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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) (28 Feb 69) FOR OT UT 684051

6 March 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 63rd Signal Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1968

AD849359

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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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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 63RD SIGNAL BATTALION
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SCCFV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

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1. Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities

a. General

(1) During this reporting period the 63rd Signal Battalion continued to evolve into a more stable operation. Subordinate elements of the battalion in outlying areas concentrated on the improvement of communications facilities and other areas. Significant improvement was made in living quarters. In some areas quarters were converted from tentage to sea huts or frame supported tentage.

(2) Basically, the mission of the battalion remained unchanged during the quarter. Several new sites were established which added to the battalion's area of responsibility. Some systems and sites were deactivated as the need for them ceased to exist. The mission of corps signal support continued to be the rearrangement of communications systems as the tactical situation changed.

(3) Provisional Corps Vietnam (PCV) was redesignated XXIV Corps during this period. This had little effect on the mission of the 63rd Signal Battalion who continued to provide quality communications in the two northernmost provinces of the Republic of South Vietnam.

(4) The redeployment of the Marine units out of the Phu Bai area caused some shifting of communications responsibilities. This was particularly true with regard to cable systems and distribution which had been installed and maintained by the Marines. The redeployment also changed the responsibility for base defense communications and convoy control communications in the area south of Phu Bai. All of these shifts of responsibility affected the 63rd Signal Battalion either directly or indirectly.

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684051
Incl

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(5) During the reporting period the I Corps Tactical Zone Provisional Signal Group was activated and located at Phu Bai. Although the 63rd Signal Battalion was not scheduled to come under the new group's operational control until the next quarter informal liaison, briefings and mutual assistance began in order to ensure a smooth transition once the group became fully operational.

(6) The organizational structure of the battalion to include organic, assigned and attached units under the battalion's operational control are listed in Inclosure 1.

b. Activities:

(1) On 4 August 1968 an AN/MRC-112 multi-channel radio terminal was airlifted into Landing Zone Berchtesgaden in support of Operation Sommerset Plain. The AN/MRC-112 was used to provide four voice circuits between Eagle's Nest and Berchtesgaden in support of 101st Airborne Division requirements.

(2) On 9 August two Mode V Autodin circuits (SMR-1 and SMP-7) were activated. The installation of the Mode V Autodin terminal at the Phu Bai Army Area Communications Center provided two direct circuits to the Nha Trang Autodin Switching Facility. The new facility helped significantly to reduce the commcenter service rate. With the new facility the 63rd Signal Battalion entered into a new era of communications, i.e. high speed data transmission.

(3) On 12 August a cement pad was poured at the Quang Tri Air Signal Site for an AN/MTC-9 switchboard. The switchboard was programmed to improve the area telephone service to subscribers in the Quang Tri area. The cement pad was positioned adjacent to the existing signal complex so that the existing bunker could be extended to include the switchboard.

(4) On 18 August the AB-216 tower at Quang Tri was dismantled for repairs. Due to unknown causes one of the base legs had been damaged, causing it to separate and placing the tower in danger of twisting and falling. All antennas which were on the tower were removed and placed on tactical masts.

(5) On 19 August the AB-216 tower at Quang Tri Air was rebuilt and extended from its original 78 feet to 114 feet. This action provided the increased ability for more systems over greater distances.

(6) On 21 August the communications support requirement for Operation Sommerset Plain was terminated and the equipment was extracted for rehabilitation in preparation for future operations.

SCCFV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(7) On 21 August the 63rd Signal Battalion was tasked with the responsibility of conducting the perimeter defense of approximately half of the Phu Bai post. The perimeter defense responsibilities in essence gave the battalion the largest infantry-type mission of any signal battalion in the Republic of South Vietnam.

(8) On 26 August all telephone subscriber circuits and trunks on the AN/MTC-1 switchboard belonging to the 501st Signal Battalion were cut over to an AN/MTC-1 owned and operated by the 63rd Signal Battalion. This action was taken to allow the rehabilitation of the 501st AN/MTC-1.

(9) On 1 September an event extremely significant to the battalion took place. The new battalion headquarters building was opened and occupied by the battalion commander. Although not directly connected with communications, the new headquarters building provided increased efficiency for the battalion activities. It was a proud day for the battalion as the entire project had been accomplished on a "self-help" basis.

(10) On 2 September a USAFV directed AN/GRC-163 radio school commenced at the 63rd Signal Battalion. The school ran for a month and was taught by ECOM New Equipment Team (NET) representatives from CONUS. Instruction included the mounting of the equipment (both in $\frac{1}{4}$ ton trucks and on $\frac{1}{4}$ ton trailers), operation and operator maintenance. Major units providing student input were the 1st Air Cavalry Division, the 101st Airborne Division, the Americal Division, 1st Brigade/5th Mechanized Division, and the 63rd Signal Battalion. During the course 101 students were trained. At the conclusion of the school the 1st Cavalry Division, the 101st Airborne Division and the 1/5 Mechanized Division were each issued two AN/GRC-163 radio terminals.

(11) On 2 September an AN/MRC-112 four channel radio system was installed between Dong Ha and Camp Carroll in support of the 108th Artillery Group.

(12) On 4 September the 63rd Signal Battalion area of operation was hit by Tropical Storm Betsy. The storm had 40-50 knot winds and very heavy rains. It degraded communications provided by this battalion to some extent. The Quang Tri City site became flooded and had to be shut down because the high water level was a safety hazard to the power distribution system. The heavy downpour in the Quang Tri City area was such that a state of emergency was declared throughout the entire area. To prevent recurrence vans positioned at the site were raised and power distribution systems were elevated. Betsy also caused problems with the outside cable plant because water entered some of the splices which were wrapped with tape rather than cased due to non-availability of splice cases. In the final analysis it can be said that Betsy found this battalion ready and prepared, however, we did learn valuable lessons in preparing for future storms.

