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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980 ; AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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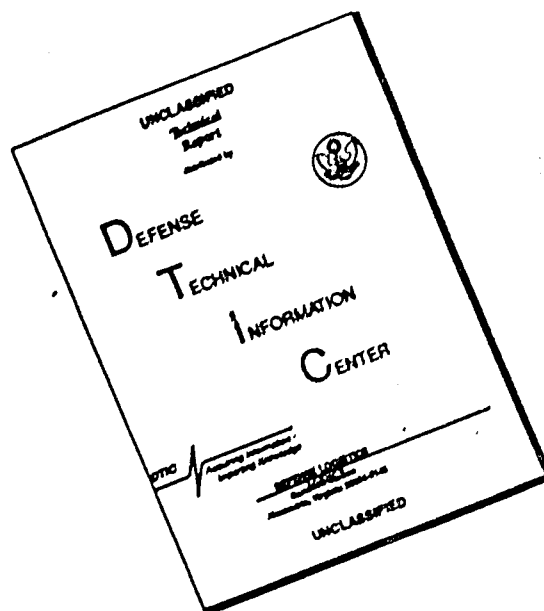
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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AGDA-A (M) (9 Mar 71)

OT-UT-703068 ✓ B

18 March 1971

SUBJECT: Operational Report (6) Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 13th Aviation Battalion

(U.S.)

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1. The attached report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with para 4b, AR 525-15.
2. The information contained in this report is provided to insure that lessons learned during current operations are used to the benefit of future operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.
3. Information of actions initiated as a result of your evaluation should be forwarded to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, ATTN: FOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt of this letter.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Verne L. Bowers

VERNE L. BOWERS
Major General, USA
Acting The Adjutant General

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Operational rept. for quarterly period ending 31 Jul 70

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat)
APO San Francisco 96296

AVB:BN-GC

11 August 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

CINCUSARPAC, ATTN: GFOR-DT, APO San Francisco 96558
Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVHCE-DST, APO San Francisco 96375
Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBAGC, APO San Francisco 96384
Commanding Officer, 164th Aviation Group (Combat), ATTN: AVFACE-C, APO San Francisco 96215

1. (U) Operations: Significant Activities:

a. (U) Unit Mission: The 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) constituted as TASK FORCE GUARDIAN was placed in direct support of the 21st ARVN Division on 1 January 1970. During this reporting period there has been no change in this mission.

b. (U) Organization: Under TASK FORCE GUARDIAN the 162nd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) and the 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) were placed under operational control of the 307th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) at Can Tho. There has been no change to this during the reporting period. On 27 July 1970, C Troop, 10th Air Cavalry relocated from Soc Trang AAF to Can Tho AAF, APO San Francisco 96215. The 52nd Quartermaster Detachment (Petroleum) and the 62nd Quartermaster Detachment (Petroleum) were reassigned from the 164th Aviation Group (Cbt) to the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) on 20 June 1970. At the close of the reporting period the organization of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) was as follows (Incl 1):

- (1) HHC, 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt), APO San Francisco 96296.
- (2) 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), APO San Francisco 96296.
- (3) 162nd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), APO San Francisco 96215.
- (4) 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), APO San Francisco 96215.
- (5) 221st Aviation Company (Util Aplt), APO San Francisco 96215.
- (6) 336th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), APO San Francisco 96296.
- (7) C Troop, 10th Air Cavalry, APO San Francisco 96215.

c. (U) Changes in command and Staff:

(1) LTC Robert L. Sauer, 524-24-2649, INF, was assigned as Commanding Officer of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) on 9 June 1970. LTC Billy I. McRill, 515-24-1605, INF, was reassigned to COMUS.

(2) Maj Charles J. Lepore, 179-30-5479, ADA, was assigned as Executive Officer of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) on 15 July 1970. Maj Louis B. Sokowski, 292-30-7556, was reassigned to 221st Aviation Company (U/A).

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(3) Maj Burnum E. Melton Jr. 417-40-6088, INF, was assigned as S-3 Officer 31 July 1970. Maj Judson R. Lucas, 269-30-5138, ARM, was reassigned to 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel).

(4) Cpt Daniel F. Schrage, 350-3505950, FA, was assigned as Assistant S-3, 17 June 1970. Cpt Paul C. Hollowell II, 254-60-1532, INF, was reassigned CONUS.

(5) Cpt Stephen F. Garrett, 445-40-2572, TC, was assigned as Adjutant on 17 June 1970. Cpt Thomas S. Catalano, 045-32-9006, ARM, was reassigned CONUS.

(6) CW2 Francis W. Turner, 156-28-8996, AGC, was assigned as Personnel Officer 21 June 1970. CW2 Cyril H. Bystricky, 728-05-6736, AGC was reassigned CONUS.

(7) Cpt Michael L. Wilton, 530-28-5991, INF, was assigned to S-4 on 26 July 1970. Cpt Barry W. Meeker, 028-28-2884, CE, was reassigned CONUS.

(8) Maj James A. Horton, 442-36-6068, INF, was assigned as Company Commander of 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), 28 July 1970. Maj Victor S. Connor, 458-60-8651, ADA, was reassigned CONUS.

(9) Maj Donald M. Frierson, 420-46-0301, INF, was assigned as Company Commander of C Troop 16th Air Cavalry on 8 July 1970. Maj Robert L. Phillips, 527-38-4625, AR, was reassigned CONUS.

