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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (26 Feb 69)

FOR OT UT 684335

7 March 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 1st
Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech), Period
Ending 31 October 1968

AD849495

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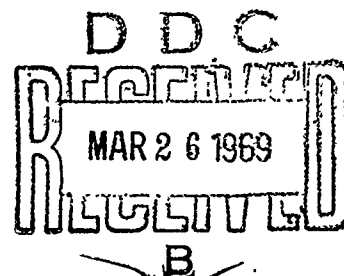
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HQ, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech)
APO San Francisco 96477

AVBL-C

13 December 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 1st Infantry
Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) for period
ending 1 November 1968, RCS CSDOR-65 (EI).

SEE DISTRIBUTION:

References: Reg 525-15, HQ USARV, 13 April 1968; PCV Reg 525-2,
HQ PCV, 9 May 1968.

1. SECTION I - Operations: Significant Activities

a. The 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) was directed to reorganize for overseas movement to RVN starting 25 March 1968 at Fort Carson, Colorado.

b. Phase I - Training: The reorganization and training of the Brigade was given the code name PROJECT DIAMOND. The training program and advance planning was prepared by the Brigade, then under the command of Colonel Truman E. Boudinot. On 25 March 1968 the Brigade began to receive personnel from CONUS to fill its TOE of officers and men. On that date Colonel Richard J. Glikes assumed command. The following fifteen week training program was initiated:

WEEK

1-2	25 Mar - 6 Apr	Organization, Individual Tng and Wpns Firing
3	7 Apr - 13 Apr	Riot Control
4-6	14 Apr - 4 May	Tank Cmdrs Qualification Course, Wpns Firing, Sqd and Plt Training
7-9	5 May - 25 May	Intensified Plt and Company Training
10	26 May - 2 Jun	Make-up Training and Maintenance
11	3 Jun - 8 Jun	Battalion/Brigade Readiness Test
12	9 Jun - 15 Jun	Intensified Small Unit Training
13	16 Jun - 22 Jun	Re-test of Battalions and Brigade
14	23 Jun - 29 Jun	Make-up Firing and P.O.R Make-up
15-17	30 Jun - 20 Jul	Leave Period and Make-up Firing
18-19	21 Jul - 2 Aug	Air Movement to RVN

Narrative Description of Activities: Superimposed on the training program was the turn-in of excess equipment, drawing and issuing of new equipment, the TI and POM of vehicles, and the loading and packing of CONEX containers and equipment.

In addition to personnel turbulence which resulted from the arrival of new personnel and a complete change over of key commanders and staff, the training was slowed when the Division was alerted for Riot Control duty, on 6 April, under OPLAN GARDEN PLOT. To meet the commitments of the OPLAN, it was necessary to stop training in subjects other than riot control and to reorganize the tank and infantry battalions into riot control forces.

Upon completion of GARDEN PLOT, the Brigade resumed its training program. The intensified platoon/company training was RVN-oriented and consisted of six exercises for all the infantry, tank, cavalry and artillery company size units. Included were platoon and company live fire attacks, occupation and counterinsurgency operations. Integrated, where appropriate, were cordon and search operations, ambush and counterambush drills, night movement, use of close air support (both live and dry), and a myriad of the detailed techniques found in operational lessons learned.

The live fire exercises emphasized combined arms offensive operations, used all supporting arms, and stressed giving the individual soldier the feeling of live combat. The fact that there were no live fire training

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accidents is largely attributable to the close cooperation between the Brigade, the Fort Carson Range Control Office, and the 5th Inf Div G-3 Training Officer. Realism was also added to training through the outstanding support provided by the Fort Carson Training Aids Section which provided simulated VC mines, weapons, uniforms, and constructed three VN villages and a tunnel system.

A Brigade technique was to have units run through the exercises twice, varying conditions to avoid patterns, and critiquing the exercises while the events were still fresh in the minds of the troops.

Upon completion of the intensified training, on 4 June, the Brigade conducted its operational readiness tests supervised by 5th Infantry Division (Hoch) Headquarters and an inspection team from 5th Army Headquarters. The test results were satisfactory; however, testing revealed deficiencies in squad and platoon training. Brigade immediately embarked on a ten day intensive small unit training program culminating in another series of tests. The results of the test were satisfactory.

c. Phase II - Logistics: Logistical activity occurred simultaneously with the training requirement. The turn-in of excess equipment and drawing, issue and pecking of new equipment was accomplished primarily by the maintenance and supply personnel to avoid disruption of combat training. This had the effect, however, of requiring the Brigade to conduct training with limited personnel resources.

Training was conducted with as many combat vehicles as possible, all of which had to be turned in at the end of the training period. Newly received vehicles were processed and stored until shipment. From May to June approximately 1,000 vehicles were processed for movement and about 800 were brought to standard for turn-in to installation supply. These figures reflect the fact that 81.3% of the Brigade's vehicles were exchanged in order to standardize with equipment in Vietnam.

