

HISTORY OF THE  
240TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASLT HEL)  
222ND AVIATION BATTALION (CBT)

1 JAN 1970 - 31 DEC 1970

Prepared by

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Approved by

WILLIAM R. DEAN, JR.  
MAJ, IN  
Commanding

CAMP MARTIN COX, BEARCAT  
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
APO San Francisco 96530



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
240TH AVIATION COMPANY (ASLT HEL)  
222ND AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
APO San Francisco 96530

19 February 1971

SUBJECT: Unit Commander's Introduction

1. Throughout 1970, the 240th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) has continued playing a significant role in Combat Operations within all areas of Military Region III. The Greyhounds' outstanding reputation is without parallel with the units supported, and is characterized by cooperation, dynamic execution of assigned missions, and an overall attitude of professionalism that is recognized by ground commanders.
2. In 1970, the Greyhounds primarily supported three types of combat operations; Combat Assaults, Long-range Reconnaissance patrol operations, and combat support missions. In addition to these operations, the Greyhounds have trained 50 Thailand pilots, 80 Thailand doorgunners and crewchiefs, and given advanced training to 16 Vietnamese Air Force pilots. All training was incorporated into the daily missions and the unit's effectiveness remained at 100 per cent. Truly an outstanding accomplishment, but all in a day's work for the Greyhounds.
3. The enviable reputation of the Greyhounds has been built on the professionalism of the officers and men who have served in the 240th Avn Co (Aslt Hel) and the Greyhounds have surely earned their place in the History of Army Aviation.

*Herman J. Williams*  
HERMAN J. WILLIAMS  
MAJ, IN  
Commanding



## LINEAGE

The company was constituted on 10 March 1943 in the Army of the United States as the 2462d Quartermaster Truck Company, Aviation, and activated on 15 March 1943 at Kelly Field, Texas.

After participating in the New Guinea Campaign during World War II, the company was inactivated on 15 February, 1946, at Tokyo, Japan. On 1 August 1946, the company was converted and redesignated as the 2462d Transportation Corps Truck Company. Finally, on 1 November 1966, at Fort Hood, Texas, the company was redesignated as the 240th Aviation Company and allotted to the regular Army. The company was then deployed to the Republic of Vietnam on 23 May 1967.

## HONORS

During World War II, the company was credited with participating in the New Guinea Campaign.

In Vietnam, participated in the Counteroffensive, Phase II and III, the Tet Counteroffensive, 1968, Counteroffensive Phase IV, X, VI, Tet Counteroffensive 1969, Vietnamese Summer-Fall, Vietnamese Winter-Spring, and the Current Unnamed Campaign.

## COMMANDING OFFICERS

The following officers commanded the 240th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) during the periods indicated:

Major William A. Williams	Oct 66 - Sep 67
Major Glenn F. Hoffman	Sep 67 - Mar 68
Major Jesse H. James	Mar 68 - Aug 68
Major William H. Overholser	Aug 68 - Feb 69
Major Archie C. Ringgenberg	Feb 69 - Sep 69
Major Joseph A. Lacy	Sep 69 - Mar 70
Major Bruce J. Dubov	Mar 70 - Aug 70
Major Herman J. Williams	Aug 70 - Present







## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF TERRAIN

All of the operations for the year took place in the III Corps military region, with the exception of the Cambodian operation. That operation will be covered in the section dealing with the unit's operations.

On the map on the preceding page, III Corps has been divided according to the areas of operation of each of the major units supported by the 240th during 1970. These areas were quite flexible with joint operations quite often being executed outside the limits of a particular command's area. A general terrain description of each area with the unit working that area will aid in understanding the varied types of operations the company performed. The areas will be discussed according to the number in each region on the map.

AREA I: Two units occupied this area, the Bien Hoa Tactical Assistance Command and the Capitol Military Defense Command. Quite often, the missions flown in this area were performed with Regional and Popular Forces and were single-day operations. The area is quite flat, with many rice paddies. Most of these paddies have been abandoned in the western portion of the sector due to enemy activities, but many are presently being worked in the Saigon area. There is no dense forest or jungle area in the region.

