

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 2d Battalion 35th Infantry
APO San Francisco 96355

AVDC-C-OP

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period ending 31 Oct 1967

TO: Commanding Officer
3d Bde TF, 4th Infantry Division
APO 96355

SECTION 1: Organization Activities

1. Name of operation: Baker
2. Dates of operation: 010001 Aug 1967 - 312400 October 1967
3. Location: Duc Pho District, Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam;
Mo Duc District, Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam.
4. Command and control headquarters: 2d Battalion 35th Infantry
5. Reporting Officers:

a. Commanders

UNIT	COMMANDER	PERIOD
2d Bn 35th Inf	LTC NORMAN L. TILLER, SR	1 Aug - 31 Oct 67
HHC 2d Bn 35th Inf	CPT S.L.C. BARCENA	1 Aug - 31 Oct 67
Co A 2d Bn 35th Inf	CPT LARRY W. HICKS	1 Aug - 31 Oct 67
Co B 2d Bn 35th Inf	CPT JAMES L. LINDSEY	1 Aug - 31 Oct 67
Co C 2d Bn 35th Inf	CPT JAMES W. LANNING	1 Aug - 16 Sep 67
Co C 2d Bn 35th Inf	1LT HOMER L. KROUT II	16 Sep - 31 Oct 67
Co D 2d Bn 35th Inf	CPT DAVID H. KILLOY	10 Sep - 12 Oct 67
Co D 2d Bn 35th Inf	CPT LARRY W. BASS	12 Oct - 31 Oct 67
Co E 2d Bn 35th Inf	CPT LARRY W. BASS	10 Sep - 12 Oct 67
Co E 2d Bn 35th Inf	1LT PAUL C. SHIERHOLZ	12 Oct - 31 Oct 67

Reconnaissance Platoon 1. 1LT HOMER L. KROUT II 1 Aug - 20 Aug 67
 2d Bn 35th Inf

Reconnaissance Platoon 2. 1LT RICHMOND E. HENRY 20 Aug - 31 Oct 67
 2d Bn 35th Inf

b. Staff

Executive Officer	MAJ IRA W. BLACK	1 Aug - 31 Oct 67
S1	1LT JAMES T. HENNESSEY	1 Aug - 10 Sep 67
S1	1LT DEVALLIS RUTLEDGE	11 Sep - 28 Oct 67
S1	1LT PAUL C. SCHIERHOLZ	28 Oct - 31 Oct 67 (Additional Duty)
S2	CPT MICHAEL FLICK	1 Aug - 31 Oct 67
S3	MAJ BEN G. CROSBY	1 Aug - 31 Oct 67
S4	CPT JAMES A. HARRIS	1 Aug - 7 Oct 67
S4	CPT ROBERT S. HENDERSON	8 Oct - 31 Oct 67
Arty LNO	1LT CHRISTOPHER Q. HERRICK	1 Aug - 29 Sep 67
Arty LNO	CPT LUTHER R. VANN, JR.	29 Sep - 31 Oct 67

6. Task Organization

1 Aug - 10 Aug 1967	29 Aug - 30 Oct 1967
2/35 Inf	2/35 Inf
A/1-14 Inf	C/1-10 Cav (-)
C/1-10 Cav (-)	Sqd/D/65th Engr
C/2-21 Arm (-)	
Sqd/D/65th Engr	
11 Aug - 28 Aug 1967	31 Oct 1967
2/35 Inf	2/35 Inf
C/1-10 Cav (-)	1-46 Inf (-)
C/2-34 Arm (-)	C/1-10 Cav (-)
Sqd/D/65th Engr	Sqd/D/65th Engr

7. Supporting Forces (Artillery)

A. The 2-35th Inf received artillery support from 2d Bn 9th Arty and 2d Bn 11th Arty in the following manner:

- a. Fired preparations for airmobile assaults.
- b. Fired H&A fires as requested by CO, 2d Bn 35th Inf.
- c. Attempted to canalize enemy into ambush sites by fire.
- d. Assisted unit commanders in land navigation.
- e. Fired counter mortar and blocking fires.
- f. Fired will-adjust missions for units in contact.
- g. Fired nightly defensive concentrations around unit locations.
- h. Fired time on target and quick fire targets on suspected or known enemy locations.

B. Artillery coordination in support of the Battalion.

a. All artillery fired in the battalion AO was coordinated by the artillery liaison section attached to the 2-35th Inf from 2-9 Arty.

b. Coordination for clearance of fires from units outside the battalion AO was coordinated by the artillery liaison section.

c. Artillery preparations of landing zones for combat assaults were prepared, adjusted, and coordinated by the artillery liaison officer.

8. Intelligence.

A. General: During the period 1 August 67 to 31 August 67, the 2-35 had three major contacts with the enemy. In each battle, the enemy was resoundingly defeated and his ranks severely decimated. Enemy units, both NVA and V.C., were unable to successfully operate in the lowlands because of superior U.S. Forces. Consequently, the enemy was forced to move to the mountain ranges. In the highlands, the enemy operated from clandestine campsites, where he attempted to evade U. S. Forces, regroup, train, stockpile supplies, and rest. These units have continuously relocated their campsites to avoid detection. His base camps can normally be found in rocky draws with large boulders forming natural caves and affording him excellent concealed hiding places. Also, he has constructed fortified bunker positions on the slopes of hills in a 360° circumference to provide all-around security. These positions are expertly camouflaged and are difficult to observe from the air because of the thick forest canopy. Two reconnaissance missions conducted by the Battalion LRRP on 9 October 67 and 11 October 67, confirmed the extensive enemy activity in the mountains. The LRRP, on its first mission, reported the enemy using the trail networks at BS 7232, BS 7233, BS 7333, and BS 7332. On these trails, the LRRP sighted four NVA and ten V.C. The second time the LRRP was inserted in the mountains, they discovered a V.C. base camp. The camp was located in a large rocky draw at BS 719353. The LRRP observed fourteen V.C. before it was detected and forced to engage, killing seven of the enemy. Operating from these mountain base camps, the enemy must acquire his food (rice) from the lowlands. Rice carrying parties are organized and consist of three to ten individuals. They are sent into the hamlets to collect rice from the people. These parties use trails and travel during the early morning and early evening hours. With the major enemy units in the mountains, there remain in the lowlands a small number of guerrillas who stay in the hamlets. Recent interrogation reports indicate that the hamlet guerrilla forces have diminished to where they're no guerrillas left in several of the hamlets. U. S. Forces have killed, captured, or forced the majority of the enemy to withdraw to the mountains. Only a few V.C. remain in the hamlets. When U.S. Forces approach these hamlets, the V.C. seek refuge in their holes or attempt to flee the area. These holes have camouflaged trap doors and are generally found in bamboo thickets. The enemy has also been found hiding in false ceilings of houses. When possible, the V.C. will try and mix with the local populace to avoid capture. The local guerrilla collaborates with the enemy in the mountains by giving him rice, medical supplies, and clothing. They are also utilized as guides. Due to the inadequate resupply, the hamlet guerrilla has been forced to give up his weapons (rifles) to the L.F. and M.F. units, leaving him armed mainly with grenades.

