

RG472

11D, G3

CMD RPLS

68-69

Box 3

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 96345

16 SEP 69

AVDB-TP

SUBJECT: Night Convoys (U)

Commanding General
II Field Force Vietnam
ATTN: G3
APO 96266

1. (C) This letter is in response to the TELECON on 6 September 1969 between MAJ Hinds, G3 Plans, II FFV, and CPT Goldberg, G3 Plans, 1st Infantry Division, reference the feasibility of conducting night convoys between the Long Binh area and Phu Loi.
2. (C) A decision to schedule night convoys to Phu Loi should take into consideration the following factors:
 - a. The road net from Long Binh to Phu Loi, while classified GREEN during daylight hours, must be considered AMBER during hours of darkness. Enemy forces, particularly local guerrillas who closely monitor allied operations, have the capability and could be expected to harass or attempt to interdict night convoys. Convoy personnel security is obviously hampered by the concealment which is afforded to enemy forces during the hours of darkness.
 - b. The 1st Infantry Division presently maintains only one mechanized infantry platoon in the Di An - Phu Loi area. This force is committed to night ambush operations, mobile strike force (RRF) contingency missions, and daylight ground reconnaissance operations in the lower Lam Son area. It is critical that this force continue to be utilized on these missions, to inhibit any increase in enemy activity which may threaten the current pacification status of hamlets in the area and pose a threat to the Capital Military District.
 - c. To provide security comparable to that presently experienced during daylight hours, the 1st Infantry Division considers the following minimum force concentration to be required for night convoys.

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- (1) 1 rifle company - YT0105 to XT9008 - ambush/outpost highway.
- (2) 2 rifle companies - XT9008 to XT8615 - ambush/outpost highway.
- (3) 1 Mech company - YT0105 to XT8615 - convoy escort/Mobile Strike Force for convoy (in addition to presently utilized platoon mentioned in para 2 b above).

d. To provide the above security forces, the 1st Infantry Division would have to seriously deplete the density of its forces in the northern portions of the TAOR. These northern forces are targeted against larger main force elements which require the attention of sizeable allied forces. While 1st Infantry Division forces are committed by company-size in areas occupied by enemy regimental size elements, commitment along the Di An - Phu Loi route for night convoy security would tie down sizeable assets for a possible enemy attack in squad size or less on a convoy.

e. 1st Infantry Division presently has the mission of providing route and convoy security from Lai Khe north along JL 13 and from Ben Cat to the Song Be Bridge. This security task requires one mech bn, one armored cavalry squadron, two infantry companies, and one tank company (-). This force constitutes roughly 25% of the Division's maneuver battalions. Any additional requirement for security will further reduce the forces available for maneuver against the Dong Nai Regt and SR-1 elements.

f. Provincial/district/hamlet security forces may be considered available for enhanced convoy security at night; however, such a mission would detract from the primary mission of these local security forces which is to provide population and installation security. Further, any plan to deploy additional provincial/district forces specifically along the line of communication compounds the matter of fire coordination. Security forces are necessarily restricted in their ability to respond by fire to enemy contact in areas in which local RVN forces may be operating, particularly because radio communications are generally not maintained with these elements.

3. (C) In summary, these are the factors that should be considered in determining the feasibility of night convoys between the Long Binh area and Phu Loi.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

for Keith Carson 2LT
 SAMUEL R. WARD, JR.
 CAPTAIN, AGC
 ASSISTANT AG

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By AAC MRA Date 4/2/01