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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 2d Squadron, (Airmobile), 17th Cavalry
101st Airborne Division (Airmobile)
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-SQ-3

5 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 2d Squadron, (Amb1), 17th Cavalry period ending 30 April 1970 RCS - 65 (R2)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. SECTION I, OPERATIONS: SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES.

a. General.

(1) This report covers the period 31 January 1970 through 30 April 1970 and is submitted in accordance with AR 525-15, USAHV Reg 525-15, 101st Airborne Division Reg 525-4 and 2/17th Cavalry Memo 525-4. The report period covers the last 2/3 of Randolph Glen ending 31 March 70 and operation Texas Star beginning 1 April 70 and still in progress.

(2) The mission of the 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry is to perform reconnaissance and to provide security for the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) on its major subordinate combat elements; to engage in combat as an element of force unit; and to provide limited air and ground anti-tank defense, immediate reaction force and downed aircraft support for the Division.

b. Persormel.

(1) During the reporting period the following major changes in command and staff positions occurred.

(a) LTC Robert F Molinelli assumed duties as Squadron Commander on 24 Mar 70 replacing LTC Lavern W Bindrup.

(b) MAJ Joseph C Gross III assumed duties as Squadron Executive Officer on 15 Mar 70 replacing CPT Ronald E Adams.

(c) MAJ Paul K Dargon assumed duties as Squadron S-3 replacing CPT Herbert L Vosseler 11 Mar 70.

(d) CPT John H Kirby assumed duties as Squadron S-3 on 18 Apr 70 replacing MAJ Paul K Dargon.

(e) CPT Thomas E Ellington assumed duties as Squadron S-2 on 18 Apr 70 replacing CPT John H Kirby.

(f) CPT Walter A Harman III assumed duties as Squadron S-1 on 1 Mar 70 replacing CPT Louis G St Peter.

(g) CPT John D Sterrett III assumed Command of Troop C 11 Mar 70 replacing MAJ William T Hecken.

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Declassified by authority of the Chief of Staff, 101st Abn Div.
(AASLT) per DE AFZB-CS, 18 March 77, subject: "Declassification
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(h) CPT James D Stowers assumed Command of L Co, 75th Infantry on 26 Apr 70 replacing CPT Robert A Guy.

(i) CPT Robert N Magnan assumed Command of HHT on 2 Feb 70 replacing CPT Randolph J Torres.

(2) The following personnel are occupying major command and staff positions:

- (a) Squadron Commander: LTC Robert F Molinelli
- (b) Squadron Executive Officer: Joseph C Gross III
- (c) S-1: CPT Walter A Harman III
- (d) S-2: CPT Thomas L Ellington
- (e) S-3: CPT John H Kirby
- (f) S-4: CPT Eugene E Glancy
- (g) S-5: 1LT Donald M Gray
- (h) HHT: CPT Robert N Magnan
- (i) Trp A: MAJ Paul D Smith Jr.
- (j) Trp B: MAJ David J Larcomb
- (k) Trp C: CPT John D Sterrett III
- (l) Trp D: CPT Paul E Protzman
- (m) L Co: CPT James D Stowers

(3) Unit Strength:

Present strength figures for the Squadron do not show the deficits in the critical skill specialties, specifically the 77B, 77H, 77P, 67Z50, 35K, 35L, 35M, 35P, and other aviation/avionics allied military occupational specialties. Additionally the aero-rifle platoons have been without a sufficient number of SSG, E-6, 11B40 personnel throughout the reporting period.

The loss of critical skill enlisted personnel and aircraft commanders inhibited Squadron flexibility during the latter part of March. Primary staff positions had to be filled from the line troops resulting in further loss of trained aircraft commanders. This compounded the shortage of qualified aircraft commanders within the Air Cavalry Troops.

a. Intelligence.

During the report period the squadron continued its role in support of the division by providing reconnaissance and security. These missions included; visual reconnaissance of designated reconnaissance zones both for the brigades and the area of operations west of the designated "Blue Line", bomb damage assessments for the Air Force and Division resources, target acquisition for Cavalry/Artillery raids, Ranger reconnaissance missions, airborne personnel detector missions (SNIFTER), screening around friendly units, convoy escort, first & last light security.

