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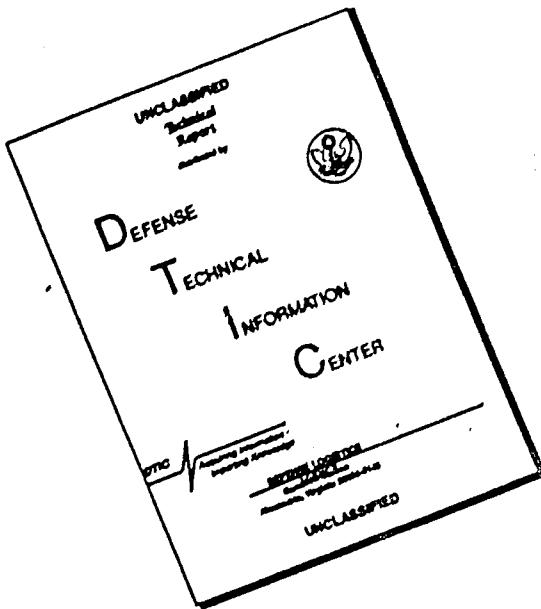
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M)(27 Dec 68) FOR OT UT 683131

2 January 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 31 July 68 (U)

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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 UT . 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.

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 214th Combat Aviation Battalion
 US Army Aviation Test Activity

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 214TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96530

AVGC-EC

8 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation
Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS
CSFOR-65 (R1)

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1. (C) Section 1, SIGNIFICANT UNIT ACTIVITIES

a. MISSION

(1) To provide aviation support to United States, Republic of Vietnam, and Free World Military Armed Forces in the III and IV Corps Tactical Zones as directed by the Commanding General, II Field Forces, Vietnam and the Commanding Officer 12th Combat Aviation Group.

(2) Commands and administers assigned and attached Army Aviation and supported units.

b. ORGANIZATION: (Inclosure 1) There were no changes in the organizational structure during this period.

c. PERSONNEL CHANGES & STATUS

(1) On 6 May 1968, Major Conrad F. Chesser, 08033824, replaced Major Lawrence E. Corser, 0937873, as Battalion Maintenance Officer.

(2) On 9 May 1968, LTC Paul F. Anderson, 075136, assumed command of the Battalion, vice LTC Leo C. Bryan, 091775.

(3) On 13 May 1968, Major Lawrence E. Corser, 0937873, replaced Major Jimmy N. Moore, 078442, as Battalion S-4.

(4) On 6 June 1968, Captain John E. Mortenson, 05019624, replaced Major James Myers, 0F113782, as Battalion S-2.

(5) On 20 June 1968, Major Calvin R. Griggs, 094302, assumed

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command of the 191st Assault Helicopter Company, replacing Major Colbert L. Dilday, 088658.

(6) On 31 July 68, 2LT William R. Bradley, 02338189, replaced 1LT George E. Hudson, 05336135, as Battalion Signal Officer.

(7) Unit strengths as of 31 July 1968: This unit is at its lowest strength level since beginning operation in April 1967. A steady decline has resulted from losing more personnel to DEROs and ETS than was gained from replacements. For example: During June a total of 22 replacements were received while losing 73 to DEROs or other loss. In July a total of 56 replacements were received while losing 52. Net loss for the two months was 53. (Not included in these computations was a gain of 13 enlisted personnel transferred from the 9th Inf Div solely for the purpose of maintaining Bear Cat contonement special service activities transferred from the 9th Inf Div. The 214th is now operating the majority of the Bear Cat special service activities.)

(a) Military

<u>Subordinate Units</u>	<u>OFF Auth</u>	<u>O/H</u>	<u>WO Auth</u>	<u>O/H</u>	<u>EM Auth</u>	<u>O/H</u>	<u>TOTAL Auth</u>	<u>O/H</u>
HHC, 214th CAB	19	17	2	8	76	96*	97	121
772nd Med	1	1	0	0	8	8	9	9
Pathfinder Det	2	1	0	0	10	7	12	8
117th AHC	15	17	52	41	152	139	219	197
140th Trans Det	1	1	1	1	70	50	72	52
256th Sig Det	1	1	0	0	9	8	10	9
191st AHC	15	15	52	46	152	138	219	199
606th Trans Det	1	1	1	1	70	52	72	54
26th Sig Det	0	2	1	0	8	9	9	11
195th AHC	15	15	52	41	152	141	219	197
609th Trans Det	1	1	1	1	70	47	72	49
366th Sig Det	0	1	1	0	8	9	9	10
93rd Med Det	1	1	0	0	8	13	9	14
240th AHC	15	16	52	38	152	142	219	196
619th Trans Det	1	1	1	1	70	53	72	55
932 Sig Det	0	1	1	0	8	7	9	8
TOTALS 214th CAB	88	92	217	178	1023	919	1328	1189

* HQ overstrength: 13 - Special Services entertainment specialists assigned from the 9th Div for the purpose of operating Camp Martin Cox Special Service facilities.

4 - Tower operators (not auth) assigned from 1st Avn Rde for operating Bear Cat Tower.

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(b) Civilian:

Subordinate Units	DAC Auth O/H	VN Auth O/H	3rd Matl Auth O/H	Contractor Auth O/P
HHG	0 0	5 19	0 0	0 0
117th AHC	0 0	11 11	0 0	2 2
191st AFC	0 0	0 3	0 0	2 2
195th AHC	0 0	7 12	0 0	2 2
240th AHC	0 0	0 3	0 0	2 2
TOTALS	0 0	23 48	0 0	8 8

d. ADMINISTRATION

(1) Casualty Information

Hostile

Lightly Wounded: 25
VSI: 3
KIA: 11

Non-Hostile

Lightly Wounded: 10
VSI: 1
KIA: 13

(2) Strength: In this reporting period the Battalion's authorized strength remained at 1328. The assigned strength was 1189 or 89.8% of authorized at the close of the period. This Battalion had 297 personnel rotated to CONUS and 263 assigned from CONUS. There were 20 emergency leaves and 3 compassionate leaves granted. With the arrival and departure of personnel for all reasons, the personnel section in or out-processed 752 individuals.

(3) Civic Action: During the months of May, June, and July 1968, the 214th contributed the following to Civic Action Projects:

(a) 112 hours of labor improving a school in the village of Long Thanh.

(b) 70 desks, 5 teacher tables, and 7 platforms.

(c) 60 sheets of tin roofing, 32 bags of cement, 300 cement bricks, and 50 pounds of nails.

(d) 42,200 piasters donated for construction of a school in the hamlet of Thi Lac along with 2 truck loads of scrap lumber and mas-sonite.

(4) Chaplain's Activities:

(a) Chaplain services performed during reporting period were as follows:

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<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>OCCASION</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u>
Group Worship	23	621
Character Guidance	8	768
Visits (Post, stockade, Duty Areas)	88	
Memorial Services	3	290
Off Post Projects	2	
Counseling	95	

(b) The Chaplain began area coverage for three companies of the 210th CAB located at Long Thanh.

