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AUTHORITY

AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (19 Feb 69) FOR OT UT 684238

25 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 48th  
Transportation Group (Motor Transport), Period Ending  
31 October 1968

## SEE DISTRIBUTION

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 UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

1 Incl  
as

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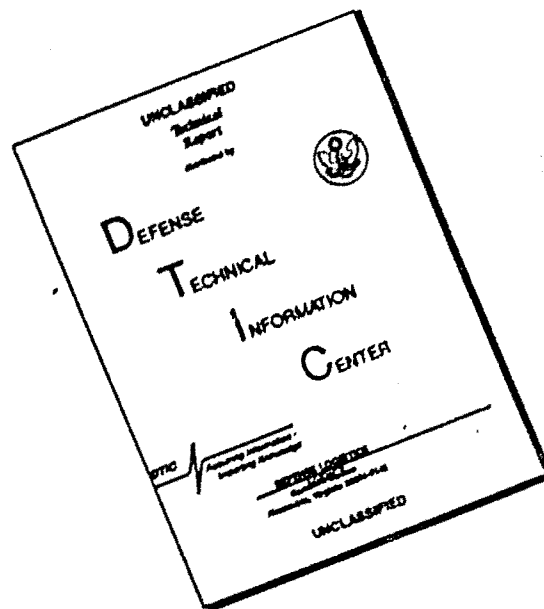
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 48TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)  
APO US Forces 96491

AVCA SGN AB CO

8 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS CSFOR 65)

THRU: Commanding General  
US Army Support Command, Saigon  
APO US Forces 96491

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

## SECTION I

### SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

#### 1. COMMAND.

a. Visitors. Inclosure 1.

b. Annual General Inspections and Command Maintenance Management Inspections. Inclosure 2.

#### 2. PERSONNEL, ADMINISTRATION, MORALE, AND DISCIPLINE.

a. Civilian personnel.

(1) By letter AVCA SGN CA, dated 17 July 1968, 178 military spaces were converted to civilian spaces. 100 of the spaces covered drivers of the 87th Transportation Company, which higher headquarters propose to reorganize as a Type B unit. The balance were mechanics helpers, cooks helpers and clerks in all units of the Group. Hiring of civilians is proceeding, with the objective of replacing military incumbents before they are lost by attrition.

Inclosure

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664238

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AVCA SGR: AB CO

8 November 1968

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(2) In a separate action, TDA P5 WCJ5AA 99 reduced previously authorized civilian spaces from 156 to 99. The primary reductions were in clerks and kitchen police. The TDA was received on 24 September and on 25 September instructions were received that the reduction to the new level would be achieved by 30 September. On reclama, a 30-day extension was granted.

b. Military personnel.

(1) Sufficient maintenance warrant officers were assigned to relieve the serious shortage which existed at the end of the previous reporting period.

(2) A decline in assigned strength began during the quarter and is expected to accelerate during the next three months. A temporary drawdown of 269 spaces during November, December, and January has been directed. Drawdowns must be accommodated without change in the non-mission tasks of the Group. The utilization of assigned men during October 1968 is indicated on Inclosure 3.

(3) In the past quarter, 156 PROJECT 100,000 (Category IV) men were on duty with the Group, out of an average enlisted strength of about 1900 men. Nineteen of the PROJECT 100,000 men were involved in motor vehicle accidents, of which 8 were driver fault. Total Group accidents were 145, of which 52 were driver fault. Three men were awarded the Purple Heart and one of the three was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for Valor. Eight have attained grade E-5. Twenty-seven have enlisted in the Regular Army. There is no indication that these men have morale or welfare problems or are greater disciplinary problems than other soldiers.

(4) The main body of the 319th Transportation Company (USAR) arrived from CONUS on 26 September. Personnel and Finance Center processing was accomplished at the unit area, at an estimated saving of 100 man days.

(5) Casualties from enemy action.

<u>AUGUST</u>			<u>SEPTEMBER</u>			<u>OCTOBER</u>		
KIA	WIA	MIA	KIA	WIA	MIA	KIA	WIA	MIA
7	26	3	0	3	0	0	0	0

(6) Awards and Decorations

	AUG	SEP	OCT
Bronze Star (Valor)	0	0	6
Bronze Star (Merit)	5	4	6
Army Commendation Medal (Valor)	0	0	16
Army Commendation Medal (Merit)	11	16	17

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(7) Safe driving awards:

	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>
5,000 mile	25	79	90
8,000 mile	31	18	23
12,000 mile	21	23	7
20,000 mile	2	0	0

3. OPERATIONS.

a. Summary of Operations.

(1) All elements of 48th Group engaged in motor transportation operations in support of combat forces in III and IV Corps Tactical Zones on all 92 days of the report period. No specific named tactical operations were supported, but support of increased combat activity in the TAY NINH vicinity through August and September was a major aspect of the work program. Operations during the period were marked by a continued moderate decline in workload, attrition of equipment assets, increase in support of the Delta, continued waste of truck capabilities by unloading delays at convoy destinations, and one combat action in which 7 men were killed, 26 wounded, and 3 captured, and 25 trucks were destroyed or damaged beyond economical repair.

(2) Tonnage hauled increased slightly from about 380,000 tons during the preceding three months to 391,384 tons during this period. Ton-mileage decreased from 9.8 million in the preceding period to 8.9 million. The increased tonnage and decreased ton mileage reflect an increase in local hauling, primarily ammunition. However, line haul operations began to increase again toward the end of the period. The major customer was the 25th Division and the major shipping destination within the 25th Division area was TAY NINH.

(3) Equipment availability declined as the result of enemy action, wearout of equipment, and a serious increase in deadline, primarily EDP in field maintenance. Operational capabilities were not seriously affected by this trend, which was partially offset by assignment of a USAR 5-ton cargo truck company to the Group at the end of September and by use of 5-ton cargo truck dolly converter/S&P semitrailer combinations.

(4) Movement of additional combat units to the Delta created a heavy unit move workload in which truck capabilities sometimes were not used to maximum advantage. Inability of units being moved to release equipment on schedule led to loss of many truck working days. Additional time was lost when support activities newly established in the Delta lacked MHE and storage facilities adequate for rapid truck turnaround. Unloading delays are, of course, not limited to Delta activities. All activities concerned made

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maximum efforts to improve truck utilization during the period and significant improvement during the next quarter is anticipated.

