and assorted plumbing. A Vietnamese civilian fuel contractor (ESSO) risked his refueler trucks across the delta roads to keep the TAFDS full. In the early months at Soc Trang, if fuel was required to be pre-positioned in an outlying area for an operation, the ARVN was responsible for providing the fuel (either drums or in fuel trucks), getting it to the position, and for providing the security once there. In August, a second TAFDS was installed at Bac Lieu, 23 miles southwest of Soc Trang, extending the helicopters' effective area of operations.

Although the Marines were busy at Soc Trang, once their work was done they found time to help the civil population in a "People-to-People" program. Within a few days after arriving, medical facilities of the task unit were made available to the Vietnamese in emergencies. Doctors and corpsmen visited villages to hold "sick call"--on a normal visit sixty men, women, and children would be examined, after which soap,

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vitamins, aspirin, and antibiotics would be dispensed.

Marines took an early interest in supporting Father Phuoc's village at Rach Trang, 20 miles east of Soc Trang on an island in the Bassac Flueve. Father Phuoc was a Catholic missionary who travelled the river to visit many other villages along its banks. Four-man medical teams held sick call at Rach Trang periodically. On 28 June, the Honorable Paul B. Fay, Under Secretary of the Navy, and his party were helicopter-lifted to the village for a visit.

Rach Trang was the closest village frequently visited by SHUFLY's Navy medical teams, but by 10 June a doctor and two corpsmen visited a small village near Ca Mau, the central point of many subsequent helicopter operations located 60 miles southwest of Soc Trang. The medical teams reached other remote settlements during the summer, and the response they received was overwhelming. Many of the Vietnamese had never seen a doctor before.

Task unit chaplains exchanged visits with religious leaders in Soc Trang through the summer. The task unit was assigned one chaplain (Protestant), but other chaplains from senior commands visited the Marines and extended their visits to the local countryside. Marines attended church services in Soc Trang, and helped re-roof the Evangelical Church building there.

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In May Marine volunteers began teaching English classes in town. Approximately 150 Vietnamese attended the classes, which met three nights a week. Early in June, the Ba Xuyeh Province Chief presented Colonel Carey two young brahma bulls--an unexpected gesture of appreciation for the work of the Marines in all phases of the "people-to-people" program.

The Marine task unit established close operational liaison with MACV, III Corps, and the 21st, 7th, and 5th ARVN Divisions --commands subordinate to III Corps. Permanent liaison officers were assigned to III Corps and the 21st Division. Marine officers also served in several important posts on the MACV staff--Major General Richard G. Weede was MACV Chief of Staff throughout the period of helicopter operations covered in this study (Apr62-Dec63).

General Paul D. Harkins, MACV Commander, and Brigadier General Nghiem, III Corps Commander, visited Soc Trang officially on 9 April, the day the leading elements arrived. On a second visit (20 April), after the helicopter squadron had flown in, they expressed surprise at the progress made in so short a time. By 14 April, the camp had been set up and organized, facilities of all types were in operation, and the airfield was ready. At 0730 on the fifteenth the first flight of HUS helicopters, led by Lieutenant Colonel Clapp, the squadron commander, landed at Soc Trang.

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At first light, they had lifted from the deck of the USS Princeton (LPH-5), cruising offshore 30 miles from the field. Within 10 hours, HMM-362 (Archie's Angels), assisted by sister squadron HMM-261, had lifted 264 personnel and 200,000 pounds of cargo ashore. Twenty-four HUS, three OE fixed-wing observation planes, and all necessary support equipment landed at Soc Trang without incident. The squadron was aboard; there remained the task of getting ready to operate.

Between 15 and 22 April, briefings by the advisor sections of MACV and III Corps, with whom the task unit would work, were conducted. TU 79.3.5 worked under operational control of MACV, in support of III Corps, with both commands and the helicopter commander approving each mission. (See ^{Figure IV-1} ~~enclosure~~ ~~(-)~~ for a chart showing the command structure). MAG-16 and the 1st MAW exercised logistic and administrative control of the unit. While the briefings were going on, familiarization, reconnaissance, logistics, and troop indoctrination missions were flown. After a week of shakedown, HMM-362 was ready to go to work.

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(5)
Missions Flown

At 0900 on 22 April, Easter Sunday morning, HMM-362 launched its first combat support mission in South Vietnam. Sixteen helicopters lifted that morning, and from that first L-Hour until 1740 on 13 September, two days before the task unit moved north to Danang, Soc Trang was the scene of intense activity.

The first mission was an on-call coordinated troop lift with the Army's 57th Helicopter Company, based at Saigon, in support of the ARVN 7th Division, with headquarters 53 miles northeast of Soc Trang, at My Tho. HMM-362 was right on

(5) A Daily Summary of missions flown, including the date, unit supported, landing zone coordinates, number and type aircraft employed and number of sorties is shown on

Figure IV-8
~~enclosure (1)~~.

A Summary of hours flown, sorties flown, troops lifted, pounds of cargo lifted and evacuations by helicopter is shown

Figure IV-7
on ~~enclosure (1)~~. A breakdown by type mission, including those flown in tactical support, those in logistic support, and administrative/maintenance flights, is shown also.

A Map of the operating area, showing place names, pickup points, landing zones and objective areas, and number of helicopters employed per mission, is included as Figure IV-5
~~enclosure (1)~~.

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schedule, lifting 399 troops from the loading point to the landing zones in 29 sorties. From a Marine standpoint, the first operation was successful; the ground troops, however, had little luck in finding the Viet Cong.

On 22 and 23 April, the helicopters evacuated a U. S. Army advisor from the town of Vinh Long (46 miles north of Soc Trang) and 57 personnel from an outpost south of Ca Mau. A Company of Vietnamese Marines was lifted to the outpost for security while the evacuation was in progress.

On 24 April, 16 HUS lifted 591 troops into eight landing zones along two canals in the 21st Division area west of Can Tho, a town 33 miles northwest of Soc Trang. A large group of Viet Cong had been reporting hiding out there. Small arms firing commenced in both directions soon after the first waves landed. The oil line, of one HUS was hit, forcing a precautionary landing. A security force was set up around the plane; it was repaired and flown out. In the operation, 70 Viet Cong were killed, three taken prisoner, and several small arms captured. Three ARVN soldiers were killed and six wounded. All military advisors considered it a very successful operation.

A coordinated lift with the 57th Army Helicopter Company took place without incident on 25 April; HMM-362 lifted 168 troops in 14 HUS. Two other HUS lifted Colonel Dong, III Corps Deputy Commander, Colonel Nghiem, 21st Division Commander,

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and the Senior U. S. Army Advisor to III Corps, Colonel Daniel B. Porter and party to the village of Chau Doc, in the Bassac Flueve near the Cambodian border. The village had been reported attacked and burned by Cambodian bandits. Upon arrival, only charred ruins remained.

On 1 May, a lift utilizing all 24 HUS at once took place, landing 281 troops into six zones near Can Tho. Two OE fixed-wing observation aircraft provided observation and radio relay for this operation. Results: eight VC killed, and 40 suspected VC captured. On 2 May, 16 HUS and one OE took 432 SVN troops 30 miles northwest of My Tho in a combined maneuver with the Army 57th. The reported results of this action were: 10 Viet Cong killed, 78 captured.

On 9 May, heavy Viet Cong ground fire hit nine aircraft during a landing, causing the most damage yet sustained by the squadron and teaching a lesson in tactics. Twenty-three HUS and two OE aircraft had loaded at Ca Mau, launching at 1130. They arrived at Cai Ngay, 21 miles directly south, at 1200, five minutes after a VNAF air strike had ended. The troops deplaned in six landing zones while Viet Cong bullets peppered the helicopters. Eighteen hits were recorded, and two SVN troops were wounded while still aboard.

One HUS, hit in the oil drain line, made a forced landing several miles from the objective area. Troops were quickly

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flown in to set up a perimeter defense while hasty repairs were made. The temporary fix allowed the aircraft to fly to Ca Mau, where it remained for further repair. All other damaged aircraft, including one OE with a bullet hole in its fuselage, were checked on the spot. They then returned to Ca Mau to lift the reserves, returning to Soc Trang late in the day, when the operation was complete.

Lesson learned: do not conduct a vertical assault in a heavily-infested area which has just been hit by an air strike. No matter what approach is used, or what deceptive tactic employed, surprise cannot be achieved when the zone has been marked by an air strike. In this case the strike lifted five minutes before the landing, giving the Viet Cong plenty of time to bring their fire to bear.

The bullet holes from the 9 May assault were covered with tape for the next day's operation--there was no time for complete repairs until several days later. Fourteen HUS lifted 168 ARVN soldiers to a canal at Ap Hung Loi, 66 miles north of Soc Trang. An hour later the reserves, lifted in a second wave, were committed. The Marines then lifted a second reserve unit; this one was not landed.

One HUS, hit in the oil tank, flew to a pick-up site where repairs were made. It then returned to Soc Trang. Advisors of the 7th Division reported 8 enemy killed, 21 captured in the maneuver.

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On 11 May the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Robert McNamara, and party were lifted from Ca Mau to the ARVN 31st Regimental Command Post.

In a predawn takeoff on 19 May, 19 helicopters lifted 584 troops in three waves from Can Tho airfield. Eight HUS returned to Can Tho and picked up the reserve, but it was not committed. Four HUS proceeded to an Self-Defense Corps (SDC) post that had been attacked. They evacuated 36 seriously wounded SDC troops to Soc Trang. A VNAF C-47 then took them to Saigon for further treatment.

Eight HUS picked up a Ranger company at Ben Tre airstrip, 53 miles northeast of Soc Trang, delivering them to the planned objective area. This was to have been a combined lift with the 57th Helicopter Company. At 1015 III Corps notified TU 79.3.5 that the 57th had cancelled their portion because of weather. III Corps then cancelled the entire lift.

On 23 May a flight of two HUS performed a night evacuation that may have been as important as any one mission flown in the delta. Two Vietnamese officers had received severe head wounds in action about 30 miles southwest of Saigon. At 2000, when the request for aid came, the weather was poor--a ragged 300-foot ceiling with visibility limited by falling rain. The two helicopters, navigating by dead reckoning, found the pickup point and were guided to a landing by a bonfire. A few minutes later, the wounded men were in a Saigon hospital. The

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7th Division commander, commenting on the first night evacuation performed for his command, stated that the effect on the morale and fighting spirit of his troops was immeasurable.

Besides regular ARVN forces, Sector Defense Forces (SDC) and Civil Guard (CG) units trained from the beginning with the Marine helicopters. A quick reaction mission on 19 May proved the value of the practice--202 Civil Guard and SDC troops. lifted by 17 HUS, executed a smooth operation 18 miles south of the home base.

The squadron made it a policy to send a spare aircraft on all launches. The value of the plan was proved on 4 June, when one HUS out of 14 scheduled had to divert to Can Tho with engine trouble. The spare aircraft filled in, and the mission proceeded as planned. While the mission was in progress, an estimated 300 to 400 Viet Cong overran an outpost at Vinh Quoi, 21 miles west of Soc Trang. By the time the HUSs were recalled, and had lifted Civil Guard troops in to reestablish control, the damage was done. Twenty-seven wounded civilians, 17 dead SVN soldiers, and 40 civilian dependents of the dead SDC troops were lifted to Soc Trang.

On 14 June, a 15-plane flight (plus a spare) refueled and loaded for a mission near Bien Hoa. ^{3 miles north of Saigon} Upon arrival at the landing zone, the pilots found the center of the zone covered with hundreds of bamboo spikes, three to four feet high and four to five feet apart, presumably anti-helicopter obstacles.

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Unlike most of the delta region, which offered plentiful landing zones, this area consisted of a three-acre pear-shaped clearing in the jungle, surrounded by trees and vines. This made the zone ideally suited for obstacles, encountered here for the first time. The landing was made in a clear spot between the spiked area and the trees.

By mid-June, the Vietnamese were providing helicopter escort aircraft on most missions, using North American T-28s and Douglas AD-68. The T-28 was a two-place, propeller driven trainer, armed with .50 caliber guns in pods under the wings. It was flown by a VNAF pilot, with an American pilot in the second seat as an observer. This arrangement solved the language problem that existed in air-to-air and air-to-ground communications.

The AD was a single-seat, propeller driven attack aircraft noted for its ability to carry a heavy load and a variety of armament. Flown by Vietnamese pilots, the AD's caused some dangerous situations by conducting uncoordinated air strikes during helicopter landings by HMM-362.

Both of these aircraft types could slow down to cruise with the helicopter formations reasonably well, yet they had the speed to turn aside for a strike and catch up with the formation again for the assault. As planning and coordination improved and training progressed, air support became increasingly effective. The T-28's, usually two per mission,

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delivered deadly fire when called in on fleeing Viet Cong after the landing had been made.

By early June, HMM-362 began employing a plan devised by Colonel Carey, Lieutenant Colonel Clapp, and task unit pilots to snare more of the elusive Viet Cong. The Marine crews had noticed that the enemy frequently eluded ARVN troops, even well after the scheme of maneuver was being executed and after the reserve had been committed. A small breach in the lines seemed to allow large numbers of the guerrillas to escape, and once in the trees, canals, and rivers, they were almost impossible to find.

Eagle Flight was designated to trap these fleeing Viet Cong. It was a flight of four HUS, carrying 48 ARVN troops, that cruised the area of operations seeking targets of opportunity. It landed to trap any escaping enemy, often remaining on the deck just a few minutes, then lifting for another assault. It added a powerful, flexible punch to the ARVN attack.

On 18 June, in poor weather conditions, landings were made in 16 different landing zones in four lifts. The enemy was hard to find and pin down, but Eagle Flight, committed three separate times, accounted for eight VC killed and seven captured. In the following weeks its success continued and improved. On 4 July, Eagle 1 spotted 10 suspects while cruising the perimeter of the main landing zone during a

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morning operation. The flight landed, discharged its troops, and captured the 10 suspects, wounding one. At 0847, Eagle 2 relieved Eagle 1 on station; at 0850 they landed, killed four VC and took one prisoner. At 0900 they enplaned, and at 0910 landed once more, capturing four more prisoners. It did not take many such demonstrations of speed and effectiveness to make Eagle Flight an accepted tactic in South Vietnam.

On 6 July, four HUS discovered camouflaged boats in a canal with Viet Cong flags and ammunition aboard. That afternoon, while on a reconnaissance mission to the same area, two of four aircraft were hit by ground fire when forced down to 400-600 feet of altitude by low ceilings. The reconnaissance flight was cancelled; the helicopters proceeded to Nam Can, 30 miles southwest of Ca Mau, to evacuate women and children.

On 10 July 19 HUS flew a combat support mission that lifted 968 troops to landing zones in the Ca Mau area. Eagle 1 spotted a boat heading north from the assault area; the troops landed and intercepted the craft. (No result of this action is given in the Command Diary). The ARVN soldiers then reembarked, and the flight orbited until fuel was low, then returned to Ca Mau for refueling. Viet Cong were sighted upon Eagle 1's return, and in two landings, brisk action took place, with all aircraft receiving hits. The Viet Cong were in platoon strength. In the first encounter the VC had seven killed and numerous weapons captured; in the second, six were

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killed and more weapons and ammunition lost.

On 20 July, 16 HUS executed the first complete helicopter assault in South Vietnam during the hours of darkness--predawn takeoffs had been made on 19 May, but the landings were during daylight. Seventeen HUS departed Soc Trang for Ben Tre at 0415, where they picked up 192 troops and lifted them to the first objective. Fourteen HUS then picked up 148 troops at Moc Hoa, 40 miles northeast of Ben Tre, taking them to a second objective. A third wave of 154 troops landed 35 miles northeast of Moc Hoa (map coordinates WT 660045, not near any village or town), flushing approximately 100 Viet Cong regular troops. T-28 aircraft were called in for an air strike while the helicopters returned for a fourth lift, landing troops in a position to block Viet Cong movement.

Helicopters from the Army 57th Company joined in the daylight portions of the operation.

On 18 July COMUSMACV promulgated a letter of instruction which spelled out basic policies for the conduct of heliborne operations involving U. S. forces, and which emphasized the high degree of coordination required. These policies included:

- (1) The commander of the area, normally the corps/division commander, determined the scope of an operation and the forces and facilities needed to plan, execute, and support it. Employment of U. S. resources required the coordination and approval of the cognizant Senior Advisor and the helicopter

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unit commander.

(2) The area commander selected the command structure and relationships, with the advice and consent of the Corps Senior Advisor and helicopter unit commander; a clear understanding of command relationships was essential to effective coordination and conduct of the operation.

(3) The helicopter force commander normally controlled assigned helicopter forces and assigned air cover--air cover would be provided for all helicopter operations unless the urgent nature of the mission and the time element involved prevented it, or the helicopter commander waived it with the concurrence of the Corps Senior Advisor.

(4) The helicopter flight commander, acting in the capacity of Tactical Air Controller (Airborne), controlled air strikes to suppress fire being received by helicopters.

(5) Assignment and exchange of radio frequencies, lost communications procedures, and items to be covered in pre-operational briefings were also covered. ~~(See enclosure () for the complete letter of instruction).~~ These policies, most of which were already in use, were put "down on paper", tying USMC, USA, ARVN, VNAF, and MACV efforts together. Increased operational effectiveness was the result, seen in the successful blunting of a major Viet Cong offensive by a maximum-effort ARVN counteroffensive in August.

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By 23 July, the leading elements of HMM-163 began to arrive at Soc Trang to relieve HMM-362, which was returning to the U. S. Eight days later, the turnover was complete. The new squadron was on board, briefed, familiarized, and ready for operation on 31 July. Since the squadrons were similar in make up, a minimum changeover was required--the newly-arriving personnel simply took over and operated with the aircraft and equipment already in place. HMM-163 had conducted its training at Marine Corps Air Facility, Santa Ana, California, home of Marine helicopters on the west coast. The squadron left MCAF 16 July, and its personnel and their gear were flown across the Pacific for their tour in South Vietnam. They brought a 10,000-hour accident-free flying record with them.

While the squadron turnover was taking place, HMM-362 continued its intensive operations, steaming up to the finish line with full power on. On 27 July, the squadron had 18 HUS operating in the Tra Vinh area, 35 miles northeast of Soc Trang. On 28 July 19 HUS and two OEs conducted a support lift at Ca Mau, landing in eight zones around two villages. Eagle Flight was committed five times on 28 July, HMM-362's final day of flight operations in South Vietnam.

"Archie's Angels" left an enviable record. In 107 days of combat support missions, they did not lose an aircraft because of enemy fire, pilot error, or aircraft malfunctions. At times every aircraft in the assault# was hit by enemy fire,

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but emergency repairs always enabled the aircraft to be flown to safety.

Squadron maintenance men, support personnel, pilots, and crews thrived on the seven-day week, the 24-hour day. High morale and a high percentage of aircraft availability continued throughout. Pride in doing a job well provided the incentive.

At Soc Trang, HMM-362 flew 5,262 hours, 4,439 sorties; lifted 35,771 troops and 480,790 pounds of cargo; ^{and} performed 328 evacuations. They tested the Marine vertical envelopment concept in guerrilla warfare. They operated day and night, in good weather and in bad.

For his leadership and performance as commanding officer of HMM-362, Lieutenant Colonel Archie J. Clapp was nominated for the first Alfred A. Cunningham Award, given each year to the outstanding Marine aviator. ⁽⁶⁾ Among the accomplishments cited in the nomination were: (1) "...this squadron, under (his) direction, developed and tested tactics and techniques for support of South Vietnamese armed forces against Communist guerilla forces." (2) "One of the most significant contributions by LtCol CLAPP and Commander Task Unit 79.3.5 was the employment of an 'on call' airborne reserve, called the 'Eagle Flight'... This concept has proved most valuable

(6) LtCol John H. Glenn, Jr. USMC received the Cunningham award for being the first American to orbit the earth.

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and is an adopted doctrine in Vietnam today." (3) The "Significant procedure developed by this squadron, the tactic to minimize the effectiveness of hostile small arms fire en route to the objective area while maintaining the requisite element of surprise. The dispersion of forces by guerrillas, aircraft vulnerability, and navigation problems, coupled with monsoon weather, were all factors...effectively solved."

(4) "The downed aircraft procedure, which provided for the safety of passengers and crew of an aircraft shot down or forced down by an emergency."⁽⁷⁾

These had been some of the contributions of HMM-362.

On 30 July Colonel Julius W. Ireland relieved Colonel Carey as Task Unit Commander. On 1 August HMM-163 relieved HMM-362--Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Rathbun commanded the relieving squadron. On 4 August Lieutenant Colonel Ralph R. Davis relieved Lieutenant Colonel Eldridge as Commander, TE 79.3.5.2, the supporting establishment. Finally, on 13 August, Lieutenant Colonel Alton W. McCully relieved Lieutenant Colonel Harry C. Dees as TU Executive Officer, completing the upper level changes.

On 1 August, "Rathbun's Ridgerunners" officially took over from "Archie's Angels." That same day, HMM-163

(7) Task Unit 79.3.5 Command Diary, 6Apr-30Jul62 op. cit.

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accomplished a joint combat troop support lift with the H-21 helicopters of the Army 57th. Other lifts followed daily, including evacuations, supply sorties, and medical support missions (to treat civilians in remote villages). The new outfit continued the people-to-people program--volunteers taught English in Soc Trang three nights per week, exchange visits between chaplains and local church groups continued, aid for an orphanage was begun, and good relations with the townspeople prevailed.

The tempo rapidly increased as HMM-163 began its first month of operations. Reports indicated that the Communist Viet Cong were readying an offensive of major proportions south of Ca Mau, An Xuyen Province. In response III Corps moved its headquarters to Soc Trang, shifted its command post to Ca Mau for a week, and stepped up all phases of ^{counter}~~anti~~-guerrilla operations, utilizing 2,000 Vietnamese troops.

Soc Trang-based VNAF support aircraft at this time included four AD-6s, two T-28s, and H-34 helicopters. The VNAF helicopters participated in assault lifts during the period, usually providing about 10 aircraft; the Marines averaged 20.

After a week of intensive operations, III Corps headquarters reported that the first phase of the operation had accounted for 84 Viet Cong killed, 30 prisoners taken, and 15,000 pounds of assorted arms, ammunition, and explosives

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confiscated. The pending Communist offensive against the four southernmost provinces had been forestalled by breaking up troop concentrations and capturing essential munitions.

Heavy commitments from III Corps continued throughout August, with several lifts scheduled per day. On 20 August, M-60 machine guns and M-14 rifles went into use aboard the helicopters, to test their effectiveness for delivery of suppressive fires. Crew chiefs employed the M-60, covering the right side of the aircraft through the door; co-pilots tested the M-14, covering the left side of the aircraft through the side window. Suppressive fires were not delivered unless the helicopter was fired upon first.

On 24 August, "Rathbun's Ridgerunners" flew 197.6 helicopter hours, their one-day record, and for the week of 19-25 August they logged 802.6 hours, well over 100 hours per day. Total HUS time for the month of August was 2,543 flight hours, a record for a Marine squadron flying this type aircraft.

The pilots, equipment, and support personnel contributed to this exceptional performance. Twenty-one pilots logged more than 99 hours each during the month. ⁽⁸⁾ The daily routine

(8) One hundred hours is the maximum a Marine or Navy pilot is normally allowed to fly. This figure has been set by the medical department as a safety measure, because of the reduction in pilot efficiency as the fatigue level rises. It can be

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included rising at 0430, launching the first lift at 0600, flying missions throughout the day, and returning to Soc Trang about 1700. The next day's missions would then be planned and coordinated before retiring. While the pilots slept, the maintenance crews worked under floodlights getting the planes ready. They kept an average of 22 out of 24 HUS in commission throughout August, a phenomenal accomplishment.

Other highlights of the month include: 3,650 sorties flown, 22,188 troops and passengers lifted, 139,930 pounds of cargo carried, 92 wounded evacuated, 163,121 gallons of fuel burned, and 3,227 gallons of engine oil consumed.

In addition to the helicopter flight statistics, the three OE's contributed 212 hours, 127 sorties, and 63 missions to the month's total, while the R4D logged 96 hours and 69 sorties. Eight HUS and one OE were hit by enemy fire, none were lost. While landing, a VNAF AD-6 attack aircraft crashed into a parked HUS at Soc Trang, ripping the engine off the helicopter and damaging it beyond repair.

exceeded, when the situation warrants, after a flight physical examination and upon approval by the Senior Medical Officer. Also, a flight surgeon is assigned to each squadron--one of his duties is to get to know the pilots and crews well and to monitor their physical and mental condition closely.)

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To extend the effective area of operations, four HUS lifted a Tactical Airfield Fuel Dispensing System (TAFDS) to Bac Lieu, 23 miles southwest of Soc Trang. Within two hours from liftoff the TAFDS was pumping fuel. The tanks had a 10,000 gallon capacity, and 45,000 gallons of fuel were pumped in the first eight days. On 24 August, the day of peak operations with almost 200 hours flown, the helicopters drained the TAFDS dry, and had to refuel at home base. The "bag" was soon refilled by the ESSO contractor, however, and back in use.

Smoke signals were used by ground forces and observation aircraft; normally white smoke marked a helicopter pickup point and red smoke marked a target for air strikes. On 18 August, 12 aircraft had been called in to a reportedly secure pickup area on a dirt road near a Self Defense Corps (SDC) outpost. When the helicopters landed, no troops were in sight. One pilot had noticed some troops during the approach, however, and so notified the flight leader.

At this time, a white smoke bomb burst half a mile away. The flight leader and his wingman took off to investigate and determine if the smoke signal marked the actual pickup point. As the flight leader made a low-level pass over the smoke (60 knots at 200 feet), his aircraft was hit by ground fire. The smoke signal had come from a VNAF L-19 observation plane, marking the target (even though there were no strike aircraft

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there to conduct a strike). The subsequent investigation determined that the L-19 had no red smoke, so white was used. The troops to be picked up had been delayed by a fire fight a half mile from the "secure" pickup point.

Lessons learned: (1) Don't use the HUS to reconnoiter at 200 feet, (2) Don't pick up troops in the field based on estimated times of arrival (ETA's), (3) There is no such thing as a secure area, and (4) Have a clear understanding of smoke signals--colors, meanings, and use--by all persons involved.

Besides such fiascos as the smoke signal mixup, there were other shortcomings which handicapped operations in the delta. One of the most important of these was the lack of complete intelligence--this will be covered next, along with discussions of reconnaissance and communication, two other areas in which problems arose during combat support operations.

Current intelligence on the location and strength of the enemy was particularly difficult to obtain. A platoon or company of Viet Cong often operated over a wide area without concentrating to any extent, or with little overt action. In some cases the enemy did not oppose helicopter landings, but

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dispersed and hid or merged with the local population; at other times he fought fiercely.

In the 9 May pre-planned lift (in which nine aircraft were hit during the landing made after an air strike), the landing force found Viet Cong emplacements, trenches, and other prepared positions in the landing zones. Intelligence agencies had no knowledge of these positions. Although planning took 48-72 hours for pre-planned missions, it was doubtful if this reduced their effectiveness--a shorter planning cycle could do no better without better intelligence. This was a problem generally beyond the capability of the task unit to correct. At Da Nang, however, a comprehensive and detailed program was put into effect--it will be discussed in Part V.

With practice and coordination, quick reaction missions (those flown in immediate response to Viet Cong activity) were perfected to such a satisfactory point that, on 27 May for example, a request for helicopters was received at 1050 and 13 aircraft were on the way to the pickup site at 1130. On such occasions, final briefing for the pilots took place at the pickup site. No prior reconnaissance of the approach routes or landing zones by Marine observation aircraft was possible on the quick reaction missions. The pilot's total knowledge of the area would come from his 1:100,000 map, his briefing information, and his recollection of the terrain from previous missions. In spite of these handicaps, no serious

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errors or delays in finding the landing zones occurred. Quick reaction (or "ready response") missions enjoyed excellent results in the delta operations.

The OE-1 fixed wing observation planes came in for greater and greater use during the Soc Trang operation. Prior reconnaissance of the objective area and approach routes was always desirable, and both photographic and visual methods were employed. The KB-20 hand-held aerial camera was used, but a request for a better system was made by the task unit. The squadron purchased and tried a Polaroid Land camera, which develops prints rapidly, but the small size of the prints and the resulting lack of detail limited its effectiveness. Photographic techniques and results were improved by the late fall of 1962 at Da Nang; this will be covered in Part V.

The OE proved to be a very satisfactory visual reconnaissance aircraft--more so than the HUS. The fixed wing plane did not arouse suspicion; the VNAF used an L-19 aircraft, similar to the OE, and so the type was common in the area. It was difficult for the Viet Cong to tell if the OE was on a reconnaissance mission or just flying point-to-point.

The HUS, on the other hand, seemed to arouse immediate VC suspicion. Several were hit by ground fire while on reconnaissance flights at altitudes of from 200 to 800 feet. OEs were hit by single rounds from the ground also, causing negligible damage. Once the order to remain above 1,000 feet went into

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effect, no further hits were recorded. The OE gained excellent results as a weather reconnaissance vehicle, also.

While attacking, ARVN ground units maintained direct communication with the division CP, normally located in the rear at the helicopter loading site. If the helicopter-lifted troops could not maintain direct communications with the division, the Marine OE relayed messages over either its VHF or FM radios. Frequently, the Division commander had to depend upon either of these two radios for ordering the reserve committed. If the commander was airborne, he used the radio in his aircraft, of course. The UHF helicopter radio was used for the normal air-to-air and air-to-ground tactical traffic, and for the flight leader's control of his flight.

Extensive administrative, logistical, liaison, planning, and transportation flights were conducted during the Soc Trang operation. When more aircraft were available than required by III Corps, CTU 79.3.5 screened requests from the local province chief, U. S. military and Vietnamese governmental officials, U. S. Special Forces, and others. Any reasonable request was filled.

Some of these missions included: administrative movement of civilians (and their personal belongings and livestock), evacuation of villagers and soldiers, medical missions to remote villages, transportation to areas isolated except for helicopter lift, and transportation for visiting dignitaries, photographers,

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newspapermen, and observers. Many "straphangers" (passengers or observers not part of the mission) went along on both administrative and combat support flights.

Other special lifts that took place included the lifting of warning radios to the villages and the TAFDS to Bac Lieu, as well as a mission to Da Nang, where the Marine crews salvaged both an Army Caribou and a helicopter courier that had crashed.

In late May, the helicopters assisted a USAF photo documentation team from the Office of the Secretary of Defense. This team spent several days operating out of Soc Trang making official photographic documentary reports of U. S. operations in the delta.

A logistics lift in mid-June for Father Hoa's village moved 89,750 pounds of rice, ammunition, and lumber, plus 627 passengers.

The helicopters provided the only possible means of lifting wounded personnel, both military and civilian, to safety and medical aid after many Viet Cong raids. No other means of transportation could reach some of the remote outposts.

