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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980 ; AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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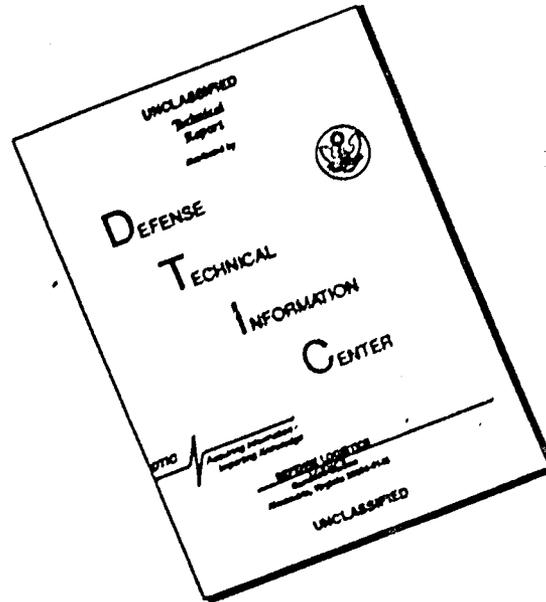
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310**



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (30 Mar 67) FOR OT

4 April 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, HQ, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion [U]-B

AD389523

Operational rept. for quarterly period ending 31 Jan 67.
TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Forwarded as inclosure is Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion for quarterly period ending 31 January 1967. Information contained in this report should be reviewed and evaluated by CDC in accordance with paragraph 6f of AR 1-19 and by CONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d of AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

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

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

Incl

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(Continued on page 2)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 11TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96289

AVGC-AC

7 February 1967

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

TO: See Distribution

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT UNIT ACTIVITIES

A. (U) General: The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion made substantial gains in all areas of performance during the past quarter. Approximately 75 per cent of the Battalion effort during the period covered was directed in support of US forces with the 1st Infantry Division receiving the majority of this support. The Battalion provided significant portions of the overall aviation effort for the two largest and most successful offensives of the Viet Nam conflict - Operation Attleboro and Operation Cedar Falls. These operations put the entire Battalion to the test of, as stated by the Battalion Commander, "Leaning Forward" at all times and giving 110-120% of the support normally expected. In the case of both man and machine, the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion exceeded all expectations during this most demanding three month period. The knowledge gained thru the lessons learned during this quarter has greatly enhanced the Battalion's ability to provide timely, responsive aviation support to the ground commander in his continuing success against the Viet Cong.

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B. (U) Mission:

1. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion provides Army Aviation Support, as directed by 12th Combat Aviation Group, to elements of US, RVN and FVMAF in the III Corps Tactical Zone.

2. Provides command, control, administration, communications and logistics to the units of the Battalion.

C. (C) Organization: The units assigned to the Battalion changed temporarily as one assault support helicopter company was transferred to another Battalion and was later replaced with a new company arriving late in the quarter from CONUS. The current organizational structure of the Battalion is shown in Annex A. Battalion organization for the past quarter is shown below:

HHD, 11th Combat Aviation Battalion - Phu Loi

*116th Aviation Company (Airmobile) - Cu Chi

128th Aviation Company (Airmobile) - Phu Loi

162nd Aviation Company (Airmobile) - Phuoc Vinh

173rd Aviation Company (Airmobile) - Lai Khe

**147th Assault Support Helicopter Company - Vung Tau

178th Assault Support Helicopter Company - Phu Loi

***213th Assault Support Helicopter Company - Phu Loi

* Unit moved from Phu Loi to Cu Chi effective 8 November 1966

** Unit transferred to 222nd Combat Avn Bn, APO 96291, effective
5 November 1966

*** Unit assigned to 11th Combat Avn Bn, APO 96289, effective 27
January 1967.

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D. (U) Command: Key personnel of the Battalion Staff and Company

Commanders are listed below:

1. Bn CO: LTC Joseph B. Starker
2. Bn XO: Maj Daniel B. Knight
3. Bn S1: Maj William Giese replaced Maj Samuel W. Patellos,
effective 1 Jan 67
4. Bn S2: Maj Bobby H. Freeman replaced Maj Ralph L. Lehman Jr.
effective 30 December 1966
5. Bn S3: Maj Cornelius F. McGillicuddy
6. Bn S4: Maj John E. Dugan
7. CO, HHD: Cpt Jackie D. Catt replaced Cpt Clyde E. Oxford
effective 3 Jan 67
8. CO, 116th Avn Co (Aml): Maj James H. Patterson
9. CO, 128th Avn Co (Aml): Maj John L. Credeur replaced Maj John
P. Casey effective 11 January 1967
- *10. CO, 147th Aslt Spt Hel Co: Maj Jack L. Keaton
11. CO, 162nd Avn Co (Aml): LTC Gerald W. Kirklighter
12. CO, 173rd Avn Co (Aml): LTC Benjamin F. Pim Jr.
13. CO, 178th Aslt Spt Hel Co: Maj Clyde S. Klick replaced Maj Lewis
J. McConnell effective 24 December 66
- **14. CO, 213th Aslt Spt Hel Co: Maj Henry G. Moseley
* Unit transferred to 222nd Combat Aviation Battalion, effective
5 November 1966.
** Unit arrived RVN 27 January 1967

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E. (U) Personnel and Administration

1. Administration:

a. Summary - The SI section continued its normal support to all assigned and attached units. The administrative work load handled by the SI now is more evenly distributed due to an increase of officers and enlisted men assigned to the section. With the increase of personnel at battalion level, the paper work requirements at company level have decreased. Telephonic reports are used to the maximum, allowing the initial paper report to be initiated at battalion level.

b. Problem Areas - The number of available typewriters continues to be a problem for all activities within this section. Many hours are spent typing at night in order to better utilize the typewriters available. Additional typewriters have been requisitioned and direct purchase is being explored.

2. Awards and Decorations:

a. Summary - The number of approved awards has increased significantly during the past quarter. This, of course, was very beneficial to the morale of the battalion. The present use of a card file for recording information rather than requiring a file copy of all awards has reduced the paper work at company level considerably. "Spot Awards", presented by the Brigade Commander, have had a positive effect on the unit desire to "lean forward" and accomplish the mission. There follows the number of awards submitted and returned for this quarter:

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(1) SUBMITTED:

	DSC	SS	DFC	SM	LM	BS"V"	BS	AR COM"V"	AR COM	AM"V"	AM	PH	CA
NOV	1	0	7	12	2	13	32	16	35	40	1387	7	0
DEC	0	0	3	0	0	2	34	51	51	4	63	0	0
JAN	0	6	10	1	1	0	7	0	18	0	146	14	41

(2) RETURNED:

	DSC	SS	DFC	SM	LM	BS"V"	BS	AR COM"V"	AR COM	AM"V"	AM	PH	CA
NOV	0	1	5	2	0	7	14	1	119	73	2594	49	0
DEC	0	0	10	0	1	20	46	3	33	72	2555	0	0
JAN	2	1	2	0	0	10	35	35	53	35	495	13	0

b. Problem areas - none

3. Special Service:

a. Summary - A complete inventory of all special service items within the battalion has been completed. Hand receipts for all items are consolidated in the SI section. Improvements are being made on the recreational facilities available to the battalion. A combination tennis, volley ball, and basketball court will be completed in the near future. Basketball and volley ball equipment is available and will be distributed to each company. The completion of the tennis court in addition to the swimming pool that is now in full operation, and movies that are shown each night will provide first class recreation for the troops.

b. Problem areas - none

4. Courts and Boards

a. Summary - Through very close liaison and coordination with SJA, U.S. Army Vietnam, the Courts and Boards section runs very smoothly and efficiently.

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The following is an account of the courts for the past quarter:

	SUMMARY COURT	SPECIAL COURT	GENERAL COURT	ART 32 INVESTIGATION
NOV	2	1	0	1
DEC	3	2	0	0
JAN	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	6	4	0	1

b. Problem areas - none

5. Personnel - Officer and Enlisted

a. Summary

(1) The Personnel section continued its normal support of all assigned units during the period. The administrative work load decreased with the loss of the 147th Aviation Company in November; however, increased to former levels with the arrival of the 213th Company in January.

(2) A total of 44 EM applied for and departed on the special leave provided by Public Law 89-735 during the reporting period. The special leave program has been well received by the enlisted men of this battalion.

(3) Reenlistments. Of 23 EM eligible for reenlistment during the reporting period, 13 were reenlisted.

b. Problem areas:

(1) The number of available typewriters continues to be the largest problem area within the Personnel section. There are presently only nine typewriters available to service the records of 2,125 assigned personnel.

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(2) Non-receipt and/or late receipt of assignment

instructions is a continuing problem for personnel in grade E1 thru E6.

