

HEADQUARTERS
39TH ENGINEER BATTALION (C)
APO 96316

17 November 1966

SUBJECT: After Action Report on Operation JOHN PAUL JONES

TO: Commanding Officer
45th Engr Gp (Const)
APO 96316

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1. GENERAL:

- a. Name of Operation: Operation JOHN PAUL JONES
- b. Date of Operation: 23 July through 5 September 1966
- c. Location: TUY HOA, RVN
- d. Control Headquarters: 39th Engineer Battalion (C)(A)
- e. Reporting Officer: Lt Col T. R. Fulton

2. ORGANIZATION:

- a. Task Force Schultz 39th Engineer Battalion (Co A (-) and elements of 572 Engineer Co (LE) and Hq Co, Equip Plt)
- b. Company B, 39th Engineer Battalion
- c. Company C, 39th Engineer Battalion
- d. Headquarters Company, 39th Engineer Battalion
- e. 553 Engineer Company (FB) (-)
- f. 572 Engineer Company (LE) (-)
- g. Tunnel demo team, 588th Engineer Battalion (C)

3. MISSION: 39th Engineer Battalion

Bn (-) provides combat support to 1st Bde, 101st Abn and 2nd Bde ROKMC; improves LOCS from TUY HOA SOUTH to VUNG RO for class 35 traffic. Task Force Schultz lands at VUNG RO on order, prepares beach landing sites and commences construction of road from Beach Bravo North to QLL and West to Beach Alfa.

4. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS:

1st Bde, 101st Abn and 2nd Bde, ROKMC seize and hold vital terrain VIC VUNG RO and south from TUY HOA along QLL to VUNG RO. B Co construct and maintain heliport facilities for 10th Avn Bn, VIC south airfield, TUY HOA. C Co commence 23 July to construct class 60 float bridge on QLL (CQ 201351); by-pass three bridges (CQ 224312, 228290, 242275) and establish contact with Task Force Schultz VIC VUNG RO. Task Force Schultz lands at VUNG RO, Beach Bravo, on order, improves landing site, constructs road to connect with Route 1 and Beach Alfa, links up with Co C, 39th Engr Bn.

5. EXECUTION: The following is a chronological resume of Operation JOHN PAUL JONES:

a. 18 through 22 July Company B began Phase I construction of heliport facilities for 10th Avn Bn VIC south airfield, TUY HOA. Work consisted of layout grading, penpriming, and emplacing 64-12' x 12' landing pads made of PSP and 2- refuel pads with PSP in cross shape. 553 Engineer Company (FB) with class 60 and MAT6 bridging arrived at TUY HOA from CAM RANH BAY on 22 and 23 July.