(10) Maj Louis E. Sokowski, 292-30-7556, ADA, was assigned as Company Commander of 221st Aviation Company (U/A) on 15 July 1970. Maj Jimmy J. McGraw, 447-30-6751, SC, was reassigned CONUS.

(11) Maj Judson R. Lucas, 269-30-5138, ARM, was assigned as Company Commander of 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) on 1 August 1970. Maj Henry T. Brown Jr, 502-32-6354, CA, was reassigned CONUS.

- d. (C) Unit Strength: See Incl 2.
- e. (C) Aircraft status: See Incl 3.
- f. (C) Operational results: See Incl 4.
- g. (C) Operations:

(1) The 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt), during the reporting period, continued to provide aviation assets for preplanned airmobile assaults, troop insertions and extractions, air cavalry operations, tactical and administrative support, command liaison, medical evacuation and detailed visual reconnaissance in direct support of the 21st ARVN Division. Tactical and administrative assets for the 21st ARVN Division were provided by the elements of the Battalion constituted in TASK FORCE GUARDIAN: the 121st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), 336th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel), 221st Aviation Company (U/A) and C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry.

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Tactical support provided by TASK FORCE GUARDIAN consisted of mini-packages and air cavalry packages. A mini-package consists of five UH-1D/H utility helicopter troop transports, a fire team of UH-1F/C utility helicopter gunships and a UH-1D/H utility helicopter Command and Control ship. An air cavalry package consists of four OH-6A light observation scout helicopters, four AH-1G attack helicopter gunships, four UH-1H utility helicopter troop transports and a UH-1H utility helicopter Command and Control ship. On 15 July 1970 the 336th Aviation Company, 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) began training twenty VNAF pilots. This is in conjunction with the accelerated Phase II (Improvement and Modernization Program), approved by DOD on 28 April 1969. This program calls for Soc Trang Army Airfield to be turned over to the VNAF on 1 November 1970 and for the 13th Aviation Battalion to be relocated, with some of its companies reducing to zero strength. The "GUARDIANS OF THE MOKONG" will however, remain in the Delta, their home for the past seven years.

(2) Airmobile Operations: The Battalion supported 316 airmobile operations during the reporting period. Some of the significant operations are listed below:

(a) Combat operation of 2 May 1970: C Troop 16th Air Cavalry (Dark Horse) supported the 21st ARVN Division on an operation 15 miles north of Rach Soi (Center of mass: Coordinates: S 100332). Contact was made by the Scouts on the initial WR of the day. The enemy unit, elements of a NVA battalion, was moving southeast out of the Seven Mountains area and Cambodia, along a much used infiltration route. The enemy was taken by surprise and seemed ill organized. The Scouts engaged the small groups with mini-guns and the Cobras put in numerous rocket strikes. Two 21st ARVN Division Battalions were airlifted into the area, while a third battalion moved in on the ground. Contact was continuous throughout the day. On several occasions the friendlies were pinned down by automatic weapons fire. C Troop continued to provide direct fire support throughout the day allowing the ground units to advance. During the sweep of the area by the ground troops, 37 killed by air (KBA's) were found along with AK-47's, rocket propelled grenade (RPG) launchers and several 30 caliber machine guns.

(b) Combat operation of 10 May 1970: The 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) conducted an operation into Cambodia supporting ARVN ground forces. This operation took place 100 miles west of Saigon in the Parrot's Beak area of Cambodia. The mini-package encountered VC/NVA forces armed with automatic weapons and after the second lift of ARVN's were inserted, the VC/NVA fired on and hit one of the gunships, forcing the gunship to land. The Command and Control helicopter directed the gunships and ground troops to the area of the strongest resistance. Immediately after the gunships accurately placed a rocket attack into the area, the ground troops conducted a frontal assault. When the fighting subsided, the ground troops found eighteen enemy dead, ten KBA's and numerous indications of other enemy casualties and a large cache of weapons and documents.

(c) Combat operation of 17 May 1970: C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry (Dark Horse) supported the 31st Regiment, 21st ARVN Division on an operation in Cambodia.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, EGS CS70R-65 (R2) (U)

The Troop completed two visual reconnaissances (VR's) and began the third when the Scouts sighted an estimated 25 enemy soldiers. The Scouts marked the location and the Cobra gunships began expending their ordnance on the enemy positions. During the contact, Dark Horse accounted for the death of 40 enemy soldiers and the destruction of an enemy motor pool, two tractor trailer trucks, two passenger buses and one 51 caliber anti-aircraft weapon. Ground troops were inserted into the area of the heaviest contact. The ground troops made a search of the area and found several caches. The caches consisted of 120 small arms, 60 cases of dynamite, 100 cases of small arms ammunition, three 75mm recoilless rifles and numerous B40 and M16 rounds. Once the area was secured by ground troops the lift platoon airlifted the captured munitions to the 31st Regimental Command Post.

(d) Combat operation of 19 May 1970: C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry operated in Cambodia in support of the 31st Regiment. The troop completed four VR's resulting in the finding of a cache containing three thousand pounds of Viet Cong currency, approximate value: 10 million Vietnamese piasters or 800 thousand U. S. dollars.

