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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980 ; AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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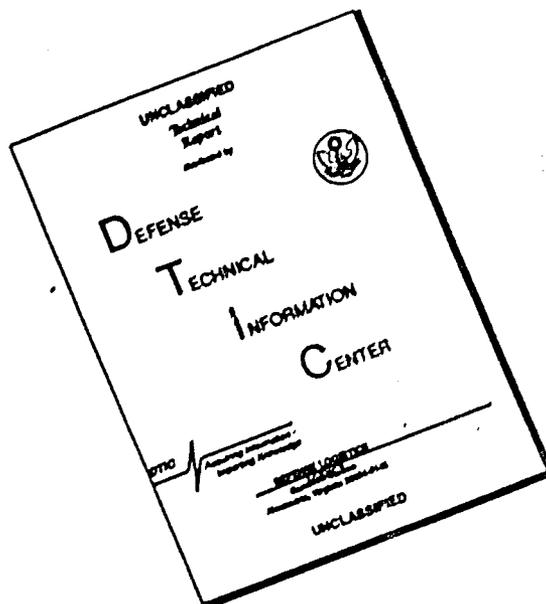
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310**

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (28 Oct 70)

FOR OT UT 702130

3 November 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd  
Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1970 (U)

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

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 52ND AVIATION BATTALION (COMBAT)  
APO San Francisco 96494  
"FLYING DRAGONS"

AVBACB-CC

14 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operation Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd  
Aviation Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

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1. Section 1 - Operations: Significant Activities.

a. (C) General. This report for the period 1 February 1970 through 30 April 1970 is submitted in compliance with AR 525-15, USARFAC Reg 525-15 and USARV Supplement 1 to AR 525-15.

(1) Headquarters, 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat), LTC Charles D. Utzman, Commanding, remains at Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN. Inclosure 1 reflects the station list of all assigned and attached units with location and APO, as of 30 April 1970.

(2) During this quarter there has been no significant change of mission. The battalion continues to provide aviation support to the U.S. Fourth Infantry Division, 5th Special Forces Group, Airborne; II ARVN Corps, MACV, and other forces in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. (See Inclosure 2) All operational and administrative functions and activities of Camp Holloway, Holloway Army Airfield, and Kontum Army Airfield are controlled by the 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat).

b. (C) Personnel.

(1) Awards and Decorations. The following awards were approved and presented during this reporting period.

	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Silver Star	0	2	0	2
Distinguished Flying Cross	5	2	0	7
Bronze Star "V"	5	0	1	6
Bronze Star	37	11	3	51
Air Medal "V"	3	15	24	42
Air Medal	640	185	109	934
Army Commendation Medal "V"	2	0	11	13
Army Commendation Medal	200	107	27	334
Purple Heart	0	0	0	0
	892	322	175	1389

FOR OT UT  
702130  
Inclosure

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(2) Command and Staff Changes. The following command or battalion staff changes took place on the dates indicated:

<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME, RANK, SSAN</u> (Incoming) (Outgoing)	<u>DATE</u>
S-1	Cooper, Patrick G., CPT, 461 66 3867 Garske, Carl A., 1LT, 389 44 1456	25 Feb 70
S-3	Gooden, Alphonso, MAJ, 248 56 8240 Ross, Bill R., MAJ, 568 46 0613	3 Mar 70
HHC	Slade, Charles K., CPT, 411 54 7250 Burdette, Robert J., CPT, 568 54 2610	20 Feb 70
119th Avn Co	Conrad, Jimmy A., MAJ, 430 58 6488 Fernald, John P., MAJ, 524 40 8974	17 Feb 70
170th Avn Co	Ross, Bill R., MAJ, 568 46 0613 Snell, Douglas H., MAJ, 417 40 2119	4 Mar 70
189th Avn Co	Morgan, George A., MAJ, 522 46 8666 Ratliff, John P., MAJ, 239 50 5939	8 Mar 70

(3) Personnel turnover for the reporting period was as follows:

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>			<u>EM</u>		
	<u>GAINS</u>	<u>LOSSES</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>	<u>GAINS</u>	<u>LOSSES</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
FEB	9	39	-30	154	94	+60
MAR	20	33	-13	172	204	-32
APR	67	23	+44	106	128	-22
	96	95	+1	432	426	+6

(4) The battalion total assigned strength is 1,649 as of 30 April 70. The battalion is short 19 commissioned officers, 54 warrant officers and 189 enlisted men. Strengths by unit are shown in Inclosure 3.

(5) Information Office Activities:

(a) Printed Releases	21
(b) Pictorial Releases	4
(c) Hometown Printed Releases	90
(d) Hometown Pictorial Releases	2

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c. (C) Intelligence. The S-2 section continues to publish a daily intelligence summary of significant activities in the Pleiku-Kontum area. Intelligence information is gathered from II ARVN Corps, 5th Special Forces, other supported units, liaison visits to other S-2 offices and debriefings submitted by aviators and air mission commanders.

(1) Enemy Activity. There were ten attacks by fire against 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat) facilities. Kontum AAF received a total 8 rounds of 122mm rockets from three attacks directed against the airfield. Seven enemy attacks by fire were directed against Camp Holloway AAF with 82mm mortar, 75 recoilless and 122mm rockets landing in and around the runway. 3 RPG-7 exploded over the field grade HQ with negative damage or casualties. The 119th and 57th Avn Co suffered one sapper attack at An Khe.

(2) Movement. The 408th Sapper Bn moved back into its normal area of operations to the northeast of Pleiku City from base area 229. The unit has increased in strength from 280 men to 300 men during the last weeks in April. This was substantiated by agent reports, captured documents and IR missions in the area. There have been reports that the 28th NVA Regt, 40th NVA Arty Regt and other support elements are located to the east of base area 609 staying in constant contact with the local forces in the Dak Pek - Dak To region. The present location of the 66th NVA Regt is unknown. The last confirmed location was in base area 701.

