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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 HEADQUARTERS, 52D COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
 APO San Francisco 96318  
 "FLYING DRAGONS"

AVGD-CC

6 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report For Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968  
 RCS-CSFOR

TO: See Distribution

SECTION I - Significant Organizational Activities

1. (C) General: This report covers the period 1 November 1967 through 31 January 1968, and is submitted in compliance with Headquarters I Field Force Vietnam Regulation 1-3, dated 23 March 1967, and Headquarters 17th Combat Aviation Group Regulation 1-3, dated 12 July 1967.

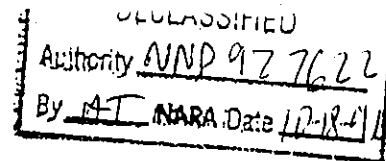
a. Mission: The mission of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion (Flying Dragons) is to provide aviation support to US Forces, Republic of Vietnam Forces and Free World Assistance Forces in the II Corps area, with priority to the 4th Infantry Division.

b. Station Plan: The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion is stationed at Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN, and is commanded by LTC Edward P. Lukert Jr. Subordinate elements consist of the following units: (Detailed list of detachments is shown in inclosure 1.)

- (1) Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment - Pleiku, RVN
- (2) 57th Assault Helicopter Company - Kontum, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) helicopters.
- (3) 119th Assault Helicopter Company - Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) helicopters.
- (4) 155th Assault Helicopter Company - Ban Me Thout, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) helicopters.
- (5) 170th Assault Helicopter Company - Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) helicopters.
- (6) 189th Assault Helicopter Company - Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) helicopters.
- (7) 179th Assault Support Helicopter Company - Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with CH-47A helicopters.
- (8) 355th Assault Support Helicopter Company (Heavy) - Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with CH-54 helicopters.

c. Type aircraft authorized and on hand as of 31 January 1968

DECLASSIFIED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
 UNLESS INDICATED AFTER 12 YEARS  
 DOD DMR 5200.10



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	<u>AUTHORIZED</u>	<u>ON HAND</u>
(1) WH-1C(A) -	40	32
(2) WH-1C -	2	0
(3) WH-1H -	115	92
(4) CH-47A -	16	13
(5) CH-54 -	9	3
(6) U-6A -	1	1
TOTAL	<u>183</u>	<u>141</u>

(For a more detailed account, see inclosure 2.)

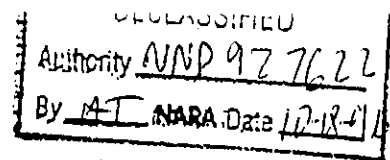
2. (C) Intelligence: The battalion S-2 Section published a Daily INTSUM in November and December. Starting 1 January the INTSUM was deleted and a numbered Intelligence Bulletin was published with distribution to Battalion units and selected Holloway Tenant Units. (See section II para 2)

a. Enemy Activity: The enemy activity in the Central Highlands was extremely heavy during the reporting period. Activity during the early part of the period was heaviest in the Dak To area but shifted south to the Pleiku area towards the latter part of the period. The Battalion suffered losses both to personnel and equipment as a result of attacks on its installations at Ban Me Thuot, Kontum, and Camp Holloway. Intelligence estimates of the attack on Kontum on 10 January 1968, and Camp Holloway on 26 January 1968 are included in the after action reports attached as Inclosures 7 and 8. The first two attacks on Ban Me Thuot were both conducted by the 301st Local Force Battalion. The first attack, on 7 November 1967, was initiated at 2340 hours and lasted for 10 minutes. From forty to fifty rounds of 82mm impacted within the 155 Maintenance area, resulting in 2 ships destroyed and 8 damaged. There were no casualties. The second attack on 4 January 1968, was initiated at 0320 and consisted of 20 to 25 rounds of 60mm and 82mm, satchel charges and B-40 rockets. Target again was the 155 Maintenance area and there were 2 ships destroyed and 11 damaged, 1 fire truck destroyed, 1 fire truck damaged, Maintenance area destroyed and 2 jeeps damaged. There were no casualties. The last two days of the period saw the beginning of an all out effort by the enemy to either keep us tied down in place or to take and hold one of the Province Capital cities. Of particular interest to this battalion were the hits taken by Kontum, Ban Me Thuot, and Pleiku. All three installations were under attack on these two days. Heavy activity continued into the next period and comprehensive analysis is not yet possible.

(1) In addition to the hits on 52d Aviation Battalion Installations, other significant items were; the Battle of Dak To (See incl 6) the rocket attacks of II Corps Hqs, Arty Hill, 71st Evac and 433 Sig on 20 Jan 68 and again on 27 Jan 68, the Sapper attack on 937th Eng Bn Compound on 21 Jan 68 and the ground attack against the city of Pleiku on 30, 31 Jan 68.

(2) Situation:

(a) Kontum: The 24th NVA Regiment is located, with



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elements of the 174th NVA Regiment in the Toumerong Base area, north east of Dak To. The 66th NVA Regiment and possible elements of the 174th NVA Regiment are occupying positions west and north west of Dak To. The 40th NVA Arty Regiment is currently unlocated in the tri-border area. The 304th Local Forces Battalion is located approximately 15 Km northeast of Kontum city. Unlocated, but last reported headed for a target in the Kontum area is the 408th Sapper Battalion. As of the close of the period, the 24th NVA Regiment is reported massing north of Kontum City.

(b) Pleiku: The 4th Battalion, 95B Regiment and elements of the 5th Battalion are located approximately 25 KM NE of Pleiku City. Elements of the 5th Battalion are also located in an area approximately 15 Km East and South East of Pleiku City. The K101 Battalion, 95B Regiment is unlocated, last believed in an area approximately 25 Km West of Pleiku City. The K-6 and possibly the K-4 Battalions (of the 32 NVA Regt) last contacted at Dak To, have moved south through the Plei-Trap Valley and are believed located in an area approximately 15-20 Kms WNW of Pleiku City. The 280th Arty Bn, an element of the 40th Arty Regiment, was believed located in the same general area. The H-15 Local Force Battalion, last seen in the An Khe area, is believed heading to the Pleiku area. The 407th Sapper Bn is currently unlocated in Pleiku Province. The X-17 and X-18 Sapper companies are currently unlocated.

(c) Darlac: Elements of the 33d NVA Regiment are currently operating both south and north (40 KM) of Ban Me Thuot. The 301st Local Force Battalion is unlocated.

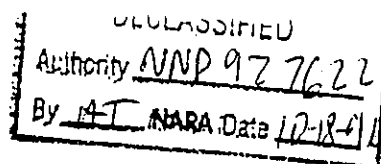
## (3) Capabilities:

(a) Kontum: To attack in the Dak To area with up to 6 NVA Infantry Battalions supported by heavy mortar and rockets from the 40th Arty Regiment. To attack Kontum City with up to 3 regular Battalions of the 24th NVA Regiment and 1 Sapper Battalion, the 408th. Continued interdiction of highway 14N utilizing possible elements of the 24th NVA Regiment and the 304th Local Force Battalion.

