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SUMMARY

In July, the largest Marine operation of the war punished a regular North Vietnamese division severely. At the same time, small unit operations killed a record number of local guerrillas, and there was firm evidence of accelerated progress in the overall Marine pacification program.

Eight operations of battalion size or larger accounted for a confirmed total of 1,039 enemy regulars killed, 22 captured, and 253 weapons seized. Field commanders estimate that an additional 1,392 VC or NVA regulars were killed, raising to over 2,400 the probable enemy dead resulting from Marine large unit operations. The bulk of the enemy killed resulted from Operation Hastings, where seven USMC battalions were involved.

There were 12,454 counterguerrilla operations during the month - the third highest total to date; but more important, there were more contacts (1,457) and more of the guerrilla enemy killed (538) than in any previous month.

Marine fixed wing aircraft flew 5,159 combat or combat support sorties, the second highest total to date. The majority of these - 3,790 - were flown in support of III MAF. Marine helicopters flew 41,957 sorties, a new record.

There were 20 County Fair operations during the month, compared with 7 in June. The 48 County Fairs to date have involved 63 villages, where 21,000 civilians were screened, fingerprinted, interviewed, photographed and given medical treatment. In the process,

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90 guerrillas were killed, 132 captured, and 268 suspects seized for questioning.

There was continued progress in the pacification level within the Marine areas. The number of villages considered to be 80% pacified or higher reached 27, an increase of 5 over the previous month. By the end of July, 39 villages encompassing some 205,000 people were classified between 40% and 80% pacified, compared with 14 villages and 58,000 people at that level in February, the first month in which a detailed statistical assessment of the pacification level was made. At the end of the month, village chiefs and councils were functioning in 74 villages, an increase of 42% over June's total, and the number of villages compiling a census increased from 46 to 58, a 28% gain. Village markets under development were up 14%, from 66 to 75.

With this progress in the overall pacification effort, in late July the tactical areas at Danang and Chu Lai again expanded farther into the populated countryside. In all, the expansion added an additional 435 square miles. Danang expanded from 676 to 999 square miles, encompassing 22 additional villages and 44,551 civilians. Chu Lai increased from 347 to 459 square miles, adding 5 new villages with a combined population of 10,641. At month's end, the total III MAF area included 1,620 square miles, 171 villages and 893,128 people.

By the end of July, 201 miles of roads were being maintained or constructed within the III MAF tactical areas. To the extent that road travel connotes a trend toward stability, the facts are favorable. I Corps roads are being utilized at an increased rate; over twice as many civilian vehicles traveled on Route #1 during July as in March 1965. Military traffic on the highways between Quang Ngai city and Hue has increased from about

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1,300 vehicles in July 1965 to over 3,400 this July. Civilian and military are also utilizing the intra-area road-net freely.

The foregoing progress is a product of three mutually supporting and simultaneous campaigns. The chart on the following page describes these major campaigns, and gives a summary of progress in each during the past 6 months.

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AIR OPERATIONS

Marine fixed wing aircraft flew 5,159 combat or combat support sorties during July, the second highest total for a one month period since the Marines' arrival in Vietnam. A significant factor in this activity was the presence of large enemy units which were either willing or forced to stand and fight, thus providing lucrative air targets. Taking advantage of this, Marine aircraft flew 1,107 tactical fixed wing sorties in support of Operation Hastings alone, an all-time high for any single operation.

Marine aircraft continued to strike communist supply lines leading into RVN; however, there was a noticeable change in the areas which they hit. In June some 80% of the out-of-country sorties struck targets in Laos, with the remainder flying over North Vietnam. In July emphasis was shifted to the lines of communication in North Vietnam, resulting in 573, or 65% of the out-of-country sorties, being flown there.

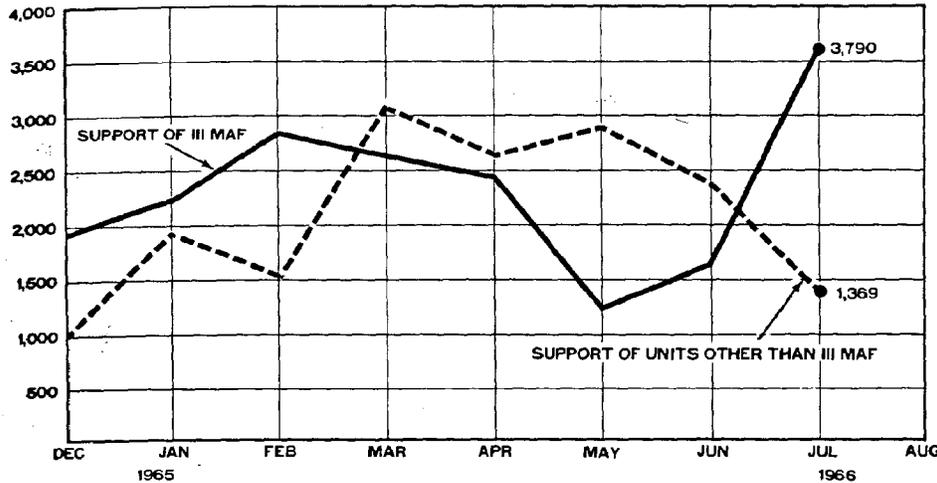
During July the majority of fixed wing combat sorties, 3790, were flown in support of III MAF. Of the others, 878 were flown on out-of-country missions and 491 were in support of ARVN units in I and II Corps Tactical Zones.

The graph on the following page depicts the fixed wing sortie rate since December 1965.

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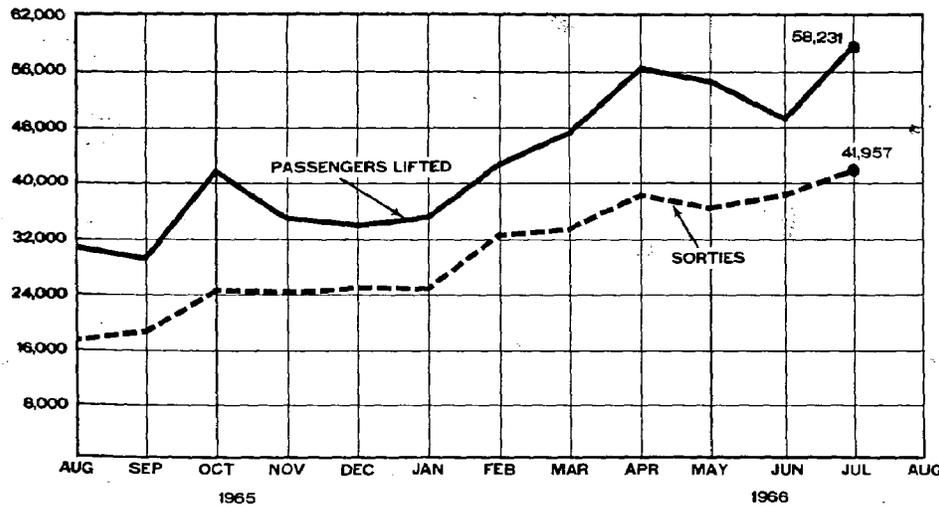
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FIXED WING COMBAT SORTIES IN SUPPORT OF III MAF
AND UNITS OTHER THAN III MAF



Marine helicopters flew a greater number of sorties, 41,957, and lifted more passengers, 58,231, than in any other month. As with fixed wing aircraft, protracted engagements with sizeable enemy forces contributed to the record totals. Some 27% of the helicopter sorties and 29% of the total passengers lifted were accomplished during Operation Hastings. The graph below shows the number of helicopter sorties and passengers lifted since August 1965.

HELICOPTER SORTIES AND PASSENGERS LIFTED



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As in previous months, Marine helicopters accomplished a variety of tasks. Besides troop carrying missions, some 3,682 casualty evacuation sorties were flown. Another 261 search and rescue missions were flown to find downed allied aviators. In addition, armed UH-1E helicopters flew over 3,300 fire support missions, delivering some 2,600 rockets and 355,000 machine gun rounds on enemy positions.

The intense operational pace in July exposed Marine helicopters to heavy enemy ground fire in a number of areas. Ten helicopters were downed by enemy action during the month. This compares with 5 lost in June and 1 in May.

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SUMMARY

During August, the Marines were heavily involved in a number of large unit actions outside the central pacification regions of I CTZ, while still maintaining the high tempo of the pacification campaign. As before, this effort was directed at driving the guerrillas out of the populated areas, destroying their supporting network, helping the local Vietnamese help themselves and generally working to bring to the coastal lowlands a better level of security and self-sufficiency.

This counter guerrilla battle included 11,004 small unit operations during August, 179 of them company size, which resulted in 324 guerrillas killed and 35 captured. In comparison, 28 Marines were killed, the lowest number in six months.

