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



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (27 Feb 68) FOR OT RD-674294

5 March 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 159th  
Transportation Battalion (Terminal), Period Ending 31 Oct 1967 (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

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:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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as

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# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 159TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TERMINAL)  
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TTR-CO

1 November 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967  
RCS CSFOR-65

THRU: Commanding Officer, 5th Transportation Command (Terminal A)  
APO 96238  
Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, ATTN:  
AVLC QN-CO, APO 96238  
Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVLC-GO-O,  
APO 96307  
Deputy Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN:  
AVHGC-DST APO 96357  
Commander-in-Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,  
APO 96558

TO: Department of the Army, ATTN: ACSFOR, Washington, D. C. 20310

## SECTION I

### SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

#### NARRATIVE SUMMARY

##### A. (1) Command

On 1 August 1967, LTC Charles H. Sunder assumed command of the 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) from LTC David C. Thatcher. Other changes in command during the reporting period are as follows. Captain James L. Cates, commanding officer of the 854th Transportation Company departed for CONUS on emergency leave on 9 August 1967, and Captain Fred K. Morrison of the B&RC Company (Provisional) assumed command of the 854th Transportation Company. 1LT Robert F. Vlasics assumed command of the B&RC Company. Captain Cates returned on 2 September 1967 and reassumed command of the 854th Transportation Company on Captain Morrison's rotation to CONUS. Captain R.E. Frazier assumed command of the 1098th Transportation Company (Medium Boat) on 12 September 1967 replacing Captain Paul H. Yearout who rotated to CONUS. Captain Ralph F. Stocker assumed command of the 285th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) on 4 October 1967, replacing Captain David A. Haas, who rotated to CONUS.

##### B. Personnel, Administration and Discipline

1. (C) The 159th Transportation Battalion was hit by a large rotation-

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al turn over in September and October. Both Terminal Service Companies were reduced from a TO&E strength of 323 men to below 100 men. This shortage especially in MOS 57A10 has resulted in a reduction of effective hatch gangs to work deep draft vessels in the stream. Both Terminal Service companies have been below strength since the middle of September and the replacement flow has not met the needs of the companies. As a result, at the end of the reporting period; approximately 140 vacancies in the MOS 57A10 alone exist in the two terminal service companies. This has necessitated the assignment of 61A10, and 61B20 MOS's to the stevedore hatch gangs. It is hoped that these men can be sent back to the boat companies if stevedore MOS replacements become available. The boat companies are at full strength at the present, but the BARG Company (Prov) will lose approximately 50 men in November with no replacement prospects in sight. Although, the battalion on the whole is over 150 men below strength as of the end of the reporting period, it continued to perform its mission, through extensive cross-training of personnel and extra work hours by all personnel. Also of concern is the shortage of Warrant Officers, both vessel masters and marine engineers. For example, a total of three warrant officers are authorized for the two floating crane detachments but only one is assigned. Several tug detachments are also short marine engineer warrants.

2. (C) Security requirements continue to place a great drain on our available manpower. An average of 16.3% of our battalion strength was devoted to this type of duty and represents an increase from the previous reporting period.

3. (U) There were 52 Article 15's administered over the three month period for a percentage of 1.6 of our average strength per month. There were three special court-martials and one ANOL during the reporting period.

4. (C) Since the last report, there has been one significant organizational change. On 15 August 1967, the battalion was assigned the responsibility for providing the physical security of the LST beach and Can Docks. To accomplish this a security detachment, consisting of personnel from the companies within the battalion was formed. This detachment composed of 1 officer, 4 NCO's and approximately 45 EM, has the mission of providing 24 hour security for the LST Beach, the railhead extending from the beach area and the Can Docks.

