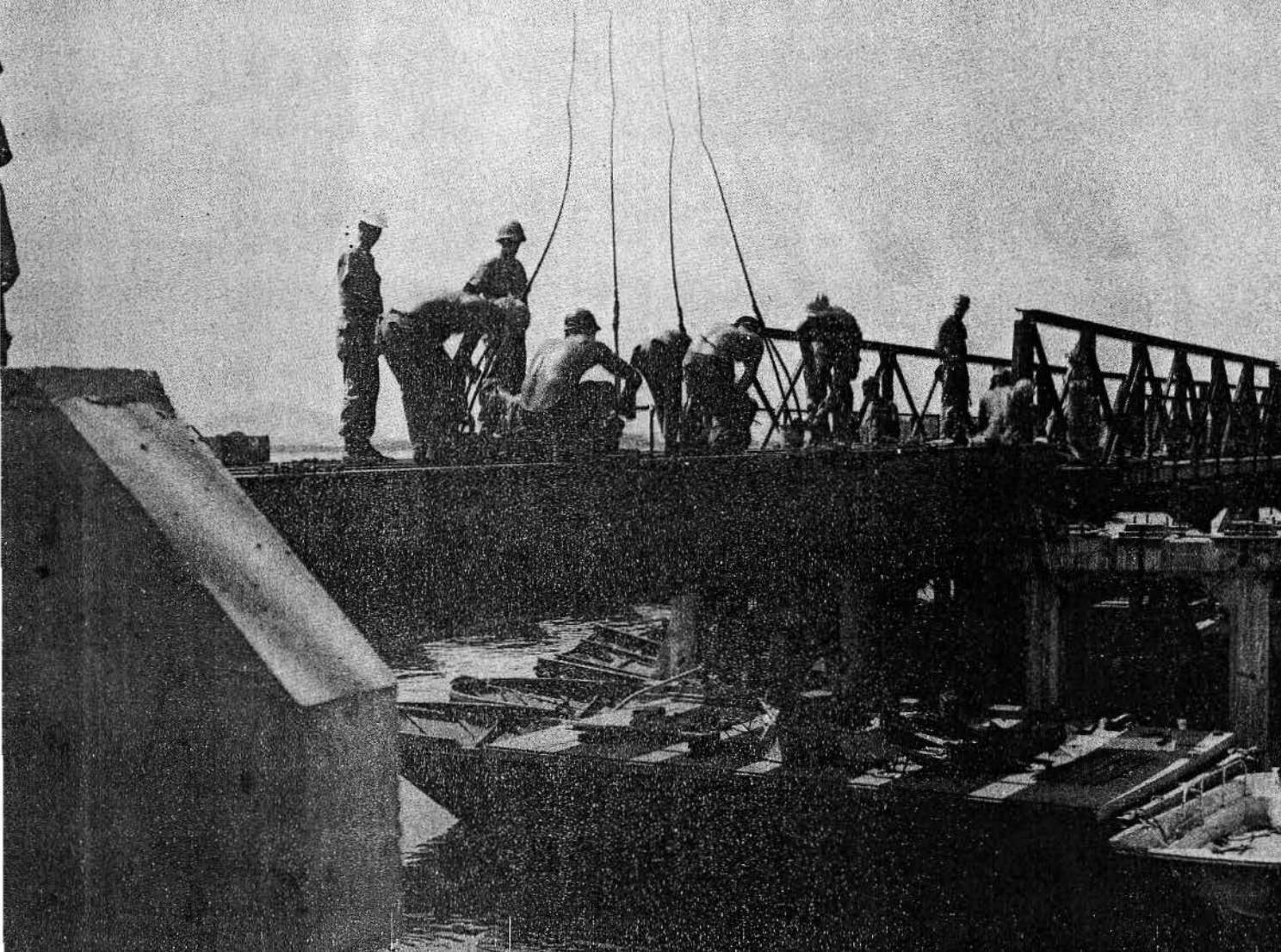


**MCB - 53**

**DEPLOYMENT  
COMPLETION  
REPORT**

**MAR 69 - NOV 69**



0631

U. S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION FIFTY-THREE  
FLEET POST OFFICE  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 09501

