

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

OCE

EGG-OP (31 Oct 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat), for the period ending 31 October 1970 RCS CSFOR-65

DA, Headquarters, 937th Engineer Group (Combat), APO 96226, 23 November 1970

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army (AGSFCR-DA), Washington, D.C. 20310
Commanding General, 18th Engineer Brigade, ATTN: AVBC-CG, APO 96377

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned from the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) is forwarded IAW 18th Engineer Brigade Regulation 525-15. Reporting period is 1 August through 31 October 1970.
2. This headquarters has reviewed paragraph 1, Operations: Significant Activities and considers it to be an accurate account of 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) activities for the reporting period. For clarification, the scope of Project "1000" is the construction of facilities for II CTZ MACV Advisory team 33 at Ban Me Thout.
3. This headquarters concurs with all recommendations in paragraph 2.
4. The contents of this indorsement have been brought to the attention of the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat).

William J. Schuder
WILLIAM J. SCHUDER
COL, CE
Commanding

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 19TH ENGINEER BATTALION (COMBAT)
APO San Francisco 96297

31 OCTOBER
~~15 November 1970~~

EGCA-OP

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned for the 19th Engineer
Battalion (Combat) (Army) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

THRU: Commanding Officer, 937th Engineer Group (Combat), ATTN:
EGC-OP, APO 96226

Commanding General, 18th Engineer Brigade, ATTN: OSS, APO
96377

Commanding General, United States Army Engineer Command,
Vietnam, ATTN: AVCC-MO-B, APO 96384

Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVHG-
C (DST), APO 96375

TO: Commander-in-Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-
DT, APO 96558

SECTION I. OPERATIONS: SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

The 19th Engineer Battalion, organized under TOE-36G consists of Head-
quarters Company and (4) line companies. From 1 August to 15 September,
Company B, 864th Engineer Battalion (Construction) was attached.
One dump truck platoon from the 585th Dump Truck Company was
attached until 6 October 1970. The 171st Well Drilling Detachment was
placed OPCON to the 19th Engineer Battalion on 10 August 1970 and
remains in operational control as of 31 October 1970. The 610th Construc-
tion Support Company was attached throughout the quarter.

During this reporting period, the primary mission of the Battalion
was the upgrading of QL-21 from Ninh Hoa to Ban Me Thuot. Additional
projects included project "1000" and MACV Team 25 in Ban Me Thuot, Gia
Nghia Airstrip, and MCA Warehouse in Cam Ranh Bay.

Changes in the command and staff of the 19th Engineer Battalion
during the reporting period were:

1 Aug 70 -- CPT Gregory C. Peck -- Reassigned to CONUS

7 Aug 70 -- 1LT Kenneth R. Brown -- Reassigned to Company B, 864th Engr Bn

FOR STUT
704104

EGGA-OP

~~315 November~~ ^{OCTOBER} 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned for the 19th Engineer
Battalion (Combat) (Army) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

- 8 Aug 70 -- 1LT Floyd J. Ermis -- Assigned as Commo Officer
- 9 Aug 70 -- 1LT Clarence E. Jentes -- Assigned as Adjutant
CWO 2 Leonard E. Tipton -- Assigned as Personnel Officer
CPT John C. Jones -- Reassigned to MICV
- 12 Aug 70 -- CPT Ronald H. Bynum -- Assigned as Chaplain
1LT Jesus L. Arriago -- Gained with duties unassigned
- 14 Aug 70 -- 1LT Allen F. Knecht -- Assigned as Assist S-3
- 15 Aug 70 -- 1LT Jesus L. Arriago -- Reassigned from HHC to company B as
Platoon Leader
- 19 Aug 70 -- 1LT Maruss Poppe -- Assigned as HHC, XO and assist S-4
1LT Paul W. Brown -- Assigned to Company C as Platoon Leader
- 20 Aug 70 -- CPT William R. Washburn -- Former company D Commanding Officer
reassigned to CONUS
- 21 Aug 70 -- 1LT John B. Gay -- Reassigned to CONUS
1LT James R. Pickens -- Former Company C Platoon Leader
assigned as D company Commanding Officer
- 31 Aug 70 -- 1LT Michael M Maes -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 3 Sep 70 -- 1LT Richard W. Johnson -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 4 Sep 70 -- 1LT Edward S. Kouzchnik -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 5 Sep 70 -- 1LT Richard A. Weid -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 8 Sep 70 -- 1LT John W Scarborough -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 10 Sep 70 -- 1LT John H Price -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 14 Sep 70 -- 1LT David L Rohli -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 16 Sep 70 -- 1LT Cecil W. Swanson -- Gained with duties unassigned
- 17 Sep 70 -- 1LT Phillip J. Caruso -- Reassigned to CONUS
- 18 Sep 70 -- 1LT Maruss Poppe -- Former HHC, XO and assist S-4, assigned
duties as S-4 expeditor
- 21 Sep 70 -- 1LT Michael A. Barra Jr -- Assigned from HHC to Company A as
Platoon Leader
- 24 Sep 70 -- 1LT Cecil W. Swanson -- Reassigned from HHC to HQ, 937th
Engr Gp