To provide logistic support to the SHUFLY group on a continuing basis, Flight Five was set up. VMGR-152 provided a GV-1 twice weekly, on Mondays and Thursdays, to make the run from Iwakuni (Japan) to Soc Trang. The support of the

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tanker-transports was a big factor in keeping the task unit supplied with all the necessities for their operation, as previously noted.

The flexibility and capability of the Hercules was demonstrated on 27 May, when the RHQD was down with an engine failure at Da Nang, almost 460 miles north of Soc Trang. The scheduled GV was diverted from its regular run, picked up an engine and hauled it to Da Nang, where the engine change was made. Meanwhile, back at the delta, the helicopters filled in for the RHQD on the supply flight to Saigon.

Developmental Activities

The tactics and techniques developed in the Soc Trang operation reflected several underlying factors: (1) The Marines were there as a support force only, not to fight a war. They transported the Vietnamese combat forces and fired only if fired upon first. (2) They operated without the benefit of Marine fixed-wing support aircraft--the attack and fighter planes normally used for air strikes and ground support in USMC operations. (3) The enemy in South Vietnam was the Viet Cong Communist guerrilla. He had no front lines, no heavy or sophisticated weapons, and no limitations on the methods he could employ. He had the capability of striking anywhere at

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any time--there was no such thing as a "secure area". (9)

(4) The task unit operated independently, supported logistically and administratively by the normal Marine chain of command (MAG-16 on Okinawa and the 1st MAW in Japan), but under the operational control of USMACV in direct support of the Vietnamese III Corps. Each mission involving the Marines was approved by USMACV, III Corps, and the Task Unit. Planning, liaison, and coordination involved these agencies, plus the Vietnamese Division or unit to be lifted, the VNAF support aircraft if utilized, the U.S. Army helicopter units if involved, and American advisors of all units and echelons. (5) The language barrier caused difficulty, both in planning and in execution of operations, that would not have occurred in a U. S. or USMC operation. (6) Factors of terrain, weather, and area of operations provided other problems. The delta provided numerous landing zones, but no electronic navigation aids. Permanent facilities at the Soc Trang airfield were meager. Weather and the monsoons had to be taken into account, for they severely limited surface transportation in the delta. (7) Finally, current and complete intelligence on the enemy forces was

(9) A USAF C-123 transport was hit by ground fire while in the landing pattern at Saigon's main airfield, Tan Son Nhut. (CTE 79.3.5.1 ltr Ser: 01A25062 of 7Sep62/C, HQMC).

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lacking, especially in the beginning, as described earlier.

Under these conditions the following tactics and techniques developed:

The helicopter brought mobility, flexibility, and speed to tactics in South Vietnam. It enabled the ARVN to move large numbers of troops quickly over great distances, and to land them almost anywhere. It was not hampered by the impassable roads on the ground in the summer rainy season. The helicopter possessed unique capabilities, and the Marines utilized these capabilities at the same time they developed effective tactics for the missions assigned.

The first problem was to get the landing force to the objective area. In the U. S., standard run-ins were made at 800 feet and retirements at 500 feet, with gradual transitions to these altitudes. In Vietnam, when repeated hits from ground fire were received, the minimum cruise altitude was raised to 1,000 feet (above the estimated 300-yard effective range of the Viet Cong weapons). No hits were recorded at above 1,000 feet, and 1,000-1,500 feet became the standard en route altitudes.

The last portion of the approach was made at tree-top level--from the Initial Point (IP) to the landing zones, a distance of some 6-10 miles. (A diagram of a typical mission is shown in ^{Figure IV-2A} ~~enclosure (1)~~). The IP was generally a geographic point--a prominent terrain feature if possible--used

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for control. After crossing over it, the flight dropped down to the designated minimum altitude for the last portion of the approach. This tactic preserved the element of surprise to the fullest extent possible, for an enemy force on the ground could not see the helicopters until they were almost upon him.

Maximum speed was maintained on the low-level run-in to take advantage of the principle of deflection, or lead. A fast moving target is harder to hit, and remains within range of any given spot on the ground for a shorter period of time.

Instead of making a direct approach to the landing zones, the helicopters flew past them, then quickly executed a final turn of 90 degrees or more just prior to landing. This tactic was designed to keep the enemy guessing until the last minute where the exact point of touchdown was to be.

Since the time on the ground was the most critical period of all for the helicopters, it was kept to a minimum. The "quick stop" accomplished this. After the high speed run-in and final turn, the pilots slowed down as quickly as possible (a maneuver called the "modified flare") to a hover or landing, the "quick stop". (If the water was shallow and the bottom firm, the pilot would land; if not, he would hover hub-deep while the troops de-planed).

During this critical period on the ground, the crew chief and co-pilot of each helicopter stood by to deliver suppressive fire if fired upon first. The co-pilot actually performed a

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dual function, for, besides his suppressive fire assignment, he had to be alert to take over the controls if the pilot became a casualty. (The Army reportedly lost one H-21 when the pilot was hit and slumped forward into the controls, causing a crash).

Time on the ground averaged 10-15 seconds. When the last soldier was out the door the pilots would lift the helicopters off quickly and accelerate to maximum speed at a low level, hugging the ground (contour flying) and avoiding tree lines, canal banks, and villages as much as possible. Retirement routes were planned in advance. After flying 2-3 miles at treetop level, the helicopters would make a maximum performance ascent (climb as fast as possible) over an open area to above 1,000 feet.

Whenever possible, landing zones were chosen in areas more than 300 yards from villages, canals, and tree lines--all havens for the guerrilla.

The flat, flooded, featureless terrain, combined with the lack of electronic navigation aids, except those at home base, produced a navigational problem in the delta. "Navigation here is like finding your way around a large spider web," reported Lieutenant Colonel Rathbun after his squadron had been there 30 days.

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(10) TU 79.3.5 Command Diary 31Jul-5Nov62 op. cit.

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The problem could be overcome by careful use of maps (1:25,000 and 1:100,000 scale) during most flight operations; it became acute, however, during the last phase of the approach --the low-level dash from the IP to the objective area. Visibility was too restricted from this altitude to allow accurate map navigation.

The airborne director solved the problem. He accompanied the helicopter flight in an OE observation craft, flying above and to the rear of the rotary-wing formation. After the helicopters crossed the IP and dropped down to minimum altitude, the airborne director guided them by radio to the objective area. From his position, he was not only safe from small arms ground fire, but he also could spot landmarks and vector the formation.

Once the landing force arrived in the objective area, the problem of finding and destroying the Viet Cong remained. In the following paragraphs, the basic tactics to accomplish this end will be described, emphasizing Marine developments and the increased use of the helicopter.

Viet Cong were often found in and around villages. To entrap them, an encirclement was used, i.e., landing the troops in several zones around the village. The troops then formed a cordon, and advanced inward to close the trap.

Canal banks were often infested with Viet Cong; the sweep was used to flush them out. The helicopters would land troops

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on both sides of the canal in this type of operation. A similar force would be landed at the same time at another point on the canal. The two forces then moved toward each other sweeping both sides of the waterway as they advanced.

A variation of this tactic, used where the terrain dictated, involved setting up a blocking force. This was a pre-positioned force, which acted as a base toward which the sweeping force moved, trapping the enemy in between. In all instances, a unit, usually company-size, was held in reserve.

Sometimes little or no opposition would be encountered in the main landing. The Vietnamese would then spend several hours searching for the enemy, sweeping across rice paddies from canal to canal. The leapfrogging tactic improved on this procedure. The landing force was used to search dense or populated areas only; if little or no resistance was found there, the force would re-embark and be flown to the next suspected area. The rice paddies and open areas could be searched from the air, saving hours of slogging on foot. Many more canal banks and villages could be covered in this manner, and the troops would be fresher when the action did take place. The increased use of the helicopters made pre-positioning of fuel necessary in some cases; the TAFDS installation at Bac Lieu helped solve this problem.

After the operation on 9 May, when nine aircraft were hit during a landing following an air strike, two developments

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took place. First, no more landings were made in the wake of air strikes, which marked the landing zone for the enemy. Instead, air support was made available on call. Usually, this support consisted of T-28 or AD-6 aircraft, which flew escort on the helicopters and made air strikes when called in to do so.

Secondly, the helicopters began making their landings with a 30 to 60-second delay between the first division (4 aircraft) and succeeding divisions. The principle of mass was slightly compromised by this tactic, but "the pause that refreshes" gave the first division a few vital seconds to determine the intensity of enemy fire. If the zone was too "hot," the first division leader radioed a warning so that the mission could be aborted. Air strikes or other supporting fire as available could be called in, if desired, to neutralize the landing zone prior to a second assault.

In the delta operations, distances from the loading zone (where the troops enplaned) to the landing zone varied from 10 to 45 miles (25 miles was the average). ^(See Figures IV-3A and IV-3B) At first, the troop commander remained on the ground in the loading zone during the assault, receiving reports and sending orders by radio. The reserve usually stood by in the loading zone also, awaiting commitment on the troop commander's order.

A problem of control ensued because of the rapidity of movement, the precise timing required, and the delay in (or absence of) communications. The Marines urged use of an

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airborne troop commander to solve these problems. Usually in a helicopter, but sometimes in a fixed wing observation aircraft, the airborne commander was in the best possible position to observe the developing operation below. He could decide whether to commit his reserve, whether a re-lift would accomplish the mission, or whether an air strike was necessary.

Once the blocking force (if used) and the main body were landed, the airborne troop commander could monitor the developing scheme of maneuver and relay precise landing instructions to his reserve, committing them in the most advantageous position. He possessed quick control and quick response at the most critical time in the operation.

The Viet Cong did not flush, or betray their position, until the helicopters were right on top of them. Sometimes they fought fiercely; sometimes they hid their weapons and mingled with the civilians. If they ever infiltrated through the friendly lines or ever got out in front of the ARVN, the Viet Cong utilized the heavy grass, vegetation, tree lines, and canals to escape.

The downed aircraft procedure was developed to provide for the safety of the crew and passengers of any plane forced down by enemy fire or a mechanical malfunction. Since there was no such thing as a secure area, and since the flooded terrain posed special problems, both of these factors influenced the procedure greatly. A third influencing factor

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was the need to recover the aircraft if at all possible.

To achieve these ends, the following procedure was devised: (1) No less than two helicopters flew on each mission, except in an emergency. This "buddy system" always provided a second aircraft to give assistance if the first went down. (2) If necessary, the second aircraft landed immediately to lift the crew and passengers of the downed craft to safety. (3) If troops were on board either aircraft, they were formed into a perimeter defense around the downed chopper while repairs were made. (Overnight engine changes were accomplished in the field in this manner without incident). (4) In all cases, the undamaged helicopter could radio or go for assistance, medical aid, repair parts, tools, or additional ground troops.

A spare aircraft was dispatched on all tactical lifts, its purpose being to fill in for any aircraft experiencing mechanical difficulty or otherwise unable to complete the mission. Several times in the delta it enabled the squadron to complete the planned lift with the planned number of aircraft when it would have been impossible otherwise.

The spare aircraft actually served a double purpose. It carried a doctor, a corpsman, mechanics, tools and high-usage spare parts to the loading point, where they stood by during the course of the operation, ready if needed.

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The HUS-1, backbone of Marine helicopter strength, has excellent lift capabilities in the standard configuration. In Vietnam, the Marines stripped the aircraft of several non-essential items--seats, main door, life raft, HF radio equipment, and rescue hoists on all but six aircraft--saving 300-340 pounds, which added the same amount to the payload. With a full fuel load and a three-man crew (with protective body armor and two hand-held weapons), this allowed a payload of 1,800 pounds, or 12 Vietnamese soldiers, fully equipped. This is well within the lift capabilities of the HUS, even in the high temperature and humidity conditions in the Mekong delta, and allowed for an occasional "strap-hanger" (newsman, photographer, observer). Average temperatures in August were 75 degrees in the early morning (cooler temperatures and the resultant thicker air increased the lift capability of the helicopters), and a mean high of 91 degrees during the day.

The Vietnamese, because of their short stature, encountered difficulty embarking and debarking when carrying weapons and a full pack during helicopter operations. Squadron metalsmiths devised and installed stationary metal steps on the helicopters to assist them. With the step installed, the helicopter's rescue hoist could not be used. This caused no problem in the delta because the helicopters could land almost anywhere to perform rescues, and did not need the hoist. Toward the end of the operations in the delta, the metalsmiths were working

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on a retractable step, or a different stationary one that would allow use of the hoist. The hoists would be needed for operations in the mountainous jungle terrain of the north.

From 8 July to 3 August, Major Claude H. Lewis, representing the Marine Corps Landing Force Development Center, Quantico, Virginia, and Mr. M. B. Mullenix, Marine Corps Operations Analysis Group, observed the operations of TU 79.3.5. Among the items proposed by the task unit and considered by the analysts were armor protection and self-sealing oil tanks for the helicopters.

Besides the weight penalty of an estimated 200-300 pounds for armor, there arose other problems. One was the center of gravity change, or stability--a critical factor for helicopters. A second problem was whether to put thick armor immediately surrounding the oil tank, or thinner armor over a greater area. Oil lines had been hit, as well as the tank, and all hits recorded had shown no set pattern. (See ^{Figure III-7}~~enclosure~~ for a diagram of hits recorded on helicopters in the delta.)

The hits that caused the most immediate danger, however, were those in the oil system, puncturing the tank and lines. Without oil, the R-1820 reciprocating piston engine cannot operate for long. In all cases in the delta, a landing was made, hasty repairs accomplished, and the aircraft flown to safety. In one case, a chamois on a stick plugged the hole long enough for the plane to get to a field.

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The hits that caused the greatest number of man-hours to repair were those in the fuel cells. A ruptured fuel cell had to be removed, and changing one was a major job.

Another proposal for altering the HUS was to put a gunport in the co-pilot's windscreen through which he could deliver suppressive fires during landings. The side window was the only opening available for this purpose, and restricted the angle of fire.

The task unit submitted a proposal indicating that a requirement existed for a lightweight terminal guidance system for helicopters. This system needed to be light, compact, mobile, and capable of guiding the aircraft to landing zones at night or in low visibility conditions. This equipment was not available for use in the delta, but did go into use at Da Nang.

The HUS was instrumented for night and all-weather operation, and all Marine pilots were fully instrument qualified. No problems were encountered in these areas that could not be solved.

The OE observation craft served as a weather and tactical reconnaissance plane, airborne command post, airborne director, communications relay, and photo plane. Recommended improvements for it included a longer range tactical radio and an improved photographic capability.

Besides bullet-riddled fuel cells and oil systems, the

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most serious problem faced by the maintenance department in the attempt to keep all aircraft operational was the shortage of tail rotor blades which developed in September.

Frequent landings in forward sites, usually dirt strips imbedded with rocks, caused pitting and wearing of the leading edges of the tail rotor blades. These worn edges absorbed water and moisture from numerous water landings, causing an unbalanced condition and metal peeling and tearing at the tips. Owing to this unusual wear, four aircraft were out of commission awaiting tail rotor blades in early September. High-priority requests through the supply system procured replacement blades and solved the problem.

The Marine Corps had developed the TAFDS for use in forward areas and made it helicopter transportable prior to the Vietnam operation. An installation can be built to any desired capacity by simply adding 10,000 gallon units together.

Rapid refueling at the forward strips during heavy operations had become a problem--it took approximately two hours to cycle 20 aircraft with a refueler truck. The TAFDS cycled 20 aircraft in 20 minutes (with six refueling points). Four HUS lifted the system, which was pumping gas an hour after the helicopters landed it at Bac Lieu 13 August. The task unit in effect extended the radius of its choppers by refueling at the strategically located "bags" rather than back at Soc Trang.

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To minimize rotor clutch engagements and to cut down cycle time, the helicopters were refueled with engines and rotors turning, but with radios and all electrical equipment turned off to minimize the danger of fire from electrical arcing or static electricity.

In attempts to find a suitable weapon to deliver effective suppressive fire, especially from the limited area of the co-pilot's side of the cockpit, several weapons were tested. One was the M3A1 .45 caliber submachine gun (grease gun)--a relatively compact weapon with a high rate of fire but limited range. A few 9mm Schmeisers and Swedish K automatic pistols were experimented with; these were short-range weapons also.

Both the M-1 and M-14 rifles were tried. The M-1 is the standard infantry rifle from World War II and Korea, weighs 9.5 pounds, fires a clip of eight rounds, and is effective up to 500 yards. The M-14 is its replacement, very similar in design, but uses a magazine of 20 rounds and can be fired full-automatic. In this position, it virtually becomes in effect a machine gun, delivering 700-750 rounds per minute. On semi-automatic it delivers 20-30 well-aimed shots per minute; on automatic, 40-60. It uses the 7.62mm NATO cartridge.

The M-14 gave the crew chiefs quite a bit of authority, fired in the full-automatic position through the open starboard door. The weapon was unwieldy and too long for effective use

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by the co-pilot within the confines of the cockpit, however.

The AR-15 Armalite rifle was demonstrated to the task unit during the summer. The crews were impressed with its simplicity, range, and wallop--for a light, compact weapon its high muzzle velocity and tumbling projectile characteristics delivered a real punch. In August, a request was made to the Commandant of the Marine Corps for permission to test and evaluate this weapon; it was procured and tested under fire at Da Nang, very successfully. The tests and results are described in Part V.

In August, the M-60 machine gun was procured for the crew chiefs, and a mounting bracket fashioned for it on the leading edge of the door frame. This weapon weighs 23 pounds, fires the same 7.62mm cartridge as the M-14, has a cyclic rate of fire of 550 rounds per minute, and a maximum effective range of 1,100 meters. Sustained rates of fire are: 100 rounds per minute for 10 minutes, or 200 rounds per minute for two minutes. With the swivel mount enabling it to traverse the firing sector to the right side of the helicopter, this weapon was most effective during the landing phase. Its test and evaluation will be fully covered in Part V.

On 24 May, the Commander, TU 79.3.5 requested information from the Coordinator, Marine Corps Landing Force Development Activities, Quantico, Virginia on the effectiveness of body armor for flight personnel, both pilots and crew members, against direct hits from small caliber fire.

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The armor recommended for use was a two-piece ensemble made of flexible ballistic nylon, considered more suitable for flyers than the semirigid armor used by ground personnel. (Ground-type armor was used until the aviation type could be provided). Tests from Quantico showed the aviator's armor provided protection up to a projectile velocity of 1,200-1,250 feet per second. It provided better protection against fragments, flak, etc. than against aimed, gun-fired projectiles or missiles. In fighter type aircraft, tests showed that the armor reduced pilot vulnerability by about 45 percent.

Tests of this armor also showed: (1) Against .30 caliber machine gun, rifle, and carbine fire--no practical protection. (2) Against .45 caliber machine gun fire--appreciable protection and, (3) Against .38 and .45 caliber revolver and pistol fire--good protection. Other factors influencing the degree of protection given by this armor were: velocity of missile, angle that missile strikes, size (weight and shape) of missile, age of body armor material, and the protection afforded by the helicopter fuselage.

Aviator's body armor for the helicopter crews was procured, and in use by late ^{October} ~~August~~. Results will be discussed in Part V.

At Soc Trang, the equipment generally did the job. The HUS proved to be a capable and reliable aircraft in the South Vietnam delta terrain and under the ^{counterinsurgency} ~~guerrilla~~ warfare conditions encountered. With nonessential equipment removed, its payload

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was about 1,800 pounds; it was capable of night and all-weather operation when flown by qualified pilots. Its most vulnerable point against small arms fire was the oil system.

The OE was valuable in several roles, and would see increased usage in the north. Suppressive fire requirements appeared to be best met by the M-60 for the crew chief and the AR-15 for the co-pilot. The TAFDS and body armor proved their worth in actual usage.

End of Operations at Soc Trang

During the final two weeks in Soc Trang, combat support missions were flown daily, generally to the west and northwest of Bac Lieu. On 2 September, during a night evacuation mission, one aircraft received a small arms hit on the horizontal stabilizer. Three aircraft were hit with eight rounds on 5 September, and one crewman received a minor wound; all aircraft returned safely to base.

Photo-reconnaissance flights were scheduled daily in the OE-1 observation planes beginning the first week in September. Their work contributed substantially to intelligence and planning. The KB-20 hand-held aerial camera was used.

On 12 September, two HUS crews completed salvage operations on two Army aircraft in the Da Nang area. Marine pilots operated at Da Nang with the Army during early September, familiarizing themselves with their new area of operations. Troop

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lifts were carried out at Soc Trang through 13 September; the last flight landed at 1740. Tactical flying then shut down, and final preparations for the move began.

One reason for the move was the superior lifting capability of the HUS helicopter over the Army H-21 (a tandem-rotor, "flying banana"-type aircraft with the same basic engine as the Marine HUS). Although the two aircraft weighed about the same, and used the same engine, the HUS never failed to lift at least 12 Vietnamese soldiers, while the H-21 could barely manage six at times. As General Harkins expressed it, "H-21 helicopters are suitable in the delta area, however the H-34 (the Army version of the HUS) or HUS type is more suitable in the mountain regions. For this reason H-34/HUS units should be deployed to the I and II Corps areas."⁽¹¹⁾

Another reason for the move was because, if certain provisions of U. S. and SEATO contingency plans were ever invoked, Marines would operate in the north anyway. When planning was underway to commit a Marine helicopter squadron to South Vietnam, it was envisioned that the squadron would eventually relocate to Danang to relieve the Army Helicopter Company there.

On 30 July Colonel Daniel B. Porter, Jr., USA, Senior Advisor, III Corps, wrote a letter to General Paul D. Harkins,

(11) COMUSMACV 010034Z of Jun62 (S; HQMC).

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MACV Commander, requesting retention of HMM-362 at Soc Trang. Enclosed was a second letter from Brigadier General Le Van Nghiem, III Corps Commander, with a similar request.

General Nghiem's letter stated, in part:

This headquarters was recently informed that the USMC 362nd (all underlinings are by originator) Helicopter Co. will be soon transferred to another Tactical Area. For this reason, it is requested that orders be issued to retain this unit for support to this area due to the following reasons:

1. The 3rd Tactical Area is the largest and most important area in political, economic and social points of view.
2. The 362nd Helicopter has become familiar with the terrain and people and has especially developed close cooperation with friendly units in 3rd Tactical Area.
3. The rainy season will be over within 2 to 3 months. In spite of the rains, the employment of helicopters is still required in some areas of the 3rd Tactical Area while the 1st Tactical Area will have continuous rains in 2 or 3 months. Moreover, according to the information received, the VC in the 3rd Tactical Area will increase their activities in the coming dry

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season.

4. Psychologically, the 362nd Helicopter Co. has effectively supported this area in many successful operations and is feared by the VC morale.

Colonel Porter's own letter said, in part:

Enclosed is a request from Gen Nghiem for retention of the Marine helicopter company in III Corps. The impending transfer of this Company is very distressing to the III Corps Commander. Here is an analysis of the III Corps situation and some of the factors that vitally affect our operations.

Every day III Corps is increasing pressure on the Viet Cong. Current plans envisage a tremendous increase in operations which should have a crippling effect on the Viet Cong. In addition to the ARVN operations each province chief plans to run operations at an increasing rate. Even now these operations are beginning to pay off.

The present helicopter lift can satisfy only a fraction of the current requirements. The planned requirements are completely beyond the present capability. The proposed move of the Marines will cut even this limited lift by a third. These facts are important:

- a. The Marine Company averages more than

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twice the flying hours of the Army Company. More important than the flying hours is that with only a 30 minute greater range capability the Marines will fly almost twice as many short missions and make more lifts without refueling. This means that reserves are more available for decisive action. Fuel resupply in isolated areas is a critical problem.

b. The Marines know the area and are ready to continue operations on an increasing scope.

c. The Marines are self sufficient and require no supervision or administrative support.

d. The Marines are better equipped:

- (1) They have better navigational equipment
- (2) They have better maintenance capability
- (3) They have better pilots
- (4) They have high morale and a will to fly
- (5) They can and will fly night operations.

e. There is a greater need for helicopters in III Corps than the other two Corps...

Another consideration is the increased logistical and administrative burden of two more Army companies in

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III Corps. There will be increased morale and disciplinary problems when the Army companies are placed in these isolated areas with inadequate support and no recreational facilities. There is no problem now. The Marines take their men to Okinawa and Japan on leave. They are not permitted to visit the local town. There have been no incidents and the community relations are outstanding.

Even if the Marine company is replaced by two Army companies, III Corps will have less lift than at present.

In addition, much valuable momentum will be lost in the process. There is every possibility that the let up in operations caused by this move will discourage the ARVN Commanders. Now they have a taste of victory and for the first time are beginning to believe there is a possibility of defeating the Viet Cong. Any slow down may result in a return to lethargy and inaction. If this move can be reconsidered it will be deeply
(12)
appreciated.

In spite of these requests, a MACV order specified 1 August as the date of movement. This move was delayed several times and the date finally settled on was 15 September.

(12) General Officer Symposium, 1963, Tab M op. cit. Italics are in the original document.

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Continual planning and liaison took place until the actual movement date arrived.

Planning for the movement to Da Nang had begun in April, soon after the Marines had landed and set up operations at Soc Trang. General Condon, CG, 1st MAW, visited Soc Trang 7-9 May. He and Colonel Carey made a trip to Da Nang at that time for planning purposes. Liaison was conducted with the Army 93d Helicopter Company, which would switch bases with the Marine task unit.

Contractors began rehabilitation work early in May to prepare Soc Trang for the Army--the mess hall had first priority. The Army had determined that much rehabilitation was necessary in order that it "be minimally housed." New barracks, officers' quarters, and a dispensary were begun, and a well-drilling team went to work.

On 4 September the task unit assistant communications officer departed Soc Trang for Da Nang to evaluate communications problems expected by the task unit. On 8 September, wiremen, message center personnel, and radio operators began installing wire and switching facilities and setting up the message center and radio central. The next day, the advance party entered the task unit command net (voice radio). This radio link helped coordinate the entire task unit's move to Da Nang. Field phones and trunk lines were set up, and on

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14 September at 2000, the communications installation at Da Nang assumed communications and crypto guard for TU 79.3.5.

In addition to the communications section, advance parties from the utilities, fuel, and supply sections arrived early to set up shop. The fuel section had a TAFDS set up and operating by 9 September, so that the GV-1 transports could refuel there during the move. This allowed a maximum payload to be lifted out of Soc Trang on each flight, since fuel for the return trip from Da Nang would not have to be carried.

The first GV-1 arrived at Soc Trang on the evening of 14 September, and was airborne with a load for Da Nang at first light on the 15th, the day of the move. During the day, the planes of the Hercules squadron, VMGR-152, moved the Marines to Da Nang, and took the Army 93d Helicopter Company to Soc Trang on the return trips.

The major portion of the move was completed in one day in the usual efficient, professional manner of the Marine transport squadron.

Half of the squadron's helicopters flew to Da Nang on 15 September, and the other half were scheduled to fly on the 16th. A tropical storm forced a 24-hour delay, however, and the last group arrived on the 17th. On the following day, the first tactical troop lift out of Da Nang took place. The

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task unit's first official visitors on 19 September were General Harkins and Major General Donald M. Weller, USMC, Deputy Commander, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

By 21 September, the move was complete, the task unit was carrying out its mission in the new location, and the northern rainy season was near.

