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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (12 Oct 67) FOR OT RD-670272

23 October 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters,  
10th Combat Aviation Battalion

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation by USACDC in accordance with paragraph 6f, AR 1-19 and by USCONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d, AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from Lessons Learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

C. A. STANFIELD  
Colonel, AGC  
Acting The Adjutant General

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 10TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
...APO. 9637Z

AVGD-AE

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10 May 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarter Ending 30 April 1967  
(RCS GSFOR-65) (U)

TO: See Distribution

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

A. COMMAND

1. (C) MISSION: The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion provides aviation support as directed by CO, 17th Combat Aviation Group to US Forces, Republic of Vietnam Forces (RVNAF) and Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF), in developing and maintaining an effective conventional and counterinsurgency capability; to exercise command and control over assigned and attached units as directed by CO, 17th Combat Aviation Group.

2. (C) ORGANIZATION: The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was organized as follows on 30 April 1967:

Headquarters and Headquarters Company  
256th Signal Detachment  
279th Signal Detachment  
296th Signal Detachment  
238th Counter-Mortar Radar Detachment  
339th Aviation Detachment (Operations)  
Pathfinder Detachment

48th Aviation Company (Airmobile)  
390th Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
286th Medical Detachment

117th Aviation Company (Airmobile)  
140th Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
130th Medical Detachment

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129th Aviation Company (Airmobile)  
394th Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
433rd Medical Detachment

281st Aviation Company (Airmobile)  
483rd Transportation Detachment (CHFM)  
499th Signal Detachment

180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter)  
403rd Transportation Detachment (MCH) (DSM)

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3. (U) COMMAND RELATIONS: The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion continues to be commanded by LTC BENJAMIN L. HARRISON. The Deputy Battalion Commander for Support is LTC HENRY L. WILKINS. On 5 March 1967, LTC DEAN G. BOYLE replaced LTC HARRY McK ROPER JR., as Deputy Battalion Commander for Operations.

b. Changes of command within subordinate units during this reporting period were:

(1) On 15 February 1967, MAJOR WILLIAM GRIFFIN relinquished command of the 281st Aviation Company (Airmobile) to MAJOR ALLEN L. JUNKO.

(2) On 18 February 1967, MAJOR RONALD H. MERRITT relinquished command of the 129th Aviation Company (Airmobile) to MAJOR BOBBY B. FERNANDER.

(3) On 1 April 1967, LTC THOMAS F. PERKINS relinquished command of the 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter) to MAJOR WALLACE L. TATE.

4. (C) ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES: a. On 17 February 1967, the UH-1 helicopter companies within the 10th Battalion were reorganized under General Order Number 30, Headquarters, United States Army Pacific. This reorganization placed the units under TOE 1-77G, PAC 1/67.

b. The 339th Aviation Detachment (Operations) was assigned to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion effective 22 February 1967 under the provisions of 17th Aviation Group General Order Number 3, dated 22 February 1967.

B. PERSONNEL MORALE AND DISCIPLINE

1. (C) During the reporting period, this battalion has lost 176 enlisted men due to normal rotation. Out of this total, 16 were reassigned to Fort Lewis, Washington for lack of specific duty station orders.

2. (U) Personnel problems had no adverse effect on combat operations during this period.

3. (U) Morale has been high, and all R&R allocations have been utilized. There have been no major disciplinary problems.

C. INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

1. (C) In the Dong Ba Thin area, the physical security officer (S-2) continued to conduct daily briefings to exchange and coordinate intelligence information. These brief-

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ings were attended by representatives of the following:

Khanh Hoa Province  
Republic of Vietnam Army  
Republic of Korea Army  
Special Forces Detachment B-51  
Cam Ranh Bay Air Police

These daily meetings provided timely intelligence from a variety of sources, and enabled everyone to have an excellent intelligence picture of enemy activity within the Dong Ba Thin area.

2. (U) In the forward area of operation, intelligence information is obtained from the supported units by way of INTSUMS and close liaison. The supported units normally conduct a daily briefing at which a current intelligence picture is presented. The battalion commander or a member of the S-3 staff always attends these meetings.

D. PLANS, OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

1. (C) PLANS: At the close of this period, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion is in a field location near Khanh Duong with the 117th and 129th Aviation Companies (Airmobile) and six CH-47s from the 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter). These units have been in general support of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division for Operation SUMMERALL which terminated 29 April 1967. The 48th Aviation Company (Airmobile) is in general support of the II Corps Tactical Zone coastal region. A complete realignment of these companies is scheduled for 1 and 2 May 1967 and new missions will be assigned. The 281st Aviation Company (Airmobile) with headquarters in Nha Trang continues to provide direct support to 5th Special Forces Group (ABN).

2. (C) OPERATIONS:

a. General - During the reporting period, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was committed to support four major combat operations (Operation GATLING I and II, 1 February - 15 February 1967; Operation FARRAGUT, 15 February - 20 February 1967 and 25 February - 23 March 1967; Operation JUNCTION CITY, 20 February - 26 February 1967; and Operation SUMMERALL, 30 March - 29 April 1967). We also supported TF IVY on Operation ADAMS during this period until 28 March 1967 with elements of one aviation company (AML) and one aviation company (AMM). During the period of Operation JUNCTION CITY, the battalion reinforced the 11th and 145th Combat Aviation Battalions. The following units were supported during this re-

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porting period: 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division; TF IVY, 4th Infantry Division; 2d Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile); 9th ROK Infantry Division; Capitol ROK Infantry Division; 5th Special Forces Group (ABN); TASK FORCE ALFA, Vietnamese Marines; and II Corps and Army Vietnam troops (ARVN). Significant activities during the period include: The conduct of one battalion size illuminated night combat assault; one battalion size illuminated night extraction; one company size gas training combat assault utilizing "CS" to saturate the landing zone; one battalion size illuminated and non-illuminated night combat assault training exercise, and seven displacements of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion ranging in distance of 55 to 220 kilometers and consisting of a minimum of two aviation companies, 4 CH-47s, and the battalion command and control element. Throughout this period, the battalion command and control element plus two aviation companies (Airmobile) and a minimum of four CH-47s have remained in forward operational areas.

b. Operation GATLING I and II ( 1 - 15 February 1967)

(1) The task organization of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during Operation GATLING I and II was as follows:

- (a) Command and control element, Headquarters 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.
- (b) 48th Aviation Company (Airmobile) ( 1 - 6 February 1967)
- (c) 117th Aviation Company (Airmobile)
- (d) 129th Aviation Company (Airmobile)
- (e) 174th Aviation Company (Airmobile) (1 - 5 February 1967) (Reinforcing).
- (f) 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter
- (g) Company A, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion ( 1 February 1967). (Reinforcing).
- (h) Pathfinder Detachment, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

(2) The mission of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was to:

- (a) Provide general support to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.
- (b) Be prepared to mass aviation support as directed by CG, 1st Field Forces, Vietnam.