B. Enemy capabilities: The enemy possesses 60mm and 82mm mortars but they have a limited supply of this type ammunition. They can initiate a limited mortar attack against U.S. and ARVN base camps, and can conduct and sustain a ground attack on small ARVN outposts located along Highway #1. Small groups are capable of infiltrating U.S. and ARVN base camps and harassing the inhabitants by throwing grenades, stachel charges, and spraying the area with small arms fire. Their sapper elements use dud artillery rounds and dud bombs to construct mines and booby-traps and plant them on Highway #1. The hamlet guerrilla conducts "anti-sweep" operations by sniping at U. S. Forces at long range. These guerrillas also plant booby-traps on trails, likely rest areas, and in openings through hedgerows. The local guerrilla, being native to the area, can obtain rice and supplies through his relatives and friends. The rice and supplies are hidden in the hamlets for immediate consumption and use by the local V.C. or for the carrying parties to transport to the mountains. The local guerrilla, having lived with the people and understanding their language and customs, uses propagand- to influence several of the young men to join his ranks. He publishes newspapers, posters, leaflets, and holds secret meetings to rally the people to his cause. The NVA can infiltrate replacements from North Vietnam to join main force units in this area.

C. Enemy Vulnerabilities: Whether the enemy is located in the mountains or lowlands, he is susceptible to artillery bombardments and airstrikes. He is reluctant to mass his forces because if detected he would be forced to fight a conventional battle against superior U. S. Forces. The enemy is not capable of fighting such a battle because of his inadequate supplies and lack of manpower. The enemy is therefore, forced to move at night and in small groups. He must move frequently to evade surveillance and to obtain supplies. When moving at night, the enemy travels on trails and roads making him vulnerable to ambushes. Resupply from North Vietnam is almost non-existent because of the tedious and hazardous trip through the jungle or by sea. The enemy has to rely on the resources in the immediate vicinity for his resupply. The 2d Bn 35th Inf has severely crippled his food supply by capturing over ninth-five tons of rice during the reporting period. A critical shortage of ammunition, weapons, and medical supplies also exists in the enemy units. The enemy is badly demoralized because he is poorly equipped, hungry, and inadequately treated for his wounds and illnesses.

d. Major Contacts: During the reporting period the 2-35 Inf has had three significant engagements with the enemy. On 080830 August 67, at vicinity BS 680580 the Battle of An Ba was fought. The 3d Company, 38th V.C. Battalion was the antagonist in this conflict. They were completely annihilated except for three POW's. There were sixty-five enemy killed and twenty-one weapons captured. One AN/PRC-10 radio was also captured. Reference (See incl 1 Combat Operations After Action Report for the Battle of An Ba). On 201148 August 67, the 2d Company, 97th VC Battalion was encountered in An Thach, BS 800460. The battle was waged throughout the day. Fifty-three enemy were killed and eighteen weapons were captured. (See incl 2 Combat Operations After Action Report for the Battle of An Thach). On 241130 August 67, in the hamlet of Thach Tru at BS 780476, elements of the 406th VC Battalion, a newly organized battalion, were discovered hiding in camouflaged tunnels and holes. Friendly elements by thoroughly searching the area successfully found the enemy's hiding places and killed twenty-two enemy, capturing seventeen weapons. In addition to these major engagements several minor contacts were made throughout

the reporting period with the following units: C 219 company, 577th Military and Political Training Company, 113th company, 796th Battalion, 297th NVA Regiment, Duc Pho District Committee, 527th Probe Element, 22d NVA Regiment, and the Recon Platoon, 2d V.C. Regiment.

E. Statistics:

<u>EN KIA</u>	<u>PW/VC</u>	<u>PW/NVA</u>	<u>CD</u>	<u>US KIA</u>	<u>US WIA</u>	<u>US DOW</u>	<u>US MIA</u>	<u>US NBD</u>
<u>541</u>	112	6	54	<u>10</u>	122	1	0	0

Weapons Captured

Individual Weapons

190

Crew Served Weapons

11

F. Conclusions:

a. For the past 2 months the enemy has continuously avoided contact and established base camps in the mountain areas. At these locations he has attempted to regroup, train and refit his forces for the forthcoming monsoon season. Obtaining food and medical supplies appears to be his major problem at the present time. He has to rely on the local inhabitants in the lowlands for these necessities. As a counter-action to the enemy's plans for obtaining food and supplies, aggressive and successful ambush operations have been conducted by US Forces.

b. The enemy, cognizant of the fact that his attempts to obtain food and supplies from local inhabitants have, for the most part failed, he is presently forced to grow or obtain food in the mountains. This has caused a demoralizing effect on the enemy and he has made drastic attempts to obtain it elsewhere but with little success.

