

Australian Army Training Team
Vietnam (AATTV)

Narrative, Annexes
1 - 31 May 1964

Series: AWM95 - Australian Army
commanders' diaries

Item: 1/2/24

COMMANDERS DIARY
NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION AATTV

COMMANDING OFFICER Col F P SERONG, OBE

Report will be enclosed with the annexes in AF C 2119. If this is not available the cover will be prepared in manuscript.

MONTH AND YEAR May 64

Place and grid reference

Day of Month

Hour

Event or information

SECRET

Annex letter and enclosure number

1

To QUANG NGAI from DANANG. Visited 25th Division for briefing on DO XA operation, and Sector situation. QUANG NGAI Sector in bad shape. DO XA just starting. Several items of hardware; much VC fire at landing aircraft; no VC contact. Discussed operation with Generals TRI, THIEM, CHIEU, STILWELL. General STILWELL agreed to the placing of Maj MURPHY AATTV at NHA TRANG. Tried to fly into DO XA with a group of three HUFB's. Weathered out. Returned to SAIGON.

2

Briefed Lt Col MONAGHAN, Maj MURPHY on latter's move to NHA TRANG. First rain of the new wet season (apart from sprinkles) last night. Looks like an early wet. Small aircraft carrier MSTC "CARD" sunk at SAIGON wharf this morning early. Resting on bottom superstructure showing. VC sabotage. Probably recoverable. "CARD" is a helicopter ferry from the PHILIPPINES.

3

4

5

Caribou crashed at TAN HIEP near MY THO. Whole complement of 15 dead. Apparently engine failure.

6

Discussed R & D personnel projects with Major MAXWELL up from SINGAPORE.

7

To BAN ME THOUT with visitor from Defence. Helio. Good progress has been made by Captain PETERSEN in organising the RHADE.

SECRET

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MONTH AND YEAR MAY 64

SECRET

Place a 1 grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	8		Took Defence visitor for briefing at US Embassy. Discussed employment of Captain TEAGUE at QUANG NGAI with Mr. Ralph JOHNSON of US Embassy, who wants him down there more or less full time. Agreed so long as we hold the house in DANANG.	
	9		CAN and DONG executed today, in SAIGON and HUE respectively. VC attempted preparation of Cong Ly Bridge on road from SAIGON to TSN Airport discovered.	
	10			
	11		General Maxwell TAYLOR arrives.	
	12		Secretary McNAMARA arrives. Conference with THOMPSON (BRIAM) on broadening scope of war by political action.	
	13		Farewell dinner for General and Mrs. TIMMES at Caravelle by MACV/MAAG staff. Rush of anti-KHANH posters by Buddhists in SAIGON. Secretary McNAMARA departs.	
	14		Senior Advisors conference, conducted by General WESTMORELAND. Much stress on additional items of equipment approved during Sec. of Def visit. Letter received from Paymaster-in-Chief on allowances and dollar expenditure. Places ceiling of \$US6500 monthly. This is halfway between their suggested \$5000 and our \$8000. Not enough. We will have to force this up.	
	15		Talked Mr. CROZIER of Australian Embassy on plan for distribution of gift tools to provinces. Agreed AATTV would handle 11 northern provinces with CSD assistance.	

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	16		Wet season battles have started. Big co-ordinate attack by VC battalion on five elements early Thursday morning. GVN announces 100% manpower draft.	
	17			
	18		Debriefed Lt Col McNAMARA who relinquishes post as D Comd AATTV. Gave him instructions for talk to DCGS on AATTV position and needs.	
	19		Planned first portion of replacement program for SF components. Lt Col McNAMARA departed for AUSTRALIA. He has done a fine job. Message received from D Inf authorizing us to vary departure dates of AATTV Infantry personnel (presumably OR). This helps. Letter from General YARBOROUGH enclosing copies of his signal to General HARKINS asking for renewed action on visit by me in late July.	
	20			
	21		US MP vehicle grenaded in SAIGON. VC shot by MP. Most office shifting consequent upon the recent MAAG absorption within MACV is now completed. Conference with British Ambassador on expanding political base of war. Conference with GSD on transportation and Psy-war support for tool distribution programme.	
	22		Letter received from CGS on increase for AATTV. US Recon flights over LAOS begin. Talk of UN control of VN/CAMBODIA border.	
	23			

