

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
 Headquarters, 2d Squadron, (Aml), 17 Cavalry
 APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-SQ-3

17 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report OPERATION APACHE SNOW

Commanding General
 101st Airborne Division
 ATTN: AVDG-CG-DOT
 APO San Francisco 96383

REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED BY
 AUTHORITY OF DOD DIR. 5200.1 R
 BY RAKERS ON 11 May 9

1. Name of Operation. APACHE SNOW.
2. Dates. 9 May-7 June 1969.
3. Location. A Shau Valley, Thua Thien Province, RVN.
4. Command Headquarters. HQ 2nd Squadron 17 Cavalry.
5. Reporting Officer. LTC William W. DeLoach
 Other Cmdrs/Advisors Involved: Cmdr 1/506
 Cmdr 3/187
 Cmdr 2/502 OPCON
6. Task Organization.
 - A. A Trp, 2/17th Cav.
 - B. B Trp, 2/17 Cav(-)
 - C. C Trp, 2/17th Cav
 - D. D Trp, 2/17th Cav
7. Support Forces. Organic.
8. Intelligence. Intsum 10 May - 7 June 1969.
9. Mission. Reconnaissance, marking and screening LZ's during and after insertions. Conducted border patrol and area reconnaissance.
10. Concept of Operation. 2/17th Cavalry supported 3rd Bde by reconnaissance, the marking of LZ's before insertions and the screening of troops on the ground. This was accomplished on LZ's #1 through #6 inclusive. 2/17th Cavalry was then to provide area reconnaissance and border patrol.

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Doc 15

AVDG-SQ-3

17 June 1969

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11. Execution. At 100800 May 69 C Trp, 2/17th Cavalry marked LZ's for the first insertion. The remainder of the LZ's were screened and marked by the 2/17th Cavalry. 2/17th provided reconaissance, border patrol, and downed aircraft security for the remainder of the operation as required. A Trp, and C Trp provided pink teams for the battle of Dong Ap Bia as required.

12. A. Results: Totals as of 7 June 1969.

- B. (1) KIA - 9.
 (2) KDAI - 16.
 (3) KBA - N/A.
 (4) Captured - N/A.

C. Friendly Losses: 2 US KIA 3 US WIA

D. Body to weapons ratio: 5:1

E. Enemy to friendly killed ratio: 12:5 to 1

13. Administrative Matters. N/A

14. Special Equipment and Techniques. N/A

15. Commander's Analysis. APACHE SNOW was well planned, supervised, and executed. Observations for consideration in future airmobile operations are listed below.

16. Recommendations.

A. Item. Infantry packs.

(1) Discussion. The scope of airmobile operations requires that the infantry soldier travel light in order to effectively move through the canopy against the enemy.

(2) Recommendation. The pack of the infantryman should be reduced to water, ammo, food all carried on his LBE. Rucksacks when used could be extracted from the unit in the morning and returned to the unit in the evening. During periods of extended inclement weather, however, rucksacks would be necessary.

B. Item. Fire Bases.

(1) Discussion. Fire base planning must be expanded to include landing areas for safe use by helicopter. There must be two separate landing areas one for all logistics and another for passenger/command personnel.

UNCLASSIFIED 17 June 1969

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(2) Recommendation. Fire base construction should be done based upon a drawn plan. Fire bases on hilltops should have landing pads on the opposite side of the hill; one for log and one for passengers.

Fire bases on flat terrain should leave two 150 foot-wide lanes between strands of defensive wire. Again these areas should be on the opposite sides of the fire base. This area will be used for the parking of aircraft and could be expanded to include ground level refuel/rearm points if required.

C. Item. Aviation Orientation.

(1) Discussion. The Division Airmobile School is an available tool in teaching airmobile concepts to non-aviators and aviators. An additional capability that should be considered for expansion is the rotation of aviators to ground assignments in key staff positions throughout the Division i.e., Support Command.

(2) Recommendations. A program should be instituted within the Division to reassign aviation company commanders, operations officers, and S-4's to the brigade/battalion staffs and the Division's Support Command.

