

UNIT HISTORY

64TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (MEDIUM TRUCK CARGO)

124TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TRUCK)

USA SUPPORT COMMAND, QUI NHON

JANUARY-DECEMBER 1968

PREPARED BY

WILLIAM J. WILKINS, LIT

64TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (MEDIUM TRUCK CARGO)

7 April 1969

APPROVED BY

*William J. Wilkins*

WILLIAM J. WILKINS  
LIT, TC  
Commanding

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
61st TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (AMTRUCK) (AVN)  
APO San Francisco 96318

UNIT HISTORY 1968

With the coming of 1968, it found the 61st Transportation Company (India Truck Cargo) heavily committed to the mission of supporting the embattled elements of the 1st Infantry Division in Kontum, RVN and Dak To, RVN. The major emphasis was on the movement of cargo north on highway (JL 1) to Kontum and Dak To, RVN. Although there were daily convoys on highway (JL 1) to An Khe and return to Pleiku, RVN. It was on such a convoy to An Khe, RVN that the 61st Transportation Company had its first ambush of the year. On 31 January 1968, while returning from An Khe, RVN to Pleiku, RVN, the 12th Transportation Battalion convoy in which 1LT David R. Wilson a member of the 61st Transportation Company was convoy commander, and which was made up mostly of 5 ton tractors and trailers from this company. The resulting action saw 1LT Wilson killed when his jeep took a direct hit from a mortar round. The Company also had four (4) other personnel wounded in the ambush. 1LT Wilson was presented the Silver Star posthumously, with "V" Device for his gallant actions, when he speedily went back into the kill zone to move his personnel out of the kill zone. SPl Jimmie T. Eldred was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" Device for his actions in the ambush.

The primary mission of the 61st Transportation Company is to provide transportation for movement of general cargo by motor transport. This mission is further broken down as follows: to provide transportation for movement of personnel, general cargo, bulk petroleum products and missiles by motor transport in line and local haul operation within the II Corp Tactical zone as directed. Also included is local transportation support to Hqts, Pleiku Sub Area Command, in excess of that units organic capability, as directed. Providing security for convoys in line haul operation, supporting combat operations as directed, and provide security for portions of the 12th Transportation Battalion perimeter.

Due to the lack of personnel and equipment this unit had reduced capability during 1968. However, the unit averaged 30 to 31 task vehicles committed daily in local and line hauls. There were also (4) gun trucks and 2 to 3 gun jeeps with crews committed daily. During the year the unit's average shortage of personnel was thirty enlisted men and two officers. It had an average vehicle shortage of twenty vehicles. Even though there were a shortage of men and equipment we amassed over a million miles and hauled 150,000 tons of cargo.

A 6.4% dead line rate was maintained throughout 1968. A high of 30.1% during the monsoon season to a low of 1% which was obtained after the unit move in August.

In August we received a new fleet of diesel trucks bringing the 6th fleet to TO&M strength. However before the year was out we had lost four (4) to mines, two (2) to other enemy action, and seventeen (17) due to accidents.

From January to August 1968, the company was located on the east slope of Artillery Hill. The quarters consisted of six (6) man tent types, with more stable wooden building for the mess hall, orderly room, operations office, and maintenance building. Due to the smallness and lack of maintenance bays much of the work was done outside in the maintenance parking lot. This proved to be quite a problem when the monsoon season came. It was during monsoon season that our D/L rate was so high. For the personnel comfort and enjoyment there was a laundry, barber shop, MM Club and NCO/Officers Club.

In August this unit moved to a new area in the 299th Engineer Compound. The entire Battalion would eventually move to the new compound as the 299th Engineers were being relocated. The new area was a big improvement as it had all permanent buildings. The maintenance shop had larger and a greater number of bays and our D/L rate continued to go down. The first week was a strain on all personnel, as there was little electricity, no running water, and some quarters were not complete. However, the men on a self-help basis worked many long, hard hours and completed the facilities. During the move the unit was still able to complete its primary mission.

All mandatory training classes and other training were usually held at night as this was the only time that the unit was at 100% strength. All personnel who entered the company were trained on the operation maintenance and firing of the M-16 rifle. For many it was the first time but the training and the results obtained were excellent. With the aid of the 1st Infantry Division, personnel from the unit who were to be on security vehicles were trained on the operation of the M-60 machine gun, M-79 grenade launcher, and then later in the year the 50 Caliber machine gun.

