Comint Support Instruction

AHQ (DMI) Instruction No. 1/66

On 17 June 1966\(^1\), AHQ (DMI) Instruction No. 1/66 *Comint Support For 1 ATF Vietnam*\(^2\) was issued by the then Director of Military Intelligence, Colonel “Sandy” Pearson\(^3\):

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1. Approval has been given for the employment of the AMP personnel, in conjunction with the US ASA organisation, in Communication Intelligence (Comint) operations in South Vietnam in direct support of 1 ATF.

2. The aim of this instruction is to formally implement the proposals that have been agreed by the Australian and United States national authorities.

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\(^1\) Note that the formal instruction was issued four days after the main body of the Troop had arrived.

\(^2\) ASD archives of 547 Sig Tp material.

\(^3\) Later to become Brigadier Pearson Comd 1ATF in October 1968.
ANNEX A To
The Story of 547 Sig Tp
In SVN 1966 – 1972

Figure 3: Comint Support Instruction - Page 1 - Enlarged view (2)

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Control of AMP DSU

4. Command and Control

The AMP DSU will be under the command and control of the Commander 1 ATP.

5. Operational Control

The AMP DSU will be under the operational control of US ASA organisation for operational tasking instructions and technical support.

Figure 4: Comint Support Instruction - Page 2 - Enlarged view (1)
6. National Control

As all matters affecting Signal intelligence are controlled at the national level in Australia and USA, any changes in role of the LMF DSU must be referred to AHQ (EMI) for discussion between the National Authorities.

7. Operational Deployment

The actual deployment of LMF personnel in theatre will be subject to consultation with the responsible US ASA authority. The agreed deployment must at all times be in such a manner to ensure maximum Comint support for 1 ATF.

Communications

8. Exclusive Comint communications between the LMF DSU and the appropriate US ASA organisation will be provided by the US ASA unit supporting 2 VMF. These communications channels will be used for the passage of all Comint material i.e., policy, steerage instructions, raw materials and end product material between the LMF DSU, US Authorities and AHQ (EMI) Canberra.

9. Administrative traffic will be passed on normal LMF channels provided from within 1 ATF resources.

Provision of Personnel

10. The following LMF personnel will be provided for this operation:

   a. From Australia

      Officer Commanding Captain  1

      Warrant Officer Class 2:

      Operator Signals  1

      Processor  1
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Staff Sergeants:
    Processor
    Sergeants:
    Operator Cipher
    Operator Signals
    Linguists

Corporals:
    Operator Signals

Signalmen:
    Operator Signals
    Total 15

b. From HQ IFW Language Pool

Sergeants:
    Linguists 1

Figure 6: Comint Support Instruction - Page 3 - Enlarged view (1)
Provision of Technical Stores and Equipment

11. The AMP will be responsible for the provision of the technical stores, vehicles and equipment required for the AMP DSU from Australia.

12. Where specialist stores are not available from Australia, arrangements will be made on the national level for the US ASA organisation to provide these stores in theatre.

Timing

13. The AMP DSU will arrive in Vietnam by 14 Jun 66. A period of three weeks training will be required after arrival to ensure the personnel are familiar with US ASA methods of operation. The target date for the AMP DSU operations at 1 ATF is 1 Jul 66.

Terms of Reference

14. The terms of reference for the Officer Commanding the AMP DSU are attached as Annex A to this instruction.
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**Personal Security**

15. Indoctrinated personnel only will be employed in or with the AMF DSU.

16. All AMF DSU personnel will be briefed on a cover story to cover the operations of the DSU. This cover story will be based on Radio Research which is the similar cover story applied to US ASA operations in Vietnam.

17. The AMF DSU will follow security instructions issued for US ASA organisations when using or handling items of equipment of US origin.

**Physical Security**

18. The following minimum security precautions will be taken:

a. A wire security fence will be erected around the operational area of the DSU.

b. Only indoctrinated personnel will be allowed within the DSU compound.

c. Security containers will be provided for all sensitive material. Such material when not in use will be stored in these containers.

d. All waste material will be destroyed by fire.

e. An armed guard will be on duty within the DSU compound 24 hours daily.
19. Detailed security instructions are contained in the terms of reference for the OC AIF ISU attached as Annex A.

Hazardous Operations

20. No person with a detailed comint knowledge will be used on hazardous operations where his capture or interrogation could be a substantial risk to the security of comint.

Administration

21. Responsibility for Administration

a. The AMP DSU is NOT a self contained unit and therefore must be administered by a unit within 1 ATF.
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b. In the interests of security it is suggested that this responsibility be given to 103 Signal Squadron.

17 Jun 66

Signatures

Colonel
Director of Military Intelligence

Distribution

Copy No.
1 Commander Aust Task Force
2 OC Detachment 547 Sig Tp
3 CO 7 Signal Regiment
4-6 Director, Defence Signals Division
7 Director of Signals AMF
8 Director of Military Intelligence
9-10 Spare (Held by DMI(WI))