(b) Pleiku: To attack Pleiku City with up to 5 NVA Battalions, 4th and 5th of the 95B and possibly, K4 and K6 of the 32d Regt, supported by artillery elements of the 40th Arty Regiment, 1 Sapper Bn plus local units and guerrillas from VC districts 3, 4, and 9. As an alternate course, using elements of both NVA Regiments, conduct multi-Bn attack against Duc Co, Plei Morong, or Plei Djerang. Continuous interdiction of highways 19E and 14N using elements of the VC 3d district and the 40th Sapper and H-15 Local Force Battalions.

(c) Darlac: Conduct a multi-Bn attack on Ban Me Thuot using elements of the 33d NVA Regiment, with local harassment and interdiction of highways by the 301st Local Force Battalion.

b. Ground to air fire was reported on 88 occasions resulting in



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62 aircraft hit, 3 crew members killed and 25 crew members wounded in action. Of the aircraft hit 29 were UH-1H's and 32 were UH-1C's and 1 was a CH-47. Altitudes of aircraft receiving hits varied from 25 feet to 4,000 feet. Specifically 26 received hits below 500 feet, 17 received hits between 500 and 1000 feet, 14 between 1000 and 2000 feet, and 5 above 2000 feet.

c. The Intelligence Section of the 155th Aslt Hel Co continues to have the responsibility of gathering intelligence information on the Ban Me Thuot area and receiving reports from local civilian agencies and military organizations in the Ban Me Thuot area.

d. The Intelligence Section of the 57th Aslt Hel Co in Kontum has effected direct liaison with the S-2 advisory elements of Kontum Sector Headquarters.

e. Intelligence briefings and indoctrinations were given to the newest member of the Battalion, the 355th Heavy Helicopter Company, stationed at Camp Holloway. A basic load of maps was provided the Company.

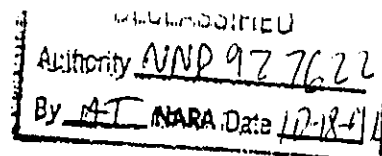
## 3. (C) Operations and Training Activities

### a. Operations:

(1) Support: The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion (Flying Dragons) supported numerous operations including Mac Arthur (92 days), Tran Son I (7 days), Michael (10 days), Co "E", 20th Inf (62 days), FOB-II (92 days), ARVN (92 days), CRID (4 days), Press Camp (66 days). In addition aviation support was provided II Corps Hqs (92 days), Co "B", 5th SFG (91 days), 52d Artv Gp (91 days) and 17th Aviation Group (78 days). In general during the reported period, the "Flying Dragons" supported II Corps with one Assault Helicopter Company and one Assault Helicopter Company minus. The 4th Infantry Division was supported with two Assault Helicopter Companies, and the II Corps ARVN with one Assault Helicopter Company. The percentage of the battalions lift capability allocated, by month, was as follows:

	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>JAN</u>
4th Inf Div -	66%	65%	63%
ARVN -	12%	13%	13%
Other -	22%	22%	24%

(For detailed sequence of significant events and statistics, see inclosure 4; for a map of the operational area, see inclosure 5.)



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## (2) Operational Statistics (1 Nov - 31 Jan 68)

<u>CBT</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UH-1H</u>	<u>UH-1C</u>	<u>CH-47A</u>
<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>HOURS*</u>	<u>HOURS*</u>	<u>HOURS*</u>
85,319	43,228	29,391	7,527	3,597
<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>CARGO</u>	<u>A/C</u>	<u>A/C**</u>
<u>HOURS*</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>TONS</u>	<u>HIT</u>	<u>DAM/DEST</u>
40,515	175,270	21,380	62	129/22
<u>CREW MEM</u>	<u>ENEMY</u>	<u>STRUCT</u>	<u>MED</u>	<u>SORTIES DELAY</u>
<u>INJ/K**</u>	<u>KRA</u>	<u>DEST</u>	<u>EVACS</u>	<u>OR CXL FOR WX</u>
37/6	217	167	1,506	62

\* Adjusted DA Form 1352 time.

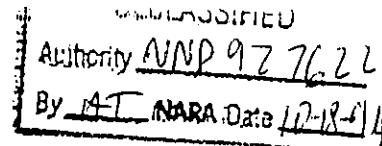
\*\* Includes results of hostile fire and accidents.

(3) UH-1H and UH-1C(A) Support: During November, the increased demand for UH-1 aircraft, brought on by the Battle of Dak To, had a lasting effect of this battalions availability for the remainder of the reporting period. Demands made it necessary to reinforce this battalion with elements of several units within the 17th Combat Aviation Group. This support extended anywhere from a day to in excess of one week. (For a more detailed analysis of this problem area; see Section II, Part I)

(4) 355th Assault Helicopter Company (Heavy) arrival: The main body of the 355th Assault Helicopter Company (Heavy) deployed to Vietnam beginning 10 January 1968, and completed the move on 12 January. The company (-) was assigned to the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion at Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN. The TC&E equipment began arriving on 24 January 1968. A small delegation from the company was sent to Qui Nhon to organize the shipment of aircraft and equipment to Pleiku, RVN. The remainder of the company worked to complete facilities prior to the arrival of their equipment.

(5) CH-47A Support: During this reporting period the demand for CH-47A support in the Central Highlands continued at a phenomenal rate. Again, it was necessary to reinforce the 179th ASHC with aircraft from other units within the 17th Combat Aviation Group, for short periods.

(6) 335th Aslt Hel Co: In mid-November the 335th returned to the Central Highlands and Pleiku area in support of the 173d Abn Bde. Although OPCON to the 173d, the 335th was attached for administration and logistics to the 52d Cbt Avn Bn. The statistics reflected in this report do not include those of the 335th Aslt Hel Co.



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(7) Major Operations Supported: The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion supported operations Mac Arthur, and the Battle of Dak To during the reported period. (For aviation support statistics of Dak To, see inclosure 6.)

(8) Weather: During the month of November, the weather was characterized by high ceilings, moderate winds and good visibility. Winds were predominately out of the NNE during this period. In late December, the winds began shifting to the ENE bringing cooler temperatures and excellent flying conditions for the remainder of the reporting period. (For more detailed meteorological data, see inclosure 4)

(9) Enemy Attacks: In the past quarter all units of this battalion have been attacked. Both NVA and VC units conducted attacks on Kontum, Ban Me Thuot, and Holloway airfields. The enemy used 82mm mortars, 122 & 140mm rockets, sappers and infantry assaults during his campaigns. (For detailed information on each attack see inclosure 7, 8, and 9.)

## b. Training:

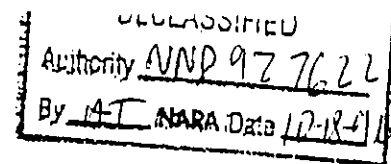
(1) During the reported period, the following subjects were stressed:

### (a) Aviation Training:

1. Pre-flight Inspections
2. Rules of Engagement
3. Instrument Training
4. Formation Flying
5. Escape and Evasion
6. Monsoon Weather Procedures
7. Cam Ranh, Nha Trang and Saigon control zone Procedures
8. Emergency Procedures

### (b) Ground Training:

1. Code of Conduct
2. Rules of Engagement
3. Geneva Convention
4. Gas Chamber Exercises
5. Viet Cong Tactics
6. Immediate Action Drills
7. Mines and Booby Traps
8. Security and Sentry Duty
9. Weapons Safety
10. Familiarization and zero firing of individual weapons



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(2) Portions of the ground training program have been eliminated during this reporting period. This was primarily due to higher Headquarters assuming responsibility for the initial in-country training.