EGG-40F

OCTOBER
31~~5~~ November 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned for the 19th Engineer
Battalion (Combat) (Army) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

- 1 Oct 70 - CPT William L. Tolbert - Assigned from IFFV to Company B as
Commanding Officer
- 4 Oct 70 - CPT John A. Ray - Former B Company Commander assigned as
assistant S-3
CPT Gary P. Straub - Former assistant S-3 assigned as S-2
- 5 Oct 70 - 2LT Richard Michelson - Assigned to B Company as Platoon
Leader
- 6 Oct 70 - 1LT David N. Speizel - Assigned to D Company as XO
2LT Harry G. Prince - Assigned to D Company as Platoon Leader
- 9 Oct 70 - 1LT Richard Lovejoy - Reassigned to CONUS
2LT Earl L. Smith - Assigned to B Company as Platoon Leader
- 10 Oct 70 - CPT James A. Jarvis - Assigned as D Company Commander
- 13 Oct 70 - 1LT Monte D. Riggs - Assigned as assistant S-3
1LT Charles Honey - Assigned to 610th construction support
company as Platoon Leader
- 14 Oct 70 - 1LT Robert F. Ingram - Reassigned to CONUS
- 20 Oct 70 - 1LT Ervin Allen Jr - Reassigned to CONUS
1LT Frank S. Yazwinski - Former A Company Platoon Leader
assigned as A Company Commander
CPT Alan D. Dresson - Former A Company Commander assigned as
610th Company Commander
1LT Allen F. Knecht - Former assistant S-3 assigned as S-4
expeditor
1LT James R. Pickens - Former D Company Commander assigned as
Platoon Leader
1LT Marusz Poppe - Former S-4 expeditor assigned as S-4
- 23 Oct 70 - MAJ David C. Ford - Assigned as Bn XO
MAJ Lawrence D. Doff - Former Bn XO assigned as special
assistant to the Battalion Commander
- 24 Oct 70 - CPT Terry A. Taylor - Reassigned to CONUS

At the end of the reporting period, total assigned strength was 823 of
891 authorized (assigned and attached units). During the period 116
personnel were assigned to the Battalion and 162 departed. There were
18 reenlistments during this quarter.

Other pertinent personnel action included the presentation of 1 Bronze
Star and 36 ARCOM's, 15 field grade article 15's and 4 court martials
were disposed of during the period.

EGCA-SP

OCTOBER
31-5 November 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned for the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Army) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

Enemy activity against the 19th Engineer Battalion in its area of operations continued to be light during this period. The Battalion experienced harassing sniper fire on five occasions, one mortar attack, and two hit and run ambushes. Although few enemy attacks were more effective than previous attacks in other quarters this year. In both ambushes, one on 2 Sep and one on 20 Sep 70, B-40 rockets inflicted both casualties and materiel damage. All five sniping incidents were ineffective and caused no casualties or damage. The one mortar attack took place on 28 August and consisted of a single 60 MM mortar round fired at Camp Swampy. There were negative casualties or damage.

During the past three months the major health problems have been injuries resulting from accidents. These accidents have occurred from improper use of weapons as well as vehicles and machinery.

There were eleven confirmed cases of malaria during the past three months. All but one of these were from B Company and 610th Construction Support Company at Khanh Duong.

There were fifteen psychiatric cases. Only one of these had a diagnosis of psychosis. All others were individuals requesting assistance under the Drug Amnesty Program.

