

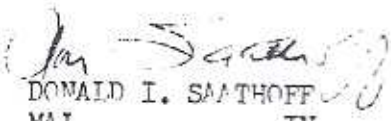


ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT
HISTORY OF THE
68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY
145TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
1ST AVIATION BRIGADE

1 JANUARY 1968 - 31 December 1968

Prepared by
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APPROVED BY:


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MAJ IN
Commanding

Bien Hoa, Republic of Vietnam
APO 96227



68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

ORGANIZED UNDER: MTO&E 1-77G

BY: General Order 249, HQ USAFPC

ATTACHMENTS

282ND SIGNAL DETACHMENT

ORGANIZED UNDER: MTO&E 11-500D

BY: General Order 200 and 283,

HQ Department of the Army

391ST TRANSPORTATION DETACHMENT

ORGANIZED UNDER: MTO&E 55-500R

BY: General Order 200 and 283,

HQ Department of the Army

430TH MEDICAL DETACHMENT

ORGANIZED UNDER: MTO&E 8-500D

BY: General Order 249, HQ USAFPC

AREA OF OPERATIONS



During the past year, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company has operated in III Corps area of Vietnam. This is the transitional terrain area for South Vietnam which provides a link between the rice paddies of the Mekong Delta and the mountains of the central highlands. (South and West of Saigon the land is delta type terrain and to the North and East is a large plain, slowly rising to the mountains of the far perimeter of the III Corps Area).

The delta region of the III Corps is a heavily silted area crisscrossed by numerous streams and rivers. It is a low level plain with an elevation of no more than ten feet above sea level. Almost the entire area is divided into rice paddies that are kept flooded during the rainy season. There are many nipa palm bushes found growing along the banks of the rivers and around the small villages.

The territory to the North and West of the III Corps area is a plateau rising from sea level to over 600 feet. The land is covered by thick jungle, except for the area's around large communities which have been cleared away. This jungle, which is often two and three canopies thick, consists of bamboo and broad leaf forests, interspersed by farms and rubber plantations. There are only a few large mountains in the III Corps area, which serve as excellent land marks.

The III Corps area provides a great variety of terrain to which the aviator must adapt. He must land anywhere from muddy open rice paddies to small holes in the thick jungle. The aviator must learn to navigate using all types of terrain features. He must adapt to dust and haze in the dry season and large thunderstorms in the wet season. These conditions of the III Corps area provide the aviator with a great challenge.

THE KEY PERSONNEL OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

Company Commanders: (Top Tiger 6)

LTC John Ohnstad: From Nov 67 to 26 Mar 68
LTC Billy Sims: From Mar 68 to 21 Sep 68
Major Richard S. Daum: From Sep 68 to Dec 68
Major Ronald I. Saethoff: From Dec to the present time.

Executive Officers: (Top Tiger 5)

Major William Mlich: From Nov 67 to 10 Feb 68
Major Robert Hagee: From Feb 68 to 22 Jul 68
Major Richard S. Daum: From Jul to Sep 68
Captain Geoffrey R. Webster: From Nov 68 to the present time.

Operations Officer: (Top Tiger 3)

Major Paul Jaenichen: From Nov 67 to Apr 68
Major Richard S. Daum: From Apr 68 to Jun 68
Captain Ronald L. Sheffield: From Jun 68 to Sep 68
Captain Geoffrey R. Webster: From Sep 68 to Nov 68
Captain Douglas O. Gooch Jr.: From Nov 68 to the present time.

There have been many changes in the personnel for the 68th Assault Helicopter Company. Many of the Officers and men have moved up to Battalion and other units within the 1st Brigade while others have completed their year here. But as each man departed, another "Top Tiger" came to fill his job with the devotion and skill needed to perform the vital mission assigned to the 68th Assault Helicopter Company.

