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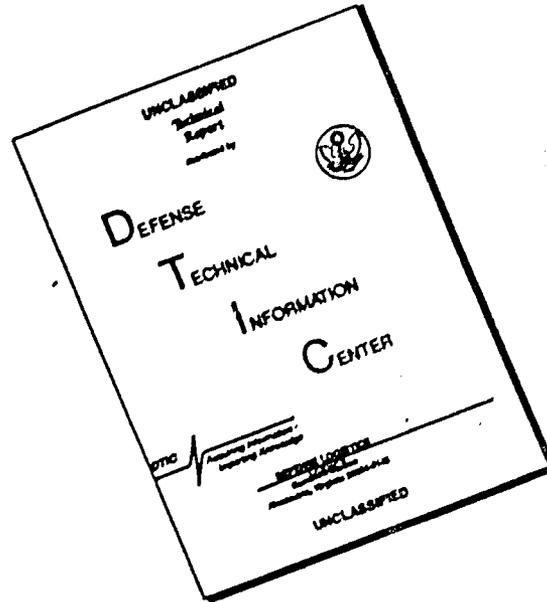
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**OPERATIONAL REPORT ON LESSONS LEARNED,**

Headquarters, <sup>11th</sup> ELEVENTH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION <sup>⑧</sup>

1 May 1966 - 31 July 1966

⑨ Operational rept. for quarterly period ending 31 Jul 66

Prepared by

⑩ Major David S. Johnson

⑪ 31 Jul 66

Office of the S3, Headquarters

11th Combat Aviation Battalion

⑫ 51 p.

Approved by

*Joseph B. Starker*  
JOSEPH B. STARKER  
Lt Colonel, Infantry

⑬ OACSFOR

⑭ OT-RD-660150

Headquarters  
12th Combat Aviation Group  
United States Army, Vietnam

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. PERSONNEL.....1  
II. INTELLIGENCE.....7  
III. OPERATIONS.....9  
IV. TRAINING.....13  
V. SECURITY PLATOON.....16  
VI. PATHFINDERS.....17  
VII. SUPPLY.....21  
VIII. AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE.....23  
IX. AVIATION SAFETY.....28  
X. SIGNAL.....31  
XI. MEDICAL.....34  
XII. LESSONS LEARNED.....36

INCLOSURES:

1. 11th Combat Aviation Battalion Headquarters Organization
2. Command Organization
3. Awards and Decorations
4. 11th Combat Aviation Battalion Newspaper
5. Aerial View Phu Loi Army Airfield

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## I. PERSONNEL

1.(U) On 1 May 1966 the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, with Headquarters at Phu Loi, Republic of Vietnam, started its 11th month since activation at Ft Benning, Georgia and its 9th month of combat operations.

2.(U) During the month of May, several changes were made in battalion staff officers and company commanders. Lt Colonel Joseph B. Starker assumed command on 20 May 1966. Concurrently, an infusion program began to offset an impact of mass staff officer losses and gains. The S1 and S2 were the first staff officer changes in the headquarters. Key personnel of the Battalion Staff and the Company Commanders are as follows:

Battalion Commander: Lt Col Joseph B. Starker, Inf,  
063034.

Battalion Executive Officer, Major Richard A. Humes,  
SigC, 01874501.

Battalion S1: Major Ralph L. Lehman, Jr., Armor, OF103556.

Battalion S2: Major Samuel W. Patellos, Infantry,  
099705, effective 17 May 1966.

Battalion S3: Major William M. Lewis, TC, 084496.

Battalion S4: Major Charles E. Brake, CE, OF106100.  
CO, HHD, Captain Richard V. Martinelli Jr, Artillery,  
02288395.

CO, 116th Aslt Hel Co (AML): Major Walter E. Parker,  
Inf, 068669.

CO, 128th Aslt Hel Co (AML): Major Gene C. Reed, Arty,  
01879084.

1  
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CO, 147th Aslt Support Hel Co (Med Hel): Major Jack I. Keeton, Artillery, 073353, effective 27 June 1966.

CO, 162nd Aslt Hel Co (AML): Major Albert H. Roughen, Infantry, OF102262, effective 15 June 1966.

CO, 173rd Aslt Hel Co (AML): Major Glen H. Ebaugh, Armor, 02208578.

CO, 178th Aslt Spt Hel Co (Med Hel): Major Roger J. Shields, Artillery, 079473.

3.(U) During the period the battalion self help program completed permanent buildings for the Battalion Headquarters working and living areas.

4.(U) The Battalion continued to improve facilities for the maintenance of troop morale. The grand opening of a building, housing the Officers and Non Commissioned Officers Open Mess occurred on 20 May 1966. This was a combined affair. The battalion bid farewell to Lt Col John W. Lautenbach outgoing commander and welcomed Lt Col Joseph B. Starker the incoming CO. Since the opening, the club has served as a meeting place for officers and NCO's alike. It has provided entertainment in the form of floor shows as well as continually serving good food and drink. Other facilities such as enlisted clubs, PX, Tailor shop, Laundry and chapel, that were previously established, continue to maintain a high level of morale and welfare for all members of the Battalion. The latest facility under construction is a swimming pool which is expected to be completed within the next reporting period.

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5.(U) 11th Combat Aviation Battalion units and their authorized strengths at the close of the reporting period are shown as Inclosure 2

6.(U) The total assigned strength of the battalion (Inclosure # 2) as of 31 July was 2266. This overstrength is a result of placements being assigned prior to the departure of those replaced. Such an overstrength is considered healthy in that it affords a transition period for newly assigned personnel. In addition, there are 72 security guards and 143 door gunners assigned, who are not authorized by TO&N. An MTO&E was submitted during the last reporting period but has not been approved. A morale problem exists among these personnel because they can not be promoted until a MTO&E is approved, authorizing the augmentation to the battalion.

7.(U) The battalion has had seven major subordinate units and 22 morning report units assigned throughout the period. They are located at Vung Tau, Lai Xa, Phuoc Vinh and Phu Loi. The requirement to rely heavily on written communications, in lieu of telephonic communications, has caused a high volume of written correspondence. In addition, it has caused delays in meeting suspense dates, as the outlying companies receive and dispatch written communication only once each day.

8.(U) The previously reported problem of publications shortages has apparently been solved. During this reporting period, all publications and blank forms that have been requisitioned have been received.

9.(U) On 11 May 1966 the 53rd Aviation Detachment was attached to the 11th Combat Avn Bn. This detachment, a test unit, arrived in-country without administrative personnel necessary for maintenance of unit records, thereby adding a substantial work load to the battalion personnel section.

