VOLUME I
BASIC REPORT

25 APRIL 1966

For Specific DA Approval Action, Refer to Transmitting DA Letter, AGAM-P (M) (22 June 66) FOR OT, 26 October 1966, Subject: Approval of Evaluation of U. S. Army Combat Operations in Vietnam (ARCOV) (U)

CLASSIFIED BY CGUSACDC
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652 AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS DECLASSIFIED ON 31 DECEMBER 1972
SUBJECT: Change 1 to Evaluation of US Army Combat Operations in Vietnam (ARCOV)

TO: See Distribution

The inclosed errata sheets should be posted to each volume of the ARCOV Report as appropriate.

FOR THE CHIEF:

[Signature]

Incl
Errata Sheets

DISTRIBUTION:
Same as Basic Letter

Inclosure 5

2. Changes:

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<td>I-7</td>
<td>2b(2)</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>I-11</td>
<td>Fig I-3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1400-1200 should be 1200-2000</td>
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<td>(3)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>MI's should be M1's</td>
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<td>area should read an area</td>
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<td>e(1)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(II FFORCEV,) should be (II FFORCEV)</td>
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<td>b(2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>affect should be effect</td>
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<td>c(1)</td>
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<td>(3)</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>nor should be not</td>
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<td>(5)</td>
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<td>thick should be thick</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>(e)</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>(j)</td>
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<td>(14)</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>(7)(c)</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>...was found, and as it burned...</td>
<td>...was found and destroyed, and as it...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>...closing at 201657.</td>
<td>...closing at 201710.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>17 from bottom</td>
<td>Company B air assaulted at 210800...</td>
<td>Company B air assaulted at 210810...</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>7 from bottom</td>
<td>...side of Ao.</td>
<td>...side of Ao.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>6 from bottom</td>
<td>...was experienced with the terrain since...</td>
<td>...was experienced at the landing zone since...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>1 from bottom</td>
<td>...lifted in because of the absence...</td>
<td>...airlifted in and lowered by winch because...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>...through... ...exist...</td>
<td>...through... ...exit...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
...medical battalion commander...

...battalion commander...

...was made all night.

...was made during the night.

...230742...

...230724...

...northeast and south...

...northeast then south...

...pounds.

...231530...

...231543...

...maintained...

...maintained...

...umbrella...

...small hill masses...

...small hill masses...

...to 200 hundred feet.

...to 200 feet.

...90mm recoilless rifles...

...90mm recoiles rifles...

...engineer demolitions team.

...engineer demolition team.
IS: ...platoon reinforced...

SHOULD BE: ...platoon was reinforced...

IS: ...special demolitions team...

SHOULD BE: ...special demolition team...

IS: ...assigned company areas. Company...

SHOULD BE: ...assigned company areas: Company...

IS: ...a LZ...

SHOULD BE: ...an LZ...

IS: 6 November

SHOULD BE: 7 November

IS: ...demolitions...

SHOULD BE: ...demolition...

IS: Because of the 4.2"

SHOULD BE: Because the 4.2"

IS: The mine was detonated by Company A, blowing down small trees 100 meters away.

SHOULD BE: When detonated by Company A, the mine was large enough to blow down small trees 100 meters away.

IS: ...33 Artillery.

SHOULD BE: ...33d Artillery.

IS: ...one in each direction...

SHOULD BE: ...one in each cardinal direction...

IS: ...the Company C patrol and the reconnaissance patrol returned...

SHOULD BE: ...the Company C and reconnaissance platoon patrols returned...
IS: ... diminished...

SHOULD BE: ... diminished...

Turn upside down (so title is at right)

IS: ... three local force battalions plus local VC guerrilla forces.

SHOULD BE: ... three local or main force battalions as well as VC guerrilla units.

IS: ... strength...

SHOULD BE: ... strength...

IS: ... command of necessary...

SHOULD BE: ... command if necessary...

IS: ... Sketch map).

SHOULD BE: ... sketch map).

IS: ... involved...

SHOULD BE: ... involved...

IS: ... perimeter...

SHOULD BE: ... perimeter...

IS: ... three of four...

SHOULD BE: ... three or four...

IS: ... approached to within...

SHOULD BE: ... approached within...

IS: ... 311825 is...

SHOULD BE: ... 311825, is...

Turn upside down (title should be at right)

IS: ... support platoon of...

SHOULD BE: ... support platoons of...
<table>
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<th>SHOULD BE:</th>
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<td>2 from bottom</td>
<td>...richt...</td>
<td>...rice...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>VALLEY</td>
<td>VALLEY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-37</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>...runs...</td>
<td>...ran...</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-37</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>...has...</td>
<td>...had...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-37</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>...is...</td>
<td>...was...</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>...causes...</td>
<td>...caused...</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-37</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>...are...</td>
<td>...were...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-38</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>...and as a battalion...</td>
<td>...as a battalion...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-38</td>
<td>14 from bottom</td>
<td>...H-13...</td>
<td>...OH-13...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-39</td>
<td>20 from bottom</td>
<td>...airborne...</td>
<td>...serial...</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-40</td>
<td>3 from bottom</td>
<td>...of US troops.</td>
<td>...of US troops, the...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Add Line: "Civilians would hide in their villages or run off to the mountains." above last 2 lines down 1 line each.
<table>
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<tr>
<td>1-42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>...its...</td>
<td>...the...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-42</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>...increases...</td>
<td>...increase...</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-44</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ADD:</strong> &quot;THIS PAGE NOT USED&quot; (in caps)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>...by 1st Cavalry...</td>
<td>...by the 1st Cavalry...</td>
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<td>2-4</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ADD:</strong> &quot;THIS PAGE NOT USED&quot; (in caps)</td>
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<td>3-1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put page numbers on each page of Annex 3 -- 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, etc.</td>
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<td>4-1</td>
<td>14 from bottom</td>
<td>...planning.</td>
<td>...planning. (MACV Dir)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>16 from bottom</td>
<td>...US/FW...</td>
<td>...US/FUMA...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-2</td>
<td>9 from bottom</td>
<td>...giant trees...</td>
<td>...giant trees,...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>...creepers. It is...</td>
<td>...creepers, it is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-3</td>
<td>24 from bottom</td>
<td>...TACTICAL AREAS...</td>
<td>...AREA...</td>
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</table>
4-3  12 from bottom IS: ...required.
       SHOULD BE: ...required. (MACV.Dir)
5-2  6 from bottom IS: ...operations.
       SHOULD BE: ...Operations.
5-2  2 IS: (UNCLASSIFIED-
       SHOULD BE: (UNCLASSIFIED-
       Change next line appropriately
5-4  2 from bottom IS: ...St...
       SHOULD BE: ...St...
       IS: ...Logistics...
       SHOULD BE: ...Logistics...
6-4/5 Chart page should be 6-5
       ADD: "THIS PAGE NOT USED" (in caps)
6-6
v Should be typed "u" not pencilled
viii ADD: "THIS PAGE NOT USED" (in caps)
       viii

INCLOSURES 1-5

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<td>Schroeder Schroeder</td>
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SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

THRU: Commanding General
US Army Combat Developments Command
Fort Belvoir, Virginia 22060

TO: Chief of Staff
United States Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) The completed report of the team which evaluated US Combat Operations in Vietnam (ARCOV) is forwarded herewith.

