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AUTHORITY

AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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

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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (7 Oct 70) FOR OT UT 702253 12 October 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 937th Engineer Group, Period Ending 30 April 1970

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Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 937th Engineer Group (Combat)
APO 96226

EGC-OP 30 April 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 937th Engineer Group (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

THRU: Commanding General
18th Engineer Brigade
ATTN: AVBC-CB
APO 96377

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

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

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army (ACSFOR, DA)
Washington, DC - 20301

1. Section I: Operations, Significant Activities.

a. General

(1) The 937th Engineer Group (Combat) is attached to the 18th Engineer Brigade and is presently organized as shown in Inclosure 1. The group has been assigned an area of operations (AO) which covers the northern portion of the II Corps Tactical Zone from the coast of the South China Sea to the western border of the Republic of Vietnam. Inclosure 2 is a pictorial representation of the Group's AOR and indicates the Area's of Responsibility (AOR) assigned by this headquarters to subordinate combat engineer battalions for combat and operational support.

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Inclosure

(2) The 937th Engineer Group has been assigned the following missions by the 18th Engineer Brigade:

(a) Exercise command and control of engineer units assigned or attached to the group.

(b) Provide combat/operational support for the U.S. and Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) as directed by the Commanding General of the 18th Engineer Brigade.

(c) Plan and execute troop construction programs as directed by the Commanding General, 18th Engineer Brigade.

(d) Provide for the physical security of personnel, equipment facilities, and construction sites of all units attached or assigned to the 937th Engineer Group (Combat) and provide assistance in obtaining security for all contractor activities within the Group's area of operations.

(e) Further the revolutionary development program through Engineering effort.

(f) Establish affiliation programs with ARVN Engineer units in AOR.

(3) An AOR within the Group AOR has been assigned to the 20th and the 299th Engineer Battalions (Combat) with assigned missions similar to those described above. The combat battalion's are each augmented with one light equipment company to increase horizontal construction capability. The 20th Engineer Battalion (Combat) is further augmented with a well drilling detachment and the pile driving section of a port construction company which is being used for construction of the Bong Son bridge. The 815th Engineer Battalion (Construction) lost its D company and the construction support company to the 35th Engineer Group during the reporting period but retained one well drilling detachment and a power distribution team. The 815th Engineer Battalion, upon assuming responsibility for the security of Engineer Hill in Pleiku was further augmented with the security platoon of the 937th Group. As operational support increased in the highlands during April the 815th was further augmented with a platoon of the 299th Engineer Battalion (Combat).

(4) The relocation of 937th Engineer Group Headquarters to Phu Tai from Pleiku by 10 March and the successful completion of QL-14 North and QL-1 South caused significant changes to be made in the group organization. These changes resulted in the following unit moves and transfers. The 509th Engineer Company (PB) was transferred from the control of the 937th group to the 20th Engineer Battalion (Combat) on 2 March 1970. The 585th Engineer Company (DT) was transferred from the 815th Battalion to the 20th Battalion on 1 April 1970 and relocated from Wooly Bully to Weigt-Davis to work on QL-14 South. Company D of the 815th Battalion and 102nd Engineer Company (CS) began moving out of

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Wooly Bully in early April and were transferred to the 35th Engineer Group at Di Linh on 25 April 1970. These units are currently erecting a new industrial complex at that site and will be returned to control of the 815th Engineer Battalion when that unit is transferred to the 35th Engineer Group in late June 1970. Company A of the 20th Engineer Battalion (Combat) moved from Engineer Hill in Pleiku to Camp Enari on 12 February 1970 to begin dismantling two large prefabricated steel hangars for relocation and reerection at Camp Radcliff near An Khe. Company A of the 20th Engineer Battalion relocated to Camp Radcliff on 10 March 1970. Company D of the 20th Engineer Battalion (Combat) relocated to Camp Enari on 23 February 1970 to work on QL-14 South and relocated again to Weigt-Davis on 30 March 1970. Company D of the 84th Engineer Battalion (Construction) relocated to Camp Radcliff from Qui Nhon on 6 April 1970 to begin upgrading QL-19 East from the Mang Giang Pass to Qui Nhon. The 23rd Well Drilling detachment was transferred from the 815th Battalion to the 84th Engineer Battalion (Construction) on 13 April 1970 to work on the Tuy Hoa MACV well. The 538th Engineer Company (LC) began and completed Phase IV of land clearing in the northern highlands during the period. In so doing they moved from Pleiku along QL-14 South and LTL-7B to the Phu Bon-Phu Yen Province boundary and along LTL-2E from Cheo Reo to Ban Blech. One platoon relocated to Ban Me Thout outside the Group AO to clear TL-1 to Ban Don, after which the entire company moved to Engineer Hill for a maintenance standdown, closing Pleiku on 30 April 1970. The first platoon of Company D, 299th Engineer Battalion (Combat) was placed Op/Con to Task Force 3-506 for a secret combat operation on 24 April 1970.

