

1967

ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT
HISTORY OF THE
68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY
145TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
1ST AVIATION BRIGADE

1 January 1967 - 31 December 1967

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AREA OF OPERATIONS



During the past year, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company has operated in the III Corps area of Vietnam. This transitional terrain area for South Vietnam provides a link between the Mekong Delta and the high mountains of the Central highlands. South and West of Saigon the land is delta type terrain and to the North and East is a large plain slowly rising to the mountains of the far perimeter of the III Corps area.

The delta region is a heavily silted area crisscrossed by numerous streams and rivers. It is a low, level plain with an elevation of no more than ten feet above sea level. Being very fertile, almost the entire area is divided into rice paddies and kept flooded. During the rainy season the only dry area is that forming the banks of canals and rivers. There are a few trees found on the banks and around the small villages.

The territory to the North and West of Saigon and in the third Corps is a plateau slowly rising from the few feet above sea level to over 600 feet. Except for the area around large communities which has been cleared, the land is covered by thick jungle. This jungle, which is often two and three canopies thick, consists of bamboo and broad leaf forests interspersed by farms and rubber plantations. Much of the land is sparsely settled though most of the soil is rich. There are only a few large mountains in the III Corps area which serve as excellent land marks.

The III Corps area provides a great variety of terrain to which the aviator must adapt. He must land anywhere from muddy open paddies to small holes in the thick jungle. He must learn to navigate using all types of terrain feature and must adapt to dust and haze in the dry season and mud and large thunderstorms in the wet season. These conditions of the III Corps area provide a great challenge.

68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

ORGANIZED UNDER: MTO&E 1-77G

BY: General Order 249, HQ USARPAC

ATTACHMENTS

282ND SIGNAL DETACHMENT

ORGANIZED UNDER: MTO&E 11-500D

BY: General Order 200 and 283,
HQ Department of the Army.

391ST TRANSPORTATION DETACHMENT

ORGANIZED UNDER: MTO&E 55-500R

BY: General Order 200 and 283,
HQ Department of the Army.

430TH MEDICAL DETACHMENT

ORGANIZED UNDER: TO&E 8-500D

BY: General Order 249, HQ USARPAC

THE KEY PERSONNEL OF THE TOP TIGERS

At the beginning of the year Major William T Kaser was the Commanding Officer of the 68th Assault Helicopter Company, Major Robert Stewart the Executive Officer and Major McGregor the Operations Officer. With the platoons were Captain Lee Kramer, the first lift Commander, Captain Neil Johnson, heading the second airlift platoon, and Major William Chritton, Commander of the Armed Platoon. The Top Tigers also had Captain Peter Emanuel for Service Platoon Commander.

The 391st Transportation Detachment was led by Major Charles Asbelle, the 282nd by Second Lieutenant John Osborn and the 430th Medical Detachment by Captain Arthur Scott. During the month of January Captain Kramer departed and Captain Garrieth Pendergraft took charge of the first lift; however, with the arrival of Major Dotson, leadership changed hands again and in March the first lift was led by Major Larry D Dotson. During March we also had two new Second Lift Commanders as Major Donald Drumm took the reins, followed shortly thereafter by Captain Johnson.

During April Major Chritton departed the 68th and Major Willis was made Gun Platoon Leader. Major Robert Akin took over the 391st Transportation Detachment during that month also, as Major Asbelle was taken for a new assignment outside the company.

In the month of May we had a major change in the super-structure of the 68th; Major Larry D Dotson became the Company Commander and Major John V Ohnstad took over the Executive Officer slot. In operations Major James Parker took charge. Major Garrieth Pendergraft moved in to take the first platoon and Major Louis Feaster the second. Under their new leadership the Top Tigers remained top and grew in name and achievement.

During June the only change was in the Service Platoon where Captain John Dick took leadership but in July there was a large change over of all Platoon Commanders. Major Donald Van Pieteron was assigned to the first platoon, Captain Joseph Squire to the Second Platoon and Captain Harry Gawkowski to the Armed Platoon. Captain Scott left the 430th Medical Detachment in July; and with no replacement, the position was left vacant.