(5) On 25 August, the TAY NINH convoy was ambushed with relatively heavy losses (Inclosure 4). Convoy operating and security procedures in the 25th Division TACR were immediately revised and improved. On 12 September, an attempted ambush in the same general area destroyed only one truck and slightly wounded one man. (Inclosure 5).

b. On 15 August for the Delta and Vung Tau and 1 September for all other destinations, a formal cargo offering system for highway movements was established. Offering TCMD's are forwarded through movements control agencies to the hauling agency. The hauling agency plans and accomplishes movements within the time period limited by the required delivery date shown on the offering TCMD. This system affords the hauling agency the opportunity to manage equipment use and to plan operations to a considerable degree. Ammunition emergency shipments, some unit moves and certain other types of moves are handled outside the offering system, but the formal offering procedure has increased efficiency and effectiveness. It has also provided some assurance that actual requirements are being met, in contrast with the former "fill or kill" procedure, which denied the existence of a backlog.

c. The inventory of TOE trailers was purified and at the same time the inventory of USATSA trailers in the III and IV CTZ was clarified.

(1) The inventory of USATSA equipment in the area was reduced at the end of September to 277 trailers, close to the 2nd Log Cnd objective of 250, and it appeared that the inventory shortly would amount to the trailers delivered on the last two voyages. At that time, however, instructions were received to rebuild the inventory toward a level of about 400 trailers in country, to provide flexibility to support a new trucking contract which called for provision of 150 trailers as GFE. At the end of the period the inventory had been raised to 330 trailers.

(2) The TOE trailer inventory at the end of the period totaled 537, against an authorization of 680. Eighteen trailers were acknowledged by 2nd Logistical Command to be in Okinawa, where they had been shipped for rebuild, and 47 were hand-receipted and not available to 48th Group, leaving 472 available to 48th Group. Utilization averaged a load per trailer every three days. Issue of the remainder of the authorized trailers is needed to reduce usage of individual trailers and permit accomplishment of urgently needed rehabilitation of the present fleet.

d. Statistical summary.

(1) Tonnage hauled, by equipment type and class of supply.  
(Inclosure 6).

(2) Tonnage hauled by type of operation (Inclosure 7).

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(3) Ton Mileage (Inclosure 8).

#### 4. TRAINING AND ORGANIZATION.

a. Organizational structure. Inclosure 9.

b. The 319th Transportation Company (Light Truck, 5-ton) (USAR), minus one platoon, was assigned to the 48th Group and arrived in Vietnam on 26 September 1968. The company met its first operational commitments on 14 October.

c. The provisional trailer control agency organized under the 7th Battalion during the previous reporting period was moved to the Group Headquarters and placed under operational control of the Group S-3 during the current period.

d. Transportation Company (Reefer) (SGN) (Provisional), with an authorized strength of 251 officers and men was established by 1st Log Command GO 894, 4 October 1968, and was assigned to the 7th Transportation Battalion, 48th Group, by Saigon Support Command GO 958, 10 October 1968, and 48th Group GO 12, 13 October 1968. 84 spaces for the provisional company are provided by attachments from former TOE elements of the 506th Field Depot, which have not yet been inactivated. The balance of the operating strength is provided from 48th Group assets, pending programmed activation of a refrigerator van company in November or December.

e. In response to the notification that military driver losses of the 87th Transportation Company will not be replaced and to notification that the Group will be drawn down by an additional 269 spaces in November, December, and January, and in recognition of projected rotational hump losses during the same period:

(1) The 87th Transportation Company has been reduced, in effect, to one understrength platoon on TDY to the 199th Infantry Brigade.

(2) The 151st Transportation Company (Light Truck, 2½-ton Cargo) and the 216th Transportation Company (Light Truck, 5-ton Cargo) have been reduced to two-platoon strength.

f. By GO 374 Hc, USARPAC, all medium truck companies not already so organized were reorganized under TOE 55-18G.

g. On 9 September, 48th Group recommended that a Transportation Heavy Truck Company be programmed for activation in time to meet roll-up requirements. 48th Group does not have a heavy truck company and the existing heavy lift capability in III and IV CTR is not adequate for probable roll-up requirements. The 87th Transportation Company (Light Truck, 2½-ton Cargo) was proposed as the trade-off unit.



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h. On 29 October an LTOE recommending changes to MTOE 55-50ORPO8 was submitted for the 506th Transportation Detachment (Trailer Transfer Point Operating).

## 5. INTELLIGENCE.

None.

## 6. LOGISTICS.

a. Significant equipment shortages continued during the period. (Inclosure 10).

b. The equipment shortage was increased by washouts. The average age of the 48th Group fleet is 20,000 miles. During the period, 33 5-ton tractors, including 24 destroyed in the 25 August ambush, 19 5-ton cargo trucks and 46 2½-ton cargo trucks were washed out.

c. 82 5-ton tractors, 4 5-ton cargo trucks and 16 2½-ton cargo trucks were received during the period. In addition, the assignment of the 319th Transportation Company added 40 new 5-ton cargo trucks to the fleet.

d. A serious increase in EDP in field maintenance developed during the period, primarily for 5-ton truck engines. 32 percent of assigned 5-ton tractors and 28 percent of 5-ton cargo trucks were in field maintenance at the end of the period.

e. Pending issue of new 5-ton cargo trucks, the 261st Transportation Company (Light Truck, 5-ton cargo) was issued a platoon of 2½-ton cargo trucks to give it some continued operational capability at its drawdown strength of two platoons.

f. Six tractors and 12 trailers were hand-receipted to the 53rd General Support Group for use in port clearance at Dong Tam and Can Tho, pending incorporation of the equipment in the 53rd Group MTOE.

## 7. OTHER

a. Management Improvement: Throughput Loading From Ammunition Barge Point for Direct Delivery to User. Such high consumption ammunition as 105mm HE arrives more or less steadily at barge points for delivery to the ammunition supply depot, and at the same time is required more or less constantly by artillery units. It is frequently practicable to load convoys at the barge point for direct haul to consignee. During the report period, throughput loading at the barge point was established as standard procedure, as the result of coordinated efforts of the port operating unit, the ASD and the line haul carrier.

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Two out of three handling operations are saved by this procedure, i.e., unloading and reloading operations at the ASD. During October, 2,864 ST of ammunition were handled under this procedure.

b. Proposed Management Improvement: Use of Large Semitrailers in Medium Truck Companies. The M52-series tractor can handle a considerably heavier load on good road surfaces than the M127-series semitrailers can carry. On 12 April, 48th Group initiated an ENSURE request for 120 each 45 foot, 30 ton capacity semitrailers for use specifically in local and shorthaul operations. After staff review, the request was resubmitted on 13 August. The requested trailers will nearly double the capacity of the trucks which pull them, with no increase in drivers or powered vehicles.

c. Proposed Management Improvement: Standardization of Convoy Shotgunner Requirements. Although divisions and separate regiments are responsible for convoy security within their TAOR's, the divisions require that truck operating units provide shotgunners, i.e., assistant drivers serving as truck security guards. The proportion of shotgunners required varies among divisions from one per truck to one for every five task vehicles. On 23 October, 48th Group recommended that the shotgunner requirement within the III and IV CTZ be standardized at one guard armed with an M60 machine gun on a swinging arm mount for every five trucks, in lieu of all other truck guard requirements. This arrangement, if approved, will reduce daily truck guard requirements by up to 80 percent, in an area where 140 guards a day may be required under present procedures, without reducing the volume of five which the truck operating elements can deliver in self-defense. The reduction in truck guard requirements will increase the availability of drivers to operate available trucks, and directly increase available lift at no increase in operating personnel.

