



1st Aviation Brigade
Long Binh, Vietnam
16 May 1969

AVRAGC

SUBJECT: Location of Aviation Assets (ANC)

1. (C) Problem: To determine the feasibility of moving either or both the 135th and 335th Assault Helicopter Companies to Can Tho.
2. (U) Assumptions:
 - a. Operation Speedy Express or an operation with similar aviation support requirements will continue in the IV CTZ.
 - b. The 135th and 335th Assault Helicopter Companies will continue to be employed in the IV CTZ.
 - d. Adequate engineer effort will be allocated to construct required facilities.
3. (C) Facts Bearing on the Problem:
 - a. The 135th and 335th although based in III CTZ, support operations in IV CTZ.
 - b. The dead blade or nonproductive flight time per day for the 135th and 335th Assault Helicopter Companies, with current missions, is approximately 20 hours and 30 hours respectively.
4. (U) Discussion:
 - a. Course of Action #1: Simultaneous deployment of the 135th and 335th to Can Tho.
 - b. Course of Action #2: Relocate one Assault Helicopter Company to Can Tho by 1 July 1969, to be followed by the other Assault Helicopter Company at a later date.
 - c. Course of Action #3: Relocate only one Assault Helicopter Company to Can Tho.
 - d. For details, see Annex A, Discussion.

11-04-83 Navigational aids installed

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ATLAS
SUBJECT: Location of Aviation Assets (AHC)

c. (C) Conclusions:

a. Stationing the 135th and 335th at Can Tho will enhance the operational capability, flexibility and responsiveness of the 164th Combat Aviation Group provided that:

(1) Adequate facilities, real estate and utilities are made available.

(2) The 611th Transportation Company at Vinh Long is augmented with sufficient personnel to support the increased assets in IV CTZ.

b. That the 135th and 335th are providing adequate aviation support to IV CTZ.

d. (C) Action Requirements:

a. That the 135th and 335th be relocated to Can Tho using course of action #2.

b. That 34th General Support Group be requested to provide security maintenance and support.

1 Incl
Annex A

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Coordination: CG, 14th Air Force: Concur _____ Nonconcur _____
CG, 164th Air Avn Grp: Concur _____ Nonconcur _____

Annex A (Discussion)

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1. (C) General: In determining the relative merits of relocating the 135th and 335th Assault Helicopter Companies from their present location at Bear Cat to Can Tho, it was necessary to coordinate with several agencies. A list of individuals and duty position is located at Tab A. The 135th and 335th Assault Helicopter Companies are supporting combat operations in the IV CTZ. Tab B. Average flying times from Bear Cat to the area of operation is at Tab C. This results in excessive dead blade time each month of approximately 1330 hours. For the purpose of this discussion, the areas surveyed will be analyzed to the combat units supported, facilities, and maintenance requirements.

2. (C) Combat Units Supported: The 135th and 335th Assault Helicopter Companies are presently assigned respectively to the 222d and 214th Combat Aviation Battalions; the 135th Assault Helicopter Company is also assigned to the 164th Combat Aviation Group. These operations started in late December of 1968, and have continued with minor variations until the present date. The 135th Assault Helicopter Company generally supports the 7th ARVN Division and the 9th US Division with the 335th Assault Helicopter Company supporting the 9th ARVN Division. A graphic representation of the geographical location of these TAOs is located at Tab B. In view of the apparent success of this operation it is reasonable to assume that this or a similar operation will continue in the IV CTZ for some time in the future. Each Assault Helicopter Company provides ten slicks, four guns and one CoC snip each day to support this operation. The disadvantages in this arrangement are the excessive dead blade time incurred because of the distance between the base camp at Bear Cat and the tactical area of operation in the IV CTZ (Tab C). The total dead blade or nonproductive time each month for these two units totals approximately 1330 hours. Purely from a standpoint of reduced dead blade time, it is highly desirable that these two units be moved to Can Tho. Considering that these two units would still support the same combat organization; a reduction of approximately 770 hours in dead blade time would be realized. This could be further reduced by the Commanding Officer of the 164th Combat Aviation Group by reallocating his aviation assets within the IV CTZ. One possible solution is graphically portrayed at Tab D. This proposal not only allows for reallocation of assets but can be accomplished with a minimum of reorganization within the 13th and 214th Combat Aviation Battalions. Additionally, it provides the Commanding Officer of the 164th Combat Aviation Group a more flexible, functional and responsive organization with which to conduct combat operations. One factor which must not be overlooked is that the 135th and 335th Assault Helicopter companies are presently providing adequate aviation support to the combat units. It is apparent that effective

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Annex A (Continued)

Aviation support can be and has been accomplished by the units remaining at Bear Cat. A summary for record concerning the specific missions of these two units is at Tab E.