Major personnel changes which took place during the 1st quarter of the year mainly involved officers and Senior NCOs. Losses included 1LT William L. Richenberg and 1SG Edward H. Dockery. Incoming personnel included 1LT Jimmie W. Reed and 1SG Ralph M. Williams.

On 16 March 1968, a convoy commanded by 1LT Jimmie W. Reed was ambushed twelve (12) miles south of Kontum, RVN on highway QL 14. SPl Robert W. Hardesty was serving as machine gun operator on the convoy's maintenance vehicle when the convoy became subject to intense enemy fire. SPl Hardesty was hit by an enemy round and despite every effort to save his life, he was pronounced dead on arrival at the 71st Evacuation Hospital. No other casualties or damage to equipment was reported during this incident.

Due to the ambush of 16 March 1968, in which one of this unit's personnel was a casualty, it was decided that the Maintenance gun truck should have more protection against small arms fire. A suggestion was made by members of the Maintenance and crew of the gun truck in which the armor plating would be angled so as to make a bullet glance off. On 21 April 1968, our Maintenance gun truck with the new design in armor plating was sent to 8th Transportation Group Headquarters for evaluation. Also included on the new gun truck was mounted a 50 Caliber machine gun, the first of its kind in the entire group. With the addition of the 50 caliber machine gun, we had increased our fire power and range. This truck has been operating since the last of March 1968 with outstanding results.

On 25 April 1968, a major personnel change took place as LIT Jimmie W. Reed was transferred to HHD, 12th Transportation Battalion (Truck) as the new S-2 Officer, after serving with this unit for two (2) months. Incoming personnel included LIT David L. Weaver who was assigned as Platoon Leader of the Third Platoon. During the second quarter of the year, the unit's task and administrative vehicles covered over 244,386 miles, hauling over 38,786 tons of cargo over the main supply routes from Pleiku, An Khe, Kontum, and Dak To, Republic of Vietnam.

Major personnel changes during this period involved mainly officers and Senior NCOs. Losses included CPT Juan R. Lopez, Commanding Officer, LIT Dale H. Sindt, Cpl J.B. Virgil, LSG Ralph E. Williams, SFC Roginald Ouellette and SSG Merle P. Ross Jr. Incoming personnel included LIT Paul J. Hildebrandt Jr., 2LT Robert L. Hogan, LSG James O. White, SSG Henry L. Carrier and SSG Russell J. Miller Jr.

The month of May 1968 was marked by much enemy action on the road to Kontum, Republic of Vietnam. On Sunday, 5 May 1968, a convoy commanded by LIT Dale H. Sindt was ambushed ten (10) miles south of Kontum, RVN on highway QL 14. SP4 Donald L. Campbell was serving as machine gun operator on one of the convoy's security vehicles when the convoy became subject to intense enemy fire. SP4 Campbell was hit by an enemy round and was killed in action while retraining fire from his security vehicle.

On Sunday, 26 May 1968, a convoy commanded by LIT Dale H. Sindt was ambushed eight (8) miles north of Pleiku, RVN on highway QL 14. SP5 David H. Miller was killed in action while trying to drive his vehicle through the kill zone. There was also one (1) man wounded by shrapnel when his 5 ton tractor was hit by a mortar round. Two (2) vehicles were also completely demolished.

On 27 June 1968, a Change of Command ceremony was held in the Company area. CPT Juan R. Lopez turned over his Command to LIT Paul J. Hildebrandt Jr., after serving as Company Commander of the 6th Transportation Company for eleven (11) months.

In September 1968, a major personnel change took place as CPT Paul J. Hildebrandt jr., was transferred to HHD, 124th Transportation Battalion as the new S-4 Officer. LIT Raymond J. Gorski Jr. was assigned as the new Company Commander from the Pleiku Truck Terminal. He was replaced at the Pleiku Truck Terminal by LIT Thomas M. Rudell as OIC. LIT William J. Wilkins replaced LIT Rudell as the new First Platoon Leader. Also during this reporting period, LIT George R. Rainhart was assigned as the new Second Platoon Leader.

In November 1968, there were two (2) incidents of trucks hitting mines with the results that both trucks were completely demolished, but neither drivers were injured. This was due to the fact that all trucks had been sandbagged.