## SECTION II

### LESSONS LEARNED:

#### COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### 1. PERSONNEL.

None

##### 2. OPERATIONS.

###### a. Use of Semitrailers with Cargo Trucks.

(1) OBSERVATION. M5442 5-ton cargo trucks can pull M127-type semitrailers on dolly converters in local and line haul operations

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(2) EVALUATION. After a brief experimental period, 48th Group borrowed all available single-axle and tandem-axle dolly converters and has dispatched up to 20 truck dolly converter semitrailer combinations daily during the reporting period. The combination has a nominal load capacity between 20 and 25 tons and the limited number of combinations available has provided an additional 250 to 300 tons of lift daily with no increase in the number of drivers used. No significant maintenance problems have been associated with the operation. A detailed evaluation report will be submitted in November.

(3) RECOMMENDATION. The evaluation report will recommend that 20 dolly converters and 40 S&P trailers be authorized per 5-ton cargo truck company WABTOC.

b. Convoy security.

(1) OBSERVATION. The doctrine that supported tactical forces provide convoy security and that convoy personnel provide only for their personal defense is sound.

(2) EVALUATION. Responsibility for securing the MSR is assigned the divisions and separate regiments in the III and IV CTZ. Following the 25 August ambush south of Tay Ninh, convoy security procedures were tightened by 25th Division. The 25th Division SOP now limits the number of task vehicles in a march unit to 15. The operating unit provides a shotgunner in every second truck and a gun jeep at the head and tail of each march unit. The 720th MF Battalion escorts the convoy from home station to destination and back, with a gun jeep at the head and tail of the column and additional gun jeeps with the march units, as far as possible. Division MP's provide ground escort, using gun jeeps and armored combat vehicles as needed and available, and the division PM or his assistant flies over the convoy while it is in the division's TAOR. The division PM is the overall convoy commander and can call in light fire teams, an air cavalry troop, artillery support and dustoff, when needed. The ADC-support or his representative also flies the convoy during critical phases. Procedures in other TAOR's follow this general line but vary in local detail. When the Tay Ninh convoy was again ambushed on 12 September, the only loss was one trailer loaded with ammunition, and it was clearly demonstrated that the most important contribution the truck operators can make in an ambush is to keep moving out of the kill zone.

(3) RECOMMENDATION. That training literature and field SOP's clearly express the policy that truck units are responsible only for individual self-defense on convoy and that supported combat units are responsible for road security and convoy defense.

c. Truck company TOE's.

(1) OBSERVATION. Truck company TOE's do not provide enough 1-ton trucks, machine guns, machine gun mounts, and radios to meet USARV requirements for convoy control.

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(2) OBSERVATION. As a general practice, a gun jeep with radio is required at the head and tail of each 15-task vehicle march unit in convoy. A 15-truck march unit is, in effect, a truck platoon at 75 percent availability. One  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck is authorized per platoon. A second  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton, with machine gun, mount and radio, is required for each platoon of every truck company committed to line haul operations in a counterinsurgency situation. MTOE's will be submitted to cover requirements for units of 48th Group.

(3) That an additional  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck, M60 MG, pedestal mount, and radio be authorized for each platoon under TOE 55-17G and TOE 55-18G, WABTOC, as required to control convoys in counter-insurgency operations.

### 3. TRAINING.

None.

### 4. INTELLIGENCE.

None.

### 5. LOGISTICS.

#### Military truck design.

(1) OBSERVATION. The bodies of 5-ton cargo trucks and trucktractors are poorly designed and insufficiently durable.

(2) EVALUATION. The apparent design theory is that the body of the 5-ton truck is flexible so that it will give under strain. In practice, the body is weak, rapidly damaged by normal field use, and impossible to repair satisfactorily. For example, fenders and hood are assembled in such a way that they shake loose in a few thousand miles, deform, and can never be brought back to a good fit. The right fender, weighted with the heavy air cleaner, cannot be supported effectively by any modification so far developed and quickly breaks away from the body. Engine compartment side panels are mounted on inadequate hinges that break out of the panels if the hinge pins are not lost first. The side panel latches secure the panels to the body by engaging metal tabs which are spot welded to light gauge sheet metal; the tabs break off and cannot be rewelded successfully. The hydraulic fluid reservoir is secured by bolts through the inside part of the fender. The bolts break through the thin steel and cannot be ressecured without replacing the fender metal. The fenders are not secured across the front, except by a light metal tie which seems to get lost within the first week of truck use and which, if not sooner lost, becomes bent and useless. For lack of a connection between the fenders, the two sides of the truck shake off separately.

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Battery box doors break away at the hinges and the latch quickly becomes undependable. Battery boxes are secured by thumbscrews engaging latches; the thumbscrews jam in the threaded fittings inside the battery boxes and require frequent rebuilding of the fastening device. Overall, the body is a collection of individual pieces of sheet metal, none of them supporting anything else, each of them replaceable and all of them requiring frequent replacement.

(3) **RECOMMENDATION.** That future military truck cabs and front ends be engineered so that heavy components, such as air cleaners and fluid reservoirs are supported by frame members, not by sheet metal; so that sheet metal parts are firmly supported by and secured to frames; and so that hinges, latches and other fittings are heavy enough to serve for the life of the vehicle without loss or breakage.

6. **ORGANIZATION.**

None.

7. **OTHER.**

None.

**SECTION III**

**HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY SURVEY INFORMATION**

**(EVASION AND ESCAPE)**

This command has no evasion, escape, or survival experience to report.

10 Incl

~~10~~  
Incl 1 - 2 wd Hq DA

FRANK B. CASE  
Colonel, TC  
Commanding

Cy Furn:

- 2 - CINUSARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT
- 3 - USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DST

AVCA SGN GO S (8 Nov 68) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

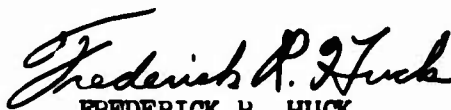
HQ, US Army Support Command, Saigon APO US Forces 96491 20 Nov 68

TO: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GO O  
APO 96384

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968, of the 48th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) is forwarded in accordance with para 9, AR 1-19.
2. Reference Section II, para 5: Unit has been directed to submit Equipment Improvement Recommendation for military design deficiencies.
3. Lessons Learned, observations and recommendations are concurred in by this command, with the exception as above. A copy of this indorsement has been provided the originating headquarters.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: IB 260.

