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AUTHORITY
AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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

180-13-2
~~INDEXED~~

IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (20 Apr 67) FOR OT 670151

26 April 1967

AD 875276

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters,
6th Transportation Battalion (Truck)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

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1. Forwarded as inclosure is Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 6th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for quarterly period ending 31 January 1967. Information contained in this report should be reviewed and evaluated by CDC in accordance with paragraph 6f of AR 1-19 and by CONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d of AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to the Commandants of the Service Schools 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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(Continued on page 2)

UNCLASSIFIED REPORT
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ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 6TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TRUCK)
APO 96491

11 FEB 1967

AVCA-SGN-AB-A-OP

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for quarterly
Period Ending 31 January 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65)


TO: Commanding General
1st Logistical Command
ATTN: AVCA-GO-O
APO US Forces 96307

Attached as an inclosure is one copy of this organization's
Operational Report for the quarter ending 31 January 1967. As directed
by paragraph 4b(4), 1st Logistical Command Regulation 870-3, it has
been forwarded direct to your headquarters.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: Long Binh 611

1 Incl
as


ROBERT L. STOBBER
CPT, TC
Adjutant

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 6TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TRUCK)
APO 96491

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AVCA-SCN-AB-A-OP

11 February 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly
Period Ending 31 January 1967

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

SECTION I. Significant Organizational Activities

1. During the quarter ending 31 January 1967, the six light truck companies attached to this battalion were engaged in port clearance, logistical support, or tactical support operations on 92 days. Vehicles were operated round the clock on a seven days a week basis. These units also conducted a total of 108 hours of training during the quarter. In addition to mandatory general subjects, attention was focused on safety, care and functioning of weapons, and counterinsurgency training.

2. A large portion of the operational effort of this battalion during the reporting period was devoted to the movement of newly arrived combat units from the port of debarkation to their initial base camps, and logistical support of combat operations.

a. During the movement of troop units to their initial base camps, the trucks of this battalion were placed under the operational control of the host tactical unit. The host unit furnished the convoy commander and arranged for an escort of gun jeeps from Military Police and Armored Cavalry units. The road was swept daily by Engineer units prior to the passage of the convoy. Security was provided by combat units placed at critical points along and on both sides of the route. Air cover was provided over the column, and artillery fires were planned along the entire route. Troop seats, side racks, and all canvas were removed from the vehicles. The beds of the trucks were sandbagged, and troops sat on their duffel bags which were placed in a row down the center of the truck bed. Troops faced out and tailgates were chained in a horizontal position to facilitate rapid deployment from the vehicles if necessary.

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AVGA-AGN-AB-A-OP

11 February 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly
Period Ending 31 January 1967

b. The major Tactical operations supported by the 6th Battalion were Operation Attleboro and Operation Cedar Falls. In both cases, vehicles were loaded at night and moved to convoy assembly points in secure areas. The escort provided varied in both quantity and type. It usually consisted of armored personnel carriers and gun jeeps. Air cover was provided. During Attleboro, some convoys were composed of over 300 vehicles. Those in support of Cedar Falls were somewhat smaller. Some artillery ammunition was moved direct from the depot at Long Binh to the firing battery positions. In addition, refugees and their personal belongings, including livestock, were relocated from the "Iron Triangle" on the battalion's vehicles during Operation Cedar Falls.

3. The only significant contact with the enemy experienced during the quarter occurred on 21 November 1966, when a supply convoy escorted by an Armored Cavalry unit was ambushed by the Viet Cong. A detailed account of this action, together with observations and lessons learned, is attached as an inclosure to this report.

4. The battalion continued to have the mission of staffing and operating the office of the Contracting Officer's Representative for a contract with Equipment, Incorporated. This firm is a US contractor and operates a fleet of commercial design trucks which are used primarily to clear cargo from the Port of Saigon. The battalion was also given a similar function for a contract with the Philco-Ford corporation. Additional trucks for port clearance and other local hauling will be made available to the Army under this contract. Services under the Philco-Ford contract should be initiated during February, 1967.