On Sunday, 3 December 1968, this unit was visited by Brigadier General D.H. Richards, Commanding General, USASUPCOM, Qui Nhon. He was here at the 124th Transportation Battalion (Truck) for the memorialization services, dedicating Camp David R. Wilson Compound in memory of LIT David R. Wilson, a member of the 64th Transportation Company (Medium Truck Cargo). He was killed while serving as Convoy Commander in a convoy coming from An Khe to Pleiku, Republic of Vietnam on 31 January 1968.

During the month of December 1968, the construction was begun on the new shower and Day Room. All work would be done on a self-help basis. During the same period, LIT George R. Rainhart was transferred to HHD, 124th Transportation Battalion (Truck) to assume duties as Adjutant. He was replaced by LIT Ian R. Steel as the Second Platoon Leader.

There were many problems encountered while trying to complete our primary mission. The roads we had to travel were some of the worst in the world. There were pot holes, mine holes, places where the entire road or bridge had been washed out. During monsoon the roads were slippery and turned into a sea of mud. Limited convoy hours, and enemy activity were other problems over which we had no control. Many drivers after being on the road for an extended period of time would come down with injuries resulting from the bouncing around on the roads.

During 1968, there were no less than five (5) property book officers and two (2) supply sergeants. It was decided in the month of December that the present supply room was inadequate and did not provide enough space. It was decided that the supply room would be moved under the day room which was on the top floor of a troop billets. The new location would give ample room and all supplies would be under one roof. Work was begun on the new supply room immediately.

In July 1968, this unit celebrated the 26th Birthday of the Transportation Corps and many members were present for the celebration and also the official opening of the new Pleiku Truck Terminal. Static displays included one (1) gun truck, one (1) tractor and trailer and one (1) tractor and tanker.

In the months of November and December Squad Leaders and Platoon Sergeants were involved in taking first aid classes at 71st Evacuation Hospital, along with the training first aid kits were discussed. At that time the contents were outlined and with the aid of the medical team first aid boxes were created and placed on Gun Trucks for emergencies.

Notable during the 1st quarter of the year were the accomplishments of PFC Lloyd P. Walters, and the Mess Section. The 61th Transportation Company Mess Hall was selected for January, February and March 1968 as the best Mess Hall in the 121th Transportation Battalion and designated as one of the best in the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport).

In September of 1968 the unit was assigned a new Mess Steward, SFC Robert O. Harper. His efficiency and devotion to duty were shown immediately as he re-designed the entire mess hall and won the best Mess Award in the Battalion for the months of September, October, November, and December.

On the 22nd of January the unit had its annual General Inspection and passed with a satisfactory.

On 7 June the unit had a GMI and failed due to the inadequate material section. We were reinspected on 21 June 1968 and passed with a 79%.

On 18 February 1968, the entire Battalion conducted Organization Day ceremonies, celebrating the 1st Anniversary of the 121th Transportation Battalion. The units Mess steward was chosen as NCOIC of food preparation and was applauded by the Battalion Commander.

The 61th Transportation Company finished the year 1968 with an admirable record. Having survived the monsoon season, plus a unit move, a complete turnover of personnel, plus having going through three (3) Company Commanders, nevertheless, the 61th Transportation Company amassed over 1,000,000 miles and hauled over 150,000 tons of cargo over some of the worst roads in the world.

All personnel performed admirably to complete the overall mission of the unit. There were many long hours and hard work put in to complete the mission, but there was satisfaction in knowing that the "Truckers" of the 61th Transportation Company had done their job.

  
WILLIAM J. WILKINS  
1LT, TC  
Unit Historian



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
**Lineage and Honors**

64th TRANSPORTATION COMPANY

Constituted 1 May 1936 in the Regular Army as Company A, 29th Quartermaster Regiment

Activated 1 June 1941 at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri

Reorganized and redesignated 20 August 1943 as Company A, 29th Quartermaster Truck Regiment

Reorganized and redesignated 2 December 1943 as 3441st Quartermaster Truck Company

Converted and redesignated 1 August 1946 as 3441st Transportation Corps Truck Company

Redesignated 30 June 1947 as 64th Transportation Truck Company

Reorganized and redesignated 1 April 1954 as 64th Transportation Company (Light Truck)

Inactivated 1 June 1955 on Okinawa

Activated 27 August 1955 as 64th Transportation Company (Light Helicopter) (H-3)