(c) Construction of a memorial chapel at Plantation (Long Binh) for the 117th AHC and 195th AHC was begun the last week in July with an anticipated completion date of 1 Oct 68.

(d) Increased emphasis has been placed on the Character Guidance Program and a character guidance council was organized in May. Classes were held in each company for E-5's and below and a summary sheet of the monthly topic was published and distributed to all grades E-6 and above. It is felt that the increased attendance at Sunday Worship Service is a result of the emphasis being placed on the Character Guidance Program and the numerous unit visits by the Battalion Chaplain.

(5) Information:

(a) During the reporting period the Battalion Information Program has continued to show steady progress. The weekly newspaper (Cougar Weekly News) has continued to be published and has shown marked interest throughout the Battalion. The Battalion received noted publicity in a three page article of the July issue of "Hawk" magazine, the 1st Aviation Brigade monthly publication. The Battalion was also in receipt of copies of the "Greyhound Transportation Quarterly Magazine" giving noted publicity to the 240th AFC "Greyhounds".

(b) The Home Town News Release Program has increased with many stories and pictures to accompany the releases. During the reporting period 101 releases were dispatched.

(c) Plans have been finalized to publish a Cougar Yearbook, for the period 1 July 1967 - 30 June 1968. Publication is expected in September 1968.

(6) Morale:

(a) The morale of the Battalion remained high during the initial part of this reporting period. Since mid-June there has been a definite downward trend in the overall morale of the command, especially the 240th AHC. This can be attributed to several factors:

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1. An abnormally high rate of casualties from both hostile and non-hostile causes.

2. The lowest strength the Battalion has had to endure since its organization. Personnel have been required to work long hours and perform extra duties to sustain operations. There is no lack of willingness in accomplishing these tasks, but it is felt that the overall effect is detrimental.

3. After much diligent work to improve living conditions, the thought of an impending move has had an adverse effect on morale in general.

4. Administrative difficulties and a somewhat tightening up in the R&R program have also been detrimental to general morale; but most specifically to those directly effected by administrative errors precluding preplanned, scheduled departures.

5. Constant delays in the base development program scheduled to improve the living conditions in the Plantation area have discouraged some efforts towards self improvement of these areas. The desire is evident and indications are that improvement can be expected in this area when construction efforts can commence.

(b) The last few weeks of the reporting period have shown a tendency to recoup from this slump and no overall lessening of combat effectiveness is attributed to this general condition.

(7) Discipline: Disciplinary actions continued to show a significant decrease during the reporting period. Article 15's numbered 33, Summary Courts-Martial numbered 0, and Special Courts-Martial numbered 4. This represents a decline of 4 Article 15's and a decline of 1 Court-Martial.

(8) Awards and Decorations: The awards and decorations program continued to show a significant increase over the last reporting period. NCO's and officers in supervisory positions have effectively observed and recommended deserving personnel for meritorious service. The Battalion awards and decorations program is still operating in a functional and efficient manner.

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>SUMMITTED</u>	<u>RECEIVED</u>	<u>AWARD</u>	<u>SUMMITTED</u>	<u>RECEIVED</u>
DSC	1	1 (Posthumous)	AM"V"	59	21
SS	5	6	BS	33	36
LOM	0	1	AM	249	321
DFC	46	34	ACM	31	57
SM	0	8	PH	11	33
RS"V"	0	4	TOTALS	SUMMITTED	RECEIVED
				435	522

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(9) Special Services Activities:

(a) During this reporting period the method of providing special service equipment was being revised. Previously the property accountability was handled by hand receipt through channels from the Saigon Special Services Supply Center. In order to better account for and control the property, it was directed to have each battalion establish an account with the supply center and have equipment laterally transferred to the unit property book. This has been a definite improvement on the system.

(b) When the 9th Infantry Division moved out of Camp Martin Cox, the 214th CAB assumed responsibility for several post Special Service facilities. These were the Plantation Service Club, the post swimming pool and miniature golf course. In order to support and operate these facilities 13 military enlisted men were transferred from the 9th Inf Div to the 214th CAR. In addition, the service club is supervised by two US female Special Service entertainment specialists.

(10) Medical Activity:

(a) Several areas of hygiene and sanitation received added emphasis in the course of normal procedures and in anticipation of the AGI/CMMI. Facilities and health practices were inspected and improved where necessary resulting in an overall satisfactory rating for Battalion units.

(b) The dispensary underwent a complete internal reconstruction with primary emphasis toward maximum space utilization with allowances for additional equipment and services. The examination and treatment rooms were arranged to facilitate traffic and minimize delays. The increased efficiency of the facility is already quite obvious.

(c) Morphine packets, which had been carried in an ammo box containing the emergency radio and survival map, have been collected and placed under dispensary control. Experience has proved that improper use of this drug often caused more harm than good and patients are usually evacuated with minimum delay making its use generally unnecessary. Operations in distant or remote areas may require issue of the packets, and this can be accomplished the preceding day without difficulty.

(d) The 30 day flying hour program continued to be an area of great concern. Aviators are exceeding 140 hours with such frequency that complacency had caused the units to start ignoring the requirements for a consultation with the flight surgeon. A high flying hour commitment over a large AO contributed to the deficiency. Strong supervisory emphasis has been placed in this area and commanders were reminded of their responsibility to this program.

e. OPERATIONAL STATISTICS - Incl 2

f. AIRCRAFT STATUS - Incl 3

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g. INTELLIGENCE

(1) General: In addition to normal activities, on 25 Jun 68, the S-2 section satisfactorily passed the Annual General Inspection. During the AGI approximately 95% of documents on hand were inspected and found to be under proper control procedures.

(2) Security:

(a) A total of 844 classified documents were processed by the S-2 section during the reporting period.

(b) A "change of custodian" inventory was completed on 17 May 68. The 12th CAG's Intelligence NCO witnessed the inventory as he was on a courtesy inspection requested by the S-2. At present there is a total of 27 SECRET documents on hand.

(c) This Battalion had 2 security violations which were losses of SOI's. One was a result of neglect and the other is still under investigation.

(3) Counterintelligence: This Battalion had 2 suspected acts of sabotage during the reporting period. Investigations are still in progress.

(4) Inspections: This section conducted a total of 10 inspections of subordinate units. Two were unsatisfactory and eight were satisfactory.

h. OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

(1) FMC, 214th CAB was operational 92 days during the reporting period. The 117th, 191st, 195th, and 240th AHC's were operational 89 days. The three non-operational days for each AHC are a result of maintenance stand down days. Individual training is being conducted in accordance with 1st Avn Bde and 12th CAG directives.

(2) The Battalion was inspected by the USARV AGI-CMI Team during the period 25-28 Jun 68. All sections from all units passed the inspection satisfactorily with the exception of the motor pool, 191st AHC. Re-inspections are not scheduled, however, noted deficiencies have been corrected.

(3) Operations:

(a) Operational activity for this quarter consisted mainly of company size combat assaults and special missions. Battalion efforts were centered around an impending move to a new location and monitoring of company activities temporarily removed as far as fifty miles from home base.