UNIT HONOR ROLE

THESE INDIVIDUALS MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE FOR THEIR COUNTRY:

Warrant Officer Paul J. Hill
Warrant Officer Norman W. Partridge
Warrant Officer Charles C. Van Allen
Specialist Four Brady W. Herring
Private First Class Samuel R. Summerfield

AWARDS & DECORATIONS 1968

JANUARY

2 Army Commendation Medals for Meritorious Service
3 Purple Hearts

FEBRUARY

3 Bronze Star Medals for Meritorious Service
5 Army Commendation Medals for Meritorious Service
3 Purple Hearts

MARCH

2 Silver Stars for Valor
2 Distinguished Flying Crosses
1 Bronze Star for Valor
1 Bronze Star for Meritorious Service
3 Air Medals for Valor
1 Army Commendation Medal for Service
6 Purple Hearts

APRIL

1 Distinguished Flying Cross
1 Bronze Star for Meritorious Service
1 Air Medal for Valor
7 Army Commendation Medals for Meritorious Service

MAY

1 Silver Star for Valor
8 Distinguished Flying Crosses
14 Air Medals for Valor
5 Army Commendation Medals for Meritorious Service
2 Purple Hearts

AWARDS & DECORATIONS: 1968

JUNE

- 1 Distinguished Flying Cross
- 2 Bronze Stars for Valor
- 2 Bronze Stars for Meritorious Service
- 3 Air Medals for Valor
- 4 Army Commendation Medals for Meritorious Service
- 2 Purple Hearts

JULY

- 2 Silver Stars for Valor
- 8 Distinguished Flying Crosses
- 1 Bronze Star for Valor
- 4 Bronze Stars for Meritorious Service
- 14 Air Medals for Valor
- 19 Army Commendation Medals for Meritorious Service
- 4 Purple Hearts

AUGUST

- 3 Distinguished Flying Crosses
- 1 Bronze Star for Meritorious Service
- 3 Air Medals for Valor
- 2 Army Commendation Medals
- 5 Purple Hearts

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Silver Star for Valor
- 9 Distinguished Flying Crosses
- 4 Air Medals for Valor
- 1 Army Commendation Medals for Valor
- 9 Purple Hearts

OCTOBER

- 2 Air Medals for Valor
- 1 Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service
- 2 Purple Hearts

NOVEMBER

- 1 Silver Star for Valor
- 1 Bronze Star for Valor
- 2 Air Medals for Valor

DECEMBER

- 3 Distinguished Flying Crosses
- 6 Air Medals for Valor
- 1 Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service
- 1 Purple Heart

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 2 Jan The Top Tigers flew in support of the 25th Inf Div (US) near Cu Chi and conducted a CA in support of the 5th ARVN Div near Katum.
- 3 Jan A combat assault and extractions in support of the 18th ARVN Div was conducted in the vicinity of Xuan Loc.
- 6 Jan The Top Tigers in support of the 199th Light Inf Bde, made numerous insertions and extractions and encountered light enemy fire in LZ's.
- 12 Jan In a combined mission with the 190th AHC, the Top Tigers conducted a combat assault supporting the 101st Abn Div near Song Be.
- 13 Jan The 68th had a busy day making numerous medevacs of ARVN Troops who ran into several mines and booby traps near Duc Hoa. The Mustangs were credited with 3 VC KBA.
- 15 Jan On this day the Top Tigers flew to Song Be to support the 101st Abn Div. Mustangs were credited with 2 VC KBA, and ground troops uncover a cache of rice, cooking materials and packs. Negative enemy fire was reported.
- 16 Jan The 68th, 118th, and 190th supported the 101st in a classified area. There was negative enemy fire reported throughout the day.
- 17 - 19 Jan The Top Tigers flew three days of combat assaults while in support of 101st Abn Div at Song Be. Three aircraft received numerous hits and one pilot was wounded in the foot.
- 27 Jan A flight of ten slicks and four gunships supported the 3rd Bde of the 101st Abn Div near Phouc Binh. One UH-1D was destroyed when it crashed in LZ. Pilot was medevaced to 93rd. All other crewmembers were unharmed.
- 28 Jan The 68th supported the 25th Inf Div (US) near Cu Chi. One gunship was hit by ground fire and the crewchief was hit in the leg; another UH-1D was also hit by ground fire enroute back to Bien Hoa.
- 31 Jan TET Offensive began (See Page 64 for TET Documentation)

