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Intelligence Estimate 8-67

Reference: a. Maps: AMS Series 7014, 1:50,000 Sheet No. 6440 I, II, III
and IV

b. OPLAN 34-67

1. (U) MISSION: CURRENT OPORD

2. (C) CHARACTERISTICS OF AREA OF OPERATION

a. Weather

(1) General: Although the Northeast monsoon usually occurs between early October through Mid-March, the rainy season at Chu Lai and the surrounding area is from September through December.

(2) Cloudiness: Scattered to broken low clouds, bases 2,000 to 4,000 feet can be expected. Crachin weather*, stratus ceilings 500 to 1,000 feet accompanied by low visibilities in fog and drizzle occur on 4 to 6 nights and early mornings per month over coastal plains. Ceilings are lower over land where terrain rises to meet cloud bases. Crachin cloudiness usually breaks up during the late morning, but it can persist through the day. The best time for flying will generally occur in the late morning hours and early evening morning before 0300 hours.

*Crachin weather is a special phenomena affecting the east coast north of 12 degrees north. It is a prolong period of widespread fog and drizzle or light rain associated with a persistent low cloud layer. In most cases, visibility is quickly and greatly reduced at the onset of crachin generally below 2 miles and frequently below 1/2 miles. Crachin is most frequent in December.

(3) Visibility: On 5-10 mornings a month fog will form. On 1 to 3 foggy mornings visibilities of less than 1 mile can be expected. When fog is associated with low stratus clouds and drizzle, fog tends to form during early morning hours and usually disipates by late morning, but will occasionally persist throughout the day.

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- (4) Precipitation: Monthly mean rainfall varies from 10 to 25 inches on 14 to 20 rainy days per month. Record monthly rainfalls range from highs of 30 to 60 inches to lows of 2 to 4 inches. Record monthly 24 hour rainfalls are 15 to 20 inches. Daily rainfall in excess of 2 inches can be expected on 2 to 5 days per month. During the wet season in this area, exposed eastern slopes can expect greater rainfall amounts than the coastal plain.

Mean number of days with precipitation	18
Mean monthly precipitation (inches)	24.2
Max/min monthly precipitation (inches)	45/8

- (5) Temperature and Humidity: Temperature and humidity statistics for the area are indicated below:

Mean max/min temperature degrees (fahrenheit)	87/78
Extreme max/min temperature degree (fahrenheit)	102/66
Average relative humidity (percent)	89

- (6) Light Data: See Annex A.

- (7) Effects on Enemy Capabilities: Since the rainy season will begin in a few days in the AO, the enemy will exploit these periods of low visibility to reinforce, resupply and initiate attacks as friendly aerial support will be more restricted.

- (8) Effects of Friendly Courses of Action: Air operations will be more restricted and fording areas will be flooded increasing river crossing time. More reliance will be placed on main trails as used trails will be too slippery.

b. Terrain

- (1) General: The area can be divided into two types: open coastal plains and isolated hills and rugged mountains. The open coastal plain narrows as it goes west and the mountains and hills become the prevalent terrain.
- (2) The coastal plain is flat covered by cultivated riceland, foot movement during the rainy season is poor. The majority of the coastal plain is in the eastern portion of the AO. Here is where the primary rice growing and population centers are. Relief is generally flat except in the south where it is 200m with slopes generally 15 percent but as great as 30 percent.

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- (3) The western portion of the AO is dominated by extremely rugged hills and mountains, having slopes in excess of 30 percent. This topography is primarily covered by multi-canopied dense undergrowth forests which at best is extremely poor in wet weather for foot movement. Mountain crests are predominately 200m with the highest single peak at 486m (BT 1320).
- (4) Drainage: The rivers in the south rise in the south and flow generally north, those in the north rise on the eastern mountain slopes and flow east. Although the high water period has not been reached the rivers and streams will be flooded and higher in velocity. The main rivers in the AO are the SONG KHANG, SONG GIANG, SONG THU BON, SONG LYLY, and SUOI CHU DUN.
- (5) Observation and Fields of Fire: The majority of the AO affords good observation and fields of fire except in the mountains where surface irregularities and dense foliage preclude good fields of fire and observation.
- (6) Cover and Concealment: In the open valley areas cover and concealment is that which is derived from man made objects. Gullies, steep embankments and dense undergrowth give good cover and concealment.
- (7) Obstacles: The primary obstacle to foot movement will be mines, booby traps and similar items used in delaying tactics. In the mountains, dense vegetation and steep slopes which the rain will make slipperier, will hamper foot movement. The increase of rain will flood the lowlands impeding normal trafficability.
- (8) Key Terrain: Inhabited areas are considered key terrain by the enemy. Hills give control over avenues of approach as well as observation and fields of fire. The enemy will utilize ridges from which he can mutually support defensive positions, caches, and base camps. A point which good observation exists over main avenues of approach is BT 035217.
- (9) Avenues of Approach: Open areas cleared of jungle vegetation are interspersed throughout the plains and generally present unrestricted movement. Only in the mountain areas excluding existing trails will movement be hampered.
- (10) Roads: The main road from the coast to the interior is route 534 which runs NE to SW through the entire AO. Route 535 parallels it to BT 024346, where it turns south and joins Route 534. An unnumbered road in the southern