(b) The 9th Inf Div appeared to be re-orienting around small assault elements and no multi-company operations were controlled by this

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headquarters. During the month of July, the 191st AFC conducted planned night combat assaults in support of 1st Bde/9th Inf Div. Objectives were selected based on radar sightings indicating movement of 20 to 40 personnel. Artillery preparations and gun ship suppressions were fired on the LZ's, and each was illuminated with 105mm howitzers. Pathfinders were utilized in the LZ's. Although there were no problems encountered by the aviation unit, the operations were terminated after five days since the ground units failed to make contact with the enemy. A possible advantage obtained was the reduction in radar sighting attributed to this type operation. Prior to commencement of the night insertions up to 20 radar sightings were reported but these reduced to 3 or 4 after they had been run a day or two.

(c) The 195th and 240th HQ's continued their support of Special Missions, 51st LRRP, 9th Inf Div, and II FFV general support. The classified special missions have been discussed in other Operational Reports-Lessons Learned. The 195th was given the dubious opportunity of conducting combat assaults during May and June after having been on special missions since becoming operational 1 Dec 67. After a day of formation practice and re-orientation, they indicated their flexibility by successfully supporting the 9th Inf Div in several "hot" combat assaults. They returned to special missions during this quarter and are presently supporting the 5th SFG.

(d) During the period 1 thru 9 Jun 68, the 191st AFC supported the 1st Bde/9th Inf Div on operation Truong Cong Dinh, conducted in the Plain of Reeds. The 1st Bde was credited with 600 VC casualties (195 actual body count) and 84 weapons captured or destroyed. The 191st provided the majority of airmobile support throughout the operation by conducting numerous combat assaults, resupply, and medevacs. Heavy AA and rocket fire was characteristic of the first day which culminated with an assault into an LZ carved out by a recent air strike. The VC force was overrun the next day and the operation continued with day and night assaults and a great deal of success. This aviation support was deemed so outstanding that the receiving unit chose to submit a letter of commendation through the appropriate channels to the "Boomerangs", lauding their bravery and tenacity in accomplishing the mission.

(4) Training:

(a) The Battalion was selected to conduct a W-1 Instructor Pilot Course for VNAF aviators consisting of twenty-five hours flight time and the appropriate ground schooling. A total of 4 VNAF officers attended this course of instruction. This program was completed and three aviators received an instructor rating. A school of this nature required the full-time efforts of the Battalion Standardization Instructor Pilot plus partial use of one other instructor pilot. The overall effect on the Battalion was a slowdown in internal programs of unit standardization and required proficiency checks.

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(b) Due to an extremely high turnover rate in personnel, training of all types was accelerated and assistance from the battalion staff was increased. Several aviator standardization and in-country orientation rides were conducted by battalion IP's and a new IP training course was initiated at this level. The course as conducted requires that candidates live and work at this headquarters to completely divorce themselves from other activities until course completion. Four officers have completed the program. The course consists of safety, maintenance, aircraft systems, and MCI training in addition to the flight program. Flight time is on a proficiency basis after the minimum time is accomplished. Initiation of this program had been delayed to accommodate the WAF training but is in full operation at present. It is anticipated that the course will be continuing at a rate of two candidates per class, at least until late fall, due to personnel turnover.

(5) Thai Training:

(a) Training in air-mobile assaults was conducted for the 1st Battalion of the new Thai "Black Panther" Division on 25 and 26 July 1968. A one hour class was presented to all commanders, down to and including platoon leaders, on 25 Jul 68. A simulated combat assault was conducted on 26 Jul 68 from Bear Cat to Long Thanh South Airfield. The 191st AFC supported this training with one C&C ship, 10 troop carriers and 2 LFT's. Additional training is scheduled upon arrival of the remaining Battalions.

i. LOGISTICS

(1) During this period normal supply activities were conducted by the units of this Battalion. Major shortages of equipment effecting unit operations were two UH-1C's, three UH-1D's, four UH-1H's, one 5-ton tractor truck, one 2¹/2-ton truck, and one 3/4-ton truck.

(2) Ballistic helmets for members of aircrews are still in short supply. Many crew members are using MPM-5's for combat assault missions.

(3) During the past period the Battalion headquarters and all subordinate units received and satisfactorily completed an annual AGI-CNMI inspection.

(4) During this period all units of the Battalion have received and issued to all air crews the phase I and II Nomex flight clothing and Nomex flight gloves. (Minor difficulties persist in proper sizing.)

(5) A short-coming within the units of this Battalion has been in the TA 50-901 system, both in issue and direct exchange. The direct exchange system leaves much to be desired as the clothing turned in for exchanged takes as high as 7 months to be replaced. The issue of new clothing and equipment is almost non-existent. The main shortages are caused by the infusion system in that the units have transferred individuals (as directed by USARV CIR 735-35) with a complete set of TA 50-901 clothing and

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equipment. A vast majority of the EM coming to this unit arrive without this same equipment. Critical items are: flak jackets, poncho liners, light weight blankets, helmets, and web gear. These shortages have been placed on requisition but have not been received.

(6) The headquarters and two AFC's are presently making preparations and attempting to obtain equipment necessary for the impending PCS movement to Dong Tam to join the 9th Inf Div at their new base camp. Difficulties are being encountered in obtaining all necessary materials and equipment for the new bunkers, living and working facilities.

(7) During this reporting period a critical shortage of automotive repair parts continued to exist. A primary example is spark plugs; none (0) have been received within the past 180 days. This situation has adversely affected the material readiness posture of this organization. The following is a list of the critical parts required:

<u>NOMENCLATURE</u>	<u>FSN</u>
Spark Plugs	2920-75244558
Tire, Pneumatic	2610-262-8677
Tire, Pneumatic	2610-051-1700
Tire, Pneumatic	2610-678-1363
Tube	2610-269-1738
Tube, Patches	2640-052-0828
Battery	6140-066-4984
Battery	6140-057-2554
Bearing, Cone	3110-678-1863

(8) Aircraft Maintenance:

(a) Overall Battalion aircraft availability ASA percentage of assigned was as follows:

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>UH-1C</u>	<u>UH-1D</u>	<u>UH-1H</u>
May	65%	75%	65%
June	63%	71%	66%
July	71%	76%	80%

The 214th CAB met all daily operational requirements during the entire quarter. As is noted by the statistics listed above, the availability of mission ready aircraft improved as the quarter ended. This fact was accomplished even though the supply of aircraft parts was critical throughout the quarter. The extremely low percentage of fill on normal requisitions forced the units to EDP priority approximately 78% fill could be expected in a 31 day period. Emphasis must be placed on proper handling of parts requisitions and the expeditious flow of parts to all units must be stressed by higher headquarters.