10.(U) There are presently plans for the infusion of aviators between airmobile companies within the Battalion. This will be done in order to maintain a high experience level as well as to eliminate a future DEROS "hump". The problem in the two CH-47 companies has been solved with the infusion program conducted during the last reporting period, and an internal infusion program between the two companies. The DEROS hump itself has been eliminated by adjusting DEROS dates within the battalion, based on guidance received from 12th Combat Aviation Group. Officers were adjusted over a 30 day period and enlisted personnel over a 25 day period. The criteria was established that persons serving a second tour in Vietnam would depart first; those with concurrent short tours would depart next; and those personnel without previous short tours would depart at normal DEROS.

11.(U) Casualties during the period included 47 due to hostile action and 19 due to non-hostile action. Ten of the casualties died. Of these ten, eight were results of aircraft accidents; one died of suffocation; and one died as a result of wounds received from the detonation of Viet Cong Claymore mine.

12.(U) On 7 May 1966, the Battalion received a replacement chaplain. Since then, the chaplain has assisted tremendously in

maintaining the high morale of the officers and men of the Bn. Due to the shortage of chaplains in the Phu Loi area, the Battalion chaplain has conducted services for members of the 1st Aviation Battalion and other 1st Inf Div units. Weekly chapel collections continue to be used for the improvement of welfare activities within the neighboring villages as well as for the purchase of essential items for the permanent chapel. Regular monthly character guidance classes are conducted in accordance with the desires of the unit commanders. These classes have received a great deal of support from the units.

13.(U) The battalion newspaper "RED DOG EXPRESS" initiated during the last period is enthusiastically received by the troops as an information media.. The latest copy is attached as inclosure 4.

14(U) Weekly liaison visits to subordinate units by a member of each staff section, are assisting to maintain the same high level of administration that was noted during the recent annual General Inspection.

15.(U) The civic action projects have continued in full force during the period. In addition to the numerous "Medcap" operations and chapel contributions, the battalion conducted a raffle that netted \$857.50 for contributions to the III Corps Orphanage. Additional civic action projects consisted of the 162nd Aviation Company (AML) reconstructing a bridge that had been destroyed by the Viet Cong terrorists, and beginning construction on a school for the Vietnamese in the Phuoc Vinh area. The 170th Assault Support Helicopter Company assisted in transporting heavy equipment to a partially destroyed village in the vicinity of Tay Ninh. The

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other assigned companies continued with civic action projects initiated during the last reporting period, which consisted primarily of home improvement and supervising a brick factory. Each unit has continued to instruct the English language to Local Nationals in the respective company areas.

16.(U) The following awards and decorations were recommended and approved during the period (See Inclosure 3).

II. INTELLIGENCE

1.(U) During the month of May the significant events that took place within the S2 section were:

a. On 17 May a new Bn S2, Major Samuel W. Patellos, was assigned. Major Patellos was formerly a gun ship Commander in the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company.

b. The new Bn S2 conducted his first security inspections within the Bn from 25 to 28 May. All unit Commanding Officers were informed of noted deficiencies and short comings.

2.(U) June brought on increased activity due to the impending Annual I.G. Inspection, and the contemplated move into the permanent Headquarters building.

a. A formal Pre I.G. inspection was conducted within the Battalion, by the S2 Section, during the period 8-11 June. All findings were reported to the appropriate Commanding Officers for corrective action.

b. During the period 20-24 June the I.G. inspected the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. There were no discrepancies found in the S2 area of responsibility and "Classified Material within the Bn is handled in an outstanding manner".

c. On 25 June the S2 section moved into the permanent Headquarters building.

3.(U) The month of July has been a continuation of normal administration matters. Work has been started on a secure "War Room" and it is expected to be completed within the next month.

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4.(U) Administration actions in the S2 action, during the reporting period were:

- a. Security Clearances (Validated, Requested and/or Issued)-413.
- b. Individual Briefings and Debriefings - 228.
- c. Security Inspections.
- d. Registration and control of Classified Documents.
- e. Mission Briefings, which include weather, photographs, terrain, and EEL.
- f. Maintenance and Issue of Maps.

## III. OPERATIONS

1.(U) At the onset of this reporting period, the Battalion was at full strength with four Combat Assault Helicopter Companies and two Combat Assault Support Helicopter Companies assigned. Training of pilots and crew members had been completed with each having reached near maximum operational efficiency. A continuous training program remains in effect, stressing pilot proficiency and operational procedures.

2.(U) A draft copy of the 1st Aviation Brigade Operation Manual was received, reviewed and staffed through each of the Battalion's assigned units for review and submission of comments and recommended changes. After a complete review, it was determined that the Battalion had been complying with the proposed policies and procedures as outlined in the draft, with the exception of a few minor areas. The recommended changes submitted by the Battalion were accepted in part and were incorporated into the finalization of the SOP. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion conforms to the established policies and procedures in executing all operational requirements.

3.(C) The Battalion defense posture in the assigned sector of Phu Loi Army Airfield has been augmented to include a second line of defense with bunkers being constructed around the aircraft parking area. The bunkers have been designed and were constructed to accommodate two personnel, armed with shotguns. The bunkers completely encompass the parking area and are positioned approximately 100 meters apart. These bunkers are manned by selected personnel

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during maximum security conditions only, and are designed to deny enemy destruction forces from entering the parking area in the event front line defenses are penetrated. As an additional defense measure, the Battalion has trained four Rifle squads of the security platoon in patrol and ambush techniques. Patrol activities are coordinated through Phu Loi Area Command and conducted in a predesignated area.

4. (C) Continued emphasis is being placed on the educational program for supported units on the utilization of CH-47 helicopters. Training is conducted between supported and supporting units when helicopters and personnel are available. Standard type loads have been established in most supported units requiring CH-47 helicopters for transportation. There still remains a shortage of nets and sling equipment required to externally transport artillery weapons and outside items of equipment.

5. (U) The Battalion continued to support the 1st Infantry Division as a primary mission for the reporting period. A Battalion policy was adopted that Combat Assault Helicopter Companies co-located with Infantry Brigades would be in direct support of the Brigade when battalion operational requirements permit. The companies assigned liaison officer to Infantry Brigade to advise and assist in the planning of airborne operations.

6. (U) The battalion provided the airlift capability required by the 1st Infantry Division during the final phase of operation BIRMINGHAM, period 1-15 May 1966. The battalion (-) supported the division from a forward location at Tay Ninh airfield for

10 CONFIDENTIAL

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the duration of the operation. Division airlift requirements on three separate troop movements exceeded the capability of battalion assets, which required additional support be attached from other resources. The battalion conducted troop extractions and combat assaults in conjunction with the division elements during the final phase of the operation. The battalion support requirements ended with the extractions of the 2nd Infantry Brigade and supporting artillery from a pick-up zone vic XT 531381 on 16 May 1966.

7.(C) During the month of June, the 53rd Aviation Detachment (Armed/Armored Chinooks CH-47A) was attached to the battalion to be employed in various operational missions and to perform specific tasks for test and evaluation. During the period 22-27 June, major organizations within III Corps were briefed on the employment and capabilities of the armed Chinook. During the same period, crews of the detachment were given orientations and in-country training in preparation for combat employment. The test and evaluation began on 28 June when they were employed on various operational missions. Separate reports on the test and evaluation are being submitted by ACTIV through channels.