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MONTH AND YEAR

MAY 64

SECRET

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	24		GVN proclaims amalgamation of all military and paramilitary forces under Defence Dept.	
	25		Completed proposals on AATTV program and despatched to CGS. Briefed Ambassador on AATTV proposals.	
	26		Captain BOILEAU rang to say DANANG house in jeopardy. Arranged for DE SILVA to signal telling them to hold it. Conferred with J4 MACV on use of MATS space available for AATTV. Proceeding. Large Buddhists procession through SAIGON, 0730 to about 1000. Part of the week-long Buddha Birthday celebrations. Speeches by BUSK and STEVENSON indicate that US is aiming at broadening the war by political action.	
	27		Conference with US Psy ops advisors on how to organize feed-back of captured VC progaganda.	
	28		To BAN ME THOUT via NHA TRANG. Visited Maj MURPHY in NHA TRANG, where he is assisting with supply operations for SF posts. Then to Captain PETERSEN in BAN ME THOUT. Province Chief being replaced by Montagnard-interesting move.	
	29		Discussions with Montagnard leaders.	
	30		Visited AN JAC area to SOUTH of BAN ME THOUT by road, with light escort. To SAIGON by Helio-courier, arriving 1200 hrs.	
	31		Checked base and depot areas in rear TSN. All quiet.	

SECRET

Monthly Report submitted AHQ

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AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM VIETNAM

REPORT NO 22
FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 1964

BY
COLONEL F. P. SERONG, OBE, COMMANDING

GENERAL:

1. No change in the pattern of trends. The situation remains serious. Each weekend brings its crop of coup rumors, which never materialize, but are indicative.
2. VC pressure is intensifying around SAIGON, with significant VC troop movements away from the Southern Delta, which they now regard as theirs.
3. An interesting facet of their operations is the sharp increase in terrorism. This I read as consistent with their apparent desire to bring the war to a decision, (not to say completion) by 3 November 64.
4. Meanwhile, GVN initiated pressure is waning.

HEALTH:

5. Captain DE LA HUNTY, while accompanying a patrol from AN DIEM suffered an internal pain which caused his helicopter evacuation. After rest, he returned to duty.

MORALE:

6. Good.

WELL BEING:

7. The advice of the Military Secretary on the Decorations and Awards position has been noted with appreciation.

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COMMENDATION:

8. I have observed with great satisfaction the outstanding work of the small group at DUC MY Ranger Training Centre, under the leadership of Major R.C. KENNEDY. Over the last twelve months, an increasing quantity and variety of tasks has been placed with this installation, which now handles simultaneously, the training of Ranger Battalions, Leaders (Jungle, Mountain, Swamp Course) and Recruits.

9. Major KENNEDY has been well supported by Captain IRVINE, whose work has earned my earlier commendation. Particular note should now be made of the work of WO D.C. DALTON, who has recorded a splendid sustained effort in his handling of the complex and physically arduous Jungle, Mountain, Swamp Course; and WO D.J. NEVILLE, who; first in Basic Ranger Training, and more recently in Unit Training, has put the stamp of his own personnel excellence on several thousand ARVN elite troops.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES:

10. DONG DA (PHU BAI)

2 Bn 6 Regt continues its interrupted 5 week programme.

2 Bn 2 Regt began its deferred 5 week programme.

CC 1 (Inf): Completed 5th week of 9 week programme.

CC 1 (Sig): Completed 3rd week of 5 week programme.

Recruits: Three companies in training.

Combat Youth: 188 Personnel commended training 18 May.

11. Special Forces, CIDG (Village Defence)

KHAM DUC: WO COLLINSON is assisting with the change over of two incoming and two outgoing teams.

AN DIEM: Continues patrolling the KATU country. Aircraft serving this post are frequently hit by ground fire.

KHE SAHN: Border surveillance operations continue.

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12.

DUC MY:

23 Ranger Bn completed its six week course
JSM course 14 (redesignated 4/64) continues.
Basic Ranger course 16 continues.

13.

VUNG TAO:

Special Cadre Course No 2 continues.

CONCLUSION:

14. Within the Vietnamese Military, official and civil community,
there has evolved an atmosphere of doubt and a waiting tenseness.