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

To: Commander, Construction Battalions, U. S. Pacific Fleet

Subj: Deployment Completion Report; submission of

Ref: (1) COMCBPACINST 5213.1E

- Encl: (1) Deployment Summary
- (2) Administrative Summary
- (3) Equipment Summary
- (4) Training Summary
- (5) Labor Distribution Summary
- (6) Construction Item Summary
- (7) Functional Component Reports
- (8) Progress and Performance Chart
- (9) General Construction Information
- (10) Supply Summary
- (11) Observations and Recommendations

1. In accordance with reference (a) the Completion Report for the deployment of U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion FIFTY-THREE to Camp Haskins North, DaNang, Republic of Vietnam, is hereby submitted.

ROBERT K. MILLER

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# **I. DEPLOYMENT SUMMARY**

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## DEPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### A. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

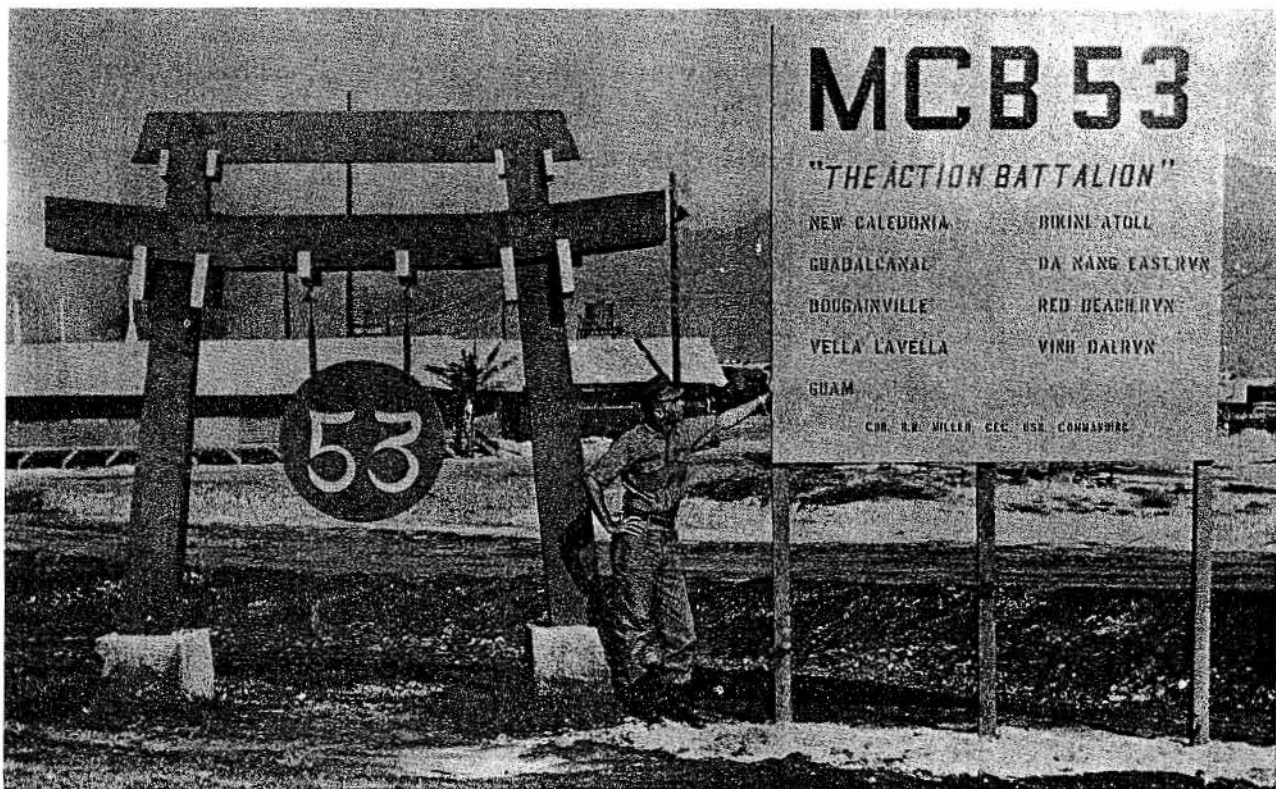
In accordance with COMCBPAC OPORD 1-69, U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion FIFTY-THREE was deployed to Camp Haskins North, Red Beach, DaNang, Republic of Vietnam from 5 MAR 69 to 4 NOV 69. The primary mission of the Battalion was to provide construction support to U. S. Military and other Free World forces. Commander THIRTIETH Naval Construction Regiment maintained operational control of the Battalion.