The venereal disease rate has been decreasing since the Battalion moved from Nha Trang.

During the reporting period the Battalion Communications Center worked with 937th Engineer Group and the companies to establish better communications throughout the Battalion area. Good communications were maintained with both 937th Engineer Group and companies thru FM radio and teletype, landline communications were very difficult. This was true especially true with Phu Tai and Cam Ranh Bay.

Logistical support was critical because of widespread Battalion activities. Coordination on reports and vital messages was hampered by communication delays and distance of outlying job sites. Until 20 Oct 70 the S-4 was operating from Nha Trang with a small component at Camp Swampy. The poor communications necessitated the consolidation of the S-4 at Camp Swampy. The S-4 expeditor is still located at Cam Ranh Bay. The consolidation of the S-4 at Camp Swampy provided better communications between the Battalion and the S-4 but has somewhat hampered communication between the S-4 and its logistic support facilities.

During the early part of the quarter, the Battalion Chaplain covered all units of the 19th plus attached units. This became increasingly difficult with the Battalion stretched along QL-21 from Nha Trang to Ban Me Thuot. Coverage was provided for Headquarters Company and Delta Company in Nha Trang, B Company and 610th Construction Support Company at Khanh Duong, C Company and B/864th at Camp Swampy, and elements of B Company at Ban Me Thuot.

EGCI-OP-

~~31~~ ^{OCTOBER} 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned for the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Army) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

Upon centralization of the Battalion at Camp Swampy, the Chaplains base of operation was moved there. Difficulties with transportation, literature, and attendance have been recognized and solved. Morale has been a constant factor with so many men being relocated so frequently. The Chaplain continued to be a constant source of encouragement and inspiration, as well as an important agent in solving unusual problems for the men of the Battalion.

Quality Control Section established laboratories and tested construction materials used in the construction of QL-21. The Battalion had 2 Fort Belvoir trained soils analysts and 2 Long Binh trained soils analysts. During the initial stages of this period, the section operated at the Khanh Duong Industrial Site. Because the greatest Battalion work effort was located at the opposite end of the AO, another lab was established at Camp Swampy. With the two lab setups, asphalt tests were conducted at Khanh Duong and all soils, concrete, and design asphalt work was done at Camp Swampy.

Due to an established program left by the 864th and QL-21 entering the final stages of construction, no major changes were made in the asphalt mix or the material used for base course. The only area constructed from the base up by this unit was a 7.04 km section where black base of 4 inch compacted thickness was substituted for 6 inch base course.

During the period 1 August 1970 to 31 October 1970, Headquarters Company participated in support missions and line company operation of QL-21. Headquarters Company provided dozer, grader and front loader support. Headquarters Company's secondary mission was to move the company and Battalion Headquarters from Nha Trang to Camp Swampy.

Headquarters Company's equipment platoon supported the extension of Camp Swampy and assisted in the installation of towers, lights, and tactical wire.

A Company concentrated on restoration of QL-21, the extension of Camp Swampy, construction of a MIG LOC warehouse in Cam Ranh Bay, and technical assistance on a TOC at Vinh Xuong. The restoration of QL-21 involved the use of organic vehicles for hauling asphalt and shoulder transition work near Ban Me Thuet. A great deal of effort was expended on the expansion of Camp Swampy after A Company moved from Nha Trang on 15 September.

The manpower of B Company was spread over a wide range of projects. TOC restoration consumed the majority of man and equipment hours. The first platoon of B Company devoted its effort to Project "1000". This project included the construction of twenty (20) 20' x 48' pre-engineered metal building marketed under the brand name of "Pascoe". The scope of work for this reporting period follows:

6 pads were formed, 8 pads had forms removed, 7½ pads were poured, 12 Pascoe buildings were erected, 7 buildings had interior partitions erected.

1930A-CP

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned for the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Army) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

OCTOBER
31 1970

For this reporting period the amount of material used was:

Sand	30cy	2x4	260 BF
Gravel	60cy	1x6	45 BF
Cement	150 Bags	1/2" Plywood	50 Sheets
#4 Rabar	6400 LF	3/4" Plywood	100 Sheets
#6 Rabar	1300 LF	Nails	70 lbs
		Building kits	12 kits

The total project man hours for this reporting period was 16,043.
The total project equipment hours for this reporting period was 2,753.