8.(C) On 1 June 66, the battalion was placed in direct support of the 1st Infantry Division and was to provide the necessary tactical and logistical airlift to support the division on operation EL PASO in the Loc Ninh-An Loc areas. The battalion airlifted elements of the division into the area of operation during the period 2-9 June 66. One combat assault company was

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placed in direct support of each of the Infantry Brigades with the option of being released to battalion control when the division requirements dictated the consolidation of all available resources. The battalion displaced a jump command post to the operational area which provided the necessary command and control of the battalion elements. Operation EL PASO continues through the end of this reporting period with the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion providing the airlift capability to the division elements conducting combat operations. Operation EL PASO is expected to continue for an indefinite period.

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IV. TRAINING

1.(U) The training accomplished by this organization was greatly restricted due to the large number of operational commitments during the period.

2.(U) USARV emphasized individual weapon proficiency. A range familiarization program was initiated and range facilities were made available through direct liaison with the 8/6th Arty, 1st Inf Div. This range was small, however, the companies of this battalion stationed at Phu Koi did familiarize 80% of their personnel during the quarter. All companies within the battalion have made the necessary liaison and have adequate range facilities.

3.(U) During the quarter no formal training program was directed by higher headquarters; however, direction was received that special emphasis would be placed on the following subjects:

- a. Escape and Evasion.
- b. Code of Conduct.

4.(U) Army training films on these subjects were procured from the 69th Signal Battalion, Saigon. These films were shown on a rotational basis to all companies of this battalion. None of the companies have theater facilities, but with provisional arrangements, these films were shown to approximately 75% of the battalion personnel.

5.(U) A night flying training program was initiated during the quarter. This program was broken into four phases. Subjects and pertinent information extracted from the battalion night training circular are listed as follows:

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## a. Standards and Organization for Training:

(1) Proficiency level of individual aviators, crews, platoons and companies will be determined by the Company Commander based on accepted aviation standards. Training will be such, that all units conduct company size or larger night operations when directed by higher headquarters.

(2) Night Training will be conducted in four phases:

- (a) Phase I - Individual ships and crews.
- (b) Phase II - Platoon size operations.
- (c) Phase III - Company size operations.
- (d) Phase IV: Battalion size operations.

(3) All stages of night training and actual night operations were closely controlled and full use made of all night landing aids, to include beacons, glide scopes, and both light and electronic landing aids.

(4) The end of the quarter found all companies were conducting sufficient night training to conduct successful platoon size night operations.

6.(U) An instrument training program was initiated during the quarter and every pilot flew a minimum of two hours of actual instruments or hooded flight. Every effort was made during April and May to release one aircraft per company, per day for this training; however, this was not always possible due to operational commitments.

7.(U) During the end of the quarter a requirement was placed on this headquarters to establish an aerial gunnery range and an

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aerial gunnery training program.

a. A 11th Combat Aviation Battalion Training Circular was published on 15 July 1966.

b. This Training Circular contains information on range location, standard for training, the training program, and aviation aerial gunnery proficiency.

c. A brief explanation of the aerial gunnery competition to be held to determine the "Top Gun" in Vietnam was also included in this circular.

V. SECURITY PLATOON

1.(U) The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion was given the mission to train the Security Platoon for patrol activities outside the perimeter in conjunction with the overall defense of Phu Loi.

2.(U) Training was conducted in two parts:

a. Classroom work consisted of classes on Squad Tactics, Patrolling, Demolitions, Platoon Tactics, Escape and Evasion and other related instructions.

b. Practical work consisted of range firing of individual weapons, practice on Squad and Platoon Tactics, and Patrolling.

3.(C) The Security Platoon started actual combat patrolling on 6 June 1966 with a series of daylight recon patrols. Then, they gradually worked into night combat ambush patrols and daytime combat search and destroy operations in the immediate area of Phu Loi Army Airfield.

4.(C) Enemy contact has been made with the Viet Cong on a fairly regular basis. Realizing that these troops are new to combat, their performance and actions under fire has been exceptionally good. To date there have been no friendly casualties. Estimated Viet Cong casualties 4 KIA, and 7 WIA from this patrolling action.

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## VI. PATHFINDERS

1.(U) During the period 1 May - 31 July 1966, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion Pathfinder Detachment was mainly utilized in support of three large scale operations conducted by the 1st Infantry Division. These were Operations BIRMINGHAM, in Tay Ninh Province and the Michelin Rubber Plantation; Operation EL PASO I at Loc Ninh; and Operation EL PASO II and EL PASO III at Quan Ioi, Loc Ninh, Minh Thanh, Song Be and An Loc.

2.(C) During Operation BIRMINGHAM, the Pathfinder Detachment participated in all types of airmobile operations. Pick up zones for troops lifts, extraction sites, pick up sites for artillery lifts, and landing zones for troops lifts and artillery lifts were all included, often several in one day. The Pathfinder Detachment remained with the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion Forward Command Post, and was dispatched as needed to the various areas to conduct operations. The number of operations being conducted at the same time was often very taxing on a fifteen man detachment.

3.(C) During Operation EL PASO I, the Pathfinder Detachment again conducted all types of airmobile operations in support of the 1st Infantry Division. A battery of artillery, moved partially at night, was a very difficult operation to conduct. Pilots had difficulty in maintaining visual reference to the ground while picking up piggy-back sling loads, and also when placing them on the ground.

4.(U) Again during Operations EL PASO II, and EL PASO III,

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the Pathfinder Detachment was utilized in conducting all types of airmobile operations in support of the 1st Division, including operation of several fixed wing strips.

During this operation, Pathfinders were attached directly to the supporting aviation companies of this battalion, and were readily available to conduct operations as necessary. This was found to be highly desirable.

5.(U) The Pathfinder Detachment also participated in several operations with the 173rd Abn Bde (Separate). These included artillery lifts of all the Brigade's artillery units and two extractions involving two infantry battalions. These were well organized and executed with minimum time lost.

6.(U) Also during this period, Pathfinders supported units of this battalion conducting operations with ARVN units. These included troop movements at Song Be and Phu Loi and several artillery moves from different areas.

7.(U) The A-22 Aerial Delivery container was obtained in the month of June for use in hauling ammunition and supplies externally with CH-47 and UH-1D aircraft. Pathfinders assisted in instructing supported units in the loading and rigging of these containers. It was found that the use of these containers has helped to expedite artillery moves. Supported unit efficiency in rigging of these containers has considerably improved, requiring less supervision by Pathfinder personnel.

8.(U) Training was conducted by the 123th Assault Helicopter Company and the "light-horse" artillery battery during the month

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of July. This consisted of several practice moves of this twelve tube, 4.2 inch mortar battery to field positions and back to Quan Loi. Pathfinders participated in this training with these units.

