

**Series: AWM95**  
**Australian Army commanders' diaries**  
**[Vietnam]**

**Army Aviation units**

**Item number: 8/1/50**

**Item: 161 [Independent]**

**Reconnaissance Flight**

**Narrative**

**[1-31 Oct 1970]**

COVERING LETTER

Reference No. 230

To: OIC, Military History Section, AHQ.

1. I enclose Commanders Diary (AF C 2118) (Adapted) as indicated at Part 2.

2. Please return receipt below.

(Signature)

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Maj

Appointment OC, 161 (Indep) Recce Flt  
(OC Unit or senior staff officer)

*27/4/71*  
*Recd*

**SECRET**

ORIGINAL }  
~~DUPLICATE~~ } Strike out where  
                  } not applicable

**COMMANDERS DIARY**

OF

161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT

Unit or Formation

From † Oct 70

To 31 Oct 70

INDEX

Narrative (AF C 2118)

ANNEXES

- \* A Duty officer's log
- \* B Messages connected with log
- C Operation orders and instructions issued
- D Operation orders and instructions received
- \* E Sitreps issued
- F Orders of battle and location reports issued
- G Intelligence reports and summaries issued; appreciations made
- H Administrative orders and instructions issued
- I Administrative orders and instructions received
- J Administrative reports and bulletins; ammunition returns; field strength returns
- \* K Standing orders issued
- L Commander's policy and demi-official letters
- M Action reports (if required)
- N Other papers, eg, maps and diagrams, air photos, reports from sub units
- O Periodical summaries of operations
- Z Top Secret Supplementary Diary

Enclosure Numbers

- ..... to .....
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† NIL  
† RETAINED  
† Despatched to

on.....

\* Only to be included during operations.  
† Cross out whichever is not applicable.

PART 3

COMMANDERS DIARIES  
INSTRUCTIONS

AIM

1. The aim of a Commanders Diary is to provide data on which to base future improvements in Army training, equipment, organization and administration, and to furnish historians with a record of the activities of units and formations in operational and non-operational periods in peace and in war.

GENERAL

2. Entries are to be made daily on AF C 2118 (Adapted) each entry being initialled by the officer detailed to keep it.

3. Commanders Diaries will conform with the rules for drafting orders given in "Staff Duties (Australia)" Chapter 2, Section 12.

RESPONSIBILITY

During Non-operational Periods

4. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled by commanders of all formations.

During Operational Periods (1)

- 5. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled in duplicate by:
  - a. Commanders of all formations.
  - b. Each branch of the staff at formation headquarters commanded by a brigadier or above.
  - c. Heads of services not below the rank of lieutenant colonel.
  - d. Personal staffs and officers holding special appointments.
  - e. Unit commanders.
  - f. Commanders of a detachment of a unit when so ordered.

COMPILATION

6. Both original and duplicate copies are to consist of:

- a. Cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted).
- b. Index as printed on cover.
- c. Narrative (AF C 2118) (Adapted).
- d. Annexes as shown in the Index.

7. All details of the unit or formation (if a detachment is concerned, the name of the parent unit), period covered and enclosure numbers of the annexes are to be shown on the cover. If there has been a change of command since the last report, the date of assumption by the new commanding officer is to be included.

8. The annexes are to be assembled in the groups shown on the cover. If there are no enclosures for an annex NIL will be entered on the cover. If additional annexes are convenient for a particular headquarters, starting at B.

for operations form Annex "Z", "TOP SECRET the document. It is to be prepared and disposed of as

ANNEXES

es as well as map references), establishment, equipment

l orders given.  
e day's fighting, including company movements.  
mmander with regard to equipment, tactics, organization

tential importance.  
o officers, men and equipment.  
oment captured.  
employed in the time not accounted for. The type of

and to save work as much information as possible is to  
ments issued and received, routine returns, etc. All  
and the time of receipt or despatch is to be given:

he annexes, but need not give a precis of any of them.

(continued on back cover)

AWM 95  
[8/1/04 70]

SECRET

VE C 3118 (Adapted)

PART 3

COLLECTING TELLER

PART 3

00 70

**DISPOSAL**

13. **Original Commander's Diary.** This is to be forwarded monthly, unless otherwise ordered, by the seventh day of the succeeding month direct to AHQ.

14. **Duplicate Commander's Diary.** This must be clearly marked as a duplicate. It is to be sent separately from the original to AHQ one month after the original has been despatched but not before the former has been acknowledged.