(3) The operational accomplishments of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during this operation are reflected in the following statistics:

- (a) Flight data - US Support:

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO (TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
48th Avn Co	786	122.3	725	480.5
117th Avn Co	1,832	53.7	2,075	735.9
129th Avn Co	2,676	50.8	2,520	863.0
180th Avn Co	3,931	673.3	776	249.9
	9,225	900.1	6,096	2,329.3

(b) Flight Data - Non-US Support:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO (TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
48th Avn Co	350	0	59	23.0
117th Avn Co	384	0	64	24.5
129th Avn Co	463	1	140	35.0
180th Avn Co	180	0	24	6.0
	1,377	1	287	88.5

(c) Combat Assaults:

	<u>US</u>	<u>Non-US</u>
Company Size	6	6
Battalion Size	4	0

(d) Combat Extractions:

	<u>US</u>	<u>Non-US</u>
Company Size	2	6
Battalion Size	2	0

(e) Ammunition Expended:

	<u>7.62mm</u>	<u>2.75"</u>	<u>40mm</u>
	78,938	6,971	339

(f) Night Time:

48th Aviation Company	2.3
117th Aviation Company	11.6
129th Aviation Company	26.9
180th Aviation Company	4.5
Total	45.3

(g) Anti-Aircraft Fire:

Number of aircraft receiving fire	- 2
Number of aircraft receiving hits	- 0
WIA	- 0
KIA	- 0

(h) Medical Evacuations: 76 personnel

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(4) Discussion of Operations: (B) Operation GATLING was initiated with what is believed to be the largest airmobile assault ever conducted by a single aviation battalion in the II Corps Tactical Zone. Spanning a distance of over 90 kilometers from pickup to landing zone, this was the longest heliborne assault ever accomplished in Vietnam. The tactical objectives and results of the airmobile raids on 1 February remain highly classified; however, the planning and execution of the initial assault is indicative of the outstanding versatility and unique tactical capability of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

(b) In a little over 24 hours after receiving our initial warning order, the battalion massed at Phan Thiet on the night of 31 January with five aviation companies (airmobile) and one aviation company (medium helicopter). The units assembled from Tuy Hoa, Ninh Hoa, Dong Ba Thin, and Phan Rang. This vast air armada was winging its way to its objective area at 0900 hours on 1 February. The assault was to be conducted with one lift from Phan Thiet of 524 troops followed by multiple lifts of 1,287 troops from two different airfields in the Bao Loc vicinity. The phasing and controlling of the assault was extremely critical in that B-52 and tactical airstrikes were to precede the assault. Fuel, ammunition, and 1,700 troops were delivered by tactical airlift to two separate airfields following the initial helicopter assault landings. The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was required to simultaneously establish and control three separate pickup zones and one refueling - rearming area in a brief span of 30 minutes after the arrival of the first tactical transport aircraft. Each of these critical phases was precisely executed 1 February as planned and by 1700 hours that day, the forward operating base and field headquarters of the "Vagabonds" was closed near Bao Loc; a two stage displacement of over 120 miles in less than 24 hours. This operation is a classic example of an airmobile raid in that more than 1,800 troops were landed combat ready in an elapsed time of three hours and prior to the initial heliborne assault no troops were within 90 kilometers of the objective area.

(c) Phase II of Operation GATLING commenced 6 February with the airmobile assault of two Infantry battalions from the Bao Loc Airfield to an area midway between Bao Loc and Phan Thiet. During the remainder of the operation, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion and its elements were located at Phan Thiet.

c. Operation JUNCTION CITY (20 - 26 February 1967)

(1) The task organization of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during Operation JUNCTION CITY was as

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follows:

- (a) Command and control element, Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.  
(b) 48th Aviation Company (Airmobile)  
(c) 117th Aviation Company (Airmobile)  
(d) 129th Aviation Company (Airmobile)  
(e) 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter)  
(f) Pathfinder Detachment, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

(2) The mission of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was to:

(a) Reinforce the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, 145th Combat Aviation Battalion, and the 222nd Combat Support Aviation Battalion.

(b) Be prepared to mass aviation assets and perform missions as directed by CG, II Field Forces, Vietnam.

(3) The operational accomplishments of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during Operation JUNCTION CITY are reflected in the following statistics:

(a) Flight Data - US Support:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
48th Avn Co	437	8.0	365	170.6
117th Avn Co	444	4.3	267	135.4
129th Avn Co	544	4.0	459	215.0
180th Avn Co	357	262.5	192	91.8
	<u>1,782</u>	<u>278.8</u>	<u>1,283</u>	<u>612.8</u>

(b) Flight Data - Non-US Support:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
48th Avn Co	317	.8	92	36.1
117th Avn Co	287	.6	158	49.3
129th Avn Co	340	.0	242	50.3
	<u>944</u>	<u>1.4</u>	<u>492</u>	<u>135.7</u>

(c) Combat Assaults:	<u>US</u>	<u>Non-US</u>
Company Size	0	0
Battalion Size	0	1

(d) Combat Extractions: None

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(e) Ammunition Expended:

	<u>7.62mm</u>	<u>2.75"</u>	<u>40mm</u>
	39,900	180	0

(f) Night Time:

48th Aviation Company	21.8
117th Aviation Company	5.9
129th Aviation Company	<u>53.0</u>
	80.7

(g) Anti-Aircraft Fire:

Number of aircraft receiving fire	- 15
Number of aircraft receiving hits	- 11
WIA	- 1
KIA	- 0

(h) Medical Evacuations: 5 personnel

(4) Discussion of Operations: (a) Less than three weeks after our highly successful initial combat assault of Operation GATLING, the mobility and flexibility of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was again put to a challenging test as the call came to provide four aviation companies to support the initial combat assaults of Operation JUNCTION CITY. The battalion moved from Phan Thiet on 20 February with three aviation companies (airmobile) and one aviation company (medium helicopter) to Tay Ninh.

(b) During the first three days of the operation, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion reinforced three other aviation battalions while the command and control element was engaged in coordinating and planning for the helilift of TASK FORCE ALFA, Vietnamese Marines. This lift took place on the morning of 24 February. Due to poor visibility and a 300 feet ceiling, the flight of 40 UH-1Ds had to proceed low level in tactical formation. In spite of hazardous weather, unfamiliar terrain, and frequent bursts of automatic weapons fire, 1,240 Marines were inserted precisely on schedule.

d. Operation FARRAGUT (26 January - 23 March 1967)

(1) The task organization of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during Operation FARRAGUT was as follows:

(a) Command and control element, Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

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- (b) 48th Aviation Company (Airmobile) (25 February - 23 March 1967).
  - (c) 117th Aviation Company (Airmobile) (26 January - 20 February 1967).
  - (d) 129th Aviation Company (Airmobile) (26 January - 23 March 1967).
  - (e) Detachment 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter) (26 January - 23 March 1967).
  - (f) Pathfinder Detachment, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

(2) The mission of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was to:

- (a) Provide general support to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.
- (b) Be prepared to mass aviation support as directed by CG, 1st Field Forces, Vietnam.

(3) The operational accomplishments of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during this operation are reflected in the following statistics:

(a) Flight Data - US Support:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
48th Avn Co	6,010	161.2	4,106	1,541.6
117th Avn Co	5,270	104.4	4,082	931.6
129th Avn Co	9,506	220.1	9,394	2,189.9
180th Avn Co	3,296	473.6	927	335.3
	<u>24,082</u>	<u>959.3</u>	<u>18,509</u>	<u>4,998.4</u>

(b) Flight Data - Non-US Support:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
48th Avn Co	84	0	31	16.5
117th Avn Co	36	0	12	3.0
	<u>120</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>19.5</u>

(c) Combat Assaults: Night US Non-US

Company Size	0	19	0
Battalion Size	1	14	0

(d) Combat Extractions: Night US Non-US

Company Size	0	13	0
Battalion Size	1	11	0

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(e) Ammunition Expended:

<u>7.62mm</u>	<u>2.75"</u>	<u>40mm</u>
331,143	968	309

(f) Night Time:

48th Aviation Company	143.0
117th Aviation Company	23.5
129th Aviation Company	106.1
180th Aviation Company	11.9
Total	<u>284.5</u>

(g) Anti-Aircraft Fire:

Number of aircraft receiving fire	- 13
Number of aircraft receiving hits	- 3
WIA	- 1
KIA	- 0

(h) Medical Evacuations: 94 personnel

(4) Discussion of Operations: (a) During the time frame of Operation FARRAGUT, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion participated in Operation GATLING (1 - 15 February 1967) and Operation JUNCTION CITY (20 - 26 February 1967).

