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HEADQUARTERS
3D SQUADRON 5TH CAVALRY
9TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 96370

A

AVDE-CT

5 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDF2AA) (U)

TO: Commanding General
9th Infantry Division
ATTN: AVDE-MH
APO San Francisco 96370

Section 1 Significant Organizational/Unit Activities

1. (C) Introduction:

a. The mission of the 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry during the reporting period was to conduct counter insurgency operations through route security, convoy escort, and search and destroy operations; and to enhance the flexibility of the 9th Division through the provision of highly mobile, armored units as rapid reaction forces. The first sixteen days of the reporting period were spent at Blackhorse, with approximately 60% of the squadron effort spent on route security and 40% on security of US and ARVN installations and search and destroy operations. After the move to I Corps Tactical Zone, which commenced 17 Feb 68, the squadron effort was divided equally between static defense and search and destroy while under OPCON of 1st Marine Division at Da Nang. After being further assigned to OPCON of the 3d Marine Division at Dong Ha effective 27 Mar 68, the squadron spent 80% of it's effort on route security and search and destroy operations, and the remainder was spent at Dong Ha as division reserve.

During the report period the 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry was engaged in four major operations. These operations, with inclusive dates were:

- Kittyhawk (1-16 February 68)
- Worth (13-21 March 68)
- Kilo (29 March-7 April 68)
- Charlton (9-15 April 68)

c. On 19 Feb 68, Co C, 2d Bn, 34th Armor, 25th Inf Div was attached to the 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry through the duration of the reporting period. At the same time Trp D, 3d Sqn, 5th Cav became OPCON to the 9th Div for the duration of the reporting period. Squadron Headquarters retained four (4) OH-23 ships from Trp D's Aero Scout Platoon to be used for command and control. On 22 Feb 68, one platoon of Trp A was placed under OPCON of the 1st ACD, and it remained there until 21 Mar 68. On 18 Mar 68, Trp A was detached from the squadron and placed OPCON to the 101st Abn Div, where it remained through the end of the reporting period.

d. The 3/5 Cav spent the 90 days of the reporting period in the following manner:

- (1) Troop movements: 15 days
- (2) Combat and other operations: 75 days

2. (C) Organization: The organization of the squadron has varied greatly from normal during the reporting period. Upon departure from III CTZ, Trp D was detached and placed OPCON to 9th Division, leaving a OH-23's in the squadron for command and control. To compensate, Co C, 2d Bn, 34th Armor from the 25th Division was attached and remained so until the end of the reporting period. On 18 Mar 68, Trp A was detached and placed OPCON to the 101st Abn Div, where it remained until the end of the reporting period.

Organizational Structure and roster of key personnel are attached as inclosures.

- (1) Inclosure 1: Organizational Structure
- (2) Inclosure 2: Roster of Key Personnel

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3. (U) Personnel and Administration: a. As reflected on the last Force Status Report, this unit currently carries C-1 rating for personnel. This report also reflects that more than 90% of our TOE personnel slots are filled by qualified personnel.

b. The high state of morale in the squadron is evidenced by its consistently superior performance in combat missions and administrative tasks. No personnel have been lost to disciplinary actions; only five members of the command have been tried by court-martial.

The squadron has undertaken an aggressive program with Division Finance to improve the maintenance of individual finance records which is yielding much more rapid resolution of pay complaints and a sizeable increase in the number of allotments requested by members of the command.

4. (C) Intelligence: a. Enemy continues to conduct small scale actions, harassment with mines, sniper fire and ambushes. The enemy initiated several large scale attacks. Bien Hoa and Xuan Loc were the centers of concentrated VC activity during the TET offensive. Trp A and Trp C were engaged in heavy contacts during the TET offensive. Trp B had contact three consecutive nights on route security operations on Route 2 between Blackhorse and Xuan Loc. Upon the move to I Corps the enemy continued harassment with mines and sniper fire. There was one major engagement in which Trp C, temporarily OPCON to 2d ARVN Regt, encountered a well dug in NVA battalion.

b. Enemy Losses:

(1) Personnel:

(a) KHA: 269

(b) WHA: Unknown

(c) Detainees: 48 (38 were determined innocent, 8 civil offenders, and 2 POW's).