SCCIV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS-CSFOR-65 (R1)

(13) On 11 September the 544th Troop Detachment arrived in Phu Bai with two AN/TRC-129 radio terminals. These terminals were used in a project that called for rearranging of Troop and VHF systems resulting in the closure of the Hue Troop site. This project was extremely important as Hue Troop site was the most vulnerable site in the battalion's area of responsibility. The site had been besieged during TET. Rather than take the chance the enemy might destroy or besiege the site again the rearranging project did away with the requirement for the site altogether.

(14) On 15 September an SB-86 switchboard was installed at the Hue Citadel site in support of the MACV Advisors to the 1st ARVN Division.

(15) On 15 September a 12-channel VHF system was installed between Quang Tri City and Quang Tri Air to provide access to a 12-channel ICS extension opening in Quang Tri City.

(16) On 17 September a 12-channel VHF system was installed between Phu Bai VHF site and Camp Eagle. This additional system was required due to the rapid deterioration of the Phu Bai-Gia Le-Eagle telephone distribution cable. Long range solution to the problem has been the approval of a new cable project in that area.

(17) On 23 September a test system that had been operational between Phu Bai and Gia Lo (12-channel VHF) was officially activated. Again, this system was required due to deterioration of the Phu Bai-Gia Le cable.

(18) On 22 September 1968 the Wunder Beach Signal Complex, which had been in support of elements of the 26th General Support Group, closed out. The support units in that area relocated in advance of the high water expected during the monsoon season and thus terminated the requirement for signal support in that area.

(19) On 24 September the BBH59 system was cutover from Hue Troop site to Hue MACV site. This was phase I of the elimination of the Hue Troop site.

(20) On 23 September Task Force X-Ray evacuated their communications center adjacent to the Phu Bai Army Area Communications Center. The following day, 24 September, the Phu Bai Army Area Communications Center expanded into the evacuated area.

(21) On 26 September the EBT22 system (Phu Bai to Dong Ha) was cutover from the Phu Bai Troop site to the Phu Bai VHF site. This was Phase II in the elimination of Hue Troop site.

SCCFV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(22) On 30 September the BBT21 system (Hue Trope to Ca Lu) was cutover from Hue Trope to Hue MACV. This was phase III in the elimination of the Hue Trope site.

(23) On 3 October circuits and trunks on the 63rd Signal Battalion MTC-1 at Camp Eagle were reterminated in the 501st MTC-1 which had been rehabilitated (See Item 8).

(24) On 6 October the Hue MACV site was rewired to divide the load on phases and allow for immediate cutover to back-up power. Hue MACV had long been a problem with regard to power due to the inadequate in-house wiring. The final solution will not be realized until a work order is honored for the total rewiring inside the site.

(25) On 6 October two AN/TCC-7 switchboards replaced the existing AN/MTC-1 at Camp Evans. This was designed to improve telephone communications in that area. The full efficiency of the board will not be realized until completion of adequate outside plant distribution. Recent developments at Camp Evans make all future plans questionable since major troop units are being withdrawn from the area.

(26) On 9 October an AN/GRC-163 four-channel VHF system was installed between Tan Ky Port and Phu Bai to support elements of the 26th General Support Group located at the port facilities.

(27) On 9 October a 12-channel VHF test system was installed between Ca Lu and Dong Ha. The purpose of the test was to determine adequacy of the path.

(28) On 13 October the BBH92 system was reterminated from Fire Support Base Bastogne to Fire Support Base Roy.

(29) On 15 October the battalion assumed operational control of all AUTOSEVOCOM in the Northern I Corps Tactical Zone.

(30) On 21 October a van mounted UNIVAC 1004 data transceiver terminal arrived in Phu Bai from Da Nang. The 1004 was programmed to replace the Mode V Autodin terminal which had been installed in the Army Area Comcenter on 9 August.

(31) On 19 October a 12-channel VHF system was established between Landing Zone Anzio and Camp Eagle in support of the 101st Airborne Division. The equipment was taken from Fire Support Base Roy, ending the communications support there.

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS-CSFOR-65 (R1)

(32) On 22 October the Hue Tropo site was completely closed down and all equipment moved to Phu Bai. The closing of Hue Tropo removed the most vulnerable site from the battalion's area of operations.

(33) On 22 October the UNIVAC 1004 Data Transceiver Terminal was activated at Phu Bai in the battalion motor pool. It operated in the receive tape mode only, requiring that the tapes be processed through run-off positions in the commcenter.

(34) On 23 October two each Mode V Autodin vans arrived at Phu Bai. The terminals will be installed at Camp Eagle and Camp Evans, giving subscribers in those areas Autodin access.

(35) On 25 October the UNIVAC 1004 van was moved from the motor pool to a prepared position behind XXIV Corps Headquarters and adjacent to the Phu Bai Army Area Commcenter.

(36) On 26 October the MTC-1 owned by the 63rd Signal Battalion was placed in tandem with the MTC-1 owned and operated by the 501st Signal Battalion. This configuration will serve as an interim Army Area Switchboard until replaced by an AN/MTC-9.

(37) On 26 October an AN/TRC-24 test system was established between Phu Bai and Hue Citadel. The system proved to be of excellent quality.

(38) On 28 October the Mode V Autodin terminal became operational at Camp Evans. A benefit derived from this was less relay traffic through the Phu Bai Army Area Commcenter.

(39) On 30 October the test system between Phu Bai and Hue Citadel was deactivated and the equipment used to install a system between Phu Bai and Tan Ky Port.

(40) On 31 October the UNIVAC 1004 went to JANAP 128 mode providing tape and hard copy thus relieving the Army Area Commcenter of the excessive backlog that had developed.

(41). On 31 October the "Talk Quick" station at Phu Bai was deactivated.

c. Personnel and Administration:

(1) During the past quarter the battalion suffered critical shortages in various military occupational specialties. Despite these shortages the battalion was still able to perform its mission in a highly efficient and professional manner.

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 53rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(2) The normal rotation of personnel still presents a problem in that vacancies are not being filled rapidly enough by replacements. The battalion will lose 175 personnel during the month of January through normal DEROS. This number represents approximately 23% of current assigned strength. The 21st Signal Group has initiated a program whereby personnel presently assigned within the group are being reassigned to the battalion. This program has been instrumental in eliminating critical shortages in certain military occupational specialties.

