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AUTHORITY

AGO D/A 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) (16 Jul 68) FOR OT RD 68X033

22 July 1968

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - Op COOKTOWN ORCHID, 1st  
Australian Task Force, Period 1-24 April 1968 (U)

STATEMENT #2 UNCLASSIFIED

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1. Subject report is forwarded as inclosure for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15.

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*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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2 RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Bn  
NUI DAT  
30 May 68

OPERATION COOKTOWN ORCHID  
COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

- Refs:
- A. 1 ATF SOP Annex B, Appendix 4.
  - B. 1 ATF Op Instr 13/68 (Op COOKTOWN ORCHID) of 25 Mar 68.
  - C. 2 RAR Op O 7/68 (Op COOKTOWN ORCHID) of 291200H Mar 68.
  - D. C Coy 2 RAR OpO 1/68 dated 30 Mar 68.
  - E. V Coy 2 RAR OpO 1/68 dated 2 Apr 68.
  - F. C Sqn 1 Armd Regt OpO 1/68 dated 4 Apr 68.
  - G. W Coy 2 RAR OpO 1/68 dated 4 Apr 68.
  - H. A Sqn 3 Cav Regt OpO 1/68 dated Apr 68.
  - I. Map VIETNAM, L 8015 Sheets 6429, I and IV, 6430-II-SW, 6430-II-SE Edition 2 AMS 1,25,000.

Name and Type of Operation

- 1. Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID, a series of company group operations, conducted by 2 RAR which consisted of:
  - a. Reconnaissance in Force operations.
  - b. Land Clearing operations.
  - c. Ambush patrolling.
  - d. Minefield clearing operations.

Dates of Operation

- 2. Commenced 010800H Apr 68, terminated 241200H Apr 68.

Location

- 3. See Annex P attached, Unit and Sub-Unit Area of Operations.

Command Headquarters

- 4. HQ 1 ATF.

Task Organisation

- 5. 2 RAR with
  - a. In Direct Support
    - Remaining in DS - 108 Fd Bty 4 Fd Regt.
    - In DS from 010800H - One H13 161 (Indep) Recon Flt.
    - Additional H13 as required.
  - b. Under Operational Control
    - From 010800H Apr 68 - Aust Land Clearing Team reinforced by Rome Ploughs from 34 (US) Engr Gp.
    - Combat Engr Teams 1 Fd Sqn.
    - Such elms of C Sqn 1 Armd Regt and A Sqn 3 Cav Regt as were required for each operation.
- 6. Details of the task organisation for each separate company group operation is given in para 17.

Supporting Forces

- 7. Armour
  - a. Tanks

FOROT RD  
68X033

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(1) In Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID I a troop of tanks, supported by a platoon of infantry mounted in M108 vehicles were used to clear through an area for land clearing operations. The area, according to intelligence was supposed to be heavily mined with M16 anti-personnel mines. No mines were encountered and the route was cleared successfully.

(2) C Sqn 1 Armd Regt, supported by W Coy 2 RAR and a tp of A Sqn 3 Cav Regt were used to conduct a reconnaissance in force operation (Op COOKTOWN ORCHID IV). This was the first infantry/tank/APC reconnaissance in force operation conducted by 1 ATF and was successful. Mechanical breakdowns and tank refuelling times tended to restrict the hours of operation. However the task was completed in the time allotted.

(3) A tank was used to tow a heavy chain mat to detonate a minefield of M16 anti-personnel mines during Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID V. This was not successful as the detonation of the mines consistently caused minor damage to the tank and the operation was terminated on the second day.

(4) A troop of tanks supported A Sqn 3 Cav Regt and B Coy 2 RAR during Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID VI, a reconnaissance in force operation. In this operation the tanks were marginally effective due to the thick nature of the vegetation and mechanical breakdown.

b. APCs. APCs were used for the following tasks:

(1) Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID I:

- (a) Road convoy protection.
- (b) Land Clearing Team protection.
- (c) Carriage of troops from NUI DAT to operational area.

(2) Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID IV

- (a) Carriage of a rifle company supporting C Sqn 1 Armd Regt in a reconnaissance in force operation.
- (b) Carriage of troops to and from the operational area from NUI DAT.

(3) Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID VI

- (a) Carriage of a rifle company in an APC/infantry reconnaissance in force operation.
- (b) Carriage of troops to and from the operational area.

In all operations the APCs worked efficiently and well.

8.

Artillery

Support was efficient.

9.

Engineers

a. Specially prepared Australian bulldozers and American Rome ploughs conducted land clearing in Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID I efficiently.

b. Combat engineer teams were used in Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID I, IV, and VI for the destruction of enemy installations located and the clearance of mines and booby traps. As normal these teams worked efficiently.

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c. A combat engineer team was used to open and close gaps in the minefield fence during Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID V.

d. Engineer mini teams were employed with arm elements throughout the operations.

10. Aviation

a. 161 (Indep) Recce Flt. Support was efficient.

b. US Army Aviation. CH47 helicopters were used throughout the operations carrying fuel to the armoured elements and engineer plant. As usual this support was punctual and efficient.

c. 9 Sqn RAAF. Resupply of companies was capably carried out during the operations.

Intelligence

11. The enemy situation in AO BURGUNDY was as given in Annex A to reference B. See also Annex P to this report.

12. Details of enemy contacts and finds are given in sub unit operational analysis attached.

13. The operational area consisted secondary jungle, areas of low scrub, paddy fields and sand dunes.

14. The weather was mainly hot and humid.

Mission

15. The mission given to 2 RAR by HQ 1 ATF was to complete the tasks given to 2 RAR in AO BURGUNDY.

16. 2 RAR deduced mission was; As a follow-up to Op PINNAROO 2 RAR was to:

a. Carry out land clearing operations in area centre of mass YS 460550 in accordance with priorities previously given to 1 Fd Sqn by Comd 1 ATF.

b. Clear the mines between the multiple concertina fences from HORSESHOE HILL YS 496617 to the coastline at YS 525538.

c. Destroy VC installations located by 1 ATF during Op PINNAROO in AO BURGUNDY.

d. Recce in force in LIGHT GREEN, centre of mass YS 540570.

e. Recce in force in LONG GREEN, centre of mass YS 560600.

f. Conduct intensive patrols in 2 RAR Patrol AO.

g. Conduct cordon and search ops within AO as directed by HQ 1 ATF.

Concept of Operations

17. The operation was to be conducted as a series of concurrent company group operations during the period 1-30 April as follows:

a. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID I. Land clearing operation in area centre of mass YS 460550 from 1-30 Apr. See Annex P - Area 1. The initial task organisation for this operation was as follows:

(1) C Coy 2 RAR with:

(a) Under Comd - one mortar sect  
- three combat eng teams

(b) In DS - one H13 161 (Indep) Recce Flt

- (e) Under Op Control - one tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt
  - two nor APCs
  - three ongr mini teams
  - Aust land clearing team with elms
  - US land clearing team under op control

(2) Cond. OC C Coy 2 RAR.

b. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID II. Intensive patrolling in AO BURGUNDY North of Route 23 during period 1-7 Apr. This operation was to be planned and conducted by OC A Coy using A Coy 2 RAR.

c. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID III. Intensive ambush patrolling in 2 RAR Patrol AO out to Line ALFA during period 3-30 Apr. This op was to be planned and conducted by OC V Coy using V Coy 2 RAR.

d. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID IV. Recce in Force in LIGHT GREEN centre of mass YS 540570 during period 6-9 Apr. See Annex F Area 3. Task organisation was to be:

(1) C Sqn 1 Armd Regt with:

- In DS - one H13 161 (Indep) Recce Flt
- Under Op Con - one tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt
  - W Coy 2 RAR
  - two combat ongr teams

(2) Operation was to be planned and conducted by OC C Sqn 1 Armd Regt.

e. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID V. Clearance of the mines between the multiple concertina fences from HORSESHOE Hill YS 496617 to the coastline YS 525538. During the period 10-20 Apr. Task organisation was to be:

(1) W Coy with:

- Under Op Con - tp C Sqn 1 Armd Regt
  - 3 x M103 A Sqn 3 Cav Regt
  - one combat ongr team

(2) The operation was to be planned and conducted by OC W Coy.

f. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID VI. Recce in Force in LONG GREEN, centre of mass YS 560600 on completion of Op COOKTOWN ORCHID IV. Task organisation was to be:

(1) A Sqn 3 Cav Regt with:

- In DS - one H13 161 (Indep) Recce Flt
- Under Op Con - one tp C Sqn 1 Armd Regt
  - B Coy 2 RAR
  - one combat ongr team.

(2) The operation was to be planned and conducted by OC A Sqn 3 Cav Regt.

g. Separate operations were to be mounted at a later date if tasks given in para 21c. and g. were still necessary after Op COOKTOWN ORCHID I-VI.

#### Execution

18. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID I proceeded as planned. C Coy were relieved by W Coy on 18 Apr. 1 ARU relieved W Coy on 22 Apr to release W Coy for Op TOAN THANG. For details see Operational Analysis by OC C Coy and W Coy attached.

19. Op COOKTOWN ORCHID II was conducted as planned. Ops were extended until 17 Apr. At YS 525626 at 2000 hrs on 10 Apr 1 Pl A Coy contacted 3 VC resulting

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in 1 VC KIA. There were no friendly casualties. No Operation Analysis is attached.

20. Op COCKTOWN ORCHID III was conducted as planned but was terminated on 23 Apr to release V Coy for Op TOAN THANG. See attached Operation Analysis by OC V Coy.

21. Op COCKTOWN ORCHID IV was conducted as planned. See Operation Analysis by OC C Sqn 1 Armd Regt submitted separately.

22. Op COCKTOWN ORCHID V was terminated on 12 Apr after consistent minor damage to the tank by detonation of M16 mines.

23. Op COCKTOWN ORCHID VI was conducted as planned. See attached Operation Analysis by OC B Coy.

24. One cordon and search operation was conducted by W Coy on completion of Op COCKTOWN ORCHID V acting on information given by Det 1 Div Int Unit. This op was considered most successful by Det 1 Div Int Unit. See W Coy Operation Analysis attached.

25. Operation COCKTOWN ORCHID was terminated on 23 Apr to release 2 RAR for Op TOAN THANG.

26. For detailed sequence of events and results see Sub Unit Operation Analysis attached.

#### Commanders Analysis

27. This type of operation is most interesting for battalions to be given. The series of company sized tasks allows company commanders the chance to conduct company group operations in a given time frame. In addition where the going for APCs and tanks was considered an important factor squadron commanders were given the task of planning and conducting the operation. The degree of cooperation on these operations showed the great possibilities of APC/tank/infantry grouping and should be used more often. It is considered that strike force of APC/Infantry coy with some tanks could be employed on many such operations North of Route 23 where speed and internal fire support are required. This type of force can be mounted quickly. It is not absolutely essential to have artillery fire support as this can be provided by tanks and mortars. The phases of the operations which involved cooperation with armoured elements were extremely gratifying and this type of operation should be repeated.

*W. H. H. du Cap*  
for Lieutenant Colonel  
Commanding Officer  
2 RAR/NZ (AFZAC) Bn

- Annexes:
- A. B Coy Operation Analysis
  - B. C Coy Operation Analysis
  - C. V Coy Operation Analysis
  - D. W Coy Operation Analysis
  - E. W Coy Operation Analysis
  - F. W Coy Operation Analysis
  - P. Unit and Sub Unit Operation Areas and Enemy Situation.

