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Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 8th Transportation Group

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE (ARMY) WASHINGTON DC

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**FROM:
Controlling DoD Organization. Assistant
Chief of Staff for Force Development
[Army], Washington, DC 20310.**

AUTHORITY

**AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980; AGO D/A ltr, 29
Apr 1980**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (12 Jun 70)

FOR OT UT 701171

25 June 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 8th Transportation Group, Period Ending 31 January 1970 (U)

AD 509877

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 4b, AR 525-15. Information of actions initiated as a result of subject report should be forwarded to ACSFOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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8th Transportation Group

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96226

AVCA QN-TO-3

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport)
for the period ending 31 January 1970, ACS CSFOR-65 (R-1)

THRU: Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
ATTN: AVCA QN-GO-H
APO 96238

TO: Assistant C of S for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington D. C. 20310

SECTION I

Operations: Significant Activities

A. COMMAND: (U)

1. Colonel Alex T. Langston Jr., commanded during the entire period. The principle staff officers were: LTC Gordon W. Anderson as Executive Officer; 1Lt John S. Maynard as S-1; Captain Julian L. Markham as S-2; Major Thomas G. Stevens as S-3; Captain Robert M. Weiss as S-4; Major John W. Alder replacing Major Glenn W. Long as Signal Officer/Assistant S-3; Captain Herbert H. Hicks replacing LTC Robert A. Arms who had replaced Major Orlando Chapman as Group Chaplain.

2. The 8th Transportation Group (MT) successfully performed its mission of line haul, local haul, and combat operations during the 92 days of the reporting period.

3. Inspector General, 1st Logistical Command, conducted an Annual General Inspection of HHD, 8th Transportation Group (MT) on 20-22 January 1970. An overall rating of SATISFACTORY was awarded. The Inspector General commented that HHD, 8th Transportation Group (MT) was the finest HHD he had inspected to date.

FOR OT UT

701171

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4. The 8th Transportation Group received visits from the following dignitaries on the dates indicated:

3 Nov 69 - LTO Frank. T. Mildron, Deputy Commanding General, USAFV

24 Nov 69 - COL Clifford C. Reynolds, DCO (Designate), USASC, QN

12 Dec 69 - BG Hubert S. Cunningham, CG, 173d Airborne Brigade

17 Jan 70 - COL William C. Applegate, DCO (Designate), USASC, QN

20 Jan 70 - COL Kenneth L. Stahl, Inspector General, 1st Logistical Command

B. PERSONNEL, ADMINISTRATION, MORALE, AND DISCIPLINE: (U)

1. a. During the reporting period, the 8th Transportation Group (MT) was under strength an average of 124 personnel. It should be noted that while the average daily under strength figure has decreased from previous reporting periods, total authorized strength has continued to decrease during the entire past 12 months. Since 1 February 1969, total authorized enlisted strength has decreased from 2611 to 1894, a drop of 717 spaces.

b. During the reporting period, the 8th Transportation Group has been short six (6) majors and five (5) warrant officers.

2. There were no special courts-martials during the reporting period, a drop from one during the previous reporting period.

3. Morale continued to be high throughout the 8th Transportation Group.

C. OPERATIONS: (C)

1. During this 92 day period, the 8th Transportation Group compiled 14,101,308 ton miles, traveling 2,678, 983 miles, hauling 212,096 tons of cargo, 20,415,200 gallons of petroleum and 10,638 passengers.

2. The command was involved in nine (9) major ambushes, twelve (12) sniping incidents and eight (8) mining incidents during the period. The statistical results of the encounters were:

KIA (US) - 0

WIA (US) - 10

KIA and WIA (Enemy) - 1

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POW's - 1

Vehicles destroyed or damaged - 27

TON due to enemy action - 469

Tonnage not moved due to enemy action - 4,273 s/t

3. Enemy action against convoy operations was sporadic during the period. From 4 January 1970 to 7 January 1970 the enemy perpetrated three (3) major ambushes and two (2) sniper incidents.

4. All but one platoon of the 545th Transportation Company (Light Truck) was detached from the 8th Transportation Group on 10 November 1969 and attached to the 593d General Support Group. The one platoon was moved from the company location in Phu Hiep to the 54th Transportation Battalion in Cha Rang and attached to the 523d Transportation Company (Light Truck).

5. On 21 November 1969, a POL platoon consisting of 17 tankers was detached from the 399th Transportation Company in Pleiku and attached to the 88th Transportation Company in An Khe. This was to balance POL assets to get the best utilization in line hauling POL from An Khe to Pleiku. This was done due to the fact that the pipeline between An Khe and Pleiku was subject to constant enemy interdiction and additional POL was required to be line hauled to Pleiku. The pipeline was non-operational from early November 1969 until 7 December 1969.

