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SUBJECT: Operational Report, Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 8th Transportation Group, Period Ending 31 July 1969

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 4b, 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 ensure 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
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General
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8th Transportation Group
CONGRATULATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, 6TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)

APQ 96226

AVCA QN-TO-3

10 August 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 6th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) for the period ending 31 July 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (S-1)

THRU: Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
ATTN: AVCA QN-00-11
APO 96238

TO: Assistant C of S for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington D.C. 20310

SECTION I

Operations: Significant activities

A. COMMAND: (U)

1. Colonel Garland A. Ludy commanded the group during the entire period. His principal staff officers were: LTC Robert A. Kerwin replacing LTC Raymond L. Farmer as Deputy Commander; Maj. Thomas G. Stevens replacing Maj. Lawrence D. Gude as S-3; Maj. Glenn A. Long, Signal Officer/Assistant S-3; Lt. Col. Sonn O'Donoghue replacing CPT Chester E. Bishop Jr as S-1; CPT Keith G. Kealey, S-2 and CPT Robert J. Coleman, S-4.

2. The 6th Transportation Group (MTR) successfully performed its mission of line haul, local haul and combat operations during the 92 days of the reporting period.

3. LTC John C. Kramer resumed command of the 12th Transportation Battalion (Truck) from LTC Tom L. Ring on 27 June 1969.

4. The 6th Transportation Group received visits from the following dignitaries on the dates indicated:

   3 July 1969 - COL William Drumwright (incoming, Special Assistant for T-Day Planning) and COL John E. Kemington (outgoing, Special Assistant for T-Day Planning).

   FOR OT UT

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19 May 1969 - BG G. F. T. Richardson, Dir of Supply and Transport, Army Headquarters, Canberra, Australia.

9 June 1969 - BG Maurice J. Hulper, Controller, USARPAC.

10 June 1969 - COL Virren G. Amburn, Director of Instruction, US Army Transportation School.

7 July 1969 - COL Swenson, Commanding Officer, 8th Transportation Group


B. PERSONNEL, ADMINISTRATION, MORALE AND DISCIPLINE: (U)

1. During the reporting period, the 8th Transportation Group (8TG) was understrength on an average of 346 personnel.

2. There were a total of 36 Special Court Martial cases during the reporting period (14 in May, 13 in June and 9 in July) as opposed to 52 in the previous quarter, a reduction of 31%.

3. On 18 July 1969 the Meritorious Unit Commanding 1st Ord Leaf Cluster was presented to the 8th Transportation Group and assigned and attached units for the period 2 September 1967 to 31 March 1968 by Brigadier General Albert E. Hunter, Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhơn.

4. Morale continued to be high throughout the 8th Transportation Group.

C. OPERATIONS: (C)

1. During this 92 day period, the 8th Transportation Group compiled 15,605,717 ton miles, traveling 13,646,920 miles, loading 295,329 tons of cargo, 17,360,000 gallons of jet fuel and 11,131 passengers. The 302,551 ton miles for 25 June 1969 set an all time daily record for the group.

2. The command was involved in 7 major ambushes, 17 sniping incidents and 1 mining incident during the period. The statistic results of these incidents were:

   KIA (Friendly) = 2
   WIA (Friendly) = 22
   KIA and WIA (Enemy) = Unknown
   PGM's = 2

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3. Enemy action during the first part of the quarter, decreased significantly during the last ten months. The enemy directed his activities against bridges, culverts, and roads. This action proved to be more detrimental to lines and support than in the past. Seven separate enemy operations involving damage to the highway took place during the quarter.

4. On 3 June 1969, the 666th Transportation Company (Light Truck) was detached from 5th Transportation Group and moved to Da Nang. The move was made by both air and air. All the equipment was moved by LST, while about half of the personnel was by air. The heavy lift carrier was transferred to the 512th Transportation Company (Light Truck).

5. The Qui Nhon to An Khie pipeline was closed down from 6 June 1969 to 28 July 1969. This was due to both high rate of damage and enemy interdiction. The 5th Group was trained with additional helicopter drilling requirements. To facilitate accomplishment of this increased mission, a platoon of twenty 5,000 gallon tanks was moved from Phuoc to An Khie. This gave greater flexibility in the movement of petroleum from Qui Nhon to Phuoc. Depending on the status of the pipeline, 5th Transportation Group's areas could be committed from either Phuoc, An Khie or both to accomplish the mission of line haul of petroleum.