The Brigade shipped a total of 1,072 vehicles from Fort Carson, which does not include the APC's and tanks received after arrival in Vietnam. Fort Hood had shipped 140 M113A1's and 8 M106A1's. Fort Knox shipped 25 M48A2C's and the balance of the M48A2C tanks (42) came from Letterkenny Army Depot. After receiving the APC's and tanks the Brigade had 99.9% of its authorized equipment on hand.

d. Phase III - Movement to Vietnam: On 1 July 1968, an advance party consisting of 300 personnel and 85.5 short tons of cargo departed Peterson Field, Colorado Springs, Colorado. This lift required seven C141 aircraft (3 for passengers and 4 for cargo). Upon arrival at Da Nang Air Base, the advance party moved to Quang Tri Combat Base to establish a temporary base camp and prepare to receive the main body of the Brigade.

The main body started moving on 22 July 1968 and completed movement on 31 July 1968. The movement of the main body required a total of 64 C141 aircraft consisting of 48 passenger sorties and 16 cargo sorties. A total of 4,578 personnel and 1,109.3 short tons of cargo were moved by air. Personnel landed initially at Da Nang and were transloaded into C130 aircraft for movement to Quang Tri. Priorities for movement were 1-11th Inf Bn, Brigade Hq, 1-61st Inf (M), 1-77 Armor, and the 75th Support Bn in that order.

After arrival the Brigade began to deprocess the equipment shipped by surface transportation. The majority of this equipment was off-loaded at Da Nang and transhipped to Wunder Beach on the coast ESE of Quang Tri city.

From 1 August to 15 August 1968 the battalions unpacked, conducted orientation and acclimatization training, and prepared for combat. The units were initially positioned as follows:

1-11 Inf.....IZ Sharon	75th Spt Bn (-).....Quang Tri CB
1-61 Inf (M)Wunder Beach	D 75th Spt Bn.....Dong Ha
1-77 Armor.....Wunder Beach	517th MI.....Quang Tri CB
5-4 Arty.....IZ Sharon	407th RRD.....Quang Tri CB
4-7th Engr.....Wunder Beach	86th Chem Det.....Quang Tri CB
4-4-12 Cav.....Wunder Beach	Bde Hq.....Quang Tri CB

e. Phase IV - Combat Operations, DMZ: The operations conducted early in August 1968 were designed to season the Brigade troops to combat. Missions varied from search and clear operations to keeping Route 1 open from Dong Ha to Quang Tri on a twenty-four hour basis.

(1) First Blood: It was not very long before first blood was drawn. On 12 August 1968, the first major engagement was fought by A/1-77 Armor while OPCON to the 1st Marine Regiment near the DMZ. As the Marine's ready reaction force, A/1-77 Armor exploited a tactical advantage gained by infantry, killing 80 enemy while suffering seven friendly WIA.

On 17 August 1968, the Brigade moved northward to the DMZ. On 24 August the Brigade TOC moved to Dong Ha to control operations in Leatherneck Square, the contested area encompassing Con Thien, Gia Linh, Dong Ha and Cam Lo.

Late August 1968 saw the conduct of a series of company and platoon operations throughout the Brigade AO. Techniques were perfected to employ all fire support means including Naval gunfire, TAC air, and artillery.

Operations were conducted on what was then the enemy's ground and demonstrated that the enemy was a worthy foe. On 4 September 1968, A/1-67 Inf (M) was sent to the relief of an engaged Marine company. In the two and a half hour fight that followed, 9 enemy KIA were inflicted at the cost of 3 friendly KIA and 27 WIA. The majority of the friendly casualties were the result of enemy RPG hits on APC's. The arrival of darkness and a typhoon precluded an exact determination of enemy casualties.

(2) Combined Arms Operations: The Brigade's far ranging operations soon denied the enemy freedom of action and movement. On 13 September 1968, the combined arms concept practiced at Fort Carson, was applied on the battlefield.

In an attack into the DMZ, the objective area was the location of the action where the enemy had previously avoided engagement. A tank heavy TF, 1-77 Armor, went for the objective with a tank team securing the left flank and an infantry/cavalry team the right flank. Contact on the flanks did not distract the Brigade and the operation went as planned with the Armor/Mechanized Infantry force driving through the objective. This combined operation was in conjunction with the 2nd ARVN Regt which attacked northeast of A-2 and then turned south towards A-1. The surprised enemy was overrun, losing 35 EN/KIA as well as large quantities of 60mm mortar, 82mm mortar and RPG ammunition, which was destroyed. The successful use of all means - including a pre-strike by B-52's, Naval gunfire, close air support, and close cooperation with ARVN units kept casualties down to 15 friendly WIA.

The Brigade was not slow to appreciate that it had a winning formula in its mobility, firepower, and staying power.

