OBEPERATION PADDINGTON PROGRESSES

The 1st Australian Task Force is engaged on Operation Paddington - the largest offensive yet mounted in Vietnam's Phuoc Tuy Province. It is part of an Allied force which is attempting to neutralise a Viet Cong Regiment.

The force includes an American Brigade, a Vietnamese Marine task force and elements of a U.S. Armoured Cavalry Regiment.

For the first time, the Task Force Headquarters, commanded by Brigadier Stuart Graham, of Canberra, moved into the field to command 2nd and 7th Battalions, the Royal Australian Regiment, 4th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, "A" Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Field Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers, and supporting U.S. units.

Iroquois helicopters from No. 9 Squadron, RAAF, are also engaged in the operation.

From the first day of the operation, the Squadron lifted 2nd Battalion RAR into its battle position and has been employed on resupply of water, food and ammunition as well as maintaining a round the clock medical evacuation stand-by.

Large scale air strikes, backed by Artillery bombardment, has been a feature of the operation.

The Artillery support, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Reg Gardner, of Canberra, is made up a Battery of Australian Artillery, a Battery of New Zealand Artillery, and a Battery of U.S. Artillery.

An American Artillery Regiment, armed with 155 mm medium guns is also in support.

Ground troops have made only sporadic contact with the Viet Cong. By the third day of the operation, 23 Viet Cong had been killed and seven wounded.

Allied casualties are light and the only Australian casualty has been Sapper Donald Spence Wide, 24, of Tamworth, N.S.W., who died of injuries after being struck by a falling tree.

Three American armoured vehicles have been damaged by Viet Cong rockets and a command detonated mine.

Two Viet Cong rocket launchers and ammunition have been captured.

One rocket launcher was found with the Viet Cong operator dead beside his weapon.

2/...
A Viet Cong base camp and two rice caches, totalling 3500 lbs, have been captured together with a number of claymore mines, set for detonation.

As combat forces continue Operation Paddington, north of the once Viet Cong dominated village of Xuyen Moc, civil affairs workers of the task force team have already moved in to give medical assistance and to distribute food and clothing to the people.

The area around Xuyen Moc was cleared by the task force and Allied troops during Operation Portsea in March this year.

Before that the area had been controlled by the Viet Cong for seven years.

List: A.

Further information:

CANBERRA: Major E. Ross-Smith
(65-4061) (49-6030)

OTHER STATES: ADPR AT COMMAND HEADQUARTERS

13 July 1967
Author/s:
Fraser, Malcolm

Title:
Operation Paddington progresses

Date:
13 July 1967

Persistent Link:
http://hdl.handle.net/11343/40231

File Description:
Operation Paddington progresses

Terms and Conditions:
Copyright courtesy of Malcolm Fraser. Contact the University of Melbourne Archives for permission requests.