(2) Materials, equipment and facilities captured:

(a) Medicine: Approx 3 lbs (assorted).

(b) Weapons: 49 small arms, 13 crew served, 2 RPG-2 launchers, 2 RPG-7 launchers, 1 AK47, 7 Chicom grenades.

(c) Ammunition: 1 box of AK47 loose ammunition, 1 box of .50 cal, 2 RPG-2 rounds, 2 RPG-7 rounds, and 5 AT mines.

(d) Misc: Assorted documents, web gear, 150-100 lb bags of fertilizer, and 1 VC flag.

(3) Materials, equipment and facilities destroyed:

(a) 4 assorted mines.

(b) 25 bunkers, 6 tunnels, and 46 spider holes.

c. Weather and Terrain: Weather has not played a significant role in either helping or hindering operations. Terrain in the operational area of Kittyhawk varied from rubber plantation to dense jungle. It did not seriously hamper movement. I Corps terrain varied from rice paddies to rolling and steep hills. The rice paddies and adjacent streams compartmentalized vehicular movement. The roads allowed for excellent movement after sweeping for mines, but many bridges in the area are restrictive to rapid armored movement.

d. Capabilities and Vulnerabilities of the enemy:

(1) Capabilities: The enemy was capable of conducting ambushes on Hwy 1 and 2 at will around Blackhorse. Numerous blockades were placed on these routes to slow and hamper vehicular movement. Hwy 1 and other routes around Da Nang were frequently mined. Route 1 and 9 have also been mined by enemy forces at will. For large scale attacks the enemy can be augmented by a regiment within hours in Northern I Corps. Mortar and rocket attacks are frequent in I Corps.

(2) Vulnerabilities: The enemy is vulnerable to ambushes, air-strikes, aggressive ground operations, and visual observation.

e. Recommendations: To facilitate joint inter-service operations, an intelligence radio net would up date OB information quickly and separate the routine operational information from intelligence thereby freeing the operational net during periods of stress.

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1. Order of Battle Summary:

- (1) Elackhorse AO:
 - (a) The 274th VC Regiment, subordinate to the 5th VC Division, remained split with two battalions dispersed in Hat Dich and another battalion located north of the Hat Dich south of Hwy 1.
 - (b) The 275th VC Regiment, subordinate to the 5th VC division was located at Phuoc Long.
 - (c) The D445 LF Battalion was dispersed throughout Phuoc Tuy Province into company and platoon size units.
 - (d) The 84th Rear Service Group continued to be located in the Slope 30 area, providing logistical support to Viet Cong units.
- (2) 1st Marine Division AO:
 - (a) 31st NVA Inf Regt
 - (b) 368th Artillery Regt
 - (c) 406 Sapper Bn
- (3) 3d Marine Division AO:
 - (a) 3d Bn, 27th NVA Inf Regt
 - (b) 4th Bn, 27th NVA Inf Regt
 - (c) Elements of 4th NVA Inf Regt
 - (e) K-400 LF Inf Co
 - (f) 5th Bn, 52d NVA Regt was contacted on 30 Mar 68 by C Trp and 2d ARVN Regt. There were 182 NVA KIA, 49 small arms and 13 crew served weapons captured.
 - (g) 27th Independent NVA Bn
 - (h) 812 NVA Regt
 - (i) 10th Sapper Bn

5. (C) Operations: During the reporting period, the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav was involved in four major operations and many minor operations while operating in the III Corps Tactical Zone and the 1st Corps Tactical Zone. The 2d Sqn, 5th Cav was invaluable to the successful defense of the city of Xuan Loc and the defense of Bien Hoa Air Base during the TET offensive of late January and early February. The 3d Sqn, 5th Cav was also called to move to the I Corps Tactical Zone to assist in the recapture of the city of Hue and the defense of the city of Da Nang. The Squadron moved to the Dong Ha area and participated in operations to the north and west of the city in coordination with the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Inf Div (ARVN) units. The Squadron also operated south of the city of Quang Tri in the last part of the reporting period.

