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SUBJECT

After Action Report

TO Ch, Sch & Doc Div

FROM Ch, Cbt Spt Br

DATE 18 Sep 69

CMT 1

In accordance with Service Schools and Doctrine Policy Statement #2, dated 1 December 1968, the attached After Action Report is submitted.

1 Incl
as

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AFTER ACTION
REPORT

1 October 1968 to 18 September 1969

ACTION OFFICER/CHIEF

COMBAT SUPPORT BRANCH
SERVICE SCHOOLS & DOCTRINE DIVISION

AFTER ACTION REPORT

1. Introduction.

The "After Action Report" is the result of a concerted effort within the past year to improve the continuity of effort throughout the Schools and Doctrine Division. This report is primarily designed to provide each replacement with a written summary of the experience gained by his predecessor. Naturally, it must be limited to highlights and personal reflections where deemed appropriate. However, when used in conjunction with the wealth of documentation available in the files, it will hopefully serve as an adequate point of departure to allow the new Chief, Combat Support Branch to become thoroughly proficient in his duties in a minimum amount of time.

2. Background.

- a. During the past year I have served as Field Service School Advisor (1 Oct - 30 Nov 68), Schools Branch and Action Officer (1 Dec 68 - 6 Jul 69) and Chief (7 Jul - 17 Sep 69), Combat Support Branch, Service Schools and Doctrine Division. When I first arrived the Schools and Doctrine Division was comprised of a Chief, XO, Plans and Programs Officer, Schools Branch and Offshore Training Branch. On 1 Dec 68 the Division was reorganized with Plans and Programs becoming a separate branch and the Schools Branch being divided into the Combat Arms Branch and the Combat Support Branch. This reorganization improved the span of control of the Field Advisory Elements and prepared the Division to accept the increased workload resulting from the implementation of the RVNAF Improvement and Modernization Program.
- b. There are 25 schools in the RVNAF Service School System (the RVNAF Schools Brochure contains detailed information on each school). Twenty-one of these schools are controlled by the Central Training Command, Joint General Staff (CTC/JGS), formerly known and often-times still referred to as the Central Training Agency. The Training Directorate controls the Field Advisory Elements at a like number of Service Schools. There is, however, one anomaly in the system as the Training Directorate provides the advisory element at the National Defense College which is controlled directly by the Joint General Staff and the MACV Command Surgeon provides the advisory element at the Medical School which is controlled by CTC. The advisory effort at the 21 schools with Training Directorate Field Advisory Elements is directed by the Chief, Schools and Doctrine Division through the Combat Arms Branch (8 schools), the Combat Support Branch (10 schools) and the Academic Officer (3 schools). The advisory effort at the other four schools is monitored by these same elements.

3. Functions and Duties.

- a. The primary functions performed by the Combat Support Branch in support of Training Directorate's (MACV's) mission are:
- (1) Supervises the advisory elements at the Administration and Finance, Adjutant General, Armed Forces Language, Military Police, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Signal, and Transportation Schools; Junior Military Academy; and the Military Dog Training Center.
 - (2) Monitors all facets of the operations of assigned schools and the Logistics Management and Medical Schools, and keeps the Chief, Service Schools and Doctrine Division informed of the status of these schools.
 - (3) Advises and assists the Training Management Division, Central Training Command on the operation of assigned schools.
 - (4) Performs special projects as assigned by the Chief, Service Schools and Doctrine Division.
- b. The duties performed as a Field Service School Advisor and an Action Officer were one in the same. The desirable attributes for an individual in this position are initiative, tact, sound judgement and the ability to efficiently and effectively accomplish typical high level staff actions.
- (1) Initiative is necessary to anticipate potential problem areas and identify an appropriate course of action to resolve the problem areas prior to their developing into flaps. The tremendous emphasis, at the highest levels, on the training program necessary to support the RVNAF Improvement and Modernization Program makes this a matter of utmost importance. The Action Officer invariably develops a much better appreciation and understanding of the need to keep the Branch Chief and Division Chief continuously informed as to status of operations at the schools than does the Senior Advisors. Naturally this is in part due to his much greater exposure to these individuals, however, the primary reason is the much broader view he obtains of the overall advisory effort due to working with several rather than a single school. Additionally, the difficulty of the Senior Advisor's position must never be underestimated. It is quite easy to levy action oriented requirements on the Senior Advisors. However, the centralization of authority inherent in the Vietnamese military severely limits his capability to obtain the required action. No matter what approach he selects the Commandant is always the focal point of decision. Although the Commandant

