

HEADQUARTERS, 3D BRIGADE  
25th Infantry Division  
APO U.S. Forces 96225

AVTL-C-OP

5 May 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV 33-32)

THRU: Commanding General  
Field Force Vietnam I  
Nha Trang, RVN  
APO U.S. Forces 96240

TO: Commander  
U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
ATTN: J343  
APO U.S. Forces 96243

1. NAME AND TYPE OPERATION: LONGFELLOW; search and destroy.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 170930H April to 011730H May 1966.
3. LOCATION: Kontum Province.
4. CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters, 3d Brigade Task Force, 25th Infantry Division.

5. UNIT COMMANDERS:

3d Brigade Task Force: Brigadier General Glenn D. Walker.  
1st Battalion, 35th Infantry: Lieutenant Colonel Edward F. Callanan.  
2d Battalion, 35th Infantry: Lieutenant Colonel George A. Scott.  
2d Battalion, 9th Artillery: Lieutenant Colonel Saul A. Jackson.  
3d Support Battalion (Provisional): Major Herbert C. Evans.  
52d Aviation Battalion: Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Cody.  
C Troop, 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry: Captain Will E. Duffer.  
Company D, 65th Engineer Battalion: Captain James VDZ Brown.

6. TASK ORGANIZATION.

Headquarters, 3d Brigade Task Force.  
1st Battalion, 35th Infantry.  
2d Battalion, 35th Infantry.  
2d Battalion, 9th Artillery.  
3d Support Battalion (Provisional).  
52d Aviation Battalion.

C Troop, 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry.  
Company B, 1st Battalion, 69th Armor.  
Company D, 65th Engineer Battalion.

7. SUPPORTING FORCES.

a. 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery: The 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery reinforced by Battery A, 1st Battalion 30th Artillery provided direct support to elements of the 3d Brigade Task Force and elements of the 24th Special Tactical Zone. During the operation the following statistics were compiled:

(1) Artillery rounds fired:

	<u>HE</u>	<u>Ill</u>	<u>WP</u>	<u>Smoke</u>
105mm howitzer	5548	147	602	156
155mm howitzer	<u>1644</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>16</u>
Total	7192	178	636	172 = 8178

(2) Missions fired: H & I - 1354 defensive concentrations - 67, landing zone preparations - 226; Total - 1647.

b. 7th USAF: Provided close air support and forward air controllers. Almost without exception requests for close air support were honored. Convoys were covered and almost all landing zones received preparatory fires by USAF aircraft.

c. 52d Aviation Battalion: Supported 3d Brigade Task Force with three airmobile companies. Support for 24th Special Tactical Zone Forces, ARVN was provided on a mission basis. Typical support roles were troop lifts, landing zone preparations, and resupply missions. Close coordination between ground commanders and the aviation company commander or flight leader involved, resulted in uncomplicated operations.

d. ARVN: Elements of 24th STZ worked closely with the brigade task force during the operation. Route security, convoy escort, and search and destroy missions in conjunction with US efforts contributed to the overall success of the operation. Close coordination within the joint US and ARVN tactical operations center alleviated many problems in the operational area.

e. CIDG: During the operation a CIDG company was attached to an infantry battalion conducting search and destroy operations. This attachment proved highly beneficial because the CIDG personnel knew the terrain. CIDG personnel also provided security for the logistics complex located at DAK TO.

8. INTELLIGENCE.

a. Anticipated.

(1) Enemy strength, location, and disposition.

(a) 407th VC Battalion and elements of the B9 Regiment associated with KONTUM Province were suspected to have integrated large numbers of NVA. Source: ARVN.

(b) 200th Main Force Weapons Battalion suspected in KONTUM Province armed with 75mm howitzer and 12.7mm AA guns. Source: ARVN and USSF.

(c) An unidentified VC/VMC Battalion and 2 separate VC/VMC companies suspected in area of operation. Source: ARVN and USSF.

(2) Enemy situation (probable courses of action).

(a) Avoid contact.

(b) Harass and interdict lines of communication with small units, snipers, mines and booby traps.

(c) Attack friendly forces with all locally available forces (two battalions, reinforced).

b. Actual.