(3) Infantry Operations: Foot infantry continued to prove their worth. On 15 September 1968, D 1-11 Inf encountered an enemy company in a fortified position. Contact was maintained with the enemy for two days at the cost of 41 EN/KIA with the loss of only 11 friendly WIA.

On 26 September 1968, 1-11 Inf conducted a three company attack near C-2. Elements of the 2nd ARVN Regiment attacked west of C-2 and south of 1-11th Inf. By 4 October 1968, 1-11 Inf had captured 600 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition and 10,000 rounds of 12.7mm MG ammunition.

(4) Operation Rich: On 23 October 1968, 1-61st Inf (M) conducted a dismounted three company attack from A-4 north into the DMZ. On the 25th of October contact was made with an estimated enemy battalion in a fortified position. As 1-61st Inf (M) leaned into the enemy, B/1-77 Armor was deployed from A-4. 5-4 Arty support was accurate and responsive, as was the close air support controlled by the Brigade's FAC's. The infantry found, fixed, and fought the enemy using all available fire support; armor came in from the flank and the mop-up began. Totals for the battle--308 EN/KIA, 17 enemy crew served weapons (including 60mm mortars, 82mm mortar and anti-aircraft MG's) and 251 individual weapons captured and destroyed. In addition, a good deal of enemy food and ammunition was captured and either destroyed or evacuated. The price of the victory - 8 FR/KIA and 16 FR/WIA.

(5) Summary of Operations in the DMZ Area: From its entry into Leatherneck Square on 26 Aug 68 until given a new AO in Quang Tri Province on 2 Nov 68, the Brigade emphasized offensive action away from fixed bases, focused on the enemy rather than on terrain, and dominated that contested area.

In addition to proving the validity of the combined arms concept in limited war certain lessons were learned. These are discussed in Section 2. Casualty totals for the period ending 1 November 1968:

Enemy Losses

KIA.....756
WIA.....Unk

Friendly Losses

KIA.....42
WIA.....420

In addition, the Brigade had 37 non-battle casualties and 5 GROWN.

2. SECTION II - Lessons Learned:

a. Personnel:

(1) Observations: That the planned for 10% overfill provided by the CONARC levy was not sufficient to take into account the actual number of ultimately non-deployable personnel assigned.

(2) Recommendations: That planning for manning of units scheduled for deployment include a 20% overfill and require providing units to more closely screen personnel against common deployability standards.

b. Operations:

(1) Movement in mined areas:

(a) Observations: That despite many incidents where tanks hit mines, there have been no fatalities to tank crew personnel and only one combat loss of a tank. In that case the tank was lost due to a secondary fire caused by the mine explosion. { fatalities and combat losses of APC's have been caused by mines.

(b) Evaluations: Nuisance mining and rigging of booby traps is a common tactic of enemy, particularly where routes of movement are restricted. The accepted expedient is to break trail with tanks. This is an unsatisfactory technique but necessary because such equipment as mine flails or rollers are not available, and mine sweeping is a slow procedure.

(c) Recommendation: That until the enemy starts employing delay action mines that mine flails and/or rollers be resurrected and deployed. Further, that the mine protection of the APC be improved particularly against the TM-41 mine. (Some local expedients include storage of ration and water cans on the floor of troop compartments).

(2) Forward Air Control:

(a) Observations: Forward Air Controllers from the US Air Force were placed in direct support of the Brigade during training for deployment and have proven very successful in directing air strikes and conducting visual reconnaissance.

(b) Evaluations: FAC's are required on a permanent basis by mechanized units with limited organic helicopter assets. Having trained as a team at Fort Carson, the FAC's became part of the Brigade team, and being familiar with the characteristics of the Brigade, were able to advise from a basis of knowledge.

(c) Recommendations: That FAC's continue to be provided to appropriate units training for deployment and remain with the unit at least through the initial operations after deployment.

(3) Tank Company Formations - Movement to Contact:

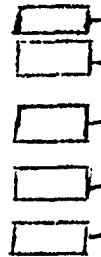
(a) Observations: The most frequently used tank company formation in a movement to contact in this AO is the "T" formation.

(b) Evaluations: The terrain in a large portion of this AO is characterized by gentle slopes covered, in most cases, by small scrub brush. In some areas elephant (kuni) grass and thick undergrowth can also be found which does not preclude armor movement. Experience has shown that the following formation works well:

3rd Plt (3 tank - 2 mech) follows in column



2nd Plt (tank & Inf balanced) in column with company command group



1st Plt
(pure tank)
on line

Since it is very difficult to see and pick routes through the thicker undergrowth, the "T" formation gives the unit a wider front and five chances to one to find routes through ravines and stream beds. If contact with the enemy is made the "T" formation affords the unit the ability to employ any of its platoons to a variety of positions to exploit the situation.

(c) Recommendation: Tank heavy elements should use the "T" formation when moving through this type of terrain.

(4) Aircraft for Artillery Air Observers:

(a) Observation: Artillery air observation is particularly good when conducted from a fixed-wing aircraft.

