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

AF 250028

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (15 Jan 68) FOR OT ED-670471

18 January 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep), Period Ending 30 April 1967 (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from Lessons Learned during current operations, and may be adopted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 10TH AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)
APO San Francisco 96250

AVFC-30

1 July 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned
(1 February - 30 April 1967)

THRU

~~Commander~~ *RDm 8 Jul 67*
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ATTN: AVFC
APO 96266

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff
For Force Development
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Washington, D. C. 20310

The inclosed Operational Report Lessons Learned is forwarded in compliance with
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FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
as

E. B. Robertson
E. B. ROBERTSON
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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from the lessons learned herein, this report is published
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670471

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AVAILABILITY
SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned

1 July 1967

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Published separately as FOR OT ED 67X001, dated 11 August 1967

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AFR-30

1 July 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned

I. Significant Organizational and Unit Activities

1. Introduction

This Operational Report Lessons Learned covers the period 1 February to 30 April 1967. The Brigade has continued to conduct operations to locate and destroy the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Armed Forces, supply lines of communication and installations. Operations were continued within the Brigade base TAOR (Tactical Area of Responsibility). The Brigade has also continued to carry out the vital phase of Civic Action and Civil Affairs in the Revolutionary Development program, which has contributed to the overall counterinsurgency effort in VIETNAM.

As during the last reporting period, to best accomplish its mission, the Brigade again conducted four (4) battalion size or larger operations in addition to its Civic Action and Civil Affairs program. Operations conducted during this period were Operation FIG SPRING, JUNCTION CITY ALTERNATE, Phase I (Parachute Assault), JUNCTION CITY II and Operation SPARK. Each of these operations were characterized by an aggressive assault on enemy areas and in every operation, the Brigade distinguished itself completing every mission in a vigorous and extremely professional manner. During this period, the Brigade became the holder of still another first in VIETNAM with the first parachute assault in the Republic and the first such operation in fifteen years, as the overlord of the largest ground operation of the war to date.

2. Organization

The internal structure of the Brigade has remained essentially the same during the reporting period, with the exception of the attachment of one new unit. The 46th Public Information Detachment was organized on 9 December 1966. After training for overseas deployment, the unit was assigned to USARV, sailing from San Francisco on 2 March 1967. Upon arrival in VIETNAM, the detachment was further assigned to the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) by General Order Number 1349, WO USARV, dated 26 March 1967.

The detachment with a TO & E strength of two officers and three enlisted men has the mission of augmenting the information section in commands having one, or constituting the information section of commands lacking one.

Since attachment to the 173d Airborne Brigade, the 46th Public Information Detachment has aided the Brigade Information Office in numerous ways. Its personnel have made possible expanded field coverage of Brigade combat activities, more extensive liaison with the accredited civilian press corps and a greater potential for handling internal information publications.

3. Intelligence

a. The enemy's order of battle in the TAOR has not changed since the last two Operational Reports Lessons Learned. The following units have continued to conduct sporadic harassing and small unit tactics in and around the Brigade's TAOR against ARVN and US Forces:

(1) 270th Guerrilla Platoon

(2) 260th Local Platoon

(3) Probable reinforcements continue to include elements from the 800th Bung Hai Battalion and the 3d Battalion, 165th "A" Regiment.

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- b. The accented location remains the same since the last reporting period.
- c. The enemy situation before and during each operation conducted by the Brigade during this reporting period is as follows:

(1) Operation BIG SPRING (1 - 16 February 1967)

(a) Enemy Situation Before Operation: Prior to the commencement of the operation, agent reports indicated the possibility of the 27th VC Regiment being located in our area of operation. The following units operated in the AO: GP 41 Rear Service Unit, C101, C102, and C111, Security Companies of GP 41, the 1109 Local Force (LF) Battalion, C102 and C100 LF Platoons which are subordinate to PHOC THANH Province and have always operated in area. The enemy was attributed with the following capabilities:

1. Initiating harassing attacks within the AO.
2. Reinforcing guerrilla elements with Local Force units of the DDOC Main Force Battalion, the 3d Battalion, 165th "A" Main Force Regiment and the PHU LOI LF Battalion.
3. Withdrawal from or avoid contact with US Forces.

(b) During Operation BIG SPRING, the Brigade elements and elements of the 1st Brigade, 9th Infantry Division maintained daily contact with the enemy to include contact during the TET Holiday period. Contacts during the TET period were always VC initiated. The sporadic contact was usually initiated by friendly forces and terminated with VC withdrawal. The latest contact was with an estimated VC Company with C/2/503d Infantry on 1 February 1967. Numerous VC base camps were found which included fortifications, weapons, foodstuff and documents. The size ranged from Platoon to Regimental. The majority of the documents captured found were from the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 27th VC Regiment. Also captured were files of the TAN UYEN District HQ, Administrative Staff Section (Political Section) which include the yearly reports from 1966, the Political Struggle Committee, Current Affairs Committee, Women's Association and the finance and economics committee.

(c) Terrain: The area of operation was located on a lowland plain which sloped gently upward to the east. The highest point of elevation within the area was an 87 meter hill located at FT 156407. The SONG DONG NAI and the SONG HE Rivers formed the major drainage pattern in the area. These rivers created major obstacles for foot movement. The primary form of vegetation within the area was dense forest, bamboo thickets, cultivated fields and grass lands. Extensive rice fields bordered the banks of the lower SONG DONG NAI. There were large open areas interspersed throughout the area of operation which provided excellent L7's. Inter-provincial HIGHWAY 16 and Commercial Road 114 provided routes of ground entrance into the area. There were populated areas along the large rivers, but the center area was not inhabited. The enemy used the dense vegetation to conceal his activities from aerial and ground observation. On occasion, the VC successfully broke contact with US Forces due to the dense vegetation.