(3) In the area of finance, a very vexing and time consuming situation has been rectified with the relocation of finance to the Phu Bai area. A finance office in Phu Bai has saved a great number of man hours, since before relocation, personnel were required to travel to Da Nang, to solve any pay problems. The problem of in and out processing with respect to finance has been largely eliminated. The organization has a good savings program, and participation should increase as more personnel become aware of the Phu Bai finance office. The personnel of the battalion displayed their benevolence by contributing the highest amount during the recent AER campaign. With the relocation of a finance unit to Phu Bai, the battalion's financial problems have been largely eliminated.

(4) The in-country mail service between Phu Bai and higher headquarters continues to be a matter of concern. In some instances correspondence is received after the established suspense date. The delay of mail is largely due to climatic conditions. The organization has established courier routes on a regular basis. The use of couriers has been quite successful in reducing the time element in the movement of correspondence. However, during heavy monsoon rains couriers are delayed due to adverse road conditions.

(5) An effective awards program is in operation within all units of the battalion. It is highly desirable that awards be made while the recipient is still a member of the command. However, awards may not be submitted until 90 days prior to DEROS. This, coupled with the long delay in obtaining approval, means the recipient has departed from the unit before approval. A solution to this problem would be to submit awards as soon as it is felt an individual should be so honored. In this manner the award could possibly be presented while the recipient is still in the command. This would enhance the meaning and effectiveness of the award. Some problems have been encountered in submitting awards. These problems are incorrect terminology and incomplete information. These problems will be eliminated as personnel become more familiar with the processing of awards. The battalion has a functioning awards program. It is imperative that individuals deserving awards receive them. This is a matter of battalion policy.

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFORM-65 (R1)

(6) Satisfactory progress was not made in the battalion civilianization program. The battalion was authorized 22 personnel under the augmentation program. However, these slots were reduced to 18. An interpreter was hired to facilitate the hiring of all indigenous personnel. Since there is limited Civilian Personnel Office support in the Phu Bai area, it is necessary to employ the services of the Civilian Personnel Office in Qui Nhon. All personnel under the augmentation program have been hired but personnel for the 5/6 civilianization program are not available in Phu Bai. Personnel in this program will be employed as switchboard operators. As such, they will require a great degree of English language proficiency. The pay scale at present is too low to hire anyone with English language ability. It is felt that a functioning Civilian Personnel Office and a higher pay scale would attract more individuals with English language ability. This would be quite beneficial to the local national hire program.

d. Security:

(1) During the reporting period, 17 SECRET clearances were granted. No TOP SECRET or CONFIDENTIAL clearances were granted. Cryptographic access was authorized for 66 personnel. No security violations occurred during the reporting period.

(2) Command emphasis continues to be placed on communication security. During the reporting period emphasis has been placed on the rehabilitation of personnel and equipment bunkers that were damaged by typhoons. A vigorous program of security inspection of both site physical security and safeguarding of classified material remains in effect.

(3) The deactivation of the Hue Trope site which was considered to be the battalion's most vulnerable site has greatly improved the battalion's physical security posture.

(4) The 63rd Signal Battalion retained the responsibility for the defense of the Echo Sector of the Phu Bai Defensive Perimeter. This sector of the perimeter is approximately 1600 meters long. Construction and rehabilitation of bunkers, trench lines and barriers is continuous due to the heavy rainfall in this area. The Echo Sector continues to be the most strongly defended sector of the Phu Bai Base Perimeter.

e. Safety:

(1) Command emphasis continues to be placed on vehicle safety. The following recordable accidents occurred during the quarter: Personnel injured: two; Vehicle accidents: two. This represents a 33% decrease in vehicle accidents and a 100% increase in personnel injuries over the past quarter.

SCCPV-NG-PE-OP

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(2) Accident Exposure for the Quarter:

MONTH	<u>MAN-DAYS</u>	<u>MILEAGE</u>
August	Military - 23,910 Days Civilian - 2,880 Hours	67,397
September	Military - 24,360 Days Civilian - 2,880 Hours	61,517
October	Military - 23,300 Days Civilian - <u>2,880</u> Hours	59,372
Total for Quarter	Military - 71,570 Days Civilian - 8,640 Hrs	188,286

f. Training:

(1) The mandatory training program within the 63rd Signal Battalion is improving significantly as time passes. Mandatory training is being scheduled and conducted IAW pertinent 1st Signal Brigade Regulations.

(2) In the area of training records and administration there has been much improvement. Command emphasis is being stressed to insure that training records are being maintained IAW the governing regulations and that all necessary information is entered on personnel records.

(3) The OJT program is still relied on heavily although the records do not indicate it in all cases. The OJT program has been the key to the successful operation of the battalion especially in the critical MOS fields.

(4) The unit cross-training programs have been relatively successful in filling certain key positions. This has worked extremely well where related MOS's are involved.

(5) Additional training has been conducted in weapons and officer development. All personnel who pull perimeter defense duty receive training on their basic weapon, mines, flares, patrolling, and related subjects. The officer training program is designed to fill the experience gap which is common under the rapid promotion policies now in effect.

(6) Maximum utilization is being made of the US Army Training Facility, 1st Signal Brigade, and has proved very helpful. The cable splicing course, circuit restoral course, and technical facilities controllers course have been especially useful.

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

g. Logistics:

(1) The logistic posture of the battalion has improved over the previous quarter. The added experience gained by the logistical staff as well as that of the companies has improved the logistical operations within the battalion. The Army support units which moved into this area during the last quarter still have not been able to provide the support needed. The support is still limited by the lack of repair parts in the system and the large quantities of equipment that are flooding it for repair. Requisitions placed through our support are not being properly processed. This has caused delay in obtaining the requisitioned parts which consequently delays repair of equipment in organizational maintenance. The present situation is expected to improve as the support units are able to better accomplish their mission.

(2) Power equipment remained a serious problem during this reporting period. Operational commitments, dispersion of signal sites, continuous use of overaged generators, environmental factors (heat, sand, rain) and lack of spare parts, combined to reduce the power capability of the battalion to a critical low. Requisitions, controlled substitutions, and requests for assistance have been made through all appropriate command and staff channels. At the present time relief is now just beginning to be received by the filling of some of our requisitions for generators.