6. During the period November 1969 through January 1970 there was a marked increase of movement in the POL fleet. On 8 January 1970, the pipeline between An Khe and Pleiku was shut down permanently. Resupply to Pleiku then relied upon the 5,000 gallon tanker fleet of the 8th Transportation Group. Within the time span of one (1) month, the tankers had increased the fill at Pleiku to a point where a day to day requirement had to be determined by AC OF S Petroleum. The tanker fleet for this operation had been increased to ninety-three (93) task tankers. These assets were primarily placed in the Pleiku and An Khe areas for operations.

7. When the additional assets were acquired and operational for the month of January 1970, an average of 53.9 tankers a day were operational on QL-19 line haul daily. An average of 58.3 tankers a day were operational within the 8th Transportation Group area of operations. This is approximately 62% of the 8th Transportation Group's tanker assets operating on a daily basis. Information indicates the Pleiku tank farm is at an approximate average of 80% fill as the result of the constant flow of tankers into Pleiku.

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15 February 1970

8. On 27 December 1969, a 57th Transportation Battalion convoy arrived from Chu Lai with 15 5-ton tractors with 12-ton semitrailers. The 8th Transportation Group provided maintenance and mass support along with assistance in loading operations. The convoy was able to load and return to Chu Lai with no problems while in Qui Nhon.

9. On 3 January 1970, the 8th Transportation Group utilized 30 5-ton cargo trucks on a ROK troop move. This was a well coordinated move in all aspects.

10. Other troop moves during the period experienced continued misutilization of assets. Both personnel and equipment were tied up needlessly due to the inability of the moving units to load and off load.

11. The 8th Transportation Group was tasked to move 31 Sea-Land Vans to various destinations on 19 and 20 January 1970 as part of a test in the thru-put concept of containerized shipment of ammunition. The commitment was completed with no problems being encountered.

12. In December 1969 the 8th Transportation Group Communications Section changed the accountability system for SSI/SOI's. The purpose was to reduce the number of SOI's on hand and create a constant chain of accountability. The SOI booklets are assigned to specific vehicles and personnel, by separate numbers. Upon assignment of a booklet to a person, this assignment cannot be changed. The system was implemented using separately numbered books produced by the communications center. Thus from 8th Transportation Group headquarters to the subordinate battalions the accountability is, by using separate numbered books, a stronger system than used prior to December 1969 and it has reduced the previous distribution of the Groups SOI's.

13. Along with the change implemented above a new procedures policy for securing each book by the holders was published. The new policy required each user of the 8th Group SOI to secure his SOI booklet by means of a chain attached to a button hole on his fatigue uniform. The SOI booklet was then to be inserted into the left shirt pocket. Thus the possibility of a loss or compromise is reduced, because the booklet is attached to the uniform of the person using the SOI.

D. TRAINING: (U)

1. Training was conducted on each of the 92 days of the reporting period in accordance with the master training schedule and other applicable directives. As in the past, the majority of the training was conducted in the evening after the convoy had returned.

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2. The 8th Transportation Group completed a series of on the job training for Vietnamese mechanics as part of Project Buddy. Such a close working relationship was developed, that when the period ended, the units requested that more Vietnamese soldiers be attached to the 8th Transportation Group for on the job training.

E. SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE (C)

1. During the reporting period, the 8th Transportation Group exercised command and control for physical security of Compound Complex Charlie (CCC) a six square-mile area of the Qui Nhon Defense Installation comprised of sixteen (16) units and facilities. During the quarter, "E" Company Troop Command, USAD, QN was replaced by Property Disposal Company (Prov), USAD, QN.

2. A sound defensive posture has been maintained. Defense improvement projects have emphasized upgrading perimeter barriers and insuring a high level of personnel readiness, particularly in view of the approach of TET. Defensive capability was materially enhanced by the emplacement of fougasse devices along the southern perimeter of sub-Complex C-1 and by the construction of an internal access road to facilitate movement of reaction forces within the installation. In addition, the Compound Complex H&I program was improved by the introduction of a wild card approach featuring the use of gun trucks and other mobile equipment on a random basis. Capitalizing on the firepower and mobility of this equipment, this innovation adds flexibility and increased firepower to the H&I program.