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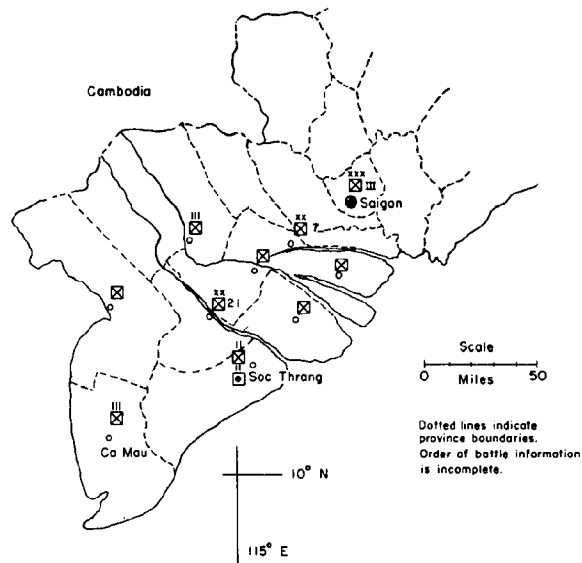
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Figure II-1A, III CORPS AREA, SOUTH VIETNAM Apr-Sep 62

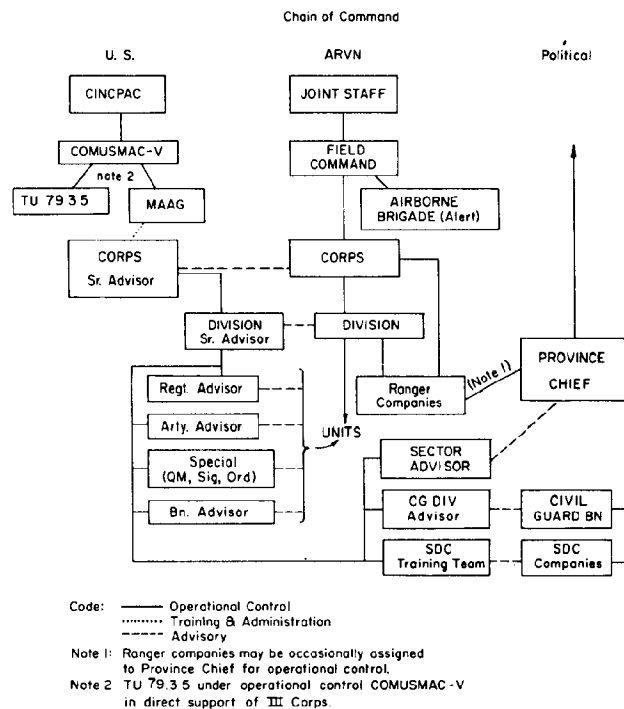


Figure IV-1B, CHAIN OF COMMAND

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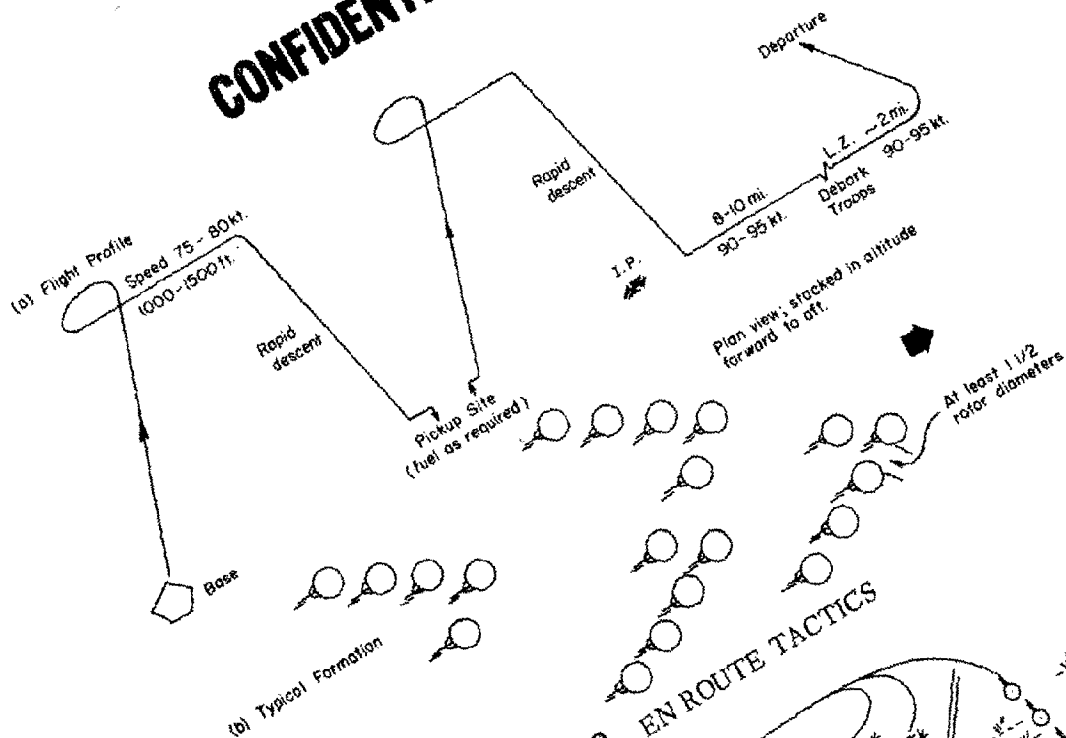


Figure IV-2A, EN ROUTE TACTICS

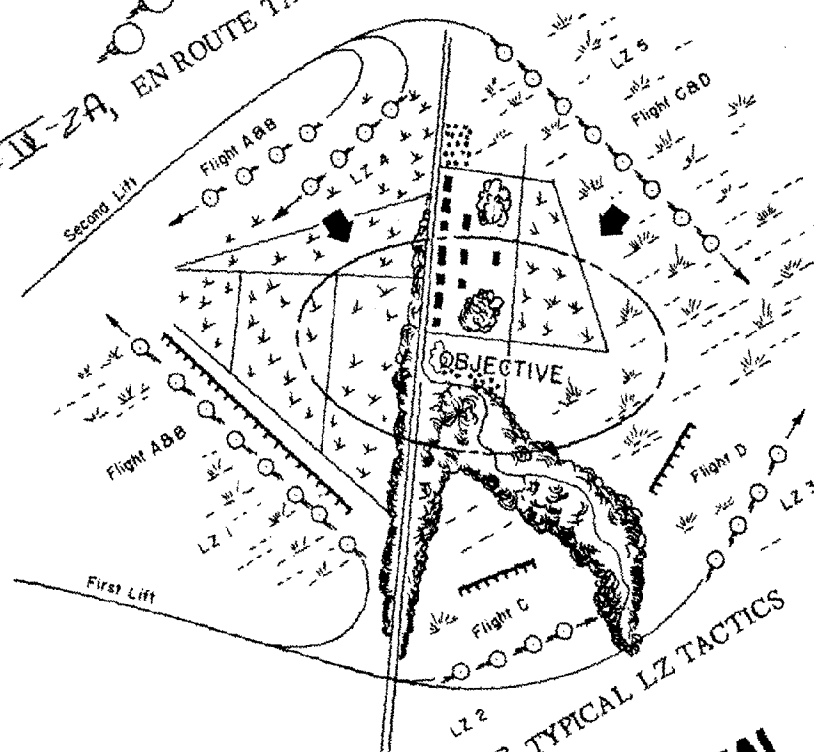


Figure IV-2B, TYPICAL LZ TACTICS

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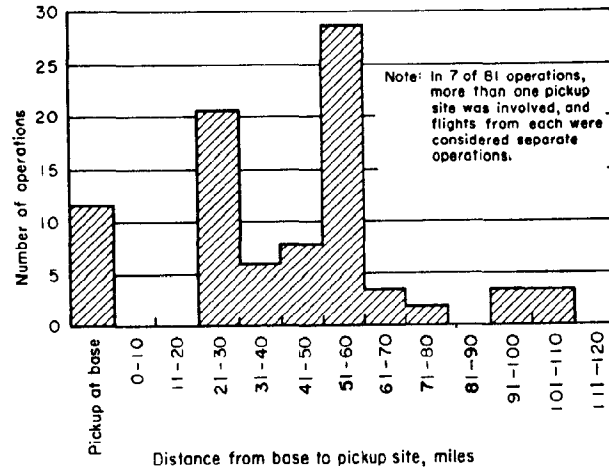
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Figure IV-3A, DISTANCE FROM BASE TO PICKUP SITE

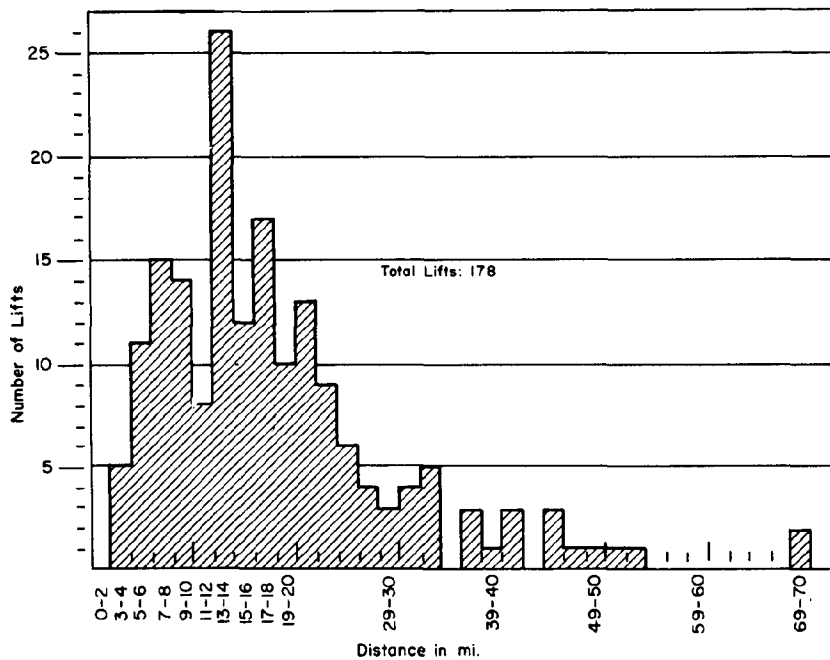
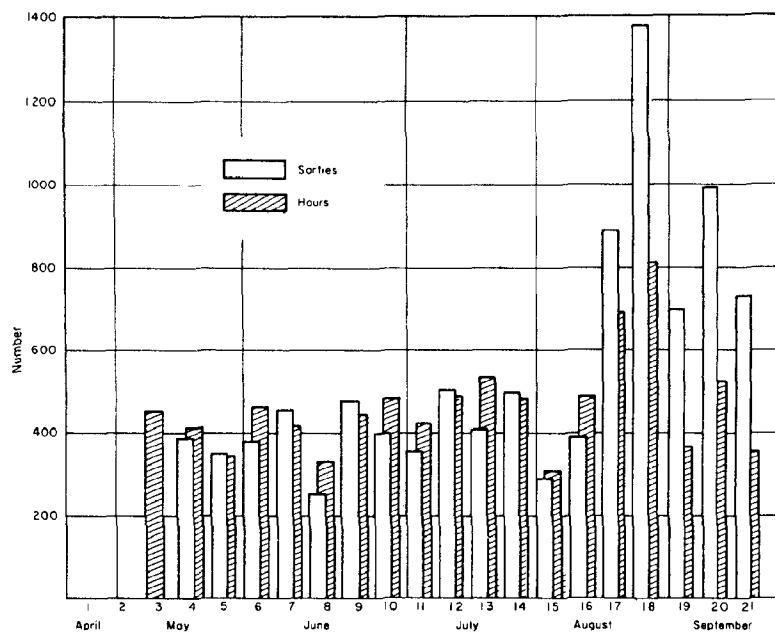
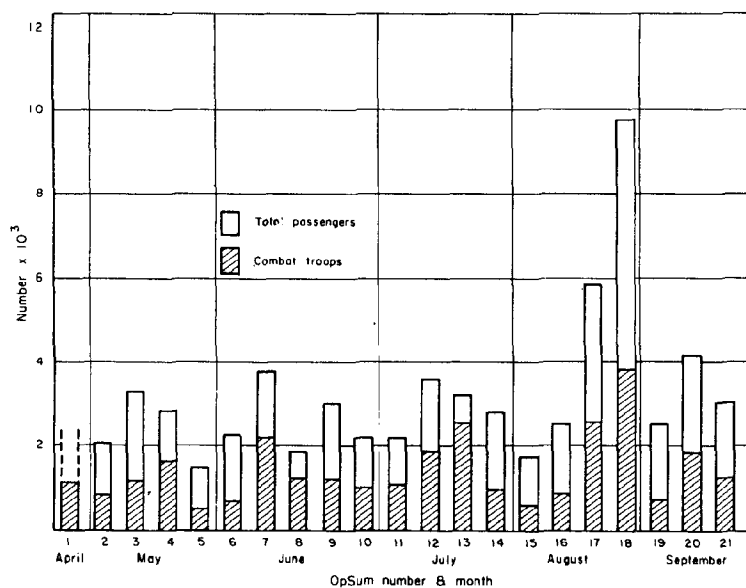


Figure IV-3B DISTANCE FROM PICKUP SITE TO LANDING ZONE

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TOTAL SORTIES AND HOURS FLOWN, OPERATION SHUFLY, 1962

Figure IV-4A

TROOPS AND PASSENGERS LIFTED OPERATION SHUFLY, 1962

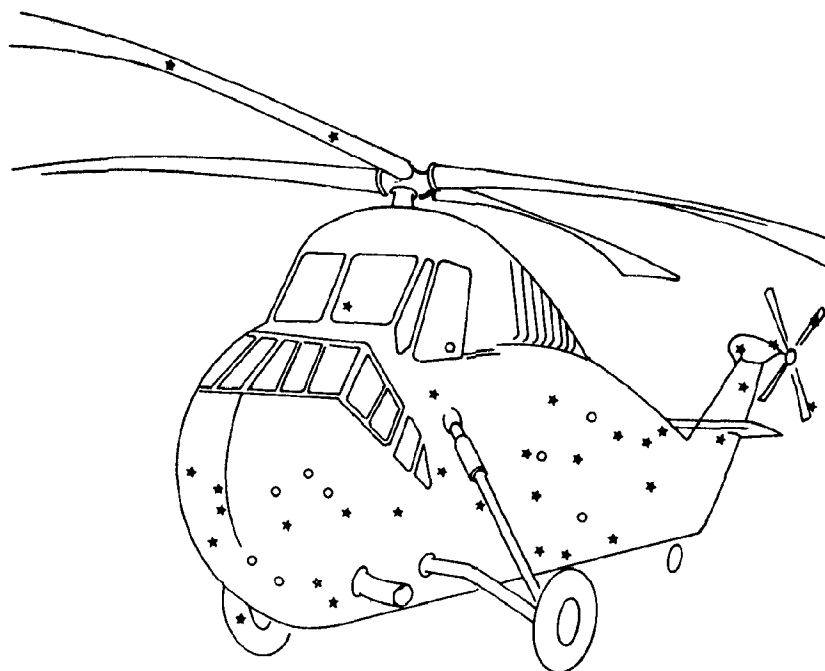
*Figure IV-4B***CONFIDENTIAL**

SOC TRANG AIRFIELD, 1962, SHOWING THE SHUFLY TENT CAMP AND FLIGHT LINE IN THE FOREGROUND.



Figure IV-6

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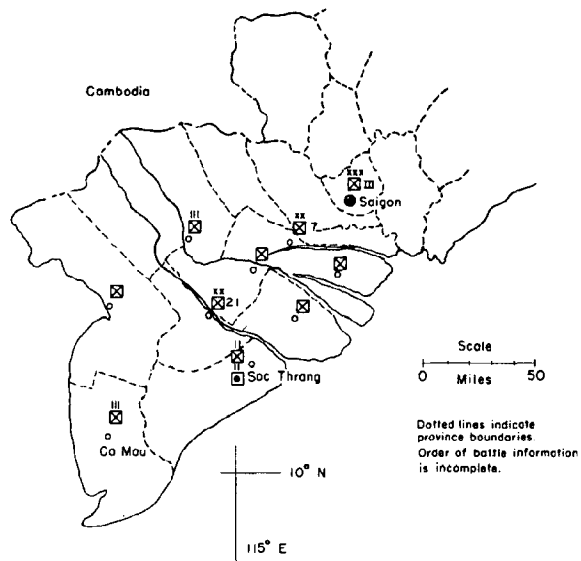
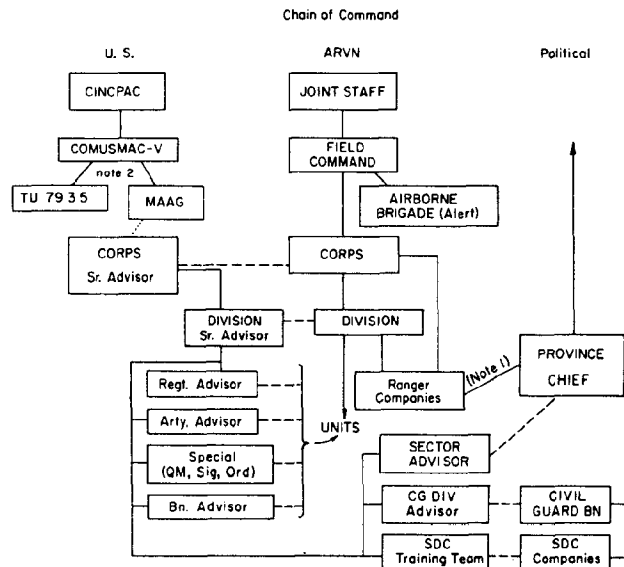


- * Location of hit
- o Location of hit on opposite side from view

PATTERN OF HITS ON HELICOPTERS, OPERATIONS THROUGH 20 JULY

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Figure IV-7

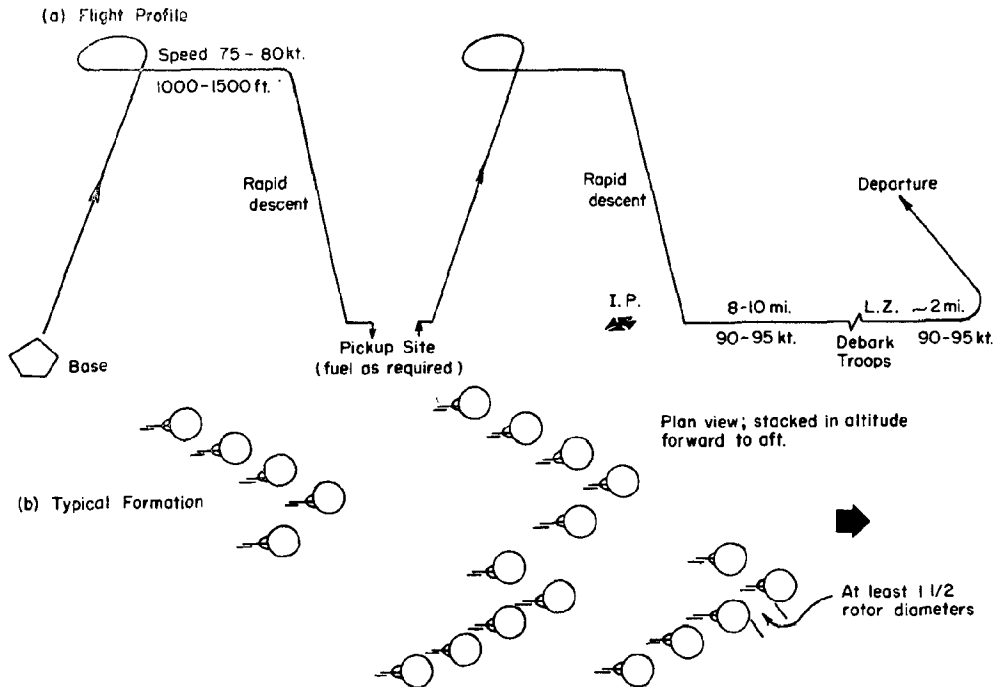
CONFIDENTIAL**III CORPS AREA, SOUTH VIETNAM**

Code: ——— Operational Control
 Training & Administration
 - - - - - Advisory

Note 1: Ranger companies may be occasionally assigned to Province Chief for operational control.
 Note 2: TU 79.3.5 under operational control COMUSMAC-V in direct support of III Corps.

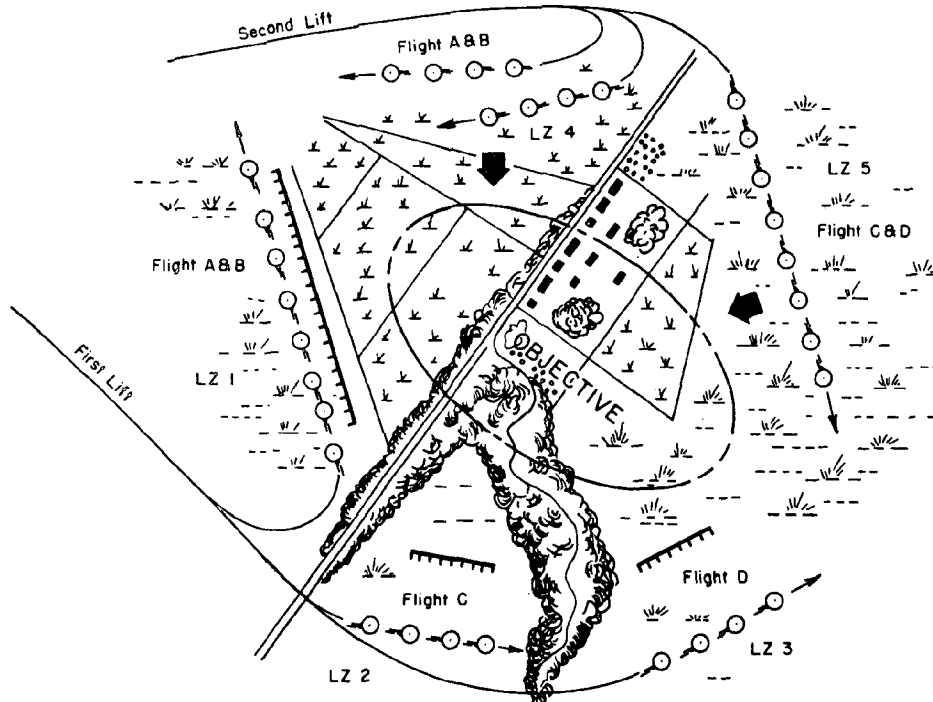
CHAIN OF COMMAND**CONFIDENTIAL***Figure - IV - 113*

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EN ROUTE TACTICS

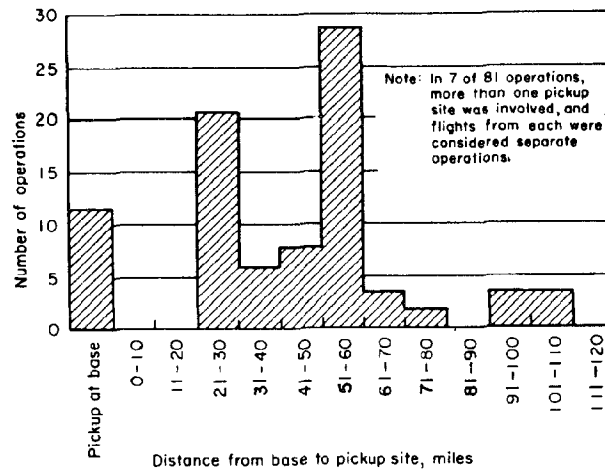
Figure IV-2A



TYPICAL LZ TACTICS

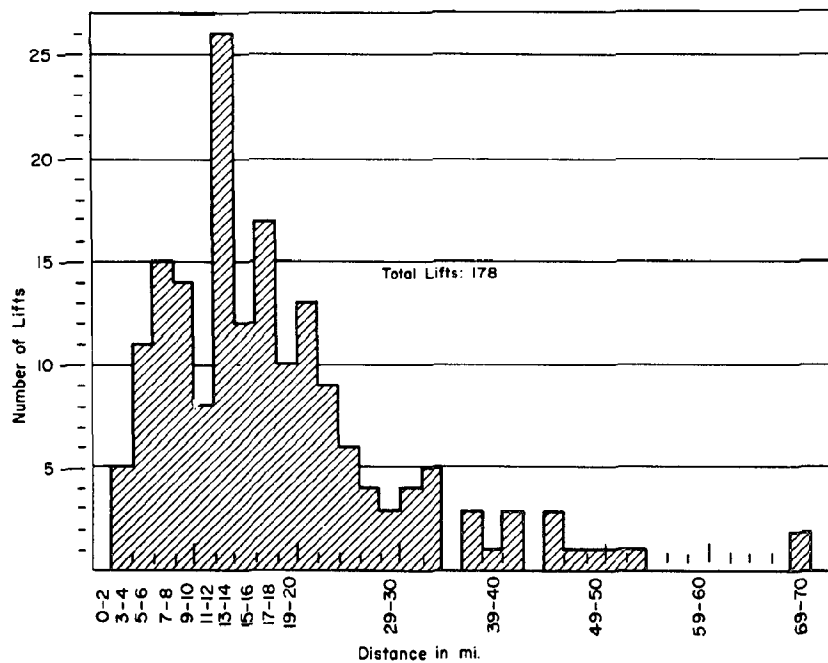
Figure IV-2B

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DISTANCE FROM BASE TO PICKUP SITE

Figure IV-3A

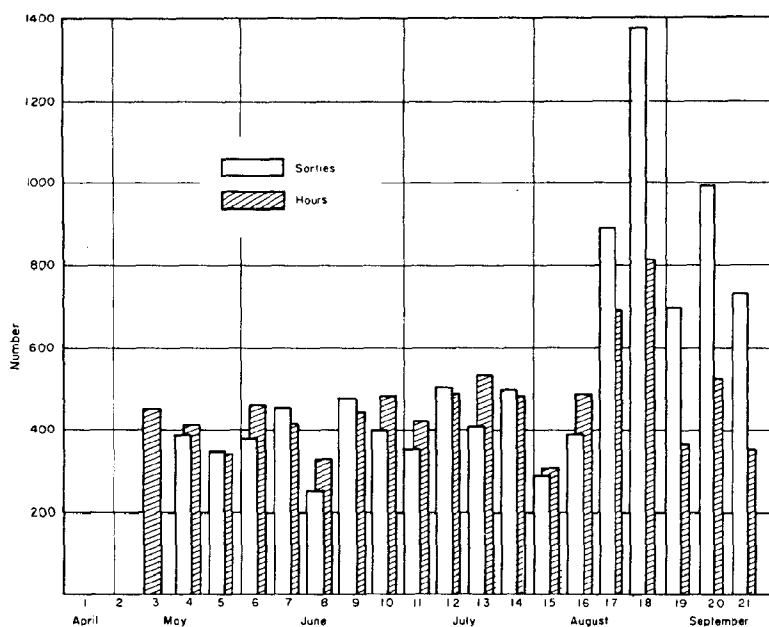


DISTANCE FROM PICKUP SITE TO LANDING ZONE

Figure IV-3B

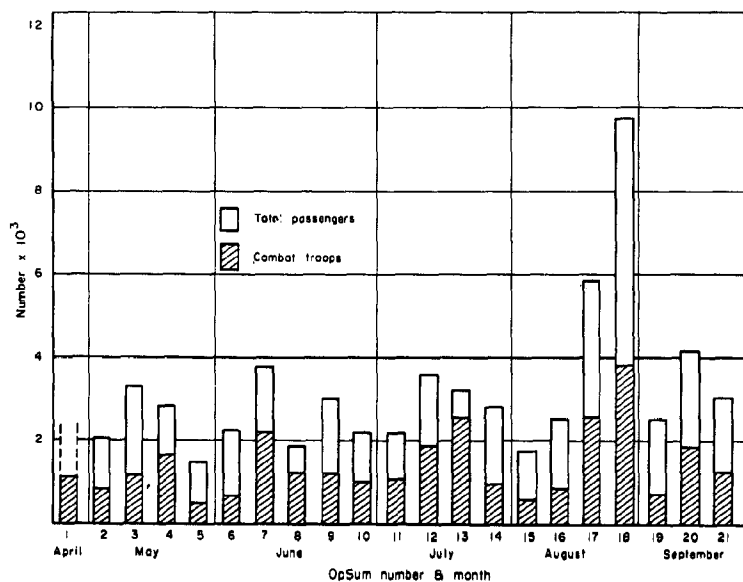
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TOTAL SORTIES AND HOURS FLOWN, OPERATION SHUFLY, 1962

Figure IV-4A



TROOPS AND PASSENGERS LIFTED OPERATION SHUFLY, 1962

Figure IV-4B

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SHU-FLY OPERATION

22 APRIL -- 31 JULY 62

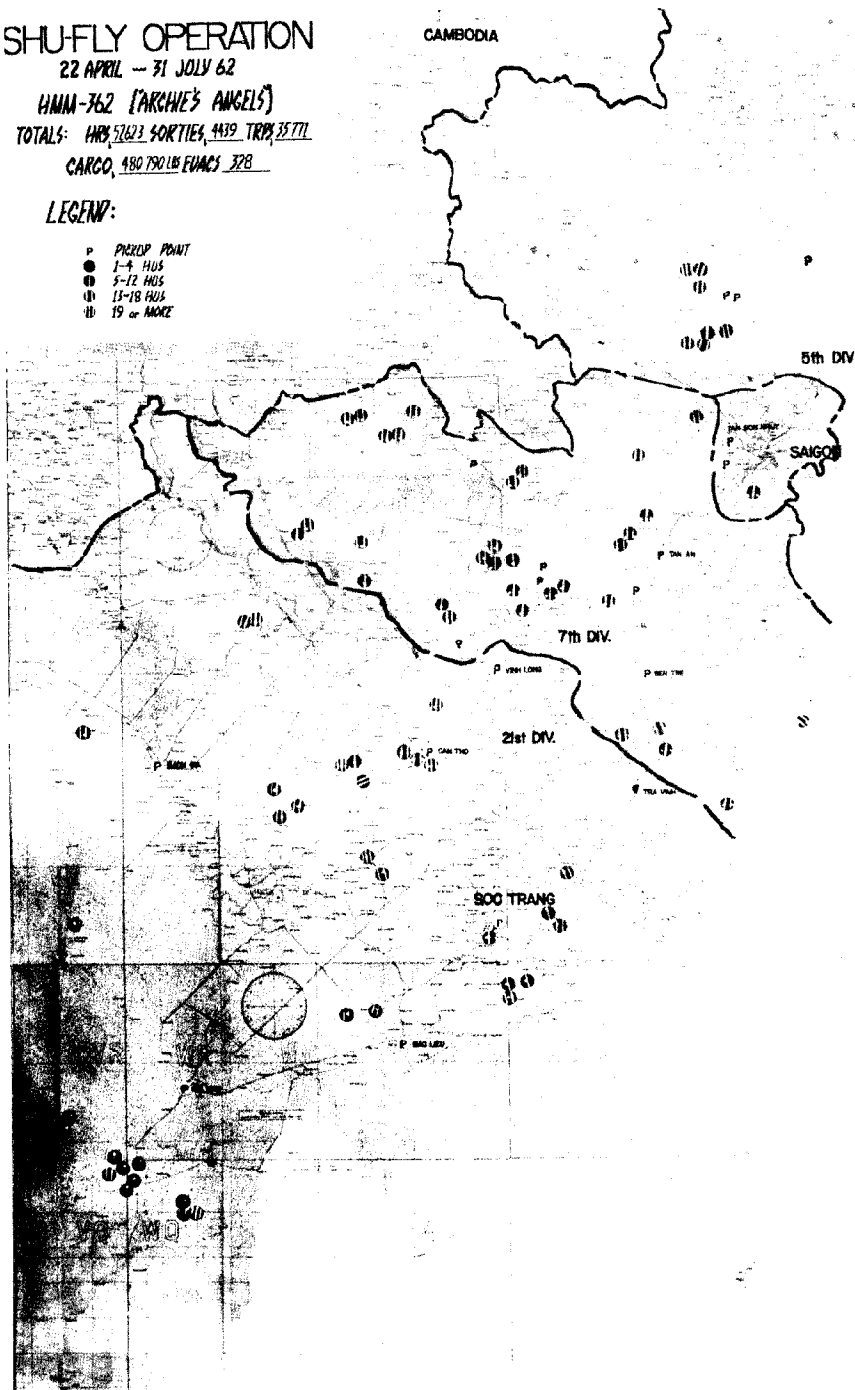
HMM-762 (ARCHIE'S ANGELS)

TOTALS: HRS 5,263 SORTIES 4,439 TRIP 35,771

CARGO 480,790 LB FUMACS 328

LEGEND:

- P PICKUP POINT
 ● 1-4 HUS
 ○ 5-12 HUS
 ⊕ 13-18 HUS
 ⊗ 19 or MORE



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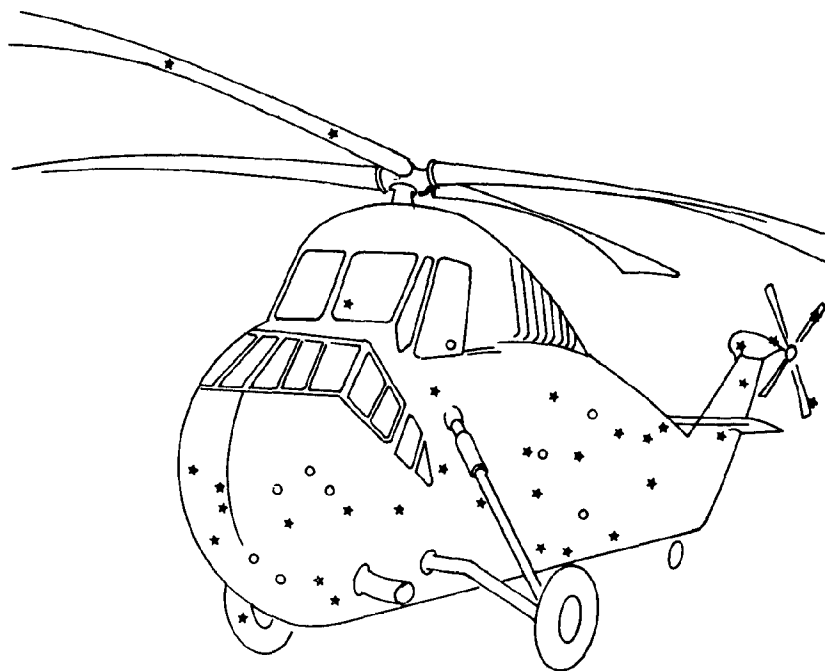
Figure IV-5

SOC TRANG AIRFIELD, 1962. SHOWING THE SHUFLY TENT CAMP AND FLIGHT LINE IN THE FOREGROUND.