### B. UNIT MOVEMENTS

- 13 FEB 69 Advance Party departs Davisville, Rhode Island for DaNang, Republic of Vietnam.
- 5-7 MAR 69 NMCB-53 Main Body consisting of 12 officers and 576 enlisted men deployed to Camp Haskins North, DaNang, RVN.
- 6-10 MAR 69 Detail Foxtrot - One officer and 142 enlisted men departed for Vinh Dai crusher site.
- 14 MAR 69 Detail Delta 1 - One officer and 12 enlisted men departed for Liberty Bridge project site.
- 22 MAR 69 Seabee Team 5301 departed for Soc Trang, RVN.
- 11 MAY 69 Detail Delta 1 - Lt. W.E. Johnson, CEC, USN, and 16 enlisted men returned from Liberty Bridge.
- 30 MAY 69 Detail Whiskey - One officer and 36 enlisted men departed for Lang Co Bridge project site.
- 21 JUL 69 Detail Ha Thanh - 7 enlisted men departed for the Army Special Forces Airfield project site.
- 26 AUG 69 Detail Baldy - 18 enlisted men departed for LZ Baldy.
- 6 SEP 69 Detail Ha Thanh - EO1 Harris, Petty Officer in Charge, and 6 enlisted men returned from Airfield project site.
- 10 OCT 69 Advance Party departs Camp Haskins North for Davisville, Rhode Island.
- 28 OCT 69 Detail Baldy - BUI Kelly, Petty Officer in Charge, and 17 enlisted men returned from LZ Baldy.
- 1 NOV 69 Detail Foxtrot - Lt. J.B. Green Jr., CEC, USN, and 193 enlisted men returned from Vinh Dai crusher site.
- 1-4 NOV 69 NMCB-53 Main Body consisting of 19 officers and 642 enlisted men departed Camp Haskins North, DaNang, RVN for CBC, Davisville, Rhode Island.
- 15 NOV 69 Detail Whiskey - CUCM Chancey, Chief Petty Officer in Charge, and 36 enlisted men returned from Lang Co Bridge project site.
- 18 NOV 69 Delayed Party consisting of 3 officers and 66 enlisted men departed Camp Haskins North, DaNang, RVN for CBC, Davisville, Rhode Island.
- 20 NOV 69 Seabee Team 5301 returned from Soc Trang, RVN to CBC, Davisville, Rhode Island.



Camp Haskins North



Commanding Officer inspects FIFTY-THREE's call card recounting a proud history of action in the Pacific Theater of Operations

## C. CAMP HASKINS NORTH

### (1) Camp Layout and Facilities

Camp Haskins North, located at Red Beach, DaNang, RVN is a typical Seabee camp. It is divided into functional areas in an organized manner. The berthing areas, galley, service areas, recreational facilities, shops, administrative offices and transportation equipment areas are located in such proximity that they complement rather than interfere with the operation of each function. The Camp is self sustaining with the exception of its electrical power.

### (2) Utilities

Electrical power is supplied by PWC DaNang using Muse units located at the Force Logistic Command, Camp Books, Red Beach. There is sufficient generating capacity, however a minor voltage drop exists in the Admin area affecting air conditioning units during peak load hours.