(3) Building materials are still extremely difficult to obtain. Consequently, many projects for bunkering and/or construction expansion are at a standstill. It is understood that the majority of the required materials are available through supply channels, however the time differential between the request and the fill is inordinately long due to the many approvals required, i.e. Local engineers, 1st Log command, and finally the Naval Support Activity in Da Nang. Some relief has been obtained by keeping a Liaison Sergeant in Da Nang who coordinates with depot and obtains some of the required materials.

(4) Adequate facilities for EMS were obtained during this reporting period by the acquisition of an additional Butler building. The EMS has operated from a limited shop space and maintenance vans for the past 7 months. The move to the Butler building has eliminated many problems and created a more effective and efficient operation. The Butler building provides total shop integrity, in that all maintenance will be performed in the shop and supervisors will have direct control over the technicians. With the added space for issue and receiving the necessity of storing electronic equipment in conexes is eliminated. Technical supply now has necessary storage space for PLL. The PLL is also secured and not subject to weather damage. EMS has operated from power provided by generators, which when inoperative have been responsible for many lost manhours. The Butler building is provided with commercial power which will eliminate lost manhours caused by generator failure. The Butler building is located on better roads and within proximity of a majority of signal sites which will reduce equipment damaged in transit.

SCC V-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-76 (R1)

h. Operations:

(1) During the reporting period the battalion participated in operation Somerset Plain. The operation was implemented in an effort to clear enemy activity in the A Shau Valley.

(2) A summary of systems activations and deactivations follows:

BBH5A	EGL-EGN	18 Aug	Deactivated
BBH5B	PHB-GAE	23 Aug	Activated
BBH82	QTA-WUB	27 Aug	Deactivated
BBH6B	DGE-CCL	7 Sep	Activated
BBH7B	PHB-EGL	24 Sep	Activated
BBH8B	QTA-QTR	15 Sep	Activated
BBH9B	HUN-PHB	28 Sep	Activated
BBH5C	PHB-TMY	7 Oct	Activated
BBH65	HUE-HUN	18 Oct	Deactivated

(3) Following facilities established:

(a) VHF Systems: 22

(b) Microwave systems: 1

(c) Army Tropo: 3

(4) The 63rd Signal Battalion operates 9 switchboards in the Northern I Corps Tactical Zone at this time with one additional to be installed in the very near future. There are 8 area switchboards and one TOC switchboard of the XXIV Corps Headquarters. Base camp telephone service is provided at 7 locations. (Phu Bai, Gia Le, Camp Evans, Quang Tri City, Quang Tri Air Base, and Dong Ha). An area cable distribution system is maintained at Phu Bai and new distribution systems are scheduled for Gia Le, Camp Eagle, Camp Evans, and Quang Tri Air Base. Telephone service is provided to 1216 mainline subscribers throughout the I Corps Tactical Zone.

(5) Switchboard Facilities:

Dynamic TOC	MTC-1
Phu Bai	DTE
Gia Le	MTC-1
Camp Eagle	MTC-9 to be installed
Hue MACV	MTC-1
Hue Citadel	MTC-7
Camp Evans	2 ea. TTC-7
Quang Tri Army	MTC-9
Quang Tri City	MTC-3
Dong Ha	MTC-1 to be phased out

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(6) Phu Bai Dial Telephone Exchange: The Phu Bai Dial Telephone Exchange is a 1000 line XY Stromberg Carlson Exchange. The present fill on the Exchange is:

(a) Trunks: 89

(b) Class A mainlines/instruments installed: 253/411

(c) Class C mainlines/instruments installed: 476/752

(7) Cable surveys conducted: During the 1st Quarter FY 69 the following cable surveys were conducted:

SURVEY

160th Avn Gp Project
Gia Lo-EGL Tie Cable
Camp Evans Distribution
Gia Lo Distribution
Camp Eagle Distribution
Gia Lo Distribution
PHB-GAE-EGL Tie cables

CONDUCTED BY

63rd Sig Bn
578th Sig Co
578th Sig Co
578th Sig Co
578th Sig Co
CSEMA, 1st Sig Bde
CSEMA, 1st Sig Bde

(8) Cable Installation: During the 1st Quarter FY 69 the following cable was installed:

160th Avn Gp Cable	1 mi. 50 pair, 1 mi. 25 pair
578th LEM Cable	1200 ft 25 pair
63rd Sig Bn Contonmont Cable	1200 ft 25 pair F8
15th TC Cable	1000 ft 25 pair
QTA Interim Outside Plant	18,000 ft 50 pair, 22,000 ft 25 pair

1. Visitors: The 63rd Signal Battalion Commander, LTC Elmer H. Graham, escorted the following distinguished visitors in the battalion's area of operations during the reporting period:

(1) On 5 August General Van Harlingen, Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), visited Eagle's Nest to observe communications support for Operation Somerset Plain.

(2) On 6 August General Van Harlingen visited 63rd Signal Battalion signal facilities in the Quang Tri City area.

(3) On 8 August Colonel Richter, XXIV Corps Signal Officer, visited 63rd Signal Battalion facilities at Hue MACV, Hue Trope and Hue Citadel.

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(4) On 14 August Colonel McElwee, Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, visited 63rd Signal Battalion facilities in the Quang Tri City area.

(5) On 15 August Colonel McElwee visited Eagle's Nest to observe signal support of Operation Sommerset Plain.

(6) On 16 August COL Mathews, Chief of Staff, 1st Signal Brigade visited Eagle's Nest to inspect signal facilities operated by this battalion in support of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Mobile) on Operation Sommerset Plain.

(7) On 23 August Colonel Harbor, Chief of DCA-SAM visited the 63rd Signal Battalion Headquarters where he received a briefing on the battalion's organization, operation and deployment.

(8) on 3 September Colonel Horner, USMC Communications Electronics Officer for III MAF visited the 63rd Signal Battalion and received a briefing on the battalion's operations and activities.