(d) The following chart represents the enemy's order of battle during Operation BIG SPRING.

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OPERATIONAL REPORT LESSONS LEARNED

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AFI</u>	<u>WPTS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
273 Bst	IT 2127	28 Jan 67	253, 27 3d Bst	6-40am WTR 9-12, 14/1A 6-7am WTR Asorted SA	Centre of the C273 are well secured. Most West personnel are out of unit in western zone since. A few of the officers are NW.
1st Bn	Unk		707	2-41am WTR 2-41am WTR 6-57am RR Asorted SA	STR approx 250
2d Bn	Unk		709	2-41am WTR 2-41am WTR 6-57am WTR 6-30 cal WTR Asorted SA	STR approx 250
3d Bn	Unk		711	2-41am WTR 2-40am WTR 6-57am RR Asorted SA	STR approx 250
C103 Bn	IT 645213	8 Nov 66	500, 700, 800, 900	1-40am WTR 1-41am WTR 6-40am WTR 2-12 7 1A runs 6-37am 6-10 cal WTR 1-50 cal WTR Asorted SA	STR approx 250 Possibly provides base security for NRI - STR 150 - 200
C101 Co	IT 690666	1 Dec 66	Unk	Unk	STR 90
C103 Co	IT 070910	1 Dec 66	Unk	Unk	STR 90
C102 Co	Unk		Unk	Unk	None
C104 Co	Unk		Unk	Unk	None

(2) Operation JUNCTION CITY I:

10. (a) See Combat Operations After Action Report, paragraph 11, page
- (b) Order of Battle - Operation JUNCTION CITY I

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>SUB-UNITS</u>	<u>WPTS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
CSVN Sub Units 4, 5, 7, & 9th Div	IT 210930	4 Feb 67	ALL WTR	Unk	Governs all VC Activity in SVN

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UNIT	LOCATION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	WIRE	REMARKS
4th Rec Company Co STR 600	YAT BUNT Province				
70 Guard Rept - STR 600	KT 2991	17 Jan 67	1st, 2d & 1d Rn	9-12.7 WG 2-75 WG 2-40mm Wire 2-40mm Wire	Security fence for STR - can be found via STR 600
60th Arty Rept - STR 100	KT 2060	17 Dec 66	275 (2nd) Rn 277 (Park) Rn 281 Wp Rn 287 (44) Rn	2-40mm Wire 2-40mm Wire 2-40mm Wire 2-75 How 2-75 How 2-105 Wire 2-40mm Wire 2-102 Wire 2-40mm Wire 9-12.7 12-57mm WR	Arty Pk's are usually used in general area of 27th Div
9th Div Hqs	KT 5673	6 Feb 67	271, 272, 273 101 Repts, 97 Arty Rn	Unknown	
271 Rept STR 2600	KT 0072	29 Jan 67	1 Rn 0501 2 Rn 0502 3 Rn 0504	2-40mm Wire 2-40 cal WG 2-40 cal WG 2-40mm Wire	Subordinate to 9th WVA Div
272 Rept STR 2450	KT 6358	28 Jan 67	1 Rn 402 2 Rn 404 3 Rn 406	2-75 How 2-40 cal WG 2-40 cal WG 2-40mm Wire 4-D75	Usually operated in vic of Michelin Plantation
101 Rept STR 1250	KT 5996	7 Jan 67	1 Rn 41 2 Rn 42 3 Rn 43	12-74mm WR 21-40mm Wire 27-40mm Wire 9-12.7 WG 27-PP45 2-240 RL Assorted SA	Sub to 9th Div
W3 Co STR 60	KT 215650		Unknown	Unknown	Sub to District
W7 Co STR 70	KT 240520		Unknown	Unknown	.
W8 Co	KT 165595		Unknown	Unknown	.

(3) Operation JUNCTION CITY II:

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170000Z
 170000Z Operational Report (Secret) (Secret)

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(a) The Combat Operations After Action Report, paragraph 11,
 Tab B, page 8.

(b) Order of battle - Operation JUNCTION CITY II

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ITEM NO</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>WEAP</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
272 VC Bn Str 1200	KT 4879 (pos)	040, 0762, 064 20 Bn 040, Op 12	402 Bn 476 Bn 406 Bn	7-7mm How 2-70 cal WZ 9-41mm WZ 9-50 cal WZ 9-47	
101 Bn Str 1100	KT 4181 (pos)	11 Bn 1254	11, 10, 11 Bn	12-7mm WZ 27-50mm WZ 9-47's 21-41mm WZ 9-12.7mm AA 10k R-40 RL	Also believed to have 120mm WZ
170 VC Bn Str 500	Unk		1, 2, 3 Bn	9-12.7 WZ's 10k 81mm WZ 10k 60mm WZ 4-75mm RR	1st Bn is prob- ably located in 40
275/090 (RR) Str 300	Pos 40	270, 2235	4-82 WZ 9-47mm WZ	4-75mm RR's	
277/090 (How)	Pos 40		2-82mm WZ 10k 81mm WZ	5-120mm Mortars 10k 70, 75 & 120mm How	
D56/090 (44) Str 200	KT 5146	243, D529		10-40cal WZ 15-12.8 9-70 cal WZ 10-AR-47's	
9th VC Div	KT 412752	Worksite 9	271, 272, 101 NVA Bn	1956 Chicom Series	

(4) Operation MWARE

(a) Enemy Situation Prior to the Operation: Prior to the beginning of the operation, the following enemy units were believed to be in the area of operation: C300 LP Platoon, C301 LP Company, C302 LP Company. The 1st NVA Regiment and the D900 VC Battalion were believed to be located in southern WAR ZONE "D". The enemy had the capability to:

1. Attack with a force up to regimental size and to harass employing local forces and guerrillas.

2. To defend with above mentioned forces

3. To reinforce his attack with elements of the D900 Battalion and possibly elements of the 2735 VC Regiment.

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d. To withdraw from contact or avoid contact at the time and place of his choosing.

