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AUTHORITY
AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (7 Oct 69) FOR OT UT 692192 10 October 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 41st Signal Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1969

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

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

1 Incl
as

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 41ST SIGNAL BATTALION (CA)
APO San Francisco 96238

SCCPV-NG-CA-OP 13 May 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 41st Signal Battalion (CA) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65, (RI)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities

1. General:

a. The organizational structure of the 41st Signal Battalion (CA) to include all assigned and attached units under the operational control of the battalion as of 30 April 1969 is shown in Inclosure 1.

b. The battalion was operational during the entire period of 89 days. Continuous mandatory on-the-job and cross training of personnel was conducted. Troop movement primarily involved cable teams from the 578th Signal Company involved in various cable projects throughout II Corps Tactical Zone. In addition, B Company 43/41st Signal Battalion participated in a sweep operation with the ROK Tiger Division, providing a VHF terminal at their forward CP location. B Company, 43rd Signal Battalion withdrew from its site at Landing Zone English North, returning AN/MRC-112 equipment to LZE for future redeployment. Throughout the reporting period the battalion continued its program of upgrading site security and defensive posture in general.

c. The mission of the 41st Signal Bn (CA) is to provide area communication support to U.S. and Free World Forces in Binh Dinh and Phu Yen Provinces, Republic of Vietnam. The Battalion's major signal commitments include the operation of one (1) 2,000 line Dial Telephone Exchange (DTE), one (1) 600 line Manual Telephone Exchange (MTE), two (2) 300 line MTE's, thirty-two (32) VHF Systems, three (3) Microwave Systems, four (4) Tropospheric Scatter Systems, three (3) Communications Centers, three (3) Auto din Terminals (2 Mode I and 1 Mode V), four (4) Technical Control Facilities, two (2) Fixed MARS Stations, one (1) FM Radio Net, two (2) HF Radio TTY Nets and various other missions to include light and heavy cable construction in the II Corps Tactical Zone.

d. A significant mission addition as well as a major change in operating elements was the assignment to the 41st Signal Battalion of the 261st Signal Company (SPT) which became the battalion's southernmost unit. Located at Phu Hiep, the 261st is tasked to provide the Corps Area Communications in Phu Yen Province.

e. The reenlistment rate for RA career personnel exceeded DA goals again this period. The RA first term reenlistment rate exceeded the percentage for the last quarter but has not yet reached the DA goal of 33.3%. There were no AUS reenlistments during this reporting period.

FOR OT UT
692192
Inclosure

CATEGORY	DA OBJECTIVES (% of Elig)	41st Sig Bn This Qtr			41st Signal Battalion Last Quarter		
		ELIG	REENL	%	ELIG	REENL	%
RA 1st Term	33.3	14	4	28.5	21	4	19
RA Career	80.0	1	1	100.0	13	13	100
AUS	6.7	15	0	0	29	2	6.9
TOTAL		30	5	16.0	63	19	30.1

2. Personnel: As of 30 April 1969, this battalion had an assigned strength of 1010 personnel. Authorized TO&E strength is 1241. Projective losses indicate that the battalion will remain well below authorized strength throughout the next reporting period as it has for the last two reporting periods. The most critical personnel losses will be in key officer and senior NCO positions. During this reporting period, two key warrant officer vacancies, unit supply technician and unit personnel technician were filled after being vacant for more than three months.

