



HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION (AIRMObILE)  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO 96383

AVDG-CG

25 February 1971

SUBJECT: Letter of Instructions, Airmobile Operations Study Group

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Purpose: a. To establish an Airmobile Operations Study Group and provide terms of references for the study of airmobile operations in support of Operation LAMSON 719.  
b. This study will record the history of the airmobile aspects of LAMSON 719 and derive lessons and guidelines to improve current and future airmobile operations, organization, and doctrine.
2. General: a. Operation LAMSON 719 is an Allied operation against NVA forces, base areas, and lines of communication in that part of Laos adjacent to the two northern provinces of RVN. GVN ground forces operate in Laos under command of I Corps, ARVN. US aviation and airmobile forces support GVN operations in Laos under command of XXIV Corps, but no US ground units participate.  
b. "Mid-intensity conflict" best describes the level of combat and operational environment being experienced in LAMSON 719 by GVN forces and supporting US aviation and airmobile forces. This level of conflict contrasts with the low-intensity level of conflict which characterizes other combat in the various phases of the Indo-China war.

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c. In Operation LAMSON 719, allied forces conduct ground and airmobile assaults against long established, well developed, heavily defended NVA base areas and lines of communication. Battalion, regiments and divisions oppose like units. Soviet weapons oppose US weapons. Both sides are equipped with armor. Modern sophisticated antiaircraft weapons in large numbers are pitted against attack aircraft and airlift operations.

d. The special command and operational arrangements resulting from the parallel Allied command organization and the restricted US presence across the Laotian border make LAMSON 719 a special case and perhaps, unique operation. Despite these peculiarities, there are lessons to be learned from this experience that are important to the future of worldwide airmobile operations, particularly in a "mid-intensity" conflict.

e. It is essential, therefore, that the experience and techniques of airmobile operations developed during LAMSON 719 be recorded, collected, analyzed, and searched for lessons applicable to current and future airmobile operations.

3. Scope: a. The scope of the study will include collection and collation of data to include personal experience and opinion, as well as official records, journals, and documents; analysis of current airmobile operations, organization, and doctrine to find ways of improvement and to discover lessons, guidelines and lines of inquiry useful for the future of airmobility.

b. The study will include inquiry into the following areas. This list is not all-inclusive.

- (1) Relationship between ground tactical plan and airmobile operations.
- (2) Command control.
- (3) Target acquisition.

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- (4) Techniques of target engagement.
- (5) Fire support planning, coordination, and employment.
- (6) Maintenance.
- (7) Logistical support.
- (8) Aviation safety.
- (9) Organization of airmobile units.
- (10) Airmobile equipment, particularly aircraft and armament.
- (11) Airmobile doctrine.
- (12) Special considerations of Allied airmobile operations.

4. Organization: a. The Airmobile Operations Study Group will be comprised of selected commanders and staff officers who have participated in the airmobile operations in support of LAMSON 719. The Committee will meet periodically to provide guidelines to the Working Group who will conduct and draft the study. The Chairman of the Steering Committee will be the Assistant Division Commander (Operations). The membership of the Steering Committee is attached as Inclosure 1.

c. The Working Group will consist of a small group of officers specially selected for full-time assignment to the study group. The Working Group will accumulate and analyze data and draft the study itself. They will be responsive to the guidance provided by the Steering Committee through its Chairman, The Assistant Division Commander (Operations) and the Assistant Chief of Staff, G3, as the Chairman's executive agent. The membership of the Working Group will be determined at the first meeting of the Steering Committee.

5. Reports: Periodic progress reports will be submitted as approp-

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riate to the Commanding General, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), as will recommendations for improvement of current airmobile operations, organization or doctrine. The final report of the Study Group will be submitted to the Commanding General for use as he determines.

6. Schedule: The schedule of establishment and work of the Study Group is attached as Inclosure 2.

2 Incl  
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*Thomas M. Tarpley*  
THOMAS M. TARPLEY  
Major General, USA  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

- 1-Assistant Division Commander (Operations)
- 1-Assistant Division Commander (Support)
- 1-CO, 101st Aviation Group
- 1-CO, 101st Airborne Division Artillery
- 1-CO, 101st Airborne Division Support Command
- 1-CO, 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry
- 1-CO, 4th Battalion, 77th Artillery
- 1-CO, 326th Engineer Battalion
- 1-CO, 15th Transportation Battalion
- 1-Assistant Chief of Staff, G3
- 10- Chief of Staff

Steering Committee, Airmobile Operations Study Group

Chairman: Assistant Division Commander (Operations)