(b) Evaluation: This Brigade is not authorized organic fixed-wing aircraft and neither is the DS artillery battalion. This limits the effective application of the fire support available to the Brigade.

(c) Recommendation: That the DS Artillery battalions organic to separate brigades be authorized fixed-wing aircraft for air-artillery observation and be provided the necessary pilots and maintenance personnel.

(5) .50 Caliber M3 Mounts:

(a) Observation: The M2 caliber .50 cupola mounted M3 on the M1 cupola in the M48 series tanks is unsatisfactory for the following reasons:

(1) The ammunition capacity (50 rds) is insufficient.

(2) The gun in the side-laying configuration is subject to stoppages which are difficult to clear.

(3) The flexible link-chute is unsatisfactory since expended cartridges and links readily jam.

(4) The tank commander's observation is limited while fighting out of the cupola.

(b) Evaluation: The M1 cupola as designed is unsatisfactory for the type of combat experienced in Vietnam. A pedestal mounted M3 with armor protection enhances the tank commander's ability to return fire immediately. The .50 caliber M3 used in reconnaissance by fire is easier to control if mounted by this method.

(c) Recommendation: That a MWO change be approved allowing the above modification to be performed out of supplied material.

(6) Combat Along Enemy Infiltration Routes:

(a) Observation: The enemy outposts the high ground along his infiltration routes, but builds his bunkers and way stations in low ground.

(b) Evaluation: The normal enemy dispositions encountered in this AO require re-evaluation of the normal fixation on high ground. The high ground must be controlled but detailed search of low ground areas is mandatory.

(c) Recommendation: That widest dissemination be given to the necessity for searching low ground for enemy bunkers when conducting search and clear operations along enemy infiltration routes.

(7) Construction of Explosive Flame Mines:

(a) Observation: Artillery powder canisters provide strong, waterproof containers for use as expedient command detonated flame mines.

(b) Evaluation: An incendiary burster and electrical blasting cap assembly can be positioned inside of an artillery powder canister filled with thickened fuel. The top of the canister can be fitted and tightened so that the rubber gasket will hold the blasting cap wires securely. The bursting radius of the mine is approximately 15-20 meters. The expedient mine is resistant to damage and will remain watertight indefinitely.

(8) Strobelights or Flashlights:

(a) Observation: Strobelights or flashlights used with the M-79 Grenade Launcher aid night air-ground operations.

(b) Evaluation: Visual contact between air and ground elements during the night in combat area can be aided by the use of an expedient signaling and marking device. The M-79 Grenade Launcher is broken open, as when loading a weapon, and the light sources inserted in the breech. The weapon then becomes a highly directional signaling and marking device, which only the pilot or aircraft crew will see. Since this device is highly directional, the user must constantly be aware that he must aim the grenade launcher directly at the aircraft.

(c) Recommendation: That techniques be developed improving this expedient method of signaling or marking for aircraft during night operations.

(9) Signal Mirror:

(a) Observation: The use of signal mirrors aid air-ground operations.

(b) Evaluation: It has been found that the standard signaling mirror (issued as a component of several types of survival kits) has been a valuable ground-air signaling device. The mirror, when used in conjunction with air-ground recognition panels, and/or smoke grenades, aids the pilot and aircraft crew to rapidly fix the ground position, particularly in densely vegetated areas. In addition, the mirror also provides the commander with a means of directional daytime signaling, which greatly reduces the probability of an enemy force spotting the signal and placing indirect fires on that position.

(c) Recommendation: That the survival signaling mirror be provided to leaders down to platoon level.

(10) Recovery Operations:

(a) Observation: The AVLB Launcher without bridge makes a good tank retriever.

(b) Evaluation: AVLB Launcher makes an excellent retriever due to its good power and traction.

(c) Recommendations: That increased emphasis be placed on using the AVLB as a tank retriever and that the vehicle be equipped with a tank tow bar as part of its HILLI.

c. Training:

(1) Training Continuity:

(a) Observations: Units were not completely filled with deployable personnel until just prior to deployment.

(b) Evaluation: A complete cycle of training was not available to many personnel due to late arrivals. Unit integrity suffered as a result of the unstable personnel situation during the training period.

(c) Recommendations: Filler personnel should be programmed to completely fill a deployable unit prior to initiating the training program.

(2) Training Emphasis:

(a) Observation: Units operating in or near the DMZ need more emphasis on training associated with attack of fortified positions and demolitions.

(b) Evaluation: Experience indicates that units fighting in the DMZ area will encounter an enemy who is well entrenched in fortified bunkers and tunnel complexes. Once the enemy is dug out, these emplacements must be destroyed to prevent them from being used again.

(c) Recommendation: That training for units deploying to the DMZ area include more demolitions work to free engineer troops for other tasks.

(3) Combined Arms Trainings:

(a) Observations: More integrated arms training is needed in CONUS prior to deploying overseas.

