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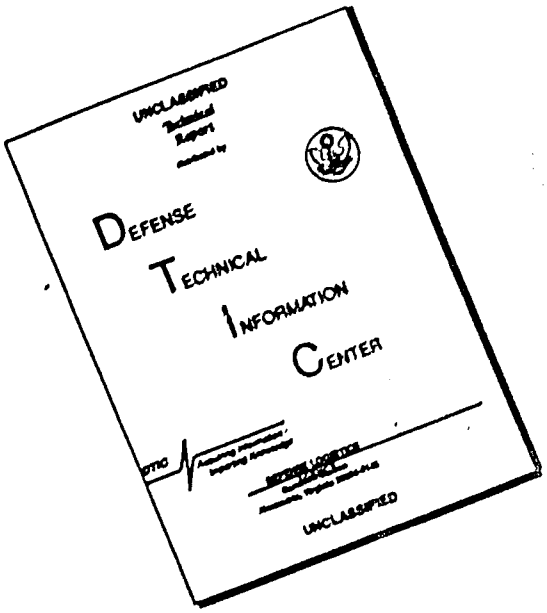

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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (26 Feb 69) FOR OT UT 684339 5 March 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 34th Engineer Group (Construction), Period Ending 31 October 1968

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

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 34TH ENGINEER GROUP (CONST)
APO San Francisco 96291

EGF-OP 1 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 34th Engineer Group (Const) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS, CSFOR-65(R1)

Commander-in-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558
Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375
Commanding Officer, 20th Engineer Brigade, ATTN: AVBI-OS, APO 96491

1. Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities

a. Command:

(1) During the reporting period, Headquarters, 34th Engineer Group (Const) remained located at Vung Tau, South Vietnam. The major activities of the Group continued to include operational support to Second Field Force Vietnam (II FFORCEV) and US units in the IV Corps Tactical Zone, road and bridge upgrading (LOC's), providing minimum essential requirements (MER) to incoming and relocating units, base construction, quarry operations and support to the Revolutionary Development Support Program.

(2) Colonel William G. Stewart continued to command the Group through 8 September 1968. Colonel Ernest Graves Jr. assumed command of the Group on 9 September 1968.

(3) Organization Structure:

(a) On 1 Aug 68, the 156th Engr Det (MD) was reassigned from the 34th Engr Gp to the 159th Engr Gp.

(b) On 5 Sep 68, the 113th Engr Det (FO) was assigned to the 34th Engr Gp. The unit is presently located in Dong Tam, attached to the 93d Engr Bn (Const), and is engaged in producing concrete for construction at Dong Tam.

(c) On 12 Sep 68, the 86th Land Clearing Team was reassigned from the 34th Engr Gp to the 79th Engr Gp.

(d) On 22 Oct 68, B Co, 62d Engr Bn (Const) was attached to the 34th Engr Gp. The unit is presently in Chi Lang attached to the 69th Engr Bn (Const).

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(e) The 34th Engr Gp organization chart as of 31 Oct 68, is attached as inclosure 1.

(4) Area of Responsibility: The Group area of responsibility (AOR) was changed slightly by the expansion of the 159th Engr Gp AOR to include all of Gia Dinh Province. The current Group AOR includes all of IV Corps Tactical Zone, Long An Province, Phouc Tuy Province, part of Binh Tuy Province, Rung Sat Special Zone, and Vung Tau Special Zone. Inclosure 2 portrays the current Group AOR.

b. Personnel, Administration, Morale and Discipline:

(1) Effective 2 Oct 68 the 34th Engr Gp was reorganized under the Golf Series TOE by approval of an MTOE from HQ's, United States Army Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558, on General Orders 548 dated 17 Sep 68.

(2) At the end of the reporting period the strength was:

	O	WO	EM	TOTAL
AUTH	175	36	4127	4338
ASGD	166	26	3667	3859

(3) During the reporting period, overall strength fell from 96% to 89%. Replacement personnel have not been assigned in sufficient numbers to maintain satisfactory unit strength, and additional shortages have developed in some skill areas. Following indicates the significant shortage as of 31 Oct 68:

SENIOR NCO's (E7-E9)

MOS	JOB DESCRIPTION	AUTH	ASGD
62G40	Quarry NCO	7	1
62N40	Const Mach Supv	19	11
94B40	Mess Steward	26	18

JUNIOR EM (E1-E6)

MOS	JOB DESCRIPTION	AUTH	ASGD
05B20	Radio Operator	44	32
12B20	Combat Engineer	181	115
12B30	Combat Engineer	72	42
51D20	Mason	38	10

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JUNIOR EM (E1-E6) cont.