6. Civic Actions

a. Summary - During the period units of the battalion continued to distribute candy, clothes, rice and other foodstuffs to nearby villages and refugee camps. In December the units of the battalion started utilizing agencies such as CRS and USAID as supply source to obtain materials and food for needy families and villagers. During the holiday season the battalion sponsored six (6) Christmas parties accomodating 812 children and adults. Presents or novelties of some type were presented to everyone attending.

In November the 179th Assault Support Helicopter Company volunteered to sponsor the Vinh Lon Refugee Camp located at Phu Loi. One of the most noteworthy accomplishments was the digging of a well. This was necessary to improve the sanitation of the village and to insure an adequate water supply.

In the month of December the 162nd Aviation Company conducted the official dedication ceremony of the Le Trang school. Members of the 162nd had assisted the people of Le Trang in building the school. Brigadier General Seneff, CG, 1st Aviation Brigade, and Colonel Campbell, CO, 12th Combat Aviation Group, attended the dedication. Also during the month of December, Headquarters Detachment and the 128th Aviation Company jointly assumed the task of lending assistance to the people of Phu Cueng in renovating the local Vinh Dong hospital. They completed painting two wards during December and intend to paint and screen the entire five hundred (500) bed complex in the coming months.

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b. Problem Areas -

(1) As a result of heavy operational requirements and the continually increasing manpower needs of maintenance it has been difficult to provide the necessary manpower support to the Civic Action activities.

(2) Obtaining supplies to complete the projects has been a problem. However, cooperation of agencies such as USAID and CRS has improved the situation.

7. Information Program.

a. Summary - The information program has received increased emphasis throughout the last quarter. With command interest, the program has become more responsive and efficient. The companies are responding much faster with home town news releases. The PIO has been developing liaison with outside news media which has resulted in greater recognition and support for the battalion.

b. Problem Areas - The major problem area is the inability to get prompt photo development. We must rely on other units to develop our film and at present have a very low priority.

F. (U) Intelligence

1. Personnel: Two personnel changes were made in the S2 Section during the quarter. On 26 December Major B. H. Freeman from the 116th Aviation Company replaced Major Ralph Lehman as the S2 Officer. In November the S2 clerk-typist position was filled. This has helped considerably to alleviate the problem of handling the large volume of paper work required for S2 administration.

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2. Activities: During the period the S2 assumed the additional staff responsibility of perimeter defense for the 11th Cbt Avn Bn's sector of the Custer Flats perimeter. The S2 was also appointed Battalion Escape and Evasion (E&E) Officer and instructed to initiate a Battalion E&E program. Other activities during the reporting period were limited to routine administrative actions. A summary of S2 actions for the quarter shows the following accomplishments:

Number of clearances validated - 140

Number of requests for NAC - 13

Number of clearances granted - 25

Number of requests for records checks - 71

Number of individual debriefings - 15

3. Intelligence Reports:

a. Daily Intsum: The Daily Intelligence Summary was continued throughout the period. This report contains local intelligence information of immediate value and interest and is distributed to the 1st Aviation Battalion and 605th Transportation Company in addition to 11th Combat Aviation Battalion units.

b. Perintrep: A periodic intelligence report containing locations of enemy units in the III CTZ is prepared and disseminated as necessary; normally every two weeks. This document is distributed to assigned units, 1st Aviation Battalion, 605th Transportation Company, and Troop D, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

c. Weekly Intsum: An Intelligence Summary containing information on enemy movements and activities, battle casualties, and aircraft hits is produced as a weekly Intelligence Letter and is distributed on the same basis as the Perintrep.

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d. **Weather and Light Data:** A monthly climatic summary and light data for the III CTZ is reproduced for the forthcoming month. This information is distributed to all assigned units.

4. E&E Program:

a. In complying with 1st Aviation Brigade letter, Survival, Escape and Evasion and Life Support Systems, 14 Dec 66, the S2 initiated a battalion E&E Program. Each company was required to appoint an E&E Officer to be responsible for all E&E training and dissemination of material pertaining to survival. The E&E Officer functions as part of the Intelligence Section of the unit.

b. All newly assigned air crew personnel receive an initial orientation on survival, E&E in RVN and all available life support and survival equipment. Briefings by the unit E&E Officer are presented at least once a month to insure that all personnel are familiar with the latest information and procedures.

c. The S2 attended the PACAF Jungle Survival School, Clark AFB, Republic of the Philippines during the month of January. The E&E Officer from the 178th Aslt Spe Hel Co is scheduled to attend this training during February. Additional school quotas will be requested to train all unit E&E Officers.

5. **Problem Areas:** none

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G. (C) OPERATIONS:

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1. Strength:

a. The Battalion operational strength has remained excellent throughout the reporting period. There was a temporary reduction of strength in early November when the 147th Assault Support Helicopter Company was transferred to the 222nd Combat Aviation Battalion. This vacancy was filled in January when the main body of the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company arrived. The 213th "Stagecoaches" will be stationed at Phu Loi in the area previously occupied by the 116th Aviation Company (Airmobile). An infusion program is planned for next quarter and should be nearly complete by the end of the period.

b. Those personnel who arrived in Viet Nam as original members of the 162nd Aviation Company (Airmobile) have all rotated during this quarter. Many of these personnel had been infused into other units in the Battalion and the 12th Combat Aviation Group to reduce the impact of their rotation. Approximately 85 of the original members of the 162nd departed the Battalion in early January.

2. Employment: The units of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion experienced a complete change of pace from the previous reporting period, going from small scale specially tailored combat assault and resupply missions to some of the largest aviation support missions of the war. Large scale lifts of Infantry units utilizing from 50 to 60 lift ships and six to ten light fire teams with extensive artillery and close air support became commonplace. The Battalion had not previously conducted combined operations of this type and many valuable lessons were learned concerning planning, execution,

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maintenance, logistical requirements, pathfinder employment, etc.

Along with the changing tempo of missions the Battalion also experienced a considerable change in areas of operation. Missions were flown over a 400 mile front, ranging from the watery expanses of the Delta to the mountainous regions of the central highlands near Khe Sanh.

However, most missions occurred in the areas around Tay Ninh,

Dau Tieng, Suoi Da, Cu Chi, Lai Khe, Phu Loi and the Rung Sat Special Zone southeast of Saigon. The terrain varied from the rubber plantations and triple-canopy jungles of the Tay Ninh area to the open rice paddies south of Cu Chi and the jungle swamps of the Rung Sat. In all cases, the tactics employed were tailored to meet the needs of the commander and as dictated by existing terrain. Some of the landing zones were large enough to accommodate an entire flight of twenty or more aircraft at one time thus allowing maximum surprise and still maintaining unit integrity. In other cases, particularly in the Rung Sat Special Zone, numerous single ship LZs were used by setting up a "Daisy Chain" between PZs and LZs with the lift ships. In several instances small ground elements were inserted or extracted from dense jungle areas using knotted ropes while the aircraft hovered just above the treetops. Many jungle resupply operations were also conducted in this manner. Numerous operations of all sizes were supported throughout the period. They ranged in size from single company lifts to multi-division operations and in time span from a single day to operations that are still continuing after eight months. Some of the more significant operations were:

Operation Lam Son which was initiated 23 May and was continued

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throughout the reporting period as Lam Son II. The operation, taking its name from a small village near Phu Loi, is a joint US and ARVN effort in the rural development and pacification program. The majority of the missions supporting Lam Son involved small rural villages around the Phu Loi area. Task Force Helper from the 1st Inf Div, working closely with Infantry units as security forces, visited numerous local hamlets passing out food, medical assistance and printed educational material.

Operation Attleboro II was conducted from 4 November thru 20 November in the Tay Ninh, Dau Tieng, Suoi Da area known as War Zone C. This operation was the largest and most demanding aviation requirement ever placed upon the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. Attleboro began with a tactical emergency in the Dau Tieng area requiring all available aircraft from the Battalion and from that time on there was never a letup. Elements of the 1st Inf Div, 25th Inf Div, 173rd Abn Bde and 196th Inf Bde relentlessly pursued the VC 273rd Regiment with one airmobile operation after another. Of particular note was the 8th of November which saw US forces moving eight Infantry Battalions by helicopters in lightning moves that sent the Viet Cong reeling. The "Big Red One" alone accounted for 325 VC KIA (body count) on this day. As Attleboro progressed it became obvious that this was to become the most successful effort to date against the elusive Viet Cong. The final tally included 1106 enemy killed, 44 captured and 2384 tons of rice seized. The 11th Combat Aviation Battalion contributed a substantial portion of the aviation effort with their four airmobile companies and one assault support helicopter company.

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Some of the more significant statistics compiled by the Battalion during this operation are shown below:

Sorties - 21,523

Hours flown - 7,224

Personnel - 36,909

Tons of cargo - 4,635

Aircraft hit - 19

Air craft recovered by CH-47 - 20

Of these figures the airmobile companies transported 89% of the personnel and the CH-47s moved 73% of the cargo. The aircraft recovered included both those that were shot down and those that were forced to land by mechanical malfunctions.