2. (S) I recommend approval of the principal findings of the team (see Volume 1, sections III, IV; Volume 7, paragraphs 5, 6; and Volume 8, paragraph 4) subject to the following exceptions:

   a. The Battalion Reconnaissance Platoon. Whereas the team recommends elimination of this platoon (when the fourth rifle company is added to the battalion), I feel that the battalion should continue to have a specialized combat intelligence and reconnaissance capability. Under current conditions the reconnaissance platoon can also be used for ranger type patrols and pathfinder functions in air mobile operations. I also foresee growing opportunities for ground, including road, reconnaissance as additional ground forces are deployed in Vietnam. Command emphasis will ensure that the reconnaissance platoon’s capabilities are fully exploited. To emphasize the proper role, I prefer to call it an intelligence and reconnaissance platoon.

   b. Anesthetic and X ray Capabilities in Clearing Companies. Whereas the team concluded that anesthetic and X ray equipment and appropriate personnel should be added to the TOE of the medical clearing companies of tactical units, I believe that only the X ray capability should be added. Past experience in RVN has shown that the anesthetic capability is neither feasible nor necessary in tactical units. There is a world
AVCG
23 April 1966

SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

A wide shortage of nurse anesthetists and their utilization rate in tactical units has been approximately 1.5 per anesthetist per month. For this reason I have recently reassigned the anesthetic capability from tactical units to USARV hospitals without changing the table of organization.

3. (S) I recommend that implementation of the findings be guided by the following considerations:

a. While I support the team's finding that a combat support company is not required, the headquarters company of the infantry battalion should be strengthened by the addition of a training officer. I recognize the considerable administrative tasks of this company commander and the variety of functions performed by the elements of the company. A training officer can assure proper emphasis on operational readiness, on the job training, and the performance of combat functions while the company commander concentrates on the administrative tasks of his unit.

b. Replacement of .45 caliber pistols with M-16 rifles should be coordinated with an evaluation being conducted in this theater. Department of the Army has approved a USARV request to evaluate CAR-15 submachine guns for possible replacement of selected .45 caliber pistols and submachine guns. One of the objectives of the evaluation is to determine which personnel should be armed with the pistol.

c. The recommendation for an improved counter-mortar radar should include the requirement for 6400 mili surveillance matched by the capability to acquire multiple hostile rounds simultaneously. This requirement has been previously reported by USARV.

4. (S) I strongly endorse the addition of a fourth rifle company to each maneuver battalion. Though this represents a personnel increase of approximately 10% for each maneuver battalion, the net gain in combat power—represented by greater foxhole strength, increased maneuver flexibility and improved security—will be double the additional investment of personnel resources. It should also be pointed out that with the increase, the largest of the four Army maneuver battalions (45 officers, 920 enlisted men) will still be considerably below the personnel strength of a Marine Corps battalion (48 officers, 1052 enlisted men).

5. (U) I would like to take this opportunity to commend Brigadier General George L. Mabry, Jr., and his team for accomplishing a difficult and complex task under adverse conditions. Within a short period of time, much valuable information has been gathered and analyzed which will benefit this command and the United States Army.

W. C. WESTMORELAND
General, US Army
Commanding

TO: Commanding General
US Army, Vietnam
APO US Forces 96307

1. References:

   a. Letter, Chief of Staff, US Army to Deputy CG, USARV, 4 March 1966. (SECRET)


   c. Message, DA754650, AGSFOR to CG, USARV, DTG 121628Z March 1966, subject: Change of Title of Study. (UNCLASSIFIED)

2. In accordance with the references above and your oral instructions, the attached report, subject as above, is submitted.

3. Reference 1c changed the title of the study from "Evaluation of Army Airmobility in Vietnam (ARAMIV)" to "Evaluation of US Army Combat Operations in Vietnam (ARCOV)," reflecting more appropriately the major thrust of the evaluation.

4. This study is primarily an evaluation of the four types of maneuver battalions engaged in operations in Vietnam. The brigade and division echelons were also examined to the extent that they influenced battalion effectiveness. Hence the recommended changes to doctrine, materiel, and organization which appear in Section IV, Volume I, are designed specifically to increase the combat effectiveness of the maneuver battalions in this particular environment.

   Incl

   as

   GEORGE L. MABRY, JR.
   Brigadier General, USA
   Team Chief
EVALUATION OF
U.S. ARMY COMBAT OPERATIONS
IN VIETNAM (U)

(SHORT TITLE: ARCOV)

BASIC REPORT

Volume 1

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws. Title 18, U.S.C., Sections 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

Special handling required
Not releasable to foreign nationals.
By auth of: CG, USARV

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals,
Declassified after 12 years.
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### BASIC REPORT

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1. (S) INTRODUCTION.

a. BACKGROUND.

(1) Beginning in May, 1965, US Army combat forces deployed to Vietnam and initiated operations against the Viet Cong (VC). Implicit in this commitment was a requirement to promptly evaluate the suitability of existing doctrine, materiel and organization for operations in Vietnam. Commanders at all echelons independently examined their resources to determine what, if any, changes should be made to maximize US Army combat effectiveness in the new environment.

(2) On 7 October 1965, the Chief of Staff, US Army, wrote to the Commanding General, US Army Vietnam (USARV), suggesting a study be made of the comparative combat effectiveness of the four types of maneuver battalions in Vietnam. Further correspondence developed the requirement, and on 27 December the US Army Combat Developments Command (USACDC) forwarded to the CG, USARV, a draft plan for evaluation of the battalions. In January, 1966, Brigadier General George L. Mabry, Jr., was sent to Vietnam as a Special Assistant to the CG, USARV, to head a team which would execute the USACDC plan. USACDC provided a liaison team to USARV continuously from early January until completion of the project.

(3) Concurrently, 10 officers from the Army Concept Team in Vietnam (ACTIV) were placed on temporary duty with USARV to provide the initial planning and coordinating staff, and to set the project in motion. They were joined by six operations research analysts from the Combat Operations Research Group (CORG), Fort Belvoir, Virginia—a contractor to USACDC—who were to furnish systems/operations research analysis.

(4) In order to gather the necessary data within the relatively short time allowed for the study, 51 officers were selected from units in CONUS and USARPAC and placed on temporary duty with USARV to augment resources already in Vietnam. After a series of briefings in Saigon, 50 of these officers moved to the field in early February for service as data collectors and evaluators.

(5) The 1st Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobiles) each received a team of 19 officers to collect and evaluate data at the division/brigade/battalion levels. Concurrently, teams of six officers went to the 173d Airborne Brigade and the 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division to acquire and evaluate information on the
separate brigade and battalion echelons of those units.

(6) Using the facilities of ACTIV, other members of the evaluation team were organized into staff sections corresponding to the five functional areas of land combat. Each section was composed of an officer from ACTIV and a CORG analyst. Their mission was to assemble and analyze data forwarded from the field and to write the functional area annexes to the team's report. (Annexes A through E). An operations section was established to coordinate team activities under the direction of General Mabry.

b. SCOPE.

(1) This evaluation is based on the examination of extensive data collected and segregated for analytical study during the first three months of 1966. It incorporates material from after action reports, observers' reports, questionnaires, interviews with key personnel, and commanders' evaluations. Since these data were collected under combat conditions, the report is subject to the environmental limitations which governed the actions of field data collectors.

(2) Evaluation team analysis and findings have provided the basis for recommended improvements in doctrine, organization, and materiel. These recommendations fall into two groups:

(a) Specific changes at the maneuver battalion level to increase combat effectiveness at this echelon.

(b) Changes at the division and brigade levels where such changes can increase the combat efficiency of the maneuver battalions as they are presently organized.

(3) No attempt has been made to trace in detail the impact of battalion changes on division and brigade organizations since this was viewed as beyond the scope of this evaluation.

c. TASKS.

(1) Task 1. To determine the comparative effectiveness of maneuver battalion organizations of the 1st Cavalry Division (AM), the 1st Infantry Division, the 173d Airborne Brigade, and the 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division, and of the brigade and division echelons as they influence the effectiveness of battalion operations; and to provide recommendations for changes to doctrine, material, and organization to increase the efficiency of those organizations.

