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Lesson Learned: 61st Medical Battalion (U.)

AVL-10-61KB-01

SUBJECT: Operational Aspects for Quarterly Period Ending 31 Jul 66

THRU: Commanding Officer
43d Medical Group
APO 96307

Commanding Officer
41st Medical Brigade
APO 96307

Commanding General
1st Logistical Command
APO 96307

Commanding General
United States Army, VietNam
APO 96307

Commander-in-Chief
United States Army, Pacific
APO 96558

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

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Section 1. Significant Organization Or Unit Activities

1. (U) General Status. Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 61st Medical Battalion arrived in the Republic of Vietnam on 2 June 1965. This organization was assigned to the 43d Medical Group effective 8 June 1965, and became operational on 15 June 1965 with headquarters at Can Tho, Long An Province (Map, Joint Operations Graphics, Ground), 11250,000, series 1501, edition December 1965, sheet no 49-1, coordinates 16S6158; with the mission of providing medical support to US/ARVN elements in the II Corps Tactical Zone (ITZ), with certain responsibilities for support throughout II Corps, with certain responsibilities for support throughout II Corps.
SUBJECT: Operational Report—Lessons Learned For Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966, Reports Control Symbol CSFR-65

2. (U) Organization.


b. Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment is assigned to 43d Medical Group, with attachment to United States Army Cam Ranh Bay Depot, Cam Ranh Bay, for administrative and logistical support. (LOI Number 3-66(U), AVLC CRB-43M-01, dated 10 June 1966).

c. Following units are assigned to this headquarters as of 31 July 1966 and arrived in-country on dates indicated:

- 98th Medical Detachment (KO); 8 June 1966
- 136th Medical Detachment (KA); 24 August 1965
- 161st Medical Detachment (KA); 29 May 1965
- 221st Medical Detachment (MB); 31 July 1966
- 241st Medical Detachment (KB); 31 July 1966
- 349th Medical Detachment (KB); 31 July 1966
- 430th Medical Company (Ambulance); 31 June 1965
- 566th Medical Company (Clearing); 27 December 1965
- 575th Medical Detachment (KB); 6 April 1966

3. (U) Command. Through the preparatory stages of training and processing for overseas movement this organization was commanded by Major Carl J. O'Kelley, G205/5316, Medical Service Corps; on 12 April 1966 command was assumed by LTC Charles O. Costello, G67/600, Medical Corps who has commanded this organization since its arrival in-country.

4. (U) Mission. The mission of this organization, in support of designated units, as defined by Letter of Instructions 3-66(U), Headquarters, 43d Medical Group, dated 10 June 1966, is;

a. Provide area medical service to units without an assigned or attached medical capability.

b. Supervise professional medical services of subordinate units.

c. Provide command, control and planning for all elements assigned or attached.

d. Provide battalion-level supply and organizational maintenance to assigned or attached units.

e. Provide augmentation of 240 operational beds to the 6th Field Hospital, Nha Trang.

f. Provide land evacuation support within responsible area.

g. Provide psychiatric consultation and mental hygiene consultation service within II CIZ.
In addition the commanding officer serves as area surgeon.

5. (U) Personal. Except as indicated in Section 2, this command experienced no unusual problems in the personnel field.

6. (U) Operations.
   a. Major combat forces operation supported has been Operation John Paul Jones (U). Operations Plans for support of combat units include Operations Blue Jay (U), Fulton (U), Emerson (U), Robin (U), and Stuart (U).
   b. Operation John Paul Jones (U) is being conducted in the Tuy Hoa (CQ160460) area by the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Map, Joint Operations Graphic (Ground), 1:250,000, series 1501, edition December 1965, sheet No 49-9. This organization supports the operation with a liaison officer (medical regulating), ambulance (M-43) and fixed-wing in-flight medical attendants.
   c. Area outpatient medical service (dispensary) is provided in Da Lat, Cam Ranh Bay, and Nha Trang. Psychiatric consultation and mental hygiene consultation services are provided throughout III CI.

7. (U) Training. Except as indicated in Section 2, this command experienced no unusual problems in the training field.

8. (U) Intelligence. Except as indicated in Section 2, this command experienced no unusual problems in the intelligence field.

9. (U) Logistics. Except as indicated in Section 2, this command experienced no unusual problems in the logistics field.

Section 2. Commander's Recommendation and Lessons Learned.

1. (U) Personnel.
   a. Item: Unit was not fully deployable upon Personal Readiness Date, 28 April 1966.

b. Discussion: III Corps 61st Medical Battalion was alerted for movement from CONUS to an overseas theater of operations (classified) in January 1966; alert contained personnel deployability criteria, and a personnel readiness date of 28 April 1966. Immediately non-deployable personnel were removed from the roles of the organization and subsequent requisitions for filler personnel were submitted through the appropriate channels. Filler personnel commenced reporting for deployment in March and continued to arrive through 28 April 1966. Officers designated by the Office of the Surgeon General for assignment to this organization and subsequent deployment, and reported for action to responsible Army Commanders with specific orders to report not later than 12 April, were not informed by losing commands that they had in fact been designated until late in April, and did not report until mid-May.
Operational Report—Lessons Learned For Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966

Unnecessary hardships were encountered in the movement of dependents and household goods, granting of FOM leaves and performance of necessary unit training.

**Recommendation:** That a definite readiness date be established for all units deploying, with a commensurate notification to mobilization designees, and that the reporting date for filler personnel be adjusted to permit at least four (4) weeks unit training.