During the month of January 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew a total of 2,251 hours. There were 14,535 passengers and 22 tons of cargo carried.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved a 69% overall availability rate. UH-1C models had an availability rate of 69%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 - 3 Feb TET Offensive (See TET Documentation)
- 4 - 7 Feb Top Tigers provided general support to the III Corp. Mustangs were on ESB and called out numerous times. They were credited with 12 structures destroyed.
- 8 Feb The 68th conducted a combat assault in support of the 5th ARVN Div near Lam Son. A VC company was located and the flight received heavy automatic weapons fire. Mustangs were hit numerous times but there were no injuries nor major damage to A/C.
- 10 - 11 Feb Top Tigers provided general support to the III Corps. At 0005 hours on the 11th, enemy mortars destroyed two aircraft in the "Tigers Den". One other aircraft had minor damage. There were no injuries to personnel.
- 12 - 13 Feb The 68th traveled to Dong Tam to support the 1st Bde of the 9th Inf Div. There were no significant results.
- 15 Feb While working with the 18th ARVN Div near Xuan Loc, several suspected VC positions were located and Mustangs rolled in and destroyed several complexes.
- 16 Feb Serving the 199th Light Inf Bde near Saigon two UH-1D and one UH-1C were damaged by ground fire. There were no injuries.
- 17 - 21 Feb The Top Tigers were in general support of the III Corps area.
- 22 - 23 Feb In a combined mission with the 118th AHC, the 68th supported the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam. There were no significant results.
- 26 Feb On this date the Top Tigers were in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Ben Luc. The Mustangs destroyed numerous enemy bunkers. During the ground troops sweep, 2000 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, 4 AK-47 automatic rifles, 15 B40 rockets and fuses, 1 B40 rocket launcher, 6 enemy uniforms, and 1 3 1/2 H.P. motor were found.
- 27 - 28 Feb The 68th again found action while in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Ben Luc. The Mustangs had a very good day killing 57 confirmed VC with their rockets and miniguns. Total enemy losses were confirmed at 152 KIA.

During the month of February 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew 2,125 hours, transported 9,732 passengers, and carried 31 tons of cargo.

Maintenance The 391st achieved a 67% overall availability rate, UH-1C models had an availability rate of 70%

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 13 Mar The Top Tigers flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Dué Hoa once again, but there was no significant results.
- 4-7 Mar The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 8 Mar The Top Tigers made eleven lifts while in support of the 18th ARVN Div near Ham Tan. One gunship was shot down by an RPG rocket, but there were no injuries.
- 9 Mar While working in the vicinity of Lam Son, the 68th made five lifts of CIDG Forces.
- 10 Mar The 68th provided general support to the 112 Corps.
- 11 Mar The Top Tigers provided support to the 199th Light Inf Bde and went on 15 min R&R. Two UH1-D and UH1-C models were used on a "people sniffer mission" near Saigon.
- 12 Mar The 68th and 135th AHC conducted a Battalion Operation in support of the 18th ARVN Div near Xuan Loc. There were five lifts and five extractions with no significant results.
- 14 Mar The Top Tigers made 4 lifts in support of the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam.
- 16 Mar The 68th made eagle flights with the 25th ARVN Inf Div into 8 different LZ's. Two gunships and three slicks were damaged by enemy fire. Two crewmembers were wounded and two missing in action.
- 20 Mar Once again the Top Tigers flew to Dong Tam to support the 9th Inf Div. There were ten lifts with no significant results.
- 24 Mar While working with the 3/187th Inf 101st Abn Div and the 199th Light Inf Bde, the Top Tigers made 18 lifts in support of Operation "Sigma" near Saigon.
- 26 Mar The 68th supported the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam. Heavy contact reported by the ground troops. There were numerous insertions but no damage or injuries were sustained by the Top Tigers heavy contact.
- 29 Mar The 68th provided support to the 101st Abn Div and the 18th ARVN Div near Song Be. They were scrambled on a TAC "E" in the afternoon and made three night insertions. The LZ was hot but no hits or injuries were sustained.
- During the month of March the 68th Flew 2,477 hours, transported 13,943 passengers and carried 36 tons of cargo.
- Maintenance! The 391st achieved a 66 % overall availability rate, UH1-C models had availability rate of 58 %.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 Apr The 68th made 14 lifts in support of the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Duc Hoa. There was negative enemy fire reported.
- 2-3 Apr The Top Tigers provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 4 Apr Once again the 68th flew to Dong Tam in support of the 9th Inf Div. The Mustangs were credited with 13 confirmed VC KBA. The flight made 20 lifts and received light enemy fire but there was no damage or injuries.
- 7 Apr The Top Tigers inserted 4 lifts of CIDG forces in the vicinity of Ben Cat with no significant results.
- 8 Apr While working with the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam the Mustangs were credited with 2 VC KBA.
- 9-10 Apr The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 11 Apr During three night extractions while in support of the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam several aircraft were hit by enemy fire and one Pathfinder was KIA.
- 13 Apr The Top Tigers were on Ready Reaction for the 11 FFW but were not committed to action.
- 14-16 Apr The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 17 Apr While working in the vicinity of Den Luc in support of the 25th ARVN Div, the Mustangs destroyed two sampans and were credited with three VC KBA.
- 19 Apr The Top Tigers supported the 2/27th Inf 25th US Inf Div near Cu Chi. They made several lifts from multiple LZ's.
- 21-22 Apr The 68th supported the 46th Regt of the 25th ARVN Div near Bao Tri for two days, conducting resupply missions.
- 25 Apr The Top Tigers provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 26 Apr On this day the Top Tigers inserted two lifts of CIDG forces in landing zones in the vicinity of Phouc Binh.
- 29 Apr The 68th provided support to the 50th Regt, 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were ten insertions and three extractions. Mustangs were credited with destroying two structures, three sampans and killing three confirmed VC with their rockets and miniguns.
- 30 Apr The Top Tigers flew to Tay Ninh to support the 5th Special Forces Group. There were no significant results.