#### Distribution

Comd Diary (3)  
File (1)  
HQ 1 ATF (11)

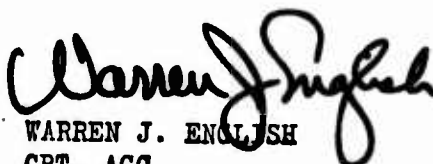
AVFBC-RE-H (5 Jun 68) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Reports

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 23 JUN 1968

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

1. Subject report is forwarded.
2. This headquarters has reviewed the attached After Action Report of the  
1st Australian Task Force, Operation Cooktown Orchid, and concurs with it.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
WARREN J. ENGLISH  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG



ANNEX A TO 2 RAR  
COMBAT OPERATION  
AFTER ACTION REPORT  
OF COOKTOWN ORCHID

SUB UNIT OPERATION ANALYSIS

- 1 Sub unit : B COY 2 RAR  
 2 Operation : COOKTOWN ORCHID V1  
 3 Commander : 27330 Maj WK CARTER  
 4 Duration : 12 Apr 68 - 16 Apr 68  
 5 Task : To conduct a reconnaissance in force in AO BURGUNDY.

6 Sequence of events:

Apr 120700 - Mount APC  
 120930 - Force concentrates in assy area  
 (MS5057)  
 121000 - Leading elms cross EL.  
 161400 - Reconnaissance complete.

7 Composition of Force:

Force commander : OC A SQN 3 CAV REGT  
 Force : A SQN 3 CAV REGT (-)  
 in DS : One H13, 161 Recce Flt.  
 under op con : One tp C Sqn 1 Armd Regt.  
 Two tk dozers C Sqn 1 Armd Regt.  
 One ARV and one fitters veh C Sqn  
 1 Armd Regt.  
 One sect Aslt Pnr Pl 2 RAR.  
 One mini team 1 Fd Sqn RAE.  
 B Coy 2 RAR with FO Party and MPC.  
 One sect Mor Pl 2 RAR.

8. Comments:

a. Command :

The operation was commanded throughout by OC A SQN 3 CAV REGT. The Inf Coy Comd moved with the Armd comd except for one phase which was basically infantry terrain when coy comd moved on foot. I consider the command arrangement was the best possible for a force of this kind, in the type of terrain encountered.

b. Terrain :

The LONG GREEN at this time of the year is very dry and except for patches of thick undergrowth or long grass is suitable for mounted operations. The exception to be preceeding is the area in MS 5660, 5760, 5861 which is thick scrub, through which veh movement is slow and cumbersome.

c. Carriage of Infantry :

The inf sections were all at a strength of 8 and each pl HQ has a strength of 5 plus on some occasions 2 aslt pprs. This made a total of 31 to be carried by a section of APC's. This strength is normal for operations. Some difficulty was experienced in fitting a platoon on to a section of APC's for the following reasons:-

(1) Rations and eqpt for APC crews is carried in the body of the vehicle and NOT stored on shelves. This was corrected during the op but principle must be established that the body of the vehicle belongs to the infantry.

(2) The infantry had large packs which cannot be worn whilst mounted. This difficulty can be overcome with experience in loading.

ANNEX A

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(3) The M113 is designed to carry 10 inf plus eqpt and the platoon strength of 31 exceeds this capacity. Future operations of this nature I consider that sections could be reduced to 7 men without loss of effective fire power.

(4) The infantry were carried inside the APC except for the MG number in the section. He travelled standing with weapons at the ready in case of contact. I consider it more important for the MG number to be orientated and informed of the whereabouts of the enemy than the section commander. MG numbers wore flack jackets and steel helmets for protection.

(5) Infantry must be given frequent rests outside the APC to overcome the affect of heat and motion sickness.

d: Dismounted movement supported by Armour:

Some early problems were encountered by both Arms when infantry were dismounted and were moving in front of the armour. Some of these are listed, I would emphasise however that all were due to lack of experience and were quickly and satisfactorily rectified by mutual discussion.

(1) Difficulty was experienced in thick country when armour moving in the rear pushing over trees caused some anxious moments to infantry clearing to the front. This was overcome by both forces moving in bounds, the armour being controlled either by the infantry comd in inf pl/APC seat operations or by an armour rep dismounted in inf coy/APC Tp operations.

(2) Some early problems were experienced by armoured section commanders in marrying up with infantry on each bound. This was quickly overcome by moving in short bounds and by the use of infantry guides on one occasion.

(3) Noise made by vehicles pushing through thick scrub also raised some problems when infantry and armour tried to move at the same time. Infantry scouts were distracted by noise and would have been unable to hear any noise made by enemy moving. This was also overcome by moving in bounds. This problem also arose when the H13 was used during the "Infantry leading" phase. Once the H13 had completed its task it was sent out of the area to overcome this problem.

e. Mobility:

The degree of search during the operation was infinitely greater than that achieved by an infantry force. The increased mobility allowed much more ground to be searched. Greater speed of movement was achieved however stealth must be sacrificed and the likelihood of contact with small groups such as the "caretaker force" thought to exist in the area is greatly decreased.

f. Firepower:

A force of this nature can develop tremendous firepower against a force of enemy infantry. Artillery and mortar DF was fired each evening around the harbour area. The potential of the CENTURION firing canister supported by the cavalry and infantry weapons supported in depth by artillery and mortars makes a force of this nature more than formidable.

.../Communications:

g. Communications:

An inf/armour/cavalry net was established and as a result no difficulty in communications between arms was experienced. Radio diagrams are attached at Annex A.

h. Centurion Tanks:

Unfortunately great difficulty in keeping the tanks mobile was experienced. Whilst not qualified to enter technical discussion on this matter it was apparent that the M113 vehicle is more suited to operations of this nature than was the Centurion tank. The value of the firepower of the Centurion would have to be weighed against the care and time required to move them through sand and scrub. Perhaps a light gun mounted on the M113 could prove a satisfactory substitute.

9. Conclusion:

A force of this nature is of great value to mount operations in open or lightly timbered terrain and I can think of any number of operations where it could be used to produce a better result than an infantry force operating on its own. There is a requirement for much greater emphasis on infantry/armour/cavalry training in AUSTRALIA to achieve a higher understanding of the problems encountered. Many of the problems which were "ironed out" on the first day of the operation would not have arisen had previous training been possible. This applies at all levels. I would like to emphasise that I do not consider operations of this nature are likely to produce contact with small parties of VC however I think they are of value for reconnaissance of known base areas and for reaction to VC harassing operations. To sum up good fun and a valuable experience at all levels. For the most part beats walking.

W K CARTER

Maj

OC B Coy 2 RAR

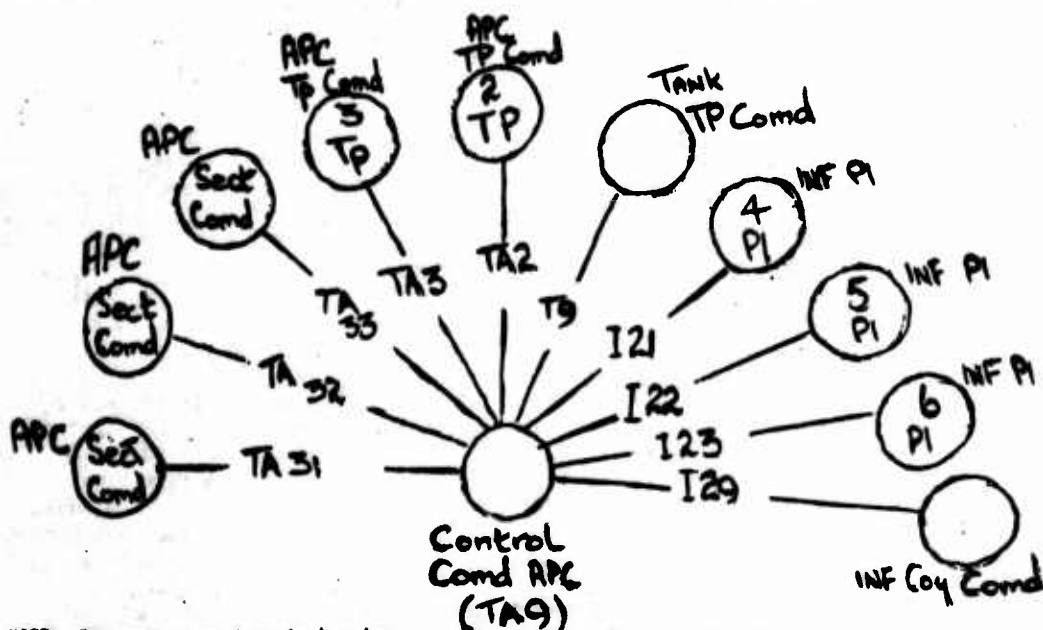
OCs Comments

This was a valuable experience for both the APCs and infantry. I concur with OC B Coy comments on contact of such a grouping with small parties of VC. The noise level is far too high, however on more specific targets against larger groups of enemy this force composition would be invaluable. The comments on APC stowage are valid and should be checked periodically. APC crews tend to carry much more than normal combat requirements.

# INF/TANK/AVY NET

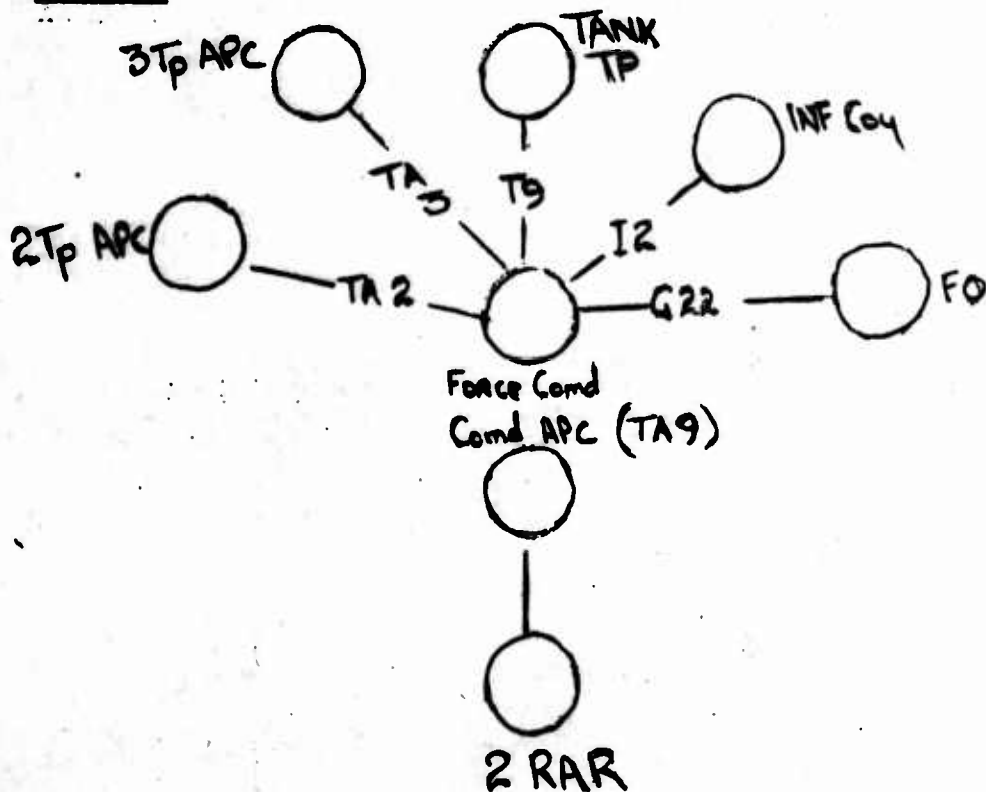
ANNEX A TO  
POST OP ANALYSIS  
OF COCK TOWN ORCHID VI

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NOTE: This net was used for Inf/Tank/APC conversation only. APCs used internal troop or section nets for internal traffic.

## FORCE COMD NET



NOTE: This net was used as means of passing information from sub-units of force to higher HQ.