(5) The group AOR remained unchanged throughout the reporting period.

(6) Throughout the reporting period, the disposition of group effort averaged 23.0% Line of Communication (LOC), 16.5% Operational Support and 4.1% Base Construction with the remainder committed to maintenance and overhead. The entire AOR experienced ideal construction weather throughout the reporting period.

b. Combat/Operational Support

(1) Combat support missions increased during the reporting period with support provided to three operations. The 299th Engineer Battalion (Combat) was tasked in late January to support the FWMAF in Binh Dinh Province due to increased enemy activity. Support consisted of hasty helicopter revetments, refuel/rearm points, berms and road repairs. On 4 April the 815th Engineer Battalion (Construction) supported Operation Firebird in conjunction with the Dak Seang, Dak Pek battles. Hasty artillery positions, bunkers, fuel bladder berms and helicopter facilities were constructed in the Dak To - Kontum area. On April 24th, the first platoon, Company D of the 299th Engineer Battalion (Combat) was placed OP/CON to TF 3-506 (TF Pursuit) for combat operations south and west of the Mang Giang Pass in "V.C. Valley".

(2) General engineer support to the 4th Infantry Division continued

throughout the reporting period. The 20th and 299th Engineer Battalions continued to provide minesweeps as required and the 815th Engineer Battalion did considerable minesweeping of its work areas on QL-14N to include borrow pits and turnout areas. All battalions performed maintenance and repairs to road surfaces, culverts, bridges and airfields, when required as a result of enemy action, weather damage, or normal improvement activities. Throughout the reporting period, the battalions provided engineer equipment support and technical assistance to infantry, artillery, and aviation units throughout the AO. During the period the bulk of the Camp Radcliff defensive system was completed by the 20th and 299th Engineer Battalions. The 299th Engineer Battalion continued to provide general engineer support to the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 4th Infantry Division.

(3) 20th Engineer Battalion (Combat). The headquarters of the 20th Engineer Battalion remained at Engineer Hill near Pleiku. Its companies and platoons were deployed throughout the 20th Battalion AO. The 538th Engineer Company (LC) was on a maintenance standdown at the beginning of the reporting period until 14 February when they moved north almost to Kontum and began clearing villages, secondary roads and QL-14 toward Pleiku. From Pleiku they relocated to a road camp near Camp Enari and cleared 14E to the junction of LTL-7B. From successive road camps along 7B to the Phu Bon, Phu Yen Province boundary and then back to Cheo Reo to clear LTL-2E North and Southwest to Ban Blech. The 538th completed Phase III of the Northern Highlands program. As of the last day of the reporting period the company had returned to Engineer Hill for another maintenance standdown. During the period the 20th Battalion completed prefabbing the bunkers and towers at Camp Radcliff and finished the heavy firing base for the 7/15th Artillery at An Khe on 7 March. The soil stabilization plant was complete and became operational on 25 March at Weigt-Davis. Twelve cobra revetments were constructed at Camp Holloway along with two maintenance revetments for the 189th Assault Helicopter Company. Revetments were modified at Camp Holloway for the move of the 7/17th Air Cavalry unit. Th MX-19 matting was recovered from the airfield at Casis and route LTL-2E from Cheo Reo to Ban Blech was upgraded to a dry weather tactical road. Work was begun on Bridges 19-33 and 34 on QL-19 East. Crusher operations continued at Weigt-Davis.

(4) 299th Engineer Battalion (Combat). During the reporting period the headquarters of the 299th Battalion relocated from Qui Nhon to Phu Tai. The S-3 section returned to Hqs from Camp Radcliff on 20 February 1970. The battalion's effort was centered at An Khe and in Northern Binh Dinh Province. The battalion continued to maintain QL-1 from Phu Tai to the I - II Corps border and QL-19 from QL-1 to the Mang Giang Pass. At Camp Radcliff the remaining 27 bunkers were completed for a total of 57 constructid. The ASP was upgraded with 4 new towers and 3 new berms. A total of 133 helicopter revetments were constructed at the Golf Course area. Two new guard towers were built for the 17th Field Hospital. Twenty-four vehicle gates were prefabricated and installed and a tank ford was constructed completing the majority of the defensive work at Camp Radcliff. A 75 TPh crusher was installed

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... Khe and crushed the first rock there on 21 April. The taxiway upgrade at the Airfield remained inactive pending final decisions on scope and design of work to be done. The cold mix paving of LTL-3A North ... ted on 23 April thereby connecting LZ Pony to QL-1 with an all weather road. Work continued on secondary roads in northern Binh Dinh Province and Route "299" was 72% complete at the end of the reporting period. Over 16 kilometers of secondary road have subsequently been added to the scope of that project.

