

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER

AD392384

CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

TO: **unclassified**

FROM: **confidential**

LIMITATION CHANGES

TO:

**Approved for public release, distribution
unlimited**

FROM:

**DoD Controlling Organization: Department
of the Army, Adjutant General's Office,
Washington, DC 20310.**

AUTHORITY

**15 May 1980 per DoDD 5200.10 document
marking; Adjutant General's Office [Army]
ltr dtd 29 Apr 1980**

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL



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

IN REPLY REFER TO

4 AGAM-P (M) (8 Aug 68) FOR OT RD 682317 26 August 1968

8 SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 16th
63 Combat Aviation Group, Period Ending 30 April 1968 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

AD3923

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.
3. To insure that the information provided through the Lessons Learned Program is readily available on a continuous basis, a cumulative Lessons Learned Index containing alphabetical listings of items appearing in the reports is compiled and distributed periodically. Recipients of the attached report are encouraged to recommend items from it for inclusion in the Index by completing and returning the self-addressed form provided at the end of this report.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Reproduced From
1 Incl Best Available Copy
as

Kenneth G. Wickham
KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

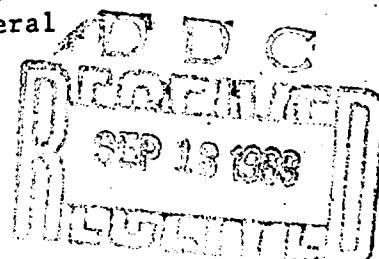
DISTRIBUTION:

Commanding Generals

US Continental Army Command
US Army Combat Developments Command

Commandants

US Army War College
US Army Command and General Staff College
US Army Air Defense School
US Army Artillery and Missile School
US Army Aviation School
US Army Special Warfare School



Regraded unclassified when separated
from classified inclosure.

CONFIDENTIAL

This document contains information being disseminated in accordance with the provisions of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U. S. C., Section 793 and 794. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents is prohibited by law, even to an unauthorized person.

DISTRIBUTION (Cont'd)

2

Copies furnished:
Office, Chief of Staff, US Army
Deputy Chiefs of Staff
Chief of Engineers
Chief of Research and Development
Assistant Chiefs of Staff
OSD(SA), Assistant for Southeast Asia Forces
Defense Documentation Center
Hudson Institute
USAF Air Ground Operations School
Commandant of the Marine Corps (AOSH10)
Commanding Officers
US Army Limited War Laboratory
US Army Logistics, Doctrine Systems & Readiness Agency
2d Battalion, 138th Artillery
16th Combat Aviation Group

3

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 16TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP
APO San Francisco 96337

AVGM-SC

15 May 68

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group for Period Ending 30 April, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) 'U)

Assistant Chief of Staff For Force Development
DA (ACSFOR, DA)
Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (C) SECTION I, OPERATIONS: SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

a. (C) GENERAL

(1) The quarter commenced with the 16th Group's two battalions, the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion and the 212th Combat Support Battalion heavily engaged in providing aviation support to suppress the enemy's Tet Offensive in the I Corps Tactical Zone. The heaviest fighting was concentrated in and near the City of Hue, which was one of the main objectives of the VC and NVA forces. The gunships of the 212th Combat Support Aviation Battalion were extensively instrumental in providing support to the ground forces during this battle.

(2) In addition to the many extra flying hours required, each unit was required to increase its internal security to protect their assets against enemy ground and stand off fire attacks. Additionally, concurrent effort was applied to improving the defensive posture and alert procedures of all units.

(3) A warning order attaching the 308th Combat Aviation Battalion was received on 9 March 1968. The order called for the 308th Battalion to be detached from its parent unit, the 12th Combat Aviation Battalion and be attached to the 16th Combat Aviation Group effective 15 March 68, with operational control invested to the 101st Airborne Division. Attachment became effective as the units passed North of 14 degrees 30 minutes North latitude. The 308th Combat Aviation Battalion completed its move from the III Corps area to the vicinity of Hu Phu Bai in the I Corps area and was declared fully operational on 12 April 1968.

(4) C Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry was redesignated F Troop, 8th Cavalry on 1 April 68. With the change of designation, the unit became organic to the Americal Division.