On 1 Feb 68, the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav continued Operation Kittyhawk which had been assumed on 28 Dec 67. The missions of Operation Kittyhawk included:

- a. Escort of logistical convoys between Long Binh (YT0711) and Elackhorse (YS4498).
- b. Provide RRF in support of logistical convoys.
- c. Assume perimeter security of Blackhorse Base Camp.
- d. Provide one Armored Cavalry Platoon as security for engineer effort at Gia Ray rock quarry (YT6211).
- e. Conduct operations in the Elackhorse TAOR to include ambush patrols, combat outposts, route security, and reconnaissance in force missions in close coordination with the 18th Inf Div (ARVN) and Lang Khanh Sector forces.

f. To provide fire support for allied operations. Fire support for Operation Kittyhawk was provided by B/2-35 Arty, A/1-34 Arty, and A/1-11 Arty successively.

On 31 Jan 68, as a result of the TET offensive, Trp A was called upon to assist in the defense of the Bien Hoa Air Force Base and III Corps Headquarters. As a result of this action, Trp A was credited with 40 VC KIA (body count) while suffering 6 US KHA, 24 US WHA, and five armored cavalry assault vehicles (ACAV's) destroyed.

On 2 Feb 68, Trp C reacted to an enemy attack on the city of Xuan Loc which lasted until 4 Feb 68. Trp C was instrumental in the successful defense of the city and Long Khanh Province Hq. Results of the two day defense included 51 VC KIA (body count), US losses included 3 KIA, 30 WHA, one tank destroyed, and 4

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On 16 Feb 68, the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav concluded Operation Kittyhawk as the 1st Sqn, 11th Cav assumed its missions. Results of Operation Kittyhawk from 1-16 Feb 68 included the following:

- a. Enemy: VC KHA - 94
- POW - 1
- US KHA - 11
- WIA - 61
- Tanks destroyed - 5
- ACAV's destroyed - 8

Cumulative results of Operation Kittyhawk from 28 Dec 67 to 16 Feb 68 include the following:

- a. Enemy: VC KHA - 135
- POW - 4
- US KHA - 23
- WIA - 98
- Tanks destroyed - 7
- ACAV's destroyed - 14

On 16 Feb 68, the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav began preparation to move by IST to the I Corps Tactical Zone. The first elements departed Newport IST Ramp on 17 Feb 68 and the last elements arrived Da Nang IST Ramp on 25 Feb 68. The Squadron was placed OPCON to the 1st Marine Division on 23 Feb 68 and were involved in minor security missions while organizing and preparing for future operations.

b. Operation Worth: The 3/5 Cav began Operation Worth on 13 Mar 68 in Quang Nam Province, Hieu Duc Sector, RVN. With two troops of armored cavalry the mission was to conduct operations at the entrance to Mortar Valley (see After Action Report Annex B) to deny escape routes to the enemy, and to find, fix, and destroy enemy forces encountered during reconnaissance. Initially A and C Trps occupied blocking positions as shown on Annex B, but subsequent concept led to reconnaissance in force operations by individual trps in AO Spur and Saddle (see Annex C).

During the operation no contact was made. However, 3d Plt, Trp C had a mine incident which caused moderate damage to the vehicle. The incident caused no casualties. Results of the operation included the following:

- (1) Friendly Losses: One tank damaged.
- (2) Enemy Losses:
 - (a) KHA and WHA - None
 - (b) Bunkers - 25 destroyed
 - (c) Tunnels - 6 destroyed
 - (d) Spider Holes - 35 destroyed
 - (e) Equipment:
 - (1) 1 Knapsack
 - (2) 2 canteens
 - (3) 1 pair trousers
 - (4) 1 billfold
 - (5) \$30 in piasters
 - (6) 1/2 lb documents
 - (7) 1 map

Commander's Analysis and Recommendations: See paragraphs 15 and 16, Operation Worth Combat Operation After Action Report.