(e) Combat operation of 20 May 1970: The 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) conducted an operation into Cambodia supporting ARVN ground forces. This operation took place 200 miles west of Saigon in the Seven Mountains Region of Cambodia. The mini-package inserted ARVN troops into areas of suspected enemy activity. Late in the afternoon the package was directed to an area of heavy contact. While inserting ARVN troops into a hot area, four (4) of the troop transports received numerous hits from three concealed .51 caliber machinegun positions. All of the aircraft were flown to the staging area at an Phu, RVN. Miraculously, none of the aircraft crewmembers were injured.

(f) Combat operation of 21 May 1970: The 162nd Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) conducted an operation in the vicinity south of Vi Thanh, RVN, (Center of mass: Coordinates R 5560), they were supporting the 21st ARVN Division with a mini-package and the first lift was picked up at Vi Thanh airfield with the intention of inserting them in a landing zone at coordinates WR 561605. Prior to the insertion, the command and control ship and gunships were over the landing zone (LZ) with the gunships providing preparatory fires in the LZ. They had negative enemy contact and the LZ area appeared to be uninhabited. On short final the gunships picked up the Vulture Flight and escorted them into the LZ. Upon touchdown a well camouflaged and heavily fortified enemy unit opened up with automatic weapons fire. All five slicks and both gunships received automatic fire to include .30 caliber fire from their 12 o'clock positions. The ARVN troops departing the aircraft were also receiving an intense volume of fire. The Vulture Flight remained in the LZ approximately ten seconds while the ARVN troops departed the aircraft. During the time on the ground the gunships were continually pounding the LZ with all their ordnance. The flight came out of the LZ with a left break and continued to receive a high volume of fire. Three of the aircraft proceeded to the 3rd Surgical Hospital at Binh Thuy to drop off wounded American crewmembers while the other two slicks were forced to land at Vi Thanh airfield with fuel leaks from the bullet damage.

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One gunship was forced to land a few miles from the LZ with a round through his engine. The mission could not be completed. It was later found that the lead aircraft in the Vulture Flight had taken thirty hits.

(g) Combat operation of 3 June 1970: The 336th Aviation Company (aslt Hel) scrambled two armed helicopters (UH-1C's) and one Command and Control helicopter to coordinates VS6035, where the airstrip near Kien Luong, known as the Cement Plant, was under heavy attack. The Thunderbird gunships were the first to arrive on station and commenced to attack the enemy positions. The aircraft continued their strikes while receiving heavy enemy fire. When the armed helicopters were released near night fall, they had successfully aided in halting the attack and caused great damage to the enemy. The 33th Aviation Company (aslt Hel) gunships were credited with 40 enemy killed, 20 structures and 9 sampans destroyed.

(h) Combat operation of 19 June 1970: The 121st Aviation Company (aslt Hel) supported the 1st and 2nd Vietnamese Marine Battalions in an airmobile operation south of Ca Mau (Center of mass: Coordinates W086989). The Tiger Flight made three insertions with negative contact. While the gunships were refueling and returning at Ca Mau airfield, the Marines on the ground came into light contact. The Viking gunships (3 OH-1H's) were scrambled back to the area, where all three gunships began receiving a heavy volume of fire from the tree lines. One of the gunships was shot down to the south of the enemy contact and had to be recovered by a OH-47. The Tiger Flight inserted troops around the downed aircraft to secure it. More gunships were scrambled to the area, as were Navy OV-10 Broncos (Black Ponies) from Binh Thuy. The gunships and Black Ponies continued to work over the area, while the Tiger Flight inserted the 2nd Marine Battalion. In all, 710 troops were inserted and the Viking gunships were credited with five KBA's.

(i) Combat operation of 5 July 1970: C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry supported the 32nd Regiment, 21st AAVN Division. VR's were conducted using a Personnel Detector XM-3 (People Sniffer) to initially locate areas of enemy concentration. The sniffer located a hot spot along a heavily vegetated stream line. The Scouts engaged with mini-gun fire and marked the area for Cobras to engage with flechettes. A battalion was inserted using the lift capability of the troop. The action resulted in 17 enemy KBA's.

h. (U) Training: The 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) continued to send personnel to various schools and courses.

- (1) Army Aviation Refresher Training Courses: 11, Phu Loi
- (2) UH-1 Instructor Pilot Courses: 4, Long Binh
- (3) OH-58A Transition Courses: 4, Vung Tau
- (4) OH-58A Transition Courses: 3, 164th Avn Gp, Can Tho
- (5) USARV Aviation Accident Report Course: 12, Long Binh
- (6) AH-1G Transition Courses: 2, Vung Tau
- (7) OH-6A Transition Courses: 1, Vung Tau
- (8) OH-6A Instructor Pilot Courses: 1, Vung Tau
- (9) Projectionist School: 2, Long Binh

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (P2) (U)

- (10) INFANT Officers Course: 3, Phu Loi
- (11) INFANT Enlisted Repairmans Course: 1, Phu Loi

i. (U) Morale and Discipline: The number of approved recommendations for awards received during this reporting period are shown by the types and totals awarded: Silver Star: 17, Distinguished Flying Cross: 109, Bronze Star: 170, Air Medal "V": 100, Air Medal: 342, ARCOM "V": 21, ARCOM: 516, Purple Heart: 40, Bronze Star "V": 6.

