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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) (7 Aug 68) FOR OT RD 682255

16 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 520th
Transportation Battalion (AM&S)(GS), Period Ending 30 April 1968
STATEMENT #2 UNCLASSIFIED

AD 829404

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FUR-OT-RD Wash DC 20310

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.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 520TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (AM&S) (GS)
APO 96289

AVGFP-O

13 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 520th Transportation Battalion (AM&S) (GS), APO 96289, for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

Commanding Officer
34th General Support Group (AM&S)
APO San Francisco 96309

1. Under the provisions of the United States Army Vietnam Regulation 525-15, dated 13 April 1968, the following report is submitted.
2. Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities
 - a. During the reporting period this Battalion consisted of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 20th Transportation Company (Aircraft Direct Support), 605th Transportation Company (Aircraft Direct Support), 539th Transportation Company (General Support) and AVEL Central (Provisional). The organizational structures of the reporting organizations are contained in inclosures 1 through 4.
 - b. This Battalion supported a total of 780 aircraft, made 159 field recoveries, and performed 287 maintenance extractions during the reported period.
 - c. The Battalion engaged in 8 days of training and had a total of 764 persons attend various classes.
 - d. During the reporting period the 20th Transportation Company moved into the new maintenance hanger, increasing the maintenance efficiency of that unit.
 - e. On 10 April, this Battalion assumed the mission of processing inbound and outbound aircraft arriving and departing the Saigon area by air. Type of aircraft processed include OH-6, UH-1, AH-1G, CH-47, O-1, and U-6 aircraft. This mission is being accomplished by civilian augmentation and military personnel drawn from Battalion resources.
 - f. No unusual problems or situations confronted the Battalion during this reporting period which were not resolved by standard doctrine or procedures.

FOR OT RD
682255

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of 520th Transportation Battalion

3. Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations

a. Personnel

(1) Shortage of critical skilled personnel (MOS 67, 68, and 76 series)

(a) Observation: Continuous rotation of personnel in critical mission support areas without sufficient replacement personnel in the pipeline to allow continuity is seriously affecting this Battalion's ability to perform its mission.

(b) Evaluation: The units of this Battalion are continuously below strength on personnel in critical support areas. This is occurring primarily in supervisory personnel, (67, 68, 76 areas), aircraft technical inspectors (67 series), engine and airframe repair personnel (68G, 68B series), and aircraft supply personnel (76 series). This constant shortage creates turbulence and instability which affects this unit's capability to perform its technical support mission.

(c) Recommendation: That the rotation interval of these critical skilled personnel and CONUS school output be adjusted as required to insure timely input of replacement personnel.

(2) Excessive amount of on-the-job training required for maintenance personnel.

(a) Evaluation: The requirement in this Battalion to extensively train personnel on initial field assignment to aircraft maintenance units seriously detracts from the productive maintenance and supply effort. The difficulty of providing good OJT to inexperienced personnel is compounded by the lack of experienced crew leaders (senior repairmen E-5) and supervisory personnel. In the direct and general support units of this Battalion, an average of four months of OJT is required in 67 and 68 skills before the school trained mechanic can adequately perform in his MOS.

(b) Recommendation: That maintenance personnel be given less theory in school with added emphasis being placed on practical exercise of repair functions under close supervision. Although the difficulty of accomplishing this under an accelerated training program is recognized, it would appear more desirable to have fewer skilled personnel prepared to function successfully upon assignment with other personnel requirements admittedly being filled with apprentice or helper repairmen.

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b. Operations

(1) Lack of equipment specifically designed for aircraft recovery operations.

(a) Observation: No standard equipment is available, through Army supply channels, for the specific use of evacuation of downed aircraft by external sling lift.

(b) Evaluation: The use of nylon strap material for the recovery of UH-1/AH-1G aircraft has been successful to date; however, the equipment needed to evacuate fixed wing and OH-6 aircraft is not available. Attempts to evacuate fixed wing aircraft and the OH-6 helicopter with standard maintenance slings has generally been unsatisfactory. These slings and their attaching points are not sufficiently strong to withstand the stress placed when lifted and transported externally. Several aircraft have been damaged or destroyed during attempted use of standard maintenance slings.

(c) Recommendation: That action be taken to design and develop standard equipment to be used for the field recovery and evacuation of all aircraft by external sling airlift.

(2) Decca Navigation Systems are not being utilized to fullest extent.

(a) Observation: Pilots are not utilizing the Decca Navigation System in the UH-1 aircraft.

(b) Evaluation: Due to a marked reduction in the number of maintenance requests received on Decca Navigation System components, an informal survey was conducted in order to determine the degree to which their system was being utilized. The survey disclosed that majority of the pilots were not utilizing this equipment. One of the main reasons reported was the lack of confidence on the part of the pilot that he could accurately set up the Decca equipment and interpret the resulting display.

(c) Recommendation: That local refresher courses be conducted in the operation of the Decca Navigation Systems. This Battalion has initiated such a program utilizing the manufacturer's field representative as the primary instructor.

c. Training - none.

d. Intelligence - none.

e. Logistics

(1) Radio Retrofit Program

(a) Observation: The radio retrofit program should have been accomplished in conjunction with the ZYR program.

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(b) Evaluation: The ZYR retrofit program was started in Vietnam in 1966 to install the KY-28 voice security system. Since the beginning of this retrofit program several hundred aircraft have been modified. It was recently discovered that this modification did not render the circuit secure and another retrofit program called ZYS must be accomplished. All previously modified aircraft must once again be sent to a retrofit site for further modification.