(1) Enemy strength: Operations in the LONGFELLOW area of operation resulted in very sporadic, light enemy contact (See Inclosure #2). Except on two occasions, the enemy operated in squads or smaller units composed mainly of VC or VMC. The two exceptions were as follows:

(a) On 21 April 1966, ARVN ambushed an estimated company size element of NVA (determination based on arms captured; i.e., AKs, CKCs, and RPD) vic YB898378.

(b) On 30 April 1966, elements of 2d Battalion, 35th Infantry contacted an estimated platoon of VC at coordinates ZB075564.

(2) Enemy operation: Throughout Operation LONGFELLOW, VC and NVA units avoided major contact with US and ARVN forces. For the most part, the enemy attempted to harass friendly forces through the use of snipers, mines, and punji traps. On two occasions the enemy attempted an ambush of friendly forces. One attempt is indicated in paragraph 8b (1) (b), above; the other occurred on 30 April 1966, vicinity YB998292 to ZB005289. During the first action the enemy allowed US forces to pass through and ambushed ARVN elements following; the second action was against an ARVN convoy moving refugees into the DAK TO area.

c. Enemy units identified.

	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMPOSITION</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>
(1) Confirmed:	None		

	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>COMPOSITION</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>
(2) Probable:	Elms of K6 Bn, 12th Regt, 350th Div, 2 sep LF co	NVA	Unk
(3) Possible:	None		
(4) Unconfirmed	200th Wpns Bn 102 Co (NVA)	NVA NVA	200 Unk

d. Other significant intelligence.

(1) Personnel losses.

	<u>VC</u>
KIA (BC)	11
KIA (POSS)	
KBA (BC)	
KBA (POSS)	
WIA	
WIA (POSS)	4
CIA	15 (7 VMC, 8 VMCS)
RALLIER	—
	30

(2) Equipment losses.

(a) Arms and ammunition.

1. 1 Chicom rifle.
2. 1 Thompson SMG.
3. 3 cases 45 cal ammunition.
4. 2 cases carbine ammunition.
5. Forty one 81mm rds.
6. Misc 30 cal rds.
7. Eighty one 82mm cannisters.
8. 24 blasting caps.
9. 1 box trip devices.
10. 2 cases frag grenades.

11. 1 case concussion grenades.

12. Four 60mm mortar rds.

(b) Other.

1. 90 tons rice.

2. 123 pigs.

3. 52 chickens.

4. Assorted military equip and uniforms.

5. 1 medical chest with drugs.

6. Misc documents.

7. 1 bicycle.

8. 5 rucksacks.

9. 80 structures destroyed.

(3) Significant contacts and findings are as shown on overlay at Inclosure #2.

e. Overlay, Inclosure #2 - Actual Enemy Situation

f. Terrain.

(1) Cover and concealment.

(a) Cover: Fair to poor in the open valleys, good in the jungle covered mountains, ravines and gulleys.

(b) Concealment: Open valleys and cleared fields offered limited concealment. Mountains and small valleys offered excellent concealment due to the extremely thick jungle canopy.

(2) Obstacles: The primary obstacle encountered was thick, secondary growth in the mountains and along the stream beds.

(3) Critical features.

(a) DAK PO KO River.

(b) Highway 14.

(c) DAK TO Airfield.

- (d) THAN CANH Airstrip.
- (e) All bridges and by-pass sites from THAN CANH to  
DAK PEK.
- (f) All villages.
- (g) DAK ROI LONG Valley.

(4) Observation: Very limited in mountains except from prominent terrain features.

(5) Avenues of approach.

- (a) Highway 14.
- (b) River valleys and stream beds.
- (c) Gullies.
- (d) All indigeneous trails.

g. Weather: Afternoon rain showers of approximately one hour duration occurred with increasing frequency during April. Scattered clouds and temperatures in the upper 80s prevailed throughout the operation.

h. CA/Psy War evaluation: N/A (Covered in sep rept).

i. Conclusions.

(1) Operation LONGFELLOW from 17 April 1966 to 1 May 1966.

(2) The relatively large volume of SA and AW fire from ground to air indicated enemy fire discipline was poor. Therefore, the majority of fire was probably from local VC/VMC forces.

(3) Lack of contact with enemy in area of operation can be attributed to enemy decision to avoid contact due to the strength of friendly troops in area of operation.