b. 23 July - Company C and 553 Engineer Company (FB) began preparing

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- c. July - Company C and 553 Engineer Company (FB) began construction of float bridge at CQ 201351. Company B (Plat) began hasty road repairs on QLL south of CQ 201351 and the company (-) continued heliport construction - Phase I.
- d. 25 July - Task Force Schultz landed at VUNG RO and began clearing of Beach Bravo area. Company C and 553 Engineer Company (FB) continued construction of class 60 float bridge at CQ 201351. Company B completed road repair on QLL south to CQ 242279, continued Phase I heliport construction and began construction of by-pass at bridge at CQ 224312.
- e. 26 July - Company C and 553 Engineer Company (FB) completed construction of class 60 float bridge at CQ 201351. Company B continued Phase I construction of heliports, installed a light vehicle raft and a foot bridge at CQ 242275, completed hasty by-pass of bridges at CQ 224312 and CQ 228290. Task Force Schultz continued clearing of Beach Bravo.
- f. 27 July - Task Force Schultz continued Beach clearing and began construction of pioneer road from Beach Bravo to QLL. Company B completed Phase I of heliport construction. Company C began construction of a by-pass at CQ 242275.
- g. 28 July - Task Force Schultz continued clearing and construction of pioneer road. Company B began Phase II (penetration area surrounding pads) of heliport construction and began operations to clear destroyed bridge at CQ 224312. Company C continued work on hasty by-pass at CQ 242275 and began road repair on QLL from CQ 242275 to CQ 268230.
- h. 29 July - Task Force Schultz continued clearing and construction of pioneer road, completed a recon between Beach Alpha and Beach Bravo and completed one temporary LST ramp. Company B continued on Phase II of heliport construction and cleared gap at CQ 224312. Company C continued work on hasty by-pass at CQ 242275. 572nd Engr Co (LE) closed at TUY HOA.
- i. 30 July - Task Force Schultz continued clearing and construction of pioneer road, began placing laterite on hardstand cantonment area. Company B continued working on Phase II of heliport construction, spanned 1/4 of gap at CQ 224312 with M16 dry span and began repair of bridge at CQ 228290. Company C completed hasty by-pass and began removal of existing bridge at CQ 242275.
- j. 31 July - Task Force Schultz completed clearing Beach Bravo area, continued construction of pioneer road and placing of laterite on hardstand and cantonment area. Company B continued on Phase I of heliport construction, began construction of M16 dry span to span another 1/4 of gap at CQ 224312 and continued repair of bridge at CQ 228290. 572nd Engineer Company (LE) began construction of pioneer road from QLL to Beach Bravo (VUNG RO) to link-up with Task Force Schultz elements which were working from beach end.
- k. 1 August - Task Force Schultz continued construction of pioneer road and placing of laterite on hardstand area. Company B continued work on Phase II of heliport construction, completed a M16 dry span spanning 1/4 of gap at CQ 224312, continued working on bridge at CQ 228290. Company C began construction of a deliberate by-pass at CQ 242275. 572nd Engineer Company (LE) continued pioneer road construction and general support of battalion.
- l. 2 August - Task Force Schultz continued construction of pioneer road and placing of laterite on hardstand area. Company B completed work on Phase II of heliport construction and continued work on bridge at CQ 228290. Company C continued construction of a deliberate by-pass at CQ 242275. 572nd Engineer Company (LE) continued pioneer road construction and etc.

- m. 2 August - Task Force Schultz completed construction of pioneer road and hardstand area. Company B completed work on bridge at CQ 224290. Company C continued work on by-pass at CQ 242275. 572nd Engineer Company (LE) continued pioneer road construction and etc.
- n. 4 through 8 August - Task Force Schultz continued construction of pioneer road and hardstand area. Company C continued work on by-pass at CQ 242275. 572nd Engineer Company (LE) continued pioneer road construction.
- o. 9 and 10 August - Task Force Schultz continued construction of pioneer road and completed laterite base for hardstand area. Company B began driving piles for bridge pier at CQ 224312. Company C continued work on by-pass at CQ 242275. 572nd Engineer Company (LE) continued pioneer road construction from QLL to Beach Bravo and etc.
- p. 11 and 12 August - Task Force Schultz continued work on pioneer road and began work on 2d LST ramp. Company B continued driving piles at CQ 224312. Company C continued work on by-pass at CQ 242275. 572nd Engineer Company (LE) continued work on pioneer road and etc.
- q. 13 August - Task Force Schultz and 572nd Engineer Company (LE) completed pioneer road from QLL to Beach Bravo. Task Force Schultz continued work on LST ramp. Company B continued driving piles at CQ 224312. Company C continued work on by-pass at CQ 242275. 553rd Engineer Company began construction of POL Pipeline from VUNG RO north along railroad to CQ 244274.
- r. 14 through 17 August - Task Force Schultz and 572nd Engineer Company (LE) began work on widening pioneer road. Task Force Schultz continued construction of LST ramp. Company B continued working on pile bent at CQ 224312. Company C continued work on by-pass at CQ 242275. 553rd Engineer Company continued construction of POL Pipeline.
- s. 18 through 20 August - Task Force Schultz continued to widen pioneer road, began cutting trail from Beach Bravo to Beach Alfa, and completed temporary LST ramps. Company B continued work on pile bent at CQ 224312 and assumed responsibility for construction at CQ 242275 which was changed from by-pass to preparing existing site for emplacement of 100' DS Bailey Bridge. Company C effort diverted from combat support to heliport construction in FWF cantonment area. 553rd Engineer Company continued work on POL Pipeline and began construction of OL 50 trestles for emplacement of class 60 treadway across island at CA 201351. 572nd Engineer Company equipment attached to Task Force Schultz for road widening.
- t. 21 through 23 August - Task Force Schultz continued to widen road, completed cutting trail to Beach Alfa, and began construction of permanent concrete barge off-load ramp. Company B began constructing timber abutments and headwalls for 100' DS Bailey at CQ 242275 and emplaced two M16 dry spans at CQ 224312 completing tactical bridging over gap. 553rd Engineer Company continued POL Pipeline construction and class 50 trestle construction at CQ 201351.
- u. 24 August - Task Force Schultz continued to widen road and bring it to grade, and completed concrete barge off-load ramp. Company B continued constructing timber abutments and headwalls at CQ 242275. 553rd Engineer Company continued POL Pipeline construction and class 50 trestle construction at CQ 201351.
- v. 25 and 26 August - Task Force Schultz continued to improve road and began construction of concrete LST ramp. Company B completed constructing timber abutments and headwalls at CQ 242275. 553rd Engineer Company continued POL Pipeline