2. (U) **Operations.** Only limited operations have been undertaken by this organization since arrival in this theater.

a. **Item:** Adequate facilities for establishment of fully operational dispensaries do not exist upon arrival of units in country.

b. **Discussion:** Units deployed overseas because of the need for their services are in fact hindered in the performance of their mission due to the lack of adequately planned or constructed facilities. Too much time is lost in the locating, re-locating, designing, re-designing an adequate facility.

c. **Recommendation:**

   1. Medical units do not deploy until a fixed or real anticipated need exists.

   2. Upon deployment a fixed location and facility be prepared to receive the unit.

   3. Medical personnel in conjunction with base development, personnel design and publish specific construction criteria for each type medical treatment unit to include type floor plans, wiring diagrams, requirements for special construction (io lead shield) and air-conditioning.

2. (U) **Training.** Except for too little time to accomplish unit training under the supervision of key personnel, this organization has experienced no unusual problems. This organization was fully capable of performing its assigned mission upon arrival in-country.

4. (U) **Intelligence.** None

5. (U) **Logistics.**

a. **Item:** Unnecessary equipment accompanied personnel enroute and unneeded equipment was shipped as residual equipment.

b. **Discussion:**

   1. **TSSEC-MW/7**. Electronic Security Equipment was shipped on order of losing command; it was returned to appropriate signal authorities immediately upon in-country arrival.

Highly classified, unnecessary files were generated and continue in the required file system for two (2) years. Security restrictions and measures taken to safeguard the equipment in transit were overwhelmingly taxing for an unneeded piece of equipment.

(2) Overahoes, mountain type sleeping bags and other cold weather gear accompanied personnel.

c. Recommendation: That gaining commander comply with the provisions of AR 220-10 and notify the losing commanders of that equipment which may be deleted.

Charles O. Couston
LTC, MG
Commanding

ANNEXES:
A - Organizational Chart

DISTRIBUTION:
AGPERA, DA - 1 (Direct)
CSC, 43d Medical Group - 3
CSC, USAFRC - 1
CSC, USARMY - 3
CSC, 1st Logistical Command - 1
Files - 15

HEADQUARTERS, 43d Medical Group, AFO 96210, 8 August 1966

TO: Commanding Officer, 44th Medical Brigade, AFO 96307

1. (U) This headquarters concurs with Commander's Recommendations in basic report except for those contained in paragraph 2a, b, and c, section 2.

2. (U) A certain amount of delay necessarily will result while TOE dispensaries await arrival of organization equipment in RVN. Upon arrival of organization equipment, units need not delay becoming operational while awaiting completion of permanent construction. Other units of this command have become operational utilizing TOE equipment and tentage.

ROBERT M. HALL
LTC, MC
Acting Commander
AVCA MB-PO (2 Aug 66) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned For Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966, Reports Control Symbol CSPOR-65 (U)

HEADQUARTERS, 44TH MEDICAL BRIGADE, APO 96307 27 Aug 66

TO: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GO-H
APO 96307

(U) Concur with the provisions of the basic report, the recommendation of the Battalion Commander and the comments as contained in the 1st Indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: Lynx 893

RICHARD M. RERIOT
Major, MSC
Adjutant

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WHEN SEPARATED.

SECRET
CONFIDENTIAL
AVCA GO-H (2 August 1966) 3rd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report – Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1965, 635 CCR-65 (b)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST LOGISTICAL CONVOY, APO 96307 025FSNCC

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, AXY: AVGO-697
APO 96307

1. Forwarded in accordance with Ad 1-19 and USMC Regulation 870-2.

2. Concur with the comments and recommendations contained within the operational report of the 61st Medical Battalion as endorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Tel: Lynx 834

[Signature]

JONES A. LUX
Capt.
USMC
Aug 65

CONFIDENTIAL
SECRET

AVGO-697

025FSNCC
4th Inf

14 NOV 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report—Lessons Learned for the Period Ending 31 July 1966 (RCS CFPD-05)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIEUXUX, APO San Francisco 96507

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ADC: CFPD-OP APO 96558

1. The Operation Report—Lessons Learned submitted by the 61st Medical Battalion for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1966 is forwarded herewith.

2. Concur with the comments contained in the basic report and the preceding endorsements except as noted below.

3. Reference Section II, Paragraph 2c, Recommendations:
   a. Medical units are not deployed until a fixed or anticipated need exists.
   b. Changes in the tactical situation may dictate changes in unit locations. Every attempt is made to expedite construction; however, the availability of secure real estate and changes in construction priorities sometimes cause delay.
   c. HQV Director of Construction prescribes standard construction design for hospitals.

4. Reference Section II, Paragraph 5c: Manned. This headquarters does comply with the provisions of AR 220-10.

   a. Paragraph 23c, AR 220-10 states that units holding critical communications security agency of impending movement and request instructions be furnished for the disposition of all secret communications material held. This headquarters has no knowledge of action taken by the unit to comply with AR 220-10.
AVHSC-61 (2 August 1966) 4th Ind 2-4 NOV 1966
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
31 July 1966 (RCS 66/C-65)

b. TA 50-901, Clothing and Equipment, prescribes allowances for units/personnel deploying to various zones of the world. NAM is classified as Zone I and II. Cold weather equipment is not included in the authorized allowances for these zones.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

[Signature]

R. J. THORNTON
1st Lt, AGC
Asst Adjutant General
ANNEX A, Operational Report-Lessons Learned For Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966, Reports Control Symbol C579A-65

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GPOP-OT (2 Aug 66) 5th Ind (i)
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
31 July 1966 (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 G DEC 1966

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

This headquarters concurs in the basic report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

[Signature]

C. L. McMillin
CPT, ACO
Asst AG

REMAINS UNCLASSIFIED WHEN
SEPARATED FROM CLASSIFIED
INCLUSION(S)____
Operational Report - Lessons Learned, HQ, 61st Medical Battalion

Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, Jan to 31 July 1966

CO, 61st Medical Battalion