5. The security of both these motor pools, located approximately 150 meters from each other near the town of Thu Duc, is also the responsibility of this battalion. One defense plan for the entire area has been prepared and approved. One of the units attached to this organization is being moved into the Philco-Ford compound, and will be given the additional mission of providing security for the area. A security platoon of 30 men which was attached to this organization to assist in securing the Equipment, Incorporated motor pool has been further attached to the unit. An additional 50 men required to secure the area have been drawn from the truck companies attached to the battalion.

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AVCA-SGN-AB-A-OP

11 February 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly
Period Ending 31 January 1967

SECTION 2. Part I, Observations (Lessons Learned)

a. Personnel:

None

b. Operations:

Attached as Inclosure 1 is a copy of an after action report which describes in detail the only significant encounter between elements of this organization and the enemy during this reporting period.

c. Training and Organization:

None

d. Intelligence:

None

e. Logistics:

None

f. Other:


None

SECTION 2. Part II, Recommendations

None

1 Incl

1. After Action Report


OREN E. DE HAVEN
LTC, TC
Commanding

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AVCA-SGN-AR-OP (26 Feb 67) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly
Period Ending 31 January 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65)

7 HEADQUARTERS, 48TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MT) APO 96491 26 February 1967


THRU: Commanding Officer
US Army Support Command, Saigon
APO US Forces 96307

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

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1967 prepared by the 6th Transportation Battalion (Truck) has been reviewed and presents an accurate and impartial summary of the units's activities.

2. No action or further comment is deemed necessary regarding this report.

Tel: Long Binh 676


S. M. COGGINS
Colonel, TC
Commanding

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AVCA SGN-GO (11 Feb 67) 2nd Ind 8
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending
31 January 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65)(6 Trans Bn)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY SUPPORT COMMAND, SAIGON, APO 96307

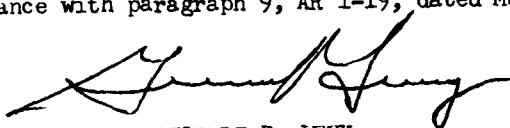
1 MAR 1967

THRU: Commanding General, Hq, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA-GO-O,
APO 96307
Deputy Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN:
AVHGC-DH, APO 96307
Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,
APO 96558

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

Forwarded in accordance with paragraph 9, AR 1-19, dated May 1966.

TEL: Tiger 4797



GILBERT P. LEVY
Colonel, OrdC
Commanding

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VJG GC-C (11 Feb 67) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period ending 31 January 1967,
(RCS CSFOR - 65)

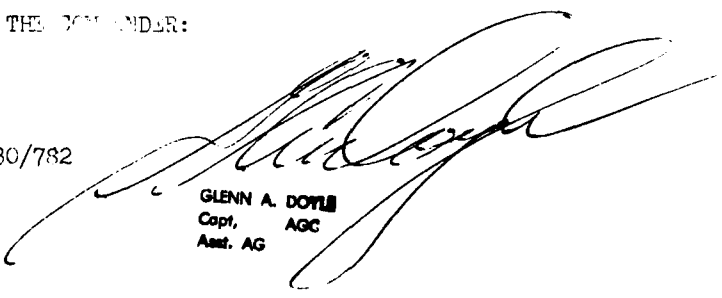
HL DEPTERIS, 1ST LOGISTICS COMMAND, APO 96307 9 1967

TO: Deputy Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGS-DH
APO 96307

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by the 6th Transportation Battalion for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1967 is forwarded herewith.
2. The 6th Transportation Battalion has the following units assigned:
 - a. 86th Trans Co (Lt Trk)
 - b. 87th Trans Co (Lt Trk)
 - c. 120th Trans Co (Lt Trk)
 - d. 163rd Trans Co (Lt Trk)
 - e. 261st Trans Co (Lt Trk)
 - f. 543rd Trans Co (Lt Trk)
3. Concur with the basic report. The report is considered adequate.
FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: Lynx 430/782

1 Incl
nc



GLENN A. DORN
Capt, AGC
Asst. AG

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AVHGC-DH (11 Feb 67) 4th Ind 10
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
31 January 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65)

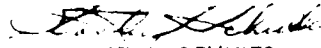
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307 16 MAR 1967

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT
AFC 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 January 1967 from Headquarters, 6th Transportation Battalion (truck) as in orsed.