MOS	JOB DESCRIPTION	AUTH	ASGD
51H40	Construction Foreman	67	18
62B10	Engineer Equipment Repairman	105	46
62C30	Quarryman	37	4
76A10	Supplyman	42	14
76Y40	Supply Sgt	25	13
91B20	Medical Specialist	29	18

(4) A major program was undertaken to encourage extensions by personnel DEROSing in rotational hump months in order to eliminate the necessity of implementing an infusion program. This program resulted in 305 personnel extending their foreign service tour during the reporting period.

(5) The following promotions were made during the reporting period: CSM E9 - 2, E8 - 2, E7 - 9, E6 - 50, E5 - 364, E4 - 906.

(6) The following awards were presented to 34th Engr Gp personnel:

MEDALS

Silver Star	2
Legion of Merit	1
Air Medal	4
Bronze Star Medal with "V" for Valor	3
Bronze Star Medal for Achievement/Service	62
Joint Service Commendation Medal	0
Army Commendation Medal for Achievement/Service	141
Army Commendation Medal with "V" for Valor	3
Purple Heart	38
Certificate of Achievement	125

(7) A daily average of 742 Local National Permanent Hire personnel were paid a total of 11,004,082 $VN during the period for work on projects throughout the Group AOR. A daily average of 179 Local National daily hire unskilled personnel were paid a total of 1,385,920 $VN. Both categories continued to serve a useful function by releasing military personnel for more specialized tasks.

(8) The Group had a 53.6% first term RA reenlistment rate for the reporting period.

(9) The Group Information Program was accomplished by using facilities of network television to cover unusually important engineer accomplishments. Using USARV information facilities, taped

interviews are being made of engineer personnel in the field for radio release during the upcoming Christmas Holidays. Hometown News Releases, feature stories, and weekly stories have increased by 25% during the reporting period. Distribution of the Group bi-weekly newspaper, the "Delta Developer", has been expanded from 2000 to 2250 copies per issue.

(10) Publication of the new 86th Engr Bn newspaper, the "86th Newsletter", has been put into effect under the guidance of the Group Information Officer.

(11) Character guidance attendence increased from 76.3% of the present for duty strength during the previous quarter to 86.5% during the current reporting period. This increase is believed due to three factors:

(a) Increased command support.

(b) More make-up classes provided.

(c) Conduction of character guidance classes by platoon leaders at isolated sites.

(12) Chapel attendance increased from 18.7% to 20.5% of the present for duty strength served weekly over the previous reporting period. It is believed that additional worship opportunities offered at more advantageous times, together with the initiation of a chapel representative program which promotes greater lay involvement in publicizing services and encouraging attendance in one of the battalions have been key factors in this increase.

(13) While the number of men contacted by chaplains remained high, the number of personnel counseled by them monthly declined from 266 to 190. This decrease is believed to be, in large measure, an indication that unit leaders are being increasingly supportive to their men, assisting them with solutions to their problems, thus, in many instances, making counseling with the chaplain unnecessary.

(14) No unusual disciplinary problems were reported during this reporting period.

c. Intelligence and Counter Intelligence: The chief sources of intelligence information concerning enemy activity continued to be II FFORCEV INTSUMS, PERINTREPS, the USARV Weekly Combat Intelligence and Security Review and 9th Div (US) INTSUMS. Additional intelligence summaries were obtained from Senior Advisor, IV ARVN Corps Tactical Zone, 164th AVN Gp and Phouc Tuy Province Sector

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Headquarters. This information was supplemented by intelligence obtained by direct liaison between the Group's battalions and local tactical units having area responsibility and was further supplemented by SPOTREPS from the Group's units which were in sporadic contact with the enemy. Engineer reconnaissance of Routes QL-4 and QL-15 and information from tactical units having area responsibility provide daily information of interdictions on these two Routes. Engineer reconnaissance of other LOCs and planned project sites continued to be on an "as required" basis. Group HQ remained physically located in the Vung Tau Sub-area. The 53d Gen Spt Gp, responsible for the overall defense of the sub-area, provided INTSUMS for the local area.