  
FREDERICK R. HUCK  
Colonel, GS  
Chief of Staff

AVCA GO-O (8 Nov 68) 2nd Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS CSFOR-65)

DA, Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96384 18 DEC 1968

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

1. The Operational Report-Lessons Learned submitted by Headquarters, 48th Transportation Group for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1968 is forwarded.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference Section II, paragraph 2a. Concur. The 48th Group's success with the dolly converter indicates that the technique can be used elsewhere in Vietnam where terrain conditions permit. Items will be considered for inclusion in new standardization MTOE for transportation truck companies.

b. Reference Section II, paragraph 2b. Concur. In order to preclude any misunderstanding as to who is responsible for road security and convoy defense, an official statement of policy on this subject should be solicited from USARV and MACV. A MACV statement of policy is required to insure compliance by III MAF in I CTZ.

c. Reference Section II, paragraph 2c. This headquarters is studying proposals for modification of present standardized MTOEs for transportation truck companies which will allow for additional weapons, radios and control vehicles.

d. Reference Section II, paragraph 5. Concur. Recommend that this problem be brought to the attention of DA (DCSLOG, ACSFOR) for appropriate corrective action.

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

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: LBN 2684

*Lanny K Kelsey*  
LANNY K KELSEY  
1LT AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

CF:  
USASUPCOM-SGN  
48th Trans Gp

AVHGC-DST (8 Nov 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly period Ending 31 October 1968  
(HCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 11 Nov 1968

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


1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1968 from Headquarters, 48th Transportation Group (Motor Transport).

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning convoy security, page 8, Section II, paragraph 2b and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2b: Concur with the basic recommendation. USAFV Regulation 525-4, Appendix I, provides guidelines for convoy security SOP. Reference 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2b: Non-concur. A statement of USAFV policy is contained in USAFV Regulation 525-4 which makes the commander of the tactical area through which a convoy passes responsible for providing security forces for the convoy.

b. Reference item concerning military truck design, page 9, Section II, paragraph 5; 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2; and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2d: Concur with the recommendations in 1st and 2d Indorsements. Recommend these deficiencies also be brought to the attention of USAMC.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
A.R. GUENTHER  
CPL AGC  
ASSISTANT GENERAL

Cy furns:  
HQ 1st Log Comd  
HQ 48th Trans Gp (Mtr Spt)



GPOP-DT (8 Nov 68) 4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 48th Trans Gp (Motor Transport)  
for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96358 21 JAN 1968

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

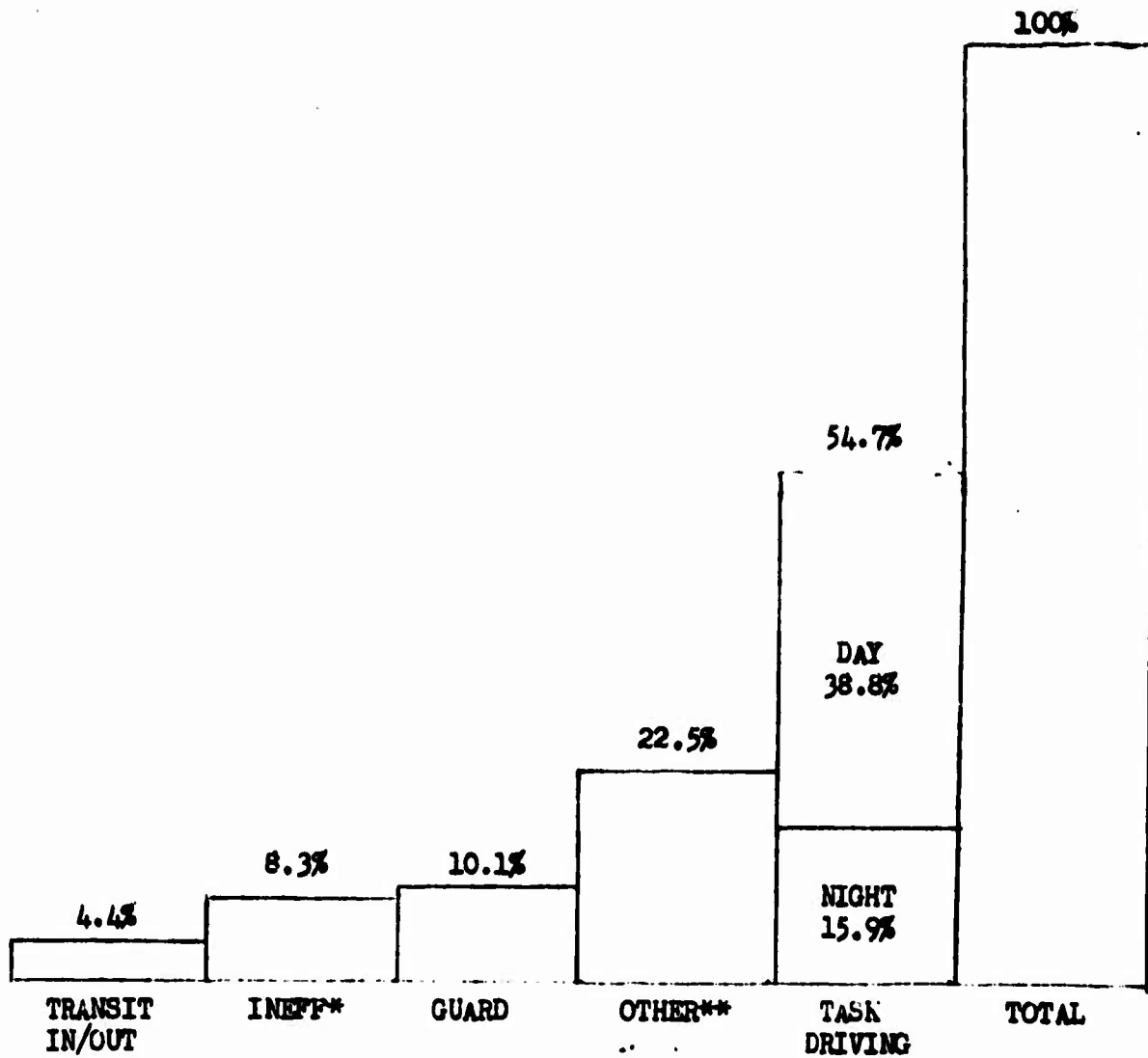
This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-  
ments and concurs as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

**DRIVER AVAILABILITY ANALYSIS**  
 (% of Assigned)  
 OCTOBER 1968



\* Leave, R&R, Sick, Hesp, Etc.