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The 2/17th Cavalry is the keystone to the divisions intelligence gathering capability. The collection and dissemination of intelligence is essential to the success of the Division's combat operations. The Squadron is targeted in areas of known or suspected enemy activity. In many areas only careful and thorough aerial reconnaissance will provide the information needed by the Division. As the Division's area of operation becomes larger the Cavalry missions become even more essential as early warning and as an economy of force unit.

From 1 February 70, 2/17th Cavalry has operated in an area bounded on the North by the DMZ, the South by the Ruong Ruong valley of Thua Thien Province, the West by the Loation border and the East by the, Piedmont and coastal plains.

Enemy activity during the early part of February was characterized by an increase in indirect attacks by fire and a general build up of troops and supplies along major infiltrations routes, the A Shau Valley, Dakrong River Valley, and the Co Pung mountain areas in preparation for the expected spring offensive. The enemy avoided major contacts and used the season's marginal weather in the A Shau Valley to his advantage by moving supplies and troops. Heavy truck activity was noted in three major areas; Route 616 (XD 7822 to YD 0829), Route 548/922 (YD 2304 - 3310 - YC 4295) and Route 548/923 (YC 54777 - YC 4295). The enemy was greatly concerned about keeping these routes open and trafficable as was evident by his use of heavy caliber anti-aircraft weapons, the appearance of bulldozers along these routes, and his fast and efficient ability to repair the roads after interdiction by the Air Force and Cavalry. Ranger teams were employed north of the Lantian Salient and DA Krong River Basin and confirmed traffic along the major infiltration route 616. Elements of the 220th Recon Airplane Company at Phu Bai aided in keeping all routes under observation. Toward the end of Randolph Glen they often observed enemy vehicles moving during daylight hours.

Results of reconnaissance during the reporting period:

	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Spot Reports	842	630	715
CSWC	0	0	1
IWC	4	2	5
KIA	56	57	72
POW	1	0	0

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2. Operations

(1) HHT: The basic mission of the Command Aviation Section of Headquarters Troop was to supply support aircraft and conduct administrative liaison between the troops.

During the month of March aviation support was supplied principally to the Rangers as C&C and lift ships, resulting in numerous insertions of Rangers in the area between the DMZ and the Huong Huong Valley. Contact was made in numerous areas during this period with damage to only one headquarters aircraft. Command Aviation support was also called on by Bravo and Charlie troops during this period. Division G-2 (ground surveillance) requested air support and ground monitoring for sensor drops, which produced excellent results.

The month of April marked a major increase in enemy activity in the A Shau Valley and Khe Sanh area. This demanded a coordinated effort of all elements of the 2/17 Cavalry to maintain constant surveillance of enemy movements. This effort resulted in heavy combat damage to all troop's aircraft who in turn called upon headquarters for support. Support was furnished to troops day and night as required. One aircraft was destroyed due to combat damage and one excessively damaged as a result of enemy ground fire. All injuries were of a minor nature. These missions resulted in Headquarters Command Aviation Section flying well over 450 hrs with 7 aircraft in a 30 day period. Other sections of Headquarters Troop supported the Squadron with logistical and maintenance support. During the months of March and April Headquarters Troop provided a greater number of guards in Bravo sector of the Eagle defense perimeter in relief of Troop A.

(2) Troop A: During the reported period Troop A participated in two major operations; Randolph Glen beginning 8 December 69 and ending 31 March 70, and Texas Star beginning 1 April 70 and still in progress. Throughout this reporting quarter all operational assets were at Quang Tri, while the 322d AC Detachment remained behind at Camp Eagle. During the later stages of Randolph Glen Troop A provided direct support to the 3d Brigade 101st Airborne Division (Almafilic) through the use of Hunter-Killer Teams (One AH-1G, one OH-6A). The teams often worked in close support of company size ground elements providing ground reconnaissance in front of the maneuver elements and securing their flanks and rear. The teams were also called on to reconnoiter areas of interest dealing with URS's, SPAR's and sensor activations. The remainder of the Troop's assets were used on missions in different areas of interest provided by Squadron and Division in an area extending from the DMZ to the northern boundary of the A Shau Valley, which produced excellent results.