3. During the reporting period the enemy perpetrated two RPG attacks against Compound Complex Charlie. On 6 January 1970 at 2335H, "E" Company, USAD received three (3) B-40 rockets and SA fire from an unknown size enemy force resulting in one (1) 8th Group S&P trailer destroyed and another damaged. On 17 January 1970 at 0155H, the Property Disposal Company area was attacked by SA fire and one (1) B-40 rocket resulting in one (1) US WIA. Although numerous incidents occurred during the reporting period, negative casualties and damage resulted therefrom.

4. Elements of 173D Support Battalion (Airborne) and of the Capitol ROK Infantry Division (CRID) made periodic patrols on Nui Hen Cha Mountain which borders the southern perimeter of Compound Complex Charlie. On 21 January 1970 at 1200H, a 173D Support Battalion patrol made contact with three (3) VC resulting in two (2) VC KIA, one (1) VC CIA along with one (1) B-40 rocket, two (2) rifles, one (1) pistol, three (3) hand grenades, assorted ammunition and documents captured.

F. LOGISTICS: (U)

1. Since the last reporting period the Group has received its authorized number M54A2C dropside 5-ton cargo trucks. The present count is 200 authorized and on hand.

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2. The AC of S Supply has initiated a program to standardize the entire 8th Group task vehicle fleet by shifting assets within the command to provide the Group with all diesel powered vehicles. The last M52A2 multifuel tractor was laterally transferred to the 5th Maintenance Battalion 1 February 1970. The Group still has nine M543A1 multifuel wreckers which may be switched if other units have diesel powered wreckers to transfer.

3. A program was established to rehabilitate M52A1 tractors with high mileage. Selected tractors are turned into the 86th Maintenance Battalion where they are returned to a green condition except for age and mileage.

4. An offshore rehabilitation program was initiated for M127 series S&P semitrailers. At present, four (4) trailers have been retrograded. No information has been received concerning their return.

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SECTION II

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

A. COMMAND: (U) None

B. PERSONNEL: (U) None

C. OPERATIONS: (C)

1. ITEM: Maintaining 100 meters Interval in Convoy.

a. OBSERVATION: In a recent ambush in the An Khe Pass, certain Han Jin (contract) vehicles did not maintain proper interval when forced to halt. Several additional vehicles were then in the "kill zone" than would have been if the 100 meter interval had been maintained.

b. EVALUATION: By maintaining a 100 meter interval at all times, the number of task vehicles exposed in a "kill zone" would be limited, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the enemy's ambush.

c. RECOMMENDATIONS: That all units involved in convoy operations in a combat zone be aware of the value of maintaining the 100 meter interval.

2. ITEM: Armor Plating of Task Vehicles.

a. OBSERVATION: All 8th Transportation Group task vehicles have had a piece of armor plating placed in the window well and under the driver's seat. Because of this armor plating, the drivers were able to remain in their trucks when halted in a kill zone when being ambushed. Although the vehicles were hit numerous times by small arms fire, no rounds penetrated the armor plating. The drivers were able to move immediately upon the direction of the convoy commander. In vehicles not belonging to 8th Transportation Group caught in the "kill zone", that did not possess the armor plating, the drivers were forced to abandon their vehicles and seek cover in the ditch. Both an increase in casualties and a loss of control over the drivers was experienced due to the fact that they had to leave their vehicles.

b. EVALUATION: The installation of armor plating in the doors and on the floor of convoy vehicles is a definite factor in reducing casualties when ambushed. In addition, greater control over the convoys is established by allowing the drivers to remain in their vehicles while in an ambush.

c. RECOMMENDATIONS: That all vehicles operated in convoy in a combat zone be outfitted with armor plating in the doors and on the floor for drivers protection.

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D. INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY: (U) None

A. TRAINING: (U) None

F. LOGISTICS: (U)

1. ITEM: Vehicle Assets

a. OBSERVATION: Units of the 8th Transportation Group are turning in M52A series tractors at a faster rate than ever before. The fleet presently encompasses fifty (50) tractors with over 45,000 miles. The DSUs are not welding cracked frames and are less stringent on their criteria for turn in.

b. EVALUATION: The 8th Transportation Group has received 83 new 5-ton tractors since 23 November 1969. These have served to lower the deadline rates of the units and thereby increased the availability of task vehicles.

c. RECOMMENDATIONS: Work be continued to turn in the 50 5D model 5 ton tractors still presently on the rosters of the units.

2. ITEM: Landing Legs for M127A2 S & P semitrailers

a. OBSERVATION: The new landing leg kits promised for delivery in October 1969 were not forthcoming.

b. EVALUATION: A field fix was developed by SFC Cave and CW2 King utilizing 4 1/2" OD pipe as a lower leg. The modification has proven successful, inexpensive, and simple to supply.

c. RECOMMENDATIONS: The new leg is basically weak. A new leg similar to the field fix would do much to improve the overall performance of the M127A2 trailer.

