

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
213TH ASSAULT SUPPORT HELICOPTER COMPANY
APO San Francisco 96289

STAND DOWN
213TH ASHC

AVBAUV-F

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company

Commanding Officer
145th Combat Aviation Battalion
APO San Francisco 96266

1. Scope: This report covers the prenotification and stand down phases (15 Jan 72 - 14 Feb 72) and (15 Feb 72 - 15 Mar 72) of the 213th ASHC.

2. Prenotification Actions:

a. General:

(1) On 15 January 1972 the CO was directed to complete a 100% inventory and submit it to the 145th CAB as soon as possible. This inventory was already in the process of being conducted because of the change of command of this unit on 9 January. The inventory was completed and delivered to 145th CAB Hqs on 17 January. Prior to that date this unit was directed to identify the 6 best aircraft in the fleet for possible lateral transfer to the 120th Assault Helicopter Company. On 18 January the maintenance officers and the PBO's from this unit and the 120th AHC met in conference at the 145th CAB and the 6 designated aircraft were transferred. On 19 January the unit CO, AMO and AMNCO met with the 145th CAB XO and other staff members to revise the CH-47 platoon, 120th AHC's TOE. An equitable compliment of PLL and ground handling equipment was designated as items of necessity to insure the operational capabilities of the CH-47 platoon. Personnel transferred from this unit to the 120th was also discussed. These personnel had been previously placed on orders on 28 January.

(2) On 3 February the CO and Operations Officer were called to the 145th CAB Hqs to read a message instructing this unit to prepare for redeployment. The commitment to provide aircraft equipment and personnel to the 120th AHC was cancelled and orders of revocation were published on personnel assigned to the 120th. Key personnel within the unit were formed to discuss the status change and identify the potential problems. On 5 February the CO was informed by the 145th CAB CO that the original commitment to the 120th was again in effect, and that this unit would be required to retain the capabilities to provide maintenance support for the transferred aircraft through 29 February. However it was unknown at that time whether the commitment for personnel still existed.

(3) Without prior knowledge we were placed in the VNAF pilot training business on 7 February with the attachment of 2 Vietnamese Lieutenants.

(4) This unit received a notification from 145th CAB requiring 16 EM with the MOS of 67U20 be sent to the 17th CAG to train VNAF enlisted crew members. We were further told that the requirement would possibly be extended to include officers. The 16 personnel departed the company on 9 February thus leaving 96 vacancies in the company's enlisted strength. On the same day we were notified

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

to prepare to feed the 334th Attack Helicopter Company from 20 February until their stand down completion. In a conference on 8 February at the 12th CAG, the stand down date was hardened somewhat and the period to be allowed for completion was given. The CO, PBO and Motor Officer were all present. CW3 Winland, the liaison representative for our receiving command, arrived in the company and presented the CO, XO, AMO and Operations Officer with a briefing from his command.

(5) On 11 February the CO was informed that this unit would be receiving 3 aircraft from a unit in I corp and 2 from another unit in II corp. He was further informed that we would be required to provide the crew to fly each aircraft to be received, to the inspection point at Vung Tau.

(6) The remainder of the time prior to the initial stand down date involved the submission of various personnel lists and the attempts to clarify instructions previously given. The initial transfer of equipment to the 120th commenced on 9 February. On 14 February the 120th AHC sent 14 enlisted personnel with 670 MOS's to this unit for OJT. Orders were cut on 13 and 14 February reassigning personnel to the 120th AHC but attaching them to this unit for rations, billeting and military justice.

(7) It should be noted that contact with the respective Keystone turn-in points was established in early January by the PBO, Motor Officer, Maintenance Officer and Tech Supply Officer. From 1 thru 16 February the CO, XO, Operations Officer, AMO, Tech Supply Officer, Motor Officer and the 1SG held a conference every other night to discuss existing and expected problems, and the progress of the planning being done by each shop. Motor maintenance was most active during this period, turning in 1/3 of all vehicles assigned because of their unserviceable status.

(8) The OH-58 assigned to the company was turned in and 2 more were placed on the unit's property book.

b. Problem Areas:

(1) One of the greatest problem areas was created by the classification of the stand down and redeployment messages. All information had to be withheld from all personnel except those who had been declared to be key position holders. Not only were personnel required to prepare for the eventual without benefit of the knowledge of the situation, but frequently the same personnel were needed to provide advice, suggestions or solutions to problems.

(2) The clerks at the Finance and Accounting center refused to alter finance records for two personnel in early January giving this unit's impending stand down as the reason. Thus an additional speculation was raised about the initial date of stand down.

