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AD392359	
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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980 ; AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980	

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



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (8 Aug 68) FOR OT RD 682135

26 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 223d
Combat Support Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1968 (U)

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.
3. To insure that the information provided through the Lessons Learned Program is readily available on a continuous basis, a cumulative Lessons Learned Index containing alphabetical listings of items appearing in the reports is compiled and distributed periodically. Recipients of the attached report are encouraged to recommend items from it for inclusion in the Index by completing and returning the self-addressed form provided at the end of this report.

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1 Incl
as

Kenneth G. Wickham
KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

SEP 13 1968

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223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
223D COMBAT SUPPORT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96238

AVGD-DE

13 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion
for period ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) 13 May 1968 (U)

TO: See Distribution

1. (C) Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities.

a. (C) During the reporting period the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion continued to provide fixed wing aviation support to the US and Free World Forces located primarily in the II Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam. This support was rendered utilizing the assets of one Utility Airplane Company, four Reconnaissance Airplane Companies and one Surveillance Airplane Company. There have been no organizational changes in the battalion during the quarter. The battalion's mission has remained the same, except for a cancellation of the requirement to support MAAG THAI, Bangkok, Thailand with one U-1A. An Annual General Inspection was conducted throughout the battalion 23-26 April 1968. In evaluating USAFV Unit mission effectiveness, the AGI Team rates either satisfactory or unsatisfactory and this battalion was found satisfactory. Special mention was made of the battalion's outstanding aviation training program and the enthusiastic, positive attitude displayed by all personnel in the accomplishment of their mission. Flying hours throughout the battalion increased approximately 15% during the TET Offensive.

b. (C) The 18th Utility Airplane Company has continued to accomplish its mission requirements in the four corps areas of the Republic of Vietnam with flight platoons located in Da Nang, Pleiku and Nha Trang. The responsibility for support of MAAG THAI in Bangkok, Thailand was transferred to the 54th Aviation Company, 222nd CAB.

The first flight platoon in Da Nang continued to support the 5th Special Forces Group and the III Marine Amphibious Force. The platoon received four aircraft equipped with the AN/ARC 121 radio sets to provide radio relay support to the Provisional Corps Headquarters in Da Nang.

The second flight platoon continued to support II Corps Tactical Headquarters and the 5th Special Forces Group at Holloway AAF, Pleiku.

The third flight platoon continued to support the 5th Special Forces Group Headquarters and JUSPAO at Nha Trang.

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13 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion
for period ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) 13 May 1968 (U)

c. (C) The 183d Reconnaissance Airplane Company continued to perform its mission in support of the II Corps visual reconnaissance program in Khanh Hoa, Tuyen Duc, Ninh Thuan and Binh Thuan Provinces. Other missions throughout II Corps included general support of the Navy Surveillance Center for coastal observation between Tuy Hoa and Phan Thiet, support of the US Special Forces Recondo School at Nha Trang, Radio Relay for US Special Forces at Kontum and Ban Me Thout and the 101st Airborne Brigade at Phan Thiet. In addition, direct support was provided to 41st Artillery Group elements at Dalat and Phan Thiet. While accomplishing these missions a total of 6336 hours were flown, resulting in 1445 significant intelligence sightings, 53 confirmed VC KIA and 12 VC WIA. In April, the 183d unit mess hall was selected as the outstanding unit mess in the 17th Combat Aviation Group.

d. (C) The 185th Reconnaissance Airplane Company, with the assets of three platoons, continued its support of combat operations to MACV Team 33, Special Forces B-23 and ARVN Forces in the II Corps Tactical Zone. The visual reconnaissance sightings continue to be a valuable source of intelligence data for the MACV and Special Forces elements supported by the 185th Reconnaissance Airplane Company. During and after the TET Offensive, visual reconnaissance sightings provided by the 185th greatly aided in detecting the movement of the enemy units and provided approximately 90 percent of all processed intelligence in the sector. The 185th Reconnaissance Airplane Company flew a total of 5185 sorties totaling 7798 hours in support of operations during this quarter.