may readily accept the Senior Advisors recommendations, the initiation of the desired action may well be delayed until such time as the Commandant is certain the action will receive favorable consideration throughout the Vietnamese chain of command or he is convinced the US will pursue the action to fruition. The point here of course is that the Commandant can, and oftentimes does, pay lip service to the requests and recommendations of the SA. The result is frustration for the SA and an apparent lack of action noted at the Branch/Division level. The Action Officer must constantly stay abreast of the status of all on-going actions and, as appropriate, recommend alternate courses of action to satisfy the requirement based upon the greater number of approaches available at the staff level.

- (2) The Action Officer must exercise a great deal of tact in order to establish and maintain a good working relationship with the Senior Advisors at his schools. The SA works for (normally) the Branch Chief but unless he works with the Action Officer the effectiveness of the advisory effort will be jeopardized. The Action Officer must provide all possible assistance and advice to aid the SA effectively accomplish the myriad of tasks associated with his advisory position. Personality conflicts between Action Officers and Senior Advisors must be resolved immediately as they can only result in a degradation of the advisory effort.
- (3) Sound judgement is necessary to determine the best course of action to pursue in resolving an existing or potential problem area. Staff actions must be based upon as detailed an investigation of the subject and analysis of available information as time permits. Sources of information must be identified for ready reference and categorized as to reliability through experience. The Action Officer is also constantly required to establish priorities for the many actions being handled concurrently. Specific guidance from the Branch/Division Chief is often needed to resolve conflicts of priority amongst a number of "urgent" actions.
- (4) The efficient and effective accomplishment of staff actions is required to allow time for the Action Officer to periodically visit his assigned schools. These visits are an invaluable means of gaining first hand knowledge of the operation and problems of each school. They are normally very informal and do not impose any imposition on the School Commandant. The Action Officer/Senior Advisor relationship is also strengthened by these visits. An Action Officer must be very careful not to let himself become tied to his desk. I have found that routine work can be quickly accomplished in the evenings or during the lunch-hour.

- (5) The Action Officer is constantly required to prepare reports (majority of these are statistical in nature) with an extremely short suspense which will be used at higher echelons to make decisions. Memorandums for Record on all significant events and monthly compilations (daily and weekly also for Language School) of pertinent statistical data for each school are essential to insure ready access of accurate information. The schools will not be operating on Sundays and holidays so information on these days must come from in-house resources. The Action Officer must maintain contact with his Senior Advisor during the periods the school is not operating. The system utilized during my tenure was to have each Senior Advisor call-in sometime during the morning and afternoon on these days. This system worked very well.
- c. My tenure as Branch Chief was relatively short and with a pending complete changeover of Branch personnel I chose to direct the majority of my effort on maintaining continuity at the Branch level. The necessity of "breaking-in" a new Action Officer for the Language School had a great deal of influence on this decision.
- (1) The Branch Chief should visit each school at least monthly. These visits are more formal in nature than those of the Action Officer as the Branch Chief normally pays at least a courtesy call on School Commandant. Discussions of school problems with the Commandants has proven extremely valuable not only from the standpoint of gaining a thorough understanding of the problems but also in conveying to the Commandant the interest of the advisors at all levels in obtaining satisfactory solutions.
- (2) The Branch Chief should insure that all requirements levied on the Field Advisory Elements either by the Branch or other Training Directorate elements are thoroughly defined to insure the desired response is obtained i.e. by providing formats for reports where uniformity is desired. This will eliminate the need for the Action Officers to expend a great deal of their time redoing unsatisfactory inputs when time precludes sending the input back to the originator. Guidance to the advisory elements should be in writing whenever possible to aid these elements in establishing their continuity of effort files. Command interest in these files must be maintained at all times as they have proven to be of invaluable assistance to new advisors, particularly in recent months when replacements have been arriving after the departure of their predecessors.
- (3) The policy within the Combat Support Branch has been to originate and answer the maximum amount of staff actions at the Branch level to provide the Senior Advisor the maximum amount of time to devote to his principal duty of advising. This policy will require reexamination if a replacement for me is not provided.