2. This headquarters is preparing a "Combat Lessons Bulletin" covering ambush and counter-ambush techniques. This bulletin is designed to remind units that conduct convoy operations almost daily that regardless of the frequency of the operation they cannot afford to become complacent concerning security or proper briefing of all personnel.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


STANLEY E. SCHULTS
Major, AGC
Asst Adjutant General

1 Incl
nc

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11
GPOP-OT(11 Feb 67) 5th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
31 January 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65), HQ 6th Trans Bn (Truck)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558

5 APR 1967

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

This headquarters concurs in the basic report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

G. R. ...
CPT, ...
Asst AG

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nc

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~~1. UNCLASSIFIED~~
HEADQUARTERS, 6TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TRUCK)
APO 96491

AVCA-SGN-AB-A-OP

24 November 1966

AFTER ACTION REPORT

Ambush of Convoy on 21 November 1966

I NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

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On 21 November 1966, this organization had 34 2½ ton trucks committed to support elements of an armored cavalry regiment in the movement of its base camp to another area. These vehicles were pulling a total of 31 1½ ton trailers, and departed the Long Binh area at 0910 hours. The total number of vehicles in the column, including those from other units, was about 60. They were escorted by 9 armored personnel carriers. There was no air cover provided over the column. As was the practice with this element of the cavalry regiment, vehicles traveled with windshields up and cab tops on. Personnel of this battalion were wearing steel helmets and armored vests.

There was no briefing given prior to departure by anyone from the cavalry unit, which exercised command and control of the column. As the vehicles departed, elements of different units were mixed to some extent in the column by cavalry unit personnel, and the OIC from the 6th Battalion was not able to keep his trucks completely together. The approximate order of march for 6th Battalion units, however, found 15 vehicles of one company, followed by 10 vehicles of another company, with 9 from a third 6th Battalion unit near the end of the column.

At about 1040 hours, the head of the column had just moved over a dip in the road and traversed the crest of a hill. Mortar rounds began falling on the road and on both sides of the road around the leading elements of the column. At the same time, the forward half of the column began to receive automatic weapons fire, primarily from the right, or south, side of the road.

The speed of the leading elements at this time was about 15-20 miles per hour. When the firing started, the lead elements slowed down momentarily and then began to pick up speed. Some of those near the front of the column had no difficulty in quickly picking up speed. Others, however, were behind armored personnel carriers which did not change their rate of march. These were not able to drive out of the ambush area. One was hit on the right rear of the bed with a recoilless rifle round and set afire, but the driver was able to get his vehicle out of the killing zone before attempting to extinguish the fire.

The ambush was apparently focused on the center of the column, which contained elements of the second and third units. Due to the momentary slowdown at the head of the column and the effects of the hill climb, the lead elements of the second unit were bunched closely together and traveling at a speed of less than 5 miles per hour. Brush and grass was thick on both sides of the road, and members of the Viet Cong force were no more than 10-12 feet from the sides of the road.

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The driver of the lead truck of the second unit heard the first mortars hit just as he heard strong automatic weapons fire start. He then saw a potato masher grenade bounce off the trailer of the truck in front of him. He was able to increase his speed to 15 or 20 miles per hour and managed to get through, although his assistant driver was wounded.

The next truck, number 49, was not so fortunate. This truck was hit on the right side of the cab by a recoilless rifle round and swerved to the right. It was then struck on the left side by a grenade or recoilless rifle and burst into flames. The truck then turned to the left and slowly stopped in such a position that it blocked two thirds of the usable road space. Both the driver and assistant driver in this vehicle were killed.

The driver of the truck immediately behind truck number 49 had closed up so close behind it that he had to back up in order to try and pull around the burning vehicle. When he started to back up, he found his rear blocked by the truck behind him. Three trucks were stopped in this manner right behind truck number 49. The occupants of these vehicles dismounted and entered a ditch on the left, or north, side of the road. Steady automatic weapons fire was cracking over their heads, and they could see grenades being thrown from the bushes which landed on and under their trucks.

There were two armored personnel carriers behind these four trucks. When the firing started, these vehicles stopped, forcing other vehicles to stop. The occupants left the trucks and entered the ditch. No one could see the enemy. Some fired into the bushes on the side of the road, but others did not fire because they could not see a specific target to shoot at. At this time, automatic weapons fire was being received from both sides of the road.