9.(U) During the month of June, members of the 11th Pathfinder Company (Prov) from the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) were at Phu Loi to exchange ideas, methods and suggestions. It was found that both units operate essentially the same way, but several helpful hints on night operations were obtained by this unit. Also in June, five members of the 25th Avn Bn Pathfinder Detachment were at Phu Loi for ten days to receive training in airmobile operations from this detachment. They participated in several operations and their stay at Phu Loi was considered helpful by them.

10.(U) On 27 July 1966, an 81mm mortar battery was moved from Phu Loi to Lai Khe. This operation was conducted entirely at night, with all loads carried internally in the CH-47, except two loads of ammunition which were slung externally. This was the first time that an entire battery was loaded and lifted after darkness by a 11th Battalion unit. This operation was extremely successful and showed the high degree of proficiency that both the supported and supporting units have obtained.

11.(U) On 28th July 1966, Pathfinders assisted the 1st Inf Div in Operation SHERIDAN. Pick-up zones for 40 aircraft were operated at Phuoc Vinh and Lai Khe. Pathfinders were delivered into the LZ for recon and marking of the LZ, approximately two minutes

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prior to the first lift. All phases of the operation were completely successful.

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VII. SUPPLY (U)

1.(U) During the month of May 1966, the Battalion welcomed a new unit to Vietnam. The 53rd Aviation Detachment (Prov) arrived in-country and was sponsored by the 147th Assault Support Helicopter Company. This unit opened many new concepts to Armed Helicopter tactics within Vietnam. Many problems and lessons were learned about the concept. The evaluation of the CH-47A and unit is covered in a report being prepared by the Army concept team in Vietnam, USA/RV.

2.(U) The Battalion completed it's pre-annual I.G. inspection with certain points well taken. Company property books were inspected and unit supply personnel were not complying with current regulation changes for property accountability. These changes in accounting required all Property Book Officers to remake property books. A shortage of blank property books pages existed and none could be located within the command. Other problems noted were that units had requested weapons for personnel who were above the TO&E strength. Certain supply channels disapproved the requests because the quantities were above the TO&E allowance. The TO&E authorized individual weapons when additional personnel are assigned. Corrective actions were initiated. The pre-inspection proved extremely beneficial for the conduct of the annual I.G. Inspection. The annual I.G. Inspection of the supply system was conducted with no major discrepancies noted.

3.(U) The Battalion construction program continued with great success. Thirteen officers billets were completed.

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Twenty-two enlisted billets were completed and construction began on twenty-two additional billets. The Battalion Headquarters Complex has been 90% completed. The Headquarters Detachment has completed the enlisted club and now offers a place for the EM to go and relax. A swimming pool is still under construction and the completion date of 27 Aug 66 has been set. The Battalion self help construction program has greatly improved the working and living conditions within the battalion.

4.(U) The supply system has been improved with many critical items becoming available. Some of these items are the XM-23 system, flight gloves and body armor, chest protectors. The future looks good for supplies that previously were in great demand. The log command has relocated many of its warehouses near transport facilities and the flow of materials have increased to combat units.

5.(U) Purchases from the imprest fund was approximately \$4,100.00 for this period.

## VIII. AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE

1.(U) The battalion, during the beginning of the period covered, had two to six CH-47 aircraft TDY in the II Corps area. Considerable difficulty was experienced in maintaining these aircraft, due to the distance from any maintenance facility.

2.(U) It was directed that all aircraft would be in the oil analysis program.

3.(U) The crash and loss of a CH-47 due to the failure of the combining transmission pinion shaft thrust bearing, and, shortly thereafter, the failure of the output shaft radial bearing in an engine transmission of another CH-47 caused a marked decrease in CH-47 availability. One time inspection and unprogramed maintenance held most CH-47 aircraft on the ground.

4.(U) There were continued problems locating EOP parts that were logged out of AMMC in Saigon for Sixth Transportation Company (ADS), at Vung Tau. These EOP parts never arrived at the destination. Continued close checking of these parts disclosed that many of these items would eventually arrive at Vung Tau after ten to fifty days in transit. This remained a problem as late as 10 July 1966.

5.(U) A supply Performance Analysis Report was initiated at 34th General Support Group to be prepared at each DS Detachment monthly.

6.(U) Airframe cracks started developing at approximately 600 flying hours station number 482 and 534 in the CH-47 aircraft. To date this battalion has repaired a total of eight of these cracks.

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Considerable difficulty has been encountered in repairing these bulkheads in-country. Air Vietnam manufactured the repair kits for this work. Repair kits were also ordered from Boeing Vertol but none have been received. It is anticipated that as other CH-47 aircraft reach 600 hours, cracks will appear in these aircraft.

7.(U) During June the battalion received a one-time inspection requirement on all UH-1 tail rotor hub assemblies. Thirty-four UH-1 aircraft were found to have excessive wear in this assembly and were grounded. All work was immediately intensified to rectify these tail rotor hub deficiencies.

8.(U) On 9 June 1966 a T-55 Lycoming Technical Representative, Mr. Patrick Golden, and a T-53 Lycoming Technical Representative, Mr. Richard Kipphut, were assigned to the 605th Transportation Company in support of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. These individuals have greatly assisted the maintenance program within the battalion.

9.(U) The Lycoming Company initiated a T-53 Engine lubrication analysis test program with the 116th and 128th Assault Hel Co's under the guidance of Mr. Kipphut. It is hoped that this program will determine the cause of our high T-53 engine failure rate in Vietnam.

10.(U) The 147th Assault Support Helicopter Company discovered nine of their CH-47's had excessive play in the 1st and/or 2nd stage mixing units. These aircraft were carried EDP for some time until Boeing Vertol determined that the tolerances in the TM

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maintenance manual were too severe. Only two CH-47's are still EDP for mixing units.

11.(U) All units within the battalion were inspected by the maintenance officer and assistance given in preparation for AGI. The AGI was conducted on 20-23 June and all units passed with favorable comments in maintenance and technical supply.

12.(U) The battalion continued to experience delays and difficulties in obtaining repair parts for CH-47 actuators, and UH-1 main rotor heads and servos. It has been very difficult to obtain either high or medium pressure hoses through supply channels or from the market.

13.(U) A survey was conducted of all the company and DS Detachments on maintenance procedures with the goal of improving aircraft availability. It was determined that the maintenance organization and procedures used were effective. There has been an excessive amount of time wasted due to poor lighting equipment, lack of hanger and shop space, shortage of essential maintenance equipment and shortage of parts.