C. Intelligence and Counterintelligence -- None

D. Plans, Operations and Training

1. (U) The mission of the 159th Transportation Battalion was not significantly changed during the reporting period. The mission includes the operation of the LST Beach, LCU, LCM-8 barges and BARG (BARG-CC) discharging and backloading areas and the "in the stream" discharge of deep draft ammunition and reefer ships. A complete restoration of the LST Beach area was accomplished by the 589th Engineer Construction Battalion during the reporting period. Concurrent with this beach resurfacing project an extensive rearrangement of Beach facilities and buildings was undertaken and it all was accomplished with little interruption of cargo operations. This reconstruction which included the buildup and resurfacing of the working and cargo storage areas and the installation of steel and cement posts for LST mooring has greatly enhanced cargo operations.

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2. (U) During the reporting period a small port at Sa Huynh was opened for shallow draft vessels. This port replaced the beach operation at Duc Pho which became unfeasible due to the heavy surf of the monsoon season. Sa Huynh, protected by a land mass to the east, provides a protected roadstead for barges and LST's and the channel is deep enough, during most tidal conditions, to allow LCM-8, LCU and BARC traffic. About twelve miles south of Duc Pho, it provides a sea LOC to the brigades of the Americal Division located at Duc Pho. Under the technical guidance of members of the battalion, feasibility was determined, dredging of a sand bar accomplished and traffic to the port begun. The first cargo mission entered and was discharged on 16 October 1967. The 264th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) and the 540th BARC platoon displaced from the ocean beach at Duc Pho to the island in the harbor at Sa Huynh to continue their normal discharge and lighterage tasks.

3. (U) Significant accomplishments during the reporting period were:

a. The discharge of 8 LST's at Qui Nhon LST Beach in support of 173rd Airborne Base Camp displacement to An Khe.

b. The discharge of 3 troopships in the outer harbor employing LARC-60's for moving troops to the shoreline area.

c. Initiated the use of half conex containers for transport of reefer cargo during rainy season, which has reduced spoilage by 100%.

d. The relocation of a Tank Company from the vicinity of Bong Son to Qui Nhon by LCM-8's.

### E. Logistics

1. (U) Construction projects under the "self help" program continued to show great progress. On 25 October 1967, the first of the buildings required to house the 854th Transportation Company (TS) was complete. Pending relocation of the 854th Transportation Company as a unit, the 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) Security Platoon moved into the building on the same date. A latrine and shower facility and a nonpotable well were completed under the self-help program. These facilities are utilized by HHD, 159th Transportation Battalion and the Security Platoon. A 800 ft drainage system was also installed to remove the water from the mess hall and the HHD and 544th Transportation Company latrines and showers. This drainage system was connected to the city storm system and has alleviated the compound drainage problem.

2. (U) During the quarter, the 285th Transportation Company (TS) and 854th Transportation Company (TS) experienced a critical shortage of batteries for electric forklifts. These forklifts are essential in the off-loading of vessels carrying ammunition and a prolonged shortage of these batteries would have seriously impaired the accomplishment of the mission. Seventeen (17) of these batteries were obtained through close coordination with the Material Readiness Expediter at the 58th Field Depot.

3. (U) On 20 October 1967, a fire swept the 854th Transportation Company (TS) area destroying the mess hall and 18 troop tents. Also destroyed was the clothing, field gear, and bedding of the men living in the tents, and all mess equipment. Through close coordination with the 5th Transportation Command and the 58th Field Depot all necessary items were obtained so that

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the 854th Transportation Company (TS) could rebuild their company area and return to normal operations. Because of the immediate and gracious response of other units in Qui Nhon and the determination and high esprit of the 854th Transportation Company, the operational mission was affected very little. Only one shift was missed by the 854th Transportation Company as a result of the disaster.