/s/ ROBERT W. FROST

/t/ ROBERT W. FROST
MAJ ARMOR

2 Incl

1. A Trp After Action Report.
2. B Trp After Action Report.

S-3

True Copy

Marvin A. Jeffcoat
MARVIN A. JEFFCOAT
Captain, Infantry
Asst S3

Incl. 1

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
A Troop, 2d Sqdn (Air), 17th Cavalry
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-SQ-A

12 June 69

SUBJECT: After Action Report

Commanding Officer
2/17th Cavalry
101st Abn Div (Aml)
APO 96383

REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED BY
AUTHORITY OF DOD DIR. 5200.1 R
BY RAKERS ON 11 May 99

1. Name of Operation: Apache Snow
2. Dates: 10 May - 7 Jun 69
3. Location: A Chau Valley, Thua Thua Thien Province, RVN.
4. Central Hqs: HQ, 2d Squadron 17th Cavalry.
5. Reporting Officer: M.J Thomas R. Curtin, Commanding, Trp A 2d Squadron 17th Cavalry.
6. Task Organization: N/A
7. Support Forces: Provided on a daily basis commensurate with aircraft availability, the following assets:

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>TYPE ACFT</u>	<u>USE</u>
1	UH-1H	C&C
4	UH-1H	Lift
4	OH-6A	Single Scout, White team, part of pink team and/or Cav team.
4	AH-1G	Red, part of pink team or Cav team, also provid armed escort for Lift.

8. Intelligence: See Intsum, provided by Hq, 2/17th Cavalry.
9. Mission: Provide Air Cavalry assets in general support of 3d Bde.

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10. Concept of Operation: Provide the aforementioned Air Cavalry assets as required by supported Hqs.
11. Execution: Provided 6 Cav teams, 67 pink teams, 4 white teams, 10 red teams, and 6 sniffer acft.
- The Lift Section flew 11 troop lift missions.
 - There were 30 C&C acft provided.
 - Flying hours by model acft as follows:

<u>ACFT</u>	<u>HRS FLOWN</u>	<u>CA/SORTIES</u>	<u>DCS/SORTIES</u>	<u>OCS/SORTIES</u>
UH-1H	145:50	558	19	18
AH-1G	529:00	731	5	41
OH-6A	532:35	638	70	66

- Ammo Expended:

2.75" FFAR	2400
40mm	7639
7.62	154,300
5.56	3300

12. Results:

KBIA	11
Structures	
Destroyed	49
Damaged	32

13. Administration Matters:

Morning Report Strength

	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
10 May	14	27	143
7 June	14	25	162

14. Special Equipment and Techniques: Aero Rifle Plt rappel qualified.

15. Commander's Analysis:

- (1) Item: Standard load carried by Rifle Platoon when inserted.

- (2) Discussion: It was noted that on each insertion of the Rifle Platoon, the load carried by the individual varied, often times

SUBJECT: After Action Report

UNCLASSIFIED

necessitating an unscheduled resupply. Additionally, the resupply requirement for a Night Defensive Position (NDP) varied.

(3) Solution: The development of a standard load to be carried by each member of the rifle platoon, plus a standard pre-positioned resupply package for use at the NDP.

b. (1) Item: Difficulty of getting qualified aircraft riggers to the site of a downed aircraft.

(2) Discussion: On occasion this unit experienced great difficulty in getting qualified riggers to the site of a downed aircraft. Mainly due to the dense foliage surrounding the aircraft the rigging personnel would be required to rappel into these areas.

(3) Solution: Rappel qualified aircraft maintenance riggers in addition to qualifying members of the rifle platoon, who are rappel qualified, as aircraft riggers.

c. (1) Item: Aerial Artillery Adjustment being accomplished by all Aviators.

(2) Discussion: Little or no training is being given to aviators in the art of aerial adjustment while in attending flight school which is immediately apparent when the individual arrives in a combat zone assigned to an Air Cavalry Troop. To effectively adjust artillery from the air is an absolute requirement to further the Air Cavalry capability.

(3) Solution: Aerial Artillery Adjustment classes conducted, on a recurring frequency, by the Artillery Observer assigned to each troop followed by repeated practical exercise.

16. Recommendations: The employment of Air Cavalry is unknown to many commanders and I recognize the recurring requirement to constantly explain the proper employment of this very valuable asset but this operation brought to light the great need for a re-evaluation of the Air Cavalry indoctrination program currently in effect. The proper employment of Air Cavalry not only requires an intimate knowledge of the assets available, their use and employment, but also an imagination. The ground tactical commander must realize that he cannot effectively employ Air Cavalry directly over his point element. He must further realize that Air Cavalry with its speed, flexibility and great determination can quickly find, fix and begin to fight the enemy. The ability of the ground commander to quickly and effectively react to the findings by the Air Cavalry is the key to his success, and he must be ever prepared to act boldly and with decisiveness. I have found that the primary problem is indoctrination with the newly arrived commanders,

12 June 67

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1 levels, and the continued orientation on Air Cavalry employment.