(b) The highlight of Operation FARRAGUT was a three phase combat assault with the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division on 3 March 1967. The first phase was to insert one Infantry battalion east of Song Mao in an illuminated night combat assault conducted during pre-dawn hours. The mission was to cordon a village that was suspected of sheltering a large body of main force Viet Cong. Markings of the LZ's was done using railroad fuse flares and white smoke grenades. Phase two and three consisted of helilifting two Infantry battalions into multiple LZ's north and west of Song Mao. The landing zones were at elevations in excess of 3,500 feet and the density altitude in excess of 5,000 feet. Moreover, they were extremely small and surrounded by tall trees and other high growing foliage. An additional problem was created when the grass in the LZ's was ignited by gunship preparation, and helicopters were required to land under very limited visibility due to the attendant fires, smoke, soot and dust.

(c) On 10 March, in conjunction with a long range airmobile assault into the mountains between Phan Rang and Song Mao, the command and control element displaced to Phan Rang and remained at that location until Operation FARRAGUT terminated.

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e. Operation SUMMERALL (30 March - 29 April 1967)

(1) The task organization of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during Operation SUMMERALL was as follows:

- (a) Command and control elements, Headquarters 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.
- (b) 117th Aviation Company (Airmobile)
- (c) 129th Aviation Company (Airmobile)
- (d) 155th Aviation Company (Airmobile) (2 April - 10 April 1967) (Reinforcing).
- (e) Detachment 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter).
- (f) Pathfinder Detachment, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion.

(2) The mission of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was to:

- (a) Provide general support to the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.
- (b) Be prepared to mass aviation support as directed by CG, 1st Field Forces, Vietnam.

(3) The operational accomplishments of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion are reflected in the following statistics:

(a) Flight Data - US Support:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
117th Avn Co	6,462	204.0	7,284	1,848.6
129th Avn Co	7,581	217.2	7,230	1,864.2
180th Avn Co	<u>2,808</u>	<u>1,039.7</u>	<u>1,053</u>	<u>330.1</u>
	16,851	1,460.9	15,567	4,042.9

(b) Flight Data - Non-US Support:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
117th Avn Co	447	8.8	315	115.0
129th Avn Co	690	10.1	592	243.0
180th Avn Co	<u>560</u>	<u>13.7</u>	<u>212</u>	<u>70.1</u>
	1,697	32.6	1,119	428.1

(c) Combat Assaults: Night    US    Non-US

Company Size	0	10	4
Battalion Size	1	9	1

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(d) Combat Extractions:	<u>Night</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>Non-US</u>
Company Size	0	7	6
Battalion Size	0	9	1

(e) Ammunition Expended:

	<u>7.62mm</u>	<u>2.75"</u>	<u>40mm</u>
	474,972	2,058	1,937

(f) Night Time:

117th Aviation Company	56.3
129th Aviation Company	73.8
180th Aviation Company	5.8
Total	<u>135.9</u>

(g) Anti-Aircraft Fire:

Number of aircraft receiving fire - 47  
 Number of aircraft receiving hits - 13  
 WIA (not as a result of enemy fire) 3  
 KIA (not as a result of enemy fire) 1

(h) Medical Evacuations: 42 personnel

(4) Discussion of Operations: (a) The original area of operation was southwest of Khanh Duong; however, due to a change in the tactical situation, the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division moved to an area south of Duc My.

(b) One of the highlights of this operation was a battalion size night combat assault to simulate insertion of an Infantry battalion. This operation was conducted on 21 April 1967 as part of a deception plan for the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Both non-illuminated and illuminated assaults were made.

f. Operations of the 281st Aviation Company (Airmobile)

(1) The 281st Aviation Company (Airmobile) continued to provide airlift support to the 5th Special Forces Group (Abn) as its primary mission. This support was divided among the lettered companies and Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group (Abn), and periodic support to the MACV Recondo School and Detachment B-52 (Special Operations). The mission remains the same at the close of the reporting period.

(2) Aircraft from the company are located in the four Corps Tactical Zones of Vietnam.

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(3) Operations: During the quarter, the 281st Aviation Company (Airmobile) provided an average of five UH-1D's and three UH-1C's to support Detachment B-52 in long range reconnaissance patrol (LLRP) operations. Also armed helicopter support was furnished "D" Company, 5th Special Forces Group (Abn), located in IV Corps. A summary of these operations is contained below:

(a) Can Tho (22 February - 1 March 1967)

1. This operation provided a heavy fire team in support of "D" Company, 5th Special Forces Group (Abn). The heavy fire team was to support an Engineer Survey Team working at a new "A" camp location.

2. During this period, the heavy fire team was credited with the following:

VC KIA Confirmed	25
VC KIA Estimate	25
Destroyed one hut with secondary explosion	
Sanpan destroyed	1

(b) Bong Son (2 March - 4 April 1967)

1. This operation in support of Detachment B-52, Project DELTA, was conducted in conjunction with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). The support consisted of infiltrations, extractions, medical evacuations, and combat assaults.

2. The following statistics were compiled:

Total Hours	722.1
Total Sorties	1,655
Troops	2,356
Cargo (Tons)	16.4
Aircraft Hit by Enemy Fire	- 1
Aircraft Lost	- 0
Casualties	- 0
Recon Teams Supported	-10
Roadrunner Teams Supported	-15
Medical Evacuations	-25
Ranger Operations:	
Company Size	- 5
Battalion Size	- 1

(c) MACV Recondo School: Support was provided throughout the period. The school trains Americans, Koreans, and Vietnamese in tactics of long range reconnaissance patrols. The course is three weeks in duration, and the men are trained in rappelling, rope ladders, McGuire Rig extractions, and techniques of infiltration. For advantages of electronic hoist over McGuire Rig see Inclosure #3. 3 UH-1D's and 2 UH-1C's provide this support.



g. Other Combat/Combat Support Operations -

(1) Throughout this period, the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion was committed to combat operations daily.

(2) Operation ADAMS:

(a) The following support was provided by the 48th Aviation Company (Airmobile) during the period 7 - 19 February 1967:

<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
3,371	171.4	2,051	736.8

(b) The following support was provided by the 117th Aviation Company (Airmobile) during the period 27 February - 28 March 1967:

<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
6,437	206.3	5,553	1,187.9

h. Summary of Operations - The following is a summary of the statistical highlights of the helicopter accomplishments of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during the reporting period:

<u>TROOPS</u>	<u>CARGO(TONS)</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME</u>
120,109	9,217	68,872	23,056

Combat Assaults: (Battalion Size)	- 31
Number of aircraft receiving fire	- 77
Number of aircraft receiving hits	- 28
WIA	- 5
KIA	- 1

3. (C) TRAINING: The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion has conducted various training activities in conjunction with combat operations. Supported units were briefed concerning helicopter utilization (Inclosure #1), and the role of aviation in anti-guerrilla warfare (Inclosure #2). Areas receiving the most emphasis were those required to improve or sustain the individual and unit proficiency in combat operations.

a. Night - The battalion conducted extensive individual and unit night training throughout the reporting period. A total of 670 hours were flown at night for training during the quarter. Every month each aviator is required to fly a minimum of 1 hour at night and to accomplish at least 3 night take-offs and landings from the pilots seat. On the night of 21 April in the vicinity of Khanh Duong, the battalion conducted a night training combat assault. Both illuminated and

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non-illuminated combat assault, ~~complete with~~ gunship preparation, were conducted as training exercises and integrated as part of a deception plan developed by the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. The night assault demands the highest level of skill and this can only be achieved and maintained through frequent practice of night flying techniques. The dividends of our training are evident in the successful conduct of a battalion size illuminated combat assault, and one night extraction during this quarter.

b. Instrument - The instrument training program was initiated on 29 August 1966 with the objective to attain and maintain a proficiency in basic instruments by non-instrument rated rotary wing aviators. The program continues to be very active and during the reporting period 511 hours were devoted to instrument training.

c. Chemical - During this reporting period each crew member went through a gas chamber exercise given by the Chemical Officer, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. The culmination of this training was a company size combat assault training exercise into an LZ saturated with CS gas. Formation flying wearing the M-24 protective mask was practiced during the CS exercise and no difficulties were encountered.

d. DECCA - During the reporting period, the Battalion Standardization Officer made arrangements for a DECCA representative to visit each unit. Classes were conducted and in-flight instruction was given to the unit instructor pilot.

e. First Aid - Each crew member receives a minimum of two hours per quarter on this vital subject. We are continually called upon to conduct medical evacuations, and our crew members are ready to render assistance if called upon.