6. The refrigeration van was sent to Any Hoe by road on 10 June 1969. This was a test to see how fast the vehicle and the C-120 transportables would stand up on the rough road. This test run was completed without problems. Rations moved on the road completed a round trip in two days, while it took on average of five days by sea. To offset the increase in distance, refrigeration are now integrated into convoy operations to Any Hoe.

7. The Tactical Operations Center van was completed on 19 June 1969. With the completion of this van, tactical and normal operations could be carried out under intense fire and periods of deep contact on the highways without conflict. The operational support which was established allowed the Group Commander to establish with ease a good base of operations.

8. The final report that Group gave an additional mission of hauling 211 tons of Qui Nhon and Chu Orn Airfields was transferred to 20 June 1969. This mission will continue until the Qui Nhon Air Field resume operations.

9. A General Post Script of the continuity of logistical support in the area of a or destruction of logistical items was held at Qui Nhon Support Group 6 July 1969. Other support items provided for transportation include support to numerous logistics operations. All transportation support was both available and committed as requested. It was expected that the equipment of transportation units to other areas would proportionately decrease the line haul capability in the Qui Nhon area.
CONFIDENTIAL
10 August 1969

10. The 545th Transport Train Company (Light Truck) was relocated in Thanh Hoa on 15 July 1969. The move was due to removal of US troops from the area. While the move was not nearly as good as the men left, a large amount of work on the part of the personnel greatly improved the new facilities.

11. Helicopter support for convoy operations was received on a two week trial basis commencing 30 July 1969. The first two days saw a large improvement in convoy discipline. The convoy commanders were made aware of both guns in the area and bunching of vehicles. This information was readily available to them on the ground. In addition, a battalion commander was able to visit a company that was located about 100 miles away. This would have been difficult and time consuming without a helicopter.

D. TRAINING: (U)

1. Training was conducted on each of the 32 days of the reporting period in accordance with the master training schedule and other applicable directives. A great deal of improvement in both the quality of instruction and the maintenance of training records was accomplished by the battalions during this period. As in the past, the majority of the training was conducted in the evenings after the convoys had returned.

2. Continued emphasis on Project Skills I resulted in more efficiently trained soldiers in the MOS skills required.

3. Extensive effort was placed on map reading during the period. The aim is to make each man familiar with supply activities and techniques. This training is done on a continuing basis as new personnel become assigned to the battalions.

E. SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE: (C)

1. During the reporting period, the 8th Transport Group exercised control and command of physical security for Compound Complex Charlie: a six square mile area of the Qui Nhon Defense Installion encompassing fourteen US compounds and facilities. The 70th Medical Battalion, the 311th Field Artillery, and the 4th Company, 54th Engineer Battalion departed the compound and were replaced by the 173rd Support Battalion (Airborne) and the 17th Execution Battalion. Additionally, the 19th Supply and Service Company was relocated, but remained within the 8th Group's area of responsibility.

2. Beginning on 5 May 1969, after a six day training period, patrols were conducted on a regular basis to prevent enemy sniper units from setting up positions in the proximity of friendly compounds. Consisting entirely of logistical troops, these patrols were primarily conducted on the Huon Cham Kuntin (BR 906 232) which shuts all the facilities in Compound Complex Charlie. No mine, booby, or booby-trapped positions were discovered and destroyed.