Deriving from this latter activity there is evidence of some erosion of the enemy guerrilla power in the countryside. During the first six months of 1965, when the Marine campaign against the guerrillas was just beginning, there were 96 incidents of enemy sabotage against roads and railroads in the I CTZ. In the first six months of 1966, the number of these guerrilla acts had decreased by 61%, to 37. Assassinations, comparing the same two periods, also declined 61%, from 39 to 15, while kidnappings dropped from 62 to 14, a 78% decrease. These are small, albeit credible, indications that progress is being achieved in disrupting the Viet Cong guerrilla fabric, the importance of which is eloquently portrayed in the following excerpt

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from a DIA report some months ago:

"Indian ICC Commissioner Rahman discussed his recent trip to Hanoi with U. S. Embassy officials in Saigon and had these points to make: ... The crucial matter from Hanoi's standpoint is not the volume of communist casualties, but the survival of the guerrilla infrastructure in South Vietnam...."

Some of the same Marine units that conducted the 11,004 small unit actions in and about the hamlets of the lowland countryside killed another 651 of the enemy in large unit operations which extended into all five of the northern provinces. Also, late in the month, the Marine Special Landing Force of the Seventh Fleet took part in three actions on the littoral east of Saigon, in support of US Army and Australian operations there.

Of the 975 enemy killed by Marines during August, 33% (325) were casualties to attack aircraft of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. The 5,437 fixed wing sortie total was the second highest to date. 4,262 of these were in support of Marine units, compared with 3,790 in July and 1,703 in June. Helicopter sorties declined slightly, from 41,957 for the previous month to 36,216; 90% were troop lift or troop-supply missions.

Slow gains continued to be registered in the Marine pacification program, although preoccupation with election preparations diminished GVN support. At the end of the month, 434,000 Vietnamese were living in villages considered to be at least 80% pacified, compared with 320,000 in May and 175,000 in February. 218,000 villagers were living in areas 40 percent to 80 percent pacified, versus

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116,000 in May and 58,000 in February. At month's end, a census had been completed or was being undertaken in 63 villages; by comparison, in May the figure was 34, and in February it was 12. And the number of local chiefs residing full-time in their villages continues to increase - in February only 13 villages had chiefs in residence; by May the total had risen to 29, and at the end of August the figure stood at 42. And the beginnings of local government were evident in 82 villages, an increase of 49 over February's total.

On 27 August, months of coordinated effort by Vietnamese civilians, U. S. Marines, and Navy personnel were culminated when a newly-constructed, nineteen-mile roadway joining the inland industrial complex of An Hoa with the seaport at Danang was opened for traffic - the first time in two years that An Hoa has had access to the sea by a secure overland route.

On 29 August the 2d Brigade, Republic of Korea Marine Corps assumed responsibility for a 183 square mile area of operations south of Chu Lai. At the end of the month, two of the Brigade's three battalions had arrived; the balance of the 4,200 man force was expected to arrive by end-September. The unit will operate under the operational guidance of the CG III MAF.

Significant events in the operations of the ROK Marine unit will be reported in these summaries, whenever they relate directly to those of the US Marines, and to the extent necessary to make the USMC historical record complete.

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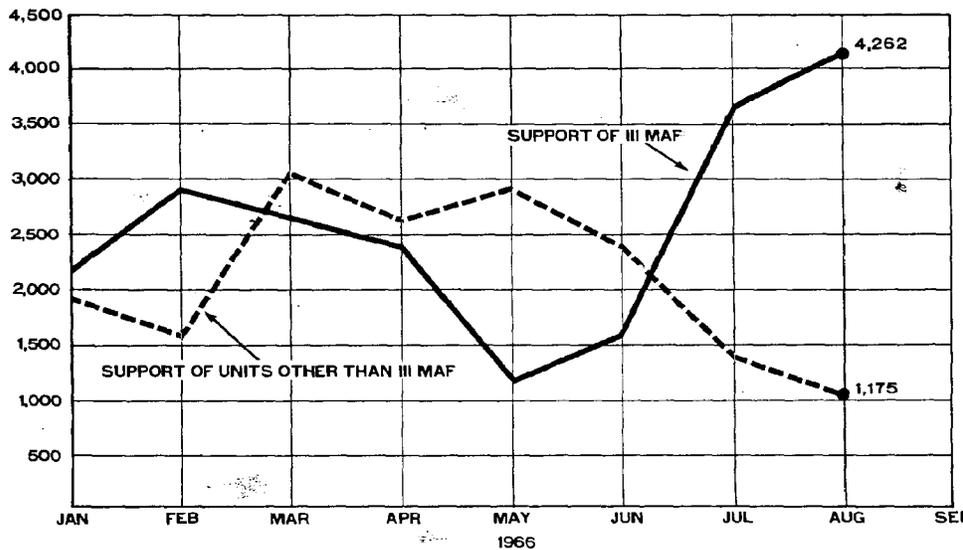
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AIR OPERATIONS

There were 5,437 fixed wing aircraft sorties in August, the highest total since March 1966. Of these, 4,262 were flown in support of Marine units, which compares with 3,790 in July and 1,703 in June. The higher sortie rate can be attributed, in part, to the increased use of attack aircraft against a number of enemy troop formations during the eleven large-scale operations conducted by III MAF in August, and to the use of attack aircraft in support of Sting Ray operations, described previously in this report. The number of confirmed enemy killed by attack aircraft was 325, roughly one-third of the total number of all enemy killed by Marines during the month.

As was the case in July, out-of-country sorties were concentrated on targets in North Vietnam, as opposed to Laos; 991 sorties, or 99% of the total out-of-country effort, were in North Vietnam.

**FIXED WING SORTIES IN SUPPORT OF III MAF
AND UNITS OTHER THAN III MAF**



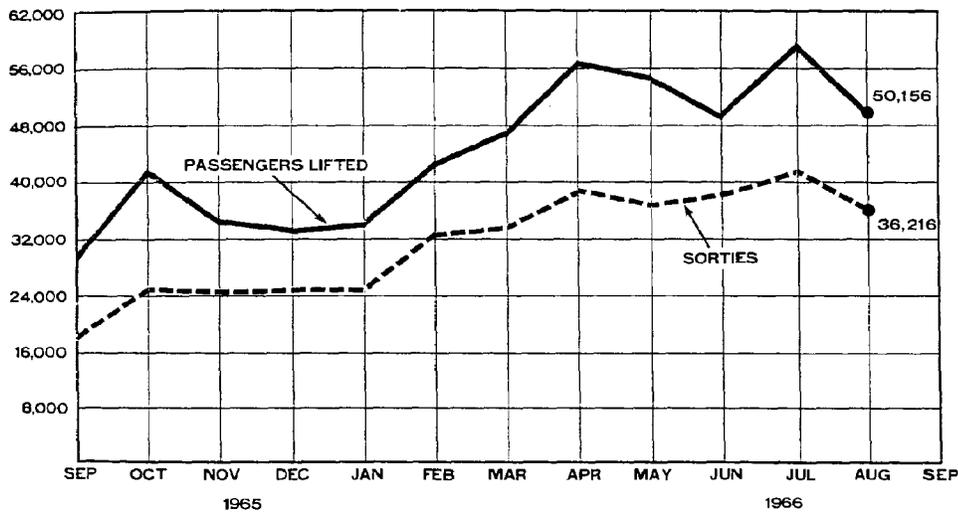
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Marine helicopter sorties flown during August declined from the July high of 41,957 to 36,216. Of this number, 3,364 were casualty evacuation sorties and 64 were for search and rescue missions.

HELICOPTER SORTIES AND PASSENGERS LIFTED

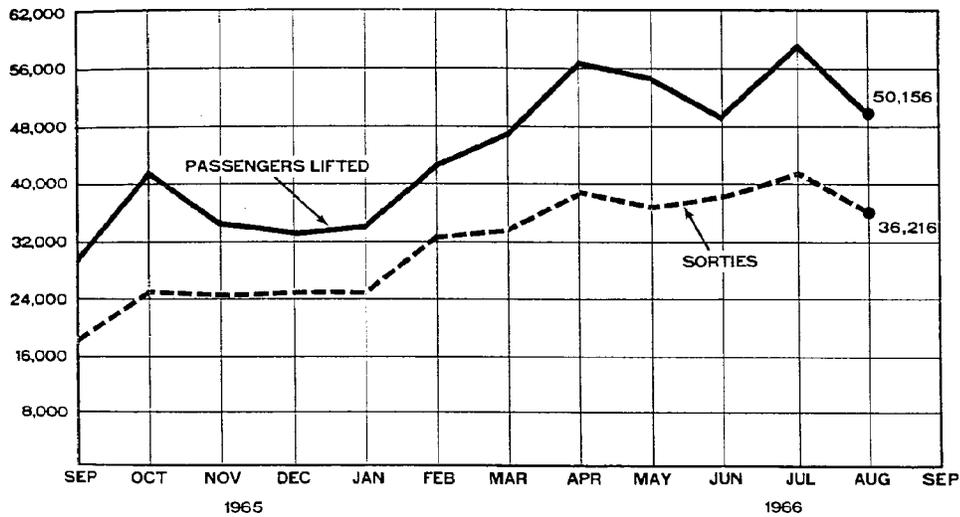


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HELICOPTER SORTIES AND PASSENGERS LIFTED



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SUMMARY

Thirteen large unit operations by Marine forces during September accounted for 1,551 enemy killed, half of them in Operation Prairie, where between four and six Marine battalions continued to blunt attempts of North Vietnamese formations to enter northern I Corps in force.