(3) Quite significant was the scheduling of the initial stand down date to occur during the Tet Lunar holiday. Planning and preparing for both eventualities caused great concern within the company as all personnel were aware of the vast amount of energy expended on both efforts.

(4) The requirement to train VNAF pilots came at a most inopportune time. The personal attention recommended to be given the trainees could not be devoted

AVBAUV-F

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

because of the lack of time remaining. Even though this was true, a total of 34 hours of flight time was shared by the 2 pilots.

(5) An attempt was made to close all club facilities within the company on 25 January by the 12th CAG club system. The detrimental morale impact on personnel in the unit was not considered.

(6) When the message containing the redeployment directive was received at Battalion, only the operations officer was requested to read it. Only at his suggestion was the CO summoned.

c. Recommendations:

(1) That classification of stand down date and planning be down graded to allow dissemination of VALID information to all unit personnel. To be included is the curtailment criteria to be used.

(2) That a unit stand down not be affected during periods when major enemy offenses are expected in the unit's immediate area.

(3) That a unit not be required to train personnel of other allied services at a time so close to stand down.

(4) That the unit PBO, AMO, Motor Officer and Keystone Officer make liaison with all respective turn-in points.

(5) That recommended personnel lists published by the unit commander be given thorough consideration.

(6) That all non-essential and unserviceable equipment be turned in prior to notification.

3. Operations of the Unit:

a. General: The last mission was flown on 17 February 1972. The unit was notified that 2 additional aircraft would be transferred from the 178th ASHC, thus making a total of 7 requiring transfer. A target date of 1 March was set to have the 11 original remaining aircraft of the 213th accepted at Vung Tau with the required Agriculture inspection completed. The unit's redeployment with 60% PLL, 18 CH-47's, 2 OH-58's, no ground handling equipment and 93 personnel was confirmed.

b. Operations Procedures followed:

(1) Effective 18 February 1972 - All missions were complete, however operations remained functional through 29 February to receive and follow missions for the 120th AMG Chinook platoon.

(2) All tracking records were closed out on 19 February. Final entries were posted and nose flight records were closed 21 February 1972. Flight records for the CO, Ops Off, AMO and Tech Supply Supply Officer were not closed until 29 February. Flight records of crew personnel and aviators assigned to the 120th were closed out 17 February and re-opened 18 February 1972.

AVBAUV-F

SUBJECT: After Action Report: "Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

c. Problem Areas: No actual problems were encountered.

d. Recommendation: All recurring reports requirements, including Forestat, be terminated as of the initial day of stand down.

4. Administration and Personnel:

a. General: On receipt of notification of stand down for redeployment the key personnel activated their plans of action.

b. Personnel: The Executive Officer, First Sergeant and Company Clerk combined their efforts to attempt to make the personnel turbulence less noticeable. A total of 9 different personnel lists were submitted for various reasons. Notification that personnel redeploying would not be curtailed relieved us of the need to prepare curtailment rosters until the disposition status of the unit changed. After receipt of the unit disposition change, personnel were scheduled to leave in accordance with the existing need of the particular shops and platoons. No particular consideration was given for personnel with greater time in country if their section required their presence.

c. Administration: Though the workload of the administrative section increased with the unit's disposition change, the section was required to do an extra amount of work only one night. This was achieved because of the extensive prior planning involved on the paperwork preparation.

d. Procedures:

(1) All accounts, publications and books were closed IAW current regulations and procedures.

(2) Mail distribution was terminated IAW USARV Manual 600-1 with no problems on 15 March 1972.

(3) OER's were requested and received from all platoon leaders without difficulty. The closing dates were left blank on several to allow timely submission. A total of 4 special OER's were written on First Lieutenants who performed admirably during the entire stand down period. With the exception of these 4, all were submitted on 5 March 1972.

(4) Awards and Decorations proved not to pose any problems at all because of the prior planning of the A&D officer and his clerk. All section leaders submitted a list of those personnel they felt deserved awards. All list were received by 20 January 1972 and immediate work began on the preparation of the requests. The last request were forwarded 1 March 1972.

(5) The unit fund property was offered for lateral transfer, however none of the items were accepted. Consequently all unit fund property was disposed of through the PDO at Long Binh. Prior to notification of stand down the council voted to use almost all the remaining funds to finance a mid-stand down company party. The remaining funds were turned back into the Long Binh Central Fund.