Operation Leeds was initiated 17 October and was terminated 4 November as a result of Attleboro II. Leeds was resumed on 25 November and finally terminated on 3 December. This operation was conducted along Highway 13 north of Lai Khe was employed both as a Search and Destroy effort and as Route Security for this vital communications link to the north.

Operation Charleston was launched on 23 November and terminated 23 December. This operation was very similar to Operation Baton Rouge, reported last quarter, and was to be a Battalion sized operation in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) located between Saigon and Vung Tau. Charleston was initiated to counter the VC attacks on the shipping lanes that pass thru the Rung Sat enroute to Saigon. Missions during this operation consisted mainly of company size or smaller lifts.

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Several extractions and resupply operations were performed in small single ship LZs requiring vertical approaches and departures. In some instances it was necessary to lower clearing teams and equipment by rope to the jungle floor to clear LZs. The 11th Battalion rotated three companies in support of Charleston during the 26 day operation. These companies had five UH-1Ds and one LFT RON each night to serve as a ready reaction force and sent the remaining aircraft back to home station each night for maintenance and crew rotation.

Operation Dante was a brief but potent demonstration of US firepower and force conducted 22 December. The purpose of the operation was; (1) to demonstrate to the villagers of Chanh Long, believed to be sympathetic to the Viet Cong, the tremendous fire power that was available for combating communist aggression. (2) Saturate a wooded area near the village that was a brown enemy location. Ordnance included T/C Air that delivered 80 cans of napalm and thousands of rounds of 20mm cannon fire, high explosive and white phosphorus artillery fire from 155mm, 175mm and 8 inch batteries and armed helicopters using 7.62mm, 2.75" rockets and 40mm grenades. The firepower portion involved two hours of continuous air and artillery strikes concentrated in two small wooded areas. Following this portion, Task Force Helper from the 1st Inf Div conducted an educational lecture in the village explaining the tremendous firepower available from the current US arsenal.

Operation Niagara Falls was a three day operation preceding Operation Cedar Falls. Niagara Falls was designed to create deception and to position key elements for initiation of Cedar Falls on 8 January.

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Operation Cedar Falls was a multi-division search and destroy operation conducted as a clearing measure in the Iron Triangle area 30 miles north of Saigon. Cedar Falls, initiated 8 January and terminated 26 January, involved elements of the 1st Infantry Division, 25th Infantry Division, 173rd Airborne Brigade, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 34th Armor Battalion, and Vietnamese Army and Ranger Battalions. Units of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion were instrumental in the opening phases of the operation, lifting nearly 3000 troops and 440 tons of cargo on the first day alone. Significant 11th Battalion statistics during Cedar Falls were:

Sorties - 16,948

Hours flown - 4,514

Passengers - 30,051

Tons of cargo - 4,246

As the ground elements moved through the Iron Triangle, blowing tunnel complexes and routing the Viet Cong, it became obvious that this was to be one of the most successful efforts of the war. Final count showed 720 enemy dead and an incredible 3700 tons of rice seized.

3. (C) Achievements: The Battalion achieved substantial gains in operational accomplishments during the past quarter. The results of the Battalion effort for the past three months are shown below:

a. Hours flown

UH-1 28,066

CH-47 2,690

b. Sorties flown

UH-1 93,963

CH-47 9,856

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c. Passengers carried

UH-1	172,402
CH-47	29,162

d. Cargo tons hauled

UH-1	9,609
CH-47	12,702

e. Medical Evacuations 432

f. Aircraft recovered by CH-47 53

g. Ammunition Expended

7.62mm	3,696,124
2.75" FFAR	14,984
40mm grenade	34,397

h. Enemy losses

(1) VC Killed (Body Count)	213
(2) VC Killed (Estimate)	124
(3) VC Wounded (Body Count)	3
(4) VC Wounded (Estimate)	10
(5) VC Captured	7
(6) Structures Destroyed	172
(7) Sampans Sunk or Destroyed	45

i. Friendly losses

Crew Members

WIA	19
KIA	12

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k. Aircraft Destroyed by enemy fire

UH-1B/C	1
UH-1D	3
CH-47	0

4. Operational Highlights: The quarter covered in this report was characterized by an increase in aviation support rendered and by numerous examples of valor by individuals and by unit action. These facts are attested by the truly exceptional support provided during Operation Attleboro II. The following accounts are considered worthy of mention:

a. 4 Nov 66 - Elements of the 196th Inf Bde (Lt) (Sep) made heavy contact with what was believed to be a Viet Cong Battalion-sized force northeast of Tay Ninh. A Tactical Emergency was declared at 1600 hours and the 11th Cbt Avn Bn responded with all available aircraft from four airmobile companies and one assault support helicopter company. Over 1500 personnel and 80 tons of artillery, ammunition and equipment from the 1st and 25th Inf Divs were moved into the Tay Ninh - Ban Tieng area. This action was a prelude to what was to become the largest and most successful offensive to date in the Viet Nam conflict - Attleboro II.

b. 8 Nov 66 - Operation Attleboro II continued, requiring a maximum effort by the Battalion that saw all flyable aircraft committed. Several Infantry battalions were in contact during the day, necessitating major troop repositioning lifts. The 11th Battalion moved approximately 1500 personnel and 255 tons of equipment and supplies. Elements from two other aviation battalions augmented the 11th and the lift force moved five Infantry battalions during the day. Numerous instances of moderate to intense Viet Cong automatic weapons fire were reported.

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Three UH-1Ds from the 173rd Avn Co received a total of 28 hits, but were able to fly to secure areas.

c. 12 Nov 66 - The 11th Cbt Avn Bn continued their maximum effort support of Attleboro II as several new lift records were established. The Battalion repositioned six Infantry Battalions, one Engineer Battalion and conducted numerous small size personnel displacements and resupply lifts. They lifted over 3600 personnel and 315 tons of cargo. The Tomahawks from the 128th Avn Co (Aml) lifted an incredible 1182 passengers and 28 tons of cargo. The 1st Inf Div CG was extracting a squad sized patrol that was under fire when his helicopter experienced radio failure. Red Dog 6 and 3 (11th Cbt Avn Bn CO and S3) immediately came to the general's aid and, assisted by one other aircraft, successfully extracted the the squad under enemy fire. Two squad members were wounded but the aircraft were not hit.

d. 19 Nov 66 - Elements of the 11th Cbt Avn Bn lifted three Inf Bns and conducted numerous small size personnel lifts and resupply missions. At approximately 1200 hours the 128th and 173rd Avn Cos (Aml) plus the 178th Aslt Spt Hel Co and A Co, 1st Avn Bn, under the leadership of Red Dog 6, conducted what was considered to be one of the most perfectly executed extractions ever completed by the 11th Cbt Avn Bn. The mission was to extract 1/18 Inf Bn from an area 32 kilometers north-east of Tay Ninh. The 30 lift ships were divided into flight elements of five helicopters each because of the small size of the pickup zone(PZ). During the extraction continuous artillery fire was placed 200 meters to the east of the PZ and TAC AIR strikes were placed within 150 meters on the west side of the PZ. Ten UH-1B gunships were used to cover the

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approach and departure axes. Two CH-47s were used to extract ammunition and supplies from the PZ just prior to the troop extraction. The extraction of the entire Bn was accomplished in 24 minutes.

e. 7 Dec - Elements of the 11th Bn supported US and ARVN forces in the III Corps area, moving 2377 personnel and 284 tons of cargo. A light fire team from the 128th Avn Co (Aml) was diverted from an assigned mission to respond to a tactical emergency north of Tay Ninh where a patrol had been attacked by an estimated three VC companies. The Gunslingers were instrumental in repelling the attack and were credited with 30 VC KIA as confirmed by a later body count.

f. 8 Dec 66 - Two Airmobile companies from the 11th Bn, augmented by two other airmobile companies, conducted a combat assault on a seal and search operation of the village of Chanh Luu just north of Phu Loi. The southern portion of the village perimeter was to be sealed by airmobile assault forces while the northern half was being sealed by ground elements moving overland. At 0700 simultaneous landings in the east and west LZs effected the element of surprise and placed a maximum number of personnel in close proximity to the village. By 0720 all elements of the Bn had been landed, completing the combat assault phase. CH-47 aircraft then lifted elements of Task Force Helper into the village to conduct pacification programs. The operation was concluded with the extraction of friendly forces later in the day.

g. 16 Dec 66 - The 11th Bn continued support of US and ARVN forces in the III Corps area, transporting 1864 passengers and nearly 300 tons of cargo. At approximately 1300 hours a Cross Bow light fire team from the 173rd Avn Co was engaging a target near Song Be when one

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aircraft received two hits. Further suppressive fires were placed in the area when it was determined to be an extensive VC supply storage area. The gunships destroyed 31 structures and damaged 17 others.