3. Operations:

a. HHC continued to improve the compound defenses with the construction of additional bunkers suitable for fighting as well as personnel protection.

b. B Company, 41st Signal Battalion, Vung Chua Mt., drew up a fire plan to include overlays of artillery and morter preplots for both illumination and high explosive rounds. Patrols have also been initiated to thwart any enemy preparations for future attacks. A bulldozer was used to construct a road around half of the VCM perimeter. The road not only gives better access to the areas, but provides a barrier to infiltrating enemy troops. In order to cover some of the blind areas in the rolling, mountainous terrain, claymore mines have been added to each bunker for additional security. Installation of anti-intrusion devices on the site perimeter is 25% complete. Sandbagged bunkers were torn down and replaced by reinforced concrete towers. Construction of the new company headquarters building provided a larger company administrative area, a new mail room and a conference room. With acquistion of these facilities, personnel and equipment were moved from the expando vans formerly used as an orderly room. A plan has been forwarded to begin construction of two concrete helipads strategically located to provide quick and easy access to all parts of the site. Two VHF systems were deactivated during the reporting period, 77UHE5, and 77UHM2, relessing equipment for future deployment. Construction of the Vung Chua Mountain (VCM) Tandem Switch Building is complete and equipment is currently being installed.

c. A major problem encountered by D Company, 459/41st Signal Battalion during the quarter was heavy damage to the outside cable plant from small arms fire. At one point during the month of March, all normal wire communications were temperarily interrupted due to these actions, creating an emergency repair problem which took several days to solve. Intermediate communications were effected by reverting to a mobile telephone switchboard AN/MTC-1 and the use of AN/MRC-54 and AN/MCC-6 equipment. This system worked adequately as a temporary measure until standard cable lines could be repaired and replaced.

(1) Construction of the dial telephone exchange building at Phu Thanh is complete and equipment is currently being installed. The facility will offer 1000 lines to Long My Depot subscribers in the Phu Thanh Valley. 28 June 1969 is the target date for project completion.

(2) The movement of the 58th Field Depot to Long My precipitated a tremendous increase in data traffic. The Long My 1013 data terminal processed 1,372,313 cards this fiscal quarter compared to 195,030 for the previous quarter.

d. The 578th Signal Company is now directly under USAD Qui Nhon, Long My Depot for security. Since the transition the unit has received five physical security inspections, all of them favorable. Major troop movements included transporting one section to Pleiku, one to Landing Zone English and elements to Cam Ranh Bay and Phan Thiet. The following cable missions were accomplished:

(1) Buried outside cable plant at LZE in support of 173rd Abn. Bde. 9,500 feet of Multipair Cable was used.

(2) Rehabilitation of VCM cable between the QNH DTE and the VCM frame.

(3) Buried three 300 pr. cable between ICS and the tandem switch on Vung Chua Mountain.

(4) Buried outside cable plant at Pleiku in support of 43rd Signal Battalion. Approximately 3,000 feet of 600, 100 and 50 pr. cable was used.

(5) Buried cable at Phan Thiet in support of D Company, 36th Signal Battalion. Approximately 15,000 feet of 100 pr. cable is buried.

(6) The TK-1 cable (400 pr.) is currently being rehabilitated in the Cam Ranh Bay area.

(7) The south end of the Phu Tai Valley cable is currently being buried to prevent system outages and cable loss. During the reporting period, the company replaced some 65,000 feet of cable in this area. Primary damage was caused by friendly fires for an estimated cable loss of $25,000 to $30,000. It is believed that the underground system will provide better area services and also aid in reducing dollar loss of cable.

e. During the reporting period B Co 43/41st Sig Bn Air Base Site at Phu Cat expanded from 4 systems to 7 with the addition of AN/TRC97B equipment, a 12 channel AN/TRC24 system to An Khe and a 12 channel system to Qui Nhon

h. The MODE V AUTODIN system was installed and placed in full operation in the Qui Nhon Army Communication Center on 24 March 1969 by the Qui Nhon Signal Support Facility. Four (4) circuits were deactivated as a result of this new operation; An Khe, Bagi, Phu Hiep and the Da Nang overload. The Comm Center has thus been reclassified to terminal, rather than minor relay status. During the reporting period, the QNHSSF MARS station greatly increased its number of patches largely due to the acquisition of the mobile facility used on VCM. The MARS station also uses a new Log Periodic antenna, enabling them to use more frequencies.

i. The major activity of the 261st Signal Company (SPT) during the reporting period was the continuous improvement of sites to include buildings, grounds, and physical security. The cable platoon has nearly completed a project to bury all cable in the area for increased quality. A segment of BBH13 from Vung Ro Bay to Vung Ro Mountain was redesignated BBH2E. AN/TCC-7s were installed at VRM to allow a termination capability. Relay circuits were 4 wire strapped between AN/TCC-7s. The 261st has recently been tasked to support the 84th Engineers in their new battalion area, Tuy Hoa North.

