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**Report date:** August -November 1944

**Title:** Organization and Training of Pathfinder Troops

**Author:** Headquarters, XVIII Corps (Airborne)

**Abstract:** The documents includes: Pathfinder Training (Airborne) aids memorandum, 21 August 1944; Organization and Training of Pathfinder Troops, 27 October 1944; and Pathfinder Training report, 9 November 1944.

**Number of pages:** 4 p.

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Pathfinder Training

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*This was being handled by [unclear]*

HEADQUARTERS, XVIII CORPS (AIRBORNE)  
Office of the Commanding General

353 (S) G-3

APO 109, U.S. Army-3  
9 November 1944

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C. CLERK		
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Subject: Pathfinder Training.

To : Commanding General, 101st Airborne Division, APO 472, U.S. Army.

1. Reference to letter, this headquarters, subject: "Organization and Training of Pathfinder Troops", dated 27 October 1944, request that necessary orders be issued by your headquarters to place the personnel of the division requiring Pathfinder Training on temporary duty at the Pathfinder Group (Provisional), Chalgrove Field, England.

2. It is desired that the personnel report for duty for a two - three week period commencing on or about 14 November 1944.

3. The Pathfinder Officer, 101st Airborne Division will report to Headquarters, 101st Airborne Division to assist in movement of personnel to the Pathfinder School. Upon receipt by this headquarters of departure field, time of departure, and number of aircraft required necessary planes will be provided by this headquarters as required.

4. Necessary instructions for the return of this personnel to their respective units will be issued to your headquarters upon completion of their training.

By command of Major General RIDGWAY:

HERBERT L. NELSON,  
Lt Colonel, A.G.D.,  
Adjutant General.

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*101st [unclear]*



HEADQUARTERS, XVIII CORPS (AIRBORNE)  
Office of the Asst Chief of Staff, G-3

APC 109, U. S. Army  
21 August 1944

MEMORANDUM:

TO : Chief of Staff.

PATHFINDER TRAINING (AIRBORNE)

1. Aids:

a. The aids which are now employed in marking drop or landing zones are of two (2) varieties:

(1) Lights, panels and smoke.

(2) Eureka's.

b. In addition a radio beacon for use with the aircraft radio compass is being tested.

2. Operation and maintenance of Aids:

a. A reasonably intelligent soldier can be taught the operating principles of this equipment in a matter of hours.

b. No repairs can be made in the field other than the tightening of connections, etc., hence extensive technical training in maintenance and repair because extraneous.

c. A lecture should be given upon the necessity of selecting favorable terrain for the placing of aids. An inspection should be made after each practice drop to insure that these instructions are thoroughly understood and followed.

3. Ground Training for Personnel - Initially personnel should be trained in the individual duties of each member of the Pathfinder Team. Next, exercises in establishing the team on the ground should be held during daylight hours, followed by thorough training in establishing the team during darkness. Sufficient number of drops should be held under simulated combat conditions to insure that each team is thoroughly competent to execute a combat mission.

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4. Conclusions:

- a. Pathfinder Teams should be trained under division control; after completion of training teams should return to their organization and take part in normal unit training.
- b. Recommend that Officer in charge of division pathfinder teams should be member of Division G-3 Section and when not engaged in pathfinder activity perform duties in the G-3 Section.
- c. All pathfinder teams should be available, on call, for training in division aids and developments and refresher courses.
- d. Teams should be formed under control of Officer in charge of Division Pathfinder's at least one (1) week prior to an operation for necessary briefing, organization, equipping, and special training.
- e. During training period normally four (4) drops under simulated combat conditions are sufficient for the training of each team.
- f. Complete training of each team can be accomplished in a two (2) week period, weather permitting.

A. D. SURLS, JR.,  
Lt. Col., G.S.C.,  
G-3.

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