The operation was concluded on 21 Mar 68 and the Squadron returned to the 1st Marine Division Control for training, maintenance, and preparation for movement to Dong Ha.

On 18 Mar 68, Trp A(-) departed Da Nang IST ramp enroute to Hue, where it became OPCON to the 101st Abn Div. It was subsequently reunited with its 3d Plt, and it remained OPCON to 101st Abn Div through the end of the reporting period.

The first elements of the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav departed Da Nang IST ramp on 23 Mar 68 and the last elements arrived Dong Ha Combat Base on 27 Mar 68. At this time the Sqn(-) became OPCON to the 3d Marine Division.

c. Operation Kilo: On 29 Mar 68, the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav(-) began Operation Kilo in Gio Linh Sector of Quang Tri Province. Participating units included the 3d Sqn, 5th Cav(-), Co A, 1st Bn 502d Inf, 101st Abn Div, and the 2d Regt (ARVN).

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The mission of Operation Kilo was to attack in zone to sieze Obj Alpha (see Annex A, After Action Report), secure Rte #1 and continue attack to north on order.

On 30 Mar 68, Trp C and 2d Regt (ARVN) attacked Obj Birch (see Annex A) and at noon came under heavy attack from an entrenched enemy due to inadequate infantry support needed to drive the enemy from their bunkers. Contact continued until approximately 1945H when Trp C broke contact and withdrew to its night position.

Results of this contact include 182 NVA killed (body count), 4 NVA POW, 10 US KHA, 39 US WHA, and 3 APC's destroyed. Four tanks, 3 APC's, and 1 VTR were damaged by mines.

On 31 Mar 68, the attack continued, siezing Obj Maple, Oak, Elm, and Fir (see Annex A) until the final obj was taken. Results of the overall operation included:

(1) Enemy: 182 KHA, 4 POW, 49 small arms, 13 crew served weapons, and two radios captured.

(2) Friendly: 10 KHA, 2 MHA, 20 WHA (EVAC), 30 WHA (slight), and 3 APC's destroyed. Four tanks, 3 APC's, and 1 VTR were also damaged by mines.

c. Operation Charlton: On 9 Apr 68, the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav(-) (reinf) became OPCON to the 4th Marine Regiment to participate in Operation Charlton.

The mission of Operation Charlton was to attack south from Hwy #9, search and destroy in zone (see Annex A, Operation Charlton Combat After Action Report), continuing operations to the south and west on order.

On 12 Apr 68, the Task Force (see After Action Report) attacked on line to the south and on subsequent days reached their southernmost boundary without incident. As a supplement to the operation, the Task Force established blocking positions and were given an additional AO (see Annex B) to screen a suspected enemy force.

On 16 Apr 68, the operation was terminated, results being negative enemy losses and negative friendly losses.

d. On 17 Apr 68, the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav(-) (reinf) became OPCON to the Quang Tri Base Defense Command and assumed road security missions of Hwy #1 from Quang Tri City to a point south of Hai Lang. Further assignment under OPCON of the 26th Marine Regiment occurred on 23 Apr 68 with no changes in mission. In the early morning hours of 30 Apr 68, the squadron command post sustained an extremely heavy mortar attack and a battalion sized ground attack. Results of the contact were 11 KHA, 25 WHA (MEDEVACED), 2 tanks and 5 ACAV's destroyed. After daylight, 11 NVA bodies and numerous blood trails were found around the perimeter and agents reported an additional NVA loss of 36KIA and 47WIA.

6. (C) Training:

a. Notable in the training area was the requirement to train the replacements assigned to 3/5 Cav upon its transfer to ICTZ. The requirement was unusual only in the large number of replacements, and shipboard classes in fire adjustment, map reading, weapons and gunnery, sanitation, CER, and maintenance were necessary to bring the unit to combat readiness. These classes were reinforced by operations in the Da Nang area.

b. The administrative move by LST from Saigon to Da Nang was accomplished with little difficulty in spite of lack of training in amphibious loading and other such naval subjects.

