

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

Detachment, 1 Topographical  
Survey Troop

**Item number: 5/1/5**

**Item: Detachment 1 Topographical  
Survey Troop**

Operational Report no. 4

[photocopy]

[10 Aug - 9 Sep 1966]



1<sup>ST</sup> AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE  
VIETNAM



DET I TOPO SVY TP  
OPERATIONAL REPORT

Nº 4

REPORTING PERIOD 10 Aug - 9 Sep 66

CONFIDENTIAL

Sep 66

See Distribution List

OPERATIONAL REPORT NO 4

Covering period 10 Aug - 9 Sep 66

PART 1 & MATTERSPresent Location

1. Det 1 Topo Svy Tp moved to a new location at GR YS 4345-6671 during the reporting period. The new location is approximately 200m EAST of HQ 1 ATF.

Enemy Contacts

2. The following incidents involving Det 1 Topo Svy Tp occurred during the reporting period.

a. On 17 Aug 66 1 ATF Base Area was mortared. No mortars fell within 200m of either the working or accommodation areas of Det 1 Topo Svy Tp.

b. On 30 Aug 66 a Cessna of the "Possum Flight" on a visual reconnaissance mission with one member of Det 1 Topo Svy Tp as observer, received small arms fire from the ground.

Tasks

3. The major effort during the reporting period was applied to the Contonment Survey of 1 ATF Base Area. Several of the tasks discussed in Operational Report No 3 have had to be temporarily shelved. 10 days of the reporting period were devoted almost entirely to non-productive work such as the sand bagging of all accommodation areas, and site preparation in the new location

4. The following tasks undertaken, were completed during the reporting period. A summary of major tasks is attached as Annex A.

a. Map Enlargement/photoplot of NUI DINH HILLS  
- 1:25000 (GR YS 340660)

Area Covered - 210 x 1000 metre grid squares.

As stated in Op Report No 3, the basic plot was traced directly from the 1:25000 enlargement series. The standard contour interval of 10 metres was adopted from sea level to the 50 metre contour. Thereafter only the 50 metre contours were Creek detail was taken from 1:25000 photography and, where coverage was not available, from the "picto" series. Additional track information was obtained from 1:3000 oblique intelligence photography and from SAS patrol reports. A transparent dyeline copy of the original plot was used to show all intelligence information, ie VC contacts, installations etc. This included further track information taken from a captured VC hand drawn map. Dyeline copies of both the original plot and the intelligence trace were supplied to 6 RAR for operation VAUCLUSE.

/now

now in progress

b. Combat Operations After Action Report - Annexes. Annexes to Combat Operations After Action Reports have been prepared as follows:

- (1) Operation SYDNEY 1 - 2 Annexes.
- (2) Operation SYDNEY 2 - 2 Annexes.
- (3) Operation HOBART 1 & 2 - 2 Annexes.
- (4) Operation HOLSWORTHY - 2 Annexes.

c. Sundry Traces and Plans. These in the main were:

- (1) Retrace of XA BINH BA 1:10000 photoplot.
- (2) Annexes to Frag Orders OP TOLEDO.
- (3) Covers for Commander 1 ATF Diary.
- (4) HQ 1 ATF manning charts.
- (5) Extension of LONG TAN 1:5000 photoplot, to the north to provide coverage of SMITHFIELD Area of operations.
- (6) Enlargement of western portion of 3 Corps Area from 1:250000 JOG to 1:100000 for 2nd Field Force VIETNAM.

5. The following tasks are currently in hand.

a. Detailed "cantonment survey" of 1 ATF Base Area. This task has proceeded along the lines described in Operational Report No 3, with the following additions and modifications.

- (1) 2 metre contours have been provided over the area using altimetric heighting in the undulating areas north, east and south of the NUI DAT feature and by a combination of plane table & stadia on the NUI DAT feature. Ample checks were incorporated in the area heighted altimetrically, and it is considered that the contours obtained fall well within the specified accuracy of  $\frac{1}{2}$  contour interval. The contours are not detailed, and represent a mean contour position.
- (2) Closed stadia traverses were run through all unit areas to provide the basic frame work of horizontal control
- (3) Detail within unit areas has been obtained using a combination of stadia and plane table. Using a party of 3, this method has been found to be most effective. Essentially, distance is obtained by stadia, and azimuth maintained by plane table. The working plot is of course kept current on the plane table.