During the month of April 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew 2,476 hours, transported 14,886 passengers, and carried 18 tons of cargo.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved a 75 % overall availability rate, UH1-C models had a availability rate of 67 %.

OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 May The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 2 May The Top Tigers made numerous insertions in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Tan An.
- 3-4 May The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 5 May The 68th made seven insertions and seven extractions near Duc Hoa in support of the 25th ARVN Div.
- 6 May The Top Tigers provided support to the 111 Corps. Top tiger 23 and Top Tiger 47 were congratulated by the 111 Corps TOC for a "tremendous job done" while conducting MEDEVACs in an extremely hot LZ in support of the 18th ARVN Div.
- 8 May The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 9 May The Top Tigers flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Can Giouc. There were no significant results.
- 11 May The 68th supported the 5th Special Forces Group near Tay Ninh. There were five lifts.
- 12 May The Top Tigers supported the 25th ARVN Div near Bao Tri. There were eight lifts. One UH-1D was destroyed when it crashed on take off from LZ with load of enemy weapons. One pilot was killed in the crash.
- 14 May The 68th was on Ready Reaction Force for the 11 FFV. They were not committed.
- 16 May The Top Tigers flew in support of the 190th Light Inf Bde near Binh Chanh. There were numerous insertions and extractions. Four A/C took hits from a automatic weapons fire. One pilot was KIA while flying the smoke ship. Enemy casualties were unknown.
- 17 May While in support of the 5th ARVN Div, the Top Tigers conducted two combat assaults in the vicinity of X760260.
- 20 May The Top Tigers supported the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were numerous insertions and extractions.
- 21 May The 68th provided support to the 111 Corps.
- 24 May The Top Tigers provided support to the 50th Regt of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. The "Mustangs" were credited with 25 VC KBA.
- 27 May The 68th flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Can Giouc. There were seven lifts and seven extractions. The Mustangs were credited with 3 VC KBA.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMP ANY 1968

29 May The Top Tigers provided the III Corps with general support.

30 May The 68th supported the 25th ARVN Div near Ben Luc. There were eight lifts with no significant results.

During the month of May 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew a total of 2,610 hours. There were 16,180 passengers and 14 tons of cargo carried.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved a 78% overall availability rate. UH-1C models had an availability rate of 72%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1-3 Jun The 68th provided support to the 11 FFV providing general support type missions.
- 5 Jun The Top Tigers made 12 lifts in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa.
- 7 Jun The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps area.
- 8 Jun The Top Tigers flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were 11 lifts with no significant results.
- 10 Jun The 68th provided support to the 3/7th Inf 190th Light Inf Bde near Saigon. There were no significant results.
- 11 Jun The Top Tigers provided 111 Corps with general support type missions.
- 12 Jun The 68th again supported the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were 8 insertions and 4 extractions.
- 13 Jun The Top Tigers were on Ready Reaction Force for the 11FFV.
- 15 Jun The 68th provided support to the 25th ARVN Div near Rach Kien. They made eight lifts and the Mustangs were credited with 6 VC KBA and they destroyed 1 sampan.
- 18 Jun The Top Tigers flew in support of the 18th ARVN Div near Xuan Loc. There were eight lifts with no significant results.
- 21 Jun The Top Tigers supported the 25th ARVN Div near Bao Tri. The Mustangs were credited with eight VC KBA and six structures destroyed. Five aircraft took hits from small arms fire, but there was no major damage or injuries.
- 22 Jun The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 23 Jun The 68th flew in support of the 9th Inf Div in the vicinity of Rach Kien. Ground troops were in heavy contact most of the day. There were no injuries or damage to any aircraft.
- 24 Jun The Top Tigers were on Ready Reaction Force for the 11 FFV.
- 26 Jun While in support of the ARVN Airborne near Tay Ninh, The Mustangs were credited with ten VC KBA.