ANNEX A  
TO POST OP ANALYSIS

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ANNEX B TO 2 RAR  
COMBAT OPERATIONS  
AFTER ACTION REPORT  
OP COOKTOWN ORCHID

C COY SUB UNIT OPERATION ANALYSIS

1. SUB UNIT C Coy 2 RAR.
2. COMMANDER 335121 Maj G.E. WILLIAMS.
3. OPERATION NAME COOKTOWN ORCHID ONE.
4. DURATION 1 - 18 Apr 68.
5. OUTLINE OF SUB UNIT TASKS

a. The mission given to the coy group was to conduct land clearing operations in the area between Route 44 - Route 326 and the LONG HAI Mountain Complex (Centre of Mass YS 460530) in accordance with the following priorities:

(1) Priority One

- (a) Clear the area from YS 489541 to YS 493533.
- (b) Clear a lane 200 metres wide along the creek line from YS 482549 to YS 472540.
- (c) Clear a lane 200 metres wide from TAM PHOUC (YS 456574) - YS 470540 - YS 477523 - YS 491521.
- (d) Clear the line of the SUOI HUT THIEN from YS 462550 to YS 475568.
- (e) Clear the line of the SUOI TRE from YS 459560 to YS 469569.

(2) Priority Two.

- (a) To clear a lane along the NORTH WESTERN face of the NUI DA IUNG feature from YS 456572 to YS 435551.
- (b) To clear a lane between NUI HONG THUNG and NUI DIEN BA from YS 440523 to YS 462549.

(3) Priority Three Priority Three tasks were to clear the areas remaining between the Priority One cuts

b. The Company grouping for the operation was as follows:

C Coy 2 RAR,  
 1 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt.  
 AUST Land Clearing Team (12 x D8 bulldozers).  
 Elements US Land Clearing Team (5 x Rome Ploughs).  
 One Section Mortar Pl 2 RAR.  
 H13 161 Rocco Flt (in DS)

6. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

a.	Serial	Date	Event
	1.	1 Apr 68	Movement of coy gp from NUI DAT to FSPB HERRING (YS 492551); B Coy 3 RAR relieved in FSPB HERRING.
	2.	2 - 3 Apr 68	Land clearing operations completed in area of YS 490540.
	3.	5 Apr 68.	Advance Base GLORIA established at YS 471541, FSPB dismantled.
	4.	6-10 Apr 68	SOUTHERN land clearing completed from YS 471541 - YS 478523 - YS 491521.

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ANNEX B

- 16
5. 11-17 Apr 68 NORTHERN Out completed from YS 471541 - YS 456575.
  6. 18 Apr 68 C Coy relieved by W Coy 2 RAR at GLORIA.
- 

b. Comments

(1) Use of Infantry It was generally found best by day to employ one platoon in the protection of the base camp; one platoon giving intimate protection to the day's clearing operations and the remaining platoon patrolling and remaining overnight in the area to be worked on the day following. By night due to the size of the base camp, two platoons were found necessary for the defence of GLORIA.

(2) Use of Cavalry 1 Tr A Sqn 3 Cav Regt were used extensively on the following tasks:

- (a) Movement of infantry to and from the days cutting face.
- (b) Protection of the land clearing bulldozers.
- (c) Ready reaction force (with one platoon) for incidents occurring anywhere along the cuts.
- (d) Escort of the numerous convoys of engineer stores and water necessary for the operation.

(3) Use of Air The H13 was used extensively by Engineer, cavalry and Infantry commanders to check the day's cut and to reconnoitre the area to be covered on the following day. As the distance between the cutting face and the base camp increased, the H13 was used to provide air cover for the daily move forward of the heavy plant.

(4) Enemy

(a) The initial assessment of the enemy prior to the operation was that VC in up to squad size could be encountered. In addition several VC base camps and minefields were reported as being in the area as a result of Operation PINNAROO.

(b) Contacts, findings and incidents 1 - 18 Apr 68 were as follows:

(i) On 3 Apr at 0150H FSPB HERRING received approximately 20 rounds of 60mm mortar from a base late position in the vicinity of YS 490560. There was no casualties and no damage to vehicles.

(ii) On 7 Apr 68 one VC was contacted at YS 475535, resulting in one AUSTRALIAN WIA (not evacuated).

(iii) On 7 Apr 68 and again on 11 Apr 68, the land clearing bulldozers detonated M16 mines in the creek beds at YS 472538 and YS 463550. A total of four mines were detonated. The blast shields fitted to the bulldozers proved to be effective and no casualties resulted to personnel or equipment. The mines had been in position for some time prior to land clearing operations commencing, it appeared.

(iv) On the 13 Apr 68 a small VC base camp was located in the creek bank at YS 459560. The camp consisted of three bunkers. In the camp was found a K50 sub machine gun and several tins of documents. The camp showed signs of having been hastily evacuated possibly due to artillery used early that day.

.../Two VC

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(v) Two VC KIA were located in the area immediately SOUTH of TAM PHOUK during the period 14 - 16 Apr 68. These are thought to have resulted from early contacts during Operation PINNAROO.

(vi) In addition several base camps were located along the lines of the SUOI TRE and SUOI HUT THIEN. All had been previously located by friendly forces and effectively struck by air.

Assessment of the Operation

7. From the company point of view OPERATION COOKTOWN ORCHID ONE was considered to have been very successful - especially as the land clearing concept was relatively new within 1 ATF at the time and consequently in the initial stages infantry procedures had to be worked out from day to day.

Engineer daily targets were generally met and on many occasions exceeded. The only problems encountered by either engineers or the company were those of internal administration. The need to have sufficient APCs to provide intimate support, escort duties and as a ready reaction force to counter 'brushfire' contacts, especially where the land clearing operations are extensive, cannot be over emphasised.

G E WILLIAMS  
Maj  
OC C Coy 2 RAR

CO's Comments I concur with above.

V Coy RNZIR  
2 RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn  
NUI DAT

May 68

32.2

2 RAR/NZ(ANZAC) Bn

SUB UNIT OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

Maps: 18015 Sheet 6430 III SE

1. V Coy, 2 RAR/NZ(ANZAC).
2. Maj BTA Wormop, RNZIR.
3. Operation COCKTOWN ORCHID III.
4. 3 - 24 Apr 68.
5. Outline of Coy Tasks.
  - a. To conduct intensive patrolling in the 2 RAR TAOR.
  - b. To prevent VC movement from HOA LONG to NUI THI Hills.
6. Sequence of Events.

Serial	Date/Time	Location	Event	Remarks.
1.	031730	Nui Dat	c/s 51 left by TCV	
2.	031800	Nui Dat	c/s 52,53 and 53A left by TCV.	
3.	031825	YS 403647	Locstat c/s 51	
4.	031930	YS 405646	Ni ambush estb by c/s 53.	
5.	031945	YS 411656	Ni ambush estb by c/s 52.	
6.	031947	YS 406637	Ni ambush posn estb by c/s 53A.	
7.	032310	YS 380674	Loc of c/s 51.	
8.	040640	YS 406644	c/s 53 and 53A in day posn.	
9.	040717	YS 414654	c/s 52 in day posn.	
10.	040735	YS 380674	c/s 51 move out from ni loc to commence patrolling foo thills East of Nui Dinh feature.	
11.	041020	YS 379668	c/s 51 estb ambush posn for day and ni 4/5 Apr.	

ANNEX C



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12.	041920	YS 411656	c/s 52 in ni ambush posn.	
13.	041927	YS 405646	c/s 53 in ni ambush posn.	
14.	041928	YS 404638	c/s 53A in ni ambush posn.	
15.	050640	YS 411651 YS 405644	c/s 52 in day posn. c/s 53 and 53A in day posn.	
16.	051210- 051440		c/s 51 move from YS 379668 to 380661 to 381658 and estb ambush posn for night 5/6 Apr.	
17.	051930- 052015		Pl ptls estb ni ambushes at: c/s 52 - YS 411656 c/s 53 - YS 405646 c/s 53A - YS 404638	
18.	052223	YS 404638	c/s 53A contact with 10-12 VC.	See Annex A,
19.	060710	YS 414667	c/s 52 in day posn.	
20.	060715	YS 404638	c/s 53 joined up with 53A.	
21.	061330	Nui Dat	c/s 53 returned by TCV.	
22.	061727	YS 404640	c/s 53A in ni ambush posn.	
23.	061730	Nui Dat	c/s 52A departed by TCV.	
24.	061845	YS 382647	c/s 51 in ni ambush posn.	
25.	061910	YS 409648	c/s 52A in ni ambush posn.	
26.	061930	YS 411656	c/s 52 in ni posn.	
27.	070644- 070730		Pl ptls in day posn at: c/s 51 - YS 381648 c/s 52 and 52A - YS 411651 c/s 53A - YS 405642	
28.	071855- 071930		Pl ptls estb ni ambush posns at c/s 51 - YS 382647 c/s 52 - YS 415654 c/s 52A - YS 404647 c/s 53A - YS 406635	
29.	080615- 080700		Pl in day posn at: c/s 51 - YS 382647 c/s 52A, 53A - 405642.	
30.	080850- 081020	YS 382647	c/s 51 move to YS 377640.	
31.	080900	Nui Dat	c/s 52 returned on foot.	
32.	081837	Nui Dat	c/s 53 departed by TCV for AO.	
33.	081830- 081945		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns at: c/s 51 - YS 379638 c/s 52A - YS 408649 c/s 53 - YS 405646 c/s 53A - YS 405638	

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34.	090610- 090706		Pls in day locs at: o/s 51 - YS 377639 o/s 52A - YS 410650 o/s 53 and 53A - YS 405644.
35.	091825- 091940		Pl ptl estb ni ambushes at: o/s 51 - YS 379638 o/s 52A - YS 411656 o/s 53 - YS 404647 o/s 53A - YS 403639
36.	100635- 100800		Pls in day locs at: o/s 52A - YS 410650 o/s 53 and 53A - YS 404642
37.	101220	Nui Det	w/s 51 returned by TCV.
38.	101830	Nui Det	o/s 52 departed by TCV.
39.	101830- 101950		Pl ptls estb ni ambushes at: o/s 52 - YS 411656 o/s 52A - YS 408655 o/s 53 - YS 404647 o/s 53A - YS 404638
40.	110555- 110645		Pls in day locs at: o/s 52 and 52A - YS 411651 o/s 53 and 53A - YS 404643
41.	111912- 112005		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns) o/s 52 - YS 415654 o/s 52A - YS 407649 o/s 53 - YS 404647 o/s 53A - YS 405634
42.	120620- 120635		Pls in day locs: o/s 52 and 52A - YS 411651 o/s 53 and 53A - YS 404643
43.	121923- 121940		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns. o/s 52 - YS 415654 o/s 52A - YS 407648 o/s 53 - YS 402645 o/s 53A - YS 401630
44.	130610- 130643		Pls in day locs at: o/s 52 and 52A - YS 416657 o/s 53 and 53A - YS 404643
45.	131220		o/s 53 and 53A returned to Nui Det.
46.	13		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns at: o/s 52 - YS 411656 o/s 52A - YS 410648
47.	131835	Nui Det	o/s 51 and 51A departed by TCV for AO.
48.	131840	YS 403647	o/s 51 in ni ambush posn.
49.	131925	YS 405637	o/s 51A in ni ambush posn.
50.	131955	YS 412662	o/s 52 sighted 6 VC approx 600 metres from loc mov West to East. Bty fire mission

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51.	140635	YS 405642	c/s 51 and 51A in day loc.	
52.	140645	YS 4166	c/s 52 and 52A carried out sweep of area of bty fire mission. Negative results.	See serial 50.
53.	140726	YS 416657	c/s 52 and 52A in day loc.	
54.	141211	Nui Dat	c/s 52 returned by TCV.	
55.	141906	YS 404647	c/s 51 in ni ambush posn.	
56.	141914	YS 403637	c/s 51A in ni ambush posn.	
57.	150647	YS 405642	c/s 51 and 51A in day loc.	
58.	151815	Nui Dat	c/s 53 and 53A departed by TCV.	
59.	151835- 151952		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns at: c/s 51 - YS 405647 c/s 51A - YS 404639 c/s 53 - YS 410656 c/s 53A - YS 407052	
60.	160619- 160700		Pls in day locs at: c/s 51 and 51A - YS 405642 c/s 53 and 53A - YS 409649	
61.	161831- 161935		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns at: c/s 51 - YS 404647 c/s 51A - YS 401638 c/s 53 - YS 409655 c/s 53A - YS 405649	
62.	170621- 170636		Pls in day locs at: c/s 51 and 51A - YS 405642 c/s 53 and 53A - YS 409649	
63.	171220	Nui Dat	c/s 51 and 51A return by TCV.	
64.	171826	Nui Dat	c/s 52 and 52A departed by TCV.	
65.	171921- 171940		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns: c/s 52 - YS 401638 c/s 52A - YS 407646 c/s 53 - YS 409655 c/s 53A - YS 405649	
66.	180610- 180635		Pls in day locs at: c/s 52 and 52A - YS 406640 c/s 53 and 53A - YS 409649	
67.	181920- 181930		Pl ptls in ni ambush posns: c/s 52 - YS 405632 c/s 52 A - YS 409645 c/s 53 - YS 409655 c/s 53A - YS 405649	
68.	190606- 190630		Pls in day locs as for serial 66.	
69.	191215	Nui Dat	c/s 53 and 53A return by TCV.	
70.	191824	Nui Dat	c/s 51 and 51A depart by TCV for A0.	