c. During the last 2 weeks of this reporting period the enemy has been observed and engaged during daylight hours. His attempts to infiltrate local hamlets during the hours of darkness have been interdicted, and he must resort to daylight techniques to accomplish his food procuring goal. Aggressive daylight ambushes by friendly forces have severely hampered this effort.

d. The enemy no longer has the capability to employ his forces in unit strength in the lowlands and is forced to operate in small groups to conduct harassing operations and to obtain food and supplies for his units in the mountains.

e. Interrogation reports have repeatedly indicated the individual enemy's desire to CREU HOI to friendly forces due to the lack of adequate supplies, fear of combat, and illness.

f. Due to the absence of unit size elements in the lowlands, it is clear that the enemy has retreated to the mountains. His attempts both day

and night to obtain food and supplies from local inhabitants have been foiled by US ambushes. Without these necessities, the enemy cannot successfully initiate any significant offensive type operation and will continue to avoid contact with US Forces.

9. Operations Section

1 August - 7 August 1967

During this period the battalion continued to operate in detailed search missions killing an average of seven enemy per day. On 6 August a small enemy force infiltrated the battalion trains area at Montezuma and utilizing hand grenades killed one U.S. soldier and wounded five others. One enemy was killed by his own hand grenade.

8 August 1967

See inclosed Combat After Action Report - Battle of An Ba (Incl 1).

9 August - 10 August 1967

The battalion continued search operations. On 10 August A/1-14 returned by helilift to operational control of its parent unit.

11 August - 19 August 1967

Continued efforts in "hole hunting" unearthed thirty-nine enemy while friendlies suffered only five casualties.

20 August 1967

See inclosed Combat After Action Report - Battle of An Thach (Incl 2).

21 August - 23 August 1967

Elements continued search and destroy operations in AO Baker with no significant contact.

24 August 1967

Company's A and C and the battalion reconnaissance platoon worked in a joint operation partially within the popular forces area of operation. At 1058 Company A pursuing three enemy moving to the east began a detailed search of an area near Thach Tru (1) and unearthed a series of spider holes. By the end of the afternoon they had dug up twenty-five V.C. and nineteen weapons to include one 60mm mortar and one RPG-2 (B-40) rocket launcher. It was later determined that they had found the Headquarters of the 406th VC Battalion.

25 August to 31 August 1967

Continued search and destroy operations and combat assaults by elements of the battalion produced no significant contact.

1 September 1967

H23's from the Brigade Aviation Platoon while working with Company A observed an enemy platoon on the south side of a stream just west of The Song Thoa river (685578). Company A then received automatic weapons fire from the same location. Gunships were called and blocked by fire the area near the Song Ve River cutting off the enemy's escape to the north. Company A then maneuvered north against the enemy while Brigade Aviation aircraft killed twelve in the open fields. Company A forced the enemy against the river junction killing five and capturing two weapons; one a 45 caliber pistol, presumed from documents found on the body, to belong to either the Battalion Executive Officer or a Company Executive Officer of the 38th VC Battalion.

2 September - 6 September 1967

Continuing search and destroy operations netted several enemy kills daily, but no major contacts developed.

7 September - 8 September 1967

Company A conducted a new type of combat assault "Operation Aloha" just north of Red Hill (BS 760540). This technique included assaulting one element and then utilizing the Brigade Aviation H-23's to screen the surrounding areas, placing the other elements where the most movement was discovered. Utilizing this method near Tam Thuong Company A killed three V.C. and captured one M-1 carbine. This was significant because of the considerable distance between the original landing zone and the location where the other element was inserted and engaged the enemy.

9 September - 15 September 1967

Elements continued operations in the AO. Contacts were scattered as the enemy appeared to be abandoning his habit of hiding in camouflaged spider holes.

16 September - 17 September 1967

On 16 September at 1045 hours the battalion reconnaissance platoon moving on foot into a rocky draw at BS 721452 discovered a cave large enough to hold sixty to eighty men. They investigated and found many smaller off-shoots from the initial cave. After killing five V.C. the Brigade's psyops team was called in and with their help the reconnaissance platoon captured twenty-five POW's, one 45 caliber pistol, two M-1 rifles, one M-16 rifle, one M-1 carbine, one AK 47, and one SKS plus numerous supplies. Interrogation reports indicated that this was the site of a guerrilla meeting, with one NVA attending from the 24th Regiment stationed in Kontum. Repeated air strikes and artillery fires were adjusted on the area. The following day the reconnaissance platoon returned to the cave and continued their search incurring two US wounded from cleverly concealed snipers. A detailed investigation showed little damage done by the artillery and air strikes and a decision was made and executed to blow up the tunnel sealing CS crystals inside.

18 September - 22 September 1967

Between 18 September and 22 September all units conducted search and sweep operations. On 22 September, Company C made a multiple flight assault into the rice paddy area west of Thach Thang (1) ostensibly to trap V.C. However, their search uncovered forty thousand pounds of rice. With the help of national police brought to the scene from Mo Duc District Headquarters, Company C identified the VCS in the area and used them and CH 47 helicopters to move twenty tons of rice to the district headquarters where it was distributed to refugees in surrounding camps. During this operation company C received sniper fire and gunships engaged killing one enemy, and capturing one M-1 carbine. This operation hurt the enemy in two ways: First the rice captured was denied the V.C. and given to the refugees, Second ten confirmed Viet Cong were captured. This operation was to set a pattern for all future such operations. Company D while on a search mission vicinity of BS 767507 on 18 September killed the Mo Duc Viet Cong District Chief.

23 September - 28 September 1967

Acting on intelligence from a POW captured near An Ba on 24 September companies A and C made a four day detailed search of the Nui Lon mountains discovering two base camps, killing one enemy with weapon, and capturing one NVA POW with a new chicom sub-machinegun. Meanwhile other elements continued search operations in the lowlands. On 28 September company C made a multiple flight assault near Dam Thuy (2) and discovered several concentrations of enemy. Results of the engagement were thirteen enemy killed and two enemy POW's. Also company B captured and lifted eighteen thousand pounds of rice to Mo Duc district headquarters.