During the month of Jun 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew a total of 2,630 hours. There were 14,397 passengers transported and 15 tons of cargo carried.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved a 79 % overall rate. UH1C models had an availability rate of 78 %.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 Jul The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps area.
 - 3 Jul The Top Tigers flew in support of the 18th ARVN Div near Xuan Loc. There were no significant results.
 - 5 Jul The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps area.
 - 7 Jul The Top Tigers supported the 9th Inf Div in the vicinity of Dong Tam. There were ten lifts with no significant results.
 - 9 Jul The Top Tigers were on Ready Reaction Force for the 11 FFV. They were not committed.
 - 11 Jul The 68th flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were seven lifts and four extractions. One UH1-D received minor damage when hit by small arms fire.
 - 13 Jul The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
 - 15 Jul The Top Tigers flew in support of the 5th Ranger Group in the vicinity of Tay Ninh. There were no significant results.
 - 17 Jul The 68th flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were eight lifts with no significant results.
 - 19 Jul The Top Tigers provided support to the 111 Corps.
 - 21 Jul The 68th flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Ben Luc. There were no significant results.
 - 23 Jul The Top Tigers provided support to the 9th Inf Div in the vicinity of Dong Tam. There were numerous insertions and extractions.
 - 25 Jul The 68th flew in support of the 19th Light Inf Bde near Saigon. There were 12 lifts. All LZ's were cold.
 - 27 Jul The Top Tigers provided support to the 11 FFV.
 - 29 Jul The Top Tigers provided support to the 11 FFV.
- During the month of Jul 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew 2,782 hours, transported 16,008 passengers, and carried 10 tons of cargo.
- Maintenance: The 391st achieved a 78 % overall rate, UH1C models had an availability of 78 %.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 Aug Provided 11 FFV with Ready Reaction force. They were not committed.
- 3 Aug The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 4-5 Aug The Top Tigers supported the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. They made 15 lifts with no significant results.
- 8 Aug The 68th provided support to the 5th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Lam Son. There were five insertions and five extractions with no significant results.
- 10 Aug The Top Tigers provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 12 Aug The 68th flew to Can Giouc to support the 25th ARVN Div. Five lifts were made with no significant results.
- 14 Aug While working near Cu Chi the Top Tigers made eight lifts in support of the 25th ARVN Div.
- 16 Aug The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 17 Aug The Top Tigers made nine combat assaults while in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. The Mustangs were credited with killing 8 confirmed VC and destroying two structures.
- 18 Aug While in support of the 9th Inf Div at Rach Kien, one UH1-D was destroyed by a RPG rocket and one gunship and two UH1-D were damaged by ground fire. There were seven Top Tigers wounded in action. Enemy casualties were unknown.
- 20 Aug The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 22 Aug The Top Tigers flew in support of the 18th ARVN Div near Xuan Loc. There was no significant results.
- 23 Aug While in support of the 199th Light Inf Bde, the Mustangs destroyed three sampans.
- 24 Aug The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 25 Aug On this date the Top Tigers supported elements of the 9th Inf Div in the vicinity of Rach Kien. The Mustangs were credited with five VC KBA.
- 26-27 Aug The Top Tigers conducted eagle flights in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

28 Aug The 68th provided general support to the III Corps.

30 Aug The 68th supported the 25th ARVN Div near Cu Chi. Mustangs were credited with five VC KBA.

During the month of August 1968 the Top Tigers flew 3,331 hours, transported 19,278 passengers and carried 24 tons of cargo.