(3) New Units. There were no new units confirmed or reported during the period.

(4) Situation. The mission of the NVA units remain unchanged. They have conducted attacks by fire on RF/PF units, OP's and poorly defended hamlets. The K-631 Bn has been conducting attacks by fire against U.S. and ARVN units and installations. The 408th Sapper Bn continues to attack installations by fire.

### (5) Capabilities:

(a) Kontum Province: In Kontum Province enemy forces can conduct standoff attacks or combination standoff/sapper attacks against US/GVN installations anywhere in the province. He can conduct large scale ground attacks in up to reinforced battalion strength with supporting artillery primarily in the areas of Dak Seang, Ben Hat, and Dak To. The enemy can employ and has employed mortars up to 120mm. 100mm and 105mm artillery have been used against installations near the Cambodian border. Enemy tanks have been reported along the Ho Chi Minh Trail providing convoy cover for the infiltration route. Friendly air activity may be restricted with fire from small arms, automatic weapons, 12.7mm, 14.5mm and 37 anti-aircraft weapons.

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(b) Pleiku Province: The K631 Composite Bn has the capability of launching 122mm rocket attacks on installations in and around Pleiku City and of conducting multi-company ground probes and attacks by fire on villages and friendly units in the area. The 24th NV. Regt has the capability of launching multi-battalion ground attacks, attack by fire and interdiction of lines of communications north and northwest of Pleiku. The 408th Sapper Battalion is capable of conducting multi-company sapper attacks on Pleiku, U.S. and ARVN installations, and attacks by fire on villages and friendly units in the area. The H-15 LF Bn is capable of harassing villages and friendly units in the area using 60mm mortars and B-40 rockets. The 95th Regt has the capability of launching multi-battalion attacks on villages and friendly units in the area.

### d. (C) Operations.

(1) During the reporting period, the 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat) has supported combat, combat service and pacification operations throughout the II Corps Tactical Zone. The battalion flew a total of 32,242 hours during the period, including 16,086 hours of combat assault. Units or activities receiving daily aviation support included the 4th Infantry Division, MACV, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), IFFV Artillery, II ARVN Corps, and Pleiku, Kontum, Phu Bon and Binh Dinh Provinces. Tabulated data of operational results is shown in Inclosure 4.

(2) The following 4th Infantry Division operations were supported during the period:

<u>OPERATION</u>	<u>START</u>	<u>TERMINATION</u>
Hines	21 January 1970	Continues
Wayne Stab	30 January 1970	Continues
Putnam Shark	30 January 1970	Continues
Greene Deuce	30 January 1970	17 March 1970
Wayne Wind	15 April 1970	Continues
Earhart White	10 March 1970	Continues
Engleberck Black	22 March 1970	Continues

(3) The 119th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) relocated from Camp Holloway during this quarter and closed at An Khe on 22 Mar 70. The 119th Avn Co (Assault Helicopter) is continuing aviation support to MACV, IFFV Artillery, 5th Special Forces Group, II ARVN Corps, and its primary supported unit, the 4th Infantry Division. Missions supporting 1/10 Cav and 1/69 Armored were deleted and a requirement to support Task Force Dagger was placed on the company during the quarter.

(4) The 179th Aviation Company (Support Helicopter) located at Camp Holloway continued to provide general support primarily to the

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4th Infantry Division, and IFFV Artillery, with lesser support going to the II Corps (ARVN), 5th Special Forces, Engineers, and the 17th Aviation Group (Combat). Commencing with the last week in March and continuing through the month of April major CH-47 support was provided to the 24th Special Tactical Zone, and the 5th Special Forces in the Dak Seang/Dak Pek areas.

(5) The 189th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) primarily supported the 4th Infantry Division with some support being provided II ARVN Corps and CORDS. Major support was provided to the 24th Special Tactical Zone during the battle of Dak Seang/Dak Pek. (2 Apr - 2 May).

(6) The 170th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) relocated from Camp Holloway this quarter and closed at Kontum on 15 Mar 70. The new mission of the 170th Aviation Company is to provide support to the 24th Special Tactical Zone, Command and Control Central, Kontum Province, and the 5th Special Forces Group.

(7) The 361st Aviation Company (Escort) has had the primary mission of supporting Command and Control Central with four AH-1G aircraft daily. During the battle of Dak Seang/Dak Pek, daily support of two AH-1G were provided to the 24th Special Tactical Zone.

(8) The 57th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter) relocated from Kontum this quarter and closed at An Khe on 13 Mar 70. The 57th Aviation Company provides support primarily to the 4th Infantry Division, 24th Special Tactical Zone, and 5th Special Forces. The majority of support was provided to the 24th Special Tactical Zone during the battle of Dak Seang/Dak Pek.

(9) During the period the battalion again experienced hazardous flying conditions due to dust. Some landing zones were declared unsafe until the supported unit could provide a satisfactory landing area free of hazardous conditions.

e. (C) Training. All units and sections continued to use on-the-job training to meet tactical and administrative mission requirements. Training as outlined in AR 350 series was conducted as prescribed with make up classes scheduled as necessary. Command emphasis was placed on instrument training of all aviators in preparation for the coming monsoon season.

f. (C) Logistics.

(1) Class II:

(a) Shortages were experienced in flight gear and clothing. This problem will be eliminated, or substantially reduced, in the month of May, when requisitions will be filled.

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(b) Motor vehicle shortages have again become a problem. Recent messages from the 1st Logistical Command indicate that assistance will be rendered in the month of May on  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ton vehicle shortages.

## (2) Class III

(a) Total JP-4 dispensed by this battalion during the reporting period was 3,872,354 gallons of which 901,320 gallons were dispensed at Kontum Airfield by the 57th and 170th Aviation Companies. This is an increase of 1,717,754 gallons. Increased activity at Dak To and Dak Seang was the prevalent factor for this increase in JP-4. 81,300 gallons of Avgas were dispensed at Kontum to transient and tenant aircraft. As of 29 April 1970, the 45th Group (GS) assumed operational control of the Kontum Airfield refueling point.