construction and class 50 trestle at CQ 201351.

w. and 28 August - Task Force Schultz continued to improve road and place concrete on LST ramp. Company B initiated work clearing brush as a part of the US/ROK base development project. 553rd Engineer Company continued work on POL Pipeline and completed the class 50 trestle construction at CQ 201351.

x. 29 August through 2 September - Task Force Schultz continued to improve road and completed one concrete LST ramp. 553rd Engineer Company continued construction on POL Pipeline.

y. 3 through 5 September - Task Force Schultz continued to improve road at VUNG RO. Company B began constructing approaches to bridge at CQ 242275. 553rd Engineer Company completed installation of 19,000 feet of 6" POL Pipeline from Beach Alfa to Tank Farm at CQ 244274.

6. SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

a. Construction of 8100 feet of pioneer road between Beach Bravo (VUNG RO) and QLL completed in 18 days and commencement of widening road and bringing it to grade.

b. Cut trail between Beach Bravo and Beach Alfa (VUNG RO).

c. Covered hardstand and cantonment area at Beach Bravo (VUNG RO) with laterite.

d. Construction of one concrete barge off-load ramp and one concrete LST ramp (VUNG RO).

e. Construction of 14,700 feet of line from Beach Alfa (VUNG RO) to vicinity CQ 244274.

f. Construction of class 50 float bridge on QL #1 (CQ 201351) to include installation of a fixed span on trestles across island for use during monsoon season.

g. Construction of hasty by-pass and then installation of tactical bridging (4 - 23 feet 4 inch M4T6 dry spans) on QL #1 (CQ 224312).

h. Repaired existing damaged bridge on QL #1 (CQ 228290) by placing concrete in hole in existing concrete and by placing half an I beam in split at mid span.

i. Construction of hasty by-pass followed by construction of abutments and headwalls in preparation for installation of 100' Da Bailey Bridge on QL #1 (CQ 242275).

j. Construction of 64 helipads and 2 refueling pads at TUY HOA cantonment area.

7. SUPPLY AND ADMINISTRATION:

a. 10 July through 5 September - A-1 units (except Task Force Schultz) deployed with three days rations and were resupplied by land. Class I, III, and V were obtained from TUY HOA Sub-Area Command and Class II, IV was obtained from CAM RANH BAY DEPOT. All classes were moved from CAM RANH BAY to TUY HOA by air or sea.

b. Task Force Schultz

(1) 25 July through 14 August - Deployed with 7 days rations and was resupplied daily by LCM-8 boats from TUY HOA Sub-Area Command. All classes of supplies, including one meal per day of "A" rations were moved from TUY HOA to VUNG RO by LCM.

(2) 15 August through 5 September - Resupplied daily both by vehicles using QL #1 and by sea using LCM-8 boats.

c. Treatment of Casualties:

(1) "Dust Off" helicopters provided by supported Units provided immediate evacuation of seriously wounded or sick personnel as required.

(2) Minor wounds and sickness were treated by unit Medics or evacuated to Bn aid station by available air, sea, or land transportation.