(3) Instructor Pilots from the 355th ASHC(H) were sent to the 478th ASFC(H), located at An Khe, for training with that unit. This training included ground, flight, and operational procedures peculiar to these units.

c. Research and Development: During the reporting period, the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion took part in a minimum number of evaluations and no significant advances were made.

## 4. (C) Logistics

a. Class I: No significant problems.

b. Class II: Command emphasis placed on control and turn in of excess equipment and conex containers throughout the period.

c. Class III & IIIA:

(1) Over 4,000,000 gallons of JP4 used by the battalion during the period.

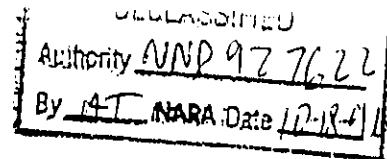
(2) Holloway miniport relocated on the new heliport to vacate previous location for the 355th Assault Support Helicopter Company (Heavy). The 350 GPM POL pump provides adequate pumping pressure over a lateral distance of 800 feet.

(3) Approval was received from 1st Log Command to retain the 3-3000 barrel POL storage tanks at Holloway should the Class III storage facility be moved.

d. Class IV: No significant problems. Command emphasis placed on class five accountability and storage facilities during the period.

## 5. (U) Civil Affairs

a. The Battalion Civic Action Officer, the Battalion Chaplain and volunteers from subordinate units are now engaged in civic action activities in five Montagnard villages in the battalion area of operations. The battalion continues to receive many boxes of soap, vitamins and clothing from friends in the US. As new personnel arrive, so do new sources of donations. These items are being distributed through village chiefs, the Pleiku Province Hospital, the Evangelical Hospital, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The battalion conducts medical assistance clinics with emphasis on hygiene; eg, washing and treating skin disorders. The Battalion Civic Action Fund continues to receive donations from organizations interested in the program. (For a pictorial account of Civic Action similar to that of the 52d, see inclosure 3.)



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b. Emphasis in the Civic Action Program is being placed on establishing channels of communications between GVN and the Montagnard Chiefs. The Montagnards definitely prefer to work directly with the Americans, although resistance to the idea is present on both sides.

c. Specifically, the Chaplain contributed:

(1) Over 20 boxes of sheets, clothing, soap and drug items were received from churches and individuals in the States. These were distributed for use by the CMA missionaries and the VNCS Clinic - Hospital.

(2) Two sewing machines found in the Special Services storage building were given to the Pleiku Montagnard Farm and School.

(3) Approximately 300 cases of surplus food from units at Camp Holloway and the PX warehouse were distributed to the Montagnard tribes through the CMA missionaries.

(4) The Protestant congregation received special offerings for the following causes:

(a) \$668.95 to Jorai Church for construction of library and reading room.

(b) \$50.75 to the Bible Societies of Vietnam.

(c) \$80.00 to the CMA missionaries at Ban Me Thuot for the Montagnard Church under construction.

(5) The Catholic congregation received \$128.53 in offerings for Catholic missionary activities in the area.

### 6. (C) Personnel

a. PIO activities during the period November 1967 - January 1968.

(1) Feature stories submitted: 8

(2) Pictorial releases (hometown and in-country): 30

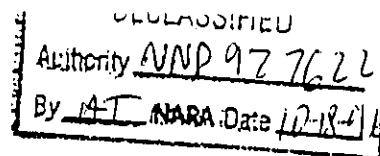
(3) Taped interviews: 23

(4) Formal press interviews: 4

(5) Newsmen and representatives supported: 48

(6) The "Dragon Fire" was revived and increased in size and scope during this period. It provides local news of interest and selected news service items.





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(7) The nightly report of daily aviation activities has greatly improved during the period. Unit PIO's are beginning to submit better reports, thereby enabling the Battalion PIO to submit more effective reports.

b. Special Services activities for the period November 1967 - January 1968.

(1) During the period, a total of 506 out of country R&R quotas were received; of these, 396 were filled.

(2) A total of 6 in-country R&R quotas were received, 3 for EM and 3 for officer. This is a notable decrease from the last reporting period.

(3) The arts & crafts shop as well as the library have expanded to a seven day a week operation.

## c. Awards and Decorations:

(1) Total number of awards and decorations submitted during this period are as follows:

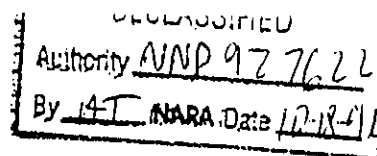
<u>AWARD</u>	<u>NUMBER SUB</u>	<u>APPROVED</u>
Silver Star	22	0
DFC	47	19
Soldiers Medal	6	3
Bronze Star	36	28
Air Medals	1487	2035
ACM	37	34
Purple Heart	14	8
TOTAL	1649	2127

d. Personnel problems during the period November 1967 - January 1968.

(1) The problems of receiving replacements in our critical MOS areas still exists. Most critical during the period were helicopter Tech Inspectors (MOS 67W), Aircraft Armament Repairmen (MOS 45J), Petroleum Storage Specialists (MOS 76W) and Cooks (MOS 94B). The shortage of personnel in MOS 11B continues to be a matter of grave concern.

## e. Command Changes:

The following new commanders assumed command on dates indicated:



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<u>COMMANDER</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Maj Billy R. Goodall	155th AHC	6 Nov 67
Maj Eugene P. Malkoff	165th TC Det	6 Nov 67
Maj Joseph R. Campbell III	119th AHC	20 Nov 67
Maj George E. Burnison	57th AHC	1 Dec 67
Maj Neil I. Leva	189th AHC	2 Jan 68
*Maj Glenn E. Morgan	355th ASHC	
*Maj William H. Hinds	622nd TC Det	

NOTE: Does not indicate date individuals assumed command of respective units, only when they reported in-country as elements of this command.

## f. Gain and Losses

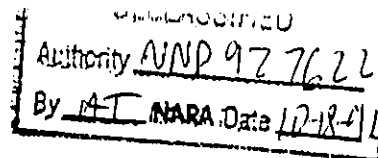
(1) The following gains and losses occurred during the period November 1967 - January 1968:

(a) <u>GAINS</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>EM</u>
November	118	212
December	36	140
January	42	114
(b) <u>LOSSES</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>EM</u>
November	83	282
December	26	150
January	28	164

(2) At present the battalion is 298 EM and 49 officers and warrant officers below TO&E strength.

g. Morale: The morale of officer and enlisted personnel throughout the battalion continues to be exceptionally high. This was due primarily to the following:

- (1) Maximum recognition for job accomplishment through promotions, awards and decorations and letters of appreciation.
- (2) Liberal leave and R&R policies.
- (3) Continually improving standards of living.
- (4) Availability of post facilities.
- (5) Continual indoctrination in job performance and mission orientation.



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## h. Religious Activities:

(1) During the quarter the Battalion Chaplain was responsible for all religious activities at Camp Holloway and at the operational sites. Protestant services were conducted by the Battalion Chaplain.