(3) Class V: Ammunition expenditures and issues were above the amounts of the last reporting period. This was in direct relation to activity in the Dak To and Dak Seang areas. Ammunition issues and expenditures for helicopter gunships, by type, were as follows:

<u>NOMENCLATURE</u>	<u>ISSUED FROM ASP</u>	<u>EXPENDED</u>
2.75" Rkt	23,107	19,074
40mm	24,611	20,766
7.62mm	2,562,300	2,096,400

The only problem area was the allocation for 81mm illumination flares. The initial allocation was not realistic and assistance was received from the S-4, 17th Aviation Group to obtain additional amounts.

## g. (U) Aircraft Maintenance.

### (1) Maintenance Statistics:

	<u>AH-1G</u>	<u>UH-1C</u>	<u>UH-1H</u>	<u>CH-47C</u>
Aircraft Authorized	12	32	92	16
Total Aircraft Assigned	11	28.5	86.2	16
Average Aircraft Per Co	11	7.0	21.5	16
Availability Rate (%)	65.5	48.6	67.0	64.4
EDM Rate (%)	20.9	34.6	22.9	25.8

### (2) Aircraft on-hand status as of 30 April 1970.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>AH-1G</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>	<u>UH-1C</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>	<u>UH-1H</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>	<u>CH-47C</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>
57th Avn Co		8/8	23/21	
119th Avn Co		8/7	23/21	
170th Avn Co		8/7	23/19	

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>AH-1G</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>	<u>UH-1C</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>	<u>UH-1H</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>	<u>CH-47C</u> <u>Auth/OH</u>
179th Avn Co				16/16
189th Avn Co		8/6	23/21	
361st Avn Co	12/11			
HHC			2/2	

(3) Aircraft availability rates by unit and other tabulated maintenance data are shown in Inclosure 5.

h. (U) Accident Prevention.

(1) The number and causes of forced landing showed no trends or specific areas of concern. There were two short shaft failures, an engine failure, a low side governor failure, and one instance of blown transmission seals. Probably the most mentionable was that of a forced landing necessitated by the breakup of the 90° gear box and tail rotor which occurred on 27 April 1970. The aircraft was landed without injury to the crew and passengers and without further damage to the aircraft. Suspect components were submitted for teardown and analysis.

(2) There were seven precautionary landings in February due to hydraulic problems. This area was investigated and it was found that the failures occurred due to lack of proper hydraulic test equipment, lack of supervision, and contamination (dust, dirt) within hydraulic shops. Steps were initiated to test all locally made hydraulic lines and fittings and to properly sanitize all shops. With increased supervision and more efficient maintenance operations, this problem has now been alleviated.

(3) Seventy-five percent of the incidents were either main rotor or tail rotor strikes. Fifteen of the incidents involved IFR conditions in dust, and ten percent involved mishaps between vehicles and aircraft. Problems in these areas were due to lack of supervision and operational error, in that the aircraft were operating at or beyond the limits of their design parameters. Some landing zones were both ill-prepared and poorly reconned. Aircraft commanders were operating fully loaded aircraft under high density altitudes, sometimes in downwind conditions. Unforecast and often very treacherous winds were encountered in many of the mountain landing zones. Emphasis has been placed on operator awareness and thorough knowledge of the aircraft and chapter seven of the operators manual.

(4) Accidents were, in seven cases, due to operational error on the part of the aircraft commander or pilot. Crew error and material failure accounted for the remainder. Contributing causes were, in five cases, supervision, and in one case, maintenance error. The accidents, as did the incidents, resulted primarily from heavily loaded aircraft operating under high density altitudes, thus losing either power or tail rotor control.

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i. (U) Flight Standardization.

(1) The battalion standardization section flew 271 hours qualifying new instructor pilots, administering 90 day standardization rides, post accident check rides, aircraft commander check rides, and in-country orientation rides for newly assigned aviators.

(2) Individual unit instructor pilots performed numerous standardization rides of which a large number of these rides were over-due. Due to the heavy mission requirement during the battle of Dak Seang/Dak Pek aircraft were not available for training purposes.

(3) The battalion has expanded its instrument program to include two instrument approaches and two hours of hooded flight per month. All aviators are supposed to meet these minimums. Due to the lack of ADF and GCA facilities these minimums are not being made because of the heavy traffic at Pleiku Air Force Base, many aircraft are being refused practice GCA's and ADF approaches. There is a need for ADF facilities at Camp Holloway.

j. (C) Organization. Post Headquarters has supported tenant units of Camp Holloway in several areas including airfield operations, base defense, base development, facilities engineers, post exchange, officer and NCO/EM Clubs, special services, law and order activities, fire fighting and civilian personnel.

k. (U) Other.

(1) Chaplain.

(a) The 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat) Consolidated Chaplains' Fund designated special offerings as follows: building of a school at Xom Moi, \$594.65; Leprosarium, \$245.05; Local Catholic Parish, \$104.80; indigenous people, \$404.85. Total expenditures: \$1,532.65.

(b) Civic Action for the quarter included (1) firewood and garbage (for pigs) to Tu Tum Orphanage; (2) the 52nd Security Detachment was designated as sponsor for the new Camp Holloway Montagnard Souvenir Shop; (3) the 361st Avn Co was designated to build desks out of scrap lumber for the school at Xom Moi.

(c) Company sponsorship of the Chapel Services has continued this quarter. Sponsoring units furnish Lay Readers, Ushers and Greeters. The choir has a membership of 20 people but the missions of their units cut its potential to approximately 11 people each Sunday. Chapel attendance has remained constant.

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(d) The Billy Graham Associates have informed us of their intentions of sending movies for Chapel program use. They will be shown Sunday nights.