Potable water is obtained from (4) water wells located within the Camp itself.

Garbage and trash are collected two times daily, except Sunday, by a local firm operating under contract with PWC China Beach.

### (3) Camp Maintenance

Maintenance of Camp Haskins North, has not been a significant problem. The problems that did exist were corrected through camp improvement as outlined in paragraph (4). About 90% of the berthing huts and the majority of the work areas were re-wired to correct discrepancies reported during scheduled fire inspections.

All "as built" electrical, water and waste disposal prints were updated and verified. This solved the largest maintenance headache.

### (4) Camp Improvements

Several major camp improvements were completed during the deployment. The more notable improvements are listed below:

#### (a) ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION

Fifty per cent (50%) increase in the capacity of the power distribution system at the galley, administration area and BRAVO Company Shops was accomplished by replacing the 25 KW transformers at the Galley and Admin area with 37 1/2 KW transformers and the 10 KW's with 15 KW transformers at the BRAVO Company Shops. The 4/0 secondary associated with these transformers was replaced with 250 MCM cable.

An emergency electrical system was installed utilizing a 200 KW generator in conjunction with the existing secondaries. Complete flexibility was obtained by using a 200 ampere air switch and six (6) safety switches that enable changing the system without climbing poles.

#### (b) SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM

Three leach fields were installed during the deployment. 15 cubic yard fields were installed at the Ward Room and CPO Mess and a 45.5 cubic yard field at the garbage house.

Seven man holes and a new out fall have been installed in the sewer system. The outfall of invasion pipe was replaced with 8" well casing extending 500 feet off shore.

### (c) STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS AND ADDITIONS

Two major additions were completed which contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the Camp. A 200 sq. ft. addition was completed at the NMCB-53 Exchange and 3,000 sq. ft. of covered storage was completed at the Bravo Company Shops area.

A 1,000 pound ice plant and storage reefer were installed at the Bravo Company Shops with very satisfactory results.

Additional lighting and compressed air service was added to the Alpha Company Shops in the vicinity of the lube rack.

### (d) WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The camp water distribution and storage system was significantly improved with the construction of a 500 barrel potable water storage tank near the camp's eastern boundary. Transmission lines were installed from the tank to the new infiltration gallery presently under construction. With the installation of the new system, water storage is no longer considered a problem; capacity was increased five-fold.

The capacity of the storm drainage system was increased through the addition of three 36" culverts. The main drainage ditch was straightened, widened and laterite and crushed rock placed on the banks to prevent erosion. This action should solve problems of minor flooding that occurred earlier in the deployment.

### (5) Security

Camp Haskins is located in Vital Area II of subsector ALFA of the Northern Sector Defense Command of the FIRST Marine Division. The NSD Commander was the 11th Marines while Force Logistics Command at Camp Books had responsibility for subsector ALFA.

Camp Haskins North, was bounded on the south by the 3rd NCB, 30th NCR and MCB EIGHT and on the north by the 58th TC (Viking) compound. The defense on both east and west perimeters consisted of five bunkers/towers with intermediate fighting holes.

The security section consisted of one officer, one Marine First Sergeant, two Sergeants of the Guard (PO1), two Corporals of the Guard (PO2), 27 bunker sentries, a four man mortar crew, and a four man listening post. Generally, Security personnel were rotated from the Companies every ninety days. Men who volunteered to stay on security permanently were allowed to do so if they had done well.

During nighttime conditions, security personnel manned bunkers on both the east and west perimeters with four men each. The bunkers had sleeping spaces for two men. The 81mm mortar was manned nightly by security and the Listening Post went approximately 500 meters outside the perimeter and set in to watch likely enemy avenues of approach. The Command Post watch consisted of one SOG and one COG who stood twelve hours on and twelve hours off. Line companies manned their respective sectors of the line during alert conditions I and II. ALFA Company was responsible for two bunkers and eight fighting holes. BRAVO and CHARLIE companies were each responsible for one bunker and six fighting holes. During daylight hours, security manned three bunkers with one man in each and the CP with a SOG and COG.

