

ARMY REGULATION

No. 525-15

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 20 November 1970

MILITARY OPERATIONS
OPERATIONAL REPORTS—LESSONS LEARNED

Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65(R3)

Effective 15 January 1971

This revision reduces the frequency of reporting periods and the number of headquarters required to report lessons learned. Changed portions of the text are indicated by a bold star. Local limited supplementation of this regulation is permitted but is not required. If supplements are issued, Army Staff agencies and major Army commands will furnish one copy of each to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development; other commands will furnish one copy of each to the next higher headquarters.

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1. Purpose. This regulation establishes—

★a. The Operational Report—Lessons Learned, a medium through which organizations report unit historical information and lessons learned during current operations.

b. A system for evaluating Operational Reports and Combat After Action Reports to insure appropriate action is initiated in response thereto.

c. A means of providing details of current operations of the Army to study groups, schools, scientists, and historians.

2. Scope. This regulation encompasses all types of activities of the reporting units. Under the provisions of AR 870-5, organizations which submit Operational Reports are relieved from submitting Unit Histories and Annual Supplements to the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army.

3. Objective. The objective of this regulation is to insure that current and future benefits are derived from the experiences of the reporting units.

4. Responsibilities. a. The Assistant Chief of Staff

for Force Development, Department of the Army, is responsible for coordinating all activities related to reports submitted under the provisions of this regulation.

b. Each Department of the Army Staff agency and major Army command is responsible for analysis of the information submitted under the provisions of this regulation which falls within its functional areas and for insuring that appropriate action is initiated.

★5. Preparing agencies. a. The Army organizations listed in table 1 will submit this report when engaged in operations shown therein.

b. Other Army units, including subordinate units of all levels in the Active Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserves, as deemed appropriate by the commander concerned or as directed by Headquarters, Department of the Army for a particular operation.

★6. Reporting schedule. The report will cover each 6-month period ending the last day of April and October. It will be dispatched by the prepar-

*This regulation supersedes AR 525-15, 25 September 1969. ✓

ing headquarters no later than 20 days after the close of the reporting period.

★7. **Security classification.** Reports will be classified in accordance with chapter 2, AR 380-5. Information of special intelligence activities will be classified in accordance with AR 380-35 and submitted as prescribed in paragraph 8d.

8. **Preparation instructions.** a. Reports will be prepared in letter form, following normal correspondence procedures, as outlined in AR 340-15. When practicable, the commander will sign the report.

b. The subject of each report and forwarding indorsement will be as follows:

SUBJECT: Operational Report—Lessons Learned (headquarters or unit name), Period Ending (day, month, year), RCS CSFOR-65 (R3)

c. Operational Reports are frequently reproduced and widely distributed by the Department of the Army. Therefore, it is essential that reports and indorsements be legible and prepared with black type on letter size, white bond or mimeograph paper. Supporting documents, such as copies of operations orders, maps, overlays, sketches, photographs, Combat After Action Reports, or combat interviews, should be included when such items clarify the report or augment its historical value. Filler pages, tabs, covers or other items not normally included in correspondence should not be included in this report. The use of legal size paper, cardboard covers, or other innovations is not appropriate.

★d. Information from which special intelligence handling restrictions cannot be removed will be submitted separately as a report of special activities in accordance with e(3) below and forwarded through appropriate special intelligence channels to the Commanding Officer, U.S. Army Special Security Group, Department of the Army, ATTN: ACSFOR, Washington, DC 20310.

e. This report is normally prepared in two, and occasionally three, paragraphs as outlined in the appendix. It is imperative that preparing units appreciate the purposes of the separate paragraphs and the uses which will eventually be made of them.

(1) *Paragraph 1, Operations: Significant Activities.* Refer to paragraph 1 of the appendix. This paragraph will be historical in nature. It will cover in narrative form the operations and mis-

sion-related activities of the reporting period. Operations and activities should be reported in chronological order to include complete, accurate, factual detail. However, the commander must prevent the inclusion of extraneous, nonessential material, which simply creates bulk without adding information related to the unit's mission. This paragraph should be under preparation throughout the reporting period to insure accuracy and completeness. This will also avoid the pitfalls that result by attempting to reconstruct and document the activities of a reporting period in the 20 days allowed for submission of the report following the close of the period.