3. The enemy successfully penetrated two attempts against US compounds during the quarter. Both attacks were remarkably similar in nature. In neither case did the enemy attempt to penetrate to the perimeter, but rather utilized the command tower in and dense foliage of the Huon Cham Kuntin to launch 6 to 8 84-0 rocketers, primarily at troop billets. In both instances, AC-47 fire was
employed simultaneously with the rockets in a widely scattered pattern to confuse US personnel and hinder rapid reaction in the compound under attack. On 7 June 1969, "E" Company, 173rd Support Battalion (Airborne) lost one US KIA and 8 US WIA.

iv. NVA forces reportedly ambushed 8th Group convoys at the base of the Hong Giang Pass (BR 230 506). On three separate occasions, one enemy force, estimated to be a reinforced company, launched simultaneous mortar, 81mm rockets, and automatic weapons fire at passing convoys. In all cases, swift reaction by the convoy commanders and close coordination with the tactical elements prevented major disasters. On 24 June 1969, a convoy from the 124th Transportation Battalion reached the besieged garrison at Ben Het in a maneuver more resembling a tactical assault than an ambush. Knowing that there were three enemy regiments in the proximity of the road between Dak To and Ben Het, the convoy was nevertheless able to run a 6000 motor kill zone and deliver the much needed 175mm ammunition to the firebase.

F. LOGISTICS: (U) Since the last reporting period, the on hand total of 5 ton cargo trucks, 15A series, has improved only slightly. At present, only 31.2% of the total authorized 5 ton cargo trucks are on hand. Semitrailers, 12 ton 81P, and H127 series are becoming critically short. The group has only 76.5% of its authorized trailers.
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SECTIO: II

10 August 1969

Lessions Learned: Commander's Observations, Actions and Recommendations.

A. PERSONAL: (U) None.

B. OPERATIONS: (C)

1. ITEM: Map Books for Convoy Commanders.

   (a) OBSERVATION: Early in May a convoy commander was unable to record a
       pin point his position during contact with the enemy. While he did have maps
       with him, they were not organized and led to misplaced points on Map.

   (b) EVALUATION: Convoy commanders and other convoy control personnel
       now carry maps arranged in loose leaf books. These maps have coordinates of
       such reference points as bridges, storing points and pump stations printed on
       the maps. This enables the convoy commander to quickly locate his position on
       the ground either in the case of an attack or in case assistance is required to
       recover a breakdown.

   (c) RECOMMENDATION: That other command adopt the map book for their
       convoy commanders utilization.

2. ITEM: Dedication of Tractors and Trailers in Out of the Way Locations.

   (a) OBSERVATION: Twenty six (26) 12 ton S/P trailers became stranded
       in Ban Hot during a period of high enemy activity. These trailers were moved
       in and left for unloading. An increase in enemy activity in the area precluded
       return to pick up the trailers for several weeks. These transportation assets
       were lost to the line level operations for several weeks.

   (b) EVALUATION: Transportation assets such as sandtrailer should not
       be left for unloading in an area that is not normally serviced by convoys.
       The convoys should move to the area, unload and return with all assets. By
       utilizing a dedicated tractor trailer system in a little used area, a large number
       of assets will not be lost to operations.

   (c) RECOMMENDATION: That the dedicated tractor trailer system be lost
       for little used areas in a combat zone.

C. TRAINING: (U) None.

D. DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY: (C)

   II:5: Patrol Security

   OBSERVATION: During the quarter, patrolling was initiated on the I/M
   Noi Chh Mountain adjacent to Compound Coup: Coup. The terrain is so rocky
   and the foliage so dense that the patrols were lost from view when only 50 meter
   beyond the perimeter.

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EVALUATION: Patrolling of this area is critical to the defense of US installations and detailed efforts have proven relatively futile. However, every effort must be made to provide security for the patrol.

RECOMMENDATION: That the policy initiated in this command be considered for implementation in other areas where applicable. As each patrol sweeps a given tract, it is paralleled by a gun truck inside the perimeter equipped with machine guns and in radio contact with the patrol. If contact is made, the patrol marks their position with smoke and the gun truck covers the withdrawal by firing on the mountain above the smoke.

E. LOGISTICS: (c)

1. ITEM: Vehicle Assets

   (a) OBSERVATION: The 6th Transportation Group has 210 5 ton cargo trucks authorized and 75 on hand. Nineteen 5 ton cargo "drop side" were received since the last reporting period. Of the 640 semi-trailers authorized, 490 were on hand.

   (b) EVALUATION: The critical shortage of 5 ton cargo trucks and 12 ton semi-trailers continues to hinder our load carrying capability in performing our line haul mission.

   (c) RECOMMENDATION: That 5 ton cargo trucks and 12 ton semi-trailers be made available so the 6th Transportation Group can better perform its mission.