After a short stay with the Top Tigers Major Van Pieteron was called to the 118th; in September his slot was filled by Lieutenant Feil. Then in September, Maj William Alich became the 391st Commander and Lieutenant Lane took the 282nd Signal Detachment.

In November Lieutenant Colonel Dotson became Battalion S-3 and Major Ohnstad moved up to take the Commander of the Top Tiger. Major Alich was called from the 391st to Executive Officer and Major Parker left, leaving the Operations Officer's position vacant; however, Lieutenant Graves the assistant Operations Officer did a fine job of filling in until a replacement could be found. With the departure of Captain Dick, WO Torres-Cartagena became Service Platoon Leader and Major Leonard Spanjers came from the 335th Assault Helicopter Company to take Major Alich's job as 391st Commander. Also during November we were sent a new doctor as Captain Donald Stupar arrived to take over the 430th Medical Detachment.

In mid-November Major Paul Jaenichen became Operations Officer when he arrived from the First Cavalry and Captain Stephen Van-Meter arrived to lead the first platoon with the departure of Captain Squire. With the closing of the month Captain Tommy R Dillow moved up to become the Second Lift Leader and the company leadership remained the same through the end of the year.

There have been many changes in personnel for the 68th Assault Helicopter Company. Many of the officers have moved up to Battalion and Brigade while others have completed their year here. But as each man departed, another "Top Tiger" came to fill his job with the vigor and devotion to duty indicative of all the Top Tigers.

However, many more not mentioned here served the 68th, working very long and hard hours each day. They are the ones responsible for making the "Top Tigers".

UNIT HONOR ROLE

THESE INDIVIDUALS MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE FOR THEIR COUNTRY:

Captain Charles Abel
Warrant Officer Edward Higgins
Warrant Officer John Paul Marlow
Warrant Officer James P. Barton
Specialist Four Kenneth Bertsch
Specialist Four John N. Shefeild
Specialist Four Gilbert N. Smith
Specialist Four Johnny Washburn

AWARDS & DECORATIONS 1967

JANUARY

1 Silver Star for Valor
3 Distinguished Flying Crosses
1 Bronze Star Medal for Valor
2 Bronze Star Medals for Meritorious Service
1 Air Medal for Valor
1 Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service

FEBRUARY

1 Distinguished Flying Cross
1 Air Medal for Valor
1 Army Commendation Medal
7 Purple Hearts

MARCH

6 Distinguished Flying Crosses
10 Air Medals for Valor
4 Army Commendation Medals
8 Purple Hearts

APRIL

16 Distinguished Flying Crosses
10 Air Medals for Valor
1 Legion of Merit Medal
1 Silver Star
6 Bronze Stars
1 Purple Heart
4 Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry Medals

MAY

3 Distinguished Flying Crosses
23 Air Medals for Valor
1 Army Commendation Medal

AWARDS & DECORATIONS 1967

JUNE

9 Distinguished Flying Crosses
4 Air Medals for Valor
1 Army Commendation Medal
2 Bronze Star for Valor
2 Purple Hearts

JULY

6 Distinguished Flying Crosses
1 Bronze Star
27 Army Commendation Medals for Valor
1 Army Commendation Medal
5 Purple Hearts

AUGUST

2 Distinguished Flying Crosses
1 Bronze Star for Valor
2 Bronze Stars
5 Army Commendation Medals for Valor
1 Army Commendation Medal
4 Good Conduct Medals

SEPTEMBER

1 Bronze Star
5 Army Commendation Medals
1 Purple Hearts
1 Good Conduct Medal

OCTOBER

3 Bronze Stars
1 Army Commendation Medal

NOVEMBER

3 Air Medals for Valor
3 Bronze Stars
1 Purple Heart

DECEMBER

2 Bronze Stars
1 Army Commendation Medal

Of course a unit can be considered only as good as the men who compile it, and the sacrifices each is willing to make. Little more can be said of those who have been thusly recognized above than that which was expressed by President Johnson in reference to Sergeant Harry A. Walling, "No medal, no words, no eulogy of ours can honor him so highly as he has honored our country and our cause". This total effort once again pointed out the company motto "EVERY MAN A TIGER".