\*\* Dispatchers, Admin Drivers, TTP, Tire Repair, Shotgunners, Etc.

Incl 3

## FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

### 1. Synopsis of TAY NINH Convoy Ambush, 25 August 1968

a. The convoy consisted of 81 vehicles. The majority of the convoy had started out from LONG BINH and, after an extended halt at CU CHI, by 25th Division elements, departed there at about 0930 hours, with an accompanying MP escort.

b. About 15 miles NW of CU CHI a 48th Group 5T tractor, pulling a refrigerator trailer, hit a mine. The tractor was destroyed, but there were no injuries. Such an event was not an extraordinary one, since these refrigerated vans normally are in front of the convoy. The indications are that the mine encountered was a commonly-used pressure-detonated device, and was not command detonated.

c. At approximately one mile SE of the scene of the ambush, personnel of this organization reported seeing many civilians moving SE toward GO DAU HA, carrying their personal possessions. Many of these persons are alleged to have shouted "VC," and no known precautions were taken. At the reported 20 MPH rate of march, this amounted to approximately a three-minute warning. The column proceeded up the road and 30 vehicles passed what proved to be the "kill Zone."

d. The ambush took place on Route QL 22 in a 1500-1600 meter area in the immediate vicinity of 25th Infantry Division Check Point 182 (XT 356333), which is about 6 kilometers NW of GO DAU HA. The best information available indicates that the ambush commenced at 251158 Aug 68, local time.

e. The ambush began in an innocuous manner: Upon approaching the head of what would prove to be the "Kill Zone," a group of soldiers in mottled-green uniforms were encountered firing into some huts on the left side of the road. Initial concern turned to relief when it was assumed these soldiers were ARVN; this conclusion was reached by the NCO in the 48th Group's Convoy Commander's jeep, who stated that the firing was being done by ARVN troops. However, after 30 vehicles had passed, these soldiers turned, as if on signal, and began to fire into the passing convoy. At the same time, intense small arms, automatic weapons, and RPG fire was received from the right side of the road. The fire was initially concentrated on communications equipment and cabs of vehicles and, at the head of the column, on a 5,000 gallon tanker, which exploded and blocked the road. The column, travelling at an estimated 50 meter interval as it halted, ended up with 51 vehicles in the "kill Zone."

f. The drivers and control personnel, forced to dismount, took positions on the left side of the road and returned fire upon the enemy (later identified as NVA). As the men left the vehicles, they found themselves without radios, some without any weapons because they didn't have time to dismantle the automatic weapons on their vehicles and they weren't otherwise armed, and another few found themselves without

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ammunition and/or water because they had neglected to bring their belts with them as they dismounted.

g. The firefight continued without reinforcement for a full thirty minutes when, at about 1215 hours, an MP, using a vehicular-mounted radio not damaged (2d serial, rear), called for support. At about 1220 hours, helicopter gunships arrived and made two strikes against enemy positions. Ground reinforcements (25th Division) arrived at about 1330 hours, but were not initially effective against the enemy because their mobility was limited by the burning vehicles at the head of the column.

h. During the ensuing battle, which lasted until on or about 260030 hours, local time, the following occurred:

(1) Personnel dismounted and took defensive positions in a shallow ditch on the West side of the road and returned fire with available weapons. The NVA were located on the East side of the road, on the high ground and the vehicles were in between. Initial attempts to remain near the vehicles proved futile because of the intense, accurate enemy fire placed on the men.

(2) At about 1530 hours, when elements of 3/4 Cavalry, 25th Division, began to be effective against the enemy, the drivers were able to withdraw behind these forward elements, to positions of relative safety.

(3) At about 1830 hours a plan was formulated and an attempt was made to drive vehicles out of the kill zone, but, owing to the intensified fire at the time of the attempt, it was aborted.

(4) Between 1900 and 2230 hours, after friendly elements were able to secure a defensive line across the road at the rear (S) of the column, convoy personnel, including the wounded and the dead, were infiltrated to waiting Armored Personnel Carriers and moved to an ARVN compound in GO DAU HA, to the SW.

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### 2. Chronology of 25 August Ambush, Tay Ninh Convoy:

- a. 250615 - Convoy departed LONG BINH.
- b. 250800 (?) - Convoy arrived at CU CHI; 25th Division added its elements and created two march units of approximately 40 vehicles each.
- c. 250930 - Convoy departed CU CHI.
- d. 251100(?) - 10th Transportation Company tractor, pulling a reefer van, hit a mine, vicinity of GO DAU HA.
- e. 251145 (?) - Vietnamese civilians encountered heading SW carrying personal possessions, allegedly warning our personnel of VC in the area ahead.
- f. 251148 - Ambush commenced, vicinity of BM 6 (XT 356333).
- g. 251215 (?) - Undamaged radio located by unidentified MF, and support requested.
- h. 251220 (?) - Helicopter gunships arrived on the scene (2 HUAY COBALT) and made 2 (?) supporting passes with suppressive fire. (Weather conditions (rain) precluded further close-in air support.)
- i. 251330 (?) - Ground reinforcements from 25th Division arrived, but were not employed effectively until about 1530 (?) because the blocked road precluded use of their mobility.
- j. 251830 - An unsuccessful attempt was made to drive vehicles out of the kill zone.
- k. 251900 - 252300 - Convoy personnel, to include the dead and wounded, began to be evacuated to GO DAU HA.
- l. 250630 - Contact broken.

NOTE: Question marks after times indicate the best approximate times available from reports.

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### Ambush of the Tay Ninh Convoy, 121030 September 1968

1. The Tay Ninh convo was ambushed on Route QL 22 at coordinates XT 330344 about 1030, 12 September. The first march unit had cleared the kill zone. The third march unit cleared the area, after the ambush had been suppressed, without incident. March unit 2 was caught in the kill zone.