Figure IV-6

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- * Location of hit
- o Location of hit on opposite side from view

PATTERN OF HITS ON HELICOPTERS, OPERATIONS THROUGH 20 JULY

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Figure IV-7

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V. SHUFLY OPERATIONS AT DA NANG (15Sep62-31Dec63) ⁽¹⁾

Part V concerns SHUFLY operations at Da Nang, in the northern part of South Vietnam, from mid-September 1962, through December 1963, a period of over 15 months. On 6 November 1962, TU 79.3.5 was redesignated Task Element (TE) 79.3.3.6, but the form of the organization remained the same--a commander and his small staff, a supporting sub-unit, and a Marine medium helicopter squadron, with a total strength of slightly less than 500 officers and men.

(1) Unless otherwise indicated, the material in this section is derived from: Task Unit 79.3.5 Command Diary, 31Jul-5Nov62 [S]; Task Element 79.3.3.6 Command Diaries, 6Nov62-28Jan63, 29Jan-30Apr63, 1May-17Jul63, 18Jul-31Oct63, and 1Nov63-14Jan64 [S]; 1st MAW SHUFLY Operational Summaries (OpSums), Sep62-Dec63 [S]; Memorandum for Director, Marine Corps Operations Analysis Group (MCOAG) 053-64, Aspects of U. S. Marine Corps Helicopter Operations in SVN, late 1963, dtd 24Mar64 [C]; Memorandum For Director, Marine Corps Operations Analysis Group (MCOAG) 0114-63, Marine Helicopter Operations at Da Nang, dtd 16Dec63 [C]; Marine Corps General Officer Symposium, 1963, Tab M, Summary of Presentation on Southeast Asia, 007A20763 dtd 26Jul63 [S].

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At Da Nang, the task element operated in direct support of the ARVN I Corps (~~see enclosure ()~~ for a tactical map of the area). *will be included in the final study* The task element commander exercised operational control of U. S. Marine and, by mid-1963, U. S. Army aviation units in the I Corps area, and was a major component commander of USMACV. He coordinated helicopter/fixed-wing operations with elements of the USAF and the VNAF, both of which also supported I Corps, and which employed fixed and rotary-wing transport aircraft and fixed-wing attack aircraft. The VNAF operated 10 H-34 helicopters at Da Nang for most of the period covered in Part V.

The Da Nang operation through 1963 is covered as follows: a description of the area of operations, the organization of the camp and airfield, an account of the missions flown, including combat support and administrative/logistical flights, and developmental activities, including tactics, techniques, and equipment.

Description of the Area of Operations

The Da Nang (Tourane) airfield, where SHUFLY was based, is about 460 miles north of Soc Trang and 375 miles north of Saigon. It lies in Quang Nam Province near the city of Da Nang, South Vietnam's second largest metropolitan area (after Saigon) with a population of some 110,000. The city and airfield are

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near the coast, about 84 miles south of the 17th parallel, which generally marks the border of Communist North Vietnam. The asphalt runway, 7,872 feet long and 199 feet wide, can handle any type aircraft. The field is 33 feet above sea level.

The task element area of operations extended over the I Corps area, from the North Vietnam border south to beyond Quang Ngai, and into the northern fringe of the II Corps area south and west of Quang Ngai. ~~(See the tactical map, enclosure ()))~~ It was about 180 miles deep (north-south) and 30-60 miles wide. Unlike the Mekong delta region, the northern terrain rises quickly from the Annam Coastal Plain westward to the Annam Mountains. The coastal plain comprises a narrow, interrupted level area that does not exceed 20 miles in width. Sandy beaches, sparse vegetation, and a series of small deltas make up the coastline. The deltas are formed by short, rapid streams with limited drainage basins, often separated from each other by rugged, densely forested headlands of the Annam Mountains.

The mountains range in elevation from 5,000 to 7,000 feet in the vicinity of Dalat (in the central part of the country) to 3,000 to 5,000 feet elsewhere. The Annam Cordillera, the backbone of the mountain range, slopes steeply to the coastal lowlands on the east and more gently to the Mekong Plateau on the west. The result is a strong contrast between the short,

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swift, eastward flowing streams with steep-walled valleys and the sluggish, westward flowing waterways with broad, flat valleys.

South Vietnam narrows to a width of 30-50 miles in the north, with a corresponding narrowing of the mountain range. Valleys cut through this narrow section, forming passes at elevations of 1,300 to 2,500 feet. Thick rain forests cover three-quarters of the mountain regions, which are mostly uninhabited and accessible only on foot. Trails are the only routes of travel and communication. Tangled jungle growth, tall trees, frequent fog, and low visibility hide the Viet Cong and provide him with abundant cover and concealment. Helicopter landing zones are limited in size by the terrain and vegetation, and are few in number.

Unlike the weather in the Mekong delta, the monsoon season in the northern coastal area occurs during the winter months, and extends from October to March. This "reverse" rainy season (in the delta it occurs in the summer) is brought about by the northeast monsoon winds, which dump their moisture east of the mountains during the winter. The mountains form a barrier against the rain-laden clouds moving in from the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin, trapping rain and fog between the high elevations and the coast. Such weather often hangs in the valleys for days and weeks at a time, limiting flight operations.

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Rainfall is heavy, averaging 128 inches per year at Hue, half way between Da Nang and the 17th parallel. In the I Corps mountains, the mist rises and spills across the hills into Laos, where it dissipates under southeast winds. Cloudiness and precipitation begin in October and reach their maximum in November, restricting visibility and aerial observation.

Rice, the staff of life for the northern populace as well as the southern, is grown in the coastal fields, giving way to varied crops in the highlands. The elephant does the heavy work in the highlands, especially in the timber industry. Wild elephants are sometimes hunted, as are stags, roe-bucks, wild boars, bears, wild oxen, panthers, tigers, lizards, and crocodiles (the latter two for their skins). The usual varieties of tropical snakes abound, including cobras.

Fishing is an important source of food in the coastal area. Sea bass, mackerel, and tuna are caught from the sea, and trout, perch, and pike from the rivers.

Most of the population is clustered along the coast, and is made up of ethnic Vietnamese, with some Laotian and Chinese elements. Over half a million tribespeople, called the Montagnard, inhabit the inland forests. They are excellent hunters and trackers, and exist under primitive conditions, influenced little by the Vietnamese government.

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Organization of the Camp and Airfield

Advance parties from the communications, fuel, supply, and utilities sections had set up shop and were ready to operate when the main body of Marine Task Unit 79.3.5 (SHUFLY) moved from Soc Trang to Da Nang on 15 September. Normal communications traffic flowed, and the fuel section's TAFDS provided fuel for the Marine KC-130F⁽²⁾ transports of VMGR-152, which logged 301 hours of flight time during the move, while hauling 944 passengers and 1,173 tons of cargo. The last transport load arrived on 20 September, and the move was complete.

The supply office was in full operation on the 17th, and two days later not one aircraft was "down" for parts, a condition always strived for by the supply section, but rarely

(2) In the fall of 1962, aircraft designations were standardized among all the military services. Navy Bureau of Weapons (BuWeps) Instruction 13100.7 of 18Sep62 implemented the new designations in the Marine Corps. They will be used in parts V and VI of this study. Old and new designations for previously mentioned aircraft follow, with the new designation in parentheses: HUS (UH-34D), OE (O-1B), R4D-8 (C-117D), AD-6 (A-1H), L-19 (O-1A), and GV-1 (KC-130F). The H-21, H-34, T-28, and B-26 remained the same.

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achieved. No more than three aircraft were AOCF at any one time during the period covered by this study.

The task element was allocated about 50 small but permanent buildings on the airfield at Da Nang. The buildings, built by the French, were constructed of reinforced concrete and arranged in rectangular compounds. (See ^{Figures D-1, D-2, and D-3} ~~enclosures~~ for photographs of the field and billeting area). The Marine compound, surrounded by barbed wire, was bounded by Vietnam Highway 1 on one side, the ARVN compound on another, and Vietnamese soldiers' homes and fields on the other two.

The Marine task element contained more men than the Army Helicopter Company it replaced, and required more room. In the beginning, 100 Marines were jammed into a building designed as a mess hall, and crowded conditions still existed after ARVN units vacated additional spaces. In January, four tents were erected and strongbacked to accommodate utility section and bulk fuel (TAFDS) personnel. With this added space, living conditions were adequate for the remainder of 1963.

Besides quarters for the officers and men, buildings were provided for a chapel, medical and dental facilities, service clubs, a movie, a laundry, a hobby shop, a barber shop, an armory, and a photo lab, as well as a mess hall. The interiors of the buildings were in poor shape--plumbing fixtures were coming apart and electrical wiring was inadequate--but the

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indoor toilets, showers, ceiling fans, and fluorescent lights were so welcome to the Marines that they jumped in eagerly to fix things up.

One of the facilities in the poorest condition was the electrical wiring for the camp. The 75kw generators had been flown in from Soc Trang and set up in a bank of three near the flight line, to provide electrical power for the working and billeting areas. Lights were rather dim in the barracks, however, so the circuit was checked. The electrical section found that in the first 200 feet of wiring, there was a 20-volt drop in power--only 9 volts reached the far side of the camp, less than three miles away. Further investigation showed heavy corrosion at connecting points in the wiring. After thorough cleaning, reconnecting, and rewiring, full voltage reached the working area, and 109 volts reached the barracks--the lights shone brightly.

Early in 1963, two additional generators were flown in by KC-130 to provide for increased electrical demands, and still allow one unit to be off the line for maintenance and another to be used for backup. With five generators, all necessary electrical power was provided, though extensive maintenance, including the installation of new engines, was required from time to time.

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The utilities section was faced with a water shortage immediately upon arrival--water hours were established and went into effect at once. The source of water for the base was a shallow well in the Vietnamese compound--really a pool for wrapping water close to the surface--whose output often dropped below base requirements. The Marines installed a pump and a purification system. Purification by settling was required because of the shallowness of the well, and the fact that open sewage ditches with floating fecal matter were in common usage at the field.

In January, the output of the well dropped to eight gallons per minute, less than one-third the normal flow. A Vietnamese contractor removed the pump, casing, and screen. After cleaning the screen and re-installing it one meter lower, the well again delivered its guaranteed 25 gallons per minute. The fine silt in the soil continued to cause clogging, however, periodically reducing well output, especially in the summer dry season.

A Marine laundry unit, which was placed in operation in the billeting area, placed additional demands on the water supply. By April, a second shallow well in the billeting area was used as a source, and a well was dug in the hangar area, yielding sufficient water for the motor transport and maintenance sections. With the coming of summer, the output of all wells went down, and the Marines used storage tanks, water

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towers, and tank trucks to store and transport water--using every device at hand to make the limited supply last. Sixteen thousand gallons a day were trucked in from a U. S. Air Force installation six miles away during the summer. In September 1963, an average month, 1,724,700 gallons were purified and used, about 57,000 gallons per day. All measures employed were temporary, however--what was really needed was a deep well.

In November, a detachment from a U. S. Navy Construction Battalion, after a tough drilling job, struck water 450 feet down. A 500 gallon-per-minute pump and a large storage tank were installed, and the water shortage was over. The capacity of the new system was more than twice the Marine requirements. The old pump and purification unit were returned to MAG-16; the new pump and tank could be dismantled and removed if required.

Each week more than 12,000 pounds of food supplies were hauled in from Saigon via the C-117D. The logistics load increased at Da Nang, because of the 375-mile distance to Saigon--more than four times as far as it had been from Soc Trang. The fresh supplies arrived regularly, however, and the mess hall was in full operation on 18 September.

The quality of food remained high, as it had in the delta. A continual effort was made to provide a pleasant atmosphere in the mess hall--early in 1963 the building was painted inside, and fans were installed for the summer.

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Beginning in July, taped stereophonic music during meals was piped into the mess hall. The next month, food service personnel began serving hot noon meals at the hangar, eliminating both cold food for flight crews (box lunches) and the need for the men to travel across the field for a hot lunch. The mess section prepared an average of 500-550 rations (1,500-1,650 meals) per day during 1963, with 21-22 cooks and messmen assigned.

The Task Element Command Diary for that period expresses the results: "An unusual circumstance prevails at SHUFLY. There is little or no complaining about the quality of the food served."⁽³⁾

One of the biggest problems at Da Nang turned out to be transportation. The billeting area was almost three miles from the working area, requiring a round trip over a rough and muddy road. (At Soc Trang, the whole operation had been within walking distance.) The need for additional vehicles had been anticipated, and they had been ordered beforehand--they arrived at Da Nang 9 September. Among these were three surveyed Air Forces busses--a 1951 Ford, a 1952 GMC, and a

(3) TE 79.3.3.6 Command Diary, 29Jan-30Apr63, Mess Section, p. 49.

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1955 Chevrolet, each with a 29-passenger capacity. It cost \$200.00 to maintain each bus the first month of operation, but under the deft touch of motor transport personnel, the three responded by providing 9,000 miles of transportation per month during the winter rainy season. During the third week in October, 16.47 inches of rain fell on Da Nang. A Hercules transport lifted in a road grader the next week. A new drain was cut along the entire roadway to the billeting area; 100 feet of road was raised two feet and graded; 600 feet was raised one foot and graded; but vehicles still plowed through a sea of mud.

In February, a typical month, the task element vehicles compiled a total of 19,565 miles. Four engines, three transmissions, and one transfer case were replaced during the month. Screening was installed in two busses to protect against grenades being thrown in the windows by the Viet Cong. In March 1963, the motor transport section completed work on its shop--an adequate working area in which to perform its maintenance. Four C-120 personnel carriers (four wheel drive commercial-type enclosed 10-passenger trucks) and two Mighty Mites (small, jeep-type vehicles) were received on 18 April, lifting some of the burden previously carried by the older vehicles. At the end of April, the section had 100 percent availability on all vehicles.

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By summer, two of the busses had been surveyed and replaced with tactical passenger trailers, which were used to shuttle personnel from the barracks to the working area. The task element recommended in October that no more commercial-type vehicles be sent to Da Nang, since they did not hold up well there, but that tactical type vehicles be used instead.

To help with the cleaning problem which resulted from operation of the vehicles over the wet, muddy roads, a wash rack using a 4,000 gallon water tank, a 55 gallon-per-minute pump, and a steam trailer was set up. Cleaning the vehicles at this installation almost completely eliminated rust, and cut down on the number of gas tanks that had to be flushed and cleaned.

Further improvement in vehicle availability resulted from increased utilization of Marine Wing Service Group-17 (MWSG-17, based at Iwakuni). This organization had the highest level vehicle repair capability within the 1st MAF--it repaired the component parts, and thereby eliminated the ordering of new ones by the task element, which often resulted in long waits for VOCP items (Vehicle Out of Commission For Parts--the highest priority). Very satisfactory results were obtained with the repair program.

A follow up system on order requisitions, and an improved usage data procedure both contributed to improved parts

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procurement, also. Vehicle transportation continued at a satisfactory level through 1963.

At Soc Trang, elaborate and thorough security measures were taken, and no problems occurred. At Da Nang, the problem became a more serious one. The physical layout of the field caused complications--the working area was separated from the living area; the field was shared with a variety of U. S. and RVN units, including Vietnamese civil aviation; the nation's main highway ran right past the field boundary; and a large populated area infiltrated with Communist elements was nearby. In addition, the working area itself was split up--the flight line was one-half mile long, with the TAFDS at the northern end and the hangar at the southern. Separated from the flight line, and a quarter-mile further south, was the motor pool and the communications facility. Finally, the Viet Cong made a more determined sabotage effort at Da Nang.

Shortly after the task element arrived, the 1st MAW counterintelligence team made a security survey of the base. They noted four areas of special concern: (1) There was a need for emergency communications between the hangar and billeting area. This was corrected by use of radios. (2) The security of personnel in transit from the billeting area to the hangar was questioned. Two actions were taken on this--a new road was built, eliminating that portion of the route on

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a public road through a congested area, and protective screens were put on the busses, to keep thrown grenades or explosives out. (3) The poorly lighted aircraft ramp area was a liability.

Two additional generators provided the power to light it.

(4) Increased internal security for the base itself, and for the Marine areas, was required. The security of the base was the responsibility of the ARVN, and remained so. Increased security for the Marine areas came in April with the arrival of a reconnaissance platoon of one officer and 46 men from the 3d Marine Division on Okinawa. They came at the opportune time--just as the ARVN reduced its sentry force and as threats of Viet Cong attacks intensified. The recon platoon later expanded its operation to include providing security at crash sites while aircraft repairs were being made or salvage operations conducted. The platoon remained with the task element until December 1963, when it returned to its parent organization during the overall cutback of U. S. forces in Vietnam.

Before and after the time security was provided by the recon platoon, a system similar to the one used at Soc Trang was employed. Personnel from both the sub-unit and the tenant HMM squadron were detailed to guard duty for periods of a week or more. While on guard duty, they manned posts around the flight line, the hangar, the TAFDS, the motor pool-communications area, and the billeting compound. Each man was on duty four

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hours per night, and often still performed his regular job in the daytime, if the workload was heavy. One permanent sergeant-of-the-guard supervised the security force.

One other problem of security throughout the Da Nang operation was that provided by the Vietnamese. Local civilian workers were on their jobs on the base every day, and ARVN sentries manned posts at night (they were passed by simply saying "okay")--thus a determined enemy who gained access to the base and impersonated a friendly soldier or civilian was in a position to do real damage. Since base security remained the responsibility of the ARVN, the task element could take no action in this area.

At Soc Trang, the Marines had operated everything on the airfield; at Da Nang the U. S. Air Force provided radar, GCA, TACAN, and meteorological services, and the Vietnamese operated the control tower. Since the Marines who had performed these jobs were no longer needed, they were returned to their parent organization. Even with the addition of the recon security platoon in April, the total strength of the task element remained under 500--it dropped to about 450 when the platoon left in December.

TE 79.3.3.6 remained self-sufficient, however, with VMGR-152 dispatching two flights per week from Iwakuni via Okinawa and Cubi Point (in the Philippines) to Da Nang,

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bringing anything that was needed, and taking personnel on R&R when they left. Once in January, when the roads had reached an almost impassable state, a KC-130 flew in a D-4 bulldozer with shovel, and in two days eight inches of rock base was placed on a new 400-foot section of road. Four inches of clay went on top of this and the road was back in operation--regular traffic provided the compaction.

Aircraft maintenance used the main hangar and several other small buildings for a work area. The utilities section built shelters for motor transport personnel and others who had no working "home." A lumber yard was established, an equipment park built, a storage shed constructed, and facilities for communications repair, a radio shack, a grease rack for the vehicles, and a generator bank for the camp electrical power supply were completed by January 1963.

On 20 September, a 10,000-gallon TAFDS was installed at Quang Ngai, about 65 miles south of Da Nang down the coast. On 13 October, a second TAFDS was set up at Hue, 45 miles north. By November, the Da Nang installation had been expanded to a 40,000 gallon capacity unit, which handled high octane aviation gasoline (115/145) only. Diesel fuel for the vehicles and equipment engines was dispensed from drums or a truck. A third TAFDS later went into regular use at Tam Ky, about 35 miles south of Da Nang--eventually it was removed because of

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fuel contamination problems. On large operations, or when required, TAFDs were temporarily emplaced to support that one operation.

Because of recurring problems with contaminated fuel, caused by dust, high condensation, and general lower standards of cleanliness in Vietnam, fuel sampling and quality control procedures were instituted by MACV in January. Periodic samples of all fuel and oil in use were sent to Saigon for analysis. The Marine installation pumped from under 40,000 to over 200,000 gallons of fuel per month into task element aircraft, the amount depending upon the tempo of operations.

Shell Oil replaced Esso as the fuel contractor on 1 January; however, fuel trucks from both companies transported gasoline to the outlying areas. Once, when the Viet Cong had blown up a bridge and stopped delivery by truck, a railroad tank car was used until the bridge was repaired--a period of three days.

Despite acute shortages of communications personnel, a condition that existed throughout the 1st MAF early in 1963, the communications section maintained operations at a high level. In March and April, over 1,100 messages were sent and over 2,300 were received, per month--on 15 February a one-day high was reached, with 100 messages received and 33 transmitted within 24 hours. In the first quarter of 1963, 8,326 messages

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were handled.

In April, an MRC/87 radio jeep was received. It was used for emergency backup radio communications with MAG-16, the 1st MAW, or other commands, and provided a ground-to-air capability if required.

Emergency communications between the billeting area and the hangar were established by December. A radio net provided a backup for the telephone system, in case it was rendered inoperative for any reason.

By May, the normal daily traffic was up to 134 messages, "all-weather" patch panels were being installed for better telephone service, new wiring was going into the flight line area, and the wire section was replacing EE-8 field telephones with new type models. The communications section rated 17 personnel, 11 were on hand. Each of the two sections stood a 12-hour watch each day to maintain the operation. At one time nine men carried the whole load.

Medical and dental facilities were crowded into one building in the early months at Da Nang, but in April the dental department moved to a separate building and both sections enjoyed adequate space. Marine, Navy, Army, and Air Force personnel were served by the Navy medical and dental departments, made up of two doctors, one dentist, and eight corpsmen, attached to TE 79.3.3.6. In the spring of 1963, the medical

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department averaged over 400 outpatients per month and gave about 25 physical examinations and over 600 inoculations each 30 days. Medical teams of doctors and corpsmen also treated Vietnamese civilians in remote areas and were lowered into crash sites by helicopter, an operation which is described in more detail in the section, "Missions Flown." The dental department averaged over 200 patients per month during the early part of 1963.

Only one chaplain, (Protestant), was assigned to the task element during the spring--he conducted weekly worship services, served communion, visited the barracks, counselled, handled Red Cross cases, and began a daily evening prayer over the camp intercom system. An Air Force Catholic chaplain performed similar services for men of his faith in the task element, and the MAG-16 Catholic chaplain visited Da Nang each month. A new chapel was dedicated 3 March, and attendance at worship services rose to 175 for the month; in April, it reached 299, including Good Friday and Easter sunrise services. Later in 1963, a Catholic chaplain was assigned to the task element for a tour--during that time the task element had two chaplains.

An orphanage in Da Nang, founded and maintained by a missionary family, was supported by the task element with the coordination and leadership of the chaplain. Relations with the Vietnamese people, civilian and military, were excellent,

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and the "people-to-people" program continued to expand. Merchants and businessmen in the city often expressed their appreciation regarding the friendliness and conduct of Marines on liberty. (Though liberty was granted in Da Nang, the R&R flights continued). English classes, taught three nights a week by Marine officers, were enthusiastically received.

Mail service was provided by the twice-weekly KC-130 flight, which usually delivered about 3,000 pounds of mail per month, and hauled out about 1,500 pounds. Money orders were available for task element personnel, and about 450 per month were sold.

The special services section continued to improve its service during the first 15 months in Da Nang. Athletic gear was issued, movies were shown nightly, a small library was available, and by summer two beaches were open and in use, water skiing and skin diving were enjoyed, and a fishing boat took groups out frequently.

The camp and airfield were set up and ready for operations by the Marine task element two days after the move from Soc Trang. The first combat support mission was flown the next day.

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Missions Flown

On 18 September, 14 Marine UH-34D helicopters of HMM-163 departed Da Nang on the first combat support troop lift in the north. They carried ARVN troops of the 21st Division, I Corps, to two landing zones at map coordinates (AT947098) and (AT935105), 35 miles south of the field. ⁽⁴⁾ VNAF A-1H attack aircraft bombed and strafed the landing zones just prior to the landing, and T-28s were on hand for close air support, but no enemy were encountered.

The next day, 10 helicopters evacuated an outpost at (ZC115680), 18 miles west of Da Nang. When the choppers left, they had everything aboard--people, animals, food, utensils, and personal belongings. Many such evacuations would be made ⁽⁵⁾ in the next 15 months.

(4) In Part V, landing zones will often be identified by map coordinates only. The nature of the terrain and the lack of towns, villages, and place names makes it necessary. ~~Enclosure~~ *will be appended to the final study.* ~~(4) a tactical map of the area of operations, may be used to pinpoint exact locations.~~

(5) On at least two occasions, animals in transit caused special problems. One farmer had his cow on board, tied to the side of the cargo compartment. The cow, unaccustomed to this mode of transportation, kept shifting her weight and

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On 26 September, 22 helicopters lifted two companies of Vietnamese special forces from Da Nang to Landing Zone Alfa (BS 238950), 45 miles south-southeast of home field and 15 miles south-southwest of Tam Ky. The landing zone had been prepared for landing by SVN artillery and air strikes. This was the first time artillery had been used to support a Marine helicopter operation in South Vietnam. It was used thereafter in operations near the coast and within range, but seldom back in the interior.

Landing Zone Alfa could accommodate only four helicopters at one time, so the landings were made at one minute intervals, in divisions of four aircraft. Viet Cong small arms fire was encountered, and one chopper was hit on the port side of the fuselage but continued the mission. Nineteen UH-34Ds proceeded to Tam Ky, loading troops for a second lift to Landing Zone

disturbing the equilibrium of the helicopter. Finally the pilot yelled down to the crew chief, "Tell him to keep that (censored) cow still." The farmer did not understand the words, but he understood the tone of voice. He replied by whipping out a sharp knife and cutting the cow's throat with one slash. The cow was still after that. The second case concerned a pig--like the one that went to market, this one went "wee-wee" all the way home.

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Bravo (BS173989), 14 miles southwest of the loading point and 4 miles northwest of LZ Alfa. LZ Bravo had also been prepared by air strikes and artillery, and three T-28s provided air support, but no enemy was encountered.

An O-1B was used for weather reconnaissance before the mission launched--a job that was to become a familiar one in the months ahead for the fixed wing observation craft--and during the lift an O-1B served as a radio relay. Total troops lifted for the day were 428. In other missions Marine helicopters evacuated three ARVN wounded to Da Nang.

An emergency medical evacuation mission took place on 27 September, with three helicopters, carrying the unit doctor and a corpsman, picking up five dead SVN soldiers and two seriously wounded ones. All three aircraft were fired upon by a Viet Cong battalion that had the landing zone surrounded on three sides. Only one chopper was hit, and it returned safely to base.

During the next few days, "Rathbun's Ridgerunners" served as mail couriers to remote outposts, evacuated more wounded, and moved 365 ARVN troops from Quang Ngai to Mang Buk, 20 miles further ~~south~~ down the coast. On 29 September, 19 helicopters lifted 230 troops into four landing zones in two waves. Two aircraft were hit by small arms fire, and one round passed through the co-pilot's windshield, missing his head by inches,

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and out the rear of the cockpit. All aircraft returned to base safely.

On 6 October, the Marines lost their first helicopter in South Vietnam. One UH-34D with maintenance and medical personnel aboard crashed 15 miles southeast of Tam Ky. The accident occurred during a flight to Quang Ngai with 20 other choppers, carrying 240 ARVN troops. Ten helicopters landed troops at the top and bottom of the hill on which the crash occurred--the forest prevented landings any nearer. The troops hacked their way to the crash site, and a spare aircraft brought medical and evacuation personnel from Da Nang. The doctor and corpsman were lowered into the site by hoist through 50-100 foot trees. One pilot, the crew chief, and five passengers were killed in the accident; the other pilot was seriously wounded. The crash was not the result of enemy action, but was operational in nature.

Two days before the crash, it had been proved once again that there is no such thing as a secure area in South Vietnam. A Marine UH-34D landed at a supposedly secure outpost, manned by friendly forces, at (BT007093), 15 miles southwest of Tam Ky, on a resupply mission. Viet Cong fire from ambush killed two ARVN soldiers and wounded the crew chief while the aircraft was on the ground. The helicopter was not damaged badly, and returned to base.

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ARVN-USMC coordination broke down on a unit displacement lift on 9 October. Ten helicopters flew to Quang Ngai to pick up 400 ARVN troops--only 80 showed up.

In late October and November, ARVN ranger battalion troops and Civil Guardsmen were lifted in planned assaults and in displacement maneuvers. Wounded ARVN soldiers were evacuated almost daily, and many of them were taken to Da Nang hospital for treatment.

On 3 November, a morning launch of 18 helicopters lifted a total of 563 troops in three waves into a landing zone at (AT800260), 28 miles southwest of Da Nang. One O-1B was used for weather reconnaissance and another for radio relay. Two helicopters were hit by small arms fire--one in the transmission fluid line. It landed in the landing zone, maintenance crews and parts were flown in for repairs, and it returned to base late in the day. Another chopper damaged a landing gear and had to remain in the LZ overnight--ARVN rangers provided security. The following morning it was repaired and flown out.

Two events took place at SHUFLY on 6 November. Task Unit 79.3.5 was redesignated Task Element 79.3.3.6 and Lieutenant Colonel Alton W. McCully relieved Colonel Julius W. Ireland as commander; Colonel Ireland assumed command of MAG-16.

Weather became a prominent factor early in November. At Soc Trang the weather had caused some inconvenience and some

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delays, but it never stopped operations, even in the summer at the height of the monsoon season. The winter rainy season in the north was a different matter--heavy clouds and low overcasts moved in and stayed for days at a time, severely curtailing flight operations. Supply and evacuation missions were flown as the weather permitted in November, and every planned mission had a reconnaissance by O-1B beforehand, checking both en route and landing zone conditions.

On 13 November, three days after the traditional Marine Corps Birthday ceremony had been celebrated by the task element, 20 UH-34Ds made a predawn launch with 200 special forces troops on board. The mission had to be called off when the landing zone was found covered by heavy ground fog.

The next day, four Marine helicopters lifted the remains of 26 passengers and the crew of a VNAF C-47 Douglas twin-engine transport, which had crashed in the mountains during a flight from Hue to Da Nang. The task element staff interpreter/translator assisted in the recovery of the bodies; a letter of appreciation from the VNAF to COMUSMACV commended the Marines for their part in the operation.

COMUSMACV, in Directive Number 62 of 24 November, imposed certain operational restrictions upon various categories of U. S. aircraft in SVN. The directive stated that the general aviation mission of all deployed U. S. aviation units was to

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provide training and support to the RVNAF in its counter-insurgency effort. Because of varied aircraft configurations and mission capabilities, mission types were defined as:

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a. Non-Operational:

(1) Training: Training flights are those carried out to transition Vietnamese or U. S. pilots into new aircraft, and for tactical upgrading and instruction of pilots and crews to develop better tactics and techniques, to include accelerated combat crew training under combat conditions.

(2) Support: Typical missions are administrative, liaison, ferry, courier, logistics, flight proficiency, air rescue and maintenance test.

b. Operational:

(1) Combat: Combat missions are always accomplished utilizing armed aircraft. Such missions include close air support, interdiction, escort, air cover, armed reconnaissance and air defense.