(5) 74th Engineer Battalion (Construction). Although the bulk of the 74th's effort was on LOC and Base Construction, several important op/spt missions were completed or begun during the period. The Vung ... Mountain signal site access road was completed on 15 February. Lay Ho North airfield was upgraded with new rocket bunkers, relocated fencing and a coat of non-skid surface treatment during March and early April. Route 505 was 75% upgraded and repairs were begun on two leaking 10,000 BBL POL tanks at Tank Farm #1 in Qui Nhon. Repairs consisted of floating the tanks off their pads, pouring new bottom pads, then refloating the tanks onto the new pads and pouring a pad inside the tank. Repairs were 83% complete by 30 April. At the Ammo ... Depot in Phu Tai all land clearing was completed. The remaining scope of the work was changed to Base Construction in March. At Phu Hiep, new bunkers were constructed at the POL tank farm for the Qui Nhon Support Command. The crusher operation at Chop Chai was shut down and dismantled.

(6) 615th Engineer Battalion (Construction). The 615th was tasked with two high priority op/spt missions during the period. The first was the upgrade of the ARVN ASP in Pleiku, so that the U.S. ASP can be closed. The project consists of upgrading the access road and the interior road network, construction of 6 new bunkers and pads and the rehabilitation of 6 old pads. At F.O.B. 2 near Kontum, the 715th Engineer Battalion was tasked with constructing a new fireproof TOC and operations building after the old one had been destroyed by an enemy rocket attack. Bridge 14-29 was repaired to a two lane capability by 1 April. The Woolly Bully Industrial Complex was dismantled during April after QL-14 North was completed, thereby closing a colorful chapter in the history of the Engineers. The 615th continued to support operations at the Hon Quarry and the CLL Yard Asphalt Plant.

c. Construction Operations

(1) General

(a) During the reporting period an average of 23% of the 937th Engineer Group's effort was devoted to LOC work and an average of 4.1% to base construction. This represents a 1.5% increase over the previous quarter. The percentage allocated to base construction fell slightly as major base construction missions were terminated. The percentage increase was applied to LOC, as all projects proceeded with increased speed and emphasis. Weather was ideal throughout the 937th Engineer

Group A6 for LOC construction.

(b) Major projects started during this period include the construction of Bridge QL 19-33, QL 19-34, and QL 19-5, the upgrade of QL 19E and the upgrade of QL 14S and LTL-7B. Base construction projects started included the MACV site at An Tuc, and the reconstruction of the ASP at Phu Tai.

(2) LOC Construction

(a) During the reporting period LOC effort was applied to QL 14 N from Pleiku to Dak To, QL-14S from Pleiku to Dak Blech, QL-1 from Tuy An to Tuy Hoa, QL-1 from Tuy Hoa to Vung Ro Bay, QL-19E from Pleiku to RJ QL-1 in Qui Nhon and LTL-7B from RJ 14S to Cheo Reo. Construction was completed on QL-14N between Pleiku and Dak To. This 92 km stretch of highway was upgraded to CENCOM class C standards and supported the move of troops and supplies into Dak Pek and Dak Seang just two weeks after its completion. Also completed during this period was the section of QL-1 between Tuy An and Tuy Hoa. The 84th Engineer Battalion used 33 933 cy's of 3" (-) and over 19,986 tons of asphaltic concrete to pave this class A CENCOM standard road. Construction quality on this road enabled it to be turned over to MPW two days after completion. The quarry at Chop Chai was closed out after completion of this project.

(b) Construction on QL-14S was continued by the 20th Engineer Battalion during this period. The industrial site at Point-Davis became fully operational during the reporting period. Asphaltic concrete for surfacing continued to be supplied by the CLA Yard in Pleiku, operated by the 815th Engineer Battalion. During the period a total of 15,973 tons of cold mix and 22,151 cy's of base rock was used to cover 25.4 km of road. The target date for completion of paving on 14S to RJ LTL-7B is 10 May 70.