(b) Enemy Situation During the Operations: From 18 - 30 April 1967, the Brigade maintained sporadic contact with the enemy. These contacts were usually positive engagements with small groups of VC harassing friendly troops. Approximately 40% of these contacts were friendly initiated. Although no large engagements occurred, many base camps were found.

(c) Terrain: The area of operation was to the east of the VC 10 Grid Line and west of the SONG PHU RIVER within the boundaries of BINH DINH Province located in WAR ZONE 7B. The area is a lowland plain that slopes gently upward to the east. The SONG PHU RIVER and SONG PHU RIVER PROVINE the major drainage pattern in the area. Other streams are interlaced between these major water ways. The primary form of vegetation in the AO is dense forest. Secondary forms of vegetation consist of bamboo thickets, cultivated fields and grass lands. Extensive rice fields border the banks of the lower SONG PHU RIVER. Interprovincial HIGHWAY 16 and Commercial Road 314 provide the routes of ground entrance into the area.

e. Throughout this quarter, operations have substantiated the fact that the VC still maintain the ability to engage ARVN and US Forces when he believes the odds are favorable and he will continue to harass in any event.

f. VC losses for the period 1 February to 30 April are as follows:

Enemy Personnel

KIA (RC)	406
KIA (poss)	94
KPA (Killed by Air)	38
VCC	5
Detainees	4
Rallies	0

Equipment/Supplies - Operation FIG SPRING

Weapons

Chicom Carbines	10
German Mausers	2
AK-47's	2
SNS Rifles	2
Necess Magent Rifles	5
Springfield Rifle	1
US Carbines	3

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SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned

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M1 Sub-Machinegun 1
 Czech 7.92mm MP 1
 US M-79 Grenade Launcher 1
 Shotgun (homemade) 1
 .38 Caliber Pistol 2

Ammunition:

175mm Round 1
 105mm Rounds 5
 81mm Rounds 15
 82mm Rounds 19
 60mm Round 1
 40mm Rounds 2
 M1 Rounds 50
 7.62mm Rounds 450
 7.62mm Rounds (rimmed) 275
 .30 Caliber Rounds 2
 7.92mm Rounds 300
 Assorted SA Rounds 1,224

Personal Gear and Clothing

Uniforms 20
 US Pistol Belts 4
 US Canteens 5
 Ammo Pouch 1
 Gas Masks 8
 Rucksacks 16
 Packs 3
 VC Pouches 19
 Steel Helmets 2

AVR-CC
SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned

1 July 1967

Entrenching Tools	11
Hammocks	3
Miscellaneous Clothing	55 lbs
<u>Bombs, Mines, Grenades & Demolitions</u>	
500 lb Bombs	2
15 lb Bombs	5
CMU Bombs	235
Chicom Grenades	45
VC Grenades	6
Grenades (Misc)	28
US Grenades	7
Rifle Grenades	4
Claymore Mines	3
VC Claymores	5
DM-8 Claymores	1
DM-10 Claymores	5
AP Mines	7
AT Mine	1
Dynamite	2 sticks
Explosives	41 pounds
CS	55 gallons
Demolition Kits	6
TNT	10 grams
Blasting Caps	3
<u>Installations</u>	
Base Camps	26
Huts	78
Funheles	172

AFTE-3C
 SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned

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Barkers 1,297
 Trenches 19
 Prone Shelters 16
 Panji Pits 20

Foodstuffs

Polished Rice 14.05 tons
 Paddy Rice 10.65 tons
 Peanuts 20 lbs
 Cucumbers 50 lbs
 Needles 15 lbs
 Lard 50 lbs
 Dried Shrimp 250 lbs
 Salt 335 lbs

Transportation

Bicycles 14
 Farm Tractor w/trlr 1
 2 1/2-ton Trucks 6
 US 3/4-ton Truck w/winch 1
 Stripped Volkswagen 1
 British Landrover 1
 3/4-ton International Truck 1
 Sumpans 3

Miscellaneous: 1047 ft electric wire, 8-3 volt batteries, 3 flashlight batteries, 111 gallons of gasoline, 4 quarts oil, 2 gallons grease, 170 gallons kerosene, 4 typewriters, 550 reams of paper, 4 machettes, 3 pounds tobacco, 4 medical books, 1 barber kit, 50 pounds of medical supplies, 4 7.62mm Ammo Pans, 1 wrist watch, 1 sewing machine, 1 US flight helmet, 13 flares, 3 VC wallets, surgical equipment (assorted), 1 stethoscope, 6 inner tubes, 3 drive shafts, piston rings, 1 battery tester, 1 German tire, 5 - 55-gallon drums, 1 - 30 gallon drum, 1 tire, 3 wheel rims, 1 750 sound bomb casing, 2 Chicom magazines, 1 .50 caliber machinegun tripod, 12 AK-47 magazines, 30 M-16 magazines.

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Equipment/Supplies - Operation JUNCTION CITY I: See attached Combat Operation After Action Report (Tab A), paragraph 18, page 35.