14.(U) Through increased command emphasis and assistance in obtaining additional equipment and parts, this battalion expects to continue it's present climb in increased aircraft availability. The statistics listed below show the operational versus maintenance accomplishments of units assigned to the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion since arrival in the Republic of Vietnam:

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<u>HOURS FLOWN</u>	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	TOTAL
UH-1B	267	685	1099	1030	1634	2125	2118	1516	2233	12707
UH-1D	1051	764	2135	2377	4927	4901	5264	5029	5735	31283
OH-13	-	53	52	75	19	43	70	75	70	457
CH-47	-	517	908	870	1118	2084	1278	896	1273	8944
U-6A	-	-	-	13	61	56	35	34	3	202
	1318	2019	4194	4365	6859	9209	8765	7550	9314	53493

<u>AVAILABLE</u>	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL
UH-1B	81%	61%	81%	58%	82%	83%	68%	59%	74.5%
UH-1D	67%	28%	68%	82%	81%	75%	70%	64%	71.6%
OH-13	-	100%	96%	85%	38%	40%	71%	61%	74 %
CH-47	-	83%	74%	74.9%	78%	74%	49%	38%	42.1%
U-6A	-	-	-	54%	100%	100%	32%	74%	74.2%

<u>EDM</u>	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL
UH-1B	18%	38%	18%	40%	15%	12%	24%	15%	15.3%
UH-1D	30%	71%	27%	12%	14%	17%	11%	14%	14.3%
OH-13	-	0%	4%	14%	12%	35%	14%	8%	1.5%
CH-47	-	12%	16%	10.9%	10%	12%	22%	40%	35.2%
U-6A	-	-	-	46%	0%	0%	26%	13%	5.8%

<u>BDP</u>	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL
UH-1B	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	5%	6%	20%	10.2%
UH-1D	3%	1%	5%	6%	5%	8%	18%	22%	14.1%
OH-13	-	0%	0%	1%	50%	25%	15%	31%	24.5%
CH-47	-	5%	10%	14.2%	12%	14%	29%	22%	22.7%
U-6A	-	-	-	0%	0%	0%	42%	13%	0%

HOURS FLOWN

UH-1B (Footnote 1)

<u>UNIT</u>	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	TOTAL
116	144	384	525	424	524	755	509	415	791	4471
128	123	301	574	524	657	632	528	388	487	4214
162	-	-	-	82	425	433	471	352	412	2175
173	-	-	-	-	19	214	578	345	474	1630
H&H	-	-	-	-	9	91	32	16	28	176
TOTALS	267	685	1099	1030	1634	2125	2118	1516	2192	12666

UH-1D (Footnote 2)

<u>UNIT</u>	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	TOTAL
116	510	299	932	925	1219	1565	1521	1148	1718	9837
128	541	465	1203	1074	1491	1316	1303	1093	1272	9753
162	-	-	-	378	1225	1394	1372	1476	1415	7260
173	-	-	-	-	92	626	1068	1312	1330	4428
TOTALS	1051	764	2135	2377	4027	4901	5264	5029	5735	31283

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OH-13

<u>UNIT</u>	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	TOTAL
147	-	53	52	75	19	18	29	31	24	301
178	-	-	-	-	-	25	41	44	15	125
TOTALS	-	53	52	75	19	43	70	75	39	426

CH-47 (Footnote 3)

<u>UNIT</u>	NOV	DCE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	TOTAL
53	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	102	73	175
147	-	517	908	870	1052	1041	588	244	573	5793
178	-	-	-	-	66	1043	690	550	627	2976
TOTALS	-	517	908	870	1118	2084	1278	896	1273	8944

Footnote: 1 Programed hours for 9 UH-1B aircraft per month 540

2 Programed hours for 16 UH-1B aircraft per month 960

3 Programed hours for 16 CH-47 aircraft per month 800

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## IX. AVIATION SAFETY

1.(U) The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion experienced a marked increase in aircraft accidents during the last quarter of Fiscal Year 1966. It is most probable that the increases resulted from a combination of several factors.

2.(U) During the month of May, this battalion experienced its largest number of major aircraft accidents since it was organized a year ago. There were five major accidents of which four were attributed directly to material failures. Three of these were CH-47 accidents and were considered to be catastrophic. They resulted in the loss of twenty-four American lives. Subsequent accident investigations revealed the need for additional maintenance inspections which were non-existent prior to that time. Another CH-47 helicopter of this organization made a precautionary landing as a result of fluctuating engine transmission oil pressure. The post landing inspection revealed a complete failure of the output shaft radial bearing in the engine transmission. It was estimated by both Army and Boeing Vertol maintenance personnel that had the aircraft flown another three minutes, we would have experienced another accident. Immediate steps were taken to inspect the other CH-47 helicopters of this battalion. Of the first five aircraft inspected, all were found in varying stages of deterioration and each fell well below safe standards. Recommendations were made to have a world-wide grounding of CH-47 helicopters as a safety measure until a one time inspection of the engine transmission could be made. This was accomplished.

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3.(U) The psychological effects as a result of the numerous malfunctions and material failures did produce an eroding factor on the will to fly. This apprehension of flying was partially overcome by a candid and complete discussion of the maintenance in question.

4.(U) The conduct of combat operations by this battalion continued to increase even with the introduction of the monsoon season. The associated inclement weather forced many missions to be flown at tree top level, thereby exposing the aircraft and crew to hostile ground action. As a result, many aircraft sustained combat damage requiring a number of forced and precautionary landings. During a three week period which overlapped June and July, five aircraft of this organization were shot down, producing 11 WIA casualties with injuries ranging from burns and schrapnel, to gunshot wounds.

5.(U) The majority of aviators assigned to this battalion are reaching the completion of their Vietnam tours. A large percentage of the replacement aviators arriving in this command are newly graduated aviators with little experience. Close supervision and command guidance is required to transition many of these young aviators to a combat environment. The exposure to combat tactical conditions and the effects associated with the intensified combat flying has produced a discernible effect on the safety consciousness of our aviators, both old and new. Continued command emphasis is placed on professionalism in all phases of flying and the need of assigning an experienced

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aviator to fly with a newly assigned and/or less experienced  
aviator.

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**I. SIGNAL**

1.(U) During the period 1-15 May 1966, this section provided radio and limited telephone service for the battalion forward CP location during operation BIRMINGHAM, in addition to maintaining normal communications at battalion rear.

2.(U) Upon return of the communications personnel, the section completed construction of an overhead generator power distribution system. The power lines consisted of heavy electrical cable supported by concrete poles. Construction was completed on 22 May 1966.

3.(U) The section began wiring of the new headquarters building and living quarters, as construction of each unit was completed. This project has continued from 22 May through 31 July 1966, and is approximately ninety percent complete.

4.(U) The section maintained normal communications during June. Preparations for the Annual IG on 20-23 June began early in the month, including visits and preparatory inspections of subordinate units.

5.(U) On 9 June, battalion support of operation EL PASO necessitated forward CP communications. The requirement involved operation of one relay station and four radios. Operator requirements were terminated on 28 July, but equipment will be required until completion of the operation.