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(b) Aircraft Recovery: Response to all field recoveries by the 56th Transportation Company (DS) during this quarter was outstanding. However, when the number or priority of recoveries to be made did not allow return of the aircraft to home base it was dropped off at a nearby secure area. The damaged aircraft then became a maintenance evacuation with low priority and valuable maintenance time has been lost as a result of delays encountered in delivery of the aircraft back to the owning unit. The 214th CAB Commander has stressed that maximum repairs are to be accomplished in the field, however, it is imperative that steps be taken to return damaged aircraft to the owning unit with minimum delay.

(c) Aircraft Transfer: During the quarter numerous aircraft were retrograded from companies of this Battalion for excessive combat damage, accident damage, or excessive airframe hours. Other aircraft were issued to the companies to replace these losses. A problem was encountered when replacement aircraft were located in such areas as Qui Nhon, Pleiku, or Danang. Valuable time was lost in arranging transportation for flight and maintenance personnel to these areas. In some cases the aircraft was not ready for issue when the personnel arrived or had been previously issued to another unit. Strongly recommend that the feasibility of transferring replacement aircraft through GSU/DSU channels to the supporting DSU be considered to alleviate this problem.

(d) USARV CMMI Inspection: An inspection of all units of the 214th CAB was conducted by the USARV Team 25-28 June. All areas of aircraft maintenance were found to be satisfactory.

j. AVIATION SAFETY

(1) During the reporting period this Battalion has reduced the accident rate from 13.9 to 10.6 per 100,000 flying hours. The continued accident rate reduction is a direct result of command emphasis on safety and standardization at all levels.

(2) To realize the effects of the safety and standardization program, a study revealed that out of 5 engine failures all were auto-rotated without further damage. This success is again attributed to command emphasis at all levels placed on a thorough 90 day standardization ride.

(3) The Battalion sustained four major accidents during the reporting period. The cause factors are as follows:

- (a) One - most probable cause - weather
- (b) One - Material Failure
- (c) Two - Pilot Error

(4) To preclude recurrence of these accidents, the Battalion has initiated the following:

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(a) An inadvertent IFR Procedure

(b) Increased command emphasis on the EIR program.

(c) Safety classes for the command, discussing the "Pilot Error" accidents and increased emphasis on advising the ground commander of the capabilities and limitations of the airmobile force.

2. (C) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations.

a. PERSONNEL.

(1) Security Personnel

(a) OBSERVATION. Inadequacy of TOE personnel authorization.

(b) EVALUATION. As stated in the ORLL for the periods ending 31 Oct 67 and 31 Jan 68, the TOE does not provide sufficient personnel to perform the required mission of a battalion in Vietnam when considering security requirements and self-help construction programs. Since 31 Jan 68, this Battalion has steadily decreased in strength level from 95-96% to a present level of 89-90%. The Battalion is presently located in two separate contingents and consistently operates elements at two distant operational bases requiring perimeter type security that constitute 5-6% of the unit's strength. Combine this with a continuing requirement for construction details which has averaged some 5% of total strength for most of the past year and will continue with the anticipated move to Dong Tam and it seriously hampers the unit's ability to perform its primary mission.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That aviation units be authorized and given fills for additional security personnel. In addition, present replacement policy should be reviewed to insure small operating units are kept at or near 100% authorization.

b. OPERATIONS.

(1) Improper Utilization of Aircraft

(a) OBSERVATION. Increased blade time as a result of inadequate planning.

(b) EVALUATION. The units of this Battalion supporting 9th Inf Div for the past quarter have experienced a great waste of blade time as a direct result of poor or inadequate planning. It is understood that the tactical units are reacting to the latest intelligence, however, a basic plan should be given to the air mission commander at the initial coordination meeting. If the air mission commander has a plan for the day's activities, blade time can be saved by planning refueling, standby areas, and routes of flight and the elimination of excessive orbiting.

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In addition to saving blade time, the air mission commander would be able to give more responsive support and lessen the aircraft vulnerability by an adequate movement plan.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the supported units review proper and sound planning procedures and give the air mission commander a basic plan for the days activities at the initial coordination meeting.

(2) Planned Maintenance

(a) OBSERVATION. Special missions commit the aviation unit 24 hours a day. The consequences of this is that little or no maintenance (other than that not requiring any "tear-down") can be performed on these aircraft.

(b) EVALUATION. As a result of this situation, normal maintenance may occassionally be neglected and the aircraft accumulates much deferred maintenance. Simply stated, time for planned maintenance should be allotted to the unit.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That a specific amount of time be set aside each day or series of not more than three days to perform maintenance when involved in special operations. Insertions should be planned to allow a complete stand-down of aviation support for several hours maintenance (8 hours is suggested in a 24 hour period).

(3) Maintenance Stand-Down

(a) OBSERVATION. All levels of command have recognized the necessity for a programmed maintenance stand-down for aircraft.

(b) EVALUATION. The first attempt at providing stand-down was by tail number, one aircraft per day, per company. Any abnormal or unexpected occurrences, such as a unit receiving several hits or the requirement for unscheduled maintenance, made adherence to this schedule extremely difficult and on occasion, impossible. The most workable program, from several aspects, was that of having a complete stand-down one day, per month. This provided a day for all crews and all aircraft to accomplish thorough and carefully supervised maintenance during optimum conditions. Most important, it allows the assigned crew chiefs the opportunity of maintaining their own aircraft, wherers, they are often required to fly another ship due to the current crew shortage, even if their aircraft remained on the ground. The complete stand-down also provided an opportunity for the company to accomplish other required tasks such as mandatory training, awards ceremonies, and talks by the commander to the majority of his company. While these may be considered "nice to have" advantages, they can be integrated with, or accomplished subsequent to, the performance of required maintenance. Needless to say, this day contributed greatly to the morale of each company. The present stand-down procedure is back to the unrealistic tail-number system and is not satisfactory.

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(c) RECOMMENDATION. Immediate reinitiation of the one day a month complete stand-down to perform maintenance and accomplish other mandatory activities.

c. TRAINING

(1) Training Manual

(a) OBSERVATION. Units supporting special missions require considerable training time prior to assuming active support.

(b) EVALUATION. Since it became operational on 1 Dec 67, the 195th AHC has mainly supported special operations and Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols of the 5th Special Forces Group. Much of the activity is highly classified, but numerous lessons and techniques have been learned and developed. Inclosure 4 contains a summary of their experience and guidelines for future organizations assuming this type of mission.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That a training manual and/or field manual be written to relay this information to other units and minimize mission orientation time. There are definite techniques that can be related through such a document without compromise of the current or future missions. (Incl 4 is an interim report. Attempts are underway by this headquarters to amplify this basic guide during the period Aug/Sept at which time distribution will be made.

d. INTELLIGENCE: None

e. LOGISTICS: None

f. ORGANIZATION: None

g. OTHER: None

4 Incl
as

Paul F. Anderson
PAUL F. ANDERSON
LTC, TC
Commanding

Distribution:

5-Copies to CO, 12th CAG
2-Copies to CG, CFCUSARPAC
3-Copies to CG, USARV
2-Copies to CG, 1st Avn Bde
1-Copy to CO, 11th CAB
1-Copy to CO, 145th CAB
1-Copy to CO, 210th CAB
1-Copy to CO, 269th CAB
1-Copy to CO, 3/17th Air Cav

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AVGC-SC (8 Aug 68) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion
for Period Ending 31 July 1968 (RCS CSFOR - 65) (RI)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96266 22 August 1968

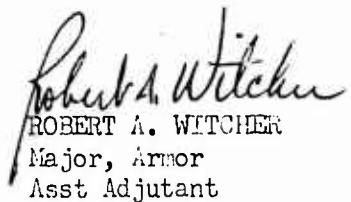
CC: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, ATTN: AVFDC-RU-H,
APO San Francisco 96266
ACofS for Force Development, DA (ACSFOM, DA), Washington, D.C. 20310

1. In compliance with AR 525-15 and USARV Regulation 525-15, two (2) copies of subject report are forwarded.

2. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and the following comments are made: Reference page 9, item i (2) - This headquarters has designated to headquarters, 1st Aviation Brigade, that the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion is number two (2) in priority to receive remaining required APH-6 helmets, when available for issue.