(1) During the reporting period the number of approved disciplinary actions taken under UCMJ were:

	OFFICERS	INFANT OFFICERS	EM
GENERALS	0	0	0
SPECIALS	0	0	3
SERGEANTS	0	0	0
ARTICLE 15's	0	1	126

(2) The number of personnel that took R & R or leave to various countries are denoted below:

Australia	56	Hawaii	75	Bangkok	24
Hong Kong	22	Taipei	18	Tokyo	20

j. (U) Safety:

(1) During this period the Battalion flew 42,720 hours and experienced 10 major accidents. At the end of FY 70, the Battalion had 155,332 cumulative hours which gave it a rate of 16.6 accidents per 100,000 flying hours.

(2) The 336th Aviation Company (aslt hel) and HHC did not experience any major accidents during this period.

(3) The statistics for the period from 1 May to 31 Jul 70 are as follows:

UNIT	ACCIDENTS	INCIDENTS	FORCED LANDINGS	PRECAUTIONARY LANDINGS	FLIGHT HOURS	RATE
HHC	0	0	0	0	545	0
121	4	1	1	2	8,056	49.6
162	2	1	1	5	6,447	30.9
191	1	4	1	1	6,887	14.5
221	1	1	0	3	5,072	19.7
336	0	1	2	4	7,326	0
C/16	2	1	3	1	8,347	23.9
TOTAL	10	8	8	16	42,720	23.4

2. (C) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Command Action.

a. (C) Personnel:

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(1) Personnel Shortages:

(a) Observation: There is a critical shortage of specialized maintenance personnel in the 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt). The Battalion has 43% of the Helicopter Technical Inspectors (MOS 67W20) it is authorized. The Battalion has only 10% of the Aircraft Engine Repairmen Apprentices (MOS 68A10) it is authorized and only 55% of the Senior Aircraft Engine Repairmen (MOS 68B20) authorized. Other critical shortages in the maintenance field are Aircraft Powertrain Repairmen (MOS 68D20) at 40% of authorized strength and Airframe Welders (MOS 68F30) at 50% of authorized strength. There is also a critical shortage of supervisors. First Sergeants/Platoon Sergeants (MOS 67Z50) are down to 46% of the authorized strength.

(b) Evaluation: Combat Aviation Battalions rely heavily on their specialized maintenance personnel. Their mission is to provide as much air support and the best air support as possible. This requires short turn arounds on Periodic Maintenance Inspections and all required maintenance. This is impossible without the necessary specialized maintenance personnel. Naturally, the quality of the maintenance performed will decrease when there is a shortage of specialists.

(c) Recommendations: Continued emphasis be placed on requisitioning of new personnel and that specialized screening be set up at replacement centers to insure an even distribution and control of critical MOS's.

(d) Command Action: Unit requirements for specialized maintenance personnel are continuously monitored and higher headquarters is kept informed of areas of criticality. Additionally, commanders at all levels are made aware of the importance of close supervision of all personnel to insure maximum output under the circumstances of minimum personnel.

b. (U) Intelligence: None

c. (C) Operations:

(1) Airmobile Operations:

(a) Observations: It has been noted during combat operations that mirrors have been used effectively in aiding aircraft in the identification of pickup zone.

(b) Evaluation: This method is effective, especially during the monsoon season where the usual method of using smoke has failed when the smoke has been suffocated in wet rice paddies.

(c) Recommendation: Ground commanders, both American and Vietnamese, should be instructed in the proper use of a mirror as a ground to air signal device. Mirrors should be readily available in pickup zones in the event smoke is not available or the pickup zone is too wet to utilize it.

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(d) Command Action: Ground commanders have been informed of the advantages and disadvantages of the use of mirrors in pickup zones for signaling aircraft.

(2) Armed Helicopter Employment:

(a) Observation: Many ground commanders do not understand the capabilities and limitations of the armed helicopter.

(b) Evaluation: It is essential that the ground commander, especially if he is the Air Mission Task Force Commander (AMTFC), understand the capabilities and limitations of the armed helicopter, for he is in a position where he can utilize them efficiently or he can misuse them completely.

(c) Recommendation: That all ground commanders, especially those serving as AMTFC's, be required to have a thorough knowledge of armed helicopters and their employment.

(d) Command Action: Airmobile classes, to include armed helicopter employment, have been given to ground commanders and their American Advisors throughout the 42d DTA by staff members of Task Force Guardian. A "Back Seat" training program is conducted in conjunction with the 164th Aviation Group (Cbt). This program allows for prospective AMTFC's to fly with a Command and Control aircraft of Task Force Guardian and observe the relationship between the AMTFC and the Air Mission Commander (AMC). A letter of instruction on armed helicopter employment and tactics, dated 3 August 1970, has been prepared by this Headquarters for personnel unfamiliar with armed helicopters.

(3) Night Phantom (Rach Soi):

(a) Observation: On 24 June 1970, the Night Phantom package (A C&C ship and two UH-1C gunships) of the 191st Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) operating from Rach Soi, RVN was ambushed by an estimated enemy squad while refueling their aircraft.

(b) Evaluation: It is obvious from the well-planned ambush that the Night Phantom package is operating effectively in Kien Giang Province. The Viet Cong felt that it was a great hinderance to their night activities. For it to continue to be effective, it must be protected from the occurrence of another ambush.