AREA II: Two major units worked in this area. These units were the 3/9th U.S. Infantry and the 25th ARVN Division. This area has many rice paddies and canals in it, but has more foliage and offers many more hiding places. There are no thick forests in the area, but many patches of nippa palm. This was a major infiltration route into South Vietnam for the NVA. The many canals and streams of the region provided the enemy with good transportation routes, especially at night.

AREA III: The 5th Special Forces Group worked in this area. The area contains triple-canopy jungle and very thick forests. There are very few streams in the area, and very few civilians. The mountains are relatively small, seldom rising more than 500 feet above the surrounding terrain. Low clouds and fog quite often hampered operations in this area.

AREA IV: This area is the Rung Sat Special Zone and is worked by ARVN Marines with U.S. Marine Advisors. The area is flat, with many areas of thick nippa palm and other types of underbrush. Since the area is flat and close to the ocean, the tides play an important role in operations in the region. It is suspected that there is some infiltration into the country by sea at this point.

AREA V: The 240th's home is in this section, noted with a red "X" on the map. Bearcat is also the location of the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Forces who work the area around Bearcat. The area has rice paddies on the western and northern borders, but the majority of the area is dense forest. The area is relatively flat, but the thick forest and nearness of civilian sources of food make it an excellent location for enemy forces. Some plows were put to

work on the area late in 1970, clearing parts of the area of forest, but several enemy units are still known to be operating in the region.

AREA VI: The 25th U.S. Infantry Division conducted operations in this area during 1970. The area has thick forest and jungle, and several mountains that provide caves for the enemy to hide in. Most of the civilian population is centered around the city of Xuan Loc, but there are farmers to the east of the city. This area also has several large rubber plantations which are old and have cut large ravines in several places.

AREA VII: The 18th ARVN Division worked in this area, along with the 199th Infantry Brigade until the 199th stood down in the Fall. The region is sparsely populated and has several large mountains and forests. There are a few rice paddies scattered throughout the area, but the mountains restrict farming to a large extent. Weather is a critical factor in operations, especially during the Monsoon season, as low clouds and ground fog often restrict visibility.



Unit Operations and Record of Achievement 1 Jan 70 - 31 Dec 70

During 1970, the 240th Assault Helicopter Company Greyhounds and Mad Dogs continued to work in the 3rd Military Region of South Vietnam. The tactics employed by the company remained generally the same, with minor variations as indicated by terrain. The "raid" tactic was most often used, since the company has employed this tactic with great success since early 1969.

The major units supported during the year were as follows:

- 3rd Brigade, 9th U.S. Infantry
- 25th ARVN, Long An Province
- 5th Special Forces Group, Bien Hoa Province
- Royal Thai Army Volunteer Forces, 1st and 2nd Brigades
- Bien Hoa Tactical Assistance Command
- Capitol Military Defense
- Rung Sat Special Zone

The company normally flew two combat assault missions per day, in addition to flying up to six direct combat support ships. The DCS ships carried mail, cargo, passengers and distribution to units that were stationed in the field.

On a combat assault mission in support of the 3rd of the 9th Infantry, a normal day would begin with the insertion of a company, or, quite often, a battalion size unit. The unit would then conduct search and destroy missions. When any element of the unit made enemy contact, the element was immediately reinforced with other elements, inserted to the contact area by the Greyhound lift aircraft. Once an element had completed sweeping its sector of operations, it would be reinserted to another area. The Greyhounds often made as many as fifteen to twenty such insertions each day.

In contrast to the large scale operations of the 3rd of the 9th Infantry, operations with the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Forces were of a much smaller size. The same type operations were performed, but usually with only one or two platoons. The RTAVF also utilized squad sized long range recon teams, which usually conducted three day operations. The insertions were made with two lift aircraft, and a light fire team of Mad Dog gunships. One lift ship made the insertion, occasionally employing ropes for the insertion, while the other ship flew chase in case some problem developed. The Greyhounds and Mad Dogs were on a constant alert for the duration of the operation.