15. When overseas, both copies of diaries are to be sent through the Army Records organization in the overseas theatre but at different times.

16. **TOP SECRET Supplementary Diaries.**

a. The documents referred to in Paragraph 9 together with a list of them made out on AF C 2118 (Adapted) must be placed in separate cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted). All details must be filled in and the cover clearly marked in red: "ANNEX Z — OFFICER ONLY". It may be convenient to group the papers by appendices.

b. Supplementary diaries must be forwarded under the normal rules for TOP SECRET correspondence, to AHQ. The inner envelope must be plainly marked:

TOP SECRET

ANNEX Z to

Commanders Diary of 94846 161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT (Formation or Unit)

From 1 Oct 70 to 31 Oct 70 (Dates)

c. The duplicate supplementary diaries must be despatched as shown in Paragraph 14 as soon as receipt of the original has been acknowledged.

1 BP Coy—274/65—55m

AWM 95  
[8/1/04 70]

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C2118 (Adapted)

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT

MONTH AND YEAR ...OCT 70.....

REFERENCE MAP .PHUC TUY PROVINCE.....

COMMANDING OFFICER MAJ. P.J. CALVERT...  
AA AVN C

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			<u>SUMMARY</u>	
			<p>During October, enemy activity again remained at a low level. Towards the end of the month the wet season commenced to taper off. The flying rate was up compared to the previous quarter and the flight flew a total of 1173.30 hrs. Ac serviceability remained high at 97%.</p>	
			<p>A feature of operations for the month was that unit pilots commenced an extensive programme of VR in the RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE, a large area of mangrove swamp lying between VUNG TAU and SAIGON and reaching North to Highway 15. The area had long been a safe haven for VIET CONG because of the few allied operations into the area. Unit VR in the area soon produced good results and operations were commenced on intelligence gained.</p>	
			<p>The detachment of unit pilots to 3/17 Air Cav US Army Avn was recommenced when 2Lt T.R. Partridge joined that unit at QUAN LOI.</p>	
			<p>2Lt D.H. Earley returned to Australia, having completed his tour of duty</p>	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C2118 (Adapted)

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT

MONTH AND YEAR .....

REFERENCE MAP .....

COMMANDING OFFICER .....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			and was replaced by 2LT Sonneveld.	
			The month was free of incidents.	
			<u>Incidents</u>	
YS 607753	1 Oct	0800	2Lt Hayes located a track which moved East to Grid YS 617753 and then continued approx 200m further East. The track appeared to have been used in the previous two weeks by 2 or more persons.	
YS 4279	1 Oct	1000	Lt Ellwood located a track one week old, and used by 4-5 people. It led along the West side of the rubber about 10m into the jungle to the West. From the Southern edge of the rubber the track was followed to YS 422786 before being lost.	
YS 360788	1 Oct	1200	2Lt Hayes located fresh diggings in thick vegetation at the North West edge of clearing. Estimated to be two days old. Ground rooted up in areas about 2' wide by 4' long.	
YS 709736	1 Oct	1800	2Lt Monteith marked for an airstrike. BDA Nil.	
YS 718754	2 Oct	0800	2Lt Monteith followed a track which was located in a previous report. The track	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C2118 (Adapted)

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT

MONTH AND YEAR .....

REFERENCE MAP .....

COMMANDING OFFICER .....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			<p>was picked up at YS 718754 and passed through the following grids, YS 715741, YS 706740, YS 706737, where it entered the tree line. At YS 696730 a lay up point was located. The track continued on to YS 696728 where it entered the tree line and was lost</p>	
YS 393809	2 Oct	1200	<p>2Lt Monteith located a very fresh track between the above grid and the creek. No camp could be located.</p>	
YS 728769	2 Oct	1000	<p>2Lt Gibson located a large rest up area used recently. The track from the NE splits at this point, one running NW and the other SW. At YS 729773 a large tree with a track running to it was sighted.</p>	
YS 703740	2 Oct	1800	<p>2Lt Monteith marked for an airstrike on a suspected enemy camp. BDA Nil</p>	
YS 701745	3 Oct	0630	<p>2Lt Monteith sighted tracks under the canopy which appeared quite fresh, and the cleared under the trees suggest possible lay up area.</p>	
YS 191723	3 Oct	1000	<p>Lt Mackworth marked for an airstrike. BDA 1 hut uncovered.</p>	
YS 591720	3 Oct	1430	<p>Lt Mackworth sighted one track and followed it from the grid North West along the creek which it crossed at YS 586723 and then ran along the North Eastern side of</p>	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			the creek and was lost at YS 579734.	
YS 733763	4 Oct	1000	2Lt Bell sighted an established track which had been used within the last two weeks it entered the bush from the NW at this location. All movement along the track ceased about 20m inside the treeline. An open area approx 300m SW of this grid also showed signs of recent movement. At YS 703747 a foot track was followed from this location off an established track in a SW direction to link up with a fairly recent truck track at YS 695737.	
YS 705856	4 Oct	1200	2Lt Hayes found extensive rice gardens which were well tended at above grid and at YS 702857 and YS 701858. At YS 694841 track activity was sighted estimated to be 1-2 weeks old.	
YS 71672 0	4 Oct	1400	Maj Calvert sighted 5 old bunkers and 100m of comms trench, with sheets of iron laying on the ground.	
YS 383844	5 Oct	0800	2Lt Gibson sighted a large fresh rest area with tracks running N/S.	
YS 580778	5 Oct	1000	Lt Ellwood sighted tracks made by 5-6 people approx 3 days old on the edge of the clearing and leading 100m into the scrub.	



COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C2118 (Adapted)

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (INDEP) RECCE FL

MONTH AND YEAR .....

REFERENCE MAP .....

COMMANDING OFFICER .....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
YS 410789	5 Oct	1200	2Lt Gibson sighted a camp fire in bamboo which was fairly fresh with lay up area around it. At grid YS 412780 a track running NS was followed and appeared to be two weeks old.	
YS 394795	5 Oct		2Lt Monteith sighted a camp containing 3 bunkers which had been used recently and was possibly occupied at the time.	
YS 623593	6 Oct	0800	2Lt Hayes sighted an old camp containing about six bunkers, visible due to the camouflage above the bunkers dying. At Grid YS 597580 tracks running along the beach estimated to be of 20 people.	
YS 359763	6 Oct	1010	Lt Mackworth followed a track from a lie up area at the above grid, in a SW direction. It met the Suoi Chau Pha at approx YS 349754 and turned South. Two new tracks were sighted, both looked the same age and had been used by a number of people. In places each one would split up and then join up again.	
YS 700858	6 Oct	1200	2Lt Hayes sighted a vegetable garden East of a rice garden. The ground had been cleared and tended but not in the last week. A track led from here to the East, along the North side of a little lake, to YS 703858 and joined another track at YS 707858.	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
YS 700909	6 Oct	1355	Capt Cairns sighted a track of 2-3 persons travelling SW-NE across a small clearing at this point, estimated to be two days old.	
YS 704736	7 Oct	1000	Lt Mackworth marked for an airstrike. BDA Nil.	
YS 192723	8 Oct	1000	2Lt Gibson marked for an airstrike. BDA Nil	
YS 372724	8 Oct	1745	2Lt Gibson marked for an airstrike. BDA Nil	
YS 3671	9 Oct	0830	Lt Earley sighted fresh tracks running SW which were under 24 hrs old and used by 15-20 people. The track was followed to YS 348692 where 5-6 VC were moving SW over the Knoll. One VC was carrying an RPG and AK47. 2 VC remained visible at the base of trees while one moved back along the track to taller timber. 2 VC were kept under observation until gunships arrived. After the gunships had expended, a continuation of the initial track was sighted on the SW side of the ridge. Automatic fire was received at this time. Arty was directed onto the first area and onto YS 347690. The Ready Reaction force were then inserted into YS 344697 to move into the area. One wounded VC was captured.	
YS 714741	9 Oct	1000	Lt Earley sighted tracks under 24 hrs old moving from indicated grid <del>XXXX</del> West to a creek and South entering the tree line at YS 710732. This track was then followed North from	

# COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

UNIT/FORMATION.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			YS 714741 around the Eastern side of timbered area in Grid YS 7174 and NE to YS 730779. At that point the track split, one moving NE, the other moving West along the tree line to YS 718778. All tracks indicated 15-20 people.	
YS 735765	10 Oct	1215	2Lt Hayes sighted a track that came from the West, crossed a creek and a clearing and then disappeared at that point. It appeared to have been a camp area although no bunkers were sighted. There was generally no movement along the track, and the canopy was fairly thick in the Southern section.	
E 57-61 N 70-73	11 Oct	1210	2Lt Bell sighted a track which was approx 3 weeks old, it was followed from Grid 594717 for approx 1000 yds N through open country.	
E 71-73 N 65-69	11 Oct	1400	Lt Earley sighted regular ox cart traffic on Rte 23 as far E as the 73 Easting. One ox cart track went from Rte 23 to a coconut grove at Grid 713668. At YS 727673 a fresh single ox cart track went from Rte 23 to YS 727668. At this point a cleared area under the trees containing piled thatching was located and 1 felled tree 200m E. Recent foot tracks of 15-20 people, which were under 1 week old, connected the latter grid and YS 722668. From that point a foot track of similar size and age was followed across Rte 23 to the NE, (it roughly followed the marked track on the map) to YS 726686 where it was lost in the tree line. An ox cart track with fresh use was located and followed from Rte 23 to YS 717687. At that point it stopped at a grove of trees with no evidence	