Each security bunker's armance consisted of one M-60 machine gun, one M-79 grenade launcher and four M-16 rifles, "pop" flares, and illumination and HE rounds for the M-79. The mortar crew fired only illumination in support of the LP and surrounding units.

The security force worked during the mornings on defense improvements, camp maintenance, civic action and direct labor.

The perimeter was improved by rebuilding one bunker, remodeling four bunkers and putting stairs

on tower #5. Concertina wire was placed around the entire perimeter and all the bunkers including the ammunition storage bunker were re-sandbagged.

Various camp maintenance projects were undertaken and completed by the 35 man working force, including: laying concrete sidewalks, beach cleanup, MLO and BRAVO Company yard cleanup, an addition to the camp exchange, remodeling the old DELTA Company office for use as a TV lounge, building a pistol range, and pouring a slab for the Dental trailer.

Security worked on such civic action projects as the vocational school for the World Relief Program, doors for the children's hospital at FLC, and the foundation for a chapel at a DaNang ARVN compound.

Security provided direct labor for the Camp Monahan and Lang Co Bridge projects. Approximately 3,600 concrete blocks were manufactured for protection at Lang Co Bridge.

A description of the security at the Vinh Dai crusher site is contained in the significant projects summary.

(6) Communications

(a) BATTALION COMMUNICATIONS consisted of the following:

1. An industrial net which consists of one Motorola base station located with the transportation dispatcher and AN/GRC-125 and Motorola PT-300 radios located in jeeps and other vehicles to provide 24 hour communications between the main camp and various job sites.
2. The tactical radio net consisted of AN/PRC-25 radios located in the main Command Post and all Company CP's, monitored 24 hours a day and providing backup for land line communications. The Listening Post and area Marine Corps nets were also included in the net.
3. The telephone system consisted of SB-22 switchboards with TA-312 and EE-8 telephones. This system is connected with other camps in the immediate area and the local dial system, providing complete land line communications. Main offices within the camp were also linked by a ten channel intercom system installed shortly after arrival in RVN. All defensive posts within the perimeter of the camp are connected by a system of EE-8 telephones and are monitored 24 hours a day by the Sergeant of the Guard in the Battalion CP.
4. The in-country net provides communications with all in-country Battalions and utilized the Motorola Single Sideband Transceiver, which has proven versatile, efficient and reliable. The net is monitored 24 hours a day.

(b) MILITARY AFFILIATE RADIO STATION (MARS)

The Navy MARS Station located at Camp Haskins (North) serves approximately 3,200 personnel in the northern DaNang area. Although hindered occasionally by adverse atmospheric conditions, 3,684 phone patches and 1,257 MARS Grams were handled by the station during the deployment. In addition to working with NORTW in Barstow, California and NOUSM in Davisville, Rhode Island, the station has a six day a week schedule with Hawaii and Okinawa as well as operation with Japan and the Phillipines from time to time. The major problem associated with the overseas patches was that NORTW in Barstow was unavailable for 3/4 of the deployment. All of the west coast Battalions and personnel were excluded from communications for that time.

(c) Radio communications on the whole have been satisfactory this deployment. The occasional malfunctions were corrected promptly. There are several repair facilities in the DaNang area with a good supply of spare parts. All radios are usually repaired within a few days.

(7) Ordnance

(a) The Battalion Armory was staffed by one GMG1 and one GMG3. Their duties consisted of



operating the armory, keeping records of all weapons, conducting limited technical inspections, procuring ammunition and assisting in familiarization firing and qualifications. There was a GMG3 assigned to Vinh Dai and he performed the same functions for the detachment.

(b) The Battalion weapons allowance included 3.5 inch rocket launchers, M-60's, M-79's, M-16's, 12-gauge shotguns, 81mm mortars, and .45 caliber pistols. Besides this basic allowance the Vinh Dai Detachment was able to borrow .50 caliber machine guns from nearby Army and Marine units.