FOR OT RD
682317

CONFIDENTIAL

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS.
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.10

CONFIDENTIAL

4

AVGM-SC

15 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group for Period Ending 30 April, RCS CSFQR-65 (R1) (U)

(5) Corps Aviation Company (Provisional) was assigned to the 16th CAG on 12 March 1968. It was further attached to the 212th CSAB on 14 March 1968. The unit is stationed at Hue Phu Bai with the mission to provide aviation support for the headquarters element of the Provisional Corps Viet Nam.

(6) Throughout the quarter, the Group Headquarters continued to fill its personnel vacancies and improve its facilities. As equipment became available, the need to depend on subordinate units was decreased. Due to the Group having command less operational control of the assigned battalions, planning of operational activity was minimal. Primary effort continued to be directed towards the development of complementing OFIAMS in support of those issued by higher headquarters. Key staff officers and non-commissioned officers continued to visit each of the assigned units to obtain first hand information relative to problems, status and condition of equipment and overall personality of the commands.

(7) Army Aviation Elements (AAE's). The Group's three AAE's continued to provide necessary liaison and timely recommendations concerning the most effective and appropriate utilization of Army Aviation to the CG III Marine Amphibious Force, CG First Marine Air Wing and the CO I Corps Advisory Group.

(8) Utilization. With the exception of the time spent in moving the 308th CAB from III CTZ to I CTZ, the Group's units were continually engaged in combat aviation support activities. Other items such as civic action projects and training were integrated into daily activities.

(9) Enemy activities. On 25 Feb and 4 Mar 68, Marble Mountain Air Facility, location of the 16th Combat Aviation Group Headquarters, was attacked by fire with 64 122mm rockets. Fire was accurate and damage consisted of the complete destruction of five (5) buildings, to include the 212th Battalion Headquarters, one (1) OV-10 and one (1) UH-1D destroyed, 19 aircraft and 21 vehicles damaged to varying degrees.

b. (U) TRAINING. The 16th CAG, in coordination with First Marine Air Wing, has initiated a program to qualify O-1 pilots as Tactical Air Controllers Airborne (TACA). This is accomplished by on the job training with qualified personnel from the 1st and 3rd Marine Division and is accomplished in 3 to 4 weeks. The TACA qualification of O-1 Army Aviation adds versatility and flexibility to the visual reconnaissance program.

c. (U) AVIATION SAFETY. The Group has flown 52,677 hours during the quarter, with an accident rate of 15.2 per 100,000 flying hours. There were

2

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGM-SC

15 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group
for Period Ending 30 April, NCS USFOR-65 (R1) (U)

eight (8) major accidents; seven UH-1s and one O-1 type aircraft. Five were caused by poor pilot technique and two by suspected material failure.

Total accident experience is as follows: K/W F/W TOTAL

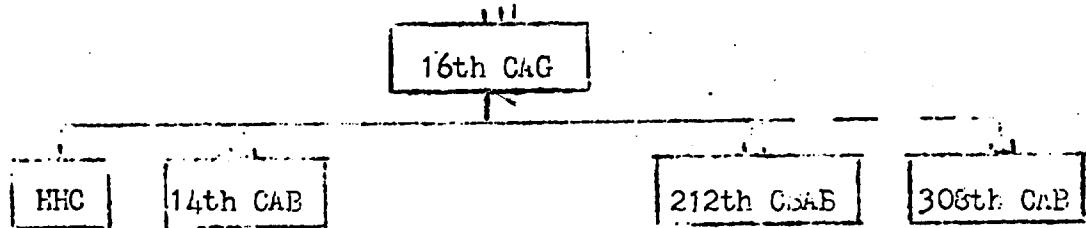
Major Accidents	7	1	8
Minor Accidents	0	0	0
Incidents	5	1	6
Forced Landings	6	0	6
Precautionary Landings	6	0	6

d. (U) CASUALTIES. The Group casualties during this quarter were:

<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>WIC</u>	<u>CROWN</u>
7	7	60	10	3

e. (U) ORGANIZATION.

(1) The 16th Combat Aviation Group is organized as follows: See Inclosure 1 for station list:



(2) Key Personnel:

(a) Group Headquarters.