6.(U) On 20 June publication of a more usable battalion SOI was completed. Improvements were made in providing more required information and reducing the quantity of classified material.

Delays in obtaining changes and in distributing to subordinate units continue to cause some difficulties.

7.(U) In preparation for a crypto capability, the section obtained crypto access authorization for operators and made arrangements for a crypto account.

8.(U) During July, further delays in establishing the secure circuit resulted from a physical move of the communications shop location, re-establishing the local wire system, and maintaining 24 hour communications with a limited number of personnel.

Operation of the forward communications further depleted the number of available personnel. Crypto equipment has been drawn from the 455th Signal Detachment, and a new cable was installed from the Danger North patch panel.

9.(U) On 6 July 1966, disapproval of a USARV Form 47 submitted on 9 February 1966, requesting the addition of a Switchboard SB-86 was received. The battalion had been hampered by a limited telephone and switchboard capability (12 telephones and 1 SB-22) since arrival in-country. A new request was prepared and hand-carried through channels during the week of 12-15 July. Approval was received and the telephones and a portion of the new switchboard were obtained. The communications capability, especially in maintaining contact with perimeter bunkers has been greatly improved.

10.(U) On 21 July a class on operation of the Command and Control Console in the UH-1D was presented to key personnel of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. Plans have been made to present the class to the 1st and 2nd Brigades, 1st Inf Div in the near future.

## XI. MEDICAL

1. (U) During this reporting period unit medical sections of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion continued their functions of primary medical care, staff advice to commanders, and keeping immunizations up to date.

2. (U) On 22 May 1966 Captain Frank Anzalone replaced Captain George Thurmond as C.O. of the 432nd Medical Detachment (128th Assault Helicopter Company).

3. (U) On 19 July 1966 Captain Ronald Crown was transferred from the 432nd Medical Detachment to the 759th Medical Detachment in order to provide aviation medical coverage to the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company at Phuoc Vinh.

4. (U) Captain Melton Welch departed on 18 July 1966 to return to CONUS to begin a urology residency on 1 September 1966. Captain Grover Tompkins was transferred from the 431st Medical Detachment (116th Assault Helicopter Company) to the 758th Medical Detachment in order to provide aviation medical coverage at Lai Khe.

5. (U) On 23 July 1966 Captain John Cavender and Captain Peter Clark were assigned to the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. Captain Clark was assigned to the 431st Medical Detachment (116th Assault Helicopter Company). Captain Cavender was assigned to the 772nd Medical Detachment in support of the 147th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

6. (U) On 27 July 1966, Captain Paul Hill was transferred from 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, where he was Battalion Surgeon, to Headquarters, 12th Aviation Group. He replaced

Major Samuel Mangus as Group Surgeon.

7.(U) Captain Harold Leland was transferred, on 27 July 66, from the 772nd Medical Detachment to Headquarters, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, where he replaced Captain Hill as Battalion Surgeon.

8.(U) MEDCAP has been engaged in by all medical units within the battalion. At each of the locations, all of the medical units hold sick call for Vietnamese nationals using medical supplies obtained through MEDCAP. Most of the patients seen are young children or elderly people. Many respiratory infections are seen, but probably the largest group of patients have skin problems: either infected, neglected cuts and scratches or a whole host of eczematous skin problems, most of which are secondarily infected. Occasionally there are a few suspected cases of tuberculosis, malaria, or various other diseases. Average number of patients seen is about 95 per visit. Approximately 8 visits are conducted per month by this battalion's medical personnel.

XII. LESSONS LEARNED

REPRODUCTION/ADMINISTRATION

Item: (U) Lack of reproduction capability.

Discussion: The Battalion Headquarters currently has one mimeograph machine. This machine is required for use to reproduce all stencils within the battalion. When this machine requires repair, it is necessary to publish only those orders and other items required for emergency action. These must be stenciled by utilizing machines in other units after normal duty hours.

Observation: A unit the size of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion should have, as a minimum, three duplicating machines, for continuous operation and one in the event of breakdown.

### PILOT TRAINING/TRAINING

Item:(U) Pilot training in the combat zone.

Discussion: An allocation of one aircraft per company, per day for training was established; however, this aircraft was seldom available because operational requirements during the quarter have been extremely demanding. This resulted in limited training being conducted during the period.

Observation: The majority of the aviators reporting into units within the battalion, are generally new graduates from the Army Aviation School. This will require the continuous use of at least one aircraft per company daily, to be utilized for the further training of these aviators.

### COMMO/OPERATIONS

Item:(U) Commo shut downs cause delays.

Discussion: During operations in which assault helicopter units are in direct support of ground units, communications between the supported and supporting units are shut down awaiting departure time for additional lifts.

Observation: That supporting aviation units be provided with and use a portable radio to maintain contact with the supporting unit commander during waiting periods.

### LIFT CONTAINERS/PATHFINDERS

Item:(U) Use of A-22 Containers.

Discussion: The use of A-22 Aerial Delivery containers has expedited the movement of artillery units and ammo resupply. Shortage of these containers is a continual problem as is a

shortage of straps, clevises, and nylon doughnuts. Unit proficiency in the rigging and loading of these containers is increasing but still necessitates close supervision by Pathfinder personnel.

Observation: Every attempt should be made to supply all artillery units with an abundance of these A-22 containers. Also it should be emphasized that these containers are useless without allied equipment. Emphasis should be placed on unit training in rigging and loading of these containers to minimize Pathfinder supervision. A document has been prepared by this battalion stating the rigging requirements of an Inf Bde and Arty Battalion. New units being assigned to Vietnam should have aerial delivery equipment with them when they arrive in-country due to the long length of time it takes to get this equipment through supply channels.

AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY/AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE

Item: Aircraft Maintenance Facilities and Equipment.

Discussion: Due to a lack of facilities and equipment i.e. sufficient lights, hanger space (maintenance tents) ground handling equipment, sufficient compressed air, generators, and other equipment helpful in maintaining aircraft, this battalion has found that it takes considerable more manhours than normally programmed to maintain aircraft in a safe flying condition.

Observation: Aircraft availability can be increased with the same amount of manhours expended by improving working conditions in aircraft maintenance work areas.

## AIRCRAFT PARTS/TECH SUPPLY

Item: High Pressure hose kits for CH-47 aircraft

Discussion: This battalion has yet to receive its first high pressure hydraulic hose kit. The high pressures hoses are coded as "local manufacture" and have been workordered through the 330th Transportation Company (GS). The 330th further work ordered them to Air Vietnam who in turn cancelled the work orders. The units have not been able to obtain sufficient bulk hose materials and fittings to make their own hoses.

Observation: We can expect to have CH-47 aircraft EDP for hydraulic hoses until such time as the bulk hose items are made available in the supply system or the DS and GS units acquire a better capability for manufacturing these items.