From 18 Aug 70 to 28 Oct 70, the second platoon of B Company devoted its effort to restoration and turn-over of QL-21. The scope of this project included major and minor repair from Ninh Hoa to Bridge 7. The amount of materials used were: Asphalt 480 tons, MG-70 5,892 gals.

The third platoon of B Company is a dump truck platoon. Bolstered by the addition of thirteen (13) 12 ton MGA dump trucks, Company B became the major hauling power for base course and asphalt on QL-21. Organic haul has expanded 21,356 man hours and 11,228 equipment hours.

Company C was involved in many significant operations. The first platoon began clearing earth with anticipation of finding rock at Chu Bao on 23 August 1970. After that they moved to Chu Plom on 11 September 1970 with the same mission. Both hills produced little useable rock.

The second platoon began work on NCO Jean 25 Administration Building on 25 August 1970, poured 4 20' by 96' pads, and constructed a building. The third platoon throughout the reporting period has continued work on its section of QL-21.

During the quarter, D Company completed its move from New Camp Bu Prang, where it had spent the previous six (6) months, to Nha Trang and later moved on to Camp Swampy.

While in Nha Trang the unit was tasked with many small projects expanding its area of operation incrementally, from Cam Ranh Bay to Ninh Hoa, to Camp Swampy and on to Gia Nghia. This area shrank somewhat, once the unit moved to Camp Swampy.

On 1 August 1970, a convoy was organized at Camp Swampy, Battalion Headquarters and traveled to Bu Prang to complete the company's unit move. The first requirement was to move personnel and equipment to Gia Nghia to begin work on an airfield project. It then returned to Bu Prang to pick up equipment and the remainder of the personnel and return to Nha Trang, arriving 4 August 1970. This convoy was not capable of hauling all the company's equipment, so two (2) D/L 5 ton dums, a D/L 3/4 ton, a D/L backhoe, three (3) rollers, and a 990 gen had to be left behind. As of the end of this period, this equipment had not been retrieved because of the enemy situation in the area and the lack of available security.

The scope of the Gia Nghia airfield project was to upgrade and repair it in order to return it to the Air Force standards for a C-123 strip. To accomplish this it was scarified, filled, graded, and three coats of penepribe were applied. The project was not complete until 21 October 1970 because the work had to be performed during the monsoon season.

Between 1 August 1970 and 8 August 1970, a platoon was sent to Cam Ranh Bay to construct partitions and shelves in a newly constructed MCA LOC building.

On 1 August 1970, another platoon was assigned the task of constructing a 15' x 40' living/fighting bunker for the Cam Loc District MGV team. Existing building had to be demolished, roofing lag, and floor poured and the structure erected. Sandbags were filled and placed around the walls and 2 feet of sand was placed on the roof. The project was completed on 7 September 1970.

The platoon returning from the MCA LOC building construction was used for the construction of a double 20 inch culvert across QL-1 between Nha Trang and Cam Ranh Bay. A by-pass was first constructed while the culverts were being assembled. The road was cut and the culvert placed and backfilled. The headwalls were formed but were never used before the company moved to Camp Swampy.

A technical assistance team was requested to assist the 9th ROKA Division Engineers with construction of two 10,500 gallon storage tanks and towers, and a truck fill stand. An NCO, E-5, plus eight (8) men were sent on 27 Aug 70. The ROKA Engineers were to provide an equal number of troops, and a crane, but three (3) troops were the most that ever reported. By 1 Nov 70, when the project was terminated, one tank and tower, plus another tower, were completed. The second tank and the truck fill stand remain to be constructed.

Another project was the construction of Fire Base Windy. The mission was to build a hasty fire base for A Battery, 2/17th Artillery, who were supporting an ARVN Special Forces combat assault located approximately 20 miles west of Nha Trang. One E-6 and 17 men, plus two airmobile dozers were airlifted into the LZ on 4 Sep 70. During the next three (3) days, they cleared the base, leveled 4 gun pads, constructed 4 personnel and ammo bunkers and a TOC, and laid part of the perimeter wire.