71. 191910-  
191922 Pl ptls estb ni ambush  
posns at:  
o/s 51 - YS 408653  
o/s 51A - YS 410647  
o/s 52 - YS 390639  
o/s 52A - YS 403643

72. 200303 YS 386639 o/s 52 sighted 6 VC Tgt engaged by arty.  
moving NW.

73. 200617-  
200712 Pls in day loos at o/s 51 and 51A,  
YS 407649  
o/s 52 and 52A - YS 392640.

74. 200845 YS 3863 o/s 52 carried out search  
with negative results.

75. 201847-  
201936 Pl ptls in ni ambush posns;  
o/s 51 - YS 407649  
o/s 51A - YS 408645  
o/s 52 - YS 391638  
o/s 52A - YS 403643

76. 202235 YS 408645 o/s 51 made contact with  
unknown no of VC. VC mov  
North towards o/s 51.

77. 202235 YS 407649 o/s 51 stood to.

78. 202239 YS 407649 o/s 51 in contact with See Annex B.  
4 VC moving East to West,

79. 211103 YS 407649 o/s 51 and 51A in day loo.

80. 211211 Nui Dat o/s 52 and 52A return by TCV.

81. 211845 Nui Dat o/s 53 and 53A depart by TCV  
for AO.

82. 211845-  
211927 Pl ptls in ni ambush posns  
at:  
o/s 51 - YS 403647  
o/s 51A - YS 410647  
o/s 53 - YS 406637  
o/s 53A - YS 401635

83. 220603-  
220640 Pls in day loos at:  
o/s 51 and 51A - YS 407649  
o/s 53 and 53A - YS 405641

84. 221808-  
221910 Pl ptls estb ni ambushes at:  
o/s 51 - YS 403647  
o/s 51A - YS 409645  
o/s 53 - YS 390639  
o/s 53A - YS 404638

85. 230606-  
230640 Pls in dayloos at:  
o/s 51 and 51A - YS 407649  
o/s 53 and 53A - YS 394639

86. 230800 Orders received for all  
callsigns to return to base.

87. 230910 o/s 51 returned to base.

88. 231001 o/s 53 returned to base.

89. 231835 o/s 52 and 52A moved to AO.

23

7.

Assessment of Operation:

a. Summary of Results: VC KIA (BC) - 10

Weapons Captured: Rifle Garand - 1  
 M1 Carbine - 1  
 RPG2 - 1  
 Thompson SMG - 1  
 PPS (Chicom SMG) - 3

b. This operation probably did much to upset the morale and fighting efficiency of the Hoa Long Guerillas and the Chau Duc District Coy.

BTA Worsnop

Major Officer Commanding  
 V Coy

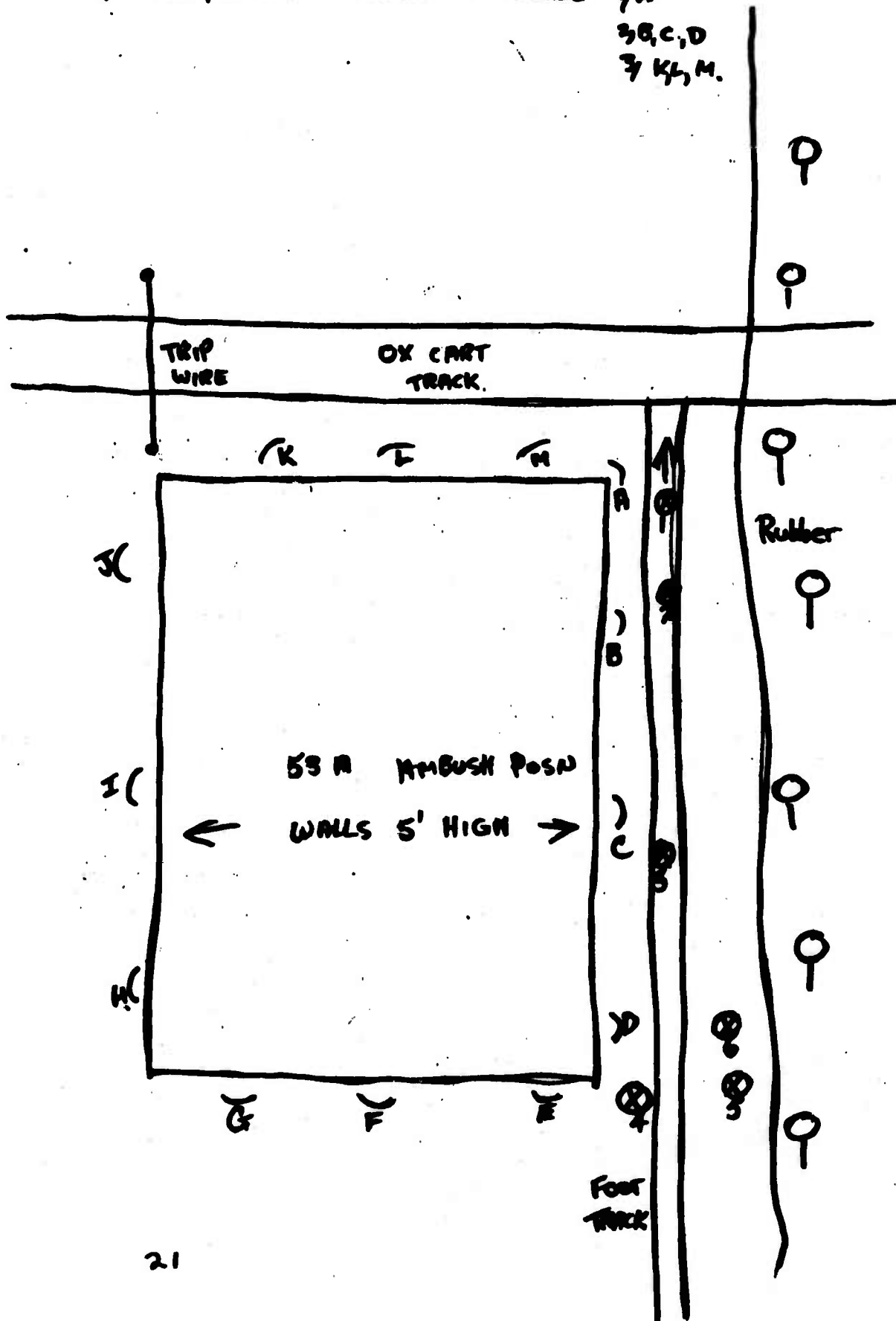
8. CO's Comments. As shown by the results of this operation and Op FORREST, sustained ambushes in areas of general VC movement will always pay off. A company used this way enables a more detailed appreciation of the pattern of enemy movement to be made. A company allotted a task around any village in the province can obtain similar results. The great requirement for comds in this type of operation is patience.

CONTACT AFTER ACTION REPORT

1. Operation COCKDOWN ORCHID III.
2. Report by 579613 Sgt WHITWORTH JR.
3. 6 Platoon, V Coy, 2 RAR/NZ(ANZAC) Bn.
4. Strength of Patrol in Contact: 14.
5. Date of action, 2230 hrs 5 April. Duration 10 minutes.
6. Location: YS 404638.
7. Patrol Task: Ambushing.
8. Description of action: A party of 10-12 VC walked into ambush from rubber to the South. Ambush was triggered by sentry.
9. Description of terrain: Low scattered scrub on edge of rubber, visibility about 100 metres.
10. Distance to enemy when first sighted: 3 metres.
11. Which soldier first saw enemy: Sentry.
12. What was soldier doing: Sentry duty.
13. What caused enemy to be noticed: Noise of movement.
14. VC strength and type: 10 - 12, Local Force, dress assorted black, green and blue.
15. Who fired first: Ambush party, range 2 metres.
16. What section weapons fired: Claymores, M79, M60.
17. What was enemy's immediate reaction: Drop dead.
18. What was the sections immediate reaction: Stand to.
19. Enemy casualties: 6 VC KIA (BC).
20. Caused by: Claymore.
21. Friendly casualties: Nil.
22. Approx ammo expenditure: 7 Claymores, 22 rds 40mm M79, 200 rds 7.62mm mixed link.
23. Documents/Weapons captured: 1 Garand M1, 1 RPG 2, 1 Thompson SMG, 3 FPS(Chic
24. Other points: Enemy never returned fire. There were no blood trails, but footprints of fast moving VC were found next morning, to the South of the ambush.

● VC MOVING SOUTH TO NORTH

1 CLAYMORES — ORDER OF FIRING 1A  
3B, C, D  
3 K, L, M.



CONTACT AFTER ACTION REPORT

1. Operation COOKTOWN ORCHID III.
2. Report by 39042 Lt Howell AG.
3. 4 Platoon, V Coy, 2 RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn.
4. Strength of Patrol in contact: 15.
5. Date of action: 2239 hrs 20 Apr 68. Duration: 2 hours including sweep.
6. Location: YS 407649.
7. Patrol Task: Ambush.
8. Description of action: My patrol was alerted by the firing from 51A s position and I stood the patrol to. My attention was drawn, by the sentry, the movement of 4 persons. They were moving East to West. I ordered a hand-held flare to be fired and when this was done the enemy were clearly seen. The patrol engaged with M60, M16 and claymores. All the enemy fell to the ground and after an interval of suppressive fire I led out a search party. All bodies and equipment were recovered during that search. Next morning I again searched the area but found nothing more.
9. Description of terrain: Clear rubber with a section of bush to the South.
10. Distance to enemy when first sighted? 100 metres.
11. Which soldier first saw enemy: Sentry.
12. What was soldier doing: Sentry duty.
13. What caused enemy to be noticed: Movement against a flare.
14. VC strength and type: 4 Local Force, dressed in black.
15. What section weapons fired: All.
16. What was enemy's immediate reaction: Fell at first engagement.
17. What was the sections immediate reaction: Open fire as target was identified.
18. Enemy casualties: 4 KIA (BC) (1 male, 3 female).
19. Caused by: All weapons.
20. Friendly casualties: Nil.
21. Documents/Weapons captured: 1 M1 carbine, 5 instantaneous fuse grenades, miscellaneous documents, 1 pack.

ANNEX B 16 V COY  
32.2 OF 2 MAY 68.