d. Plans, Operations and Training:

(1) Operational Support:

(a) During the period 42.8% of the total Group effort was expended on operational support missions. There continued to be three basic types of operational support missions:

1 Direct support to combat operations.

2 Deliberate construction to support future operations.

3 Troop and equipment support to MACV and II FFORCEV units for construction and maintenance of existing roads, airfields and other facilities.

(b) Operation Land Clearing - Route 15: The 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) supported the 9th Inf Div on this land clearing operation. The operation consisted of clearing selected areas along Route QL-15 between Ba Ria and Long Binh. Clearing, begun on 12 Jul 68 and finished on 29 Aug 68, totaled 6,517 acres.

(c) Airfields: The 34th Engr Gp worked on five deliberate operational support airfields during the reporting period:

1 Luscombe Airfield: The 36th Engr Bn (Const) completed the upgrading of the airfield from a Type I, C-130 capability to a Type II, C-130 capability. Work on this airfield was begun on 6 Feb 68 and finished on 15 Aug 68. The work was done in support of the 1st Australian Task Force. The completed airfield consists of a 3200 FT laterite based runway with a DBST, a 210' x 450' parking area and 215' x 40' of access taxiways, all with a DBST.

2 Ben Tre Airfield: The 31st Engr Bn (Cbt) completed the upgrading of an existing Type II, C-7A runway to a Type II, C-130 capability. The original runway consisted of a clay base surfaced

with crushed rock. The 31st Engr Bn placed a sand/asphalt sealing layer on the runway and surfaced it with AM-2 matting. Work was begun on 25 May 68 and completed on 22 Aug 68.

3 Binh Duc Airfield: Upgrading of the existing 1,500 FT rice paddy clay base, laterite capped airfield continued by the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt). The new runway will have a Type II, C-130 capability and will consist of M8A1 matting overlaying a lime stabilized clay base with a sand/asphalt sealing course. This is the first use of clay/lime stabilization by a 34th Engr Gp unit in airfield construction. On 31 Oct 68, 1250 feet were completed.

4 Vi Thanh Airfield: The 69th Engr Bn (Const) continued to upgrade this airfield to Type II, C-130 capability. The original airfield consisted of rice paddy clay surfaced with gravel. The completed airfield will consist of M8A1 matting on a sand/asphalt sealing layer. Twelve hundred feet have been completed as of 31 Oct 68.

5 Can Tho Airfield: The 69th Engr Bn (Const) completed the rehabilitation of the runway by replacing deteriorated sections of runway with a sand/asphalt sealing layer and M8A1 matting. A total of 180 CY of sand/asphalt and 1305 panels of M8A1 matting were replaced.

(d) Miscellaneous Construction and Maintenance Projects in support of MACV and II FFORCEV units included:

1 Long Hai: Elements of the 36th Engr Bn (Const) completed construction of a Special Forces Camp in support of the 5th Special Forces. Work consisted of construction of berms, towers, and buildings.

2 Can Tho: The 69th Engr Bn (Const) completed the emergency construction of 12 mini-pads for the staging and refueling of helicopters at Can Tho Airfield.

3 Tan An: The 86th Engr Bn (Const) completed the installation of a temporary mine boom and a temporary lighting system at the Tan An Bridge site. Work continued on permanent pier protection, a permanent lighting system, a guard tower and float bridge site improvement.

4 Can Giouc: Elements of the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) constructed a fire support base. Six gun pads, a living area, a road network and drainage system were completed.

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5 Phu Quoc Island: Elements of the 36th Engr Bn completed construction of the POW Camp Expansion to include quarrying, jungle clearing, rehabilitation of access roads, drilling of wells and providing technical assistance in building construction.

6 Phon Dien: The 69th Engr Bn (Const) completed the construction of a fifty-foot radar observation tower in support of the 6/77 Arty which is to be used for perimeter defense radar scanning equipment.