(c) After completion of QL-14N the 815th Engineer Battalion began major repair efforts on QL-19E between Bridge QL-19-34 and the Mang Giang Pass. Completion of this upgrade to standards for turnover to MPW is scheduled for 15 June. Simultaneously the 84th Engineer Battalion commenced major repair on QL-19E working west from RJ QL-1 toward the Mang Giang Pass. This section is scheduled for completion by October 1970. Repair of QL-19E will involve major shoulder rebuild, drainage structure reconstruction, extensive pot hole repair and pavement removal for repaving. The 20th Engineer Battalion began the upgrade of LTL-7B from RJ QL-14S to Cheo Reo. This 53 kilometer section is being upgraded to an all weather tactical road prior to the summer monsoon season. At the same time QL-14S from the RJ of LTL-7B to Dak Blech is being upgraded by the 20th Engineer to CENCOM class C standards through the subbase. Additionally a 3" thick "black base" wearing surface is being placed as far south as Bridge QL-14-17 to provide a wearing surface during the monsoon season. Construction on both of these roads is expected to be completed by 15 June; however, upgrade of LTL-7B will continue into July if weather permits.

(d) LOC bridge construction continued at the Bong Son Bridge site. A Company of the 84th Engr Bn together with the 536th Port Construction Detachment continued work on this 1560 ft steel and concrete highway bridge. The 20th Engineer Battalion began the construction of bridges 19-34 and 19-33. These bridges are to be steel and concrete. Design was accomplished by 937th Engr Gp.

(2) Base Construction

(a) As review of base construction projects continued, several large projects were cancelled. This resulted in continued slowdowns and reduced effort on base construction.

(b) Major projects started during this period include:

1 MACV Facility Hoai An

2 MACV Facility Hoai Nhon

3 MACV Facility An Tuc - This project was started and completed during the reporting period.

4 Repair and reconstruction of 25 bermes in the AAD. This project started during the period included the haul of over 50,000 cy's of fill. The project is scheduled for completion on 15 June.

5 The upgrade of the Phu Hiep Army Airfield was also begun. The project included removal of the existing M8A1 mat surface and placement of 4 inches of cement stabilized soil overlaid with asphalt concrete. This project is scheduled for completion on 15 Mar 1970.

6 A large MER project including construction of 25 showers and 40 latrines for the 4th Div was started by the 20th Engr Bn during this reporting period. Production was delayed for 2 weeks due to lack of lumber, but is now underway. Completion is scheduled during Jun 70.

(c) The 937th Group Well Drilling Program continued with the completion of 1 well at Qui Nhon and the start of a second well at the Tuy Hoa MACV site. No well drilling was accomplished during the period as new rotary well rigs were received and well drilling teams were trained in their use.

(d) Engineer Reconnaissance: A reconnaissance of the entire AO was conducted in April to update information on all installed tactical bridging. This information was used to update USMACV's Tactical Bridging Report and to get USAECV to assume property accountability of all installed bridges. Extensive airfield recons were conducted during April to estimate remaining service life on a number of airfields that will not be repaired. Recons were conducted to locate potential quarry sites and borrow pits for the continuing LOC program.

e. Intelligence

(1) Intelligence information received from major tactical units within the Group's AO has been evaluated and disseminated to all subordinate units within the Command on a daily basis.

(2) The S-2 Officer and NCOIC have attended periodic intelligence briefings and area defense conferences.

(3) The 937th Engineer Group Security Detachment was transferred to the 815th Engr Bn as the Group moved to Phu Tai.

(4) The S-2 Section published the defense plan for the 937th Group Compound at Phu Tai.

(5) Enemy activity that affected Engineer operations were as follows

(a) 1 bridge destroyed

(b) 2 culverts destroyed

(c) 20 ambushes involving Engineer troops

(d) 11 standoff attacks against Engineer troops

(6) Engineer units have reported the following mining statistics; 16 mines detonated, 12 mines found by Engineers. Mining incidents reported by all major tactical units within the Group's AO are as follows: 63 mines detonated, 85 mines found. Several mines were discovered during this period that were implanted in the pavement of the road. A square of asphalt was cut out, a hole dug in the sub base, the mine placed, the asphalt placed back over the mine, and some type of solvent used to seal the crack. This method of emplanting mines was reported to Brigade and was published in the March issue of mine warfare notes put out by the Mine Warfare Center, USARV.

