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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 2D BRIGADE, 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 96225

AVDCSB-C

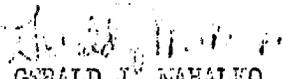
4 May 1969

SUBJECT: Feeder Report for Operational Reports-Lessons Learned (U)

Commanding Officer
25th Infantry Division
ATTN: Division Historian
APO 96225

In accordance with 25th Inf Div Reg 525-15 and unclassified message
TL5-4032, HQ, 25th Inf Div, subject as above, dtd 1 May 69, the attached
inclosure is submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


GERALD J. MAHALKO
Major, Infantry
Adjutant

1 Incl
as

Regraded Unclassified when separated
from Classified Inclosure

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(C) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations Evaluation's and Recommendation's.

a. Personnel. None

b. Operations.

(1) Pick-up and Landing Zones.

(a) OBSERVATION. The enemy rapidly "zeros-in" on landing zones for troop lifts, dustoffs and resupply. Units use one LZ/PZ for several hours and place excessive smoke in the vicinity.

(b) EVALUATION. When troops move after one resupply drop, receive a second drop at another location, the vulnerability to mortar fire is greatly reduced. The enemy often waits for a second helicopter landing.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That units move after and rapidly between landing and pick-up zones. That the requirement for "continuous smoke" for identification be reduced to the minimum acceptable level by aviation units.

(2) Hedgerow Clearing.

(a) OBSERVATION. Requirement for an efficient method of reducing hedgerow complexes.

(b) EVALUATION. A problem exists in search and clear operations of hedgerow complexes. The usual methods result in exposing one flank of the friendly forces to enemy forces that may be hidden in the hedgerows.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. This problem may be relieved by setting up two bases of fire in front of two adjacent sides of the complex. The infantry is then sent in to search those two sides in a cloverleaf pattern while their flanks are protected.

(3) Mounted Ambush Patrols.

(a) OBSERVATION. Mounted ambush patrols produce very meager results.

(b) EVALUATION. Enemy forces are able to hear and observe mounted patrols and avoid them, hence no results are obtained.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Vehicles should be used as rapid reaction force for dismounted ambush patrols. This permits contact to be made and maintained by the dismounted group who can then be reinforced by the mounted group as necessary. This technique has been employed successfully on eight (8) occasions by this unit during the reported period.

1
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(4) Techniques of Clearing a Hedgerow.

(a) **OBSERVATION.** It has proven impractical to search and clear a hedgerow complex without securing all vegetated areas systematically before entering open areas.

(b) **EVALUATION.** Omitted.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION.** Initially, the point element must enter the hedgerow at one corner, moving into it, checking it out thoroughly and clear it for a distance of 7 to 10 meters in both direction. Then an additional element can enter the hedgerow and establish an automatic weapons position to support the continuing movement of the point element. Once the corners are secured, elements can move in a leapfrog manner, constantly covering each other. This will provide us with an element always in position to roll up the enemy's flank, should he engage us from any given hedgerow. This unit will be supported by its adjacent unit which will always be able to support by fire. The roles will constantly be switching back and forth and movement should be continuous. Once the hedgerows have been cleared, the remainder of the elements can move into the open areas between the hedgerows and thoroughly search hootches and the adjacent areas. To preclude unnecessary casualties, no one should be permitted to enter a complex until the hedgerows have been cleared.

(5) Item: Tactical Purpose of LP's.

(a) **OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION.** It should be realized that LP's be established for early warning for a perimeter and are not to mistakenly assume the stature of an AP. However, steps should be taken to equip and prepare the LP should it become necessary for the LP to engage the enemy.

(b) **RECOMMENDATION.** The commander must closely study the terrain surrounding a Patrol Base or Fire Support Base and choose the terrain features where LP's must be employed in order to deny access to the enemy. The LP element should move to its pre-determined site after dark, having already laid WD 1 wire and buried it at least 6 inches during the daylight hours. The element should carry a field telephone and an AN/PRC-25 radio, a double basic load of ammo, a strobe light, multi-colored flares, a handheld Starlight scope and entrenching tools. Upon reaching the site, both wire and radio communications should be established. The element must then establish itself in such a position as to be able to observe 360 degrees. All danger areas must be kept under constant surveillance keeping in mind that any slight terrain feature, be it an eight inch berm or six inches of grass, must be considered a danger area. The element must then dig into a defensive posture as much as possible under the conditions of stealth. Should enemy movement be heard or sighted, instantaneous accurate reports must be rendered to the commander. The commander must then decide the degree of danger to his element and the

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probability of compromise of their position. He must then decide whether withdrawal action is necessary. If this action is taken, all necessary coordination with friendly elements should be pre-planned and he must assure that all coordination has been adhered to without exception. It should be noted that the element must never engage the enemy force unless it is afforded no other alternative. If this is the situation, and the element should engage the enemy, the dug-in position and all equipment should be in a ready status and the commander should utilize all support necessary to safely withdraw his element back to the defensive position.

(6) Holding-area prior to AF.

(a) OBSERVATION. This unit has effectively used the tactic of moving an ambush patrol into a holding area prior to the hours of darkness and having the patrol go through the motions of establishing a night ambush position. This technique has proven to be quite effective in populated areas and on "stay behind" type ambushes.

