

18 Pages Narrative  
66 Slides  
(1 Page on slides etc)

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U.S. MILITARY VETERINARY

ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

United States Army Veterinary Corps officers were originally assigned to the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group, Vietnam, in early 1962.

\* (Chart #1, U.S. Military Campaign, VN). Throughout the Advisory and Defensive

Campaigns a succession of veterinary officers and enlisted specialists provided veterinary support to the U.S. Military Advisory and Support Groups and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). Beginning in early 1965, increasingly larger U.S. forces were committed to the military campaign in

~~the North~~ <sup>South</sup> Vietnam (ARVN). Medical ~~units~~ and veterinary units were increased to support these forces. By January 1966, three veterinary units

(the 4th <sup>frade</sup> and the 75th Veterinary Service Detachments and the 936th Veterinary Small Animal Hospital) were in the country. The 504th Veterinary Small Animal

Dispensary arrived in October of that same year. <sup>Until recently</sup> These detachments provided

the majority of veterinary services throughout the Republic of Vietnam. <sup>Currently,</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~12~~ <sup>12</sup> ~~TOSF~~ <sup>Detachments</sup> Veterinary ~~units~~ <sup>are</sup> in Vietnam.

In addition, veterinarians are assigned to the Preventive Medicine Unit, the ~~four~~

~~the~~ <sup>Special Forces</sup> Transportation Terminal Command ~~and~~ the Veterinary Department, 9th Medical

Laboratory, which provides laboratory support to all U.S. military veterinary

activities in the Republic of Vietnam.

\* Charts are no longer available

The 44th Medical Brigade, which arrived in April, 1966, assumed operational control of all medical service detachments. The Brigade's Staff Veterinarian exercised this responsibility for all veterinary units. ~~The chart (Chart #2, Command Structure) illustrates the relationship of U.S. Army veterinary activities.~~ Veterinary detachments maintain close liaison with the Preventive Medicine Detachment and outside of the medical structure with the logistical support commands, the Regional Exchange Service, and the USA Procurement Agency, Vietnam.

In August 1967 the Medical Brigade was transferred from the 1st Logistical Command and placed directly under the Headquarters, U.S. Army Vietnam. The Surgeon USARV assumed command of

the Brigade. *The Brigade Veterinarian now serves as Staff Veterinarian to the USARV Surgeon and operational control of Veterinary detachments is exercised by the 522 Veterinary Headquarters Detachment (AFTAM*

*With the increasing military activities, the extension of veterinary*

*in early 1966*  
services into the field was accelerated *Chart #2 ON* (Chart, #2 Location Veterinary Activ-

*This illustrates the widespread distribution of Veterinary Units in VN.*  
ities, Vietnam). The 4th Medical Detachment expanded from a Headquarters and

4 stations in March of 1966 to a Headquarters and 21 field stations by December.

The 75th Detachment with headquarters in DaNang established field stations in Chu Lai and Red Beach in October; in December an additional field station was opened in Phu Bai to support Hue, Quang Tri and Dong Ha. Control of the

widely scattered field stations was hampered by lack of adequate and reliable communication. In order to improve the operational control of these stations, the country was divided into areas of veterinary responsibility which coincide with those of the three Medical Groups in II, III, and IV Corps Areas. Provisions were made to designate a veterinary officer as Medical Group Veterinarian. Each group area was subdivided into areas, with an Area Veterinarian assigned to each of these. The Commanding Officer of the 75th Medical Detachment was assigned responsibility for ~~all~~ <sup>I Corps in support of Marine and Naval Operations</sup> veterinary activities in his designated area, whereas ~~the Area Veterinarian is responsible for~~ the Group Veterinarian is responsible for coordination of veterinary activities throughout the group area. <sup>Chart 2 off</sup> ~~(Chart #2 off)~~

<sup>Chart #4 ON</sup>  
(Chart #4, Veterinary Mission, Vietnam) The military veterinary mission in Vietnam comprises four main functions: (1) Food Inspection (2) Zoonoses Control (3) Animal Care (4) Civic Action. The conditions which prevail in Vietnam challenge the ingenuity and resourcefulness of our personnel in fulfilling their mission. Each function will be discussed individually and associated activities illustrated with slides. <sup>(Chart #4 off)</sup>

Food Inspection

Slide #1  
(- Food supplies)

The vast quantities of food delivered to the port cities of Saigon, Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon, and DaNang, and distributed through the developing depots and ration points, created unusual problems and imposed unique

requirements on the veterinary inspection service. <sup>Initially, the port at Saigon was congested as harbor facilities were inadequate for unloading and unloading.</sup> (2 - Newport Army Terminal)