f. Training: The 937th Engr Gp continued to conduct a training orientation program for all newly assigned personnel immediately after their arrival in the Group. The training includes combat skills, security procedures, safety and convoy procedure, first aid, sentry duty and weapons familiarization and firing. Continued emphasis was placed on anti-sapper tactics. RVN training and the Affiliation Program received new emphasis during the period. The 815th Engr Bn (Construction) graduated 17 RVN trainees in March in D7-E, 20 ton crane, bucket loader, and mechanics training. New courses were started on 15 April for 31 RVN's in D7-E, concentor, air compressor, rock crusher and mechanics training. The 84th Engineer Battalion (Construction) trained 3 RVN's to operate M-4 transit mix trucks. The 20th Engr Bn trained an RVN Captain in Land Clearing operations and has established a program to begin training RVN's in bucket loader and 290 M operations

to commence in June 1970. A new Group regulation 350-2 was published in April establishing a sister unit concept between U.S. and ARVN battalions in the AO.

g. Civic Action: Each battalion continued to conduct limited civic action programs.

(1) The villagers of Plei Ron Du near Pleiku have provided the 815th Engr Bn's security detachment with intelligence information in return for aid in constructing their perimeter defense and aiding the PSDP.

(2) Food, building materials and health aids were supplied to the local people by all battalions.

(3) 40,000 VN dollars was given to a local orphanage.

(4) All battalions conducted MEDCAPS. Approximately 1000 patients were aided this period.

h. Administrative Operations:

(1) Personnel - During the reporting period the only changes in the authorized manning level were the loss of 25 spaces in the 20th Engr Bn, the restoration of 51 spaces in the 299th Engineer Battalion and 56 spaces for both the 74th and 815 th Engineer Battalions. After applying this manning level increase, the Group enlisted strength of 4103 was at 101% of the authorized manning level of 4056 at the end of the reporting period.

(a) Officers: At the end of the reporting period, Officer strength was 172 of an authorization of 175 for 99.5%

(b) Warrant Officers: At the end of the reporting period, Warrant Officer strength was 31 of 33 for 94%

(c) Senior NCO's (E7, E8, E9) with 139 of authorization of 175, the Group is at 79.8% strength in this category. An alightening consideration in filling the vacancy is that group has 36 E6's on the E7 promotion list.

(d) The 102nd Engineer Company transferred to the 35th Group on 25 April 1970. Included in the losses which are reflected in the above figures are the loss of 4 Officers, 2 Warrant Officers and 117 enlisted personnel.

(e) Delta Company of the 815th was attached to the 35th Engineer Group, but their strength figures are included in the above.

(2) Supply During this reporting period the 937th Engr Gp Headquarters moved from Pleiku to Phu Tai, RVN. This move was accomplished

with transportation assets organic to the Group and additional supporting assets from the 8th Transportation Group. The Group S-4 section formed the nucleus of the advance party which had the responsibility of setting up the new headquarters area. This was accomplished without disruption of the normal S-4 activities. Work was started on upgrading highway QL-14 south of Pleiku and 7B. This project requires large quantities of RC-800 and AP-3 asphalt products. These are being obtained on a continuing basis from Qui Nhon Support Command and are being transported by the 8th Transportation Group. Close and continuous coordination is required in an effort to obtain a smooth and uninterrupted flow of materials. Steel for highway bridges is being obtained from all depots in the RVN. This steel is being released from depot stocks, nominated for shipment by the Transportation Management Agency, transported to Qui Nhon by the Military Sea Transport Service, and delivered to the requesting unit by the Movement Control Center, Qui Nhon. Although many different organizations are involved, this is developing satisfactorily. At various times excess construction material lists were published by RMK and the 32nd Naval Construction Regiment. The lists contain some materials which have been critical to some of our projects. They have been requested from the holding activities and shipped to the job sites.

(3) Maintenance: During this report period the NOR (Non-operational readiness) rate for USARV designated critical items has averaged 11.6% This is an increase of 1.0% from the last report period. This increase is due, in part, to the turmoil caused by the change in the direct support unit as noted in the previous report. The majority of the increase, however, was due to the increased usage of the equipment. Equipment failures occurred faster than the maintenance personnel could repair the items. On hand repair parts were exhausted causing delays in repair. With the completion of the major LOC work, the outlook is for a downward trend in the overall NOR rate.

i. Aviation:

(1) The Aviation Section has continued its mission of re-supply, reconnaissance and liason during this quarter; the section flew 919 hours. Aircraft utilization and hours flown are as follows:

			HOURS FLOWN	UTILIZATION
(a)	68-16342	UH1H	242	39%
(b)	66-16203	UH1D	174	29%
(c)	68-16797	OH58A	114	14%
(d)	68-16846	OH58A	249	59%
(e)	68-16832	OH58A	87	22%
(f)	68-16776	OH58A	53	45%

(2) Two aircraft were turned in during this period. The U-6A Beaver, 53-7953, was turned in due to excessive maintenance. One OH58A, 68-16809, was turned in due to excessive maintenance. It was replaced by an OH58A, 68-16786.