(c) Recommendation: Immediately following this incident additional security forces were requested at the airfield and it was requested that defense barriers be improved. Revetments were built by the refueling and rearming points. These were built without any recommendations from aviation units. As it turned out, it was unsafe to have revetments by each refueling point as it does not give helicopters sufficient room to maneuver from the active runway to the refueling pads. It has been recommended that only two of the refueling points have revetments built next to them.

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(d) Command Action: The Night Phantom package and all other Night Hawk packages no longer refuel all their aircraft simultaneously. One aircraft remains airborne at all times to provide coverage for the other aircraft. It was coordinated with the Kien Giang Province Senior Advisor to have only two refueling points with revetments.

(4) Air Cavalry operations:

(a) Observation: The majority of KBA's credited to C Troop, 16th Air Cavalry occur during the first 15 - 30 minutes of a visual reconnaissance (VR).

(b) Evaluation: Once the presence of the Troop in an area is known, the enemy seeks shelter in the many bunkers that are scattered throughout the area of operations (AO). It is difficult to detect the enemy inside bunkers and he often has the advantage in that the troop cannot easily destroy heavy bunkers, while the bunkers offer the enemy protection to engage aircraft.

(c) Recommendation: To catch the enemy in the open, you must surprise him. Raid type operations are recommended.

(d) Command Action: The 16th Air Cavalry standing operating procedure has been changed to incorporate a quick opener, which is a means of covering the AO rapidly, in order to find the enemy in the open and moving. The Scouts (OH-6A's) descend well clear of the AO and are vectored over the area at 50 to 80 knots by the C & C aircraft. The C & C ship and Cobra gunships follow behind as far as practical to allow the Scouts full advantage of the element of surprise. After the quick opener is completed a more detailed reconnaissance is made.

(5) Aircraft Hits:

(a) Observation: Recently, many aircraft have sustained aircraft hits in the pickup zone (PZ), especially when the PZ's have been close to treelines.

(b) Evaluation: Due to the airmobile nature of operations in Vietnam the enemy knows an extraction by helicopters will likely be made. His knowledge of the terrain and weather allows him excellent planning for ambushing the lift element, particularly during the last extraction when there are few troops remaining in the pickup zone.

(c) Recommendation: Pickup zones should be well clear of treelines and other natural camouflage, so that the enemy cannot ambush the lift elements from nearby hiding places. Smoke should not be utilized in the pickup zone until immediately prior to extraction, as this will clarify to the enemy the exact location of the pickup zone. Mirrors should be utilized when possible.

(d) Command Action: Ground unit commanders have been encouraged to keep out a security force until seconds prior to the last extraction. Gunships are providing a complete visual reconnaissance of the area surrounding the pickup zone prior to bringing in the lift slicks. AMC's and AMTC's have been informed of the importance of keeping the PZ's clear of natural camouflage that will allow the enemy ambush opportunities.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

(6) Tactical Air Strikes:

(a) Observation: During contact with a Viet Cong unit a tactical air strike was requested by the ground commander. The Senior U. S. Advisor on the ground contacted the flight of two OV-10 aircraft for target assignment. Due to the position of the observer on the ground, much of the ordnance missed the target area but appeared from the ground to strike the target.

(b) Evaluation: Airstrikes, like artillery, can usually be better adjusted from the air where the entire area can be seen.

(c) Recommendation: If there is any doubt in the ground commander's mind where the airstrikes are hitting, he should relinquish control to the air observer.

(d) Command Action: All Air Mission Commanders have been encouraged to assist ground commanders when air strikes are missing the target areas.

(7) Weather Advisory Service:

(a) Observation: With the arrival of the Southwest Monsoon in the Delta, many combat operations have been delayed or canceled due to weather.

(b) Evaluation: This results in non-productive time on the aircraft. Many times a tactical package proceeds to its reporting point only to find the area is socked in by weather and it has to fly to another location to wait out the weather. Often troops have been inserted early in the afternoon, and cannot be extracted until darkness due to a weather hold. This makes the extractions vulnerable to VC ambushes and may result in the ground troops having to spend the night in the field without the necessary equipment to do so.

(c) Recommendation: Air Mission Commanders (AMC's) and Air Mission Task Force Commanders (AMTFC's) should take the weather into consideration when planning insertions and extractions. This is especially true in afternoon operations when there is a greater likelihood of weather affecting operations. PIREPS and Weather Station reports should be disseminated to AMC's and MATFC's so that they can remain up to date on the weather moving into their area.

(d) Command Action:

1. A letter of instruction (LOI), this headquarters, dated 6 July 1970, Subject: "Weather and Artillery Advisory Service", was distributed to each company. It explained how O-1 aircraft (Bird Dogs) would be utilized by each tactical package to gain weather and artillery information for the area they would be working. The Bird Dogs of the 221st Aviation Company work for the various Province Senior Advisors. They begin each day by doing a visual reconnaissance (VR) of the Province, so they are familiar with the weather and artillery in the Province. The AMC calls the Bird Dog in the Province he will be working and gets the weather and artillery in the Province. In this way the AMC knows before traveling to the area, if he will be able to conduct his operation, or will have to shut down and wait out the weather.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

2. All AMC's have been briefed on the importance of including weather in their planning considerations. In airmobile classes presented to ground commanders, this has also been emphasized.

