

177
U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION THREE
ELIOT POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO 96601

1478-3:dbn

3000

Seri: 1478

29 NOV 1965

From: Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion THREE

To: Commander Naval Construction Battalions, Pacific

Subject: Deployment Completion Reports submitted on of

Ref: (a) CMCBPAC IIST 5213.1B (NOTAL)

- Reel: (1) Narrative Report
(2) Construction Completion Report, Guam
(3) Final Labor Distribution Report, Guam
(4) Final Financial Report, Guam
(5) Progress and Performance Chart, Guam
(6) Project Photos, Guam
(7) Construction Completion Report, RVII
(8) Final Labor Distribution Report, RVII
(9) Final Financial Report, RVII
(10) Progress and Performance Chart, RVII
(11) Project Photos, RVII
(12) Personnel Breakdown during Deployment
(13) Viet-Ihm Heartout Report

1. In accordance with reference (a), the completion report for the deployment of HMCB THREE to Guam and Danang, RVII from October 1964 to September 1965 is submitted herewith as enclosures (1) through (13). The completion reports for operations conducted by HMCB THREE in support of Operation Sailor Hat on Kahoolawe, Hawaii and construction completed in support of CIOC Far East on the island of Two Jinn on two occasions are covered in separate correspondence.

J. D. RUSSELL

Copy to:

CMCNPACFLT

CMC SIRVPAC

DUDECKS

DUDECKS (Code 50)(2)

CG FIFPAC

CCUSIACV

CG III IAF/IXC (3)

CG IIAVIAAR

CICC MAETIANAS

30th NCR

CBCEU PORHUE (2)

CBEU PORHUE

CECOS PORHUE

NCHE PORHUE

NAWCON PORHUE

HMCB FOUR

HMCB FIVE

HMCB EIGHT

HMCB NINE

HMCB TEN

HMCB ELEVEN

NARRATIVE REPORT

- Ref: (a) CCGCWPAC OPRD 13-64 (NOTAL)
(b) CCGCWPAC OPRD 14-65 (NOTAL)
(c) CCGCWPAC MSG 030131Z DEC 64 (NOTAL)
(d) CCGCWPAC OPRD 19-64 (NOTAL)
(e) CCGCWPAC OPRD 21-64 (NOTAL)
(f) CCGCWPAC OPRD 22-64 (NOTAL)
(g) CCGCWPAC MSG 140007Z AUG 64 (NOTAL)
(h) CCGCWPAC MSG 090032Z MAR 65 (NOTAL)
(i) HUDOCNS MSG 252255Z NOV 64 (NOTAL)
(j) CCGCWPAC OPRD Exercise Busy Bee 1-65 (NOTAL)
(k) H'CB THREE ltr Ser 500 of 26 MAR 65 (NOTAL)

1. General. In accordance with reference (a), H'CB THREE Advance Party consisting of 9 Officers and 141 enlisted men was air-lifted to Guam, Marianas Islands, via VR-21 aircraft on 1, 5, 8, and 19 October 1964. The main body of H'CB THREE departed Port Hueneme, California on board USS PATRICK on 15 October 1964, arriving in Guam and reporting under the operational control of Commander, Naval Forces Marianas on 30 October 1964. H'CB THREE was assigned 17 construction and repair projects in support of various commands under CCGNAVIC, including one on the island of Chi Chi Jima and one in support of the CG Loran Station, Yap, Caroline Islands. A narrative of the construction accomplished is contained in enclosure (2) with supplementary information contained in enclosures (3) through (6). On 20 and 23 May 1965, H'CB THREE in accordance with reference (b) deployed to Danang, RVN, on board U.S.S. POINT DEFIANCE (LSD-31) and U.S.S. HILL GROVE (LSD-2) with 10 Officers and 321 enlisted men arriving and reporting for operational control to Commander, 30th Naval Construction Regiment on 26 and 30 May 1965. An advance party consisting of 1 Officer and 99 enlisted men reported to Danang on 18 May 1965 having been moved by USAF aircraft. While deployed to Vietnam, H'CB THREE completed or worked on various construction projects as assigned by 30th NCR in support of the Naval Component Commander or the Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force. The narrative of these projects is contained in enclosure (7) with supplementary information contained in enclosures (8) through (11). During the period 23 to 28 September H'CB THREE, after having been relieved by H'CB FIVE, returned to its homeport via six MATS aircraft having completed an 11 1/2 month deployment.