7 Chi Lang: Elements of the 69th Engr Bn (Const) constructed four 250 barrel POL tanks with soil stabilized berms for fuel storage at the airfield.

8 Dong Tam: The 93d Engr Bn (Const) completed 20 refueling pads at the Dong Tam Heliport in support of the 9th Inf Div.

(e) Operational support bridge missions in support of II FFORCEV included the following:

1 Dong Tam: Elements of the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) and the 617th Engr Co (FB) installed a 120' double-double, Class 50 Bailey Bridge at XS 470440 in support of the 9th Inf Div.

2 Camp Viking: Elements of the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) installed a 100' double-single Bailey Bridge at XS 472445 in support of the 7th ARVN Inf Div and the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt).

(2) Lines of Communication: Emergency road repair and deliberate road restoration continued. A total of 13.4% effort was expended on LOC's during the period. Work accomplished by Group units included:

(a) Route QL-15 (Vung Tau to Bien Hoa - Phouc Tuy Province Boundary): The upgrading of this National Highway to MACV standards by elements of the 36th Engr Bn (Const) continued. During the period, work continued on drainage structures, selected sections were widened and approximately 6.50 kilometers were paved with hot-mix asphalt.

(b) Route LTL-2 (Nui Dat to Ba Ria): Elements of the 36th Engr Bn (Const) continued the maintenance and repair effort on this section of highway. Work accomplished consisted of filling, shaping, widening, and base preparation.

(c) Route QL-4: (Vinh Long to Can Tho) Along this section of road, elements of the 69th Engr Bn (Const) worked in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) and ARVN Engineers in the repairing of potholes and craters, the driving of sheet pile along the canal side of the road to prevent further erosion, and placing a DBST and SBST where required. General road maintenance continues.

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(d) Route LTL-22 and LTL-25: Elements of the 93d Engr Bn (Const) performed continuous essential maintenance on these access roads to Dong Tam and Binh Duc from Route QL-4 and My Tho to insure passage of essential military traffic. Maintenance responsibility has been transferred to the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) for these two routes.

(e) Ap Thu Lu Bridge: Elements of the 36th Engr Bn (Const) completed construction of a MACV standard bridge at YS 401600. The bridge was constructed as a part of the Tactical Bridge Removal and Replacement Program.

(3) Barge Off-Loading Facilities: The joint ARVN, MPW and the US program of constructing and operating barge off-loading sites in the DELTA, which was initiated to support the LOC program, continued:

(a) Vinh Long: Elements of the 69th Engr Bn (Const) supported by elements of the 523d Engr Co (PC) completed construction of the Vinh Long Barge Off-Loading Facility. Construction included an off-loading pier and a rock stockpile site.

(b) Tan An: Elements of the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) in conjunction with elements of the 523d Engr Co (PC) completed construction of the off-loading pier at this site. Work continues on the rock stockpile site.

(c) Soc Trang: Elements of the 523d Engr Co (PC) initiated construction of the barge off-loading facility at this location.

(d) Mooring Buoy Construction was begun by elements of the 36th Engr Bn (Const). These mooring buoy are to be placed at off-loading sites, in support of the Delta Transportation Plan, at My Thuan, Chau Doc, Cai Be, Vinh Long, Tan An, My Tho, Long Xuyen, Cao Lahn, and Can Tho.

(4) Base Construction:

(a) Elements of the 34th Engr Gp continued construction of cantonment facilities at the following locations: Ba Ria, Can Tho, Dong Tam, Phu Quoc Island, Vinh Long, Vung Tau and Binh Thuy.

(b) Base construction projects are also directed and planned for the following locations: Bac Lieu, Ben Tre, Ca Mau, Chau Doc, Go Cong, Long Xuyen, Moc Hoa, My Tho, Rach Gia, Sa Dec and Tra Vinh. These projects consist mainly of construction of communication facilities at these various locations.

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(c) Elements of the 69th Engr Bn (Const) completed the 139 Man Cantonment area at Soc Trang. This project consisted of construction of EM billets, BOQ's, showers and latrines.