(2) Religious services were provided for the 155th Avn Co in Ban Me Thuot on a weekly basis by the Protestant missionaries and the Catholic Chaplain from MACV.

(3) Religious services for the 57th Avn Co in Kontum were provided by the Protestant Chaplain and the ARVN Catholic Chaplain.

(4) Catholic services for Camp Holloway were conducted each Sunday by the PSAC Chaplain.

(5) Transportation was provided from Camp Holloway to the 71st Evac Hospital Chapel each Friday for Jewish personnel.

(6) The Protestant congregation continues to attend the hymn sings at the CMA compound each Sunday. One cook out was held jointly with the CMA missionaries in January.

(7) In November, a bus tour was taken of all the missionary institutions of the Pleiku area.

(8) At Christmas time, several packages were received from individuals and churches for distribution to men of the units.

(9) In January, a regular pianist/organist was secured for the Chapel, and a choir was started.

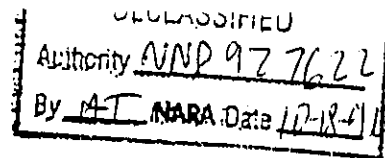
(10) During the quarter new light fixtures were installed inside the Chapel, outside speakers were erected to play religious music on Sunday and at other special times.

## 7. (H) PSYOPS

The battalion continues supporting the Chiu Hoi and Hoi Chanh programs. The battalion works jointly with the 4th Infantry Division, distributing leaflets and in aerial sound broadcasts. These activities are programed in known or suspected enemy areas of operation and are the responsibility of the PSYOPS Officer.

## 8. (C) Safety and Standardization

a. Standardization: The Battalion Standardization Pilot flew 24 check rides in November, 21 in December and 14 in January. These check rides are broken down as follows:



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- (1) 5 SIP (Standardization Pilot)
- (2) 9 IP (Instructor Pilot)
- (3) 7 AC (Aircraft Commander)
- (4) 42 Quarterly check rides and in-country standardization and orientation.
- (5) 3 Post Accident Check Rides

Primary emphasis during all rides has been upon aircraft and emergency procedures. Young aviators soon develop a high degree of proficiency but may arrive at AC status without ever having a review of emergency procedures. This is an underlying cause of "complacency" and leads to unnecessary low level flight, take-off over unnecessary barriers, disregard for routes offering good forced landing areas, failure to make precautionary landings and to execute successful autorotations. Daily commitment of all flyable assets precludes adequate scheduled unit flight training.

## b. Safety:

(1) The accident rate (per 100,000 flight hours) for this period was 24.6 for 40,515 flight hours. All were major accidents.

- (a) November - Three accidents, rate; 21.6
- (b) December - Four accidents, rate; 27.3
- (c) January - Three accidents, rate; 23.8

(2) The following causes (all were major accidents) are cited.

(a) #391 22 Nov 67

- 1. FOD
- 2. Maintenance error
- 2. Lack of forced landing sites in AO

(b) #390 25 Nov 67

- 1. Material failure (sun gear shaft)
- 2. Failure to execute successful autorotation

(c) #759 28 Nov 67

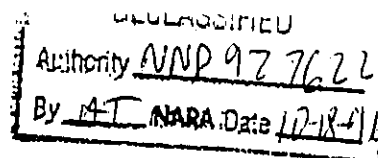
- 1. Crew error, hit tree

(d) #577 6 Dec 67

- 1. Crew error
- 2. Fatigue
- 3. Possible engine deficiency

(e) #219 16 Dec 67

- 1. Over loaded



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2. Possible engine deficiency
3. Poor selection of flight route

(f) #154 20 Dec 67

1. Crew error, hit tree
2. Fatigue

(g) #597 21 Dec 67

1. Crew error
2. Poor judgement
3. Poor operating conditions (dust, crowded, no control)

(h) #075 6 Jan 68

1. Over loaded
2. Crew error

(i) #168 10 Jan 68

1. Short shaft failure
2. Lack of forced landing site in AO

(j) #581 21 Jan 68

1. Overweight
2. Went IFR in dust

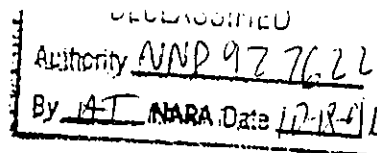
(3) During the period an air traffic flow plan has been devised for the Pleiku metropolitan area. The plan, accepted by the Air Force and 4th Infantry Division, is still being staffed prior to implementation.

(4) The airfield at Holloway has new improved runway markings, runway lighting and a lighted miniport. Several major dust areas have been prima-primed, and several hazardous wires have been marked.

(5) A new Aviation Accident Prevention SOP has been written and a new Ground Safety SOP is close to completion. Both functions have been consolidated into one office. This action will not only reduce the commanders span of control for safety matters, but will provide the best qualified personnel to direct the Ground Safety Program. The two programs normally overlap and integration should not create any major problems.

## 9. (C) Post Headquarters (Camp Holloway)

a. During this reporting period, Post Headquarters continued normal operation and continued effort was expended on various projects



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with the goal of improving Post Headquarters and Defense Structures:

(1) With an increase in availability of material the perimeter light project made considerable progress during the period. Approximately 50% of the system is operational and approximately 30% is currently in use. The major problem encountered during the period was the inability to get a crane into a swamp to erect light poles. This problem was solved by sling loading the poles with a MH-1H helicopter.

(2) The 815th Engineer Battalion continued to progress on the 70 pad Christmas Tree Helipad. Progress was delayed due to increased Combat Engineer support and emergency road work during this period. Estimated completion date is now 1 March 1968.

b. The Airfield Operations Detachment was reorganized under a new TO&E. There were changes in personnel and equipment with the major change being the upgrading of the Commander from Captain to Lieutenant Colonel.

## 10. (C) Signal

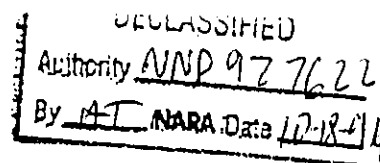
a. Dial telephone service was installed at Camp Holloway during the month of December. Although this system is not complete, all major staff sections and companies have dial telephone service. This new dial system has greatly increased the quality of telephone service and reduced the time needed to place calls.

b. Two types of telephone service have been installed. Class A and C service. Class A service gives the subscribers access to the long distance telephone system. All major staff section and companies have Class A dial service. This is especially important in an aviation battalion where units are separated and operate over a large geographical area. Class C service within the Klokku area has provided faster service for subscribers at Camp Holloway who still do not have dial telephones.

c. The dial telephone system will eventually replace the Camp Holloway AN/TTC-7 switchboard. Existing dial telephones at Camp Holloway have greatly reduced the amount of traffic handled by the Holloway switchboard. This in turn has provided faster switchboard service for subscribers at Camp Holloway who still do not have dial telephones.

d. VHF radio relay-carrier communications are presently being used to link Camp Holloway with the 155th AHC at Ban Me Thuot and the 57th AHC at Kontum. Direct CKTS to these companies has greatly improved command and administration between 52d CAB and these two companies. As soon as the new AN/VSC-2 or AN/MRC-119 radios are issued to these companies a more reliable voice communications net will be established.

e. The new AN/VSC-2 HF/RTT radio has proven to be a reliable and useful piece of equipment. This SSB radio has provided the battalion



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with a reliable means of radio communications with the 17th Aviation Group Headquarters. Previous radios utilized were not as reliable and voice communications was often weak and distorted.

f. The AN/USC-2 or AN/ARC-119 radio set will be issued one each per aviation company as soon as they arrive within the command. These radios will net with each other and provide an HF net between battalion and company operations.