4. Training:

a. The battalion chaplain and unit commanding officers continued to provide all personnel with required command information and character guidance. Common military subjects lesson plans are distributed to all outlying companies and their sites. It is the responsibility of the site commander to insure that each subject is properly taught. Reports on the status of this training are forwarded to each company headquarters.

b. On-the-job and cross training programs were in effect during the reporting period. Emphasis was on the training of cable splicers due to the battalion's continuing shortage of men qualified in this MOS. The 1st Signal Brigade cable splicer's course has been quite helpful. OJT was conducted on VHF radio, carrier, mess hall operations and wheeled vehicle repair.

c. Inspections of the company training programs were scheduled and conducted by the battalion training officer.

d. The program of zeroing individual weapons and the initial in-country familiarization with individual weapons and crew served weapons is carried out by each company to insure proficiency in the use of defensive weapons.

e. Formal schools attended by members of the battalion during the reporting period are as follows:

(1)	16mm Projectionist School	1 EM
(2)	Cable Splicer	7 EM
(3)	Tech Controller	3 EM
(4)	Radio Relay Operator	1 EM
(5)	PIL Training	1 EM
(6)	Radio Relay Management	1 EM

5. Intelligence:

a. The following figures represent the clearance actions during an average month:

(1) Validations:

(a)	Final Top Secret	8
(b)	Final Secret	47

(2) Interim Clearances:

(a)	Top Secret	4
(b)	Secret	10

(3) Crypto-Access Authorized:

(a)	Top Secret	12
(b)	Secret	36

(4) Local record checks conducted: 122

b. Personnel security clearance action for this period increased over last period.

c. Physical security inspections for all units and sites were conducted as scheduled by the battalion S-2 section. Emphasis was placed on the subordinate unit's headquarters area since this is the hub of control for the unit. Sensitive areas such as the Dial Telephone Exchange and Communications Center were given special emphasis due to the critical nature of their operation.

6. Logistics: The newly arrived supply technician (warrant officer) has visited the companies to bring their property books into agreement with the company TO&E and MTOE. The addition of a warrant officer generator specialist has greatly reduced the battalion deadline rate both for generators and air conditioners. The battalion motor and electronic maintenance sections showed steady improvement while handling increased work loads. The battalion motor pool is now responsible for B Company, 41st Signal Battalion second echelon vehicle maintenance and the deadline rate of that company is expected to decline. The electronic maintenance section made frequent visits to operating sites throughout the battalion

during the reporting period. Both sections have devoted much of their time to the newly acquired 261st Signal Company

7. Organization: The acquisition of the 261st Signal Company was the only organization change during the reporting period.

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

a. Personnel: NONE

b. Operations:

(1) Employment of Prefabricated Metal Forms for Use in the Construction of Personnel Bunkers:

(a) OBSERVATION: Most fighting and personnel protection bunkers are constructed, repaired and improved by units on a self help basis. Effective bunkers must provide maximum personnel protection with minimum maintenance.

(b) EVALUATION: Experience has shown concrete bunkers to be most effective. Concrete bunkers built in the 41st Signal Battlion were made by pouring concrete into a hand made form, constructed of scrap lumber. Building the form is time consuming and wastes lumber which may be better used elsewhere.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: The Corps of Engineers could design a reusable bunker mold, using a light yet strong metal. The molds should come in sizes suitable for two, four and six man bunkers, and should be issued in sections to facilitate assembly, disassembly and storage.