CO	COL Daniel G. Gust 036330
DCO	LTC Thorveld K. Torgersen 069818
S1	MAJ James A. Boyd 04021916
S2	MAJ Herndon Godfrey Jr 01935345
S3	LTC Charles S. Steen 066513 from 1 Jan 68 thru 9 Mar 68
S4	LTC Ronnie M. Cory 065207 from 13 Mar 68 to present
	MAJ Franklin K. Harris 089499

(b) Unit Commanders:

14th CAB	LTC Carroll C. Isaacs OF100091 from 7 Aug 67 to 6 Feb 1968
	LTC Ray M. Carson OF0106541 from 7 Feb 1968 to present

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

6

AVGM-SC

15 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group
for Period Ending 30 April, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (U)

212th CSAB LTC Wilbur A. Middleton 070141

306th CAB LTC Onore E. Case OF0108132 from 22 Dec 1967
to 9 Mar 1968
LTC Charles S. Steen 066513 from 10 Mar 1968
to present

(c) Unit strength as of 30 April 1968:

(1) Military:

Subordinate Unit	OFF	WO	EM	TOTAL
HHC	Auth 17 O/H 23	Auth 2 O/H 2	Auth 51 O/H 84	Auth 70 O/H 109

(2) Civilian:

Subordinate Unit	DAC	VN	3D NATL CONTRACTOR	
	Auth 0 O/H 0	Auth 5 O/H 3	Auth 0 O/H 0	Auth 0 O/H 0

(d) Aircraft status of 30 April 1968:

	UH-1D	U-21
Auth	2	1
O/H	2	1

(e) Operational results as of 30 April 1968. See Inclosure 2.

2. (U) SECTION II LESSONS LEARNED: COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

a. (U) PERSONNEL:

(1) Personnel Qualification.

(a) OBSERVATION. Personnel received for the Group Headquarters were in some cases recent school graduates, and others not proficient in their MOS.

(b) EVALUATION. The problems involved in activating a new headquarters requires trained and experienced personnel to accomplish this mission in minimal time. A trained and experienced cadre was provided, but filler personnel, to a large extent, were non-qualified and inexperienced. This experience gap created unnecessary problems in establishing an efficient functioning headquarters.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGH-SC

15 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group
for Period ending 30 April, 1968 (R1) (U)

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That replacement centers exercise more care in the selection of personnel for newly formed units.

b. OPERATIONS:

(1) Fly Away Program.

(a) OBSERVATION. During the Tet Offensive, OV-1 aircraft were operated from safe haven airfields out of country. In addition, O-1 aircraft stationed at outlaying ANVU strips were flown to more secure bases.

(b) EVALUATION. During the periods of intensified enemy mortar and rocket threats, the removal of aircraft from the threatened area is desirable. Whenever this can be accomplished and still perform the mission, the aircraft should be evacuated. During the Tet Offensive, the Group's OV-1 aircraft operated from safe haven airfields with no deterioration in mission performance.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Evacuation plans commensurate with mission requirements be formulated and executed.

(2) Alert Status.

(a) OBSERVATION. During periods of increased tension, alert conditions often vary numerous times during the night.

(b) EVALUATION. It is a common occurrence for the alert condition to change numerous times during the night. This creates unnecessary movement of troops to and from the bunkers. Consequently, this creates increased fatigue of individual soldiers, increased confusion and an increased vulnerability to hostile attack. Bunkers at fixed locations should be constructed so that off duty personnel will have space in which to rest.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. When troops are sent to bunkers where conditions permit sleeping, they should remain there for the remainder of the night.

c. (U) TRAINING.

(1) Tactical Air Controller Airborne (TACA)

(a) OBSERVATION. The 16th CAG, in coordination with the First Marine Air Wing, has developed a program to qualify Army O-1 aviators as Tactical Aircraft Controllers Airborne, or TACA's as they are referred to. Thus far, there are 24 who are qualified on orders to direct marine tactical air strikes. During the reporting period, 107 strikes were conducted by Army TACA's.

(b) EVALUATION. Army O-1 aviators trained as TACA's add to

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

8

AVGM-SC

15 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group
for Period Ending 30 April, RCS CEFOR-65 (h1) (U)

the depth, versatility and flexibility of the visual reconnaissance program. The program also assists the Marines in filling their shortage of TACA's, and provides responsive and timely heavy firepower to be applied against targets of opportunity.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That all O-1 aviators assigned to the Visual Reconnaissance Program operating in the I Corps Tactical Zone be qualified as TACA's.

d. (U) INTELLIGENCE. None.

e. (U) LOGISTICS.