/s/ THOMAS R. CURTIN

/t/ THOMAS R. CURTIN
Major, Armor
Commanding

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Thomas R. Curtin
N. A. JEFFCOAT
in, Infantry
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
C TROOP, 2D SQUADRON (Airmobile), 17th Cavalry
APO San Francisco 96383

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SUBJECT: Combat Operations, After Action Report

Commanding Officer
2/17th Cav, 101st Abn Div (Aml)
ATTN: AVDG-SQ-3

1. Name of Operation: Apache Snow.
2. Dates: 10 May - 7 June, 1969.
3. Location: A Shau Valley - Adjacent to Laotian Border (3rd Bde AO).
4. Control HQS: 3rd Bde.
5. Reporting Officer: CPT Vincent R. Anderson, other Cmdrs/Advisors involved:
Cmdr 1/506
Cmdr 3/187
Cmdr 2/501 OPCON
6. Task Organization: Cav Teams, Pink Teams, and ARP.
7. Support Forces: Organic.
8. Intelligence: N/A
9. Missions: Recon, mark and screen LZ's before, during and after insertion. Conduct border recon and recon of selected areas. LZ# 314988
10. Concept of Operation: C Troop supported 3rd Bde in reconning and marking LZ's before insertion and screening troops during and after insertion. This was accomplished on LZ's #2, #4, #5, and #6. For the week following the initial insertion, C Troop provided trail watch along the Laotian border and aerial reconnaissance of selected AO's.
11. Execution: Cav teams and Pink teams were used to perform area recon's and screening operations. ARP was used to secure downed aircraft.
12. Results: All Spot Reports:

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<u>DTG</u>	<u>COORDINATES</u>	<u>SIGHTING</u>
120905H	YC308084	Found 2x bulldozers and 1x truck which were taken under fire and destroyed yesterday.
131020H	YC330878	Trail 2 - 3 ft wide running N-S, used within last couple of hours.
142115H	YC308986	Many huts and bunkers, movement observed through trees. Trail 5' wide running from river to area, well used.
142115H	YC303998	Found truck tire marks and fresh mud on eastern side of ford in river.
142115H	YC302038	Movement on trail in the open on ridge top, observed two men in uniform running into tree line, called for verification of friendlys in area. Negative reply.
142115H	YC299949	5' trail running E-W with hard rock ford approximately 2' deep in river.
142115H	YC380092 to YC300991	5' trail running along river on eastern side with numerous huts and bunkers.
142115H	YC299949	Series of very large huts and bunkers along river running East.
142115H	YC299949	Area under top canopy of jungle cleared of all underbrush.
160820H	YC365998	Received small arms fire, did not return fire. Speed: 80K, Alt: 20 ft.
160832H	YC285005	Received automatic weapon fire, red birds engaged target, negative assessment; speed: 70K, Alt: 20 ft.
171015H	YC298943	Trail 3' wide used in last couple hours, 3x or 4x strands of commo wire along trail to hill west of Currahee, trail follows Blue Line.
171025H	YC350956	Bamboo raft, 8' x 8', did not engage.
171033H	YC383940	Raft 9' x 10' with barrels underneath.

13. Administrative Matters: None.

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14. Special Equipment and Techniques: Artillery used to cover Cav teams off station. WP was used to burn all huts destroyed. The following ammo was expended:

<u>7.62</u>	<u>5.56</u>	<u>2.75</u>	<u>40mm</u>
48,015 rds	680 rds	787 rds	2,556 rds

15. Commander's Analysis: UH-1B fuel capacity is insufficient for required tasks.

16. Recommendations: Ropes and ladders should be organic to the troops and 125' ropes should be used for rappelling in all cases.

/s/ VINCENT R. ANDERSON

True Copy

/t/ VINCENT R. ANDERSON

CPT

Operations Officer

Marvin A. Jeffcoat
 MARVIN A. JEFFCOAT
 Captain, Infantry
 Asst S3