(b) Evaluation: Each of the maneuver and support branches represented within the Brigade should become familiar with the capabilities, limitations and methods of operation of the other branches prior to deployment. This opportunity was not available, because of limited time and safety limitations imposed during training in CONUS.

(c) Recommendations: That after an initial period of basic artillery training for forward observer teams and artillery liaison teams these personnel should begin working, training and living with their supported maneuver elements. These elements should be allowed to practice adjusting artillery fires in close proximity to friendly troops. This should not be done for the first time in combat.

(4) Clearance Procedures:

(a) Observations: Procedures for military and political clearance of artillery fires employed in RVN were not integrated into CONUS training.

(b) Evaluation: Procedures for clearance of artillery and mortar fires had to be learned by this brigade after arrival in Vietnam. Imposition of this additional requirement on the calls-for-fires system required additional radios and extensive realignment of fire direction nets.

(c) Recommendation: That a standard system for clearance of artillery and mortar fires should be taught by Fort Sill and should be published and distributed to deploying units for incorporation into CONUS training programs.

(5) Safety Restrictions on CONUS Artillery Training:

(a) Observation: The dependence on safety officers during CONUS training caused a serious problem for the artillery battalion upon its arrival in Vietnam.

(b) Evaluation: The required use of safety officers during CONUS training inhibits the training and development of the gun section chiefs, battery executive officers, and battery commanders who will be responsible for safe firing conditions in combat.

(c) Recommendation: Requirements for the use of safety officers during CONUS training should be lessened. Responsibility for safety during training should be returned to those people in the established chain of command who will be responsible for safe firing in combat.

(6) Live Firing:

(a) Observation: The transition from a CONUS live fire environment to a combat situation was a drastic change to all personnel.

(b) Evaluation: A definite need exists to review CONUS live fire training safety requirements in regards to combined arms teams of tanks, infantry and artillery so all three can make a smoother transition from training to combat. As an example of the effects of CONUS restrictions, small units have stopped artillery fire as far away from them as 2000 meters because they thought it was too close.

(c) Recommendation: That safety requirements be relaxed so deployable units can establish proper working relationships between all combat arms. Impact areas should be opened to ground forces to allow troops to plan defensive fires and to maneuver and fire without too much restriction.

(7) Lost Training Time:

(a) Observation: The Brigade lost the week of 6 - 13 April scheduled for important small unit training and tank gunnery after being placed on alert for riot control duty.

(b) Evaluation: The tank battalion was recalled from the tank ranges back to Fort Carson and had the task of reorganizing into a 700 man riot control force. This meant obtaining new personnel from other post units, weapons, and equipment to meet the minimum requirements of Garden Plot. The remainder of the Brigade engaged in riot control training and realigned their organizations.

(c) Recommendation: That a unit alerted for deployment to Southeast Asia be released from riot control duty upon commencement of their training program.

(8) FO Training:

(a) Observation: All personnel should be qualified to direct fire and call for fire missions before being assigned to RVN.

(b) Evaluation: It has been found that clerks, cooks, and other administrative personnel are constantly being used as perimeter guard at base camps where FO procedures are necessary.

(c) Recommendation: That all personnel be given the opportunity to call and adjust at least one live fire mission.

d. Intelligence:

(1) Continuity and Feedback:

(a) Observation: Passage of current and pertinent intelligence data among relieved and relieving units is poor. Dissemination of intelligence information appears to be slow.

(b) Evaluation: Lack of a standard continuity folder for area intelligence provides no common departure point for the exchange of

intelligence information. Much intelligence information is treated as routine and arrives at the using unit too late to be of use.

(c) Recommendation: A standard intelligence folder, i.e., grid square activity, map update, air photo and OB, be compiled at Division level and made available to units operating in newly assigned AO.

(2) Mining:

(a) Observation: Enemy reaction to mechanized operations has been extensive mining of the area of operation while avoiding physical contact.

(b) Evaluation: From intelligence reports, personnel involved in mining activities are small bands of local force guerrillas who serve as guides for NVA units infiltrating south. These small units have received instructions to shun contact with mechanized forces. Trafficability problems and mines make it impractical to hunt for small enemy groups with tracked vehicles, especially when the mines are laid in no discernible pattern.

(c) Recommendation: That tank and mechanized forces be committed only after a specific target has been identified. Routine patrols with tracked vehicles result in heavy mine damage.

e. Logistics:

(1) USARPAC LOI

(a) Observation: The logistical instruction for deployment no longer apply to current conditions in Vietnam.

(b) Evaluation: Items that were authorized to be drawn in country by the USARPAC LOI are not available in Vietnam. Base Camp Development Kits are one such item. Requisitions for care and comfort items were rejected at Fort Carson based on what was reportedly available and authorized in country. These items such as fans, refrigerators, generator sets, washing machines, water coolers, footlockers, etc., should be authorized to be drawn from CONUS and shipped with the unit.

(c) Recommendation: That the USARPAC LOI be revised to reflect current supply conditions in Vietnam and that supply allowances in CONUS be changed accordingly.

