

OTHER FREE WORLD MILITARY FORCES IN VIETNAM

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VIETNAM SERIES

Author's Note. The "Vietnam Series" orders of battle began life several years ago as a method of helping designers create more accurate Vietnam war scenarios for TalonSoft's *The Operational Art of War*® computer wargame. (This was later taken over by Matrix Games and revised as *The Operational Art of War III*®.) The particular web site hosting scenarios, order of battle, and TOE information has long since disappeared, although those original documents might still have a life somewhere on the internet. I have returned to all of them from time to time, adding additional information and doing some editing. However, their origin as wargame aids remains most visible in the documents on non-Vietnamese armed forces, which often contain information organized by arrival and departure in the theater.

The cover illustration is a screen shot of Stéphane "Boonierat" Moutin Luyat's scenario, "Vietnam Combat Operations, Volume 2: Defense Campaign—Stemming the Tide," created for *The Operational Art of War III*® and used with his permission.

In this document, “other” indicates non-US troops other than the Australian and New Zealand forces. They are covered in a separate document, since Australia used a unit rotation system, with battalions and other units coming and going throughout the period of the war.

Date	Action	Formation	Units and Notes
Sep 1965 19 Oct 1965	Arrival	ROK Capital ROK Marines	HQ ROK Capital Div ¹ [on 29 th] HQ ROK 2 nd Marine Bde; ² ROK 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd Marine Bns
Oct 1965	Arrival	ROK Capital ROK Capital	Cav Regt [on 14 th], 1 st Inf Regt [on 29 th] 10 th , 60 th , and 61 st FA Bns (105mmH), 628 th FA Bn (155mmH), Engr Bn, Armor Coy, Recon Coy: arrival dates unknown
Apr 1966	Arrival	ROK Capital	26 th Inf Regt [on 16 th]; and possibly one of the 105mm FA Bns
Aug 1966 Sep 1966	Arrival Arrival	ROK Field ROK 9 th ROK 9 th PHILCAG	HQ ROK Vietnam Field Command ³ 28 th Inf Regt [on 7 th], HQ ROK 9 th Inf Div ⁴ and 29 th Inf Regt [on 27 th] 30 th , 51 st , 52 nd FA Bns (105mm), 966 th FA Bn (155mm), Engr Bn, Armor Coy, Recon Coy arrived ca 27 Sep-8 Oct 1966 1 st Phil Civic Action Group arrived from 14 th [Inf Security Bn and 105mm FA Bty, with Constr Engr Bn] ⁵
Oct 1966	Arrival	ROK 9 th	30 th Inf Regt [on 9 th]

¹ ROK Capital (“Tiger”) Division HQ near Qui Nhon (about 6 miles west). Regiments deployed there and Binh Khe; when the third regiment arrived it stayed at Qui Nhon. Sometime between December 1968 and June 1969 the 26th Regiment went south to Tuy Hoa; sometime after June 1970 and before December 1970 the three regiments of Capital Division were deployed at Binh Khe, Qui Nhon, and Sung Cau, where they remained until the end. The Cavalry Regiment was organized as a normal infantry regiment.

² ROK 2nd (“Blue Dragon”) Marine Brigade went initially to Cam Ranh Bay area, but was soon moved to the Tuy Hoa area. On 29 August 1966 it shifted north to the Chu Lai area, moving to Hoi An ca. January 1968. The brigade itself was only activated 20 September 1965 from volunteers from the rest of the Korean Marine Corps. It also had artillery (a battalion?), engineers (company?), medical and recon units.

³ Established at Nha Trang, making it adjacent to the US I Field Force Vietnam headquarters. The ROK forces in Vietnam constituted a de facto corps, and were sometimes referred to as the Korean Corps. ROK GHQ units in Vietnam would include 127th Engineer Battalion, 51st and 101st Rifle Companies, 11th Aviation Company, 26th MP Company, and various service and support units. The ROK forces in South Vietnam totaled 47,872 personnel (including medical and engineer units sent 1964-65). This included a reinforced mobile surgical hospital in September 1964 and a group nicknamed the Dove Unit which deployed February to June 1965: a construction support group, a Marine engineer company, Navy LSTs and LSMs, and an Army security company. These units totaled about 2,400 personnel. The peak ROK force strength was 50,003 in 1968, falling to 48,537 in 1970.

⁴ ROK 9th (“White Horse”) Division HQ was at Ninh Hoa. Its regiments would deploy 28th to Tuy Hoa, 29th to Ninh Hoa and 30th to Dong Bin Thin (near Cam Ranh Bay), where they remained until withdrawal.

⁵ PHILCAG was located at Tay Ninh. Peak Filipino strength was just over 2,000 1966-67, falling to 1,576 in 1968 and under 200 in 1969.