AIRCRAFT PARTS/TECH SUPPLY

Item: In-country Aircraft Parts Repair

Discussion: We have many aircraft components, i.e., CH-47 actuators, UH-1 main rotor heads, UH-1 servos, that could and should be repaired in-country at the general support level. However, very few of these components, are ever repaired and sent back to the units.

Observation: An increased and expedited in-country repair capability of aircraft components would decrease the number of aircraft EDP requisitions and increase the aircraft availability.

REPORTS/SUPPLY, ADMINISTRATION

Item:(U) Increased requirements for reports by higher headquarters.

Discussion: It has been noted that higher headquarters are requiring many additional, one time, reports. Many of these requests arrive with suspense dates on the date of arrival in this headquarters. Consequently, many reports are rushed and only given half the consideration that they should receive. All reports are based on information that must come from the subordinate companies which are not centrally located and must be contacted by radio. This takes time. These reports should be given careful consideration, therefore, a suspense date from higher headquarters should allow the subordinate units at least five days to formulate and submit replies to these reports.

Observation: That all non-essential reports be eliminated and essential reports abbreviated to the absolute minimum requirement. More time should be spent doing and less in telling about it.

COMBAT LOSSES/SUPPLY

Item:(U) Combat loss of equipment accountability must be kept simple.

Discussion: Previous regulations required a statement from the unit commanding officer that the items were either lost or destroyed during insurgency or counter-insurgency operations. The new USARV Regulation 735-2 requires that each item be put on a separate 2408-7. This new regulation also requires the item property book page and other data along with a certificate from the unit commander stating that the item was lost or destroyed. The

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administrative work caused by the new regulation actually makes it easier to survey the item than to declare it a combat loss.

Observation: Combat loss of equipment should remain as its name implies and only require a certificate signed by the unit commander.

## OFFICE EQUIPMENT/SUPPLY

Item:(U) Shortage of typewriters.

Discussion: Typewriters are a critical item within the battalion.

At present, more than one section in Battalion Headquarters is using the same typewriter. Therefore, a bottle neck is created while one section waits for another section to finish using the machine. This same problem exists within the companies. When a typewriter is in for repair the problem is compounded.

Observation: Correction of this problem could be accomplished by creating a direct exchange point where typewriters requiring repair could be exchanged for usable machines. This solution would minimize the time that a machine would not be available to the battalion. Additional typewriters are required to successfully accomplish the administrative mission of this battalion.

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## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT SHORTAGE/SECURITY PLATOON

Item: (C) Special Equipment shortage.

Discussion: During combat patrols outside the perimeter of this airfield special equipment such as starlight scopes, PRC-25's and M-16 rifles are essential. This equipment would greatly enhance the capability of this patrol action.

Observation: Changes are being submitted (MTO&E) at this time to authorize the security platoon and the additional equipment required.

VENEREAL DISEASE/MEDICAL

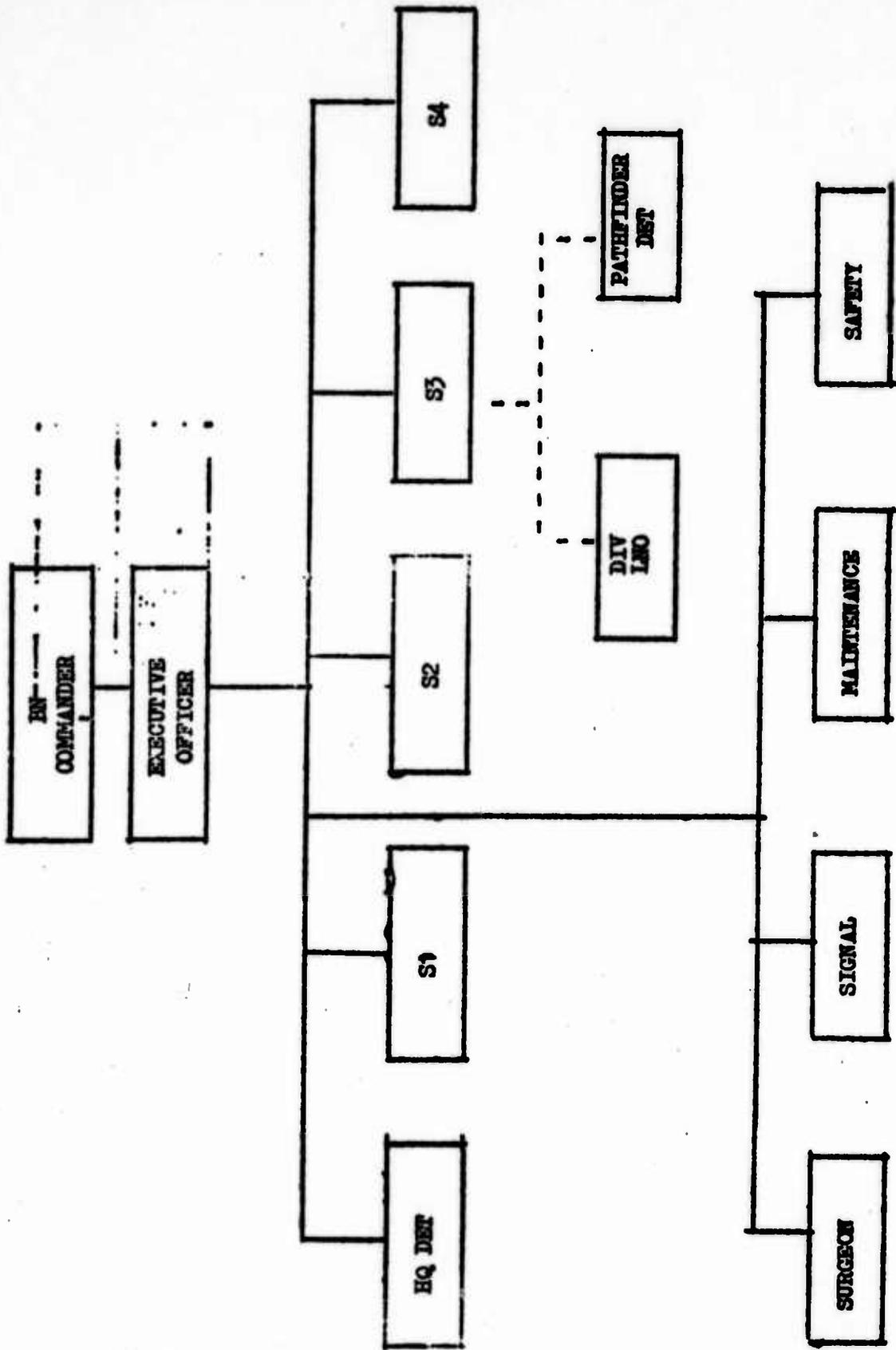
Item:(U) Resistant strains of Gonococcus are being encountered now in the Phu Loi area.