(e) The Battalion Chaplain made 54 aircraft flights and has conducted 7 Memorial Services during the quarter.

(2) Surgeon. There are presently three flight surgeons at Camp Holloway, one at Kontum and one at An Khe.

(a) Training: There is a continual program of training at the dispensary both in individual OJT situations and those of mass casualties. In coordination with the 71st Evacuation Hospital, several medics and flight surgeons have worked at the hospital for proficiency training.

(b) Preventive Medicine: This field still remains at the top of the priority list. Active measures have been taken to decrease the incidence of venereal disease and drug abuse.

(3) Signal: An increase of enemy activity in Kontum Province during early April required that a ground communications base for the battalion be established with the 24th Special Tactical Zone at Tan Canh. The forward control base is utilized to coordinate operations for battalion aircraft in the area, and has resulted in improved support of ground units, and better utilization of 52nd Battalion aircraft operating in the area.

### 2. Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commanders Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

#### a. (C) Personnel.

##### (1) Critical MOS Shortages.

(a) OBSERVATION: There still remains a critical shortage of qualified MOS trained personnel in maintenance positions. A large number of maintenance personnel are undergoing on-the-job training which requires maximum supervision and in turn, reduces man hour productivity. Critical shortages exist in such slots as 64823 (Maintenance Officer); 671CO (Aircraft Maintenance Technician), 67N30 (Helicopter Technical Inspector), and 67N20 (Helicopter Repairman).

(b) EVALUATION: Reduced effectiveness of the unit and aircraft availability rates result from unqualified personnel performing MOS skills in an OJT status.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Have CONUS trained personnel programmed to receive practical work in their MOS prior to overseas departure.

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(d) COMMAND ACTION: Careful selection of personnel in a related field are used to fill these vacancies. OJT training is conducted in all MOS's where vacancies exist.

(2) Drug Abuse.

(a) OBSERVATION: This battalion has previously reported a decrease of drug abuse throughout the enlisted ranks. During the past three months there has been a further decrease in this area.

(b) EVALUATION: The decrease in drug abuse, while not as pronounced as desired, has been evident in the amount of drugs and marijuana being turned in to battalion officers and NCO's. It is thought the "No Questions Asked" policy is to be credited with part of the success. Command emphasis in this area continues to be important in controlling this problem.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Continued emphasis be placed in eliminating the drug threat at its source. To effectively accomplish this end, the Military must continue to obtain cooperation and assistance from the Vietnamese authorities. In addition, further effort must be made to enlarge the "Drug User Self Help" program to accommodate new users or newly addicted personnel.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Existing troop information efforts have been expanded to include personal contact whenever possible. Personnel who have divorced themselves from drug activity have been employed as spokesmen in an attempt to reach the offender at his own level.

b. (U) Intelligence. None.

c. (C) Operations.

(1) CH-47 Loading Areas.

(a) OBSERVATION: There has been an increased lack of organization in the CH-47 loading areas.

(b) EVALUATION: The CH-47 loading areas and loads are being controlled by members of individual units rather than coming under one central controller. Radio communications, information on the number of sorties and their destinations, and proper rigging fall far short of being adequate without experienced pathfinder controllers or trained "Pad Men."

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(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) That air movement sections of major units consolidate resupply of subordinate units under the management of one appointed CH-47 loading area controller. (2) That controllers be furnished with call signs, frequencies and load information by the units being supported.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Reported on previous ORLL's.

(2) Incomplete or Inaccurate Mission Requests.

(a) OBSERVATION: Incomplete mission information continues to hinder mission accomplishment.

(b) EVALUATION: Many mission sheets are incomplete, inaccurate and contain inadequate information. Landing zones, pick-up zones, frequencies and call sign information are incorrect. The type loads, size loads and flying time required for the mission are frequently inaccurate. This problem occurs most frequently on missions supporting the 4th Infantry Division.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Incomplete mission requests should be denied. Mission changes should be coordinated with unit operations.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Reported on two previous ORLL.

d. (U) Organization. None.

e. (U) Training.

(a) OBSERVATION: The Camp Holloway hover-test area is unsatisfactory and hazardous to use as a flight training facility.

(b) EVALUATION: The hover-test area remains the only flight training facility in the Pleiku area. It is hazardous to use and much essential training cannot be accomplished due to the fact that low level entries cannot be initiated when the winds are from the east because the approach leg overflies a BOQ/BEQ area. Also, there is no facility on Camp Holloway to provide the required gas chamber exercise.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the present hover-test area be widened and lengthened and that a new area be built for aviator training. Any selected area should not cause the traffic pattern to overfly a built up area where an engine failure at low level could have catastrophic results. Recommend further that an adequate facility be provided as a gas chamber so that units may accomplish satisfactory semi-annual training in CBR.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: None.

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AVBACB-CC (14 May 70)

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

f. (C) Logistics.

(1) Flight Equipment.

(a) OBSERVATION: Flight equipment which is a necessity for safe flight is becoming extremely difficult to obtain.

(b) EVALUATION: There have been several instances when flight equipment has been extremely difficult to obtain, particularly gloves, body armor, nomex clothing (proper size), and survival radios.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That command emphasis be given to the problem of obtaining vitally needed equipment which has been requisitioned but not received within a reasonable time period.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: All supply actions are closely monitored to insure timely submission and adherence to proper procedures.

(2) POL for Medium/Heavy Lift Helicopters.

(a) OBSERVATION: There continues to be a critical shortage of refueling points for CH-47/54 type aircraft operating in the An Khe area.

(b) EVALUATION: Due to the fact that there is only one usable refueling point in the An Khe area, CH-47/54 type aircraft are sometimes forced to remain idle up to 45 minutes waiting for POL. Large air operations requiring a number of CH-47/54 aircraft are seriously hampered due to this limitation. The aircraft waiting for POL also add to the congestion of the airfield.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the old refueling point at An Khe (formerly controlled by An Khe Tower) be reactivated for the exclusive use of CH-47/54 aircraft. This would serve as a solution to the heavy aircraft refueling problem, would save valuable working time, and would ease the congestion of traffic at Golf Course A/F.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: None.

g. (U) Communications. None.

h. (C) Support and Tactics During Battle of Dak Seang.