(2) Combat Support: Combat support missions may be carried out with either armed or unarmed aircraft. Such missions include airborne forward air

(6) Underlinings and capitalizations are from the original document.

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control, artillery adjustment, combat support liaison/ observation, reconnaissance, aerial communications relay, airborne guide, defoliation, flare drop, airborne/airland assault, airborne resupply and airborne command post. Psywar broadcast and leaflet drop will not be conducted except under unusual circumstances.

4. GENERAL POLICY

a. In South Vietnam all operational missions flown by U. S. personnel and/or aircraft are classified as combat support. As a general policy, no missions will be undertaken utilizing U. S. personnel and/or aircraft unless it is beyond the capability of the Vietnamese Air Force (because of lack of training, equipment, etc.) to perform the mission. Efforts will be intensified to provide the necessary training for GVN personnel so that the VNAF can perform all required missions at the earliest possible time.

b. U. S. aircrew personnel operating under the terms of this and other applicable directives are reminded that nothing shall infringe upon the inherent right of the individual to protect himself against hostile attack. In event of such an attack, the individual concerned will take immediate aggressive action against the attacking force with any means available.

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5. SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS: The following specific restrictions are applicable and strict compliance therewith is directed:...

d. U. S. Army CH-21C's (Shawnee) and USMC UH-34D's (HUS): Armament may be installed in and utilized from transport helicopters for defensive purposes only. Armament in such aircraft will not be utilized to initiate fires upon any target; however, if the aircraft is fired upon, it may return the fire. Aircraft will be (7)
U. S. marked and manned...

The U. S. Army UH-1 Iroquois (a light, turbine-powered helicopter used, starting in April 1963, to escort Marine transport helicopters--it mounted external forward-firing machine guns and rockets) operated under the same restrictions as the UH-34Ds, except that it was manned with a combined U. S. and Vietnamese crew. The performance of this helicopter enabled it to operate with the UH-34D, and it could carry up to six personnel in its cabin. Suppressive fire hand-held weapons were fired through the door, as in the Marine craft.

The COMUSMACV directive also repeated the general content of a 23 October MACV letter restricting operations near the Cambodian border. In normal day operations, U. S. aircraft

(7) TE 79.3.3.6 Command Diary, 6Nov62-28Jan63, Part D, Item 9
op. cit.

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were restricted from operating closer than three miles to the border, and then only when the ceiling was at least 1,500 feet and the visibility three miles or better. When the border was clearly defined by physical landmarks, operational missions could be conducted to within one mile of the border. Non-operational missions were restricted to five miles away and at least 2,000 feet altitude.

At night, no U. S. aircraft could operate within three miles of the border during periods of reduced visibility, and then only when under positive radar control. No combat missions could be conducted more than two miles off the coast at any time, unless specifically authorized by MACV headquarters.

During the last half of November, an ARVN howitzer unit was lifted on a displacement mission from Quang Ngai to Mang Buk, a "Tiger Force" (a northern designation for the 'Eagle Flight' of the delta) of 68 troops was lifted in a quick response mission but met no opposition, and several VIPs, newsmen, and press photographers were lifted on inspection tours of mountain radar sites, strategic hamlets, and various outposts. The O-1B aircraft were used for artillery fire control several times during this period.

On 25 November, a call for reinforcements resulted in the launching of five choppers to Tam Ky. The troops had already departed by truck, but the helicopters proceeded to an outpost at Phuoc Chau where the garrison, manned by 97 men, had

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successfully repelled an attack by several hundred Viet Cong troops. This was the largest VC attack since April and was well planned; however, the enemy lost 124 men confirmed dead, mostly from artillery bombardment and light machine gun fire from outpost bunkers. Marine helicopters evacuated 10 ARVN wounded.

Early in December, a UH-34D experienced engine failure and auto-rotated (descended without power and used the windmilling rotor to cushion the touchdown) to a safe landing. A maintenance team was flown in, repairs made, and the aircraft flown out safely.

On 6 December, 1,100 ARVN troops were given training in helicopter embarkation and the debarkation procedures and landing zone tactics, aimed at improving the speed and effectiveness of heli-borne assaults.

Christmas day was relatively quiet--supply flights delivered Christmas packages and food to various outposts, and three medical evacuations were flown. Francis Cardinal Spellman, Roman Catholic Ordinary to the U. S. Armed Forces, held mass in the hangar for personnel stationed in the area. Chaplain Richard P. Vinson of the task element brightened the day for 32 Da Nang orphans with his "Father-For-A-Day" program at the Marine compound. Each orphan spent the day with his "father," a volunteer Marine, ate dinner in the mess hall, sang Christmas

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carols, and received presents. The orphans returned the gifts by presenting a skit. At the conclusion of the festivities, Chaplain Vinson presented Mr. Gordon H. Smith, missionary founder of the orphanage, with a gift of over \$800.00, which had been donated by Marines for use in the building fund.

As 1962 drew to a close, many changes had already come about in SHUFLY operations since the task unit had left the delta. The decreased lift at higher altitudes had cut the payload from 12-13 ARVN soldiers to 6-9 in mountain lifts. The Viet Cong were seldom found in large concentrations, but were afforded unexcelled cover and concealment by the jungle. Landing zones were small and usually surrounded by forest--the 300 meter distance between helicopter landing sites and trees in the delta had been reduced to rotor blade diameter. The only landing zones available were often found beside stream beds and in valleys, accessible only by flying between ridge lines and close to steep hillsides--both dangerous places to be if the enemy were present. To minimize the risk as much as possible, Marine pilots made nearly vertical descents into the landing zones, and used every evasive maneuver, including maximum performance ascents, in the retirements.

The delayed landing tactic was continued--divisions landed at one minute intervals, and if the landing zone was too "hot," the flight leader aborted the landing and called for supporting

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fires. Because of the landings in close proximity to cover and concealment, preparatory fires and strikes became frequent, and desirable. The landing zones were already known to the enemy, anyway, so preparatory strikes did not give them away like they did in the delta. VNAF L-19s and Marine O-1Bs were used to good effect to spot and adjust artillery fire.

Selection and reconnaissance of landing zones became more important in the mountains of the north. A systematic program of photographic reconnaissance was begun, with photo planes remaining above 1,000 feet_x to provide timely and accurate information on potential landing zones without endangering the element of surprise. Thoroughness in visual reconnaissance had to be sacrificed somewhat to preserve that same element. Improved camera equipment, film processing, and photo interpretation capabilities were acquired by the task element and used daily. Two hand-held K-20 aerial cameras, and one K-25 mounted on external brackets on the O-1B, were used. The photo lab eventually turned out 1,500 prints per month, and detailed descriptions of all landing zones were available, complete with photographs, for each mission.

Troop training was found wanting at times. The ARVN tendency seemed to be to regroup in the landing zone immediately after debarking, rather than to spread out rapidly to the perimeter of the cleared area. This not only disrupted the

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next incoming wave, but also did not give protective fires for the troops or the helicopters during the critical phase of the assault. At other times "secure" outposts, manned by ARVN soldiers, turned out to be not secure at all. Continued training reduced these problems, but occasionally, such as on the first lift for a new troop unit, or the first landing at an outpost, they came up again.

Improved rescue techniques were developed. A new step was devised underneath the door opening of the helicopters, which allowed the rescue hoist to be used at all times on all aircraft. Emergency rescue kits were made up and detailed plans formulated for their use. The use of pathfinder or paratroop personnel to clear single helicopter landing zones, either for rescue or other operations, was studied.

Coordination, both air-to-air and air-to-ground, was still a problem. The B-26, a twin-engine, propeller driven medium bomber from the World War II era, was used to prepare landing zones for helicopter landings, but had no radio which could carry on direct communications with the choppers--hence, split-second coordination between lifting the strike and landing the troops was impossible. USAF crews piloted the B-26, so the language barrier did not present a problem. The B-26s were used primarily for pre-assault preparation, rather than on-call air strikes, and did an excellent job, in general. The A-1H,

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on the other hand, had a compatible radio, but with a single VNAF pilot the language barrier arose. Many times in mission briefings, with the use of hands and facial expressions, the point in question could be understood by the VNAF pilot, who had some understanding of English. In the air, however, using only the radio for communication, it was a different story. Messages were frequently not understood or misunderstood. Coordination and effectiveness suffered as a consequence, and dangerous situations sometimes resulted. Marine or other U. S. pilots would have solved this problem immediately, but the decision to use them would necessarily have had to be made at a high level.

After three months of flying in the north, a whole new type of operation had evolved. The mountainous, jungle-covered terrain, loosely controlled by remote outposts, did not lend itself to the large-scale mass attacks used in the delta. The whole area was mostly a link in the Viet Cong supply routes from the north and west to the south. Helicopter routes were channelized by the terrain, and landing zones were small, often holding less than four choppers.

As a result of these factors, resupply, ARVN unit displacements, administrative movement, and logistic support took up more flight hours than did combat support troop lifts. (See *Figures V-7 and V-8* ~~enclosure~~ for an overall summary of missions flown by type,

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sortie, and hours, with the number of troops lifted, the map coordinates, number of helicopters used, and cargo lifted.) By the summer of 1963, an average operational period, resupply and administrative missions took 65 percent of the total operating hours; combat support troop lifts took only 20 percent, medical evacuation missions took 7 percent, and the remaining 8 percent went to maintenance and miscellaneous flights.

Even earlier than that, however, the shift in the type operation could be seen. In the final quarter of calendar 1962, 1 October-31 December, the Marine task element compiled the following statistics:

	<u>UH-34D</u>	<u>O-1B</u>	<u>C-117D</u>	<u>Total</u>
Flight Hours, Total	4,332	611	200	5,143
Flight Sorties, Total	7,336	351	88	7,775
Sorties, Tactical Support, ARVN. .	795	225	0	1,020
Sorties, Logistic Support, ARVN. .	6,021	62	0	6,083
Sorties, Admin/Maintenance. . . .	520	64	88	672

During this period, of all sorties in support of the ARVN, about 86 percent, six out of seven, were for logistic support, mostly to outposts, with only one for tactical support. Considering the weather, the terrain, and the type operations conducted, flight hours held up well for all types of aircraft: the 24 UH-34Ds averaged 1,444 hours per month, or 60 per aircraft;

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the 3 O-1Bs averaged 204 hours per month, or 68 per aircraft; and the C-117D logged 200 total hours, or 67 per month.

Thus ended 1962. Enough missions in 1963 will be described to give the overall picture of Marine operations, and emphasis will be placed on new developments or changes.

On 10 January, an O-1B with engine failure made a dead stick landing on the beach 10 miles southeast of Quang Ngai. During the rollout in the soft sand the propeller, right wing tip, and right landing gear were damaged. The wings were dismantled and lifted by helicopter to Da Nang, while the fuselage was heli-lifted to Quang Ngai for fixed wing transportation back to home base, for further shipment to repair facilities.

The next day, 11 January, HMM-162, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Reinhardt Leu, relieved HMM-163. The rotation was accomplished over a period of a week, with one Marine KC-130F Hercules bringing in and taking out a load every second day. Only the personnel changed--the aircraft and equipment on station were transferred to the new squadron.

HMM-163 spent 163 days in South Vietnam, at Soc Trang and Da Nang. "Rathbun's Ridgerunners," in five months and 10 days, flew 10,869 hours and 15,200 sorties, lifted 25,216 combat assault troops and 59,024 other passengers, carried 2,228,776 pounds of cargo, made 535 medical evacuations, and recorded 32 hits, all on UH-34D aircraft. In August they flew 2,543

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helicopter hours, a record. Each pilot was recommended for at least one Air Medal, and many for second and third awards.

Five days after the squadron relief, the subunit changed commanders--Lieutenant Colonel George H. Linnemeier relieved Lieutenant Colonel Ralph R. Davis on 16 January. Subunit personnel continued to be provided from MAG-16 and the 1st MAW on individual orders, and the standard tour in SVN averaged four months for each man. Squadron personnel rotated as a unit approximately every six months.

On 29 January, Lieutenant Colonel Harold F. Brown relieved Lieutenant Colonel Alton W. McCully as task element commander.

On 19 January, the first recorded instance of helicopter landing zone obstacles at Da Nang occurred. Eighteen choppers lifted 299 troops into three landing zones 15-20 miles west-southwest of home base. One of the zones, at (ZC150700), had anti-helicopter stakes in it. A fire fight took place, and two helicopters were hit but not damaged seriously.

Subsequently, many staked landing zones were encountered, with sharpened bamboo or sapling trees 15 feet high and thickly emplaced, filling a clearing. Missions had to be aborted because of such obstacles. No completely effective method was devised to overcome the obstacles, yet retain the element of surprise in the assault. If control of the surrounding terrain could be established and maintained by strike aircraft

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(or artillery if within range), pathfinder or ranger troops could be rapelled into the zone to destroy the stakes with demolitions. This method took time and relinquished surprise.

If control could not be maintained over the surrounding terrain, helicopters were asking for trouble by hovering over the zone long enough to lower troops to the ground. Firing from well-concealed positions in the dense jungle, the Viet Cong were able to zero in on stationary targets from short range. By early 1963, they had automatic .30 caliber weapons and their accuracy was improving. Intelligence estimates also credited them with .50 caliber automatic antiaircraft weapons which were not used because of a shortage of ammunition.

Plans for using air-delivered explosives or napalm to destroy the stakes were considered but discarded. It was felt that the explosives would not clear a large area, and a landing could not be made immediately after a napalm strike. It would take some time for the stakes to burn.

Natural as well as man-made obstacles caused trouble. On 16 February, 18 UH-34Ds lifted 443 troops from Hue to a landing zone 18 miles south-southwest at (YC623975). Five of the helicopters sustained ruptured lower fuselage skins from a heavy concentration of tree stumps in the zone, hidden by tall elephant grass. One plane, which suffered a torn forward fuel cell, was left in the zone overnight under the guard of ARVN

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troops, then repaired and flown out the next day.

A second aircraft, which sustained rotor blade damage while on the approach to the LZ, made a precautionary landing a short distance away where the blades were replaced. A third, which received a shot through a main rotor blade, returned to Da Nang, where the blade was replaced.

During the same day, on other missions, Marine choppers evacuated an injured American advisor to the Hue hospital from (YD685093) 10 miles southwest of the town, and lifted 16 women and children, the victims of an artillery barrage, to a Vietnamese hospital.

Within the next week, task element helicopters evacuated a sick, pregnant Vietnamese woman, took a Scripps-Howard correspondent and his Army escort along on a combat support mission, and evacuated a small Vietnamese girl suffering from a shotgun wound. (At least one helicopter, an Army UH-1B, was hit by shotgun fire while based at Da Nang). Two weeks earlier, while on an administrative/supply mission, a helicopter lifted an ARVN heart attack victim to the Tom Dooley hospital at Quang Ngai. The next day, another lift took a Vietnamese soldier shot while in training on the Hoa Cam Range to Da Nang hospital. Suspected smallpox cases, pneumonia victims, other pregnant women, and, on 8 February, a sick ARVN sentry dog all traveled by Marine helicopter to medical aid. An American

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advisor who stepped on an antipersonnel stake was helo-evacuated to the Da Nang hospital on 7 March. Paradrop training missions for the ARVN, the lifting of CBS television camera crews to film an assault mission, and the flying of 25 newsmen to cover South Vietnam's President ^{Ngô's} ~~Diem's~~ visit to the area were included in a busy and varied spring agenda for TE 79.3.3.6.

On 10 March, two UH-34Ds were utilized to lower a U. S. Army pathfinder captain, a U. S. Army Special Forces medic, and an ARVN ranger into the crash site of an Army OV-1 Mohawk (a light, twin-engined turboprop observation-strike aircraft).

As the first UH-34D attempted to lower a fourth man, another ARVN ranger, into the crash site, the helicopter settled and crashed into the thick jungle, killing the ranger instantly. It burned on impact. The pilot, copilot, and crew chief managed to climb out of the wreckage, but the copilot died early that night.

The crash site was high on a hillside, about 30 miles southwest of Quang Ngai, at an elevation of about 5,000 feet. The altitude and high temperature made helicopter operations extremely hazardous, and, as the search and rescue operations progressed, a second UH-34D experienced power loss and settling when making ^{an} ~~this~~ approach to a landing nearby, and crashed. The aircraft sustained strike damage, but the only personnel injury in this second crash was a sprained ankle, suffered by one of

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the MABS-16 subunit ground rescue team on board.

The rescue team, except for the injured man, proceeded to the first UH-34D crash site to lend assistance. Bad weather prevented the evacuation of the crews on 10 March, but the clouds lifted the next morning and a coordinated, intensive rescue effort began. A UH-34D was stripped of 700 pounds of equipment to increase its lift capability, and trees at the crash site were blown down by rescue personnel, using demolitions, to make room to lower the helicopter rescue hoist. A 50-foot block and tackle was hooked to the helicopter's external cargo hook and used to lift the survivors and rescue personnel out. The survivors were heli-lifted to Quang Ngai for further evacuation to the Nha Trang U. S. Army hospital via Air Force C-123.

In the meantime, the task element ground rescue team, guided by search aircraft above, reached the downed Army Mohawk. The team recovered the pilot and made ¹⁵their way to a clearing. They were then lifted out by helicopter.

For the next two days, the ARVN ranger company that had been used in the search for the Army Mohawk guarded the crash sites. On 13 March, as two helicopters were shuttling the rangers to Mang Buk outpost, one aircraft received three hits from Viet Cong fire near the crash site. The lift operation halted while three more UH-34Ds were called upon for close

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air support. While the three delivered suppressive fire from their M-60 machine guns, the original two lifted out the remaining troops without further incident. This is the first reported instance of UH-34Ds providing close air support.

Prior to the last lift from the crash area, the helicopter that had not burned was cannibalized of useable equipment and parts and destroyed with thermite grenades.

On 19 March, while on the ground to pick up ARVN wounded for evacuation, a UH-34D received 32 shrapnel holes from a mortar round, believed to be 60mm. The holes were distributed from the copilot's window to the tail rotor gearbox housing. The aircraft was flown to home base, the tail rotor was replaced, and the holes were repaired.

On 26 March, two Montagnard civilians with broken backs and one with a broken arm were evacuated. The next day, the C-117D lost an engine in the landing pattern at Da Nang--a safe landing was made on one engine. Torrential rains prohibited all flying on 28 March. On the 30th, the Quang Tin Province Chief was lifted on a tour of outposts in his province. On the final day of the quarter, ARVN paratroopers made 70 practice jumps from Marine helicopters and a special KC-130 flight arrived with a shipment of rotor blades.

In the first quarter of calendar 1963, 1 January-31 March, the Marine task element compiled the following statistics:

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	<u>UH-34D</u>	<u>O-1B</u>	<u>C-117D</u>	<u>Total</u>
Flight Hours, Total	4,761	670	281	5,712
Flight Sorties, Total	8,275	389	111	8,775
Sorties, Tactical Support, ARVN	1,181	359	0	1,540
Sorties, Logistic Support, ARVN	6,537	19	0	6,556
Sorties, Admin/Maintenance	557	11	111	679

Of all sorties in support of the ARVN, almost four out of five (81 percent) were for logistic support; of all UH-34D sorties almost 85 percent were for logistic support. The sorties totaled exactly 1,000 more than the previous quarter. The 24 helicopter averaged 1,587 total hours per month for the quarter, or 66 hours per aircraft; the three O-1Bs averaged 233 hours per month, or 78 per aircraft; and the C-117D logged 281 total hours, averaging 94 per month.

USMC-USA Helicopter Flight Comparisons, Oct62-Mar63

During the six-month period from October, 1962, through March, 1963, a comparison of flight hours and sorties between Marine and Army units is shown. (This was the period when flight operations in the north (Marine) were limited somewhat by the weather, and when activity in the south (Army) was stepped up, because of the dry season.

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<u>Period,</u> <u>Organization</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>A/C Assigned</u>	<u>Flight Hours</u>	<u>Sorties</u>
Oct-Dec62			
USA	100	11,872	13,091
USMC	24	5,143	7,775
Jan-Mar63			
USA	100	9,804	11,423
USMC	24	5,712	8,775
6-Month Totals			
USA	100	21,676	24,514 ⁽⁸⁾
USMC	24	10,855	16,550

With one fourth as many aircraft, the Marines flew over half as many hours and over two thirds as many sorties as the Army.

Operations in the second quarter of 1963 started slowly, with evacuation missions, paradrop training missions, an escort helicopter flight for General Harkins to the Hue area, and some low ceilings and rain that limited flight operations. On 8 April, a UH-34D on a routine supply mission ^{drew} received heavy automatic weapons fire but was not hit. Five days later, on a medical evacuation flight, 28 miles southwest of Da Nang at (AT795295), a helicopter received eight rounds in the cockpit

(8) Marine Corps General Officer Symposium, Tab M, op. cit.

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and clamshell doors (the area in front of and below the cockpit, surrounding the engine). One round hit the copilot in the upper right arm, and the chopper made a forced landing in the zone.

Two other helicopters evacuated the copilot, a wounded U. S. advisor, four wounded ARVN, and one dead ARVN. On a second trip to pick up more wounded, one of the helicopters received five hits along the right side of the aircraft. The crew chief was hit twice, once in the thigh and once in the back. He was evacuated to the Marine task element dispensary for emergency treatment and then taken to the U. S. Army hospital at Nha Trang, *about 24 miles down the coast from Da Nang.* Both helicopters underwent repairs in the field, the one with five hits flying out the same day and the one with eight hits two days later. Further repair on the latter was required at Da Nang.

In the meantime a third UH-34D, on an evacuation mission at (ZC215251), three miles from the previous "hot" zone, took four hits along the right side of the aircraft. It was temporarily repaired and flown to Da Nang the following day for more work. Viet Cong automatic weapons were becoming effective, and April saw the greatest number of hits yet recorded in a single month--39.

The operation on 13 April had started with 16 helicopters lifting 435 ARVN troops in three waves into Landing zones Xray

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and Zulu (ZC205242 and ZC132250). Three O-1B aircraft were used for reconnaissance, and for the first time U. S. Army UH-1B helicopters (the armed attack version of the UH-1 Iroquois) escorted the Marine transport aircraft. Five UH-1Bs, armed with M-60 machine guns and 2.75 inch rockets, supported the assault waves, along with the fixed wing aircraft normally used. No Marine helicopters were hit in the assault landings --it was later in the day, on unescorted evacuation missions, that the two UH-34Ds were damaged.

From April on, a detachment of six of the armed Army helicopters remained at Da Nang to provide escort and support to the Marine task element, whose commander exercised operational control over them. The Army pilots worked closely with the Marines, attended all briefings, and there was no problem of coordination or liaison as so often arose with other supporting elements. The UH-1Bs were effective in delivering suppressive fire, but they could not carry the ordnance load of the fixed wing escort aircraft, especially the A-1H. On the other hand, they could remain right with the transport helicopters at all times, and be instantly responsive to any enemy fire received.

Heavy cargo, troop, and evacuation traffic continued in the northern part of the I Corps area through mid-April, and the weather improved. Tension increased at the airfield as

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indications of Viet Cong activity nearby increased. A captured VC district chief divulged information which resulted in two enemy killed by the ARVN four kilometers south of the Marine compound. In another incident, a young boy was apprehended on 23 April, one kilometer south of the quarters area. He was carrying several grenades concealed in large, fresh bread rolls that he was ostensibly selling. With May Day approaching, the task element completed extensive defensive preparations and the security platoon utilized its full strength on patrol and sentry duty.

The task element published OPERATION PLAN 1-63 on 25 April, setting up the commander's defensive organization. The plan assumed that the enemy had the capability to carry out attacks on the airfield at will, in strengths up to company size. The mission of the task element was to be prepared to defend personnel and equipment within the working and billeting areas by any means available.

^{Should}
~~When~~ Lieutenant Colonel Brown gave the order to execute the plan, the subunit (Company "B") would take up prepared positions along the perimeter of the billeting area, and provide defensive forces to secure the hangar and flight line area. The security platoon would revert to task element reserve stand by to reinforce the perimeter in the billeting area, and also be prepared to move by vehicle or tactical

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march to the flight line area.

The tenant HMM-squadron (Company "A"), upon the order to execute, would proceed to the hangar area and assume primary responsibility for the defense of the area and the aircraft. The aircraft would be flown out on order of the task element commander only, should the situation require.

Medical aid stations in both the hangar and the billeting areas were set up by the plan, and a corpsman was billeted at all times during hours of darkness at the flight line, as a precautionary measure. Two separate wire circuits and a backup voice circuit provided normal and emergency communications. Each man in the defensive perimeter would receive one unit of fire (40 rounds) with resupply of ammunition, water, and rations provided for.

With these preparations made, the task element continued normal operations. The attack never came.

On 27 April, in support of OPERATION BACK PHUONG XI, 21 Marine UH-34Ds lifted 567 troops to (AS900983) 22 miles southwest of Tam Ky. During the approach to the landing zone one UH-34D was shot down by Viet Cong machine gun fire. It was suspected that the tail rotor control cable was cut by the gunfire--the cockpit area sustained five hits. Several fragments of shrapnel wounded the pilot in the left leg, and the ARVN helicopter team leader was hit by three shrapnel fragments.

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The plane was stripped of useable parts and destroyed by burning.

In the same assault, four other helicopters were hit, one six times. This was the first incident in South Vietnam of a Marine aircraft being destroyed by direct enemy action.

During the remainder of April, two helicopters coordinated the rescue of a Vietnamese floating on an air mattress off the coast, more evacuations were made, including a Vietnamese child with a broken hip, and the C-117D continued the regular Saigon commissary supply runs. The helicopters logged 1,942 hours in April, the highest total for a month since leaving the delta. One more TAFDS was put into use, at Tam Ky, increasing the operational range from Da Nang. "Field usage of the TAFDS under actual combat conditions continued to prove them invaluable," commented the task element commander. (9) Support from higher echelons and VMGR-152 continued to be excellent, though personnel shortages particularly in the utilities and communications fields, created a heavy workload on those sections. The utilities section maintained over 63 buildings on the field during the time, in addition to their other duties. Parts for both aircraft and vehicles became a problem at times, caused in part by the heavy damage sustained by the helicopters from enemy fire. With the KC-130s hauling in AOCP

(9) TE 79.3.3.6 Command Diary, 29Jan-30Apr63, p. 53. [S]

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parts by the dozen, the tempo of operations was maintained and even increased--in May, 2,058 hours and 4,644 sorties were flown by the helicopters. In addition, 16,108 personnel were transported and 246 evacuations made, and almost a million pounds (957,040) of cargo hauled.

May was the last full operating month for HMM-162, and on 8 June HMM-261, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Frank A. Shook, took over on station. Marine KC-130s had been ferrying in the relieving personnel for a week prior to the changeover, and the last elements of the new squadron arrived on two special Hercules flights on 12 June.

In the second quarter of calendar 1963, 1 April-30 June, the Marine task element compiled the following statistics:

	<u>UH-34D</u>	<u>O-1B</u>	<u>C-117D</u>	<u>Total</u>
Flight Hours, Total	5,432	776	192	6,400
Flight Sorties, Total	12,107	405	78	12,590
Sorties, Tactical Support, ARVN	996	392	0	1,388
Sorties, Logistic Support, ARVN	9,976	0	0	9,976
Sorties, Admin/Maintenance	1,135	13	78	1,226

Good flying weather prevailed during the latter part of this quarter, the number of total sorties flown increased substantially, and over 90 percent of ARVN support by the helicopters was logistic in nature. The 24 helicopters averaged 1,811 hours per month, or 75 hours per aircraft; the three O-1Bs

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averaged 259 hours per month, or 86 per aircraft, and the C-117D logged 192 hours, or 64 per month.

In this period, the O-1Bs were in full use, both for weather and photographic reconnaissance and for radio relay. Both the O-1B and the RB-26 (photo version of the bomber) photos gave excellent coverage, but neither could always detect stakes in the landing zones, so a visual reconnaissance by the helicopter flight leader was still required. This procedure also allowed a close look at approach and retirement lanes, and the detection of prevailing winds.

A minimum of 1,500 feet of altitude over the terrain was maintained wherever possible, with resupply missions going in over the outposts high and spiraling down to a landing to avoid small arms fire. Covering aircraft were used during evacuation missions--they made passes at the zone even when not firing for a suppressive effect. T-28s and A-1Hs were preferred for this duty because of their greater ordnance capacities, *(See Figures V-5 and V-6 for ordnance expanded by type aircraft, Apr-Jul 1943).* especially the latter type aircraft. In his letter of 19 July to COMUSMACV, evaluating helicopter tactics and techniques for the previous quarter, CTE stated in part:

(2) Highly desired in order of efficiency for air cover:

- (a) AD's (A-1Hs) with Marines or U. S. Pilots
- (b) T-28's with Marines or U. S. pilots.

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(c) UTT (UH-1B) armed helos in immediate area

New requirements which the same report considered were:

(1) that VNAF helicopters be integrated into U. S. Marine division formations for training and advisory purposes; (2) that VNAF helicopters assume the burden of resupply and evacuation after a maximum effort strike by U. S. helicopters; (3) that friendly troops must occupy the high ground around landing zones to prevent helo losses on evacuation and resupply missions; (4) that providing trained pathfinder personnel to clear landing zones and provide terminal guidance are necessary to fully exploit the helo-borne concept; and (5) that "U. S. advisors should instruct ARVN troops on proper loading and unloading of both personnel and cargo. Troops who enter the aircraft with rounds in chambers pointing at the pilot or co-pilot, rifle grenades on rifles with round in chamber, or hand grenades with rubber bands around the spoon are a constant source of concern to pilots and crew chiefs."⁽¹⁰⁾

During the first half of 1963, full implementation of the new task element intelligence SOP was realized. OPERATION LAM SON VII began on 6 February, marking the first time that

(10) TE 79.3.3.6 Command Diary 1May-17Jul63, Substantiating Documents p. 47, Evaluation of Helicopter Tactics and Techniques Report. [S]

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the task element S-2 section was included in pre-strike briefings for the HMM air crews. Intelligence for LAM SON VII on the landing zones and the enemy situation proved accurate and useable.

The daily routine for the O-1B aircraft called for two or three weather reconnaissance sorties. These latter flights reduced the uncertainty of conditions in the interior due to the lack of weather stations there, and avoided useless launches by the helicopters into impenetrable cloud or fog conditions.

By March, two new KE-4 70mm aerial cameras were in use in the O-1Bs. Officer aerial observers, flying in the back seat, used them with excellent results. A new photo lab with three darkrooms went into operation in late March, and processed 1,000-1,500 prints per month, significantly improving the overall intelligence effort. As a result, many missions were planned and executed in less than 24 hours. The U. S. Air Force provided additional coverage with photo reconnaissance flights by RB-26 and RF-101 (a high performance twin-jet McDonnell Voodoo, "little brother" of the F4B fighter of the USMC and USN) aircraft.