3. The USAF Weather Station at Soc Trang provides the Battalion Operations Center (BOC) with a written terminal forecast each evening and a verbal weather forecast by telephone each morning at 0800. These are disseminated to the Companies in time for their mission briefings to their aviators.

d. (U) Organization: None

e. (U) Training:

(1) VNAF Pilot Training:

(a) Observation: Twenty VNAF Pilots have been training with the 336th Aviation Company (Aslt Hel) since 15 July 1970. It is felt that this is too many VNAF Pilots in training with one unit.

(b) Evaluation: The VNAF Pilots are required to get from 60 to 100 hours per month for the three month training period with the 336th. This means that a minimum of seven VNAF Pilots must fly each day, in order that they get the required 60 hours. Since the VNAF Pilots do not fly in our gunships or Command and Control ships, a company is hard pressed when flying combat assaults to meet the minimum of seven VNAF Pilots per day. With fifteen VNAF Pilots assigned, each pilot could fly almost every other day and would average about 80 hours per month. This would be more beneficial to the VNAF Pilots.

(c) Recommendations: Fifteen VNAF Pilots should be the maximum number in training in an assault helicopter company at one time.

(d) Command Action: This has been verbally emphasized to higher headquarters.

(2) OH-6A Scout Pilot Transitioning:

(a) Observation: OH-6A Scout pilots are required to fly low level during missions. A high percentage of new scout pilots have tree strikes during their first 50 hours.

(b) Evaluation: Flying scout missions require the pilot make immediate reactions to avoid having tree strikes. New pilots have a tendency to become so engrossed in targets that they forget about flying and think only of destroying the target (target fixation). As the experience level grows, the pilot learns to control the aircraft better and also becomes more aware of the whole picture around him, thus experienced pilots have less accidents.

(c) Recommendation: Increase transition period to include flying door gunner on combat missions.

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(d) Command Action: In order to bring the experience level of new OH-6A pilots to a safe degree, additions have been made to the transition and training period. Pilots are required to fly as door gunner for 25 hours on combat missions. This allows them time to learn the act of picking out targets (scouting). It also gives them a better idea of the conditions which the observer operates under. In addition the new pilot is required to complete 25 hours of low level flight training with an instructor pilot or qualified pilot.

f. (U) Logistics:

(1) Stream Liner:

(a) Observation: The new supply system, Streamliner, in which requisitions are forwarded directly to AMMC (Aviation Materiel Maintenance Command), without having to go through Direct Support Unit channels, and aircraft EDP (Equipment Deadlined for Parts) parts are often obtained the same day, continues to enable using units to maintain a low "NORS" (Not Operationally Ready Supply) rate.

(b) Evaluation: Streamliner is an effective and simple system for obtaining necessary aircraft repair parts.

(c) Recommendation: This system be utilized by more units in Vietnam.

(d) Command Action: None

(2) O-1 Aircraft Engines:

(a) Observation: The average waiting period for engines, utilizing a EDP requisition, for O-1 aircraft is 30 to 45 days.

(b) Evaluation: Aircraft that are badly needed in support of combat operations remain EDP for long periods even after continuous follow up and requisitioning.

(c) Recommendation: That steps be taken to reevaluate requisitioning and supply channels to expedite normal resupply of EDP O-1 engines.

(d) Command Action: Continued EDP requisitioning, plus the advent of the Streamliner system should alleviate part of the problem.

(3) Waste of Ammunition:

(a) Observation: Much retrograde ammunition taken from various stage-fields has been a result of indigenous personnel removing the boxes for personal use.

(b) Evaluation: The quantity of retrograde ammunition taken from stage-fields is excessive. Much of it could be eliminated if rockets and other ammunition were left in their containers.

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(c) Recommendation: Province Senior Advisors should insure that the personnel they have securing stagefields also secure the ammunition containers at the stagefields.

(d) Command Action: Conex containers have been placed at all stagefields for the purpose of storing good ammunition and retrograde ammunition. Province Senior Advisors have been notified of the existing problem with indigenous personnel using storage containers for personal use.

g. (U) Communications: None

h. (U) Materiel: None

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ROBERT L. SUERS
LTC INF
Commanding

AVBACC (15 Aug 70) 1st Im
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 13th Aviation Battalion
(Combat) for Period ending 31 July 1970, AFS 88:06-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HQ, 164th Aviation Group (Combat), APO 96215 20 Aug 1970

Department of the Army, AFHQ: AVBACC
Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, AFHQ: AVBACC-0, APO 96304

1. (U) The attached 13th CAB GLL for period ending 31 July 1970 has been reviewed by this headquarters.
2. (U) The following comments are made on the report: Para 2, pages 7 and 8 concur with comments.


LEO A. SOUCAL
Colonel, CA
Commanding

AVBACC-0 (15 Aug 70) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 13th Aviation Battalion
(Combat) for Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

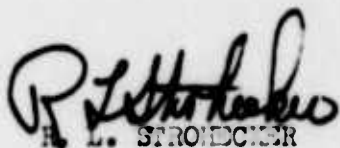
DA, HEADQUARTERS 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384 19 SEP 1970

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and concurs with its contents.
2. The following additional comment is considered pertinent:

Paragraph 2a(1), page 7, addresses the problem of shortages of specialized maintenance personnel. There is no apparent reason why MOS 68F30 should have been at 50% strength in the 13th CAB while the 164th CAG as a whole was at 107% strength. The personnel officer, 164th CAG was contacted on 5 Sep 70 by the AG, 1st Aviation Brigade, and advised to insure equitable distribution of personnel with critical MOS's. Other personnel shortages during this time frame were consistent throughout the 1st Aviation Brigade.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