2. ITEM: Modified 5 Ton Tractors.

   (a) OBSERVATION: Due to the temporary closing of Qui Nhon Airfield, the 6th Transportation Group was reassigned the mission of hauling mail from Phu Cat AFB to Qui Nhon. Since suitable secure vans weren't a part of 6th Group's assets, two 5 ton shop vans were transferred from Property Disposal and rehabilitated into usable condition by interchanging parts from other trailers at 6th Group's Centralized Trailer Maintenance Facility (CTM).

   (b) EVALUATION: After being returned to a usable condition these trailers were hooked up to 5 ton tractors. A problem resulted in turning when the trailer leading legs arms in contact with the rear derricks of the 5 ton tractor, since the van wasn't originally designed to be pulled by a 5 ton. This problem was resolved by removing the outside rear derricks wheels on the 5 ton tractors. To date no adverse effects have been noticed.

   (c) RECOMMENDATION: That units faced with similar problems be made aware of this variable modification.

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[Signature]

Colonel, TC
Command
AVCA GO-GO-H (10 Aug 69) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 8th Transportation Group (MT) for the Period Ending 31 July 1969, RCS CSPOR-65 (R-1)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, APO 96238 I SEP 1969

TO: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GO-O, APO 96384

1. (U) The Operational Report, Lessons Learned of the 8th Transportation Group for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1969 has been reviewed by this headquarters and the following comments are submitted:

   a. SECTION II, paragraph B 1: Concur. The evaluation illustrates the validity of the recommendation.

   b. SECTION II, paragraph B 2: Concur. The policy recommended would be valuable in obtaining maximum use of transportation assets.

   c. SECTION II, paragraph D: Concur. The Special Assistant for Combat Security, this headquarters, is in the process of publishing periodic defense circulars dealing with various subjects of interest to commanders in the Qui Nhon area. The recommendation by the 8th Trans Gp will be incorporated into this program.

   d. SECTION II, paragraph E 1: Concur. Vehicle shortages in both semitrailers and 5 ton cargo trucks exist command wide. Relief with regard to the 5 ton trucks is expected by early September.

   e. SECTION II, paragraph E 2: Concur. The evaluation illustrates the validity of the recommendation.

2. (U) The report is considered adequate as modified by the above comments.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

[Signature]

RICHARD A. DANIELS
CPT, AGC
Asst Adjutant General
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 8th Transportation Battalion for Period Ending 31 July 1969 RCS CSPCR-65 (U)

DA, Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96584 16 OCT 1969

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC DST, APO 96575

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by headquarters, 8th Transportation Battalion for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1969 is forwarded.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning dedication of tractors and trailers, page 6, paragraph B2. Concur with evaluation in paragraph B2(b); however, non-concur with recommendation as stated. Recommend that in truck operations supporting little used areas, the tractor wait for cargo to be off loaded from the trailer so that the trailer can be returned to the CULT system.

b. Reference item concerning modified 5-Ton tractors, page 7, paragraph E(2). Nonconcur. Removal of the outside rear dual wheels on 5-Ton tractors constitutes a definite troop safety hazard. Specifically, this unauthorized "field expedient" reduces the effective width of the tractor from 8 feet to 6 feet thus limiting read contact and reducing tractor stability. Recommend the 8th Trans Bn submit a suggestion or EIR thru channels describing proposed modification of 5-Ton tractors to Tank-Automotive Command (TACOM). TACOM engineering personnel must thoroughly evaluate the proposal prior to adoption and application by any unit. If the suggestion or EIR is declared valid by TACOM an MWO will be published authorizing removal of outside rear dual wheels.

3. Concur with the basic report as modified by this and previous indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

[Signature]

C. D. STAFFORD
1Lt, AGC
Asst Adjutant General
To: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558

This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report—Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1969 from Headquarters, 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) and concurs with the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Cy furn:
8th Trans Gp.
1st Log Cmnl.

C. B. WILSON
1st Lt. AC
Assistant Adjutant General
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 8th Trans Gp (MT) for Period Ending 31 July 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 30 OCT 69

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:

[Signature]

D. A. TUCKER
CPT, AGC
Asst AG
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