(d) The major base construction project within the 34th Engr Gp continues to be that being done at Dong Tam in support of the 9th Inf Div. All of the 93d Engr Bn (Const) and elements of the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) and the 36th Engr Bn (Const) are involved in this construction effort. Completed facilities include a variety of billets, latrines and showers and other facilities such as a laundry, a division medical supply warehouse, a control tower, an aviation operations building, and an electronic maintenance facility. Construction continues on maintenance buildings, hangars, a water treatment plant and water distribution system, a 6000 KW power plant, an electrical distribution system and many other facilities.

(e) An indication of the magnitude of the 34th Engr Gp construction effort during the reporting period is given by the following:

1 Total CY of concrete placed: 12,963.
2 Total SF of wood frame buildings completed: 210,780.
3 Total SF of wood hutment billets completed: 138,400.
4 Total CY of laterite excavated: 8,240.
5 Total CY of fill hauled: 202,257.
6 Tons of rock produced: 136,538.
7 Tons of asphalt placed: 6,704.

(f) Uncompleted Raymond-Morrison-Knudson — Brown-Root-Jones (RMK-BRJ) contract projects previously assigned continue to be carried by the 34th Engr Gp. The basic problem identified in previous reports still existed: non-availability of construction materials which are not standard to the Army supply system.

(g) Effective 3 Sep 68, the 34th Engr Gp discontinued the monitoring of contract dredging within the 34th Group AOR. During the period the dredge Thu Bon was sunk as a result of enemy action at Dong Tam and dredging of the Dong Tam turning basin was completed by a drag line. At Vinh Long a 300,000 CM land fill requirement was completed and a contract for an additional 250,000 CM is being negotiated. At Cat Lo (Vung Tau) a land fill requirement for 80,000 CM was also completed. No further figures will be kept on contract dredging by the 34th Engr Gp.

(5) Design and Construction Engineering:

(a) The Engineering and Plans Section has devoted most of its effort to the review of construction drawings produced by the battalions. As a result of detailed review, many suggested improvements have been incorporated in the final drawings.

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(b) Review of the designs of some airfields under construction resulted in recommendations to 20th Engr Bde that the lack of permanence of M8A1 matting be re-emphasized.

(c) Although no major design projects were completed during the period, several smaller unusual designs were produced, including a bridge lighting system, a mine boom and a barge mooring buoy.

(d) The survey and soils sections continued to support the lime/clay stabilization of Binh Duc Airfield although the wet monsoon season slowed work.

(e) Long range planning included the estimate of engineer effort required to upgrade airfields in various parts of the Mekong Delta on several occasions. The soil and survey section generated data which was then evaluated by the Engineer so that good estimates were produced and forwarded on time.

(f) The Engineering and Plans Section acted as a consulting engineer for all of the Group's units, assisting with design problems from port facilities to air conditioning and "troubleshooting" for some construction projects.

(6) Training: During the reporting period, the following training programs were conducted over and above those required by USARV Regulations:

(a) Personnel from the Group attended the 18th Engr Bde equipment operators school with instruction being given operators on the 290 M wheeled tractor, D-7E tractor, 20 ton crane, and grader. This school has now been discontinued and the Group can no longer obtain this additional training.

(b) Personnel from the 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) participated in float bridge training conducted by the 573d Engr Co (FB).

(c) Special instruction was given to members of the Group on the care and maintenance of the M-16 rifle. The training was given by a team from HQ's, USARV.

e. Logistics and Maintenance:

(1) Supply: One of the most serious recurring problems facing the supply section is the inability to insure the timely receipt of construction materials at distant locations to provide for continuous construction. Material shortages at the supply point have been one of the contributing factors to the long lead time involved in

receiving construction materials. In order to reduce this leadtime, it is necessary to provide the supply point with an accurate forecast of material needs. A monthly major essential materials forecast for the six months subsequent to the report has proven effective. The format of the report is such that the forecast is subdivided by months and all on-hand quantities are shown for each directed project. Also, each succeeding monthly report reflects all materials received during the month. The forecasts are compiled at Group Headquarters and checked against BOM's and material expenditures reports for discrepencies. In addition to providing the supply point with future construction material requirements, the forecast insures that each battalion carefully screens current construction assets and necessitates the maintenance of accurate construction accountability records. In addition, each Battalion has been instructed to establish and maintain records of all construction materials on hand. The establishment of these records on a modified stock record card permits the unit to know at a glance the status of their materials. These records are to be posted daily and can be easily cross-checked against issues to a particular project. This system gives the unit much better control over its materials assets and also results in more accurate accounting for materials issued against each project.