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 2 Jan. A flight of ten slicks and four gunships supported the 4th Infantry Division near Dau Tieng.
- 3-5 Jan. The Top Tigers flew three days of combat assault missions supporting the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. Sixteen extractions and ten combat assaults were flown in the Tay Ninh and Dau Tieng area.
- 9 Jan. The 68th was one of the six companies who participated in eight combat assaults airlifting elements of the 2/16 Infantry Battalion.
- 15 Jan. A combat assault mission was made in support of the 1st Infantry Division in Operation Saratoga airlifting elements of the 2/16th Infantry Battalion.
- 16 Jan. The 68th reinforced the 25th Aviation Battalion in supporting the 4/9th Infantry Battalion. Airmobile assaults were conducted into four landing zones.
- 17 Jan. Four combat assaults and extractions were flown in support of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade near Nha Be.
- 20 Jan. The 68th reinforced the 1st Aviation Battalion supporting the 2nd Brigade in Operation Silver Spring by airlifting the 2/18th Infantry in the area of Phu Loi.
- 23 Jan. The 68th made eagle flights with the 4/9th Infantry into five different landing zones.
- 25 Jan. The 68th was the second flight element of three assault helicopter companies conducting three extractions and two combat assaults in the area of Cu Chi. The 68th conducted the re-supply missions for the 25th Infantry Division after release from the 25th Aviation Battalion.
- 27 Jan. The Top Tigers conducted two combat assaults in the area near Den Luc as a second flight element controlled by the 25th Aviation Battalion. The Command and Control ship and gunships departed Binh Chanh to recon and find targets for eagle flights.

In the month of January, 1967, the 68th Aviation Company flew a total of *2613 hours. There were *9190 sorties transporting *11,501 passengers and *155.5 tons of cargo.

Maintenance Keeping up its fine maintenance standard, the 391st achieved a 77.5% overall availability rate. Especially noteworthy was the 94.3% availability of the important UH-1C models.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 4 Feb. The 68th flew six combat assaults in support of the 25th Infantry Division in the area of Ben Luc. The 68th was released to Bien Hoa for 30 minutes stand-by except for two command and control ships and three re-supply missions for the 21/4th Infantry.
- 5 Feb. The Top Tigers supported the 173rd Airborne Brigade by participating in eleven combat assaults and two extractions near Tan Uyen.
- 7 Feb. The 68th supported the 1st Australian Task Force by participating in four dummy troop repositionings in the area of Nui Dat and two actual extractions in the area of Bear Cat. Six combat assaults from Bear Cat were conducted in the afternoon operation along with 46 sorties of re-supply.
- 14 Feb. The 68th flew two combat assaults while supporting the 9th Infantry Division by airlifting the 605th Regional Force.
- 15 Feb. The Tigers conducted twelve combat assaults and extractions while supporting the 2/12th Infantry Division in the area of Trai Bi.
- 16 Feb. The 68th made three combat assaults, two troop repositionings, and seven combat extractions in the vicinity of Vi Thanh as a second flight element controlled by the 13th Aviation Battalion in support of the 21st ARVN Division.
- 18 Feb. The 68th supported the Australian Task Force conducting search and destroy operations in the vicinity of Dat Do.
- 19 Feb. The 68th supported the 4/47th Infantry Battalion conducting search and destroy operations in the area southeast of Binh Son.
- 20 Feb. A combat assault and extraction in support of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade was conducted in the vicinity of Can Giuoc.

In the month of February, 1967, the 68th Aviation Company flew *2477 sorties, transported *10,449 passengers, and carried *607 tons of cargo for a total of *2458 flying hours.

