

Vietnam

Operation Safeside

Final Report

1041st Security Police Squadron (Test) - Safeside

82nd Combat Security Police Wing

| - 821st CSPS
| - 822nd CSPS
| - 823d CSPS

Safeside

submitted by Steve Wieman

REF #95


DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH AIR FORCE (PACAF)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307

REPLY TO
ATTN OF:

SUBJECT: Operation SAFESIDE Final Report (U)

TO: Hq USAF (AFGCS)

DEC 1967



1. (C) During the period January through July 1967, the 1041st Security Police Squadron (T) was deployed at Phu Cat AB, RVN to perform operational evaluation of advanced security equipment, to evaluate Air Force Security Police training methods and requirements for air base defense and to acquire the experience necessary to develop doctrine and tactics for air base defense in a limited war or insurgent environment. Prior to the deployment of the unit to the RVN, I made known my desire to comment on the final report as the test was being conducted at a Seventh Air Force installation, affected the security of a Seventh Air Force installation for the duration of the deployment phase and could have immediate consequences on the tactics and doctrines utilized to secure air bases within the RVN.

Additionally, Seventh Air Force has more extensive and recent experience in the problems associated with base defense in a limited war environment.

2. (C) The specific comments below have been grouped in natural functional areas, and include comments on the functional study on Operation SAFESIDE which was quoted as a source document in the final report.

a. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS: The restrictions imposed on the use of Combat Security Police only within the installation perimeter make it mandatory that added emphasis be given to security considerations in initial base planning and/or land acquisition. In many cases

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the Free World Military Force charged with the responsibility for external defense of the installation will not have the capability to adequately defend the base. This situation can evolve because of the lack of training and equipment of an indigenous force or through the emphasis that is correctly placed on offensive operations, as opposed to static defense, necessary in a limited war or insurgent environment. With these considerations it is apparent that USAF forces, through proper planning, can provide an increased capability to

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defend their own resources. Through the correct placement of combat essential resources within the base perimeter and acquisition of sufficient real estate the off base mortar threat can be minimized. While obviously the USAF security forces cannot provide ground reaction to long range stand off weapons attacks, an added capability to neutralize the mortar/penetration threat can be achieved through these actions without deploying beyond the installation perimeter.

(1) Sensors: The employment of USAF provided sensors should not be arbitrarily limited to the interior and perimeter of the installation. Many sensor devices would in fact be more effective and contribute more directly to installation security if they were utilized within the external TAOR. In conjunction with this application of sensors, in specific instances where it is possible, action should be taken to establish sanitized buffer zones outside from the perimeter of "bare base" installations. Additionally the concept of replacing security personnel, as detection instruments, on the base perimeter and placing sole reliance on sensor devices is unrealistic in the near term. The state of the art, as evidenced by ground sensor equipment evaluated during the SAFESIDE deployment and equipment furnished Seventh Air Force, is not such that this approach is practical in the immediate future. My position, as presented at the MACV Seminar for Research and Development for Base Defense, 7 September 1967 that "the equipment represents nothing more than an extension of the sensory capabilities of the sentry" appears valid and should govern the use of sensors until much more sophisticated devices are developed. A sensor/equipment area, an extremely desirable degree of discrimination can be achieved through a proper mix of equipment. For example, at Phu Cat, subsequent to the departure of the 1041 Security Police Sq (T) a penetration attempt was discovered and thwarted by a combination of detection through the use of the RAIDS-1, observation by Starlight Scopes and selective penalty applied with mortar fire.

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(2) Threat Analysis: In light of the above a very practical threat division, valid in most limited war or insurgent environment, would be the long range stand-off weapon which is beyond USAF control as far as ground reaction and the infiltration/sapper/mortar threat that can be contained through sole USAF resources or in conjunction with the external defense force commander.



(3) Tactics: The use of ambush and other type patrols is considered essential to provide adequate security for an installation in an insurgent environment. Lacking sophisticated intelligence aids and equipment, any insurgent, as has been proven in Vietnam, must rely on the low level intelligence gathering/reconnaissance agent. A static defense posture will be quickly compromised by activity of this type, and a varied defense, reacting to the local threat, is considered essential. One recently captured enemy document constituted a request by the local Viet Cong reconnaissance cell leader for assistance from a higher headquarters in methods to defeat the ambush patrols and other outer defenses of Phu Cat AB. Another portion of the tactics evolved and concerns me. The concept of "control by sector" can be over emphasized and detract from the security posture. The problem of divided authority has historically been the major limiting factor in the RVN. Any attempt to sectionalize "command and control" of the internal security forces would be detrimental. A single Central Security Control has proven effective in controlling the security activity during normal conditions, while in the event of enemy attack the sector supervisor has the authority to commit his resources in response to the threat, subject to being overridden by CSC which must maintain overall control of the protection effort.

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During deployment

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(4) Command and Mission Relationships: Little mention was made in the final report of the initial requirement to establish command relationships for the control of any deployed Combat Security Police unit although the possibility of the coincidental use of standard security police forces and the Combat Police forces, such as occurred at Phu Cat, was acknowledged. The failure to fully integrate the efforts of both units at Phu Cat resulted in a less than optimum security posture. For example, the placement of the 1041st base camp in a remote area of the base resulted in diversion of personnel to perform camp security duties and decreased the reaction capability of off duty forces in the event of emergency. Additionally, a lessening of mission orientation was noted during the test period when it appeared the test unit became pre-occupied with "proving itself" by killing an occasional Viet Cong rather than providing the best possible security. These examples, not to degrade the effectiveness or potential of the test unit, but rather to illustrate some problem areas inherent in this type of operation which should be considered prior to future deployment.