(2) Vehicle Loading:

(a) Observation: Vehicles were loaded at Fort Carson with the primary emphasis being placed on weight and cube and economically loading all available storage space, such as truck beds.

(b) Evaluation: The loading of items which are sensitive to weather or which are subject to pilferage in truck beds, while economical, is not in the best interest of a deploying unit. Since storage space is not available on arrival and the transportation is immediately required, the sensitive or perishable items are expeditiously off loaded and placed in a less than satisfactory situation. It was found in many instances that units took a considerable loss of M&E because it was loaded in transporters such as trucks, trailers, lowboys, etc., and not Conexes.

(c) Recommendation: That only those items needed for immediate use, such as tents, etc., which can be removed with negligible damage be loaded on truck beds for transshipment and that additional Conexes be utilized to ship all items sensitive to damage or loss, regardless of the fact that all available cube in truck beds is not utilized.

(3) PLL

(a) Observation: The PLL was prepared without an adequate experience factor.

(b) Evaluation: It has been apparent that the items of high usage are not in the PLL. For the most part the PLL has not been used.

(c) Recommendation: Recommend a PLL be established for a unit by a higher headquarters using a like unit in the area of operation to which the

unit is deploying. This would insure that a unit would arrive in country with PLL with the items of high usage on hand.

(4) PLL Stockage:

(a) Observation: The models of several major items of equipment received just prior to deployment were different than those requested and for which PLL had been ordered.

(b) Evaluation: The Brigade deployed with several pieces of equipment (generators, grader, outboard motors, bridge erection boats) for which it had no PLL and DS maintenance had no ASL. This has caused increased downtime and has been a detriment to successful mission completion.

(c) Recommendation: That every effort be made to get the major pieces of equipment to deploying units early in the preparation for deployment phase.

(5) Rear Detachment:

(a) Observation: There were numerous supply problems caused by a need for the property book officer to clear the deployment station and to organize equipment at the objective area.

(b) Evaluation: The rear detachment officer should be a member of the battalion who is not going to deploy. This officer should work in the SH as rear detachment commander during the entire training program. This will facilitate accountability of all station property and an orderly turn-in to the sponsoring unit. This will permit the deploying property book officer to concentrate on combat equipment.

(c) Recommendation: That the above lesson be provided to future deploying units.

(6) Resupply Operations During the Monsoon:

(a) Observation: Air resupply has proved to be invaluable during operations in the Monsoon season.

(b) Evaluation: During September, the key bridge to the Brigade's line of communications to Cam Lo (ID 148604) washed out twice. During this period over 200,000 lbs of material, primarily class V, were airlifted to the units deployed in Leatherneck Square. This lift was provided by the 3rd Marine Division's provisional air group.

(c) Recommendation: That increased emphasis be placed on air resupply during pre-deployment training.

(7) M548 as a Fuel Resupply Vehicle:

(a) Observation: Trafficability in the I Corps Sector, RVN, can be very difficult for wheel vehicles, especially off roads. The POL requirements, especially for MORGAS for the M48A2C tank, are tremendous. Therefore, a reliable, off-the-road POL carrier is mandatory.

(b) Evaluation: Resupply requirements demand a vehicle that can go through mud, water, and uneven terrain.

(c) Recommendation: That the M548 be made a standard TOE authorization for mech and tank battalions and that units transfer the tank and pump units normally mounted on the 5 ton truck to the M548 cargo carrier. The pump unit will fit by mounting the filter unit and the pump assembly along the right side of the cargo box. There is not room for the reel assembly. Suggest hose racks be made out of 1/2" or 3/4" pipe and bolted on the cargo box for hose storage. This transfer can best be done in CONUS where bracing timbers are available. Take particular care not to bend or warp the tailgates, as this will adversely effect the swimming capabilities of the M548.

(8) Vehicle Recovery:

(a) Observation: Due to extensive damages caused by mines to M48A2C tanks, each recovery is a major operation.

(b) Evaluation: One M88 recovery vehicle is often unable to make a tank recovery; at times it is necessary to use as many as six track vehicles. Vehicles are hooked up with a chain and the damaged vehicle is removed from the combat area. Reason for the use of so many vehicles is because of the extensive damage to the suspension system and that the vehicle is normally belled up in mud and is very difficult to move.

(c) Recommendation: That this technique be practiced during training and that adequate tow bars and cables be authorized to effect this type of recovery.

(9) Repair of Mine Damage:

(a) Observation: Torsion bar pullers and other tools in the special kit for the M48A2C wear out rapidly.

(b) Evaluation: It has been found that certain tools in the special kit M48A2C wear quite rapidly. Torsion bar pullers do not seem to hold up for more than two or three vehicles.

(c) Recommendation: Special tools should be placed on requisition for anticipated usage, rather than waiting until the tool breaks.

f. Organization:

(1) Additional Rifle Company, Mechanized Infantry:

(a) Observation: The vast majority of infantry units in RVN are organized with four rifle companies.