On 1 Sep 70, D Company sent an advance party to Camp Swampy, consisting of a Lieutenant and 20 men. Their primary responsibility was to learn to operate the MCA LOC equipment which the company would be using to support the hatta lion road construction mission. They were also to make the area ready to receive the rest of the company. The remainder of the company moved to Camp Swampy in two (2) movements on the 13th and 14th, Sep 70, following the exit of Company B/86th Engineer Battalion. The first order of business was to reorganize the company in order to incorporate the MCA LOC 12-ton dump truck drivers. These people formed one platoon with the rest of the personnel being split into the other two platoons.

~~5 November 1970~~
31 OCTOBER

SUBJECT: Operational Report: Lessons Learned for the 19th Engineer Battalion (Abt) (Army) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

In addition to D Company moving into Camp Swampy, Headquarters Company and A company were to follow immediately. Since the compound was only designed to house 2 companies, an expansion was planned and the project directive went to D Company. A berm was pushed up around the 7 1/2 acre area and the area was shaped and graded; road and drainage structures were built. In addition, tent floors and walls were built for 36 GP medium tents. This project began 16 Sep 70.

On 26 Sep 70, the unit was levied for two Sergeants E-5 to provide technical assistance to the installation commander of Camp Coyvill in Ban Me Thuot for the purpose of repairing the perimeter defense. Very little work was accomplished because of the lack of personnel and materials. The project was terminated on 1 Nov 70.

While the major effort was on the upgrade and repair of a section of QL-21 from Camp Swampy East to Bridge 30. Within this section the treadway on the bridges was replaced, headwalls were built for one culvert, pot-holing was performed, a bridge approach prepared, and shoulders graded.

The 610th Construction Support Company was attached to the 19th Engineer Battalion for the quarter. It was responsible for quarry operations, rock crusher operations, and asphalt plant operations. The 610th produced 34,111 cy of rock and 31,885 cy asphalt for use on QL-21.

SECTION II. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations

A. PERSONNEL:

1. Troop Morale.

(a) OBSERVATION: The 19th Engineer Battalion had a delay in mail service between members of this unit and their families when the unit changed areas of operations. Several men in the unit became extremely concerned about the welfare of their families. The MARS station could complete only a limited number of calls.

(b) EVALUATION: Another communications link had to be utilized in order to lessen anxiety in urgent cases and to improve mail delivery from Nha Trang to Camp Swampy.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: This unit used the Red Cross system of health and welfare messages by reversing the process. Personnel at this location who had become worried about conditions at home were able to gain information which greatly alleviated their anxiety. The unit Chaplain aided the individuals in contacting the Red Cross, which was able to provide relatively quick service. This seemed to raise morale and increase effectiveness.

Subject: Operational Report Lessons Learned For the 1st Signal Battalion (Combat) (1st Sig Bn) for the period ending 31 Oct 70

An extensive investigation into the mail service was significantly alleviated the problem. The MARS station was contacted as to the best time for placing calls and personnel were advised of the schedule. The service has shown remarkable improvement.

2. Non Commissioned Officers;

(a) OBSERVATIONS: This Battalion's efficiency has been reduced because of the shortage of senior NCO's and experienced junior NCO's.

(b) EVALUATION: Because of the shortage, E-7 Platoon SGTs became 1st SGTs, and acting SGTs became supply, maintenance, comms, and mess SGT's. This inexperience in company administration placed a greater burden on the company. In addition, placement of the few experienced NCO's in 1st SGT and Battalion staff NCO slots prevented the junior and inexperienced NCO's in the platoons having frequent and effective guidance which would increase the efficiency and quality of work.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: To bridge the experience gap, companies and Battalions must institute a program of classes on leadership and job planning and organization for the junior NCO's. Frequent staff visits should be made by Battalion staff sections to respective areas in each company to assist rather than to criticize the company.

B. INTELLIGENCE: None

C. OPERATIONS:


1. Constructing Vietnamese Buildings

(a) OBSERVATIONS: During the layout of four (4) buildings for MACV Team 25 it was discovered that Vietnamese personnel construct their buildings parallel.

(b) EVALUATION: It was discovered that all buildings used for Vietnamese personnel should be constructed in parallel. This derives from a Vietnamese belief that construction perpendicular indicates that command and staff are opposed to one another.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Construct all buildings to be used by Vietnamese parallel to one another.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


CLARENCE E. JENTES
1LT, CE
Adjutant