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company

(6) The unit mess served its last meal on 29 February 1972. No problems at all were experienced during the turn-in of mess equipment. All ranges and equipment not in use was cleaned in advance and turned in during the 1st week of stand down. As a result the mess hall was completely clear on 2 March 1972. Mess facilities were provided by the 605th Transportation Company from 1 March to 15 March 1972.

(7) The perimeter guard commitment was relinquished on 16 February 1972.

(8) The Domestic Hire Fund was closed out on 29 February 1972. Domestic personnel were notified of their possible release on 7 February 1972. On 21 February some of the hire personnel were released and those remaining were regrouped and reassigned rooms of responsibility. The work force steadily decreased in accordance with the number of troops remaining in the company. After 29 February the fees were paid directly to the hired help by the tenants. This was monitored closely by the XO and the Assistant Domestic Hire Fund Custodian.

(9) Weapons were drawn through the 145th CAB S-4 from HHC 145th CAB. This allowed for completion of weapons turn-in on 7 March 1972.

(10) Most of the personnel assigned to the 120th AHC departed this unit on 1 and 3 March 1972. After the disposition change of the unit was ordered and the curtailment criteria imposed, most of the personnel originally scheduled to redeploy were tabbed for PCS. It was apparent that the personnel section of the 145th CAB was doing all possible to issue orders in sufficient time to allow personnel to depart on the availability dates requested by the unit. The personnel who were assigned to the 120th found a lack of preparation for their arrival.

(11) Plans were formulated to consolidate all enlisted personnel in one billeting area as soon as space were available. This plan was activated 10 March 1972. This allowed one of the 3 billeting areas to be closed completely.

e. Problem Areas:

(1) Official notifications changed so frequently that by the third week of stand down a reluctance to respond to the latest word was experienced for fear of receipt of further directives negating all previous work.

(2) Attempts to maintain the morale of the troops required extensive consideration and time, because of the fluid change of the disposition of the unit. Early unofficial prenotification allowed personnel to believe that a curtailment criteria would be in effect. Consequently and understandingly the receipt of the redeployment orders indicating the nonexistence of curtailments lowered the morale significantly. This was particularly noteworthy in that other redeploying unit's personnel were considered for curtailments. Thus it was welcome news to most personnel to receive the directive to stand down, however another depressing morale factor was added on 10 March 1972. Enlisted personnel with certain MOS's were frozen even though others with the same MOS were previously allowed to depart. Try as one will, it sometimes becomes rather difficult to get career and non-career oriented personnel to understand the reasoning for the requirements.

AVBAUV-F

SUBJECT: After Action Report: redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company

(3) It was never determined whether the unit would be deactivated or redeployed minus personnel and equipment. Consequently several war trophies had to be given away to personnel in the unit.

f. Recommendations:

- (1) That final disposition of the unit be determined prior to notification of stand down.
- (2) That the curtailment criteria be determined prior to notification.

g. Credits:

- (1) Personnel section, 145th CAB for attempting to get and disseminate orders on a timely basis.
- (2) S-3 and AMO sections, 145th CAB for providing aircraft assets for transporting personnel.

5. Aircraft Disposition:

a. General: With the stand down and redeployment notice all maintenance equipment was transferred to the 120th AHC along with 6 aircraft. The remaining 11 aircraft were rapidly prepared for delivery to the 388th Trans Co in Vung Tau. When they were delivered, all the requirement listed for redeployment in the 34th GSG SOP had been complied with. 12th CAG then notified the 213th that we would receive 7 additional aircraft, 5 from the 178th ASHC and 2 from the 68th ASHC. These aircraft had to meet all requirements for redeployment, and be delivered to Vung Tau for acceptance by the 213th. All failed to meet these requirements. It was then determined that the 213th should provide assistance in preparing these aircraft. This required many long hours of additional effort. After the additional 7 aircraft were prepared and delivered for acceptance on 3 March 1972 we were notified that the 213th would not redeploy. Instead the 213th was now Keystone and that all additional requirements would have to be met before the aircraft could be turned in. The 388th Trans was contacted and they outlined the new requirements for us. It soon became apparent that the 388th did not have a sufficient amount of Technical Inspectors to meet the extra work load. The 12th CAG Maintenance Officer then made arrangements with 34th GSG for additional assistance consisting of 2 Technical Inspectors from 34th GSG and 1 Technical Inspector from 12th CAG. Only the 12th CAG Technical Inspector ever appeared.

b. Personnel Organization: All maintenance and flight personnel were combined into one work force and subdivided into sections with specific responsibilities. Three cleaning teams of 6 enlisted personnel and 2 officers were formed to allow for a 24 hour operation. A disassembly team of 5 enlisted and 1 officer was formed. An assembly team of 5 enlisted men and 1 officer was formed. Other maintenance personnel were working on intermediate inspections required and on assisting in the support of the 120th AHC's CH-47 platoon. The aircraft washing crews originally worked 12 hour shifts. However it was found that valuable time was lost through the use of that procedure. A team of 10 personnel established a wrap-up contingency at Vung Tau to prepare the aircraft for inspection. That team proved to be highly efficient. They had very little equipment at their disposal, yet they were able to prepare aircraft for final inspection in minimum time.