E. LOGISTICS

1. (C) COMBAT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES:

a. Class III and V - Significant improvement in Class III and V support was achieved. Until the beginning of the past quarter, the battalion was dependent upon integral TO&E storage and dispensing equipment to satisfy all POL combat support requirements. Logistical planning for Operation FARRAGUT led to the tasking of the 1st Logistical Command (FSA) with the responsibility for Class III and V support. The system, at its present state of development, consists of the following:

(1) Presentation of Class III and V requirements to the FSA by the S-4 forward area representative.

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(2) Transportation, storage, issue or disbursement of Class III and V products by the FSA.

(3) Supervisory management of equipment, personnel and product by the S-4 forward area representative.

b. The above system is now being effectively utilized at the battalion field location. This procedure frees the smaller capacity company to support equipment for the support of various auxiliary operational areas, normally in conjunction with a forward supply point.

2. (C) Transportation - During the quarter, organic units of the battalion have been continuously on the move in support of accelerated combat activity. S-4 is continuing with studies aimed at reducing the impact of these moves on combat operations, through the acquisition of improved airmobile equipment and shelters.

3. (C) Post Development Activities - During the quarter the Post Development Planning Board initiated the following projects:

a. STRATCOM transmitter and receiver site construction, to include billeting for assigned personnel.

b. Contonment construction for an incoming aviation company.

c. Military Construction Authority (MCA) construction program submitted to USARV MCA committee.

d. Facilities were allocated to the US Army Engineer Command Vietnam (P) Engineer Equipment School.

e. Power line construction for the permanent post power system.

f. Preparation of requirements and justification for ramp and hangars to be used by tenant airplane reconnaissance company.

g. Contonment construction of 3,400 man billet contonment, primarily through self-help construction of billets.

h. Contonment of the 18th Engineer Brigade Headquarters build.

i. Dong Hien Post perimeter was strengthened through the addition of concertina, double apron fencing, guard towers and clear zones.

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4. (C) Installation Coordinator ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ effective 1 May 1967, Commanding General, 18th Engineer Brigade will assume responsibility for development of Dong Ba Thin Post.

F. INFORMATION

1. (U) The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion public information program continues to be active providing coverage of the forward area as well as the Dong Ba Thin complex.

2. (U) A summary of the battalion news releases is as follows:

a. Feature Articles	27
b. Picture Releases	108
c. Home Town Releases	262
d. Taped Interviews	5
e. Formal Press Interviews	2

3. (U) The battalion continues to utilize the PIO capabilities of higher headquarters to cover important events.

G. SIGNAL

1. (C) HIGH FREQUENCY SSB: Utilization of high frequency (HF) single side band communications equipment has continued to provide the fast-moving forward element with continuous communications during displacements. The palletized equipment is airlifted by either helicopter or fixed wing aircraft at the initiation of a displacement and communications are established before the high frequency station at the old location leaves the air.

2. (U) LAND LINE: Communications through the area system can usually be provided within one or two days, at which time the HF assumes a back up role.

3. (C) DONG BA THIN COMCENTER: A signal platoon from the 278th Signal Company has been assigned to the Dong Ba Thin base camp which has taken a heavy load off the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion Comcenter. These personnel now provide communications center facilities for all units at Dong Ba Thin to include the 18th Engineer Brigade and other separate units.

4. (C) AVIONICS: Avionics support in the field location has continued to be superior. Utilization of the avionics vans provides a much better facility than the tents that must be used in more remote locations. Development of a van that could be airlifted by C-130 aircraft is desirable.

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H. (U) SURGEON

CONFIDENTIAL

The services of a flight surgeon for the personnel in the 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter) in Tuy Hoa has been very limited. The 17th Combat Aviation Group flight Surgeon makes a weekly trip to Tuy Hoa to preclude adoption of the alternative whereby the 180th personnel must travel to Dong Ba Thin.

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SECTION II, PART I

LESSONS LEARNED

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A. PERSONNEL

1. (C) Item: Assignment Orders on enlisted personnel.

Discussion: During this quarter, 9% of the enlisted men in this command rotated to CONUS without specific assignment instructions. Programmed losses in May indicate the situation will become worse.

Observation: The adverse effect on morale is readily apparent, particularly for married personnel. In addition, the situation of indefinite duty station assignments creates additional problem areas which are detrimental to the retention of desirable personnel through reenlistment.

B. OPERATIONS

1. (C) Item: Selection of alternate landing zones for combat assaults.

Discussion: The landing zones selected for combat assaults normally receive preparatory fires from tactical air, artillery or gunships. In many instances these preparatory fires ignite the grass or scrub bush setting the landing zone ablaze, making it difficult and sometimes impossible to land troops and supplies in the primary landing area.

Observation: Wherever possible an alternate landing zone must be selected in the event that the primary landing zone becomes unsafe for landing.

2. (C) Item: Multiple flight routes for smoke dispersing helicopters.

Discussion: In recent operations the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion has employed a smoke generator mounted on a UH-1B helicopter for the purpose of screening the landing zones during combat assaults.

Observation: Changes in wind direction or in the enemy situation require that several flight paths be selected for smoke generating helicopters in order to provide adequate screening of the ground forces. Therefore, multiple flight routes must be preplanned for these helicopters so that the Command and Control helicopter can rapidly redirect the laying of smoke in the event of any change in wind direction or enemy situation.

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C. TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION

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1. (C) Item: Chemical Training.

Discussion: The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion conducted gas chamber exercises for all of its flight crews during the period as well as practice company size combat assaults into a CS saturated landing zone.

Observation: The lens of the M-24 protective mask limits peripheral vision and the plastic material can become creased resulting in some visual distortion. These limitations are minimized by requiring aviators to fly wearing their protective masks for a minimum of one hour each month. During these periods the aviator practices formation flying and accomplishes at least three approaches to the ground, thereby instilling confidence in his ability to fly an aircraft while wearing a protective mask.

2. (C) Item: Maintenance of instrument flying proficiency.

Discussion: The weather encountered by the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion during the period of this report was characterized by early morning fog, low ceilings and late afternoon thundershowers with attendant reduced visibility.

Observation: These weather conditions emphasized the need for all aviators to be proficient in instrument flying in the event they inadvertently fly into clouds during performance of their missions. Continual emphasis must be placed at unit level to insure that all aviators receive sufficient training to gain and maintain instrument flying proficiency.

3. (C) Item: Coordination of night training exercises with supported unit tactical operations.

Discussion: Experience has shown that units must conduct actual night operations or training exercises regularly in order to maintain night flying proficiency. The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion does this by scheduling a battalion size night combat assault for training at least once every 30 days if an actual night operation is not conducted during that period.

Observation: Whenever night training exercises are being planned, coordination should be made with the supported unit to insure that these exercises are incorporated into the tactical deception plan thereby providing an additional benefit to the ground forces.

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D. INTELLIGENCE - None

E. LOGISTICS

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1. (C) Item: 100 GPM Pump (Miniports).

Discussion: The use of 100 GPM pumps with organic miniport equipment has proven to be ineffective, resulting in excessive non-productive aircraft operating time between successive sorties. When refueling a company or battalion size lift, refueling time averages 10 to 15 minutes per UH-1, and 20 to 25 minutes per CH-47.

Observation: The 350 GPM refueling system can simultaneously refuel 12 UH-1 aircraft within 4 to 6 minutes, saving an average of approximately 9 minutes per aircraft. The 350 GPM system reduced the refueling time for CH-47s by at least 10 minutes. The filter separator for the 350 GPM system is also much more effective in eliminating water and foreign matter.