## 11. (U) Aircraft Maintenance

### a. Maintenance Statistics:

	<u>UH-1H</u>	<u>UH-1C</u>	<u>CH-47A</u>
Aircraft Authorized -	115	40	16
A/C Assigned (AVG) -	18	6	13
Availability Rate -	80.8	75.7	58.1
EDM Rate -	14.7	15.7	28.8
EDP Rate -	3.6	5.6	13.0

(For detailed statistical data, see inclosure 10)

b. Due to the increase in enemy attacks on units of this battalion availability has dropped to some extent. However, after attack repairs and round the clock maintenance has kept the availability at a phenomenal rate. More specifics are presented in Section II.

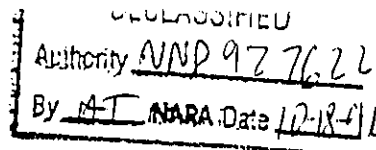
## 12. (U) Flight Surgeon

a. During the past three months the Camp Holloway Dispensary has been averaging 1000 outpatients visits per month while supporting about 4000 personnel.

b. There have been no significant outbreaks of unusual or epidemic diseases during the past reporting period. Upper respiratory infections, venereal diseases and dermatological conditions are the most prevalent diseases. The rate for these diseases have remained about the same month to month with the exception of an upsurge in URI during November.

c. The significant aviation medicine problem is aviator fatigue. This problem cannot be solved until sufficient aviators and equipment are available for use in Vietnam. Aviators are automatically grounded at 140 hours by their company and allowed to fly if the mission dictates only if cleared by the flight surgeon.

SECTION II - Commanders Observations and Recommendations Part I, Observations (Lessons Learned)



# CONFIDENTIAL

1. (C) Intelligence

## a. Item: Daily INTSUM

Discussion: The Daily INTSUM published by the Battalion S-2 Section consisted of, for the most part, a listing of contacts, agent reports, etc., extracted from INTSUMS published by various G2 sections in the Pleiku, and Kontum area. A time study revealed that preparation and publication of the INTSUM cost upwards from three (3) hours daily. Coordination with adjacent and higher headquarters subscribers revealed that they were merely receiving from this Battalion, several days later, items that they had already published. Coordination with subordinate subscribers revealed that a daily listing of Corps wide contacts, incidents, agent reports, etc., was of no benefit to company size aviation units.

Observation: A numbered Intelligence Bulletin containing High Hazard areas, 24 hour weather forecast, aircraft Shot Afs, and a discussion of current enemy capability and probable course of action, would perform a much more beneficial service. Bulletin was initiated 1 Jan 68 and time saved by not preparing and publishing the Corps wide listing, was used to prepare the more comprehensive "Discussion Section".

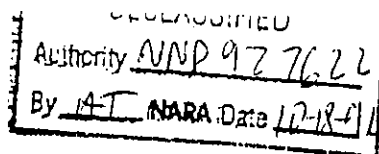
## 2. (C) Operations

### a. Item: Bomb Crater Landing Zones

Discussion: The use of the bomb crater landing zones increased significantly during the past quarter. During the past several months this battalion has experimented with the use of these landing zones on many minor operations. However, during the Battle of Dak To, it became an operational necessity to use them in almost every airmobile operation. The terrain within the Spatz AO (Dak To) is characterized by double and triple canopy jungle, thick undergrowth, and 200 - 300' trees; landing zones are almost non-existent. Seeking the utmost in airmobile flexibility, the U.S. Air Force was frequently called upon to develop helicopter landing areas. To perform this task they employed the use of several 750 and 1,000 pound bombs concentrated into a small area. Unfortunately present delivery techniques precluded any two bombs from falling into the same area. Many of the bombs fell onto steep slopes in the terrain, leaving large gaping holes that were unusable for heliborne operations. It was found that at best, only one ship landing zones could be expected. However, even these had the one single tree or stump in the wrong place, requiring the ship to hover at 15 - 20 feet to discharge its passengers. The unsuitability of this is obvious; personnel injuries, rotor blade strikes and other accidents rates went soaring.

Observation: The basic concept of this technique is excellent. It broadens the employment of helicopter forces immeasurably. However, extensive improvements must be made in both delivery techniques and the type ordinance used. The use of A-1E aircraft equipped with 2,000 pound daisy cutters, has been the most effective in this area. This is primar-





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ily due to the increase in accuracy by slower delivery speeds and the increased effectiveness of the 2,000 pound daisy cutter. Unfortunately the bomb shackles on this aircraft were found to be unsafe to carry this load, and the use of this type of ordnance was discontinued.

### b. Item: Dust Hazards

Discussion: During this reporting period several incidents have occurred as a result of dust hazards. These incidents have ranged from the close-call category to the major accident. Operational requirements compel continued usage of the numerous semi-improved airfields located in the Central Highlands. This fact alone does not always create the hazardous conditions. These conditions normally arise with the selection of these sites for major operations. With this selection comes a vast armada of men and equipment to an airfield never designed to accommodate the increased traffic. The area is quickly leveled by bulldozers and vehicular traffic over the dirt roads is doubled. In addition, the increase of air traffic aggravates the already hazardous dust conditions.

Observation: Obviously it would not be tactically sound to make major improvements to an airfield prior to a major operation. However, if immediate engineer assistance could be made available, many of the dust problems would never occur. Immediate construction of necessary road nets would preclude the taxi-ways from becoming major highways for resupply. Helipads and heavy traveled roads should be preprimed as soon as possible to further improve the area. In most cases if the above improvements could be made early in the operation, the dust problem could almost be eliminated.

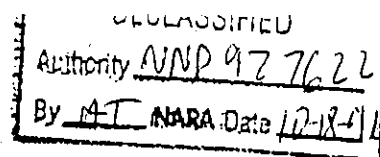
### c. Item: Late Releases by Support Units

Discussion: This unit is still encountering a recurring problem of supported ground units failing to release their C&C and resupply aircraft at the appointed time. Aircraft have been released as late as 2100 hours which in several instances has contributed to crew fatigue, delayed intermediate inspections, and late arrivals for other missions assigned the aircraft.

Observation: Aircraft scheduled to be released at a specific time should be released at that time. The supported unit should be made aware of the problems incurred by their failure to observe the release time.

### d. Item: Low Level Approaches in Support of Clandestine Reconnaissance Operations.

Discussion: On numerous occasions this battalion has been required to perform the covert infiltration of reconnaissance teams into areas known or suspected enemy activity, as well as effecting the exfiltration of these units, often under fire. The clandestine nature of these operations created a requirement for reconnaissance at altitude



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several days prior to the infiltration, and insertion during those hours of limited visibility, utilizing techniques which would minimize the possibility of enemy detection. A covert exfiltration was also required to limit the exposure of the exfiltration aircraft to enemy fire.