(4) Enemy strength probably consisted of two companies of IF/militia forces in the area of operation, except for ARVN engagement 21 April when they estimated they were operating against a NVA company size element.

(5) Captured documents and the release of refugees indicated enemy is suffering from a shortage of medical equipment and food stuffs.

(6) Probable infiltration routes: Inclosure #2.

(7) Active VC areas: Operation LONGFELLOW uncovered two confirmed active VC areas and one possible VC active area as follows:

(a) Active area 1: This area is bounded by coordinates YB780500, YB905500, YB905460, YB780460. Estimated one LF company of VC/VMC operates in this area in squad and smaller size elements. Probable missions of this company are to control indigenous personnel in the production of crops and act as guides for infiltration groups.

(b) Active area 2: This area is bounded by coordinates ZB005580, ZB090580, ZB090520, ZB005520. Estimated one LF company of VC/VMC operates in this area in squad and smaller size elements. Probable missions of this company are to control indigenous personnel in the production of crops and act as guides for infiltration groups.

(c) Possible active area: This area is bounded by coordinates YB727390, YB810390, YB810300, YB724300. This possibility is based on constant VR which revealed numerous signs of fresh trails and new construction.

(8) The DAK ROLONG River Valley, long suspected as a main infiltration route, was searched in considerable detail. As a result of this search it has been determined that the trails in the valley from vicinity coordinate YB779524 north west to the border had not been used in 5-6 months. It is now believed that this portion of the route has either been abandoned or is a seasonal route which could become active during the rainy season. Commander of the USSF Detachment at DAK PEK indicated that the same is true of the DAK KIAP River Valley.

#### 9. MISSION.

3d Brigade Task Force conducts search and destroy operations in northwest KONTUM province in conjunction with the engineer effort effecting repair and improvement of Highway 14 between THAN CANH and DAK PEK.

10. CONCEPT. This operation will be conducted in three phases.

a. Phase I: 1/14 Infantry relieves 2/35 Infantry; provides Highway 19 security on 12 April; 3d Brigade Task Force (-) conducts air and motor movement from brigade base camp to area vicinity THAN CANH and establishes brigade base of operations at that location.

b. Phase II: Task force (-) conducts search and destroy operations north of DAK TO to DAK PEK and from 1000 meters west of Highway 14 to Cambodia/Laos and Vietnam borders. This operation will be characterized by small unit reconnaissance patrolling action to locate and interdict enemy movement along infiltration trails by establishing ambushes in assigned AO. Reserves will be maintained at all levels as reaction forces should significant targets be developed. Enemy caches will be used as "bait" at an established ambush, but caches and installations will be destroyed prior to departure from the area if evacuation is not practical.

c. Phase II: Conduct motor and air movement to brigade base camp.

11. EXECUTION.

a. Chronological development of the operation (numbers in the left hand column key the item to the overlay at inclosure 1).

(1) 130630 to 170930 April: Engineer company conducted route repairs to raise road classification of Highway 14 to class 30 from PLEIKU to THAN CANH; priority of effort north of KONTUM. Brigade task force (-) moved to forward base.

(2) 170930 April: 2/35 elm conducted helicopter assault into landing zone 4 in sector OHIO.

(3) 181500 April: 1/35 elm conducted helicopter assault into landing zone 5, in sector ALABAMA.

(4) 190800 April: 2/35 elm conducted eagle flights into landing zone 8 and landing zone 11 in sector OHIO. 1/35 conducted search and destroy operations in sector ALABAMA.

(5) 200730 April: 2/35 conducted helicopter assault into landing zone 14 and landing zone 17 and commenced search and destroy operations in sector DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA. 1/35 conducted helicopter assault into landing zone 15 and began landing zone improvement in sector HAWAII.

(6) 210730 April: Elm, 1/35 helilift into landing zone 19. 2/35 conducted operations in sector DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

(7) 230800 April: 1/35 continued operations in sector HAWAII moving by ground into sector NEW YORK during the afternoon. 2/35 continued operations in sector DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

(8) 250730 April: 1/35 (-) with attached CIDG company conducted helicopter assault and search and destroy operations in sector MAINE. A/1/35 moved overland into landing zone 24 in sector MAINE. A/2/35 helilifted into sector ALASKA at landing zone 27 at 1300.