(1) Unit Moves.

(a) OBSERVATION. There was a lack of coordination and information involved in the movement of the 308th CAB.

(b) EVALUATION. The lack of sufficient planning time, knowledge of port facilities, adequate material handling equipment caused unnecessary delays in the movement and operational status of this battalion. Additionally, essential items of equipment were temporarily misplaced or lost when off loaded at other than the destination.

(c) RECOMMENDATION.

1 That units prepare loading plans for PCS moves to include air, land and sea movement.

2 That these plans be approved by the unit's higher headquarters.

3 That higher headquarters advise moving units as to transportation and material handling limitations.

f. (U) ORGANIZATIONAL. None.

g. (C) OTHER.

(1) Radio Relay.

(a) OBSERVATION. The U-1A aircraft retrofitted with AN/ARC-121 Repeater Set Radio has experienced excessive loss in performance.

(b) EVALUATION. The installation of the AN/ARC-121 Repeater Set Radio in the U-1A, caused the aircraft's performance to become critical at altitude. The aircraft took excessive time to climb, causing the engine

6
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

15 May 1968

AVG1-SC

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group
for Period Ending 30 April, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (U)

to overheat, decreasing the obtainable airspeed while increasing the stall speed. This resulted in an aircraft that was a near hazard to fly. The suspected cause was the parasite drag of the antennas installed on the wings. A letter was initiated by the Platoon Commander, 1st Platoon, 16th Aviation Company describing, in detail, the problems involved.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the AN/ARC-121 antenna installation on the U-1A, be reevaluated in view of the decreased performance experienced with the current installation.

(2) Publications.

(a) OBSERVATION. Necessary Army and intermediate headquarters publications are very slow in reaching newly arrived units to RVN. For those units formed within RVN, this also applies plus there is excessive delay in acquiring DA publications.

(b) EVALUATION. The lack of proper publications hampers the accomplishment of the mission for both newly assigned or formed units. Units receive some publications upon arrival or when formed, but have to rely on requisitions, which they must submit for the majority of the necessary publications. This is both time consuming and difficult because of the lack of proper references from which to order.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. When new units are to be formed or to arrive in RVN, that appropriate publication packets be established.

3. (U) SECTION III. HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY SURVEY INFORMATION. None.

DANIEL G. GUST

Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

3 Incl
 1. 16th CAG Station List
 2. 16th CAG Operation Results
 3. Lessons Learned During
 . VC/VA TET Offensive

DISTRIBUTION:

CINCUSARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT 2 cys
 CG USARV, ATTN: AVHCC-DST 3 cys
 CG 1st Avn Bde, ATTN: S3 2 cys
 CG 1st Avn Bde, ATTN: AVRA-MH 3 cys
 FILE 15 cys

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

11

AVGA-C (15 May 68) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group
Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CGFOR-65 (R1) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, AFN 96384 JUN 27 1968

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, AFN 96375
Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPCP-OT, AFN 96358

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

1. (U) This Headquarters has reviewed this report, considers it to be
adequate, and concurs with the contents.

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

a. Paragraph 2a(1), page 4. This problem is not peculiar to 16th
CAG. All 1st Aviation Brigade units have experienced this problem to
some degree. The problem, however, has been particularly evident in
newly formed units which do not have an established base of experienced
personnel to compensate for and assist in training of the unqualified or
inexperienced members. In many cases, improper classification and re-
classification actions have resulted in personnel being awarded MOS's
for which they are not qualified. Additionally, the recent rapid growth
of the Army has resulted in a large influx in inexperienced personnel.
The need for fully qualified experienced personnel in hard skill MOS's
is generally recognized, particularly in units of the Brigade, since
Brigade unit TOE's and TUO's contain a preponderance of hard skill MOS's.
More selective screening of personnel qualifications at training and re-
placement centers prior to awarding MOS's would be a definite assist in
reducing the number of unskilled or unqualified personnel. Moreover, it
behooves unit commanders to be more selective in awarding MOS's to OJT
personnel in their units and to devote additional attention to OJT for
currently assigned unqualified personnel.