(1) Tactics Used by Supporting Aviation Assets.

(a) OBSERVATION: The NVA offensive at Dak Seang which began in this reporting period caused excessive aviation personnel and equipment losses.

(b) EVALUATION: Aviators and ground commanders continue to use tactics and techniques developed several years ago against much less sophisticated and poorer equipped Viet Cong Guerillas. The NVA units engaged at Dak Seang were highly trained, with sophisticated weapons and modern tactics.

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AVBACB-CC (14 May 70)

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Recommend all units continually stress the capabilities of highly trained NVA units and the requirement to adapt aviation tactical techniques to each situation.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Assigned companies regularly brief on the tactics and weapons currently being used by regular NVA units as information becomes available from ground unit commanders and experience factors. Units were required to vary tactics and techniques to preclude stereotyped aviation operations and to avoid low level operations whenever possible.

(2) Security of Downed Aircraft.

(a) OBSERVATION: Failure of supported unit to provide reaction and security forces for downed aircraft had adverse effects on the aviation units providing support.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: A detailed plan must be agreed on by the aviation and supported units concerning the security of downed aircraft, provision of chase aircraft, and the pickup of downed crews.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Airmobile operations are now planned in explicit detail. Included in this plan are specific responsibilities for both aviation and ground units relative to the security of downed aircraft and crews.

(3) Security of Landing Zone.

(a) OBSERVATION: Troops initially inserted into landing zones failed to disperse sufficiently to provide security for incoming helicopters.

(b) EVALUATION: When fire support was of little use due to nearness of enemy, ground troops failed to disperse sufficiently causing incoming aircraft to be vulnerable to enemy fire. This made airmobile operations almost impossible and led to excessive losses.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That ground tactics during combat assaults include adequate expansion to provide necessary security.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: Tactics utilized by supported units are reviewed by aviation personnel. When necessary, improvements in those areas of special concern to aviation units are recommended for inclusion in the ground tactical plan.

(4) Enemy Tactics.

(a) OBSERVATION: Tactics of the enemy made aviation operations vulnerable and difficult.

(b) EVALUATION: The tactics of the enemy, in many cases, was to get as close to the friendly positions as possible which made close-in fire support extremely difficult. The enemy refused to pull back but

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AVBACB-CC (14 May 70)

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd  
Aviation Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

crowded and hugged the friendly positions causing aerial resupply and medical evacuation operations to be extremely vulnerable and difficult.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Reevaluate the enemy's capabilities and tactics and alter our tactics, procedures and techniques so as to take the element of control away from the enemy. Aviation tactics, procedures and techniques should be so flexible as to adapt to changing enemy situations and deny the enemy the initiative on the battlefield.

(d) COMMAND ACTION: The use of stereotyped tactics when conducting airmobile operations has been discouraged.

6 Incl

  
CHARLES D. UTZMAN  
LTC  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

- 2 - CINCUSARFAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558
- 3 - CG, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375
- 2 - CG, 4th Inf Div, APO 96249
- 2 - CG, 1st Avn Bde, ATTN: AVBA-MH, APO 96384
- 7 - CO, 17th CAG, ATTN: AVBACB-SC, APO 96240
- 1 - Each Staff Section
- 1 - Each Company
- 5 - S-3, 52nd ABC

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AVBACB-SC (14 May 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd  
Aviation Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 17TH AVIATION GROUP (COMBAT), APO 96240 29 May 1970

TO: Department of the Army (ACSFOR, DA), Washington, D.C. 30310  
Commanding General, I Field Force Vietnam, APO 96350

1. (U) This Headquarters has reviewed the attached report, considers it adequate and concurs with the contents, except as indicated below.

2. (C) The following comments and recommendations are submitted:

a. Section 1. **Operations: Significant Activities.**

(1) Personnel.

(a) Non concur with paragraph 1b(3). EM losses for April should be 174 as shown by the reports submitted to this headquarters.

(b) Non concur with the strength figures in inclosure 3, paragraph 1b(4). The authorized figures for the EM in inclosure 3 should be as indicated.

UNIT	AUTH STRENGTH
HHC	85
57th Avn Co	218
119th Avn Co	218
170th Avn Co	218
179th Avn Co	227
189th Avn Co	218
361st Avn Co	64
Bn Total Should Reflect:	1509

(2) Intelligence. The intelligence section should include information on the number of aircraft shot at and hit by ground fire. The type weapons should be included when known.

(3) Logistics. Non concur with the comments in paragraph 1f(1). This problem has been resolved through timely submission of normal requisitions.

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AVB<sub>A</sub>CB-SC (14 May 70) 1st Ind 29 May 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd Aviation Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, MCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

(4) Aircraft Maintenance. The aircraft authorization as shown in paragraph 1g(1) has mixed TOE and 1st Bde fill level quantities. The correct figures are shown below:

	AH-1G Auth/OH	UH-1C Auth/OH	UH-1H Auth/OH	LOH Auth/OH
179th				2/0
361st	0/11	12/0	0/1	
HHC			0/2	3/0

b. Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

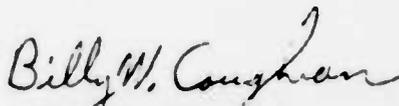
(1) Concur with the comments in paragraph 2c(1). The policies are explicit but are not adhered to by all the ground elements. This headquarters continues to monitor missions in an attempt to insure that adequate control is provided. Any deviations from policy should be reported to this headquarters for action.