(b) Evaluation: The mechanized infantry battalion has a great potential for decisive offensive operations, but the mechanized battalion of this brigade has only three maneuver companies, which severely limits the offensive capability of the battalion. Very often two of the maneuver companies of the battalion find themselves securing two fire bases and several fixed installations. As a minimum one company is always tied down to fire base security leaving only one or two maneuver companies free for offensive operations.

(c) Recommendation: That the modified G-series TOE be developed to provide a fourth rifle company for the mechanized battalion. If necessary this fourth maneuver element could be a dismounted rifle company since sufficient transportation exists under the present TOE.

(2) The Service Company, Tank Battalion:

(a) Observation: The most outstanding change to the TOE of a tank battalion has been the establishment of a service company.

(b) Evaluation: The breaking away from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of all the logistical elements under a separate company headquarters, provides for a logistical operator for the Battalion. The service company commander has been able to insure timely resupply and maintenance by transforming the battalion plans into action. The addition of another company overhead to include a maintenance section helps to insure that the transportation fleet receives proper supervision. The HHC is freed of logistical coordination and can concentrate on the combat operations of the battalion headquarters combat elements. The battalion executive officer becomes the deputy commander for logistics and operates the system through the service company commander. The service company commander does not subvert the staff but rather translates the plans of the staff into resupply action in coordination with the battalion executive officer and the battalion S4.

(c) Recommendation: That the service company be made a permanent TOE addition to a tank battalion.

(3) The Support Battalion:

(a) Observation: The support battalion was formed at the same time the Brigade was alerted for world wide deployment.

(b) Evaluation: The support battalion was forced to organize as a battalion, prepare for movement, train its people in their jobs, conduct predeployment training, and perform its normal support missions simultaneously. Because the brigade was deploying to Vietnam the

finance and personnel records of almost every man had to be screened, many changes in allotments, and personnel records made, and equipment had to be received and prepared for shipment or turned in. With all of the preparation for movement of the brigade that the battalion had to do it was impossible to train properly.

(c) Recommendation: That the support battalion of the separate brigade be organized and trained six (6) weeks prior to the reorganization and training of the remainder of the brigade. This advanced preparation would allow the battalion to properly support the brigade as it prepares for deployment. Another solution would be to have a separate agency responsible for the administrative, finance and maintenance support of the brigade while it reorganizes, trains and prepares for shipment.

3. SECTION III, Headquarters, Department of Army Survey Information:
Negative report.

/s/James M. Gibson
/t/JAMES M. GIBSON
COL, INF
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

2-CINCUSARPAC ATTN: GPOFODT APO 96558
3-HQ, USARV ATTN: AVHOC-DST
3-CG, XXIV Corps ATTN: G-3

AVII-GCT (2 Dec 68) 1st Ind MAJ Sanderson/glt/2506
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 1st Infantry Brigade,
5th Infantry Division (Mech) for period ending 31 October
1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ, XXIV Corps, APO 96308 19 JAN 1969

TO: Commanding General, United States, Vietnam, APO 96375

1. The 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) Operational Report - Lessons Learned has been reviewed at this headquarters and is forwarded in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15.

2. The subject should be changed to read: * * * for the Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1).

3. Except as noted below, HQ, XXIV Corps concurs without further comment on commander's observations, evaluations and recommendations listed in Section 2 of the report. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning personnel, para 2a, page 4. Nonconcur. The 10% overfill of personnel is deemed sufficient to bring the deploying unit to 100% authorized strength provided units receiving and providing fillers screen personnel against the common deployability standards required by AR 220-10.

b. Reference item concerning aircraft for artillery air observers, para 2b(4), page 5. Nonconcur with recommendation requesting authorization for fixed wing aircraft for the direct support battalion of a separate brigade. The brigade has four OH-6A and four UH-1H helicopters available for aerial observation of artillery fire. If these assets are inadequate to provide necessary observation of artillery fires, an MTOE should be submitted requesting additional aircraft for the brigade aviation section. In addition, XXIV Corps has operational control of the 220th Reconnaissance Airplane Company which is capable of providing artillery air observation in addition to its visual reconnaissance mission.

c. Reference item concerning .50 caliber machine gun mounts, para 2b(5), page 5. Concur. Equipment Improvement Reports were submitted by the unit through the 5th Infantry Division G4 prior to departure from CONUS. Tanks belonging to the 1st Bde, 5th Inf Div have been modified.

d. Reference item concerning signal mirror, para 2b(9), page 6. Concur. The standard signaling mirror is very effective and relatively

AVII-GCI (2 Dec 68) 1st Ind

19 JAN 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) for period ending 31 October 1969, RUS CSFOR-65 (R1)

inexpensive. A minimum of training is required for its effective use.