Observation: It was determined that the best technique to perform this mission was a low level approach, controlled throughout its conduct by an aircraft at altitude. The command aircraft is positioned so that visual contact with the primary landing zone can be effected. With both the landing zone and the infiltration aircraft in sight, the command aircraft directs the infiltration aircraft to touchdown with the LZ. It was found that the infiltration pilot need not have seen the landing zone prior to the flight. The same procedure is used for exfiltration and emergency extraction, with the exception that the reconnaissance teams select the pickup site, and identify their location to the command ship by the use of pannels, signal mirrors, or smoke.

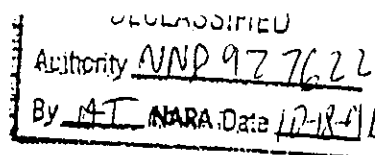
## e. Item: Daily CH-47 Operational Commitments

Discussion: During this period, as with the last, the battalion has had to fly many loads to areas where airfields are available. The number of sorties involving moves of the supported units continue to increase. There have been many instances where the loads were not "CH-47" loads in that the weight was far below the desired 7,000 pounds. Also the Chinook is still being used for loads that are capable of being carried by smaller, less expensive aircraft. Many hours of CH-47 flying time are still being used to transport units to an area accessible by roads. In most cases these areas are but a few miles from the resupply point.

Observation: The Chinook should seldom be used in flying loads into areas where airfields are available. With improved planning and coordination, fixed wing aircraft are available for these missions. Continued emphasis must be placed on the requirement for reducing sorties in unit moves. Units should monitor all Chinook sorties and make certain that the loads are as close to 7,000 pounds as possible or that they are at least an item that a smaller aircraft cannot carry. Every effort should be made to utilize the existing road network for unit movement and resupply of units that are accessible by roads.

## f. Item: Flying Hour Program

Discussion: During the reporting period a series of inevitable circumstances led to some interesting developments. Due to the maximum support effort of this organization during the Dak To campaign, post Dak To aircraft availability was vastly decreased. However, even with the loss of aircraft, using units appeared to be functioning normally. Some investigation of this matter revealed, that when aircraft were only available for a few hours, using commanders became keenly aware of his aircraft utilization. Missions well planned and organized to achieve the maximum, with the allotted time.



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Observation: Considering the above; a possible solution to the present shortage of mission ready aircraft is apparent. A closely monitored, five hour flying day for other than tactical requirements, could be established. This should be sufficient support in almost every case. Exceptions to this rule could be taken on a mission basis only. This would keep blade time at a minimum, and allow for sorely needed daylight maintenance. If additional administrative time is needed on one day, an equal amount of ground time should be allowed the following day.

## g. Item: Sapper Attacks

Discussion: During the reporting period assaults on this Battalions installations have increased considerably. In almost every instance the enemy has successfully employed the use of sappers. Analysis of after action reports clearly indicate, that damage suffered at the hands of the sapper far exceeds that of the damage caused by mortars.

Observation: In an attempt to reduce the effectiveness of the sappers, new precautions have been taken. New and strategically placed positions have been constructed in the aircraft parking areas. These positions are automatically manned when the units are placed on fifty per cent alert. Personnel in these positions are to stop the sapper before they have the time to place their charges.

## 3. (C) Signal

### a. Item: Shortage of Maintenance Float FM, UHF, VHF RT Units

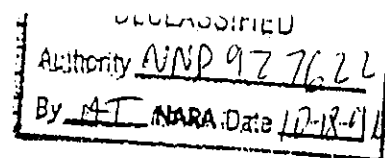
Discussion: Maintenance float FM, UHF, VHF RT units never seem to reach the 52d CAB Avionics Shop. Equipment has been released by the 58th Transportation Bn and never arrived here.

Observation: The close liaison with the supporting facility is often necessary in order to determine whether parts have been shipped and to which location.

### b. Item: Shortage of APH-5 Parts

Discussion: The Avionics Shop has experienced great difficulty in receiving parts for the APH-5 protective helmet. According to the Avionics News Letter published by the 34th General Support Group, these repair parts are in country. Repair parts for the APH-5 often take more than sixty days to receive on an O2 priority.

Observation: That immediate action is received if requisitions are carried to 34th General Support Group.



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## 4. (U) Maintenance

### a. Item: Revetments

Discussion: The value of revetments in helicopter maintenance areas can not be minimized. The last four attacks against units of this battalion have been concentrated against maintenance areas. The enemy has used mortars, rockets, and hand carried sapper charges or a combination of all three. In general, the maintenance areas offer the larger structures, the greater concentration of equipment and aircraft and are lighted at night. In addition a successful attack limits a units maintenance repair capabilities. When aircraft are reveted a mortar round landing outside a revetment will cause damage to a single ship and usually only to the area extending above the revetment. Extensive damage to main rotor, tail rotor, and pylon assembly (UH-1) is often incurred, however, this is usually repairable. When a helicopter is not reveted, which is frequently true in crowded maintenance areas, a round falling some distance away will cause extensive damage. Aircraft in this situation suffer considerable sheetmetal, wiring and window damage which requires much time and effort to repair. Even in case of fire a revetment will confine the damage to one aircraft which is not the case when unreveted ships are parked some distance apart. The tendency of maintenance personnel to park the aircraft as close to the work area as possible is a common error.

Observation: Revetments should be as high as practical and long enough to protect the full length of the aircraft. Extra revetments should be constructed in maintenance area in anticipation of peak input of aircraft. Consideration should also be given to parking 2 1/2 tons trucks on the open side of the revetments this also gives dispersion to vehicles, which are also prime targets of the enemy.

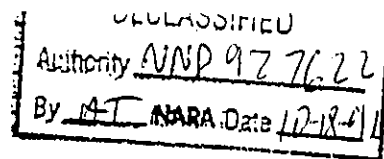
### b. Item: Radio Retrofit Program (Project ZYR)

Discussion: UH-1 aircraft continue to be received without the KY-28 retrofit being completed. This program places an additional burden on maintenance, administration and operations. This unit has had two aircraft at a time in Project ZYR for six month. This is two aircraft that can not perform a mission.

Observation: The retrofit on new aircraft should be accomplished in CONUS before they are sent to RVN.

### c. Item: Repair of Helicopters After Attack

Discussion: Following a concentrated ground attack on a helicopter unit there will be a considerable amount of sheetmetal repair to be performed, usually beyond the capabilities of the unit. The unit will often times be reluctant to turn work over to support maintenance to repair knowing that given enough time they can make the repairs themselves.



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Observation: Upon notification of an attack the support maintenance unit should be prepared to provide a sheetmetal repair team. In the case of extensive aircraft destruction a contact team should be provided to assist in classification, inventorying and expeditious processing of aircraft to supporting maintenance. Unit maintenance personnel should be encouraged to turn in as much work as possible to their support and not to get tied up in major repair projects.

## d. Item: Armament Capabilities

Discussion: Due to the lack of armament personnel (9 on hand of 39 authorized) assigned to the units at Camp Holloway (3 AHC and 1 ASMC) consideration is being given to establishing a consolidated armament shop. This will provide a pooling of personnel and physical resources.