Maintenance: The 391s achieved a 79% overall availability rate, UH-1C models had an availability rate of 75%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 Sep The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 3 Sep The Top Tigers flew in support of the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam. There were 16 lifts with no significant results.
- 4 Sep The 68th provided support to the 18th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Xuan Loc. There were no significant results.
- 5 Sep In a split mission the Top Tigers provided support to the 199th Light Inf Bde and the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Can Giouc. There were no significant results.
- 7 Sep The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 9 Sep On this day the Top Tigers provided support to the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Duc Hoa. The Mustangs were credited with two VC KBA and they destroyed one structure.
- 11 Sep Once again the 68th provided support to the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Duc Hoa. The Mustangs were credited with destroying two structures and sinking two sampans.
- 12 Sep The Top Tigers flew to Tay Ninh to support the ARVN Airborn. There were no significant results.
- 14 Sep The 68th provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 15 Sep The 68th provided support to the ARVN Airborn near Tay Ninh. There were 10 lifts. One pilot was KIA.
- 16 Sep Once again the Top Tigers flew in support of the ARVN Airborn. There were eight lifts into extremely hot LZ's. There were three crewmembers KIA when aircraft was shot down in LZ. One pilot was KIA. The Mustangs were credited with numerous VC KBA.
- 18 Sep The 68th provided support to the 111 Corps.
- 19 Sep The Top Tigers flew in support to the 25th ARVN Div near Can Giouc. There were no significant results.
- 20 Sep The 68th provided support to the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam. Mustangs were credited with five VC KBA.
- 22 Sep The Top Tigers provided general support to the 111 Corps.
- 25 Sep The 68th provided support to the 25th ARVN Div near Bao Tri. There were ten lifts with negative fire reported. The Mustangs were credited with 3 VC KBA, three structures destroyed, and sinking ten sampans.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY..1968

27 Sep The Top Tigers were placed on a Tac Emergency at Dau Tieng.

During the month of Sep 1968 the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew 3,092 hours, transported 16,290 passengers, and carried 27 tons of cargo.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved a 81% overall availability rate, UH-1C model had an availability rate of 75%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 Oct The 68th provided support to the ARVN Airborne near Tay Ninh. There were no significant results.
- 2 Oct The Top Tigers provided support to the 25th ARVN Div near Ben Luc. The "Mustangs" were credited with seven VC KBA and sunk five sampans.
- 5 Oct The 68th provided support to the 5th ARVN Div near Loc Ninh. There were no significant results.
- 6 Oct The Top Tigers provided support to the 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam. There were 11 lifts with no significant results.
- 8 Oct The 68th provided general support to the III Corps area.
- 10 Oct Once again the Top Tigers supported the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa, conducting three combat assaults.
- 12 Oct The Top Tigers provided general support to the III Corps area.
- 14 Oct The 68th provided support to CMAC, inserting troops into numerous LZ's in the vicinity of Saigon.
- 15 Oct While in support of the 25th ARVN Div, the Top Tigers made 16 lifts in the vicinity of Bao Tri.
- 19 Oct Once again the Top Tigers flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Duc Hoa. There was negative fire reported in the LZ's.
- 22 Oct The 68th provided support to the 50th Regt of the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Ben Luc. There were no significant results.
- 25 Oct The Top Tigers flew to Tay Ninh to support the ARVN Airborne. There were no significant results.
- 26 Oct While in support of the 9th Inf Div near Dong Tam the "Mustangs" were credited with killing five VC.
- 28 Oct The 68th flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div. There were ten lifts in the vicinity of Bao Tri.
- 30 Oct The Top Tigers flew to Dong Tam to support the 9th Inf Div again. There were no significant results.
- 31 Oct The 68th ended the month of October providing general support to the III Corps area

During the month of October 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew 2,632 hours, transported 14,720 passengers, and carried 21 tons of cargo.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved a 78% overall availability rate, UH-1C models had an availability rate of 74%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 Nov The 68th provided support to the 1st Cav Div in the vicinity of Quan Loi.
- 2 Nov The Top Tigers flew in support of the ARVN Airborne near Tay Ninh. There were eight lifts with no significant results.
- 3 Nov While in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa, the Top Tigers conducted two combat assaults. There was negative fire reported in the LZ's.
- 4 Nov The 68th provided general support to the III Corps area.
- 6 Nov Once again the Top Tigers provided support to the 25th ARVN Div. There were no significant results.
- 12 Nov The Top Tigers supported the 1st Inf Div near Saigon. There were no significant results.
- 14 Nov The 68th provided support to the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Duc Hoa. There were four insertions and four extractions.
- 16 Nov Once again the Top Tigers provided support to the 25th ARVN Div near Ben Luc. The "Mustangs" were credited with destroying five structures and killing one VC.
- 18 Nov The 68th flew in support of the 1st Inf Div in the vicinity of Quan Loi. There were no significant results.
- 19 Nov While providing general support to the III Corps area, two UH-1D were slightly damaged from ground fire.
- 20 Nov The Top Tigers provided support to the 25th Inf Div near Ben Luc. The "Mustangs" were credited with killing four VC and destroying three structures.
- 22 Nov The 68th provided general support to the III Corps area.
- 27 Nov Once again the Top Tigers flew in support of the 25th ARVN Div in the vicinity of Duc Hoa. There were no significant results.
- 30 Nov The 68th provided support to the ARVN Airborne in the vicinity of Tay Ninh. There were sixteen lifts with no significant results.