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(2) Troop A: During the reported period Troop A participated

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At the beginning of Texas Star the Squadron LNO to 3d Brigade remained at the 3d Brigade TOC attached to Troop A. Troop A was involved in extensive Ranger insertion and extraction missions as well as immediate reaction force (IRF) for the Rangers. The aero-rifle platoon was involved in many ground operations with Troops BRAVO, CHARLIE, and DELTA in response to ground reconnaissance missions. Troop A was also involved in a Joint ARVN-US Ranger operation in the Ba Long Valley. The Aero-Rifle Platoon was on standby at Quang Tri in response to any ground action or Ranger contact. Throughout this period the Troop did not engage in any Troop movements but was continually engaged in training and combat operations.

The most significant problem encountered throughout this period was a shortage of aircraft parts. An increase in enemy activity and proficiency in engaging aircraft, resulted in extensive combat damage. Maintenance personnel were working on a 24 hour basis in order to keep up with scheduled and unscheduled maintenance. Even though a maximum effort was being exerted, the lack of aircraft parts caused extended down time on many aircraft.

(3) During the period 1 February through 31 March, Troop B was engaged in the final phases of Operation Randolph Glen. Operation Texas Star began 1 April and is presently in progress. From 1 February through 14 February Troop B was oriented toward 1st Brigade missions, and at the same time performed missions throughout the Division area of operation.

Support of the 1st Brigade consisted mainly of intelligence gathering operations by hunter-killer teams operating from Camp Eagle in both the 1st Brigade Area of Operations and the Division Reconnaissance Zones, with the Aero-Rifle Platoon remaining at Camp Eagle ready to respond to either intelligence targets or for security and recovery of downed aircraft.

Along with the primary missions mentioned, Troop B was engaged in Ranger Team support, Sniffer Missions, and support of 3d Force Marine Reconnaissance Company teams throughout the Division Area of Operations.

Troop B was engaged in combat operations on a daily basis throughout the reporting period. Training of personnel was conducted on a concurrent basis.

Troop B provided air support to the 3d Force Marine Reconnaissance Company on several occasions with extremely rewarding results. The use of the Marine reconnaissance teams provided valuable intelligence to both the Cavalry Squadron and the Division. The hunter-killer teams were extremely effective in locating and destroying enemy targets when directed from the ground by these Marine Reconnaissance teams, and were able to support the teams very effectively when they came into contact with the enemy.

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The use of Canister, Cluster Assembly, Tactical CS, 50 lb., E158 R2 from aircraft in the deep reconnaissance zones, in 10' elephant grass or single canopy is particularly effective causing NVA to come out of their bunkers and into the open. This canister spreads a layer of CS on the ground which is several hundred meters square, and provides excellent area coverage.

The use of the M-79 fired flares for night operations involving the Aero-Rifle Platoon was found to be far more successful than the use of the hand fired flares, due to both the illumination given, and the fact that the M-79 flares are lighter and smaller, thus more can be carried.

(4) Troop C: During this reporting period, Troop C participated in two major operations; Randolph Glen, beginning 8 Dec 69 and ending 31 March 70, and Texas Star starting 1 April 70 to the present. Troop C performed missions in support of the 2d Brigade during the last month of Randolph Glen and reverted to support of the 3d Brigade during Texas Star. The Troop provided reconnaissance and security employing scout teams (2 OH-6A) and hunter-killer teams (1 AH-1G, 1 OH-6A) while working for the Brigade in their areas of interest. The hunter-killer teams have the capability to defend themselves as well as developing the situation by using the available firepower from the AH-1G. Intelligence was gained by these teams and forwarded through the use of spot reports to the Brigades and Squadron S-2.

Troop C employed white teams many times in support of the 2d Bde in relatively inactive areas. This saves aircraft time on the more maintenance critical Cobra gunships and provided an excellent training vehicle for the new LOH pilots. Scout teams were also employed in first and last light reconnaissance.