2. Personnel. While deployed, the personnel breakdown of H'CB THREE varied considerably. With detachments on Kahoolawe, Iwo Jima twice, well drilling teams, four Seabee Teams, EO/CI teams, project DEMO personnel, and rear echelon personnel as well as those personnel deployed to Yap and Chi Chi Jima, the battalion never was together as a whole unit at any one time during its entire deployment. A breakdown of personnel assigned by the months of deployment is contained in enclosure (12). The actual number of personnel on board the main body and the projects assigned, resulted in the cancellation by reference (c) of some projects originally assigned for the Guam deployment. During the entire 11 1/2 month deployment, a shortage of EO and CI E-8 or E-9 supervisory personnel existed and hampered equipment operations and repairs. Supervisory personnel in all other rates was adequate. While deployed to RVN, lack of sufficient EO/CI

personnel in comparison to the projects assigned was overcome by assigning DO/GI personnel TAD to HICB THREE from HICB FIVE. Full utilization of all rates during the entire deployment, with the exception of UT and CE work in RVN was realized, lack of UT and CE work in RVN and necessary reassignment of their efforts else where did not result in a full utilization of their skills or capacity. The productivity and desire expressed and demonstrated by all rates was commendatory, but the skills and experience available to the average Group VIII rating in comparison to their World War II or Korean War counter part proved to be considerably less.

3. Detachments/STATS

a. Special Iwo Jima Construction Detail #1. In accordance with reference (d), HICB THREE deployed one (1) officer and 26 enlisted men to Iwo Jima on 18 September in support of requirements for the OICC Far East. This detail completed construction on the antenna guy wire anchors at the USCG Leran Station and rejoined the Battalion on 26 October 1964.

b. Operation Sailor Hat. In accordance with reference (e), HICB THREE deployed a detail consisting of 1 officer and up to 41 enlisted to Kahoolawe, Hawaii on 12 October 1964 in support of operation "Sailor Hat". This detail completed its construction and rejoined the battalion on 29 June 1965 in Danang, RVN.

c. Special Iwo Jima Construction Detail #2. In accordance with reference (f), HICB THREE deployed a detail consisting of 1 officer and 27 enlisted to Iwo Jima on 30 October 1964, in support of the requirements of OICC Far East. This detail completed construction of a transmitter building and rejoined the battalion in late December 1964.

d. STATS (Seabee Teams). STAT's #303 and #304 rejoined the battalion in early July 1965 after completing a 10 month deployment in Thailand. STATs #305 and #306 departed the battalion in late May 1965 in Guam to return to COMUS for training. Upon rejoining the battalion, STAT #303 and #304 members were reintegrated into the battalion organization. The petty officers proved to be effective leaders during the Vietnam portion of the deployment.

e. Well-drilling Teams. In accordance with reference (g) HICB THREE deployed two well drillers to Vietnam from August 1964 to February 1965, and in accordance with reference (h) HICB THREE deployed five well drillers to Vietnam from March 1965 to ~~Sept~~ **Sep 65.**

f. Project Demo. In accordance with reference (i) HICB THREE assigned nine personnel including one GPO TAD to COMCELANT from December 1964 to September 1965.

g. Rear Echelon. HICB THREE averaged six men TAD to CBBU Port Huenam for rear echelon duties during its deployment.

h. Yap and Chi Chi Jima. Yap and Chi Chi Jima detachments are covered in enclosure (2).