29 September - 2 October 1967

With the rice harvest reaching its peak the battalion concentrated its efforts on denying this rice to the Viet Cong. Working on the same pattern as company C's operation of 22 September the battalion captured the following amounts of rice from the VC controlled rice paddy areas east of highway #1:

29 September	24,000 pounds
30 September	48,000 pounds
1 October	31,000 pounds
2 October	28,200 pounds

3 October - 10 October 1967

On 3 October Company B moved to LZ OD 783373. On 4 October the battalion assumed operational responsibility for a major portion of the 1-35th's area of operation west of highway #1. During this period all elements conducted search operations. A torrential downpour on 8 October deposited twelve inches of rain on the Duc Pho region and submerged the entire rice paddy area making further evacuation of rice impossible for both friendly and enemy forces.

11 October - 15 October 1967

Elements continued search and destroy operations with increased emphasis on stay behind ambushes on likely avenues of approach into the mountains. On 11 October, company A was air assaulted into the mountains west of LZ OD with the mission to set up day and night ambushes for a three day period. On 12 October the battalion LRRP's were inserted at company A's location BS 730335. On 13 October the LRRP observed a total of eleven enemy and adjusted artillery on them with two possible enemy kills. They were extracted at 1421. On 14 October company A completed their ambush operation and returned to LZ OD.

16 October - 21 October 1967

On 16 October, company B with the LRRP attached departed LZ LIZ for a three day "Ranger" type operation in the hills west of LZ OD vicinity of BS 7335. They received no resupply for that period and conducted day and night ambushes. The LRRP detached itself at 0630 17 October and moved to a location BS 723349 where it could observe several fresh trails. At 1320 they observed several VC with weapons. At 1400 hours they were observed, engaged the enemy and killed five with weapons. They were then extracted. On 18 October an enemy attack on company B resulted in one US KIA and six wounded. All other elements continued search and clear operations with stay-behind ambushes within the area of operations with no significant results.

22 October - 31 October 1967

All elements conducted sweep missions with stay-behind ambushes. On 22 October, company C made a combat assault BS 687511 and immediately killed one VC with weapon in the landing zone. Throughout the day they continued to engage enemy and killed six overall, three of whom were hiding in a false ceiling. On 28 October the new emphasis on ambushes yielded a total of thirteen VC KIA and six weapons captured by elements of companies A and C. Those engaged by company A's platoon never had a chance to take their weapons off their shoulders as claymores and hand grenades cut them down. On 31 October two companies and the reconnaissance platoon of the 1-46th Infantry became OPCON to 2-35 and moved into LZ OD, LZ DRAGON, and BS 813363 respectively. At 2230 hours 31 October two of company A's platoons engaged an enemy force, later determined to be the point of the 97th VC Battalion near Phuoc Dien in a well planned and well rehearsed ambush and killed fifteen VC soldiers and captured twelve weapons including one RPG-7 rocket launcher with ammo, the first such weapon captured in the southern Quang Ngai area (another first for the "Cacti Blue").

1. Personnel

A. General:

1. During the reporting period all administrative functions were performed at the forward Brigade Base Camp, LZ Mt Bronco.
2. The requirement to maintain a rear detachment at the 4th Division base camp in Pleiku accounted for initial difficulty in strength accountability, personnel in-and-out processing, and submission of personnel actions. However, the requirement was reduced and all but twelve individuals were convoyed forward bringing all TO&E equipment and maintenance personnel.
3. Visits by the record and finance teams from Division rear relieved the majority of the pay problems that had arisen and made it possible for personnel to review their DA Form 66's, Form 20's and 201 files.
4. No significant personnel problems were encountered during the reporting period.

B. Unit Strengths:

1. As of 15 August 1967, the strength of the units of the 2d Bn 35th Inf was as follows:

UNIT	AUTH			ASSIGNED & ATCHD		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
HHC, 2d Bn 35th Inf	<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>272</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>268</u>
Co A, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	173	5	0	179
Co B, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	173	6	0	183
Co C, 2d Bn 35th Inf	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>173</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>170</u>
	<u>35</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>791</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>800</u>

2. As of 15 September 1967, the strength of the units of the 2d Bn 35th Inf was as follows:

UNIT	AUTH			ASSIGNED & ATCHD		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
HHC, 2d Bn 35th Inf	<u>17</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>172</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>243</u>
Co A, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	5	0	162
Co B, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	6	0	182
Co C, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	6	0	181
Co D, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	5	0	177
Co E, 2d Bn 35th Inf	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
	<u>45</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>924</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>778</u>

3. As of 15 October 1967, the strength of the units of the 2d Bn 35th Inf was as follows:

UNIT	AUTH			ASSIGNED & ATCHD		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
HHC, 2d Bn 35th Inf	17	2	172	18	1	194
Co A, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	7	0	160
Co B, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	8	0	155
Co C, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	6	0	181
Co D, 2d Bn 35th Inf	6	0	164	5	0	160
Co E, 2d Bn 35th Inf	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>77</u>
	45	2	924	47	1	927

4. The 2d Bn 35th Inf strength fluctuated daily during the reporting period. The following are periodic strength figures:

	ASSIGNED & ATTACHED			AUGUST			PRESENT FOR DUTY		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
2	29	1	746	28	1	710	28	1	710
7	30	1	725	29	1	685	29	1	685
12	29	1	729	29	1	684	29	1	684
17	30	1	800	30	1	752	30	1	752
22	40	1	862	40	1	821	40	1	821
27	41	1	883	40	1	841	40	1	841

SEPTEMBER

	ASSIGNED & ATTACHED			PRESENT FOR DUTY		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
1	40	1	885	37	1	845
6	40	1	856	37	1	814
11	39	1	853	38	1	805
16	40	1	877	39	1	838
21	42	1	866	42	1	832
26	44	1	871	43	1	839