3. ITEM: Wheel Cylinders for M127 Series 12 ton S & P Semitrailers

a. OBSERVATION: An inordinate number of wheel cylinders are requiring replacement on semitrailers. These items are in short supply.

b. EVALUATION: Wheel cylinders are "blown" and become unserviceable due to improper braking by operating personnel and improper adjustment by mechanics. The operators tend to utilize the emergency (Johnston Bar) brake to lock all trailer wheels instead of using the normal service brakes. This greatly shortens the life of the cylinders.

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c. RECOMMENDATIONS: Drivers should be educated in the proper procedures for operation of a tractor-trailer rig prior to being shipped overseas.

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Alex T. Langston Jr
ALEX T. LANGSTON, JR
Colonel, TC
Commanding

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AVCA 2N-GC-H (15 Feb 70) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 8th Transportation Group (motor Transport)
for the Period Ending 31 January 1970 RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, APO 96238 2 Mar 70

TO: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GC-C, APO 96238

1. (C) The Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 8th Transportation Group for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1970 has been reviewed by this headquarters and the following comments are submitted:

a. SECTION II, paragraph C 1: Concur. Maintaining 100 meter interval in convoy.

b. SECTION II, paragraph C 2: Concur. It is a well known fact that small arms rounds which easily pierce the outer door panel will not penetrate the 3/8" armor plate. Implementation by other units is based on availability of armor plating and priority of other projects requiring armor plating.

c. SECTION II, paragraph F 1: Concur. All 5-ton vehicles with cracked frames are shipped for repair to 2d Log Comd per 1st Log Comd directive. This has indeed facilitated the turn-in of 8th Gp tractors.

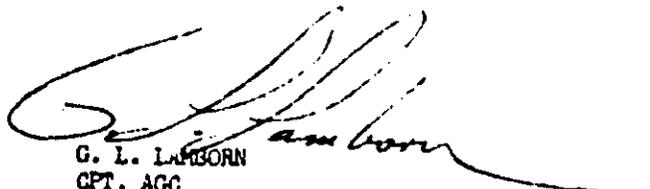
d. SECTION II, paragraph F 2: Concur. The landing legs on M127A20 S&P Semitrailers, FSN 2590-177-8249, have proven unsatisfactory due to structural design. The field fix, developed by 8th Transportation Group, has extended the service life of the leg during a period when replacement legs were not available. An equipment improvement recommendation has been submitted on the leg. Pending an adequate supply of replacement legs or an improvement in the present design, the "field fix" will continue to be applied as needed.

e. SECTION II, paragraph F 3: Concur. 8th Trans Gp conducts a continuous drivers' training program, but intensive AIT type training would also help.

2. (U) The report is considered adequate as modified by the above comments.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

REF: 2161


G. L. LAMBORN
CPT, AGC
Asst Adjutant General

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AVCA GO-MH (15 Feb 70) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 8th Transportation
Group for period ending 31 January 1970 RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)(U)

DA, Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96384

26 MAR 1970

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by Headquarters, 8th Transportation Group for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1970 is forwarded.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning armor plating of task vehicles, page 7, paragraph C2. Concur. The use of armor plate in doors and on the floors of task vehicles is a highly successful defense against small arms fire. Additionally, the installation of this material on the floor minimizes the susceptibility of drivers to serious injury from mines. Sand bags, while effective and commonly used, interfere with the drivers' operation of pedals and controls. Due to its great value, action should be initiated to develop an FWO or an ENSURE requirement for such an armor kit. This would remove the burden from units who now must fabricate these items locally using whatever material that can be procured. Such a program has been initiated for additional belly armor for APC's.

b. Reference item concerning landing legs for M 127A2 S&P semitrailers, page 8, paragraph f2. Concur. New trailer leg kits were not available during the reported period but the condition is expected to improve in the very near future. The field fix noted has been reported and is considered to be adequate. However, the statement that the trailer legs are basically weak could be disputed. Observations and reports from the field tend to indicate that improper driver practices are the primary cause of damaged trailer legs.

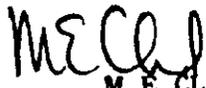
c. Reference item concerning wheel cylinders for M127 series 12 ton S&P semitrailers, page 8, paragraph f3. Concur. Drivers should be trained in CONUS, however, this training should also be continued in the using unit.

