



TAB D (12th CAG Command Aircraft Company) to Appendix 2 to Annex B to **USARV/MACV SUPCOM After Action Report**

1. PURPOSE: To report significant activities and planning involved in the standdown of the **Command Aircraft Company** during the period 1 November 1972, through 28 March 1973.

2. GENERAL:

a. Section 1: Significant Organizational Activities

(1) Pre-X-Day Phase: Basic information and planning guidance contained in 1st Aviation Brigade OPLAN 215 was received from 12th Group. The Command Aircraft Company organized their activities at this time to meet the requirements set forth in OPLAN 215.

During this period the Command Aircraft Company performed its mission of priority air transport as directed by higher headquarters. Aircraft allocations were as follows:

(a) USARV	6 Acft
(b) MACV	7 "
(c) MR-1	2 "
(d) MR-2	2 "
(e) TRAINING	1 "

The mission of the Command Aircraft Company was to provide fixed wing air transport utilizing the U21A aircraft in support of Headquarters MACV, Headquarters USARV, the four Military Regions and the Free World Armed Forces. In accomplishing its assigned mission the Command Aircraft Company flew an average of 1200 hours per month under all types of weather conditions throughout Southeast Asia including Thailand and Cambodia. The unit maintained an operational ready rate of 80% or higher during the last twenty (20) months of operation.

On 5 November 1972, the remaining U21A aircraft in Vietnam were assigned to the Command Aircraft Company. This consolidation resulted in 24 U21A aircraft being assigned with a requirement to provide (18) mission ready aircraft per day. Aircraft were reallocated as follows:

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(a) MACV	9 Acft
(b) MR-1	1 "
(c) MR-2	1 "
(d) 1st Avn Bde	2 "
(e) Radio Relay	3 "
(f) Training	2 "

Mission requirements remained at (18) throughout the pre-X-day phase.

(2) Standdown Phase: During the period 28 January through 3 February 1973, aircraft allocations were revised as follows:

(a) MACV	6 Acft
(b) Four Power (JMC)	8 "
(c) ICCS	3 "
(d) MR-1	1 "
(e) MR-2	1 "
(f) 1st Avn Bde	1 "

(3) Withdrawal Phase: During this phase the mission and aircraft allocations for the Command Aircraft Company remained unchanged.

(4) Roll-up Phase: This phase was scheduled to begin on X+55.

**b. Section 2: Observations and Recommendations:
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(1) Pre-X-day Phase: During this phase the Command Aircraft Company was required to relocate from Hustler Compound TSN to various other facilities both on and off TSN airbase. This move was accomplished within (48) hours, and was a significant achievement in itself due to the size of the unit and amount of equipment on hand. The move from Camp Hustler was initiated

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six days prior to X-day, which proved to be the key factor in the expeditious and orderly standdown of the unit. As a result of the move, a large percentage of post, camp, and station property, no longer required, was turned-in.

(2) Standdown Phase: Mission requirements and aircraft allocations remained unchanged through 27 February 1973 (X+30). On 28 February 1973 (X+31) the three (3) aircraft in support of ICCS was terminated. Preparations were made to transfer all organizational and direct support maintenance responsibility including special tools and equipment to a civilian contractor.

(3) Withdrawal Phase: The lack of definitive planning guidance and changing mission requirements during this period created numerous problems for this organization in its attempt to plan and organize a scheme for the orderly withdrawal of aircraft assets.

(4) Roll-up Phase: The unit initiated roll-up activities on (X+55). Aircraft and crews began to depart for Singapore in accordance with a much revised retrograde schedule. The flight to Singapore for 17 aircraft was direct over the Gulf of Siam. Aircraft began departing to Singapore on 27 March and movement was completed on 29 March. Nine aircraft were deployed to Bangkok and completed movement on 30 March.

3. SPECIFIC:

a. Section 1: The significant activities which occurred included the move from Hustler Compound to other facilities both on and off Tan Son Nhut airbase. The unit continued its mission of priority air transport to higher headquarters. Reports, OER's, EER's, personnel actions and other administrative requirements contained in OPLAN 215 were completed in a timely manner. The transfer of all maintenance responsibility including the special tools and equipment peculiar to the U-21A aircraft, to a civilian contractor, was planned and executed. Two FM radio relay equipped aircraft were placed on standby in support of project "HOMECOMING". Plans were formulated for the retrograde of twenty-five (25) U21A aircraft to the Lockheed over-haul facility in Singapore upon termination of mission commitments. These plans were altered on numerous occasions and resulted in seventeen aircraft being sent to Singapore as scheduled with the remaining nine being assigned to Bangkok, Thailand.

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b. Section 2:

(1) Planning Guidance

(a) Observation: Planning guidance was changed frequently as the result of changes in the political situation.

(b) Evaluation: Significant tasks were completed in a timely manner only by tremendous effort at unit level. The guidance contained in the written OPLAN was changed a number of times resulting in far reaching changes in unit plans. It is apparent that changing missions and lack of firm planning data can be expected in withdrawal operations and is probably unpreventable.

(c) Recommendation: Plans and operations personnel tasked with the responsibility of preparing a withdrawal plan must be aware of the far reaching effects of changes in planning guidance at unit level and make every effort to minimize the number of changes required.

(d) Command Action: None