★(2) *Paragraph 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations.* Refer to paragraph 2 of the appendix. This paragraph explains the lessons learned from the operations and activities described in paragraph 1 of the report. The success of the Lessons Learned Program in aiding and improving the efficiency of current and future Army operations depends upon the quality of the content of this paragraph. The evaluation of each operation should also be accomplished during the reporting period. Lessons learned which warrant immediate action should be reported promptly (para 9) and then repeated in the subsequent semiannual report indicating previous action taken. Each lesson learned will be composed of a succinctly stated observation, an evaluation, and, when appropriate, command action(s) and recommendation(s). In paragraph 2 of the report, lessons learned will be grouped under functional headings as follows:

2. a. Personnel
- b. Intelligence
- c. Operations
- d. Organization
- e. Training
- f. Logistics
- g. Communications
- h. Materiel
- i. Other

(3) *Paragraph 3 of the report.* This paragraph is prepared only when specifically directed by Headquarters, Department of the Army. Its purpose is to obtain detail from selected units on particular subjects such as experiences and lessons learned during mobilization, activation, deployment, or other specialized activities.

f. This report will not be used as a medium for handling administrative and logistic problems which should be dealt with as individual command or staff actions. For example, if unit experiences indicate a deficiency in organization, the details of the lesson learned should be included in this report but, to effect the desired change, appropriate action recommending the change to the TOE/TDA/MTDA must be initiated as prescribed by appropriate directives. Similarly, in cases of materiel deficiencies, an Equipment Improvement Recommendation (EIR) should be submitted; in cases of shortages of personnel or supplies, prescribed requisitioning and follow-up action should be taken. A statement of corrective action initiated by the preparing organization will be included with the lesson learned.

9. **Special reports.** Special reports may be prepared and submitted when the importance of content or timeliness dictates their submission in advance of the normal report period. These reports may be submitted in abbreviated form.

★10. **Distribution.** a. In addition to requirements which may be placed upon preparing units by intermediate commands, the following distribution of the semiannual Operational Report is required by Headquarters, Department of the Army:

(1) Three copies of each semiannual report, including the original or a reproduced copy to be considered as the original, will be provided by the preparing unit or headquarters to its next higher headquarters.

(2) The next higher headquarters of the preparing unit will evaluate the semiannual report and—

(a) Indorse the original, through channels, to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development,

Department of the Army, Washington, DC 20310.

(b) Forward two copies directly to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, DC 20310, with copies of the 1st Indorsement attached.

b. Special reports will be addressed to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, ATTN: FOR OT UT, Department of the Army, Washington, DC 20310, and will include all headquarters in the chain of command and operational control as information addressees. When Army-wide training problems are involved, an information copy will be forwarded to Commanding General, United States Continental Army Command, Fort Monroe, VA 23351. Reports of special intelligence activities will be distributed in accordance with paragraph 8d.

11. **Evaluation.** Each commander indorsing the original report forward will evaluate the report and its previous indorsements. He will indicate his concurrence with, or will comment on, the report and its previous indorsements. Copies of indorsements will be provided to the previous indorsing headquarters and to the headquarters which prepared the report. Comments are particularly appropriate to—

a. Correct errors.

b. Update information.

c. Indicate corrective action taken.

d. Indicate actions to be initiated.

e. Identify and make recommendations concerning items which require action by higher headquarters.

12. **Forwarding.** Semiannual reports and lengthy special reports will be forwarded via airmail.

TABLE 1

CONUS

Combat
and
Stability

Training

Separate engineer battalions.....

X

Overseas:

Field Armies.....

X

Corps.....

X

Corps equivalents.....

X

Divisions.....

X

Separate:

Regiments.....

X

Brigades.....

X

Groups.....

X

Battalions.....

X¹

Squadrons.....

X¹

Logistical Commands.....

X

Area Commands.....

X

Depots.....

X¹¹ Separate medical battalions and medical depots are not required to report.² Pertains only to separate engineer battalions.

