OPERATION KANSAS

2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

1st Marine Division | Republic of Vietnam | 17–22 June 1966

FIELD	DETAIL
Operation Name	Operation Kansas
Dates of Operation	17–22 June 1966 (official dates). The reconnaissance phase began 13 June; recon teams and artillery stayed in the area until 27–28 June.
Mission Purpose / Objective	Reconnaissance-in-force in the Que Son Valley between Tam Ky and Hiep Duc after reports that the North Vietnamese 2d (620th) Division had entered the valley. Planned as an eight-battalion Marine-ARVN operation. When the Vietnamese Marine battalions were withdrawn, it was cut back to a reconnaissance effort supported by artillery, with infantry ready to exploit.
Locations / Cities	Tam Ky; Hiep Duc; Nui Loc Son; Nui Vu (Hill 488); Hill 555; Thang Binh; Hill 29; Tien Phuoc Special Forces Camp; Quang Tin and Quang Nam Provinces
TAOR	Que Son Valley, Quang Tin / Quang Nam Provinces
UTM Coordinates	Not recorded.
USMC Units Involved	Task Force X-Ray (BGen William A. Stiles); 1st Reconnaissance Battalion (LtCol Arthur J. Sullivan); 1st Force Reconnaissance Company; Company C, 1/5 (relief of Howard's platoon); Company E, 2/5 (B-52 strike exploitation, 21 June); 3/1 (artillery security); 4/11, 4/12 and 2/11 artillery.
2/5 Companies Participated	Company E. Company E, 2/5 exploited the B-52 strike on 21 June 1966.
Mission Results	SSgt Jimmie L. Howard's 18-man reconnaissance platoon held Nui Vu (Hill 488) against a North Vietnamese battalion on the night of 15–16 June (Medal of Honor). Company C, 1/5 relieved the hill at dawn on 16 June; 42 enemy dead were counted. On 21 June, Company E, 2/5 was landed by helicopter about 3,500 meters east of Hiep Duc to exploit a B-52 Arc Light strike. It met minor resistance near the landing zone and was lifted out by 1015. Infantry participation was otherwise limited.
USMC KIA	Whole operation: 15 US KIA (previously recorded figure). Company C, 1/5 at Nui Vu: 2 KIA.
USMC Wounded	Whole operation: 32 US WIA (previously recorded figure). Breakdown by 2/5 company: not recorded.
Enemy KIA	85 confirmed (previously recorded figure); 42 enemy dead at Nui Vu
Enemy Wounded	Unknown

NOTES & SOURCE REFERENCES

UPDATED 16 SEPTEMBER 2026 FROM PRIMARY SOURCES. H COMPANY DID NOT PARTICIPATE; Company E, 2/5 did. Shulimson's official account confirms that the only 2/5 involvement was Company E's heliborne exploitation of the B-52 strike on 21 June 1966. The 2/5 Command Chronology for June 1966 records the same insertion. It places Hotel Company in the Chu Lai TAOR, ending the month on Hill 35 providing security for the 5th Marines CP. Corrected dates: the official operation dates are 17–22 June 1966. 2/5 COMPANIES THAT DID NOT TAKE PART: Company H. The record does not say whether Company F, Company G, H&S Company took part.

Primary sources: 2/5 Command Chronology, June 1966 (TTU Vietnam Archive item 1201048070); Shulimson, An Expanding War, 1966 (HQMC, 1982), ch. 8, pp. 131–136. Originals: NARA RG 127 (College Park MD 20740) and Marine Corps History Division (Quantico VA 22134).