2. (C) Item: Defective Ammunition.

Discussion: At times, defective ammunition is encountered when loading aircraft at the ammunition point.

Observation: To facilitate EOD pickup of defective ammunition, a separate bunker can be built adjacent to the main ammunition point.

3. (C) Item: Units moving to new permanent areas.

Discussion: The 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter) moved from Dong Ba Thin to a new area at Tuy Hoa. Prior to the move, coordination was made with the Engineers and a contourment area was drawn up in accordance with existing regulations and construction criteria. The Engineers built the orderly room, operation facilities, mess hall, latrines, maintenance area, and aircraft parking area. They also poured the concrete pads for the living area prior to the arrival of the unit.

Observation: Due to the prior planning and construction, the 180th Aviation Company (Medium Helicopter) retained its combat posture in spite of a permanent move of 80 miles.

4. (C) Item: Request for non-standard airmobile equipment for cargo helicopter field maintenance detachments.

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Discussion: Due to the numerous moves made in conjunction with the tactical employment of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion, a need has been generated for the field maintenance detachments to be completely air transportable. At present, only one maintenance detachment is air transportable using makeshift non-standard equipment. The other detachments are non-air transportable and their movement takes several days. This adversely affects our aircraft availability, and therefor the tactical situation.

Observation: To solve this problem, a request has been submitted to issue the three field maintenance detachments (140th, 390th, and 394th) equipment in order to be air transportable. The following is a list of equipment required to make one (1) field maintenance detachment airmobile:

<u>QTY</u>	<u>NOMENCLATURE</u>	<u>FSN</u>
1	Shop Set A/C Maint, Airmobile, tool crib, B level maint Bn Set #1	4920-906-9728
1	Shop Set A/C Maint, Airmobile, Electrical Instrument and Hydraulic, B level Maint, Bn Set #2	4920-906-9729
1	Shop Set, A/C Maint, Airmobile, Sheet Metal and Welding, B level Maint, Bn Set #3	4920-906-9730
1	Shop Set, A/C Maint, Airmobile, Machine and Engine, B level Maint, Bn Set #4	4920-906-9731
1	Shop Set, A/C Maint, Airmobile, Propeller and Rotor, B level Maint, Bn Set #5	4920-906-9732
1	Shop Set, A/C Maint, Airmobile, Flaw Detection, B level Maint, Bn Set #6	4920-906-9733
1	2½ ton Wrecker (Airmobile) Truck Crane, 2½ ton 6x6, M108 w/winch	2320-853-8526
4	Transporter 45A2 Wheels, Airmobile, Hydraulic lift for shelter and X-4 cont.	2320-902-3474
2	Truck, Utility, ½ ton Platform 4x4xW/E	2320-049-4804
20	Conex, X-4, w/inserts	4920-M54-0075
5	Airmobile Maintenance Shelter	4920-M-0073
1	Forklift, R/t 10K (463-1) Airmobile (AF)	3930-912-4450

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5. (U) Item: Self-help Program.

Discussion: Prefabricated tropical wooden frame buildings were issued by the Engineers to the units of the battalion to be erected on a self-help basis.

Observation: The Engineers should survey and stake out all the concrete pads in the contonment area. Engineers should supervise and train a unit crew during the pouring of the first concrete pad and erection of the first building. Only minimum Engineer supervision would be necessary after the first building is erected.

F. SAFETY

1. (C) Item: Inadvertant detonation of claymore mines.

Discussion: During command and control, utility, and resupply missions, helicopters are often required to land outside the perimeter of Special Forces Camps, or the forward tactical command posts of friendly units. These isolated headquarters normally are protected by claymore mines.

Observation: During an electrical storm, an aviation company had two UH-1's damaged by the inadvertant explosion of four claymore mines by static electricity. Contact must be established with these isolated posts to insure the selection of a safe landing area.

2. (C) Item: XM-21 Miniguns.

Discussion: There have been several occasions where the XM-21 has fired accidentally during rearming and re-loading. This accidental firing was due to a malfunction of of the feeder delinker assembly of the weapon.

Observation: Additional safety precautions must be taken. This unit normally rotates the miniguns to the down position upon landing and a visual inspection of the firing solonoid is made to insure it is in the open position.

G. AVONICS

1. (C) Item: Floor microphone buttons for gunners and crewchiefs on all UH-1 helicopters.

Discussion: Crewchiefs and gunners are used extensively to watch for obstructions and to guide pilots away from them. These people represent the eyes in the back of the pilot's head.

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Observation: The present use of only a hand mike switch forces the gunner and crewchief to use only one hand on their machine gun while talking on the intercom. This creates a situation that, if you are fired upon, the gunners are either late returning enemy fire or in reporting it. It also causes delays in reporting obstructions.

SECTION II, PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. PERSONNEL (C) (Reference Section II, Part I): Recommend that the entire program of enlisted assignment instructions be thoroughly analyzed and more positive effective measures be incorporated to reduce and eliminate the "Assignment orders to follow" status of personnel being rotated.

B. OPERATIONS - None

C. TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION - None

D. INTELLIGENCE - None

E. LOGISTICS

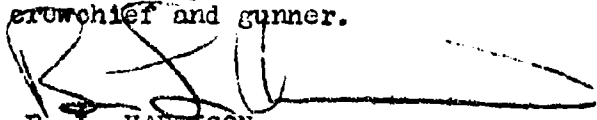
1. (C) (Reference Section II, Part I): Recommend that a theater-wide utilization study of 350 GPM pumps be conducted and that available assets be positioned to support those locations and activities requiring the dispensing of more than 5,000 gallons of POL products daily.

2. (C) (Reference Section II, Part I): Recommend initial training by the Engineers of unit construction crews involved in erection of prefabricated buildings.

3. (C) (Reference Section II, Part I): Recommend expedited acquisition of improved air transportable equipment and shelters required by combat aviation battalions.

F. SAFETY - None

G. AVONICS (C) (Reference Section II, Part I): Recommend that all UH-1 helicopters be modified by the addition of floor microphone switches for the crewchief and gunner.

  
B. L. HARRISON  
LTC, Infantry  
Commanding

3 Incls:

1. (U) Ltr, 10th CAB,  
Helicopter Utilization

24

2. (C) Seminar Notes

CONFIDENTIAL

3. (C) Ltr, 281st AHC,  
Electric Hoist

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AVGD-SC (20 May 67) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, 17TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96240 20 May 1967

TO: Commanding General, I FFORCE V, APO 96240

1. The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion Operational Report for Quarterly Period ending 30 April 1967 is forwarded for information and action.

2. This Headquarters has reviewed this ORLL and concurs with Part II, recommendations, as modified herein.

- a. Personnel - Concur
- b. Operations - N/A
- c. Training and Organization - N/A
- d. Intelligence - N/A
- e. Logistics

(1) Action has been taken thru I FFORCE V and 1st Avn Bde to install 350 GPM pumps and filter separators at each base Camp. Also one 350 GPM pump is requested to be issued to each Bn for field use to supplement the 100 GPM KENCO pumps.

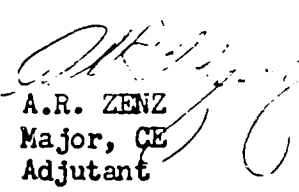
(2) At present Engineers are furnishing supervisory personnel for erection and fabrication of buildings.

(3) Improved Air Transportable equipment and shelters have been requisitioned and are being issued to the 10th CAB.

- f. Safety - N/A
- g. Avonics - Concur

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl  
as

  
A.R. ZENZ  
Major, CE  
Adjutant

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AVFA-GG-OT (10 May 67) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending  
30 April 1967 (U)

HEADQUARTERS, I FIELD FORCE VIETNAM, APO 96350 12 JUN 1967

TO: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96307

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the 10th Combat Aviation operational report for the period ending 30 April 1967, and the preceding indorsement with the following comments.

