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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY & JOINT SERVICES ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT GROUP
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REPLY TO
ATTENTION TO

April 10, 1986

DAAG-ESG

ESG PILOT STUDY OF THE MAIN AGENT ORANGE EPIDEMIOLOCAL STUDY

1. The Science Panel, Agent Orange Working Group tasked the Environmental Support Group to perform a Pilot Study for the Congressionally mandated Agent Orange Epidemiological study. ESG was given the mission due to the concerns expressed by the Centers for Disease Control and other scientific agencies that the study had not produced enough qualified heavily exposed personnel.

2. There are many detailed functions in which ESG will have to perform for the Agent Orange Epidemiological Pilot Study. Those functions are listed below.

a. CDC has provided ESG a list of Infantry Battalions that had the highest likelihood for exposure after being matched against the Ranch Hand Herbs Tape. ESG selected 6 of the units recommended by CDC and added one additional Artillery Battalion. ESG will identify the gaps and fill in the days in which no grid coordinates were previously reported on the 7 battalions for all companies covering the period 1 October 66 to 31 March 69. This will require a new tape (gap fillers) that must be integrated with the old CDC tape to establish a complete tape with all the tracking data.

b. When all the daily location data has been accomplished ESG will computer match the complete grid coordinate locations of each company by date against the Ranch Hand and Service Herbs Tapes to produce an exposure opportunities score using the below listed criteria.

- 2 kilometers, 3 days
- 2 kilometers, 6 days

c. ESG will produce a listing for each company documenting by date sequence each herbicide encounter and type of exposure (i.e. Ranch Hand, Perimeter, Abort, Ground Spray).

d. ESG will review morning reports to insure the veteran was in the unit and on duty in the field when a spray mission occurred. A veteran could have been in the hospital or on R & R in Bangkok, Thailand, when his unit experienced a herbicide encounter and hence would not have had an exposure opportunity.

e. Our goal is to identify and qualify every soldier assigned to each of the 7 battalions that were selected for the study. The qualification criteria used for the Pilot Study are listed below.

- Single tour enlistee
- E5 or below
- The veteran must have been in Vietnam sometime during or between 1 October 1966 to 31 March 1969 to qualify as a heavily exposed cohort.
- Served anytime in a tracked unit. Non-exposed personnel must have served their entire tour in a tracked unit.

3. To date, ESG has completed filling the location gaps on all 7 battalions. Extensive quality control functions were performed on the data and quality control was initiated on the existing location data that had previously been provided CDC. This information is keypunched and is almost ready to be matched against the spray mission tapes with respect to the aforementioned time and distance requirements.

4. ESG has requested approximately 2,500 military personnel files from the National Archives Records Administration in St. Louis, Missouri. Since ESG has already qualified 15,900 study subjects, 5,000 will be targeted for use in the pilot study. Once the records are obtained the records will be researched and personnel data elements abstracted on each qualified exposed and non-exposed study subject.



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