I Corps-wide intelligence seminars were conducted, starting in February, which were attended by all intelligence advisors from sectors, provinces, and divisions, as well as by representatives from other corps areas and J-2, MACV, Saigon. The

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objective of the seminars was to consolidate information collection efforts and to improve dissemination. The work of the O-1Bs was praised, but the need for a unified, sound escape and evasion (E&E) program was discussed. The task element S-2 brought this up and presented the TE 79.3.3.6 proposal--it was adopted by I and II Corps.

Closer liaison and stronger working relationships were established with USAF Intelligence, U. S. Combined Studies Division, U. S. Army Special Forces, and similar organizations to enhance the operational aspects of the task element intelligence effort. Daily visits to I Corps were made, and frequent trips to MACV, Saigon. The task element intelligence officer spent substantial time in the field with Special Forces personnel, gathering first-hand information.

At the task element level, briefings and debriefings for every mission were conducted by S-2 personnel, visitors were briefed, situation maps were kept current on a day-to-day basis, and the problems of close air support coordination, advisor methods, the Buddhist situation, the defensive problems of the airfield, and the possible coup d'etat situation were planned for. Also, close watch was kept on the enemy antiaircraft capability, especially the use of .50 caliber or larger automatic antiaircraft weapons.

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As the second half of 1963 got underway, two command changes took place in the Marine task element. On 5 July Lieutenant Colonel Earl W. Cassidy relieved Lieutenant Colonel Linnemeier as commanding officer of the subunit, and on 18 July Colonel Andre D. Gomez relieved Lieutenant Colonel Brown as commanding officer of TE 79.3.3.6.

On 6 July 21 UH-34Ds lifted the first wave of 263 ARVN troops for an assault on two landing zones. The mission was aborted when both zones were found staked. One UH-34D was hit in the forward fuel cell during a pass over the zone, and an Army UH-1B pilot was hit in a similar maneuver. He was evacuated to the Air Force Dispensary at Da Nang, but was dead on arrival.

Ten days later, on a resupply mission to Talon (YC886325) 37 miles southwest of Da Nang, a UH-34D crashed. Four ARVN troops and two U. S. Army advisors, all passengers, were injured and evacuated. Two other Marine helicopters flew to the crash site and destroyed the downed chopper.

The crew of a downed L-19 was picked up by a search and rescue (SAR) team of Marine helicopters and observation aircraft at (YC813517) 35 miles west-southwest of Da Nang on 1 August. On 26 August, a UH-34D was forced down with engine trouble. A sister chopper lifted the crew out--both aircraft received fire during the period but were not hit. Within

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40 minutes, ARVN troops had been lifted in to secure the area. The downed plane was repaired and flown out.

In the third quarter of calendar 1963, 1 July-30 September, the Marine task element compiled the following statistics:

	<u>UH-34D</u>	<u>O-1B</u>	<u>C-117D</u>	<u>Total</u>
Flight Hours, Total	4,298	776	228	5,302
Flight Sorties, Total	8,482	399	114	8,995
Sorties, Tactical Support, ARVN	3,063	389	0	3,452
Sorties, Logistic Support, ARVN	2,719	10	0	2,729
Sorties, Admin/Maintenance	2,700	0	114	2,814

During this period, the 24 helicopters averaged 1,767 hours per month, or 73 hours per aircraft; the three O-1Bs averaged 86 hours per aircraft, exactly the same as the previous quarter, and the C-117D logged 228 total hours, or 76 per month. For the first time in the north, more sorties were flown in tactical support than in logistic support, and a large increase in administrative/maintenance sorties occurred.

The autumn transitional monsoon season began during the last month of the quarter, and cloudy conditions forced pilots to fly lower than was desired over most terrain. No resultant increase in hits had been noted by the end of September, however.

Three successful night evacuations were accomplished at established outposts under fire. Helicopter pilots used no lights, but the personnel at the outposts, fearing that the dim

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lights requested would not be seen, turned on vehicle lights. This resulted in a high glare condition and a hazard to the pilot.

Eighteen UH-34Ds lifted 387 troops and 19,125 pounds of cargo on a strike mission on 16 September. One helicopter crashed in the landing zone at the destination (YD315085), 25 miles west-southwest of Hue. The aircraft was damaged beyond repair. It was stripped of all useable parts, and destroyed the next day by a demolition team.

A Typical Unit Displacement Heliborne Operation

In August, a large three-day retrograde movement involving 1,300 ARVN troops with 105mm artillery, equipment, and supplies was accomplished. This operation was typical of Marine activities at Da Nang, and is fully described here for a better look at an operation in detail. On Wednesday morning, ^{14 Aug 68} the planning briefing took place. The first lift was to take place Friday morning, taking 500 troops out of Landing Zone "Hotel," at the same time two 105s and personnel were being flown out of LZ "Zulu," both zones about five miles from the Laotian border. A second lift would remove 200 additional soldiers from "Zulu" on Friday, and the remainder would be lifted on Saturday.

LZ "Hotel," like many others in the area, was at the bottom of a steep valley, in a box canyon. The only approach

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and retirement route was between heavily forested ridgelines 1,000 feet high and 1,200 feet apart, which sloped steeply downward to a river at the bottom. The landing zone was beside the river, wide enough for one helicopter and long enough for three. Takeoffs required flying withⁿ 100 yards of the nose of a ridge before the helicopters could reach 10 knots of speed after liftoff, and within 300 yards of another before 50 knots could be gained. In the final phases of a retrograde movement there would be no cover of these slopes by friendly infantry fire.

For this reason the plan was modified--the bulk of the troops in "Hotel" would be lifted out on Thursday, with a security "covering force" remaining until the lift was complete, then traveling to "Zulu" on foot to be lifted the next day. When the plans were approved by all parties concerned, 20 hours remained for the Marine task element to get ready for the lift.

To perform the lift, the HMM squadron planned to use 20 UH-34Ds--18 to carry troops, one for SAR, and a maintenance spare. The Da Nang Air Support Operations Center (ASOC, the coordinating agency for all aircraft, USMC, USA, USAF, VNAF) assigned three VNAF H-34s to augment the lift, and assigned two VNAF T-28's, one USAF B-26, and one VNAF L-19, with a forward air controller, for air support. Additionally, two Army UH-1Bs would lift the 105s externally, and two others (armed)

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would be on station to provide close-in fire suppression. A Marine O-1B would provide weather reconnaissance information, and remain between the base and the landing zones to act as radio relay.

To coordinate the multi-service, bi-lingual air effort, a TAC(A) would be required. The USAF provided an L-28, a four-place observation aircraft with over eight hours fuel endurance and, more important, with UHF, VHF, and FM radios. Occupying the seats would be the pilot, the Marine task element operations officer, and USAF and VNAF ASOC representatives. This combination was known as the Airborne ASOC.

All three radios would be required--the Marine UH-34Ds and O-1Bs had UHF and FM, the USAF B-26s had UHF and VHF, the VNAF T-28s had UHF and VHF, and the VNAF L-19 had VHF and FM. Some of the VNAF crews spoke English and some did not; none of the U. S. crews spoke Vietnamese.

There remained a requirement for the airborne ASOC to communicate with someone on the ground to keep current on the status of the operation in the landing zone. An Air Force liaison officer from I Corps volunteered to go into the zone with the first flight and provide the information by radio. On other operations, U. S. advisors with the ARVN units performed this function.

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The distance from home base to the landing zones was approximately 50 miles, and the troops would be lifted 30 miles to a staging area. To speed up the operation, an Army Caribou (a medium twin-engined turboprop fixed wing transport with short field capabilities) would fly in a TAFDS to the troop destination area, and arrangements would be made for the civilian contractor to deliver fuel and to provide protection for his trucks along the route.

By Wednesday noon, the aircraft had been assigned, the air schedule was complete, and it was time to coordinate with the ground commanders. The I Corps G-3, his U. S. Army advisor, the USAF I Corps Air Liaison Officer, and the Marine TE Operations Officer were flown to the landing zones. First they landed at "Hotel," where, after coordinating with the ground commander on the change from Friday to Thursday and the size of the covering force to be left, details of the operation were worked out. Then the ground commander was taken on a helicopter reconnaissance of the area, where he was shown the approach and retirement lanes (necessarily the same in this case) and the areas that must be protected if the helicopters were to avoid ambush.

The covering force would consist of about 125 troops, and their positions and the marking of their front lines was agreed upon. They would reply to any enemy fire directed against the

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helicopters. The transport helicopters would arrive in flights of three at five minute intervals. Armed helicopters would escort each flight in and out of the landing zone, and the fixed wing aircraft would be overhead to provide heavy fire suppression if required. The USAF ALO in the zone would coordinate the air-ground plan with the ground commander and the airborne ASOC.

The I Corps G-3 and his party then flew in LZ "Zulu" to repeat the planning process with the ground commander there. "Zulu" was at the bottom of a "bowl" 500 feet deep. During the descent and ascent the helicopters would be circling below the rim of the bowl within range of direct observed small arms fire. The security of the bowl itself depended upon controlling the rim and the slopes.

The planning party found a point from which the terrain could be observed, and drew the tactical plan out on the dirt with sticks. Helicopter routes, friendly positions and patrols, mortars and automatic weapons, and inner and outer perimeter defense lines were indicated. With a stick, a map, a compass, and a smooth patch of dirt an agreeable plan was evolved.

On Friday, the ARVN troops would occupy the rim of the bowl and patrol outward for two to three kilometers. No targets would be engaged by friendly air within 3,000 meters of the zone without prior coordination with the troops on the

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ground. The two 105s would be lifted first, and then the troops, in the same manner as from "Hotel." Prior to breaking down the artillery pieces for lift, all remaining ammunition would be removed from the LZ by firing.

On Saturday the lift would be completed, but on that day no friendly forces would proceed beyond the outer perimeter of the bowl, and air strikes would be made beyond it. Before the outer perimeter was withdrawn, the inner perimeter (100 yards in diameter) would be occupied with all the machine guns and mortars available. The outer perimeter would start to withdraw when the seventh flight of three transport helicopters cleared the landing zone. Once all friendly troops were inside the inner perimeter, the "free kill area" closed down to 300 meters from the LZ. This would permit armed helicopters and fighters to attack the source of enemy fire received from the rim of the bowl and the inward slopes.

Once all the troops but the inner perimeter defense force were out, subsequent helicopter waves would arrive with as close a landing interval as possible (rather than five minute intervals) to permit the removal of the entire remaining force within five minutes. Just before the final lift, all mortars would expend their remaining ammunition on known or potential enemy positions. The ALO would suspend all air strikes during the mortar barrage, then clear aircraft back in to support the

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final lift. Code words were used for these transmissions, to provide some measure of radio security.

With the plan of action for LZ "Zulu" agreed upon, the party boarded its helicopter for the return to home base. On Wednesday night, working arrangements for the airborne ASOC were ironed out. Only one member had any experience with the Marine conception of a Tactical Air Controller (Airborne), (TAC(A)), and each service did things a little differently. However, Army aviation was under the operational control of the Marine CTE in I Corps, and the two services had developed effective tactics working together. The VNAF helicopters would be controlled right along with the USMC choppers, and the USAF and VNAF representatives in the airborne ASOC would coordinate their aircraft--the T-28s and the B-26.

At 2200 Wednesday night, the L-28 arrived from Saigon and the pilot was briefed. Thursday morning, the "all-pilots" briefing for the day's operation was conducted. During the briefing a B-26 crash was reported, and one flight of Marine helicopters was diverted to assist in search and rescue operations. This increased the lift time, but not prohibitively. Since the cause of the crash was thought to be structural failure, all B-26s were grounded while an investigation was conducted. This deprived the operation of B-26 support.

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Following the weather reconnaissance flight, "H-Hour" was confirmed and the lift began. For four hours it proceeded as planned. Twice armed helicopters drew and engaged fire to one side of the approach route. The ASOC altered the route to avoid the area and the day was completed with no hits received.

Friday's lift started on schedule just as Thursday's had --the transport choppers arrived at "Zulu" just as the UH-1Bs departed with the 105s. The friendly troops had marked their front line positions as planned. After three hours of normal operations, a departing flight reported fire received from a ridge about five kilometers from the LZ. The armed helicopters departed immediately to search out the source of fire--they drew fire and marked the target. The fighters were then called in for a strike, which eliminated the trouble spot. They made their firing runs from north to south so that the transport helicopters could continue without interruption. During this coordination by the ASOC, the transmissions to the Marine helicopters were in English on UHF, and the fighters worked in Vietnamese on VHF.

After five hours of lifts, the ALO advised that the covering force from "Hotel" had arrived and that the ground commander would like them added to the day's loads. This lengthened the job, but shortened Saturday's effort--it was

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done, and Friday's operation was completed in seven hours.

Saturday morning, two hours after the lifts began, the ALO reported that the outer perimeter had been withdrawn as planned and that all remaining friendly troops were within the LZ. About that same time, a departing flight reported fire from the same location as the day before--again the route was moved and the fighters called in. Shortly afterward, with 100 troops plus the perimeter guard remaining, a helicopter landed at home base with a rough running engine. Home base advised all helicopters to check their fuel strainers on their next landing at the delivery area, since fuel contamination was suspected. This slowed the operation just when the mass lift was due.

With 150 troops left to be lifted, the ALO reported enemy troops inbound on the west slope 500 meters away. The ASOC kept all aircraft east of the zone and the 60mm mortars fired marking rounds. The airborne FAC in the L-19 was then requested to mark the target for an air strike, but the U. S. pilot aboard reported after several passes that the VNAF observer would not mark the target without permission from the ground. The ground commander would not approve--he thought he could not use air support within 3,000 meters (300 meters had been agreed upon previously).

These troops could not be avoided--if the transport helicopters were to come in, the enemy had to be removed. The

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armed UH-1Bs were called in and controlled by the ALO through the ASOC (because of incompatible radios). Once on target the two armed helicopters expended their 2.75-inch rockets into the area, and the enemy activity disappeared.

The transport helicopter flight leader closed up his flight interval, and the ALO reported that it was the "4th of July and he could start his celebration." The mortar barrage opened as the "birds in a flock" proceeded inbound. As the flight approached the landing zone, the perimeter troops answered enemy fire to the south and east--the enemy positions were marked with mortars. The helicopters spiraled down, with the armed helicopters flying a concentric pattern in the opposite direction, firing on the enemy as they passed. The traffic was too congested to use fighters, and the job now was to keep the enemy suppressed while the lift continued.

In less than five minutes, the last troops were airborne, and purple smoke grenades were dropped in the zone--the signal that all the ARVN were out. The next helicopter flight waved off and returned empty. The retrograde movement was complete, and not a plane or a man had been hit.

This operation marked the first use of the Marine doctrine of the TAC(A) and an ALO or FAC (Forward Air Controller) for ground-air coordination. The ASOC proved to be a valuable tool throughout the rest of 1963. The other lessons learned

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included: (1) plan in detail, and (2) be flexible.

Planning was especially important in all operations because of the constantly changing personnel situation. If the same operation had been flown again a week later, many of the personnel involved originally would have changed. A new Vietnamese ground unit might not have been ^{so} experienced as the one lifted in this operation--instead of a mixup in distance it might be in smoke signals. Five services and two languages levied an even greater requirement than normal on thorough planning. These problem areas received continued emphasis.

Late in the afternoon of 8 October, two UH-34Ds were lost and seven crew members killed in an operational accident while on the way to a USAF T-28 crash. The crash sites were not located that night, though a search was made, but they were found the next morning. By that time the Viet Cong were waiting. Stiff resistance was encountered as 254 ARVN were landed in the area six miles ^{38 miles southwest of Da Nang} west of Talon, 1. Nine hits were recorded and one ARVN killed, but the area was secured.

The following day, three Marine helicopters, supported by three UH-1Bs and two T-28s, lifted a maintenance inspection team to the crash site and recovered the remains of the bodies. The helicopters were driven out of Talon by enemy fire, while waiting there for the team to investigate the crash. They were also fired upon by automatic weapons when picking up the

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maintenance team, but accomplished the mission without being hit.

On 11 October, another UH-34D on the ground two miles from the crash site took two hits in the engine and one in the left strut. A maintenance team determined that the engine had to be replaced. On the 13th, 10 transport helicopters, with three UH-1Bs and two T-28s again escorting, lifted 120 ARVN troops into the site as security. Other helicopters brought the new engine and a maintenance crew. The engine was changed and the aircraft flown out without incident.

Early in November, a coup d'etat took place in the Vietnamese government. The situation was confused during the early portions of the uprising, and internal security was increased to the maximum by the task element.

On the first day of operation by the new regime, no aircraft, U. S. or Vietnamese, were permitted to take off or land. On the second and third days, emergency evacuations and emergency resupply flights were permitted, although each flight had to be approved by the aviation operations center in Saigon through both U. S. and RVN channels. After the fourth day, operational flights were back to normal, though great care was taken that U. S. aircraft were not involved in any flights of a political nature. It was permissible to transport troops from the main population centers to the field, but no troops

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were permitted to return to the cities.

Throughout the remainder of 1963, there was a marked decrease in operational requirements, and the task element operated at a slower tempo than before. Torrential monsoons caused cancellation of some scheduled missions in November and December.

Evacuations and resupply lifts by helicopter, weather recon by O-1Bs, the regular commissary supply flights by the C-117D, and the logistics run twice-weekly by VMGR-152 all continued in the normal manner. Five hits on aircraft were recorded in November, and six in December.

During the final quarter of 1963, 1 October through 31 December, the Marine task element compiled the following flight statistics:

	<u>UH-34D</u>	<u>O-1B</u>	<u>C-117D</u>	<u>Total</u>
Flight Hours, Total	3,328	728	202	4,258
Flight Sorties, Total	6,332	314	81	6,727
Sorties, Tactical Support, ARVN	1,869	314	0	2,183
Sorties, Logistic Support, ARVN	2,684	0	0	2,684
Sorties, Admin/Maintenance	1,779	0	81	1,860

The effect of the political situation was reflected in the helicopters totals for this quarter: an average of 1,109 hours per month, or 46 hours per aircraft. The O-1Bs continued their high level of operations, recording an average

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of 243 hours per month, or 81 per aircraft. The faithful C-117D logged 202 hours for the quarter, 67 per month.

Developmental Activities

Several tactics and techniques from the delta were carried over in the north. The en route altitudes remained at 1,500 feet (slant range from the terrain) wherever possible, the delayed landing tactic was employed out of necessity as well as caution, because of the small landing zones, and the reconnaissance of weather, routes, and landing zones continued. In other areas, though, changes were made.

Approach and retirement tactics were adopted to keep the helicopters out of small arms range from the surrounding terrain as much as possible. Resupply missions to outposts were flown at en route altitude until directly overhead, and a nearly vertical descent made to a landing. The techniques described in the three-day retrograde movement showed how the terrain restricted approach and retirement, and how the spiral descent was used.

The ground tactics were completely different from those used in the south, and influenced the use of helicopters. There were few sweeps, leapfrogs, or blocking forces. Even the "Tiger Force" that replaced "Eagle Flight" was seldom used. Movement in the jungle was next to impossible, and landing

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zones were rare--outpost warfare was the rule. Lifting troops and equipment into and out of outposts, and providing logistic support, became the primary job of Marine helicopters.

While the number and size of assault lifts decreased, the use of the fixed wing observation planes increased in the north. They were invaluable for weather reconnaissance, for scouting alternate routes during rapidly changing weather conditions, for marking landing zones, for airborne radio relay, for position orientation of friendly ground patrols, and for photo reconnaissance. Their photographic work was excellent, though it could not always detect stakes, stumps, or rocks in the elephant grass. The photo lab facilities and the increased intelligence effort at all echelons combined to make the intelligence program vastly more effective than it had been.

Air support also took on added effectiveness in the Da Nang operation. The drawbacks of incompatible communications equipment and the language barrier remained, but maximum utilization was made of what was on hand for use. The airborne operations center, first used in August, expanded a Marine Corps concept and increased the effectiveness of air support. The armed helicopters of the U. S. Army, which teamed with the Marine UH-34Ds to form a potent striking force, proved effective as an addition to, but not a replacement for, fixed wing strike aircraft.

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The UH-1Bs were used in three areas--assault landings, protection for friendly landing zones, and during retrograde operations. They normally carried 16 2.75 inch rockets and four 7.62mm machine guns, but one helicopter in the platoon carried 48 rockets and no machine guns. Both weapons were excellent in accuracy against point targets. The machine guns could be deflected downward and outward, permitting firing into a side area for several seconds while still maintaining forward speed.

The most significant capability of the UH-1B was its performance and maneuverability. It could stay with the UH-34Ds at all times, and usually led and flanked the assault wave, going down almost to ground level to deliver suppressive fire. It went all the way in to the landing zone, making fire-power available after the strike aircraft lifted their attack.

If enemy fire proved too heavy, the transport helicopters would wave off and orbit clear of the zone, while the UH-1Bs took the targets under fire. If necessary, they marked the target with rockets and called in the heavier armament of the T-28s or B-26s.

The maneuverability of the UH-1Bs allowed them to spiral down into difficult landing zones with the UH-34Ds, flying in the opposite direction and outside the transport helicopters' circle, so as to have all the surrounding area under surveillance

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at all times. This is something the fixed wing aircraft could not do. Along the same lines, the UH-1Bs could take nearby enemy positions under fire and allow the UH-34Ds to continue their lifts, such as in the critical phase of a retrograde movement. Fixed wing strikes, on the other hand, might interfere with the transport helicopter flight pattern or approach routes under certain terrain conditions.

The UH-1Bs, as good as they were, had some limitations. Their speed was no greater than that of the UH-34Ds, so they could not turn aside to take a target under attack while en route and then catch up again for the assault, unless the transport choppers circled and waited for them. They had less fuel endurance than the UH-34Ds, and their time on station was less. Their armament was relatively light and their ammunition capacity limited. In the short lift distances used at Da Nang, these shortcomings were overcome by scheduling the UH-1Bs to relieve each other on station, so that they could refuel and rearm during the operation. If their armament was not heavy enough to suppress the enemy, the fixed wing fighters were waiting, capable of carrying 20mm cannon, rockets, bombs, and napalm.

In the area of supporting weapons, mortars were used to good effect by the ground troops for marking targets and as antipersonnel weapons. The machine guns and rockets employed

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by the aircraft were effective, as was napalm when the terrain was favorable for its use. Artillery saw limited use, because most operations took place in the inland areas, out of artillery range.

Another change in tactics involved the downed plane and search and rescue procedures. The tangled jungle and higher elevations caused some drastic modifications in these areas. Helicopters continued to fly in pairs, and to lift in security forces and maintenance and medical personnel in emergency situations, but getting them on the ground in the immediate area was a problem in the forest. Medical kits were prepared, the aircraft hoists were used, and rappelling became the latest technique of doctors and corpsmen. Several times medical personnel went down through 100-foot trees to provide quick assistance after crashes.

The airborne Air Support Operations Center was a significant development during Da Nang operations. By providing an aircraft with the capability of communicating with all participating units, and by carrying a representative from each organization involved, including at least one with a command of both languages, most of the coordination problems of an air-ground operation assault were solved. This system allowed quick decisions to be made and executed, it provided instant contact between air and ground, and it gave split-second

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coordination between helicopter and fixed wing elements, and it added flexibility--a much-needed ingredient--to the attack.

Once coordination was achieved, only detailed planning and thorough training remained as drawbacks to most operations. Smoke signals were still misunderstood at times, and ARVN troops left loose grenades on board helicopters, or climbed on with loaded weapons, even after repeated training.

The UH-34D continued to do a good job in the mountains, as it had in the delta. Even its performance became marginal, however, when subjected to the high elevations, temperatures, and humidity conditions of the north, and its load-carrying capability decreased. The underslung step allowed the re-installations of hoists on all aircraft, for useⁱⁿ rescue operations. ^{The UH-34D also} proved once again that vulnerability is a question of degree, for in South Vietnam during the period covered it flew close to 20,000 hours over terrain 90 percent hostile, and only one aircraft was lost to enemy fire, though over 200 hits were recorded. One plane was hit 14 times and survived, and another was forced down by one bullet, but not lost.

The M-60 machine gun proved to be an effective suppressive fire weapon--on one occasion three of them provided the only fire support for an evacuation. In late 1963 a second M-60 was installed to fire from the left side of the UH-34D. This

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added considerable firepower, and allowed the copilot to perform his primary function of assisting the pilot. The added weight of the weapon and gunner did not materially affect the accomplishment of most missions. (See ^{Figure 2-4} ~~enclosure~~ for a photograph of the M-60 as used by the crew chief).

Up until the addition of the second M-60, the AR-15 was used by the copilot. It was a gas operated, clip fed, .223 caliber rifle capable of semiautomatic fire. It was the best weapon found that combined shortness and lightness with range, accuracy, and firepower. The proposed firing port in the copilot's windscreen was never incorporated.

Camouflaged flight suits went into use at Da Nang. They provided an extra measure of protection for the wearer if forced down in enemy territory.

A 300-foot rescue hoist was in the final stages of test at Quantico in late 1963. Designed to allow rescue operations even in the tallest trees, it was badly needed in the north. (One rescue team worked for two days, using chain saws and demolitions, and could not clear enough area in the thick jungle for one helicopter to descend low enough to use its hoist.)

At the end of 1963, Marine operations in South Vietnam continued, and the men and machines of SHUFLY continued to get the job done.

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THE USMC HELICOPTER FLIGHT LINE AT DA NANG

Figure V-1



DA NANG AIRFIELD, SHOWING THE MARINE COMPOUND. IN THE RIGHT FOREGROUND, THE CURVED NEW SECTION OF ROAD, CONSTRUCTED TO AVOID TRAVEL ON PORTION OF ROAD TO REACH THE FLIGHT LINE AREA, IS AT THE UPPER RIGHT.

Figure V-2

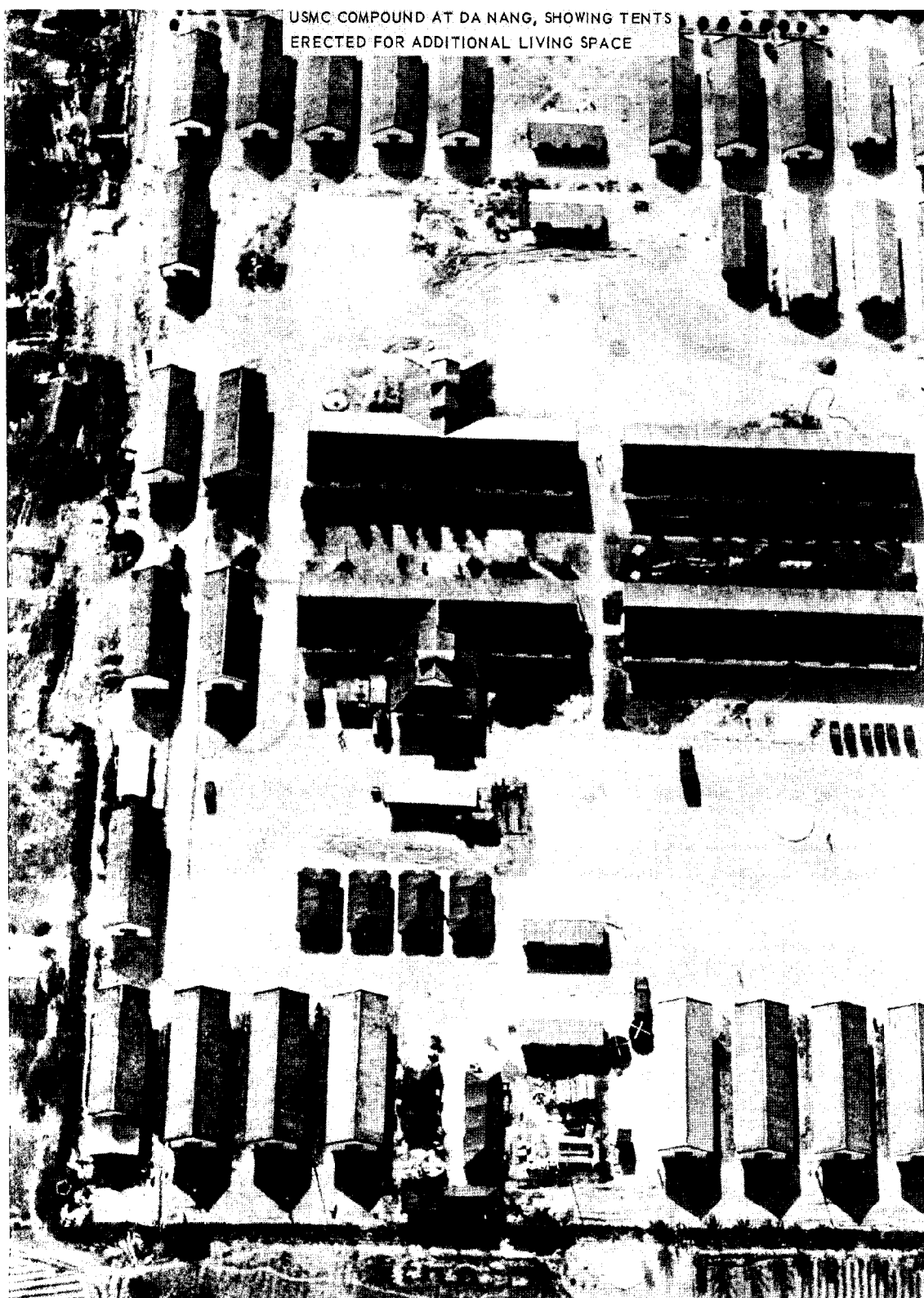


Figure V-3



USMC UH-34D HELICOPTER CREW CHIEF SHOWING
FIRING POSITION FOR SWIVEL-MOUNTED M-60
MACHINE GUN

Figure IV-4

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USE OF AIR COVER ON COMBAT TROOP LIFT MISSIONS

1 APRIL - 31 JULY

Type A/C	USE			ORDNANCE EXPENDED							
	No of Mission	No of A/C	Missions Expen. Ord.	120# FRAG	260# FRAG	2.75 Rocket	GP Bombs 100/500	20MM Rnds	50 Cal Rnds	7.62 Rnds	Small Arm Rnds
UH-1B (Armed)	7	55	5	---	---	319	---	---	---	82,920	3,474
T-28	10	45	6	14	---	155	4/4	---	1920	---	---
B-26	4	7	3	42	---	20	18/12	---	4900	---	---
AD-6	4	10	3	---	16	228	28/28	300	---	---	---

Number of operations w/ air cover 15
Number of operations w/o air cover 2

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DECLASSIFIED

Figure V-5

DECLASSIFIED

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USE OF AIR COVER ON OTHER MISSIONS