7. (C) Logistics Operations: a. From 1 Feb 68 to 17 Feb 68, the 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav Regt secured the Blackhorse Base Camp and conducted extensive operations in the 11th AGR TOAR. Resupply was routine with class I, III, and V being drawn from Blackhorse while classes II and IV were drawn from the squadron base camp at Camp Martin Cox (Bearcat).

b. On 17 Feb 68, the squadron moved from Blackhorse to the vicinity of Da Nang by LST. Resupply of classes I, III, and V were coordinated by the Da Nang Area Command of 1st Log Command. Most class II and IV supplies as well as repair parts were shipped from Bearcat to Da Nang by air.

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c. On 22 Mar 68 the squadron(-) moved from Da Nang by LST and ICU. Resupply of class I, III, V were coordinated through the 26th Group 1st Log Command. Most repair parts and class II and IV supplies still must be shipped from Bearcat. This has been hampered by problems in obtaining aircraft for moving supplies. Maintaining security of cargo once it has been shipped is also a problem.

d. Supporting an armored cavalry squadron of this size with supply lines over 400 miles long has at times been extremely difficult. However, with the proper coordination, good communications, and a good deal of ingenuity it was possible to operate in such an environment.

8. (C) Civil Affairs:

a. Due to operational requirements and the squadron's move to I Corps, our S-5 activities were limited to only the first two weeks of February. A total of only two additional S-5 activities were conducted in the form of medcap while in I Corps.

b. Medical Civic Action Programs for the reporting period:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>PATIENTS TREATED</u>
(1) 7 Feb 68	Scu Soc	89
(2) 7 Feb 68	Tang Lon	101
(3) 13 Feb 68	Ap Cho	50
(4) 13 Feb 68	Mieu Pa	48
(5) 11 Apr 68	Thon Khanh Son (Da Nang)	111
(6) 24 Apr 68	Thon Mai Dong (Quang Tri)	126

c. Civil Affairs Support:

- (1) 6 Feb 68: 1,650 gal diesel fuel to Xuan Loc for emergency power.
- (2) 8 Feb 68: 19,200 lb of ammonia sulfate (fertilizer) to USAIU Xuan Loc.
- (3) 8 Feb 68: 110 rolls of barbed wire to Xuan Loc sub sector, PF/RF out post and to Chieu Hoi center.
- (4) 9 Feb 68: 400 lb of captured rice and 750 lb of assorted food stuffs to Corda Long Khanh.
- (5) 11 Feb 68: 850 lb of food stuffs to Hung Nghia (YT301095).

9. (U) Regional Force/Popular Force upgrading and ARVN training: Omitted.

10. (U) Engineer Support: Omitted.

11. (U) Signal Support: Omitted.

12. (U) Army Aviation: Omitted.

13. (U) Chemical Operations: Omitted.

14. (U) Base Development: Omitted.

Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations.

a. (U) Personnel: NONE

b. (U) Operations: NONE

c. (U) Training: NONE

d. (U) Intelligence: NONE

e. (U) Logistics:

Logistic Support for Armored Units

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OBSERVATION: The logistical requirements of an armored cavalry squadron are unique in an infantry division, and the type of infantry division found in Viet Nam (e.g. 101st Abn Div, 1st and 3d Mar Divs, 1st ACD) does not have the necessary equipment or demand histories for parts to fully support such an organization.

EVALUATION: Transfer of the 3-5 Cav to ICTZ has resulted in a degradation of the unit's combat capability through a rising deadline rate. Tanks and armored personnel carriers are foreign to the 1st ACD and the 101st Abn Div, and the Marine divisions have no APC's. Therefore the organization of the support elements of these units has not been readily adaptable to higher echelon services on armored cavalry vehicles, and replacement parts were practically non-existent upon the 3-5 Cavalry's arrival in ICTZ. The conclusion is that, while a cavalry squadron possesses great tactical mobility while in the shadow of its rather extensive logistical umbrella, a restriction is placed upon all capabilities of the squadron when it moves too far from its logistical base.