### F. Special Staff Sections

1. (U) Civic Action: This program, although hampered by lack of available manpower, has continued to be very successful. Following are some of the activities at the various projects of this battalion:

a. On 14 August 1967, the Transportation Company (BARC)(PROV) was instructed to discontinue the Province Hospital and Hai Gran School civic action projects. In place of these two projects, it received the Mai-Kuan-Thuong School, which needed extensive work. Also on 10 October 1967, the BARC Company, sponsored Nguyen Huu Sanh, know to all of the men as Louie, by sending him to school at a cost of 4,600 piasters a month.

b. The 285th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) continued its sponsorship of the Vien Duc Anh Bae Orphanage. Over 5,000 pounds of food was donated to it. Men from the company spent over 140 man hours at the orphanage doing construction, painting, and entertaining the children.

c. HHD, 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) continued its support of its civic action project, the La San School. Remodeling and repainting was accomplished through the efforts of both volunteers from HHD and the help of Vietnamese nationals. HHD also sponsors three boys in school; Trung, Bai and Duc. All three boys are given all monetary assistance needed for school and personal items. For the reporting period, a total of 21,060 piasters was donated by the personnel of HHD for support of the boys.

d. The 854th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) supports the Tin Lahn School. Three additional classrooms were renovated and desks and benches were built. The rooms were painted and the windows repaired and washed. It is planned to build two additional classrooms. The company is supplementing the salary of the teachers with a monthly donation of 7,000 piasters.

e. The 1098th Transportation Company (Medium Boat) supports the Vien Duc Anh Bae Orphanage. Over the past three months it has donated 29,500 piasters and have begun several renovations. A new roof for the orphanage kitchen has been completed. Many of the men in the company have asked their wives and families to send care packages of clothes for distribution to the children. Some packages have arrived and more are expected.

f. The 544th Transportation Company (Medium Boat) continues to support the Love of the Cross Orphanage by providing material and labor for the construction of a building to house the orphans. In addition, the children have been brought to the company area on numerous occasions for supper, showers and entertainment. Excess food is given to the orphanage and transportation is offered when ever possible. The 544th also provides scholarships for two students studying at the Qui Nhon Normal School in order to become teachers.

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## SECTION II

### COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### PART I

#### OBSERVATIONS (Lessons Learned)

##### A. Personnel

###### 1. (U) Item: Insufficient Authorization of Personnel

Discussion: The Transportation Medium Boat Company was not designed to operate on a 24 hour basis consequently the personnel authorization is not adequate in our situation.

Observation: Our experience shows that by keeping the company at 125% of authorized strength, the 24 hour operational commitments can be met.

###### 2. (U) Item: Shortage of personnel

Discussion: Security commitments and the slow rate of personnel replacement has reduced the effectiveness and capability of our companies, particularly the stevedore companies.

Observation: Intensive OJT is required and is being conducted in order to keep a proper balance between the stevedores and boat operators. The number of hatch gangs has been reduced in order to keep the crews at efficient and safe strengths.

##### B. Operations

###### 1. (U) Item: Sling innovation

Discussion: The wire rope sling, when used to hoist certain type palletized cargo, is sometimes awkward and a safety hazard when trying to position the sling in an exact location under the pallet.

Observation: By using a combination of material, such as wire rope and chain spliced together to make a single sling, flexibility is gained and placement of the sling under the draft of cargo is facilitated.

###### 2. (U) Utilization of Conexes on reefer ships

Discussion: There is a problem involved in working reefer ships both on hot and rainy days. Since the hatch is necessarily open, heat will lower the ships temperature while falling rain will freeze in the hold. Either situation is undesirable as the hatch must be closed in both cases and much valuable time is lost.

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Observation: Although not as efficient, the use of conexes does allow for continuation of work during undesirable weather conditions. The reef hatch is opened, two or three conexes are lowered into the hold which is then covered. When the conexes are loaded, the hatch is uncovered and the two or three quick lifts are made.

### C. Training

#### 1. (U) Item: Shortage of trained BARC mechanics

Discussion: Because there is no specialized BARC mechanics school, few replacements are arriving at the BARC Company, who have any knowledge in BARC maintenance. The attrition of skilled mechanics and engineers is affecting the quality of BARC maintenance.