During these major operations, the Marine logistic system in Vietnam demonstrated its capability to provide continuing support for an extended campaign in an undeveloped region, remote from the sea. Beginning in July with Operation Hastings, and continuing through August and September with Operation Prairie, that logistic system provided Marine forces engaged near the Demilitarized Zone with 5,800 tons of ammunition, 1,600 tons of food, 248,000 gallons of fuel, and 1,000 tons of miscellaneous supplies. And by the end of the month, a rapidly-developed advance logistic base to support Operation Prairie forces was near completion in northern Quang Tri Province, stocked with sufficient food, ammunition, and other basic supplies to sustain six battalions and their supporting forces for 30 days of continuous combat deep in the hinterland.

This commitment of as many as six battalions from the central pacification areas for the conduct of large unit operations in Quang Tri Province, although productive in thwarting enemy offensive efforts, paid a price in the pace of pacification and counter guerrilla activity. The northward shift of a substantial part of the Marines' ground strength - many elements of which had been deeply involved in pacification - caused small-unit operations to decline from 11,004 in August to 10,372, a 6% drop, and the lowest level of intensity since February. As a related consequence, the number of guerrillas killed in this critical campaign (238) was the lowest total in four months,

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well below the monthly average of 438 for this period.

Despite the substantial northward shift of Marine forces, the pacification program exhibited that it had generated much momentum. When forces introduced from other Corps Tactical Zones (3 Republic of Korea Marine battalions thus far) become familiar with the people and the countryside, there is reason to conclude that the momentum will be continued. At the end of September, the number of villagers living in areas considered to be at least 60% pacified exceeded 562,000, which compares with 521,000 in August, 478,000 in July and 217,000 in February, the beginning month for this statistical evaluation. Key indicators of improved security and improved conditions of government control are portrayed in the pacification section of this report.

A milestone was achieved in late September when the Commanding General of the ARVN I Corps stated that he intended to move actively into the Revolutionary Development (pacification) Program with the Marines, employing 25 of his 31 ARVN infantry battalions in the endeavor. By month's end, there was little evidence of ARVN activity yet visible in this area.

There were 14 County Fairs conducted during the month, raising to 74 the number carried out since these operations were begun in February. To date, over 31,000 villagers have been screened, issued identity cards, given food, medical treatment, agricultural instruction, made acquainted with local officials, and indoctrinated with the goals of the GVN. At the same time, 141 confirmed guerrillas have been killed and 206 others captured.

Those Marines not otherwise employed in September achieved emphatic results in protecting three widely separated rice harvests. In the largest of the three, 10,000

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workers under Marine protection harvested and retained over 8,400 tons of rice, an amount sufficient to support 31,000 Vietnamese civilians for a year. Whereas, in previous years, the Viet Cong had managed to obtain 90% of the crop in the areas concerned, their spoil this year was less than 30%. In one 10-day harvest period, Marines killed 244 Viet Cong who risked open encounters in desperate attempts to replenish their rice stores.

The threatened Viet Cong disruption of the Vietnamese national elections on 11 September failed in the I Corps Tactical Zone, as elsewhere. Of the 814,000 eligible Vietnamese voters in that area, over 87% went to the polls, undeterred by Viet Cong propaganda and threats of guerrilla violence. This underscored the progress that has been made in the pacification program and in the corresponding degradation of the guerrilla threat.

During September, Marine attack aircraft flew 5,826 sorties, a new high. Over 75% (4,400) supported Marine ground operations, accounting for 343 enemy killed. Of the remainder, 1,013 were flown over North Vietnam, 14 over Laos, and 382 were in support of ARVN and other Free World Forces in I and II Corps. Helicopter sorties declined slightly, to 35,527, from the August total of 36,216. Approximately 82% were in support of Marine operations.

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AIR OPERATIONS

During September, flight operations reached a new peak as Marine fixed wing jet aircraft flew a record 5,826 combat or combat support sorties, exceeding the previous high of 5,637 sorties established in March. III MAF received the majority of the fixed wing air support as over 4,400 sorties (75 percent of the total) were flown in support of Marine ground operations. Of the remaining sorties, 1,013 were flown over North Vietnam, 14 over Laos, and 382 in support of ARVN and US Army units in I and II Corps Tactical Zones. Over 5,000 tons of bombs and napalm were dropped on enemy targets, killing 343 VC/NVA and destroying 1,436 structures and 17 sampans.

A large portion of the Marine fixed wing combat effort in South Vietnam during the month was allocated to Operation Prairie, with 1,272 sorties expending over 1,670 tons of ordnance. This total, which accounted for roughly 27 percent of all Marine fixed wing sorties flown in-country during September, surpassed the previous single operation record set during July, when 1,107 sorties were flown in support of Hastings.

While supporting Operation Prairie, Marine fighter and attack aircraft flew an average of 11 fixed wing combat sorties per engaged battalion per day throughout the month. This was culminated by a surge effort on the 28th, when 84 sorties supported the ground units, an average of 21 sorties for each of the four participating battalions. On that day, most of the missions were flown in support of the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, which was heavily engaged with an NVA unit in the mountainous area eight miles west of Cam Lo (see Large Unit Operations section).

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Air operations during the month were influenced to a limited extent by lowering ceilings and visibility in advance of the monsoon. A prevailing light northeasterly wind flow caused early morning low ceilings and reduced visibility along the coastal areas of I Corps, while operations in the mountainous regions to the west were hampered by early morning patchy fog and afternoon buildups with scattered rain showers. The total of 79 sorties cancelled because of poor weather would have been larger had it not been for the support rendered by the Air Support Radar Teams at Danang, Chu Lai, Phu Bai and Dong Ha. These conducted 1,587 radar-controlled combat sorties - 733 of them in support of Operation Prairie.

Three aircraft were lost during the month. One A-4 Skyhawk was reported missing and presumed down shortly after midnight on the 9th, following an Air Support Radar Team controlled bombing mission in the Chu Lai area. Search and rescue operations failed to produce any trace of the missing aircraft and pilot.

Seven days later, another A-4 crashed while on a close air support mission in support of the US Army Operation Seward in east-central II Corps. The pilot ejected successfully, but during the rescue attempt, the sling on the rescuing US Army helicopter broke and the pilot fell from approximately 800 feet and was killed.

Then, on 20 September, a third A-4 conducting a direct air support mission 15 miles southwest of Danang caught fire and crashed following a dive bombing run, fatally injuring the pilot. In addition to these losses, 19 other fixed wing combat aircraft received varying

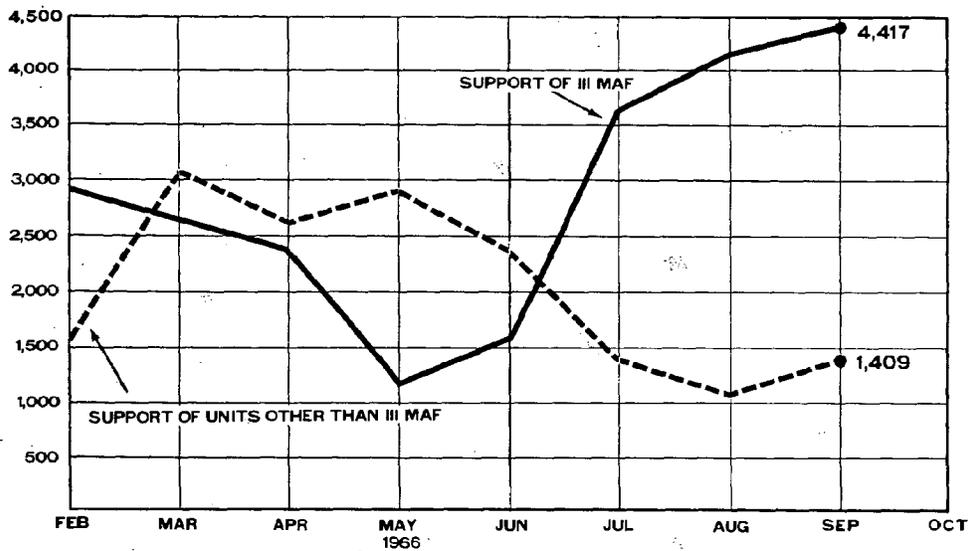
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degrees of battle damage during the month, 3 of them while conducting strikes in North Vietnam.

The graph below depicts the fixed wing sortie allocation since February.

FIXED WING SORTIES IN SUPPORT OF III MAF
AND UNITS OTHER THAN III MAF



Marine helicopters flew a total of 35,527 sorties during September, a slight decrease from the previous month. Almost 50% of the sorties were involved directly with troop and cargo carrying operations, while the balance was composed of armed helicopter, search and rescue, casualty evacuation, and reconnaissance missions. Approximately 82% of the total helicopter effort supported III MAF operations. Over 3,100 wounded Marine and ARVN troops were evacuated from the battlefield by 1st Marine Aircraft Wing helicopters.