2. Sequence of events:

a. At about 1030, the ambush was initiated by "two white puffs of smoke," perhaps from recoilless rifles, about 5 to 10 seconds apart, followed by automatic weapons and small arms fire. LT Outland, leading the march unit, moved out rapidly. The lead tank, 2 jeeps, an S&P, 2 reefers, and a 5T cargo cleared the area and were directed by the Division PM, airborne, to keep moving.

b. Vehicle 321-31 stopped when he saw his load (charges) was on fire; personnel dismounted.

c. Vehicle 321-10, with 5 flats, slowed to avoid closing in on 321-31 and halted when his truck was unable to keep moving at low speed on its flats. The truck came under fire and the driver and shotgunner dismounted.

d. Vehicles 321-40 and 321-30, feeling the road wasn't clear enough to pass, also stopped and personnel dismounted.

e. Vehicle 321-38 stopped, believing he had not entered the kill zone and the driver and assistant dismounted. After stopping, the truck was hit by a heavy round of unidentified kind, and was so heavily damaged that it was apparently not operational. The NVA then made a move forward and sprayed that vehicle with small arms fire. APC's came up and placed fire on the NVA positions. The APC's picked up drivers from vehicles 321-40 and 321-30. An MP jeep picked up the drivers of vehicle 321-10. Vehicle 321-30 was loaded with projectiles and was on fire, apparently from a ruptured gas tank.

f. The driver of vehicle 321-31, seeing the fire had stopped on his truck, moved back to his vehicle, started it and departed.

g. CPT Philbrook, moving up from the rear after fire had been suppressed, wanted to move the balance of the MU past. The fire on vehicle 30 was not serious at that point and, from B/T at rear, he obtained spare drivers and moved vehicle 321-10 and 321-40 on out. Vehicle 321-38, seriously damaged from appearances, started and also moved out. Vehicle 321-30 then blew up.

h. After the explosion, vehicles continued to pass on both sides, and some became stuck as a result of the cratered road from the explosion. One tanker slid into the crater and about half its load had to be dumped before a tank could drag it out. APC's and tanks pulled other stuck vehicles past the crater.

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1. The entire operation lasted about 45 minutes.

j. Damages were as follows:

(1) One Reefer Tractor driver had minor glass or shrapnel wounds in his hand. One Reefer Tractor lost a windshield, and both had two or three bullet holes in the vans.

(2) One tractor-trailer was completely lost.

(3) Another trailer was damaged.

(4) One tractor had major "skin" damage, but the major components seem to be OK.

3. Miscellaneous Comments:

a. CPT Philbrook, Convoy Commander, commented that gunships took 5-10 minutes to arrive.

b. While both sides of the "rubber" were posted by the 25th Division, the "rubber" itself was not.

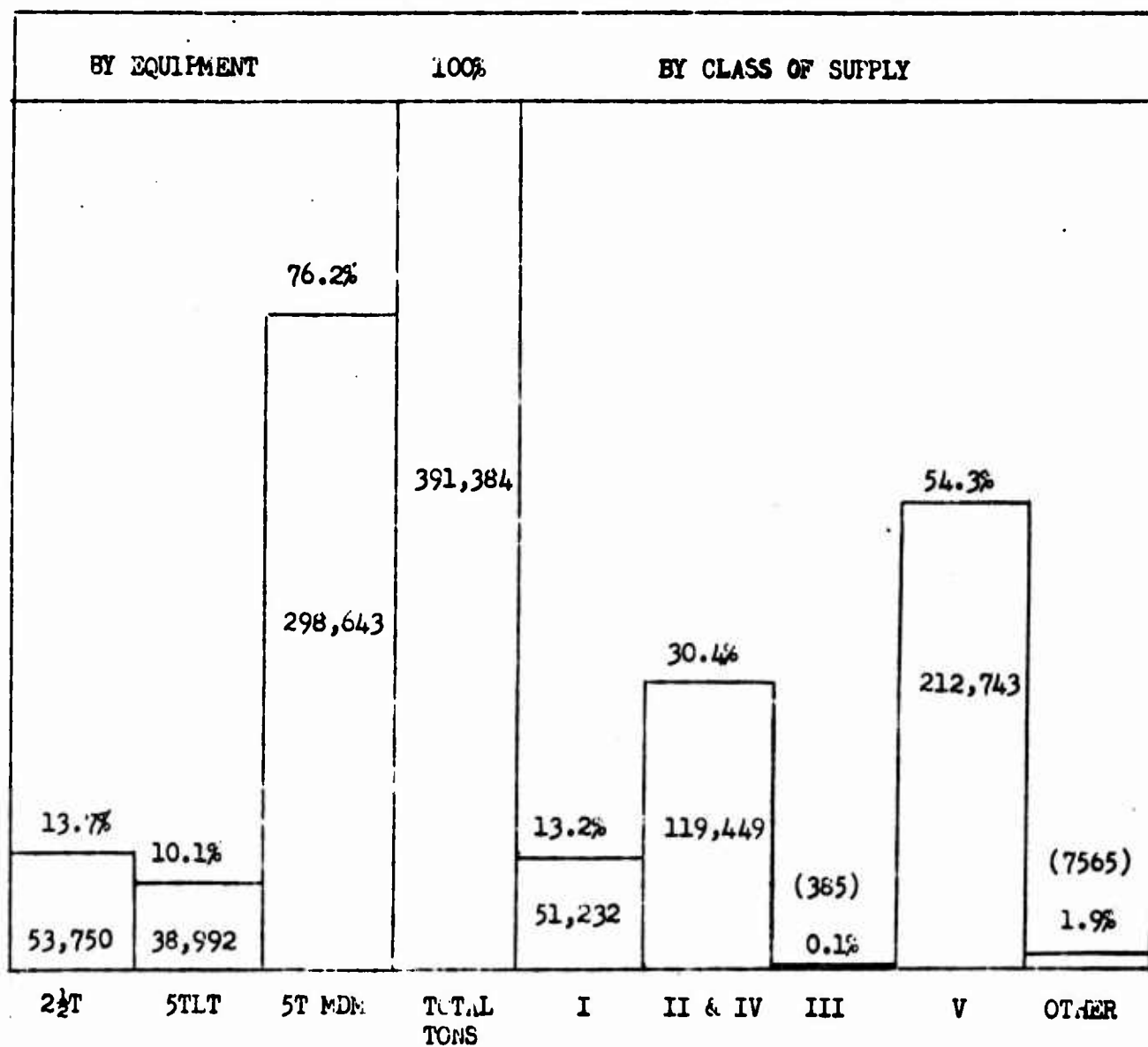
c. The communications picture was cloudy because the leading jeeps and the tank were ordered to continue and they had only radios in the area. Had there been some communications there, the seemingly "blocked" road could have been assessed as passable, and damage/danger from delay could have been precluded.

d. Drivers should have continued to move, with the probable exception of 321-30, which had a burning fuel tank.

e. BC Preer stated the NV. unit was the same one that had executed the 25 August ambush at XT 360333.

