Nui Dat, Vietnam: Australian and Vietnamese troops this week combined on a search and destroy mission in Phuoc Tuy Province and delivered another telling setback to the Vietcong.

With the monsoon season just starting in the Australian Task Force area of responsibility the Vietcong will face hard times trying to find enough rice and general supplies, plus medical and ordnance equipment to keep them efficient.

The Allied operations in Phuoc Tuy Province during the past few months have had only minor contact with the enemy forces but have uncovered and captured tons of Vietcong supplies, ammunition, weapons and medical stores.

This was again the pattern this week when Alpha Squadron of the 3rd Cavalry Regiment from Puckapunyal, Victoria, combined with 3/48th Vietnamese Army Battalion to search and destroy three reported Vietcong base installations east of the Task Force Base at Nui Dat.

Australian armoured personnel carriers took the Vietnamese troops to their objectives and provided gun support during the search and destroy patrol phase.

No contact was made with enemy forces and there were no Allied casualties during the operation.

Intelligence reports proved correct and the Allied force destroyed four Vietcong base installations, one which showed signs of recent completion and occupation.

Additionally two tons of rice was uncovered during the operation and taken by the Allied force.

Assisting the Vietnamese to mount and conduct their own field operations is one of the prime tasks of the Australian force in Phuoc Tuy Province.

This ranges from ground troop support, armoured carrier assistance, aviation - both reconnaissance and strike aircraft - and artillery cover.

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