Contributing to the overall effort was HMM-363, the helicopter squadron with the Special Landing Force,

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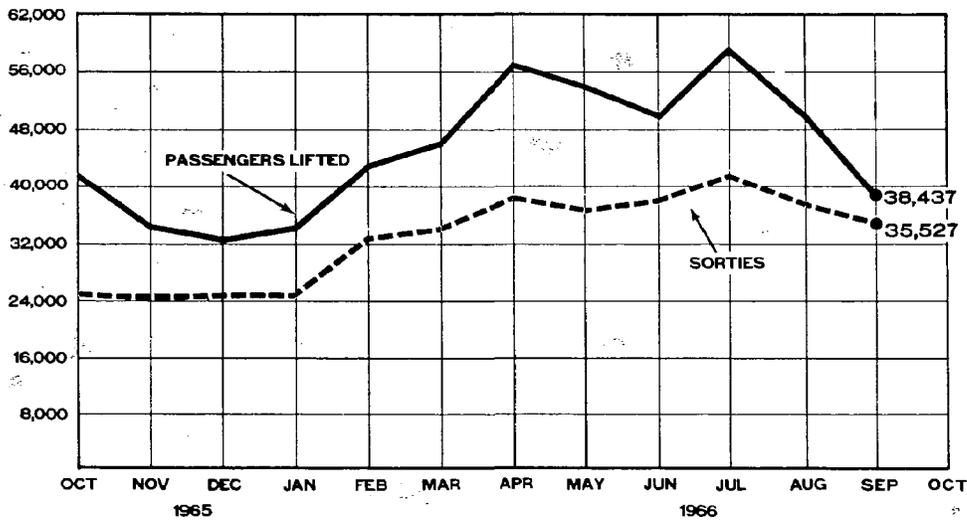
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which lifted 4,931 passengers and 993 tons of cargo while flying 1,751 sorties in support of Deckhouse IV and Operation Prairie during the period 15 to 25 September.

Five helicopters were lost during the month and an additional 112 were damaged in combat operations. Four passengers or crew members were killed, and 37 were wounded.

The graph below shows the number of helicopter sorties and passengers lifted since October 1965.

HELICOPTER SORTIES AND PASSENGERS LIFTED



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SUMMARY

The commitment of almost 10,000 Marines to the Demilitarized Zone area continued for the fourth consecutive month. Aggressive patrol and reconnaissance operations resulted in infrequent and small contact, indicating that the enemy forces which had earlier attempted to move south in mass had elected - at least for the time being - to withdraw north of the DMZ. All told, in October, Marines killed 259 of the enemy in Quang Tri, raising to 2,085 the number confirmed killed since the battle for the DMZ area began in July.

While productive in terms of enemy killed, and in the security brought to far northern RVN, the continued commitment of the large number of Marines to the DMZ region has had reflections elsewhere. Particularly evident was the reduced pace of Marine activities in the coastal lowlands, chiefly in Revolutionary Development and in the related combatant efforts.

In October, there were 10,713 counterguerrilla operations. This was a slight increase over the 10,372 conducted in September, but below the average of 12,258 for the three month period prior to the northward migration of Marine forces. The number of guerrillas killed was 275, compared with 238 in September and an April - June average of 359.

Civic action activity showed a decline. Compared with September, medical treatment decreased 21% (89,332 persons treated versus 113,542); construction projects dropped 91%, from 485 to 45; and soap and food distribution were down 45% and 64%, respectively.

The decline in counterguerrilla operations and civic action activity was mirrored also in the level of

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Revolutionary Development progress. At the end of October, the number of persons living in areas at least 60% pacified remained the same as in September, whereas the average monthly gain from February to September was approximately 45,000.

Modest gains were made in other areas of the RD program. At the end of the month, 82 villages had either undertaken or completed a village census, an increase of 7 over September's total; the number of villages with functioning chiefs and councils was raised to 101, a gain of 3; and village markets under development were up to 92, from 88 in September.

Despite the shift of Marine effort away from the major Revolutionary Development areas, analysis of progress for 1966 to date discloses that III MAF has met or exceeded all of the six Honolulu Conference RD goals except in the areas of railroad rehabilitation and, perhaps, enemy attrition.

Although logistic operations were impeded by the violent arrival of the monsoon, support of Marine forces remained satisfactory throughout the month. The monsoonal effects have been tempered by measures taken during the dry season, such as construction of covered storage and maintenance facilities, rehabilitation and construction of roads and bridges, and prepositioning of supplies in areas likely to be isolated by flooding.

Marine fixed wing aircraft flew 4,987 combat or combat support sorties in October, lower than September's record high of 5,826. This is attributable to the poor flying weather which accompanied the arrival of the monsoon. Of the October total, 78% (3,893) were in support of III MAF; they accounted for 148 enemy KIA, or 20% of the total casualties inflicted by III MAF during the month (777).

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AIR OPERATIONS

Flight operations during the month were down slightly from September's high of 5,826 fixed wing jet sorties. Heavy rains and low ceilings curtailed air activity in many parts of I CTZ, North Vietnam and Laos, causing cancellation of 1,326 fixed wing sorties. During October, Marine jet aircraft flew 4,987 combat or combat support sorties, over 78% (3,893 sorties) supporting III MAF operations in I Corps. Of the remaining sorties, 685 were flown over North Vietnam, 64 over Laos, and 345 in support of ARVN, ROKMC and US Army units. While fixed wing sorties for the month were down, total ordnance expended equalled that of September, with over 5,000 tons of bombs and napalm dropped on enemy targets.

Despite the fact that in many cases poor weather conditions prevented bomb damage assessment, 148 enemy were confirmed killed by Marine air attacks, representing nearly 20% of all enemy casualties inflicted by Marines during the month. In addition, 541 enemy structures and 39 sampans were destroyed. No fixed wing aircraft were lost to enemy fire.

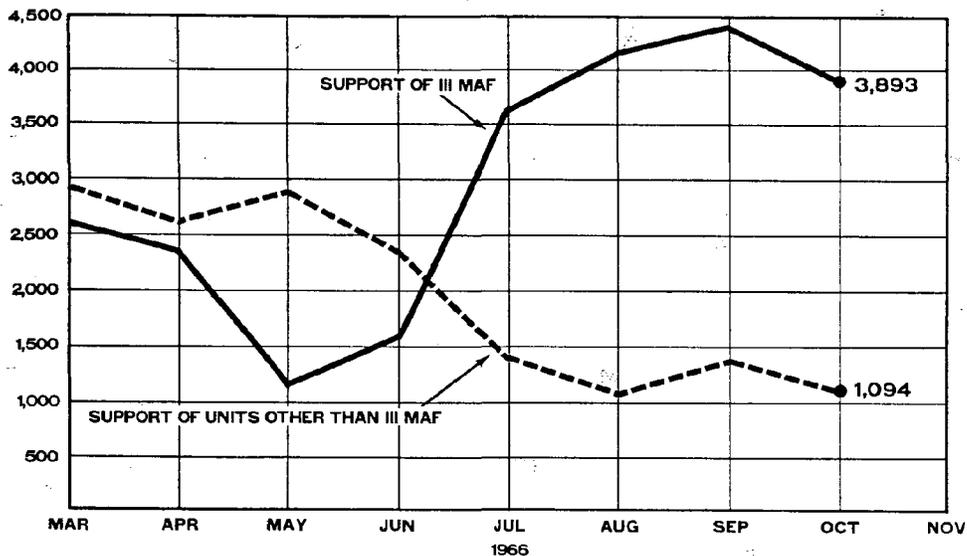
As in September, Operation Prairie received a significant portion of 1st MAW's fixed wing combat effort. Marine Phantoms, Skyhawks and Crusaders flew a total of 1,487 sorties and expended over 2,100 tons of ordnance in the Prairie area, accounting for roughly 35% of all Marine fixed wing sorties flown in-country during October.

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The graph below depicts 1st MAW's fixed wing sortie allocation since March.

**FIXED WING SORTIES IN SUPPORT OF III MAF
AND UNITS OTHER THAN III MAF**



Marine helicopters flew a total of 32,867 sorties during October, also a slight decrease from September's mark. As in previous months, helicopters accomplished a variety of tasks, with roughly one half of all sorties committed to troop and cargo carrying operations, lifting nearly 41,000 troops and 3,445 tons of cargo. In addition, 3,416 casualty evacuation sorties, 1,324 reconnaissance and 317 search and rescue sorties were flown. Armed UH-1E helicopters flew 3,434 fire support missions, delivering 720 rockets and over 224,000 machine gun rounds on enemy targets.