h. 20 Dec 66 - The 11th Bn committed two aviation companies (Aml) in support of the 1st Inf Div, one Aml to the 1st Australian Task Force and one Aml in general support of III Corps. A light fire team from the 128th Avn Co was on standby at Duc Hoa when they were scrambled to Luong Hoa (XS5788) to support an ARVN outpost that was under attack. Despite extremely adverse weather conditions with low ceilings and ground fog, the Gunslingers provided effective close air support for the outpost and repelled the attack. A later body count and damage assessment attested to the effectiveness of the light fire team; they were credited with 20 VC KIA (body count), 11 structures destroyed and six damaged and two motorized sampans destroyed.

i. 23 Dec 66 - A heavy fire team (3 UH-1B gunships) from the 128th Avn Co put out an impressive volume of firepower on a VC base camp area. After receiving moderate automatic weapons fire near Duc Hoa, the Tomahawk HFT took the source of fire under attack, expending 27,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammo, 210 rounds of 2.75" rockets and 2150 rounds of 40mm grenades. When the smoke had cleared, the gunships had destroyed 32 structures, killed one VC and wounded and captured one VC.

j. 23 Dec 66 - Once again the Duc Hoa area proved to be good hunting for the 128th Avn Co Gunslingers. A heavy fire team was directed to an area just north of Duc Hoa where there were two 40 foot motorized VC sampans. These were quickly sunk, resulting in 9 VC KIA (body count); then two additional sampans and 25 structures were destroyed and three more VC were KIA (body count).

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k. 29 Dec 66 - The 116th Avn Co returned from a three day commitment in the IV Corps area. Twelve UH-1Ds and a heavy fire team were sent to the Delta to reinforce the 13th Avn Bn in the vicinity of Vi Thanh (WR5382). The operation involved numerous combat assaults and one large airborne troop drop. The Hornets lifted over 2100 troops during the three day operation. The Stinger heavy fire team was credited with 25 VC KIA (body count), 23 VC KIA (estimate), 5 structures destroyed and 12 sampans destroyed.

l. 8 Jan 67 - A multi-division operation, code named "Cedar Falls", that was destined to become the largest US offensive effort of the conflict was launched this day. The 11th Cbt Avn Bn provided extensive aviation support for two Inf Divs and two separate Inf Bdes during this operation and responded on the opening day by transporting nearly 3000 troops and 440 tons of cargo into the battle area of the "Iron Triangle". The Boxcars from the 178th Aslt Spt Hel Co established an all time record for their unit, and possible for all CH-47 units in the Army, when they transported 377.5 tons of cargo and 781 personnel in one day. This record was only possible thru exceptionally close and efficient coordination between supporting and supported units and a thorough knowledge of load preparation and rigging techniques on the part of all personnel concerned. This relationship between the 178th and their supported units was developed and strengthened by a definite "Lean Forward" attitude of both parties and a continuing program of education utilizing the 178th Mobile Training Team (See page 26 for details on MTT program).

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m. 17 Jan 67 - A "Gunslinger" Light Fire Team from the 128th Avn Co (Aml) was on a training flight east of Tan Uyen when they received a request from the 10th ARVN Div to assault a suspected VC base camp vic YTO428. Because of the dense jungle cover the LFT was unable to assess the damage from their gun runs. A later sweep of the area by ground elements revealed 14 VC KIA by the gunships.

n. 18 Jan 67 - The "Stinger" Light Fire Team from the 116th Avn Co (Aml) recently constructed a special mount for an M-39, 20mm cannon that allowed the weapon to be quickly installed on a standard UH-1D. This weapon, dubbed "Big Daddy" by the 116th, proved to be most effective when employed against seven VC in the Duc Hoa area today. The VC were observed running for a tree line when the gunner took them under fire. The first burst of ten rounds accounted for one enemy KIA and one WIA. The remaining VC took cover in nearby wood line as the gunner took them under fire, expending approximately 90 rounds. The final results were five VC KIA and one WIA.

o. 24 Jan 67 - Two UH-1D "sicks" from the 116th Avn Co (Aml) were flying troop lifts north of Phu Loi when they observed several VC entering a wooded area. The two aircraft orbited the area pouring 7.62mm machine gun fire into several small structures where the VC were last seen. Ground elements later verified 12 VC KIA and four structures destroyed.

p. 28 Jan 67 - The 116th Avn Co (Aml) were supporting the 199th Light Infantry Brigade near Nha Be when the LFT was called to prestrike an LZ prior to insertion of ground forces. The Stingers suppression accounted for seven VC KIA by body count. As they finished

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their runs on the LZ the LFT was called to engage three VC fleeing the area in three sampans. The sampans were quickly sunk resulting in three VC KIA (est). Later in the day the Stingers were credited with nine more VC KIA (BC), bringing their total for the day to 16 enemy KIA (BC) and three KIA (est).

5. Significant Activities: The period covered saw a variety of noteworthy activities take place within the Battalion. Several new weapons systems were introduced to the Battalion, a variety of training projects were undertaken and several units were transferred or moved.

a. Unit Movement and Reassignment:

(1) During the first week of the quarter the 147th Aslt Spt Hel Co was transferred to the 222nd Cbt Avn Bn, Vung Tau. The long distance between Battalion Headquarters and Vung Tau and the unreliable telephone and radio communications greatly hampered command and control functions by this headquarters.

(2) The 116th Avn Co (Aml) moved from Phu Loi to Cu Chi effective 8 November 1966. This move served three purposes:

- (a) Improved the dispersion of the Battalion units.
- (b) Allowed one Arimobile Company to be co-located with one of the two US Divisions habitually support by the battalion.
- (c) Provided an area at Phu Loi for a new unit arriving from CONUS later in the quarter.

(3) The 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company was activated at Ft. Benning, Georgia, on 1 June 66. Following unit training at Ft. Benning the unit prepared for overseas movement and the advance party departed by air, arriving in Viet Nam 14 January. The main body

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closed at Phu Loi 27 January and the unit immediately commenced initial in-country training. The 178th Aslt Spt Hel Co is serving as the host unit and at the close of this period the 213th is well on the way to becoming firmly established at Phu Loi. Their period of operational training will last approximately 30 days and will be covered in detail next quarter.

b. Training: Despite the accelerated operational requirements during the past quarter, the 11th Battalion has conducted several noteworthy, training programs. Some of the more pertinent accomplishments are listed below:

(1) Pathfinder Training: Heavy operational commitments have precluded Pathfinder training courses during most of the past quarter. A new course was initiated 30 January 1967 and will be concluded 10 February. A total of 29 students from the 11th Cbt Avn Bn, 222nd Cbt Avn Bn and 1st Avn Bn were attending this course. A more detailed narrative of the course will appear in the ORLL for the next quarter.

(2) Decca Training: The training program in the use and operation of the Decca Navigation System has been progressing very smoothly, with approximately 33% of the Battalion aviators presently qualified on the system. With the high turnover of aviators the training will, by necessity, be continuous. The Decca technical representative has been instrumental in training personnel within the units who will later serve as unit Decca instructors. During November all aviators in the Battalion headquarters were trained. The 115th Avn Co (Aml) with the aid of the Decca technical representative conducted extensive Decca training during December and January. It is anticipated that the

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Decca technical representative will continue training instructors for all assigned units until each unit will have sufficient trained instructors to be self-sustaining.

(3) Mobile Training Team (MTT): The Battalion Mobile Training Team from the 178th Aslt Spt Hel Co continued their training program of all supported units. The classes on rigging and loading equipment for movement by CH-47 have been presented to all 1st Infantry Division Artillery Battalions, 25th Infantry Division Artillery Battalions, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, the 196th Infantry Brigade (Lt) (Sep), and the 3rd Bde, 9th Inf Div. The first day of Operation Cedar Falls, 8 January 1967, served as a testimonial to the effectiveness of the MTT program; the 178th Aslt Spt Hel Co (Boxcars) established an all time record by lifting 377.5 tons of artillery, ammunition, and equipment plus 781 personnel. Another indicator of the effectiveness of the MTT program is the ever-increasing ratio of tons carried per hour flown. This ratio has shown a continuing improvement since the beginning of the program. The ratio for the last calendar quarter was 4.3 tons per hour flown compared to 3.3 tons the previous quarter. Having trained all supported units has reduced the frequency of instruction required. The main effort now is directed at refresher type training and training for units experiencing a high personnel turnover.