Observation: When an adequate physical facility is located and a qualified shop commander is found, this consolidation will take place.

## e. Item: Dispersal of Vehicles and Equipment

Discussion: During January this battalion lost numerous vehicles and equipment. This combat damage was incurred by satchel charges, and could as well have been by mortar fire.

Observation: By dispersal of equipment the number incurring damage would have been reduced. Compound areas do not lend themselves for wide dispersal, also security of equipment cannot be maintained with wide dispersement. The equipment can be spread throughout the compound and eliminate congestion. When possible, revetted areas should be provided for prime equipment i.e., Wreckers, Fuel Tanker and Aircraft Service vehicles. Maintenance shop areas should never be allowed to become congested at night. During good weather most maintenance can be performed by operators within assigned parking areas.

## 5. (II) Aviation Safety

### a. Item: Foreign Object Damage

Discussion: Foreign object damage (FOD) was identified as a major cause of engine usage. A request for assistance in the design of a "last chance" filter for the T-53-L13 engine installation was requested of USABAAAR. In addition the units have been instructed to perform a last chance inspection of the sand and dust separator and plenum chamber area.

Observation: Failure of the sand and dust separator to stop FOD and increased night maintenance are believed to be the primary causes (See incl 11)

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## b. Item: Accident Cause Factors

Discussion: In our continuing search for accident cause factors an analysis of the Crash Facts Message File was made. (See incl 12 from 1 Jun 67 to 22 Dec 67 time of analysis). The 41 events lead to the following conclusions. First, that there were no accidents, incidents, forced or precautionary landing from 0700 - 0920 hours. Second, that 67% of the major accidents occurred after 1500 hours or during the last 25% of the normal flying day.

Observation: It appears that aviator fatigue may be more closely related to the number of hours flown in one day than it is related to flying time per month. Consideration for a 5 hour non-tactical mission flying day and a 1700 hour aircraft release time has been requested. This will not only provide for aviator fatigue prevention, but will provide some daylight hours for maintenance.

## c. Item: Maintenance Personnel

Discussion: The fatigue factor of maintenance personnel is also serious. Continuous daily commitment of flying assets beyond the flying hour program and the shortage of skilled personnel, especially supervisors, cannot help but effect the quality of maintenance.

Observation: The aircraft are flying more and more hours than programmed. Trained maintenance personnel become fewer and are forced to work longer and harder under poor lighting (or none at all). The inevitable result can only lead to mistakes and accidents. We must either reduce the flying hours and force the user to improve his use of the aircraft and increase the number of maintenance personnel or accept lower standards and high accident rates.

## PART II: Recommendations:

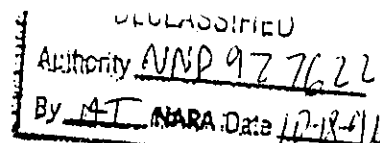
1. (C) Operations: Reference Section II, Part I, para a, b, c, e, f.

a. Recommend increased use of the 2,000 pound daisy cutter for this type operation. In addition, that the necessary modifications be made on the A-1E aircraft be made to carry the larger loads.

b. Recommend closer direct liaison between the major aviation unit and engineer support unit concerned, prior to the commencement of a major operation in the vicinity of an airfield.

c. Recommend command emphasis be placed on the absolute necessity of scheduled release times being honored.

d. Recommend a study be made to determine the reason behind the phenomenal increase in sorties for battalion moves. In addition, that requests for CH-47 support be closely monitored.



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c. Recommend a study be conducted to determine a realistic flying hour program, that would meet operational requirements and increase needed ground time for aviation units.

2. (C) Signal: Reference Section II, Part I, para 3b. Recommend present system of requisitioning be inspected. Several sections still report difficulty in receiving requested items through supply channels. This would indicate requests are not being properly processed.

3. (II) Maintenance: Reference Section II, Part I, para 4b.

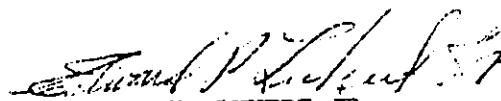
Recommend future acquisitions of aircraft be retrofitted during production.

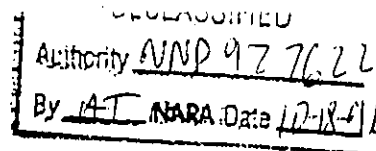
4. (II) Safety: Reference Section II, Part I, para 5a.

a. Recommend immediate implementation of a "last chance" filter for the T-53-L13 engine. That the sand and dust separator inspection be emphasized to other aviation units with similar difficulties in this area.

b. Recommend a study be conducted by a USAB/AR team concerning the fatigue problem. This should encompass both aviators and maintenance personnel. In addition, that aircraft utilization be monitored for a possible increase in daylight maintenance time.

12 Incl  
as

  
EDWARD P. LUKERT JR.  
LTC Inf  
Commanding



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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 HEADQUARTERS, 52D COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
 APO San Francisco 96318  
 "FLYING DRAGONS"

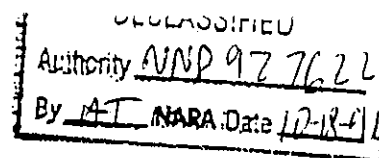
AVGD~CC

31 January 1968

SUBJECT: Organizational Structure of 52d Cbt Avn Bn

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMMANDER</u>
52d Cbt Avn Bn - "FLYING DRAGONS"	LTC Edward P. Lukert Jr.
52d Security Platoon	1/Lt Breman W. Baker
57th Aslt Hel Co - "GLADIATORS" "COUGARS"	MAJ George L. Burnison
615th Trans Det	MAJ Niles C. Clark
822nd Signal Det	WO1 Harvey Baker Jr.
119th Aslt Hel Co - "ALLIGATORS" "CROCS"	MAJ Joseph R. Campbell III
545th Trans Det	CPT Philip C. Ashley
94th Medical Det	CPT Valentino Menis
70th Signal Det	CW3 Floyd V. Gavison
155th Aslt Hel Co - "STAGECOACH" "FALCONS"	MAJ Billy R. Goodall
165th Trans Det	MAJ Eugene P. Malkoff
8th Medical Det	CPT David L. Weinberg
208th Signal Det	CPT Albert E. Fisch
170th Aslt Hel Co - "BIKINIS" "BUCCANERS"	MAJ Jessie E. Stewart
405th Trans Det	MAJ Wilbur R. Mixter
755th Medical Det	CPT David L. Acus
448th Signal Det	CW3 Harold B. Percy





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179th Aslt Spt Hel Co - "SHRIMPBOAT"

MAJ Donald C. Macabe

402nd Trans Det

MAJ David C. Whitworth

189th Aslt Hel Co - "GHOST RIDERS"  
"AVENGERS"

MAJ Neil I. Ieva

604th Trans Det

MAJ Richard D. Caldwell

6th Signal Det

1/Et James R. Conley

344th Avn Det

LTC Robert D. Craig Jr.