(3) The section received four OH58A's during this quarter. They have proven to be an excellent VIP and reconnaisance aircraft. The availability of these aircraft has been lowered considerably by the non-availability of parts and the lack of higher eschelon technical assistance.

(4) The section strength is 6 officers and 13 enlisted men.

j. Communications

(1) Operations Review:

(a) During this reporting period, activities centered about the relocation on 10 March 1970, of Headquarters Company, 937th Engineer Group, to Phu Tai, BP 997247. This move prompted the deactivation of five circuits and the re-termination of two DCA circuits from Group Headquarters' XR6P, speech plus circuit to 18th Engineer Brigade and XCOM, speech plus circuit to 20th Engr Bn. The reliability of the circuits to date has been about 95%; however, the circuit quality has been marginal at best.

(b) The Group Communications Sections currently operates in these functional areas: switchboard, wire installation and maintenance, messenger runs to the area Communications Center, local communications Center Service, secure radioteletypewriter operations, and command and compound security FM radio nets.

(c) This unit continues to be hampered by logistical problems in the implementation of the Nest program, the receipt of depot packed installation kits containing the improper cables. This problem will be resolved prior to the next reporting period. The secure voice equipment KYB-6 has operated without fail for this headquarters, the only difficulties encountered being the critical key-setting required on the code changer, KYK-12, and the improper emplacement of the KYK-12 within the KYB-6.

(d) An aggressive radioteletypewriter operator training program was instituted to insure maximum proficiency and responsiveness to meet the needs of the commander. This training is currently being conducted in conjunction with communications center operations.

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

a. Personnel

NONE

b. Intelligence

NONE

c. Operations

(1) Tanglefoot Wire

(a) Observations: Tanglefoot wire as described in FM 5-34 is inadequate for defense against sappers.

(b) Evaluation: The tanglefoot shown in FM 5-34 is practically useless in defending against sappers as it does not pose any problem to a sapper in passing through it. A sapper does not have to reveal himself in any way to get through it. Tanglefoot should force the sapper to raise off the ground to get over it, thus making him more visible to guards.

(c) Recommendation: Tanglefoot should be put out in a diagonal or square pattern with 2' or less squares at a height of approximately 4". This would force a sapper to raise up and be more easily detected.

(2) Concertina Wire

(a) Observation: The recommended installation of concertina wire as shown in table 4-7, pg 127 of FM 5-34, dtd Dec 69, creates an inadequate obstacle.

(b) Evaluation: Using the recommended number of concertinas for a 300 meter section of triple standard concertina causes each concertina to be stretched fifteen (15) meters. Experience has shown that this stretches the wire far enough apart to allow easy infiltration by sappers. Former sappers demonstrated penetration of several such triple concertinas at Engineer Hill in Pleiku within several minutes by not raising their bodies more than 18 inches above ground. A fence constructed in this manner is also easily flattened by throwing boards or mats over it. A similar obstacle constructed by spacing each concertina only five meters apart creates a dense reasonably effective fence if properly staked down and supported with straight wire. A former sapper estimated that several hours would be required to penetrate several such obstacles employed with tanglefoot.

(c) Recommendations: That changes be made as required in FM 5-34 and other related manuals on the recommended installation of concertina wire at fixed installations.

d. Organization

NONE

c. Training

NONE

f. Logistics

(1) Limitaitions on Moving Heavy Equipment

(a) Observations: Shortage of semi-trailer low bed, 60 ton, hinders unit operations and unit movements.

(b) Evaluation: This piece of equipment is necessary to move 40 ton crawler mounted cranes, D-9 dozers, 6 C.Y. scooploaders, and segmented compactors. It should be noted that most of this equipment is MCA and there are no MCA trailers. At present this Group is short 4 of the TO&E authorized 9, 60 ton low bed trailers.

(c) Recommendation: That the 60 ton low bed trailer or a suitable equivalent be included in the MCA iventory and be obtained as soon as possible.

(2) Transportation Loss of Construction Materials

(a) Observation: Transportation of construction materials from depots other than Qui Nhon can result in mis-shipment of materials to units other than the requesting unit.