During the month of November 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew 2,697 hours, transported 15,747 passengers, and carried 18 tons of cargo.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved an overall availability rate of 83%, UH-1C models had an availability rate of 79%.

THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE 68TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY 1968

- 1 Dec The 68th provided general support to the III Corps area.
- 3 Dec The Top Tigers supported the 18th ARVN Div near Xuan Loc. There were no significant results.
- 4 Dec The 68th provided support to elements of the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were five lifts into five different LZ's.
- 5 Dec The Top Tigers provided general support to the III Corps area. The "Mustangs" were called out while on ESB. They were credited with killing 17 VC, sinking two sampans, and destroying 11 structures.
- 6 Dec While in support of the 25th ARVN Div near Tra Cu, the Mustangs were credited with killing 45 VC, destroying three structures, and sinking four sampans. Top Tiger "Smokey" was credited with killing 11 VC with his .50 Caliber machine gun. One crewmember aboard "Smokey" was WIA when the aircraft came under intense enemy automatic weapons fire.
- 10 Dec The Top Tigers flew in support of CMAC. The "Mustangs" were credited with killing ten VC.
- 11 Dec Once again the 68th provided support to the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were three gunships shot down but there were no injuries or major damage.
- 12 Dec The 68th provided general support to the III Corps area.
- 14 Dec The 68th provided support to the 25th ARVN Div near Can Giouc. There were no significant results.
- 17 Dec While in support of the ARVN Airborne in the vicinity of Tay Ninh, the Top Tigers made numerous insertions and extractions.
- 19 Dec The Top Tigers supported the ARVN Airborne once again in the vicinity of Tay Ninh. The "Mustangs" were credited with killing two VC and destroying two structures. The ground troops captured forty confirmed VC.
- 20 Dec While in support of the 25th ARVN Div, the "Mustangs" were credited with killing four VC and destroying three structures.
- 22 Dec The 68th provided general support to the III Corps area.
- 25 Dec On Christmas Day, the Top Tigers were placed on a two hour R&R, while one ship was sent out to transport "Santa Claus".

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27 Dec The 68th provided general support to the III Corps area.

28 Dec While in support of the 5TH ARVN Div, the Top Tigers made several medevacs of ARVN troops that encountered numerous booby traps in the LZ.

31 Dec Ending the calender year of 1968, the Top Tigers supported the 25th ARVN Div near Duc Hoa. There were no significant results.

During the month of December, the 68th flew 2,701 hours, transported 14,969 passengers, and carried 15 tons of cargo.

Maintenance: The 391st achieved an overall rate of 77% availability, UH-1C models had an availability rate of 71%.

TET OFFENSIVE (Rocket and Ground Attack on Bien Hoa Air Base)

On 31 January 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company was scheduled to fly the night command and control aircraft for the Bien Hoa Area. At about 0330 hours 1 February 1968, Bien Hoa Air Base came under an intensive enemy rocket and ground attack. LTC John V. Ohnstad, Commanding Officer of the 68th Assault Helicopter Company, discovered a breach of the east perimeter while flying the command and control aircraft. He immediately called in air support and coordinated a counter-offensive operation. At this time, Warrant Officer Michael E. Wenrich, was performing his duties as physical security officer for the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion. As Warrant Officer Wenrich and Captain Massey, the Air Force Security Officer, were checking an outpost bunker one hundred meters south of the east end of the Bien Hoa runway, a heavy volume of enemy fire was received. Shortly afterwards, the bunker was attacked by elements of an enemy assault company and the bunker received four direct hits from enemy RPG-2 rockets. Captain Massey was instantly killed by the third rocket and Warrant Officer Wenrich was critically injured. Gunships from the 334th and 68th Assault Helicopter Companies arrived at the outpost in time to prevent it from being overrun.