(5) Air Support: The test report recommends the direct assignment of armed Huey gun ships and the "slick" version of the aircraft to the Combat Security Police units, but appears to rule out the AC-47 or

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follow on aircraft because of transportation difficulties. As stated in the MACV Base Defense Seminar, of 12 June 1967, which was quoted in the final test report, the capabilities required for base defense cannot be met by either the AC-47 or the armed helicopter alone, but requires a combination of the two. Until an aircraft is developed which satisfies all the requirements, both aircraft should be programmed for deployment to any bare base environment. However, the direct assignment of any aircraft to the Combat Security Police units appears inappropriate. I consider it essential that control of the aircraft be retained by existing command and control facilities, such as TACC, to insure the maximum effective utilization of resources.

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(6) Positive Intelligence Capability: During the deployment period in the RVN and in everyday Seventh Air Force security operations security forces must depend heavily on positive intelligence information to allow a varied, effective defense posture. However, no mention is made of how this capability is to be provided during any future deployment. Unless plans are developed to concurrently deploy an OSI detachment to implement a positive intelligence gathering program such as the area source program, which has proved extremely valuable, then the capability should be developed as an integral part of each Combat Security Police unit. Unless an active attempt is made, immediately after deployment, to determine the attitudes, prejudices and social structure of the nearby indigenous population the maximum effectiveness of such a unit will not be realized. Additionally an integral capability such as this would allow for the identification and utilization of any mercenary forces available in the area. The use of "Nang" and "Mike" forces has proven extremely valuable in the RVN, and other forces of this type are available in other areas.

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b. (C) TRAINING: The effectiveness and capabilities of the 1041st Security Police Squadron (T) personnel in those subjects included in the training program were excellent and it is obvious that any unit with select, hand picked members; select leadership and expanded training will provide an added capability. However, there are three areas of training that, based on experience gained in this theater, should be seriously considered for any unit deploying to a "bare base" in an insurgent environment. The importance of the effects of the indigenous civilian populace on the success of any deployed unit cannot be over emphasized. The situation facing any unit will be directly analogous to that which faced the US Army Special Forces in Vietnam, and like capabilities such as linguists, competent medics, etc, should be considered. Secondly, in addition to the "Ranger" type training already included, serious consideration should be given to Paratroop training for the Combat Security Police forces. The stated diversified missions of the units appear to require this capability. Thirdly, the additional training proposed for supervisors of the Combat Security Police units should include political, social, and ethnological

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courses for those areas where threat analysis indicates future deployment is most likely. Again, the effect of the interface between the security forces and the civilian populace cannot be over emphasized and the ability to operate effectively in new and diversified social environments will be required of the units.

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(c) (C) ORGANIZATIONAL EQUIPMENT: The organizational equipment provided for future deployment should be packaged in a modular concept and effort should be made to insure that equipment utilized by the Combat Security Police unit is compatible with that in use by any host Security Police unit.

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(1) Security Police Radios: The present non tactical radios are clearly inadequate for use in any limited war or insurgent environment. Although the four channel non tactical radio which is apparently being developed in response to SEAOR 127 is acceptable as an interim solution, the end position should be a complete tactical radio system for Combat Security Police units. Action will be initiated to modify SEAOR 127 to clearly state this requirement.

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(2) M-151 Vehicles: The M-151 vehicle is marginally acceptable as an interim Security Alert Team vehicle. Extreme reliance is placed on mobile response/enforcement by the Security Alert Teams under the USAF concept of security. This vehicle does not provide any acceptable degree of protection for the SAT in responding to an emergency and severely limits the response capability. In the event this vehicle is issued to Combat Security Police units, either the US Army basis of issue and replacement should be utilized or procurement action should be initiated to insure adequate spares levels of major components are deployed with the unit.

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(3) Armored Personnel Carriers: The final report states that this vehicle is "capable of operating over any terrain and in any weather." Subsequent experience at Phu Cat AB during the early part of the monsoon season has proven this statement inaccurate. On several occasions the APC has proven unsuccessful and has been mired in the heavy mud in the area. Similar experience has been noted by Republic of Korea forces in the area.

(4) Sentry Dogs: The decision to deploy sentry dogs with the Combat Security Police units should be reconsidered. Although not an ideal solution, the capabilities of the scout dog to detect are comparable with that of the sentry dog and the support requirements for the scout dog are minimal in comparison with those required for the sentry dog. Action should be initiated to train and deploy scout dogs who will attack only on command.

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d. (C) TACTICAL SECURITY SUPPORT EQUIPMENT: The area of Tactical Security Support Equipment encompasses more than intrusion detection devices and continued efforts should be made in the areas of greater illuminating capability and better methods for applying selective penalties to any enemy force.

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(1) Radar Airbase Intrusion Detection System - RAIDS-I: Additional testing has been accomplished with this system and it appears that equipment of this type is extremely useful in a base defense role.

(2) Research Incorporated Seismic Detection System: Further testing with this system indicates that the reliability is affected by moisture leakage and malfunction of the geophones. Further tests, with additional systems, are being conducted.

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(3) Sandia Seismic Intrusion Detection System: An improved version of this system is presently available and should be evaluated for use by Combat Security Police units.

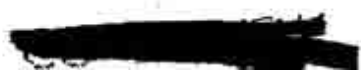
3. (U) The above comments are based on both the final test report of

Operation SAFESIDE and the Functional Study prepared to provide a basis for determining the nature and size of the USAF security capability required for Air Force installations in a limited war or insurgent environment. Information copies of this letter have been provided all recipients of the Functional Study.

William W. Momyer
WILLIAM W. MOMYER, Lt General, USAF
Commander

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