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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (25 Jun 70) FOR OT UT 702042

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 90th Replacement Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1970

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

1 Incl  
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AD No. **AD871567**  
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30 June 1970

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 90TH REPLACEMENT BATTALION  
APO US FORCES 96491

AVIF-C

15 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 90th Replacement Battalion,  
Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

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

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

1. Section 1: Significant Organizational Activities

a. The primary mission of the 90th Replacement Battalion continues to be to receive, control, orient, billet, mess, and process for onward movement in-country replacements and CONUS returnee personnel. The battalion continued to operate a tri-service R and R processing center at Camp Alpha, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon.

b. During the reporting period, the 90th Replacement Battalion processed 37,135 replacements, 40,281 CONUS returnees, and 50,202 R and R personnel. There were approximately 8100 other personnel (hospital returnees, leave personnel, and in-country transients) processed.

c. S-1 Activities:

(1) The following personnel changes occurred:

(a) CPT Daniel E. Bauer assumed duties as Battalion S-2/3.

(b) CPT John Hamman assumed command of the 18th Replacement Company.

(2) During the reporting period, 106 transient enlisted personnel donated blood at the 93d and 24th Evacuation Hospitals.

(3) The Personnel Section underwent a complete reorganization as a result of the USARV CPMI inspection which found the overall personnel operation unsatisfactory. The reorganization and correction of deficiencies noted by the CPMI team were accomplished prior to the Annual General Inspection, which gave an overall rating of excellent for the Personnel Section.

FOR OT UT  
702042  
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d. S-2/3 Operations:

(1) At the direction of the Deputy AG for Replacement Operations, USARV, a records survey of rotatee personnel was conducted from 9 February through 23 February 1970. The survey revealed that of 5,015 personnel processed during this period, 52 were missing official records (MPRJ, FDRF, Health, Dental, and Clothing Records).

(2) On 10 February 1970, Mr. Don Baker of ABC News and Mr. Kaiser of the Washington Post filmed various aspects of the processing of DEROS personnel including the comprehensive customs briefing and actual customs inspection of baggage.

(3) A Department of the Army Sample Survey of Military Personnel was administered to 4500 rotatees during the period 9 February through 23 February 1970. The survey investigated the individual soldier's knowledge of the Rules of Land Warfare and the Geneva Convention. Results of the survey were forwarded to OPO, DA.

(4) A restricted access walkway was constructed between the shake-down building and the Air Force baggage storage area. The purpose of the walkway is to insure that all accompanied baggage is "sterile" and secure upon completion of customs inspection. Lighting for this area will be installed upon receipt of fixtures.

(5) On 27 February 1970, a 122mm rocket impacted in the battalion compound. There were no casualties or property damage.

(6) On 15 March 1970, inprocessing procedures for senior enlisted DEROS personnel were centralized. Initial inprocessing of all enlisted rotatees is now accomplished at a single location (Quonset 2).

(7) Medical Corps officers of the 44th Medical Brigade conducted a tuberculosis survey among DEROS personnel from 3 April through 29 April 1970. The survey involved the interpretation of reactions to TINE tests administered previously by selected units. Results of the survey will be compiled in June 1970.

(8) The 1970 edition of TOUR 365 booklets was completed during this quarter and delivery to the battalion began in April 1970. As of the end of April, 100,000 copies had been received. One copy of this booklet is given to each officer and enlisted rotatee.

(9) In order to upgrade the battalion area and to eliminate safety hazards, the removal of dead trees was begun in April 1970.

(10) The battalion underwent a practice YELLOW alert on 18 March 1970.

(11) The Unit Reaction Force participated in monthly patrols, weapons training, and equipment/ammunition inspections throughout the period. The URF was also called upon to conduct sweeps of the area to the northwest of the battalion compound.

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(12) An article concerning the customs check at Camp Alpha appeared in the 23 February 1970 edition of the Pacific Stars and Stripes.

(13) Civilian clothes are now authorized for Hong Kong R and R personnel. With this decision, civilian clothing now may be worn to all R and R sites. However, due to the requirement that officers be readily identifiable upon arrival in Hong Kong, officer personnel are required to wear a bright red tag on their person.

(14) The practice of sending R and R "no-show" reports to units whose personnel have missed scheduled R and R flights has been discontinued as an unnecessary workload since unit commanders took little or no action on the reports.

(15) On 15 March 1970, the 90th Replacement Battalion was declared a restricted access post. Upon implementation of this "closed post" policy, access to the compound was limited to cadre personnel, casual personnel, and individuals having official business within the battalion.