(4) Army Aircraft Maintenance Technical Assistance Program (AAMTAP) at Vung Tau continued during the past quarter. The classes were well received by all concerned and have proven very beneficial to the unit maintenance effort. All available quotas were filled except the CH-47 Airframe IV course. There were 20 students

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available with the necessary prerequisites for this course. Attendance figures are shown below:

<u>Course</u>	<u>Students Attending</u>
UH-1 Airframe	10
UH-1 Engine (T-53)	8
CH-47 Airframe I	10
CH-47 Airframe II	6
CH-47 Engine (T-55)	<u>15</u>
TOTAL	49

(5) VNAF Training: On 7 November 66 the 11th Cbt Avn Bn began the transition training of four Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) pilots in the UH-1 aircraft. This training included an extensive ground school with emphasis on principles of turbine engine operation, UH-1 systems operation, preflight inspection, starting procedures performance data, emergency procedures and aircraft capabilities and limitations. The entire transition program was conducted by Instruction Pilots and Ground School Instructors from the Battalion staff. Each student received 27 hours of ground school subjects and from 10 to 15 hours of transition training in the UH-1. The students had all been flying CH-34s with their units and had logged from 750 to 1000 hours total flight time. With the completion of Phase I, transition training, the pilots were sent to the 128th and 173-1 Aviation Companies (Aml) for Phase II training. This training was designed to qualify the pilots for all types of missions conducted by airmobile companies and could also help alleviate the pilot shortage some of the companies were experiencing. The entire training program progressed very smoothly with only occasional minor problem areas.

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The students had logged an average of 103 hours per aviator in the UH-1 as of 31 January 67. They will complete their training on 6 February 1967 and will be honored at a graduation ceremony at 12th Combat Aviation Group Headquarters prior to being returned to their units.

(6) Aviator Training - 9th Infantry Division: In January ten aviators from the 9th Inf Div were attached to the 11th Cbt Avn Bn for a period of 18 days. The first day of instruction covered initial in-country briefing that included a current Intelligence Summary, Escape and Evasion, safety, medical, weather and current rules and regulations pertaining to aviation operations in Viet Nam. The aviators were then sent to the four airmobile companies in the Battalion where they received standard in-country orientations with unit instructor pilots and were then sent out as pilots on regularly assigned missions. The ten pilots logged an average of 69 hours flying time per pilot during their training with the Battalion.

c. New Subsystems: Several new subsystems were installed and tested on 11th Battalion aircraft during this period of increasing change in aviation tactics and hardware. Three of the more significant systems are discussed below:

(1) XM-47: The aircraft-mounted XM-47 mine dispersing subsystem gives Army Aviation a new weapons system that is limited only by the imagination. It is currently flight certified for use on the Air Force A-1E aircraft and the Army UH-1P helicopter. The weapon, commonly called the "gravel mine", can be used offensively or defensively. It may be used as a barrier, to canalize, to deny certain areas, to isolate,

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to protect, to harass and interdict, or to serve as an economy of force measure. The XM-47 subsystem has been issued to the four airmobile companies in the battalion and each unit will install the necessary hardware on one UH-1 B/C to accept the complete system. Each company has established and will maintain an XM-47 training committee to insure that necessary training and proficiency levels are maintained. The initial cadre training was conducted 17 and 18 January 1967 by technical representatives from Picatinny Arsenal. At the present time one company maintains a three hour alert posture while the other three companies are all to be prepared to fly mine laying missions on 24 hour advance notice. Missions will be rotated among the companies to facilitate crew training and proficiency. The 162nd Avn Co (Aml) is the only company in the Battalion to date that has successfully completed a mine laying mission.

(2) Smokey the Bear: The Battalion Headquarters UH-13 with smoke generator system, as described in the last ORLL, has been successfully employed on numerous combat operations during the past three months. The reaction of ground commanders and aviators alike has been most enthusiastic. "Smokey" is on call at all times for possible missions in the III Corps TAOR. Units utilizing the smoke ship have included the 1st Inf Div, 25th Inf Div, 173rd Abn Bde and 199th Lt Inf Bde. The aircraft has been used to obscure approach and departure routes just prior to a troop insertion or extraction, to conceal landing zones from nearby areas of suspected VC emplacements, and to conceal downed aircraft and crews until a recovery could be accomplished. The system has been very effectively employed with close and continuous gunship

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support. Since this technique has been made standard, "Smokey" has received only sporadic sniper fire and has not sustained any hits in over three months operation. The basic installation has been modified by replacing the 16 gallon tank with a 55 gallon tank that fits under the passenger seat. This has more than tripled the duration, with approximately one minute and 45 seconds of continuous smoke now available.

(3) Firefly Training: As a result of the exceptional effectiveness of the Firefly systems in the III and IV Corps area in the sampan interdiction role, each airmobile company in the battalion plus the battalion headquarters will be issued the necessary hardware to field one complete Firefly system per company. At the close of this quarter, each company has received the seven-lamp adjustable lighting system and an initial issue of C-123 type aircraft landing lights. The 50 cal machine guns that will complete the system are on requisition but have not been received as of this writing.

(a) Training: Crew members from each unit will receive initial training from the 334th Assault Helicopter Company located at Ben Hoa, and will then serve as cadre to train other crews in their own unit. Personnel from each company receiving initial training will be the Con Platoon Leader, two pilots, a light operator and a gunner. The training course lasts four days and includes 20-25 hours of flight time on actual missions. Crew members from the 116th Avn Co (Aml) were trained in early January. Operational commitments have precluded further training. However, it is anticipated that the other units will receive their initial training in February.

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(b) **Limitations:** Effective employment of the Firefly system is usually restricted to periods of relatively good visibility. During periods of rain, haze or fog the systems efficiency is greatly reduced. The Firefly is most effective when employed in its primary role of interdicting sampan traffic. When used in areas other than rivers, canals or open areas it has proved to be very ineffective as a result of the abundant shadows, trees, foliage and other areas of concealment.

(c) **Employment:** Conventional employment is with two UH-1C gunships and one UH-1D. One UH-1C is equipped with the Firefly light and the other is a standard gunship, preferably with the M-5 weapons system. The UH-1D mounts the 50 cal machine gun and is usually flown by the platoon leader. The three aircraft operate as a team with the UH-1D usually flying between 1000-1500 feet. The light ship is flown between 800-1000 feet and the M-5 equipped UH-1C operates from 50-500 feet above the surface.

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H. (U) Logistics

1. Summary of Activities: The major efforts of the S4 during this reporting period have been directed toward:

- a. Implementing a TOE change for the Airmobile Companies (light)
- b. Alining equipment requirements with operational requirements to insure adequate equipment on hand and no excess.
- c. Improving administrative supply procedures
- d. Improving unit ASL and PLL procedures
- e. Establishing POL facilities
- f. Construction of cantonment area

2. POL: The battalion POL team became operational (KD-TOE 5000). This has been a substantial assist in refueling operations. The equipment (100 GPM Pumps) is satisfactory but a more powerful pump is recommended (350 GPM). This would speed up refueling operations at staging areas.

3. Supply:

- a. Supply procedures have improved during this quarter. The opening of an ICC, and more accurate inventory at depot level has enabled supplies to flow more expeditiously.
- b. Distribution of Class II and IV supplies is still a problem. All Class II and IV drawn by this battalion are picked up by the requestor at the DS or GS unit. Unit TOE's do not authorize sufficient vehicles or personnel to support such procedures.
- c. Determining the status of requisitions has improved substantially since the last report.

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d. **Typewriter shortages:** There is still a significant shortage of typewriters in this battalion. Efforts are now being made to have P&C purchase typewriters for this unit.

4. Construction:

a. The self-help program continues to be the primary method of constructing cantonment areas.

b. Construction of aviation facilities is a difficult area. Some units receive contractor assistance and others receive practically no assistance. Provisions should be made to program type facilities for each aviation unit. CH-47 units should receive a high priority for the construction of indoor facilities. The cost of construction is easily offset by a reduction in parts usage and increased aircraft availability.

I. SIGNAL:

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNAL ACTIVITIES

a. (U) On 11 November 1966 Major Lewis G. Holladay assumed the duties of Battalion Signal Officer, replacing Captain Maynard A. Nagelhout.

b. (U) Radio Set, AN/VRC 24, requisitioned 21 September 1966 has been received, and installed, in the Battalion Operations Center (BOC).

c. (U) An emergency power source, 28 volts DC, for operation of radio equipment and emergency lights, has been installed in the BOC. This system supplies DC power to operate two AN/VRC 46 and one AN/VRC 24 radios, plus two 28 volt lights.

2. PROBLEM AREAS

a. (U) The Switchboard, SB 86, that was approved for this unit on a USARV form 47, and requisitioned on 12 July 1966 has not been received. The present switchboard consists of three SB 22 boards, which are 98% filled. Signal doctrine considers a switchboard system saturated when filled to 80% of capacity.

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b. (U) Antennas installed for use by the BOC are not at sufficient elevation to afford required coverage. Steps have been taken to acquire two 80 foot wooden telephone poles to correct this problem.

J. FLIGHT SAFETY AND STANDARDIZATION

1. (U) General:

a. On 29 January 1967 Major Charles Frank completed his tour of OJT with the Robin Hoods and returned to Battalion Headquarters to take over the reins as Battalion Aviation Safety Officer. Major Larry Miller, Assistant S3 becomes the Battalion Standardization Instructor Pilot.

b. Major Arthur K. Kinney Jr. departs for CONUS on 6 February 1967.