RECOMMENDATION: For such moves in the future, commensurate maintenance support must accompany the unit. This means that an appropriate maintenance element, complete with a reserve of parts on the authorized stockage list, must be placed in direct support of and move with the unit.


f. (C) Organization:

Detachment of Air Cavalry Troop

OBSERVATION: The detachment of the Air Cavalry Troop (Troop D) from this squadron has resulted in a decrease in the ground capabilities of the squadron.

EVALUATION: Due to the fluid and wide ranging nature of cavalry operations, the role of the air cavalry troop in the armored cavalry squadron cannot be satisfactorily fulfilled by miscellaneous helicopters temporarily in support of the squadron. The problems in command and control have been solved by the attachment of 4 OH-23's, but the squadron has experienced difficulty in finding the enemy, fixing him with light, air-mobile forces, and blocking or screening avenues of egress with aerial fires until the combat power of the bulk of the squadron can be brought into play through ground mobility. Conversely, this ground mobility is also vital to the operations of the air troop, particularly the aero-rifle platoon. This element should not be employed outside the capability of forces in the area to react to heavy contact, and the squadron provides more of that capability on an hour-to-hour basis than other type units. The conclusion is that the squadron is the unit most able to utilize the capabilities of the air cavalry troop while at the same time protecting the troop's vulnerabilities.

RECOMMENDATION: That the air cavalry troop of this squadron not be detached in the future.


HUGH J. BARTLEY
LTC Armor
Commanding

Inclosures:
1 - Organizational Structure
2 - Roster of Key Personnel

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SUBJECT: Inclosure 1 (Organizational Structure) to Para 2, Organization to 3-5 Cavalry Operational Report - Lessons Learned.

1 - 17 Feb 68

3-5 Cavalry

Headquarters and Headquarters Troop (HHT)

Troop A

Troop B

Troop C

Troop D (Air Cavalry Troop)

18 Feb - 17 Mar 68

3-5 Cavalry

HHT

Troop A(-)

Troop B

Troop C

Co C, 2d Bn, 34th Armor(-)

Section(-) Light Scout Team (LST), Troop D

18 Mar - 30 Apr 68

3-5 Cavalry

Troop B

Troop C

Co C, 2d Bn, 34th Armor(-)

Section(-), LST, Troop D

HHT

Organizational Structure

Inclosure 1

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SUBJECT: Inclosure 2 (Roster of Key Personnel) to Para 2. Organization to 3-5 Cavalry Operational Report - Lessons Learned.

1 Feb - 6 Apr 68

CO	LTC Hugh J. Bartley
XO	MAJ Michael D. Mahler
*S-1	1LT Richard B.V. Toledo
*S-2	CPT Richard G. Miller
*S-3	MAJ Roger A. Quinn
S-4	CPT Charles Johnson
Maint Off	CPT Ronald J. Grace
Surgeon	CPT Richard L. Mayes
Chaplain	CPT Carl R. Stevens
Signal Off	1LT John Dinapoli Jr.
CO, HHT	CPT John R. Reichley
*CO, Trp A	CPT Ralph B. Garretson Jr.
CO, Trp B	CPT Anthony Holtry
*CO, Trp C	CPT Peter F. Scott
CO, Trp D	MAJ Kenneth G. Nielsen

*These positions were changed as follows:

16 Feb 68:
1LT Richard B.V. Toledo relieved as S-1 due to impending transfer to Transportation Corps.
CPT Ronald G. Thompson assigned as S-1

1 Apr 68:
CPT Peter F. Scott relieved as CO, Trp C due to impending promotion to MAJ.
CPT Richard G. Miller assigned as CO, Trp C.
1LT Thomas J. Player assigned as S-2.

3 Apr 68:
MAJ Roger A. Quinn KHA

6 Apr 68:
CPT Ralph B. Garretson Jr relieved as CO, Trp A for assignment as S-3.
CPT Steward S. McLaughlin assigned as CO, Trp A.

Inclosure 2

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