This form is to be enclosed with the annexes in AF - C 2119 (Adapted).

# COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF - C 2118 (Adapted)  
Revised Jun, 1965

UNIT/FORMATION .....

MONTH AND YEAR .....

REFERENCE MAP .....

COMMANDING OFFICER .....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			oftimber cutting in the area. Further ox carts with recent use were also located in the Northern area of the VR area. The S side of the road had two track systems, one was three weeks old and the one reported appeared to have been less than 1 week old. 4 ox carts which were 1 kilometre outside civilian access, were seen returning to Xuyen Moc with loads of bark. Foot tracks in the VR area were far heavier than that consistent with the ox cart traffic seen.	
YS 436797	12 Oct	0810	2Lt Bell located a foot track which had been used within the previous week, it was followed SW from the given Grid to YS 423789. At YS 408812 a foot track which had also been used the previous week, was located, it was followed NE to YS 416814. There was a lie up area at YS 412810 which had a track joining the above track at YS 411812. At YS 432806 a hole approx 6'x2'x6" was found at the edge of a clearing, it appeared to have been an old grave, the soil had subsided to approx 1' deep. A well worn track was followed from the grave to YS 431807.	
YS 356684	12 Oct	1424	2Lt Gibson located a large rest up area for 15-25 people, fresh tracks from the NW and E also joined at that point. At YS 356679 fairly fresh track was followed S along the W bank of a creek to a lay up area. At YS 357674 tracks were followed in a Southerly direction to a large hut of galvanised iron and wood about 12'x6'. There were no signs of recent use, but it was usable.	

# COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
YS 358644	13 Oct	0800	Lt Mackworth sighted a lean to hutchie behind a big rock. After further investigation a person was found squatting down outside the shelter. It was probably an old woman in a green shirt and black trousers.	
YS 754787	14 Oct	1200	Capt Cairns sighted a very heavy track used by 30 plus persons. The track ran generally NE and was lost on the Southern side of the creek at YS 759793. At YS 761796 a large campsite on the Northern side of a creek with 4 bunkers in good condition. It appears to have been well used in the last 1-2 weeks.	
YS 784796	14 Oct	1400	2Lt Monteith sighted a track found on a previous VR and was followed up further to the North East and at YS 794809 a pack was found just off the side of the track. The track up to this point appeared quite fresh, and from here the track joined the marked track on the map and continued North. A track from YS 794809 to the West was followed and led to YS 791810 where a large camp was located, 200x80 metres. 3 bunkers and a well were sighted and by the size of the camp there could be quite a few more. The camp was fresh and possibly occupied.	
YS 508665	14 Oct	1600	2Lt Gibson sighted a track from the NW which turns at this point and heads due East. It was approx 24 hrs old and used by 15-20 people carrying loads. The track goes at least 6000m to the E but was unable to be followed further.	

# COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH AND YEAR.....

REFERENCE MAP.....

COMMANDING OFFICER.....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
YS 692848	15 Oct	0800	Maj Calvert sighted a well defined track recently used. One track from WNW joins a track from ENE then turns South. AT YS 691847 a bombed camp shows signs of rebuilding. Iron sheets in surrounding area could cover underground caches. At WS 694842 one bunker in good condition and wire mesh cover 2m E of track.	
YS 805850	15 Oct	1400	2Lt Bell sighted a track and followed it SW to YS 870840. The track was well worn but was unable to determine when it was last used. At YS 868847 a large bundle approx 5' long x 1'6" round, placed at the base of a tree. At YS 874858 4 old <del>bunkers</del> gardens in the area with plants still growing but did not appear to have been attended to recently.	
YS 791810	17 Oct	0800	2Lt Gibson marked for an airstrike. BDA 2 bunkers damaged.	
YS 791810	18 Oct	1200	2Lt Monteith sighted the camp which had not been damaged by the airstrike. The pack located at YS 794812 has been removed showing that movement in the area is quite recent.	
YS 732773	19 Oct	0800	2Lt Bell sighted gardens with young plants growing. At YS 732766 several tracks lead into the area from the West and what appeared to be 2 well camouflaged bunkers were seen approx 30m in from the tree line.	
YS 777722	19 Oct	1200	Capt Cairns sighted very heavy tracks leading to the South from this point to what appears to be a rest area at YS 778706 with tracks 2-3 days old by 30+ persons, the track leads S from the rest area to YS 780692 where it was lost among old APC tracks.	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C2118 (Adapted)