Considerable relief was realized with the opening of the Newport Army

Terminal in July <sup>1967</sup> ~~1966~~. The terminal is approximately 3 miles upstream

from Saigon and is completely self-contained. The port handles about 430,000 tons monthly. The average turnaround for ships is now 6 days as

compared with 89 days a year before; and <sup>the number of</sup> ~~few~~ deep draft barges waiting

clearance is practically nil <sup>whereas there were as many as</sup> ~~withstandings~~ 80 ~~days~~ a year before. Other

adverse conditions prevail, and supplies are continuously subjected to the rigors of the hostile environment of Vietnam. (3 - Storage) Supplies may

be exposed to excessive heat, rain, and humidity because of insufficient refrigeration and open storage. Lack of mechanical handling equipment may

impair rotation of stock. (4 - Inspection) Inspection is concerned with

product damage and deterioration <sup>24</sup> (4 - Product Damage, 6 - Product Damage) <sup>Ice Cream Deterioration</sup>

<sup>Very little</sup> (5 - Very little)

<sup>These slides illustrate some conditions</sup>

and with their effects on wholesomeness and service. The majority of these

conditions can be evaluated by organoleptic and subjective examinations;

however, objective laboratory tests (<sup>\*</sup>8 - Laboratory Testing Canned Rations)

are periodically requested to support inspection findings and opinions

\*9 - Blank).

Veterinary inspection of food storage areas was extended as far forward as possible. This service contributed significantly to correcting unsatisfactory conditions and became recognized as essential to the develop-

ment of Class I ~~at the Class I Cu Chi~~ <sup>when storage and distribution points</sup> Class I Cu Chi. The operations at the ~~25th~~ <sup>Class I Veterinary subsection</sup> Division Base Camp at ~~Cu Chi~~ illustrate the success of this arrangement and

<sup>Successful</sup> ~~the~~ quality management of subsistence as provided by veterinary personnel.

The Class I Yard receives supplies directly from Saigon <sup>\*</sup>17 - Truck Delivery

Cu Chi) by convoy, a hazardous two-hour trucking operation. Recombined

milk and ice cream manufactured in Saigon is delivered in refrigerated

trucks. <sup>\*</sup>18 - Inspection Refrigerated Truck) Condition of the product is

inspected on arrival and samples are collected to confirm the quality of

the product as delivered. The Division <sup>\*</sup>19 - Ice Cream Plant) also operates

its own ice cream making machines, producing approximately 250 gallons daily.

This product is one of the best quality food items available to the soldier.

The superiority and cleanliness of the product is a direct result of close intensive supervision by veterinary inspectors, laboratory testing, and <sup>\*</sup>(~~14~~ - Sanitizing Ice Cream Equipment) conscientious cooperative GI management. In those instances in which Division ice cream plants were operated without veterinary supervision, quality and cleanliness were decidedly inferior as reflected in excessively high total bacteria and coliform counts. The operation and product of <sup>\*</sup>Quartermaster (~~15~~ - QM Bakery) Bakery platoon that is also located at the Camp are inspected (~~16~~ - Vet Inspection QM Bakery) by veterinary personnel. The platoon bakes approximately 13,000 one-pound loaves daily for distribution to surrounding camps and field operations. <sup>\*</sup>(~~17~~ - Ice Plant) Ice is obtained from a plant constructed by an American engineering firm and operated under a contract with the U.S. Forces. Veterinary inspectors maintain surveillance of the quality and potability of the item. Samples of the water supplies are periodically tested at the Veterinary Department, 9ML. The capacity of this plant is 15 tons daily, which far exceeds the maximum production obtained from the smaller Vietnamese operations (~~18~~ - Inspection Vietnamese Ice Plant) as typified by this plant being inspected by the <sup>as I have illustrated</sup> Navy PM and Army veterinary personnel at Phu Bai. Similar duties are performed

Despite intensive efforts to construct sanitary ice making facilities, it is estimated that as yet approximately 30% of the ice used by US Forces is supplied from VN vendors. Ice from unapproved sources is believed the source of an extensive infectious hepatitis outbreak in April-June 1969 involving 71 personnel of the 1st Infantry Division.

by field veterinarians at other camps; for example, <sup>\*</sup>19 - Phu Loi, <sup>\*</sup>20 -

Pleiku) Phu Loi and Pleiku.

<sup>\*</sup>21 - Blank) Procurement inspection of indigenous foods expanded rapidly <sup>beginning</sup> in 1966. The number of food and ice establishments listed in the Directory of Approved Food Sources as a result of veterinary sanitary inspections increased from 12 to more than 39 at the end of 1966. The poundage of food and ice inspected by veterinary personnel went up from 8 million to almost 33 million pounds. Recombined milk and dairy products are produced in plants in Saigon (<sup>\*</sup>22 - Milk Plant Interior) and DaNang which are operated by American firms using modern equipment and food components manufactured in the United States. (<sup>\*</sup>23 - Milk Plant QC) The Veterinary Department, 9th Medical Laboratory, assumed responsibility for dairy plant inspection in Saigon and instituted a coordinated program of inspection and laboratory testing for evaluation and control of locally manufactured dairy products. This consolidation of inspection responsibility proved very efficient and effective in improving the quality of the product and milk plant sanitation. The laboratory maintained a courier service to the DaNang plant on the Navy Base which facilitated transmission of samples to the laboratory and timely reporting of results.