Towards the end of the column, vehicles were traveling at a speed of about 15-20 mile per hour. They had just passed a group of civilians with children who waved their arms and yelled "V.C.", "V.C.", when they heard explosions and saw smoke up ahead. When they stopped, an armored personnel carrier came up from the rear and told the men to dismount and take cover. The men had plenty of time to clear the trucks and take cover before their position received automatic weapons fire from both sides and the rear. The Viet Cong had evidently moved a blocking force in behind the stopped column.

Heavy firing continued for at least 30 minutes. Following an air strike, it subsided and some drivers at the rear of the column started to move their vehicles. The firing started again, and the drivers were pinned in the ditch for another 30-45 minutes.

While the column was stopped, armored personnel carriers moved up and down the road firing into the bushes on both sides. It was several hours before the area was considered clear, and all vehicles were allowed to proceed to Xuan Loc.

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II FRIENDLY CASUALTIES AND DAMAGE

a. Two members of the second unit were killed in action. Six other members of the battalion were wounded. Seven trucks were destroyed or damaged beyond repair, and one truck was extensively damaged, but can be repaired.

b. Other friendly losses were six killed in action and three wounded. In addition two armored personnel carriers were destroyed and two were damaged.

III ENEMY LOSSES

Nineteen VC were killed (body count) and seven VN were detained but later released. One 57mm recoilless rifle and two rounds of ammo were captured, along with 2 rounds and 3 empty shell casings of 75mm recoilless ammo.

IV OBSERVATIONS-LESSONS LEARNED

a. Air cover was not immediately available over the column. Had the column been covered by armed helicopters, an immediate reaction may have kept the Viet Cong force from stopping the column.

b. Briefing and organization of the convoy by the cavalry elements was extremely poor. No briefing was given, and unit integrity was not maintained. Inclosure 1 covers this phase of the convoy operation in detail. Units of this battalion will be briefed prior to departure from the home station area.

c. Failure of drivers to maintain sufficient gap between vehicles made it easy for the Viet Cong to stop the column. Drivers should be instructed to maintain sufficient gap at all times, and not close up when the column slows down. Drivers should also be instructed to keep moving and not slow down or stop when under fire.

d. Some drivers left their trucks in such a hurry that they left their web gear in the cabs. As a result, many found themselves in the ditch with only one or two magazines of ammunition. Drivers should be told to place extra magazines in the pockets of their flak jackets.

e. It is apparent from interviews with drivers and assistant drivers that their volume of fire against the ambush party was not as heavy as it could have been. Personnel should be told to return a large volume of fire immediately when ambushed, even though individual targets can not be clearly seen. In addition, units of this battalion should place machine guns and grenade launchers in vehicles throughout their columns.

f. Regardless of the policy of escorting command and control units, the units of this battalion will move with tops off and windshields down whenever traveling in a convoy which requires armed escort.

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NOTES OF THE BATTALION OIC

On Sunday, 20 November 1966, at 1800 hrs I reported to the S-3 for a convoy briefing. There I learned I was to be convoy commander of 34 Group Trucks. Thirty of these trucks were to report at 1700 hrs 20 November 1966. The idea was to place these trucks in a staging area and then return the drivers to their units, using unit transportation. Cav personnel were to drive and load the trucks during the night having them in the staging area and ready for convoy in the morning. Our drivers were to report to Captain Alpha at 0700 hrs 21 November 1966. No convoy departure time was given. 16

Since the departure time, staging area and report point were in question, the truckmaster and I drove to the Cav area to coordinate with Capt. Alpha.

From Capt. Alpha we learned that 0700 hrs was both the departure time and the time he wanted drivers to arrive. I suggested the drivers arrive at an earlier time and ask if the convoy escort would give a briefing before departure. He said yes they would, I then suggested we have the drivers arrive at the Cav area at 0615 hrs to allow time to check out vehicles and 0645 hrs as the time for the briefing. Capt Alpha agreed.

We further learned all vehicles would be staged, ready to go in the Cav Headquarters Co. Motor pool. drivers would pick up vehicles in the motor pool and restage then along the road leading out of the area.

At 0600 hrs 21 November 1966, drivers and assistant drivers departed company areas. I was delayed until 0620 by a mix up in assistant drivers.