1963 Month	Mission	No.	No of Helos	Number & Type A/C	Missions Expending Ordnance	Ordnance
APRIL	Resupply	2	5	4 AD-6	0	0
	Medical Evacuation	3	6	2 AD-6	1	12-100# GP Bombs 12-120# FRAG Bombs 1400-20 MM RNDS
				4 T-28	0	0
				5 UH-1B	1	Unknown amount - 2.75 Rockets & 7.62MM
MAY	Resupply	2	16	8 T-28	0	0
	Medical Evacuation	0	—	—	—	—
JUNE	Resupply	4	22	1 B-26	0	0
				6 T-28	0	0
	Medical Evacuation	1	2	2 T-28	0	0
JULY	Resupply	7	23	20 T-28	1	4-260# FRAG Bombs 28-2.75 Rockets 400-CAL 50 RNDS
	Medical Evacuation	9	18	12 T-28	1	14-2.75 Rockets
				2 AD-6	0	0
				1 B-26	0	0

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Figure V-6

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OPSUM and WEEKLY SUMMARY INFORMATION

MISSIONS CANCELED
BY WEATHER

OPSUM	REPORT PERIOD	SQUADRON	BASE	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL SORTIES	PAX	COMBAT TROOPS	MED EVAC	CARGO LBS	TIMES				ADMIN SUP	RECON	COMBAT TROOP LIFTS	A/C SHOT DOWN	A/C DOWN	NO OPER	BY ENEMY		OPER ACCIDENT
										FIREDA/C ON HIT	TOTAL HITS	A/C LOST	WIA							KIA	WIA	
001	09APR26APR62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	0300	200	414	1462	58	200000	1	1	1	0				1		4			
002	29APR05MAY62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	284	16	1197	840	0	34200	0	0	0	0						3			
003	06MAY12MAY62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	455		2128	1186	0	15250	21	10	21	0				3		3		2	
004	13MAY19MAY62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	417	386	1010	1757	36	19300	0	0	0	0						5			
005	20MAY26MAY62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	340	343	924	480	12	18800	5	3	3	0						1			
006	27MAY02JUN62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	463	379	1540	716	20	72180	0	0	0	0						4			
007	03JUN09JUN62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	417	450	1623	2161	51	18930	4	4	4	0				1		5			
008	10JUN16JUN62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	334	255	592	1233	08	3300	4	4	4	0						5			
009	17JUN23JUN62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	439	479	1719	1251	09	106109	0	0	0	0						3			
010	24JUN30JUN62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	483	399	1039	1154	26	67390	0	0	0	0						5			
011	01JUL07JUL62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	419	348	1020	1119	61	17610	4	04	04	0		1		1		2			
012	08JUL14JUL62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	490	499	1384	2224	11	7750	8	08	08	0						5			
013	15JUL21JUL62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	527	403	723	2579	15	18800	4	01	01	0						5			
014	22JUL28JUL62	HMM362	SOCTRANG	480	491	1866	1018	5	64790	0	0	0	0						4			
015	29JUL04AUG62	HMM163	SOCTRANG	304	284	1666	729	50	15155	0	0	0	0						2			
016	05AUG11AUG62	HMM163	SOCTRANG	487	389	1789	760	20	34877	1	1	1	0						3			
017	12AUG18AUG62	HMM163	SOCTRANG	689	886	2259	3004	88	27722	4	1	1	0				1		6			
018	19AUG25AUG62	HMM163	SOCTRANG	802	1378	5717	4140	10	23525	4	3	4	1				1		6			
019	26AUG01SEP62	HMM163	SOCTRANG	361	692	1849	804	19	58728	0	0	0	0						2			
020	02SEP08SEP62	HMM163	SOCTRANG	517	988	2364	1756	143	83944	9	4	9	0						5			
021	09SEP15SEP62	HMM163	SOCTRANG	359	735	2136	888	6	69890	0	0	0	0						2			
022	16SEP22SEP62	HMM163	DANANG	440	478	918	918	25	103951	0	0	0	0						2			
023	23SEP29SEP62	HMM163	DANANG	397	562	1431	530	26	83125	6	4	4	0						2	0	0	
024	30SEP06OCT62	HMM163	DANANG	494	489	966	605	13	31057	4	2	2	1						4	1	7	
025	07OCT13OCT62	HMM163	DANANG	476	664	1111	695	20	74624	1	0	0	0						3	0	0	

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Figure II-7a

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OPSLM	REPORT PERIOD	SQUADRON	BASE	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL SCRTIES	PAX	COMBAT TROOPS	MED EVAC	CARGO LBS	TIMES				ADMIN SUP	RECON	COMBAT TROOP LIFTS	A/C SHOT DOWN	A/C DOWN	BY ENEMY			OPER ACCIDENT
										FIRE	DA/C	TOTAL HITS	LOST						NO OPER	CREW WIAKIA	PAX WIAKIA	
026	14OCT20OCT62	HMM163	DANANG	272	400	688	398	12	68895	1	0	0	0						1	0	0	
027	21OCT27OCT62	HMM163	DANANG	409	588	1450	205	32	134719	0	0	0	0						1	0	0	
028	28OCT03NOV62	HMM163	DANANG	593	899	1375	1008	28	295160	3	3	3	0			2			2	0	0	
029	04NOV10NOV62	HMM163	DANANG	88	204	13	961	13		0	0	0	0						2	0	0	
030	11NOV15NOV62	HMM163	DANANG	318	383	1242	200	35	91642	0	0	0	0						2	0	0	
031	16NOV22NOV62	HMM163	DANANG	300	517	761	589	27	76485	3	2	2	0						5	0	0	
032	25NOV01DEC62	HMM163	DANANG	295	339	1096	0	16	103450	2	2	2	0	32	6	3			0	0	0	
033	02DEC06DEC62	HMM163	DANANG	203	440	1834		13	83200	0	0	0	0	1	2		1		0			
034	07DEC13DEC62	HMM163	DANANG	339	639	1736	304	19	116035	3	2	2	0		1	1			2	0	0	
035	09DEC15DEC62	HMM163	DANANG	REF	EREN	CEA	OPS	UM	34 HAS	S	TA	TI	S	TI	CS							
036	16DEC22DEC62	HMM163	DANANG	225	655	2975	484	16	86680	0	0	0	0		13	1			1	0	0	
037	23DEC29DEC62	HMM163	DANANG	372	886	3060	0	21	172778	0	0	0	0		15				0	0	0	
038	30DEC05JAN63	HMM163	DANANG	244	343	871	366	12	69350	14	3	3	0		31	5			2			
039	06JAN12JAN63	HMM162	DANANG	300	41	875	360	16	86730	1	1	1	0						2	0	0	
040	13JAN18JAN63	HMM162	DANANG	405	645	2213	000	10	194894	4	1	1	0						1	0	0	
041	19JAN26JAN63	HMM162	DANANG	336	571	967	403	20	95335	2	2	2	0		6				2	0	0	
042	27JAN02FEB63	HMM162	DANANG	318	553	1826	000	18	135760	0	0	0	0						0			
043	03FEB07FEB63	HMM162	DANANG	351	660	2297	1167	38	77315	11	7	11	0		5				3	1		
044	08FEB15FEB63	HMM162	DANANG	355	764	2420	103	64	216321	4	2	4	0		9				3	0	0	
045	16FEB22FEB63	HMM162	DANANG	454	870	3016	962	34	144307	1	1	1	0				2		2	0	0	
046	23FEB02MAR63	HMM162	DANANG	446	982	3751	540	35	353806	1	1	1	0						1	0	0	
047	03MAR09MAR63	HMM162	DANANG	419	805	2420	762	30	179420	1	1	1	0			1			2			
048	09MAR15MAR63	HMM162	DANANG	674	1101	2873	1498	62	261413	4	2	4	2			1			3		21	
049	16MAR22MAR63	HMM162	DANANG	323	720	2304	000	26	145780	2	2	2	0			1			0			
050	23MAR29MAR63	HMM162	DANANG	204	370	949	000	18	074185	2	1	2	0		3				0			

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Figure V-7b

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OPSUM	REPORT PERIOD	SQUADRON	BASE	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL SORTIES	PAX	COMBAT TROOPS	MED EVAC	CARGO LBS	TIMES				ADMIN SUP	RECON	COMBAT TROOP LIFTS	A/C DOWN	SHOT DOWN	A/C DOWN	NO OPER	BY ENEMY			OPER ACCIDENT
										FIRED	A/C ON	TOTAL HITS	A/C LOST								CREW	PAX	WIAKIA	
051	30MAR05APR63	HMM162	DANANG	462	1108	1888	128	34	335287	0	0	0	0							1				
052	06APR13APR63	HMM162	DANANG	332	67	4193	628	23	192740	13	0	0	0	4			1			2				
053	14APR20APR63	HMM162	DANANG	524	929	2302	435	59	233890	20	6	20	0				2			0	3			
054	21APR26APR63	HMM162	DANANG	475	1008	2058	165	39	292681	2	2	2	0							1				
055	27APR03MAY63	HMM162	DANANG	505	1095	2666	674	209	284265	15	6	15	1			1	1			1	1			
056	04MAY10MAY63	HMM162	DANANG	532	1773	3773	983	106	202604	0	0	0	0							2				
057	11MAY17MAY63	HMM162	DANANG	515	1279	3473	715	66	218600	0	0	0	0							1				
058	18MAY23MAY63	HMM162	DANANG	387	1069	2878	1867	29	200580	1	1	1	0							3				
059	23MAY29MAY63	HMM162	DANANG	292	747	2398	240	42	145442	9	2	9	0				1			1				
060	30JUN05JUN63	HMM261	DANANG	270	554	1425	000	30	137470	0	0	0	0							0				
061	06JUN12JUN63	HMM261	DANANG	261	571	1357	000	78	118725	5	4	4	0							0				
062	13JUN19JUN63	HMM261	DANANG	427	857	1908	322	39	194315	9	4	9	0							1				
063	27JUN03JUL63	HMM261	DANANG	364	740	1787	123	25	179687	0	0	0	0							1				
064	20JUN26JUN63	HMM261	DANANG	389	639	1531	160	4	179640	0	0	0	0			1				0				
065	04JUL10JUL63	HMM261	DANANG	427	830	1863	602	36	153180	4	4	4	0							1				
066	11JUL17JUL63	HMM261	DANANG	425	931	2651	519	43	154435	2	2	2	1							2		2		
067	18JUL24JUL63	HMM261	DANANG	331	646	1408	415	42	120250	1	1	1	0							1				
068	25JUL31AUG63	HMM261	DANANG	361	840	1692	1037	15	17679	1	1	1	0							3				
069	01AUG07AUG63	HMM261	DANANG	234	518	1447	204	45	72426	2	1	2	0							2				
070	08AUG14AUG63	HMM261	DANANG	369	703	1723	1330	9	42312	5	1	3	0							4				
071	15AUG21AUG63	HMM261	DANANG	369	703	1723		9	42312	1	0	0	0							1				
072	22AUG28AUG63	HMM261	DANANG		303	608		24	43655	1	0	0	0							0				
073	29AUG04SEP63	HMM261	DANANG		553	774		35	117700	0	0	0	0							0				
074	05SEP11SEP63	HMM261	DANANG	341	698	1825		73	104805			5	0							0				
075	12SEP18SEP63	HMM261	DANANG	347	710	1776		33	91740	0	0	0	0							0				

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Figure IV-7c

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OPSUM	REPORT PERIOD	SQUADRON	BASE	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL SORTIES	PAX	COMBAT TROOPS	MED EVAC	CARGO LBS	TIMES				ADMIN SUP	RECON	COMBAT TROOP LIFTS	A/C SHOT DOWN	A/C DOWN	NO OPER	BY ENEMY WIAKIA	CREW WIAKIA	PAX WIAKIA	OPER ACCIDENT WIAKIA
										FIRE	DA/C	TOTAL	A/C T/T										
076	19SEP25SEP63	HH4261	DANANG	336	647	1637		51	68065	0	0	0	0							0			
077	26SEP01OCT63	HH4361	DANANG	307	517	850		44	99995	1	1	1	0						0				
078	02OCT08OCT63	HH4361	DANANG	878	618	894		24	169945		5	9	2						1		3		
079	09OCT15OCT63	HH4361	DANANG	335	673	1402		36	116973		4	4	0				1		1				
080	16OCT25OCT63	HH4361	DANANG																				
081	26OCT01NOV63	HH4361	DANANG	327	589	1050		26	159700	3	3	3	0				0		0				
082	02NOV08NOV63	HH4361	DANANG	217	452	776		17	126813	7	3	7	0						0				
083	09NOV15NOV63	HH4361	DANANG	381	588	1476		11	151850			0	0						1				
084	16NOV22NOV63	HH4361	DANANG	224	497	1391		15	106675			0	0						0				

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Figure I-7d

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CONFIDENTIAL		OPERATION DATA																	
2	OPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER HELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TAKE OFF	TIME IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIFTS	FROM	TO	TO	TO
001	D		22APR62	16	UH340	Y	N	399			0900	29	0	0	2	XS48 45	WS90 54		
			23APR62	08	UH340	N	N	304	04000		0930	26	0	0	2	WR16 15	WQ080770	WQ091708	
001	Y		24APR62	16	UH340	N	N	591			0900	69	1	1	2	WS86 09	WR64500	WS650065	
001	Y		26APR62	14	UH340	Y	N	168		0745	0916	45	0	0	1	XS47 55	XS76 51		
002	Y		01MAY62	24	UH340	N	N	281		0530	0900	33	0	0	1	WS86 09	WS78 28		
002	Y		02MAY62	16	UH340	Y	Y	432			0900	39	0	0	3	XS48 45	WS95 68	WS74 84	
002	N		05MAY62	10	UH340	Y	N	127			0630	11	0	0	1	SOCTRANG	WR87 52		
003	Y		09MAY62	25	UH340	N	Y	284			1135	41	09	16	1	WR01515	WQ20 80		
003	Y		10MAY62	14	UH340	Y	N	328			0900	49	1	1	1	WS97 40	WS94 49	WS97 40	WS70 59
003	Y		10MAY62	14	UH340	Y	N										ZS82 82		C1
003	N		12MAY62	14	UH340	N	N	590			0900	50	0	0	3	WS97 40	WS690692	WS511723	
			13MAY62	21	UH340	N	Y	252			0958	31	0	0	1	WS86 09	WR383478		
004	Y		13MAY62	21	UH340	N	N	364		0630	0730	30	0	0	1	WS86 09	WS635060	WS38478	
004	N		15MAY62	08	UH340	N	Y	180			0900	23	0	0	1	XS07 33	XS56 10	XS15 50	
004	Y		17MAY62	08	UH340	N	Y	095			0800	9	0	0	1	XS47550	XS513763		
	Y		19MAY62	17	UH340	N	Y	203			1430	17	0	0	1	SOCTRANG	SR185405		
004	Y		19MAY62	18	UH340	N	Y	786			0720	54	0	0	3	WS86 09	WR605909	WR606908	WR707909
005	Y		26MAY62	14	UH340	Y	N	462			0932	51	3	0	2	XS34 92	XS16 91	XS14 59	
006	Y		27MAY62	13	UH340	N	N	152		1055	1358	21	0	0	1	WT870035	XS03 91	WT845077	
006	Y		29MAY62	16	UH340	N	N	192			1004	20	0	0	1	WR16 15	WS38 48		
006	Y		31MAY62	11	UH340	N	Y	120			0950	40	0	0	1	XS52 32	WS91 52		
006	Y		02JUN62	12	UH340	N	N	257			1401	27	0	0	3	WS85 09	VS89 16		C
006	Y		02JUN62	12	UH340	N	N									WS09 07	VS89 16		C1
007	Y		04JUN62	14	UH340	N	N	554	1800	0745	0900	119	02	2	8	WS70 55	WS51 71	WS70 51	WS57 60
007	Y		04JUN62	04	UH340	N	Y	136			1355	17	0	0	2	SOCTRANG	WR660570		
007	Y		07JUN62	16	UH340	N	Y	192			1218	21	02	02	1	SOCTRANG	WR72 36		

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OPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER HELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TIME TAKE OFF	IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIFTS	FROM	TO	TO	TO
007	Y	08JUN62	16	UH340	N	Y	189			0800	29	0	0	1	WS86 09	WR74 78		
007	Y	08JUN62	16	UH340	N	N	417			1300	39	0	0	1	WR79 28	WR64 35		
008	Y	14JUN62	15	UH340	Y	Y	510		0610		57	0	0	3	XT99 13	XT720565		
008	Y	14JUN62	10	UH340	N	N	116			1346	9	0	0	2	SOCTRANG	XR15 45		
008	Y	15JUN62	10	UH340	N	N	114			1145	10	0	0	1	XS56 5	XS72 55		
008	Y	16JUN62	16	UH340	N	N	620			1032	68	0	1	2	XS290780	XS40 52	XT74 28	
009	Y	18JUN62	14	UH340	N	Y	777		0810	1133	106	0	0	4	WR79 28	WR548068		
009	Y	22JUN62	08	UH340	N	Y	098			1440	020	0	0	1	XS20 59	XS13 56		
009	Y	23JUN62	18	UH340	N	Y	376			0815	042	0	0	2	XS07 33	WS895239		
010	Y	25JUN62	14	UH340	Y	N	168			0945	016	0	0	1	XS52 32	XS82 94		
010	Y	26JUN62	14	UH340	N	N	173			0930	43	0	0	1	XS52 32	XS77 03		
010	Y	27JUN62	14	UH340	N	N	353			0900	38	0	0	2	XS52 32	XS94 24		
	Y	29JUN62	21	UH340	N	N	348		0615	0920	45	0	0	2	XT775380	XT635440		
011	D	02JUL62	18	UH340	N	Y	343		0700	0730	61	0	0	2	WS86 09	WS69 01	WS69 04	WR74 99 C
011	D	02JUL62	18	UH340	N	Y									WS77 01			C1
011	Y	06JUL62	18	UH340	N	Y	776		0745	0910	80	03	03	2	WR16 15	WQ20 79	WQ20 81	
012	D	10JUL62	19	UH340	N	Y	968			0900	91	07	07	2	WR16 15	VQ95 91	VQ93 91	XM92 91
012	Y	11JUL62	18	UH340	N	Y	282			0835	28	01	01	1	SOCTRANG	XR46 61	XR46 59	
012	Y	12JUL62	06	UH340	N	N	067			0850	12	0	0	1	XS47 55	XS12 63	XS20 60	
012	D	13JUL62	17	UH340	N	N	387				48	0	0	1	XS47 55	XS20 60	XS08 68	XS08 63
012	Y	14JUL62	21	UH340	N	N	520		0635		64	0	0	2	XS47 55	XS47 55	XS46 71	XS43 69 C
012	Y	14JUL62	16	UH340	N	N									XS49 73			C1
013	Y	15JUL62	19	UH340	N	Y	354				38	0	1	1	WS10 06	VR86 61		
013	Y	17JUL62	18	UH340	Y	N	565				57	0	0	3	XT75 38	XT69 45	VT68 42	
013	Y	18JUL62	18	UH340	Y	Y	566				55	01	01	1	XT81 02	XT70 80	XT75 36	XT64 24 C
013	Y	18JUL62	18	UH340	Y	Y									XT68 24			C1

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Figure I-8b

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OPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER HELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TIME TAKE OFF	IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIEIS	FROM	TO	TO	TO	
013	Y	20JUL62	16	UH340	Y	Y	668		0415		87	00	01	4	XS47 55	WT76 00	XS03 91	WT81 00	C
013	Y	20JUL62	16	UH340	Y	Y										WT66 04	WT68 05		C1
013	D	21JUL62	18	UH340	N	N	426				43	00	2	2	WS86 09	WR50 95	WR45 92	WR43 99	C
013	D	21JUL62	18	UH340	N	N										VQ99 01			C1
014	Y	25JUL62	13	UH340	N	Y	232				24	0	0	2	SOCTRANG	XR38 58	XR32 64	XR31 64	
014	Y	26JUL62	10	UH340	N	N	182				24	0	0	2	XS25 13	XS21 59	XS28 57	XS27 56	
014	D	27JUL62	18	UH340	N	Y	220				41	0	0	1	XR47 99	XR27 76			
014	D	29JUL62	19	UH340	N	Y	384		1045		72	0	0	4	VR86 03	VR85 08	VR85 07	VQ98 95	C
		29JUL62	09	UH340	N	Y	112			1800	12	0	0	1	SOCTRANG	WR900405			
014	D	29JUL62	19	UH340	N	Y										WQ00 86	WQ01 89	WQ01 94	C1
015	Y	01AUG62	15	UH340	Y	N	461		0530		39			3	XT936459	XT698413	XT790390	XT98 13	C
015	Y	01AUG62	15	UH340	Y	N										YT055315			C1
015	Y	02AUG62	09	UH340	N	N	156				17			3	WR175170	WR175400	WR214435	WR175400	
016	Y	06AUG62	13	UH340	N	N	277				90	0	0	5	WS69 51	WS725615	WS670074	WS858447	
016	Y	07AUG62	16	UH340	N	N	192				29	0	0	1	WR320450	WR328450	WR342452	WR345455	
016	Y	08AUG62	17	UH340	N	N	291				17	01	01	02	XS46 2	XS20 60	XS290600		
017	Y	12AUG62	16	UH340	N	Y	184				10	0	0	01	XS47551	XS32 70	XS34 72		
017	Y	13AUG62	16	UH340	N	N	192				52	0	0	01	XS34093	XS908555	XS860500		
017	Y	15AUG62	20	UH340	Y	N	745				124	0	0	05	WR16 15	VR004000	VQ865903	VR902100	C
017	Y	15AUG62	20	UH340	Y	N										VR900905	VQ905903	VR09 04	C1
017	Y	15AUG62	20	UH340	Y	N										VQ892942			C2
017	Y	16AUG62	22	UH340	Y	N	671	15000			79	0	00	04	VQ885795	VQ965865	VQ89980V	Q945785	C
017	Y	16AUG62	20	UH340	Y	N										VQ079812	VR875945		C1
017	Y	17AUG62	16	UH340	N	N	528				20	4	04	03	WR16 15	WQ215855	WQ192855	WQ190806	C
017	Y	17AUG62	16	UH340	N	N										WQ218796	WQ295824	WQ185806	C1
017	Y	18AUG62	16	UH340	N	N	684				25	31	04	04	WR16 15	TQ205860	WQ312960	TQ205860	C

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Figure V-8c

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OPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER HELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TIME TAKE OFF	IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIFTS	FROM	TO	TO	TO	
017	Y	18AUG62	16	UH340	N	N										WQ301948	WQ204800	WQ204800	C1
018	Y	19AUG62	16	UH340	Y	N	32				18	92	02	04	WR80 26	WR603102	WR603114	WR408005	C
018	Y	19AUG62	16	UH340	Y	N										WR409003	WR408002	WR307003	C1
018	Y	19AUG62	16	UH340	Y	N										WR203206			C2
018	Y	21AUG62	15	UH340	N	N	780				282	1	1	5	WR79 28	WR10335	WR460335	WR505307	C
018	Y	21AUG62	15	UH340	N	N										WR678369	WR635335	WR638304	C1
018	Y	21AUG62	15	UH340	N	N										WR615150			C2
018	Y	22AUG62	17	UH340	N	N	360				105	0	0	2	WR79 28	WR745175	WR715155	WR742195	
018	Y	23AUG62	18	UH340	N	N	600				153	0	0	4	WR79 28	WR475452	WR480541		
018	Y	24AUG62	20	UH340	N	N	900				41	0	0	4	WR79 28	WR107607	WR10604	WR109608	C
018	Y	24AUG62	20	UH340	N	N										WR203609	WR202601	WR206601	C1
018	Y	25AUG62	19	UH340	N	N	468				263	00	01	2	SOCTRANG	WR601590	WR640580	WR556615	C
018	Y	25AUG62	19	UH340	N	N										WR630580			C1
018	Y	25AUG62	19	UH340	N	N									WS470470	VS894548	VS894548	VS91535	C2
019	Y	28AUG62	20	UH340	N	Y	468				118	0	0	2	XR299484	XR240436	XR264445		
019	Y	29AUG62	19	UH340	N	Y	336				55	0	0	2	SOCTRANG	WS990890	TS970870	XR00880	
020	Y	03SEP62	17	UH340	N	N	384				119	1	0	2	WS470470	VS875565	VS894548	VS905543	C
020	Y	03SEP62	17	UH340	N	N										VS919545			C1
020	Y	04SEP62	16	UH340	N	Y	612				198	0	0	4	XS52120	XS37803	XS397276	XS378303	C
020	Y	04SEP62	16	UH340	N	Y										XS485078	XS481094	XS405109	C1
020	Y	04SEP62	16	UH340	N	Y										XS441131			C2
020	Y	05SEP62	08	UH340	Y	Y	096				28	3	8	3	WS470470	WS348993	WS340498	WS250450	C
020	Y	05SEP62	08	UH340	Y	Y									WS123457	XR472988	XR185825		C1
020	Y	06SEP62	11	UH340	Y	Y	484				112	0	0	4	WS699550	WS720638	WS674638	WS833853	C
020	Y	06SEP62	11	UH340	Y	Y										WS832618			C1
020	Y	07SEP62	11	UH340	Y	Y	180				84	0	0	1	WS300719	WS25775	WS295585	WS092313	C

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Figure V-8d

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OPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER MELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TIME TAKE OFF	IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIFTS	FROM	TO	TO	TO
020	Y	07SEP62	11	UH340	Y	Y										WS129356		C1
021	Y	11SEP62	16	UH340	N	N	384				184	0	0	6	SOCTRANG	XS479348	XS939212	XS845188
021	Y	11SEP62	16	UH340	N	N										XS958215	XS470525	XS908318
021	Y	11SEP62	16	UH340	N	N										XS938218	XS938218	XS489556
021	Y	11SEP62	16	UH340	N	N										XS908318		C3
021	Y	13SEP62	10	UH340	N	Y	552				202	0	0	11	SOCTRANG	WS730300	WS734290	WS782256
021	Y	13SEP62	13	UH340	N	Y										WS787252	WS903242	WS895237
021	Y	13SEP62	13	UH340	N	Y										WR665900	WR656890	WR842766
021	Y	13SEP62	13	UH340	N	Y										WR35758	WS762246	WS858258
021	Y	13SEP62	13	UH340	N	Y										WS878260	WS831227	WS682097
021	Y	13SEP62	13	UH340	N	Y										WS669122	CANTHO	C5
022	Y	18SEP62	14	UH340	N	Y					28	0	0	1	BT029790	AT935105	AT947098	
022	Y	19SEP62	10	UH340	N	N						0	0	1	BT029790	LX115680		
023	Y	26SEP62	22	UH340	N	Y	300				76	1	1	1	DANANG	BS238950	BT307216	BS173989
023	Y	29SEP62	19	UH340	N	Y	230				96	2	2	2	DANANG	BT370015	BT370007	BT375004
024	N	03OCT62	07	UH340	N	N	365				70	0	0	1	BS61716	AS987426		
024	Y	04OCT62		UH340	N	N						1	2	1	DANANG	BT007093	CP035550	
024	Y	06OCT62	21	UH340	N	Y	240					0	0	1	DANANG	BS611716	BT47007	
024	Y	06OCT62	10	UH340	N	Y					40	1	2	1	BS611716	BS752273		
025	N	07OCT62	07	UH340	N	N	445				42	0	0	1	BS611716	AS987426		
		08NOV62	06	UH340	N	N					48	0	0			YC96002	YB95 98	
025	N	09OCT62	10	UH340	N	N	080				39	0	0	1	BS611716	AS987426		
025	Y	10OCT62	16	UH340	N	N	170				84	0	1	2	YD754233	YD865050	YD787020	
025	Y	10OCT62	16	UH340	N	N									ZC137528	ZC002650	C1	
026	Y	15OCT62	15	UH340	N	N	398				90	0	1	3	DANANG	AT865654	AT848686	
027	Y	22OCT62	13	UH340	N	Y	205				58	0	0	2	DANANG	BT003305	BT156570	BT003395

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Figure I-8e

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Figure I-8f

QPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER HELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TIME TAKE OFF	IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIFTS	FROM	TO	TO	TO
028	Y	01NOV62	04	UH340	N	N	445				112	0	0		BS380653	BS323605	BS723538	
028	D	03NOV62	18	UH340	N	Y	563				103	3	3	3	DANANG	AT80 26		
029	Y	07NOV62	06	UH340	N	N	052				8	0	0	1	DANANG	AT850950		
030	Y	13NOV62	20	UH340	N	N	200				19	0	0	0				
030	Y	15NOV62	09	UH340	N	N					55	0	0	1	BS611716	AS987426		
031	Y	16NOV62	20	UH340	N	Y	383				79	0	1	2	DANANG	AT955325	AT906365	
031	N	19NOV62	06	UH340	N	N					40	0	0	3	BS611716	BS344496		
031	Y	19NOV62	08	UH340	N	N	068				24	0	0	1	DANANG	BT075227		
031	Y	20NOV62	12	UH340	N	Y	138				24	0	1	1	DANANG	AT606305		
031	Y	23NOV62	04	UH340	N	N					48	2	2	1		BS330502		
034	Y	07DEC62	04	UH340	N	N					32	1	2	1		BS370380		
034	Y	13DEC62	12	UH340	N	N	304				92	0	0	1	YD635275	XD783356	XD960330	
036	N	19DEC62		UH340	N	N	484	20887			92	0	0					
038	Y	03JAN63	04	UH340	N	N	166	15600			34					BS33 60		
038	Y	04JAN63	19	UH340	N	Y	220				59	0	1	1	BS611716	BS328595		
039	Y	06JAN63	19	UH340	N	Y	360				95	0	0	1	BT307216	BT324004	BT310013	
		08JAN63	03	UH340	N	N					12					ZC03 44		
		15JAN63	05	UH340	N	N					15					AS1042		
041	Y	19JAN63	18	UH340	N	Y	299				66	2	2	1		ZC115662	ZC150700	
041	N	20JAN63	02	UH340	N	N	104				32	0	0		BS611716	BS487787	XS480082 6	
043	Y	04FEB63	22	UH340	N	Y	885				159	3	7		DANANG	AT918143		C
043	Y	04FEB63	22	UH340	N	Y										BT307187	AT942114	C1
043	Y	04FEB63	22	UH340	N	Y										DANANG	AT950101	C2
043	Y	04FEB63	22	UH340	N	Y									TAMKY	BT022148		C3
043	Y	06FEB63	12	UH340	N	N	108				32	2	2		TAMKY	BT151293		
043	Y	07FEB63	13	UH340	N	N	174				88	2	2		BT037061	TAMKY	BT146308	