3. Concur with all other comments and recommendations.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


ROBERT A. WITCHER
Major, Armor
Asst Adjutant

AVFBC-RE-H (8 Aug 68) 2nd Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

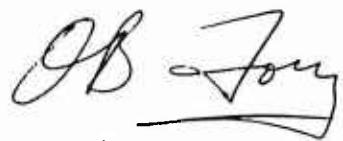
DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 30 AUG 1968

Commanding Officer, 12th Combat Aviation Group, APO 96266

1. Subject report is returned.

2. Reference para 1c (7) and para 2a (1). Request specific comments concerning the personnel status of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion and the desirability of assigning security personnel to the unit in light of its pending move to Dong Tam.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



C. B. FORRY
1LT, A
Asst

1 Incl
nc

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AVGC-SA (8 Aug 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96266

TO: Commanding General, II Field Forces Vietnam, ATTN: AVFBC-RE-H,
APO 96266

In compliance with instructions contained in the preceding indorsement the following specific information is furnished:

1. Personnel Status.

a. The 214th Combat Aviation Battalion is authorized 1023 enlisted personnel. As of 4 September 1968 the battalion was at 90% of its authorized enlisted strength with 921 EM assigned.

b. During the month of August 1968, enlisted losses were 83 and total enlisted gains were 89. The 214th Combat Aviation Battalion received 21.2% of all enlisted personnel assigned to the 12th Combat Aviation Group during the month of August and 20% of all enlisted personnel assigned during the month of July. The enlisted strength of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion has been stabilized at 90% of authorization and every effort is being made to maintain the present enlisted stature.

c. Enlisted replacement personnel have not equalled enlisted losses in the 12th Combat Aviation Group for the past two months. During the month of August, the Group lost 588 enlisted personnel and gained only 420. In July, 387 enlisted personnel were lost while only 318 were gained. The difference between total losses and total gains for these two months resulted in a total strength reduction of 237 enlisted personnel.

d. Present personnel strength of the other combat aviation battalions assigned to the 12th Combat Aviation Group which are similar to the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion are as follows:

- (1) 11th Combat Aviation Battalion - 92% of authorized strength.
- (2) 145th Combat Aviation Battalion - 88%.
- (3) 214th Combat Aviation Battalion - 90%.
- (4) 269th Combat Aviation Battalion - 91%.

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AVGC-SA (8 Aug 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

e. The personnel status of the 12th Combat Aviation Group is continuously reported to and monitored by higher headquarters. Until such time as replacements are received in sufficient quantity to replace existing losses, this headquarters must continue to supply personnel to the assigned battalions in such a manner as to insure equitability and provide sufficient personnel resources to permit the accomplishment of the mission.

2. The recommendation that security personnel be authorized and assigned is justified for the following reasons:

a. Only the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion and the 191st and 240th Assault Helicopter Companies will move to Bear Cat. The other two assault helicopter companies assigned to the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion, namely the 117th and the 195th will continue to be stationed at Long Binh adjacent to the Plantation air strip.

b. The 191st and 240th Assault Helicopter Companies are each required, by guard requirements placed on the 12th Combat Aviation Group by Headquarters, II Field Forces Vietnam to furnish each night twenty-one perimeter bunker guards. The move of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion to Dong Tam will not eliminate or reduce this requirement.

c. The move of the battalion headquarters and the 191st and 240th Assault Helicopter Companies to Dong Tam will not relieve these units of any of their perimeter guard requirements. When the 9th Infantry Division was stationed at Bear Cat the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion had to provide twenty-two perimeter guards from the resources available to the battalion headquarters and co-located assault helicopter companies. Additionally the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion has already been notified that the battalion and co-located assault helicopter companies will be responsible for approximately 1500 meters of the Dong Tam base perimeter. This requirement will require at least the same number of personnel as the perimeter defense requirement at Bear Cat.

d. The TQ&E's under which the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Company and its four assigned assault helicopter companies are organized do not provide personnel for this perimeter defense requirement. The personnel needed to fulfill this

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AVGC-SA (8 Aug 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

requirement must be drawn from the already reduced resources of the units with a corresponding decrease in the number of personnel available to operate and maintain the unit's assigned aircraft, which is the primary mission of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion and its assigned assault helicopter companies.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



RALPH E. NAUMANN
Major, Infantry
Adjutant

1 Incl
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AVFBC-RE-H (8 Aug 68) 4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 17 SEP 1968

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

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

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

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

1. Subject report is forwarded.

2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with the Operational Report-Lessons Learned of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for the period ending 31 July 1968, as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

4 Incl
nc

Warren J. English
WARREN J. ENGLISH
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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AVBA-C (8 Aug 68) 5th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion
for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (b)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384

SEP 26 1968

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVNGC-DST,
APO 96375
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GRC-OF,
APO 96558

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 as indorsed.

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

a. Paragraph 1i(2), page 9 and paragraph 2, 1st Indorsement. Ballistic
helmets are command controlled items. A list of shortages on ballistic
helmets has been furnished USARV AVI. Issues to groups are made as the
helmets arrive in-country. 500 large size helmets were allocated to the
1st Aviation Brigade from a shipment which arrived in-country on or about
20 August 1968. It was determined that these helmets were too large even
with the thickest pads for personnel to use. These helmets are being held
pending receipt of disposition instructions from USARV.

b. Paragraph 1i(4), page 9. This headquarters is in the process of
issuing phase III and IV Nomex flight clothing.

c. Paragraph 1i(5), page 9. USARV letter AVNGD-SH, dated 21 August
1968, informed all units that items in short supply would be issued at
the Central Issue Facility. This headquarters directed 1st Aviation
Brigade units to cancel requisitions for those items issued to them at the
Central Issue Facility and to take follow-up action on outstanding requisitions
of other essential items.

d. Paragraph 1i(7), page 10. This headquarters requested document
numbers from 12th Combat Aviation Group so that follow-up action could
be taken with the 1st Logistic Command.

