

Support of Special Forces Outpost 15 Alpha (Forward Operating Base) 10-11 April 1966

At 2307 hours, 9 April 1966, Special Forces Outpost 15 Alpha (FOB) AB 200825 came under attack by the 261st and 267th Main Force Battalions. Special Forces Detachment B-41 at Moc Hoa, requested air support through 7th Division Headquarters. At 2342 hours an AC47 "Spooky" aircraft was over the outpost dropping flares and took the attacking force under fire. At 0035 hours, 10 April, the first flight of fighters had arrived and put in several strikes around the outpost. By this time, a number of Viet Cong had succeeded in penetrating the walls of the outpost itself. B-41 Detachment called for additional air support and 7th Division recommended an armed platoon be sent to support the outpost. At 0230 hours, the "Cobra" Armed Platoon of the 114th Aviation Company was scrambled. The "Cobras" departed Vinh Long with two heavy fire teams, a total of six aircraft. At 0310, one fire team arrived at 15 Alpha and immediately engaged the attacking VC. The other fire team proceeded to Moc Hoa to refuel and pick up ammunition and radios being flown in by a CV-2 aircraft for outpost resupply. At 0340 hours, the "resupply" fire team departed Moc Hoa for 15 Alpha. While the first fire team suppressed enemy fires, the other attempted to land and drop off the load of supplies. Heavy automatic weapons fire was received less than 100 meters from the outpost. After two attempts, the fire team under blackout conditions, managed to land inside the outpost and delivered the badly needed supplies. The two fire teams then joined forces and disrupted the VC attack. The VC commenced a withdrawal to the northwest, leaving their dead and wounded behind. Because of darkness, the helicopters lost contact with the VC. While one fire team continued to search for the VC, the other fire team began evacuating wounded from the outpost to Moc Hoa. At approximately 0645 hours, one of the armed aircraft spotted three sampans and five VC, 1500 meters northwest of the outpost and took them under fire. In this same area, the fire team discovered numerous, freshly dug foxholes occupied by from two to three men each. The armed platoon immediately took these positions under fire. No fire was returned by the occupants of these foxholes even though the helicopters were hovering directly above them. From 0730 until 1120 hours, the "Cobras" kept five of the six armed aircraft over the area, sending a single aircraft back to Moc Hoa at a time to rearm and refuel. During this period, a column of VC troops 150 meters long, in uniform, were observed walking down a trail in single file toward the VC positions. An armed aircraft took this column under fire and dispersed them after several firing passes. At 1115 hours, two armed platoons and ten UH1D aircraft arrived at Moc Hoa after being released from a 9th Division operation. The two armed platoons relieved the "Cobras" and continued to attack the VC positions.

12 May 1966

Operational Report on Lessons Learned Period Ending 30 April 1966  
(RCS CSG 40-28 (R1))

At 1145 hours, the ten UH1D aircraft, escorted by the armed platoons, lifted two companies of ARVN and CIDG troops into two landing zones just west of the VC positions. One "Cobra" aircraft was shot down on the first lift, its crew and equipment being evacuated immediately. A CH47 later evacuated the downed aircraft. On the second lift, a "Viking" aircraft received 19 hits. Its crew chief was wounded. Such heavy fire was received from the objective area that the ARVN and CIDG companies could not mount an attack. The armed platoons continued to strike the area the remainder of the day. Air strikes called in to the north of the objective caused secondary explosions. At 1800 hours the ARVN and CIDG companies were extracted. All aircraft were released upon completion of the extraction. At 1005 hours, 11 April, intelligence reports received at 7th Division indicated that a number of VC had returned to the area to carry off the dead they were forced to leave behind the previous day. At 1025 hours, one C&G aircraft from Soc Trang, an armed platoon and ten UH1D aircraft from a 9th Division operation, were sent to Moc Hoa for a quick reaction lift. 275 ARVN and CIDG troops were again lifted into the operational area. No contact was made with the VC. However, 23 additional VC bodies were discovered. At 1830 hours, the ARVN and CIDG troops were extracted and all aircraft were released.

Final results of the operation:

a. Enemy:

191 VC KIA (140 of these killed by armed helicopter).  
19 sampans sunk (all by armed helicopters)  
100 (est) VC WIA

b. Friendly:

1 US KIA  
2 US WIA  
22 ARVN and CIDG KIA  
18 ARVN and CIDG WIA  
14 ARVN and CIDG MIA  
1 armed helicopter shot down due to ground fire (later recovered).  
9 other helicopters received hits  
3 troop carriers  
6 armed helicopters