On arriving at the Cav area I went to the Headquarters Co. motor pool. Most of the trucks were staged on the road. Moving on to the convoy I could find no Cav representative. This was after 0700 hrs. The NCOs reported several trucks missing, several improperly loaded trailers, the companies were mixed, and 2 empty trucks were pulling loaded trailers while there were several empty trailers behind loaded trucks.

Drivers were put to work checking and rearranging trucks. The empty trucks dropped the loaded trailers and picked up empties.

Approximately 0745 hrs a Lt. Bravo, Headquarters Co., came by and informed me several trucks were still being loaded. I told him of the empty vehicles and said I would send them back if he didn't want them. Lt. Bravo told me he did not know the departure time, who the escort would be, or who was in charge; however, he would check and let me know.

At 0835 hrs Lt. Bravo notified me the convoy would leave at 0830 hrs. He still didn't know who was coordinating things or who the escort would be. Trans Group trucks were constantly joining the convoy and 30 (approximately) from the Cav and other units had fallen in behind us.

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Lt. Bravo returned at 0845 hrs and informed we would depart at 0900 hrs with an escort of 9 armored personnel carriers. At 0900 hrs the first element of the escort went by followed by about ten Cav trucks. The Trans Group column pulled up behind them and they started to move out. Then Cav personnel broke into our column running in several of their trucks letting a few of ours go then some more of theirs. After that I couldn't see what happened.

The convoy moved out at 10 mph until we reached the hardtop road to the destination then increased speed to 15 or 20 mph.

Twenty miles out of Long Binh at 1030-1045 hrs, I heard scattered shots ahead and noticed the vehicles in front were increasing speed considerably. Next I saw a mortar round hit 50 yds to the left of the vehicle to my front. That was immediately followed by another about 10 yds to his left. I could also hear automatic weapons fire to my front. Another landed on the right side of the road to my rear. By this time we were moving about 30 mph, I had signaled my column to increase speed and they were closing fast.

Up the road about 75 yds we started receiving small arms and automatic weapons fire from the right. I could see no one but the shots sounded like they were 10-20 yds off the road. We were traveling about 45 mph but had to slow down to keep from over running the trucks in front.

The convoy as I could see it proceeded on to destination as fast as possible. About $\frac{1}{4}$ miles behind us I could see thick black smoke rising about the tree tops.

Upon reaching the Cav base camp area, we parked the vehicles in the class I yard and jumped into trenches. The whole area was on red alert.

I immediately had a roll call of all personnel. From this I learned all fifteen trucks from my unit and one from another Group unit made it through. Two men had been wounded and brought forward. They were treated by the local med unit and evacuated by air.

A Capt. Charlie came by and notified me I was wanted at regimental headquarters. There I told what I knew of the action. They informed me that two of my men were KIA and that the convoy was unable to get through.

Sergeant Delta of another Group unit arrived about 1830 hrs with six of his trucks and one other Group truck. He brought all remaining drivers and assistant drivers from the ambush site. From them I learned that 3 more men were wounded and flown out. Contact was established with Battalion and all available information was passed on. Contact was again made at 2100 hrs and all personnel from the Group were accounted for.

Regimental Headquarters notified me several of my trucks were destroyed and several were being towed in. Sergeant Delta said 8 trucks were still at the ambush site.

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0700 hrs 22 November 1966, four trucks and seven trailers not completely destroyed have been towed in. Upon examination it was decided that all trailers could be brought back if tires could be found for two. Two trucks could be driven if the tanks were fixed. One could be towed and one would have to be carried. 18

From 0800 hrs to 1330 hrs Sgt Delta and myself were running around making arrangements for unloading vehicles and preparing vehicles for the return trip. Our departure time was unknown since all available escort vehicles were on mop up operations.

At 1330 hrs I was notified we would move out at 1400 hrs in a special convoy consisting of those trucks which convoyed through the ambush site the previous day.

Lt. Ehco, second squadron, let the convoy out at 1440 hrs. The escort consisted of two armored personnel carriers in front, one every six trucks and two in the rear.

The convoy reached home station between 1730 hrs and 1800 hrs. Trucks reported to their respective motor pools and I reported to the Battalion S-3 for debriefing.

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