(9) On 7 September Colonel McElwee, 21st Signal Group Commander, visited 63rd Signal Battalion facilities in the Hue area.

(10) On 11 September Major General Lotz, Commanding General, USASTRATCOM, visited 63rd Signal Battalion facilities in the Phu Bai area.

(11) On 19 September Colonel McElwee, 21st Signal Group Commander, visited battalion facilities in the Phu Bai area.

(12) On 3 October General Van Harlingen, Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM) visited battalion facilities at Quang Tri Airfield, Ca Lu, Camp Carroll, Que Viet, Dong Ha, and Quang Tri City.

(13) On 4 October General Van Harlingen visited Phu Bai, Hue, Camp Eagle, and Landing Zone Anzio.

(14) On 8 October General Rienzi, Deputy Commander, 1st Signal Brigade, (USASTRATCOM) made his initial visit to the 63rd Signal Battalion. While in the area, General Rienzi visited XXIV Corps Headquarters, Ca Lu, Dong Ha, Camp Evans and selected facilities in the Phu Bai area.

(15) On 15 October Major General Schweiter, Chief of Staff, XXIV Corps, visited the UNIVAC 1004 data transceiver terminal van.

(16) On 24 October Colonel Burns, Director of Operations, 1st Signal Brigade visited the battalion to obtain current information on the Hue MACV-Hue Citadel cable project.

SCCFV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(17) On 25 October Major General Schweiter, Chief of Staff, XXIV Corps, visited the battalion area. During his visit he was shown the battalion's new electronic maintenance facility, the battalion S-4 facilities and the UNIVAC 1004 van positioned in its final location.

(18) On 26 October Colonel Burns, Director of Operations, 1st Signal Brigade and Colonel Swenson, Commanding Officer, 160th Signal Group arrived in the area to investigate the Hue MACV-Hue Citadel cable project. While in the area they visited several of the battalion's sites. They departed the area on 28 October.

j. Aviation: None

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

SECTION 2. LESSONS LEARNED: COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Personnel: None

b. Operations:

(1) YAGI Antenna Orientation

(a) OBSERVATION: That the cork holding ring at the base of a YAGI Antenna cannot be sufficiently tightened to keep the antenna properly oriented during high winds.

(b) EVALUATION: The YAGI Antenna is a uni-directional antenna, its reception dependent on how accurately the antenna is oriented. The solution to keeping it oriented in high winds is to tape the guy line ring located 3/4 of the way up the mast, to the mast. This affords added support and helps prevent the elements from being disoriented. Any type of electrical or friction tape may be used. The guy lines add additional support to the cork holding ring at the base.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That YAGI Antennas be secured from becoming disoriented by taping guy rings.

(2) Expedient RC-292 Guy Stakes

(a) OBSERVATION: It has been observed that when using an RC-292 antenna in swampy areas the ground stakes packed with it will not hold over a period of time.

(b) EVALUATION: High winds and monsoons will soon topple antennas not properly guy staked. A solution is to use eight foot engineer stakes as guy stakes with electrical tape wrapped around them to protect the guys from being cut from the pressure on the sharp edges. Driven at the correct angle these stakes have held antennas up in 75 mph winds with 3 feet of water around the stake.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That RC-292 antennas used in marshy areas be inspected for possible replacement of guy stakes.

(3) Inadequate MWO

(a) OBSERVATION: Recently during the installation of an AN/MTC-1, it was found that all trunks terminating in the trunk circuits of the AN/MTC-1 are routed over VHF systems were not functioning correctly. Forty-eight (48) volts was erroneously being supplied by the cord circuits of the switchboard and was tripping the ringers of the VHF system.

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1966, RCS USFOR-65 (R1)

(b) **EVALUATION:** Examination of the trunk relay telephone circuit schematic diagram revealed that an MWO had been performed on the CO relays. The D winding had been jumpered to contact 22. Thus when an answer cord was plugged into a trunk jack, the DL relay was operated and ground was supplied to the sleeve lead of the trunk jack. This ground in turn operated the RS relay of the cord circuit which put forty-eight volts battery on the tip and ring leads. To resolve this problem, the sleeve leads of the trunk jacks were disconnected from terminal 11 of the circuit plate terminal board.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** If trouble develops when connecting dial trunks or VNF trunks to the trunk circuits of an AN/MTC-1, check for this MWO on the CO relay.

(4) Burnt Out Call Supervisory Lamps

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Recently nine cord circuits malfunctioned in the first position of an MTC-1. On each of the bad cords, the subscriber could hear the operator but the operator could not hear the subscriber. Also there was no sidetone in the subscriber's receiver.

(b) **EVALUATION:** An evaluation of the problem indicated that the subscriber was not receiving talk battery. This in turn indicated a malfunction in the operation of the FS relay. A visual check of the FS relays showed they were not operating. One of the many reasons for malfunction of the FS relay is lack of a ground indication from the sleeve lead. A check of the circuit schematic revealed that this ground could be interrupted by a burnt out call supervisory lamp. This indeed proved to be the problem in all nine cord circuits.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION:** It will pay in time and effort to check the supervisory lamps first when cord circuits malfunction in an MTC-1.

(5) Ring Answer Dial Switch

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Recently in the first position of an MTC-1, a cord circuit malfunctioned. Both the answer and call plugs were giving the operators shocks. Also the operators were occasionally receiving shocks from the exposed metal screws of the position itself.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The shocks received were fairly severe. Thus it was suspected that 120V ringing current was being shorted to the tip and ring leads of the cord circuit. Operating of the ringing key hand switch to the hand ringing position relieved the malfunction thus isolating the problem in the ring answer dial switch. This wiring is congested and close together, thus it is conducive to shorting.

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Check the wiring of the ring answer switch box possible shorts to correct shocks received from plugs of an AN/MTC-1.

(6) Induced Power Noise

(a) OBSERVATION: A considerable amount of noise was present on certain local battery trunk circuits of an AN/MTC-1. In several cases this noise was severe enough to require the installation of a C-161 coil in the circuit.