Maintenance Despite the consistently high number of hours flown by the Top Tigers, the 391st maintained its high standards with 73% of the UH-1D models and 87.7% of the UH-1C models flyable for an overall 75% availability rate.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 10 Mar. The Top Tigers conducted six combat assaults from Trai Bi to a landing zone in the vicinity of AT 050 63. Negative fire was reported and the operation went smoothly.
- 15 Mar. In support of the 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., the 68th Aslt. Hel. Co. repositioned the 2/1 Inf. to the vicinity of Tay Ninh. No problems arose during the day and upon completion of the lifts, the flight was released for re-supply missions.
- 18 Mar. Again working for the 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., the Top Tigers repositioned 265 troops from Tay Ninh west to Prek Nok (AT 274763).
- 23 Mar. The Mustang's, while working with the Top Tigers in the vicinity of Rach Kien destroyed 21 sampans, killed one V.C. with a weapon, and burned five buildings. The flight reported negative enemy fire.
- 30 Mar. While working for the 3d Bde. 4th Inf. Div., the Top Tigers, along with the 118th AHC made several insertions in the vicinity of Suoi Da. A large mine was detonated in the landing zone as the second element of the first lift was on short final. As a result, four aircraft were downed. Two of the four, however, were able to be flown out. When landing in the LZ the second and third time, two more mines were detonated resulting in minor damage.
- Summary. March was a relatively slow month. The Top Tigers flew 2170 hrs completing 7422 sorties. They repositioned 7,559 passengers, and carried 623 tons of cargo.

Maintenance The maintenance standard remained high with the 391st. They upheld an overall 75.8% availability with 71% with the UH-1H models and 80.6% with the UH-1C models.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 6 Apr. While working for 1/27th Inf. Bn in the vicinity of Cu Chi, the Mustangs found two Viet Cong running for the cover of woods. CAC decided to land and unload the CAC party, load four infantry troops and make the capture. The Viet Cong were captured with no injuries.
- 11 Apr. The Top Tigers were in support of the 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division, made numerous extractions, and encountered light enemy fire.
- 12 Apr. The 68th was part of a Battalion operation in which the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion was also involved. The operation could have been more successful had the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion been more familiar with Delta operations.
- 13 Apr. As a result of the operation of the 12th, there were nine Viet Cong bodies found. Also a large munitions catch consisting of 20 grenades, 1 round of 105 ammo, 50 containers of plastic explosives, numerous documents, 3 weapons, and six enemy prisoners.
- 24 Apr. The 68th was in support of the 2/14th Inf. Bn, 197th Inf. Bde. Upon landing in the landing zone the troop carriers took fire. One aircraft was hit, but little damage was sustained.
- 27 Apr. While working in the local Bien Hoa area the flight upon landing in an landing zone receiving heavy small arms fire. The fire was returned by both troop carriers and gunships.

During April our activities picked up again with 2535 hours flown, 9,220 sorties, 13,834 passengers, and 222 tons of cargo.

MAINTENANCE: The availability remained high with the average availability at 75.45% the UH-1D up to 78.9% as their availability steadily increased while the UH-1C models went down to 72%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 2-3 May The 68th was called out on rapid reaction to relieve the 116th Assault Helicopter Company at Dong Tam. The "Top Tigers" made several lifts without serious mishap and then remained over night at Dong Tam on ready alert. The next day they ran resupply missions and extractions.
- 4 May The Top Tigers traveled to Bear Cat and Rach Kien. There they made four lifts and the "Mustangs" killed one Viet Cong and sank one sampan.
- 9 May The 68th supported the 5th Special Forces Group at Kiep Hoa and at Tanh Linh the "Mustangs" killed 3 Viet Cong, destroyed 13 structures and sank one sampan.
- 12 May Supporting the 9th Division, while working out of Tan An and Bear Cat, the "Top Tigers" made 15 Assaults destroying 14 Viet Cong structures.
- 14 May Returning to support the 9th Division the 68th made two extractions while the Mustangs killed one Viet Cong and destroyed nine structures and three sampans.
- 15 May Working with the 116th Assault Helicopter Company the 68th lifted a Battalion of 9th Infantry troops and extracted them without any enemy action.

With the most active month of the year the "Top Tigers" flew 3318 hours completing 10868 sorties carrying 15,856 people and 219 tons of cargo. It was a month of hard work for the 68th Assault Helicopter Company.

MAINTENANCE: The 391st worked hard also and maintained our availability at 74.59%. The UH-1D accounted for 72-74% availability while the UH-1C maintained 76.44%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 5 June The 68th had a busy day making eleven combat assaults and three extractions for the 9th Divisions near Rach Kien. The mustangs had one kill, destroyed eight Viet Cong structures, and damaged five as well as destroying two sampans.
- 8 June Returning to support the 9th Division the "Top Tigers" made four combat assaults and two extractions.
- 13 June On this day the 68th made twelve assaults near Rach Kien while the Mustangs killed one Viet Cong.
- 21 June Conducting Eagle Flights with the 9th Division the "Top Tigers" made two assaults and two extractions.
- 23 June Going to support the 199th at Thu Duc the 68th made three assaults and extractions as well as one depositioning to finish up the months combat assaults.