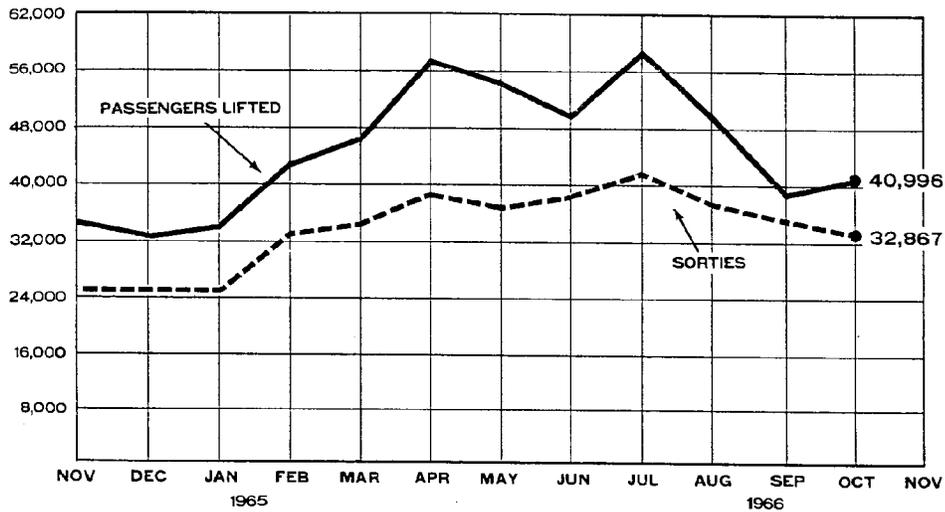
Three helicopters were lost during the month, compared to five in September, while 91 were damaged.

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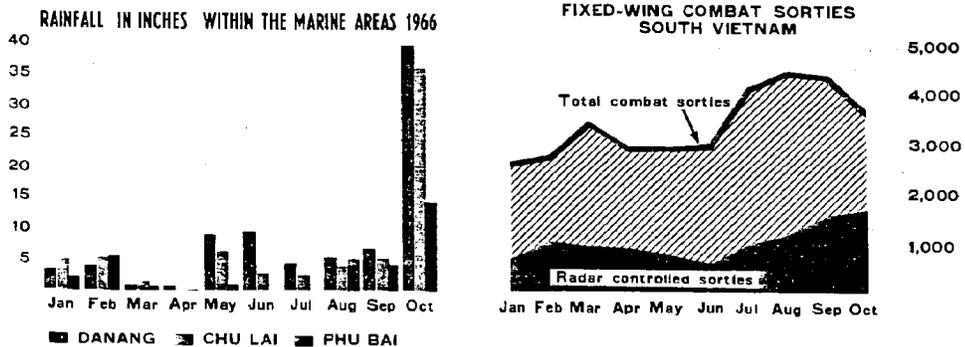
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The graph below exhibits the number of helicopter sorties and passengers lifted since November 1965.

HELICOPTER SORTIES AND PASSENGERS LIFTED



Measured rainfall within the Marine tactical areas, and the associated effect on fixed wing combat sorties are shown on the following charts.



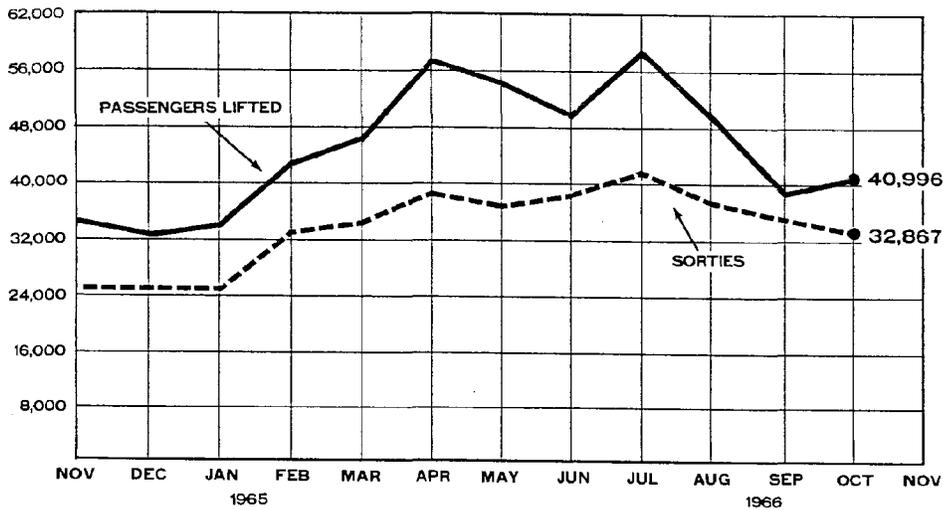
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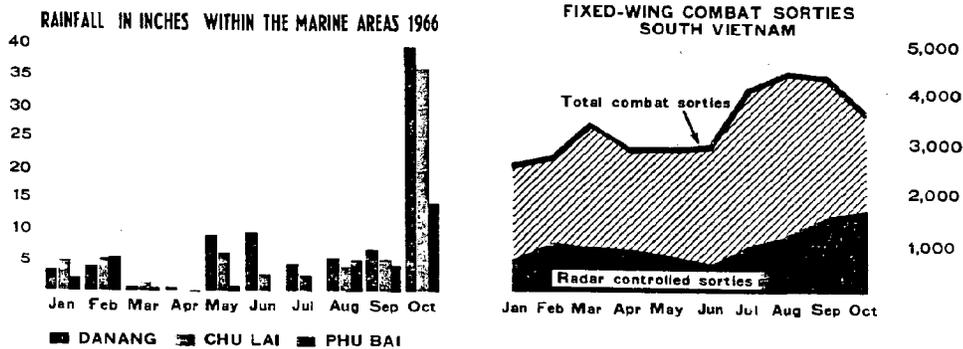
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SUMMARY

Rain and mud were the Marines' principal adversaries in Vietnam during November. The northeast monsoon, more severe than in 1965, had delivered more rain on the III MAF area than normally falls on Washington, D. C. during a two year period.

The enemy, perhaps also affected by the weather, showed a lesser disposition to fight than in any of the twelve preceding months.

Despite the sodden circumstances, slow progress was registered in all of the Marines' convergent efforts. They continued to cover the countryside with small unit, counter guerrilla-oriented operations. During the month, there were 11,256 patrols and ambushes, mainly of squad size, and 185 company size search and destroy operations. In 937 contacts, 240 guerrillas were killed.

There were six operations of battalion size or larger, each characterized by light contact. The number of enemy killed in large unit operations declined to 203, 71% below the average for the prior six month period.

Marine fixed wing aircraft, although severely hampered by rain, clouds, and fog, flew 5,558 combat and combat support sorties - an 11% increase over October's total. Over 4,300 of these were in support of III MAF, with 871 sorties flown over North Vietnam and Laos. The balance supported ARVN, ROK Marines, or U. S. Army units in-country. 1st Marine Aircraft Wing pilots accounted for 93 enemy confirmed killed, 21% of the 443 enemy killed by Marines in November.

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The 1,693 square miles under Marine influence showed a slight rise in pacification levels. The number of villagers living in areas at least 60% pacified increased to 589,000, a 26,000 gain over October's total, and a rise of 371,000 since February, when Marines began a statistical appraisal of pacification progress. Twenty villages advanced, in some degree, in their pacification level.

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AIR OPERATIONS

Flight operations during the month were hampered by rain, clouds and fog. Marine fixed wing sorties were nevertheless 11% greater than the previous month - 5,558 combat and combat support sorties in November versus 4,987 in October. Of the total fixed wing effort, 78% (4,333 sorties) supported III MAF operations in I Corps, while 354 were flown in support of ARVN, ROKMC, and U. S. Army units in-country. In addition, 808 sorties were flown over North Vietnam, and 63 over Laos.

Approximately 46% of all those fixed wing sorties flown in support of III MAF were allocated to the large operations - Prairie and Rio Blanco. Marine pilots flew nearly 2,000 combat sorties and expended over 1,640 tons of ordnance while supporting these two operations (see Large Unit Operations section).

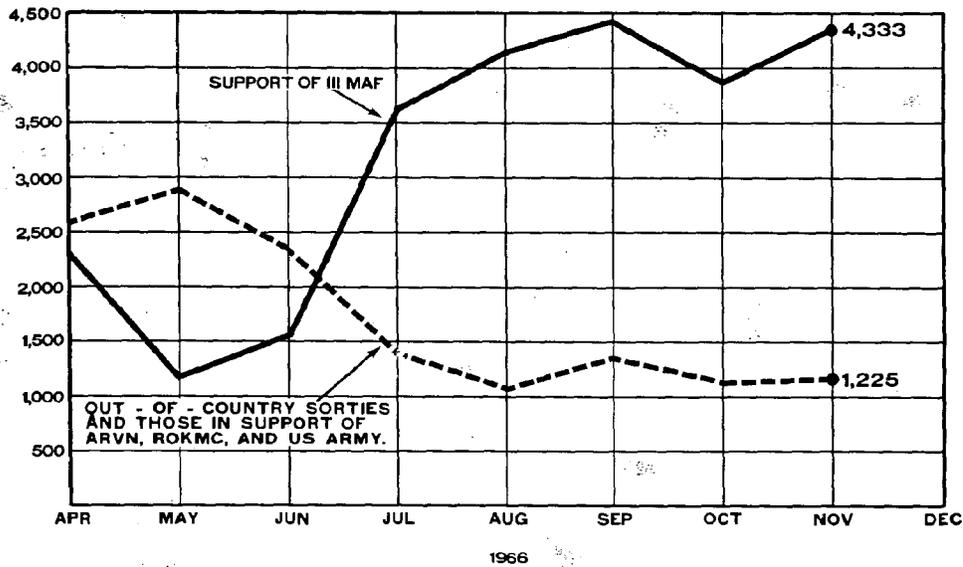
In all, Marine fixed wing aircraft expended 6,434 tons of bombs and napalm on enemy targets in RVN, Laos and North Vietnam, destroying or damaging over 1,530 enemy structures and 62 sampans. During one particularly successful strike in NVN on the 24th, four F-4 Phantoms and two F-8 Crusaders hit two suspected SAM sites, expending 14 tons of ordnance. The targets were subsequently removed from 7th Air Force's target list. In addition, 93 enemy were confirmed killed by Marine pilots during the month, representing 21% of all enemy casualties inflicted by Marines during November.