(2) Task 2. If the Task 1 evaluation discloses changes so extensive that a new type organization is required, to provide
recommendations in the form of draft TOE's for the new type organization. (Never implemented).

(3) Task 3. To prepare a critical appraisal of developmental items of equipment now organic to the airmobile division under TOE 67T.

(4) Task 4. To provide appropriate recommendations for changes to doctrine, materiel, or organization required to increase the efficiency of the aircraft maintenance system of the airmobile division. (This task was assigned in mid-March by letter from the Chief of Staff, US Army, to the Deputy CG, USARV.)

d) TASK OBJECTIVES.

(1) Task 1.

(a) To determine the effectiveness of each of the four types of infantry battalions as part of its parent organization in the combat environment of Vietnam.

(b) To make a comparative analysis of data collected to draw conclusions concerning the relative effectiveness of these battalions in the five functional areas of land combat and the applicable essential elements of analysis (EEA).

(c) To evaluate the operations of the brigade and division echelons as they influence the effectiveness of the battalions.

(d) To determine and recommend changes in doctrine, materiel, and organization which will contribute to improved effectiveness of each of the four types of battalions; and of the brigade and division echelons as they in turn increase the battalions' effectiveness.

(e) To initiate Task 2 if Task 1 discloses changes so extensive that a new organization(s) is needed.

(2) Task 3.

(a) To prepare a critical appraisal of the 177 developmental items of equipment in the airmobile division under TOE 67T.

(b) To determine which of these items should be deleted, replaced, modified, or retained.

(3) Task 4.

(a) To determine the comparative effectiveness of the aircraft maintenance system of the 1st Cavalry Division with other aviation units in Vietnam.
(b) To determine if aircraft operational readiness ratios are lower in the 1st Cavalry Division than the other aviation units in Vietnam.

(c) To provide appropriate recommendations for the improvement of the operations readiness and utilization ratios of the airborne division.

2. (U) METHODOLOGY.

a. FUNCTIONAL AREAS. The conduct of Task 1 of the evaluation was guided by specific objectives outlining the scope of the project and by a list of questions called Essential Elements of Analysis (EEA). An EEA is a question specifically designed to obtain data that will provide an answer in a particular problem area or information required to conduct an evaluation. These EEA were subdivided into sections or functional areas defining the land combat system: intelligence; mobility; firepower; command, control, and communication; and service support.

(1) The intelligence function provides for the planning and direction of the collection effort, the processing of information, and the dissemination of intelligence. Included are combat surveillance and reconnaissance elements, the air weather detachment, US Army Security Agency, and supporting technical intelligence specialist services.

(2) Mobility considers the maneuver of people and materiel whether on foot, by ground vehicle, or aerial vehicle. The doctrine, organization, and equipment required for tactical maneuver and logistic movement at division level and lower is considered.

(3) Firepower is the ability to deliver fire upon a target from a fire unit or weapon system. Included are the doctrine, organization, and equipment related to the firepower function, fire direction procedures and equipment, and responsiveness, flexibility, and terminal effects of the systems.

(4) The command, control, and communication function includes the doctrine, organization, and facilities for direction and control of units and the communication system and procedures for support of unit operations.

(5) The service support area includes the following functions in support of battalion operations:

(a) Supply (Classes I, II & IV, III, V, water).

(b) Maintenance (aircraft, ground vehicles, communication, and ordnance).
b. DATA BASE.

(1) The methods adopted for use in the evaluation were chosen to be compatible with the fundamental requirements that there be no interference with tactical operations and that no actions be planned for the express purpose of collecting data. Therefore, existing administrative and operational reports were used to the maximum extent to provide the basis for information on current and past operations. These included after-action reports, unit staff journals, situation reports (SITREPs), routine logistic data compilations, maintenance statistics, and flight logs. These reports were the primary source of information concerning past operations, but detailed data from current operations were gathered by direct observation, by interrogation of participants using questionnaires and fill-in forms, and by interviews with commanders and other key personnel.

(2) The questionnaires were designed to provide detailed factual information concerning combat operations in Vietnam. Where possible, the questions solicited quantitative information describing what was being done, such as: Number of rounds of each type fired by number of each type weapon, number of people or pounds of cargo carried by number of aircraft or ground vehicles, time required for carrying out the action, numbers of personnel and quantity of equipment used for each task in the operation, or problems encountered such as equipment limitations and breakdowns, coordination difficulties, information gaps, personnel and materiel shortages. Additional questions requested knowledgeable commanders in the field to provide professional opinion concerning the adequacy of support provided and to propose solutions to the problems encountered. Complete rationale was requested to support the opinion in every instance.

(3) Synthesis and analysis of these data provided a basis for the evaluation of the comparative effectiveness of the organizations under study. In areas where quantitative information was not available or not obtainable for operational reasons, or where the quantitative information did not indicate a firm decision, subjective judgement of the most knowledgeable commanders in the field provided the basis for answers to the questions. Such instances are clearly noted in the report.

(4) The questions applicable to the units in all their missions were answered one time only by each appropriate unit while
questions designed to highlight differences in organization, materiel, or procedures for accomplishing different missions were answered for each current or past tactical operation considered in the evaluation.

c. COLLECTION.

(1) The data collectors were 51 Army officers ranking from Captain through Lieutenant Colonel, chosen to represent a cross section of command and technical service backgrounds and experience in evaluation procedures. They were formed into teams to cover each type organization under study, given an appropriate orientation in the purpose, objectives, and methodology of the evaluation, and sent respectively, to the 1st Infantry Division, the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the 173d Airborne Brigade and the 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. Under the supervision of the team chief, the data collectors associated with all levels of command from company to division and, through direct observation as well as interviews with commanders and staff officers, developed answers to the questions. The data collectors and field evaluators also used data from existing operational and administrative reports, journals, and studies to complete the questionnaires for current and past operations.

(2) The questionnaires were returned from the field, reviewed for completeness and clarity and, if necessary, returned to the field for further explanation or more complete rationales. The data were then rated for validity and knowledgeability of the source and tabulated by subject on spread sheets.

d. SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS.

(1) A methodological approach to the comparative analysis was used by the five functional areas to integrate the data contained in replies to the questionnaires from the four type battalions engaged in the four type missions as illustrated in Figure 1. The tabulated answers were collated by type battalion and by type mission to arrive at a consensus for a particular question and to identify for comparative purposes the differences which might be attributed to mission or type battalion, its organization, or support. The answers to the series of questions related to a particular EEA and covering the subject of the EEA as completely as possible were then integrated and analyzed to provide the required single answer to the EEA. While it was imperative that quantitative results be obtained whenever possible, judgment was a highly important part of the analysis. Not only was judgment used in the analysis of the objectives of the study to decide which alternatives to consider and which factors were relevant to the evaluation but also in answering many of the questions not amenable to objective analysis and in interpreting the results.

(2) Significant differences by type battalion and by type mission were carefully noted and extracted for the comparative evaluation of battalions.
e. EVALUATION.

(1) The evaluation of the data received in the replies to the questionnaires was accomplished first by functional area to provide answers to the EEA and to the stated objectives of the study. The data were then examined to determine what successful tactics, techniques, procedures, or field expedients had been described which might result in desirable changes in doctrine, organization, or equipment. These changes were tentatively identified and refined by returning to the data collectors additional questionnaires designed to provide details concerning these indicated changes.

