

## TRANSFORMING THE FORCE: THE 11TH AIR ASSAULT DIVISION (TEST) FROM 1963 TO 1965

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Today's Army has gone through some incredible transformations since the end of the Cold War. Since then, the Army has struggled with Force XXI concepts and, more recently, the concept of the Prototype Brigade. This monograph examines other periods of transformation to determine whether any of the lessons learned can be applied to current force structure changes. Specifically, the monograph conducts an in-depth study of the 11th Air Assault Division (Test) from 1963 to 1965, when the Army conducted extensive experimentation with air mobility and helicopter operations.

The monograph begins its study with an examination of a framework for analysis. Using the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's (TRADOC) domains of doctrine, training, leadership, organization, material, and soldier systems (DTLOMS), the monograph first proves that this is a valid methodology for analyzing change. It does this by showing that all revolutions in military affairs (RMA) have occurred when the DTLOMS all converge to provide a synergy to each other. Having established that the criteria of DTLOMS is a valuable tool for evaluating change in military systems, the next step is to apply those criteria to evaluate the changes that occurred in the formation of the 11th Air Assault (Test) Division from 1963 to 1965. In order to accomplish this, a study of the separate elements of DTLOMS will be conducted in order to determine how the 11th Air Assault Division reorganized itself and conducted operations during that period. The benchmark for studying the elements of DTLOMS will be the use of air mobility during the Ia Drang campaign of November 1965.

Specifically, this monograph will attempt to answer the following six questions:

1. How did the division develop doctrine to support the transition to airmobile warfare?
2. How did the division determine the proper organization to facilitate warfighting with the airmobile division?
3. How did the division train leaders to support the new doctrine and organization?
4. How did the division conduct field training to certify its soldiers and units in the new tactics?
5. Did building a new force require any specific soldier skills; and if so, how were those skills cultivated?
6. How did the division adopt and recommend changes to material and equipment to support the new methods of fighting?

Each of these questions addresses one aspect of DTLOMS and will be used to measure change in the 11th Air Assault (Test) Division from the beginning in 1963 to the redesignation to the 1st Cavalry Division in 1965. Finally, this study will synthesize these changes and determine which lessons learned can be applied to ongoing experimentation in the U.S. Army of the 21st century.

The conclusions that the present author reaches is that for change to be lasting in the U.S. Army, there must be the impetus for change provided by the Army leadership. The U.S. Army Tactical Mobility Requirements Board—commonly referred to as the Howze Board—provided this impetus in the early 1960s and produced a lasting change that is still manifested within the current U.S. Army force structure. It takes this type of leadership in order to make changes to a historically conservative organization, such as the U.S. Army.

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