W Coy  
2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn.  
Hui Dat

24 Apr 68

60.15

2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn. (12)

Info:  
1 RNZIR

W COMPANY OPERATION ANALYSIS

SUB UNIT : W Coy  
COMMANDER : Maj P.G. Hotop RNZIR  
OPERATION : COOKTOWN ORCHID I  
DURATION : 17 - 22 Apr 68

1. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
170800H	Relief of C Coy by W Coy commenced. c/s 73 and an advance party heli-lifted to SPB GLORIA. (YS471541) c/s 73 was deployed to relieve a pl of C Coy who were in ambush at the end of the days out. APCs. Remained in ambush overnight.	In loc at SPB GLORIA were a combined US/AUST Land Clearing Team, 3 Co's at Engr teams, a sect of Mortars and a tp of
180720H	The remainder of the coy commenced flyout from EAGLE FARM in a Chinook. c/s 71 despatched on arrival to protect move out of Land Clearing Team. Relief not complete until 1030 hrs.	Long time of changeover due to the failure of the hydraulic system on the helicopter. A relief a/c was called in to complete the lift.
180830H	c/s 73 provided protection for Land Clearing Team. c/s 71 commenced patrolling from YS465566 to clear the area for the following days out.	
180900H	A bulldozer uncovered a 155mm blind at YS476570.	Blind destroyed by engr.
181120H	4 single shots heard from vicinity of YS476570.	These could have been ARVN patrols.
181315H	A US engr injured when he fell across a dozer blade. Evacuated on a mainstem helicopter.	
181602H	Further SA shots from the vicinity of YS465565.	Probably VC warning shots.
181730H	Land Clearing Team returned to SPB GLORIA with c/s 73. c/s 71 moved into an ambush post at YS469567.	Primary cut completed to YS469569. Windrowing completed to YS465565.
181740H	c/s 71 reported 4 bursts of SA fire from the area of YS474571.	The LO at DAT DO confirmed there were no friendly patrols in that area.

/ 190730H.....

ANNEX D

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
190730H	c/s 72, Land Clearing Team and a sect of APCs moved out to commence a new out to the SW between the Mui Hoa Thung hills and the Mui Dien Ba hills. Windrowing continued on the Northern out towards TAM PHUOC until 1130 hrs.	A preliminary bombardment along proposed cut was conducted by Coy FO from a helicopter.
191015H	c/s 72 located a camp complex consisting of 8 bunkers with inter connecting trenches. The bunkers were partially collapsed as the area had been hit by a B52 strike. The camp had been vacated for about one month. A calendar was located with days crossed off up to 3 Mar 68.	The following items were found in the area of the camp: 150 lb. polished rice A Medical Kit containing empty bottles, 3 anti toxin ampules, cotton wool and two hypodermic needles. Some documents. A damaged loud speaker. 17 x M16 mine initiators 4 x M79 cases. 5 x M5 switches 3 Bangalore Torpedoes(LP) 3 ft long x 2" Dia. 1 Weapon 5 CHUs 1 x 75mm aircraft rocket(blind) 7.62 ammo of different types 16 Thompson mags 20 Browning mags 1 Circular 'Chicom' magazine 2 x M26 grenades 2 US pineapple grenades 1 VC grenade
191730H	c/s 73 and Land Clearing Team returned to base. c/s 72 moved to an ambush posn at YB459548.	Pilot out completed to YB455546. Windrowing only just commenced in the area.
191924H	c/s 72 reported SA fire from the area of YB482519.	
192153H	c/s 73 (SPB GLORIA) reported two strong spot lights and an explosion from the area of YB482519. Lights remained on for 2 mins.	Initial clearance given by Sector to engage with Arty but was later cancelled as ARVN patrols were close to the area. Sector could not determine if ARVN had used lights or heard the explosion.
200730H	c/s 73, Land Clearing Team and APCs moved out to commence ops. c/s 72 protected land clearing ops.	
200815H	c/s 73 located a blind 75mm ac rocket at YB456545.	Blind was destroyed by engrs.
200935H	c/s 73 located an old VC camp at YB455540 which had previously been destroyed by friendly forces.	
200955H	At YB454539 c/s 73 located and destroyed 4 CHUs.	
201040H	Elements of Land Clearing Team and APCs doing the pilot out located a VC camp complex at YB454540. There were 20 bunkers with a tunnel complex.	The camp had been vacated in the previous 24 hrs. Probably after the preliminary bombardment the previous day. /Fires in the area. ....

29

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
201040H contd	Fires in the area were still warm. A qty of ammo (30 cal short and long) was also found hidden in the camp.	The camp was destroyed by the dozers.
201200H	c/s 73 located a grave at YB457540 approx 4 months old.	
201320H	c/s 73 located fresh tracks at YB455538 for 2 - 3 people. Tracks were followed in a North Easterly direction but were lost on hard ground. Tracks were about 24 hrs old.	
201402H	At YB457538 c/s 73 located a number of CS bomb cannister vats which had not exploded.	One unit despatched by heli to 1 ATF for identification purposes.
201705H	A bulldozer uncovered an ammo cache containing approx 3,000 rounds of 7.62 ammo (short) and 12 lb of plastic explosive of local manufacture,	Explosive was later tested by the engns. Considered to be twice as powerful as C4 and much more malleable. Ammo and explosives returned to bn for checking.
201725H	At YB452538 c/s 73 located a bomb crater which was full of water and fish. A fish trap was dug into the side of the crater and there was also a bunker on the perimeter of the hole. Tracks 2 - 6 hrs old were also found in the area moving in a Northerly direction.	Explosives were later used to kill the fish and destroy the trap. There were over 4,000 small fish found dead in the pool when inspected the following day.
201730H	Land Clearing Team and c/s 72 returned to base. c/s 73 moved to an ambush posn at YB453539.	Pilot out completed to YB454542. Windrowing completed to YB456545.
210740H	c/s 71 and land clearing team moved out to continue land clearing. c/s 73 moved from ambush position to protect land clearing ops.	
211200H	At YB459540 c/s 73 located a pl size VC camp consisting of 8 bunkers with communication trenches. Some of the communication trenches had cho. The camp had been vacated for about one week. Elevated fire places had been built inside the bunkers,	Camp destroyed. Found in the camp were: 1 x M16 mine and initiator Documents (one dated 12-4-68) Diary
211355H	At YB454542 a dozer uncovered a box containing approx 200 rds of M1 ammo (both rimmed and rimless) and two sub machine gun magazines.	
211430H	At YB456532 c/s 71 found a well used track running North to South. There were some signs of recent use. The track was followed to YB456528 where two old bunkers were located. In the area of the bunkers were Ho Chi Minh sandal marks 2 - 3 days old.	

/211435H.....

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
211435H	At YS459541 c/s 73 located a further camp consisting of 9 bunkers which had been re-occupied in the last 2 weeks. 2 M16 mines were found on the perimeter of the camp - only one being fused, the second was in the ground but there was no initiator. Also found was 100 ft of green electric cable. 25 yards further east was a further complex of seven bunkers in good condition but these had not been used for approx 6 months.	There were no communication trenches. Both complexes were destroyed the following day. These camps had not previously been visited by friendly forces.
211449H	At SPB GLORIA sentries protecting an Engr Bde helicopter reported hearing noises of mov in the scrub to their EAST. Shortly afterwards a person in black was seen ducking back into the scrub. The area was engaged with SA and a sweep followed. Only a possible OP was found.	OP provided good obsn over GLORIA.
211640H	At YS445532 c/s 71 found the remains of CBUs which had been dismantled.	VC had removed the explosive content.
211740H	At YS543539 a dozer uncovered a green tin containing an APVN type pack.	Pack contained: 2 pieces of material 1 Diary 1 Pkt crystals 1 Pkt white powder 39 pages of figs (typed) 1 plastic bag containing documents 1 spring back folder containing 2 ex books & documents 1 soap dish containing med sups Pack back loaded to Bn HQ.
211740H	c/s 73 and Land Clearing Team returned to base. c/s 71 in ambush at YS450533.	
212010H	A series of explosions and bursts of fire heard in the vicinity of YS479519.	
220730H	c/s 72 and Land Clearing Team left base camp. c/s 71 moved to area of windrowing to protect Land Clearing Team.	
221010H	At YS448527 c/s 72 located a number of signs nailed to trees. These were later translated as VC propaganda signs.	
221030H	c/s 73 and a party of engineers departed the base to destroy the two remaining camps located the previous day. The advance party of 1ARU also arrived.	
221415H	An engr received slight shrapnel wounds to his right knee and hands when a CBU detonated as it was being dismantled. Soldier was evacuated by helicopter.	The CBU was discovered inside the base area. Only the detonator section exploded after it had been removed.
221520H	1 ARU arrived at GLORIA and relief commenced. One platoon ARU was despatched to relieve c/s 71 on protection duties. c/s 71 & 72 returned to GLORIA on APCs. c/s 73 less one sect returned to Nui Dat by helicopter. The remainder returned to Nui Dat on APCs.	Due to the break down of two APCs the coy did not arrive back in Nui Dat until 1930hrs

2.

Assessment of Operation

a. The Land Clearing Team are to be commended for their fine effort. The conditions under which they work are atrocious and in order to keep their vehicles on the road some of them have to work from dawn to dusk.

b. Although the operation might be extensive, when the task is completed the area will no longer be suitable as a VC base. Even if not completed, the work done so far will make it much harder for the VC to hide their movements and reaction by friendly forces will be easier.

c. Some difficulty was experienced in the CP when more than one not was operating at the same time. The ongr rear link, 108 Bty not, Coy internal and bn air not were all within one or two m/c of each other. Consequently there was serious interference on all nets.

d. Judging by the number of new camps found during the land clearing ops many camps must have been missed during Op PINNAROO. In a search and destroy op more time must be allowed for detailed searches - if necessary grid square by grid square.

3.

Recommendations

a. Land clearing ops should be extended to include the 'Light' and 'Long Greens'.

b. More time must be allowed battalions when they are given a search and destroy task if they are to cover the area completely.

c. The present allocation of frequencies should be re-examined so as to allow a bigger gap between frequencies used within the same unit.

PG Hotop

Maj  
OC V Coy

4. CO's Comments. I concur with OC's comments on timings. Although not a part of PINNAROO, the camps etc found were obviously missed by the companies during that operation.

W Coy  
2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn.  
14 Apr 68

32

60.15

2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn. (12)

Info:

C Sqn 1 Armd Regt (4)  
A Sqn 3 Cav Regt (3)  
1 RNZIR

W COMPANY OPERATION ANALYSIS

SUB UNIT : W Coy  
COMMANDER : Maj P.G.Hotop RNZIR  
OPERATION : COOKTOWN ORCHID IV  
DURATION : 4 - 9 Apr 68

1. GENERAL

a. W Coy was under comd C Sqn 1 Armd Regt for this operation and the full Operation Analysis will be submitted by C Sqn. Full details of the op are not included in this report.

b. Due to operational commitments it has not been possible for the OC W Coy and the OC C Sqn to get together to discuss this operation. This report covers only the infantry aspects and is submitted to assist in the compilation of the final report.

2. OUTLINE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
040700H	W Coy mounted on APCs from 3 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt moved to FSPB HERRING (YS492553). The morning was spent establishing a night harbour outside the perimeter of the FSPB on the North Eastern corner.	
041300- 041700H	All officers and senior NCOs attended a series of lectures by the OC W Coy on the org, characteristics, employment and communications of the armd sqn. The remainder of the Coy spent the afternoon with the tanks on familiarisation and mov through open and close country.	A very necessary period of instruction.
041945- 042045H	Familiarisation and practice in the use of Infra red and White light eqpt on the tanks.	
050800- 051030H	W Coy moved in APCs to a live firing area where the OC C Sqn demonstrated the methods of Inf/Tk tgt indication. Most officers and NCOs engaged tgts using all natures of ammo.	

/051330H....