(b) EVALUATION: The noise had the characteristic of a power hum and was emanating from the switchboard. Suspecting the power hum might be picked up by induction from the interconnecting power cables, these cables were physically separated from the 26 pair interconnecting telephone cables along their entire route. This eliminated the noise problem.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: The interconnecting power cables always be separated from the 26 pair interconnecting telephone cables in an AN/MTC-1.

(7) Air Conditioner Tool Storage

(a) OBSERVATION: It was noticed that on trailer mounted, 18,000 BTU air conditioners that air circulation was hampered by the tool kit's position on the trailer.

(b) EVALUATION: Although the operation manual does not indicate its removal, the tool storage section should be unbolted and stored elsewhere. Heat from the generator is not dispersed as widely as it should be for protection of the generator and for more efficient use of the air conditioning unit since the heat envelops the air conditioning unit. The box can be utilized just as effectively off the trailer and beside it.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Remove tool storage sections on 18,000 BTU trailer mounted generators and store it either beside or under the trailer as the situation warrants.

(8) Antenna Guy Wires

(a) OBSERVATION: Guy wires should be included in preparation for monsoon season.

(b) EVALUATION: During the monsoon season antenna guy wires are subject to corrosion and can work loose during high winds.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Turnbuckles should have a good coating of lubricant on them at all times and guys should be inspected periodically to insure that they are tight.

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(9) Generator Safety

(a) EVALUATION: An accident caused by personal carelessness resulted in the permanent loss of a critically needed generator repairman.

(b) EVALUATION: The individual in question was trouble-shooting a 10KW J-109 electrical power generator. He poured gasoline into the carburetor in an attempt to get the engine started. He carelessly poured an excessive amount of fuel into the carburetor and spilled fuel on his shirt sleeves and hands. When he attempted to start the engine, the engine backfired through the carburetor causing a flame to ignite his shirt sleeve and shirt. This resulted in 2nd and 3rd degree burns on his left forearm and abdomen. The individual was medically evacuated to the United States.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: If the individual had not been so careless this accident would not have happened. Frequent training should be given to maintenance personnel to keep them aware of the inherent hazards when trouble-shooting equipment. Hazards of this nature should be stressed during the initial training of maintenance personnel.

(10) Classified Message Writing

(a) OBSERVATION: While reviewing classified messages it has frequently been observed that the last paragraph in a message lists a project officer and telephone number. In some cases the message has invited coordination by telephone.

(b) EVALUATION: This could lead to the disclosure of classified information to the enemy or persons that do not have the need to know.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: When it is necessary to list a project or contact officer and telephone number in a classified message, a statement should be added to the effect that discussing of any classified portion of this message will be by secure means only.

(11) Protective Bunker Entrance Way Blast Walls

(a) OBSERVATION: The majority of entrance way blast walls for protective bunkers now in existence in the Republic of Vietnam require an excessive amount of sandbags to construct. This is because the entrance way walls are constructed entirely of sandbags.

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFO-65 (R1)

(b) EVALUATION: Protective entrance way blast walls requiring less sandbags can be constructed in the following manner:

Materials required:

Four 8" x 8" x 10' logs (suggested length)

Six sheets of 12' L x 18" W PSP

Sandbags (filled)

Construction:

Nail the tops of each 8" x 8" x 10' log or comparable lumber to the top of the bunker body. A minimum of 2½' should be the distance between each positioned 8" x 8" x 10' log. The base of these logs are then positioned 5' from the bunker body, and are dug one foot into the ground. The six sheets of 12' x 18" PSP are positioned vertically and parallel on the wood framework. The wood and PSP framework is then covered with the filled sandbags. Approximately 100 sandbags will be sufficient to cover this framework. When completed the blast wall will have a 65 degree angle.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: During the rainy season this type blast wall will not topple or require extensive repairs. Less time is required for construction and maintenance.

(12) Reinforcing Sandbag Bunkers

(a) OBSERVATION: Protective bunkers constructed exclusively of sandbags have a tendency to cave in totally during the rainy season. This includes bunker top, sides, and blast walls.

(b) EVALUATION: This problem can be relieved somewhat by constructing these bunkers in the following manner:

Materials:

Any length of PSP matting

Sandbags (filled)

Construction:

Position a length of PSP matting for the base of each of the bunker sides and blast walls. Position the sandbags on the PSP base matting, two rows deep (minimum). Stack the sandbags in this manner until there are five layers of sandbags. Continue positioning the PSP matting every five layers of sandbags until the desired height of the bunker is reached.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: The PSP positioned, every five layers functions as a stabilizing platform and minimizes the chance of the sandbags shifting and therefore prevents the bunker from collapsing.

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(13) Line of Sight Refraction

(a) OBSERVATION: Installation of UHF systems when line of sight is not possible.

(b) EVALUATION: Operational requirements necessitated installation of 12-channel UHF system (TRC-24) under conditions which did not permit line-of-sight profile due to terrain features. After experimenting with various frequencies and polarization, a reliable system was installed using horizontal polarization and low range bravo band frequencies. Similar requirements since then have been met using the same combination of polarization and frequencies.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Provided that distance is not too great a factor, reliable TRC-24 systems of satisfactory quality can be installed without line of sight profile. Horizontal polarization and bravo band frequencies have produced best results.

(14) AN/TRC-24 Antenna Configuration

(a) OBSERVATION: Reduction of noise on TRC-24 UHF systems.

(b) EVALUATION: Four AN/TRC-24 tactical UHF systems were relayed on the same azimuth at hilltop relay site. Due to back to back configuration of antennas, back lobes created unwanted noise on systems and hindered the ability to effect prompt frequency changes in cases of system interference. These problems were corrected by relocating antennas to the military crest on both sides of the hill, thus reducing noise levels by allowing the hill mass to absorb and deflect backlobe RF.

(c) OBSERVATION: When permitted by tactical and operational requirements, locate UHF antennas on military crest of hilltops to allow hill mass to mask effects of RF backlobes.

(15) AUTOSEVOCOM Circuit Engineering

(a) OBSERVATION: Engineering AUTOSEVOCOM circuits on AN/TRC-24-AN/TCC-7 systems.

