

SUBJ: 1971 Sapper Training and Development Plan, VC Military Region 2. (U)

(U) (11 pages, typewritten; B-3) Plan, undated and unsigned, prepared by Headquarters, ((VC)) Military Region 2, outlines the various activities aimed at consolidating, developing and training sapper units within the Military Region during 1971. The plan also concerns the activities of these sapper units during 1970. It was noted that C-D267 ((2nd Co, 267th Sapper Bn)) as well as sapper elements of the My Tho and Kien Phong Province Units made considerable improvements in their combat tactics during 1970. Various sapper battalions directly subordinate to the Military Region have attained outstanding exploits due to the progress made in Party leadership and unit solidarity. A total of 40 major battles were fought by sapper elements of the Military Region ((during 1970)). Some of the outstanding battles were: An attack by the 10th Bn, 3rd Regt ((possible the 10th Sapper Bn, former 88th NVA Regt)) resulting in the destruction of the ((RVNAF)) Base 23; and attacks by the 267th and 269th Sapper Bn's on enemy positions in Binh Duc. The most laudable infiltration techniques were displayed by the 10th Sapper Bn during a raid on the ((RVNAF)) My An Sub-Sector, which was surrounded by 20-apron barbed wire entanglements numerous bunkers. It was noted that no village-echelon sapper units have been activated. Even at district and province echelon, the number of sapper units on hand was inadequate. Even though the military region-echelon sapper and engineer units constituted two separate branches, the province-echelon still belonged to one branch.

The Plan further states that during 1971 the following were to be implemented:

The criteria prescribed by ((VC)) Military Region 2 Party Committee in the Oct-70 Resolution concerning the development the Sapper Force should be attained by the provinces, districts and villages. It was vital to recruit young individuals with reliable political backgrounds for sapper units.

Intensive training programs were to be conducted for sapper cadre of various echelons, especially those who have not attended refresher sapper courses conducted by the Military Region and HQ, SVNLA. In compliance with the plan to develop sapper units in the Military Region in 1971, every effort should be made to train additional leaders for the newly-activated sapper units. Emphasis was to be placed on the formation of sapper unit leaders from infantry cadre, particularly the young and capable ones.

Steps were to be taken to reorganize the sapper training schools in various provinces with support from the Military Region. Further, the Sapper-Training School of the Military Region was to establish a Party Committee equivalent in size to that of a battalion. Sapper training programs would consist of an average training period of 50 days, including 25 days of politico-military training, and 25 days of practical exercises. The Military Region Sapper Training School was to train 200 students for sapper units. In addition, the School was to train a contingent of students sufficient for the Military Region to activate a new sapper battalion. During the second half of 1971, the School was to conduct a sapper-training course for 100 company/platoon cadre.

Ben Tre Province currently has three sapper companies. Of the seven subordinate districts, six have sapper units. It was imperative for the Province to have 30 of its guerrilla cells specialized in sapper techniques during the first half of 1971.

My Tho Province has two sapper companies. Its three subordinate districts of Cai Lay, Chau Thanh Nam, and Cai Be should form nine sapper guerrilla cells.

Kien Phong Province has one sapper company. Its three subordinate districts of My An, Hong Ngai, and Cao Lanh should form nine sapper guerrilla cells.

An Giang Province has two sapper companies. No sapper units have been activated by its districts.

Presently, there are no sapper units in Kien Tuong and Go Cong Provinces. Plans were being worked out for the activation of sapper units for these two provinces during the first half of 1971.

C26-D7 ((possibly the 26th Co, 7th Sapper Bn)) was to train seven sapper guerrilla cells for the Cai Be District; C2-D267, seven sapper guerrilla cells for the Chau Thanh District, ((My Tho Province)); and D269, 30 sapper guerrilla cells for the various villages ((of My Tho Province)).