Observation: Extensive cross-training and on-the-job training supervised by the experienced BARC company engineers and mechanics will enable us to continue operating effectively. A special school for training BARC mechanics should be considered for a more permanent and long range solution.

#### 2. (U) Item: Swimming lessons

Discussion: A surprising number of personnel on boat crews do not know how to swim. This was dramatically brought to our attention by the recent tragic loss of two boat crewmen who fell overboard and drowned. In both cases a contributing factor was the inability of the victim to swim or stay afloat long enough for help to arrive.

Observation: Swimming instructions should be included in the formal instruction given all boat crewmen.

### D. (U) Logistics

#### 1. Item: Resupply of BARC parts

Discussion: Order and shipping time for BARC parts is unusually long due, primarily, to the location of the supply points in CONUS and the unusually large size of most parts.

Observation: Direct telephonic communication with the Larc Project Manager in St. Louis, Missouri has greatly expedited the receipt of these parts. This direct communication should continue as long as BARC's are project managed.

#### 2. (U) Item: Reserve cable for 100 ton Barge Derrick

Discussion: A cable of correct size needed by the 100 ton crane for making heavy lifts was not available in Vietnam when the cable in use was rendered unusable. Much valuable time was lost while securing a new one.

Observation: A back-up cable for a crane of this unusual size should always be kept in Vietnam and reordered immediately when used. This would minimize the number of hours in which we would have no heavy lift capability in-country.

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3. (U) Item: Water delivery to Class A Vessels

Discussion: The large amounts of potable water required by Class A Vessels has been a constant problem. Topping off a single vessel can involve hundreds of gallons of water and requirements often exceed our logistical capability.

Observation: Having vessel masters project their potable water requirements so that water delivery can be scheduled has greatly facilitated our effort to provide adequate water to all vessels.

4. (U) Item: Post overhaul maintenance of LCM-8

Discussion: An excessive amount of engine breakdowns have occurred on LCM-8's shortly after returning from depot. The biggest cause of post overhaul breakdowns has been the lack of good post overhaul maintenance to include the proper and timely torquing of the cylinder head.

Observation: If proper maintenance procedures as per TM 55-4026-1 are used and, in addition, cylinder heads are re-torqued during each post overhaul maintenance, breakdowns will be greatly decreased.

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SECTION II

PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS

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A. (U) Recommend that:

1. A swimming program for crew members at AIT level at the Transportation School, Fort Eustis, be initiated.
2. The assigned strength of medium boat companies be established at 125% of authorized strength when conducting operations on a 24 hour basis.
3. A specialized course in BARC maintenance, MOS 61E20-40, be initiated at the Transportation School.
4. TM 55-4036-1, section 21, page 10 be modified to include that cylinder heads be re-torqued at the same intervals as post overhaul maintenance.

*Charles H. Sunder*

CHARLES H. SUNDER  
LTC, TC  
Commanding

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AVCA QN-TTA (8 Nov 67) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967  
RCS CSFOR-65 (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 5th Transportation Command, APO 96238 10 November 1967

TO: Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, ATTN: AVCA  
QN-GO, APO 96238

(U) Basic communication has been received and the following comments relative to the recommendations contained in Part II, Section II are furnished: Personnel shortages in the 199th Transportation Battalion was caused by the rotational turn-over and the replacement flow did not meet the requirements. An additional drain was added to the battalions to provide security which was approximately 16.3% of the battalion strength. However, the mission was accomplished by cross-training personnel and extra long work hours which will be alleviated by the adoption of the augmented TO&E.