(2) Additional input was provided by combat operation summaries and detailed descriptions of tactics and procedures which were used directly to develop changes in doctrine not otherwise apparent.

f. MATRICES. The functional evaluation of the data by EEA was guided and summarized by a matrix which is a device for presentation of information. In its simplest form the matrix contains along one dimension, the abscissa, the EEA pertaining to one functional area and along the other dimension the organizations being investigated, the four types of infantry battalions. In some cases, the EEA were grouped by subfunction to aid in explanation of results. Adding other arguments (such as: type mission) required repeating along the abscissa the list of EEA and subfunctions. Entries in the matrix can only indicate whether or not a problem has been identified in the area covered by the EEA and a reference to the section of the report where a discussion of this problem may be found. If there are no differences among type battalions revealed by the analysis in the area covered by an EEA, a check or other indication is made in the appropriate blocks. The completed matrix thus indicates the problems identified by the EEA and the areas of no differences among type battalions. The entries in the matrix cannot be summed by row (type battalion) to yield overall values because each EEA does not have the same utility or weight as all other EEAs. However, the overall rating of each battalion in the performance of each type mission can be discussed by functional area and, if problems exist, they can be identified in the matrix without assigning a comparative rating to each battalion.

3. (U) ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT.

a. GENERAL. The AROV Evaluation Team Report consists of nine volumes. Volume 1, the basic report, is followed by eight other volumes which are annexes to the basic report.

b. BASIC REPORT.

(1) The Preface contains a discussion of all administrative aspects of the report to include background, requirements, and methodology. The rest of the basic report is divided into four sections.
Section I contains the environmental setting and an examination of the enemy and friendly situations. Section II, the major discussion and analysis portion, opens with an investigation of the impact that operational concepts have had on the changes recommended in this report. A brief description of the maneuver battalions as currently organized is followed by the team's analysis of doctrine, materiel, and organization at battalion level. The concluding paragraph deals with a similar analysis of the brigade/division level. The major conclusions and recommendations comprise Sections III and IV respectively.

(2) The inclosures to the basic report contain a variety of information. Inclosure 1 contains a summary of five battalion operations representative of combat actions in Vietnam which may be used as an aid in understanding the context within which the report was made. Inclosure 2 is part of Task 3, an appraisal of non-standard and developmental items of equipment in the airmobile division. Because Inclosure 2, new matériel requirements submitted by the 1st Cavalry Division, is classified CONFIDENTIAL, it has been removed from Annex G, the Task 3 report, so as to leave that annex unclassified (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY) for ease of handling. Inclosure 3 is a list of all Essential Elements of Analysis, the answers to which appear in each functional area annex. The remaining inclosures cover administrative information in the glossary, reference, team composition, and initial distribution respectively.

c. FUNCTIONAL ANNEXES. Volumes 2 through 6 are the functional area annexes: Volume 2 - Annex A (Intelligence); Volume 3 - Annex B (Mobility); Volume 4 - Annex C (Firepower); Volume 5 - Annex D (Command, Control, and Communications); and Volume 6 - Annex E (Service Support). Each of these annexes contains a detailed discussion and analysis within its area of specific concern, after which itemized conclusions and recommendations are presented. The more significant conclusions and recommendations have been carried forward into Sections III and IV of the basic report. Each annex has attached to it appendicies which examine and answer in turn each EEA.

d. OTHER ANNEXES. Volume 7, Annex F, is the Task 4 report, a study of aircraft operational readiness. Volume 8, Annex G, Developmental Equipment in the Airmobile Division, is the Task 3 report, and must be considered together with Inclosure 2, basic report, Volume 1 (See paragraph 3b(2) above.) The final volume, Annex H, Recommended MTOE's, reflects the recommendations made in Volume 1.
Figure P-1 (U) Evaluation Matrix
SECTION I

GENERAL

1. (U) ENVIRONMENT

a. GENERAL

South Vietnam (VN) occupies a crescent-shaped area of about 67,000 square miles on the southeastern edge of the Indochina Peninsula. It is only 45 miles wide at the 17th parallel, which is its demilitarized northern border with North Vietnam (NVN). It has a seacoast of 1,500 miles on the South China Sea and the Gulf of Siam, and a western border with Laos and Cambodia of about 950 miles. Land borders are poorly defined and drawn through difficult and inaccessible terrain.

b. CLIMATE AND WEATHER

(1) The climate is hot and humid, subtropical in the north and tropical in the south where the mean monthly temperature is about 80 degrees Fahrenheit. In parts of the lowlands and delta region, however, the temperature can soar well above the 100 degree mark, considerably reducing the effectiveness of the American soldier. The annual rainfall (monsoon) is heavy in most regions and torrential in many. It is heaviest at Hue, a coastal town 40 miles south of NVN, which has an annual average of 128 inches. The low of 28 inches at Mui Dinh, a small cape on the eastern coast 60 miles south of Nha Trang, results from the presence of hills in the area. At Saigon, rainfall averages 80 inches annually.

(2) Seasonal alternation of monsoon winds profoundly influences the weather throughout the year, although geographical features alter patterns locally. The winter monsoon blows generally from the northeast from early November to mid-March, and often brings floods to the northern portions of VN. This is also the period of the dry season in the delta. The winds begin to shift in March, and with the exception of the coastal plain, high temperature and humidity prevail in all of VN from April to mid-June. The summer monsoon blows generally from the southwest from mid-June to late August or early September, bringing to the southern delta region heavy and frequent rains, high humidity, tropical temperatures, and maximum cloudiness, thus considerably influencing air and land movement. Mountains cause clouds to pile up and deposit their moisture before they can reach the northern highland coastal areas, which remain dry during this period. In September the winds begin to shift again, and the coastal plain receives its maximum amount of cloud cover and rain, including severe tropical storms and typhoons.
(1) Four distinct geographical regions can be identified in VN: the highlands located in the north and central portion, the plateaus of the central highlands, the coastal plain, and the Mekong Delta and lowland plains in the south.

(2) The northern two-thirds of VN is dominated by a chain of broken mountains and rugged hills, the Annamite Cordillera, extending in a northwest-southeast direction and terminating on the northern edge of the delta plain about 50 miles north of Saigon. The area is characterized by steep slopes, sharp crests, narrow valleys, and dense vegetation, which almost prohibit cross-country movement. It is sparsely populated, mainly by primitive and nomadic tribes, and it contains few roads or trails.

(3) The central highlands adjacent to the Laos-Cambodia border contain extensive plateau areas. Here, the mountains give way to more gently rolling terrain. The northern plateau is covered by almost impenetrable tropical forests and primary jungles which often have two dense layers of foliage (double canopy) at heights of about 40 and 125 feet. Rates of foot movement are measured in terms of hundreds of meters per hour and visual contact is lost beyond 10 or 20 meters. Because of the overhead mask, mortar firing and determining precise locations are difficult in the jungle. The southern portion of this area is typical savannah country, with large open expanses covered by open forests and tropical grasses. Some of this tropical grass grows to such a height that a man standing on an M13 armored personnel carrier, cannot see over it. This region is more heavily populated than the northern highlands and has more roads and trails.

(4) The coastal plain, varying from 10 to 25 miles in width, extends from the 17th parallel to the Mekong Delta. At several places mountain spurs jut out into the sea, cutting the plain into a series of compartments roughly at Mui Dinh, Mui Ke Ga, Quang Ngai, Da Nang, and Hue, north of which spurs become more frequent. The area is characterized by sandy beaches and dunes, with rice fields, fertile areas, and marshes. The coastal waters are clear and shallow, yet there are many safe anchorages and beaches suitable for over-the-beach supply. The Cam Ranh Bay logistics complex capitalizes on excellent harbor facilities. Small cities are frequently found on the coastal plain, usually astride the many small and often torrential rivers and streams draining the mountains.