While the above operations are descriptions of the type of operations the company employed with these particular units, they are typical of most of the other units supported by the 240th.

One distinct exception from the type operations already described was the Fifth Special Forces. Four lift ships were utilized for the insertion of three recon teams. The teams, inserted individually, consisted of five to eight men and conducted patrols throughout their assigned areas. The missions and training performed accomplished definite objectives, including gathering intelligence. The teams consisted of two experienced men and several students who were on the last portion of a training course presented by the Special



Forces command. The insertions were often accomplished with ladders or ropes, since the terrain included triple canopy jungle and offered few landing areas where the ships could land. The extraction of the teams was often accomplished in the same manner. While the patrols were out, the Greyhounds served a dual mission. They were on a constant stand-by in case one of the teams ran into trouble, and flew training missions for the early phases of the course. This training included practice insertions to secure areas, parachute drops from the helicopters, and demonstrations of fire power by the Mad Dogs.

From the period 1 Jan 70 to 30 Apr 70, the company put up two combat assault missions each day, with the exception of maintenance down days, one each month. The missions were performed by four lift ships and two gunships under the control of a command and control ship, with members from the ground unit aboard. During this period, the 240th supported the units previously mentioned and also the 25th U.S. Infantry Division in Phouc Tuy Province, plus DCS ships for II Field Force Artillery and MACV Cords.

The raid tactic again proved its worth during this period considering the low number of hits received by aircraft and the number of enemy soldiers killed by aircraft. We were credited with 95 kills by actual body count.

Two noteworthy missions were flown by the company during the first quarter of the year, the first one occurring on 19 March.

The 240th was assigned the mission of supporting the ARVN Marines of the Rung Sat Special Zone, Gia Dinh Province, operating out of Nha Be. The operational area was fifteen miles southeast of Bearcat. The ground troops were inserted into the area to conduct search and destroy operations, and established enemy contact after two to three hours. They sighted an estimated thirty Viet Cong soldiers in what appeared to be an enemy base camp. The Mad Dog light fire team came under heavy enemy fire and immediately returned fire with 2.75 rockets and M-60 door gun fire. After six hours of intense contact, the enemy weapons were silenced and the Mad Dogs were credited with 16 enemy killed by air, with no friendly casualties.

The second mission of significance took place on 15 April while working with the RTAVF out of Bearcat. The Mad Dog gunships were escorting the lift platoon to an intended landing zone when they came under fire from an estimated company size enemy force. The Mad Dogs, reacting from the instinct developed from similar situations, immediately engaged the enemy and were credited with ten enemy soldiers killed.

During the time these operations took place, the 240th suffered a shortage of doorgunners and crewchiefs in the flight platoons. The company adjusted to the shortage by initiating training periods after the missions of the day were completed. The shortage was eliminated with no loss to the overall combat effectiveness of the unit.

During the second quarter of the year, 1 May 70 - 31 Jul 70, the company participated in the Cambodian operation. The company worked on a daily basis, supporting the 5th ARVN Infantry Division on operation Black Horse. The company supplied helicopter support for combat assaults, resupply, and medevacs.



Five troop ships and two gun ships provided support and cover for the ground operations, which took place in the Fish Hook region of Cambodia. The company received a Letter of Commendation from COL John G. Hayes, Senior Advisor, for the outstanding support provided by the Greyhounds and Mad Dogs.

On one occasion, the 240th supported the 4th of the 9th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division with nine troop ships and four gun ships from early morning until noon. Then these same ships supported the 3rd of the 9th Infantry Division in the Parrot's Beak region for the rest of the day until dusk. The combined flying hours for this day totalled over seventy tactical flying hours. This record is a credit to the maintenance platoon in addition to the crews who were doing the flying.

Over 400 combat hours were flown in a concentrated period of ten days, all in direct support of combat units. After that ten day period, DCS, resupply, and medevac missions continued on a daily basis throughout the month of May. On one afternoon, the company medevaced 55 wounded soldiers to hospitals in a three hour period. The 240th was, to say the least, very flexible during the entire operation. All this, despite the fact that most crew members had to exceed restrictions placed on the number of flight hours to be flown during any thirty day period. This means the crews were flying over 140 hours in the month besides pulling daily maintenance on their aircraft. This is a fine example of the professionalism and pride of the unit. The 240th has always put out a little more when they have been exhausted. The results of their work is readily seen when scanning through the achievements of the company.