8. COMMUNICATIONS:

a. The battalion utilized an AN/VRC - 18 with RC - 292 antenna for the command net at the battalion NCS in the battalion CP area.

b. Company B and Company C utilized 1/4 ton mounted AN/VRC - 10 radios to communicate from highway QL 1 to the battalion CP area.

c. From 25 July to 31 July - Company A utilized a borrowed AN/PRC - 25 located on high ground behind Beach Bravo to communicate with battalion. A land line was utilized from the AN/PRC location to the Company CP, also a land line provided communications between Beach Bravo and elements of the 1/101st Avn Div on Beach Alfa.

d. Between 1 August and 5 September - Company A utilized an AN/VRC - 18 with vehicle batteries located at the old French Fort on high ground to the northwest of Beach Bravo. An RC - 292 antenna was utilized with the AN/VRC - 18. When silence was required at night an AN/PRC - 25 was borrowed from the Infantry and utilized with the RC - 292. A land line installed by helicopter connected the radio location with Company CP.

e. Communications between the 572nd Engineer Company (LE) and the battalion CP was accomplished utilizing AN/VRC - 10 radios in the company vehicles and an AN/VRC - 18 in a mobile NCS which moved north and south on QL 1 as required. The 572nd Engineer Company, organized under the old "D" series TOE had no organic FM radio capability. The radios referred to above were provided from the 39th Engr Bn equipment which was made excess when the new family of FM radios were received.

9. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED:

a. Transportation - Lack of transportation from battalion CP to and from the support area and our senior headquarters (both located via CRB) was a continuing problem. Reasons for this were:

(1) Lack of organic aviation.

(2) Lack of scheduled flights and inter coastal shipping between TUY HOA to CRB area.

(3) Distance from support area: All supplies had to be airlifted or sealifted into the TUY HOA area. Due to the bulk and weight of construction materials, very little could be airlifted even if the aircraft were available. Sufficient sealift was not available for the material to be shipped from the CRB Support Area. Transportation was also a problem for officers and men of this unit to the above mentioned areas. Frequent trips were necessary for coordination and expediting material requests. A one day trip would turn into a three to four day trip, which in turn resulted in lost manhours.

b. Aircraft support for Local Operations - Support from local aviation units was not adequate. The only aviation unit in this area was the 10th Aviation Battalion. This unit was in general support of the 1/101st Airborne Division, therefore priority for use of their aircraft went to the 1/101st. Whenever possible our requirements were met but due to tactical considerations the majority of our requirements were not fulfilled. Due to our unit's usually being some distance from the base camp, resupply,

only on insecure land LOC's.

c. Demolitions - Some difficulty was encountered in obtaining sufficient demolition materials when required. The stockage level at the TUY HOA ASP was not large enough to meet this unit's demands and delays were experienced in transshipping required items from CAM RANH BAY ASP to TUY HOA by air or sea.

d. During the Operation JOHN PAUL JONES, there were constant problems related to DX and resupply of 2d and 3d echelon repair parts. Although a small maintenance support unit had been collocated with the battalion, it had no PLL and experienced the same problems obtaining DX items or evacuating equipment as did the battalion. Experience gained during this operation convinced 1st Log Command that a Support Maintenance Company must be located at TUY HOA as soon as possible.

10. LESSONS LEARNED:

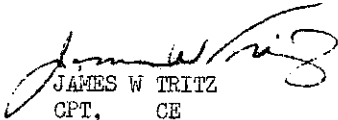
a. Detailed Planning - All projects should have detailed planning completed prior to initiating work on the project. A little extra time in thorough prior planning will result in a faster and more professional job.