2. (C) Accidents, Incidents, Combat Losses

a. The battalion accident rate was high for November with a sharp decrease noted in December. January was the highest accident rate experienced by this battalion. Of the six accidents in January, four resulted from material failure and two from pilot error. Six of the eleven major accidents resulted from known or suspected material failure.

b. Seven of the eleven major accidents involved relatively new aviators.

c. Changes in unit commanders and rotation of a large number of experienced aviators probably contributed to the increase in accidents during this period. Greater emphasis is being placed on command supervision, orientation, training and aircraft maintenance. A numerical summary of aircraft accidents, combat losses, incidents etc follows:

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	Major Acc	Minor Acc	Major Cbt loss	Incid.	Presc Ldg	Forced Ldg
Nov	4 ⁽¹⁾	-	2	1 ⁽²⁾	1	3
Dec	1	-	-	3	4	4
Jan	6 ⁽³⁾	1	2	2	2	1
Total	11	1	4	6	7	8

(1) Four fatalities

(2) Incident damage after forced landing

(3) Two accidents with eight fatalities

d. Three of the four combat losses resulted from small arms and automatic weapons fire. One was destroyed by a mine while landing to evacuate wounded.

3. (U) Major accident summary:

a. UH-1B: 4 Nov Engine failure on final approach. Poor autorotative technique with a loaded aircraft resulted in major damage to the A/C on landing.

b. UH-1D: 8 Nov All troops departed the right side of the A/C while at a hover over a slope. Lateral CG limits were exceeded and rotor blades hit the ground.

c. UH-1D: 14 Nov AC attempted take-off from a confined area with an A/C overloaded for existing conditions. Failure to use Go-No-Go procedures.

d. UH-1B: 28 Nov Gunship crashed and burned after rapid descent to tree top level. Cause unk. Suspect engine failure. Four fatalities.

e. UH-1D: 8 Dec A/C fell thru on termination of approach. Improper power control.

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f. UH-1D: 4 Jan Two UH-1Ds from the same unit meshed rotor blades. Pilot failed to maintain proper distance between aircraft.

g. UH-1C: 10 Jan Tail rotor hub failed. Tail rotor blades and 90° gear box separated from A/C. Hard landing resulted in minor damage to the A/C.

h. UH-1D: 14 Jan Tail rotor blades and 90° gear box were seen separating from A/C. Descent appeared controlled until 400 feet above the ground when the A/C went into tail low attitude and spun in tail first. Suspect improper anti-torque failure procedures. Four fatalities.

i. UH-1D: 17 Jan A/C flown into tree during night low level flight. Suspect faulty altimeter.

j. UH-1D: 28 Jan Tail rotor struck wires at night while A/C was performing a clearing turn. Pending investigation.

k. UH-1D: 28 Jan A/C was seen going thru violent maneuvers, crashed and burned. Suspect main rotor pitch change link failure or cargo door going thru rotors. Evidence of granular corrosion in pitch change link. Six fatalities.

l. UH-1D: 31 Jan A/C rolled over on its right side while at a hover. Suspect main rotor pitch change link failure. Extensive granular corrosion thru 60% of the diameter of the pitch change link.

4. (C) Combat Loss Summary:

a. UH-1D: 15 Nov Two UH-1Ds were shot down by automatic weapons fire during an extraction. One pilot killed due to gun shot wound in the chest. Chest protector was worn. Bullet entered between chest protector and armpit.

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UH-1D: 7 Jan Aircraft could not be controlled after one round severed hydraulic line and entered transmission. RPM decay followed hit and was probably a result of transmission failure.

c. UH-1D: 8 Jan Approach was terminated at a hover during med-evac mission. Mine was detonated to the right of the aircraft. The aircraft rolled over on its left side and burned.

5. (U) Emergency Procedures: Eight successful forced landings and seven precautionary landings reflect favorably on the skill, state of training and judgment of the individuals concerned.

6. (U) Accident Prevention: Three monthly Accident Prevention Newsletters were published and distributed. Courtesy copies were sent to 28 units of battalion size or larger, USABAAR and USAAVNS (see Annex D).

7. (U) Instructor Pilots: The instructor Pilot status was excellent during this quarter. Mass rotation of personnel will create the problem of qualifying inexperienced new aviators as instructor pilots. A report on instructor pilot status was made to 12th Combat Aviation Group and USARV on 25 January 1967.

8. (U) Problem Areas:

a. Receipt of information to complete downed aircraft reports and crash facts messages is a continuing problem. A letter of instructions was sent to all units.

b. Timely completion of accident reports to meet suspense dates was a problem. Investigating Officers and members of investigation boards are now put on TDY to Battalion Headquarters until the reports are completed.

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K. (U) MAINTENANCE

1. Summary

a. November was the highest total flying hour month per aircraft in the history of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion and perhaps of any similar unit in Vietnam. The UH-1D had the highest average with 107 hours per aircraft. The operational requirements demanded an extremely high flying hour rate. Due to the excellent supply and maintenance posture of all units at the beginning of the month, this was accomplished without an adverse effect on the December & January aircraft availability.

b. The Battalion had 15 UH-1D aircraft undergo a standard configuration modification by an avionics retrofit team. Because there was a shortage of modification kits only the 1965 models could be retrofitted. Aircraft undergoing extensive maintenance were configured first.

c. All units of the Battalion were required to submit requisitions for all TBO components that were within 250 hours of change. The requisitions were documented through the supporting DSU and hand carried to the Special Management Items (SMI) Project Officer of the 34th General Support Group for hand carrying to USAAVCOM in St. Louis. The purpose of this program is to prevent excessive down time on aircraft approaching major inspections and TBO changes. A reconciliation of all due-out requisitions from the Aviation Material Management Center (AMMC) was received by the supporting DSU; this resulted in the cancellation of many requisitions. Items still required have been requisitioned.

d. The Battalion's CH-47 rotor blades were x-rayed by the General Support Company in order to extend service life. This was accomplished with minimum down time on aircraft.

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e. One UH-1C aircraft experienced a main rotor blade failure during flight but landed without further structural damage to the aircraft. A project engineer from the 34th General Support Group was assigned to investigate the problem. Further inspection revealed one other aircraft with a cracked main rotor blade.

f. One company had the XM-21 armament subsystem installed on their UH-1C aircraft. This much improved armament system has not caused any major maintenance problems to date.

g. Some improvement in dust suppression has been accomplished in helicopter parking areas and maintenance areas by the use of peneprime. Several aircraft have experienced hard landings due to pilot disorientation while landing in the dust.

h. UH-1B/C Model availability has been poor due to the lack of aircraft and armament parts.

i. Statistics of performance for the period of this report are shown below:

<u>Hrs Flown</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Jan</u>
UH-1B	1796	1537	1719
UH-1D	8844	8512	9140
CH-47	<u>1010</u>	<u>795</u>	<u>768</u>
	11650	10845	11627

Available

UH-1B	76%	64%	67%
UH-1D	77%	79%	78%
CH-47	63%	79%	75%

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<u>EDM</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Jan</u>
UH-1B	9%	14%	17%
UH-1D	11%	10%	14%
CH-47	17%	8%	8%
<u>EDP</u>			
UH-1B	15%	22%	16%
UH-1D	12%	11%	8%
CH-47	20%	13%	17%

2. Problem Areas:

a. Time between overhaul (TBO) components are falling far short of life expectancy. A revised expected life should be published for supply management. Units have been authorized to requisition components based on experience and historical records. In many cases components endure less than half their published normal life.

b. Aircraft are flown double and triple the flying hour program without corresponding increase in maintenance personnel, parts, and equipment. Many maintenance personnel have little experience. Units are required to work a 24 hour day and at the same time provide on the job training for those who have had no previous experience.

L. (U) MEDICAL

1. Summary: The 431st, 432nd, 785th, and 759th Medical Detachments (OA) and the Medical Section of Headquarters Detachment have continued to provide aeromedical support to units of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. The nature of problems facing these medical units has changed but little since the preceding report.

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2. Personnel Changes: The Battalion Surgeon, Cpt Harold B. Leland returned to CONUS during this period and he was replaced by Cpt Jon A. Smith. Cpt Arthur Scott, Commanding Officer of the 431st Medical Detachment was transferred to the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion; no replacement for Cpt Scott is available. Medical coverage of the parent unit of the 431st Medical Detachment, the 116th Avn Co (Aml), is being provided by the 25th Aviation Battalion Field Surgeon.

3. Medical Civic Action Projects: Medcap activities continue unchanged. The 162nd, 128th Avn Co (Aml), and 178th Aslt Hel Co continue to provide medical care to small adjacent hamlets. The 173rd Avn Co (Aml) provides medical support to a small provincial hospital in Lai Khe.