Equipment/Supplies - Operation JUNCTION CITY II: See attached Combat Operation After Action Report (Tab B), paragraph 18, page 34.

Equipment/Supplies - Operation NEWARK

Weapons

12 Gauge Shotgun 1

Ammunition/Mines etc

AP Mines 15

CRU Bombs 7

Claymores 3

Blow Rounds 5

CS Grenade 1

Frag Grenade 1

Installations

Bunkers 19

Huts 11

Other: 4 shell casings, 1 ejection seat, 1 parachute, 5 tons of rice, 50' coamo wire, 3 canteens, 15 documents, 8 notebooks, 9 vials medicine, 2 shirts.

4. Combat Operations

General: The Brigade continued to conduct combat and Revolutionary Development (Civil Affairs and Civic Action) operations designed to locate and destroy Viet Cong Forces, logistical installations and to further reduce his hold on the Vietnamese people.

February

During the month of February, the Brigade continued to conduct normal security operations in and around the BINH HOA Area, terminated one operation and initiated one operation during the month.

The Brigade initiated Operation BIG SPRING on 1 February 1967, conducting offensive operations in the western portion of WAR ZONE "D" with the 1st Brigade, 9th Infantry Division O'CW to the Brigade. Prior to the operation, airt reports indicated the possibility of the 273d VC Regiment being located in the area. During the operation, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) and the 1st Brigade, 9th Infantry Division maintained daily contact with the enemy to include contact during the TET

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Holiday, which were all VC initiated. Contact was usually initiated by friendly forces and terminated by VC withdrawal. Numerous VC base camps were found which included fortifications, foodstuffs, weapons and documents. Operation PIG SPRING terminated at 1500 hours on 16 February with Brigade elements closing back into BINH HOA.

The Brigade had already begun planning for a parachute, and on 17 February, a deceptive plan was published. On 19 February, the Brigade under the OPGW of the 1st Infantry Division, deployed the 1/503d Infantry, 4/503d Infantry and the 3/310th Artillery (-) by C-119 aircraft from BINH HOA Airbase to QUAN LOI in preparation for Operation JUNCTION CITY ALTERNATE. In addition, on 20 February, E/17th Cavalry, D/16th Armor (-), the 173d Engineer Company (-), Brigade HHC (-), and elements of the 173d Support Battalion were deployed by road convoy to the staging area at QUAN LOI. On 22 February at 0900 hours, the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry, Alpha Battery 3/310th Artillery and selected personnel of the Brigade HHC (-) parachuted into Drop Zone "CHAULIK" (XT 339929). Approximately 780 troops were dropped completing the initial assault at 0910 hours. A heavy drop followed at 0927 hours and the CDS drop at 0930 hours. This marked the first combat parachute jump in 15 years and the first in the Republic of VIETNAM. The purpose of the parachute assault was to place the maximum number of combat troops into the operational area in the shortest period of time. The 1/503d Infantry and 4/503d Infantry conducted helicopter assaults south and north of the DZ at 1010 hours and 1120 hours on this day respectively. Operation JUNCTION CITY ALTERNATE was aimed at the COSVN (Central Office of South Vietnam) and the 9th NVA Division in WAR ZONE "C". The operation continued into the month of March. Operations during the month were supported by 285 TAC Sorties and 51 FAC Sorties dropping a total of 333.87 tons of ordnance. Artillery supported the brigade firing a total of 804 missions, expending 19,288 rounds. The Brigade Aviation Platoon (Cannon Platoon) supported all operations with the following sorties:

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Sortie</u>
Resupply	35
Command & Control	1,253
Medevac	12
Reconnaissance	44
Artillery Adjustment	109
Miscellaneous	111
TOTAL	1,457

Operations during the month of February resulted in the following VC and friendly VC and friendly losses:

<u>VC Losses</u>	<u>US Losses</u>
KIA (BC) <u>50</u>	KIA <u>33</u>
KIA (pass) <u>75</u>	MIA <u>201</u>
VCC <u>1</u>	Non-Battle Dead <u>1</u>
VCS <u>0</u>	Non-Battle Injured <u>8</u>
Ballists <u>0</u>	MIA <u>0</u>

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March

During the month of March 1967, the Brigade continued to conduct normal security operations, terminated one Operation (JUNCTION CITY I) and initiated participation in Operation JUNCTION CITY II at the vicinity of MINH THANH.

The Brigade continued participation in Operation JUNCTION CITY ALTERNATE in TAY NINH Province. On 3 March, the Brigade CP (-) displaced from the vicinity of KATM and moved south to SUDI DA. On 6 March 1967, the Brigade initiated numerous airborne and ground assaults southeast of KATM. At this time, Troop "A", 17th Cavalry was under the Operational Control of the 3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. Throughout the operation, the Brigade maintained daily contact with the enemy, inflicting sizeable losses in personnel and supplies/installations on the Viet Cong. A total of 266 kills were inflicted by the paratroopers in addition to capturing over 39 weapons. On 15 March, the 173d returned to BINH HOA Base Camp and immediately upon return, assumed responsibility of the Tactical Area of Responsibility. On 20 March, the Brigade, under the Operational Control of the 1st Division, commenced deployment to MINH THANH for participation in Operation JUNCTION CITY II, again in WAR ZONE "C" by C-130 aircraft and road convoy. Throughout the month of March, infantry elements of the Brigade continued to conduct heliborne assaults, search and destroy missions and night ambushes, meeting with light enemy contact. This operation continued into the month of April. During March, 359 TAC sorties and 69 FAC sorties were flown in support of the Brigade dropping a total of 417.5 tons of ordnance. Supporting artillery (3/319th Artillery), fired 1,651 missions expending a total of 55,554 rounds. The Brigade aviation Platoon continued to provide support on all operations, a statistical report of their activities follows:

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Sorties</u>
Resupply	15
Command and Control	749
Medevac	5
Reconnaissance	63
Artillery Adjustment	29
Miscellaneous	47
TOTAL	<u>908</u>
Maintenance & Training	37
Total Passengers Transported	1,243
Total Cargo (tons)	11.0
Total Hours Flown	1,287

Operations during the month of March 1967 resulted in the following VC and Friendly losses:

<u>VC Losses</u>	<u>US Losses</u>
KIA (PC) <u>304</u>	KIA <u>44</u>
KIA (POW) <u>65</u>	WIA <u>129</u>
VCC <u>5</u>	WIA <u>0</u>

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VC5 (Detainees)	<u>0</u>	Non-Battle Dead	<u>1</u>
Raiders	<u>0</u>	Non-Battle Injured	<u>9</u>

April

The Brigade continued normal security operations, terminated participation in Operation JUNCTION CITY II, and initiated and terminated Operation NEWARK.

The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division continued participation in Operation JUNCTION CITY II, which was initiated on 20 March 1967. The Brigade conducted search and destroy operations, perimeter defense and road security. During the operation, the 173d maintained daily contact with the enemy, inflicting 49 kills by body count and sizeable losses in supplies and installations. The Brigade terminated Operation JUNCTION CITY II on 13 April with all elements closing into BIEN HOA. Upon their return, Brigade elements immediately assumed responsibility of the Brigade's TAC. On 18 April, Operation NEWARK was initiated with the 1/50th Infantry deploying by helicopter assault into WAR ZONE 'D' west of the SONG HO RIVER within the boundaries of PHUOC THUAN Province. The Brigade also assumed participation in Operation UNICOWTON, a security mission in the LONG BINH Sub-Area, CHAU CHAN Mountain and a ridge site between BIEN HOA and SAIGON. Throughout Operation NEWARK, Infantry, Infantry Battalions were rotated between Operation NEWARK and Operation UNICOWTON. During Operation NEWARK, the Brigade elements maintained sporadic contact with the enemy. These contacts were usually engagements with small groups of VC. Operation NEWARK was terminated on 30 April, and served as a valuable training vehicle in preparing new arrivals for forthcoming operations. Enemy resistance was light, thus the men received practical training with a minimal loss in casualties. Operations during the month were supported by 205 TAC sorties and 53 FAC sorties. A total of 256 tons of ordnance was dropped. Supporting artillery (3/319th) fired 149 missions expending a total of 34,424 rounds of ammunition. The Aviation Platoon (Casper Platoon) supported all operations, a statistical summary of their activities follows:

Combat Sorties

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Sorties</u>
Resupply	90
Command & Control	1,110
Medevac	21
Reconnaissance	12
Artillery Adjustment	17
Miscellaneous	100
TOTAL	1,350

Non-Combat Sorties

Maintenance & Training	30
Total Passengers Transported	935
Total Cargo Transported (tons)	35
Total Hours Flown	1,235

VC and Friendly losses during the month of April are as follows:

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<u>VC Losses</u>		<u>US Losses</u>	
VC KIA (PC)	<u>50</u>	KIA	<u>21</u>
VC KIA (poss)	<u>15</u>	WIA	<u>106</u>
VCC	<u>0</u>	WIA	<u>0</u>
VCS	<u>0</u>	Non-Battle Injured	<u>4</u>
Ralliers	<u>0</u>	Non-Battle Dead	<u>5</u>

5. Training

On the 26th of February 1967, the 173d Airborne Brigade Jungle School was organized by Captain Jack K. Farr and SGT Gerald W. Gentry. Instructors were sent by different units within the Brigade for an interview and selected from their experience in combat and instruction abilities. A total of 19 personnel personnel were assigned to the school. The selected ones set out to build a school, working days pitching tents, building runways, setting up class M areas, and nights studying reference materials, making lesson plans and rehearsing classes. New instructors were still reporting in with only two days before the first class was scheduled to start. On 6 March 1967, the first student body reported to the Brigade jungle school. They were unaware that they were the first class until the last day of instruction. This was as much a surprise to the students as it was to the cadre, only the surprise came to the cadre in the form of the comments received from the students on the criticism sheets they filled out at the end of the cycle. On 11 June 1967, the school was authorized a new Manning structure which raised the strength from 19 to 24 cadre. With this increase, the school is able to train 250 new replacements each week and also with minor changes, could train an entire rifle battalion in 9 days. Now instructing class number 18, the school is still providing the Brigade with replacements that are not cold, but have a good knowledge of what they will be doing and how to perform during their tour with the Brigade.

The objective of the school is to provide all replacements in grades E-1 through O-2 with the best possible preparation prior to participation in combat operations in VIETNAM. Initial priority is given to training replacements for the infantry battalions. The training is designed to supplement the training each soldier has received in CONUS. Emphasis is on common mistakes, lessons learned, immediate reaction, enemy tactics and procedures unique to operations in VIETNAM. The training program will consist of five and one half (5½) days of combat subjects taught by instructors with combat experience in VIETNAM. A breakdown of the day by day curriculum is as follows:

Monday: On Monday, the school starts off with the history and organization of the 173d Airborne Brigade followed by airmobile operations, characteristics of the enemy, handling captives and documents, reporting EKI, and security, ambush and map reading, especially relating to the problems of jungle navigation, techniques of jungle operations, First Aid and personal hygiene (with a demonstration by a Dust-off medical evacuation helicopter on the use of the forest penetrator and "stake" litter), a class on communications to include field expedient means, fire support, and a class on patrolling followed by the movie "The Unique War" which gives an insight into some of the reasons we are here.