AVBAUV-F

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

c. Problem Areas:

(1) A total of 5 days was lost by maintenance and flight personnel because of the requirement to assist the 68th ASHC and the 178th ASHC personnel in the cleaning of aircraft to be transferred to this company. Both units indicated a lack of knowledge of the stringent agriculture criteria that had to be complied with before transfer could be effected.

(2) The unit disposition change required a total of 8 days of extra work from the turn-in crew at Vung Tau to prepare the aircraft for Keystone turn-in. Some work that was previously completed was absolutely negated by the change. Transmission changes in compliance with a DA message had to be effected.

(3) Although additional steam cleaners were required none could be ascertained in an operational condition. As a result, an estimated average of 4 to 6 additional hours of work was required on each aircraft in preparation for turn-in.

d. Recommendations:

(1) If transfer of aircraft is necessary the losing unit be made aware of the transfer criteria and that it be given sufficient time to meet the requirements.

(2) That the gaining unit not be held responsible for the preparation of transferred aircraft for turn-in.

(3) That a more timely decision be made on the disposition of a unit to prevent the abundant last minute requirements that plagued this unit.

e. Credits: The 145th CAB AMO rendered a tremendous amount of assistance in efforts to keep the unit abreast of the extremely fluid changes. Daily he was either at the unit or making liaison visits attempting to clarify instructions and directions.

6. Tech Supply

a. General: Originally, the disposition of the unit's PLL was in doubt. Five days after the unit started its stand down it was decided that 1/3 of all PLL stockage would be transferred to the 120th AHC. This transfer left the 213th ASMC 420 lines below its authorized level of stockage. In preparation for redeployment extensive efforts were required to rebuild the PLL. The unit disposition change required all parts to be unpacked, tagged and turned in to the 165th DSSA. Because of the close proximity of the 165th, only 2 days were required to complete the turn-in.

b. Problem Areas:

(1) The initial plan to require the 120th AHC to use the appropriate (34P) manual to establish its PLL was disapproved by the 34th General Support Group. As a result too much time was required to rebuild the unit stockage after the transfer of items to the 120th was effected.

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AVBAUV-F

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company

(2) The unit disposition change negated all previous efforts to rebuild and pack the PLL stowage in preparation for redeployment. A tremendous amount of wasted effort was the end result.

c. Recommendations:

(1) That more timely decisions be made as to the disposition of the unit PLL status.

(2) That a unit redeploying not be required to transfer a part of its stowage thus necessitating rebuilding action.

7. Avionics: All avionics equipment and personnel were transferred to the 120th AHC without problems.

8. Motor Maintenance Equipment:

a. General: When possible, vehicles were transferred to the 120th AHC. Of great assistance was the turn in of several unserviceable vehicles, generators and pieces of POL equipment prior to notification. Three vehicles, (1) 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ton van, (1) 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ton water truck and (1) 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ton cargo truck were not turned in until 12 March 1972 to allow necessary functions within the company to be performed. Also of great assistance was the prior efforts made to clean vehicles before notifications.

b. Operations: The volume of vehicles being turned in at the SIPP point necessitated an extremely early departure time from Phu Loi enroute to Long Binh each morning. Even so most of the day was required to turn in the vehicles.

c. Problem Areas:

(1) Usually 8 hours were required to turn in vehicles after arrival at the SIPP point.

(2) The SIPP wash rack was too small to handle the volume and type of vehicles requiring cleaning.

(3) A vehicle originally accepted for transfer to another unit was later rejected.

d. Recommendations:

(1) That 2 SIPP points be established. One would be utilized by units standing down, and one to be utilized by units prior to their notification.

(2) Separate wash racks be established for wheel vehicles and track vehicles.

