Series: AWM95
Australian Army commanders' diaries
[Vietnam]

Headquarters units

Item number: 1/4/1

Item: Headquarters, 1 Australian Task Force

Narrative

Duty Officer's log

Annexes

[1-31 May 1966]
COVING LETTER

Reference No.........................

HQ A.F.V. SAIGON

To: G.G.-Military History-Section—ARG.

1. I enclose Commanders Diary (AF C2118) (Adapted) as indicated in Part 2.

2. Please return receipt below.

(Signature) Signed

Brigadier

Appointment Commander, 1st Task Force

PART 2

SECRET

ORIGINAL

DUPLICATE

Strike out where not applicable

COMMANDERS DIARY

OF

Unit or Formation HQ 1. AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE

From 1 May 66 To 31 May 66

INDEX

Narrative (AF C2118)

ANNEXES

* A Duty officer's log
* B Messages connected with log
* C Operation orders and instructions issued
* D Operation orders and instructions received
* E Siteps issued
* F Orders of battle and location reports issued
* G Intelligence reports and summaries issued; appreciations made
* H Administrative orders and instructions issued
* I Administrative orders and instructions received
* J Administrative reports and bulletin; ammunition returns; field strength returns
* K Standing orders issued
* L Commander's policy and semi-official letters (Minutes of meetings)
* M Action reports (if required)
* N Other papers, eg, maps and diagrams, air photos, reports from sub units
* O Periodical summaries of operations
Z Top Secret Supplementary Diary

Enclosure Numbers

* Only to be included during operations.
† Cross out whichever is not applicable.
PART 3

COMMANDERS DIARIES
INSTRUCTIONS

AIM

1. The aim of a Commanders Diary is to provide data on which to base future improvements in Army training, equipment, organization and administration, and to furnish historians with a record of the activities of units and formations in operational and non-operational periods in peace and in war.

GENERAL

2. Entries are to be made daily on AF C 2118 (Adapted) each entry being initialled by the officer detailed to keep it.

3. Commanders Diaries will conform with the rules for drafting orders given in “Staff Duties (Australia)” Chapter 2, Section 12.

RESPONSIBILITY

During Non-operational Periods

4. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled by commanders of all formations.

During Operational Periods (1)

5. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled in duplicate by:
   a. Commanders of all formations.
   b. Each branch of the staff at formation headquarters commanded by a brigadier or above.
   c. Heads of services not below the rank of lieutenant colonel.
   d. Personal staffs and officers holding special appointments.
   e. Unit commanders.
   f. Commanders of a detachment of a unit when so ordered.

COMPILATION

6. Both original and duplicate copies are to consist of:
   a. Cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted).
   b. Index as printed on cover.
   c. Narrative (AF C 2118) (Adapted).
   d. Annexes as shown in the Index.

7. All details of the unit or formation (if a detachment is concerned, the name of the parent unit), period covered and enclosure numbers of the annexes are to be shown on the cover. If there has been a change of command since the last report, the date of assumption by the new commanding officer is to be included.

8. The annexes are to be assembled in the groups shown on the cover. If there are no enclosures for an annex NH, it will be entered on the cover. If additional annexes are convenient for a particular headquarters, starting at B.

   for operations form Annex “Z”, “TOP SECRET the document. It is to be prepared and disposed of as

ENTITIES

as well as map references, establishment, equipment

orders given.

the day’s fighting, including company movements.

mander with regard to equipment, tactics, organization

entential importance.

officers, men and equipment.

ished by the time not accounted for. The type of

and to save work as much information as possible is to

ments issued and received, routine returns, etc. All

and the time of receipt or despatch is to be given.

he annexes, but need not give a precis of any of them.

(continued on back cover)
13. **Original Commander’s Diary.** This is to be forwarded monthly, unless otherwise ordered, by the seventh day of the succeeding month direct to AHQ.

14. **Duplicate Commander’s Diary.** This must be clearly marked as a duplicate. It is to be sent separately from the original to AHQ one month after the original has been despatched but not before the former has been acknowledged.