OCTOBER

	ASSIGNED & ATTACHED			PRESENT FOR DUTY		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
1	45	1	907	43	1	874
6	46	1	892	45	1	857
11	46	1	930	46	1	902
16	47	1	927	47	1	904
21	49	1	907	49	1	880
26	49	1	886	48	1	859
30	49	1	871	48	1	840

C. Rest and recuperation:

1. During the reporting period, personnel of this unit were offered rest and recuperation at ten different locations.
2. The total number of allocations for the reporting period was 195. Bangkok continues to be the most popular R & R site. The R & R allocations and utilization were as follows:

PLACE	<u>AUGUST</u>		<u>SEPTEMBER</u>		<u>OCTOBER</u>	
	ALLOCATED	UTILIZED	ALLOCATED	UTILIZED	ALLOCATED	UTILIZED
HAWAII	9	9	10	10	12	12
TOKYO	13	10	11	10	4	4
BANGKOK	14	13	12	12	10	10
HONG KONG	12	9	12	8	9	5
TAIPEI	13	8	9	7	7	5
KUALA LUMPUR	2	1	2	1	2	1
FENANG	4	3	4	3	3	2
MANILA	2	2	2	2	3	2
SINGAPORE	4	4	3	3	4	3
AUSTRALIA	0	0	0	0	3	3

D. Promotions:

1. Promotion allocations for first in-country promotions continue to be many times more than utilized.
2. Promotion allocations for second and third in-country promotion continue to be less than the requested number.
3. The promotion allocation and utilization for the reporting period were as follows:

<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>ALLOCATIONS</u>		
First in-country	E4 (25)	E5 (130)	E6 (33)
Second in-country	E4 (0)	E5 (5)	E6 (1)

<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>PROMOTED</u>		
First in-country	E4 (25)	E5 (30)	E6 (1)
Second in-country	E4 (0)	E5 (5)	E6 (0)

SEPTEMBER

ALLOCATIONS

First in-country	E4 (88)	E5 (124)	E6 (41)
Second in-country	E4 (0)	E5 (3)	E6 (1)

SEPTEMBER

PROMOTED

First in-country	E4 (88)	E5 (19)	E6 (3)
Second in-country	E4 (0)	E5 (3)	E6 (1)

OCTOBER

ALLOCATIONS

First in-country	E4 (62)	E5 (50)	E6 (2)
Second in-country	E4 (0)	E5 (5)	E6 (1)

OCTOBER

PROMOTED

First in-country	E4 (62)	E5 (3)	E6 (2)
Second in-country	E4 (0)	E5 (5)	E6 (0)

4. Three personnel were promoted to E7 during this period.

E. Casualties:

During the reporting period, the battalion suffered the following casualties:

	<u>KIA</u>	<u>DOW</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>
Aug	6	0	41	0
Sep	1	1	30	0
Oct	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>0</u>
	10	1	122	0

F. Replacements:

The following units received replacements during the reporting period:

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>E3</u>	<u>E4</u>	<u>E5</u>	<u>E6</u>	<u>E7</u>	<u>E8</u>
HHC	Aug	13	4	2	6	1	0
	Sep	11	0	1	0	0	0
	Oct	5	2	1	0	2	0

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>E3</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>E5</u>	<u>E6</u>	<u>E7</u>	<u>E8</u>
A Co	Aug	24	1	0	0	0	0
	Sep	8	0	0	0	0	0
	Oct	7	0	0	1	0	0
B Co	Aug	13	0	0	1	1	0
	Sep	3	2	0	0	0	0
	Oct	13	1	3	0	0	0
C Co	Aug	18	0	1	1	0	0
	Sep	18	1	1	0	0	0
	Oct	8	0	1	1	0	0
D Co	Aug	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sep	33	0	0	0	0	0
	Oct	5	0	0	3	0	0
E Co	Aug	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sep	26	2	0	0	0	0
	Oct	6	0	0	0	0	0

SECTION 2: COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Part I, Observations (Lessons Learned)

1. OPERATIONS.

a. Item: Newly Arrived Units.

Discussion: The arrival of a new packet of troops from the states to become our D Company posed a challenge in attempting to make the element immediately combat ready. New elements arriving in country universally go through adjustment problems prior to becoming truly combat effective. However, new replacements to existing companies normally adjust much more quickly. Therefore, the new packet was broken down with much thought to individual DEROS's, the leveling off of NCO's, experience factors, and the current strength of companies. Four companies were created which included approximately three-quarters experienced personnel and one-quarter new personnel. To further prepare the new unit it was put through seven days of training stressing working together in small unit operations rather than combat skills. As a result of this training the unit's first combat assault, normally a difficult operation for any new unit, was described as extremely smooth by the flight leader. The unit's day-to-day operations have shown few adjustment problems. This procedure should also prove helpful if used in integrating officers of new units as well as enlisted men.

Observation: Integrating personnel from new units arriving in country with existing units alleviates problems of adjusting these units to combat conditions and also avoids rotational humps.

b. Item: Ambush Rehearsals.

Discussion: The importance of good ambush rehearsals is universally accepted but often not adhered too in the combat area. Our ambushes made remarkable improvement once command interest was generated in detailed preparation to include live fire rehearsals prior to the execution of the ambush, and giving sufficient time to rest following the ambush. (See Incl 3 Ambush SOP 2d Bn 35th Inf). On a recent occasion, only two weeks after this increased training, platoon ambushes in one area engaged an enemy force killing fourteen, capturing one NVA and a total of twelve weapons including RPG-7 without incurring one serious injury. On another ambush several days prior a reinforced squad engaged and killed six V.C. and captured six weapons without the enemy being able to unsling their arms. No U.S. casualties were accrued.

Observation: Time devoted to realistic live fire ambush rehearsals in the combat zone and standdowns following ambushes yields significant results in terms of enemy killed and fewer friendly casualties.

c. Item: Multiple flight air assaults.