To satisfy an immediate planning commitment a provisional plan has been prepared incorporating major proposals. This is included as an enclosure to this report. It is intended

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that a base plan will be drawn for silk screen reproduction which will then be periodically overprinted with new additions of a permanent nature

- b. Photoplot of BINH GIA village - 1:5000 (GR YS 495775)  
Area Covered - 12 x 1000 metre grid squares.

Ref Op Report No 3 Para 4 b.

This task has had to be temporarily shelved. It is intended that field parties will carry out the field check during Sep 66.

- c. BINH BA photoplot. (Ref Op Report No 3 Para 5 a.)  
This task has been temporarily shelved. It is intended that a field check of this sheet will be carried out concurrently with BINH GIA.

- d. Photoplot/Map enlargement of NUI NUA Island  
- 1:10000 (GR YS 280560)

Ref Op Report No 3 Para 4 c.

This task is awaiting intelligence photography.

- e. Landing Zone Plot of area of operation

Ref Op Report No 3 Para 4 e.

Visual reconnaissance of selected LZ's is currently in hand.

- f. VUNG TAU overprint (Op Report No 2 para 3 f.).  
This task is still awaiting the new edition of the VUNG TAU 1:12500 sheet. It is now intended to produce a revised overprint, from survey plans provided by 17 Const Sqn at VUNG TAU.

- g. 1:25000 plot of VC tracks from captured VC map.  
A captured VC map showing track information at a scale of 1:100000 is being used to prepare 1:25000 track plans on a plain grid for intelligence purposes. The captured VC map is hand drawn on tracing paper in coloured inks. It has been traced from a current VC adaption of the FRENCH 1:100000 series, monochrome copies of which are held by the the Det. An attempt will be made to restore the captured document, which is in a very dilapidated state.

6. The following tasks are scheduled to commence during the month of Sep or later, as indicated.

- a. PHOU C TUY provincial Agricultural Map

Ref Op Report No 3 Para 5 b.

A provisional overprint of the existing 1:50000 series will be commenced during Sep 66.

- b. LONG DIEN village plan 1:5000.

In response to a request from provincial/sector HQ, a village plan similar to HOA LONG will be produced as an opportunity task. A scheduled date of commencement has not been considered, however, it is possible that a start could be made during Oct - Nov 66.

- c. Revision of 1:25000 enlargement series in 1 ATF Area of Operation.

It is intended that the 1:25000 enlargement series will be used as the basis of a systematic and progressive revision, in the form of overprints on the silk screen press. The revised detail will be obtained from the following sources and will be depicted according to reliability.

/a.

- (1) Patrol reports.
- (2) Intelligence photography.
- (3) Captured documents - when applicable.
- (4) Visual reconnaissance from the air.

At the request of Lt Col Benton of the M & I Division Engr Sec USARV, information copies will be provided to USARV and confirmed detail from these will be used in a proposed revision of the "Picto" series.

d. Civil Affairs Projects.

No further progress has been achieved with the Civil Affairs projects listed in Op Report No 3 para 5 c.

7. Dyelines - During the reporting period 1664 dyelines have been produced.

Maps

8. Pictomaps 1:25000: The supply of the pictomap series remains limited. Depot stocks of all sheets within 1 ATF AO is still dependent upon air re-supply from HAWAII. Until bulk supplies are received 'in country' by ship, issues to units of this series will remain restricted.

9. L701 series 1:50000: The replacement of this series with the L7014 series is imminent. Bulk stocks covering South VIETNAM south of Lat 12° N are still awaited and no indication has been received as to when the change will take place.