(16) From 1 March through 7 April, approximately 5,000 in-country transfers from the redeploying First Infantry Division were processed through the battalion. On 6 and 7 April, a 340-man color guard of the Big Red 1 was processed through the battalion.

(17) Additional perimeter lighting was installed along the battalion's segment of the Long Binh Post external perimeter. The perimeter lighting and generator installed for TET during the previous reporting period has been retained as a permanent defensive measure.

(18) From 20 through 22 April, the battalion billeted and fed approximately 150 Jewish personnel from outlying areas who were in the Long Binh area to participate in Passover activities.

(19) The Annual General Inspection for S-2/3 activities resulted in an overall rating of excellent.

e. S-4 Activities:

(1) Numerous rebuilding and improvement projects were undertaken to improve facilities within the battalion including replacement of staircases on some buildings, painting of the Chapel, NCO Club, and guard shacks.

(2) Continuing effort was devoted to the rebuilding, refurbishing, and improvement of perimeter, personnel, and ammunition bunkers.

(3) All battalion drainage ditches and the swampy areas of the compound were cleared and upgraded in anticipation of the onset of the Southwest Monsoon in May.

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- (4) The battalion swimming pool was extensively refurbished. New showers were installed and new sidewalks, fences, partitions, and signs were constructed. An effective system of chlorination was developed. Sanitation and safety measures of the pool have been approved by the USARV Surgeon General's office.
- (5) One new perimeter tower bunker was constructed to improve observation over the eastern portion of the perimeter.
- (6) The construction of new facilities at Camp Alpha continued throughout the reporting period. Construction of the new mess hall began on 19 February 1970 and is nearing completion. The new Processing Terminal was completed on 30 April and became operational on 2 May. The terminal was named E. B. Robinson Hall in memory of Mr. E. B. Robinson who was killed during the construction of the facility. The Central Purchasing Agent, Saigon, has not yet received equipment for the new terminal; therefore, old equipment will be utilized to the maximum extent possible.
- (7) The construction priority at Camp Alpha is raised from 59 to 7.5, resulting in more workers being added to the project in April.
- (8) On 4 February, Camp Alpha was tied into Tan Son Nhut base power.
- (9) The upgrading of battalion mess facilities, latrines, billets, revetments, and grounds continued on a self-help basis.
- (10) The battalion AGI conducted in April resulted in an overall rating of excellent for S-4 activities.

Section 2: Commander's Observations and Recommendations:

a. Personnel:

- (1) Observation: With limited cadre personnel available to the battalion, it is difficult to enforce the policy of requiring replacement personnel to police and clean transient billets, and to maintain order and security in the billets.
- (2) Evaluation: In an attempt to resolve the problem, approval was requested and received from the Deputy AG for Replacement Operations, USARV, to hold a total of five E-6 replacement personnel in the battalion to serve as barracks sergeants. Each group of Barracks Sergeants is held for seven days and rotated. Each individual is made responsible for the police and control of replacement personnel in two transient billets.
- (3) Recommendation: The system of utilizing casual Barracks Sergeants has proven highly effective and has resulted in cleaner billets and increased control over transient personnel. It is highly recommended that this procedure be continued.

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3. Operations:

(1) Observation: Personnel continue to arrive at the 90th Replacement Battalion without Commanders Certificates authorizing them to convert more than \$200 in MPC to US dollars, without appropriate amendments to orders when required, and without MAC Travel Authorizations (MTAs).

(2) Evaluation: Failure of units to provide DEROS personnel with all the forms necessary to their processing results in personal hardship to the individual, added workload to the battalion, and inconvenience to the losing organization when personnel must be returned for further processing.

(3) Recommendation: Units should be reminded periodically by USARV that preparation of MTAs, amendments to orders and Commanders Certificates is a unit responsibility. It is further recommended that specific units be required to reply by indorsement concerning their out-processing procedures when it can be documented that such units are continually in contravention of USARV directives.

(4) Observation: Numerous incidents involving violations of the UCMJ have occurred among transient DEROS personnel during the quarter.

(5) Evaluation: Change 2 to USARV Regulation 330-12 directs that offenders will be returned to their parent units for disciplinary action when deemed appropriate by the replacement battalion. Men returned under this provision often have little or no disciplinary actions taken against them by units concerned. In some cases, the units have refused to pick up these offenders.

(6) Recommendation: It is essential that unit commanders comply with the provisions of USARV directives and insure that appropriate action is taken against all offenders returned to their units. It is recommended that units refusing to pick up offenders when asked by the 90th Replacement Battalion be directed to do so by USARV.