Inactivated 19 February 1962 at Fort Knox, Kentucky

Activated 26 March 1963 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina as 64th Transportation Company (Medium Truck Cargo)

64th TRANSPORTATION COMPANY

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDIT

World War II-AP  
East Indies  
Papua  
New Guinea

DECORATIONS

Distinguished Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered PAPUA

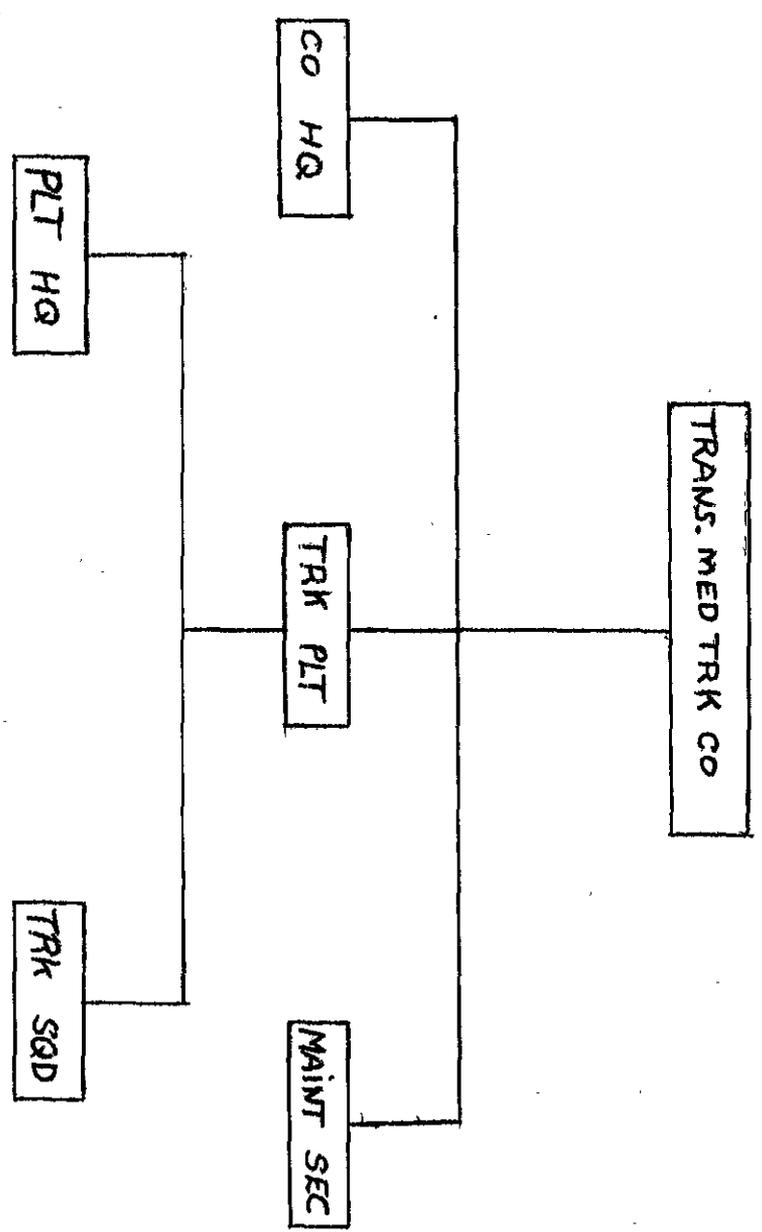
By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

9 DEC 1966

TRANSPORTATION MEDIUM TRUCK COMPANY  
TOE 55-18G  
MTOE 55-18G PAC 2/68



GENERAL AND UNIT ORDERS

Only one copy of the General and Unit Orders exist and must be kept on file within the Unit, Unit does not have capability to reproduce orders in time to meet suspense date.



WILLIAM J. COLLINS  
LTC, TC  
Commanding

ANNEX "C"

Personnel Strength for the Months January - December 1968

JANUARY: 146  
FEBRUARY: 165  
MARCH: 160  
APRIL: 152  
MAY: 150  
JUNE: 159  
JULY: 153  
AUGUST: 135  
SEPTEMBER: 118  
OCTOBER: 139  
NOVEMBER: 146  
DECEMBER: 146

ANNEX " D "