e. Paragraph 1i(8)(a), page 10. Considerable emphasis has been
placed on the supply system by USAAMC. The installation of a new com-
puter has reduced the supply cycle by one third. Reconciliation of
priority requisitions is now possible on a weekly basis and replenishment
requisitions every 30 days. Properly established and maintained unit

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AVBA-C

SEP 26 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (U)

ASL and PLL is a matter of continuing emphasis. The 1st Aviation Brigade is preparing a regulation covering this specific subject in which the responsibility is placed upon a unit to reconcile requisitions with its supporting DSU.

f. Reference 1i(8)(b), page 11. USARV Regulation 750-16, dated 15 May 1968, specifies that the unit is required to recover disabled aircraft, however if the assistance of the DS company is required, a request is to be made through the DS company to move the aircraft to a secure area. If time permits, the damaged aircraft will be taken to the base camp, otherwise it will be moved to the nearest secure area.

g. Paragraph 1i(8)(c), page 11. Transfers of aircraft within the Brigade that entail long distance travel are held to the absolute minimum. On occasions the long distance travel is necessary to replace combat losses of a specific type and model aircraft. The GSU/DSU units do not have the responsibility of handling transfers within the brigade.

h. Paragraph 2a, page 12 and 3d Indorsement. Enlisted losses have exceeded gains since 1 July 1968, for the Brigade as a whole, resulting in a decrease from 101% to 99% of authorized strength. Replacements are assigned equitably to all units by MOS and every effort is made to achieve a balance in total strength of the units. Significant MOS shortages and immediate losses have been reported to higher headquarters for possible assistance in distribution of replacements. In addition, action has been initiated to reduce overstrengths in headquarters elements within the Brigade, thus making more personnel available to units. The 1st Aviation Brigade has a recognized requirement for 750 personnel for the security forces. This total is based on a SARPAC manpower survey completed in December 1967. The recognized total includes 262 personnel for units in 12th CAB. Due to manpower ceiling limitations, USARV has authorized only 372 personnel for the Brigade security forces TDA. The authorized total includes only 53 personnel for the 12th CAB Security Detachment.

i. Paragraph 2b(3), page 13. The maintenance stand down by tail number once each week or by a complete company size unit once a week was initiated by DEPCO1.USMACV in MACV Confidential message IAC 04633, date time group 070447Z April 1968, subject: Aircraft Maintenance. At the time of its inauguration, the effects of the TET Offensive were being felt by all aviation units in reduced availability and scarcity of parts. The 214th CAB is presently experiencing similarly poor availability; but for a somewhat different reason, that of excessively high flying time in comparison to maintenance down time. During the months of July and August 1968, the 4 assault helicopter companies of the 214th CAB averaged 2686 hours and 2853 hours respectively with high monthly totals of 3033 hours and 3393 hours during the same period. The average time per assigned

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AVEA-C

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation battalion for
Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (U)

SEP 26 1968

aircraft was well over 100 hours per month, which is at least 25 hours in excess of the USAF flying hour program. This headquarters concurs in the 214th CAB's recommendation for maintenance stand down. However, USAF exercises operational control over 12th CAG units and has virtually eliminated the stand down program with the resulting decline in availability.

j. Paragraph 2c, page 14. A separate manual on special missions is not required. An appropriate document for information pertaining to special missions is the 1st Aviation Brigade Operations Manual. This manual is being revised at this time and consideration will be given to expand the manual to include applicable techniques.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

for M. Penney Capt USA

4 Incl
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L. D. SEGAL

CPT, AGC

Adjutant General

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AVHGC-DST (8 Aug 68) 6th Ind (C) MAJ Klingman/ds/LBN 4433
SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 214th Combat Aviation Battalion for
Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 23 OCT 1968

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

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1968 from Headquarters, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion.

2. (C) Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning ballistic helmets, page 9, paragraph 1i(2); 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2; and 5th Indorsement, paragraph 2a: Concur. Medium size ballistic helmets are due to start arriving in RVN in December 1968. Distribution will be made at that time according to established priorities.

b. Reference item concerning aircraft recovery, page 11, paragraph 1i(8)(b); and 5th Indorsement, paragraph 2f: Concur with the 5th Indorsement. No further action by higher headquarters is recommended.

c. Reference item concerning maintenance stand down, page 13, paragraph 2b(3); and 5th Indorsement, paragraph 2i: Concur with the 5th Indorsement. II Field Force Vietnam restored the unit maintenance stand down, effective 1 October 1968. This headquarters will conduct a study of aircraft availability during observance of the unit maintenance stand down program, versus availability during the various phases of elimination of the program by subordinate headquarters. The results of this study will be forwarded to MACV in the form of a recommendation.

d. Reference item concerning training manual, page 14, paragraph 2c; and 5th Indorsement, paragraph 2j: Concur with the 5th Indorsement. No further action by higher headquarters is recommended.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

4th Incl
nc

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Avn Bde
HQ 214th CSAB

for Deanne Maj-Ar
W. C. ARNTZ
C1 TAGC
Assistant Adjutant General

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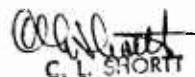
GPOP-DT (8 Aug 68) 7th Ind (C)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion, for
Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)
HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 11 DEC 1968
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed, except as noted in paragraph 2 below.
2. (U) Reference paragraph 2b, 6th Indorsement: Nonconcur. The 214th Combat Aviation Battalion is composed of four Assault Helicopter Companies equipped with UH-1 aircraft. The battalion does not have a capability to assume unit responsibility for recovery of its aircraft as required by USARV Regulation 750-16 since recovery operations normally necessitate use of a CH-47 or larger aircraft to effect the recovery. Expediency, safety and economy justified placing CH-47 aircraft in the GS companies of the 34th General Support Group for aircraft recovery purposes rather than utilizing tactical unit aircraft in these activities. Therefore, procedures should be developed that will assure recovery of aircraft with minimum loss of maintenance time and effort using 34th Group recovery aircraft rather than requiring the unit to request this support from other tactical units through higher headquarters.
3. (C) Reference paragraph 2c, 6th Indorsement: Any unit flying over 100 hours per aircraft per month must have a maintenance stand-down, as the average maintenance manhours to support one flying hour is as follows for the UH-1 helicopter:

Organizational Maintenance	2.90
DS Maintenance	1.50
GS Maintenance	<u>1.10</u>
Total	5.50

This amounts to over 550 hours or 55 man-days of maintenance (10 hour work day) for each aircraft during each month. The accumulation of deferred maintenance can only result in increased and uncontrollable Not Operationally Ready Supply (NORS) and Not Operationally Ready Maintenance (NORM) rates.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