Troop C moved from Camp Evans to Phu Bai, on 22 February 1970. Squadron S-4 provided 2 ½ ton trucks to help accomplish the move. The administrative part of the move took 24 hrs and the combat elements were operational within 12 hours after the initial H-hour. No major problems were encountered.

The Aero-Rifle Platoon with its UH1H lift capability was used to exploit the situation when detailed ground reconnaissance was required. The platoon was used to conduct ground BDA's following B-52 strikes. When not engaged in operations, the platoon was in a standby posture at Phu Bai for security and downed aircraft missions.

(5) Troop D: During the reporting period Troop D participated in 34 combat assaults, 12 106mm recoilless rifle gun runs, 2 cordon and search operations, 2 convoy, security missions and sent one 106mm recoilless gun crew to Fire Base Ripcord Opson to 3d Brigade. Enemy results during this period were 2 KIA confirmed, 1 NVA, captured with only 1 friendly WIA. Troop D also provided a ready reaction force for downed aircraft in the Division AO. Troop D further provided one platoon as Base Camp reaction force on alert at Camp Eagle 24 hours a day.

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Troop D conducted ground and mounted sweeps and on 20 January uncovered a 200 lb rice cache in H sector (YD 815125). Another sweep of Hotel sector by Troop D captured 1 fully equipped NVA at coordinates YD 801122.

Troop D participated in night ambushes around the Eagle perimeter and on 13 February sprung an ambush resulting in 1 VC with AK47 killed.

(6) Rangers: During the report period Ranger operations were concentrated in four major areas. During the last stages of Randolph Glen, Rangers were targeted in the Co Yan (XD 9431) and Kho Sanh (XD 8639) areas. During the beginning of Texas Star the rangers were targeted in the Ba Long river valley (YD 0941) in support of a 54th ARVN operation. Toward the end of April, after the 54th ARVN operation began, the Ranger teams displaced west of the Ruong Ruong valley (YC 7190) in support of the special Cavalry areas of operations.

Throughout the report period L Company maintained an average of 5 teams in their designated area of operation daily.

e. Organization.

Headquarters 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry is located at Camp Eagle, Hue/Phu Bai Republic of Vietnam and is commanded by LTC Robert F Molinelli. The squadron is organized under table of organization and equipment 17-95T and is currently in general support of the Division. The Squadron has attached L Company 75th Infantry and had detached F Troop 101st Aviation Bn on 10 March 70.

(a) Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Camp Eagle, Hue/Phu Bai, Republic of Vietnam is organized in accordance with TOE 17-96-T.

(b) Troop A Combat elements and forward CP are located at Quang Tri, while the 338d TC Detachment and HQ Admin Section are located at Camp Eagle, Republic of Vietnam. Troop A is organized under TOE 17-98-T and is 1 of 3 Air Cavalry Troops. 17-95T

(c) Troop B is organized under TOE 17-98-T and is located at Camp Eagle Republic of Vietnam. The 333d TC Detachment provides direct support maintenance to the Troop.

(d) Troop C is also organized under TOE 17-98-T and is located at Hue/Phu Bai. The 507th TC Detachment provides direct support maintenance to the troop.

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(e) Troop D is located at Camp Eagle Republic of Vietnam and is organized under TOE 17-99-T. It is a wheel vehicular mounted ground Cavalry troop.

(f) L Company 75th Infantry is also located at Camp Eagle and is an assigned Ranger Company, to the Division under TOE 7-157E.

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f. Training.

(1) The squadron made maximum use of the AARTS program. With the large number of non-aviation qualified personnel assigned to the Squadron and personnel not qualified in aviation specialities the program has enjoyed success within the 2/17th Cav. Coupled with on-the-job training the overall results have greatly enhanced the success enjoyed by the squadron. A breakdown of the schools attended is as follows:

1	UH1H Airframe
1	AH1G Airframe
1	OH6A Airframe
5	T-53/L-13 Eng
2	Armament Off
7	Armament Enl
2	XM35 Subsystem
6	LOH Transition
3	AH1G Transition
6	Tech Supply
1	Tech Insp
12	MACV Recondo School
3	OH6A IP/SIP
1	AH1G IP
3	AH1G Heli Repair
3	UH1D Heli Repair
1	UH1H IP
1	Projectionist

(2) Division Schools.