7. Training

a. Military Training. A total of 4667 man days were expended for military training during the deployment. During the Guam deployment each man averaged two full days of military training per month. Emphasis during the Guam deployment was placed on keeping intact the military posture gained during the previous Port Hueneme training period. Training also consisted of one full battalion field exercise in April 1965. Formal military training was not carried out during the Vietnam deployment, but the experience gained during the Guam deployment and the previous Port Hueneme deployment proved helpful in setting up the MHCB THREE camp perimeter defense and security guard force.

b. Technical Training. 3692 man days of formal technical training were conducted during the deployment on Guam. Emphasis was placed on training directly connected with the projects assigned on Guam. In addition, rotation of personnel from job to job to gain experience was emphasized at company level. Perhaps the largest gain in technical training realized was the improvement in senior petty officers in job planning and the carrying out of their plans. This training and experience gained on Guam helped considerably in Vietnam. No formal technical training was conducted in Vietnam.

c. Operation Busy Bee. In accordance with reference (j) MHCB THREE conducted Operation Busy Bee, a full battalion mount-out exercise, from 26 February to 4 March 1965. A full report on this exercise was submitted in reference (k). The experience and training gained in this exercise proved to be invaluable during the mount out conducted to Vietnam in May 1965. In conjunction with exercise Busy Bee, but as a separate part, MHCB THREE assigned 1 officer and 35 men TAD to MHCB TEN in conjunction with Operation Silver Lance from 28 February to 1 April 1965. MHCB TEN submitted a separate report on this exercise.

d. Disaster Recovery Training. In conjunction with COMNAVIAF, MHCB THREE conducted a full battalion disaster recovery training. This training was later put to use on Guam on 4 February 1965 during a tidal wave alert for the island and on at least four other occasions while assisting COMNAVIAF in fighting island brush and forest fires.

e. Officer Training. A junior officer training course was established during the Guam deployment. Subsequent to the administrative inspection held in March 1964, this program was dropped in favor of a officer and petty officer leadership program held twice monthly. This program was continued in Vietnam.

f. Evaluation. The overall military posture of the battalion while deployed in Vietnam was considered excellent, and is attributed as a direct result of the continuous military training received by the battalion. The use of the Group VIII ratings in Vietnam pointed out that many of the Group VIII personnel lacked much of the technical experience which attributed to the Seabee reputation. This immediate built-in

handicap can be initially overcome by a vigorous can do attitude and eventually solved by continuous emphasis upon technical training and further experience in the individual areas of specialization.

8. Contingency Planning. Upon arrival on Guam, NMCB THREE established a mount out control center (MOCC) which was actively and fully engaged during the whole Guam deployment. The COMBOPAC contingency library was inventoried and taken over from NMCB TWO. NMCB THREE assumed the position as Pacific Fleet Back-Up Battalion in October 1964. During Exercise Busy Bee the Battalion and the staff received a full exercise in mount-out and in carrying out its contingency planning. The final test of this training was the mount out of the battalion in May 1965 to Danang, Vietnam. This mount out was accomplished expeditiously within six days with few problems. A full report of this mount out is contained in enclosure (13). Movements of the battalion in all cases was directed by MOCC. The administrative move to Guam utilizing USNS PATRICK for the main body and VR-21 aircraft for the advance party was considered excellent. The move from Guam utilizing USS BELLE GROVE (LSD-2), USS POINT DEFIANCE (LSD-31) and USS FALLADOGA (APA-208) with the advance party moving by 29 Tactical Air Command aircraft proceeded without any major problems and within the time frame allowed. The move was considered by the battalion to be excellent. The return home utilizing six Military Air Transport Service aircraft (3 C135, 2 C130 and 1 C124) was considered to be less than satisfactory. Absolutely no planning information or assistance was provided this command by MATS, the schedule was unpredictable and time delays encountered were considered excessive. Return of the battalion organic equipment was accomplished by the SS FAIXOD, a chartered NBSB freighter.