ANNEX E

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
051330H	The armd sqn/inf coy/APC gp moved to a new base at Y8499544.	This move served as a 'shakedown' to test comm and practise the occupation of an inf/tk/APC night har. No problems were encountered.
060730H	Op COCKTOWN ORCHID IV commenced. 1 Tp C Sqn with 1 Pl W Coy mounted in APCs moved to their SL at the minefield at Y8509555. 2 Tp C Sqn with 2 Pl mounted in APCs moved to their SL at Y8517543. The minefence in both areas was breeched using cannister. Sqn HQ, Coy HQ, SHQ Tp and 3 Pl followed on the Northern axis.	No mines were hit when tanks crossed the Northern gap. Approx 7 - 12 mines were detonated in the Southern gap. Because of the mine threat inf remained mounted in APCs and followed the tanks. Preliminary bombardment was fired as tanks crossed the minefield. There were signs of many old pits on both axis
061015H	1 Tp C Sqn located a camp at Y8525567 consisting of two bunkers and a weapon pit. Some clothing, fish and rice was destroyed and ashes in the fire were still warm. A set of black pyjamas, some documents and two ex books were also located when the camp was searched by 1 Pl. 6 mine signs were also located in the camp.	
061515H	During a clearing patrol round a har estb at Y8526559 for SHQ and SHQ Tp a possible camp complex was located 60 metres North of the base. 3 Pl and SHQ Tp moved into the area to investigate. 3 Pl dismounted and located a camp for approx 50. There were 4 large bunkers, 3 - 4 small bunkers and several 2 man slit trenches as well as cooking areas. 3 ammo boxes were found buried in the bottom of a 2 man slit trench. These contained 7.62mm rimless and rimmed ammo, 3 BAR mags, 2 rain coats and one surgical mask.	
061525H	1 Tp and 1 Pl located a camp at Y8535567. The camp had not been used for a long time. The one remaining bunker in good condition was destroyed by the engineers.	
061537H	At Y8529564 2 Tp hit an M16 mine. Negligible damage.	

/061630H....

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<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
061630H	At YS532564 the APCs with 1 Tp received SA auto fire. The fire was returned by tanks and APCs. There were a series of explosions near the APCs and tanks and one APC crew member was slightly wounded. During a sweep back through the area of contact by 1 Tp, the reserve fuel tanks of one of the tks was hit and caught fire. One VC dressed in black was seen crossing the track in front of the tks. During the extraction of the wounded APCs they were again engaged by SA fire and there were two explosions behind the APCs as they moved out. As the APCs entered the har area at YS526559 there were a further four single shots from just outside the perimeter of the base.	The tk was not badly damaged and was towed back to the base. It was mobile again the following day. The damage had been caused by a 0.5 in round. Some of the explosions may have been mines but there were some unexplainable explosions in front of and behind tks and APCs which could have been RPGs
061537H	Night har estb at YS526559.	
071015H	1 Pl found two ammo boxes containing documents on the South-ern perimeter of the base camp.	Documents were returned to 2RAR/NZ.
071100H	1 Tp and 1 Pl remained to protect the base. 2 Tp and SHQ Tp with 2 and 3 Pls mounted in APCs commenced a sweep towards the known en camps at YS534568 and YS531568. The following camps were searched during the day: a. At YS532566 a camp containing 5 bunkers and 4 fire trenches with sleeping bays was located. 3 M16 mine initiators, 5 CBUs and some old clothing were found in the area. b. At YS534569 there was a further old camp containing 1 large bunker 12'x 10', 4 2 man bunkers, 2 further bunkers with connecting crawl trench and 2 x 2 man fire trenches. The camp had not been used for many months and was 3 - 5 years old. c. A number of fire trenches were observed throughout the area. None of these had been used for at least two years.	Because of the mine threat the two tk tps led forming a hollow square and the inf mounted in APCs moved behind the tks. When a camp was located the inf dismounted after passing through the camp. The colm was controlled by the OC C Sqn who travelled in a helicopter.
071500H	1 Pl searched the camp at YS525560 (just North of the base area) and located one M16 mine and a box containing black trousers, a gas mask, 2 pieces of plastic, a note book and rubber thongs for Ho Chi Minh sandals.	



35

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
071645H (Approx)	At YS530565 one of the tks detonated a further M16 mine.	
081115H	<p>2 Tp and 2 Pl remained to protect the base. 1 Tp, SHQ Tp, 1 and 3 Pl commenced a recon in force to the NE of the base. The following camps were located:</p> <p>a. YS535565 - 3 bunkers not in use.</p> <p>b. YS538567 - 4 bunkers, 4 trenches at least 5 years old. Not used for 6 months.</p> <p>c. YS546571 - 3 to 4 weapon pits with out oho. Very old.</p> <p>d. YS545567 - checked two round holes and one oblong hole. Appeared to be old graves which had been dug up in the last month.</p> <p>e. YS547560 - 3 bunkers and a large OP destroyed by airstrike. Some old clothing and sheets of plastic were found in the area. There were signs of a large force having moved through the area from E to W in the last 3 - 4 months.</p> <p>f. YS538565 - Several old wpn pits - 4 yrs old but not used for at least 6 months.</p> <p>g. YS536563 - 5 slit trenches partially filled in.</p> <p>h. YS531557 - 3 bunkers and a cooking area 4 to 8 months old. Fresh tracks for 3 people heading SE and then SW found on a track near the camp.</p> <p>j. YS529556 - 2 destroyed bunkers, tunnel entrances and 2 wpn pits. Good OP over paddy to the SW. A set of fresh tracks heading North.</p>	Method of mov was the same as previous day.
090800H	<p>1 and 2 Tp with 2 and 3 Pl moved to check area to the SE of base. 1 Tp moved on separate axis to YS552562. The remainder moved in the direction of YS553567. The following camps were located:</p> <p>a. YS537561 - 6 bunkers and a cooking area. Some clothing, plastic bags, empty drug bottles and 2 containers for RPG 2 &amp; 7 charges.</p> <p>b. YS548566 - There were signs of a further very old camp.</p>	<p>Markings on one container (green) were:</p> <p>PG-7P-NBL-38</p> <p>3-66-CCF</p> <p>12-66-2</p>
091100H	CS gas was noticed at YS546566. As one of the APCs threw a track and required assistance 1 Tp was recalled from the SOUTHERN axis as the fitters veh was with them. 2 and 3 Pl dismounted and continued on foot to the East and SE.	3 Pl located a drum of CS gas to the North of the coln.
091115H	At YS549566 3 Pl found signs of people fishing in a bomb crater within the last 24 hrs. There were still many fish in the pool. At YS550566 a further drum of CS gas was located.	VC could have been farming these fish.
091142H	2 Pl located one bunker and three trenches at YS546564. It had not been used for some years.	/091200H....

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
091200H	At YS553568 3 Pl found foot prints less than 24 hrs old. Pers was moving North on a track.	
091500H	Sqn/Coy Gp commenced move back to the Horseshoe and Nui Dat. W Coy's return was delayed when one of the APCs lost its rear idler.	

### 3. ASSESSMENT OF THE OPERATION

- a. The presence of mines in the area dictated that the infantry had to remain mounted. The op would have caused casualties had it been done by infantry alone.
- b. The extent of the damage to the tks was suprising and a few hours of daylight must be allowed each day for maintenance.
- c. In relatively close country the APCs could move faster than the tanks. Some difficulty was experienced by the APCs when travelling in the paths flattened by the tanks.
- d. A Tp of APCs may be able to lift a Coy of inf when they are not carrying their full eqpt. Even though sects were reduced from 10 to 6 men it was impossible to fit everyone in the APCs when carrying all their kit. If other arms e.g. FOs party and engrs are to be att to the coy additional vehicles must be provided for them.
- e. Without inf on the ground tanks can not search close country in detail. However if the mission is to recce in force and there is a time limit imposed which precludes the use of inf alone, then a mounted op is acceptable. The method of search whereby the inf moved back into any camps located did prove successful.
- f. In spite of the time limit imposed, and the mine threat, it is considered that the op was successful and both inf and armd learnt a great deal. The working relationship estb between W Coy and 3 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav was most pleasing. The coy had little difficulty working with the tks.

### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. When other arms are att to an inf coy for an op additional APCs should be provided. Consideration should be given to the estb of a small pool for this purpose.
- b. Where possible the same coy and the same APC tp should work together. This saves time during the marrying up phase.
- c. When tks are employed the tempo of ops must be governed to allow time for tk maint each day. POL should be delivered the day before to allow for refuelling in the evening.
- d. At least one day should be allowed for the marrying up of inf and armour before an op especially when the tps have not worked together before.
- e. If time permits W Coy would like to carry out further trg on ops with 3 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt to develop and confirm drills and techniques.

5. CO'S Comments. I concur with OC's comments. True cooperation and marrying up is essential. Until all coys of a battalion are trained in tank cooperation, flexibility will be lost.

W Coy  
2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn.

Mui Dat

15 Apr 68

60.15

2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn. (12)

Info:

C Sqn 1 Armd Regt  
A Sqn 3 Cav Regt  
1 Fd Sqn  
1 RNZIR

W COMPANY OPERATION ANALYSIS

SUB UNIT: : W Coy  
COMMANDER: : Maj P.G. Hotop RNZIR  
OPERATION : COOKTOWN ORCHID V  
DURATION : 10 - 13 Apr 68

1. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
101300H	c/s 73 departed W Coy lines with 3 sect 3 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt to RV with 2 Tp 1 Armd Sqn at Tan Phuoc (GS Y84558) This group then moved direct to the Coy base area at Y8517542.	Under comd were: One tp C Sqn 1 Armd Regt One tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt 2 Combat Engr teams
101500H	The remainder of W Coy, att engr, engr vehs and 3 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt departed W Coy lines.	Two engr combat teams (One being made up of Aslt Pnr) were att to the Coy.
101615H	Coy Gp complete an base area. Deployment for occupation of def room commenced.	
101730H	While a sect of c/s 72 was moving onto a knoll to complete the perimeter a soldier tripped a booby trap consisting of a trip wire and a grenade. Three soldiers were injured and evacuated by helicopter. Engrs checked the area but could find no further mines or booby traps. However the sect was withdrawn from the area as it could be covered by fire from other posns.	All members of W Coy were wearing steel helmets and one of the soldiers helmets was punctured by the grenade. The shrapnel came to rest against the leather headband and no wound resulted. An interpreter visited the nearest PF post which was only 250 yds from the coy base but the comd insisted there were no mines or booby traps placed outside his perimeter by his troops. He said the VC often booby trapped the area so as to injure PF patrols. (See Annex A)
110800H	OC W Coy with tk tp comd and engr offr commenced detailed recon of minefield. At the same time the mine mats were attached to two of the tks and drivers tested the eqpt.	Some mines were visible from the edge of the minefield.  /OO 1 RNZIR and OC .....

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<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
110800H contd..	CO 1 RNZIR and CO 1 Fd Sqn visited the area during clearing ops. While attempting to get the comd APC on to high ground so as to be able to observe the mov of the tk in the minefield the APC threw a track. As this took 2 - 3 hours to extract, the tk tp comd decided to guide the mine clearing tk from his own tk which he positioned on high ground just outside the minefield fence.	
110915H	Engr officer briefed each tk driver on the lay out of the minefield and the proposed method of clearing the field.	
110930H	The first tk cleared the gap previously out in the mine fences during Op COOKTOWN ORCHID IV. c/s 72 and 73 moved in APCs to positions on high ground approximately 300 metres to the EAST of the minefield. c/s 71 remained to protect the Western flank,	The tk exploded a number of mines in the gap each time it crossed the area previously used by tks and APCs.
110945H	The first tk completed a run down the Western fence and back up the Eastern fence. The tp comd endeavoured to guide the tank so that his tracks straddled the mine clusters. This was only partially successful. The area of the run was from YS518543 SE to YS520542. The tank then came back out through the Western gap so that damage could be assessed.	Approximately 26 mines were detonated 12 going off under the tracks. The damage was extensive to both tracks and roadwheels. One suspension unit was punctured in a number of places. Suspension rods were also twisted and grease nipples and nuts were also blown off.
111015H	The second tank then completed a run over the area previously cleared and there were further detonations. A second circuit was then completed one tank width inside the previous runs. Although an effort was made to move more quickly in second or third gear the ground was too rough to keep up a constant speed. However it was noted that more mines exploded behind the tank when travelling at speed. After the second run the tank came out of the minefield for further inspection. Again the damage was extensive. OC W Coy was not prepared to let the tks return to the minefield in their present condition in case of breakdown or track failure while in the minefield.	Although exact details are held by 1 Fd Sqn and C Sqn 1 Arm'd Regt, outline damage was as follows: a. The total No of mines exploded was 76. Approx 24 of these went off under the tanks. b. Approx 72 links of track had to be replaced. One track being torn almost halfway through. c. One suspension unit was punctured and a number of suspension rods were twisted. d. Ten road wheel required replacement. Some were buckled. e. Many grease nipples and nuts were blown off suspension systems. f. Bins, aerials and a gun sight were damaged. g. Some radio eqpt was affected by the blast. h. The steel I beams on the mine mats were twisted and one had a 6 inch tear in it.
111115H	OC C Sqn 1 Arm'd Regt arrived by helicopter to inspect the damage. He was also not prepared to put the tanks back into the minefield.	
111230H	APCs less one sect returned to Nui Dat for another task. The third sect ferried c/s 72 and 73 back to the base camp and then also returned to Nui Dat.	
111400H	The two damaged tanks were moved to an area of hard standing at YS515535 where some repairs were carried out. c/s 72 provided protection parties.	111435H.....