e. Reference item concerning clearance procedures, para 2c(4), page 7. Nonconcur. Clearance procedures should be stressed at Ft Sill and problems encountered should be emphasized and published, but a standard system for clearance applicable to all of Vietnam does not exist. To clear artillery fires is not just a matter of checking with the maneuver unit commander. To be able to fire into the Vietnamese countryside requires clearance from the Vietnamese. In some areas ARVN grants clearance, in others, district chiefs. Clearance procedures are established based on the requirements that exist for a particular area.

f. Reference item concerning safety restrictions on CONUS artillery training, para 2c(5), page 8. Nonconcur. The fact that safety officers are used in CONUS is not meant to relieve the chain of command of the responsibility for firing safety. Section chiefs, executive officers and battery commanders are responsible for safety in CONUS. The presence of a safety officer in CONUS does not limit this responsibility, nor should his absence in RVN alter operations.

g. Reference item concerning live firing, para 2c(6), page 8. Nonconcur. Relaxing safety requirements in CONUS and opening impact areas to troops is not consonant with CONARC training objectives. The problem of acquainting personnel with live fire while in a training status can be accomplished during in-country transition training.

h. Reference item concerning forward observer training, para 2c(8), page 8. Nonconcur. The broad scope of this recommendation would require substantial augmentation of artillery at Army training centers, and a significant increased expenditure of artillery ammunition. An alternative, more applicable to the evaluation presented, is to train designated personnel at fire bases and landing zones, while firing defensive fires.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

H. R. Taylor
H. R. TAYLOR
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

AVHGC-DST (13 Dec 68) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 1st Infantry Brigade,
5th Infantry Division (Mech) for period ending 31 October 1968,
RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375

31 JAN 1969

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

1. This Headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1968 from Headquarters, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech).

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning indirect fires clearance procedures, page 7, paragraph 2c(4) and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 3e. Concur with comments and recommendations contained in the 1st Indorsement.

b. Reference item concerning difficulties in adapting to live fire environment in combat situations, page 8, paragraph 2c(6) and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 3g. Concur with comments and recommendations contained in the 1st Indorsement.

c. Reference item concerning forward observer training for all US military personnel assigned to RVN, page 8, paragraph 2c(8) and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 3h. Concur with comments and recommendations contained in the 1st Indorsement.

d. Reference item concerning USARPAC LOI, page 9, paragraph 2e(1). Nonconcur. Existing policy precludes bringing equipment which can neither be maintained nor replaced in USARV. COMUSMACV policy, implemented by USARV regulations, will preclude the increase of luxury/excess items. Legitimate requirements are considered in USARV regulations and are authorized.

e. Reference item concerning PLL, page 9, paragraph 2e(3). Concur in principle with stated recommendation: A unit being activated for deployment to RVN will establish required PLL in accordance with allowances stated in pertinent technical manuals. Adjustments, additions and deletions, will be made based upon demand. The establishment of a PLL using a like unit in the area of operation to which the unit is deploying certainly has merit, but should be initiated by the sponsoring unit in RVN. The sponsoring unit should provide the deploying unit with PLL requirements based upon actual demand experience. The commander of the deploying unit must then approve the modified PLL in accordance with paragraph 6-2c, AR 735-35.

AVHGC-DST (13 Dec 68) 2d Ind

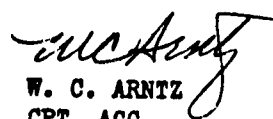
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of 1st Infantry Brigade,
5th Infantry Division (Mech) for period ending 31 October 1968,
RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

f. Reference item concerning M548 as a fuel resupply vehicle, page 10, paragraph 2e(7). Concur in the recommendation that the M548 be made a standard authorization. This requirement has been recognized and incorporated in the service company MTOE for the mechanized infantry and tank battalions. Recommend that higher headquarters consider these changes to the TOE.

g. Reference item concerning additional Rifle Company, Mechanized Infantry, page 11, paragraph 2f(1). To support the DA standardization program, an additional rifle company in the mechanized infantry battalion in the 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) would require an additional company for all mechanized infantry battalions now in Vietnam. Such action would require a total of 1692 additional spaces and related equipment which are critically short at this time. Upon receipt of a concept plan IAW USARV Cir 310-44, and subsequent staffing with subordinate commands to insure a like requirement exists, appropriate action will be taken by this headquarters.

h. Reference item concerning the Service Company, Tank Battalion, page 11, paragraph 2f(2). Since the requirement for a service company in the tank battalion has been recognized and implemented by MTOE, concur in the recommendation that the service company be made a permanent TOE addition to a tank battalion. Recommend that higher headquarters consider these changes to the TOE.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


W. C. ARNTZ

CPT, AGC

Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ XXIV Corps
HQ 7/5th Inf (Mech)

GPOP-DT (13 Dec 68) 3d Ind


SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (Mech)
for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RJ)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 6 FEB 1969

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

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

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


G. E. HOLYFIELD
MAJ, AGC
Asst AG

UNCLASSIFIED

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