3. Concur with the basic report as modified by this and previous indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: LEN 4862

CF:
USASUPCOM, QNH
8th Trans Gp


M. E. CLARK
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

//

11 APR 1970

AVHGC-DST (15 Feb 70) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport)
for the Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R-1)

Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1970 from Headquarters, 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) and concurs with the comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Reference item concerning "Armor Plating of Task Vehicles", page 12, paragraph 1b, 1st Ind: it appears that armor plating in the window well and under the driver's seat serves a vital purpose when vehicles are under attack. Recommend that USAMC explore the possibility of a modification for vehicles which would protect drivers while under attack.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


F. D. MURRAY
CPT, ACC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
1st Log Comd
8th Trans Gp

GPOP-DT (15 Feb 70) 4th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 8th Transportation Group (Motor
Transport) for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOM-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96358 27 APR 70

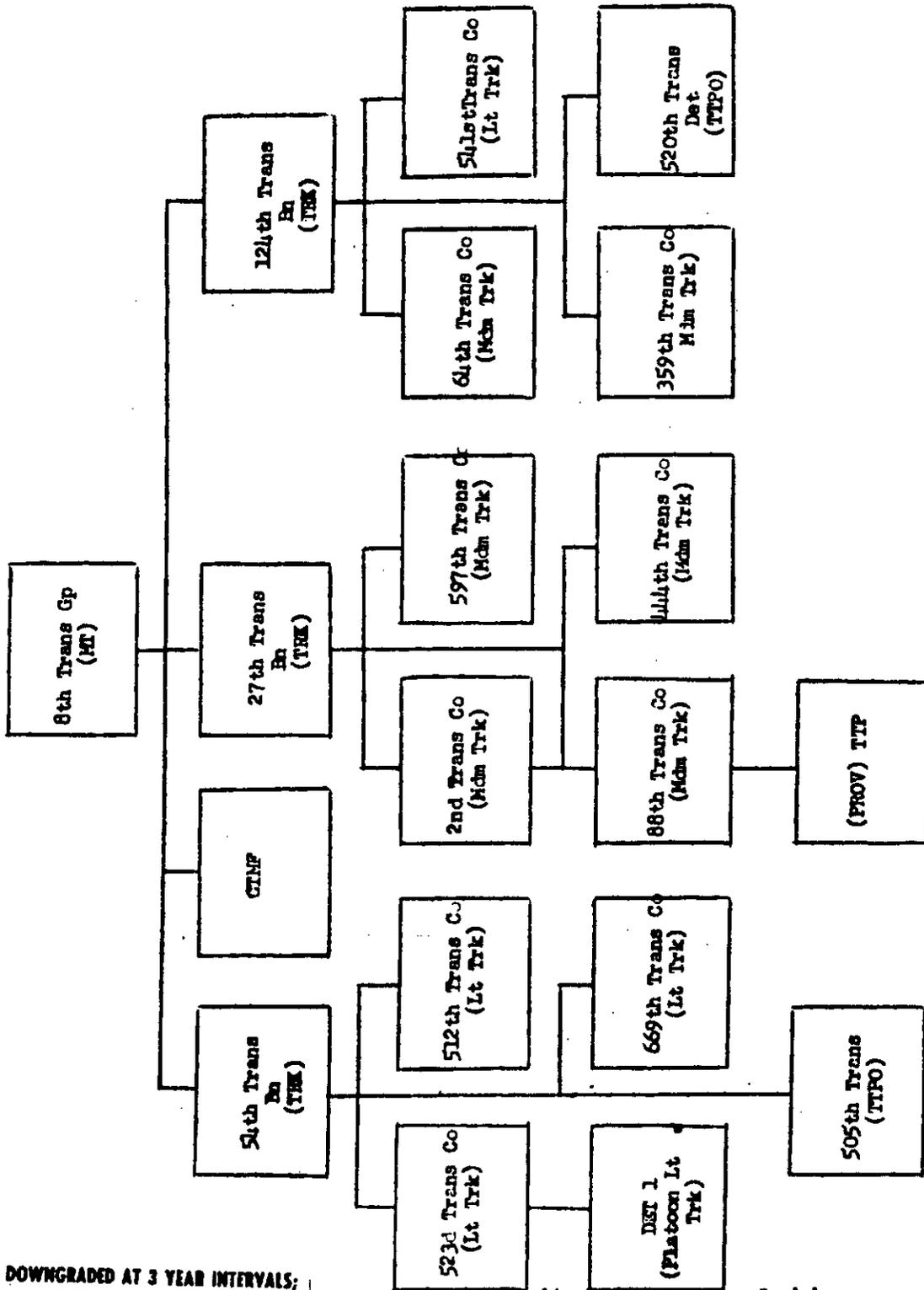
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


I.M. OZAKI
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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