b. Paragraph 2b(1), page 5. The 1st Aviation Brigade concurs that
the fly away program is a suitable means of passive defense in some cases
and will direct subordinate units to make contingency plans for evacuation
of aircraft. It must be realized, however, that these plans should be
judiciously implemented since designated safe haven airfields may them-
selves become lucrative targets. Commanders must carefully weigh the
advantages and disadvantages in each particular situation before implementing
such plans. It may frequently be more desirable to remain at home station
even during an attack when adequate revetments and personnel bunkers are
available rather than to move to a "safe haven" where these facilities are
not adequate for transients.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

12

AVBN-C (15 May 68) 1st Ind

JUN 17 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Group
for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RL) (3)

c. Paragraph 2c(1), page 5. 1st Aviation Brigade concurs with the recommendation. It is further recommended that C-1 aviators in all four CTB's become knowledgeable in procedures for directing tactical air strikes. Army aviators have effectively directed air strikes in all CTB's when AF FAC's were not immediately available to control strikes. In April 1966, COMUSMACV directed that Army O-1 pilots become familiar with these procedures and be allowed to direct the TAC when AF FAC's were not reasonably available to perform the functions. Additionally he directed that AF O-1 pilots become familiar with procedures for directing artillery fires when Army O-1's were not reasonably available to perform that function.

d. Paragraph 2e(1), page 6. 1st Aviation Brigade Headquarters is requiring all units to prepare movement plans for movement by air or surface and a combination of both.

e. Paragraph 2g(1), page 6. "Blade" or "Shark's fin" type antennas have been procured from Collins Radio Inc and arrived in RVN during the first week of June 1968. One radio relay (ARC-121) U-14 will be retrofitted with these antennas and emission tests and flight tests will be performed during June. The drag problem will be solved. There is a high probability that the emission test will be successful with a minimum of directional effect due to the omnidirectional characteristics of this antenna.

f. Paragraph 2g(2), page 7. Acquisition of publications for newly arriving units is a function of the host unit. Activation of new units in-country will require designation of a unit to requisition necessary publications.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

John D. Mixsell, Jr.

JOHN D. MIXSELL, JR.
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

CONFIDENTIAL

13

AVHGC-DST (15 May 68) 2d Ind CPT Arnold/dls/LBN 4485
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 16th Combat Aviation Group
for Period Ending 30 April, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 28 APR 1968

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned
for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 16th
Combat Aviation Group.

2. Concur with report as submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

C. S. Nakatsukasa
C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Avn Bde
HQ 16th Cbt Avn Gp

GPOP-DT (15 May 1968) 3d Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 16th Cbt Avn Gp for
Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, AFO San Francisco 96558 26 JUL 1968

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

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

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

STATION LIST
16TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP

Chu Lai:

14th CAB	APO 96374
21st RAC (212th CSAB)	APO 96374
71st AHC	APO 96374
176th AHC	APO 96374
178th ASHC	APO 96374

Da Nang

16th CAG	APO 96337
212th CSAB	APO 96337
245th SAC	APO 96337
282nd AHC	APO 96337

Duc Pho:

174th AHC	APO 96374
-----------	-----------

Iue Phu Bai:

131st SAC (212th CSAB)	APO 96308
220th IAC (212th CSAB)	APO 96308
Corps Prov Avn Co (212th CSAB)	APO 96308
308th CAB	APO 96383
17th AHC	APO 96383
188th AHC	APO 96383
200th ASHC	APO 96308

16TH CAG OPERATIONAL STATISTICS
QTR ENDING 30 APRIL 1968

<u>Subordinate Unit</u>	<u>Sorties Flown</u>	<u>Troops Lifted</u>	<u>Cargo Lifted (Tons)</u>	<u>Enemy KIA</u>	<u>Structures Dam Dest</u>	<u>Sampans Dam Dest</u>	<u>Aircraft Damaged*</u>
Incl 2	HQ, 16th CAG	521	401	5	0	0	2

* Aircraft Damaged: 1 UH-1D, 1 U-21

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 16TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP
APO San Francisco 96337

AVGM-SC

14 February 1968

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned During VC/NVA TET Offensive

TO: Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
ATTN: AVBA-C
APO 96348

LESSONS LEARNED - VC/NVA TET OFFENSIVE

SECTION I - Planning and Preparation Which Affected the Command's Readiness Posture upon Initiation of the TET Offensive.

