

OPERATION HARRISON

Following the rice harvest, the 1st Brigade remained at Tuy Hoa, re-joined by the 2-327th, which had been at Phan Rang. The brigade was ordered to continue offensive operations to the north and west of Tuy Hoa to find, fix, and destroy the 95th NVA Regiment. These actions bore the title Operation HARRISON and extended from 21 February to 25 March 1966. The brigade's battalions employed checkerboard patrolling operations, emphasizing night operations and ambushes. General Pearson's tactics for the brigade called for ground movement into suspected hostile areas without extensive artillery preparations. Pearson's theory was that advance artillery and noisy helicopter movement forewarned the enemy and hindered closure with them.³² Among the innovations employed by the brigade in this operation were expanded use of the long range reconnaissance patrols, and night airmobile assaults.

When determined resistance met elements of the 1-327th Infantry, one company was committed to hold the enemy down while another maneuvered around the opposing forces. The "Above the Rest" Tiger Force was inserted into a blocking position late in the evening, and by the following morning, 118 enemy dead lay on the battlefield.

Later during Operation HARRISON, the 2-502d Infantry conducted the first known battalion night airmobile operation. The 2-327th attacked a Viet Cong redoubt and seized a small weapons cache. By the time the operation terminated, the 1st Brigade was credited with having destroyed two North Vietnamese battalions and keeping several tons of rice from being used by the Communists.

³²Pearson, "Find 'em, Fix 'em, Finish 'em," pp. 15-21, and George McArthur, "101st Airborne Guerrillas' Whip Viet Cong with Own Weapons," The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, Tennessee), January 29, 1967, m.p.