(b) Evaluation: Construction materials have a high percentage of transportation loss due to the unfamiliarity of transportation people with this type cargo. Shipments often become separated and if each item is not labeled properly there is no way for the carrier to know the destination of the separated item.

(c) Recommendation: That when construction materials are shipped from a depot, the release number and TCMD number be obtained by the requesting unit. This enables the cargo to be traced after it leaves the servicing depot. The shipper should insure that each piece of cargo is properly labeled to reduce loss of separated shipments.

g. Communications

(1) Administrative Delays to Install Circuits

(a) Observation: The failure of signal sites to install circuits without written directives (circuit activation order or circuit equipment order has caused unnecessary delay in the activation of circuits urgently required for command and control purposes. Circuits XR6F and XC0 are examples of this observation.

(b) Evaluation:

1 Responsiveness has been sacrificed for unnecessary

administrative delays as much as much as seven days beyond the date the circuit was required.

2 Systems control at Signal Group level for CACS circuits and EE at DCA level for DCA circuits should designate controlling terminals for the prompt activation of all circuits. Coordination with the technical controls at battalion level must not be overlooked.

3 To insure activation on the start date, and upon order by the controlling terminal, all intermediate signal sites (relays), regardless of unit control, should install the circuits as required.

(c) Recommendation: That controlling terminals insure prompt installation of circuits in accordance with validated circuit requests.

h. Material

NONE

i. Other

(1) Morale

(a) Observation: During the period the number of counseling cases referred to Chaplains involving administrative problems, Articles 15, negative morale and dissatisfaction with assigned duties and long hours has increased by at least 25% over the previous period.

(b) Evaluation: A need exists at all levels to assure maximum communication of basic reasoning foundational to Operation Last Chance and any other operational requirements which reduce "free time" for assigned personnel. Failure to communicate this rationale at numerous work sites has negatively affected morale and conceivably contributed to decreased productivity.

(c) Recommendation: That unit Commanders and NCO's take appropriate steps and exercise such consistent leadership as is necessary to assure that all personnel know the exact reasons why they are tasked with extra work hours and have their "free time" preempted by essential duties.

C. E. ADAMS
COLONEL, CE
Commanding

Incls 2 & 3 w/d HQ DA

AVHGC-CG (30 April 1970) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 937th Engineer Group (Combat) for the Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 18TH ENGINEER BRIGADE, APO 96377 19 JUN 1970

TO: Commanding General, U.S. Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375

1. The Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the 937th Engineer Group (Combat) has been reviewed by this Headquarters and is considered to be an excellent account of the Group's activities during the reporting period.

2. This Headquarters concurs with the observation of the Group Commander.

H.C. SCHRADER
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

CF:
2-AC of S for Force Development, DA
1-CO, 937th Engr Gp

AVHGC-DST (30 April 1970) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 937th Engineer Group (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375 1 JUL 1970

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

1. This Headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1970 from Headquarters, 937th Engineer Group (Combat) and comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Limitations on Moving Heavy Equipment," page 13, paragraph f(1): nonconcur. TOE authorizations for the 60 ton lowbed semi-trailer are considered sufficient to support unit operations and movements. The Engineer Command is authorized 50 each, 60 ton trailers and has 17 each on hand. Some relief is expected through shipment of 10 each, semi-trailer, 52½ ton, to RVN in 3d quarter, CY 70. Equivalent trailers are also being requested from Navy excess to assist in alleviating the shortage. USARPAC or DA assistance in expediting the shipment of trailers is requested.

b. Reference item concerning "Transportation Loss of Construction Materials," page 13, paragraph f(2): concur. Release numbers, for items that are command controlled are currently provided to requesting units. Release numbers for other construction materials, less timber and barrier materials, will be provided to requesting units on a weekly basis by ICCV. The release numbers can be used to obtain TCMD numbers when required. Procedures are in effect to mark cargo for identification purposes. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

c. Reference item concerning "Administrative Delays to Install Circuits," page 14, paragraph 2g(1): nonconcur. The observation presented does not consider the needs for careful control over the use of communication assets, nor that circuit routing over both the Corps Area Communications System and the Defense Communications System necessarily requires coordination between the headquarters controlling these systems (USARV and MACV). The MACV CEOI establishes a circuit installation lead time of thirty days for routine circuit installation, in order to permit proper coordination of efforts and circuit engineering time by subordinate elements operating the DCS-SEA. In case of emergency requirements, the MACV CEOI has a clearly defined and workable procedure to enable the rapid installation of circuits, with associated paperwork to follow the verbal circuit request. The Headquarters has a similar procedure for CACS circuits. In the case of the DCS circuits cited, the MACV CEOI was not complied with. The actions were not