2. (C) Reference certain sub-paragraphs of Section II, Part I - Lessons Learned:

a. Paragraph E1 - Operations: Concur. Selection of alternate landing zones is a well established procedure which was instituted to primarily cope with tactical requirements. The manner in which preparatory fires are employed on primary and alternate landing zones varies in intensity and scheduling, but preparation fires are delivered on alternate as well as primary landing zones.

b. Paragraph E2 - Logistics: Concur. Sufficient documentation of defective ammunition, i.e., nomenclature, lot number and quantity should be given to the supporting ammunition supply point for the unit to conduct an evaluation which may result in the suspension of the entire lot.

c. Paragraph E3 - Logistics: Concur. The results achieved and the ease of movement of the 180th Aviation Company may be attributed to effective planning and timely coordination with the local installation coordinator.

3. (C) Reference Section II, Part II - Recommendations:

a. Paragraph A1 - Personnel: Concur. Recommend that the services of the USARV Military Personnel Assistance team be made available to the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion to determine and correct, if possible, the factors which led to the high percentage of personnel rotating without reassignment instructions to CONUS during the quarter.

b. Paragraph E1 - Logistics: Concur. This headquarters recommended approval of the 17th Combat Aviation Group letter, subject: Refueling at Base Camps, dated 4 May 1967. The establishment of refueling points at base camps in II CTZ would provide sufficient organic 350 GPM pumps for operational requirements at field locations.

c. Paragraph E2 - Logistics: Concur. This is normal procedure for self-help base development projects in which the engineers are responsible for site preparation and layout, as well as construction of concrete pads. A small engineer team will assist the unit in construction of a few prefabricated buildings until training of unit personnel is considered adequate

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12 JUN 1967

29  
AVFA-GC-OT (10 May 67)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending  
30 April 1967 (U)

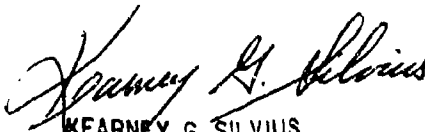
without further engineer assistance.

d. Paragraph E4 - Logistics: Concur. Appropriate action has been taken to alleviate this problem. USARPAC message (U), 5888, DTG 070454Z March 1967, granted interim authority to issue to three field maintenance detachments the equipment required to provide the added capability required.

e. Paragraph G - Avionics: Concur. The aircraft pilot and co-pilot have floor microphone switches available to facilitate communicating while both hands are in use. When the crew chief and door gunner are manning a machine gun both hands are in use and a floor microphone switch would allow them to communicate while so occupied.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

3 Incls  
nc

  
KEARNEY G. SILVIUS  
CAPTAIN, AGC  
ASST AG

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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AVBA-C (10 May 67) 3rd.Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 30 Apr 67,  
(RCS-CSFOR 67)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96307

JUL 15 1967

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DH,  
APO 96307  
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-MH,  
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff Force Development, Department of the  
Army (ACSFOR DA), Washington D. C. 20310

1. This headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 10th  
Combat Aviation Battalion and considers it to be adequate and concurs  
with the contents as indorsed.

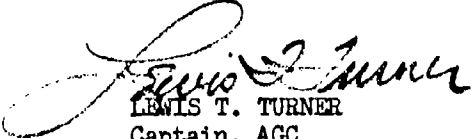
2. The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Reference section II, part II, para A, page 6: Personnel.  
The 10th Combat Aviation Battalion has been made aware of the reasons  
for nonreceipt of assignment instructions. Coordination with Hq USARV  
Adjutant General Section identified the reason for this problem area  
and solutions were provided the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion and 17th  
Combat Aviation Group.

b. Reference section II, part II, para G, page 6: Avionics.  
Concur in requirement for installation of floor microphone buttons  
for crew chiefs and gunners allowing "hands free" access to the helicopter  
interphone system. This headquarters has advised the unit that initia-  
ting action should be accomplished through submission of an EIR.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

3 Incl  
nc

  
LEWIS T. TURNER  
Captain, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

31  
AVHGC-DST (10 May 67) 4th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
30 April 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 31 JUL 1967

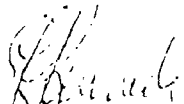
TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 30 April 1967 from Headquarters, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion as indorsed.

2. Pertinent comment follows: Reference item concerning late receipt of reassignment instructions, paragraph A1, section II, part I: Late receipt of reassignment instructions is a matter of concern to this headquarters and is not limited to any one unit or organization. USAPV G1 is working with Department of the Army and the major subordinate commands to improve AOR reporting procedures, speed up processing of reports and eliminate errors. Personnel management teams are giving particular attention to this problem. The goal is to ensure that all enlisted personnel grades E-1 through E-6 have published orders at least 30 days prior to DEROS. The objective for officers and senior noncommissioned officers is to have published orders in their hands at least 60 days prior to DEROS.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

3 Incl  
nc

  
**E. L. KENNEDY**  
Cpt. AGC  
Asst Adjutant General



GPOP-DT(10 May 67)

5th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967  
from HQ, 10th Cbt Avn Bn (RCS CSFOR-65) (U)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558

4 OCT 1967

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding  
indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



3 Incl  
nc

by . L. McMULLIN  
MAJ, AGC  
Asst AG.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 10TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO 96377

20 April 1967

SUBJECT: Helicopter Utilization

TO: See Distribution

1. Recently at my request the 1st Bde 101st Abn Div published a letter on Helicopter Utilization which is of interest to all commanders and flight crew members.

2. A copy of this letter is forwarded for each pilot and aircraft commander of your unit. They should study the letter in order to understand what is expected of them and to know what to expect of the ground troops.

DISTRIBUTION: Special



E.L. HARRISON  
LTC Inf  
Commanding

Incl 1

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
APO 96347

26 January 1967

AVBD

SUBJECT: Helicopter Utilization

TO: Battalion and Separate Company Commanders

1. In the majority of combat operations conducted by the Brigade, we depend upon helicopter support for tactical mobility, fire power, command control and resupply. The commander of our supporting aviation organization and I feel that excellent utilization of this support has been the rule. However, the formation and deployment of Army aviation units has not kept pace with the increased U.S. deployment of ground units to the Republic of Vietnam. Therefore, continued improvement in efficient utilization of our limited aviation assets is of great importance to us in the accomplishment of our combat mission.

2. Continued attempts to do more with fewer aircraft has resulted in excessive increases to the Army's aircraft flying hour program. This, simply stated, means that components of our supporting aircraft are being worn out faster than anticipated. Repair parts which have been programmed and purchased to support a lower flying hour program therefore, are in short supply and fewer aircraft can be maintained in a mission ready posture.

3. The enclosed list of considerations concerning helicopter utilization is provided to assist you in our quest for increased combat effectiveness of the Brigade team. I urge you to carefully consider these in your daily planning and operations. Be emphatic in educating your personnel in these matters and demand close attention to the various responsibilities involved. The net result will be the accomplishment of the same fine results we have always gained from our aviation support, in spite of an overall decrease in the number of aircraft supporting the Brigade.

1 Incl  
as

/S/ Pearson  
WILLARD PEARSON  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:  
A plus  
5 ea company - 25 XO

## HELICOPTER UTILIZATION

33

### 1. Helilift Operations

a. Determine the exact number of troops to be lifted as soon as possible. This dictates the number of aircraft, sorties and refueling stops needed to accomplish the mission. When these figures are incorrect it frequently can delay an operation by requiring an unplanned refueling stop prior to the lift completion. Fuel loads are computed so as to carry as little excess fuel as possible allowing ships to have a maximum pay-load capability, thus providing better support.

b. Troops should not hang out of the doors while riding in the helicopters. Some troops seem to delight in being able to hang their legs out the doors, but if the aircraft runs into a turbulent area, they could easily be thrown out of the helicopter.

c. Do not chamber a round in the helicopter. Several ships have been damaged by accidental discharges of weapons inside the helicopter.

d. Troops should face forward when sitting on the floor of the helicopter. This positions their packs towards the rear of the helicopter thus maintaining a proper center of balance and improving the flight characteristics of the helicopter.

e. On company size combat assaults, where a clandestine entry is not required, I would like to see the gunships fire suppressive fire on the initial lift especially when no artillery prep or tactical air has been used. Gunship suppressive fire on combat assaults and final extractions can often insure the success of the operation.

f. Troops must be informed not to mount skids while the helicopter is at a hover. Often while the pilot is looking for a good spot to set down, the troops will exit by jumping on the skids. This can easily result in control problems and cause the aircraft to roll over. Jumping out of the helicopter also increases the ground troop's chance of injury. Troops should wait until the crewchief and gunner give them the signal that the aircraft is in position for debarking.