(7) Observation: During the period 1 March through 7 April 1970, the battalion processed approximately 5,000 in-country transfers from the redeploying First Infantry Division. Numerous disciplinary and transportation difficulties were encountered.

(8) Evaluation:

(a) Personnel of the First Infantry Division were assigned directly to their new units. Their orders directed them to report to the 90th Replacement Battalion for onward movement to their new units, rather than assigning them to the battalion for further assignment or providing for unit to unit movement. This resulted in the 90th having difficulty controlling these individuals and enforcing discipline.

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(b) The large in-house population of these reassignees who were largely disgruntled and resistant to moving on to their new units resulted in five weeks of almost nightly incidents involving robbery, racial disturbance, muggings, and acts of violence.

(c) Since reassigned personnel were afforded no opportunity to ship hold baggage to their new units, they arrived at the 90th Replacement Battalion with all their possessions including stereo equipment, refrigerators, and various other bulky, heavy items. This resulted in a great problem with air transportation, since the cargo capacity of a C-130 aircraft configured for troop movement is only 3500 pounds. Consequently, each day numerous personnel were removed from flights because of excess baggage. This resulted in the loss of sorely needed seats on aircraft. This problem was compounded by the fact that reassigned personnel were authorized only 66 pounds of baggage by their orders, although it should have been obvious that some provision had to be made for the movement of personal property.

(d) There were insufficient in-country flights available to move the number of personnel (reassignees and new replacements) being processed by the battalion during this period. No advance provisions had been made for additional flights to handle this overload of personnel, and every attempt to schedule additional aircraft during this period met with frustration and failure.

(9) Recommendations: Future redeployments of large units should be far better planned and coordinated. The following specific recommendations are made with this goal in mind:

(a) To the maximum extent possible, personnel should be moved from the redeploying unit directly to the new units of assignment. Experience has demonstrated that the majority of the personnel being reassigned are bound for only four to six primary destinations. If this situation exists during future unit redeployments, advance arrangements should be made to schedule Special Airlift Missions from the air strip servicing the old unit directly to the new destinations. If the number of personnel assigned to a certain destination is too small to warrant a SAM aircraft and movement by surface transportation is impossible, then these personnel could be sent to the replacement battalion for shipment.

(b) Those personnel sent to the replacement battalion should be assigned to the USARV Transient Detachment for further assignment to their new unit. This provision will insure proper personnel accounting and will have the added benefit of giving replacement battalions control over these personnel in situations involving disciplinary problems.

(c) Provisions for the movement of hold baggage or excess baggage to new units must be considered and pre-planned.



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(d) Whatever course of action is decided upon for the movement of personnel, it is essential that Special Airlift Missions be scheduled well in advance specifically for the purpose of moving in-country transfers.

(10) Observation: There has been a recent trend among many returning R and R passengers to attempt to smuggle US currency into Vietnam.

(11) Evaluation: As the smuggling trend became evident, procedures for a thorough search of all returning R and R personnel were developed. Each person is now completely checked out and those apprehended are placed in custody of the Tan Son Nhut Air Police. Search procedures for departing R and R personnel have also been revised and improved. The flow of drugs, marijuana, and other contraband out of Camp Alpha has been sharply reduced.

(12) Recommendation: The search procedures in use at Camp Alpha as well as those on the battalion compound at Long Binh must be continually reviewed and updated as personnel become wise to various methods.

(13) Observation: Processing of personnel being separated UP AR 635-212 continues to be a problem.

(14) Evaluations: Units send 212 discharge personnel to the 90th Replacement Battalion under escort. However, the personnel arrive at all hours of the day and night. Due to the requirement that the battalion screen all records for 212 discharge personnel, this situation results in considerable inconvenience for the S-1 section. In addition, once the records have been screened and the individual's paperwork submitted for outprocessing, the escort generally departs. The battalion has neither the cadre nor the facilities to control 212 discharge personnel who often create disciplinary problems or go AWOL. This situation is compounded by the fact that often, due to flight scheduling, these personnel must stay within the battalion from 24 to 72 hours before they can be returned to CONUS.

(15) Recommendation: It has been formally recommended to USARV that a firm policy be established for the processing of personnel being separated UP AR 635-212. If implemented, this policy will require that units contact the replacement battalions prior to shipping 212 discharge personnel. The replacement battalions would establish the reporting date and time for the individual based upon flight availability and processing time. The new policy would also require the unit escorts to remain with the 212 personnel until released by the replacement battalion.

c. Training: None

d. Intelligence: None

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e. Logistics:

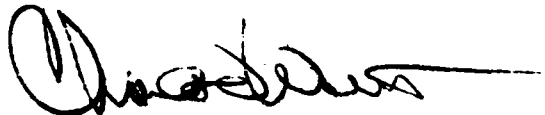
(1) Observation: Power outages at Camp Alpha are a continuing problem creating numerous difficulties in the processing of R and R personnel.