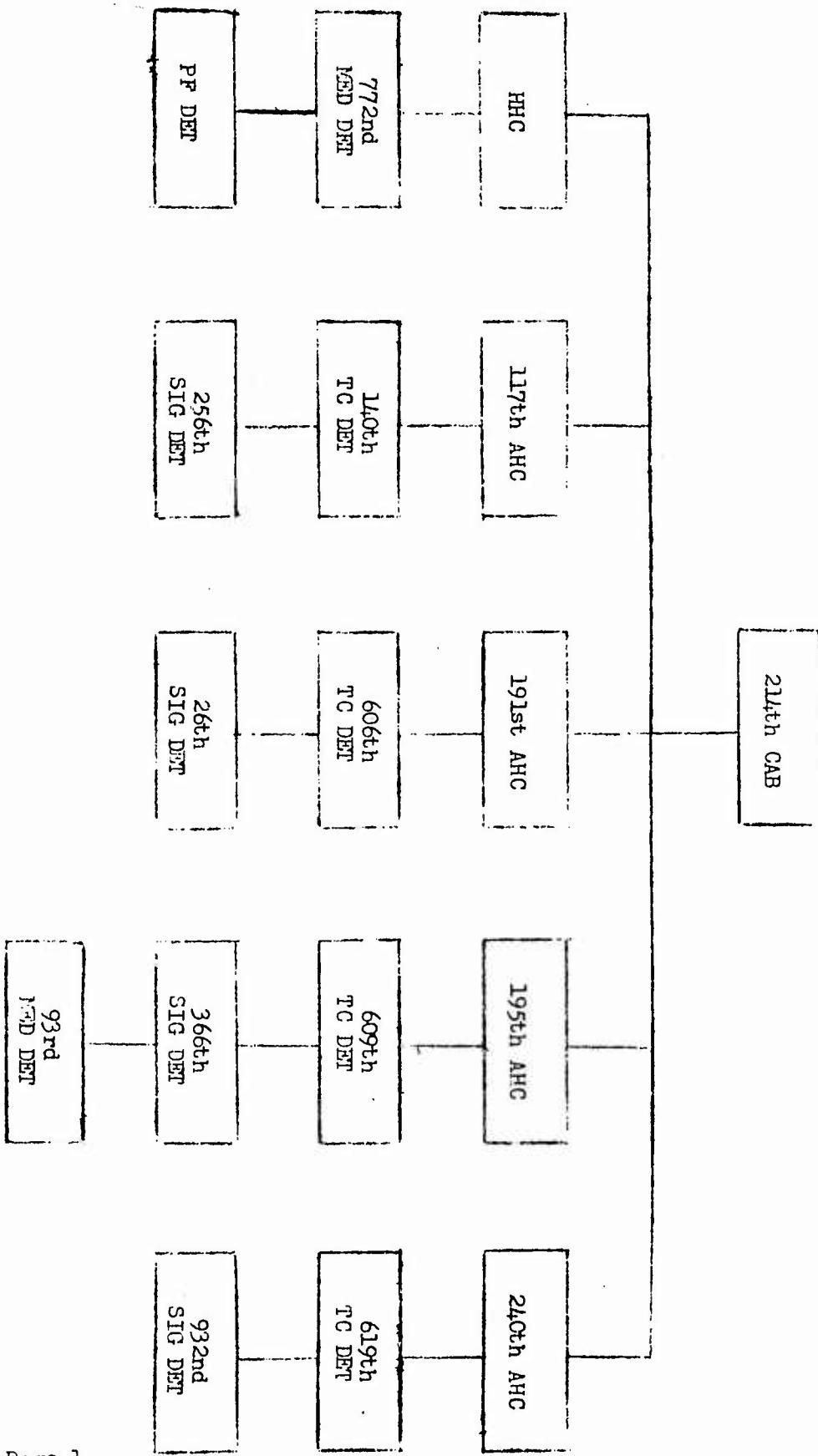
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CONFIDENTIAL714th Combat Aviation Battalion Troop List

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>APO</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
<u>214th CBT AVN BN</u>	96530	Bear Cat
Hqs & Hqs Co	96530	Bear Cat
772nd Med Det	96530	Bear Cat
Pathfinder Det	96530	Bear Cat
<u>117th AHC</u>	96384	Long Binh
140th TC Det	96384	Long Binh
256th Sig Det	96384	Long Binh
<u>191st AAC</u>	96530	Bear Cat
606th TC Det	96530	Bear Cat
26th Sig Det	96530	Bear Cat
<u>195th AAC</u>	96384	Long Binh
609th TC Det	96384	Long Binh
366th Sig Det	96384	Long Binh
93rd Med Det	96384	Long Binh
<u>240th AAC</u>	96530	Bear Cat
619th TC Det	96530	Bear Cat
932nd Sig Det	96530	Bear Cat

214TH CAB OPERATIONAL STATISTICS
CTR. ENDING 31 JULY 1968

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UNIT	SORTIES FLOWN	TROOPS LIFTED	CARGO TONS	ENEMY KIA	STRUCTURES DEST	SAMPANS DAM DEST	AIRCRAFT CONFIRMED LOSS	AIRCRAFT DAMAGED
117th AHC	24,916	36,951	469	43	80	61	12	15
191st AHC	27,110	39,222	248	50	16	6	0	0
195th AHC	19,296	27,195	237	11	142	116	7	13
240th AHC	21,527	32,724	245	30	6	5	7	20
214th CAB	92,849	126,092	1347	134	238	183	26	48
							8	131

117th Aircraft Damage: 29 UH-1D, 13 UH-1C
 191st Aircraft Damage: 24 UH-1D, 6 UH-1C
 195th Aircraft Damage: 30 UH-1H, 12 UH-1C
 240th Aircraft Damage: 13 UH-1H, 4 UH-1C

191st Aircraft Loss: 2 UH-1D
 195th Aircraft Loss: 2 UH-1H
 240th Aircraft Loss: 3 UH-1H, 1 UH-1C

NOTE: Aircraft Damage includes Operational and Combat

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214TH CAB AIRCRAFT STATUS
31 July 1968

Subordinate Unit	UH-1C		UH-1D		UH-1H	
	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H
214th HQ	0	0	0	1	0	0
117th AHC	8	8	23	19	*23	4
191st AHC	8	8	23	22	0	0
195th AHC	8	7	0	0	23	21
240th AHC	8	7	0	0	23	21
214th CAR	32	30	46	41	46	46

* This company is presently trading "D" Models for "H" Models.

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SPECIAL MISSIONS SUPPORT

NOTE: The following document has been prepared by the 195th APC. The 195th has been in constant support of these types of missions over the past 8 months. Further simplification of the techniques indicated here is planned and will be published at a later date.

1. Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols

a. Introduction: The information contained herein is the result of experience gained during several months of operations with units concerned solely with the LRRP type operation and may serve as a guide in organizing, training, and employing aviation elements in support of LRRP mission in this theatre of operations. The nature of the requirements of LRRP is such that no hard and fast rules can be used with consistent success. The fundamentals listed herein are a starting point from which tactics can be developed for the particular terrain and enemy situation which exists.

b. Mission: The mission of aviation elements supporting LRRP is to insert patrols at selected sites in secrecy and to extract them upon completion of their mission.

c. Organization:

(1) The ideal task organization is six cargo helicopters and four armed helicopters. This provides from one to three insert aircraft in the event one or more of the insert ships go down. The two light fire teams provide constant target coverage even when refueling in the middle of the operation is required.