Discussion: Following the initial large engagements in our area of operations we faced small and scattered groups of enemy, sometimes only two or three, whose mission was to harass and then to evade and avoid contact. Normal

air assaults did not suffice because the enemy just split up and successfully evaded from the initial landing zone. To counter this tactic a new technique featuring a new method of multiple impromptu air assaults of platoon or smaller size elements, orienting on enemy movement, was developed by the battalion commander. Initially a small element, usually a platoon, is placed on the ground. Following this the brigade H-23's scout and screen the surrounding areas up to two thousand meters. Meanwhile the troop helicopters return to the pickup zone and load the next element. These troops are loaded in such a manner that each two ships contain an independent element that can be inserted in one location while the other elements go to another. The helicopters remain on the pickup zone or some intermediate secure area either at flight idle or shut down until the enemy situation is sufficiently developed to determine the most opportune landing zone(s). Then the flight or a section on standby pulls pitch, is briefed while in flight, and is inserted with a gunship prep as close as possible. To assist the company commander in remaining abreast of the situation he accompanies the battalion commander in the command and control helicopter until his final element is landed. The command and control helicopter is used to mark all landing zones as selected. This technique requires increased attention to command and control and adequate communication with each participating element or subelement. The results of this tactic have been extremely encouraging and indicate a successful method of assaulting an adequate number of troops in the proximity of an evading enemy.

Observation: A series of small unit helicopter assaults inserted as a result of sightings by H-23 scout birds frustrate an enemy attempting to evade and scatter, meeting each enemy force with a superior yet economically sized friendly force.

d. Item: Floating Marking Devices.

Discussion: The terrain and weather in the combat theater of Vietnam and especially in the Duc Pho Area necessitates landing troops in locations where there are several inches to several feet of water. Marking these landing zones with normal smoke grenades from a helicopter has proven impossible, necessitating a floating smoke mark. To meet this situation a field expedient marker was made out of a 7.62 ammo can filled with two inches of sand and water with a smoke grenade wired on top. The device initially sinks, but then returns to the surface giving a normal billowing smoke mark. The drawbacks to this device are its size and cumbersome nature.

Observation: A need exists for a floating smoke marker for marking wet landing zones. An ammo can field expedient will suffice but is cumbersome.

e. Item: Aircraft Panels.

Discussion: Every unit has as a part of its basic issue aircraft panels, but few units have utilized them on a daily basis. During pick ups and extractions, elements of this battalion have utilized them to mark the landing point for the lead ship in each Vee. Consequently we have had little trouble with ships overflying their proper positions especially during periods of reduced visibility.

Observation: The utilization of aircraft panels for pickups ~~made dur-~~
ing periods of reduced visibility facilitates each aircraft finding its proper
place on the landing zone and assists in rapid troop loading.

f. Item: Night Airstrikes.

Discussion: During this reporting period several "night owls",
(airstrikes run at night with a FAC and a flareship) have been employed.
In contrast to radar directed night airstrikes which rarely hit the exact
target, these strikes were as accurate as day strikes and allowed the FAC
to adjust the strike to suit the actual situation in the target area.

Observation: Night airstrikes adjusted by an airborne FAC with the
help of a helicopter flare ship are much more accurate and flexible than
radar directed strikes when weather permits.

g. Item: Rotating beacons on landing zones.

Discussion: Because of the nature of the enemy's operations much
of the action in this war occurs during periods of reduced visibility. In
our area of operations a heavy fog accumulates at night, making it extremely
difficult for helicopters to navigate. To counteract this problem the battalion
installed a rotating red beacon at the battalion firebase. Numerous pilots
have volunteered that this has been a valuable aid for their navigation and
several times we have had requests to turn it on for ships passing through our
AO in order to help them orient themselves.

Observation: A rotating beacon located on landing zones is a valuable
navigational aid for helicopters.

h. Item: Techniques of guiding helicopters in for night landings.

Discussion: Through repeated trial and error it has been found that
there is only one acceptable method of guiding helicopters into landing zones
at night. When the helicopter is a considerable distance from the landing
zone, approximately four minutes, a trip flare and a hand held flare or mortar
illumination round should be utilized to give the pilot a bearing on the land-
ing zone. Trip flares, if used when the helicopter is closer, blind the pilot
and destroy his night vision. One more hand held flare may be used when the
helicopter is forty five seconds out.

Observation: Hand held flares and mortar illumination rounds are
good guides for aircraft in giving them a general fix on the location of a
landing zone. Trip flares should only be used when helicopters are at least
four minutes out.

i. Item: The utilization of 106 recoilless rifles with M113 personnel
carriers.

Discussion: During this reporting period an extensive experiment
was conducted mounting a 106 recoilless rifle on one of the M113's attached
to our unit. This addition enabled the carriers to deliver suppressive fire
against enemy hiding in bunkers or buildings and was often used to "RECON by
fire". When a supply of "beehive" rounds was carried it gave the carriers an

excellent defensive weapon against night attacks which helped offset the lack of a full complement of troops aboard the carriers. Some problems were experienced with the gas tank seams of the carriers which indicate that a detailed study should be made of the effects of this employment.

Observation: 106 recoilless rifles, when used with M13 personnel carriers give them a valuable offensive and defensive weapon.

j. Item: Artillery preparation of landing zones.

Discussion: It has been the experience of this unit that artillery preparations of ten to fifteen minutes duration have one of two undesirable effects. Either the enemy leaves the area because of this forewarning, or he gets his weapon and position ready to engage the assaulting element. To offset this we have tried a high intensity TOT type preparation of short duration in which three or more batteries mass and fire their maximum rate of fire for three minutes, hitting all the danger areas surrounding a landing zone. The result is a tremendously increased shock effect on the area around the landing zone and in addition gives the enemy only five minutes warning prior to actual touchdown. No fire has been received on any landing zone in which this method has been used.