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**TONNAGE HAULED**  
For the Quarter Ending October 1968



AUG

14.6%	8.2%	77.2%	134,137	10.2%	32.9%	0.20%	54.1%	2.6%
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SEP

14.2%	10.4%	75.4%	125,825	16.37%	27.65%	0.04%	54.72%	1.17%
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OCT

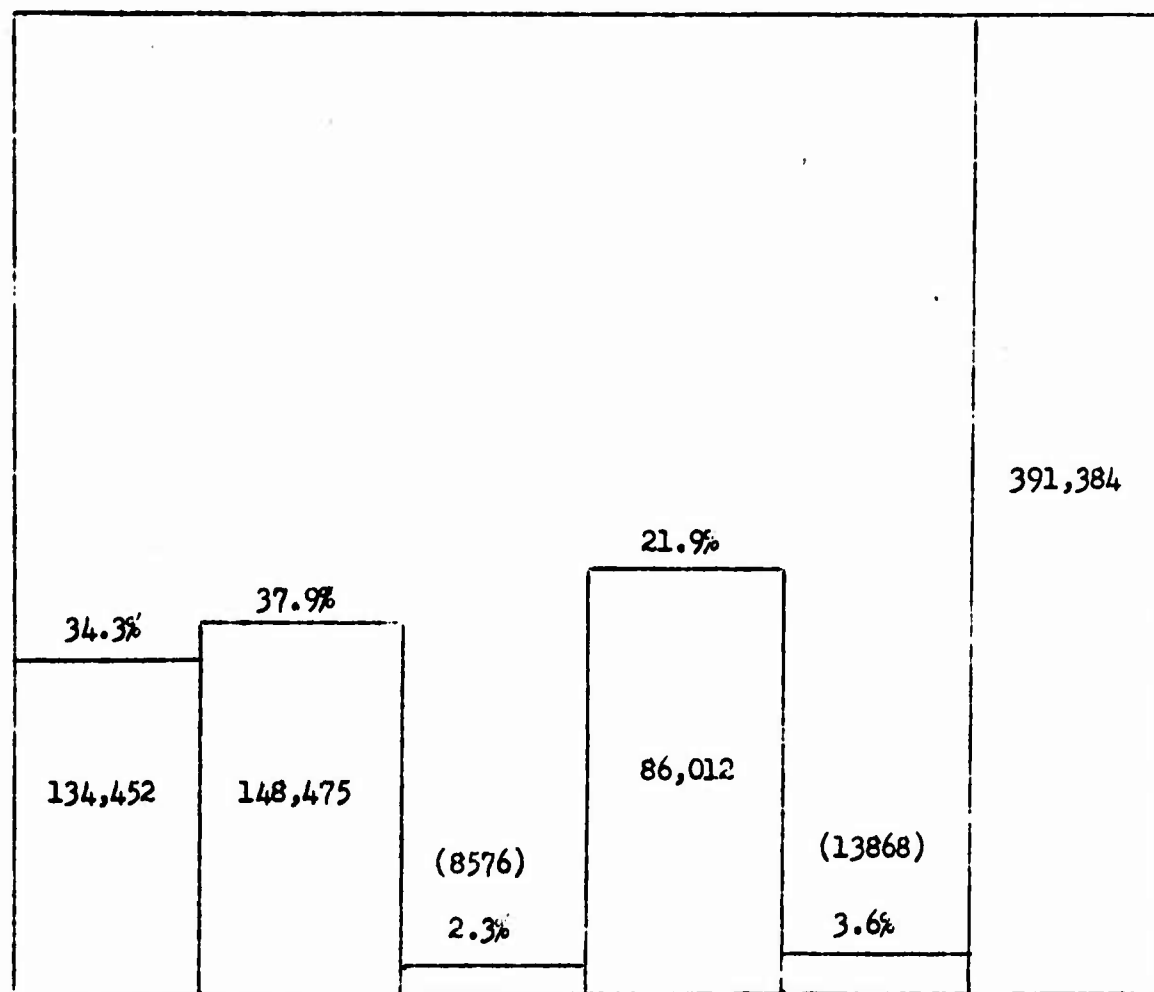
12.2%	11.6%	76.2%	121,422	13.14%	30.63%	0.06%	54.23%	1.94%
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Incl 6