During the month of June the 68th concentrated on a direct support missions throughout the III Corps area.

MAINTENANCE: Maintenance continued to work hard and their availability showed this 81.4% overall was the best average to that date largely due to the 85.3% for the UH-1D. The UH-1C had a good average of 77.5% availability.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 5 July On this date the 68th ran two combat assaults and two extractions with the 2nd Royal Australian Infantry out of Nui Dat, and then proceeded to Loc Ninh to make two extractions. All operations ran smoothly.
- 8 July Flying to Nha Be and Thu Duc the "Top Tigers" made two combat assaults and eight extractions with the 199th Infantry.
- 9 July The 68th inserted 126 troops in two lifts to act as a blocking force for the 9th Infantry Division near Tan Tru.
- 11 July Flying first to Binh Chanh the "Top Tigers" made four assaults and two extractions for the 199th Infantry. Then they went to assist the 296th Combat Aviation Battalion make two assaults near Tay Ninh.
- 12 July Supporting the 25th Division the 68th had nine aircraft hit when they were called on a tactical emergency to reinforce troops of the 227th Infantry. Fire was received on each one of the lifts. No casualties resulted.
- 15 July Having a very busy day the "Top Tigers" flew 16 assaults and 14 extractions for the 199th Infantry at Nha Be carrying 1363 Passengers.
- 17 July Returning to support the 199th the Tigers went to Nha Be and the Mustangs got 4 kills and one sampan. Ceilings of 100 feet and visibility, in rain, of less than a quarter mile created hazardous flying conditions.
- 26-27 July Flying eagle flights for the 25th Infantry Division, 6 assaults and 7 extractions were made. The weather became very bad with the last extraction but it was carried out without incident.
- 28 July The 68th had four aircraft take hits during four combat assaults for the 9th Infantry Divisions at Dong Tam.
- 31 July Having a good day the "Mustangs" got six kills near Rach Kien during eagle flights.

In July the 68th flew 2462 hours as the rainy season was in full swing. They completed 7422 sorties carrying 7559 passengers and 623 tons of cargo.

MAINTENANCE: The 391st improved upon its outstanding record again in July. They reached a high of 82.7% availability with both C & D models over 80%; UH-1D 81.5% and UH-1C 83.8%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 9 Aug. The 68th supported the 9th Division in the Bear Cat area. Several lifts were made with no enemy fire encountered. Extractions were completed with no difficulty and the flight was released.
- 10 Aug. The 68th supported the 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division by conducting six combat assaults and three extractions in the Tan Tru area. No problems were encountered, but restricted visibility hindered the operation.
- 12 Aug. The Top Tigers conducted a series of Eagle flights in the Go Dau Ha area. There were three assaults made into several small villages in the area. As a result two VC were captured and taken to the Trang Bang compound. No other incidents were encountered and the operation went smoothly.
- 16 Aug. While working for the A/351 CIDG units in the Hiep Hoa area, a malfunction of the armament system of one gunship caused two rockets to leave the pod at the same time. As a result the rockets collided approximately 10 feet above the ground showering one aircraft with shrapnel. However, no major damage was encountered and no injuries.
- 19 Aug. The Top Tigers made two lifts in the Ninh Than area for III Corps. CIDG received negative enemy fires. Gunships and artillery were used to prep the LZ's. The flight was on 1 hour stand by for the remainder of the day.
- 28 Aug. While in support of the 9th Infantry Division a series of eagle flights were initiated. Upon landing in one LZ in the Rach Kien area two aircraft were hit. Both aircraft sustained major damage, but there were no injuries.
- 29 Aug. The 68th Assault Helicopter Company was in support of the 9th Infantry Division in the vicinity of Bear Cat. No enemy fire was reported and no incidents were encountered despite low visibility and bad weather.

Still increasing its load the 68th flew 2681 hours. They made 9,648 sorties carrying 16,201 passengers and 140 tons of cargo.