(c) During the course of the deployment there were five .45 caliber pistols and one M-16 lost or stolen, while three M-16's were destroyed in mining incidents.

#### D. SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 5 MAR 69 NMCB-53 arrived Camp Haskins North, DaNang, RVN.
- 12 MAR 69 Captain John R. Fisher, CEC, USN, COM30NCR, and Captain J.E. Powell, CEC, USN, prospective COM30NCR, visited Camp Haskins North.
- 12 MAR 69 Captain A.W. Walton Jr., CEC, USN, COM32NCR, toured the Vinh Dai crusher site.
- 15 MAR 69 MCB-53 participated in change of command ceremony in which Captain J.E. Powell, CEC, USN relieved Captain John R. Fisher, CEC, USN as Commander THIRTIETH Naval Construction Regiment.
- 28 MAR 69 CUCM Shannon, Senior Enlisted Advisor to NAVFAC, conducted conferences with Chief Petty Officers and senior enlisted personnel of MCB-53.
- 30 MAR 69 A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at Liberty Bridge to open the bridge to traffic. Major General O.R. Simpson, USMC, CG 1ST MARDIV, Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, Captain J.E. Powell, CEC, USN, COM30NCR, and Commander R.K. Miller, CEC, USN, Commanding Officer MCB-53 attended.
- 31 MAR 69 Captain C.G. Miller, CEC, USN, Chief of Staff CBPAC, and Commander B.J. Hackenson, CEC, USN, Logistics Officer CBPAC visited Camp Haskins North.
- 7 APR 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, and Captain A.W. Walton, CEC, USN, COM32NCR, visited MCB-53's crusher and quarry site at Vinh Dai.
- 15 APR 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, and Captain J.E. Powell, CEC, USN, COM30NCR, inspected Camp Haskins North.
- 16-20 APR 69 Commanding Officer visited the Battalion's crusher-quarry operation at Vinh Dai and also MCB-40, MCB-62, MCB-121, MCB-128's camps.
- 20 APR 69 Captain J.W. Powell, CEC, USN, COM30NCR, presided at Battalion quarters and awards ceremony.
- 1 MAY 69 Started Disaster Recovery Operations at Camp Monahan to repair damage resulting from ASP-1 explosions.
- 4 MAY 69 Commander W.L. Wilson, CEC, USN, Operations Officer CBPAC, visited Camp Haskins North.
- 7 MAY 69 Lieutenant Commander L.M. Larsen, CEC, USNR relieved Lieutenant Commander D.L. Forney, CEC, USN as Operations Officer.
- 12 MAY 69 Lieutenant Commander D.L. Forney, CEC, USN relieved Lieutenant Commander W.A. Simmons, CEC, USN as Executive Officer.