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT

COMMANDING OFFICER .....

MONTH AND YEAR ..... Oct 70 (Cont)

REFERENCE MAP .....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
E80-84	19 Oct	1405	2Lt Hayes sighted a small track on the west side of clearing headed S to N	
N70-82		1605	used in last week.	
YS357649	19 Oct		Lt Ellwood carried out a VR of this grid and sighted old bunkers in the area. One had an old hut frame over it and tables adjacent. Probably more bunkers in the area, and track leads out of camp down spur line to SE.	
E70-Coast	20 Oct	1000	2Lt Monteith located a patrol base at YS 737643 of approx 6 people, and	
N Coast-64		1200	tracks show 2 small circular patrols to North and East. At YS 772665 and YS 768656 two rice gardens were sighted with approx 2 acres of rice in each. At YS 743616 tracks of approx 10 people entered tree line. These were followed backwards along track to west and came from small lay up area at YS722618.	
YS751818	20 Oct		2Lt Monteith marked for an airstrike, BDA: Nil	
YS384765	20 Oct	1700	2Lt Earley sighted a track which had been used by 20-30 people within last 36 hours. Followed North-east through YS 386775 to YS384780.	

COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C2118 (Adapted)

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT

COMMANDING OFFICER .....

MONTH AND YEAR ..... Oct 70 (Cont)

REFERENCE MAP .....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
YS 373764	21 Oct	0800	Lt Earley sighted a track. It led from the North-east through the clearing into a night harbour position. At YS 373812 a light track passes through a large banana track.	
YS643611	21 Oct	1000	Capt Cairns sighted a heavy track. It had been used by 20+ people. It ran South-west to a rest up area at YS636602 and had been used in the previous 1-2 days. Another track was located at YS644601 which had been used by approx 20 people and led west to YS632597 where it was lost in thick scrub.	
YS243791	22 Oct	0800	2Lt Gibson located a camp under bamboo on a creek with 2, possibly 3, bunkers and fighting pits on southern side of creek. At YS282786 a possible camp was located, with fresh tracks coming from South and West.	
YS705805	22 Oct	1400	2Lt Monteith located a camp consisting of at least 3 bunkers. There was heavy track in camp area, but did not appear to have been used in last week.	
YS 691830	24 Oct	1400	2Lt Bell sighted a track which led along the edge of clearing to YS693835. It had been used recently by 3+ people.	
YS 779766	26 Oct	1200	2Lt Gibson located a possible camp area. Tracks led off fire trail to a	



COMMANDERS DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C2118 (Adapted)

UNIT/FORMATION 161 (INDEP) RECCE FLT

MONTH AND YEAR ..... Oct 70 (Cont)

REFERENCE MAP .....

COMMANDING OFFICER .....

Place and grid reference	Date	Time	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			large cleared area under thick trees.	
YS800753	26 Oct	1300	2Lt Gibson located one hut with possible bunkers located on Western side of the previous camp area. Recent tracks in area. An airstrike was recommended. At YS790755 a track ran North across a creek and turned East to a track junction at YS804766. Track split at that point, going East and North. Track had been used by 5-10 people recently.	
YS277-684	27 Oct	0800	2Lt Hayes fought a small platform made of sticks on top of a knoll, several months old. Area had many caves, and areas were cleared under the foliage on the slopes of the hills, but no definite movement or camps sighted.	
YS702618	27 Oct	1430	Capt Cairns located a rest area approx 75m x 75 m, which had been used 1-2 weeks previously. Numerous tracks within 1000m of coast and the rest area had possibly been made by friendly troops.	
YS791762	28 Oct	1000	2Lt Bell located a track which had been used by approximately 4 people within previous fortnight. It led East to a track junction at YS804763. A track South from this location appeared to have been used by 1-2 people.	