(2) Various task organizations can be used with less than the optimum number of aircraft, but as the number of patrols simultaneously deployed on the ground increases, the need for reserve aircraft to handle emergency extractions increases.

d. Discussion:

(1) Aerial Recon:

(a) The aviation element commander meets with the ground commander upon receipt of a mission. A map study is made and an aerial recon of the mission area is planned. Tentative check points are picked along the most suitable route to the area of operations.

(b) On the aerial recon it is imperative that a readily identifiable RP be picked (which is extremely difficult in many of the remote areas). The route of flight to the LZ from the RP must be the one which affords the least probability of observation from the ground.

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(c) The LZ should be the smallest one available into which a reasonable safe approach and landing may be made; preferably one with heavy foliage surrounding it to provide immediate concealment to the recon team. Large bomb craters in the jungle or rain forest are often the only suitable LZ's. The pilot who is to fly C&C must be assured that he can readily identify the LZ and should mark any readily identifiable reference point on his map to assist him. The single most critical operation for the air mission commander is to locate the insert ship when it is coming in low level against a varying background and at the same time keep his target identified.

(d) If there is any question of the suitability of the area during the high recon, a final low recon should be made by establishing an azimuth and heading to the LZ from a distance and flying directly over the LZ at tree top level. The flight should be extended so that the exact point being reconed along the route of flight won't be compromised should the enemy be in the locale.

(e) An alternate LZ must be selected. Both the LZ and alternate LZ must be agreed upon by the air and ground commanders. They should be the safest ones which will permit the mission to be effectively accomplished.

(f) A light fire team should accompany the recon ship whenever possible.

(2) Mission Planning and Briefing:

(a) A joint briefing of the pilots and ground team is essential. Check points, WP, formation, orbit point, final approach azimuth, times, emergency extraction plans, and E&E for both ground and air elements should be covered.

(b) Enough time should be left before take off to permit adequate map study.

(c) Reconnaissance photographs of the mission should be secured and studied whenever possible.

e. Execution:

(1) Insertions:

(a) Aircraft should not depart from the base camp in a standard formation and head directly for the insert area. Aircraft can take off individually and rendezvous at the first check point in a loose formation that will be used for the insert. Formations which may be used under various conditions are many but will normally be some variation upon the standard trail formation.

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(b) Aircraft should proceed to the RP at a safe altitude. Those aircraft other than the C&C aircraft to be used on the insert should then go to tree top level as the C&C vectors the insert craft to the target from an absolute altitude of several thousand feet, and approximately 1000 meters to one side of the final approach vector. Aircraft not needed in the insertion will orbit in an area five to ten thousand meters from the LZ.

(c) The C&C continues to vector the insert ship to the LZ by giving him changes in heading, distance remaining to the LZ, and speed reductions so as to bring him directly over the LZ. The insert pilot will inform the C&C aircraft when he has the LZ in sight.

(d) The pilot must understand that he has the final authority to insert or abort. The insert pilot must not risk damage on insert since it might jeopardize the mission as well as the crew and recon team. If the landing is aborted, the C&C will direct the pilot to the alternate LZ.

(e) After dropping the troops, the insert ship proceeds from the LZ to the orbit area along the most suitable route and orbits with the reserve aircraft until released.

(f) The armed escort will not orbit near the LZ, but will give passing protection during the few seconds the insert ship is in the LZ. In the event the insert ship is fired upon, on landing, the mission will be aborted and the armed escort will suppress the hostile fire.

(2) NORMAL EXTRACCTIONS: These will be planned in detail and conducted essentially as the insertion except that it is not necessary to approach the PZ at treetop level. Armed escorts may circle the PZ during the extraction since compromise of the team is no longer of concern. The orbit area will be moved much closer to the PZ than it was in the case of the LZ.

(a) Rope ladder extracting will be made when there is no suitable LZ. More aircraft will have to be committed since the aircraft will not be able to sustain its high hover with a full load. The second aircraft must be ready to come in immediately after the first one leaves if it's an one ship LZ. Therefore, a successful technique is for the 2nd aircraft to remain at altitude observing until time to approach the LZ.

(b) McGuire rig extractions will be conducted in the same manner as rope ladder extractions except that the aircraft will be required to hover above the trees and drop their ropes down through the trees. Techniques will vary depending on the conditions.

(c) Rope ladder and McGuire rig extractions should be utilized only as a last resort.

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(3) **EMERGENCY EXTRACtIONS:** Conducted the same as normal extractions but there will normally be no opportunity for planning or briefing. However, RP's, orbit points, and likely pick-up areas should be thoroughly considered during the extraction. Emergency extractions may be required anytime of the day or night. Consequently, radios must be present on the proper frequencies and each pilot briefed. The aircraft must be kept mission ready and the crews able to become airborne within minutes of the alert. For night operations, the C&C ship should be rigged with flares at dusk.

(4) **ALTERNATE INSERT PLAN:** When conservation of forces is demanded, terrain permits, crews are experienced, and other factors are suitable, inserts can be made with one insert aircraft and a light fire team. When the LZ is easily identifiable and the trees are so high and dense as to obstruct the enemy's observation, a nearly normal approach can be made to the LZ. The insert aircraft will remain at an altitude after passing the IP so he can see the LZ and establish an in-bound heading. He'll arrive at tree-top level a thousand or so meters short of the LZ and start slowing so as to arrive over the LZ at a suitable final approach speed. Normal light fire team support protection is afforded him until out of the LZ, at which time each aircraft takes a different vector to the orbit area where they remain until released. Additional transport and armed helicopters remain in the orbit area. This can be flown with or without a C&C.

(5) **EXTRACTION PLAN:** The extraction aircraft aircraft proceeds on command to the LZ with armed escort. The remaining cargo and armed aircraft remain in orbit in the immediate vicinity of the LZ to provide rapid response as the C&C requests. Secrecy is no longer essential. It may be considered more advantageous to approach from altitude rather than at tree top level. Armed escorts take up a tactical formation and maneuver to provide suppressive fire if required.

f. Formations:

(1) Formations are primarily dictated by the terrain and vegetation. The fundamental consideration during insert is getting the team on the ground undetected. The primary consideration during extractions is getting the team out expeditiously. It is not possible to bring the team in quietly but the movement of aircraft over a general area can be such that the enemy in the area cannot tell at which point the team was inserted or that an insertion did in fact take place.

(2) **Basic Insert Plan:** A basic insert plan requires an insert aircraft and one or more light fire teams or a heavy fire team. A decoy ship may also be used to act as a guide over the LZ and to see if the mission will draw fire before the loaded insert ship approaches. The formation must not become stereotyped and the aircraft "break out" pattern must vary as the terrain dictates. All armed escorts must be available to provide immediate coverage on the LZ if the team is detected initially. All aircraft will then return to the orbit point and orbit at a safe altitude.

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2. Basically, the same techniques above also apply to modified combat assault missions with platoon sized or larger range Special Forces Missions.

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