(5) The southern third of VN is part of the large delta plain formed by the river systems of the Hau Giang, Mekong, Vam Co, Saigon, and Dong Nai. The Hau Giang flows directly into the South China Sea. The large Mekong Delta splits into four branches, and the Vam Co and Dong Nai enter the Saigon before reaching the sea. In addition to these major tributaries, the area is cut by a number of smaller
Figure I - (U) Geographical Regions of South Vietnam
streams and a dense network of canals. The plain is relatively flat with few points exceeding an elevation of 20 feet above sea level. The sediment carried downstream by the rivers has made the delta extremely fertile and in places has raised the banks of the rivers above the low-lying rice paddies. More than 9,000 square miles are under cultivation. When combined with the harvests of the coastal plain, they yield enough rice to feed the domestic population and to export a quarter of a million tons annually. Drainage is effected chiefly by tidal action, with the differences between ebb and flood as much as ten feet in some areas.

(6) Cross-country movement is fair during the dry season, except in the extreme south where permanent waterways criss-cross the otherwise dry paddies. During the rainy season, the only feasible means of transport is by sampan, or shallow draft river craft.

(7) The southernmost tip of the delta, known as the Ca Mau Peninsula, is covered with dense jungles, and mangrove swamps bordering the shoreline and estuaries. The eastern portion of the delta plain is heavily forested. The Plain of Reeds, a large marshy area covered with tall reeds and scrub trees and sparsely populated, is located in the center of the delta region adjacent to the Cambodian border. During the rainy season, a major portion of this area is completely inundated. Farther to the north, in the Vam Co Valley, large rubber plantations are alongside thick forests which border the grassy plains.

d. COMMUNICATION

(1) A single track, narrow gauge railroad connects Saigon with the northern provinces by way of the coastal plain. The system and equipment are old and frequently damaged by the Viet Cong so that they are effective only for short distances; for example, the stretch between Saigon and Bien Hoa, a distance of only 13 miles. Before the rail network could be used effectively to solve logistics transport problems, it would have to be secured—a major task—and extensively reconstructed.

(2) Except for a few stretches of highways and main road radiating from the cities, roads in VN are few in number, primitive, narrow, and poorly maintained. They are subject to rapid deterioration to the point of impassability in the wet season, and constant engineer effort would be required to sustain convoy movement. Apart from the natural causes which often destroy bridges or wash out roadbeds, the roads are also frequently interdicted by the VC. The many bridges throughout the country and the sharp curves in the mountains greatly enhance the standard techniques of enemy ambush or roadblock. As a result, only small stretches of road between major centers are continually open.

(3) Travel off the existing road network is most difficult. Cross-country movement is virtually impossible in the mountains and dense forests and in the coastal swamps and marshes. The Mekong
Delta and the coastal plains are trafficable only after floodwaters and mud have disappeared. The M113 armored personnel carrier, has shown very good mobility across paddies even during the rainy season, and equipped with a frontal winch, can pull itself over canal banks and levees. The Mekong River itself is a major barrier at all times. The moderately extensive plains and plateaus afford the best possibilities for movement of tracked vehicles, although half of this terrain has forest cover sufficiently thick to impede or prevent movement of wheeled vehicles. Small tracks and trails are plentiful except in the mountainous regions. The Ho Chi Minh Trail, a generic term for the VC supply routes from the north and west, is well camouflaged and continually maintained to keep the tracks passable.

(4) In the delta regions, the 2500 miles of navigable inland waterways ease somewhat the burden placed on the 1200 miles of roads in the area. These water channels become the only feasible route of surface travel during the wet season, and sampans are often not even restricted by these channels. Hence any control of movement of these shallow craft is almost impossible.

(5) Air transport has been of major significance to VN. The existing airfields are primarily military in origin. Suitable landing zones for helicopters are not frequent in the mountains, but new techniques of delivery from the hover have tended to minimize these limitations. Although weather is often a problem it usually causes only brief delays in the commitment of an airborne force rather than outright cancellation. Exception to this is found in the high plateau and mountain regions where adverse weather may delay a military operation for several days. The major drawback attributable to weather has been the limitation imposed on USAF close support missions.

(6) There is no wire telephone communication among the major centers of population. The limited radio telephone service is affected by the often unstable atmospheric conditions in VN. Telephone equipment used in major cities is antiquated or makeshift.

(7) Rural areas, thus, are isolated both physically and psychologically from the Government of South Vietnam (GVN). This greatly assists the VC in their organization of the people and greatly inhibits the rapid reaction of the GVN to any local crisis.

e. POPULATION

(1) VN has a population of approximately 16 million, with an average density of 234 per square mile. Of the four geographical regions, the highland regions are least populated while the delta and coastal plain are most populated. About 90 percent of the people live on the 15 percent of land best suited for rice cultivation: the delta and small river basins of the coastal plain.
(2) Ethnically, the population is composed of 85 percent Vietnamese, 6 percent Chinese (who have great influence on the economy), 5 percent Montagnard or Moi (the nomadic aboriginal tribal people living in the highlands), 3 percent Khmer-Cham (of Cambodian descent), and 1 percent European, Indian, and other small groups.

(3) Religiously, about 80 percent are Buddhists, about 10 percent profess Catholicism, and the rest are Mohammedans, Hindus, Protestants, Cao Daists, or Hoa Haoists (two local sects). These rival beliefs have perennially contributed to anti-government unrest.

(4) Socially, there is an upper class composed of old mandarin families, landed gentry, government officials, professional men, intellectuals, clergy, and wealthy businessmen; an urban middle class of civil servants, teachers, and small businessmen; and a lower class mainly composed of farmers, but with a growing group of urban workers. Advancement within the social structure is possible but difficult, especially from the lowest stratum.

(5) The culture in VN is based on traditional Chinese customs and has been profoundly influenced, especially among the urban upper class, by the French. Most rural Vietnamese continue to follow the traditional way of life. The great divergence in racial, religious, social and cultural structures has produced continual strife and tension among the various groups.

(6) The Vietnamese have a deep and traditional belief in destiny and man's inability to change the natural order of events. This concept, reinforced by religious beliefs, results in a high valuation of the virtues of stoicism, patience, and endurance, and tends to suppress initiative. The Vietnamese are proud of their ethnic traditions and hold themselves superior to ethnic minorities in VN and to the peoples of the neighboring countries. Most of the people in the countryside, who make up (approximately) 90 percent of the population and who provide the main targets for the VC, care neither for the government in Saigon nor for the VC. They want to be left alone to grow their crops, raise their families, have a tranquil old age, and die traditionally.

I. GOVERNMENT

(1) Political power in the GVN is concentrated at the national level; the most important programs and decisions originate in and are directed from Saigon. The Prime Minister is the real head of the government and is assisted in the development of policies by the heads of the various ministries. These policies, decisions, and programs are then passed to the lower echelons, corps, division, province, district, village, and hamlet, for execution.

(2) The first command level of government below Saigon is the corps. Each of the four corps commanders acts as the government
representative in his Corps Tactical Zone (CTZ). Not all instructions originating at the national level pass through corps headquarters, however. Routine administrative instructions from the various ministers in Saigon normally go direct to the province chief for implementation, leaving corps and division commanders free to concern themselves with tactical operations. There are 43 provinces in the country. Below the province is the district, most closely approximating the American county. Districts are divided into villages, with an average of 8-12 per district. Villages normally consist of 4-6 hamlets, and are in reality more like subcounties rather than separate towns. Historically, the village has been the most important organization for local government, and today retains many essential legal and tax collecting functions.