R. L. STROEDCKER
CPT, AGC
Asst Adjutant General

AVHDO-DO (11 Aug 70) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion
(Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)(U)

Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375 19 NOV 1970

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

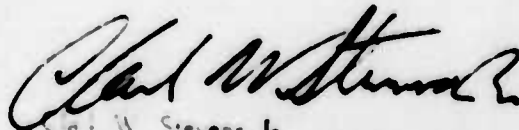
1. This Headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1970 from Headquarters, 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) and comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Personnel Shortages," page 7, paragraph 2a(1) and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2. Shortage of specialized aviation maintenance personnel continues to be a matter of concern at both USARV and DA. Past fill experience indicates, however, that the shortage of these personnel will continue. In an attempt to alleviate these shortages, DA has undertaken a number of programs. Subordinate commands are responsible for insuring an equitable distribution of personnel within their subordinate units and the proper utilization of their personnel. Commanders are also encouraged to utilize to the maximum OJT, grade and MOSC substitution. No action is required by USARPAC. Action is required by DA to insure the timely fill of personnel requisitions.

b. Reference item concerning "O-1 Aircraft Engines," page 12, paragraph 2f(2): nonconcur. The 30 - 45 day waiting period for O-1 engines was due to movement of the DSSA. No supply problem now exists for O-1 engines. Unit has been so advised.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



Carl W. Stevens Jr.
Lieutenant Colonel
Adjutant General

Cy furn:
1st Avn Bde
13th Avn Bn

GPOP-DT (11 Aug 70) 4th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 13th Aviation Battalion (Cbt) for
Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 14 DEC 1970

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:

L. N. Ozaki, 1LT

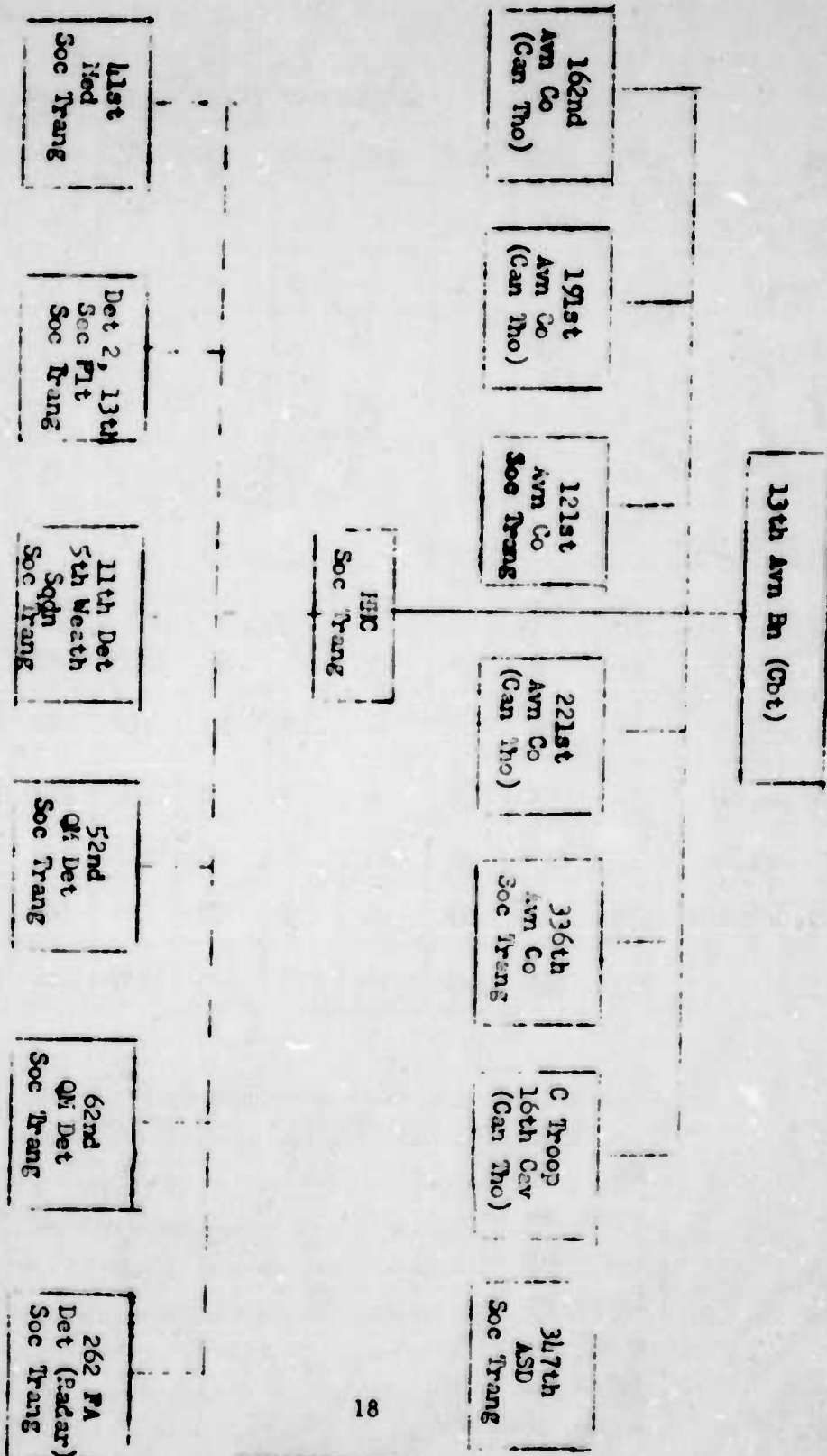
L. N. OZAKI
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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11 August 1970