Tuesday: On this day the training is run on a "Country Fair" basis. Included are demonstrations and practical exercises on the M16A1 Claymore, M-79 Grenade Launcher, M-72 LAW, M-26 Fragmentary Grenade, care of personal weapons, quick kill, night sounds, starlight scope and night firing.

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Wednesday: This day's training goes to ambush and counter ambush techniques, squad tactics, characteristics and defense of operational base, VC mines and booby-traps, boobytrap detection, demolitions, The Gas, search of VC base camp, and tunnel clearing.

During the first three days of training, to help acclimate the students, maximum use of time between classes (scheduled at movement time) is used to double time them from one area to another.

Thursday & Friday: On Thursday morning, after a class on search and destroy, the students are taken on a 30-hour tactical operation in the Brigade FAC. Incorporated in this operation are most of the phases of operation and tactics that are taught during the first three days of instruction. School cadre accompany each element and maintain tight control at all times depending upon the size of the class. A tactical base camp is set up and usually two ambush patrols are sent out, each accompanied by TAC NCO's. The following day, after running search and clear patrols, the elements move tactically back to the jungle school base camp in the Brigade area.

Saturday: Saturday training continues in the base camp starting with PAF bag training, which is followed by guidelines to good relations, which includes instruction on the Vietnamese culture and goes in detail to the other side of this war, that pertaining to Civil Affairs and the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) Program. Next, a class on the maintenance and operation of Chain Saws, which are used quite frequently by this Brigade to clear LZ's in the Operational Area. Then a practical exercise on automobile operations is conducted, followed by a written test covering the week's instruction, a critique of the course by the students, remarks by the Commanding General and after show, a class on communications security followed by movement to the jump school tower for a practical exercise with the PAF bag.

The following is a breakdown of the number of students attending the jungle school during the reporting period.

	<u>Attending School</u>	<u>Combat MOS</u>
MARCH	516	414
APRIL	590	395

6. Psychological Operations and Civic Action

Operations during the period 1 February through 30 April 1967 centered generally on areas where extensive civil affairs operations were not warranted. Emphasis during this time fell on psychological operations and rear area civic action. In the BIEN HOA Area, a total of 23,222 patients were seen on MEDCAP, 2,259 on DEWTCAP. In the forward operational areas, 160 MEDCAP and 116 DEWTCAP patients were treated. Psychological operations included leaflet drops totaling 4,212,000 and 24 1/2 hours of speaker missions. The 12th AA Platoon, 2d Civil Affairs Company has been invaluable, supplying their skill in the Psychological and Civic Affairs Program.

7. Logistics

During the reporting period, the logistical picture has continued to remain excellent. Tactical operations were supported by air, airdrop and land lines of supply (for special techniques in airdrop of supplies, see attached Combat

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Operations AFR - Action Report, Tab D, Incl 1, 2, 3 and 4). In addition, a logistical summary by classes of supply is furnished by month in inclosure 5.

B. Personnel and Administration

a. Personnel

	(1) <u>Brigade Casualties:</u>			<u>Non-Battle Casualties</u>	
	KIA	WIA	MIA	DEED	INJURED
February	22	188	0	5	11
March	44	128	0	1	9
April	22	84	0	5	4
Total	88	396	0	7	21

(2) Brigade Strength

	<u>AUTHORIZED AND ASSIGNED STRENGTH</u>											
	<u>AUTHORIZED</u>				<u>ASSIGNED 1 FEB</u>				<u>ASSIGNED 30 APR</u>			
	OFF	WO	EM	AGG	OFF	WO	EM	AGG	OFF	WO	EM	AGG
Asgn Units	262	39	3964	4265	262	40	4453	4755	266	36	4302	4542
1/ Attached	15	2	78	95	15	1	84	100	17	0	91	108
Aggregate	257	40	4044	4341	277	41	4537	4855	261	36	4393	4650

	<u>GAINS AND LOSSES BY MONTH</u>											
	<u>FEBRUARY</u>				<u>MARCH</u>				<u>APRIL</u>			
	OFF	WO	EM	AGG	OFF	WO	EM	AGG	OFF	WO	EM	AGG
2/ Gains	18	2	392	412	30	1	591	622	46	7	445	518
3/ Losses	15	3	114	132	30	1	293	324	46	1	779	826
Net	+3	-1	+278	+280	0	0	+298	+298	0	+6	-334	-308

1/ During the reported period, the attached unit strength of the Brigade increased. The increase was the result of the attachment of the 46th PI (Public Information) Detachment to the Brigade.

2/ Represents all assigned gains to include both in-country and out-country gains.

3/ Represents all assigned losses to include HEROS, ETS, in-country reassignment, and deceased members.

b. Discipline, Law and Order

(1) During the period 1 February - 30 April 1967, the discipline has been excellent. There were no stragglers.

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(2) There were 2 General Court Martials, 13 Special Court Martials and 2 Summary Court Martials during the reporting period. In addition, there were 133 Article 15's.

c. Development and Maintenance of Morale:

(1) The state of morale within the Brigade remains excellent resulting from improved services and facilities.

(2) Finance: The Brigade Finance Section continued to provide outstanding financial support throughout the reporting period.

(3) Chaplain: During the reporting period, there were 601 religious services conducted (all faiths with a total attendance of 23,361).