Also, on 27 May, the 240th supported the ARVN Marines in the Bung Sat Special Zone. After approximately six hours, the ground troops reported that they were pinned down under heavy enemy fire. The command and control ship relayed the call to the Mad Dogs, who immediately responded to the call for help. The gunships engaged the enemy with organic weapons, resulting in ten enemy killed by air, one killed by ground troops, and no friendly casualties.

Later in the quarter, on 9 July, the 240th inserted elements of the 25th U.S. Infantry Division twelve miles southeast of Xuan Loc. After two insertions, the ground troops received sniper fire which seriously wounded two friendly soldiers. A lift aircraft from the 240th made an urgent medevac from the hot landing zone. The three remaining lift ships made emergency resupply of ammunition and pyrotechnics to the troops, who were still in contact. The rest of the infantry company was inserted into the area, including a mortar platoon. The enemy broke contact after ten hours of fighting. During the operation, the light fire team of the 240th expended eight loads of ordinance in very close support of the ground unit. The results of the day were friendly losses described as light and enemy losses unknown.

Even though the seasonal monsoons drenched the local area during this quarter, the Greyhounds still performed their assigned missions in a superior manner. Occasionally, low ceilings delayed take-offs, but these times were few. The pilots continued their instrument flight training by flying a minimum of four hours hood time, and conducting two ground controlled approaches each month. This training helped them to remain proficient in instrument flight conditions, should inadvertant IFR conditions be encountered.



During the third quarter, the company was assigned several additional missions. These missions were to support the 18th ARVN Division, Task Force 333 at Fire Support Base Blackhorse, and MACV Advisors at Ham Tan, Duc Hoa, Tan An, Ben Luc, Baria, Quan Loi, and Xuan Loc.

A significant incident occurred on 21 Aug 70, this time concerning one of the direct combat support ships. While on a resupply to a Thai unit, the aircraft was shot down on short final to the area. The unit was in a Roto-plot cut, awaiting resupply of food and equipment. At twenty feet above the ground, the ship received automatic weapons fire from both sides of the landing zone, which was bordered by thick forest. The crew escaped from the aircraft upon hitting the ground, just as the ship began to burn. One of the crew was killed when the main rotor blade flexed low as he was running from the aircraft. The remainder of the crew was safely evacuated by members of the 240th, who were flying a combat assault in the vicinity.

The next month, on 22 Sep 70, while supporting the 18th ARVN force working 4 miles southwest of Xuan Loc, a company was inserted at 0800 to conduct search and destroy missions in the area. The unit was ambushed at 1030 hours by an NVA unit dressed in ARVN uniforms. The ARVN company commander and two of his platoon leaders were killed in the initial contact, and the enemy captured two radios with frequencies dialed to the operating channel. Thus, whenever the Mad Dog gunships fired on the enemy positions, the NVA radioed that the guns were firing on friendly positions, adding to the confusion of the battle. The Greyhound lift ships then inserted an additional sixteen loads of troops, while the landing zone received ten rounds of 60MM mortar fire. The light fire team suppressed the suspected mortar position with rockets and mini-gun fire as the insertions continued. The fifth flight into the area took automatic fire while sitting in the landing zone, but suffered no casualties. On the seventh flight into the landing area, while 800 meters from the touchdown point, the flight again took fire. One aircraft commander was struck on his left hand, and his crewchief was wounded in the elbow and back. The aircraft also was struck in its fuel cells, causing rapid loss of fuel. The copilot of the ship made the decision to fly the ship to Xuan Loc, rather than land in the hostile area, despite the severe loss of fuel. Once the ship was down at Xuan Loc, the two wounded members were taken to a hospital and treated. Both recovered and were returned to CONUS as a result of their wounds. Meanwhile, the lift ships completed the insertions. The ground troops confirmed two NVA killed by air, and six bunkers destroyed. Due to the heavy enemy activity, the ground troops were unable to sweep the area, allowing the enemy to carry his dead and wounded from the area.

