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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 101st Aviation Battalion (Aslt Hel) (Ambl)
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-AV-BE

19 July 1970

SUBJECT: Feeder After Action Report Covering the Period 010001 June -
302400 Jun 70 of Operation Texas Star.

Commanding Officer
101st Aviation Group (CPT)
101st Airborne Division (Ambl)
ATTN: AVDG-LC-C
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1. The primary mission of the 101st Avn Bn during operation Texas Star was to provide tactical mobility for combat troops, supplies and equipment of the 101st Abn Div during the conduct of combat and airmobile operations. The Battalion was organized with a HHC, three assault helicopter companies and one attack helicopter company. Support was furnished to the 1st and 2d Infantry Brigades with two direct support assault helicopter companies and additional divisional requirements with one general support assault helicopter company. The Battalion's Attack Helicopter Company supports this Battalion in a general support role daily with a minimum of three LFTs. Each direct support company furnished a minimum of ten aircraft per day to their respective Brigades.
2. During the period 1 - 22 Jun 70 the Battalion's general support company provided an average of four aircraft daily for CCN support. The flexibility and maneuverability afforded to this operation through the use of aviation assets allowed for the positioning of reconnaissance forces throughout the area of operation. The use of false insertions and extractions, and false LZ preparations greatly increased the overall effectiveness of this operation. On 23 Jun 70 the Battalion commenced providing six aircraft daily in support of Project Delta, a combined US/ARVN reconnaissance operation. Weather prevented any substantial activity before the mission was terminated on 30 Jun 70. Throughout this entire period the Nighthawk system on the UH-1H aircraft was used extensively for night surveillance. This system has proved highly successful and accounted for numerous sightings and several confirmed kills during the period.
3. Lessons Learned:
 - a. (1). Item: The shifting of artillery fire off of LZ's into suppressive fire areas.

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(2). Discussion: During the conduct of an artillery raid the artillery preparation of the LZ was completed at H-2 minutes and the tubes were reported clear. At H-hour the artillery began to fire suppressive rounds without shifting the artillery tubes to pre-planned targets. This resulted in damage to two UH-1H aircraft and two wounded personnel in the LZ.

(3). Solution: The AMC must get a positive confirmation as to whether the tubes have been shifted prior to committing the aircraft into the LZ.

b. (1). Item: The use of flechette rounds during the ARA's portion of an LZ preparation.

(2). Discussion: While conducting a combat assault ARA was to make a pre-strike of the LZ using flechette rockets. After the artillery preparation had stopped at H-2, ARA took up the preparation and fired a pair of flechette rockets. One of the lift aircraft was caught in the outer edges of the flechette pattern and received several aircraft skin punctures.

(3). Solution: The AMC must specify that no flechettes be used after the lift element is on final approach and that ARA should be made to acknowledge sighting the position of the inbound flight.

c. (1). Item: Booby Trapped PZ's.

(2). Discussion: While making a routine extraction of a recon element from a flat land PZ, one aircraft encountered a booby trap detonated by a member of the ground element. The incident resulted in two injured aviation personnel and three wounded infantrymen and damage to one UH-1H aircraft.

(3). Solution: Prior to touchdown in a new PZ artillery or ARA should be expended on the area, if possible, in an attempt to detonate any booby traps. In addition the ground element should make a thorough sweep of the PZ area prior to arrival of the first ship. Ground elements should also mark the exact location for touchdown of the aircraft.

d. (1). Item: Providing six aircraft on a 24 hour basis at QT in support of Project Delta.

(2). Discussion: During this seven day period it was necessary to commit seven aircraft in order to provide a continuous availability of six aircraft. There was sufficient unscheduled maintenance to necessitate having one aircraft grounded at all times. Considerable difficulty was encountered with avionics and it would have been preferable to keep a small stock of spare radios and control heads at Quang Tri.

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(3). Solution: When involved in missions which require the separation of aircraft from their normal company location only aircraft which are more than 50 hours away from Periodic Inspection should be used. Intermediate kits should be made available to crewchiefs so the intermediate inspection can be pulled on location.

4. It is felt that the desired objectives of operation Texas Star during the period of this report have been met. Through the use of aviation assets the operation has been highly successful. The increase maneuverability afforded to each Infantry Brigade through the use of aviation assets allowed rapid repositioning of combat forces and equipment throughout the AO.

William N. Peachey
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LTC, IN
Commanding

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