3	Sniper Course
9	LOH Transition
1	Projectionist
9	Combat Leadership

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(3) Class were given on the following subjects during the report period.

- Ambush Techniques
- Counter Ambush
- Day-Night Patrolling
- Adjusting Artillery and Gunships
- Crew served weapons
- Individual weapons (also qualification)
- McGuire rig operation
- Rappelling (also qualification)
- Medivac Procedures
- Aircraft checkrides
- Interior Guard
- Command Information
- Escape and Evasion
- Air Cavalry Tactics
- Preventive Maintenance
- FAC Procedures
- Sapper attack
- AN/URC - 10 survival radio
- Marginal weather and Instrument flying
- Character Guidance
- Aircraft and Ground Safety
- Care, cleaning of Gas Mask
- Effects of Marijuana

g. Logistics.

(1) The reporting period is from 1 Feb 70 through 30 April 70. During this period, the Squadron relocated C Trp and a major portion of A Trp. Troop C moved from Camp Sally RVN to Phu Bai Combat Base RVN. Trp A moved its combat elements from Camp Eagle RVN to Quang Tri RVN. Transportation and logistical support for these moves was adequate.

(2) Support.

(a) Concept of logistical support: The S-4 supply section supported all units from a Central Issue Facility at Camp Eagle RVN. Class I and IV were provided to Trp A by the 1st Brigade 5th Mechanized Infantry at Quang Tri and to Trp C by the 159th Assault Helicopter Battalion at Phu Bai.

(b) Organization for support: The supply section draws and issues Class II and IV items for units assigned to the Squadron. Additionally, the supply section maintains the Squadrons property books and records and prepares the majority of this Squadrons logistical reports.

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The Transportation section provided wheel transportation for the Squadron. Eagle beach transportation, trash pickup, supply pickup, transportation for ammunition and potable water were also provided by this section.

The ammunition section provides ammunition to the Squadron ASP. With Trp A at Quang Tri, a portion of their ammo is drawn at the Quang Tri ASP. All other ammunition is supplied from the Phu Bai ASP. Re-arm points for AH1G gunship were re-located at the troops to provide better turn around time for the Cobras. Troop B utilized 3 re-arm points on Scabbard flyway. Troop A utilized 6 re-arm points at Quang Tri and Troop C used re-arm facilities at Phu Bai. Troop's gunships could use their own re-arm points or any of the other troop points depending on the mission and destination of the aircraft.

(3) Material Service.

(a) Supply: Class I during this period was picked up by each unit. This was a change, as last reporting period the transportation section picked up and delivered rations. Class II and IV were provided by Quang Tri, Phu Bai, and Camp Eagle.

Refueling was accomplished at refuel points set up by 426 S&S Bn, throughout the Division TAO.

Class V was provided by the Division ASP's at Quang Tri and Phu Bai.

h. Civil Affairs.

(1) During the past three months, Squadron Medical assets have continued to be utilized to augment existing Medical aid in Thua Thien Province. Over 1000 Vietnamese participated in 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry medocaps with five cases being referred to Hue Hospital (civilian) or 85th Evac (military) for specialized treatment.

Medocaps have ceased to be conducted in different locations each week, but are now stabilized in one location until it is felt that a number of the residents are capable of treating other people. Then and only then, does the medcap transfer to a new location. In this respect, emphasis has changed from directly supporting tactical operations to complementing and training local personnel and will continue past our eventual departure. The program is under the mutual direction of the District Health Chief and Squadron Surgeon and requires extensive use of local nurses. Emphasis has also been placed on exercising GVN medical supply channels although US channels are more expedient.

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(2) In the future, Psyops, specially designed, high quality, limited distributed posters and leaflets are employed by Ranger and Aero-Rifle platoons in areas showing signs of recent and frequent enemy activity or at sites of enemy contact or bomb damage assessment. Future plans call for more leaflets of basically the same type.