MAINTENANCE: Availability dropped sharply in August to 75.5%. The UH-1D 74.8% availability and the UH-1C a 76.2%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 2 Sept. The 68th Aslt Hel Co was in support of the 9th Inf. Div. on a combat assault mission in the Rach Kien area. A series of eagle flights caused the separation of the two lifts and the operation was conducted in two flights of five. Upon landing in one LZ, two of the aircraft were hit with heavy automatic weapon fire and sustained major damage; however there were no injuries to pilots or crew.
- 7 Sept. Again the 68th was in support of the 9th Div. and made a series of eagle flights in the Rach Kien, Tan Tru, and the Ben Luc area. However, there was no enemy contact, and the flight returned to Bien-Hoa after transporting 652 passengers with no incidents.
- 17 Sept. The 68th was in support of the 331 and 332 CIDG companies in the Cau Song Be area, and made two insertions into unsecure LZ's. The flight did not receive any enemy fire and was released to Bien Hoa after standing-by at Cau Song Be.
- 18, Sep. 1200 troops of the 6th ARVN marines were moved from their base camp to several field sites in the Tan Uyen area. This movement was completed within 1 1/2 hrs with no difficulties and the flight was released. Upon arrival to Bien Hoa, the company was again called out to support the 1st Inf. Div. Two dummy lifts and one actual lift were completed. No enemy fire was reported and the flight returned with no incidents.
- 19 Sep. The 68th Aslt Hel Co was part of a Battalion operation in support of the 5th ARVN Div. in the Bear Cat area. The operation went smoothly with no enemy fire reported. Gunships and artillery were used in the prestrikes of the landing zone. Due to bad weather, limited tac air support was used.
- SUMMARY. The 68th Aslt Hel Co during the month of September demonstrated the safety record it established. During this month the Top Tigers participated in numerous CA and DCS mission in the III Corps area. The Top Tigers contributed greatly to the combat effectiveness of many individual units within the III Corps area.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 2 Oct. The 68th Aslt Hel Co was in support of the 199th Inf. Bde. in the Nha Be area. They relocated 863 troops although low visibility and rain made flying very hazardous. One UH-1C gunship was hit by enemy fire, but there were no casualties.
- 4 Oct. The Mustangs went to the aid of the 1st Australian Task Force killing 1 Viet Cong and destroying two structures.
- 5 Oct. Serving the 9th Division in Operation Coronado the "Top Tigers" made 6 lifts and found the Viet Cong. The Mustangs killed 9 themselves. Two UH-1C and one UH-1D took rounds.
- 6 Oct. The 68th continued with the 9th Division; 5 Viet Cong were killed. The flight ran into heavy fire and had two aircraft hit by enemy fire. Four medical evacuations lifts were made under heavy fire and adverse conditions.
- 7 Oct. Operation Coronado continued and the Viet Cong were receiving a bitter defeat. Three more medical evacuations were made under adverse conditions. The 68th helped greatly to make this battle one of the most successful in the Delta region.
- 11-13 Oct. The "Top Tigers" sent out five ships on a combat assault to support the 199th Brigade to search out the Viet Cong in sight of Saigon.
- 15 Oct. The 68th was sent to support our ARVN allies in a search and destroy mission near Nha Be.
- 16-17 Oct. Again supporting the 199th Brigade, the Top Tigers searched out the Viet Cong. On the 17th they were located and the Mustangs killed two personnel and destroyed four of their structures.
- 20 Oct. The Mustangs had a very good day as the 68th supported the 199th Brigade. Twelve Viet Cong were confirmed killed and one was captured.
- 23 Oct. The 68th began direct support of the 25th ARVN Division with a very good day. Eight Viet Cong were killed one taken prisoner and two weapons captured. 23,000 piasters were taken from a tax collector.
- 24 Oct. The Top Tigers were flying Combat Assaults every day now with the 25th ARVN's. Sixteen enemy were killed as the 68th hit heavy action. The Mustangs were hit by enemy fire and one was shot down.
- 25 Oct. Working at Ban Trai the 68th again found the Viet Cong and killed one. Four ships were hit by enemy fire. WO1 Anderson was wounded but returned to duty.
- 28 Oct. The 68th continued its daily support of the 25th ARVN's with combat Assaults.
- 29 Oct. Again the Top Tigers found action as 14 Viet Cong were killed by the Mustangs near Bao Trai.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

30 - 31 The Top Tigers finished off the month of October with two more CA's
Oct with the 25th ARVN's. The Tigers were being pushed hard with their constant commitment but never slacked their drive. They completed all missions assigned in a outstanding manner.