F. P. Seery
Col
Comd. AATTV
8 Jun 64

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ANNEX "A" to
AATTV Report No. 22

ARRIVALS

Number	Rank	Name	Scheduled date of arrival	Actual date of arrival	Station
235063	Maj	T.C. BANNISTER	15 May 64	15 May 64	DUC MY
31951	WO2	E.W. RAMSDALE	15 May 64	15 May 64	SAIGON
29010	WO2	W.J. LAPHORNE	15 May 64	15 May 64	DONG DA

DEPARTURES

Number	Rank	Name	Scheduled date of departure	Actual date of departure	Station
12983	WO2	R.W. COOK	15 May 64	14 May 64	DONG DA
32128	WO2	J.C. SWANSON	15 May 64	14 May 64	SAIGON
2270	Lt Col	R.G.P.S. NOMANARA	15 Jun 64	19 May 64	SAIGON

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ANNEX "B" to
AATV Report No. 22

CASUALTIES

52693

Capt N.F. DE LA HUNTY

Pain in the kidney region.

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ANNEX "C" to
AATTV Report No. 22

APPOINTMENTS

1.

SAIGON:

Col F.P. SERONG: Comd
Lt Col J.G. MONAGHAN: Dep Comd, Advisor OMT Div
Capt C.L.T. MCDONAGH: Adm Offr
WO1 H.D. CLIVELY: Adm WO
WO2 K.W. RAMSDALE: Replacing WO 1 CLIVELY

2.

DANANG (GSD):

Capt G.F. BOILEAU: Combined studies
Capt A.B. PETERSEN: Detached BAN ME THUOT
Capt P.C. JARRATT: Detached VUNG TAU
Capt I.C. TRAGUE: Replacing Capt G.F. BOILEAU

3.

DANANG (Special Forces)

Maj J.M. MURPHY: "C" Team NHA TRANG
Capt J.J. BURROWS: "B" Team DANANG
Capt N.F. DE LA HUNTY: "A" Team AN DIEM
WO2 J. W. ROUGHLEY: "A" Team AN DIEM (detached ASHAU).
WO2 B. STOKES: "A" Team AN DIEM (detached ASHAU)
WO2 J.S. MCCOURT: "A" Team AN DIEM (detached TARAU)
WO2 D.W. DONKIN: "A" Team KHE SANH
WO2 R.E. ROONEY: "A" Team KHE SANH
WO2 R.J. COLLINSON: "A" KHE SANH (detached KHAM DUC)

4.

DONG DA

Maj I.G. MCKEOWN: Senior Australian Advisor, Adv S3.
Capt R.L. POLLARD: Chief Tactics Committee
WO1 G.E. CHINN: Tactics Committee
WO1 R.A. BANDY: Tactics Committee
WO2 K.G. CONWAY: Tactics Committee
WO2 W.J. LAPHORNE: Tactics Committee
Capt R.J. MOYLE: Chief Weapons Committee
WO2 A.D. CRAIG: Weapons Committee
WO2 J. HUSBAND: Weapons Committee
WO2 J.R. STEWART: Weapons Committee
Capt R. CLARK: Chief General Subjects Committee.

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5.

DUC MY:

Maj R.G. KENNEDY: Senior Australian Advisor, Senior Training Advisor

Maj T.C. BANNISTER: Replacement for Maj KENNEDY

Capt G.D.W. IRVINE: Chief Basic Ranger Committee

WO2 D.C. DALTON: Advisor, Jungle, Mountain, Swamp School

WO2 D.J. NEVILLE: Unit Training Committee

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ANNEX "D" to
AATTIV Report No 22

LOG OF INCIDENTS

Date	Location	Occurance
2 May 64	AN DIEM	The AN DIEM patrol, which Capt DE LA HUNTY is accompanying as training advisor, engaged two VC platoons at 0650 hrs. Two Strike Force KIA and three WIA. An airstrike was requested through the overflight L-19 which was in the vicinity and four AD-6 fighters struck the VC areas with rockets and M3 fire. The casualties were evacuated by USMC H-34 helicopters escorted by armed UH-1B's
5 May 64	AN DIEM	Our AN DIEM patrol suffered six Strike Force casualties in two separate fights. WIA were evacuated by USMC H-34 helicopters supported by armed UH-1B helicopters.

INFORMATION RECEIVED FOLLOWING SUBMISSION OF REPORT NO 21

On 18 Apr 64 Capt R. CLARK and WO1 G. CHINN were attached as observers to 32 Ranger Battalion. The battalion was taking part in an operation in the BALONG Area. On 28 Apr 64 the losses suffered by the enemy included the following: Ten KIA, 50 ha of Manioc and corn, 3 ha of crops, 2,000 kilos of corn, 3,000 kilos of rice, 2,000 kilos of manioc, 2,000 kilos of paddy, 17 buffalo, 32 houses, 10 huts, 1,000 bamboo spikes, flags, carbine magazines with ammo, and a number of documents.

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