The distribution of the Marine fixed wing effort from January 1966 is shown on the following graph.

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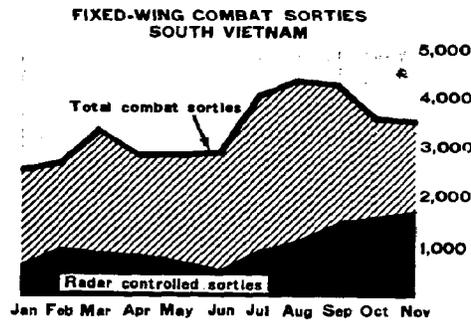
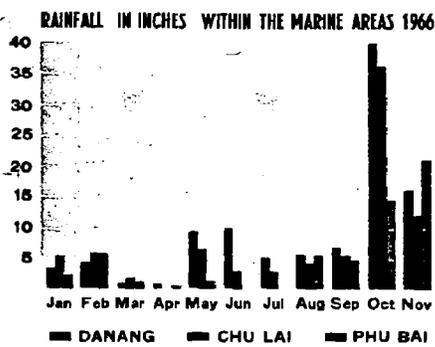
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**FIXED WING SORTIES IN SUPPORT OF III MAF
AND UNITS OTHER THAN III MAF**



Adverse weather had a direct effect on air operations; 1,331 fixed wing sorties were cancelled during the month.

Measured rainfall within the Marine tactical areas and its effect on fixed wing combat sorties are shown on the following charts.



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Radar Bombing Operations

As a counterpoise to the unfavorable weather, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing's combat effort was enhanced by Air Support Radar Teams at Chu Lai, Danang and Dong Ha (2 teams), and by the arrival of a fifth team from CONUS on 10 November. A general re-allocation of the Air Support Radar Teams in mid-month provided an all-weather close air support system that covered the entire I Corps littoral, as well as much of the mountainous region to the west.

During the month, these teams, which have a radar-to-target range of approximately 50 miles, controlled 1,834 combat sorties, 62 of them conducted against enemy targets in the DMZ and North Vietnam. Concurrently, 261 additional Marine tactical strikes were conducted in North Vietnam and Laos under the control of US Air Force ground radar equipment located at Dong Ha.

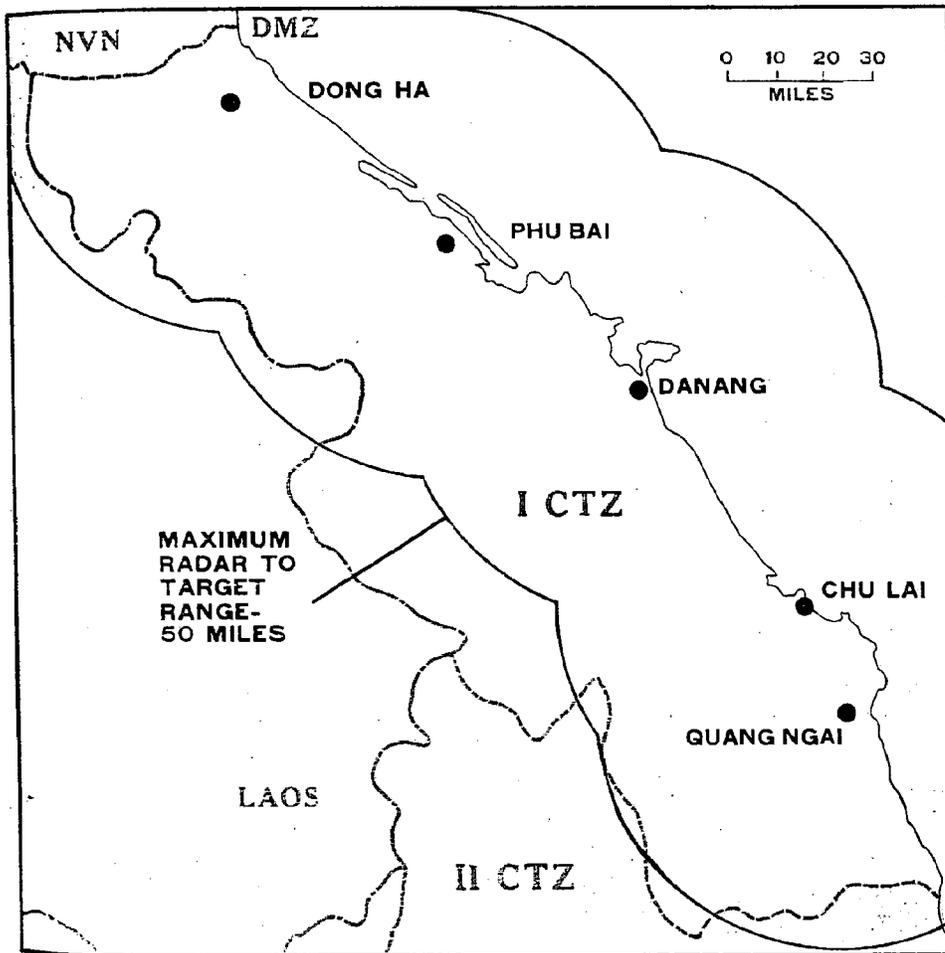
In addition to the offensive capability discussed above, ASRT's in RVN were utilized for accurate positioning of Marine helicopters delivering troops and supplies to forward areas, as well as for directing photo aircraft to assigned locations during the hours of darkness or low visibility.

The location of the Marine radar bombing installations and their effective area coverage is shown on the map on the following page.

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MARINE AIR SUPPORT RADAR TEAM COVERAGE IN I CTZ
NOVEMBER 1966



Site	Dong Ha	Phu Bai	Danang	Chu Lai	Quang Ngai	Nov. Total
Sorties Controlled	558	377	320	138	441	1,834
Tons Ordnance Expended	1,378	958	504	155	672	3,667

Arrival of New Aircraft

On 1 November, three EA-6A aircraft, of a group of five newly arrived at Danang following a trans-pacific flight ferry from MCAS El Toro, California, flew electronic

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countermeasure sorties over North Vietnam, the first time that this type aircraft had been flown in combat. The same day, twelve A-6A's arrived at Danang, completing the trans-oceanic ferry (Operation File Cabinet), in which aerial refueling was accomplished by organic Marine aircraft.

Helicopter Operations

Helicopter operations also were conducted at a slightly higher pace than the preceding month, with Marine pilots logging 33,496 sorties in November. Approximately 81% of the total helicopter effort supported III MAF operations during the month. As has been the case in previous months, over half of all sorties flown were engaged in troop or cargo carrying missions, lifting 51,726 passengers and 3,419 tons of cargo. In addition, helicopters accomplished a variety of other missions, including 2,739 armed helicopter, 265 search and rescue, 2,178 casualty evacuation, and 1,836 reconnaissance sorties.

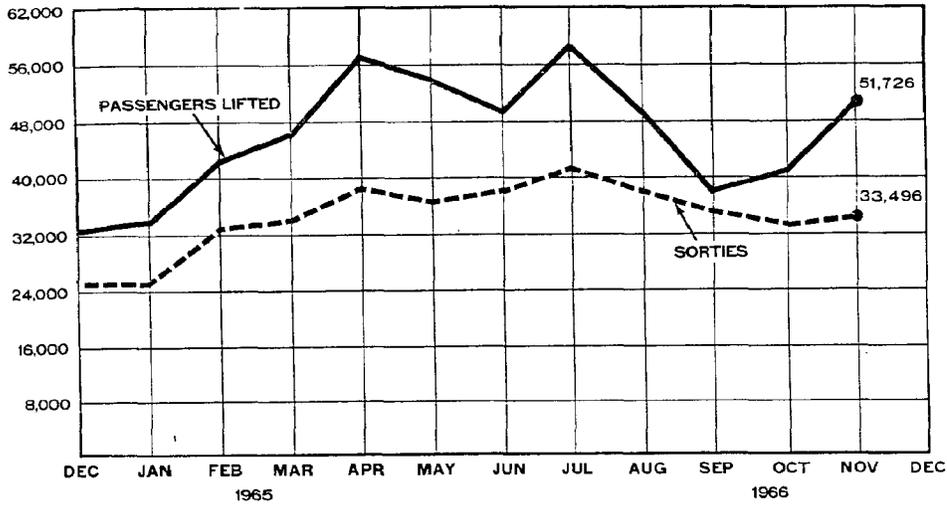
Four helicopters were lost during the month to enemy ground fire. The most costly of these losses occurred about mid-afternoon on the 14th, when an armed UH-1E was downed by enemy fire thirteen miles southwest of Danang. Three of the four man crew were killed. All three of the remaining combat losses resulted from enemy fire in or near landing zones. In addition, 84 helicopters received varying degrees of battle damage from enemy ground fire, and 27 passengers or crew were wounded.

