

Inclosure 3 (After Action Report Operation "GOLDEN SWORD") to Operational Report of 3d Brigade, 101st Abn Div for period Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1), dtd 15 November 1968. (U)

AVDG-CA-F

After Action Report for Operation GOLDEN SWORD

CO, 3d Brigade

S4, 3d Brigade

11 November 1968

1. General: The 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) participated in Operation Golden Sword during the time frame 1 September to 24 October 1968. This was a movement exercise with the express mission of rejoining the 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) with the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) at Camp Eagle in the I Corps Tactical Zone; movement originating from Phuoc Vinh Base Camp in the III Corps Tactical Zone, where the 3d Brigade had been based for approximately ten (10) months. The 3d Brigade utilized 289 C-130 aircraft sorties and one LST in closing the Brigade Tactical Force elements into Camp Eagle. 3,000 tons of equipment and 3,452 personnel were involved in the relocation of the Brigade. Tactical units and combat essential equipment were formed into three task forces, designated Task Force Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie. These task forces were moved during the periods 16 September through 19 September, 30 September through 3 October, and 16 October through 19 October respectively. Support units and less critical items of equipment were integrated into the movement flow on a daily basis excepting those dates utilized by the main Task Forces. The 3d Brigade completed Operation GOLDEN SWORD in the time frame allocated and was in all instances prepared to assume those assigned missions at Camp Eagle with no exception.

2. Problem Areas: Throughout the duration of the movement problem areas were encountered and although resolved caused additional burdens and efforts on the part of the units concerned. These areas are included for future planning to ascertain that there is no recurrence of like difficulties.

a. Throughout the entire movement the schedule of aircraft and number of aircraft to arrive on a given day was never firm. Extensive effort was made in coordinating with the Air Force Mobility Team attached for the movement from Phuoc Vinh and the TALO at G4 rear to gain more exact information. The efforts failed to receive results and scheduling, arrival and departure times were no more firm on the last days of movement than they were on the first.

Recommendation: That firmer schedules be adopted by the movement control personnel (Air Force) and that using units be given concrete information so that excessive man days are not spent waiting on transportation that may not arrive.

b. The ten (10) aircraft per day allocated initially to move this brigade is totally unsatisfactory. Each unit and staff section found itself split between the two basecamps for varying periods of time. During these periods reports and complete effectiveness of each unit or staff section was greatly impaired and in some cases ineffective.

Recommendation: That at least 40 aircraft per day be allocated toward a brigade move, even when moving during different time frames. This will enable all personnel and necessary equipment to be moved rapidly and enable a more rapid assumption of mission.

SUBJECT: After Action Report for Operation Golden Sword 11 November 1968

c. For the movement of Task Force Bravo the Air Force Mobility Team arrived the day before the move even though requested to arrive four days prior to the move. Additionally the scales flown in by the mobility team were defective and resulted in having a maintenance team flown in for an on the spot repair. This tardiness resulted in the 2/506th Infantry having to work both night and day to insure that adequate items were on the air-strip prepared for shipment.

Recommendation: That the Mobility Teams be made available to the using unit when requested to preclude the unnecessary leadership on the supported unit.

d. Practically on a daily basis requests from both G-4 forward and G-4 rear were received reference the same items of information pertaining to the progress of the move. Numerous attempts were made to have G-4 rear pass the daily reports to G-4 forward. This problem did not resolve itself throughout the duration of the move and consistently resulted in double reporting.

Recommendation: That information be presented to one division source for dissemination to all concerned.

e. Although planned as a pure air move a surface move by LST was interjected during the movement of TF Charlie. Hence the maintenance stand down planned at Bien Hoa was lost. This was extremely critical in view of the fact that weapons, vehicles and equipment had been in a combat field situation for the past four months. The state of maintenance upon arrival at Camp Eagle was marginal.

Recommendation: That prior notice be given of any change in movement plans to enable affected units to procure adequate services support.

f. At the peak of the movement of Task Force Bravo the decision was made that the Phuoc Vinh Basecamp ASP would not be accepted by the 1st Infantry Division and that some 2,000 tons of ammunition would be retrograded to Long Binh. Since this requirement was unprogrammed, there was no labor force available, resulting in monumental task being placed on the Brigade at a critical series in the move. This mission required the recall of personnel from Camp Eagle, the acquisition of EOD personnel, coordination for convoys and the dedication of our already over burdened trucks and forklifts involved in the move. Units involved in the move were subjected to providing personnel for labor who should have been preparing the unit for their move.

Recommendation: That other resources be committed to projects of this nature when a unit is already involved in a full time mission and that future planning encompass more than immediate actions required.

SUBJECT: After Action Report for Operation Golden Sword 11 November 1968

g. Immediately upon arrival at Camp Eagle a new perimeter was constructed as the first units were made available. Inadequate barrier material was on hand resulting in these materials being flown from Phuoc Vinh, integrated into the movement. Prior planning had not been made to move these materials and caused some further delay of programmed items.

Recommendation: That any additional movement requirement to be placed on a unit be done with adequate planning time included for reallocation of aircraft and space.

h. Throughout the move numerous messages were originated by USARV and II Field Force Vietnam. The majority of these messages were for compliance by 3d Brigade elements, however they were sent through 101st Airborne Division Headquarters. On several occasions as much as a weeks delay was experienced before the 3d Brigade actually was made aware of the existence of these messages. Last minute scrambling to make changes and attempt to comply were experienced unnecessarily.

Recommendation: That every effort be made to alert interested or involved units mentioned in messages from higher headquarters when action or planning is implied. An alternative would be to include the brigade as an information addressee.

i. Vehicles belonging to Task Force Bravo were held at Bien Hoa. This resulted in the 2/506th Infantry having a total of one (1) 2½ ton vehicle for purpose of driving rations and water, clearing the battalion ASP and area, and moving items to the airstrip.

Recommendation: That at a minimum of three (3) 2½ tone trucks be authorized each battalion size unit for normal basecamp activities.

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S-4

"A TRUE COPY"

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