

## **PROVISION OF CONTACT/MIPOFOLIE FOR 1 ATF**

Letter to HQ AFV

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### **ANNEX F — Provision of Contact/Mipofolie for 1 ATF**

One of thirteen annexes (A–M) to “War in Vietnam: A Surveyor’s Story”, by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Francis Skitch (Retd), 1934–2026 — Officer Commanding, Detachment 1st Topographical Survey Troop, Nui Dat, 1966–67.

Scanned and transcribed from the original documents. The complete four-part memoir, and the wider Skitch family archive:

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3 Aug 66

HQ AFV

PROVISION OF CONTACT/MIPOFOLIE FOR 1 ATF  
*(scanned and transcribed from original)*

1. 1 ATF has an urgent requirement to protect all maps, enlargements and photographs used in the field, with some form of plastic protecting film.

2. Experience has shown that the life of any map carried by the infantryman or any other soldier required to support the infantryman is from 1 to 2 days. Under very wet conditions the life may be less than this before the map becomes soggy and illegible. Other forms of map intelligence suffer as badly or worse.

3. The desirable qualities of such a protecting film are:

a. It must continue to adhere to the map when the map is folded without lifting or cracking.

b. It must be easy to apply and the map must be immediately useable after application.

c. It must be in continuous contact over the whole face of the map, that is, without crinkles or bubbles.

d. It must not add noticeably to the bulk of the map.

e. It must exclude all moisture.

4. To date the only material found to satisfy these requirements is 'Contact' or 'Mipofolie'.

ESTIMATED QUANTITIES

5. Table A shows the air photo and map requirements of all 1 ATF units, taking part in a Battalion Group on TF Operation with calculated amounts of contact required. The quantities fall into three categories:

a. Immediate requirement to allow all maps in current use covering the TAOR to be covered immediately.

b. A continuing requirement to meet the needs of a particular operation. New battalion size operations have been

occurring about one per week.

c. Future requirement to allow maps covering any operation outside the TAOR to be covered.

6. The following criteria have been applied to the calculations of quantity, for the reasons listed.

|    | CRITERION                                                                                      | REASON                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| a. | Pictomap must be covered on both sides                                                         | Experience has shown that maps covered on one side only are not adequately protected. Moisture enters through the back of the map and along the edges.<br>Pictomaps are very limited in supply and it is necessary that 75% of the pictomaps issued must remain in use for 6 months. Re-supply of pictos cannot be guaranteed in greater quantity than 25% of normal holdings over a 6 month period. |
| b. | Standard 1:50,000 maps to be covered on one side only                                          | The current series 1:50,000 will be superceded within 3 months                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| c. | Photoplots and map enlargrments printed on dyeline photographic paper to be covered both sides | Dyeline paper is very soft and absorbent and will last only 2 to 3 hours in the field in moist conditions. Moisture must be completely excluded to allow the map to last the duration of the operation.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| d. | Air photographs to be covered on emulsion side                                                 | The emulsion on air photographs issued by the US in Vietnam have been found to discolour and fade with continued exposure to air and light after developing. Covering the emulsion side with 'Contact' has been found to completely arrest this process as well as increasing the durability of the print.                                                                                           |

#### SUMMARY OF QUANTITIES

7. The following table summarises the quanties of Contact/Mipofolie to cover 1 ATF requirements for an initial period of 6 months based on a roll measuring 25m x 1.2m containing 302 square feet.

Quantity required to cover:

|    |                                  |           |
|----|----------------------------------|-----------|
| a. | Map enlargements and photoplots. | 180 rolls |
| b. | Pictomaps in AO                  | 438 rolls |
| c. | Air photographs and mosaics      | 24 rolls  |
| d. | 1:50,000 maps                    | 98 rolls  |
|    | TOTAL                            | 740 rolls |

#### CONCLUSION

8. It is requested that immediate action be taken to supply 1 ATF with 300 rolls of Contact/Mipofolie to meet the immediate operational requirement with delivery effected by courier aircraft.

9. It is further requested that the remaining 440 rolls to make up the estimated 6 month requirement be delivered to the theatre within 3 months.

O.D. Jackson  
Brig  
Commander 1 ATF

Attached: (i) Table A