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
111435H	Half of each pl/tp were permitted to go swimming at YS528540. One member of the Cav tp was stung by a sting ray and was later evacuated on a maindlem helicopter.	
120800H	c/s 72 estb a check point at YS515538 in conjunction with the two tks which were being repaired on the road. 5 people were detained for the lack of ID Cards during the morning. These were despatched to the Police Station in Lang Phuoc Hai but relatives arrived with their ID Cards so they were released.	
120830H	Three M108s (105mm SP) arrived to replace the APCs.	
121000H (approx)	Orders received that the task was not to be continued and that gaps were to be closed. Engr Combat teams were despatched with inf, armd and M108 protection to complete the task.	
121315H	At YS507557 an engr mini team located an M26 gren with an unfamiliar switch. This was destroyed by running an M108 over it.	
121435H	An engineer stood on a mine when only 2 yds from the back of an M108. Tps were dismounting from the veh at the time. One Aust engr and one NZ soldier were killed instantly. A further five were injured, only one of these being a member of W Coy. All were evacuated by helicopter and all mines located were destroyed.	(See AnnexB) The engineers were clearing the Western gap in the minefield at YS509555 with mine detectors prior to closing it. The M108s backed up to tank tracks made when tanks and APCs moved through the gap six days earlier. The first team from the veh where the incident occurred cleared from the veh North to the gap and back to the veh. On change-over the next team started to clear South to the next M108. A further three mines were found sewn in the tracks and near the fence.
121500H	The tp of tanks and c/s 72 and 73 moved to a new base at YS507522 where further maint was carried out on the tanks as good hard standing was available.	
121715H	Engrs completed the closing of the gap and after uplifting Coy HQ, c/s 71, M108's and the engineers moved to join c/s 72 & 73.	
122000H	A light was observed on the Long Hai Hills at approximately YS481514. As friendly tps were in the area the light could not be engaged.	
130900H	W Coy Gp were swimming in the sea.	Very pleasant!
131130H	W Coy Gp (minus c/s 71, 3 M108s and 2 Tp) moved to HV with road convoy at YS515535 for return to Nui Dat.	The rd convoy was approximate -ly 2 hours late and tps did not return to Nui Dat until approx 1545 hrs. /131300H...

41

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
131300H	C/S 71 under comd of 2 Tp C Sqn 1 Armd Regt moved to FSPB GLORIA (YS 471542) mounted in the three M108s to prepare for the clearing op the following day.	

2. ASSESSMENT OF OPERATION

- a. The op was a failure as very few mines were destroyed and the task could not be completed.
- b. Although an effort was made to close the gaps in the minefield there appeared to be little point in losing further men as the fence can be crossed in many places.
- c. A few mines were not destroyed by the tanks or mat and these became exposed. Only a few of these could be destroyed.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Centurion tanks should not be used in the minefield until considerable stocks of spare parts are available and then they can only be used if extensive damage is acceptable.
- b. It is obvious that the VC are still moving mines in the area of the minefield. Every effort should be made to destroy the few remaining mines before the wet season.
- c. One possible solution would be to first tear the fences down using tank dozers and some form of grappling hook from outside the minefield. Two tanks could then travel outside the minefield dragging a heavy chain between them. Because of the rough terrain inside the minefield several passes would have to be made over the same area. A clear path could then be cut by dozers for the rebuilding of the fence.
- d. If nothing else can be done, the mines in the minefield between Lang Phuoc Hai and Hoi My should be eliminated first.

4. CO's COMMENTS

I concur. In my opinion this minefield could only be cleared properly with a machine such as a flail tank. Ad hoc equipments could be devised but a further study is required. The possibility of a curved/roofed dozer blade with additional protection on a D8 dozer may be one feasible solution. The possibility of lifting the mines by hand is in my opinion dangerous and would be a long arduous and frustrating operation

# BOOBY TRAP REPORT REPORT

YS 517 542  
(Location)

HOW DETECTED	Detonation	TYPE EXPLOSIVE	Grenade	ORIGIN OF MANUFACTURE	US

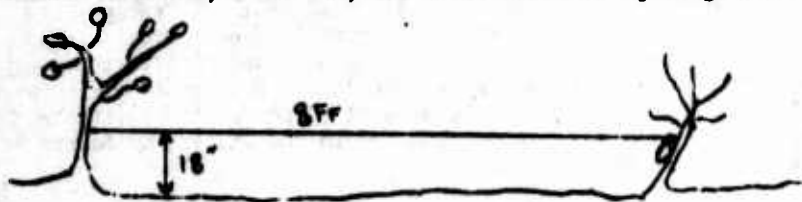
**SOME OF CHARGE**    0 - 10 lbs    **TYPE FIRING DEVICE**    Pull Release

LAST FRIENDLY PASSENGER Over two days CIV IN AREA INDIFFERENT TYPE VEH N/A

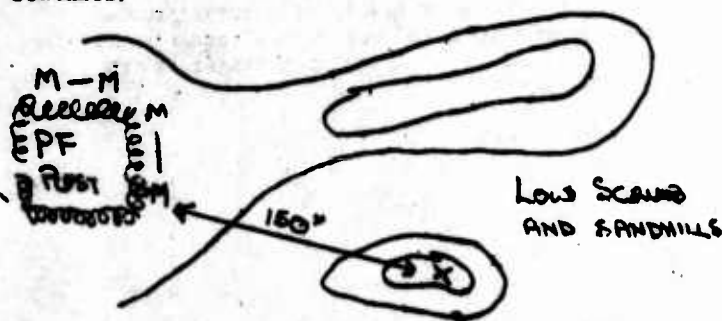
EXTENT OF DAMAGE N/A TOTAL CASUALTIES 3 WIA

**CASUALTY DATA:** Man No.1 - WIA Hands/Arms. No body armour  
Man No.2 - WIA Hands/Arms. No body armour  
Man No.3 - WIA Upper Torso, Abdomen/Groin. No body armour

Sketch of device, wires etc, and their relationship to ground level.



Sketch indicating location of device in relation to personnel, terrain, manmade features.



VO warning indicators in area NIL

Has this area been mined frequently? YES

Was this area likely for mining? Yes, VC and PF have both used mines in area.

Submitted by: P.G.Hotop Maj. W Coy 2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn.

APPENDIX A to WCOY  
OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS  
18 APR 68.



## MIKE REPORT

W Coy 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Bn. 1 ATF      121435H (Apr)      YS 509555  
(Unit)      (Date/Time Gp)      (Location)

HOW DETECTED    Detonation    TYPE EXPLOSIVE    Mine    ORIGIN OF MANUFACTURE    US

SIZE OF CHARGE    0 - 10 lbs    TYPE FIRING DEVICE    Pressure

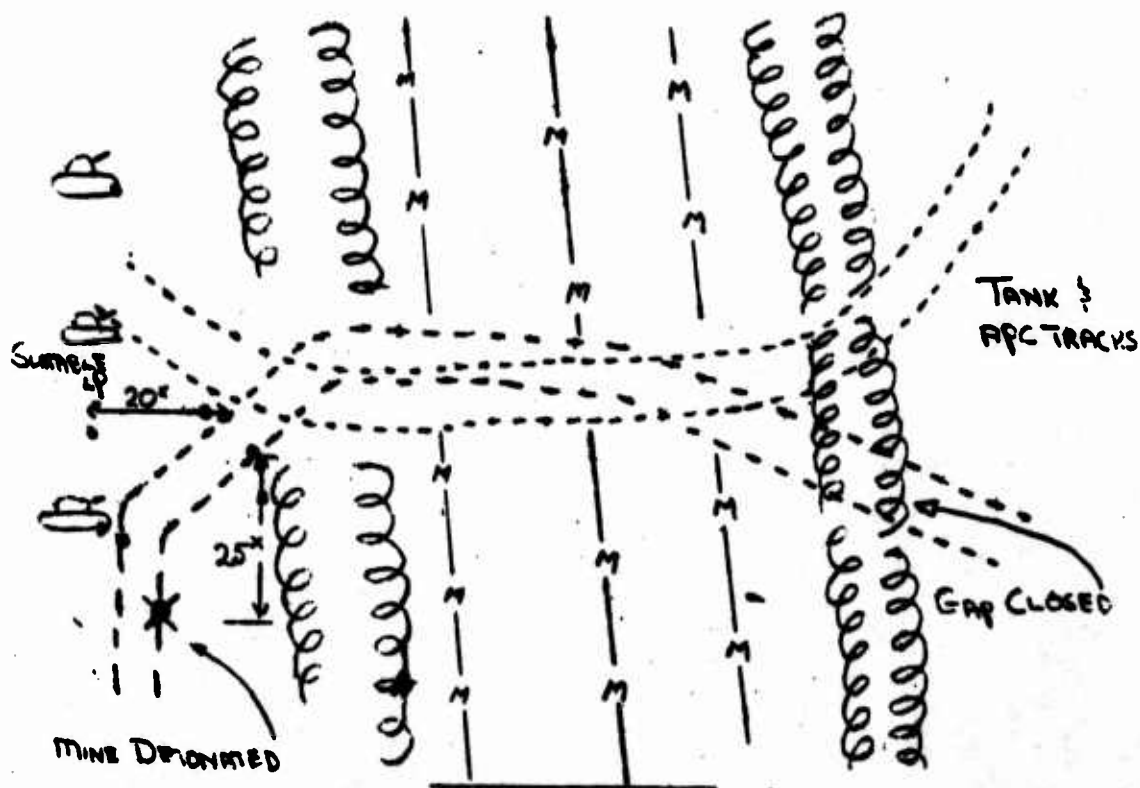
LAST FRIENDLY PASSAGE    Over 2 days    OIV IN AREA    Indifferent    TYPE VEH    M109

EXTENT OF DAMAGE    Nil    TOTAL CASUALTIES    2 KIA, 5 WIA

CASUALTY DATA:    Man No.1 - KIA    Major injury loc: Head/Neck. No body armour.  
                         Man No.2 - KIA    Major injury loc: Head/Neck. Body armour.  
                         Man No.3 - WIA    Feet/Legs: No body armour.  
                         Man No.4 - WIA    Feet/Legs    No body armour.  
                         Man No.5 - WIA    Upper Torso No body armour.  
                         Man No.6 - WIA    Head/Neck    No body armour.  
                         Man No.7 - WIA

REMARKS: Mine detonated by engr while clearing the approaches to a minefield gap. Mine had been laid in tank tracks.

Sketch indicating location of device in relation to personnel, terrain, manmade features.



Has this area been mined frequently? YES  
Was this a likely area for mining? Yes, Gap used six days earlier by tanks and APCs.

Submitted by: P.G.Hotop Maj. W Coy 2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn.