- 19-21 MAY 69 Lieutenant A.T. German, CEC, USN, Equipment Officer CBPAC, and his staff conducted annual COMCBPAC Automotive and Construction Material Handling Equipment Administrative Inspection. A grade of excellent was assigned.
- 25 MAY 69 Marine units beneficially occupied Camp Monahan, 25 days after Disaster Recovery Operations were begun.
- 26-30 MAY 69 Commanding Officer visited Seabee Team 5301 in Soc Trang, RVN.
- 28 MAY 69 CBPAC Staff conducted a contingency plans and military readiness inspection. Grades of excellent were received.
- 4-5 JUN 69 CBPAC Staff conducted annual supply inspection. A grade of excellent was assigned.
- Rear Admiral W.V. Combs, COMSERVPAC, visited MCB-53 to job site at Freedom Hill Recreational Complex.
- 7 JUN 69 Rocket attack. One round of 140mm rocket impacted inside the Camp Haskins North perimeter and three more rounds fell just outside the perimeter. Seventy-five barrels of asphalt destroyed, no personnel casualties.
- 7 JUN 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, on board Camp Haskins North to inspect damage done by explosion of 140mm rocket in early morning.
- 17 JUN 69 Road Grader working at MCB-53's quarry site at Vinh Dai struck a mine. Operator suffered minor lacerations and ruptured eardrum. Major damage to grader.
- 19 JUN 69 Two and one-half ton truck working at Vinh Dai detonated a mine on QL-9. Major damage to the truck; driver shaken up but uninjured.
- 20 JUN 69 Rear Admiral W.M. Heaman, CEC, USN, COMCBPAC, inspected MCB-53's construction site at the Freedom Hill Recreation Complex.
- 22 JUN 69 Rear Admiral W.M. Heaman, CEC, USN, COMCBPAC, visited Camp Haskins North.
- 25 JUN 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, and Captain J.E. Powell, CEC, USN, COM30NCR, visited MCB-53's rock crusher and asphalt detail at Vinh Dai.
- 27 JUN 69 A mine exploded in a booby trapped security bunker at the Vinh Dai quarry site resulting in one very serious and one minor WIA.
- 29 JUN 69 MCB-53 celebrated reaching the mid-deployment mark with a full day off from work for all hands and appropriate recreation and entertainment.
- 29 JUN 69 MCB-53 celebrated the second anniversary of its recommissioning on 30 JUN 67 with a Mess Night. Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, was the honored guest.
- 7 JUL 69 BU3 D.F. Hovanec was killed as a result of an accidental discharge of a .45 caliber pistol at MCB-53's Lang Co Bridge detail.
- 7 JUL 69 Captain J.E. Powell, CEC, USN, COM30NCR, on board Camp Haskins North for mid-deployment briefing.
- 7-9 JUL 69 Commanding Officer visited Camp Campbell at Phu Bai for MCB-40's change of command and visited MCB-53's crusher and asphalt detail at Vinh Dai.
- 16 JUL 69 Held a condition I drill with simulated gas and sapper attacks. Response was outstanding.
- 18 JUL 69 First mix run through MCB-53's newly installed asphaltic concrete plant at Vinh Dai.

- 25 JUL 69 Commanding Officer visited FIFTY-THREE's Special Forces Airfield reconstruction site at Ha Thanh southeast of Chu Lai.
- 29 JUL 69 Rear Admiral E.P. Bonner, USN, Commander U. S. Naval Support Activity DaNang, and Captain J.E. Powell, CEC, USN, COM30NCR, visited Lang Co Bridge site north of Hai Van Pass.
- 4 AUG 69 Captain A.W. Walton, CEC, USN, COM32NCR, and Captain J.E. Washburn, CEC, USN, prospective COM32NCR, visited crusher and asphalt detail at Vinh Dai.
- 8 AUG 69 Held a Condition I drill with simulated gas and sapper attacks. Response was outstanding.
- 10 AUG 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, on board Camp Haskins North for briefing on construction project status.
- 11 AUG 69 Rocket attack on FIFTY-THREE's crusher and asphalt detail at Vinh Dai. Seven 122mm rockets impacted in camp area causing 3 Army KIA, 9 Army WIA, and one Seabee WIA. Also caused much damage to a number of vehicles.
- 15 AUG 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB and Captain J.E. Washburn, CEC, USN, COM32NCR, visited FIFTY-THREE's crusher and asphalt detail at Vinh Dai.
- 19 AUG 69 Motor grader hit a mine on quarry site road near Vinh Dai as Marine vehicle was picking up sweep team. Eleven USMC WIA (MEDEVAC'd), one Seabee WIA. Major damage to both vehicles.
- 20 AUG 69 Major B.E. Townsend, USMC, Military Training Officer, CBLANT, on board for visit.
- 20 AUG 69 Rock dump hit a 22 pound plastic mine placed at the edge of the paved roadway on QL-9 near Vinh Dai. Two similar mines found and blown in place. One minor personnel casualty and major damage to rock dump.
- 21 AUG 69 D-8 dozer struck a mine on quarry road near Vinh Dai. One minor casualty; major damage to dozer.
- 28 AUG 69 Vinh Dai paving crew involved in a firefight on QL-9 when they came to the aid of MCB-62's paving crew which had come under small arms and RPG fire. No casualties.
- 2 SEP 69 Typhoon Doris struck I Corps near DMZ. No damage in Camp Haskins North; moderate damage to crusher and asphalt detail at Vinh Dai in NICTZ. Generator shed destroyed, galley roof damaged, test lab damaged.
- 6 SEP 69 Rocket attack on Camp Haskins North at 0102. Three 122mm rockets impacted in and around berthing area in camp. No damage or casualties.
- 12 SEP 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, and Captain J.W. Washburn, CEC, USN, COM32NCR, visited Lang Co Bridge construction site north of Hai Van Pass.
- 19 SEP 69 Five ton tactical dump hit a 75 to 100 pound plastic mine about 20 miles south of DaNang on Highway 1 while returning from Landing Zone Baldy construction site. Two Seabees WIA, MEDEVAC'd, one very serious. Truck was destroyed.
- 14 OCT 69 General Lam, ICTZ, Lieutenant General H. Nickerson Jr., USMC, CG III MAF, Lieutenant General Zais, USA, CG 24th Corps, Commander R.K. Miller, CEC, USN, Commanding Officer MCB-53 attended the ribbon cutting ceremony at Lang Co Bridge.
- 15 OCT 69 Commanding Officer made an inspection tour of MCB-53's construction site at LZ Baldy.