(2) Paragraph 2a(3) Drug Abuse should read 2a(2) Drug Abuse. \*

(3) Commencing with subparagraph 2e Training on page 11 the paragraphing and subparagraphing sequence is in error through to paragraph 2f Logistics on page 13. The battalion has been directed to submit revised and corrected pages 11 through 13. \*

(4) Concur with the comments in paragraph 2f(2), POL for Medium/Heavy Lift Helicopters. A request for additional Class III support is being forwarded through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
BILLY W. COUGHRAN  
CPT, AGC  
Asst Adjutant

Cf:  
CO, 52nd AB(C)

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\*Basic report contains corrected pages.

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AVFA-30-HIST (14 May 70) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52d Aviation  
Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, RAS, CUFU-65 (R2)

DA, Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam, APO S.F. 96350

TO: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96384

This headquarters has reviewed and evaluated subject Operational Report-Lessons Learned and forwarding indorsement and concurs.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



ROBERT L. ALDEMAN  
Lieutenant Colonel, AGC  
Acting Adjutant General

CF:

1 - CO, 17TH AVN GP (C), (LESS ORLL)

1 - CO, 52D AVN B. (C), (LESS ORLL)

AVDAGC-0 (14 May 70) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52d Aviation  
Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, CL 0701-05 (2)(1)

TO: HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384 21 JUN 1970

FROM: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, AFIN: AV 10-05F,  
APO 96375  
Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Pacific, AFIN: G11-01,  
APO 96558

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned from the 52d Aviation Battalion (Combat) and concurs with the contents of the report.

2. The following comments are considered appropriate:

a. Paragraph 1f(1)(b), page 6: Three  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton trucks and two 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton trucks were released to the 17th Aviation Group (Combat), in May 1970; however, the Air Cavalry Squadron has been given first priority because of shortages within that organization. Additional vehicles will be released in the next 30 days.

b. Paragraph 2a(1)(c), page 9: The shortage of rotary wing Technical Inspectors is a recognized problem at all levels of command, and currently DA is taking action to alleviate this shortage.

TO: THE COMMANDER:

  
WARREN A. PETERSON  
CPT. AGC  
Asst AG

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AVHGC-DST (14 May 70) 4th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operation Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 52nd Aviation  
Battalion (Combat), Period Ending 30 April 1970, RCS CSFOR-65  
(R2) (U)

Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375

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

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1970 from Headquarters, 52d Aviation Battalion (Combat) and concurs with the comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. (C) Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "CH-47 Loading Areas," page 10, paragraph 2c(1), and paragraph 2b(1), 1st Indorsement: Concur. Action has been taken to solve these problems. Personnel of the Pathfinder Detachments assigned to the Group's subordinate battalions are now used to organize and control CH-47 and CH-54 loading areas. Closer liaison with supported units by aviation commanders and staffs has effected a significantly improved change of the entire situation. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

b. Reference item concerning "Incomplete or Inaccurate Mission Requests," page 11, paragraph 2c(2): Concur. Coordination has been made with IFFV concerning the problem. Mission requests are now being received which are correct and complete. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

c. Reference item concerning "Hover-Test Area," page 11, paragraph 2e: Concur. Unit has been contacted and is obtaining local engineer support to provide the test, training, and CBR areas and facilities. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

d. Reference item concerning "POL for Medium/Heavy Lift Helicopters," page 12, paragraph 2f(2), and paragraph 2b(4), 1st Indorsement. Coordination has been effected to validate the need for the reactivation of the refueling point at An Khe. If reactivation is deemed necessary, coordination will be effected for the An Khe Airfield Command to assume responsibility for the refueling operations. No action by USARPAC or DA is recommended.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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Clark W. Stephens Jr.

Cap. (C)  
Assistant Adjutant General

CF:  
HQ, 1st Avn Bde  
HQ, 52d Avn Bn (Cbt)

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GPOP-DT (14 May 70) 5th Ind (U)  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 52d Aviation Battalion  
(Combat), for Period Ending 30 April 1970,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 14 AUG 70

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

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

  
L.M. OZAKI  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

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## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND STATION LIST

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMMANDER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>APO</u>
52nd Avn Bn (Cbt) "Flying Dragons"	LTC Charles D. Utzavn	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
HQ & HQ Company	CPT Charles K. Slade	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
52nd Scty Det	CPT Jimmy L. Duncan	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
68th Radar Det	None Authorized	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
94th Med Det	CPT Arthur H. Thomas	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
179th Avn Co (Aslt "Shrimpboats")	MAJ George A. Hooker	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
189th Avn Co (Aslt Hel) "Ghostriders"	MAJ George A. Morgan	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
361st Avn Co (Escort) "Pink Panthers"	MAJ John L. Deryck	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
665th TC Det	CPT Douglas B. Brown	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
621st Sig Det	None Authorized	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
344th AD(D)	LTC Donald S. Galla	Camp Holloway Fleiku, RVN	96494
57th Avn Co (Aslt Hel) "Gladiators"	MAJ Byron E. Byerley	Camp Radcliffe An Khe, RVN	96249
755th Med Det	CPT Jerome L. Arnbruster	"	96494
119th Avn Co (Aslt Hel) "Alligators"	MAJ Jimmy A. Conrad	Camp Radcliffe An Khe, RVN	96249
170th Avn Co (Aslt Hel) "Bikinis"	MAJ Bill R. Ross	City Airfield Kontum, RVN	96499