e. (C) During this reporting period the 219th Reconnaissance Airplane Company continued to accomplish the primary mission of visual reconnaissance of the northern portion of the II Corp Tactical Zone. The company's assets were consolidated in Kontum and Pleiku, with occasional missions into Darlac and Phu Bon Provinces in support of the 4th US Infantry Division. In addition to the continuing support of the II Corps visual reconnaissance program, the company provided direct support for the 52nd Artillery Group and numerous ARVN and US Forces operations in Kontum and Pleiku Provinces. During the reporting period the 219th intelligence gathering effort netted a total of 2,345 sightings while compiling 7,914 sorties and 7,662 flying hours. On 17 February 1968, NVA Forces began constructing a road from Cambodia into the Plei Trap area of Kontum Province. By 9 March 1968 the NVA had completed 77 kilometers of road from Cambodia to the border of Pleiku Province. During this period Lt Hansford L. Bohanon and CW2 Bobby J. Gray

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13 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion
for period ending 30 April 1968, RAS CSTOR-65 (RI) 13 May 1968 (U)

flew an average of six hours a day of visual reconnaissance to provide a continuous flow of intelligence on the progress of the road construction. In addition, 57 significant sightings were reported in the area of the road to include bridges under construction, bunker complexes, 70 NVA Soldiers using the road, trucks, truck parks, storage areas and tank trunks. On 9 March 1968, at the request of the Chief of Staff, 4th US Infantry Division, Lt Bohanon and CW2 Gray attended a general staff meeting at which they recommended airstrikes be used against the road complex.

f. (C) The 203d Reconnaissance Airplane Company continued to perform its mission in support of the II Corps visual reconnaissance program throughout Binh Dinh and Phu Yen Provinces. Additional support has been given to artillery units of the 41st Artillery Group and the 52nd Artillery Group. Elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Sep) at both Kontum and Phu Hiep as well as LRRP's have also been supported. There' missions have been accomplished while flying 5600 hours and accounting for 51 confirmed VC KIA.

g. (C) During the reported period the 225th Surveillance Airplane Company continued to provide day and night reconnaissance and surveillance throughout the II Corps Tactical Zone employing photographic, infrared and side-looking airborne radar systems. Infra red imagery taken in Northwest Kontum Province revealed the presence of heavy enemy activity involved in the construction of a sophisticated road network leading east from Cambodia and linking with existing roads in South Vietnam.

h. (C) Personnel

(1) Command and Principle Staff Changes:

(a) Major Merle L. Mulvaney, OF100665, assumed command of the 203d Reconnaissance Airplane Company on 13 February 1968 vice Major Charles A. Stephenson III, 04009533, who assumed command of the 343d Airfield Detachment in Qui Nhon.

(b) Major Robert E. Luckenbill, 04009627, assumed command of the 18th Airplane Company (UAC) on 19 February 1968 vice Major James T. Bridges who was reassigned to Fort Rucker, Alabama.

(c) Major Billy G. Williams, 04026176, assumed command of the 219th Reconnaissance Airplane Company on 29 February 1968 vice Major Fletcher H. Maffett who was reassigned to Ft Leavenworth, Kansas.

(d) Major William McDermott assumed command of the 225th Surveillance Airplane Company on 1 April 1968 vice Major Thomas E. Cote, 02268644, who was reassigned to HHDy, 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion.

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for period ending 30 April 1968, HHC CSFOR-65 (RI) 13 May 1968 (U)

(e) Lieutenant Colonel Henry J. Dethlefs III, 066835, assumed command of the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion on 1 April 1968 vice Lieutenant Colonel Leslie H. Gilbert, 01120579, who was reassigned to the 17th CAG.

(f) Major Darrel W. Basom, 04040796, assumed the duties as Battalion S-3 on 25 April 1968 vice LTC John A. Koegler, 04009568, who was reassigned to Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

(g) Major Paul H. Strang, 0971789, assumed the duties of the Battalion S-2 on 5 March 1968 vice Major Robert E. Luckenbill, 04009627, who assumed command of the 18th Utility Airplane Company.