(2) Maintenance: The Group has experienced a high deadline rate on all items of equipment during the reporting period. The USARV goal of 10% for Critical Items and 5% Overall Items was not maintained Small unit (platoon, section and squad) leaders are placing more emphasis on the operators responsibility for maintenance. The Group has a full time Material Readiness Expeditor (MRE) for the purpose of obtaining repair parts from property disposal yards, cannibalization points and organic units. The time spent by maintenance supervisors in seeking repair parts through other than normal channels detracted from the supervision maintenance shops. However, this continued to be justified when the supply system was unable to provide the necessary repair parts.

f. Force Development:

(1) On 1 Aug 68, the 156th Engr Det (MD) was reassigned to the 159th Engr Gp (Const).

(2) Headquarters and HQ Company, 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) was relocated from Bear Cat (YT 1601) to Camp Viking (Binh Duc) (YS 4945) during August and September enabling them to exercise better command and control over their units operating within the 34th Engr Gp AOR.

(3) On 5 Sep 68, the 113th Engr Det (HO) was assigned to the 34th Engr Gp and further assigned to the 93d Engr Bn (Const) at Dong Tam Base (XS 4243), where they have set up their concrete batch plant in support of base construction for the 9th Inf Div.

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(4) On 12 Sep 68, the 86th Land Clearing Team was reassigned to the 79th Engr Gp (Const).

(5) On 22 Oct 68, Company B, 62d Engr Bn (Const), 159th Engr Gp was attached to the 34th Engr Gp and further attached to the 69th Engr Bn (Const) at Can Tho.

(6) The Group force structure remained well balanced for the accomplishment of its assigned missions and was improved by the addition of the 113th Engr Det (HO) and its concrete producing capabilities.

g. Command Management: Aviation support continued to be the critical item in maintaining effective command and control over the widely dispersed units. Aviation support did improve during the period, but remained below the required level.

h. Communications: During this reporting period the Group Communications Section continued the installation of a Group Wide Tactical Landline Teletypewriter system. This system is providing a fast, efficient means of transmitting all types of messages up to and including secret. The Landline Teletypewriter System is as follows:

(1) Teletype service began with 20th Engineer Brigade in May 68. On 8 Oct 68, the 86th Engr Bn became the first station in Group net followed by the 93d Engr Bn on 24 Oct 68, and the 69th Engr Bn on 27 Oct 68.

(2) The 36th Engr Bn is in the process of securing approval and requisitioning equipment in order to make the Group net complete.

(3) Since 16 Aug 68, the 93d, 86th, and 69th Engr Bns have had their speech plus lines in. They vary in reliability with the 69th circuit being the best. Overall reliability is approximately 85%.

i. 523d Engineer Company (Port Construction):

(1) Command:

(a) The unit remained attached to the 34th Engr Gp (Const), APO 96291, for operational control during the reporting period.

(b) Captain Alton A. Clark continued to command the Company through 20 Oct 68. Captain William H. George assumed command of the Company on 21 Oct 68.

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(2) Personnel, Administration and Discipline:

(a) At the end of the reporting period the personnel strength was:

	O	WO	EM	TOTAL
AUTH	9	1	215	225
ASGD	9	1	191	201

(b) During the quarterly period ending 31 Oct 68, there were 12 Awards and Decorations given to individuals of this unit. There were no IG complaints, no Class I or Class II offenses, and no AWOL's during this period.

(c) Personnel with the 523d Engr Co (TC) received 10 Delinquency Reports, no Field Grade Article 15's, and 16 Company Grade Article 15's.

(d) 12 Cases of Venerial Disease were reported in the Company during the reporting period.

(3) Plans, Operations, and Training:

(a) The 523d Engr Co (TC) during the last quarter engaged in 79 working days and 6½ training days. The training consisted of classes on pertinent military subjects, personal hygiene and familiarization of individual and crew served weapons.