**TONNAGE HAULED  
(CONT'D)  
BY THE TYPE OF OPERATION  
FOR THE QUARTER ENDING OCTOBER 1968**

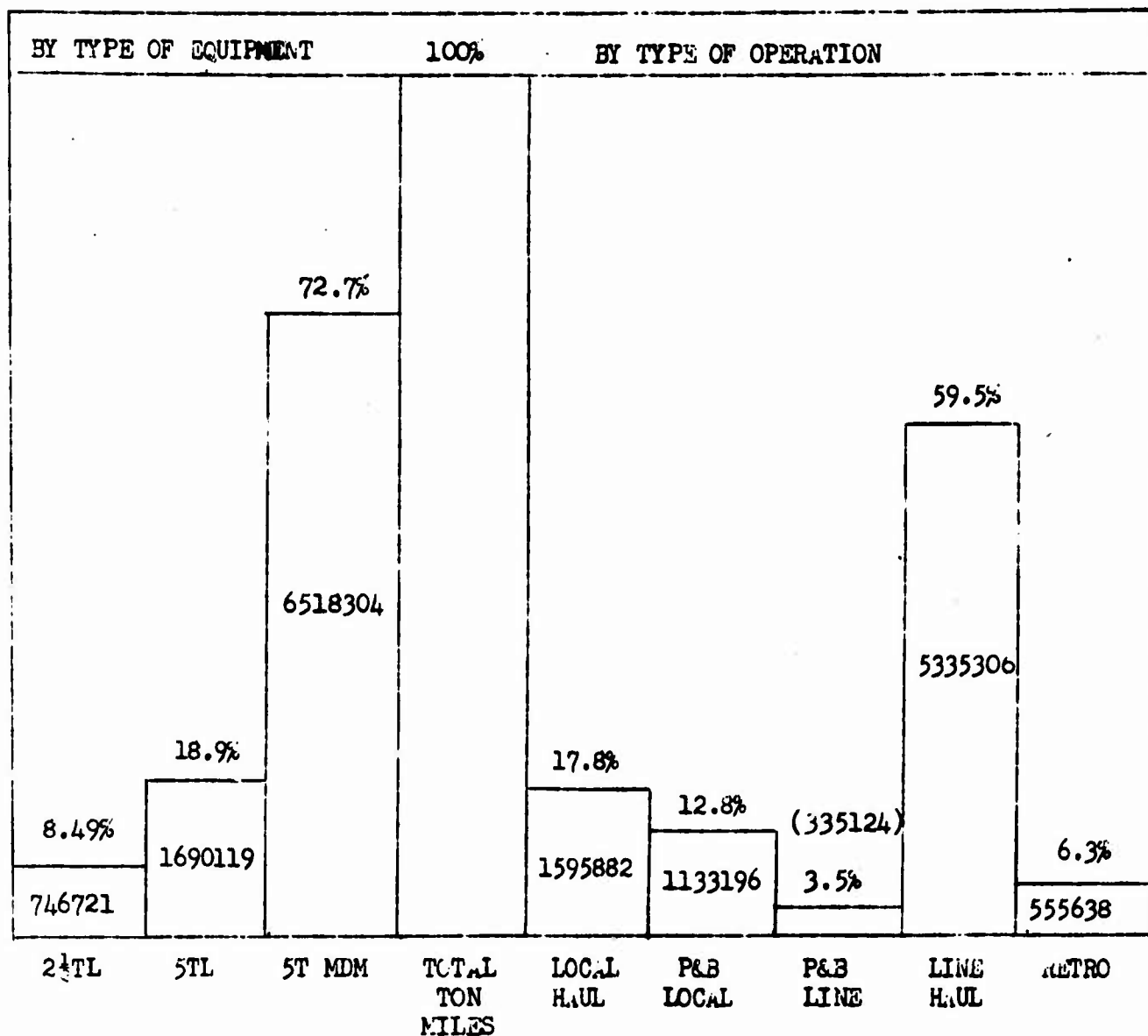
100%



	LOCAL HAUL	P&B (LOCAL)	P&B (LINE)	LINE HAUL	RETRO	TOTAL
AUG:	35.7%	38.60%	0.70%	22.9%	2.10%	(100% = 134,137)
SEP:	35.2%	34.63%	3.36%	22.46%	4.35%	(100% = 125,825)
OCT:	31.9%	40.6%	2.80%	20.30%	4.40%	(100% = 121,422)

Incl 7

**TON MILEAGE  
FOR THE QUARTER ENDING OCTOBER 1968**



AUG:

7.9%      15.5%      76.6%      3,062,416      19.0%      11.7%      1.7%      62.6%      5.0%

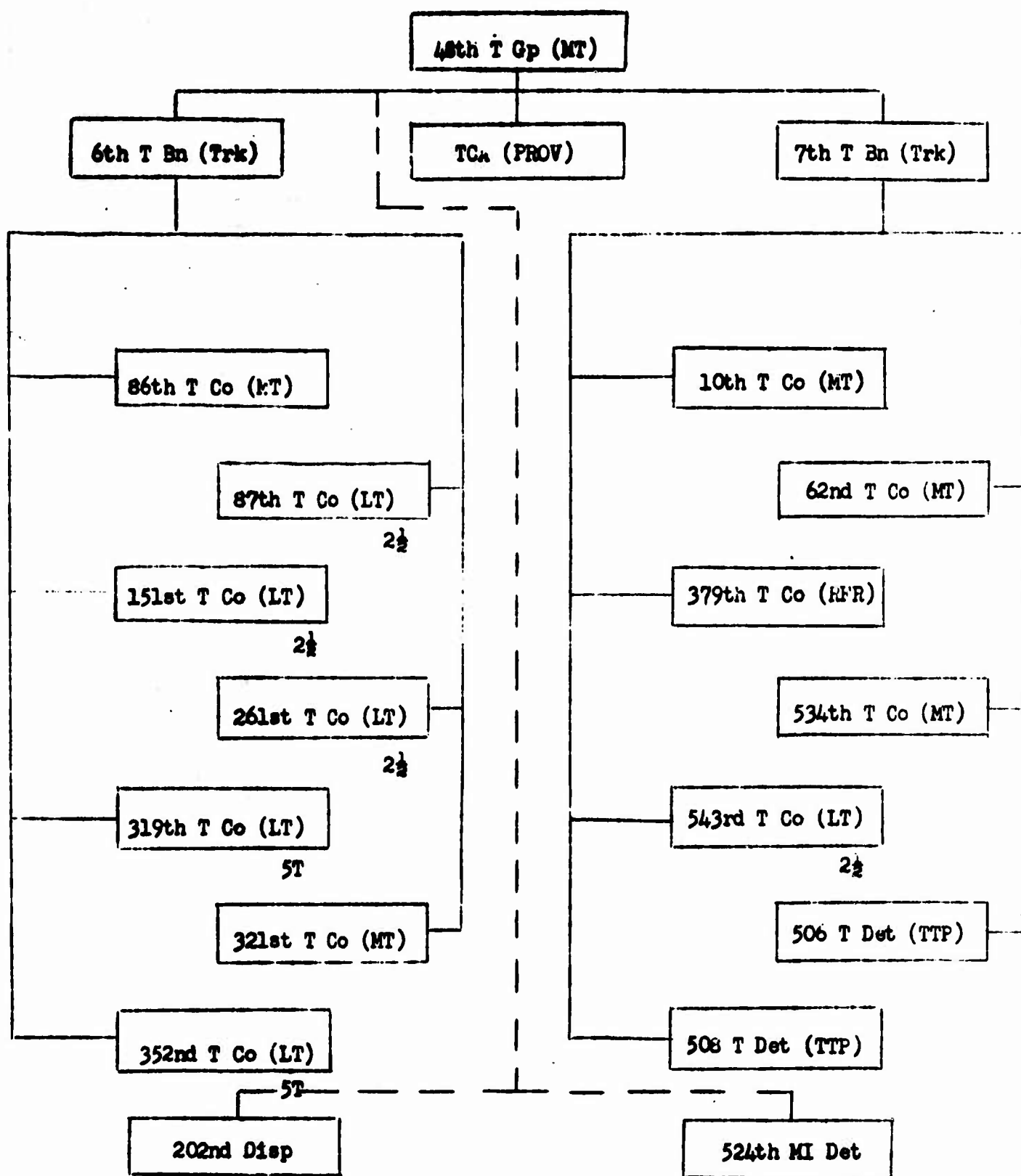
SEP:

8.4%      18.6%      73.0%      3,126,104      15.7%      12.6%      2.7%      61.6%      7.4%

OCT:

9.0%      22.7%      68.3%      2,766,624      18.7%      13.8%      6.9%      54.2%      6.4%

Incl 8



Incl 9

# EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES - TASK VEHICLES

	AUGUST			SEPTEMBER			OCTOBER		
TYPE VEHICLE	AUTH	ASGD	% SHORT	AUTH	ASGD	% SHORT	AUTH	ASGD	% SHORT
2½ Ton Cargo Trk	180	188	-	180	173	4	180	150	17
5 Ton Cargo Trk	120	113	6	120	108	10	160	114	29
5 Ton Tractor	366	315	14	366	304	17	366	298	19
12 Ton S&P Trailer	680	487	28	680	502	26	680	515	24
Reefer Trailer	85	49	42	85	47	45	85	47	45

Incl 10

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