(h) Captain David L. Weinberg, 02325544, assumed command of the 163d Medical Detachment on 16 April 1968 vice Captain William E. Atlee, Jr. 02320686, who was reassigned to CONUS.

(2) Casualties during the period 1 February through 30 April the battalion suffered one officer and one enlisted man killed in action, sixteen wounded in action and four personnel are listed as missing in action.

2. (U) Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations.

a. (U) Personnel

(1) Special Leave.

(a) Observation: Special leave reduces present for duty strength.

(b) Evaluation: The special leaves to CONUS adversely affect strengths available for duty and in some cases may hinder mission accomplishment. It appears that many who extend would rather receive additional remuneration rather than depart Vietnam. Thus the recommendation below would reduce transportation requirements, enhance the manpower situation, and have less effect on mission accomplishment.

(c) Recommendation: That individuals be given the option of one month's pay, travel pay computed to California and remain in-country; or extend under present regulations.

b. (U) Operations:

(1) Army Aviators Flight Record Folder

(a) Observation: There are no instructions in AR 95-64 outlining the format for Army Aviator Flight Record Folders.

AVGD-SE

13 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 213d Combat Support Aviation Battalion
for period ending 30 April 1968. FOS CSFOR-65 (RI) 13 May 1968 (U)

(b) Evaluation: AR 95-64, paragraph 5 states that all aviator flight records be uniform in content and appearance. One unit may have all flight records assembled and filed uniformly, but when an aviator joins another unit, a new folder must be made for this individual's folder to conform to the gaining unit's records.

(c) Recommendation: That Department of the Army prescribe a standard Army Aviator flight record folder, complete with index tabs and designated as a DA Form, for each Army Aviator and/or aspirant.

(2) Identification from the air, of friendly elements in contact.

(a) Observation: During the recent TET Offensive, close-in fighting was conducted in heavily populated areas.

(b) Evaluation: From the air it is often extremely difficult to determine the area friendly forces occupy and that which the hostile force occupies. Because of this inability to discern friendly from hostile forces, air support is hampered even when requested or sorely needed. Units are sometimes reluctant to use smoke because of a fear of giving away their positions to nearby enemy.

(c) Recommendation: That friendly ground forces make more use of marking panels and/or mirrors in the daytime and flares at night to identify their positions so that effective air support might be delivered.

(3) Parking Tactical Aircraft in Revetted Areas:

(a) Observation: Aircraft parked nose-first into U-shape revetted areas receive maximum protection from mortar rounds impacting adjacent to the open side of the revetment, but hinder rapid movement out of the revetment.

(b) Evaluation: Aircraft should be parked nose-first into U-shaped revetted areas for maximum protection, however, if the tactical situation indicates a high probability of ground attack or situation requiring a rapid evacuation of aircraft, the aircraft should be parked tail first into the revetment.

(c) Recommendation: That commanders constantly evaluate the tactical situation in their area and have all aircraft thoroughly preflighted and parked tail first into revetted areas to facilitate rapid evacuation when the situation demands.

c. (U) Training

(1) M-16 Zero Firing Range

(a) Observation: Firing Ranges are not available or are difficult to schedule for required M-16 Rifle zeroing.

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(b) Evaluation: A 25 meter two point range can easily be made within a small perimeter or any compound. Sand bags are stacked approximately 4 feet high to provide a sturdy support for the firer and his weapon. A few feet in front of the sand bags, excavation begins and continues downward away from the firing point to a 25 meter range. Standard targets can be used on the vertical end of the excavated area. The width of sand bag support and excavated area may vary with specific needs. Proper safety control must be exercised-i.e., one may fire at any time provided designated Safety Officers or Non-Commissioned Officers are present.

(c) Recommendation: That this field expedient method for continual zero accomplishment receive maximum dissemination.