355th Aslt Spt Hel Heavy

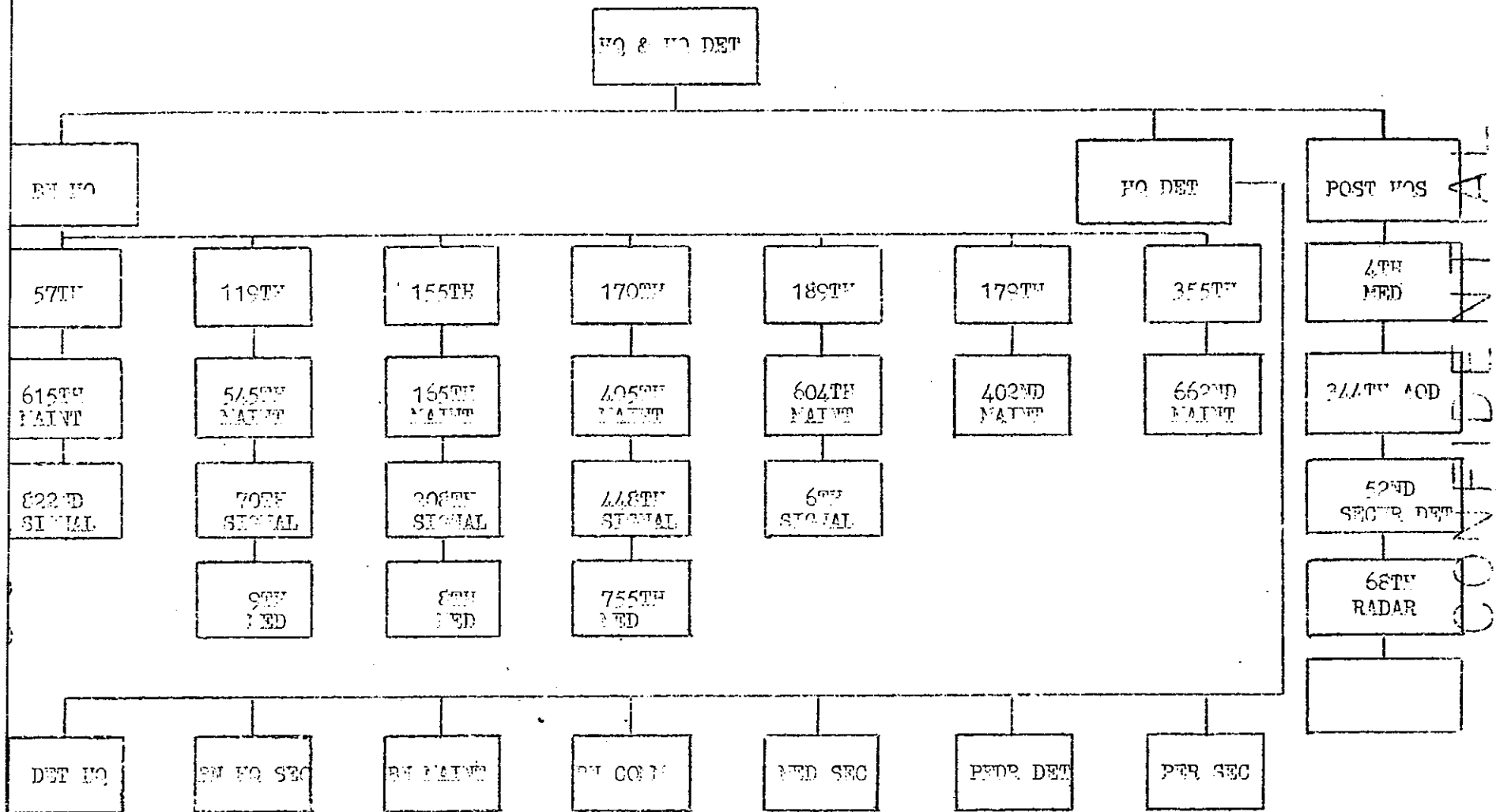
MAJ Glen E. Morgan

662nd Trans Det

MAJ William H. Hinds

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 Authority AND 977622  
 By AFI AMRA Date 12-8-11

1200M



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 52D COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO San Francisco 96318  
"FLYING DRAGONS"

AVCD-02

5 February 19

SUBJECT: Recapitulation of Flying Hours

UNIT	Month	UH-1C				UH-1H				Combined		% of DA Prog.
		Avg Nr. Guns on Hand	Hours Flown	Avg. Hours Guns	Avail. ability	Avg Nr. Slicks on Hand	Hours Flown	Avg. Hours Slicks	Avail. ability	Total Hours	Combined Avg Hours	
57th	Nov	8	466	58.3	63.0	21.0	1622	77.2	76	2088	72.0	120%
	Dec	9	605	75.6	68.0	21.0	2456	117.0	73	3061	105.6	176%
	Jan	5.9	359	52.0	50.0	18.5	1928	104.2	63	2287	90.0	150%
119th	Nov	7.2	496	57.5	90.0	20.5	2176	106.2	85.4	2672	96.5	162%
	Dec	7.4	438	59.2	81.1	20.1	1545	76.9	80.8	1983	72.1	119%
	Jan	5.4	404	63.1	82.6	19.0	1626	85.6	81.6	2030	79.9	133%
155th	Nov	7.1	414	58.3	71.9	20.4	1948	95.5	91.8	2362	85.9	143%
	Dec	6	430	71.7	80.6	20.0	1827	91.4	87.4	2257	86.8	145%
	Jan	6	461	76.7	92.3	17.5	1591	90.3	83.4	2052	87.3	146%
170th	Nov	7.5	519	69.2	77.0	18.7	2307	123.4	84.1	2826	107.8	180%
	Dec	8	624	79.3	86.7	18.9	2518	133.2	84.2	3152	117.2	194%
	Jan	7.8	540	69.2	81.1	18.6	1972	105.0	78.6	2512	95.2	159%
189th	Nov	7.4	576	77.3	89.9	20.2	1809	89.6	83.2	2385	86.4	144%
	Dec	7.5	546	71.8	85.9	20.2	2182	108.0	80.3	2728	98.1	164%
	Jan	8.0	639	79.9	85.0	18.0	1884	104.7	78.1	2523	97.0	162%
*****												
52d	Nov	37.2	2471	63.5	78.4	100.8	9862	97.8	84.6	12333	89.4	149%
	Dec	37.0	2653	71.7	80.6	100.2	10528	105.1	81.1	13181	95.3	159%
	Jan	55.5	2403	67.7	68.2	92.5	9001	98.4	76.9	11404	89.1	148%

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By AFI MARS Data 12-18-11

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REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Unit	Month	Avg. CH-47 On Hand	Hours Flown	Avg. Hours per CH-47	Percent of DA Program	Avail- ability
12956	Nov	15.8	1113	70.8	142%	55.0%
	Dec	15.6	1305	83.7	168%	65.0%
	Jan	14.0	1174	83.9	169%	54.5%

4000 P874

Average number of aircraft is based on those actually on-hand with the following provisions: (1) Destroyed aircraft are dropped from accountability the day following destruction, and (2) Replacement aircraft are picked up on accountability on the first day that they become "mission ready" or within 10 hours following receipt, whichever occurs first.

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F. 2001

By	Auth	Date
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