(9) 270830 April: 2/35 conducted helicopter assault into landing zone 29 to commence search and destroy operations in sector UTAH. 1/35 continued operations in MAINE and IOWA.

(10) 280730 April: 1/35 and 2/35 continued operations in sectors IOWA and UTAH. At 300730, 2/35 commenced movement to THAN CANH, closing there at 1350. 1/35 commenced movement to THAN CANH at noon and closed that location at 1725.

12. RESULTS.

a. Summary of friendly and enemy personnel losses.

(1) Friendly:

<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>
1	108
2 (Nonhostile)	

(2) Enemy: Para 8d (1) above.

b. Summary of friendly and enemy equipment loss.

(1) Friendly: No equipment was lost to the enemy.

(2) Enemy: Para 8d (2) above.

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.

a. Supply.

(1) There were no significant problems with Class I, III, or V supply. Modified B ration proved to be an outstanding morale booster.

(2) Major Mann, 1st Logistics Command was very cooperative.

(3) The battalion S4's did outstanding work.

(4) Replacement clothing was not available. Emphasis should be placed on obtaining jungle fatigues, boots, socks, etc, for distribution to personnel requiring replacement items during the operation.

b. Personnel administration and services.

(1) There was no ice source available.

(2) Laundry point was excellent.

(3) Shower point was excellent.

(4) Water point was excellent.

c. Medical evacuation was good.

(1) The majority of injuries were not critical.

(2) There were no reported cases of malaria.

(3) There were no night requirements for "DUSTOFF".

d. Communications.

(1) Terrain features such as hill masses reduced the operational effectiveness of FM radios. Relay stations were employed. The vehicle mounted automatic retransmission units were inefficient because they were employed in positions similar to the termination stations, and the hill masses interfered with their performance. Adequate automatic radio retransmissions should be made available for the PRC 25. These can be employed on hill tops to get line of sight characteristics required by FM radios.

(2) FM radios in the OH-23 were often either nonoperational or the transmissions were so garbled that the receiving station could not understand them.

(3) The administration/logistic net must be used more often. Too many transmissions concerning administration or logistics were made on the command/operations net.

e. Transportation: No particular problems were encountered.

f. Special equipment and techniques: None.

14. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS.

a. LONGFELLOW provided a good "shake down" and invaluable experience for the brigade.

b. The limited enemy force in the area elected to avoid contact.

c. The engineer effort on Route 14 was a complete success. Company D, 65th Engineer Battalion, a combat engineer company, accomplished the mission of a construction engineer organization with little difficulty.

d. LONGFELLOW provided valuable information about the terrain in the area of operation which included trail networks and landing zones for subsequent operations.

e. Operation LONGFELLOW pointed out the need for timely and accurate intelligence. Most information provided prior to the operation was proven to be in error.

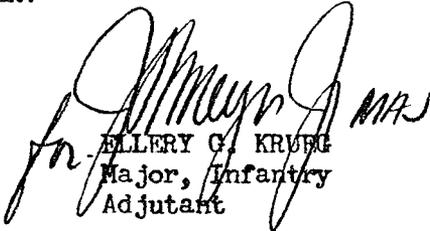
f. Communication is an essential ingredient of control. The terrain in the operations area caused communication difficulty which dictated manual aerial radio relay or automatic radio retransmission. During the operation the automatic radio retransmission unit was not available for the PRC 25 and the vehicular mounted set had to be used. The latter, of necessity, was implaced in similar areas to those where units were already experiencing communication difficulty thus negating

good communication. If the FRC 25 retransmission works as it should, it can be implaced unattended on a hill top to overcome the hill massing effect, on line of sight FM requirements. The capability of unattended operation saves combat troops normally used to secure manual relay or vehicular mounted automatic retransmission units.

g. There are significant advantages gained when the joint operations center is used. Coordination is more rapid and effective. Mutually supporting maneuvers and fire support plans can be established more readily and a spirit of cooperation is created among the friendly forces involved in the operation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

2 Incl:  
1 - Area of Op Schematic  
2 - En Sit Overlay

  
ELLERY G. KRUEG  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

Enclosure 1 Area of Operations Schematic Operation LONGFELLOW