TEL: QNL 2026

*James F. MacLeod*  
JAMES F. MAC LEOD  
Colonel, TC  
Commanding

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AVCA-01-GO-0 (1 Nov 67) 2nd Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967  
(RCS CSFOR-65) (UIC:WCKHAAA)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY SUPPORT COMMAND, QM1 NHCN, APO SAN FRANCISCO 96238 15 NOV 1967

TO: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GO-0  
APO 96307

The attached Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967 from the 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) (UIC:WCKHAAA) has been reviewed and is considered adequate.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

QNL 3873/3611



D.L. McDONALD  
1LT, AGC  
Assistant Adjutant General

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AVHC GO-C (1 Nov 67)

3rd Ind

23 DEC 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period ending 31 October 1967  
(RCS JSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST LOGISTICAL COMMAND, APO 96307

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHC3-DH  
APO 96375

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1967 is forwarded.

2. Section II Part II:

a. Paragraph 2 (Part 1, Paragraph A1). Nonconcur. The unit is able at reduced strength ( $\frac{1}{2}$  strength Coxswains, Enginemen, and Crewmen) of operating all 16 landing craft for one 12 hour shift.

b. Paragraph 3 (Part 1, Paragraph C1). Nonconcur. Any properly trained amphibian engineer, MOS 61E, familiar with functions and operations of diesel or multifuel engines, powertrain, hull, and chassis components of amphibian vehicles should, with some familiarization and appropriate manuals, be capable of performing the required maintenance functions. There are no particular peculiarities associated with the BARC amphibian not found in other, similar vehicles.

c. Paragraph 4 (Part 1, paragraph D4). Concur. The Marine Maintenance Officer, this Headquarters has informed the CO, USAMMAV, of the need for improved quality control in depot maintenance operations. The desirability of revising TM 55-4036-1 to include the requirement for re-torquing cylinder heads at time of depot overhaul is concurred with.

3. Concur with basic report as modified by indorsements. This report is considered adequate.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*James D. Fox*  
JAMES D. FOX  
1LT ASG  
Asst AG

Lynx 430



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AVHGC-DST (1 Nov 67) 4th Ind (C)  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967  
RCS CSFOR-65

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 22 JAN 1968

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

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 October 1967 from Headquarters, 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) (CKHA) as indorsed.

2. (C) Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning rotational turnover, page 1, section I, paragraph B1. The effect of the rotational hump was aggravated by the general reduction in strength which occurred in 1st Logistical Command during this same period. Action to fill current shortages is continuous. With respect to the high DEROS loss months, 1st Logistical Command has reported to this headquarters that all rotational humps can be successfully leveled through internal reassignment action.

b. Reference item concerning shortage of warrant officers, page 2, section I, paragraph B(1). There is a shortage command-wide of warrant officers, MOS 561A and 562A. However, the gain and loss projections for 1968 indicate that the 1st Logistical Command strength posture will improve in these MOS's and will attain full strength by next June.

c. Reference item concerning shortage of personnel, page 5, section II, part I, paragraph A2. The personnel shortage in the 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) during the period of the report reflects the decline in assigned strength experienced throughout 1st Logistical Command during that time. Assignments are made by this headquarters to major subordinate commands only; thus replacements for the 159th Transportation Battalion would have to come from the 1st Logistical Command.

d. Reference item concerning swimming instructions, page 6, part I, section II, paragraph C2; and page 8, part II, section II, paragraph A1: Concur, however, according to DA Pamphlet 350-10, page 5-81-1, swimming is included in the scope of instruction provided Seamen (813-61A10). In addition, one of the requirements for personnel possessing MOS 61A10 is that they must be able to swim short distances (page 605, AR 611-201).

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AVHGC-DST (1 Nov 67)

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1967  
RCS CSFOR-65

3. (U) A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



D. E. TUMAN  
Major, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

cy furn:

HQ, 159th Trans Bn (Term)  
HQ, 1st Log Comd

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GPOP-DT(1 Nov 67) (U) 5th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 October  
1967 from HQ 159th Trans Bn (UIC: WCKHAA)(RCS CSFOR-65)(U)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 14 FEB 1968

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:



HEAVRIN SNYDER  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

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