(2) Evaluation: Camp Alpha was tied into the power supply of Tan Son Nhut Air Base on 4 February 1970. Between 6 and 11 April there were separate power outages which resulted in great inconvenience to R and R personnel as well as processing personnel. In the event of power problems, Tan Son Nhut cuts the power to Camp Alpha to prevent or correct overloads. Camp Alpha has no backup generators, and attempts to secure generators have failed so far. This situation will continue to be a hindrance to the accomplishment of the R and R mission until it can be resolved.

(3) Recommendation: Continued efforts must be made to secure an alternate source of power for Camp Alpha.

f. Organization: None

g. Other: None



CHARLES O. WALTZ  
MAJ, AGC  
Acting Commander

~~1 Incl~~  
~~90th Repl Bn units~~  
Incl wd HQ, DA

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- 2 - Commander-in-Chief, USARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558
- 3 - Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375

AVHGC-DST ( 15 May 70) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 90th Replacement Battalion  
Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375 .. MAY 1970

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

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1970 from Headquarters, 90th Replacement Battalion.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Commanders Certificates", page 5, paragraph b(1): concur. A command message from Headquarters, USARV will be disseminated throughout the command reminding commanders of their responsibilities with regard to this necessary pre-processing, prior to movement of personnel to replacement battalions.

b. Reference item concerning "Violations of the UCMJ", page 5, paragraph b(4): concur. Units refusing to pick up offenders when asked by the 90th Replacement Battalion will be directed to do so by USARV. However, any directive to the unit concerned that the individual being returned should or must be the subject of disciplinary action would constitute unlawful command influence. Unit has been so advised.

c. Reference item concerning "Troop Movement", page 5, paragraph b(8): concur. Deployment of large units should be accomplished separately and away from the normal operation of the replacement battalion. Personnel management teams can be furnished to the units to be redeployed to control and direct movement of troops within country and to separate DEROS personnel for onward movement to CONUS through the 90th and 22d Replacement Battalions.

d. Reference item concerning "Baggage of Personnel being Reassigned within RVN", page 6, paragraph b(9): concur. MACV Directive 59-3 authorizes the granting of 134 pounds excess accompanied baggage for intra-RVN movement via CSAS. Unaccompanied baggage not desired by the member at his new RVN duty station could have been shipped to CONUS under the provisions of USARV Regulation 55-2. It appears that a misinterpretation was made of USARV OPLAN 183-70 which limits the accompanied baggage of personnel deploying from RVN to 66 pounds. Future units redeploying or inactivating will be so advised.

AVHGC-DST (15 May 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 90th Replacement Battalion  
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g. Reference item concerning "Processing of Personnel being separate. UP AR 635-212", page 7, paragraph b(13): concur. Policy and instructions have been disseminated to all subordinate commands incorporating those recommendations noted in paragraph b(13).

f. Reference item concerning "Power Outages at Camp Alpha", page 8, paragraph e(1): nonconcur. Power outages at Camp Alpha are not a continuing problem. Three outages occurred at Camp Alpha during the period 6 through 11 April 1970. One of these outages was caused by a power plant malfunction which left a considerable portion of Tan Son Nhut Air Base without power. The other two outages were the result of load shedding required by an overload condition. Although inconvenient as these outages are they were not of such length to cause grave problems. Operational changes have been made at the Air Force Power Plant and no load shedding has occurred since 11 April 1970. Two separate power projects are now underway at Tan Son Nhut which will add over 2000 KW of capacity to the Tan Son Nhut area. Also nonconcur in providing an alternate source of power to Camp Alpha. Standby power is authorized only for the following facilities:

(1) Tactical Operation Centers of separate brigades and higher headquarters.

(2) Communication Facilities providing trunking and switching to separate brigades and higher headquarters.

(3) Hospital facilities.

Unit has been so advised.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



D. J. WINTER  
1LT, AGC

Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:  
90th Repl Bn


GPOP-DT (15 May 70) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ 90th Replacement Battalion for Period  
Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 16 JUN 70

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

1. This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.
2. Inclosure 1 to basic letter is missing and will be forwarded as soon as received.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



L.M. OZAKI  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

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