4. New Activities: The medical section, HHD has completed a large permanent dispensary which it shares with the 432nd Medical Detachment (OA). This consolidated battalion dispensary greatly improved economy and efficiency of operation.

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SECTION II

COMMANDERS OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PART I

OBSERVATIONS (LESSONS LEARNED)

A. (U) PERSONNEL: None

B. (U) INTELLIGENCE: None

C. (C) OPERATIONS

1. Mined Landing Zones

a. Item: Mines and booby traps on landing zones

b. Discussion: This battalion has encountered six incidents of mines and booby traps in the landing zones during the period 26 December - 31 January. The devices used have varied; some were pressure mines and others were command detonated. The explosives are usually attached to trees or buried in small mounds or rice paddy dikes. The enemy normally fires the command detonated mine on touchdown of the aircraft in order to wound not only crew members but also the passengers. Fortunately, our combat loss rate to this tactic has been very low. In the future when operating in areas where very few landing zones are available special attention must be directed to the preparation of the landing zone. In addition, we must be most careful in the selection of the exact touchdown point; advising the ground commander of the enemy's probable employment of anti helicopter devices.

c. Observation: More intensive preparation of landing zones to include the use of special munitions such as "daisy cutters" will help eliminate booby traps and mines. In coordination with ground commanders for operations in areas where booby traps may be encountered, advise landing away from dikes and back from tree lines.

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2. Planning Airmobile Operations

a. Item: Planning time for multiple LZ operations

b. Discussion: More frequently the ground commanders tactical plan requires the simultaneous landing of lift ships into multiple landing zones. This tactic is not difficult to accomplish if the operation is well planned in advance. Eighteen to twenty four hours advance notice is normally sufficient to confirm the landing zones by reconnaissance with the lifted unit and the air assault flight leaders. The advance planning also affords time to brief the participating elements in detail.

c. Observation: When multiple landing zone operations are contemplated the requirements for detailed planning must be given due consideration.

3. Planning Large Airmobile Operations

a. Item: Large scale helicopter operations (50 or more ships involved)

b. Discussion: As new aviation units arrive in Vietnam we can expect more frequent air assaults involving 60-80 helicopters. Normally a common pickup zone will be used. To avoid confusion and assure a well coordinated, smooth operation, time to pickup troops and to arrange flights in the air for the assault into the landing zone must be included in the sequence of events. For example in twenty ship lifts the pickup can normally be accomplished ten at a time in two minutes; the flight is easily formed and can proceed directly to the landing zone. However, in sixty ship operations, pickup of ten at a time takes approximately eleven minutes. Also to avoid having a long string of aircraft headed for the LZ, time must be provided to orbit the ships after pickup in order

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to arrange the flights in the most cohesive package possible for the flight to the LZ.

c. Observation: Take into account the extra time required for pickup and organizing large scale helicopter assaults.

4. Controlling Helicopter Assault Operations

a. Item: Command and control of assault operations using one helicopter company.

b. Discussion: Single helicopter company operations are the most common. The company commander has the option of flying with the flight or controlling the operation from a command and control ship. From experience we have learned that control from a ship apart from the flight is the best method. This gives the aviation commander the opportunity to carry the ground commander with him, thereby insuring instantaneous decisions when changes to the tactical plan are required. Also, the aviation commander can more easily change flight patterns and formations if challenged by enemy fire and he is in a better position to observe the entire tactical scene.

c. Observation: More positive control of both the ground and aviation elements is achieved by the use of a command and control aircraft in assault operations.

5. Rigging Downed Aircraft for Recovery

a. Item: Aircraft Recovery

b. Discussion: Aircraft maintenance personnel in each airmobile company have been trained to rig downed helicopters for recovery in order to reduce the time required for recovery. Prior to this training a rigging team from one of the direct support maintenance companies was required for

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rigging downed aircraft. At this time the direct support maintenance company responsible for the downed aircraft still insist on checking the rigging before recovery; this often causes a delay in recovery operations.

c. Observations Each airmobile company should train organic maintenance personnel to rig downed aircraft for recovery. Recovery of downed aircraft in unsecure areas should be completed as soon as possible utilizing the first available trained crews for rigging and recovery.

6. Dust Effect on Helicopter Operations

a. Item: Dust Suppression

b. Discussion: Dust becomes more of a problem area as the dry season progresses. Dust conditions in field locations have usually not caused any difficulty due to the presence of a small amount of vegetation and the short duration of operation in the areas. Dust conditions in aircraft parking and staging areas have become a real problem and must be considered each time an operation is planned. Aircraft may be required to depart in individual flights with extra spacing between each aircraft. The use of peniprime in these areas has greatly reduced the dust hazard; however many staging and resupply areas have not been covered with peniprime.

c. Observation: Extra time must be allowed for helicopter operations in dusty areas when planning for a lift. Peniprime greatly reduces dust and should be applied to all helicopter parking, staging and resupply areas.

7. Committed Aircraft vs Required Aircraft for Helicopter Operations

a. Item: Daily Aircraft Commitments

b. Discussion: Experience has shown that total aircraft flying

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hours are increased and crew rest is enhanced by programming the number of aircraft to be committed on a daily basis. The number presently scheduled for commitment by each airmobile company on a daily basis is eleven (11) UH-1Ds and one or two LFTs. Committing only eleven (11) UH-1Ds daily out of approximately 18 to 20 assigned may appear to be a low commitment. Often overlooked is the fact that aircraft which go down for any reason during the day must be replaced and additional aircraft are required for the Battalion Commander and staff use, pilot in country orientation and training, liaison and coordination meetings for future operations, and unit administrative and resupply missions. Normally from 13 to 15 aircraft must be flown each day in order to maintain eleven mission ready aircraft. Six CH-47 "Chinooks" are presently scheduled for mission commitment on a daily basis. Normally from 9 to 11 Chinooks must be flown each day in order to maintain six mission ready aircraft throughout the day.

c. Observation: The actual number of aircraft flown during any one day is many more than the number committed on a mission basis. The actual number of aircraft flown during the day should be included on the Commanders Operational Report (CPREF 5) to give the commanders a more concise picture of actual aircraft required.

D. (U) LOGISTICS:

1. Standardisation of POL Dispensing Equipment

a. Item: POL Capability

b. Discussion: The refueling of aircraft has worked quite smoothly, however there is difficulty in identifying and obtaining particular types of reducing valves and hardware associated with POL dispensing equipment.

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c. Observation: Standardized and complete POL dispensing systems would reduce present problems.

2. Standardizing Aviation Facilities

a. Item: Aviation Facilities

b. Discussion: Aviation units are expected to achieve similar flying hour programs. However, facilities differ substantially from unit to unit.

c. Observation: Emphasis should be placed in standardizing aviation facilities and Ch-47 units should receive a priority commensurate with their complexity.

E. (U) SIGNAL: Improved Command and Control Console

Item: Command and Control Console for use of Battalion Commander.

Discussion: The AN/ASC 6 Command and Control console installed in the Battalion Commanders aircraft weighs approximately 350 pounds. It is located in such a forward position in the aircraft that a weight and balance problem is created. Due to the size and weight of this unit, excessive time is required to remove/reinstall when required for maintenance purposes. For these and other reasons, a smaller, light weight console has been designed by the Signal Officer of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion. The newer unit is under construction at this time, and once completed will afford three FM radios, plus one UHF radio, and full intercom throughout the aircraft. Because the plan is to use plugs to connect the system into the aircraft, only about five minutes will be required to remove or re-install the console. The entire system will weigh approximately 100 pounds.

Observation: The aforementioned console, once completed and installed, will allow a more effective utilization of the Command and

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Control aircraft through a safer, more flexible concept in radio communications.

F. (U) FLIGHT SAFETY AND STANDARDIZATION: None

G. (U) MAINTENANCE:

1. Current Avionics Standard Configuration Program

a. Item: The avionics standard configuration program.

b. Discussion: The objective of the program is to configure all Army Aircraft to accept the same family of radios. The completion time of this project is estimated to be one year. The operational commitment in the RVN does not lend itself to Army configuration that will ground operational aircraft. Therefore any extensive configuration or modification, short of safety of flight, must be accomplished on aircraft that are grounded for extensive maintenance. In order for this to be possible the avionics configuration team would have to be able to configure any aircraft regardless of year or model. The program started in November with the capability to configure only a few 1965 UH-1D model aircraft. The kits were incomplete in many cases and resulted in delays. The available kits were exhausted and after approximately two weeks a few 1964 UH-1D model kits were received. Due to operational commitments and lack of 1964 UH-1D model aircraft down for extensive maintenance, very few were modified. The team is presently working on O-1 aircraft of which there are none assigned to this battalion. However the problem will undoubtedly present itself again in the near future.

c. Observation: A configuration program should be completely ready in every way before it is started. It should be flexible, staffed

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through all headquarters down to the unit well in advance, and be completed so as to avoid interference with the operational mission at hand. All aircraft returning to units from extensive maintenance in RVN or US and the models coming off the production lines should be the first aircraft configured. The present configuration program does not meet this criteria.