Observation: By blanketing all critical terrain with a short three minute intensive artillery preparation followed immediately by insertion of ground troops the enemy is denied time to either leave the area or get his weapon and prepare to engage the assaulting troops or their helicopters.

k. Item: Snipers and Sniper Weapons.

Discussion: Although the majority of this war is fought at close range, here in Duc Pho there has been ample opportunity for engaging targets at ranges up to 1,000 meters as they are retreating from sniping missions against US Forces. At the present time however, the only acceptable sniper weapons available are some captured M-1 rifles. These rifles have been more successful than the M-16 in this role. A short sniper school was held at the division base camp, but this instruction was oriented only towards using the M-16 with a low power scope. If a course of instruction were given to at least one person per squad armed by MTOE with a superior sniper weapon and high power scope, a rapid improvement in long range kills would follow..

Observation: In the Duc Pho area a need exists for a sniper weapon and trained personnel in each squad capable of engaging enemy targets at ranges up to 1,000 meters.

l. Item: Air Support.

Discussion: During the past reporting period our experience with Air Force Support has shown it to be too inflexible to adequately support our operations. Preplanned air strikes must be submitted at least twenty-four

hours prior to time over target. It is extremely difficult in a fluid guerrilla war to decide what targets are going to be the most productive twenty-four hours in advance. A standing policy which precludes diverting air strikes even if later intelligence indicates a much more lucrative target means many airstrikes are not employed as profitably as possible. Another problem with air support develops because no one knows until the flight is over the target what type of aircraft and ordnance will be available. This makes it impossible for the FAC to give the ground commander an estimate of the limitations of the support he can expect so he can plan his operation accordingly. For this reason there are numerous times that close air support might have been used, but it wasn't because by the time information about the type of support available was obtained the movement of the troops had precluded its use. Finally, a highly dangerous situation exists with respect to radar directed air strikes. Once requested, these air strikes cannot be stopped under any circumstances later than thirty minutes prior to time over target. In our highly mobile war where helicopters could be forced to land at any moment and where airmobile assaults can within minutes, deposit troops as a result of a developing contact, this arrangement is extremely dangerous. ★

Observation: Because of the inflexible nature of the support provided by the US Air Force, especially in its radar directed air strikes, its inability to provide advance information on aircraft ordnance loads, and its reluctance to divert pre-planned airstrikes to more profitable targets of opportunity, air support cannot be considered a significant factor in our operations. ★

m. Item: Ammunition for the M-79.

Discussion: The M-79 has been combat proven to be an efficient means of placing effective fire on and marking distant enemy targets. However, it could be more effectively used if a variety of rounds were available to include CS, smoke, white phosphorous and canister. The few experiences we have had with the M-79 CS round show it to be excellent as it can place the CS where it is needed while not requiring the friendly troops to wear cumbersome gas masks. White phosphorous rounds would be valuable for the same reasons. A smoke round would allow ground troops to mark enemy targets for air strikes and gunships. Finally, a canister round would be excellent for ambushes.

Observation: The M-79 is an effective weapon but could be more effective to mark targets and engage the enemy if CS, white phosphorous, smoke, and canister were made available.

n. Item: Aircraft consoles.

Discussion: The command and control helicopter (C&C) of this unit has been responsible for marking (an average of two) landing zones per day, and controlling combat assaults into these landing zones. Such actions take minute and continuing coordination between the unit commander and gunships, lift ships, airborne FAC's, participating ground units, airborne members of the command group and the pilot of the C&C ship. The F.M. radios of most aircraft are unreliable, thus requiring the commander to have a UHF and back up FM capability. For the above control and coordination a minimum of two FM radios, a UHF radio, and an intercom system enabling each member of the airborne command group to use these radios, talk to each other, and direct the C&C pilot is required.

Observation: An urgent need for an aircraft console in the battalion command and control ship exists.

2. PERSONNEL

Item: Excessive time for award processing.

Discussion: The manner in which awards are processed at the present time requires anywhere from eight to fourteen weeks and in some instances longer. All non-posthumous valorous award recommendations are processed in the following manner. The award is submitted from the unit through the battalion and brigade commanders to Americal Division where it is boarded. From there it is forwarded through Brigade to the 4th Infantry Division Awards and Decorations Branch for editing and final approval by the Commanding General, 4th Infantry Division. Then finally orders are promulgated and returned to the unit for presentation. It takes one week to process the award at the unit and brigade level; three to eight weeks at Americal Division; and four to six weeks at 4th Division. Thus a total of eight to fourteen weeks elapses between initiation of an award and final approval. In many cases this causes a loss in morale and often the individual involved has left the country prior to the award being presented. A possible corrective action would be to exclude Americal Division from the process or include it in the process by sending a copy of the recommendation to them with their silence indicating approval.

Observation: The time required to process valorous non-posthumous awards is unsatisfactory and results in lowered morale.

3. LOGISTICS.

a. Item: Repair of rubber air mattresses

Discussion: Air mattresses are being turned in for salvage if they have a small hole in them and they will not hold air. Many of these holes are minute and with the proper equipment, the air mattresses could be repaired with very little effort.

Observation: The unit and battalion supply rooms do not have the capability to repair air mattresses. Therefore, mattresses with repairable holes are being turned in for salvage, creating a shortage of air mattresses for troops in the field.

b. Item: Wearing of stripes on jungle fatigues.

Discussion: Since fatigues are laundered in bulk and the same fatigues are not sent back to the same individual, the wearing of stripes on jungle fatigues is impractical in most combat field units.

Observation: Metal rank insignia, if issued, can be removed in the same manner as brass when the clothing is sent to the laundry and affixed to a fresh clean uniform. Metal insignias should be an item of issue in all combat areas.

c. Item: Disposable Food Containers.

Discussion: This unit continues to feed its elements in the field hot "A" rations for breakfast and supper whenever possible. Utilizing mermite containers to supply elements requires two helicopter sorties for each company and in many instances tactical operations have been delayed in order to wait for their extraction. This problem has been intensified during the monsoon season because of marginal flying conditions. A critical need exists for disposable mermite containers for use by troops in the field.