10. Enlargement Series 1:25000. The arrival 'in country' of this series is eagerly awaited.

11. Map movements, both accumulative and within the reporting period are summarised in Annex B.

Survey Control

12. The discrepancy discovered between the three points THANH, VUNG TAU light house and CAP ST JACQUES 3rd order pt, (ref Op Report No 2) has been referred to Lt Col Benton. He in turn has requested further information on the original fixation of CAP ST JACQUES and THANH from USAMSFE and when received, OC Det will visit Lt Col Benton in attempt to resolve the ambiguities.

PART 2 A MATTERS

Personnel

13. The following occurrences mentioned in Op Report No 2 paragraph 9 are either outstanding or have developed as indicated.

- a. 214295 Cpl DGP Ceruti: The recommendation for temporary promotion of this member has been rescinded.

- b. 53723 Cpl JL Roberts: Notification regrouping this member to Svyr Topo Class 3 has not yet been received.

14. The following personnel have been nominated to RTA in lieu of the proposed introduction of lithographic tradesmen.

61130 Cpl AR Carew  
36639 Spr SR Johns  
311459 Spr JA O'Connor

Pay

15. Delays in the receipt of paybook remittances by members NOK has caused some minor financial problems to the members concerned. This problem has been presented to HQ 1 ATF.

Medical

16. The following personnel have been hospitalised at 2 Fd Amb VUNG TAU during the reporting period.

52897 Capt RF Skitch - Malaise - 5 days

311459 Spr JA O'Connor - Diarrhoea - 7 days

There has been no incidence of malaria or any tropical fever in the Det.

R & R - R & C

17. The following members have had periods of 48 hours R & C at the VUNG TAU R & C Centre during the reporting period.

214295 Cpl DGP Ceruti

53723 Cpl JL Roberts

18457 Spr DEJ Chambers.

18. Sgt TD King departed 1 ATF on R & R to HONGKONG on 10 Sep 66. No further allocations of R & R have been received to this date.

Rest Days

19. Whenever possible, Sundays are still being observed as a rest day. In addition to this whenever circumstances allow, 4 members per week are being granted 24-36 hours rest in VUNG TAU, accommodation and messing being arranged within ALSG.

Recreational Activities

20. Circumstances during the reporting period prevented the implementation of the recreational plan outlined in Op Report No 3. It is intended to develop this in the new unit location. Due to a shortage of projectors in the area, the regular showing of movie pictures has not been effected. Action is now in hand to overcome the shortage.

Postal

21. The erratic postal service has an adverse effect on morale. This applies particularly to the mail returning to AUSTRALIA, where delays of 14 - 21 days are common. Letters frequently "go astray" for periods up to 4 weeks. Parcel mail is completely unpredictable and erratic. Every effort is being made to straighten out the present system and remove the hold-ups. Nevertheless very few soldiers in theatre will ever agree that the officially stated normal delivery time of 5 - 6 weeks for parcel mail is acceptable. It is apparent that a postal system originally designed to meet the need of 1 RAR in SVN, has fallen considerably short of the mark in satisfying the Task Force requirement.

Morale

22. Morale remains at an acceptably high level amongst all ranks.

PART 3 Q MATTERS

/ Stores and equipment

Stores and Equipment

23. The following equipments have been received apparently in error from AUSTRALIA.

Sterioscopes universal 3

It appears that these were requested by 1 Topo Svy Tp at RANDWICK 1 have been sent to SVN by 2 BOD in error. They will be back loaded on the SS Jeparit or a subsequent ship.

24. The following stores from the Det Q Series table are still outstanding.

Heliographs 5" MK 4	Qty 4
Frame sun printing	Qty 1
Lamps fluorescent	Qty 2

Hastening action has been taken and these stores may be on the SS Jeparit.

25. The Zeiss Steriotopes and Old Delft scanning stereoscopes have not been received to this date, however it is understood they may have arrived in theatre. Action is in hand to obtain the equipments. It is understood that the RVE submitted on the 14 Jun 66 was held by AFV pending finalisation of 1 ATF RVEs its subsequent fate is indefinite. A further RVE will be submitted in support of the priority 1 staff indent action in accordance with AFV instructions.

