

1968
HEADQUARTERS
FEB 10 19TH ENGINEER BATTALION (CONBAT) (ARMY)
APO San Francisco 96238

ACCESSION NO
REGISTR 13016

15 October 1965

SUBJECT: Command Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 September 1965,
Report Control Symbol GSERO-28 (R)

THRU: Commanding Officer
957th Engineer Group (C)
APO San Francisco 96238

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations
Department of the Army
Washington, D. C. 20315

1. Section I. Significant Organization Activities.

a. Training.

(1) This unit was alerted for overseas movement on 24 June 1965. At that time this unit was assigned as Post Engineer Support missions at Indianton Gap Military Reservation, Pennsylvania, Camp Perry, Ohio and Camp Pickett, Virginia. Upon notification, this unit commenced its FOR qualification subjects for approximately 200 replacements, completing all FOR prerequisites on 28 July 1965.

(2) Training was attempted aboard ship, however, space was not available for troop training. Officer classes were held on critical path method of construction scheduling, equipment management, and similar topics.

(3) Only mandatory training has been accomplished since 1 September 1965.

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b. Operations.

(1) Unit engaged in overseas movement, 15 August 1965 through 2 September 1965. During the interval 3 September 1965 through 12 September 1965, the unit decomposed, becoming operational on 13 September 1965.

(2) Projects engaged in 13-30 September 1965.

(a) Construction of ten (10) ammunition storage pads, approximately 100 feet square, enlargement of eight (8) existing pads and improvement of roads and drainage within the ammunition storage facility. Construction has been delayed due to the frequent changing of priorities, equipment breakdowns and shortage of demolition and culvert materials. Project No. 937-66, priority 1.

(b) Construction of 50,000 barrel POL tank farm to include 5-10,000 barrel steel tank tanks, 4.7 miles of 6 inch pipe and construction of a truck fueling facility. Construction of the five tank foundations has been completed; the remainder of the project is at a standstill due to lack of necessary material. Project No. 937-65, priority 1.

(c) The construction of a POL storage hardstand. This project required the placement and compaction of 21,000 cubic yards of fill material. It is anticipated that the truck fueling facility of (b) above will be placed at this location. The project has stopped at 87% completion due to the assignment of higher priority missions. Project No. 937-66, priority 1.

(d) The construction of nine miles of perimeter roads, the improvement of eleven miles of access road, and the construction of six bridges in an area to be occupied by a ROK division. Project No. Mds-65-488-937, priority 1.

(3) Communications.

(a) Radio communication within the Battalion is presently very limited and inadequate, due primarily to the allocation to the Battalion of only one AM frequency. The Battalion has extensive AM and FM organic capabilities; however, both capabilities are nullified by the lack of assigned frequencies.

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(b) Since crypto facilities are not used by our command, the Battalion crypto account is presently being closed. Guidance from the overseas command concerning the use of crypto equipment in the command, the need to have the equipment accompany the unit overseas, or the turn-in of the equipment before departing COMUS was not provided prior to movement. Such guidance would have eliminated many of the security precautions and problems which are inherent in transporting classified equipment into overseas commands.

c. Administration.

(1) The only equipment authorized for the reproduction of special orders and other documents in this unit is spirit process equipment. This equipment is not satisfactory for reproducing documents of a permanent nature. This machine requires a hard, high gloss paper which is not available in this theater. When a substitute is used in any area with high moisture or exposure to the sun, the print fades away in a matter of weeks.

(2) Movement of Units: During overseas movement, space aboard ship was not provided for unit administration. The lack of space caused administration to come to a standstill for a period of 20 days.

(3) Financial Matters: In many instances, individuals relocating families were unable to provide a permanent address for the purpose of initiating allotments Class C and E for support because movement of dependents to another location occurred after departure of sponsor and initiation of allotment. In these cases the time lapsed from the time a dependent contacted the sponsor, and the problem reached the Finance Center caused an unwarranted delay in solving a dependent's problem.

(4) Issuance of Orders: Very short interval between the issuance of movement orders, 29 July 1965, and actual movement, 15 August 1965, caused considerable inconvenience for married personnel in relocating their families.

d. Logistics.

(1) Although alerted 90 days prior to movement readiness date, the unit was not informed until just a few days before the readiness date that some items of equipment on hand could not accompany the unit overseas. As a result of this delay, replacement equipment was being received up to shipment time. No P.L. could be drawn for this

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equipment and many last-minute shipping and accounting problems were created.

(2) Guidance and implementing instructions from the overseas command were not received until after shipment had been accomplished. Thus, many items that would have been very useful at destination could not be obtained and shipped.

(3) Packing, crating and shipping instructions were changed frequently during POM operations, and there was little adherence to the prescribed and rehearsed STAM procedures. This caused extensive confusion and wasted effort in packing and repacking, marking and remarking of equipment and containers.