2. (C) ENEMY SITUATION

a. STRATEGY Overall VC strategy is aimed toward the overthrow of the GVN and the reunification and consolidation of all Vietnam under communist rule. This is to be accomplished in three separate phases, the first of which is to force a cease-fire and the seizure of power by political maneuver. This would be followed by the formation of a "neutral" coalition government in a position to force the withdrawal of US forces. Lastly, the new government would commence negotiations with Hanoi with a view toward reunification. Typical of all Communist doctrine, however, is the close coordination of political and military effort to achieve the desired goal, control of the people.

b. POLITICAL AND MILITARY STRUCTURE

(1) The VC apparatus in VN is an extension of the Communist military and political structure of NVN controlled by the Lao Dong Party, the Communist Party of NVN under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh. The Central Committee of the Lao Dong issues directives through its Reunification Department to the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN). COSVN is the highest level VC headquarters in VN, and is located in Tay Ninh province near the Cambodian border.

(2) Under COSVN are five regional units plus the Special Zone of Saigon-Cholon-Gia Dinh. Each has a Regional Committee which is responsible for liaison, propaganda, training, personnel, subversive activities, espionage, and military bases. Below each region are similarly organized committees at the province and district levels, a structure which closely parallels that of the GVN. The villages and hamlets which comprise the bottom levels are organized into party cells based upon geography, or social or occupational groups. One of the most significant features at each of the echelons from top to bottom is the existences of special branches for recruiting and tax collecting. The development of the lowest party cell and the extent to which it operates openly is determined primarily by the extent of VC control, or lack of GVN control, over the area concerned.

I-7
(3) An elaborate propaganda screen has been devised to influence world opinion and to hide the communist direction of VC activities. The National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam was established in 1960 to create the illusion that the aggression in VN was an internal rebellion by many groups against the established government. To carry the illusion further, a People's Revolutionary Party was organized to explain communist presence in the Front and to make it appear that they were only one of the several affiliated organizations in the Front.

(4) A key element in the VC effort is an elaborate organization in Hanoi called the Central Research Agency (CRA). The CRA handles the North Vietnamese intelligence effort on a world-wide scale, but the main focus of its attention is South Vietnam. Inside the Republic, the intelligence network is quite extensive and includes the supervision and handling of agents, supplies, equipment, and communications. Party and military intelligence units work closely with the CRA.

(5) The military activities of the VC are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defense and the High Command of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA), under close supervision from the Lao Dong Party and in coordination with COASVN. The five military regions and the capital zone are the same as those of the VC political organization. The military structure of the VC is an integral part of the political machinery in that each political headquarters has a military component which controls day-to-day military operations. Similarly, each military headquarters has a political element designed to guarantee political control over the military and insure the closest cooperation in support of the total communist mission.

c. MILITARY UNITS Although communist military resources available for employment in VN are considerable, this examination will concern only those forces presently employed. VC naval and air threat is negligible. VC military units are divided into the general categories of combat and combat support forces. The combat forces are in turn identified by their degree of sophistication as four distinct types of military forces: the NVA, VC main forces, VC local forces, and the militia.

(1) Combat forces

(a) North Vietnamese Army. Regular NVA units began infiltrating into South Vietnam in November, 1964. Since then nine NVA regiments have been confirmed as operating in VN. There is probably an additional regiment in the highlands. So far they have fought using the main and local forces as well as the militia (guerrillas) as support. Being regular army units, they have revealed a greater tendency to stay and fight than the VC forces have in the past. They are better armed, equipped, supplied, and led than other units because of their direct ties with NVN.
FIGURE I-2C) DISPOSITION OF KNOWN ENEMY FORCES

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(b) Main Forces The VC main forces are the South Vietnamese equivalent of the NVA units. They too are organized to regimental size, and are the best of the troops recruited in South Vietnam. They usually operate within a military region and are not restricted to any particular province. They are well trained and led by NVA cadres which have infiltrated from the north through Laos and Cambodia. It is accepted that 13 main force regiments, including 43 subordinate battalions, and 20 independent battalions are operating in VN. The presence of an additional four main force battalions is suspected.

(c) Local Forces The VC local forces are organized up to battalion size and are provincial in nature since they are recruited from and employed within their own home provinces. Although these soldiers are full time, they are still in training. They provide the back-up for the main forces when their training is completed. The presence of 23 local force battalions is accepted, with an additional five suspected.

(d) Militia The VC militia forces, all at the hamlet and district level, are subdivided into three types of irregular forces: guerrilla, self-defense, and secret self-defense. The full time local guerrillas are the most important of these. They are used to harass units and to perform assassinations, acts of terrorism, and sabotage. They also participate in combat activities in conjunction with main or local force units, and in these operations act as guides, porters, and rear or flank guard riflemen. Self-defense and secret self-defense forces are part-time irregulars responsible for local security and for providing early warning of approaching troops. These forces seldom exceed squad size. The self-defense units are normally found in VC controlled areas while the secret self-defense units are found in contested or GVN controlled areas. The total number of militia in the RVN is probably near 100,000.

(2) Combat Support Forces The VC combat support forces are those not attached to combat units which are responsible for transportation, communication, engineer support, reconnaissance, and food production. They have been particularly effective in supporting the movement of supplies and units by foot down the established infiltration routes, providing daytime security guards and rest facilities, and nighttime porters and guides.

d. ORGANIZATION FOR COMBAT

(1) The NVA sets the organization pattern for all other VC units. A typical regiment totalling 1200-2000 troops is organized with two to four rifle battalions and one artillery battalion. Indirect fire support consists mainly of 81mm mortars or Chinese Communist (CHICOM) 82mm mortars. On occasion, however, artillery battalions have employed 70mm and 75mm howitzers, and some 120mm mortars are coming into use. Air defense capability has also been upgraded by increasing the number
FIGURE I-3 (U) TYPE VIET CONG UNITS

TYPE VIET CONG REGIMENT

TYPE VIET CONG BATTALION

TYPE VIET CONG COMPANY
of 12.7mm (.50 cal) machine gun for which an elaborate sight has been developed. This is highly effective against aircraft flying to an altitude of 3000 feet, and moderately effective as high as 5000 feet.

(2) VC rifle battalions of from 300 to 600 men are organized into three or four rifle companies and conventional support units such as signal, reconnaissance, engineer, and medical. The heavy weapons company of the battalion has 81mm mortars, CHICOM 57mm and 75mm recoilless rifles, .30 caliber machine guns, rocket launchers, and a multitude of smaller supporting weapons such as mines and demolitions.

(3) The rifle companies within the battalion usually consist of from 60 to 130 men with three rifle platoons and a weapons platoon. The rifle platoon has three rifle squads which are composed of three 3-man cells and a squad leader. Since the 81mm mortar is now found at the heavy weapons company and higher level, the 60mm mortar is standard only at rifle company level. Automatic weapons from a variety of countries and the 57mm recoilless rifle round out the rifle company arsenal. Individual weapons are far from standardized but are generally of recent manufacture. Many are 7.62mm small arms which are CHICOM made copies of weapons in the current Soviet Army inventory. Captured US carbines, M1's, and BAR's are still found among VC main and local force units. Pistols are normally reserved for political and military cadres and serve as possible identifiers of these personnel.

e. METHODS OF OPERATION

(1) The simple but effective code of the VC is "When the enemy advances, withdraw; when he defends, harass; when he is tired, attack; when he withdraws, pursue." This guerrilla maxim underscores the relatively light strength of VC units, but also emphasizes the difficulty with which he can be found, fixed, fought, and finished. VC tactics and techniques rely on speed, security, surprise, and deception for their success.

(2) Operations are planned in great detail and are based on thorough and current reconnaissance. Sand tables, terrain models, and rehearsals are used whenever possible in preparing troops for ambushes, raids, or other missions. This has lent a certain inflexibility to larger operations, since standard radio communications are limited to one AN/PRC-10, or an equivalent radio in each battalion. Hence, when a large operation fails to be executed according to plan, instead of changing operations in mid-stream, they prefer to break contact and wait for a more favorable time. They appear reluctant to attack units which have demonstrated skill in employing artillery and air support.

