

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
1ST BATTALION 12TH INFANTRY
"RED WARRIORS"
APO San Francisco 96262

AVDDB-121

20 February 1970

SUBJECT: Circumstances Surrounding the Injury of Friendly Troops by D Co
Stum Mortars.

1. Start of mission received at 1555H, 19 Feb 70.
2. Friendly casualties and end of mission at 1610H, 19 Feb 70.
2. I personally checked the data on the guns after the mission and both guns were on the correct data. Guns were relayed after the mission and #1 gun was found to be two (2) mils off and #2 gun was found to be eight (8) mils off. FDC data was checked and found to be correct. Range to target was 1850 meters.
3. Procedure on the guns was correct and a system of checks and rechecks was used. FDC procedure was checked and no major deficiencies were noted on the particular mission. The mission was called down as contact so knowing the exact location of friendlies was not required. However, at no time was proximity of friendlies given by the FO, nor requested by the FDC.
4. Initial HS on the ground was safe and 2 subsequent corrections were given. Both corrections were dropped 100's and both were gun target, (GT). On the second correction a section two was fired, and the first volley was sensed approximately 150m to 200m from friendlies. The second volley was a tree burst from approximately 20 meters up, and approximately 20-50 meters from friendlies.

Conclusions:

1. The second volley fell somewhat shorter than the first due to a settling of baseplates, and possibly not releveling exactly. The rounds caught the tops of trees and detonated.
2. With the heavy vegetation and steep terrain the FO was giving bold corrections, (100m) when smaller corrections would have been in order.

Recommendations:

1. FDC personnel should always request a proximity of friendlies, especially when their present location is not known.
2. Guns should always settle their baseplates prior to firing missions.