

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDF-HL

10 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report – Lessons Learned, Americal Division, Period
Ending 30 April 1970, (RCS-CSFOR-65) (R2) (U)

b. Evaluation: It is possible to raze bunkers and fortification on TFSB's and leave the foxholes for protection. Enemy units do not use the hilltops as we do, preferring draws where there is concealment and water, and any boobytrapping of foxholes could be minimized by scheduled fires, LZ preparations, and alertness on the part of the troops.

c. Recommendation: That policy be promulgated to preclude filling in of foxholes when closing out TFSB's.

3. (C) SUBJECT: ACAV's Carrying Infantry

a. Observation: Armored Cavalry operations in Vietnam often require the attachment of Infantry. When carrying Infantry on ACAV's the possibility of having a large number of casualties from one mine incident increases.

c. Recommendation: No attached Infantry should be carried on the lead vehicle. Additionally, no attempt should be made to maintain the Infantry organization at the expense of dispersing the Infantry throughout the Armored Cavalry formation. The Infantry should be uniformly dispersed among all vehicles except those likely to lead.

4. (C) SUBJECT: Scheduled Fires

a. Observation: The enemy frequently establishes patterns in their operational procedures which can be exploited to our advantage. This includes the repetitive use of trails, base camps, river crossing sites, and sleeping positions. While it is not possible to place surveillance on all these areas within a unit's area of operations, it is possible to periodically place scheduled fires on these areas to reduce the enemies capabilities. Due to errors in ground navigation and the existing maps, it is essential that an exact plot be achieved on the desired location.

b. Evaluation: The most effective method of obtaining an exact plot for future fire missions is to adjust the artillery on the desired site. To best achieve this without indicating it has happened is to register on the target using white phosphorous with VT fuses. The forward observer can adjust the round relatively accurately utilizing a setting of 50 meters, and not leave any signs on the ground.

c. Recommendation: That increased emphasis be placed upon the small ??? leader to identify enemy trails, base camps, crossing sites, and sleeping positions. Once identified, artillery should be adjusted when feasible, and the data recorded by the Battalion S2 for future use.

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5. (C) SUBJECT: Deception Operations

a. Observation: The 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry has experienced increased success in recent months through the employment of increased deceptive techniques, coupled with greater foot mobility. These techniques include:

(1) Moving into an area, remaining several days and then moving out for a long distance (either by foot or air), rapidly returning to the original area by a new and unexpected route.

(2) Moving slowly through an area, then suddenly moving a long distance in a new and unexpected direction.

(3) Trailing a unit moving through an area by a second unit several hours behind.

(4) Use of the standard stay behind ambushes and stay behind patrols.

b. Evaluation: While both the enemy and friendly units tend to establish patterns in their operations, the objective study of a units patterns will offer that unit an opportunity to take advantage of these patterns to lull the enemy into complacency, then a sharp deviation of these patterns will tend to disrupt the enemy's preconceived notions of the friendly unit's methods of operation.

c. Recommendation: That units study their own methods of operation to evaluate methods of varying their techniques and exploit these activities by rapidly modifying operations.

6. (C) SUBJECT: Crop Destruction Techniques

a. Observation: The dropping of 5 gallon plastic collapsible cans filled with herbicide Agent Blue into enemy rice paddies has proven an effective means of destroying rice. The containers are filled with 3 or 4 gallons of agent and can be dropped from a CH-47 at 2500 feet at 70 knots. This altitude and speed provide relative safety from ground fire while allowing enough accuracy for the area coverage desired. Using 5 cans per hectare and arranging the targets in straight line runs, 90% of the targeted rice can be destroyed or damaged. This method utilizes only Division assets and costs only one tenth as much as comparable Traidust Mission flown by C-123 aircraft. The method is limited, however, to smaller targets.

b. Evaluation: Tests have shown that Herbicide Agent Blue can be effectively used to destroy small area rice crops using the method described.

c. Recommendation: That herbicide Agent Blue in 5 gallon collapsible cans be dropped from CH-47 helicopters on small area rice destruction targets.

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558

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

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

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
ASST AG

AMERICAL DIVISION TROOP LIST
(as of 30 April 1969)

2. HEADQUARTERS AMERICAL DIVISION

HHC, Americal Division

1st Sqdn, 1st Cav
F Troop, 8th Cav
415th Sig Det
570th TC Det

26th Engr Bn
160th Engr Det

523d Sig Bn

23d MP Co

3d Mil Hist Det

USAMID (PROV)
52d MI Det
569th MI Det
635th MI Det
636th MI Det

328th RR Det

2. AMERICAL DIVISION ARTILLERY

HHB, Div Arty
6th Bn, 11th Arty
1st Bn, 14th Arty
3d Bn, 82d Arty
3d Bn, 16th Arty
3d Bn, 18th Arty
1st Bn, 82d Arty
6th Bn, 56th Arty (LESS OPCON)
G Btry, 55th Arty (.50)
B Btry, 2d Bn, 11th Arty (OF Party and Metro Section)
251st Radar Det
252d Radar Det