The graph on the following page exhibits the number of helicopter sorties flown and passengers lifted since December 1965.

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HELICOPTER SORTIES AND PASSENGERS LIFTED

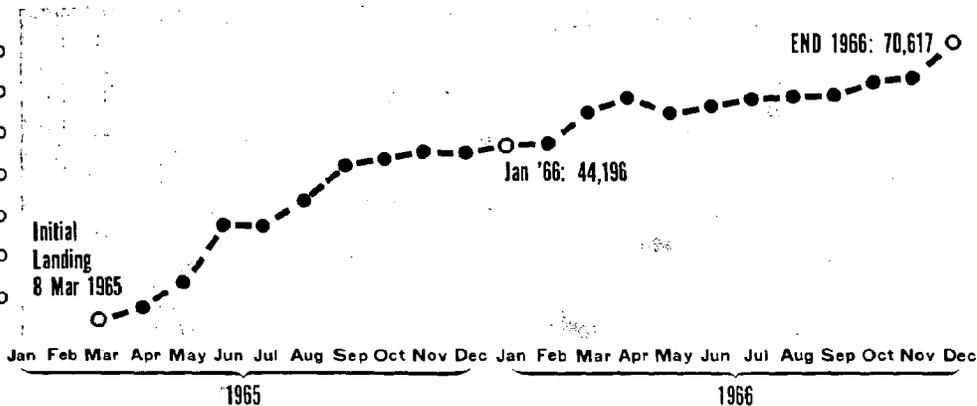


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SUMMARY

During 1966, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific put into the field the largest force since its amphibious operations at Okinawa in World War II. III MAF grew from 44,196 in January to 70,617 at year's end.

III MAF STRENGTH

Responsive to MACV directives, the overall 1966 Marine campaign was designed to maintain a balance between three simultaneous, mutually-supporting efforts. The first, a program of large unit operations, aims at attriting the enemy Main Force and regular units; the second, a counterguerrilla campaign, directed toward rooting out and destroying the guerrilla network; and the third, a system of comprehensive Revolutionary Development programs to help the Government of Vietnam consolidate local government control and help the peasant find a better and more secure life.

Progress during the year reflected the validity of this balanced campaign. By year's end, the Marine tactical areas had doubled in size, from 804 to 1,693 square

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miles, involving more than 1,077,000 people; the enemy had been largely eliminated from 66 villages (the number assessed at 60% or higher on the III MAF scale); public health, education, and transportation facilities were all growing; and the Combined Action Company program had flourished to 58 platoons.

In terms of direct enemy losses, Marines killed 10,627 during the year and captured 913 more. Based on a standard factor, 5,313 others were estimated to have died from wounds. The total loss thus inflicted on the enemy by the Marines in 1966 was calculated at 16,853.

During the first eight months of the year, the enemy attempted to escalate the conflict by a major troop build-up, both by infiltration of NVA forces from the north and by a heavy drawdown on guerrilla elements to strengthen the larger enemy units. This effort reached its climax in mid-summer when the enemy moved to establish himself in strength in Quang Tri province, near the Demilitarized Zone. The effort was unsuccessful. The enemy, met by a force which grew to some 17 Marine and Vietnamese battalions, was defeated in every major encounter, took painful losses, and withdrew a substantial number of his elements north of the DMZ. By the end of the year, his units remaining in Quang Tri were suffering from lowered morale and from logistic difficulties. Doubtless as a result of these developments, the final months of the year evidenced some shift, in this region, back down the insurgency scale, trending away from large unit combat, and toward intensified guerrilla tactics by smaller units.

Marine forces numbering some 10,000 men, which were shifted northward to meet the enemy's challenge were, for the most part, still operating near the DMZ at year's end, in a security, anti-infiltration and screening role. Their continued absence from the regions farther

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south in I CTZ had an unfavorable effect upon both Revolutionary Development progress and base defense.

A major development of the year occurred in December, with the decision to orient ARVN effort directly upon Revolutionary Development and to shift Marine forces to the I CTZ hinterland to assume the tasks hitherto pursued by the ARVN. This was a major change in thrust, and the measure of its success will go to the heart of the training and motivation of the Vietnamese soldier, who has never been conditioned to the importance of ministering to the needs of the people. There is little likelihood that the ARVN reorientation can be accomplished without much guidance and side-by-side participation by our forces. At the same time, we are also committed to relieve the ARVN of its back-country tasks. The force level implications are plain. Meanwhile, problems raised by the conversion were beginning to appear by year's end, and it is already clear that this program, and its costs, represents the great unanswered question facing Marine forces in 1967.

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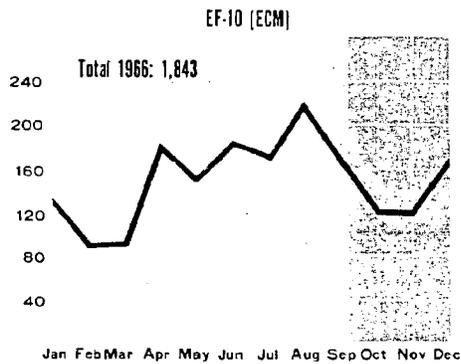
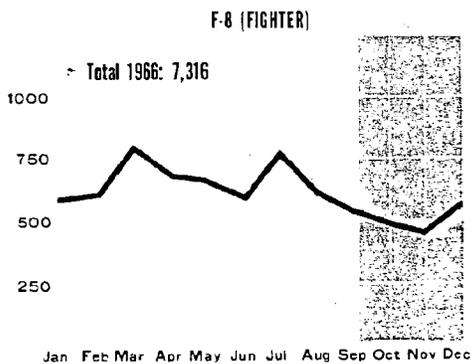
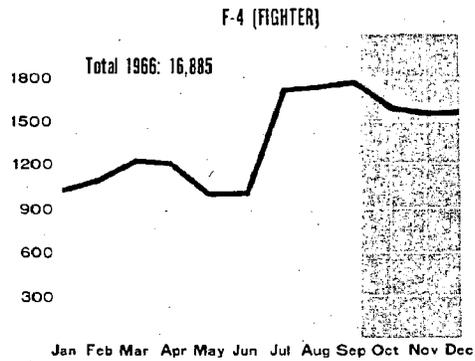
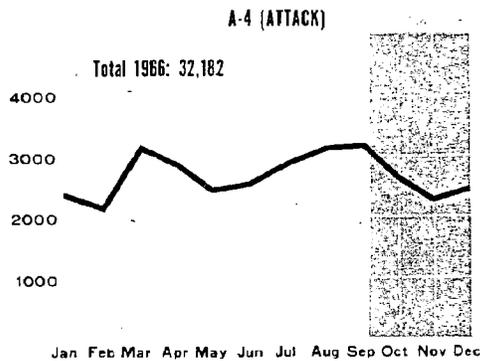
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AIR OPERATIONS

Throughout 1966, the air operations of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing contributed substantially to realization of the six Honolulu Goals. During the year, 60,544 fixed wing combat/combat support sorties were flown in support of III MAF and other Free World forces. Monthly sorties for the majority of Marine fixed wing aircraft are shown below.