SUMMARY. With 2683 hours flown the Top Tigers again stepped up their activities. They made 8,970 sorties and carried 14,002 passengers with 137 tons of cargo.

MAINTENANCE: With few UH-1C models to work with maintenance could only get 58% availability rate for its UH-1C models. This brought the overall average down to a low of 64.5%. The UH-1D availability was also low at 71%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 4 Nov. The 68th Assault Helicopter Company was in support of the 25th ARVN Division in the Duc Hoa area. Upon landing in one location, the lead ship in the right file was caught in an explosion and crashed. The aircraft burned but as a result of quick thinking of the different crews no injuries were sustained to the crew of the aircraft.
- 5 - 6 Nov. The flight was also in support of the 25th Division several ships received ground fire upon landing in the landing zone. Also the Mustangs were credited with 4 Viet Cong kills.
- 8 Nov. An aircraft was lost in the pick up zone. Major damage was sustained, however the operation continued smoothly and the Mustangs were credited with two kills.
- 10 Nov. The 68th was released early due to bad weather. (300 ft. ceiling and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile visibility.)
- 19 Nov. The 68th Assault Helicopter Company while working for the 5th Division uncovered the remains of Aloft 11 which crashed the day before.
- 27 Nov. Some difficulty was encountered when targets were spotted outside the A.O. and clearance could not be obtained to fire or bring in artillery. The Mustangs were credited with two confirmed kills.
- SUMMARY: The 68th continued the combat assault missions for more than 25 days straight. They never lost the professional attitude needed for safe flight. Despite the unfortunate incidents where helicopters were lost the Tigers continued to do the outstanding job that can be expected of them at any time.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1967

- 1 Dec. The Mustangs were credited with 5 kills in the operational area, also setting off a secondary explosion.
- 3 Dec. Following take off from the landing zone one of the Tigers struck a tree, which caused the helicopter to crash land. All escaped with no injuries, however one ARVN troop jumped from the ship and was killed by the rotor blade.
- 6 Dec. The Tigers operating in the vicinity of Tan An recovered numerous enemy grenades and supplies.
- 17 Dec. While operating for the 5th ARVN Division the 68th sustained several hits in the gunships. SP4 Scanlen and Gonzalez were both wounded in action. Also seven detainees were captured by ground troops.
- 20 Dec. The proposed landing zone had to be canceled due to heavy ground fire and RPG-2 rocket fire. An alternate was selected but ground troops refused to go into the original area. All of the extractions were cancelled.
- 27 Dec. The Top Tigers assisted in the capture of numerous weapons including one 60mm mortar with ammo, 5 rounds of 105 ammo, and a claymore mine. Top Tigers lead and Mustang 6 took several hits in the landing zone.
- 30 Dec. While working for the 25th ARVN Division the Mustangs were credited with 4 Viet Cong. Also the ground troops reported killing four Viet Cong and captured weapons and documents.

The flying time dropped to 2194 hours as the tigers were low on pilots. They made 6,606 sorties carrying 12,688 passengers and 60 tons of cargo.

Maintenance sprang back to a 72.95% availability. The UH-1D models many with over 2000 hours of flying, carried a 70.8% availability and UH-1C a 75.1%

During the calendar year of 1967, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew a total of 31,022 hours, conducted 103,120 sorties, and carried over 150,000 passengers, most of which occurred during combat assault missions. In the process of doing so, the men of the 68th earned an impressive total of 2 Silver Stars, 4 Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry, 1 Legion of Merit, 43 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 25 Bronze Stars, 49 Air Medals for Valor, 49 Commendation Medals, 5 Good Conduct Medals, and 25 Purple Hearts. Thus, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company, "Top Tigers", have responded meritoriously to the requirements for assistance in the counter-insurgency environment of the Republic of South Viet Nam.