APPENDIX

FORMAT FOR OPERATIONAL REPORT—LESSONS LEARNED

(Letter size; white bond or mimeograph paper; black type)

UNIT LETTERHEAD

(Date)

SUBJECT: Operational Report—Lessons Learned (headquarters or unit name), Period Ending (day, month, year) RCS CSFOR-65(R3)

Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington, DC 20310

(Refer to para 10)

1. Operations: Significant Activities.

★ Refer to paragraph 8e(1). Describe the operations and mission-related activities of the reporting organization in full detail. Include what occurred, when, where, how, and why. Provide detail as to the mission; concept of operations; plans; details of execution, to include changes in the concept of operations and why changes were necessary; degree of success or failure and reasons therefor; extent and evaluation of combat support and combat service support operations to include support received from both direct and general support intelligence activities; extent and evaluation of support by allies or other armed services; details of joint or combined operations, command post exercises, or field exercises.

2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations.

Refer to paragraph 8e(2). Describe, evaluate, and, when appropriate, make recommendations concerning each lesson learned. Report tactical, technical, and organizational improvisations or field expedients employed and the degree of success achieved. Describe new methods and techniques or ideas such as means for improving the conduct of pursuit, cordon and search, and ambush operations; reducing friendly casualties from supporting fires; evacuation and processing of casualties; receipt and processing of replacements; avoiding or defeating ambush; reducing casualties from mines and booby traps; improving the versatility or capability of weapons, vehicles, and aircraft; employing electronic sensors in combat operations; locating the enemy and his base camps and caches; improving night operations, tactical communications, unit readiness, training, maintenance procedures, logistical procedures, or any mission-related activity in which the unit was involved. Each lesson learned need not necessarily be based upon an operation or activity reported in paragraph 1, but may result from experiences of empirical knowledge covering a long time span. Further, the experiences of greatest value are often those encountered at platoon and company level. Therefore, reporting headquarters should make positive and sustained efforts to seek and report the lessons learned by their subordinate elements.

Very valuable lessons have been learned from operations which failed to achieve desired results and from accidents and incidents which resulted in casualties or equipment losses. An objective evaluation of such events should reveal lessons of great importance throughout the Army.

Organize subjects of lessons learned under the appropriate functional heading listed in paragraph 8e(2). If there are no lessons learned for a particular functional grouping, insert the word "None" after that grouping title. For example, an extract from indicated functional subparagraphs of paragraph 2 may read as follows:

"2. *Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations.*

"a. *Personnel.* None.

"b. *Intelligence.* None.

"c. *Operations.* None.

"d. *Organization.* None.

"e. *Training.*

"(1) *Training for Attacks on Fortified Positions.*

"(a) **OBSERVATION:** The use of flamethrowers, light antitank weapons (LAW), and satchel charges has been restricted in recent operations.

"(b) **EVALUATION:** Training with these weapons was found to be inadequate due to time lapse and personnel rotation since such training was conducted. Frequent specialized training is needed, in preparation for attacking bunkers and fortified positions, including the use of flamethrowers, satchel charges, LAW, and all other special purpose weapons available.

"(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** That commands concerned be reminded of the need for frequent re-training on special purpose weapons.

★"(d) **COMMAND ACTION:** This requirement has been added to the monthly training inspection checklist of this headquarters.

"(2) *Battle Drill Training.*

"f. *Logistics.* None.

"g. *Communications.* None.

"h. *Materiel.* None.

"i. *Other.* None."

3. *Headquarters, Department of the Army Survey Information.*

Refer to paragraph 8e(3). Omit this paragraph unless specifically requested by Headquarters, Department of the Army.

List Inclosures

Signature Block of Commander
(or authorized Staff Officer)

By Orde

Official:
KEN
Major
The

District
A

The proponent agency of this regulation is the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications) to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, ATTN: FOR OT UT, Department of the Army, Washington, DC 20310.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

W. C. WESTMORELAND,
*General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.*

Official:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
*Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.*

Distribution:

Active Army, ARNG, and USAR: To be distributed in accordance with DA Form 12-9 requirements for AR, Administration—B (qty rqr block No. 3).

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