(b) EVALUATION: Extension of AUTOSEVOCOM service over tactical UHF systems presented difficulties involving adjustment of TCC-7 receive gains to a level low enough for SECORD board to ring subscriber. In one instance, receive gains could not be adjusted low enough, which resulted in extended outage of AUTOSEVOCOM service to subscriber. Problem was corrected by addition of 5 db pad at tech control on subscriber end of system.

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(c) RECOMMENDATION: AUTOSEVOCOM subscribers with access to SECORDS through tactical VHF systems require -4 to -3 db receive levels in order to receive ringing frequency from SECOR board. This can be accomplished by installation of 5 db pad at tech control nearest the subscriber.

(16) Page Copy on UNIVAC 1004 Mode I Terminal

(a) OBSERVATION: UNIVAC 1004 Mode I terminal cannot receive page copy using ACP-127 message conversion program.

(b) EVALUATION: The Mode I terminal at Phu Bai AACC was installed using a program that converted originated messages from ACP-127 message format to JANAP 128 message format. The memory capacity of the UNIVAC 1004 is not large enough to perform this conversion and still provide a page copy of received messages. Consequently, the messages received at 1200 wpm on the Mode I had to be run off at 100 wpm on teletype in order to obtain page copy for terminated messages. This mismatch condition resulted in a high backlog of terminated messages in the Phu Bai AACC which caused delay in delivery of messages. The Mode I was doing the opposite of what it was intended to do; it was placing a greater work load on the AACC instead of reducing the traffic load. When the ACP-127 message format program was replaced by the JANAP 128 program board and page copy of incoming messages was received, the run off mismatch was eliminated and the terminating backlog reduced. It was evident that the message format to be used in deploying the UNIVAC 1004 was not considered as a planning factor.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That planning and engineering in the future for Autodin terminals include as factors the message format to be used and the functional parameters of the equipment to be utilized.

(17) KG-13 Card Reader KOI-1A/TSEC

(a) OBSERVATION: KG-13 card reader KOI-1A/TSEC not making correct contact to synchronize the equipment.

(b) EVALUATION: It was discovered that very often during daily RADAY key change with KG-13 Comsec equipment the equipment would not run up immediately, even when in a local loop configuration. Sometimes, however, merely opening and closing the card reader drawer would correct the condition and the equipment would synchronize. It was deduced that possible the card reader had become dirty and the only cleaning solution available was rubbing alcohol. After cleaning the contacts in the card reader with a rag damp with alcohol, no problem was experienced in obtaining an immediate runup and synchronization of the equipment.

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That alcohol is a good substitute cleaning agent which can be used when a normal solvent is not available.

(18) Emergency Lighting

(a) OBSERVATION: Emergency lighting to repair cable during hours of darkness.

(b) EVALUATION: During a night rocket attack communications cable was damaged due to shrapnel. When repair teams arrived they could not complete repair due to inadequate lighting.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: All cable construction and splicing teams should be equipped with emergency lighting kits.

(19) 6800 Cook Protectors

(a) An unfavorable characteristic of the 6800 cook protectors is that they do not pop out when heat coils are blown.

EVALUATION: Recently a power surge on the outside cable plant in Fhu Bai caused the heat coils to blow on the 6800 cook protectors. It was observed that the blown coils could not be visibly detected.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: When a power surge comes in on a cable all protectors on the cable should be replaced and then tests conducted to repair blown ones.

(20) Utilization of TA-312 Telephone.

(a) OBSERVATION: Serious difficulties have been experienced in maintaining a reliable telephone subscriber service. During the past quarter many underground cables have been cut or damaged. Due to these many splices and non-availability of splicing material several sub-standard splices were made. Due to excessive rain many splices are breaking down. However, changing cable pairs is very time consuming and causes poor subscriber service.

(b) EVALUATION: It has been observed that the placement of a TA-312 at these trouble locations in the place of the standard common battery TA-236 results in better subscriber satisfaction in the local battery position because the TA-312 is not as sensitive to poor quality cable pairs as the TA-236.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That TA-312 telephones be used when difficulty arises from faulty cable splices or a poor ground on a cable frame.

SCCPV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS ~~FOR-65~~ (R1)

- c. Training: None.
- d. Intelligence: None.
- e. Logistics:

(1) Vehicle Battery Care

a. OBSERVATION: Tops of batteries blowing off.

b. EVALUATION: Numerous batteries have had their life span cut short due to overcharging of the vehicle voltage regulator. This causes the vehicle to be deadlined at least for the period of replacing the battery in addition to the cost of the battery plus manhour cost.

c. RECOMMENDATION: Each voltage regulator be checked at organizational maintenance level with a low voltage circuit tested and output set at 27.5 volts. Reseal the voltage regulator after adjusted. This will enhance the life of the battery and save time, money, and manpower.

(2) Generator Starters

a. OBSERVATION: Burning out of generator starters.

b. EVALUATION: Many 10 KW generator starters armatures are being burned up unnecessarily due to holding the start switch in the "ON" position for periods exceeding 15 seconds. This causes the starter to burn-up, thus causing down time, inconvenience, and money.

c. RECOMMENDATION: When starting generators, engage the start switch for no longer than 15 seconds. Allow at least 1 full minute to elapse before trying to re-start the engine. This will allow the starter armature to cool sufficiently.

(3) Clutch Riding

a. OBSERVATION: Excessive clutch slippage.

b. EVALUATION: Many vehicle clutches are requiring adjustment or replacement far ahead of their time due to operators putting their foot lightly on the clutch pedal while traveling down the road. This uses up the required "Free-Travel" and causes clutch discs to be replaced more frequent than necessary.

c. RECOMMENDATION: Emphasis to operators to not use the clutch as a "Foot-Rest". Use the clutch only when shifting gears and put foot on vehicle floor when done shifting.

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(4) Mess Hall Ovens

a. OBSERVATION: Trouble has been experienced with the oven doors of Vulcan-Hart oil burning ranges, a standard garrison mess hall range.

b. EVALUATION: The hinge plate shanks (hinge pins) on the oven door on these ranges have been breaking after very little use. It was found that when large baking pans are placed into or removed from the oven interior, the door is often required to support a portion of the weight of the pan while the pan is oriented for insertion or safe removal. The door hinge pins are apparently not strong enough to support this extra weight and after relatively little use, break.

c. That a free swinging brace be welded or bolted to the top center of the oven door so that when the door is opened this brace will swing vertical, reach to the floor, and provide additional support for the door.