### 2. Landing Zones

a. Continued emphasis must be placed on LZ's. Too often troops pitch their shelters right on the fringes of a very tight LZ. This is a serious hazard for both the troops on the ground and the crew of the helicopter. The helicopters continually blow down the shelters and ponchos and loose objects can easily be sucked up into the main rotor or tail rotor resulting in the destruction of helicopters. Moreover, the ultimate result will be the probable injury or death to troops on the ground and in the helicopter.

b. Units should mark their helipads with a panel and insure that the panel is secured. The pilot will be less likely to create a rotor downwash in undesired areas if certain of his touchdown point.

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c. Clear LZ's of all stumps and obstacles, but do not burn or remove grass, as a serious dust problem will result. Since the clearance of the belly of the helicopter may be as low as 6 inches during normal operations, stumps should be cut to heights of less than 4 inches from the ground to prevent damaging the underside of the helicopter.

d. Everyone should be cautious about moving up or down a slope toward the rotor blades. Ground clearance of the rotor blades is reduced considerably when the helicopter is sitting on a slope and there is a constant hazard of walking into the rotor. An ARVN soldier was recently hit by a rotor blade under such circumstances and he was much shorter in height than our troopers.

e. Do not string wires in the vicinity of LZ's. They are extremely difficult for the pilot to see on his approach and numerous helicopters have been damaged and crashed following wire strikes.

f. Once troops are put into an LZ, they should leave the immediate touchdown area. This is most important in tall grass since the pilots of the followup ships cannot see the troops on the ground and may be committed to touchdown in their midst. The hazards are obvious.

g. The use of white smoke in an LZ is not recommended. It lingers longer than colored smoke, and often causes a restriction of visibility. Also, do not throw smoke when aircraft is on short final unless the pilot requests it.

h. Units should provide ground guides, especially in small one ship LZ's. Individuals selecting LZ's should be cognizant of slope limitations of the helicopter. (Not more than 10 degrees is desired).

### 3. Crew Briefing

a. The helicopter crew can provide valuable service if they are made aware of the composition and disposition of your troops. Therefore when an aircraft arrives for a C&C or utility mission, the aircraft commander should be briefed on the following: Current situation, call signs and frequencies, location of units to be supported and the tactical plan for the day. The aircraft commander should, in turn, brief the supported unit on the aircraft capabilities and limitations.

b. Ground commanders should respect the aviator's advice on flying in weather or hazardous conditions. He wants only to give you the best possible support, but he is the best judge of his own capabilities and limitations.

c. Do not try to get the aviator to perform extra missions not scheduled in your mission requests. This voids mission planning and allocation of aircraft and causes delays and mission confusion for the remainder of the day. Obviously, changes in the tactical situation can generate such requirements, and when this occurs they will be met; however proper planning can eliminate many unscheduled last minute missions.

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#### 4. Resupply

a. The idea should be stressed that one UH-1D can normally resupply a whole battalion if properly utilized. Several units have made effective use of a man riding "shot gun" with a PRC-25. He has full knowledge of the LZ's and frequencies. Also, if a unit doesn't want some equipment or will soon be on the move, the "shot gunner" has the big picture and can make a proper decision. Too often, trips are wasted between rear CP and forward areas due to lack of such knowledge or information.

b. To facilitate loading, supplies should be placed in two stacks so that the helicopter can land between them. The stacks should be placed approximately thirty feet apart so as to clear each side of the helicopter by 5' - 10' when it lands between them.

c. Whenever possible, loads should be consolidated. Each time the helicopter departs the rear area, it should be fully loaded.

#### 5. Vehicle Antennas

Insure that drivers and RTO are cognizant of the dangers of operating around helicopters with whip antennas. We have had several recent blade strikes with resulting loss of one or more rotor blades at a cost of more than \$5,000.00 per blade. Furthermore the aircraft is normally unavailable to support our units for a period of time since rotor blades are in extremely short supply.

#### 6. CH-47 Operations

a. Do not overload the aircraft. The CH-47A will carry approximately 7000 pounds when operating in mountainous terrain. The weight may be increased to 8000 pounds along the coastal area.

b. In external load operation, stay clear of the approach or depart path. A malfunction of the cargo hook or sling equipment, or an accidental jettison of a load might cost a man his life.

c. Maximum use of sling loads increases the work capability of the CH-47. Prepared sling loads require little time to hook up in the PZ and little time to release in the LZ; thereby eliminating time of loading and unloading internally.

d. Minimum ground clearance for the front rotor blade of the CH-47 is 5' 8" when the helicopter is sitting on level ground. This clearance will be reduced when the helicopter is sitting on a slope, therefore use extreme caution when approaching or departing the helicopter.

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11 February 1967

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Notes for Seminar

Helicopters - Anti-Guerrilla Role

1. Impact on Areas of Interest. The helicopter can cover the Commander's area of interest rapidly. Instead of 2 miles per hour, it transports the foot soldier at better than 2 kilometers per minute.
2. Impact on Area of Influence. The helicopter can rapidly expand the commanders area of influence by moving troops, displacing artillery and directing aerial fire support with gunships.
3. Disadvantages of the Helicopter.
  - a. It is noisy and must fly above the jungle and other ground obstacles.
  - b. There is a continuous need for reconnaissance.
  - c. It can remain "on station" for a limited time only.
  - d. They require large quantities of fuel i.e., one and one-third gallons per min or 1000 lbs in two hours.
  - e. They need from one to three hours of maintenance daily and approximately every thirty days need a "periodic" inspection. This inspection is rather extensive and requires from three to five days to accomplish. The Chinook requires about three times the amount of maintenance as the UH-1.
4. Noise and Exposure to View. The disadvantage of flapping blades and being seen by observers on the ground can be reduced or in some cases overcome by the following.
  - a. Operate downwind from the enemy.
  - b. Maintain a constant speed (reduces flapping noises).
  - c. Avoid landing at friendly positions if possible. (Resupply missions can be conducted by slowing aircraft and dropping the supplies from low level).
  - d. Reduce the number of C&C flights.
  - e. Reduce supply flights by consolidating loads. Further, use one flight of several aircraft instead of one aircraft being used all day on a daisy chain.
  - f. Deceive the enemy of your true intentions. This can be accomplished by doing the following:
    - (1) Use false landing zones and have helicopters land at one or several LZ's before and after dropping troops into the correct LZ.
    - (2) Yellow smoke is normally used to mark LZ's. It should be used also for marking false LZ's.
    - (3) Fire artillery and gunships preparations on false LZ's.

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- (4) Fly circuitous routes and "Nap of the earth".
  - (5) Insert stay behind forces during extractions.
  - (6) Refrain from pointing during recons.