Observation: Weather problems and the tactical situation necessitate the development of a disposable mermite food container for feeding troops in the field.

d. Item: Resupply of special equipment prior to monsoon season.

Discussion: Prior to the monsoon season, this battalion submitted requisitions for wet weather equipment, and winter clothing, such as rain suits, and sweaters, and additional bunker material including tarpaper and lumber to strengthen existing defensive positions. Some of the above mentioned requisitions were not filled and are still outstanding. Others have only been partially filled and the remainder are urgently needed by this battalion to maintain health and welfare of the enlisted men.

Observation: Critical items needed for operations during the monsoon season were requisitioned well prior to the monsoon yet did not arrive in sufficient quantities before the monsoon and in some cases still have not arrived.

e. Item: Repair Parts.

Discussion: Recently this unit relocated its maintenance facilities from Pleiku to LZ Bronco (Duc Pho). In Pleiku our support element was Headquarters and A company, 704th Maintenance Battalion located at Pleiku. Our present support is from B company, 704th Maintenance Battalion. At present there are still many repair parts on requisition with Headquarters and A company in Pleiku. These requisitioned parts are being issued to a liaison NCO in Pleiku, who is responsible for obtaining transportation for delivery of them to Duc Pho. Air transportation being limited and convoy traffic almost negligible, this causes increased delay in being able to return deadlined equipment to an operational status. In addition, B company, 704th Maintenance Battalion does not have an adequate capability to handle a large supply of parts.

Observation: The displacement of our maintenance facilities from Pleiku to Duc Pho while we still have parts on requisition from Hqs and A company 704th Maintenance has caused considerable delay in these parts being made available to this unit.

f. Item: Company tunnel kit.

Discussion: Due to the many tunnel and cave complexes found in the Duc Pho area of operations it has been advantageous to this Battalion to locally assemble company tunnel kits. Through trial and error it has been found that the following items should be included:

(a)	Rope 100' lengths	2 ea
(b)	6 volt lights	6 ea
(c)	Armored Vests	2 ea
(d)	Grappling Hooks	2 ea
(e)	Infrared scopes	2 ea
(f)	Protective masks	2 ea
(g)	Sound powered phones	2 ea
(h)	WD-1 wire one mile spool	1 ea
(i)	Ear plugs	2 ea

These kits can be lifted to the unit once it finds a cave complex and then lifted out once the cave has been explored.

Observation: The creation and utilization of tunnel kits by each unit furnishes them with a ready means to capitalize on any cave complexes found.

g. Item: The M170 vs M37B1 Ambulance.

Discussion: In this war the only need for an ambulance is to transport patients over adequate roads to nearby medical facilities or aircraft evacuation locations. The M170 is too small to efficiently transport patients in the numbers required. Further, its ride is too rough for injured men. The larger ambulance, the M37B1 could carry a larger number of personnel and afford them a smooth ride.

Observation: The M170 is too small and gives occupants too rough a ride for the local transportation of patients.

h. Item: Patient Holding Tent.

Discussion: Past experience during the reporting period indicates that individuals with foot problems and other medical problems requiring almost continual care should be housed in a separate medical holding tent in the trains area where proper care could be given rather than returned to company areas where no facilities exist for housing and caring for them.

Observation: A medical holding tent (GP, medium) in the trains area would improve medical care of those with convalescent medical problems not requiring hospitalization.

i. Item: Watches.

Discussion: Only 1 (one) US issue watch is authorized for an Infantry platoon. A requirement exists for a minimum of one watch per squad leader.

Observation: US issue watches are not authorized squad leaders in infantry platoons therefore causing a time coordination problem.

Part II, Recommendations

1. OPERATIONS.

- a. That members of packets scheduled to become the fourth company of infantry units be integrated with existing units making four balanced units with equal strength and experience.
- b. That a floating smoke marker be developed to be used in marking wet landing zones.
- c. That a study be made of the practicality of mounting the 106 recoilless rifle on personnel carrier M113.
- d. That a sniper weapon and scope capable of engaging targets up to 1,000 meters be issued on the basis of one per rifle squad and that one individual per squad be trained as an additional duty operator as a sniper.
- e. That a variety of rounds to include white phosphorus rounds be developed for the M-79 grenade launcher and that those already available to include CS smoke and canister be more widely distributed.
- f. That a study be made of the current procedures utilized in Air Force support with a view towards making them more responsive to the changing tactical situation.
- g. That metal rank insignia be issued to all enlisted men serving in Vietnam for use on jungle fatigues.
- h. That issue watches be obtained and given to small unit leaders to aid in coordination.
- i. That aircraft consoles be made available to battalions for command and control of air assaults.

2. LOGISTICS.

- a. That rotating beacon lights be made available for infantry units desiring to utilize them for navigation.
- b. That repair kits for rubber air mattresses be furnished unit supply rooms.
- c. That a disposable thermos food container be developed and utilized for delivery of food to troops in the field.
- d. That the M37B1 ambulance be substituted for the M170 ambulance for all units operating in areas where short trips over adequate roads are required.

e. That the medical section of each infantry unit be issued one general purpose medium tent to be used as a holding tent for patients in the trains area requiring ambulatory care not severe enough to justify hospitalization.

3. PERSONNEL.

That all valorous non-posthumous awards be processed from the unit of assignment through battalion, brigade and then directly to the 4th Inf Div awards section, for boarding action and approval by the CG, 4th Inf Div with an information copy being forwarded to Americal Division who if they disagree with the recommendation can indicate this on an appropriate indorsement to CG, 4th Inf Div.



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3 Incl

1. Combat Operation After Action Report The Battle of An Ba, 8 Aug 67 LTC, Infantry Commanding
2. Combat Operation After Action Report The Battle of An Thach, 20 Aug 67
3. SOP ambushes 2-35 Inf