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portion of the AO, which turns into a trail at BT 110218 joins Route #1. Route 534 is a fair weather dirt road in poor condition, 4.0m wide. Route 535 is a fair weather dirt road, 2.0m to 4.7 m wide.

(11) Airfields:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COORD</u>	<u>AZ</u>	<u>L/W</u>	<u>ELEV</u>	<u>SUR.</u>	<u>CLASS/TYPE</u>
TAM KY	BT 308187	110/290	3930/98	20'	Asphalt	Type 2 C-123, C-7A
TAM KY	BT 302245	40/220	660/65	10'	Sod	Stol
Alternate						

(12) LZ, DZ Study: See Annex B (Limited Distribution)

(13) Effects on Enemy Capability: The enemy has utilized trenches in the open areas therefore he will employ all natural terrain but make the mountainous areas his primary defensive base. The enemy has unrestricted movement because of the open area.

(15) Effects on Friendly Courses of Action: Because we are closer to the sea and the mountains are lower, a higher lift capability will be seen as compared to previous areas. The extensive open areas will enhance aerial observation.

c. Economics, Sociology and Politics

(1) Economics: The main occupation is farming for 85 percent of the population. Other occupations include fishing, small business and trade. There are a few family operated lumber mills in the forested areas.

(2) Sociology:

(a) Population in this area can not be accurately reported. Population density varies from 30 to 250 people per square mile. Approximately 45,000 people of which 75 percent are in contested or VC control areas, live in the AO.

(b) Ethno-Linguistic Groups: The majority of the people living in this area are Vietnamese but Montagnards of the JARAI and CUE tribes may be found in this area.

(c) Religion: The Vietnamese practice Mahayana Buddhism and Catholicism. Montagnards are predominately Animists although some may be Catholic.

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- (d) Health: The only large medical facility is a 72 bed hospital at TAM KY. Many large hamlets have a medical aid station but the facilities are limited.
- (e) Education: Most schools in contested areas are poorly staffed if in existence. Those in VC areas are VC run.

(3) Politics: Overall direction of the VC insurgency is vested in the Central Officer of South Vietnam (COSVN), subordinate to COSVN is the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLFSVN). Within Communist dominated areas, the VC infrastructure controls the populace. In contested areas, the VC have not supplanted the GVN sponsored local government. The VC organization reverts to covert activity in GVN controlled areas.

3. (C) ENEMY SITUATION

a. See Appendix 2 (Order of Battle) to Annex B (Intelligence) to OPORD 34-67

b. Reinforcement Capability

- (1) Forces Locally Available: The enemy is capable of attacking, defending or reinforcing with one NVA Division Headquarters; 2 NVA Regiments; 5 Combat Support Bns; 1 Main Force VC Regiment; 1 Local Force Bn and 7 Local Force Companies.
- (2) Movement: The enemy is capable of normal movement at a rate of 15 to 20 miles in a 24 hour period using laborers.

c. Activities

General

- (1) The 2d NVA Division Headquarters with a strength of approximately 200 is located in Western QUANG TIN Province.
- (2) The 1st VC Regiment, 2d NVA Division has recently moved north to QUANG TIN from the DUC PHO area of QUANG NGAI Province, where moderate losses were suffered by the regiment.
- (3) The 3rd NVA Regiment, 2d NVA Division continues to operate in the QUANG NAM/QUANG TIN border area.
- (4) The 21st NVA Regiment, 2d NVA Division continues to operate from Base Area 117 West to Hiep Duc and north to Thang Binh.