(2) Damage to Overhead Cable:

(a) OBSERVATION: Three units within the 41st Signal Battalion reported damage to overhead cable. Primary causes of damage are pipeline oil fires and friendly small arms fire.

(b) EVALUATION: Many man hours have been spent repairing and rehabilitating overhead cable damaged through pipeline fires and friendly small arms fire, resulting in lengthy circuit outages.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: Plans to bury all overhead cable should be initiated immediately. Aerial cable should be avoided in all future surveys of outside plant cable requirements in RVN.

(3) Adjustment of VHF Antennas When Changing Frequencies:

(a) OBSERVATION: In at least two instances during the reporting period, VHF operators neglected to properly cut dipoles when making frequency changes.

(b) EVALUATION: Dipoles must be properly adjusted to the new frequency when frequency changes are made. This is especially important for such adjustments as distance from the reflector and length of A band yagi elements. These two adjustments are not readily apparent from ground observation and some operators tend to neglect these settings.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: That VHF operators be briefed on the necessity for checking dipole and yagi settings when making frequency changes and that existing antennas be checked for proper adjustment.

c. Training: NONE

d. Intelligence: NONE

e. Logistics:

(1) Central Location for Storage of Cable Mission Essential Items:

(a) OBSERVATION: Mission essential items which are necessary to complete cable projects are difficult to obtain. Examples are splice materials such as sealing washers, splice cases, sealing compounds and tape.

(b) EVALUATION: Lack of these materials hampers accomplishment of the unit mission.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: The controlled issue of cable mission essential items would greatly facilitate the accomplishment of cable missions. A cable supply depot should be established at a central location in country by 1st Signal Brigade.

(2) Maintenance of Generator Set, 15kw, FSN 6115-944-8409:

(a) OBSERVATIONS: Excessive deadline due to bad battery charging units.

(b) EVALUATION: Battery charging units are electronic devices located behind the instrument panel on 15kw generator sets. Examination showed that cooling air which circulates past the transistors and heat sinks caused excessive dirt build up, which prevents proper heat dissipation. This problem is alleviated by second echelon mechanics periodically removing the instrument panel cover and cleaning the electronic components.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: That users of these 15kw generator sets incorporate cleaning of battery charging units in their SOP for second echelon service.

(3) Maintenance of Generator Set, 15kw, FSN 6115-949-8409:

(a) OBSERVATION: Excessive deadlines due to broken fan belts.

(b) EVALUATION: Excessive fan belt breakage was found to have resulted from operators making three errors. The first was not allowing one-quarter inch free travel in the belt when tightening. Many operators,

although aware of the one-quarter inch requirement, are under the impression that this movement is tested by exerting a strong pull on the belt rather than a slight pressure test for free travel. The second and third errors involve the propensity for alternator mounting bolts to vibrate loose, causing fan belts to wear. In some cases, operators were not checking for tightness and bolts were working loose. In other cases, operators were adjusting bolts too tightly causing bolts to break as a result of vibration.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: That operators of those generators maintain proper belt tension and make daily adjustments on alternator bolts, being careful not to overtighten.

f. Other: NONE

DONALD R. LASHER
LTC, SigC
Commanding

~~1 Incl~~
1. Organizational Chart
Incl wd HQ, DA

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1 - CO, 1st Sig Bde (USASTRATCOM), ATTN: SCCPV-OP, APO 96384
5 - CO, 21st Signal Group, APO 96240

SCCPV-NG-OPT (13 May 69) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 41st Signal Battalion (CA) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, (RCS CSFOR-65) (RI)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 21ST SIGNAL GROUP, APO 96240 25 May 1969

TO:

1. Subject report is forwarded IAW 1st Signal Brigade Regulation 1-19.

2. This headquarters has reviewed the basic report and concurs with the information and comments contained therein with the following complementary comments or exceptions relative to referenced paragraphs:

a. Section 1 of the ORLL did not follow the format prescribed by paragraph 5 and Appendix I, 1st Signal Brigade Regulation 1-19 in that sub-paragraphs should have been letter (a, b, c, etc.) designated rather than numerically designated (1, 2, 3, etc.). This non-compliance was brought to the attention of the appropriate staff element within the 41st Signal Battalion responsible for the preparation of the report.

b. Para 1d, page 1. The 261st Signal Company was detached from the 459th Signal Battalion and reassigned to the 41st Signal Battalion effective 15 February 1969.

c. Para 3d(5), page 3. The total amount of cable to be installed is approximately 20,000 feet - of which 15,000 feet has been installed with a completion date for the remaining footage estimated as 15 June 1969.

d. Para 2e(2) and 2e(3), page 8. These first echelon maintenance areas are included in the 21st Signal Group Standard Operating Procedures for generator operation and maintenance.

THOMAS C. MUSGRAVE
Colonel, SigC
Commanding

SCCPV-OP-SD (13 May 69) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 41st Signal Battalion (CA) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15.

2. This headquarters has reviewed the report and concurs in it with the following comments and/or exceptions:

a. Section 2 Para b(2), P.7. It is the Brigade policy to engineer cable projects as buried where possible.

b. Section 2 Para b(3), P.7. It is standard procedure for operators to properly adjust antennas when changing frequencies.

c. Section 2 Para c(1), P.8. Nonconcur. Currently Communications Systems Engineering and Management Agency, 1st Signal Brigade, operates a Project Support Yard that should support all new projects. Material to maintain the already existing systems should be requisitioned through normal supply channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

William G. Skinner
WILLIAM G. SKINNER
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

CF:
Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command, ATTN: DCSOPS, SCC-OPS-RT, Fort Huachuca, Arizona
Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, APO 96240
Commanding Officer, 41st Signal Battalion, APO 96238

AVHGC-DST (13 May 69) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 41st Signal Battalion (CA) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65, (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 3 JUL 1969

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command-Pacific, APO 96557

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 30 April 1969 from Headquarters, 41st Signal Battalion (CA).

2. Reference item concerning Employment of Prefabricated Metal Forms for Use in the Construction of Personnel Bunkers, Section II, page 7, paragraph b(1); nonconcur. USARV policy on standards of construction is that facilities required by a unit to accomplish its assigned missions will be provided at the most austere standard of construction consistent with functional needs and duration of occupancy. Concrete bunkers are not consonant with this policy. Unit will be notified of above comment.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

W. C. ARNTZ
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
41st Sig Bn
1st Sig Bde

28 AUG 1969

SCCP-OP (13 May 69) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 41st Signal Battalion (CA) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

Headquarters, U. S. Army Strategic Communications Command-Pacific, APO San Francisco 96557

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

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.

2. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and offers the following comments:

a. Reference item concerning "Maintenance of Generator Set, 15KW, FSN 6115-944-8409", para 2e(2), page 8. The problem of excessive dirt build-up within the battery charging units is being researched by USAMECOM. Concur with recommendation that organizational maintenance SOP include procedures for periodic cleaning of these units pending resolution of the problem.

b. Concur with the remainder of the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

FRANK C. MAHIN
COL, GS
Chief of Staff

GPOP-DT (13 May 69) 5th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 41st Signal Battalion (CA) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 18 SEP 69

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Strategic Communications Command, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

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:

C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

Cy furn:
DA, ACSFOR
CG, USASTRATCOM-PAC

SCC-PO-CERA (13 May 69) 6th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 41st Signal Battalion (CA) for Period Ending 30 Apr 69, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

Commanding General, US Army Strategic Communications Command, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613 30 SEP 1969

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:

Robert A. Mall
ROBERT A. MALL
Captain, AGC
Asst Adj Gen

Cy Furn:
CG USASTRATCOM-PAC

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5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)

CO, 41st Signal Battalion

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