AV 421-02

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970 HCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)



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11 August 1970

AFM 1-38

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (12) (U)
13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) Unit Strength breakdown by Unit, Direct Hire, MOS shortages, and Civilian Technical Representatives

UNIT	OFFICERS			WARRANT OFFICERS			ENLISTED			TOTAL	
	AUTH	ASGD	PRES	AUTH	ASGD	PRES	AUTH	ASGD	PRES	AUTH	ASGD
BHC	19	17	17	3	10	10	87	104	104	109	131
13th Scty	0	1	1	0	0	0	24	15	15	24	16
52d QM	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	7	8	7
62d QM	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	7	8	7
41st Med	1	1	1	0	0	0	8	11	11	9	12
262nd Pa	0	0	0	1	1	1	8	10	8	9	11
121st Avn Co	19	16	16	51	40	40	218	190	189	288	246
162nd Avn Co	19	18	18	51	40	40	218	192	191	288	250
191st Avn Co	19	18	18	51	45	45	218	189	183	288	252
221st Avn Co	41	19	19	2	7	7	104	117	111	147	143
336th Avn Co	19	13	13	51	33	33	218	194	194	288	240
C Twp, 16th Cav	16	18	18	34	33	33	216	183	184	266	239
TOTAL	153	121	121	244	209	209	1335	1224	1204	1732	1554

UNIT	AUTH VN	ON HAND
BHC	4	4
121st Avn Co	16	13
162nd Avn Co	8	7
191st Avn Co	8	2
221st Avn Co	3	0
336th Avn Co	15	14
C Twp, 16th Cav	0	0
TOTAL	54	40

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AVB:BN-GC

11 August 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period Ending 31 July 1970, RGS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U) Unit, Direct Hire, MOS shortages and Civilian Technical Representatives

Shortages MOS Report (50% Strength or Less)

<u>MOS</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ASGD</u>
11B10	Rifleman	33	8
11B1F	Pathfinder	4	0
11D2F	Scout Gunner	8	2
17B10	Power Gen Operator	1	0
31B20	Radio Mechanic	6	2
35A20	Avionics Cou Eq Oper	5	1
35B10	Avionics Rpr Sp	5	1
45A10	Unit Maintenance Rpmn	1	0
45J20	Sr Asst Unit Rpmn	24	12
51H20	Crash Rescue Sp	8	4
52A10	Rpr Gen Eq Opr/Mech Appr	4	0
55A10	Ammunition Appr	2	1
67A10	Hel Rpmn Appr	70	5
67A2F	Crew Chief	132	55
67W20	Hel Tech Inspector	19	0
67A50	First Sergeant/ Platoon Sgt	32	15
68A10	Asst Eng Rpmn Appr	10	1
68B20	Sr Asst Eng Rpmn	20	11
68D20	Asst Air Trn Rpmn	5	2
68F30	Airframe Welder	6	3
71B30	Clerk Typist	5	1
71F20	Flight Operations Sp	25	10
71T20	Eq Reports Clerk	10	5
76A10	Unit Supply Clerk	18	2
76T20	Asst Pt Supply Sp	17	5
76Y30	Armedr	6	3
81A10	Cooks Helper	6	3

Civilian Technical Representatives

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ASGD</u>
110, 13th Avn Co (Cot)	0
121st Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
162nd Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
191st Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
221st Avn Co (Util A/P)	0
336th Avn Co (Aslt Hel)	2
C Troop, 16th Cav (dir)	0

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AVR 71-30
 SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion
 (Combat), for the Period ending 31 July 1970, AOS CSFOR-65 (R2) (3)

Comp n°	UH-1B		UH-1C		UH-1D/H		OH-1		OH-6/H-53a		UH-6a		AH-1G	
	auth	OH	auth	OH	auth	OH	auth	OH	auth	OH	auth	OH	auth	OH
HEC					2	1			3	3	1	1		
121st avn Co	8	4			22	21								
162nd avn Co			3	5	22	21								
191st avn Co			8	5	22	22								
221st avn Co							32	32						
336th avn Co			8	7	22	22								
C Troop					8	8			5	8			5	8
TOTL	8	4	24	17	58	55	32	32	12	11	1	1	5	8

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11 August 1970

AF3.311-70

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat), for the Period ending 31 July 1970, AOS 03F01-65 (12) (1) 13th Aviation Battalion (Combat) Operational Results

UNIT	Weights Lifted	Cargo Tons	Empty M.A.	Structures Dest	Saps and Logs	Acft. Comb. Loss, Damaged	Sorties
121st Avn Co	41,552	335	211	218	202	0 3	23,142
102nd Avn Co	20,829	233	110	620	413	2 2	10,500
191st Avn Co	23,404	0	132	503	632	2 1	18,684
221st Avn Co	0	0	227	113	75	0 0	5,838
336th Avn Co	39,599	394	175	346	386	1 10	29,451
C Trp	17,938	18	357	351	256	2 7	13,053
TOTAL	143,322	980	1212	2156	1559	7 23	92,069

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