

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
312TH Aviation Detachment (Divisional)
APO San Francisco 96308

AVRAUS-312

1 March 1973

SUBJECT: After Action Report

TO: Commander
12th CAG
ATTN: AVRAUS-C
APO 96308

1. (U) Purpose: To relate significant organizational activities of the 312th Aviation Detachment (Div) during the Pre-X-day through Roll-up phases of the stand down of US Forces in RVN.

2. (U) General Comments:

a. Significant Organizational Activities: The 312th Aviation Detachment (Div) was responsible for furnishing Air Traffic Control for H-3, Saigon Heliport, and traffic advisories for all other heliports in the Saigon Area. The Saigon Heliport was the largest heliport in operation in RVN. In addition, the 312th furnished VFR flight following for MR III through the operation of Capital Center flight following facility. During the past 12 months there were a total of 72,874 landings and departures from H-3 and 123,770 air movements flight followed by Capital Center. These went from a high of 9,156 for H-3 and 16,912 for Capital Center in January 1972, to a low of 6,886 for H-3 and 6,852 for Capital Center in November, 1972.

(1) Pre-X-Day Phase: During the Pre-X-day phase, plans were initiated for the timely submission of awards and required reports. Additionally, plans were made for the orderly turn-in of TOE and station property and the phase out of assigned personnel. Plans were also made for the establishment of Air Traffic Control at the Newport aircraft retrograde site. The U.S. Embassy signed for all real property comprising H-3. The Air Traffic at H-3 and Capital Center declined to approximately 225 combined operations per day. On the third of November, a mobile control tower was moved to Lassiter AHP to provide ATC services for two air cavalry troops located there. It controlled approximately 100 movements per day.

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(2) Stand Down Phase: During this phase, the tower operations at Lassiter AFB were closed and the mobile tower moved to H-3. Capital Center and Saigon Tower operations were consolidated utilizing this mobile tower. The turn-in of TOE equipment was accomplished and station property was laterally transferred in place to the U.S. Embassy. All awards were submitted and the phase out of personnel commenced.

(3) Withdrawal Phase: This phase of the operation was devoted to the turn over of the equipment previously laterally transferred and retained on hand receipt to Vietnamese and U.S. Embassy personnel and the close out of remaining functions and operations at H-3. All tenant units at H-3 were involved in clearing their areas of operation in preparation for turn over of facility to the U.S. Embassy. Air movements remained stable at approximately 225 per day during the initial portion of this phase, showing a gradual decline as aircraft missions were reduced and aircraft phased out.

(4) Roll-up Phase: This phase was devoted to processing remaining personnel, submission of final morning report and unit deactivation.

b. Commanders Observation:

(1) Pre-X-Day Phase: This phase was marked by enthusiasm for the anticipated cease fire in November which gradually diminished on the part of many as it became apparent that there would not be a cease fire prior to Christmas. This enthusiasm re-emerged rapidly, however, when the cease fire was announced, and all assigned tasks were cheerfully undertaken to expedite the stand-down of the unit.

(2) Stand Down Phase: The plans made during the pre-X-day phase for the phase out of non-essential personnel and the turn-in of property worked extremely well and with a minimum of problem areas. By the end of this phase, all TOE and station property had been turned over, and only mission essential personnel retained.

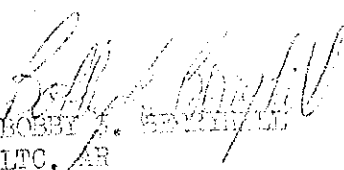
(3) Withdrawal Phase: During the initial portion of this phase some confusion existed as to who would be operating the heliport, if anyone, and what elements would remain as tenants. The turn back of all real property was made to the U.S. Embassy. Five personnel were designated to be transferred to the Command Aircraft Company (CAC) to act as air traffic controllers and heliport guards until X+58.

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(U) Roll Up Phase: Five personnel designated to act as air traffic controllers and heliport guards were transferred to CAC on X+45.

3. (U) Specific Comments: During the Pre-Stand Down Phase, plans were initiated for the orderly release of personnel. Personnel were released as the mission requirements diminished with those personnel considered non-essential to the unit mission and those who had been in country longest departing first. Sixteen personnel were released between X-day and X+20, with the remaining 15 to be released by X+45. During the period from X-day until X+30, all TOC and station property was turned in and the property book submitted for audit and destruction. Operations of Capital Center continued until X+51 and Saigon Tower operations continued until X+50. Newport tower operations ceased at X+33. The utilization of the mobile flight operations center, previously located at Lascitelle AFB, to consolidate Capital Center operations and Saigon Tower allowed for an earlier and more orderly turn-in of complex equipment which had been used as permanent facilities. This consolidation also allowed for the release of some personnel which would have otherwise been required until the withdrawal phase. The use of a radio jeep with PRC-25 back up FM was found to be quite satisfactory for air traffic control at the aircraft retrograde site at Newport.


ROBERT A. EDMUNDO
LTC, AR
Commander