On 6 Oct 70, during a routine insertion, the lead ship of the Mad Dog light fire team spotted a man hiding in a tree line near a small village. The ground commander, from the 25th ARVN Division of Hiep Hoa, gave clearance to the gunships to kill the man, who was wearing some type of uniform. After killing the man, the fire team continued searching the area, finding five more men with weapons, web gear and packs. The enemy were engaged with rockets, and in the process of this fire, several trenches and bunkers were uncovered. For three hours, the Mad Dogs continued to search, spotting more VC from time to time. The ground troops found thirteen bodies that were credited to the gunships and captured nine weapons, along with a large but unreported amount of money. It was later learned that the man carrying the money was the district Viet Cong pay officer.



Next, during a two day operation with the AFWN Marines from the 1st, the 240th took part in another large contact with the enemy. The ground troops discovered some very fresh footprints during their mission, and requested that the Mad Dogs recon the area toward which the tracks led. Since they work with one ship very low and the other at approximately 300 feet above, the Mad Dogs provide very good reports of what lies ahead of the friendly troops. After 20 minutes, the gunships received heavy automatic weapons fire and returned fire. The lift ships inserted a blocking force 150 meters from the contact area. The results from the first day were no friendly troops wounded or killed, and 23 enemy killed by air. Also, 3 bunkers and 6 sampans were destroyed by the gunships.

The next day, on 14 Oct 70, the 240th returned to the area and discovered an enemy base camp 4 kilometers west of the previous contact area. There was an undetermined number of enemy in the camp, and these men were fired on by the Mad Dogs. This time, a total of nine enemy were killed by air, eight bunkers were destroyed with no friendly casualties. A total of twelve enemy weapons were captured during the two day operation. Two of the VC dead were later identified as long time members of the Viet Cong and had over 40 years combined service.

One of the largest contacts of the year occurred on 19 Oct 70 while working with the RTAVF five miles south of Bearcat. A hunter-killer team consisting of a Cobra gunship and a LOH were working east of where the Thais had been inserted, when the LOH took fire. The Mad Dogs flying in the area went to the assistance of the team and found several bunkers. The lift ships of the 240th re-inserted the Thai troops into the vicinity of the bunkers. The Thais received heavy fire when they tried to assault the bunker complex and had to withdraw from the area, while the Mad Dogs covered their retreat. The Mad Dogs placed heavy fire on the area, then called in an air strike by the Air Force, directing the fire of the jets. During the operation, the Thais had one man wounded but he was immediately evacuated by one of the lift ships. When the ground troops went back through the area, they found 28 VC/NVA soldiers killed by the Mad Dogs, 12 killed by the air strike and 4 killed by the Thais. There were also many bunkers destroyed, and one Chicom radio was captured with numerous documents identifying seven enemy units working in the area.

In addition to flying combat operations, the 240th was called upon to train Thai aviators as UH-1C gunship pilots during the first part of the year. The purpose of the training was to increase the knowledge and combat effectiveness of the Thai aviator by making him proficient in the tactics of the "Charlie Model" gunship.

Working closely with the 240th Assault Helicopter Company at Bearcat, the Thai pilots have acquired the skills necessary to perform successful insertions and extractions. All aspects of safety and weapons systems were stressed heavily.

Approximately 9 hours of ground school instruction were taught in the initial phase of training. The classes included: description and capabilities of the weaponry, arming and de-arming procedures, safety techniques, and maintenance, which an aviator should be able to supervise.



The second phase of training was the transitioning into the UH-1C aircraft. This involved much verbal instruction by the JT/AC and actual flight instruction on aerial tactics and coverage of the "slicks". When these tactics were mastered, the Thais were able to support their own people effectively and efficiently.

The unit Instructor Pilots covered the instructions of the Thais in the air. Subjects taught included aircraft limitations and the techniques the Mad Dogs have initiated in the III Corps area. Emergency procedures and autorotations were other subjects taught.