(4) In-Country and Out of-Country P & R's for the quarter were as follows:

	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>MARCH</u>	<u>APRIL</u>
Yung Tzu (In-Country)	62	Yung Tzu (In-Country) 65	Yung Tzu (In-Country) 65
Bangkok	80	Bangkok 75	Bangkok 80
Hawaii	42	Hawaii 45	Hawaii 50
Hong Kong	71	Hong Kong 50	Hong Kong 60
Kuala Lumpur	-	Kuala Lumpur 15	Kuala Lumpur 15
Manila	15	Manila 10	Manila 20
Penang	27	Penang 20	Penang 25
Singapore	35	Singapore 30	Singapore 30
Taipei	62	Taipei 65	Taipei 70
Tokyo	<u>86</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>75</u>
TOTAL	478	425	465

(5) Awards and Decorations: There were a total of 1,097 awards given for valor and meritorious services during February, March and April, a breakdown of which follows:

APPROVED AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

	<u>FEBRUARY</u>	<u>MARCH</u>	<u>APRIL</u>
Distinguished Service Cross	1	2	1
Silver Star	4	8	7
Legion of Merit	2	4	14
Distinguished Flying Cross	-	1	1
Bronze Star Medal (Valor)	97	50	136
Bronze Star Medal (Merit/Achievement)	112	129	173

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	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Air Medal (Valor)	10	10	1
Air Medal (Service)	39	40	11
Soldier's Medal	1	5	1
Army Commendation Medal (Valor)	10	36	17
Purple Heart	22	24	21
	611	475	51

9. Chemical Operations: The 51st Chemical Detachment provided readily available chemical support on standby whenever requested by elements of the Brigade.

10. Commander's Observations and Recommendations

1. Observations (Lessons Learned)

Throughout this quarter, several lessons were learned to further aid in the overall counterinsurgency effort in VIETNAM, the most significant of these follows. Additionally, Operation JUNCTION CITY ALTERNATE, the first parachute assault in VIETNAM, produced several new and unique techniques. These appear in paragraph 19 of the attached After Action Report and in Tab D of the same document.

Item: Use of Light Organic Fires and Illumination to Aid Units in Night Navigation

Discussion: On 3 April 1967, Company A/1/507d Infantry was detached to conduct a linkup with the Recon Platoon that was in contact with the Viet Cong. The company moved from the battalion perimeter at 1925 hours and completed the linkup at 040450H April.

Observation: Light organic fire was used to assist the unit in keeping on their azimuth while moving by firing their flares, providing a continuous reference point to move by. Additionally, further navigational assistance was provided by the initial ignition of illuminating rounds in the vicinity of the linkup point.

Item: Establishing an Ambush Site

Discussion: When establishing an ambush, a secondary kill zone within the ambush site, in addition to the primary kill zone should be established.

Observation: The reason for the action cited above is that the VC often try reaching an ambush site. If an ambush is suspected in a general location, the Viet Cong will often try to move parallel to the location within approximately 100 - 150 meters. A secondary killing zone on either the flank or rear allows for a greater possibility of trapping the VC within.

Item: Use of Firefly Teams

Discussion: When the tactical situation permits, a firefly team consisting of a searchlight ship and a light fire team can provide illumination for emergency night operations. On Operation BIG SPRING, this technique was used to lower security forces by winch to a downed Medevac helicopter.

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Observation: When conducting such an operation, LZ conditions are very difficult to determine during the hours of darkness. Security forces are elements already on the ground in the vicinity of the downed aircraft and must secure the LZ and inspect the area to insure that it is free of stumps and other obstacles that could damage or obstruct the rescue helicopter from landing.

Item: Acoustic Telescope

Discussion: Six Acoustic Telescopes (IML Task 10-P-63) were delivered to this Brigade in February 1967. One telescope was issued to each one of our three Infantry Battalions, one to Troop "E", 17th Cavalry, one to D/16th Army and one was maintained by Company "D" Maintenance as a float. Each unit issued this item was requested to field test it.

The tests were conducted to determine its feasibility for use in air-mobile search and destroy patrolling operations. The evaluation was based on employment during local patrolling operations and Operations BIG SPRING and JUNCTION CITY I & II.

Observation: The present structure of the instrument and accessories is such too awkward and fragile. The equipment proved to be very difficult to carry in the dense jungle and water obstacles. Additionally, there was no container to carry the telescope for its protection. The maintenance personnel at company and battalion level are not trained sufficiently to maintain required repairs on the instrument. The primary problem encountered in maintenance was with the wiring circuit. Additionally, the 9 volt dry cell battery, which is the main source of power, was not available through supply channels. When replacements were needed, field expedient methods were used.

In conclusion, the field test proved the acoustic telescope to be unsatisfactory in its present configuration. An easy carrying case should be made for the telescope and it should be reduced in bulk and made more steady for field operations.

Item: Road Sweeping for Mines

Discussion: It has been proven that deployment of mine detectors as teams for road clearing is the most effective and fastest means. To clear a single lane for traffic the use of three detectors with two operators per detector and one NCOIC constitutes the most effective method. Each team sweeps a six foot lane with teams in echelon and one foot overlap provides a fifteen foot cleared lane. For a two lane road, an increase in mine detectors to five enables clearance of a twenty-five foot traffic way. Experience has shown that clearing rates of 1000 meters per hour can be maintained, providing the road is not saturated with shrapnel or other metal objects. Rate can be decreased to as little as two hundred meters per hour in areas containing large quantities of shrapnel etc.

Observation: The rate of mine detector teams is dependant upon the deployment of the teams themselves and the amount of extraneous metal encountered along the route.