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SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company

9. Supply:

a. General: Prior to standdown the turn in of non-essential items and equipment was initiated. This effort required extensive coordination with, and cooperation of all sections. Approximately 35% of all equipment was laterally transferred to the 120th AHC. Other items were transferred to the 12th Gp and the 362nd ISHC. The 120th AHC's priority status allowed them to transfer any piece of equipment they desired. Thus it was quite difficult to reserve items known to be in short supply at this unit's redeployment station.

b. Operations: For the lack of supply specialists 2 officers were assigned as assistant supply officers. Fortunately of the 2 had prior supply experience, thus offering great assistance. Because of the limited experience level of all other personnel in the unit supply it was not feasible or practical to permanently dispatch a team to Long Binh to handle the processing of paperwork. Consequently all paperwork was prepared at the unit and dispatched as it was completed. Separate teams were established to respectively handle turn ins at the MIPP point and at the SIP point. The PBO made visits to the turn in points almost daily to insure that turn ins were being accomplished smoothly. The appointed Keystone Liason worked continuously to keep the PBO abreast of changes in turn in procedures and to advise him of the different methods to be utilized in the preparation of turn ins. The unit used its vehicles to turn in equipment the first week. There after, transportation was arranged through the 145th CAB S-4.

c. Problem Areas:

(1) The information required to be placed on DA form 444 was changed twice. Consequently these forms required retyping.

(2) The different aircraft turn in requirements that were prompted by the unit's disposition change caused unnecessary paperwork problems.

(3) Coordinating the signover and transfer of equipment with the 120th AHC PBO was extremely difficult. It appeared that he indiscriminately selected equipment to be transferred, furthermore he twice came into the unit area and loaded equipment that had not been transferred.

(4) The civilian transportation used was difficult to control.

d. Recommendations:

(1) That a Keystone advisory team be formed to assist units in stand down. The team should be made available at least 2 weeks prior to the first date of stand down.

(2) That items laterally transferred be picked up immediately.

(3) That military vehicles be used to transport items to be turned in, instead of the civilian assets.

AVBAUV-F

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Redeployment and Stand Down of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

e. Credits: The 145th CAB S-4 was very helpful in securing the needed transportation.

10. Conclusions:

a. As a whole, the assistance offered by the 145th CAB and 520th GS Bn was highly commendable.

b. The unit was able to complete it's stand down in the allotted time frame despite numerous changes in unit status. The problems encountered by this unit were unique in that we were committed to provide a majority of our assets to a unit that could not support or facilitate these assets. Consequently the 213th ASHC had to continue to provide operational and maintenance support as well as "work around" the people and equipment during the stand down. Moreover, the requirement to prepare for, and maintain a defensive posture for an impending Tet threat at the peak of our stand down period added more complexities to the overall situation. However, through the tenacious effort of every officer and man of this unit the task was completed; the stand down was concluded.

Ronald J. Piche
RONALD J. PICHE
MAJ, IN
Commanding

Restrictive markings
removed 31 Dec 1974

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Enemy Attacks on US S. Installations After Action Report (Final)

1. DTG: 20 1650 Feb 72
2. Unit: 213th Aviation Company (Aslt. Spt. Hel.) Phu Loi: RWY
3. Location: XT 862157
4. Type of Attack: Rocket attack, 107 mm, 1 round impacted at coordinates XT 862157. No ground attack or sapper activity detected in conjunction with the rocket attack. There was an unconfirmed report of a second rocket impacting in another area of Phu Loi Base Camp.
5. Description of aircraft damage: One (1) CH-47C helicopter serial number 69-17101 received major damage from shrapnel.
List of components damaged:
 - a. Forward swash plate assy.
 - b. Two (2) forward rotor blades
 - c. One (1) Aft rotor blade
 - d. Forward speed trim yoke assy.
 - e. Forward and main fuel cells (right side)
 - f. Chin bubble (right side)
 - g. Wind screen (right side)
 - h. Cockpit side window (right side)
 - i. Two tires (right side)
 - j. Two primary wire bundles (AC electrical circuit)
 - k. 20 to 25 shrapnel holes in aircraft skin (right fuselage, forward and aft pylon.)

Aircraft was not revetted as it was standby for aerial fire fighting with the "helibucket" system. Operating procedures require the two external "helibuckets" be attached to the aircraft. This configuration precludes revetting the aircraft while on standby status (day light hours). At the time of the attack, the aircraft had been released from the standby mission and the crew was preparing to reposition into the revetments.

CH-47

REVETMENT

CH-47
REVETMENT

CH-47
REVETMENT

DAMAGED
CH-47

FIGHTING
POS W/ OC



PT. OF IMPACT

107MM RKT

"HELIBUCKETS" XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX

ALPHA ROW TAXIWAY

28'

PARALLEL TAXIWAY

FLIGHTPATH
(016°)

ACTIVE RUNWAY

31