Accommodation

26. Annex C shows the detailed layout, existing and proposed of the Det in its new location. The following tasks are planned to commence during the coming 4 weeks.

- a. Construction of enclosed shower block.
- b. Construction of enclosed latrines.
- c. Development of open trenches (already dug) with overhead cover for protection.
- d. Construction of Tropical Hut 20' x 50' for main work area.
- e. Movement of Cpls and Sprs to new location.
- f. Movement of Was and Sgts to new location.
- g. Progressive development of area for recreation and aesthetic appearance.

It is anticipated that all construction will be completed by 31 Sep 66.

*[Signature]*  
 (R.F. Skitch)  
 OC  
 Capt

- Annexes: A. Summary of Major Tasks Undertaken.  
 B. Map Distribution Summary.  
 C. Area Development of New Location

Distribution

HQ 1 ATF	(1)
Directorate Military Survey	(4)
1 Topo Svy Tp	(2)
DAD Svy E Comd	(1)
File	(1)
Diary	(1)



DET 1 TOPO SVY TP SUMMARY OF MAJOR TASKS UNDERTAKEN 10 SEP 66

Annex A to Survey  
Operational Report No

TASK a	DATE COMMENCED OR PLANNED DATE OF COMPLETION b	% PROGRESS ACHIEVED								% COMPLETED k	DATE COMPLETED OR PLANNED DATE OF COMPLETION l	REMARKS m
		c Field work	d Enlargement	e Photo inspect	f Photo Plotting	g Completion work sheet	h Final Drawing	i Colour separation	j Printing			
UI DINH HILLS 1:25000 Enlargement/ hotoplot	5 Aug 66		comp	let	ed			N/A	N/A	100%	20 Aug	
ANTONMENT SURVEY	10 Jul 66	80%	N/A	100	100	80	100			75%	10 Sep	Provisional sheet for dylinjing only
INH GIA 1:5000 photoplot	20 Jun		N/A	100	100	100				60%	30 Sep	Requiring field check
INH BA 1:10000 photoplot	15 Jun		N/A	100	100	100	100			80%	30 Sep	Requiring field check
UI NUA ISLAND 1:10000 photoplot	1 Aug		100							20%	30 Sep	Awaiting air photograph
Z Plot	15 Jul	20	N/A	100	100	100				75%	Indefinite	Visual reconnaissance progress
VUNG TAU overprint	10 Jun		N/A	N/A	N/A	100	100	100		95%	Indefinite	Awaiting revised VUNG 1:12500 sheet
C track plot	1 Sep	N/A	30	N/A	N/A	30	N/A	N/A	N/A	30%	20 Sep	
HUOC TUY PROVINCIAL Agricultural map	15 Sep									NIL		
ONG DIEN village plan 1:5000	Oct 66									NIL	Jan 67	
1:25000 Revision series 1	25 Sep									NIL	30 Oct	

MAP DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY

PERIOD 10 AUG - 9 SEP 66

UNIT	MAP SERIES & SCALE							
	L8020 1:25000		L701 1:50000		JOG G 1:250000		JOG A 1:250000	
	10 Aug 9 Sep	Accum	10 Aug 9 Sep	Accum	10 Aug 9 Sep	Accum	10 Aug 9 Sep	Accum
HQ 1 ATF	54	175	59	355	44	152	1	1
1 APC SQN	12	97		741		6		
1 FD REGT	64	480	77	473				
1 FD SQN RAE		75		157	14	14		
3 SIG SQN	17	38	11	91				
5 RAR	522	1308	246	896	16	16		
6 RAR		1848	120	2343		100		
3 SAS		329	210	490		6		
ALSG	65	115	635	845	65	65		
CIVIL AFFAIRS	10	32		36				
ARU	4	4						
1 DIV INT	2	8	1	9				
RAAF	18	20		8			1	7
NSAF	6	6	1	48				
67 GROUND LIASION	10	14		20				
TOTAL	784	4549	1360	6512	139	359	2	8
				10 AUG - 9 SEP				
MISC MAPS				131	ACCUM			
GRAND TOTAL				2416	11619			