(3) Conversational English instruction was begun at Thien Hue High School, District III, Hue. One hour on Tuesdays and two hours on Thursdays constitutes the frequency of the classes. Emphasis is placed on students not only understanding their instructor when he speaks but, more importantly, their answering coherently. Since the English alphabet contains more letters than does the Vietnamese, pronunciation is most difficult for the Vietnamese student attempting to enunciate in English. The classes are resulting in improved pronunciation of English by many students.

(4) Squadron civil affairs assets are being slowly diminished in District III, Hue. Increasingly effective local GVN direction has changed the nature of our participation from that of doer to a catalyst. Projects require and receive virtually no American labor and technical assistance. Village funds are used to provide selected materials and our less visible role is to provide the remaining materials.

Lich Doi School, a project begun with entirely American materials, is being completed with materials requested from province by the Chief of District III, Hue.

Repairs to Hue stadium, which will be initiated in the near future, will require only the hauling of sand and dirt by American military forces. The remaining materials will be furnished through Thua Thien Province channels.

2. SECTION II, LESSONS LEARNED: COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION.

a. Personnel:

1. (1) Observation: Large groups of personnel who arrive in country at the same time are often put into one or two units, which causes a large DEROS "hump", and leaves the unit at a loss for trained and qualified personnel until such time has elapsed to enable replacements to be trained.

(2) Evaluation: This condition places an unnecessary load upon the unit to train large bodies of personnel simultaneously, thus affecting the unit's combat effectiveness.

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(3) Recommendations: That either the flow of personnel into units be more effectively controlled at a higher level, or that infusion be incorporated in such a manner as to provide an advance training period (6 or more months ahead of the projected DEROS hump). Due to the Cavalry mission consideration of priority should be given.

b. Intelligence:

1. (1) Observation: Intelligence information passed between Brigade and supporting Troop.

(2) Evaluation: In the past intelligence information has not been timely or accurate between Brigade and Troop. The Brigade can be a valuable source in keeping a supported troop abreast of the intelligence situation in a specific area of operations. This intelligence is passed to Division, back to Squadron, to Troop which affords a certain time lag, briefing from Brigade and pass the information to the Troop on a daily basis.

c. Operations:

1. (1) Observation: Artillery fires should be adjusted on active enemy trails and known enemy rest and storage areas, and target numbers obtained for the target, then fire the target by number for H&I fires at night.

(2) Evaluation: In January, when the unit arrived at Quang Tri, H&I Artillery Targets were submitted using eight digit coordinates. Reconnaissance of the H&I target areas revealed that usually none of the rounds hit the area.

Most of the rounds hit from 200 meters to as much as 1000 meters from the target. Subsequently during each reconnaissance mission, two or three fire missions were adjusted on active enemy trails at choke points, and on bunker, storage and rest areas. Target numbers were obtained and H&I targets were requested by target number. Post strike analysis of the adjusted H&I targets revealed that 80% of the H&I rounds hit in the target area. Enemy casualties cannot be assessed, but the fact that NVA quit using the trails and bunkers indicated that the H&I fires were effective.

(3) Recommendation: That artillery fires be visually adjusted on areas that show recent NVA activity, and that adjusted targets be fired every night for three days, and periodically after that as dictated by enemy activity in the area.

(2) Evaluation: In the past intelligence information has not been timely or accurate between Brigade and Troop. The Brigade can be a valuable source in keeping a supported troop abreast of the intelligence situation in a specific area of operations. This intelligence is passed to Division, back to Squadron, to Troop which affords a certain time lag, briefing from Brigade and pass the information to the Troop on a daily basis.

