



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 and 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 anti-aircraft weapons in large numbers are pitted against attack air craft 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
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) Chairman
BG Olin 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 Canley	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