(5) Jamming of Key Operated Locks

a. OBSERVATION: Damp weather, dust and sand play havoc with activated locks in Vietnam, thus causing difficulties when locking or unlocking the mechanism.

b. EVALUATION: An expedient for preventing this problem is practically at your finger tips daily. The lead (carbon) shavings emplaced in the openings of key actuated lock will function as a lubricant.

c. RECOMMENDATION: The carbon shaving from the pencils are practically impervious to water immersion, thus water proofing the lock, moving parts. All in all, the carbon shaving will protect the moving parts of key operated locks much longer than an oil lubricant.

(6) Vehicle Security

a. OBSERVATION: Some chain-lock combinations on vehicles do not prevent a vehicle from being driven away over fairly straight roads.

b. EVALUATION: Even with a lock and chain secured to a vehicle's steering wheel rim or spoke, very often there still remains a considerable amount of wheel movement in either direction. In this case a locked vehicle can often be driven away despite the presence of the lock and chain provided no sharp turns have to be negotiated. Before securing the vehicle, the steering wheel should be turned to the extreme right or extreme left position.

c. RECOMMENDATION: This way, even with some play in the locking arrangement it will only permit the vehicle to be driven in circles.

SCCV-NG-PB

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63rd Signal Battalion
(Army) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR_65 (R1)

3. Section 3. Headquarters, Department of the Army Survey Information.

Omitted.

1 Incl
Organic, assigned,
attached OPCON units

for *James L. Corbridge, Major, Sig C*
ELMER H. GRAHAM
LTC, SigC
Commanding *Acting Commander*

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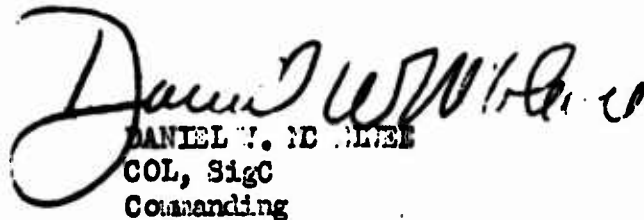
SCCPV-NG-OPT (31 Oct 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 63d Signal Battalion
(ARMY) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ, 21st Signal Group, APO 96240

24 November 1968

TO: Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade, APO San Francisco 96384

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with 1st Signal Brigade Regulation 1-19.
2. The report has been reviewed by this headquarters and is concurred in as indorsed with the following comments and/or exceptions concerning referenced paragraphs.
 - a. Paragraph 2b(5) (b), P.16. Change "120V" to "90V"
 - b. Distribution is not in accordance with 1st Signal Brigade Regulation 1-19. Distribution will be correct on future ORL's.


DANIEL W. MCDANIEL
COL, SigC
Commanding

SCCPV-OP-CR (31 Oct 68) 2d Ind

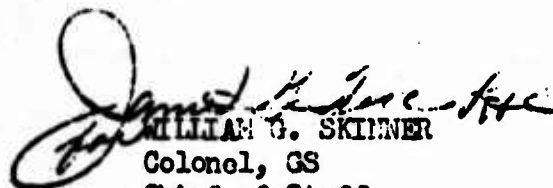
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 63rd Signal Battalion (Army)
for Period Ending 31 October, 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 11 December 1968

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

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15.
2. The report has been reviewed by this headquarters and is concurred in as indorsed, with the following comments concerning paragraph 1i(6), page 13: Delete "Chief of Staff" and insert "Deputy Commander".

FOR THE COMMANDER:


WILLIAM G. SKINNER
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

CF:
Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command,
ATTN: DCSOPS, SCC-OPS-RT, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

AVHGC-DST (31 Oct 68) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 63d Signal Battalion (Army)
for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 2 FEB 1969

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOC-1/T,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1968 from Headquarters, 63d Signal Battalion.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning classified message writing, page 18, paragraph 2b(10). Nonconcur in the recommendation. AR 380-5 prohibits the discussion of defense information in telephone conversations except as may be authorized over approved circuits.

b. Reference item concerning page copy on UNIVAC Mode I Terminal, page 21, paragraph 2b(16). Concur in the recommendation. Nonconcur in the evaluation concerning inadequate engineering. Two alternatives existed for operation of the UNIVAC 1004 at Phu Bai. Either JANAP 128 format or ACP 127 format could be used. The former alternative would have provided page copy for terminating messages but would have denied AUTODIN access to the manual teletype network, then operating in 127 format. The latter alternative acknowledged certain temporary limitations which were considered acceptable in order to provide immediate AUTODIN access for this network. Once this network converted to JANAP 128 format, the UNIVAC 1004 could then operate to provide both page copy and punched paper tape for manual relay. The JANAP 128 format conversion program for RVN is scheduled for completion by March 1969.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



F. S. TAYLOR, JR.
Major, AGC
Asst Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Sig Bde
HQ 63d Sig Bn

GPOF-DT (31 Oct 68) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 63d Sig Bn (Army) for Period Ending
31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 13 FEB 1969

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

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

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

63RD SIGNAL BATTALION

ASSIGNED

Headquarters and Headquarters Company

Company B, 37th Signal Battalion

588th Signal Company (Support)

596th Signal Company (Support)

OPERATIONAL CONTROL

2nd Platoon, Company B, 40th Signal Battalion

7 Tropo Teams, 337th Signal Company, 37th Signal Battalion

2 Microwave Teams, 37th Signal Battalion

194th MP Company, Security Detachment

2 AUTOSEVOCOM Teams, Regional Comm Group (Rations, Quarters, UCMJ, Logistics and Maintenance)

ATTACHED

COMSEC Logistic Support Unit, 706th Signal Detachment (Rations, Quarters, UCMJ and Logistic Support)

Photo Team, 221st Signal Company (Rations and Quarters)

Inclosure 1

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