

HISTORY and MISSION

The 18th Military Police Brigade, largest and only combat-tested MP brigade in the corps' history, has been operational in the Republic of Vietnam since 26 September 1966.

As command and control element for all non-tactical military police resources in Vietnam, the brigade headquarters directs seven (7) MP battalions through two (2) MP groups and the MP Group (CI-PROV). In addition to its military police units, the brigade also has seven (7) infantry companies assigned to subordinate battalions. The total strength of the brigade is in excess of 5,000 personnel. The brigade is presently commanded by Brigadier General Karl W. Gustafson.

The brigade's missions in order of priority are direct support of combat operations; prisoner of war escort; physical security; discipline, law and order; criminal investigation; traffic control; and confinement of US prisoners.

Since becoming operation in the Republic of Vietnam, the 18th Military Police Brigade has provided direct support to combat units in almost every major Army operation.

Initiating its combat support between November 10-22, 1966, with Operation Deckhouse IV, a Brigade force aided the II Field Force, Vietnam by providing elements for convoy security and traffic control. Convoy security, in the context of combat operations, is the close-in security of convoys moving through hostile territory, combined with a limited degree of reconnaissance and security to the front flanks and rear of the convoy.

Again, in January of 1967, the Brigade was called upon to provide direct support to two major operations: Operation Deckhouse IV, involving joint US/VN marine activities; and, Operation Cedar Falls with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. In both instances, a platoon of Brigade MPs processed and evacuated detainees, adding further assistance to Cedar Falls with convoy security, bridge security, traffic control and refugee evacuation.

In February of 1967, the Brigade once more took on a dual support mission - this time involving Operation Junction City with the 1st and 25th Infantry Divisions and Operation Thayer II with the 1st Cavalry Division (Air Mobile). In the two operations the Brigade was concerned with detainee evacuation, convoy escorts and highway security, plus, in Junction City, Brigade MPs provided law enforcement at two division base camps.

April 1967, saw Brigade MPs assume a mission in support of Task Force Oregon, continued through to the present with the newly operational Americal Division. Supporting the Americal Division, Brigade provides convoy escorts, highway security, security for the Tactical Operations Center, detainee processing and evacuation, law enforcement and augments the former Task Force Oregon Provost Marshal section.

With June, 1967, came a Brigade commitment to support Operation Billings, which was conducted by the 1st Infantry Division. Continuing for only one week, the Brigade's support consisted of convoy escorts, highway security, refugee control and a standard law and order mission.

Once more doubling up on its commitments in July of 1967, the Brigade became involved in Operation Paddington with the 9th Infantry Division and the 1st Australian Task Force, followed by Operation Emporia with the

9th Infantry Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, a commitment that is still active. Again, Brigade activities centered around convoy escorts, highway security and detainee evacuation, with an additional responsibility for traffic accident investigation.

The last major combat support mission involving Brigade MPs was Operation Corral, a joint operation involving elements of the 9th Infantry Division and the Vietnamese National Police. The combined task force conducted a three day cordon and search operation in the adjacent villages of Bien Go and Long Dinh in September 1967, to locate and destroy Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army close-in strike capability against the Long Binh Post complex.

Following Operation Corral, October of 1967 saw Brigade MPs assume control of their own tactical area of responsibility, located in the same 20 square mile area covered in the previously mentioned operation. Code named Operation Stabilize, the mission in the TAOR involves the support of local initiative and building confidence in the Vietnamese government and Armed Forces. To this end, much of the effort being made in the TAOR is directed through civic action programs coordinated with local Vietnamese officials.

During the TET hostilities, beginning January 30, Brigade MPs proved to all concerned that they were a ready and able alert force, capable of withstanding and repelling the most vicious surprise attacks of the enemy within Vietnam's major cities. Throughout the country, Brigade MPs found themselves suddenly catapulted to the front lines as the jungle war suddenly switched to a scene of heated street fighting. The heroism and professionalism of Brigade MPs during this period has done much to enhance both the reputation of the 18th MP Brigade among the Free World Forces and the respect of the Vietnamese civilian population for the Allied Forces which have committed themselves to their defense.

GROUP ORGANIZATION