(b) The principal operational activities during this reporting period are as follows:

1 The Phu Quoc Dolphin Facility was completed 3 Oct 68. The pile driving operation included four breasting dolphins and one mooring dolphin. A total of 69 eighty foot piles were driven. The dolphin system will be used for mooring LST ships.

2 The barge off-loading facility, Soc Trang (CD-10-268-05-T-7S), began on 14 Oct 68. To date the abutment for the pier has been completed. The abutment consists of 13 piles. The piles have been capped and stringers and decking have been placed. The 2nd Const Plt is now driving the remaining piles for the pier facility.

3 At the Tan An Barge Off-Loading Facility, a total of 132 eighty foot piles were driven. Bracing was placed by the divers of the 523d Engr Co. The pier project was turned over to C Co, 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) on 29 Sep 68 for capping and construction of the superstructure.

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4 The 523d Engr Co furnished diving support to C Co, 86th Engr Bn (Cbt) in Tan An and supported this unit with diving support on numerous projects in the Delta.

5 The 523d Engr Co has supported the 34th Engr Gp (Const), the 36th Engr Bn (Const), the 544th Engr Co (CS), and various other units in the Vung Tau area with personnel and equipment to include concrete mixers, 10 ton tractors and 60 ton trailers, 5 ton dump trucks, front loaders, 20 and 40 ton cranes, D-7 Dozers, and floating equipment such as LCM-8's, bridge erection boats, and a 6 x 18 cube barge.

(4) Logistics:

(a) This unit continued to experience difficulty in shipping construction materials to project sites out of the Vung Tau area. The piles for the Tan An project were loaded 15 days prior to their departure from Vung Tau Harbor by tug. A similar situation existed pertaining to the barges loaded for the project in Soc Trang. This may result in a delay in the completion of the project.

(b) This unit has been located in Vung Tau for a period of four months during which time the company has been unable to obtain site approval for a maintenance building. The company has on hand 127 pieces of equipment to maintain daily. Presently the company has one maintenance tent. The lack of facilities is hampering the maintenance operation.

(c) There was a notable improvement in the procurement of construction materials for our assigned tasks. Within two weeks after our requisitions are sent forward the materials are becoming available. This greatly increases the efficiency of our operation as a whole.

(d) Critical TO&E shortages have been put on requisition but little or no action has been taken by our supporting depot. We have sent AF-1 cards in to find out the status of the requests but no answer has been returned. If our critical shortages were filled, our workload could be broadened and our effectiveness increased.

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

a. Personnel. None.

b. Operations.

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(1) Chemical Stabilization of Soil.

(a) OBSERVATION. In both lime stabilization of clay and cement stabilization of sand, poor control of construction parameters such as depth of mixing and moisture content has resulted in poor bearing values. Further, the use of hydrated cement (damaged in transit) results in lower effectiveness than expected.

(b) EVALUATION. Troops in the field do not know all the considerations of soil stabilization. In some cases they are not using available plans and specifications.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That every effort be made to get complete specifications into the hands of the foreman on the jobsite and to ensure that he uses them.

(2) Design of Pile Lead Adapter System.

(a) OBSERVATION. The pile driving efficiency has been greatly increased by a system allowing the pile leads to be rigidly attached to the crane boom tip. The adapter fixes the leads so twenty feet of the leads are above the crane boom tip. The adapter also allows the leads to pivot, permitting pile to be driven at an angle.

(b) EVALUATION. The lead adapter attaching the crane boom tip to a point on the leads twenty feet below the lead top, allows 80 foot pile to be driven by the same set of leads which could originally manipulate only 60 foot pile. The new system also takes a great deal of stress and weight off the catwalk.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. The adapter system has proven so effective that it should be considered for use on all rigs to be extensively used for pile driving.

(3) Design of Pneumatic Catwalk.

(a) OBSERVATION. The job time to position and drive a batter pile with conventional 40 ton crane leads is double that time required to drive straight pile. A conventional catwalk positions leads for batter pile. Considerable work, however, is required to reposition the leads from the given batter angle to a vertical position for driving straight pile. 1LT Martin D. List, 2nd Plt Leader, 523d Engr Co (PC), improved the catwalk system by mounting a one ton pneumatic winch with a continuous pulley system on a two sectioned catwalk. Result; the catwalk can be extended or contracted at any time in a matter of seconds through use of this power assist.