- 17 OCT 69 Six MCB-53 personnel received awards from the Minister of Public Works at Quang Tri for their participation in the Northern I Corps LOC program.
- 17 OCT 69 The Battalion set condition rocket and mortar attack at 2300. Secured at 2330.
- 19 OCT 69 Rear Admiral J.G. Dillon, CEC, USN, COM3NCB, announced the decommissioning of MCB-53 at Battalion Quarters.
- 20 OCT 69 CUCM Shannon, Senior Enlisted Advisor to NAVFAC, conducted conferences with Chief Petty Officers and senior enlisted personnel of MCB-53.
- 22 OCT 69 Commander C.A. Merica, CEC, USN, CEC Detailer, visited MCB-53 giving the officers a presentation illustrating the career patterns of the CEC officer.
- 24 OCT 69 Commander P.R. Gates, CEC, USN, Chief Staff Officer CBLANT, visited Camp Haskins North.
- 4 NOV 69 NMCB-53 departed Camp Haskins North, DaNang, RVN.

#### E. MAJOR PROBLEMS

The major problems encountered in this deployment were centered in these areas: Timely material procurement and a chronic shortage of material handling equipment.

Discussing the materials procurement problem must be qualified however, in that it was primarily confined to components of large complex air conditioner units and electrical systems. This battalion was tasked with two major projects utilizing this kind of equipment, thus procurement of such long lead time items, available only from CONUS became the initial factor in meeting the project schedules. This problem was tackled successfully in both instances by sending an experienced UTCS to Port Hueneme as the Battalion expeditor. The expeditor was able to shorten the vendors delivery time significantly on major components and assure timely delivery of all items through personal attention and the monitoring of the delivery of items to Norton Air Force Base for air shipment.

The chronic shortage of transportation and materials handling capability was a severe handicap that was never satisfactorily resolved. The most acute problem was the shortage of Rough Terrain forklifts. Generally speaking all types of forklifts were in short supply. Also adequate spare and repair parts for the 6000# RT forklift were not available. The problem was partially solved by borrowing forklifts from others, particularly from the Marines at FLC.

On one project (the LZ Baldy and FSB Ross cantonment construction) the lack of Seabee hauling capability, particularly tractor trailer units, required tasking of the Marine Motor Transport Battalion with transportation of construction materials to the site. This resulted in loss of control over the material movement and considerable loss of material through damage and theft. This problem was due to maintaining a large detachment and is therefore unique.