(4) Personnel at the POM were told that equipment was shipped did not load the ship up to allow for off-loading limitations of the POD. Heavy lifts were placed aboard ship in positions where they could not be handled by the ship's gear and the necessary unloading equipment had to be furnished by the POD. When the ship's gear became inoperative, unloading of the ship could not be completed at the destination. Equipment receipt was thus delayed considerably. Three major items have not been received to date for the same reason.

(5) This unit should have brought from COMUS far more than a 15-day supply of expendable items, especially cleaning and administrative supplies, repair parts and special POL items, as these are frequently not available through local supply facilities.

e. Maintenance: Many of the maintenance problems of this unit have already been discussed in the B-4 Section of this report. In addition, several other recent difficulties are of considerable significance:

(1) An extremely small percentage of those parts requisitioned by this unit prior to departure from COMUS has been received to date.

(2) Pilferage of OVM tools and manuals from each of the Battalion equipment was quite extensive enroute. It has been difficult to maintain heavy equipment at scattered job sites without complete sets of OVM/OMM.

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(3) Some equipment had been tampered with during movement; batteries had been connected incorrectly and several batteries, bulbs and switches had been removed. In addition, some equipment was utilized without authorization at FOB by various units arriving at or near the port of Qui Nhon.

(4) Damage to equipment during movement was minor.

(5) The grade of fuel, both diesel and gasoline, in this area is poor. Contamination in the form of water and metal particles increases maintenance problems. In addition, a lack of adequate supplies of certain PCL items has significantly hampered operations of heavy equipment.

(6) All engineer equipment was inspected by the Post XI team at home station prior to departure. Equipment not passed by the team was sent through the shops for rebuilding prior to being released for overseas shipment with the Battalion. Upon arrival in the overseas command, it was discovered the following equipment was not operational (Not due to damage during movement):

- (a) One shop was out of service.
- (b) Three TD-18 tractors.
- (c) One bucket loader.
- (d) Twelve water pumps (Components of eridator units).
- (e) Two motorized graders.
- (f) One crane shovel, track mounted.

(7) Seven new TD-18 tractors were available for issue before this unit departed its home station. However, a message from the gaining theater stated that spare parts were not on hand to support this type of tractor and the unit was required to bring its old TD-18 tractors. Spare parts for the TD-18 are not available in this area at this time. Due to their age, maintenance of the TD-18's has been a continual problem.

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2. Section II. Commander's Recommendations.

a. Training: Area should be set aside on board ship for training of personnel.

b. Operations:

(1) Sufficient AM and HI radio frequencies should be assigned units on their arrival in Viet Nam to enable them to operate battalion radio nets.

(2) Units alerted for Viet Nam should be advised not to bring crypto material.

(3) This Battalion should be authorized to draw equipment and personnel to comprise the air section normally authorized by COM 9-35B.

c. Administration:

(1) That the spirit process equipment be deleted from the TOE and a hand operated mimeograph machine be substituted.

(2) That during overseas movement of units, sufficient space aboard ship be provided to accomplish essential unit administration.

(3) That a procedure in finance regulations be provided to allow dependents to make direct inquiry to the Finance Center, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, regarding non-receipt of Class Q and R support allotments. A form similar to a Power of Attorney signed by the sponsor and left with the dependent prior to departure from COMUS could be used.

(4) Upon alert of unit for overseas movement installation commanders should issue alert order in sufficient time (approximately 30 days) to allow relocation of families. Alert orders should contain the instruction "that payment of dislocation allowance and travel pay for movement of dependents is contingent upon issuance of final movement orders". Upon receipt of movement orders, this alert order would serve as the supporting document for payment of dislocation allowance and travel pay as authorized by Para 7000.9 JTR.

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d. Logistics.

(1) Equipment surveys should be conducted by technical services immediately upon receipt of alert orders. Surveys should be thorough so as to determine the true serviceability of each item of equipment and its suitability for accompanying the unit.

(2) The overseas command should give timely information as to what special items should be acquired in CONUS and shipped with the unit equipment; e.g. tents, cots, extra repair parts, extra expendable supplies and refrigeration equipment for Class I and Medical supplies.

(3) Shipping procedures should be reviewed and finalized early in the POB period to facilitate planning and execution of necessary shipping preparations.

(4) Equipment shipped to minor ports or ports where dockside unloading cannot be accomplished should insofar as possible be loaded aboard ships in such a manner that unloading can be accomplished using ship gear only.

(5) The overseas command should furnish information to the alerted unit as to expendable items which are in extremely short supply at the unit destination, so that adequate quantities may accompany the unit from CONUS.

e. Maintenance:

(1) A 30-day supply of spare parts should accompany a unit rather than the authorized 15-day supply.

(2) Whenever possible, units deploying overseas should have new, rather than rebuilt equipment.

f. Advance Party: A unit representative should arrive in the overseas area 30 days prior to departure of parent unit from CONUS. This would enable the commander to be appraised of many of the problems while he is still in a position to take action.



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Commanding