2. Effects of Dust on Aircraft Maintenance

a. Item: Dusty unit Parking and Maintenance Areas

b. Discussion: Operation of aircraft in dusty areas causes many maintenance problems. One unit alone has had six aircraft damaged due to pilot disorientation while landing in the unit parking area. Operations in dusty areas away from the home station has caused far fewer aircraft accidents. While performing internal maintenance on engines and transmissions it is imperative that all dirt and contamination be eliminated from the work area. The present dusty maintenance areas make this most difficult and on occasion has required replacement of components. The cost of dust suppressent is far less than the cost of one helicopter. The damage and loss of helicopters because of dust already amounts to several hundred thousand dollars.

c. Observation: Thousands of dollars could be saved and efficiency of operations enhanced if all unit maintenance and parking areas were free of dust. Command emphasis is needed in order for the dust suppressent program to receive the priority it needs.

3. Maintenance Support for Aircraft Operating from Home Station

a. Item: Aircraft Operating TDY away from home station

b. Discussion: Gunships (UH-1B) from two companies of the

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Battalions were dispatched TDY several hundred miles away from home station. Their mission was in support of a Special Forces operation. The aircraft received very little supply and maintenance support during this operation. Repair parts to include engines, transmissions, and rotor blades had to be shipped from home station. After the mission was completed, one aircraft remained in the area for one month requiring an engine. An investigation of the problem revealed that specific responsibility for supply and maintenance support of these aircraft had not been delegated.

c. Observation: Clear, concise orders in writing are essential for delegating responsibility for aircraft maintenance and supply support. Unnecessary delay of aircraft returning to home station and excessive aircraft down time would have been avoided had maintenance and supply support agencies been designated in advance.

4. Lighting Equipment for Night Aircraft Maintenance

a. Item: Insufficient lighting equipment is authorized to perform required night maintenance.

b. Discussion: Lighting sets authorized by unit TOE are not sufficient to perform maintenance on a twenty four hour basis. Units have fabricated make shift lighting equipment to alleviate the situation; however, the majority of night maintenance is accomplished using flashlights and hand held lanterns. Requests for authorization of equipment in addition to TOE authorization have produced negative results. Portable light sets are required for crew chiefs to perform night maintenance on the line and flood light sets for organizational and direct support maintenance areas.

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c. Observation: Sufficient lighting of maintenance facilities is required to increase productivity and reduce chances for maintenance errors during night operation.

5. Prerequisites for Aircraft Maintenance Courses

a. Item: CH-47 Aircraft Maintenance Technical Assistance Program AMTAP Course Prerequisites.

b. Discussion: The prerequisites for CH-47 AMTAP Courses are:

- (1) CH-47 airframe course 1 and 2: Student must have minimum of one year experience on CH-47 aircraft.
- (2) CH-47 airframe course 4: Student must be a graduate of a Ch-47 school or have a minimum of 6 months experience on P/W aircraft of which a minimum of two months must have been on the Ch-47.

(3) All students attending the AMTAP school must have 6 months in RVN after completion of course.

In view of the fact that the tour of duty in RVN is only 12 months it is often difficult if no impossible to fill quotas for AMTAP courses. These courses are of a great benefit to all units. Maintenance personnel with very little CH-47 or rotary wing maintenance experience are arriving in RVN as replacements and need additional training before they can be effectively utilized.

c. Observation: The prerequisites for the CH-47 AMTAP courses are too stringent.

H. (U) MEDICAL

1. Sanitation

a. Item: Disposal of Liquid Wastes and Standing Water

b. Discussion: Drainage of standing water and disposal of

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liquid kitchen, shower, industrial, and washing area wastes is inadequate. The presence of stagnant and contaminated pools of water is a nuisance and hazardous to the health of the men. Amelioration of this problem requires cooperation of all units with the post engineers, in the construction of an adequate drainage system.

c. Observation: Increased effort should be directed toward preplanning location of liquid waste generating facilities and drainage systems on a new post. Cooperative planning and coordination with post engineers should be achieved to improve present inadequate facilities.

2. Medical Facilities

a. Item: Briefing of aviators on availability and location of medical facilities.

b. Discussion: The inherent mobility of aviation units and fluidity of their operations results frequently in the utilization of assault and assault support aircraft as medical evacuation ships. Not infrequently, adequate and available medical facilities are over flown by these non-medical aircraft when involved in medical evacuation. This is uneconomic utilization of aircraft and possibly dangerous to the lives of injured individuals. This deficiency is a result of poor dissemination of information regarding the location and available facilities of field medical units.

c. Observation: Evacuation of casualties by non-medical service aircraft will achieve maximum aircraft utilization. Ideal medical treatment will be facilitated by a more thorough briefing of aviators on the location of medical units.

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PART II

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. (U) PERSONNEL: None

B. (U) INTELLIGENCE: None

C. (C) OPERATIONS:

1. That there be a continuous emphasis placed on careful selection and, when possible, preparation of landing zones to minimize the probability of encountering Viet Cong mines.

2. That ample planning time be allotted for airmobile operations involving simultaneous use of multiple landing zones.

3. That adequate time be programmed into large scale airmobile operations to allow individual flight elements to join up after troop loading and before proceeding to the landing zone.

4. That trained crews from battalion units be allowed to rig downed aircraft for recovery when direct support maintenance rigging personnel are not available or responsive enough.

5. That continued command emphasis be placed on treating areas habitually used for helicopter operations with dust suppressant.

6. That all commanders above aviation battalion level be kept informed as to the exact number of aircraft required each day to keep the requested number of mission ready aircraft available to the supported unit.

D. (U) LOGISTICS: None

E. (U) SIGNAL: None

F. (U) FLIGHT SAFETY AND STANDARDIZATION: None

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G. (U) MAINTENANCE

1. That the method of retrofitting aircraft to the new avionics standard be changed. Priority of aircraft to be configured should be to new aircraft off the production line or aircraft returning from extensive maintenance.

2. That commanders at all levels give helicopter parking and maintenance areas top priority in construction, especially in the area of dust suppressant.

3. That supply and maintenance responsibility be delegated in writing prior to aircraft departing TDY for missions away from their home stations.

4. That additional lighting equipment be provided unit and support maintenance detachments for night maintenance.

5. That the prerequisites for CH-47 AMTAP courses be lowered or that the unit commanders be afforded the right to waiver all the prerequisites he deemed necessary in order to adequately qualify his maintenance personnel.

H. (U) MEDICAL: None

JOSEPH P. STARKER
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

ANNEXES:

- A - Organizational Diagram
- ~~B - Red Dog Express~~ *w/d*
- ~~C - Aerial Photos (4)~~ *w/d*
- ~~D - Accident Prevention Newsletter (2)~~ *w/d*

DISTRIBUTION:

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AVGC-SC (7 Feb 67)

1st Ind

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

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP, APO 96491 12 March 1967

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

1. Two (2) copies of the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion's Operational Report - Lessons Learned (ORLL) (RCS CSFOR-65) for period ending 31 January 1967, is forwarded in compliance with USARV Regulation 1-19, dated 8 February 1967.

2. Comments are included on observations and recommendations made by the battalion commander:

a. Personnel: None

b. Operations:

(1) The observation (page 53) that more intensive preparation of landing zones to include the use of special munitions to help eliminate booby traps and mines is valid. This headquarters has made a study of "anti-helicopter devices" and recommends that counter tactics include violent preparation of the landing zone to include artillery, strafing and delivery of 500 pound bombs set for very low air burst. As of this time no pattern for employment of mines and booby traps in landing zones has been determined.

(2) Lack of planning time (page 53) has been a minor problem during past operations. However, as the ground commander has become more air-minded and gained airmobile experience, more time for detailed planning is being allowed.

(3) The observation that each airmobile company (page 53) should train organic maintenance personnel to rig downed aircraft for recovery is a requirement and each company within Group has completed this training. This training gives an added capability to Good Nature (recovery unit) and has been effectively utilized on many occasions. Recovery has been expedited because of unit capability in rigging.

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AVGC-SC

1st Ind

11 March 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (OELL) for Period Ending
31 January 1967 (REF COMUSMACV-65)

(4) The observation (page 45) that penicillin be used extensively is valid. Maximum use is being made of penicillin as a dust suppressant in all areas where helicopters operate. Delays have occurred in obtaining penicillin and many areas still exist which should be treated with the dust suppressant. As penicillin becomes available, helicopter areas are treated on a priority basis.

- c. Training and Organization: None
- d. Intelligence: None
- e. Logistics: None

FOR THE COMMANDER:



SAMUEL A. CLEMENT
CPT, AGC
Asst Adjutant

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ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