Item: Emergency Landing Zone Clearing Teams

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Discussion: Operation JUNCTION CITY II proved the need for an Engineer team with chain saws to descend and clear an area for one chopper for Heliovac or resupply.

Observation: Using a modified SOP from the 1st Engineer Battalion, the 17th Engineer Company formed and practiced with the employment of emergency jungle clearing teams.

Item: Location of Water Point

Discussion: Base Camp, Fire Support Base or Forward CP areas should be located in a sound tactical position that provides good communication. In addition the advance party should consider a water source within this perimeter. This would provide the engineers the capability of setting up a water point and at the same time making security of the water point possible within the perimeter defense.

Observation: Availability of water at forward Base Camps, CP locations and Fire Support Bases greatly reduces the logistic problem. Recommendation is made that future FSB, CP and Base Camp selections take into consideration a water source.

Item: Bunker Construction

Discussion: Forward area bunkers constructed with overhead cover should have at least three thicknesses of sandbags for overhead cover if the sand is dry and at least four thicknesses when wet. Overhead cover should not be supported on sandbag walls. If shelter walls are sandbags, the roof should be supported by timber posts and cap construction.

Observation: If timber or logs are not available, reinforced sand bag walls with metal pickets driven along each side of wall and tied together at the top with comco wire. Metal pickets should be at least 24 inches in separation.

Item: Movement of Heavy Equipment in Hostile Areas

Discussion: When relocating Fire Support Bases or Forward CP locations, engineer bull dozers have been utilized to close camps etc. These tasks should be completed prior to movement and the dozers should be near the head of the convoy.

Observation: With this equipment at the head part of the convoy, security is provided for the vulnerable vehicles. In addition, if there should be a break down, the equipment is not unprotected.

Item: Traffic Control and Base Camp Layout During Monsoon

Discussion: During the Monsoon Rains, special consideration should be paid to the layout of the Brigade Base Camp to insure accessibility of supplies etc. to strategic points.

Observation: When monsoon rains cause road failure, traffic control must be implemented. In many cases this calls for the reduction of traffic of all vehicles except those essential to combat units. If there is a good surfaced road in the area, the CP should be arranged to have the Brigade Supply Office (BSO) and unit kitchens as near to the road as possible. Administrative areas require minimum traffic and can be located further away from main traffic routes.

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Item: Increased Population of the 173d Abn Pde (Sep) Base Camp

Discussion: Military Police support of the Brigade on Combat Operations in addition to Military Police support in the BZN HOA Base Camp Area requires that police support be augmented, however, the present strength of the 173d MP's is not adequate to handle both jobs effectively.

Observation: Consideration should be given to increasing the number of military police, both officer and enlisted men, assigned to the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) in order to meet the increased police commitments in the base camp during combat operations as the result of additional units tenting within the Brigade Base Area.

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FEBRUARY

1. Summary of Class of Supply

- a. Class I: No critical shortages
- b. Class II & IV: The fill of II & IV requisitions remains good, however, shortages as listed in weekly periodic logistics reports do exist.
- c. The Brigade POL level was maintained at or above stockage objective.
- d. Class V: These items have been in short supply during February 1967.

2. Maintenance:

- a. Considerable difficulty was encountered with the 506th Depot at SAIGON in relation to repair parts requisitions for M2 Fire Units. The requisitions were being rejected as unidentifiable. This problem was solved by the Tech Supply Liaison leader who visited the depot and showed them the parts manual. Requisitions are now accepted and a few parts have started to come in for stockage.
- b. Tech Supply averaged 919 requisitions a week for the month of February. Generally twenty per cent were priority 02, fifteen to seventeen per cent 05, sixty per cent were 12 and the small percentage remaining priority 17. This demonstrates that units are beginning to accept the supply system and do not overly abuse the priority system.

MARCH

1. Summary of Class of Supply

- a. Class I: No critical shortages. Periodic discrepancies exist in the issue of ice.
- b. Class II & IV: The fill of requisitions remains good, however, shortages as listed in the bi-monthly FLR do exist.
- c. Class III: The Brigade POL level was maintained at or above stockage objectives.
- d. Class V: The following items have been in short supply during March 1967:

Kit, Demo M/37
Grenade, Hand Smoke, Violet
Grenade, Hand Smoke, Yellow
Grenade, Hand Smoke, Green
Flare, Surface Trip

2. Maintenance: In the last three months, January - March, Company "D" (Maintenance) has exchanged 106 handsets M-138/U for the M/PIC-25 radio. The Brigade has approximately 300 M/PIC-25 radios on hand. Currently, there are zero stocks of these items on hand in SAIGON. If the rate of breakage continues at this rate, we can expect the communications at unit level to be hampered due to lack of handsets. Company "D" (Maintenance) has a zero balance of handsets.

Enclosure 4

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APPIL

1. Summary of Classes of Supply

- a. Class I: No critical shortages. Periodic discrepancies exist in the issue of ice.
- b. Class II & IV: The fill of II & IV requisitions remains good, however, shortages as listed in bi-weekly periodic log' .is report do exist.
- c. Class III: The Brigade POL Level was maintained at or above stockage objectives.
- d. Class V: The following items have been short in supply during April 1967.

2. Maintenance

1. Since on or about 20 February, chain saws within the Brigade have been declined (total of 14) at a rate of approximately 45%. There are three probable causes which contribute most to the existing condition. They are as follows:
 - a. Poorly trained operators.
 - b. Poor Organisational Maintenance due to lack of training and a shortage of technical manuals and parts
 - c. Shortage of Repair Parts.
 - d. The majority of the problems have been with the starters, magnets, and carburetors.

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