Having completed the classroom and aerial flight instruction, the Thai pilots began phase three of the training. In this phase, the Thai pilots flew with the gunships on actual combat assaults. Here, all previous training was put into practice, and the new "gun pilots" got a chance to see the general scope of the mission, while performing an integral part of that mission. In four days time, each student acquired twenty combat hours of flight time.

When asked what he thought of the program, a pilot expressed the feelings of the 240th AHC in saying, "The Thai pilots we are training learn their lessons well and are motivated men. They are outstanding officers and eager students. Many are fixed wing rated and are all "Huey" qualified. It is always a pleasure to train interested people."

The Royal Thai Army was also given three UH-1H aircraft from the 240th and Thai pilots were selected and given instruction on the characteristics of the Huey and the techniques used in a combat zone. Crew engineers were also trained in the daily maintenance of the Huey. The Thais perform the aircraft daily maintenance, and the 240th performs higher echelons of maintenance.

The 240th also trained Thai door gunners to crew the new Hueys the Thais had received. The students were given 5 days of instruction, with practical exercises included, to make them proficient and reliable door gunners.

On the first day, such subjects as pre-flight procedures, in-flight and refueling procedures, post-flight procedures, and description, safety, disassembly, reassembly of the M-60 machine gun were taught.

During the next four days, the Thai students were given instruction in target detection, rules of engagement, emergency procedures and flight safety. Then it was time for the students to put their instruction to use. The students were given fourteen hours of range and aerial firing. In this training, the students learned to get the feel of the M-60 in flight. They also were taught the value of the door gunner and aircraft commander working together as a team.

During the year, the 240th "graduated" close to seventy Thai door gunners in two cycles of three classes each. In addition, the company trained several classes of Thai armorers to maintain their weapons. At the conclusion of these training periods, the students were awarded honorary American crewmember wings.



These programs definitely increased the combat effectiveness and the morale of the RTAFV. The men of the 240th were instrumental in the program which enhanced the U.S. - Thailand relationship. It is from these programs that we of the 240th Assault Helicopter Company consider ourselves "Ambassadors with a helping hand."



# OPERATIONAL STATISTICS 1970

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>HOURS FLOWN</u>	<u>KBA</u>
January	3047	8
February	2939	17
March	3233	50
April	3125	56
May	3068	31
June	2646	18
July	2838	16
August	2952	13
September	2545	28
October	2686	82
November	2734	82
December	2656	4

TOTAL HOURS.....34,469  
 AVERAGE HOURS FLOWN PER MONTH.....2,873  
 TOTAL KBA's.....405  
 AVERAGE KBA's PER MONTH.....34



# HONOR ROLL OF MEMBERS KILLED

The company had one pilot killed during the year. WO1 Robert Franch died in August after his helicopter was downed by hostile fire. He joins the following Greyhounds who made the supreme sacrifice.

WO1 Harvey C. Addison  
SP5 Mathew P. Amaral III  
SP4 Martin J. Begosh  
SP4 Ronald Bellinger  
1LT Haron L. Brown II  
SP5 Joseph G. P. Catoir, Jr.  
WO1 William K. Clauson  
SP5 Douglas Compton  
SP4 Michael D. Craig  
SP5 George D. Dell  
WO1 Guy L. Eisenhart  
WO1 James D. Eisenhower  
WO1 Alvis R. Faverty  
SP4 Nelson F. Fournier  
WO1 Jerry L. Green  
WO1 Ralph M. Havanaer  
CPT Franklin J. Hinds  
WO1 David R. Hoffman  
SP4 Gary D. Holton  
CPT Charles B. Jilott  
SP4 Ronny Kindred  
SP5 Martin D. Klann  
WO1 Larry S. McKibben  
PVT Bobbie J. Mounts  
SP5 Henry L. Page  
SP4 Robert Powell  
WO1 Aroi Pochtvali  
SP4 Charles C. Sales  
CW2 Thomas J. Smith  
SP4 Wayne M. Smith  
SP5 James G. Warr