(d) Intelligence - None

(e) Logistics - None

(f) Organization - None

(g) Other - None

3 Incl

1. ~~223d CSAB Aircraft status~~

2. ~~223d CSAB Operational statistics~~

3. ~~223d CSAB Unit Strengths~~

Henry J. Dethlefs III
HENRY J. DETHLEFS III

LTC, IN

Commanding Officer

WITHDRAWN, HQ, DA

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9 . AVGD-SC (13 May 68) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion
for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) 13 May 1968 (U)


Headquarters, 17th Combat Aviation Group, APO 96240 24 May 1968

TO: Commanding General, I Field Forces Vietnam, APO 96350

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion.

2. (U) Concur with recommendations in Section 2.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


GERALD M. GOCCH
1LT, AGC
Adjutant

AVFA-GC-OT (13 May 68) 2d Ind


SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 223d Combat Support Aviation
Battalion for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65
(R1)

DA, Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam, APO 96350 3 JUN 1968

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

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsement and concurs in the report as indorsed. Reference paragraph a(1) Section 2 page 4, Special Leave. The recommendation for one month's pay in lieu of 30 day's leave appears valid, however the payment of travel pay seems unreasonable in that said travel is presently offered at no expense to individuals on special leave.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ROBERT C. CABBARD

1LT, AGC

ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL

Copy furnished:
17th CAG

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AVBA-C (13 May 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion
for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (U)

Headquarters, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96384

JUN 27 1968

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,
APO 96558

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

1. (U) This Headquarters has reviewed the report, considers it to be
adequate, and concurs with the contents as indorsed.

2. (U) The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Paragraph 2a(1), page 4 and 2d Indorsement. 1st Aviation Brigade
approved this proposal and submitted it to USARV. USARV had made a
similar recommendation to DA in June 1967 but to date has not received
a reply.

b. Paragraph 2b(2)(c), page 5. Concur. The problem and recommendation
as stated are not new nor are they peculiar to 223d CAB. Paragraph 9
Chapter 5, 1st Aviation Brigade Operations Manual, dated 1 February 1967
states, "Whenever possible, the friendly elements should mark their for-
ward most elements or perimeter by some means identifiable from the air
(Smoke, panels, flares, etc). All participants in the airmobile operation
must understand all pre-arranged signals. Smoke for marking will not be
used except as prescribed in the operations order, supported unit SOP, or
SOI." The supporting aviation commander has the responsibility to advise
and educate the supported commanders and staffs in such procedures and to
make them aware of aviation problems and limitations as well as capabilities.

c. Paragraph 2c(1), page 5. Concur. Non-availability of firing
ranges has been stated by several units as a problem. This recommendation
is excellent and demonstrates the initiative in solving local problems
at local level which should be prevalent in all units. This Headquarters
will make maximum distribution of this recommendation to all units sub-
ordinate to 1st Aviation Brigade.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

John D. Mixsell Jr.
JOHN D. MIXSELL JR.

CPT. AGC

Assistant Adjutant General

AVHGC-DST (13 May 68) 4th Ind) (U) CPT Arnold/dls/LBN 4485
SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion
for period ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) 13 May 1968
(U)

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HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 5 JUN 1968

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion.

2. Reference item concerning Army aviators flight record folder, page 4, paragraph 2b(1): Concur. A preconstructed, uniform folder similar to the Personnel Records Jacket would facilitate maintenance of aviator individual flight records. This headquarters will initiate a request that DA, AG Publications investigate the feasibility of producing such a folder.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 223d Cbt Spt Bn
HQ 1st Avn Bde

13.

GPOP-DT (13 May 68) 5th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 223d Cbt Spt Avn Bn for Period
Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558

24 JUL 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 indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Confidential	
		2b. GROUP 4	
3. REPORT TITLE Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Hq, 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion (U)			
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations. 1 Feb - 30 Apr 68			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) CO, 223d Combat Support Aviation Battalion			
6. REPORT DATE 13 May 1968		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES 12	7b. NO. OF REFS
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		8b. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) 682135	
a. PROJECT NO. N/A		9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
c.			
d.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES N/A		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
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