a. Item: Physical Security Plans

b. Discussion: This command was not at any increased condition of readiness upon the start of enemy activities. The group was engaged in routine operational and administrative functions. The only significant enemy activity prior to 29 January in any area occupied by elements of this group was at Chu Lai on 27 January when an enemy mortar attack was conducted at 2300 hours on the cantonment area of Headquarters, 14th CAB. There were no casualties and no significant damage was reported. Each unit of the group is tenant at a U.S. installation except for one O-1 platoon located at Quang Ngai and one O-1 platoon located at Hue Citadel. All units had standing operation procedures to be taken in event of alert. All units had defensive plans integrated into area defense plans. Most areas had been exposed to enemy mortar and rocket attacks in the past so when the TET offensive commenced the units had sound, workable plans and procedures to guide their actions. It should be noted; however, that there was no indication on the evening of 29 January that an increased readiness posture was necessary. When the first rounds landed that evening the alert conditions went from normal to attack in progress. Although the attack was sudden, personnel responded in a calm manner and within minutes after the mortar attack, the interior perimeter was manned. Exterior perimeters are always manned so defense against ground attack is always present.

Incl 3

14

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

13

AVGM-SC

14 February 1968

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned During VC/NVA TET Offensive

c. Lesson Learned: Responsiveness to quick changing conditions of alert status is an essential training goal, but there is no substitute for prior warning of suspected enemy activity. Although few casualties were sustained during the surprise mortar and rocket attacks on installations, there could have been many if the attacks had been directed toward the cantonment areas. Fixed installations are dependent upon notification from intelligence agencies so that conditions of increased readiness can be initiated.

d. Recommendation: That intelligence collection agencies provide timely information to units advising them of probable or possible enemy activity in the area so that units can increase their readiness posture as required by the enemy situation.

SECTION II - Conduct of Operations During the TET Offensive.

1. (U) Personnel.

a. Item: Replacements

Discussion: During the period there was a noticeable drop in the flow of personnel in the replacement stream because of the shortage of air transportation from the replacement center. Replacements began to arrive again after the four day period.

Lesson Learned: The temporary loss of replacement personnel caused no hardship to the command because of the short duration involved.

Recommendation: None

b. Item: Morale

Discussion: It was expected that the requirement to man perimeters during alerts at night coupled with the normal daily work requirements during the day would reduce efficiency of the units. No noticeable degradation of capability was noted during the period or during the following week while constant vigil was continued. It was noted that the general esprit was improved during the period of tension and morale seemed to be higher than ever.

Lesson Learned: The threat of immediate danger provided a common bond among the troops. Headquarters personnel were eager to

15

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGM-SC

14 February 1968

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned During VC/NVA TET Offensive

accept the challenge of ground combat when reports indicated a ground attack was imminent.

Recommendation: None

2. (c) Operations:

a. Item: Spot Reports

Discussion: Reporting damage assessments after enemy attacks presented a problem. The information to be reported was classified and secure teletype circuits were either overloaded or inoperative. A secure HF capability to brigade does not operate. Use of the telephone proved to be the fastest method of reporting; therefore, a special aircraft damage report was devised using lines and columns to report information:

Lesson Learned: Common user secure teletype is not responsive during periods of increased operational activity. Telephone and radio is the fastest means of reporting information of an urgent nature.

Recommendation: That line item type telephonic reports be included in the brigade SOP to expedite reporting procedures during periods when area wide secure communication systems are over committed.

b. Item: Physical Security

Discussion: During the numerous mortar and rocket attacks on installations few casualties were sustained. The existence of personnel shelters within cantonment areas contributed to this result. Although shelters were considered adequate prior to attacks, units improved their shelters the day after the first attack and continued to do so throughout the period of increased readiness.

Lesson Learned: Although adequate protective shelters were constructed in advance of the attack, the importance of sound shelters was dramatically emphasized during the attack. After an attack it is always evident that improvements can be made to existing facilities.

c. Item: Fly away Flans

Discussion: During the period when enemy mortar and rocket attacks were a constant threat, O-1 aircraft were flown out of country

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

20

AVGM-SC

14 February 1968

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned During VC/NVA TET Offensive

to safe havens. No degradation of surveillance mission resulted and security of these expensive aircraft was assured.