Discussion: Gonorrhoea is ordinarily quite susceptible to adequate doses of penicillin. However, girls frequently the bars in the Phu Loi area have been receiving bi-monthly injections of inadequate doses of penicillin. The result of this unfortunate practice has been the development of strains of Gonococcus which are resistant to even large doses of penicillin.

Observation: Venereal disease prevention is more important than ever and should include:

- a. Intensive troop education program.
- b. Strong emphasis on the use of prophylactics and personal hygiene following sexual contact.
- c. Appropriate command measures such as "Off Limits" restrictions of selected establishments.

11TH AVIATION BATTALION HEADQUARTERS ORGANIZATION

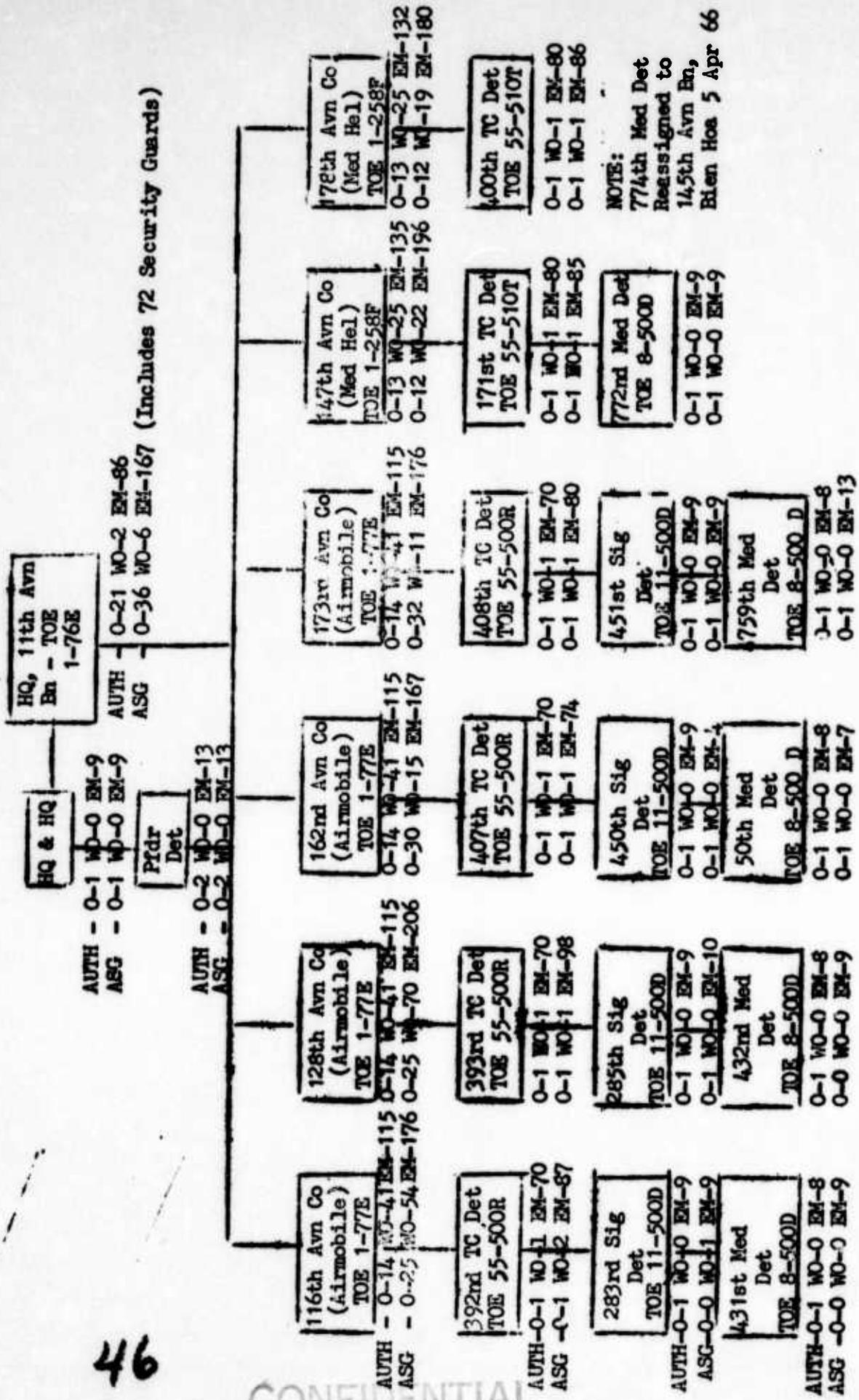


Enclosure 1 (11th Aviation Battalion Headquarters Organization)

54

OPERATIONAL CONTROL - - - - -

**COMMAND ORGANIZATION**



46

\*Includes Door Gunner Platoon

Incl  
closure #3

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

<u>SUBMITTED</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>DFC</u>	<u>SOLDIER'S MEDAL</u>	<u>LEGION OF MERIT</u>	<u>BRONZE STAR "V"</u>	<u>BRONZE STAR</u>	<u>AIR MEDAL "V"</u>	<u>AIR MEDAL</u>	<u>ACM</u>	<u>ACM "V"</u>	<u>(E)</u>
May	0	6	0	0	0	0	11	667	0	1	
June	3	4	1	7	3	5	5	1093	4	0	
July	5	22	0	1	1	12	55	817	14	6	

47

RETURNED

May	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	284	0	0	
June	0	2	0	0	1	2	6	120	0	0	
July	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	34	0	0	

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48 CONFIDENTIAL

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AVGC-DC

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966,  
Reports Control Symbol GS FOR-65

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO San Francisco 96491

THRU: ~~Commanding General, II AFHQ, APO 96491~~

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff Force Development, Department of the Army,  
Washington, DC 20310

1. Forwarded herewith are 2 copies of Operational Report on Lessons Learned of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion in compliance with USAFV Reg No 870-2 dated 19 July 1966.
2. On page 13, paragraph 3, Training, states that "no formal training program was directed by higher headquarters". This is in error in that Training Circular Number 1 was published by this headquarters on 26 July 1966.
3. On page 23, paragraph 4, EDP parts, states "that EDP parts never arrived at the destination". This has been a major problem area, caused by:
  - a. Communication failures between using echelons and supplying echelons.
  - b. High flying hour rate which has exceeded the DA program, has caused aircraft to enter PE more often than normal and used up available parts at an accelerated rate.
  - c. Battle and operational damage; this has been a matter of vigorous command attention at all levels, as a result of which the problem has been much ameliorated recently.
4. It is recommended that:
  - a. Continued emphasis be placed on the provision of TOE equipment and the provision and improvement of aircraft maintenance facilities.
  - b. The in-country capability for repair of aircraft components be increased substantially on an expedited basis.

~~2 Incl~~

*R. P. Campbell*  
RAYMOND P. CAMPBELL JR.  
Colonel, Armor  
Commanding.

DOWN GRADED UNCLASSIFIED WHEN  
REMOVED FROM CLASSIFIED INCLOSURE

13  
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48