(b) EVALUATION. When elements are employed in a "stay behind" ambush or moved into an ambush site after a day sweep, it is quite probable that its location is known by the on-looking enemy or by intelligence-passing civilians. If the element moves into an ambush position during daylight hours and sets up at that location for the night, their location in most cases has been observed and is thus compromised. The element may be subject to an indirect fire attack, a sniper or ground attack, or a counter-ambush upon move-out from the site the next day. To avoid such possibilities, the element should move into a holding area within range of a pre-determined AF site prior to the hours of darkness. While the element can still be observed, it should begin preparation of its night defensive position, placing its sub-elements into a defensive posture, and taking all appropriate actions to make it perfectly clear to a possible observer that it has every intention of staying for the night. When it becomes dark enough to move undetected, the ambush patrol will form up and move as rapidly as stealth permits out of the holding area and into the pre-planned area. In one instance, an element of this unit employed the holding area technique prior to moving into their pre-planned ambush site. Upon setting up in their new area, they observed a heavy volume of 82mm mortar rounds impacting in their holding area. This technique undoubtedly saved the element costly casualties.

(7) Detection of Booby Traps.

(a) OBSERVATION. Recently, units in the 2d Brigade TAOI are sustaining an excessive number of casualties from manufactured and home made booby traps.

(b) EVALUATION. Past Lessons Learned pertaining to detection and destruction of booby traps have been made available to units. Proper

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techniques are, in many instances, not being employed; i.e., mine detectors, killer eye device, observation and movement, bamboo poles, etc.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That past lessons learned in the area of mines/booby traps be reviewed and proper techniques implemented. Further, that commanders place command emphasis in this casualty producing area to reduce and minimize unnecessary casualties. Note: Scout dogs are extremely proficient in locating recently implaced booby traps.

c. Training.

(1) Squad and Platoon Refresher Training.

(a) OBSERVATION. Personnel sometimes fail to apply basic successful tactics during combat operations, e.g., squad fire and maneuvers, ambush techniques.

(b) EVALUATION. Basic combat skills must be continually re-evaluated and re-taught at the squad and platoon level.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Fire team squads and platoons receive training tactics, employment of weapons and marksmanship between combat operations.

d. Intelligence.

(1) Tagging of POW.

(a) OBSERVATION. The escalation of enemy activities during the reporting period resulted in the processing of numerous detainees. The present identification system necessitates tagging each individual with an identification card to facilitate organized processing.

(b) EVALUATION. A system of tagging detainees/POW's is essential for organized processing and accurate accounting of personnel.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS. That a water repellent identification card be developed and issued in lieu of existing cards to prevent unnecessary confusion in personnel identification due to non-legible ID cards caused by inclement weather.

(2) Kit Carson Scouts.

(a) OBSERVATION. Performance of Kit Carson Scouts has improved, they are alert and aggressive during combat operations.

(b) EVALUATION. Continued association with U.S. units has increased their confidence and willingness to perform.

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(c) RECOMMENDATION. That the Kit Carson Program be expanded to furnish four (4) Scouts per infantry platoon.

(3) CRIP.

(a) OBSERVATION. Combined Reconnaissance and Intelligence Platoon (CRIP) units when used in offensive operations is unable to perform its primary mission as an intelligence collection agency.

(b) EVALUATION. Use of the CRIP on frequent night ambushes produces little or no intelligence. The night ambush can easily be performed by infantry elements.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Relieve the CRIP of standard commitments and leave them free to react to DIOCC intelligence leads and to gather information as a free roving force. This may often result in stakeout missions in villages at night or as ambushes on enemy liaison routes, but as a result of accumulated intelligence rather than a defensive measure.

e. Logistics.

(1) Installation of AN/PRC 77 in the Light Observation Helicopter (LOH)

(a) OBSERVATION. The 2d Brigade presently has four (4) "LOH" helicopters assigned for tactical and general support mission. Subject aircraft is equipped with one FM radio AN/PRC-54 and one UHF radio to facilitate radio communications. In a tactical support role the aircraft is normally utilized by Battalion Commanders and/or Artillery LNO causing inadequate communication facilities.

(b) EVALUATION. Aircraft utilized for Command and Control ships must have adequate communication facilities to insure control i.e., capability for pilot, the Battalion Commander, and the Artillery LNO to communicate simultaneously.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That two PRC-77's with associated antenna AT-271 be installed in the LOH (OH-6) attached to Infantry Brigades for tactical support missions.

(2) Tracked Fuel Vehicle.

(a) OBSERVATION. Need for a fuel vehicle that can accompany tactical vehicles on operations.

(b) EVALUATION. Conventional fuel trucks are unable to negotiate the terrain encountered in cross-country operations. A tracked fuel vehicle is required.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. The mounting of 600 gallon fuel pods in the M-548 enables the tactical vehicles to complete their missions without returning to the roads.

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f. Organization. None

g. Other.

(1) Voluntary Information Program (VIP).

(a) OBSERVATION. There has been increased positive reaction to the VIP campaign (Voluntary Information Program) observed in the TAOI. The majority of the information has been given by children. Although it is standard practice to exchange money for enemy information provided by civilians, the 1st Bn, 5th Inf (Mech) has used "C" rations rather than money.

(b) EVALUATION. The increased reaction to the VIP Program by children seems to have been influenced through the use of "C" rations as a reward instead of the customary exchange of money. In the five incidents noticed the children were offered either "C" rations or money. In each case the children expressed the desire for the "C" rations over the money. A previous, but similar, incident was noticed in a different area. In this case the child would only accept half the money offered him. He expressed the fear that people would become suspicious if he was found to have too much money.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Although the preference for "C" rations may only be a local attitude, it is suggested that "C" rations be made available to those citizens who give voluntary information since there may be a fear of receiving money. It is also recommended that PSYOP support of the VIP Campaign mention that other "goods" can be substituted for monetary rewards.