Date	Action	Formation	Units and Notes
? 1967 Sep 1967	Arrival Arrival	ROK Marines Thai QCobras	5 th ROK Marine Bn arrived sometime 1967 Queen's Cobras R Thai Regt arrived 19 th ⁶
Jul 1968 Aug 1968	Arrival Departure	Thai Exp Div Thai QCobras	1 st R Thai Army Bde arrived late Jul 1968 Queen's Cobras R Thai Regt departed 15 th
Jan 1969	Arrival	Thai Exp Div	2 nd R Thai Army Bde and two FA bns in Vietnam by 9 Jan 1969
Feb 1969	Arrival	Thai Exp Div Thai Exp Div	HQ R Thai Army Exped Div arrived on 25 th ⁷ 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd 105mm FA Bns, 1 st 155mm FA Bn, 1 st Armd Cav Sqn, Engr Bn exact arrival unknown
Jul 1969	Arrival	Thai Exp Div	3 rd R Thai Army Bde arrived 5 Jul -5 Aug 1969; probably one of the 105mm FA Bns as well
Aug 1969 Dec 1969	Departure Departure	Thai Exp Div PHILCAG	1 st R Thai Army Bde departed after arrival of 3 rd 1 st PHILCAG began withdrawn December 1 st ; had prior personnel draw-downs
Aug 1970	Status	Thai	R Thai Expeditionary Div renamed R Thai Army Volunteer Force (RTAVF) with 1 st and 2 nd Bdes
Aug 1971 Dec 1971	Departure Departure	Thai ROK Marines	1 st Bde RTAVF departed by end of month 1 st and 2 nd ROK Marine Bns
Jan 1972	Departure	ROK Marines Thai	3 rd ROK Marine Bn 3 rd Bn 2 nd Bde departed on 15 th and 2 nd Bn 2 nd Bde departed on 25 th
Feb 1972	Departure	ROK Marines Thai	5 th ROK Marine Bn; HQ 2 nd ROK Marine Bde (if not already gone in Jan) 1 st Bn 2 nd Bde departed on 4 th
Mar 1973	Departure	ROK Field ROK Capital ROK 9 th	Vietnam Field Command left 17 Mar 1973 Entire division gone by 10 th ; start of withdrawal 31 Jan 1973 Entire division gone by 16 th ; start of withdrawal 31 Jan 1973

⁶ Stationed at Bear Cat. The regiment included an APC platoon and an artillery battery.

⁷ Stationed at Bear Cat, although the headquarters moved to Saigon by September 1971. This was also known as the Panther Division. Peak Thai strength 1969-70 was 11,586.

South Korean TOEs

Infantry Battalion (Army) ca. 1965

HQ and HQ Company (105 personnel), heavy weapons company (150 personnel, 8 MMG and 6 81mm mortars) and three rifle companies.

Rifle company (188 personnel, in HQ [18], heavy weapons platoon [42], and 3 rifle platoons [42 each]. The heavy weapons platoon had 3 60mm mortars and 2 57mm recoilless rifles; each rifle platoon 1 MMG and 1 3.5" rocket launcher; each rifle squad had a BAR).

Battalion aggregate 809 personnel.

Infantry Battalion (Marines) ca. 1965

HQ and HQ Company (286 personnel, with 6 106mm recoilless rifles and 6 81mm mortars) and three rifle companies.

Rifle company (220 personnel, in HQ [88] and three rifle platoons [44 each]. Heavy weapons include 3 60mm mortars, 3 3.5" rocket launchers, and 8 MMG, all in the HQ; rifle platoons have only individual weapons, including 3 BARs in each rifle squad.)

Battalion aggregate 941 personnel.

However, the battalions in the Blue Dragon Brigade were 875 personnel, organized as HQ and service company, heavy weapons company, and three rifle companies. The latter had three rifle platoons and a weapons platoon. With a squad strength of 13, the rifle platoons would have been about the same size as in the normal organization above. Given a lower overall battalion strength, this suggests that the overall total of heavy weapons (recoilless rifles, mortars, and MMG) may have been lower.

Philippine TOEs

A normal infantry company ca. 1965 had 172 personnel (HQ; heavy weapons platoon with 3 81mm mortars, 2 75mm recoilless rifles, and 2 3.5" rocket launchers; and three rifle platoons (each including two MMG and one 3.5" rocket launcher). However, the companies in the security battalion were 50 personnel smaller.

The Philippine Civic Action Group had a headquarters, headquarters and service company (232 personnel); security battalion (528 men: headquarters and support company of 162 and three companies of 122 each); 105mm battery (60 men); engineer construction battalion (449 men; two companies); and 120 logistical and support personnel. The related medical and dental group had 111 men.

Thai TOEs

Infantry Battalion ca. 1965

HQ and HQ Company (247 personnel; included 3 81mm mortars, 6 MMG, 3 75mm recoilless rifles and 3 3.5" rocket launchers) and three rifle companies.

Rifle company (211 personnel, in HQ, heavy weapons platoon, and three rifle platoons. The heavy weapons platoon had 3 60mm mortars and 3 57mm recoilless rifles; each rifle platoon had one 3.5" rocket launcher).

Battalion aggregate 880 personnel

The Royal Thai Volunteer Force was organized as follows:

- headquarters (238 personnel)
- 2 brigades,⁸ each
 - headquarters and headquarters company (158 personnel)
 - three infantry battalions (each 903 men)
- division artillery,⁹
 - headquarters and headquarters battery (154 men)
 - two battalions 105mm howitzers (each 553 men and 18 howitzers)
 - one battalion 155mm howitzers (552 men and 18 howitzers)
- Cavalry Squadron,
 - headquarters and headquarters troop (166 men)
 - long range reconnaissance patrol (86 personnel)
 - three troops (each 136 men); 48 APCs total in the troops
- Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol Company (strength ?)
- Engineer Battalion (539 men; two companies)
- Signal Battalion (227 men)
- Light Aviation Company (127 men)
- MP Company (164 men)
- support units (1,246 men)¹⁰

This gave the division a strength of 10,730 personnel.

Except for the infantry and artillery, units were un-numbered. Thus, the engineer battalion was simply designated Engineer Battalion.

⁸ 1st Infantry Brigade (1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions) and 2nd Infantry Brigade (also 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions).

⁹ The battalions were designated as 1st, 2nd and 3rd Field Artillery Battalions; I am unsure which had the 155mm howitzers.

¹⁰ Headquarters, Support Group and Band; Headquarters, Support Group; Administration Company; Maintenance Battalion, Medical Battalion; Replacement Company; Supply and Service Company; Transportation Company.

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