9. Supply and Logistics

a. Project Materials

(1) Guam. Project materials for the most part were procured in COMUS and shipped to Guam. The IFPO and ordering of this material was accomplished for the major part by COMBOPAC DET ALFA in conjunction with the NMCB THREE Operations Department planning group prior to deployment. Shipping and reorder where necessary was accomplished by DET ALFA. Some material, such as aggregate and ready mix concrete were purchased on Guam. With a few minor exceptions, project materials were received in sufficient time to allow orderly installation on each project. Where material was either delayed or required reordering, the speed with which DET ALFA responded precluded large construction delays. The cooperation, responsiveness, control of shipping, and information and planning data provided by DET ALFA (How Code 50 of CDBU) was considered to be outstanding, and the accomplishment of 90.5% of the Guam projects is a direct result of their capable operation.

(2) Vietnam. With exception of the camp materials and the PPCC consumables brought to Danang by NMCB THREE, all project materials were provided to NMCB THREE by the 30th Naval Construction Regiment. Delays in project material delivery from COMUS caused numerous changes and delays

in the construction schedule while in Danang. Some materials were locally procured such as lumber, sheet metal, sand, aggregate, and minor electrical and plumbing fixtures; however, these were available in only small amounts or they were considered to be of inferior quality to U.S. manufactured items. Completion of HTO's, firming up of long range construction planning, and better delivery of COMUS materials had largely overcome the majority of these problems towards the end of the HHCB THREE deployment.

b. Repair Parts. Repair parts support for the automotive and construction equipment for P25A and augment equipment on Guam was considered to be fair. Replenishment of stocks and delays in shipping of repair parts were realized, and availability of parts for military equipment on Guam were non-existent. While in Vietnam, HHCB THREE experienced considerable delays in the repair of construction equipment due to non-availability of repair parts. At the time of return to COMUS, approximately 1900 requisitions were outstanding. The assistance from CB Center, Port Moresby was considered outstanding in this area. Lack of transportation for shipment of the parts to HHCB THREE caused the major delays.

c. Equipment and General Stores. No problems of major significance were realized in the procurement/replacement of battalion equipment or general store materials. The filling of 95% of the deficiencies in SOMP prior to deployment and an active program to procure insurance items prior to mount out to Vietnam overcame most problems in this area.

d. Berthing. During the Guam deployment HHCB THREE was berthed in the Naval Station Barracks with the officers berthed in HTO-7. The material condition and comfort of the barracks and its facilities was considered excellent. While deployed to Vietnam, HHCB THREE was berthed in strong backed 16 X 32 tents. While some of these tents were somewhat crowded, in view of the overall conditions, they were considered excellent.

e. Messing. While deployed to Guam, HHCB THREE personnel messed at the Naval Station Mess. Food service was fair. NAS Agaña provided noon meals to personnel working on projects located there, and this food service was considered outstanding. While deployed to Danang, HHCB THREE subsisted in a temporary Galley/Mess Hall for three months and later in the permanent galley for 1 1/2 months. During one period the battalion experienced a dysentery outbreak due to the fly problem. Installation of screens and increased insecticide spraying overcame the problem within one week. The service and quality of the food, considering the rations available, was excellent.

f. Funds. The final financial reports are contained in enclosures (4) and (9) for both the Guam and Vietnam deployment.

16. Equipment:

a. General. While deployed on Guam, HHCB THREE was assigned an average of 298 pieces of P25A and augment equipment. The initial condition of this equipment was fair to poor. Replacement of critical items by CQCBPAG

and the continued emphasis placed on the repairs and upkeep of this equipment resulted in its being in a better condition at the time of mount out. The average number of pieces deadlined during Guam was 35. While deployed to Vietnam MHCB THREE was assigned an average of 276 pieces of P25A and augment equipment. Although parts procurement was slow and effecting repairs generally difficult, the condition of the equipment was considered to be good. An average of 31 pieces were continually on deadline while deployed to Vietnam.

b. Facilities. The facilities for equipment repair in Guam were considered to be excellent. The storage and parking facilities adjacent to the water from where a continual salt spray existed were considered to be detrimental to the equipment. The facilities at Danang were improved daily.

c. Maintenance. Specifically MHCB THREE had major problems with the following equipment:

(1) Hough Front End Loaders, Code 4531. MHCB THREE experienced considerable difficulty with Hough front end loaders. Major difficulties were experienced with hoses, o-rings, and hydraulic drives. At no time during the deployment could the battalion depend on the availability of these four pieces of equipment. Had they, especially when fitted out with the backhoe attachments, been available they would have been valuable pieces of equipment. It is felt that insufficient operator experience, the operation of this equipment in the hard coral of Guam, and inherent manufactured weaknesses of the machinery were the major causes of problems and breakdowns.