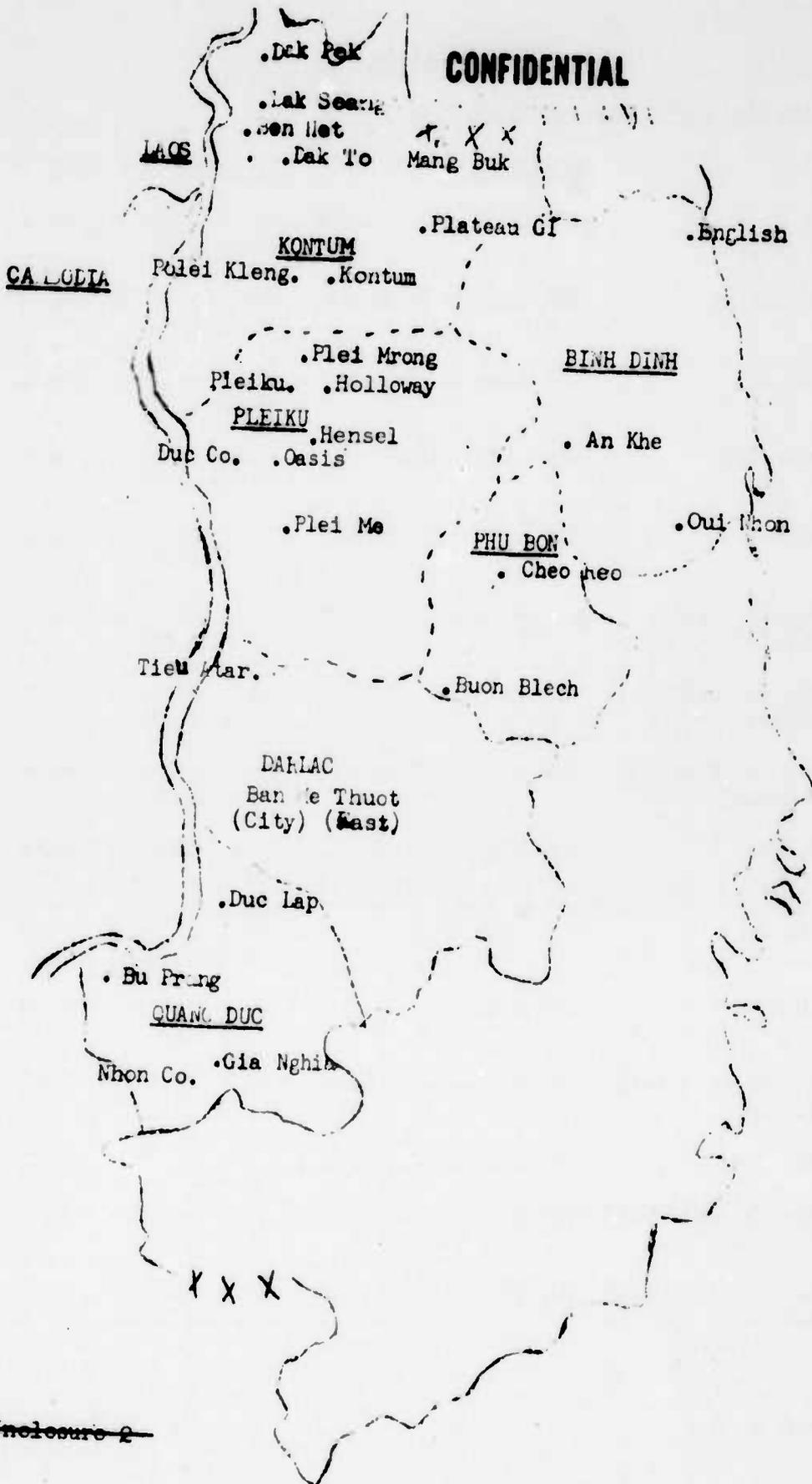
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Inclosure 1

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~~Inlosure 2~~

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UNIT STRENGTH AS OF 30 APRIL 1970

1. (C) Military:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>OFFICERS</u>		<u>WARRANT OFFICERS</u>		<u>ENLISTED MEN</u>	
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Asst</u>	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Asst</u>	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Asst</u>
HHC	19	24	3	6	87	113
94th Med Det	1	1	0	0	7	9
755th Med Det	1	0	0	0	7	9
52d Scty Det	1	3	0	0	151	168
68th Inf Det	0	0	0	0	19	14
57th Avn Co	19	14	51	41	219	178
193rd Med	1	1	0	0	7	8
119th Avn Co	19	17	51	34	219	169
170th Avn Co	19	17	51	41	219	175
154th Med	1	1	0	0	7	5
179th Avn Co	15	11	26	16	228	197
189th Avn Co	19	13	51	42	219	175
361st Avn Co	16	10	13	11	80	68
621st Sig Det	0	0	0	0	6	6
665th Trans Det	1	1	1	2	57	46
<b>TOTALS 52d ABC</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>1932</b>	<b>1373</b>

~~Inlosure 3~~

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## OPERATIONAL RESULTS AS OF 30 APRIL 1970

### 1. (C) Results.

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Sorties Flown</u>	<u>Troops Lifted</u>	<u>Cargo</u>	<u>Enemy KBA</u>	<u>Structures</u>		<u>Sampans</u>
			<u>Lifted Tons</u>		<u>Dist</u>	<u>Dest</u>	
57th AHC	27,870	45,290	494	35	17	22	1
119th AHC	22,922	34,708	794	158	0	13	0
170th AHC	13,941	27,234	423	150	0	12	0
179th ASHC	6,093	19,003	10,258	0	0	0	0
189th AHC	24,278	35,885	412	178	21	18	0
361st ACE	2,389	30	1	488	0	0	0
52nd ABC	97,493	162,150	12,382	1,039	38	65	1

### 2. (C) Losses.

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Aircraft Lost*</u>		<u>Aircraft Damaged</u>	
	<u>Type</u>	<u>Er</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Er</u>
57th	UH-1C	0	UH-1C	4
	UH-1H	5	UH-1H	11
119th AHC	UH-1C	1	UH-1C	16
	UH-1H	8	UH-1H	32
170th AHC	UH-1C	3	UH-1C	3
	UH-1H	6	UH-1H	14
179th ASHC	CH-47C	0	CH-47C	0
189th AHC	UH-1C	1	UH-1C	2
	UH-1H	3	UH-1H	17
361st ACE	UH-1C	1	UH-1C	16
52nd ABC		28		115

\*Lost Due to Combat or Retrograde

~~Inlosure 4~~

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RECONSTITUTION OF FLYING HOURS (U): Average number of aircraft is based on those actually on-hand with the following provisions: aircraft destroyed are dropped from accountability the day following destruction. Replacement aircraft are picked up on accountability on the first day they become "mission ready" or within 72 hours following receipt, whichever occurs first.