Lesson Learned: A fly away plan for all types of aircraft is not always possible; however, OV-1 is capable of being flown out of country and should be evacuated during periods of increased enemy threats.

Recommendation: That OV-1 aircraft continue to be flown to safe havens during periods of increased enemy activity.

d. Item: Frequent Changes to Alert Status

Discussion: It is noted that area defense coordinators were frequently changing the alert status in response to the enemy situation. At times units would go from a normal condition to full alert three or four times during the night. Personnel were moving from barracks to bunkers throughout the night and were losing more sleep than was necessary.

Lesson Learned: During the periods of heightened tension it is better to man bunkers at dark and remain on positions throughout the night than to have personnel moving in and out of shelters. Personnel are able to sleep more and are protected from surprise attack.

Recommendation: That unit commanders maintain a readiness posture which is always equal to or higher than that established by the area defense coordinator, but that frequent changes in alert status be discouraged.

e. Item: Counter Mortar Operations

Discussion: In all cases of mortar attacks on group airfields, emergency standby gun teams were launched for counter mortar operations. When used in conjunction with base defense plans these light fire teams provide a constant retaliatory threat to enemy mortar crews.

Lesson Learned: Although the effort expended in maintaining emergency standby gun teams is considerable, these aircraft provide a valuable means for active defense of installations.

Recommendations: That continued use of standby light fire teams be emphasized as an integral part of all base defense activities.

CONFIDENTIAL

21

CONFIDENTIAL

AVGM-SC

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned During VC/NVA TET Offensive

14 February 1968

3. Logistics

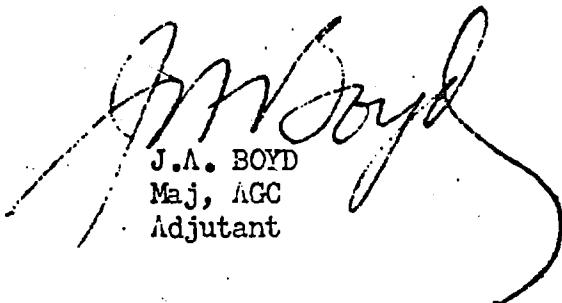
Item: Aircraft Revetments

Discussion: Although an extensive revetment building program had been completed, extensive damage to parked aircraft was sustained during mortar and rocket attacks. Almost all damage to helicopters was to rotor blades and wind shields which is, of course, to be expected.

Lessons Learned: Aircraft revetments will minimize the effects of shell fragments to the major portion of parked helicopters; however, rotor systems and windshields remain vulnerable.

Recommendation: That continued emphasis be placed on construction of aircraft revetments as necessary protective requirement for all parked aircraft.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



J.A. BOYD
Maj, AGC
Adjutant

CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

22

Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Confidential
HQ, OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		2b. GROUP 4
1. REPORT TITLE Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Hq, 16th Combat Aviation Group (U)		
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Feb - 30 Apr 68		
3. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) CO, 16th Combat Aviation Group		
5. REPORT DATE 15 May 1968	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 19	7b. NO. OF REFS
6a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	8a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
b. PROJECT NO. N/A	682317	
c.	9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned (this report))	
d.		
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310
13. ABSTRACT		

19

DD FORM 1 NOV 68 1473

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

23 The following items are recommended for inclusion in the Lessons Learned Index:

ITEM 1

* SUBJECT TITLE _____

** FOR OT RD # _____

***PAGE # _____

ITEM 2

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

ITEM 3

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

ITEM 4

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

ITEM 5

SUBJECT TITLE _____

FOR OT RD # _____

PAGE # _____

* Subject Title: A short (one sentence or phrase) description of the item of interest.

** FOR OT RD # : Appears in the Reply Reference line of the Letter of Transmittal. This number must be accurately stated.

***Page # : That page on which the item of interest is located.

- - - - - FOLD - - - - -

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OACSFOR
Washington, D.C. 20310

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

STAPLE

STAPLE

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
ATTN: Operational Reports Branch
Headquarters, Department of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

DA Label 18, 1 Apr 50 PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF THIS LABEL ARE OBSOLETE

16-7843-1

- - - - - FOLD - - - - -