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- (5) There are 5 Combat Support Battalions in the QUANG TIN area with the mission of supporting the 2d NVA Division.
 - (6) The 72d Local Force Battalion and seven Local Force Companies operate in the QUANG TIN area. Due to the disposition of a full NVA Division in the area, the local force units probably have the primary mission of supporting the NVA/MF units. Total local force strength is approximately 1,100.
- d. NVA/VC Naval and Air Defense Capabilities:
- (1) Naval: NVA/VC forces in the area have a very limited capability to employ fire from junk. However, due to the limited size of the river valleys in this area, this course of action is considered improbable.
 - (2) NVA/VC Anti-Aircraft weapons in the area consist of machineguns ranging from 7.62mm to 12.7mm in caliber. See Appendix 1 to Annex C.
- e. Logistics:
- (1) General: The NVA/VC forces have a limited supply system. What they are unable to obtain thru their own supply system in the way of foodstuffs, clothing, medical and other items, they will either force the local populace to supply or will purchase on the open market.
 - (2) Weapons: Arms and ammunition are brought down by infiltrating units, others are brought thru the infiltration routes by transportation battalions, and some are obtained from raids on friendly units, or picked up on the battlefield.
 - (3) Transportation: NVA/VC forces in the area rely heavily upon porters for the movement of supplies.
- f. Missile Capabilities: NVA/VC forces have little or no capability to launch any sophisticated type missiles. However, the enemy does possess the capability to launch free flight rockets of the 122m and 140mm variety.
- g. Signal Capabilities: The NVA/VC have the capability to build their own equipment from materials purchased from local sources. However, it is believed that there are two of the 15 watt transmitter-receivers organic to an NVA Regimental signal company, and four of the 2.9 watt transmitter-receivers organic to an NVA Battalion.

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The NVA/VC have been known to obtain signal equipment from NVN, but the prime source of supply for the enemy has been captured communications equipment.

h. CER Capabilities: There are no indications of an enemy capability to employ biological or nuclear weapons. CS has been employed by the enemy previously, however his supply is limited, and the adoption of such a course of action is improbable.

i. Significant Strengths and Weaknesses:

(1) Strengths

- (a) The NVA/VC knowledge of the TAOR and the surrounding area.
- (b) The NVA/VC have an extremely efficient and well established intelligence system.
- (c) The terrain generally favors the defender.
- (d) The capability to employ conventional tactics.
- (e) Being of the same ethnic background the enemy is capable of concealing himself among the local populace.

(2) Weaknesses:

- (a) Limited supply and transport capability forces the enemy to use mortars and recoilless rifles in lieu of conventional cannon artillery.
- (b) The NVA/VC forces have become more dependent upon local resources for support as the total NVA/VC strength increases.
- (c) The enemy suffers a rigid tactical doctrine and a dependency upon detailed planning and rehearsals.
- (d) The enemy is vulnerable to bold, aggressive, and unexpected maneuvers by ground forces supported by high concentrations of artillery and tactical air.

(3) Peculiarities

- (a) The enemy has recently employed heavy weapons in support when conducting a coordinated attack.

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- (b) Indications are that enemy units operating in the area utilize a greater number of radios than average units.
- (c) NVA/VC units store limited amount of food in base camps and supply caches. Successful interdiction by friendly units would delay enemy movement and cause food shortage.

4. (C) ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

- a. Attack: The enemy has launched daylight attacks against FWF in the past week in this area. Since he is present in such large numbers, plus his stated plan (Ref; Appendix 2), the enemy can be expected to initiate contact against battalion size units and possibly larger size units.
- b. Defend: The enemy has remained in his prepared fortifications in the face of artillery and air strikes and had to be rooted out, in some cases by hand to hand combat. He can be expected to continue this tactic.
- c. Reinforce: Within the AO is a division size unit with its supporting elements plus a local force battalion. Because of the open terrain he can easily reinforce any unit in contact with organic units.
- d. Withdraw: The enemy has shown no great desire to withdraw but if annihilation is the only alternate, he may chose to withdraw.

5. (C) CONCLUSIONS

- a. The enemy can attack with up to a division size force.
- b. Defend tenaciously his fortified areas.
- c. Withdraw when faced with complete annihilation.

6. (C) VULNERABILITIES

- a. The enemy will be vulnerable to air strikes, artillery and observation when massed or in open areas.
- b. The enemy has suffered losses up to 500 men in the past week as a results of contact with FWF.
- c. The enemy scheme of maneuver has been discovered.

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