3. (U) Facilities:

a. The existing facilities at Can Tho Airfield are crowded. Aviation units assigned to Can Tho include one Combat Aviation Group, one Combat Aviation Battalion, one Aerial Weapons Company, one Assault Support Helicopter Company, one Surveillance Company, one Radio Research Unit and approximately 20 other Army support aircraft. This does not include Air Force, Air America, and air Vietnam transit use of the Can Tho facilities. A facilities study of Can Tho/Bear Cat is a Tab F.

b. The primary reason for the present construction south of the runway is to improve the congested and unsafe conditions that exist at Can Tho. The 235th Aerial Weapons Company has the majority of its aircraft in overruns within 12 meters of the active runway. The 271st Assault Support Helicopter Company is intermingled with fixed wing aircraft and both units are forced to use maintenance facilities which are separated from the flight line. If two Assault Helicopter Companies are moved to Can Tho, they will be in addition to units presently stationed there. Existing facilities ^{have} already been established as an unsatisfactory location for the 235th Aerial Weapons Company and the 271st Assault Support Helicopter Company, otherwise justification for the newly constructed facilities would have been near impossible. The advisability of continuing to operate in an established unsatisfactory environment is questionable. The commander must be willing to accept a higher density of aircraft to terrain ratio which will present a higher exposure factor in case of an attack by fire.

c. A consideration, although not addressed in the facilities analysis, are the POL and ammo storage areas. Additional fill may be required to provide adequate dry storage for ammunition. Depending upon the base development plan, a possible solution to the POL storage area exists on the north west corner of the airfield. Even though there might be enough real estate to locate POL storage tanks in this area, it is within easy striking distance of the perimeter. Ammunition and highly volatile items such as fuel or POL in this area will also require additional real estate and to one or barrier type structures to provide adequate safeguards.

d. A base development plan for the support requirements of Can Tho Airfield should not be developed at this headquarters. A conservative

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Annex A (Continued)

estimate for the completion date of the required facilities at Can Tho is four to six months. This of course will depend upon the priority established by the Senior Advisor, IV CTZ.

4. Maintenance: Relocation of any additional aviation assets to IV CTZ will require a corresponding increase in maintenance support. Tab G is the 34th General Support Group's plan to provide required maintenance support for three possible courses of action.

5. (C) An analysis of the three proposed courses of action in relationship to the aforementioned paragraphs is as follows:

a. Course of Action #1. Simultaneous deployment of the 135th and 535th Assault Helicopter Companies to Can Tho.

(1) Advantages:

- (a) Reduces dead blade time by a proximately 770 hours per month.
- (b) Increases aviation assets in IV CTZ.
- (c) Provides the Commanding Officer, 164th Combat Aviation Group a more flexible, functional and responsive organization with which to support combat operations.

(2) Disadvantages:

(a) Will require augmentation of the 611th Transportation Company with approximately 33 personnel (Tab G).

(b) Billeting space is not available at Can Tho Army Airfield to accommodate the personnel of two Assault Helicopter Companies. This will require some of the personnel to be billeted in downtown Can Tho.

(c) Construction of required facilities at Can Tho will require an engineer effort of approximately 1.5 to 2 million dollars (Tab F).

(d) Existing facilities at Can Tho are servicing the maximum number of troops, any additional troops will require an increase in both water and electrical power supply.

(e) Tend to disrupt combat operations for a limited period of time with two units relocating simultaneously.

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AL. 2 A (Continued)

(f) Do not let the Commanding Officer, 164th Combat Aviation Group, realize our plan, to not mention priorities and familiarize him with our plan. This may tend to cause some confusion and/or diversion of mission support.

b. Commence Action #0. Helicopter and Assault Helicopter Company to start. The by 13.5.5 1969, to be followed by the remaining Assault Helicopter Company at a later date.

(1) Advantages:

(a) Provides a limited increase in aviation assets in the IV CPZ as of 1 July 1990, with the maximum increase at a later date.

(b) Allows the engineer more time to complete required constructions.

(c) Percent of units with minimum inter-

(d) Income and maintenance support ^{requirements} can be positively identified by a phase in program.

(e) Allow for some degree of flexibility for a limited period in case the impetus of battle shifts.

(f) It will not be a very comfortable situation.

(8) To assist in finalizing the requirement for space and facilities.

(2) Dilative tactics:

(a) Will require augmentation of the 611th Transportation Company of 17 personnel by 1 July 1969.

(b) Will require construction of facilities to accommodate two Assault Helicopter Companies.

2. Change in location of: Relocate only and company to Can Tho.

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(a) Requires similar construction at Can Tho.

(b) Billoting space is available.

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Annex A (Continued)

- (c) Provide additional aviation assets to IV CTZ.
 - (d) Reduces dead blade time.
 - (e) Allows for use of already constructed facilities at Bear Cat.
 - (f) Reduces the overall cost of additional facilities at Can Tho.
 - (g) May allow for movement of the 271st Assault Support Helicopter Company to the south side of the runway at Can Tho.
- (2) Disadvantages:
- (a) Requires augmentation of the Civil Transportation Company of 17 personnel.
 - (b) Reduces the flexibility of the Commanding Officer as he may be unable to reassign mission priorities to the unit remaining at Bear Cat.
 - (c) Will still have a unit located in III CTZ supporting operations in IV CTZ.
4. In reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of a thru c above it appears that Course of Action #2 is the most desirable with Course of Action #1 being the least desirable.

7 Incl

- 1. Tab A
- 2. Tab B
- 3. Tab C
- 4. Tab D
- 5. Tab E
- 6. Tab F
- 7. Tab G