(c) Recommendation: That a more thorough research program be established to eliminate duplication of work and needless down time on the aircraft.

(2) Proper grounding of the SB-22 switchboard

(a) Observation: The present grounding system for the SB-22 switchboard is inadequate.

(b) Evaluation: It has been noted that, during severe electrical storms, the grounding procedures for the SB-22 switchboard, as outlined in paragraph 16, TM 11-5805-12, do not provide for safe operation.

(c) Recommendation: That switchboard operators utilizing this switchboard exercise extreme caution when operating during electrical storms. Supervisory personnel should insure that additional grounding instructions as outlined in TM 11-676 are followed.

(3) Safeguarding of shipping documents and historical records.

(a) Observation: Shipping documents and historical records are being received in an illegible and mutilated condition.

(b) Evaluation: Many shipments of high dollar value parts and components are being received with accompanying documents illegible or mutilated due to damage caused by weather or rough handling. This causes further delay in handling and processing of the item for use, repair, overhaul, or other disposition. Often, items must be salvaged or overhauled because of the inability to determine historical facts.

(c) Recommendation: That all shipping and historical documents be placed in plastic containers and firmly attached to the shipping container or secured in the specific location designed for this purpose.

f. Organization - none.

g. Other - none.

John F. Eggers
JOHN F. EGGERS
LTC, TC
Commanding

~~4 Incl - Withdrawn, Hqs, DA~~

~~Organizational Chart Hq & Hq Co~~

~~Organizational Chart 20th/605th Trans Co (ADG)~~

~~Organizational Chart 579th Trans Co (GS)~~

~~Organizational Chart AVEL Co Gen (Prov)~~

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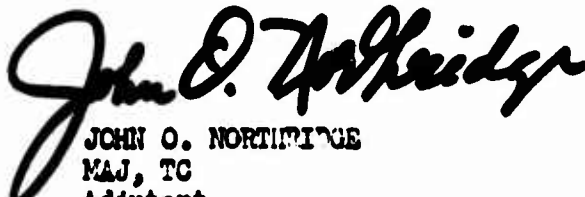
AVGP-B (13 May 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 520th Transportation
Battalion (AMS)(GS), APO 96289, for Period Ending 30 April
1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI)

DA, HQ, 34th General Support Group (AMS), APO 96309, 30 May 1968

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVIIV-DST,
APO 96375

1. This headquarters has reviewed the ORLL of the 520th Transportation Battalion (AMS) for the period ending 30 April 1968 and concurs as written.
2. A copy of this indorsement has been provided the 520th Transportation Battalion (AMS).

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JOHN O. NORTHIDGE
MAJ, TC
Adjutant

CF:
HQ, 520th Trans Bn

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AVHQC-DST (13 May 68) 2d Ind

MAJ Thompson/dls/LBN 4485

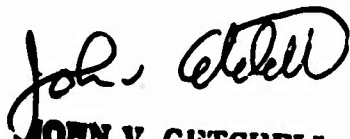
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 520th Transportation
Battalion (AM&S) (GS), APO 96289, for Period Ending 30
April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (X1)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 7 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, 520th Transportation Battalion (AM&S) (GS) as indorsed.
2. Concur with report as submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JOHN V. GETCHELL
Captain, AGIC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 520th Trans Bn (AM&S) (GS)
HQ 34th General Support Group (AM&S)

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GPOP-DT 13 May 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 520th Trans Bn (AM&S)(GS) 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

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

2. Reference (page 3) paragraph 3b(1): Standard equipment for evacua-
tion of aircraft by means of external sling lift is available in
applicable technical manuals. Normal requisitioning procedures IAW
AR 735-35 should be used to obtain the required equipment and materials.

b. For methods of aircraft recovery in general, TM 55-413, "Recovery
and Evacuation of Army Aircraft," should be used in conjunction with the
current aircraft maintenance manuals.

c. Failure or deficiencies in standard equipment used during the
recovery and evacuation of aircraft should be submitted by Equipment
Improvement Recommendation (EIR). The failure or inadequacy of the
equipment is sufficient grounds for the submission of an EIR whether
the aircraft being evacuated has been damaged or not.

d. When methods of recovery and evacuation developed by units
differ with the current published manuals and are considered to be
superior, then a DA 2028 (Recommended Change to DA Publications)
should be submitted recommending that the manuals be changed.

3. Reference (page 3) paragraph 3b(2): It appears that the Decca
Navigation System may have outlived its usefulness. While one of the
reasons for this lack of use may be as stated in referenced paragraph,
it appears that another reason may be a lack of need for the equipment.
Since the Decca System was installed in Vietnam, many improvements have
been made in other navigation facilities. There is now much more com-
plete coverage of the operational areas by ADF, VOR, TACAN, and Radar.
This headquarters has no information on technical difficulties being
encountered with the Decca System; however, the subject will receive

GPOP-DT (13 May 68) 3d Ind

24 JUL 1968

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 520th Trans Bn (AMS)(GS) for
Period Ending 30 April 68, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

staff enquiry in the future. Evaluation by the using units is desired in the preparation of appropriate EIR or recommendations for elimination of the equipment.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C.L. Shortt

C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

Gy furn:
CG USARV

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13 The following items are recommended for inclusion in the Lessons Learned Index:

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* Subject Title: A short (one sentence or phrase) description of the item of interest.

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