Although several of the Senior Advisors are capable of accomplishing many of the staff actions, their limited contact with the various MACV staff sections will necessitate more detailed guidance than that normally given the Action Officers. In my opinion the utilization of the Senior Advisors as staff officers should be held to a minimum. The increased number of reports and VIP visits resulting from the I&M Program require a great deal of his time already.

- (4) In addition to providing the guidance and impetus to aid the Action Officers and Senior Advisors in performing their functions, it has sometimes been necessary to use the Branch Chief's position as a lever to obtaining necessary action by a Commandant. This has been utilized in cases where the Commandant has taken a position with the Senior Advisor that an issue requiring action at his level is closed or he is not expeditiously taking the required action. The Senior Advisor is then told to go to the Commandant and explain that the Branch Chief has become "unreasonable" and unless action is forthcoming the Senior Advisor's job will be jeopardized. Naturally this technique must be used judiciously but it has proven effective in several instances this past year.

4. Summary of Schools.

I will concentrate my comments on those schools for which I was Action Officer. CPT Finn quite adequately covered the current status at the other schools in his After Action Report. ✓

- a. Armed Forces Language School. To adequately comprehend the present status of this school, one must start with the 1967 study performed by a MACV Board of Officers at the request of the Training Directorate (copies are available in the files). At this time it was recognized that the Language School (located on the JGS Compound) facilities were inadequate and the school must be expanded and relocated. Pending the relocation of the school, COMUSMACV approved the allocation of \$30,800.00 to improve the unsatisfactory classroom and language laboratory facilities. The renovation was scheduled to begin in Feb 68. However, the Jan 68 TET Offensive precluded the initiation of the renovation. At this time the RVNAF Language School was entirely located in Camp Tran Hung Dao on the JGS Compound. The school had a double shift capacity of 720 students and a 120 student position language laboratory facility. During the 1968 TET Offensive the school was occupied by the VC and approximately 70% of the school, including the laboratory facility, was destroyed during the ensuing fighting. Subsequent efforts to obtain a new location for the school were unsuccessful. Ten metal prefabricated buildings were then erected at the school location in Camp Tran Hung Dao in May 68 as an interim measure pending relocation of the school to a suitable training facility. These buildings, combined with useable classroom space in the

damaged facilities, gave the school a double shift capacity of 1000 students. This capacity was sufficient to accommodate the ARVN Offshore and ARVN Interpreter training requirements. However, a new requirement to provide English language training for VNAF students in support of the RVNAF I&M Program was identified in May 68. This necessitated the acquisition of additional facilities to accommodate the VNAF students. The difficulties encountered in obtaining an additional facility prevented the scheduled initiation of this training in Jul 68. A GVN owned building at 29 Dong Khanh, Cholon was allocated to the school in Aug 68. This building was considered undesirable as a language training facility due to the high ambient noise level resulting from its location on a main thoroughfare. However, due to the pressing need for additional facilities, it was decided to utilize this facility. Extensive renovation was also required before the building could be used for the conduct of language training. The renovation began in Sep 68 with 100 classrooms programmed for completion by 1 Mar 69. The renovation was to provide a facility with a double shift capacity of 2000. Instruction of VNAF students began at this facility on 4 Nov 68. In Dec 68 the VNAF program was accelerated and a new requirement to train VNN students for the "Accelerated Turn-Over of Navy Assets" Program was identified. This created a peak CY69 student load of 4610 students. Immediate action was taken to acquire Koelper Compound, 8 Nguyen Van Trang, Saigon for use as a language school. This facility was expected to provide 100 classrooms and a double shift capacity of 2000 students. The three facilities were expected to give the school a double shift capacity of approximately 5000 students. Priority requisitions for language laboratories, tape recorders, and Defense Language Institute (DLI) instructional materials were submitted to support the increased training requirements. In Jan 69 additional VNAF training requirements were identified which increased the peak projected CY69 student load to 5555 in Jul 69. Koelper Compound became the headquarters of the school with 85 rather than the 100 classrooms anticipated. A 25 position language laboratory was installed at this facility. The Advisory Detachment commenced an expansion from 38 to 500 personnel to provide additional advisory and instructor personnel to support the increased training program. The Advisory Detachment established preservice and inservice instructor training programs to train the additional instructor personnel provided on a TDY basis with little or no instructor training. A project to develop training aids to enhance the instructional program was also initiated by the Detachment. In Feb 69 a remedial training program was instituted for VNAF airmen students not progressing through their training at a satisfactory rate. An elimination policy was also established for academically deficient students. A 60 position language laboratory was obtained from the Vietnamese National Military Academy and installed at