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(b) EVALUATION: The "List Catwalk" enables the pile driving section to align each pile while suspended in the leads. The lead angle may be changed in a matter of seconds, making the rig more versatile than the conventional 40 ton crane pile driver.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the installation of a power operated adjustable catwalk should be considered whenever extensive pile driving operations are contemplated.

c. Training. None.

d. Intelligence. None.

e. Logistics. None.

f. Organization. None.

g. Other.

(1) Maintenance:

(a) Center Pin on FT D9G Tractor

1 OBSERVATION. The center pin which connects the angle blade to the C-Frame of the FT D9G tractor (Caterpiller) is too weak to withstand the forces applied in hard rock quarry operations. Frequent fractures and breaks have been experienced resulting in an unacceptably high deadline rate.

2 EVALUATION. The use of tractors with angle blade attachments in quarry operations is improper and violates design criteria for said type of attachmert.

3 RECOMMENDATION. Until bull blades can be made available, a steel plate can be attached to the C-Frame and the blade to form a rigid bull type blade thus relieving the pressure on the center pin.

(b) Control Valve Assembly on H90CM Scoop Loader.

1 OBSERVATION. Control Valve Assembly on the H90CM Scoop Loader becomes inoperative due to excessive wear on the pistons.

2 EVALUATION. Owing to the excessive amount of very fine dust particles associated with quarry operations, the hydraulic fluid becomes contaminated resulting in inordinate abrasive action in an area of very close tolerences. This supernormal wear soon renders the valve assembly inoperative.

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3 RECOMMENDATION. That the Control Valve Assembly be made available in theater depot for issue. At present the control valve is a source X2 item, and must be shipped from CONUS causing an extended deadline time.

Ernest Graves
ERNEST GRAVES
Colonel, CE
Commanding

2 Incl
~~1. Gp Organization Chart~~
~~2. Gp AOR Map~~
Incl 1 - 2 wd Hq DA
Copies Furnished:
6 - USMACV(F), ATTN: AVCC-P&O
1 - CO, 36th Engr Bn
1 - CO, 69th Engr Bn
1 - CO, 86th Engr Bn
1 - CO, 93d Engr Bn
1 - CO, 523d Engr Co

AVBI-OS (1 November 1968) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, RCS CSFOR-65(R1) for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968.

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 20th Engineer Brigade, APO 96491 11 DEC 1968

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam
ATTN: AVHEN-IO, APO 96375

1. Submitted in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15, dated 13 April 1968.

2. Subject report for the 34th Engineer Group has been reviewed and is considered adequate with the following modification:

Section 1, paragraph b (2), Personnel Strength. The authorized EM at the end of the reporting period should read 3470 instead of 4127 with an aggregate of 3681 and not 4338. The unit is presently over 100% authorized.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

RICHARD E. TAYLOR
1LT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant

AVHGC-DST (1 Nov 68) 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, RCS CSFOR-65(R1) for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968.

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 18 Jan 1969

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1968 from Headquarters, 34th Engineer Group (Const).

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning design of pile lead adapter system, page 15, paragraph 2b(2). Concur. The 523d Engineer Company (PC) fabricated a pile driving rig using the leads of a skidmounted piledriver and a fabricated set of adapters for the 40 ton crawler-mounted crane. This rig enabled the port construction company to drive piles that were too long for military standard boom leads.

b. Reference item concerning control valve assembly of H90Cm scoop loader, page 16, paragraph 2g(1)(b). Nonconcur. X2 items are not stocked in the Army supply system. The organization should attempt to obtain this item from cannibalization points by submitting a requisition with supporting justification through supply channels. Recommend that the hydraulic filter elements be replaced more often than LO 5-3805-15-1 states. Further recommend that the hydraulic system be drained and cleaned as often as necessary. The unit is being informed of the above by separate correspondence.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

W. C. ARNTZ
CPT, AGC
[illegible] General

Cy furn:
HQ 20th Engr Bde
HQ 34th Engr Gp (Const)

GPOP-DT (1 Nov 68) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 34th Engr Gp (Const) for Period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 30 JAN 1969

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

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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CO, 34th Engineer Group (Construction)

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