ANNEX B G W COY  
OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS  
DATED 15 APR 68

W Coy  
2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn.  
NUI DAT

16 Apr 68

60.15

2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)Bn. (12)

Info:

1 RWZIR

#### W COMPANY OPERATION ANALYSIS

SUB UNIT : W Coy (-)  
COMMANDER: Maj P.G. Hotop RWZIR  
OPERATION: COCKTOWN ORCHID V A  
DURATION : 14 Apr 68

#### 1. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
140655H	Departed W Coy lines in APCs and TCVs for cordon and sweep of the villages of Ma Hoi My (YB503556) and Ap Lo Gom (YB512544). OC of Det 1 Div Int Unit, Dai Wee, interpreters and members of the Div Int Unit were uplifted en route.	1 Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt provided 7 APCs. The third pl for the op (c/s 74) was made up of members of Alst Pnr Pl and Anti-tank Pl. This Pl was commanded by the RSO (also a New Zealander). Two Combat Engr teams were also under comd for the op.
140810H	Cordon estb by c/s 72 round Lo Gom. A road block was also established on Route 44 at the Southern end of the village. All APCs then moved back to c/s 73 to assist in the cordon of Hoi My. A further road block was estb North of Hoi My. Coy HQ estb the screening centre and a holding cage for suspects.	As there were known to be mines round Hoi My all troops remained mounted until the areas had been checked.
140820H	c/s 74 commenced the sweep of Lo Gom from the South..	Interpreters used a loud hailer to tell the villagers where to go.
141000H	Initial sweep of Lo Gom completed. 158 males and 203 females were screened. 5 suspects, 2 draft dodgers and 1 refugee were detained. The National Police also detained one suspect.	4 of the suspects were pointed out by Hoi Chans and the fifth was on the Black List.
141010H	c/s 74 commenced sweep of Hoi My from the North. c/s 72 carried out a quick search of all houses in Lo Gom.	
141025H	c/s 72 located one M16 mine, 1 CHU, 2 pairs of hookay boots and two old ammo boxes in a house on the NE edge of Lo Gom.	The house was checked by Div Int Unit pers and the owners were located and questioned. The CHU was destroyed.
141030H	2 APCs chased a male who broke out of the cordon on a bike and headed towards Dat Do. He leapt off his bike and ran when approached by an APC. He was captured and returned for questioning.	This male was detained as a suspect.

45

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Comment</u>
141035H	As a suspect was known to live in a house at YB511546 this house was searched in detail. The suspect was a tailoress but included in a 'measurements' book was the name of at least one known VC. The book and some photographs were confiscated.	
141100H	Initial sweep of Hoi My completed by c/s 74. c/s 73 then commenced a further search of all houses. A blood stained hat was found in one house which the interpreter thought was a VC hat. A detailed search of the house was carried out nothing further was found.	
141300H	Initial screening was completed. 447 females and 292 males were screened (total 739 adults). Detainees were then rescreened and some were released. Final figures were: 17 Suspects (14 female and 3 males all confirmed by Hoi Chans). 1 Draft dodger 7 Suspects were also detained by the National Police.	Suspects were handed over to Dat Do Sub Sector.
141345H	Convoy departed for Hui Dat.	

2. ASSESSMENT OF OPERATION

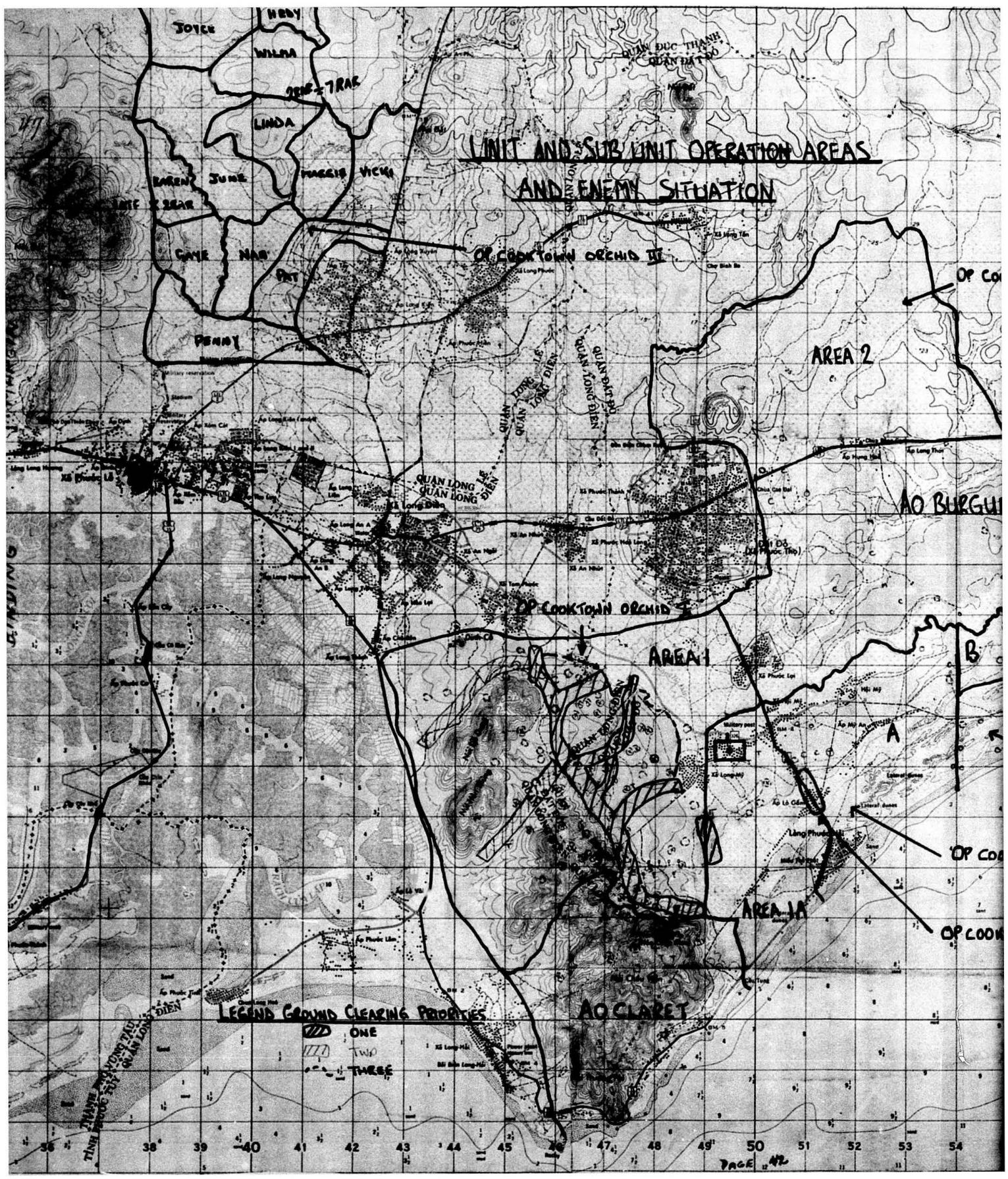
- a. Although this operation was mounted at short notice and only a very simple screening centre established, the results were quite good.
- b. It was obvious that the Div Int Pl had completed their 'homework' before the op and knew exactly what they were looking for. There were approximately 95 names on their 'wanted' list.
- c. APCs are ideal for deploying a cordon quickly.
- d. Due to lack of pers and insufficient briefing some people who had not been screened almost managed to mingle with those who had been screened.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. A representative from the Det Div Int Unit should attend the coms O Gp.
- b. The briefing of all troops working in the screening area must be detailed. They must all understand the system being used by the Int Pl and their exact task.

4. CO's COMMENTS

I concur with company commander. A quickly initiated or snap cordon and search of a known area will generally produce more positive results compared to the more cumbersome highly organised operations.



UNIT AND SUB UNIT OPERATION AREAS  
AND ENEMY SITUATION

OP COOKTOWN ORCHID III

AREA 2

AO BURGUM

AREA 1

OP COOKTOWN ORCHID I

AREA 1A

OP COOK

OP COOK

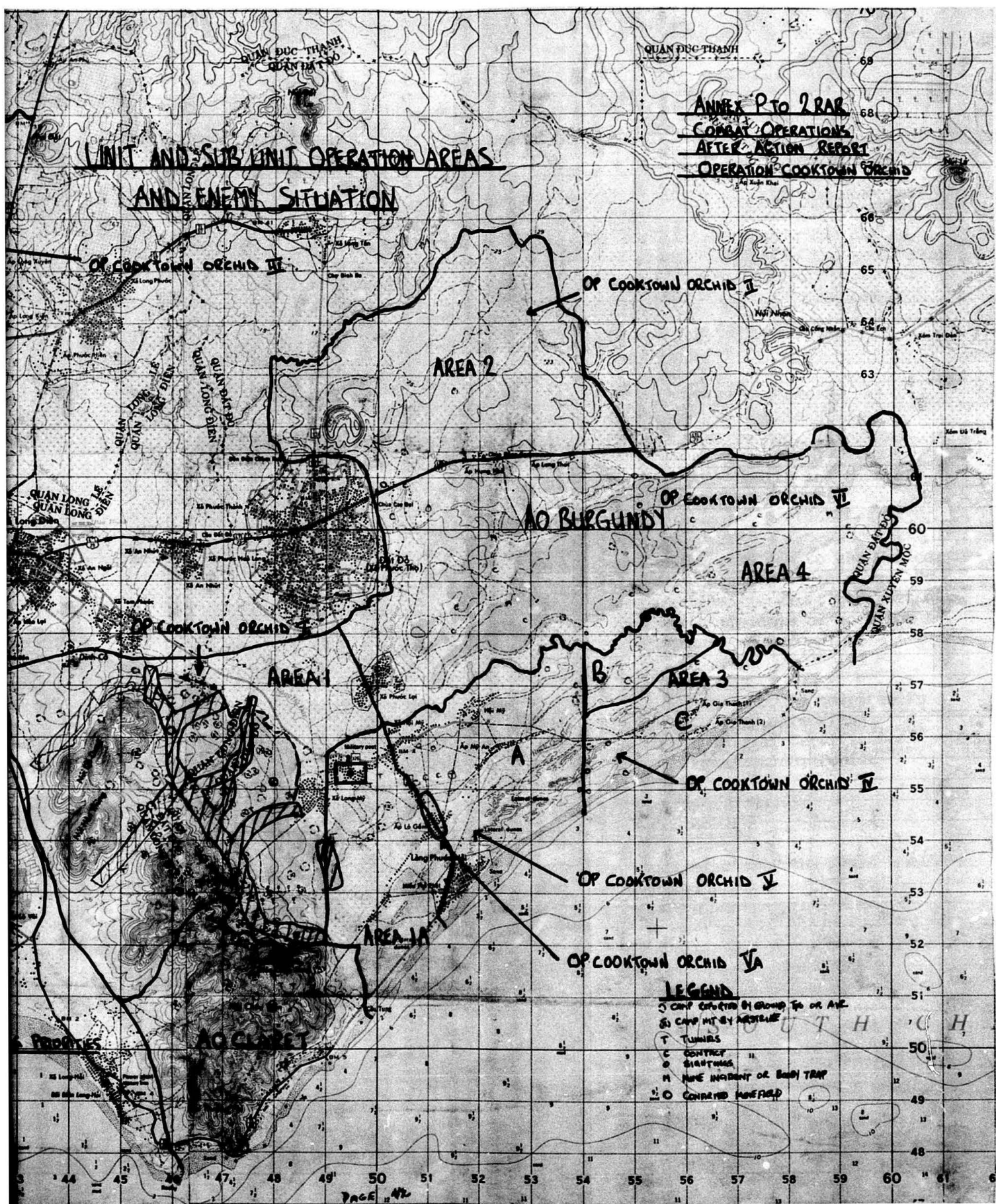
AO CLARET

LEGEND GROUND CLEARING PRIORITIES

- ONE
- TWO
- THREE



ANNEX P to 2RAR 68  
COMBAT OPERATIONS  
AFTER ACTION REPORT  
OPERATION COOKTOWN 68



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N/A

9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

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9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)

10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

N/A

12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY

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13. ABSTRACT