Koelper Compound. Portable tape recorders were acquired to provide language laboratory training in the classrooms. In Mar 69 the renovation of the Dong Khanh Annex provided only 80 rather than the 100 classrooms anticipated. The double shift capacity of the school became 4300 students. Action was initiated to acquire a fourth facility for the school to accommodate the projected student load. Department of Army approved the request to expand the DLI Language Training Detachment from 4 to 30 personnel. On 13 Mar 69 fourteen VNAF airmen successfully completed their training and became the first graduates of the VNAF program. In Apr 69 the double shift capacity of the school was increased to 5100 students with the acquisition of the Royal Hotel. Instruction of VNN students began at this facility on 28 Apr 69. Lack of student motivation was identified as one of the primary causes of unsatisfactory VNAF airmen progress. Action was taken to provide messing and billeting facilities for the VNAF students in an effort to improve student motivation. The VNAF training requirements were increased due to high attrition in the VNAF airmen classes and the approval of additional FY70 CONUS schooling quotas. The projected peak CY69 student load became 6110 in Aug 69. During the period May-Jun 69 there were 40 active and 20 listening language laboratory positions installed at both the Camp Tran Hung Dao and Dong Khanh Annex locations of the school. Installation of 30 language laboratory positions at the Royal Hotel was also accomplished. Procedures were established for the screening and early elimination of VNAF airmen students not possessing sufficient language aptitude to successful complete training. The first VNAF pilot candidates (8) successfully completed their training. A new requirement to conduct English language training in support of the Integrated Communications System (ICS) Program was identified. Actions were initiated to establish an annex of the Language School at Vung Tau and to obtain 106 additional advisory and instructional personnel to provide this training. A target date of 1 Sep 69 was established for commencement of instruction at the new facility. An agreement was reached to send 500 VNAF airmen to the VNAF English School in Nha Trang for training during Jul-Aug 69. This was necessary to prevent the capacity of the RVNAF Language School from being exceeded. On 7 Aug 69 a VC terrorist attack temporarily put the Dong Khanh Annex out of operation. Training for the affected VNAF students was continued at VNAF Tent City and a Public School on Plantation Road. An impact statement was also dispatched to JCS outlining the effects of the attack on the I&M Program. Significant actions resulting from the attack included the allocation of new facilities for the school by RVNAF. These facilities are located next to Tent City and will provide an additional 120 classrooms by 1 Dec 69. The JGS Compound is now being utilized to train VNAF students and the ARVN students have been moved to the Dong Khanh Annex. Additionally, a decision was made to pursue to immediate construction of a permanent 200 classroom facility which would ultimately replace

all the present temporary facilities. During Aug 69 the start date of the ICS ELT program was slipped to Nov 69 based upon completion of necessary renovation of the language training facility. The language training program still requires about 95% of one Action Officers time and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The Senior Advisor is the former Chief of the Combat Support Branch which has greatly benefited the continuity of effort in this extremely important program. Major actions at the present time include:

- (1) Effort to reduce VNAF airmen attrition.
- (2) Establishment of a new annex in Vung Tau.
- (3) Converting VNAF instruction to a single shift basis.
- (4) Improvement of facilities.
- (5) Continuous upgrading of instructional program.
- (6) Acquisition of additional language laboratories and training materials.
- (7) Standardization of all ELT under the auspices of the RVNAFIS.
- (8) Obtaining sufficient vehicles for the advisory team.
- (9) Identifying CY70 training requirements to permit necessary programming of instructors, texts and facilities.