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(2) Evaluation: The Aero-Rifle Platoon was combat assaulted into the Khe Sanh Plateau to RIF and leave a stay behind patrol. Due to the terrain and mission, the Platoon Leader did not feel it necessary to carry M-72 LAW's. In response to another contact, the Aero-Rifle Platoon was picked up and re-inserted to check for a wounded NVA soldier near the Quang Tri River. The wounded NVA had taken refuge in a cave. As the platoon maneuvered to get a hand grenade into the cave one man was killed. Had the platoon had their customary two LAW's per squad they could have neutralized the cave before approaching it. On another occasion, the platoon conducted RIF in an area previously hit by Cobra Gunships. They saw a bunker with a dead NVA soldier in the door. As they approached the bunker an undetected NVA soldier inside the bunker shot an Aero-Rifleman. Due to the dense underbrush the platoon did not detect the bunker until it was too close to use LAW's, hand grenades or M-79 HE. Had the platoon been equipped with M-79 CS rounds, one CS round would have neutralized the NVA in the bunker. Each squad now carries 6 rounds of CS for the M-79.

(3) Recommendation: That each Aero-Rifle Squad carry 2 each, M-72 LAW's, 6 each, M-79 CS rounds at all times.

3. (1) Observation: Air Cavalry Employment

(2) Evaluation: The role and employment of Air Cavalry and especially a Hunter-Killer team must be continually stressed to all commanders at every level throughout the Division. Emphasis should be placed on the employment of the Hunter-Killer team, its capabilities, where it should be used and when it should not be used.

(3) Recommendation: That the briefing currently given by the Commanding Officer 2/17th Cavalry to newly assigned combat Battalion Commanders, be given to all Battalion Operations Officers and Company Commanders. This will ensure that the capabilities and limitations of Air Cavalry Employment are widely disseminated.

4. (1) Observation: Ranger teams, upon insertion, often are overpromised before being able to accomplish their mission.

(2) Evaluation: the NVA are familiar with the standard methods of Ranger team insertions, and more deception is required during the insertion of small unit forces.

(3) Recommendations: This unit has conducted several types of diversions to enable the clandestine insertion of Ranger teams. The first is the use of a hunter-killer team near the area, engaging in armed reconnaissance and reconnaissance by fire. This appears to engage the enemy's attention and draw him away from an area of proposed insertion, enabling a team to be inserted without observation.

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Another method is the use of a "Stay-Behind" operation in which a platoon sized force is inserted with the Rangers dressed in similar clothing. The platoon then conducts a RIF, and is extracted using the same number of aircraft as was used for the insertion of the platoon plus the Ranger team. This leads the enemy to believe that all personnel have been extracted and gives the Rangers a greater chance to perform their mission without detection.

The third technique used is that of a "Downed Aircraft", in which a UH1H appears to be on fire by use of a white smoke grenade wired to a stick, which is held inside the cargo compartment by one of the crew. The aircraft lands in the LZ, the Rangers are dropped out, and the aircraft takes off a few minutes later, appearing to have put out the fire.

5. (1) Observation: Cavalry Mounted (wheeled) Sweeps

(2) Evaluation: A vehicle mounted cavalry unit can greatly enhance perimeter security and cordon operations especially in the rolling terrain around Camp Eagle and the coastal lowlands. Because of the vast flexibility and speed of a ground cavalry unit the principle of surprise can be used to the utmost in neutralizing any attempted infiltration. Especially in daylight hours a wheeled, ground cavalry unit can cover larger areas of terrain (one platoon equivalent to area covered by two rifle companies) with more flexibility. The infantry section or ARP can be used effectively employed to exploit terrain inaccessible to vehicles while scout jeeps and recoilless rifle jeeps provide organic support and protective fire.

(3) Recommendation: Troop D should be deployed mounted for extensive area reconnaissance or cordon operations in the lowlands.

6. (1) Observation: Effectiveness of Cavalry-Artillery Raids

(2) Evaluation: In the past cavalry-artillery raids have been in reaction to intelligence sometimes more than a month old. This leads to the firing of useless targets. The cavalry has the ability to find targets that benefit this type of operation, the key being, fast reaction so that the enemy can be kept off balance. Intelligence in the Republic of Vietnam a week old is of little value to an offensive operation of this type.