### UH-1C

UNIT	MONTH	AVERAGE NO. ON HAND	HOURS FLOWN	AVG HOURS	AVAILABILITY	DI. PROGRAM%
57th	FEB	7.3	378	52.0	70.7	93%
	MAR	8.0	367	45.8	69.6	81%
	APR	7.9	407	51.5	71.9	82%
119th	FEB	7.0	354	50.5	71.4	87%
	MAR	7.0	298	42.5	57.1	73%
	APR	6.8	271	39.8	42.7	57%
170th	FEB	6.9	271	39.2	64.4	72%
	MAR	6.5	371	57.7	71.0	94%
	APR	6.6	440	66.6	61.0	71%
189th	FEB	6.6	304	46.0	65.5	79%
	MAR	7.0	411	58.7	54.7	107%
	APR	6.9	294	42.2	44.8	74%
52nd	FEB	27.8	1307	47.4	68.0	78%
	MAR	28.5	1447	51.4	51.4	88%
	APR	28.2	1412	50.1	48.6	127%

### UH-1H

57th	FEB	22.0	1898	68.2	81.7	116%
	MAR	21.1	1905	90.8	76.2	122%
	APR	21.9	1886	86.1	58.6	116%
119th	FEB	21.6	2039	94.9	76.2	102%
	MAR	21.3	2132	100.0	77.2	135%
	APR	21.2	1705	80.4	76.2	108%
170th	FEB	21.6	2176	100.7	79.2	126%
	MAR	21.4	1668	77.9	74.0	105%
	APR	21.4	1593	78.6	78.6	108%
189th	FEB	22.4	1800	84.1	68.0	113%
	MAR	21.4	1972	93.4	75.3	124%
	APR	21.7	2135	93.7	59.8	127%
52nd	FEB	86.6	7917	91.3	76.8	144%
	MAR	84.9	7677	90.5	75.6	121%
	APR	86.2	7219	86.6	67.0	114%

\*Percent of DI Program is based on a DI Flying Hour Program per aircraft as follows: AH-1G-70 Hours, CH-47-60 Hours, UH-1C-58 Hours, UH-1H-74 Hours.

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AH-1G

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>ANG. NO. ON HAND</u>	<u>HOURS FLOWN</u>	<u>AVG HOURS</u>	<u>AVAIL- ABILITY</u>	<u>DA% PROGRAM*</u>
361st	FEB	11.9	684	57.4	71.4	83%
	MAR	11.0	635	57.7	70.8	82%
	APR	11.0	811	73.7	65.5	105%

CH-47

179th	FEB	16.0	738	46.1	60.6	77%
	MAR	16.5	803	58.6	54.5	90%
	APR	16.0	765	47.8	59.3	127%

Recapitulation: Availability, operationally ready, EDP and EDM per centages taken from DA Form 1352 and daily aircraft status report.

<u>UH-1H</u>	<u>STD</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Availability	75%	76.2%	75.6%	68.2%
Mission Ready	64%	74.4%	68.0%	63.2%
EDM	20%	21.4%	20.6%	22.9%
EDP	5%	2.3%	2.8%	8.7%
<u>UH-1C</u>	<u>STD</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Availability	72%	66.3%	60.8%	50.1%
Mission Ready	63%	54.0%	50.8%	40.6%
EDM	20%	25.6%	26.5%	34.6%
EDP	8%	5.7%	12.6%	16.6%
<u>AH-1G</u>	<u>STD</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Availability	70%	71.4%	70.8%	66.0%
Mission Ready	60%	75.7%	65.7%	96.7%
EDM	20%	28.6%	29.2%	3.3%
EDP	10%	00.0%	00.0%	00.0%
<u>CH-47</u>	<u>STD</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Availability	65%	60.6%	70.0%	62.7%
Mission Ready	55%	76.1%	61.5%	59.3%
EDM	25%	29.3%	21.5%	31.8%
EDP	10%	15.1%	24.0%	8.9%

\*Percent of DA Program is based on a DA Flying Hour Program per aircraft as follows: AH-1G-70 Hours, CH-47-60 Hours.

# CONFIDENTIAL

## ACCIDENT EXPOSURE

TABLE I

	Accidents	Incidents	Forced Landings	Prec. Landings
Feb.	5*	6	0	9
Mar.	3	11	4	2
Apr.	2	4	2	1
Total	10	21	6	12

\*Accident on 11 Feb. classified as "other" requiring DA Form 235, not included in accident rate.

TABLE II

	<u>February</u>			<u>March</u>			<u>April</u>			<u>Quarter Totals</u>		
	Hours	Acc	Rate	Hours	Acc	Rate	Hours	Acc	Rate	Hours	Acc	Rate
HHC	66	0	0	78	0	0	137	0	0	281	0	0
57 AHC	2276	0	0	2365	0	0	2468	0	0	7109	0	0
119 AHC	2393	0	0	2368	1	42.2	2426	1	41.2	7187	2	27.8
170 AHC	2347	2	85.2	2124	0	0	1986	0	0	6457	2	30.9
179 ASAC	738	0	0	849	0	0	736	0	0	2323	0	0
189 AHC	2104	2	95.0	2403	2	83.2	2378	1	41.6	6885	5	72.5
311 AC(E)	702	0	0	665	0	0	821	0	0	2188	0	0
Totals	10,626	2	37.6	10,852	3	27.6	10,815	2	18.5	32,400	9	27.7

~~Inlosure 6~~

CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) HQ, OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		4a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL	
		7b. GROUP 4	
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