The Language School has made tremendous strides in the past year, however, the battle is far from being over. It has now been proven though that the requisition in-country ELT capability has been established and this capability can be refined to the desired extent provided continuous support for the program exists at the higher echelons.

- b. Adjutant General School. This school is extremely well organized, operated and maintained. LTC Tuc, the School Commandant is an outstanding officer. The damage suffered by the school during TET 68 has been repaired and the school facilities improved by the addition of an auditorium during the past year. The school has minimal problems with an inadequate water supply and insufficient typewriters being the most pronounced. This school conducts a large number of WAFC classes and is one of the few schools providing messing and billeting facilities for the WAFC students. All in all the AG School is one of the best schools in the RVNAF system.
- c. Administration and Finance School. The lack of an aggressive Commandant is evidenced in the entire operation of this school. The problem is compounded by the location of the school in the

flight path for Tan Son Nhut Airbase. The relocation of the school has been pursued for over two years without success. RVNAF has recently constructed additional classrooms at the present location which indicates a more or less acceptance of the fact the school will remain there for quite some time. A Finance Officer is needed as Senior Advisor to provide the expertise necessary to insure the instructional program is meeting the needs of an improved RVNAF. The replacement of the Commandant by an aggressive officer would be highly beneficial.

- d. Ordnance School. LTC Tai, the School Commandant is an outstanding officer. This school requires little advice in the technical areas as the school personnel are quite proficient. Major problems are insufficient instructor personnel for the increased student loads and lack of adequate billeting facilities. I have recommended that the Senior Advisor visit various ordnance units in the field to determine the adequacy of the instructional program. The establishment of the required maintenance base is one of the keys to the success of the I&M program. The Ordnance School is a very fine school which is approaching self-sufficiency.
- e. Medical School. This is a monitored school which causes an abundance of headaches due to the poor relationship of the advisory element (provided by MACV Command Surgeon with the school staff). The advisors are extremely cooperative but have extreme difficulty in obtaining accurate information on a timely basis. The school is overcrowded although it has one of the largest physical plants. This is mainly caused by CTC utilizing the facilities to conduct other than Medical courses. A good working relationship with this advisory element is an absolute necessity to adequately monitor the school's activities.

5. General Comments.

- a. Continuity of Effort. This cannot be overemphasized. The files at the Branch and Advisory Elements have been greatly expanded and provide a good resume of the past year's activities.
- b. Management. The greatest training need for the long range improvement of RVNAF is in the area of management. The PRAISE course is a start but greater emphasis must be placed in this area if the advanced planning required throughout RVNAF is to be realized.
- c. CTC Staff. At the present time CTC is inadequately staffed to cope with the increased training requirements necessary to support the I&M Program. A new TOE has been submitted which will help resolve this problem when approved. This TOE will better align the Service School effort and permit a more effective advisory effort at the staff level. This is urgently needed to prepare the CTC staff to assume a more active role in directing the operations of the schools.

- d. Rapport. This factor must constantly be considered at the Senior Advisor level. While not as important at the staff level, it means the difference in maintaining a highly effective advisory effort at the school.
- e. Visits. The scheduling and subsequent cancelling of visits to the schools has been a continuing problem area. Every effort should be made to refrain from scheduling visits over a week in advance for the Division Chief or Director due to the inherent need for flexibility in their schedules.
- f. Counterpart Meetings. The weekly CTC counterpart and MG Dzu/BG Gunn meetings have proven extremely useful in identifying problems requiring action by various RVNAF elements. The reluctance of the Vietnamese to initiate action at the lower levels can be overcome by having the action start at the top. However, the action must be presented in such a manner that a "loss-of-face" does not occur at the staff or school levels.