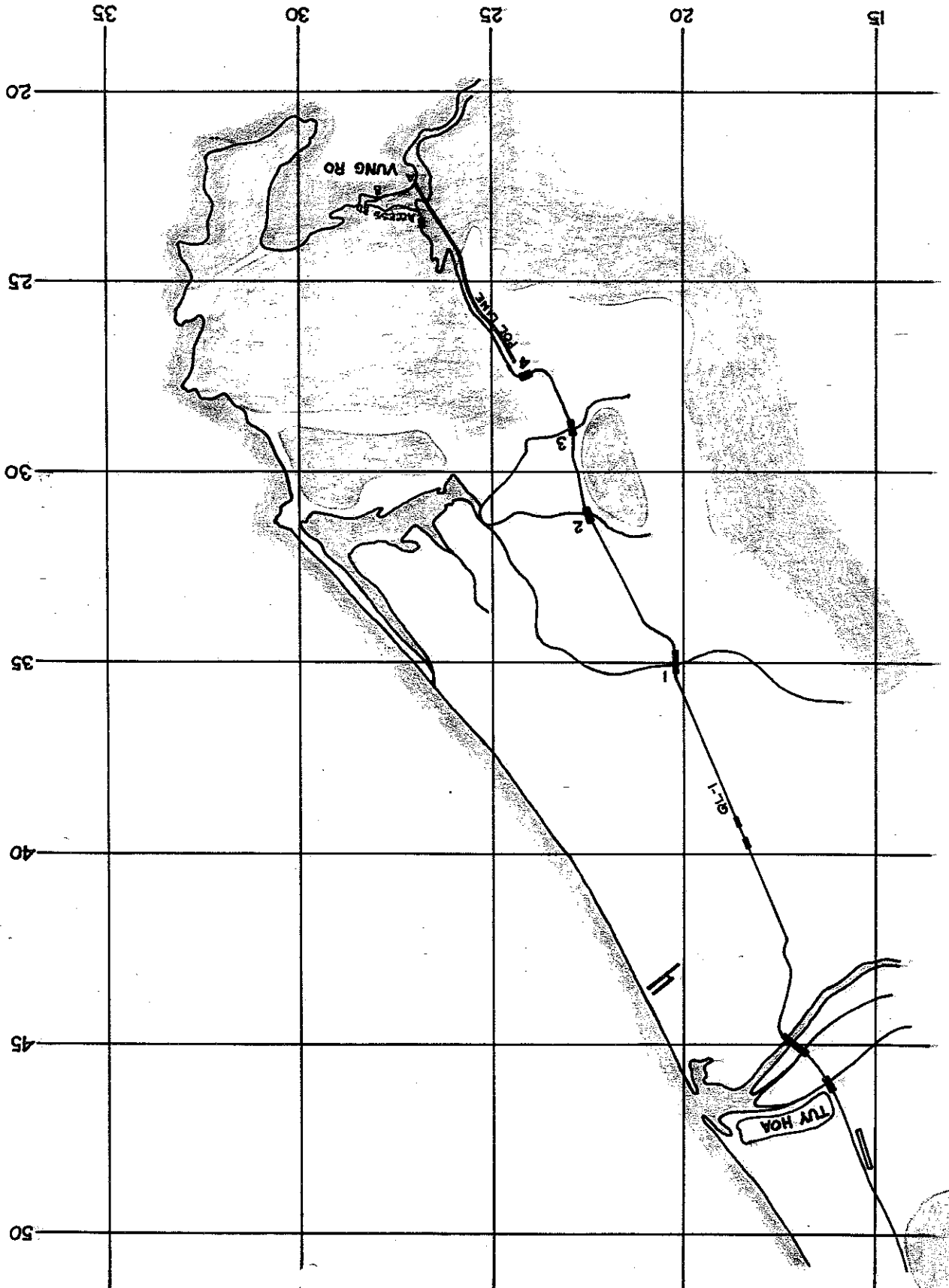
b. A complete bill of materials should be obtained for each project prior to commencing work. An accurate count of items received should also be maintained in order to effect tight control of materials. A savings in time and materials will result.

c. Preposition of Demolitions: Prior to the actual construction of a pioneer road in mountainous terrain, the estimated amounts of demolitions materials should be positioned as near to the project as security permits. This is especially true of projects located in a remote area away from large supply depots since many delays occur if resupply shipments are not on time.

d. Maintenance and Repair Parts: Adequate transportation must be made available to supply the organization with repair parts. The maintenance support detachment should be given the capability and authority to provide parts support for the constructing unit.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JAMES W TRITZ
CPT, CE
Adjutant



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