(3) Recommendation: Initial air visual reconnaissance should be made to determine target priority. The decision should be made within the same day as to movement of tube artillery into the area, keeping in mind total area coverage. Once the guns have been set up, targets should be adjusted by aerial observer to insure target destruction. Continued visual reconnaissance to acquire further targets is essential to provide fresh targets and many times provide the capability to see and engage enemy troops on the ground. If the time lapse between decision to conduct the operations is over 24 hours another aerial visual reconnaissance should be conducted to determine if the target area is still lucrative.

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7. (1) Observation: Use of scout teams (2 LOH's) in visual reconnaissance rolls.

(2) Evaluation: Use of a scout team (2 LOH's) as a reconnaissance vehicle in areas of sparse enemy activity serves the troop in two ways. It saves aircraft time on the more maintenance critical Cobra gunships and acts as a training mission for the LOH pilots. Also the scout team is able to work first and last light missions in weather where a Cobra gunship is limited in some respects.

(3) Recommendation: Use of white teams be continued for Visual reconnaissance missions. Each Brigade be briefed on ability and employment of the white team.

d. Organizations

1. (1) Observation: TC Maintenance Detachment

(2) Evaluation: The support provided by the maintenance detachment is absolutely necessary for sustained maintenance within the Troop. Its identity as a separate unit can cause conflicts which will greatly impede maintenance progress.

(3) Recommendation: That the TC Detachment be deactivated and reorganized as the maintenance platoon of the Air Cavalry Troop. It is also recommended that all TOE equipment and special tools be incorporated in this maintenance platoon.

e. Trainings: NONE.

f. Logistics

1. (1) Observation: Need for higher maintenance priority for aircraft instruments.

(2) Evaluation: During periods of marginal weather, attitude instrument flying becomes critical in the Republic due to the lack of parts availability in regards to aircraft instruments (ie; altimeter, HMI, Attitude indicator). Further, the instruments are a DX item requiring turn in of the part even before one can be requisitioned leaving the aircraft in a circled red (X) condition.

(3) Recommendation: That priority of aircraft instruments be raised and that some type of "float" system be incorporated whereby one can be used while a defective one is turned in and repaired or requisitioned.

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g. Communications:

1. (1) Observation: When a forward CP is established, FM and UHF communications are extremely difficult to maintain over long distances.

(2) Evaluation: The Single-Side-Band Long-Range radios provided either by TO&E or TA are very well suited to long-range communications.

(3) Recommendations: This unit, when establishing a forward CP, incorporated a SSB net into the communications center. This enabled instant communications at all times, and enable timely and accurate reporting of all operations, as well as easy coordination for support from the rear area.

h. Material: NONE.

i. Other:

1. (1) Observation: Survival Vests for Aviators

(2) Evaluation: Aviators need a means to secure items for survival to their person. In an actual crash the aviator is usually left with that which is on his person at the time he leaves the aircraft. He does not have time to gather his survival equipment, extra ammunition, smoke or whatever items are needed to survive any length of time on the ground. The Air Force utilizes a nylon vest that provides pockets for ammunition, pen-flares, smoke and a holster for a side arm. It is constructed in a vest form which is light and durable. It is an excellent means of securing the necessary items for survival.

(3) Recommendation: Provide each crew member with a survival Flight Vest.

2. (1) Observation: Every crew of a downed aircraft that this unit has been able to contact on Guard Frequency by using a survival radio has been rescued. Those who have not had the radios or have not used them were not always rescued.

(2) Evaluation: The survival radio plays an extremely important role in the rescue of the downed aircraft crews.

(3) Recommendation: That it become mandatory for all aircrews flying in the Republic of Vietnam to have on their person a survival radio capable of transmitting on Guard Frequency (243.00).

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1. Unit Strength as of 30 April 70.

	Officers		WO		Enlisted		Total	
	Auth	OH	Auth	OH	Auth	OH	Auth	OH
HHT	19	23	6	7	168	224	193	254
A Trp 332TC	19	10	31	30	188	165	238	205
B Trp 333TC	19	14	31	32	188	174	238	220
C Trp 507TC	19	14	31	35	188	202	238	251
D Trp	4	4	0	0	127	151	131	155
Co L	3	4	0	0	118	120	121	124
Sqdn Total	85	69	99	104	977	1036	1159	1309

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