15. When overseas, both copies of diaries are to be sent through the Army Records organization in the overseas theatre but at different times.

16. **TOP SECRET Supplementary Diaries.**

   a. The documents referred to in Paragraph 9 together with a list of them made out on AF C 2118 (Adapted) must be placed in separate cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted). All details must be filled in and the cover clearly marked in red: “ANNEX Z — OFFICER ONLY”. It may be convenient to group the papers by appendices.

   b. Supplementary diaries must be forwarded under the normal rules for TOP SECRET correspondence, to AHQ. The inner envelope must be plainly marked:

   
   **TOP SECRET**
   
   **ANNEX Z to**

   Commanders Diary of __________________________ (Formation or Unit)

   From __________________________ to __________________________ (Dates)

   c. The duplicate supplementary diaries must be despatched as shown in Paragraph 14 as soon as receipt of the original has been acknowledged.
## CC IMANDERS DIARY NAR ATIVE

### MONTH AND YEAR: MAY 66

**REFERENCE MAP:** XA Binh Ba. 1:50,000

**UNIT/FORMATION:** HQ 1 ATP

**COMMANDING OFFICER:** Brig. Jackson, OBE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place and grid reference</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event or information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bien Hoa</td>
<td>20 Apr 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning staff arrived from AUSTRALIA, assembled Bien Hoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reconnaissance made of operational area, Standing Operating Procedures re-written for theatre orientation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Outline plan made for occupation of Task Force area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vung Tau (3045)</td>
<td>13 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning staff moved to Vung Tau and joined other members of HQ staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 May 66</td>
<td>0800H</td>
<td>HQ 1 ATP opened for operations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:**

- Not possible to take over effective command of units already in country owing to lack of communications, HQ staff, and equipment.
- It became immediately apparent that there was insufficient tentage, transport, living, and office accommodation available. Tentage had to be borrowed from other units, including American units. Steps were taken to obtain further tentage from AUSTRALIA. It was also found that the AUSTRALIAN 11ft x 11ft tent was unsuitable as a Command Post tent.
**COI TANDERS DIARY NARF FIVE**

**MONTH AND YEAR:** MAY 66  
**REFERENCE MAP:** XA BINH BA 1:50,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place and grid reference</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event or information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>as it could not be made light proof.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VUNG TAU</td>
<td>24 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comd arrived VUNG TAU and assumed Comd. Addressed Officers of 5 RAR prior to then joining OPERATION HARDIHOOD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 RAR moved forward to area of operations with marching component moved by HULD helicopters to LZ secured by US troops. Unit under operational control of 173 Airborne Brigade (Separate).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUI DAT AREA</td>
<td>24 May 66</td>
<td>1930H</td>
<td>1 ATF suffered first casualty. Pte E.W. NOACK, WIA subsequently died.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4469)</td>
<td>25 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lessons Learnt:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some messages are being sent from 5 RAR to 1 Bch by several different means, eg., voice, radio, helicopter, resulting in confusion particularly in stores demands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAR BLA</td>
<td>25 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting between Comd and Lt Col DAT PROVINCE CHIEF PHUOC TUY.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUI DAT AREA</td>
<td>27 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>First kill and first VC captured by 5 RAR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4469)</td>
<td>27 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with RAAF for discussion of organisation of RAAF SUPPORT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VUNG TAU</td>
<td>1500H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annex letter and enclosure number**

ANNEX L

1 H P Coy—275/65—35m
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place and grid reference</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event or information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HUI DAT (4367)</td>
<td>28 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comd conducted first ground reconnaissance of TF Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31 May 66</td>
<td></td>
<td>General comments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a) During its assembly period in the WUNG TAU staging area 5 RAR completed test firing of all weapons, up to coy scale clearing operations and bn sized helicopter operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) 5 RAR settled down very quickly in the op area and operated very effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) HQ 1 ATF had many growing pains but is settling down and will be capable of controlling operations effectively by date it assumes control of ops forward on 5 Jun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>