(2) Transit Mixers, Code 2420. MHCB THREE was assigned four transit mixers on Guam and in Vietnam. Only an average of two of these were in an "up" status during the whole deployment, even though two were subsequently replaced by CMCBPAC. MHCB THREE was able to procure all its ready mix concrete delivered in Guam except for DAG 735. The unreliability of the T's on this project with average pours of 40 to 50 cubic yards, caused major construction delays. In Vietnam where the availability of T's was critical, the availability of only two during the whole MHCB THREE deployment also caused major construction delays. In addition, since the T's were of commercial specifications, delivery of concrete to outlying areas during inclement weather became impossible. Since it is felt that the age of two of the MHCB THREE T's was the major reason for their non-availability coupled with the poor parts support of the commercial equipment in Vietnam, their replacement with tactical vehicles is recommended.

(3) Cranes Crawler Code 4230. Upon arrival on Guam, MHCB THREE was assigned to drive piles 55 to 60 foot in length for DAG 771. The only crane available was the P25A 13725 with a 35 foot boom. Rental of a crane from P.C. of a sufficient size was finally arranged, but only after considerable delay. It is recommended that in the future, when projects are assigned to a MHCB, that augment equipment of a sufficient size be assigned prior to the actual deployment in order to prevent construction delays.

(4) Tractors Wheel, IRS, Code 4892. HHCB THREE was assigned four wheeled tractors CODE 4892, manufactured by IRS. Upon arrival in Guam only one of these was operational. The age and general condition of this equipment was such that had not the runway overrun project at NAS Agaña been cancelled, its completion would have been seriously affected. When HHCB THREE deployed to Vietnam, although six IRS's were available, their condition and age was such that upon completion of the deployment all six had to be sent to Okinawa for complete rehabilitation.

(5) Tractor Crawler, Code 4851. In Guam, HHCB THREE was assigned 8 TD24 bulldozers. The condition of all these was so poor that their total replacement was required within 4 months. D-8H's were assigned as replacements for these TD-24's and proved to be better machines even though they had cable w.c.e hydraulic blades. The only trouble experienced with them was failure of their superchargers soon after HHCB THREE's arrival in Vietnam. It is felt that this was the result of either normal wear or improper operation technique and is not an inherent problem. Lastly, while in Vietnam, HHCB THREE was assigned a TD-15 bulldozer. This machine proved to be highly versatile and very effective in the field.

(6) Dump Trucks, 5 Ton, Code 6587. On the average, HHCB THREE was assigned 16 military 6x6 type dump trucks. Non-availability of parts and almost continual operation in Vietnam resulted in an average of only 6 to 8 of these being available to the battalion. An increase of from 16 to 20 of these trucks is recommended.

(7) Motor Grader Code 4420. HHCB THREE was assigned four motor graders. One of these was lost in an accident in Vietnam. Prior to this loss the battalion only averaged an availability of 1 out of the 4. With the amount of road work assigned in Vietnam, the present age and condition of the battalion graders, and the non-availability of parts, an increase in allowance should be considered.

d. Relocation. The general condition of the equipment upon the arrival of the battalion to Guam was so poor that a drop in the number of EO projects assigned to HHCB THREE was necessary. The EO effort was diverted to assist in the upgrading the condition of the P25A equipment. Although this move resulted in upgrading the condition of the equipment and subsequent better availability of it in Vietnam, it was at the expense of training equipment operators. In Vietnam the lack of good equipment operator technique resulted in slower completion of jobs and a large number of accidents.