AVHGC-DST (30 April 1970) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 937th Engineer Group (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

17 Jul 1970

justifiable as emergency actions and inadequate lead time was provided by the unit for routine installation of these circuits prior to the date the service was required. Since the CACS is itself a modified Army Area Communications System (AACOMS) control at Army level is appropriate. Since each request may have to be provided by a combination of CACS/DCS service and may run from one end of RVN to the other, management at Signal Group level is considered infeasible. To permit the local control of communications systems, except on a temporary, emergency basis, would result in four separate headquarters trying to coordinate with MACV/DCA-SAM, instead of the one headquarters as at present (USARV). No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

D. J. Winter
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
18th Engr Bde
937th Engr Gp

GPOP-DT (30 Apr 70) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 937th Engineer Group (Combat), for Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

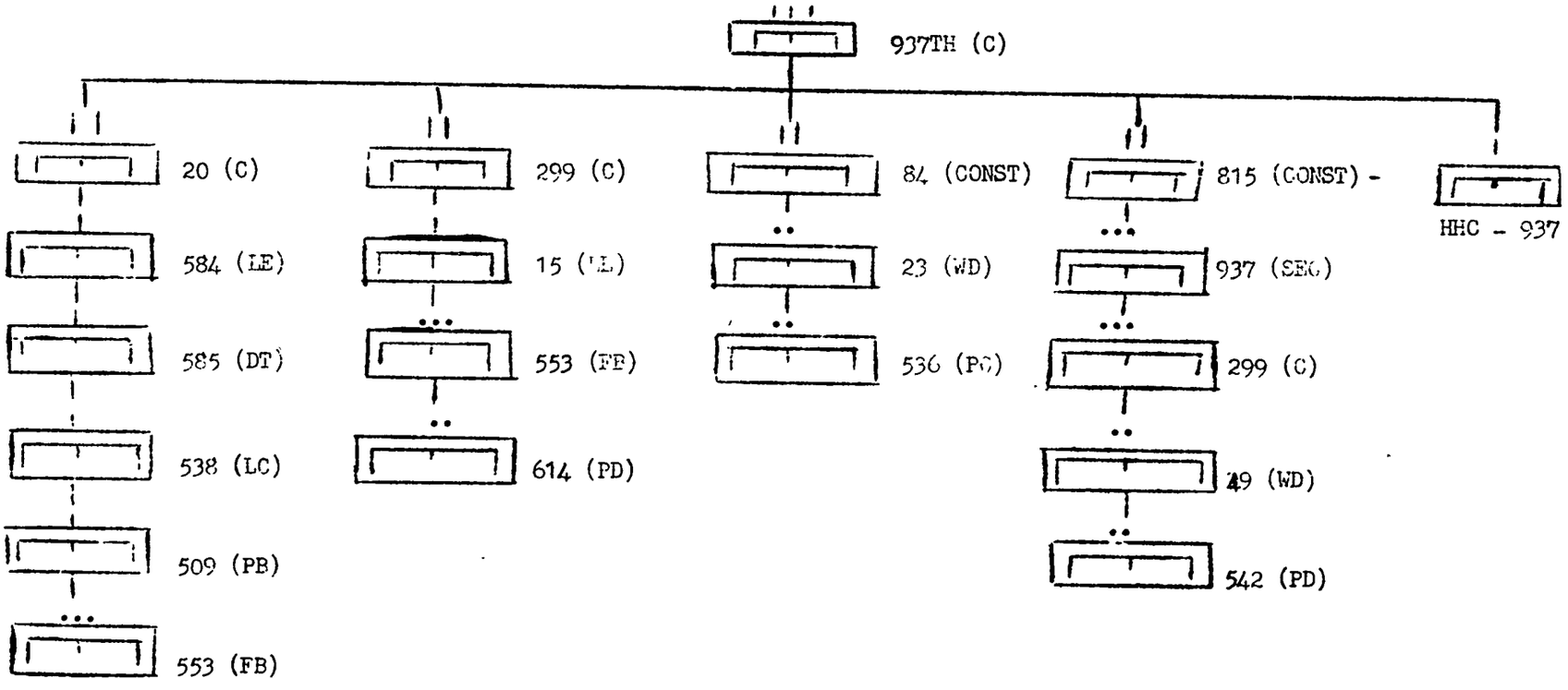
HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 6 AUG 70

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

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

G. R. McLAUGHLIN
COL, AGC
Adjutant General



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