As soon as the initial rocket attack ceased, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company started flying emergency medi-vac missions from the 145th Combat Aviation Dispensary to the 93rd Medical Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh. These missions continued throughout the morning in support of numerous Army and Air Force casualties. Approximately fifteen seriously wounded casualties were airlifted by the 68th Assault Helicopter Company.

The 68th Assault Helicopter Companies twenty-six man ready reaction teams immediately took up their positions on the perimeter and remained there for approximately seven days in anticipation of a second wave attack.

At 1130 hours 1 February 1968, a counter assault was launched at the east end of the Bien Hoa runway which was successful in driving the Viet Cong to the east and destroying three enemy mortar positions. The Air Force advisor to the ground unit commander was flown by a 68th Assault Helicopter Company Pilot, who also coordinated the air support of the armed helicopters on station. The command and control aircraft was later directed to furnish suppressive fire on the Bien Hoa Water Tower where a sniper had been located shooting into the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion Heliport.

Approximately 1200 hours 1 Feb 68, two 68th Assault Helicopter Company light fire teams were diverted from a reconnaissance mission over the Plantation Area in Long Binh to the Dong Lach Village, located near by. The Viet Cong had previously infiltrated the village and established numerous automatic weapons positions in well constructed bunkers. Elements of the 101st Airborne Division were pinned down in rice paddies to the south of the village while attempting to drive the Viet Cong from the area. With the 68th Assault Helicopter Company minigun and rocket support, the 101st elements made a successful sweep through the village and contributed 40 enemy KIA's to the 68th Assault Helicopter Company Fire Team.

A request for armed helicopter support was received at the 68th operations at 1630 hours and two light fire teams were dispatched to the Cholon area of Saigon. Heavy fifty caliber machine gun fire was being received by the friendly units attempting to secure the area. The 68th Assault Helicopter Company light fire teams alternated fire teams over the area in expending their rockets and miniguns on known enemy strongholds. While one fire team was expending on station the other was enroute to re-fuel and re-arm. At 2100 hours, while enroute to the Tigers Den, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company light fire teams were requested to assist an outpost on the east end of the Tan Son Nhut Runway. The outpost was receiving heavy automatic weapons fire and reported numerous rockets being coming from the immediate area. An intelligence report stated that the fire was coming from an enemy assault company that was attempting to withdraw to the north after attacking the runway earlier in the day. After numerous rocket and minigun strikes had been initiated, the heavy fifty caliber fire ceased and the pressure on the outpost diminished. A report on Army KIA's was not available.

At 0430 hours on 2 February 1968, one 68th Assault Helicopter Company light fire team was once again diverted from the Bien Hoa perimeter to support the 5th ARVN Sub-sector Headquarters at Phu Cong. The Sub-sector Headquarters was in heavy contact and had declared a tactical emergency to insure the strategic position would not be over-run. Although heavy ground fog and a low cloud ceiling limited the visibility of the fire team, Air Force FAC successfully directed the armed helicopter's minigun and rocket strikes. The 68th Assault Helicopter Company's light fire teams fire power succeeded in splitting the enemy force, allowing the 5th ARVN elements to reposition their elements and successfully hold the headquarters. Enemy losses attributed to the light fire teams were unknown.

From the time the initial Rocket Attack was initiated against Bien Hoa Air Base, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company light Fire Teams flew continually for forty eight hours, only to land for refueling and re-arming.

The total number of re-supply missions accomplished by the 68th Assault Helicopter Company during the TET Offensive was 1,010. Forty seven of the resupply missions required gunship protection. The total number of medevac missions that were accomplished by the Top Tigers was 87. Twenty seven medevac missions required gunship protection. Also there were 50 Administrative missions flown by the Top Tigers during that time.

CONCLUSION

During the year of 1968, the 68th Assault Helicopter Company flew a total of 32,074 hours, carried over 251 tons of cargo, and carried over 180,685 passengers, most of which occurred during combat assaults. In the process of doing so, the men of the "Top Tigers" earned an impressive total of 7 Silver Stars, 35 Distinguished flying Crosses, 14 Bronze Stars, 54 Air Medals for Valor, 48 Commendation medals, and 37 Purple Hearts. Also during one awards ceremony 24 Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry were handed out to the officers and men of the Top Tigers. The 68th "Top Tigers" have responded meritoriously in helping to stop the communists aggression in the Republic of Vietnam.