Members: 1. Assistant Division Commander (Support)  
2. CO, 101st Aviation Group  
3. CO, 101st Airborne Division Artillery  
4. CO, 101st Airborne Division Support Command  
5. CO, 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry  
6. CO, 4th Battalion, 77th Artillery  
7. CO, 326th Engineer Battalion  
8. CO, 5th Transportation Battalion  
9. Assistant Chief of Staff, G3

Inclosure 1 to Ltr of Instructions

Work Schedule, Airmobile Operations Study Group

|                |                                                                                                   |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25 February 71 | Terms of reference approved by Commanding General Steering Committee Meeting.                     |
| 26 February 71 | Working Group formed.                                                                             |
| 1 March 71     | Director of Working Group submits study outline and work schedule to Chairman, Steering Committee |
| 3 March 71     | Steering Committee Meeting.                                                                       |
| 14 March 71    | 1st Draft of Study to Steering Committee                                                          |
| 15 March 71    | Steering Committee Meeting.                                                                       |
| 19 March 71    | 2d Draft of Study to Steering Committee.                                                          |
| 20 March 71    | Steering Committee Meeting.                                                                       |
| 26 March 71    | Final Draft of Study to Steering Committee.                                                       |
| 27 March 71    | Steering Committee Meeting.                                                                       |
| 29 March 71    | Final Draft to Commanding General.                                                                |

Inclosure 2 to ltr of Instructions

## List of Members and Participants of the Airmobile Operations Study Group

### 1. Steering Committee

|                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| BG Sidney B. Berry       | Asst Div Cmdr (Opns)<br>Chairman |
| BG Clin E. Smith         | Asst Div Cmdr (Spt)              |
| COL Edward P. Davis      | CO, 101st Avn Gp                 |
| COL Lee E. Surut         | CO, 101st Abn Div Arty           |
| COL Donald E Rosenblum   | CO, 101st Abn Div Spt Cmd        |
| LTC Archie A Rider       | CO, 2d Sqdn, 17th Cav            |
| *LTC William L Gallagher | CO, 4th Bn, 77th Arty            |
| *LTC Carl P Rodolph      | CO, 326th Engr Bn                |
| *LTC Horace B Beasley    | CO, 5th Trans Bn                 |
| LTC John C Bard          | Asst Chief of Staff, G-3         |
| **LTC Roy S Dunaway Jr   | Dir, Working Group               |
| **MAJ Darel S Johnson    | Asst Chief of Staff, G-2         |

\*Deleted on 5 Apr 71

\*\*Added on 5 Apr 71

### 2. Working Group

|                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| LTC Roy S Dunaway Jr      | Director          |
| MAJ Gene A Schneebeck     | 326th Engr Bn     |
| MAJ William K McDonald Jr | DISCOM            |
| MAJ Robert L Clewell      | 101st Avn Gp      |
| CPT Gary V Burt           | 2d Sqdn, 17th Cav |
| CPT Taylor L Conley       | Div Arty          |
| CPT Francis S Davis       | 101st Avn Gp      |
| CPT Peter N Federovich    | 101st Avn Gp      |
| CPT John A Jones          | Div Arty          |
| CPT Gary L Mevis          | DISCOM            |
| CPT Ronald A Nelson       | 101st Avn Gp      |
| CPT James F Peterman      | 101st Avn Gp      |

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### 3. Participants

BG John G Hill Jr  
COL Bruce Holbrook  
LTC Gerald W. Kirklighter  
LTC William N. Peachey  
LTC George F. Newton  
LTC Joseph F. Rutkowski  
LTC Robert A. Phillips  
MAJ John A. G. Klose  
MAJ Jack T. Clark  
MAJ Richard L. Mills  
MAJ Edward V. Mahoney  
MAJ Robert W. Sheffield  
MAJ Lloyd D. Mason  
CPT Charles M. Stancil  
CPT John C. Goertemiller  
CPT Joe H. Altman  
CPT Harvey C. Curry  
CPT William P. Stubbs  
LT Philip A. Clark  
LT Leighton

CG, 1st Bde, 5th Inf Div (Mech)  
CO, 108th Arty Gp  
CO, 223d CAB  
CO, 158th AHB  
CO, 159th ASHB  
CO, 14th CAB  
S3, 101st Avn Gp  
S3, 223d CAB  
CO, A Trp, 2d Sqdn, 17th Cav  
CO, A Btry, 4th Bn, 77th Arty  
ALO, USAF  
Asst G2, 101st Abn Div (Ambl)  
S3, 2d Sqdn, 17th Cav  
4th Bn, 77th Arty  
TOC Adv, 1st ARVN Inf Div  
4th Bn, 77th Arty  
2d Sqdn, 17th Cav  
2d Sqdn, 17th Cav  
Asst G2, 101st Abn Div (Ambl)  
ALO, USAF