(a) Offensive techniques

1. The ambush is one of the VC's most effective offensive techniques. Detailed preplanning and meticulous preparation
of the chosen site are always in evidence, and they have been known to let an opportunity slip by rather than act hastily. In one instance a three-battalion VC ambush force allowed two 155mm howitzers and accompanying ammunition trucks to drive through the killing zone unmolested, because the VC had not completed laying wire and checking communications. Normal practice is to ambush along roads, trails, streams, and other natural routes of movement, and they have frequently chosen sites close to a base area to catch units or patrols returning from an operation. Baited traps are often used to lure pursuing or reserve forces into prepared ambushes by another VC unit. Then, after a short and violent attack, the ambushing forces make a rapid withdrawal. It is significant to note that their most usual targets are people, not supplies. Two 5,000 gal fuel tankers were allowed to pass on one road before a command-detonated artillery shell buried under the surface blew up a truck carrying two dozen soldiers.

2. The raid is another common offensive tactic, usually conducted during the hours of darkness by units of from squad to regimental size and can consist of elements of all four types of combat forces. The surprise raid takes as much advantage as possible of lax security by the defending unit. It is usually short and aimed at a larger force. The larger power raid employs overwhelming strength and fire power to overrun and annihilate the defending unit. The time of a raid often gives a clue as to its nature. Raids begun after 0200 hours are rarely power raids intended to overrun an outpost. Maximum use is made of poor weather conditions that could minimize the effects of aerial fire support.

3. Harassment is one of the tenets of VC guerrilla warfare and is practiced wherever conditions permit. Sniper fire, booby traps, and mortars all are used to confuse and mislead friendly forces. Personnel carrying rifles and automatic or crew served weapons are often the first targets of rifle fire. Booby traps are used with the greatest of ingenuity. Grenades, mines, spiked traps, poison arrows, and artillery and mortar shells rigged for detonation by trip wires or by command are employed. Command detonated mines are fitted with wires extending to command sites as far as 1000 meters distant. A simple radio or flashlight battery is often the power source for detonation.

4. The VC are experts at infiltration. They attempt to infiltrate units during periods of adverse weather and reduced visibility, sometimes combining this with a feint or ruse. The purposes of infiltration are sabotage, assassination, demoralization of troops, and the collection of intelligence for future operations. Often agents are infiltrated as friendly civilians, a tactic that merely emphasizes the difficulty US forces have in identifying friend from foe.
(b) **Defensive techniques**

1. VC defensive tactics are centered around methods of escaping from ambushes, raids, meeting engagements, and attacks by stronger forces. The NVA units, and to a lesser degree, the VC main forces show an increased tendency for stubborn defense, but in general the defense is one of delay until a rapid withdrawal from contact can be made. Rear guard personnel, usually militia, are expert in this type action.

2. Once contact is broken, the VC either go directly into hiding or exfiltrate to pre-arranged rally points for control purposes. Often they evade capture by blending with the local populace, especially in contested or VC dominated areas. Although hiding places are almost limitless, underground locations appear to be the favorite, and certainly the most renowned. These range from simple "spider trap" holes to large reinforced rooms, capable of holding 20 to 30 persons within elaborate tunnel systems. These tunnels have been found to be as much as 30 meters deep, sometimes going under established stream beds. In the Ben Cat area, tunnel complexes were discovered lacing an area several hundred yards square. Individual tunnels branched out even further to hidden escape exits. Entrances and exits are well concealed and usually heavily guarded by booby traps, and spiked pits. Zigzags and secret openings within the tunnels inhibit detection and minimize the effects of demolitions, grenades, and tear gas. Overall, the VC prepare extensive defensive positions throughout their operational area, and these are characterized by defense in depth, mutual support, overhead cover and maximum use of natural cover and concealment.

f. **LOGISTICAL SUPPORT**

(1) The system which supports the VC has three roots. First is the population and resources of VN which provide foodstuffs, clothing, and manpower. Second is NVN which provides weapons, ammunition, and manpower. Third is out-of-country assistance from regions like Cambodia which serve as convenient rear service areas. Supplies are also received from Red China.

(2) Most of these supplies are stored in five base areas, four of which are not far distant from Saigon:

(a) U Minh Forest in the lower delta
(b) Plain of Reeds in the upper delta
(c) War Zone C northwest of Saigon on-the-border
(d) War Zone D north of Saigon
(e) Do Xa in the mountains north of Kontum
SOUTH VIETNAM

CONFIDENTIAL

SCALE: 1" = C. 60 MI

17th PARALLEL

HUE

DA NANG

QUANG NGAI

BONG SON

AN KHE

QUI Nhon

KONTUM

PLEIKU

BAN ME THUOT

NHA RANG

DALAT

PHAN RANG

COSVN

PHUOC BINH

BIEN HOA

SAIGON

VINH LONG

MY THO

CAI NHAN

CHAN THO

U MINH FOREST

CON SON

SOUTH CHINA SEA

SUAY

FUGURE 1-4 (C) LOCATION OF VIET CONG SECRET BASES.
(3) These bases have been up to now the safe areas for VC depots, and for headquarters and training facilities required to direct and support the combined military and political effort.

(4) The growing trend towards standardization of small arms, mostly 7.62mm, and the increasing sophistication of VC units, indicates an attendant emphasis on a line of communication (LOC) extending west and north through Cambodia and Laos to North Vietnam. It also greatly simplifies the logistics problems of attempting to provide a wide variety of nonstandard ammunition and parts or components of equipment. This LOC, the Ho Chi Minh Trail, is supplemented by water routes from the north which extend to the delta and then by canal to the base areas. The land infiltration routes, a series of jungle trails and roads, are manned by as many as 10,000 VC combat and service troops who have set up liaison and relay stations which are approximately a day's march apart. These stations usually are secured and operated by a squad sized force each.

g. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

(1) The Viet Cong is a good soldier. His strength lies in his ideological dedication, his offensive spirit, and his toughness and endurance. He has developed a thorough intelligence system and has a high degree of foot mobility. His minor tactics and his fieldcraft are efficient, although his skill with modern weapons is less so. The thoroughness with which his actions are planned and the determination with which they are executed, make him a formidable individual opponent.

(2) His weaknesses stem largely from his peasant background and the lack of sophistication of his war machine. He has an acute need of leadership in crises or when battle plans go awry. He must rely largely on the local population for support, and he is highly vulnerable to food crop destruction in those areas where he must grow his own. He is very vulnerable to air, artillery, and armor attack and has none of these capabilities at his own disposal. He has a limited logistical capacity for the support of sustained operations, and lacks communications, medicine, and salt to cure his food.

3. (3) FRIENDLY SITUATION (as of 28 February 1966)

a. SUMMARY OF STRENGTH, FRIENDLY FORCES IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (RVN). Combined strength of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF), Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMNAF), and US Forces in the RVN totals approximately 816,000. Of this number, 581,000 are RVNAF; 22,400 are FWMNAF representing the nations of Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, and the Republics of Korea, China, and the Philippines; and 213,000 are US military personnel.
b. RVNAF BREAKDOWN

(1) Regular.

Army: 273,350
Navy: 15,500
Air Force: 13,000
Marines: 7,150

(2) Irregular.

Regional Forces: 135,000
Popular Forces: 137,000

(3) Army of Vietnam (ARVN).

(a) ARVN is built around 10 infantry divisions which are deployed in the four Corps Tactical Zones (CTZ’s) into which the RVN is divided. These CTZ’s are numbered consecutively from north to south. The 1st and 2d Divisions are assigned to the I CTZ; the 22d and 23d Divisions to the II CTZ; the 5th, 10th, and 25th Divisions to the III CTZ; and the 7th, 9th, and 21st Divisions to the IV CTZ in the delta. Included among ARVN tactical units are eight airborne and 20 ranger battalions. A total of 141 ARVN maneuver battalions is operational in the RVN.