11. Safety. The battalion had 28 lost time accidents during the deployment, an average of 2.6 lost time accidents per month. 20 of these occurred on the island of Guam with the remaining 8 occurring in Vietnam. The battalion had one fatality resulting from a vehicular accident in Vietnam. Over three quarters of all the accidents occurred during liberty hours or were the result of sports incurred injuries.

12. Medical and Dental. There were no major medical or dental problems

encountered during the deployment. Medical activity was primarily of a routine sick call nature. While in Guam, the medical officer utilized the naval station Dispensary facilities while the dental officer utilized the naval station Dental Clinic facilities. Both facilities were considered excellent. While deployed in Vietnam, a separate dispensary and dental clinic were maintained HHCB THREE. In comparison to surrounding units, the facilities were far above average.

13. PIO. The battalion engaged in an active PIO program both during the Guam and Vietnam deployment. Over 1583 news releases were made to news media. In addition, HHCB THREE published a battalion news paper. The THREE BEE BUZZ, on both Guam and in Vietnam.

14. Morale Welfare and Recreation

a. Morale. Battalion morale was maintained at a generally good level during the deployment, with it being especially high on Guam. An active intra-mural program, company competition, the challenging work on Guam, and the manner in which the petty officers of the battalion carried out their tasks contributed greatly to this. In Vietnam, while the work was challenging and the living conditions in comparison to other units considered good, the lack of materials and a continually changing schedule worked to the detriment of maintaining high morale.

b. Welfare and Recreation

(1) Guam. The recreation facilities on Guam were considered excellent and they were actively utilized by battalion personnel. A continuous intramural program in basketball, football, softball, and other sports was established with a good participation and following by all battalion members. HHCB THREE basketball team placed third in island wide competition, and HHCB THREE had an active varsity softball team until mount-out.

(2) Vietnam. While in Vietnam intramural sports were limited to volleyball, horseshoes and card type tournaments. Recreation facilities were limited to beaches and their utilization by battalion personnel were dependent on work schedules. The battalion operated a HHCB THREE beer mess which proved to be a high morale factor.

c. Religious Activities

(1) Guam. While deployed on Guam, HHCB THREE had ample religious facilities provided all three faiths through the Naval Station. The battalion chaplain assisted the Naval Station Chaplain in providing Protestant religious services. A meditation room was also provided in the battalion barracks.

(2) Vietnam. While deployed to Vietnam, HHCB THREE Camp had Catholic and Protestant services each Sunday in Camp. Assistance from the 3rd MARDIV provided Catholic Services. The HHCB THREE Chaplain

provided assistance to the 3rd MARDIV for Protestant Services elsewhere in addition to those conducted at the Seabee Camp.

15. People to People Work. While on Guam, HHCB THREE engaged in only a limited people to people program. Construction and repair assistance to the Chief Brody School, a school for retarded children, was provided on a voluntary basis by battalion personnel. In Vietnam the people to people program was more actively pursued, but it was limited by the small amount of free time of the men. Assistance was provided to an orphanage in the village of Le My in conjunction with the 3rd MAREES. In addition, the battalion doctor and corysman provided medical assistance to near by villages in conjunction with local doctors and U.S. Army personnel.

16. P25A and Organic Equipment. Except for specifically mentioned items in this report and previous minor changes recommended, the P25A tools and organic equipment served the battalion well. The inherent tools and equipment provided, were sufficient in most cases to allow for an orderly and rapid completion of all projects assigned.

17. Conclusion. The deployment of HHCB THREE was varied as any deployment conducted by a Pacific Construction Force in recent years. The Guam deployment was both challenging and interesting. The deployment to Vietnam taxed the battalions skills and ingenuity to meet the many problems encountered there. The deployment proved to be long and saw many changes in the capability, training, skill and production of the battalion. The battalion reached its peak after approximately one half of the deployment. Changes in personnel, loss of trained key personnel, long used to battalion organization, and the length of stay overseas brought the battalion to its present status, where retraining and integration of replacements and new personnel during the home port period will serve to rejuvenate and build the battalion back up to its maximum operating peak.