The laboratory conducted (~~24~~<sup>#</sup> - Bacteriological Testing) microbiological  
~~25~~<sup>\*</sup> (Chemical Analysis) testing and chemical analysis. The later verified

conformance of the product with ~~specification~~<sup>Contract</sup> requirements for butter fat  
content, an expensive anhydrous fat component that determined the cost of

the product to the U.S. Forces. ~~Recent~~<sup>Present</sup> instructions have directed the sub-  
stitution of anhydrous vegetable fat for anhydrous butter fat. ~~The former,~~  
~~incidentally, makes a comparatively superior product.~~

Occasionally the Veterinary Department was requested to test sodas  
and other bottled beverages which were suspected of being poisoned. In no  
instance did the laboratory disclose any evidence of poisoning of soda pop;  
however, a number of cases of methanol poisoning of Montagnards and merchant  
seamen were identified by the Chemistry Department, 9ML. ~~26~~<sup>#</sup> (Chemistry Dept.  
Methanol Samples) In the latter cases, poisoning was attributed to consumption  
of methanol contaminated whiskeys bottled in discarded Anglo whiskey bottles  
and resealed with counterfeit labels.

Veterinary personnel worked closely with the U.S. Army Procurement Agency,  
which was activated in May 1966, to develop approved local sources of fruits  
and vegetables for U.S. Forces. (~~27~~<sup>#</sup> - Inspection Local Produce) Specifications  
and standards for local produce were written. Veterinary inspectors provided

instruction to prospective Vietnamese vendors in acceptable methods of washing, trimming, and packing. Procurement centers in Saigon and Dalat were staffed with veterinary inspectors. Combined purchases of these centers exceeded 1 million dollars monthly. (~~28~~ - Dalat) Dalat and its environs is the leading vegetable growing area. (~~27~~ - Vietnamese Farmer) Farming is by conventional methods. Production in 1966 rose to 36,000 tons from 48,000 in 1963. The U.S. military buys approximately 30% of the production. (~~29~~ - Palletized Load) Produce is crated and palletized for air or rail delivery. \* (~~30~~ - Lab Examination) Soils and produce are periodically tested for parasites and parasite ova although it was reported that no night soil was used to fertilize vegetable fields. (\* ~~31~~ - Blank)

Despite the magnitude of problems inherent in the logistics of food supply, critical shortages were never encountered. Occasionally the supply of an item was delayed, but a complete nutritionally balanced menu was always available. The military veterinary contributions to quality management of subsistence have been significant and contributory to the success of the food service program and the eating enjoyment of our soldiers and marines throughout Vietnam. (Light to eat)

Control of Zoonotic Diseases

Rabies is highly endemic throughout Vietnam. Military physicians are particularly concerned with the possibility of exposure in the many cases of soldiers and marines who are bitten by animal pets, mascots, strays and wild rodents, principally rats. As a consequence, rabies is undoubtedly the zoonotic disease of major military interest. In 1966, 1,506 U.S. military personnel suffered animal bites; 628 of these received antirabies treatment. Information received through OCT 1969 does not suggest any improvements. 102 military were recorded as exposed and 505 were treated with DF vaccine.

Authorities at the Pasteur Institute in Saigon estimate that in 1966, 10,122 Vietnamese were exposed to animal bites; 4,845 of these received antirabies treatment. Six human deaths were reported. Two hundred and forty (51%) of the 470 specimens examined at the Pasteur Institute for rabies were positive.

These data are generally limited to Saigon, Nha Trang and Dalat and do not accurately reflect the disease picture in South Vietnam. <sup>(Although 150)</sup> cases of rabies have occurred in U.S. Military Forces, <sup>(26 of May 1967)</sup> many personnel have required prophylactic treatment, which has removed them from operational duties. Pre-exposure immunization of military personnel is not required; however, it was standard practice that all members of the Veterinary Department, 9ML, be vaccinated because of the high risk of exposure to positive specimens. Approximately 35% of the dog heads examined in a one-year period (1966-67) were

The incidence reported for 1967 is similar to  
positive for rabies. The Department provides ~~some~~ rabies diagnostic service  
regularly  
to the II, III, and IV Corps areas. The convenience of an accurate and

efficient <sup>rabies</sup> diagnostic capability was widely appreciated throughout Vietnam. ~~(light)~~

(dog heads)  
Specimens arrived in a variety of containers from ammo boxes <sup>\* 33</sup> (~~30~~ - Ammo Box)

<sup>\* 34</sup>  
to other centers (e.g. Pacific Center) suggesting the urgency of the request