(b) Regional Forces (RF) and Popular Forces (PF) are bonafide components of ARVN though they are categorized as irregular forces. Both are uniformed and armed. RF are organized into company-size units and operate as province forces under the control of a province chief. PF are organized into Platoons and have the mission of defending the hamlets they actually inhabit. RF habitually reinforce PF when hamlets defended by the latter are in danger of being overrun.

c. TACTICAL FWMAF Tactical FWMAF have been furnished to the RVN by Australia, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea (ROK). The 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, and a 105mm howitzer battery from the Royal New Zealand Artillery—combined strength approximately 1,400—are fighting in the III CTZ under operational control of the US 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate). The ROK has deployed in the II CTZ its Capitol Division and the 2d Marine Brigade, a total of more than 20,000 troops. There are 10 operational FWMAF maneuver battalions in the RVN.
d. US FORCES

(1) Strengths by service.

Air Force: 28,747
Marine Corps: 39,441
Army: 134,324
Navy: 10,111
Coast Guard: 462

(2) Air Force. Air Force tactical strength is concentrated in the 2d Air Division. This division's mission is to provide the air defense of the RVN, maintain air supremacy and conduct air operations against the VC, and support ground actions in the RVN as necessary.

(3) Marine Corps. The III Marine Amphibious Force (MAF), consisting of the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Marine Air Wing with supporting units, is deployed in the I CTZ with headquarters at Danang. Its mission is to defend specified US/RVN installations and conduct operations against the VC. There are 13 Marine maneuver battalions in the III MAF.

(4) Army. One infantry division, one air cavalry division, two airborne brigades, and two infantry brigades are engaged in operations in the interior CTZ's, II and III. No Army combat forces are committed in the IV CTZ which encompasses the delta region. There are 28 Army maneuver battalions in the II and III CTZ's.

e. OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF US ARMY COMBAT FORCES

(1) Commander, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV) exercises operational control of Army combat elements through two field force headquarters. These are I Field Force, Vietnam (IFORCE-V), at Nha Trang, with responsibility for operations in the II CTZ, and II Field Force, Vietnam (II FORCEN, at Bien Hoa, which controls forces deployed in the III CTZ. Both FORCE's function in the manner of corps headquarters. (II FORCE activated 15 March 1966)

(2) I FORCEN has operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airborne), the 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division, the 3d Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division, and the ROK contingent.

(3) II FORCEN has operational control of the 1st Infantry Division, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate), and the 2d Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division.
f. MISSION, I FFORCEV. I FFORCEV conducts military operations in the II CTZ in support of, and in coordination with CG, II ARVN Corps, and in other areas of the RVN as directed by COMUSMACV in order to assist the Government of Vietnam (GVN) to defeat the VC and extend GVN control over all of the RVN.

g. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS, I FFORCEV.

(1) I FFORCEV is deployed in the II CTZ generally along the RVN coastline and inland along Highway 19 with major bases in Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh, Nha Trang, Phan Rang, Sinn Ke, and An Khe. I FFORCEV defends and secures these bases in order to destroy or drive out the VC. Clearing operations are conducted in selected areas contiguous to major bases.

(2) I FFORCEV is prepared to conduct reserve/reaction or contingency operations in the II CTZ or elsewhere in the RVN as directed by COMUSMACV to support the defense of critical bases, reinforce the defense of population centers, and assist friendly forces in contact with the enemy. Selected portions of Highways 1 and 19 are kept open and secure to the degree necessary to insure continuous support of US and ROK military forces by land line of communication (LOC).

h. I FFORCEV TASKS TO SUBORDINATE UNITS

(1) All subordinate commanders will:

(a) Be prepared to conduct search and destroy operations against major VC forces and bases as directed by CG, I FFORCEV.

(b) Be prepared to conduct reserve/reaction operations in accordance with established contingency plans and elsewhere in the II CTZ as required, assist in the defense or relief of critical bases and selected population centers, and assist friendly forces in contact.

(c) Be prepared to place one reinforced battalion in an alert posture, ready within six hours after receipt of initial instructions for deployment as a I FFORCEV or MACV reserve.

(d) Be prepared to open and secure selected LOC's.

(e) In coordination with II Corps US Advisory Teams, assist, to the extent possible, in training and supporting RF/PF.

(2) 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), vicinity of An Khe.

(a) Secure and defend US bases in the vicinity of An Khe.
(b) Secure Highway 19 within the division's assigned Tactical Area of Operations (TAKOR) east of An Khe and to the extent necessary to permit continuous use of this route as a land LOC.

(3) 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division, vicinity of Phan Rang. Secure and defend US bases in the vicinity of Phan Rang.

(4) 3rd Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division, vicinity of Pleiku.

(a) Occupy and defend assembly area in the vicinity of Pleiku.

(b) Be prepared to conduct reserve/reaction operations to assist in the relief of friendly forces in contact with priority of planning to Plei Djereng, Plei Nrong, Plei Me, Duc Co, and Plei Do Lim.

(c) On order, commence search and destroy, saturation patrolling, and clearing operations between Pleiku and designated Special Forces Camps.

(d) On order and in coordination with II ARVN Corps, protect northern and eastern flanks of new Pleiku Airfield against enemy attack.

1. MISSION, II FFORCEV. II FFORCEV conducts military operations in the III CTZ in support of and in coordination with CG, III ARVN Corps, and in other areas of the RVN as directed by COMUSMACV to assist the GVN to defeat the VC/North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and extend GVN control throughout the RVN.

j. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS, II FFORCEV

(1) Combat forces assigned to II FFORCEV are employed in the III CTZ and conduct operations in accordance with the combined campaign plan, operational schedules, or other directives issued by COMUSMACV.

(2) US base camps and areas are defended with minimum forces so that sustained operations with maximum forces can be conducted throughout the III CTZ. Emphasis is placed on support of RF/PF forces and appropriate communications and liaison arrangements must be established for this purpose.

k. II FFORCEV TASKS TO SUBORDINATE UNITS

(1) 1st Infantry Division, vicinity of Bien Hoa.

(a) In coordination with CG, III ARVN Corps, participate in securing and defending the US base at Bien Hoa, and defend other selected critical installations.
(b) Conduct search and destroy operations against VC forces and bases throughout the III CTZ.

c) Conduct clearing operations in selected areas in support of the GVN Rural Construction Program.

(d) Maintain and secure land LOC's as necessary.

(e) Conduct reserve/reaction operations in the III CTZ to assist in the defense or relief of critical bases and selected population centers, and assist friendly forces in contact.

(f) Be prepared to conduct counter-insurgency operations anywhere in the RVN on order.

(g) Be prepared to release one reinforced battalion to COMUSMACV on 12-hour notice for commitment as a general reserve.

(2) 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate), vicinity of Bien Hoa.

(a) Designated the MACV General Reserve.

(b) Defend Bien Hoa Air Base in assigned operational area.

(c) Conduct offensive operations in assigned operational area against VC forces that threaten the security of the Bien Hoa Air Base.

(d) Defend other critical installations in or adjacent to assigned operational area.

(e) Conduct search and destroy operations against VC forces and bases outside assigned operational area in accordance with II FFORCEV directives and schedules.

(f) Conduct clearing operations in selected areas in accordance with II FFORCEV directives.

(g) Defend base area and conduct security operations contiguous to base area.

(h) Coordinate the defense of logistical units in the Long Binh Area.

(3) 2d Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division, vicinity of Cu Chi.

(a) Conduct search and destroy operations in assigned operational area.