5. Night Operations.

a. General - Night combat operations will accomplish the following:

- (1) Deceive the enemy as to size and to some degree the exact location of the assault, particularly in relatively flat terrain.
- (2) Reduces the vulnerability of the helicopter as a target for ground fire.
- (3) Lends itself to deceptive landings. For example, on 30 October 1966, we fired artillery and gunships prep and used illuminating flares northwest of Cung Son about 2000 hours, but no troops were landed. On 31 October, we inserted Pathfinders and a rifle platoon security element at dusk and brought in the 2/327 Infantry at 2230 hours without illumination on the south side of the river below Cung Son.

b. Night assaults require either illumination or competent Pathfinders control to provide terminal guidance for the aircraft to the LZ. Pathfinders can be inserted with the first assault troops if the LZ is illuminated. Also, they can be inserted during daylight, at dusk, jump or walk into the LZ or inserted the night before the operation is to take place.

c. Night Flying - Night helicopter operations are inherently dangerous. Some of the difficulties encountered are:

- (1) The helicopter may strike trees, antennae, mountains, or other obstacles that the pilot cannot see.
- (2) The pilot may suffer from vertigo and lose control of the aircraft.
- (3) Emergency landings are more difficult at night should an engine fail or a malfunction occur.

d. Training - Training in night operations is extremely important in order to learn techniques and maintain confidence. Fear of objects thought to be seen or instances of vertigo can cause sudden movements that, in night formation flying, can cause mid-air collisions. The bottom of the helicopter position lights are covered with tape to avoid detection from below. Landing lights are not normally used unless the pilot feels it is absolutely necessary. The less experienced and confident pilots use them frequently.

d. Tactical Maneuvers - As a tactical maneuver the night assaults could be a "loser". If the enemy is near the LZ, he has a chance to clobber you if he elects to do so. Also it can afford him several hours of darkness to move out of the area. This is the Infantry Commander's tactical decision. Meanwhile, we will maintain our proficiency and will be prepared to assault at night if desired.

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6. Reconnaissance. The need for reconnaissance should be limited only to those who must know the exact location for landing i.e., the actual ground leader and flight leader. Reconnaissance can be supplemented and enhanced by more extensive use of the O-1 aircraft and aerial cameras. The Brigade S-2 should have the handheld aerial camera KE-4 (70mm) and the Fairchild 505 with Polaroid adapter. When conducting recon's for LZ's, a balance must be struck between close examination at low level for safe troop landing zones and the risk of tipping off the enemy to the exact LZ. This is the Infantry Commander's decision.

7. Fuel Requirements. The requirements for large quantities of fuel limit the flexibility of operations. We have come a long way in solving this problem. Only two years ago, arrangements had to be made with a Vietnamese Commercial fuel handler before operations could be undertaken. Then he would drive his tankers through VC tax collection points to a stage field. Compare this to today, where we now have lightweight pumps and hoses that can be carried in our own choppers and 500 gallon rubber drums brought in by Chinook or Air Force fixed wing aircraft. On our recent operation at Bao Loa the Log Command was quite willing to give us top priority and said they could have it set up in five to eight hours from the time the first aircraft could land with the necessary equipment. This was unacceptable. My S-4 was informed that he had one hour before we needed to refuel. Following these instructions the assistant S-4 brought in one Chinook load of equipment and had eight points operating in 50 minutes. The equipment is not satisfactory in all respects but we are still working on it.

8. Maintenance. The last item is maintenance. To keep them flying and more important to keep them flying safely, those great piles of nuts and bolts, and control rods, and always vibrating metal, requires careful inspections for wear and out of tolerance conditions. They require special tools and highly trained technicians. This requires some pooling at central location, thus, the aircraft cannot remain always with the Infantry in the Jungle.

/s/B. L. Harrison  
/t/B. L. HARRISON  
LTC INF  
Commanding

A TRUE COPY:

*Joel J. Williams*  
JOEL J. WILLIAMS  
MAJ INF

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281ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY  
10TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO 96240

1 May 1967

SUBJECT: Evaluation of Hoist, Electric Rescue

TO: Commanding Officer  
10th Aviation Battalion

1. Prior to the receipt of the electric rescue hoist, the only means available to this unit to rescue personnel from a jungle canopy when no landing zone was available was the McGuire Rig. The McGuire Rig consists of three 100 foot nylon ropes secured to the aircraft. Each rope has a sling for a seat and a loop which is looped over the wrist and closed to secure a person to the sling. Using the McGuire Rig meant that only three men at a time could be extracted and that they were carried externally to an area where the helicopter could be landed and the men brought inside. On some occasions this meant a ride of twenty minutes or more. Since it was impossible to successfully autorotate with this load, an engine failure or similar emergency meant that the personnel in the slings would have to be cut loose. In view of this, the McGuire Rig was used only in a dire emergency when an injury or enemy contact absolutely precluded the patrol moving to a suitable landing zone.

2. During the month of December 1966 this unit received two UH-1D Helicopters equipped with the electric rescue hoist. This hoist was first used on 23 December 1966 in the extraction of a ten man American patrol who recovered bodies in the Ashau Valley. The patrol initially rappelled into the area and was picked up by the use of the hoist. A small hole was found in the jungle canopy and the hoist aircraft hovered over it. Four men were extracted, two men on the hoist at a time, and then flown to a nearby landing zone where they were picked up by another aircraft. The hoist aircraft returned and picked up the remaining six men and returned to base camp. The hoist was inspected after the mission and the cable was found to be frayed approximately ten feet from the reel. Twelve feet of cable was cut off and the remainder resecured to the hoist.

3. During the operation at Bong Son in support of Detachment B-52 during March 1967 the hoist was used quite successfully on three occasions. On 16 March a LRRP consisting of three Americans and three Vietnamese was lifted out in two lifts. On 21 March one man who became separated from the rest of the patrol was rescued by using the hoist. Finally, on 23 March two men

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in a similar situation were rescued. Additionally, during this period three successful medical evacuations were completed using the hoist. In one case had the hoist not been available it is extremely doubtful if the man would have survived since no landing zone was available and the nature of the man's critical wounds precluded the use of the McGuire Rig. During one training period a hoist motor failed after the hoist had been used to lift sixteen loads of two men each.

4. Notification of the necessity for pickup by hoist must be made as far in advance as possible in order to compute an acceptable level of fuel under prevailing conditions. The time over the pickup area would become prohibitive if only one man at a time could be extracted.

5. Some concern has been expressed about the exposure time of the aircraft. Careful consideration and experience have shown that the hoist aircraft has been exposed less (or no more) than would be two aircraft equipped with McGuire Rigs. Additionally, the McGuire aircraft would have to hover straight up for over 100 feet (to allow personnel on the slings to clear the trees) and then fly at only 40-60 knots IAS. The hoist aircraft however, can work hovering close to the trees and is only threatened from the area directly below (where the personnel being extracted can give some measure of protection), and when it departs, it can do so at top speed since it is carrying no external load.

6. One disadvantage is the lack of a hand operated back up system for the electric motor. Since the Floating Army Maintenance Facility (FAMF) is the only facility presently in country which can repair this system and since the hoist may fail with excessive use, some research is advisable into the possibility of installing a hand crank or other light weight system for manual operation should the hoist fail at a critical period. This unit is advising the FAMF of this problem and the recommended solution.

#### OBSERVATIONS:

1. The electrical rescue hoist is highly desirable for use in extracting long range reconnaissance patrols when injury or enemy contact precludes the patrol from reaching a suitable pickup site.
2. Advanced planning of fuel load and density altitude must be accomplished since aircraft must hover out of ground effect.
3. A shorter exposure time plus the inherent advantages of an internal load over an external load make this recovery system superior to the McGuire Rig.
4. A hand crank or other lightweight manual back up system that would be desirable in the event the electric hoist failed at a critical period.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

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1. That sufficient hoists be obtained to ensure that each unit which may be involved in the extraction of long range reconnaissance patrols or similar operations have at least two aircraft equipped with the hoist. Additionally, this hoist should be issued to all Assault Helicopter Companies to use in recovering crews of downed aircraft.
  2. That an immediate training program be instituted so that all aviators become proficient in the uses and techniques of the hoist.
  3. That an immediate recommendation be submitted recommending the modification of the hoist to include a lightweight, manual back up system in the event the hoist fails.

/s/ Allen L. Junko  
/t/ ALLEN L. JUNKO  
Major, Infantry  
Commanding

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