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OPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER HELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TIME TAKE OFF	IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIFTS	FROM	TO	TO	TO
044	Y	09FEB63		UH340	N	N												
044	Y	10FEB63		UH340	N	N												
044	Y	11FEB63	11	UH340	N	N	103				20	0	0	1	DANANG	BT005095		
045	Y	16FEB63	18	UH340	N	Y	443				115	1	1		YD745233	YC623975		
045	Y	20FEB63	18	UH340	N	N	519				117	0	0		DANANG	YC888325		
046	Y	23FEB63	16	UH340	N	N	540	12775			113	1	1		YC976366	YC886325		
047	Y	09MAR63	18	UH340	N	Y	762				161	1	1			BT310110	AS210995	BS125950
048	Y	13MAR63	14	UH340	N	Y	241				71	1	4			BT073263	BT065265	
048	Y	19MAR63	19	UH340	N	Y	822				223	0	0			BT074863	BT065265	
	Y	18MAR63	12	UH340	N	N	840					0	0	1	BS207999	BT145006		
051	Y	03APR63	08	UH340	N	Y	128	3200	0915	1000	32	0	0	2	DANANG	ATB35673		
052	Y	06APR63	06	UH340	N	Y	130	2200	1229	1430	58	0	0	3	XD848381	XD682505		
052	N	13APR63	16	UH340	Y	Y	435	3150	0830	0930	106	0	13	3	DANANG	XC205242	XC132250	
054	Y	22APR63	18	UH340	N	Y	165	4350	1715	1830	34	1	1	1	DANANG	BT187292		
055	Y	27APR63	21	UH340	Y	Y	674	4525	0825	1000	147	5	10	5	DANANG	AS900983		
056	Y	05MAY63	18	UH340	N	Y	306	2340			140	0	0	3		AS899885		
056	Y	06MAY63	10	UH340	N	N	607				147	0	0			AS900885	AS952893	
057	Y	17MAY63	16	UH340	N	N	715				263	0	0		AS900766	BS015970		
058	Y	19MAY63	12	UH340	N	N	728				190	0	0		AS900766	BS015970		
058	Y	20MAY63	10	UH340	N	N	514				137	1	1		AS879756	BS015970		
058	D	22MAY63	12	UH340	N	N	577				196	0	0		AS899885	BS015970		
059	N	24MAY63	15	UH340	Y	Y	240	3600	0602	0630	66	0	0	2	DANANG	BT223035	BT370060	
062	Y	18JUN63	15	UH340	Y	Y	396	570	1230	1095	332	1	1	3		AT987123	AT987108	
	Y	03JUL63	02	UH340	N	N	123									YC910890		
065	Y	10JUL63	18	UH340	N	Y	114	1100	0555	0810	73	1	1	1		BT374010		
066	N	10JUL63		UH340	N	Y	141	1000	1207	1325	70	1	1	1		BT374010		

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Figure V-8h

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OPSUM	CD	DATE	NO A/C	TYPE A/C	OTHER HELOS	OTHER A/C	NO TROOPS	CARGO LBS	TAKE OFF	TIME IN L ZONE	TOTAL SORTIES	NO A/C HIT	NO TIMES FIRED ON	NO LIFTS	FROM	TO	TO	TO
066	Y	17JUL63	16	UH34D	Y	Y	519	3335	0810	0900	170	0	0	4	HATAN	YC821621		
067		24JUL63	18	UH34D	Y	Y	415	2600	0750	0905	144	0	1	4	HATAN	YC737615		
068		26JUL63	18	UH34D	Y	Y	490	2600	0810	0900	149	1	1	4	HATAN	YC737615		
068		28JUL63	16	UH34D	Y	Y	547	21895	0715	0900	218	0	0	6	HATAN	YC678995	YC806625	
069		01AUG63	02	UH34D	N	Y						0	0				YC813517	
069		06AUG63	06	UH34D	N	N	204					1	2		YC678598	YC653552	YC653252	
070		10AUG63	06	UH34D	N	N	25					1	3		YC832248			
070		15AUG63	17	UH34D	N	N	346	357	0						YC663599	ZC135538		
070		16AUG63	15	UH34D	N	N	518	1042	0						YC675595	ZC135538		
070		17AUG63	21	UH34D	N	N	441	720	0			0	1		YC675595	ZC135538		
071		18AUG63	02	UH34D	N	N						0	1				XD670620	
078		08OCT63	02	UH34D	N	N											JC756365	
079		10OCT63		UH34D	N	N						1	1				JC772353	
083		08NOV63	09	UH34D	N	N	111											

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APPENDIX A

USMC ADVISORS, MAAG, VIETNAM, 1954-1963

1. BACKGROUND:

a. Initially (1954) there was only one Marine Adviser in the advisory organization. From 1955 to December 1961, there were two infantry advisers serving under the Senior Marine Adviser.

b. In December 1961, the T/O was expanded to include the following:

NO.	RANK	MOS	BILLET
1	LtCol	0302	Senior Marine Advisor
1	Maj	0802	Assistant Senior Marine Advisor/ Artillery Advisor
4	Capt	0302	Infantry Battalion Advisor
1	Capt	1302	Engineer Advisor
1	Capt	3002	Supply Advisor
1	MSgt	0141	First Sergeant
1	GySgt	0369	Small Unit Training Advisor
1	GySgt	0848	Assistant Artillery Advisor
4	SSgt	0441	Assistant Infantry Battalion Advisor
1	GySgt	2529	Communication Advisor
1	SSgt	3516	Motor Transport Advisor
1	Sgt	0141	Administrative Man

c. In April 1963, the T/O was reduced through elimination of the First Sergeant and four Assistant Infantry Battalion Advisor billets. An additional Small Unit Training Advisor (0369) was added.

2. MISSION:

a. Advise and assist the Commandant, VN Marine Brigade, and subordinate units in planning, conducting, and supervising all phases of command, staff and troop organization, administration, operations, training, and logistics. (Participation by USMC advisers in all combat operations is the keystone of the advisory effort).

b. Advise and assist in the conduct of inspections, including command, training, logistics, and end-use inspections.

c. Advise and assist the VN Navy and Marine Corps Brigade in developing amphibious doctrine, tactics, techniques, and capabilities. Maintain liaison with the VN Navy and other RVNAF units in respect to amphibious warfare and Marine Corps matters.

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d. Assist in coordination of VNMC training programs and operational plans with other MAAG and RVNAF agencies.

e. Assist in programming of MAP training and equipment for VN Marine Corps Brigade and prepare required reports.

f. Coordinate and implement the 3d Marine Division on-the-job training program in Vietnam.

3. ORGANIZATION:

<u>BILLET</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>		<u>REMARKS</u>
		<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	
SrMarAdv	LtCol	1	0	Advises Commandant, VNMC, and assists Chief, NavSec, in all Marine matters.
AsstSrMar Adv/Arty Adv	Major	1	0	Acts for SrMarAdv in his absence
InfBnAdv	Capt	4	0	One/Infantry Battalion
EngAdv	Capt	1	0	Advises AmphSptBn. (Billet to be eliminated 1Apr64.)
SupAdv	Capt	1	0	Advises in all supply and logistical matters. Assists in MAP material programming. (Will assume advisory duties for AmphSptBn 1Apr64.)
SmallUnit TngAdv	GySgt	0	2	Assist Infantry Bn Advisors, especially in respect to unit and marksmanship tng.
CommAdv	GySgt	0	1	Advises in all VNMC communication matters.
AsstArtyAdv	GySgt	0	1	Assists Arty Adv. (Will be eliminated 1Apr64.)
MT Adv	SSgt	0	1	Advises in all VNMC MT matters, including Boat Platoon.
AdminMan	Sgt	0	1	Attends to all MarAdvDiv admin matters.
TOTAL		8	6	

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4. The following U. S. Marine officers and noncommissioned officers served with the Marine Advisory Division, Navy Section, MAAG, Vietnam, from 1954 through 31 Dec 1964:

NAME	BILLET	JOINED	DETACHED
LtCol Victor J. CROIZAT, 06698 USMC	SrMarAdv	Aug54	Jun56
LtCol William N. WILKES, JR. 07414 USMC	SrMarAdv	Jun56	Jun58
LtCol Frank R. WILKINSON, JR. 09898 USMC	SrMarAdv	Jun58	Jun60
LtCol Clifford J. ROBICHAUD, JR. 014729 USMC	SrMarAdv	Jun60	Aug61
LtCol Robert E. BROWN, 09522 USMC	SrMarAdv	Aug61	Oct62
LtCol Clarence G. MOODY, JR. 044925 USMC	SrMarAdv	Oct62	Oct63
LtCol Wesley C. NOREN, 015907 USMC	SrMarAdv	Oct63	-----
Maj Alfred J. CROFT, 053919 USMC	AsstSrMar	Feb62	-----
	Adv/ArtyAdv		
Capt James T. BRECKINRIDGE, 046940 USMC	InfAdv	Sep55	Sep57
TSgt Jackson E. TRACY, 614782 USMC	InfAdv	Sep55	Sep56
Capt Frank G. PERRIN, 051957 USMC *	InfAdv	Oct56	Mar57
Capt Dale N. DAVIS, 053924 USMC	InfAdv	May57	May59
Capt Cecil J. BENNETT, 054252 USMC *	InfAdv	Sep57	Dec57
Capt Gary WILDER, 053168 USMC	InfAdv	Feb58	Aug60
Capt Michael J. GOTT, 059609 USMC	InfAdv	May59	Oct61
Capt James S. G. TURNER, 053142 USMC	InfAdv	Aug60	Oct61
Capt Bradley S. SNELL, 057284 USMC #	1stBnAdv	Oct61	Oct62
Capt Godfrey S. DELCUZE, 060725 USMC #	1stBnAdv	May63	Jul63
Maj James E. HARRELL, 049655 USMC	1stBnAdv	Aug63	Nov63
Capt Willem Van HEMERT, 069208 USMC	1stBnAdv	Oct63	-----
Capt Evan L. Parker, 056530 USMC	2dBnAdv	Feb62	Nov62
Capt Richard B. TAYLOR, 070569 USMC	2dBnAdv	Nov62	Oct63
Capt Joseph N. SMITH, 061240 USMC	2dBnAdv	Oct63	-----
Capt Frank ZIMOLZAK, 061187 USMC	3dBnAdv	Apr62	May63
Capt James P. MCWILLIAMS, JR. 073146 USMC	3dBnAdv	May63	-----
Capt William F. BETHEL, 056473 USMC	4thBnAdv	Oct61	Oct62
Capt Don R. CHRISTENSEN, 061133 USMC	4thBnAdv	Oct62	Jul63
Capt Donald E. KOELPER, 060953 USMC	4thBnAdv	Aug63	-----
Capt Robert C. JONES, 065451 USMC	EngAdv	Apr62	Apr63
Capt William J. P. MANNIX, 072847 USMC	EngAdv	Apr63	-----
Capt Raymond LABAS, 065218 USMC	SupAdv	Apr62	Mar63
Capt Herbert M. GRADL, 060390 USMC	SupAdv	Mar63	-----
MSGT Milton FRIEDMAN, 212329 USMC	1stSgt	Apr62	Apr63
GySgt Tom M. ROBINSON, 562064 USMC	TngAdv	Mar62	Feb63
GySgt Levi W. WOODS, 657169 USMC	TngAdv	Feb63	-----
GySgt George M. HAYES, 530552 USMC	TngAdv	Apr63	-----
GySgt William A. LOYKO, 1001572 USMC	AsstArtyAdv	Apr62	Apr63
GySgt Charles D. PECK, 1136355 USMC	AsstArtyAdv	Apr63	-----
SSgt Charles J. WILSON, 565559 USMC	Asst1stBnAdv	Apr62	Apr63
SSgt William E. DUNCAN, 1378665 USMC	Asst2dBnAdv	Apr62	Apr63
MSGT Ralph A. WICHMANN, 907911 USMC	Asst3dBnAdv	May62	Apr63
SSgt Clarence R. HARRIS, 946630 USMC	Asst4thBnAdv	Apr62	Apr63
GySgt Richard L. ROUSE, 325604 USMC	CommAdv	Mar62	Mar63
GySgt Richard M. GRAEME, 624275 USMC	CommAdv	Mar63	-----

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>BILLET</u>	<u>JOINED</u>	<u>DETACHED</u>
Sgt Carl B. JOHNSON, 1097395 USMC	MT Adv	Mar62	Feb63
Sgt George J. MCCONNELL, 1564128 USMC	MT Adv	Feb63	-----
Sgt Ronald A. GLIDDEN, 1499600 USMC	AdminMan	Feb62	Jan63
Sgt Monte L. RAILSBACK, 1601014 USMC	AdminMan	Jan63	-----

NOTE: * Relieved
Evacuated for medical reasons.

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APPENDIX B

VIETNAMESE MARINE BRIGADE

1. MISSION: To execute amphibious operations and such other operations as may be directed. (Other operations, which have constituted the major portion of VNMC activity to date, have included land and heliborne operations up to RCT strength).

2. COMMAND: The VNMC is a part of the General Reserve and is employed as the Joint General Staff may direct.

3. ORGANIZATION:

a. Brigade Headquarters (22-52) can be split to command and control two task forces in the field.

b. Each of the Brigade's four Infantry Battalions (39-1080 each) contains four rifle companies and an H&S Company which provides an 81 Mortar Platoon.

(1) Each rifle company has three infantry platoons supported by a 60mm Mortar Platoon and a Weapons Platoon.

(2) Each infantry platoon has three 13 man squads of three fire teams each.

c. The Artillery Battalion (40-481) contains one 105mm howitzer battery, two 75mm howitzer batteries and a H&S Battery. Each firing battery comprises eight howitzers organized into two four-gun platoons.

d. The Amphibious Support Battalion (51-987) contains the support elements necessary to various combat task groupings.

(1) H&S Company - personnel accounting, disbursing, and military police.

(2) Landing Support Company - Two Landing Support Platoons, which can furnish shore parties for two beaches. Personnel are utilized as supply men in garrison.

(3) Medical Company - One medical platoon for each Infantry and the Artillery Battalion.

(4) Pioneer Company - Three Pioneer Platoons.

(5) Reconnaissance Company - Two platoons, which have received parachute training and basic familiarization with submarine operations.

B 1

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(6) Signal Company - Provides communications for two task groups.

(7) Transportation Company - Two truck platoons capable of moving one Infantry Battalion, and a Boat Platoon (shallow draught out-board motor boats) capable of moving two rifle companies.

(8) Training Company - Trains recruits and NCOs, and conducts marksmanship training.

4. LOGISTICS:

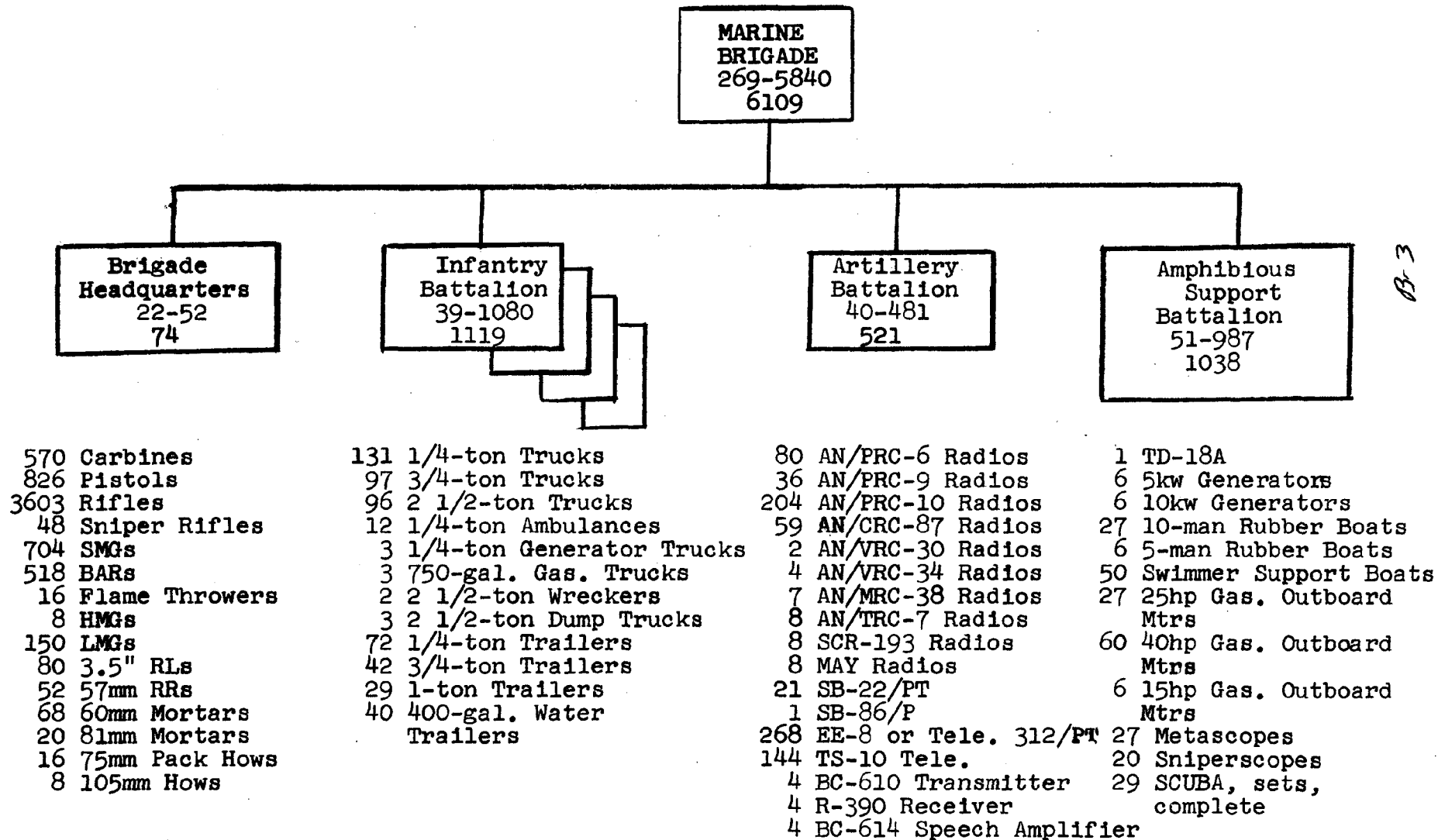
a. Capable of operating independently up to seven days.

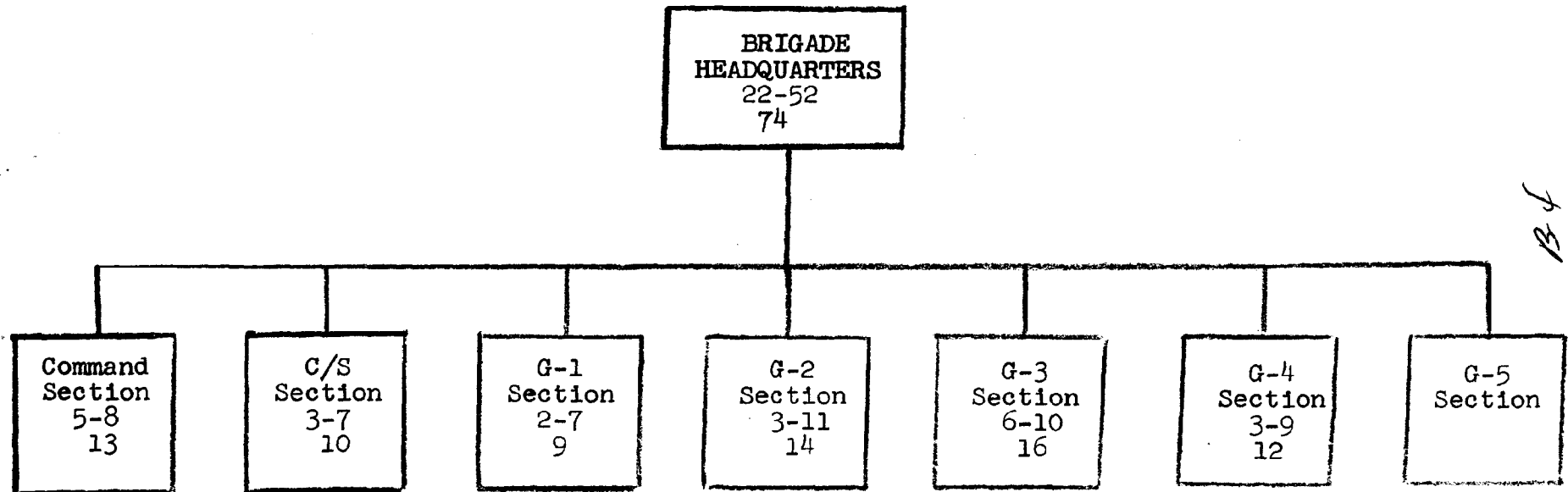
b. ARVN support required for follow-on spares and all classes of supply.

c. Capable of first and second echelon maintenance and of limited third echelon maintenance. Higher echelons of maintenance are normally provided by ARVN.

5. COMMANDANTS, VNMC:

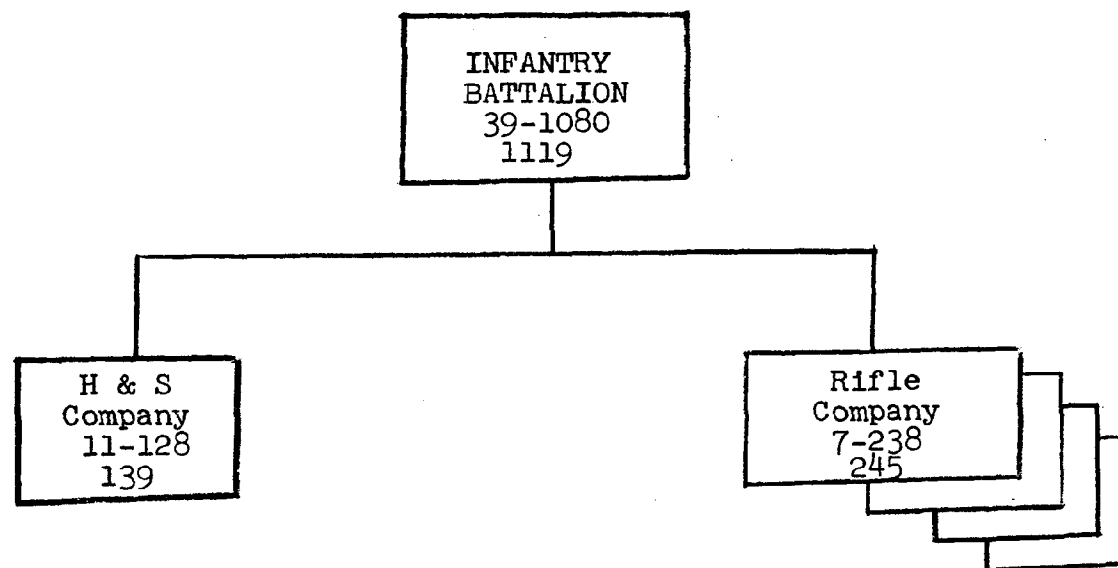
Major Le Quang Trong	1 Oct 1954	-	17 Jun 1956
Major Phan Van Lieu	18 Jan 1956	-	22 Aug 1956
Captain Bui Pho Chi	23 Aug 1956	-	1 Oct 1956
Major Le Nhu Hung	2 Oct 1956	-	23 May 1960
Colonel Le Nguyen Khang	24 May 1960	-	15 Dec 1963
LtColonel Nguyen Ba Lien	16 Dec 1963		





4 Carbines
22 Pistols
35 Rifles
13 SMGs

11 1/4-ton Trucks
2 3/4-ton Trucks
2 1/4-ton Trailers



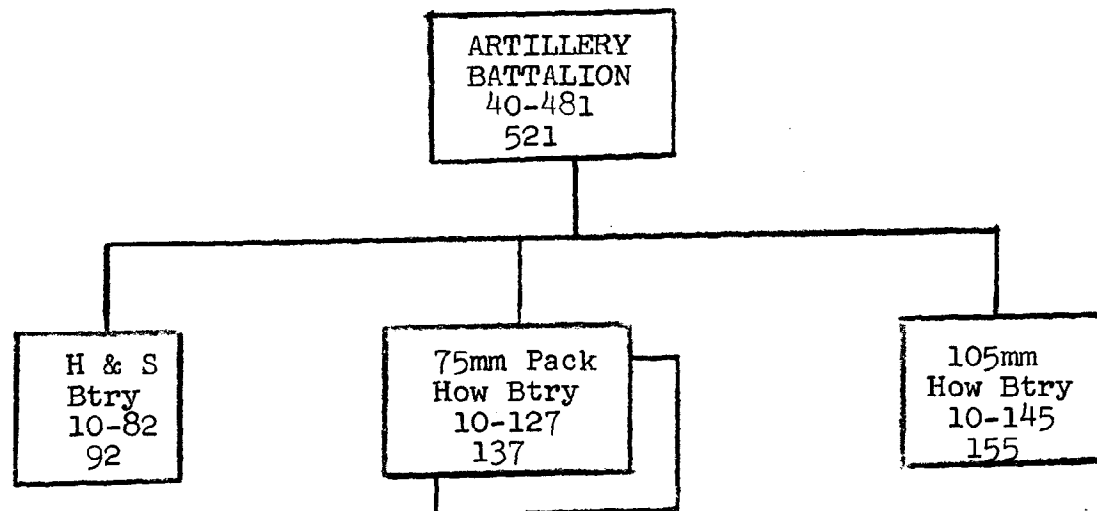
B-5

29 Carbines
 158 Pistols
 705 Rifles
 12 Sniper Rifles
 107 SMGs
 108 BARs
 28 LMGs
 12 57mm RRs
 15 3.5" RLs
 4 Flame Throwers
 16 60mm Mortars
 4 81mm Mortars

14 1/4-ton Trucks
 10 3/4-ton Trucks
 5 2 1/2-ton Trucks
 8 1/4-ton Trailers
 6 3/4-ton Trailers
 5 400-gal. Water Trailers

20 AN/PRC-6 Radios
 40 AN/PRC-10 Radios
 7 AN/GRC-87 Radios
 1 AN/MRC-38 Radio
 1 AN/TRC-7 Radio
 1 SCR-193 Radio
 1 MAY Radio
 2 SB-22/PT
 30 312/PT Telephones
 or (EE-8)
 36 TS/10

1 10kw Generator
 5 10-man Rubber Boats
 5 25hp Gas. Outboard Motors
 5 Metascopes
 4 Sniperscopes

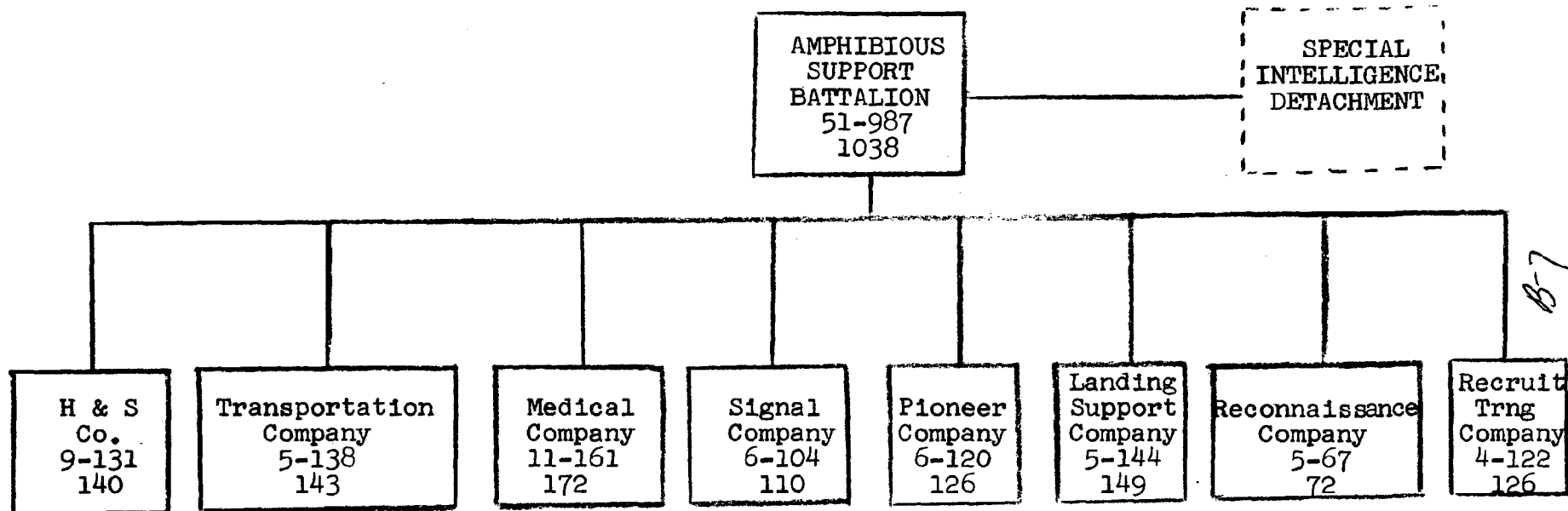


157 Carbines
 74 Pistols
 210 Rifles
 56 SMGs
 24 BARs
 8 HMGs
 16 LMGs
 8 3.5" RLs
 16 75mm Pack Hows
 8 105mm Hows

21 1/4-ton Trucks
 36 3/4-ton Trucks
 21 2 1/2-ton Trucks
 1 2 1/2-ton Wrecker
 15 1/4-ton Trailers
 18 3/4-ton Trailers
 5 1-ton Trailers
 8 400-gal. Water Trailers

36 AN/PRC-9 Radios
 6 AN/PRC-10 Radios
 10 AN/GRC-87 Radios
 1 AN/VRC-30 Radio
 1 AN/MRC-38 Radio
 3 AN/TRC-7 Radios
 1 SCR-193 Radio
 3 MAY Radios
 5 SB-22/PT
 50 EE-8 Telephones or 312/PT
 1 10-KVA Generator

B6



293 Carbines
98 Pistols
538 Rifles
207 SMGs
62 BARs
22 LMGs
12 3.5" RLs
4 57mm RRs
4 60mm Mortars
4 81mm Mortars

43 1/4-ton trucks
19 3/4-ton trucks
34 2 1/2-ton trucks
12 1/4-ton ambulances
2 1/4-ton generator trucks
3 750-gal. gas. trucks
1 2 1/2-ton truck wrecker
3 2 1/2-ton dump trucks
22 1/4-ton trailers
24 1-ton trailers
12 400-gal. water trailers

38 AN/PRC-10 radios
21 AN/GRC-87 radios
2 AN/VRC-30 radios
4 AN/VRC-34 radios
2 AN/MRC-38 radios
4 AN/TRC-7 radios
3 SCR-193 radios
4 MAY radios
8 SB-22/PT
1 SB-86/P
98 EE-8 or 312/PT
telephones
4 BC-610 Transmitter
4 R-390 Receiver
4 BC-614 Speech Amp.

1 TD-18A
6 5kw generators
1 101w generator
7 10-man rubber boats
6 5-man rubber boats
50 Swimmer Support boats
7 25hp gas. outboard
motors
60 40hp gas. outboard
motors
6 15hp gas. outboard
motors
7 Metascope
4 Sniperscope
29 SCUDA, sets, complete