MARINE FIXED WING AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY-1966



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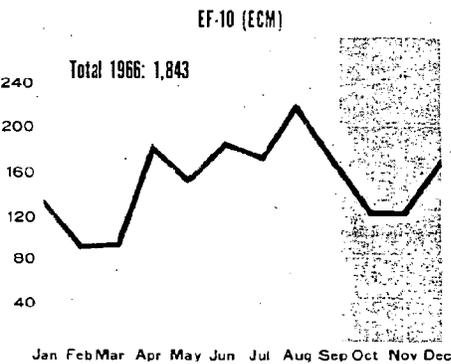
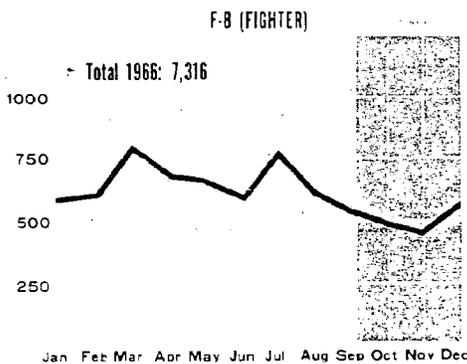
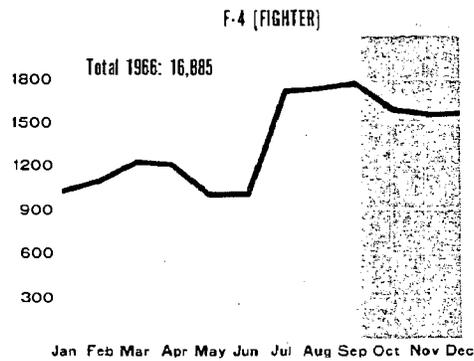
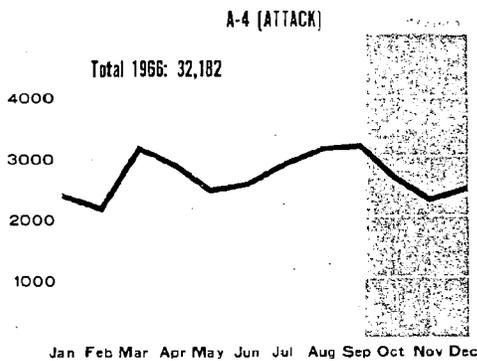
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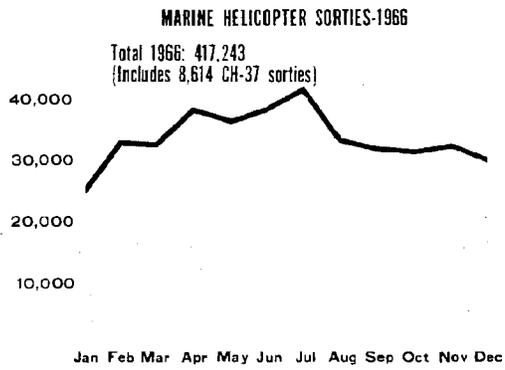
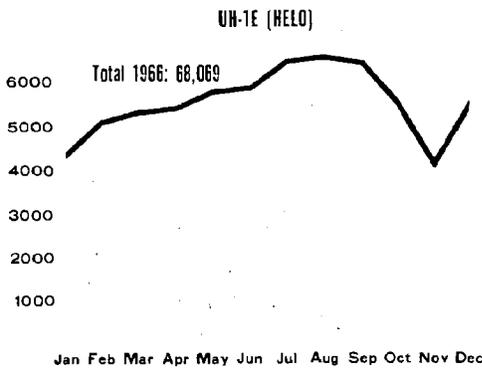
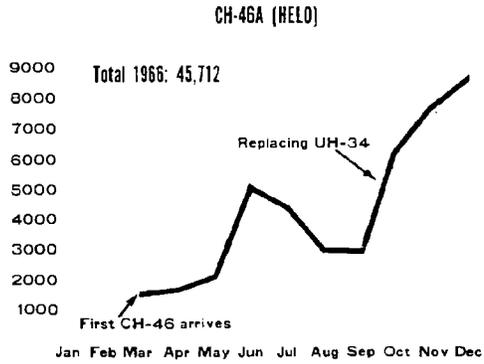
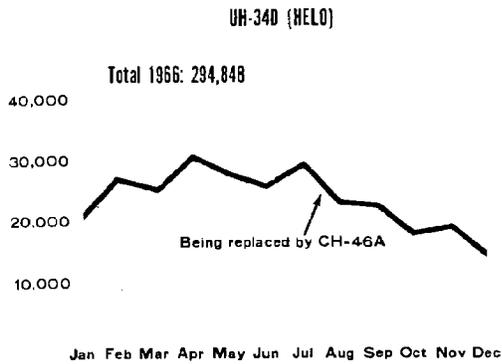
MARINE FIXED WING AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY-1966



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MARINE HELICOPTER ACTIVITY-1966

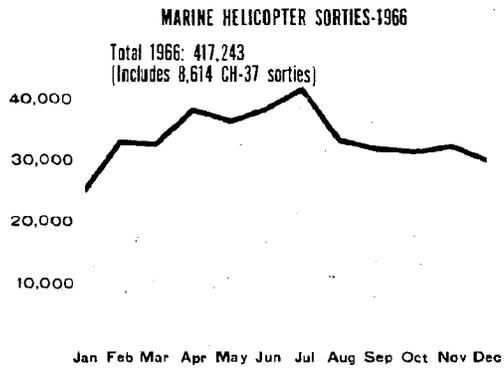
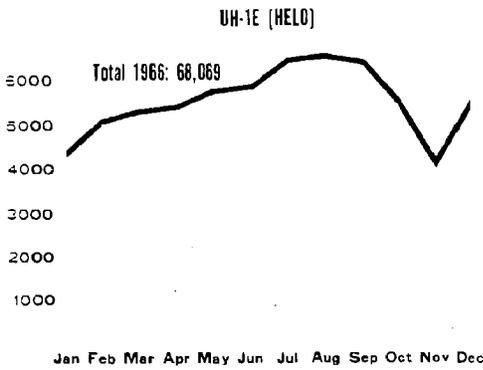
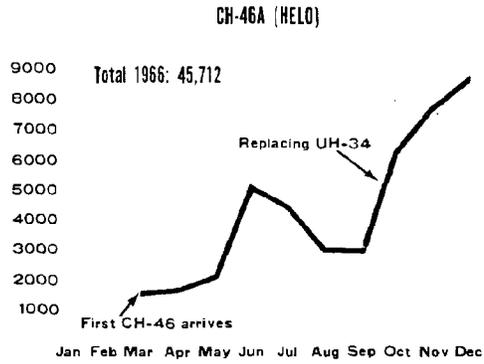
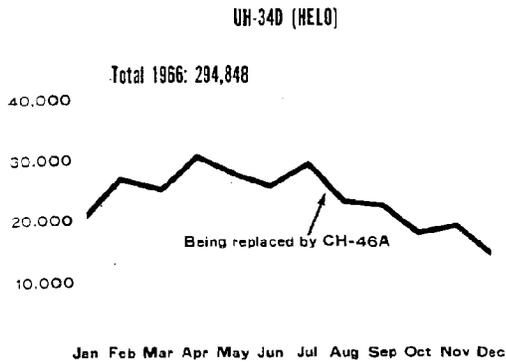


In December, a total of 6,293 combat and combat support sorties were flown - 82% of them in support of III MAF operations and 270 of them supporting ARVN and ROK Marines in the Republic of Vietnam. 643 additional sorties were flown in North Vietnam and Laos. Of these, 4,252 attack sorties delivered 6,345 tons of ordnance on enemy targets. The 370 sorties flown by the 12 A-6A Intruders delivered a significant portion - 1,888 tons, or 28% of the total ordnance with less than 8% of the attack aircraft. The greater portion of the A-6A strikes (325 sorties) were flown under night or limited visibility day-

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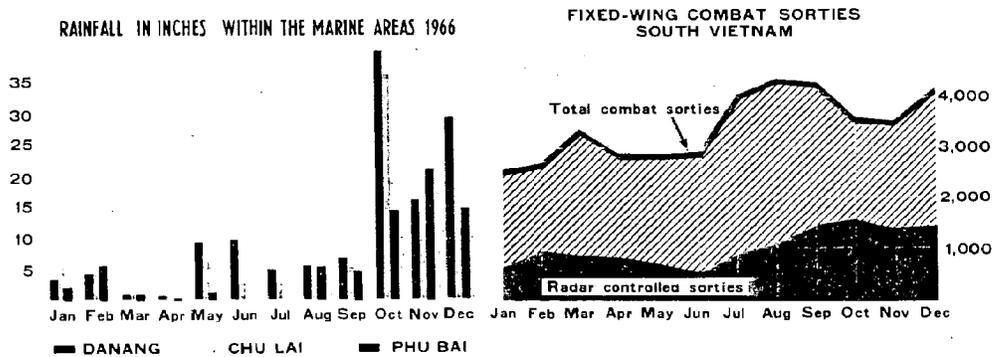
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Bomb damage assessment showed 1,849 enemy buildings destroyed or damaged, and 43 sampans destroyed with another 11 damaged. Confirmed kills credited to the aviation side of the air/ground team, during December, were 124, or 19% of the total NVA/VC killed by Marines in I CTZ.



While December weather in base and target areas caused the cancellation of over 500 sorties, ASRTs controlled 1,467 air strikes in support of Marine and ARVN units during conditions of low visibility.

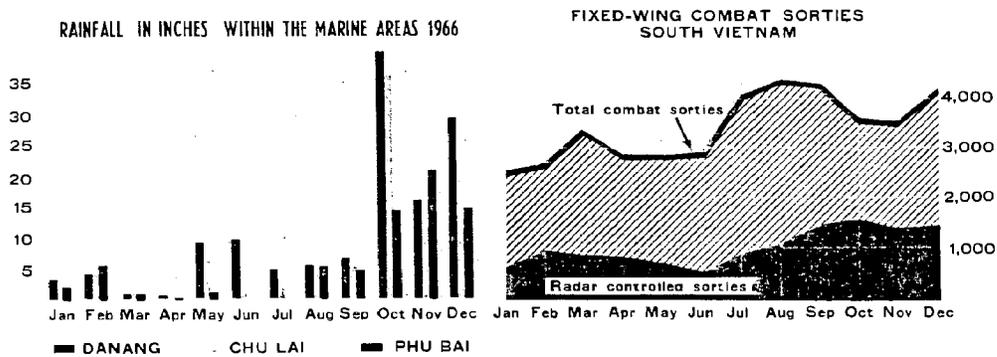
Helicopter operations were also hampered by adverse weather and low ceilings. Nevertheless, 30,192 sorties were flown on combat troop lift, combat logistic support, medical evacuation, search and rescue, tactical control and reconnaissance missions. Over 79.5% of these missions supported Marine operations. In Operation Sierra, the battalion size counterguerrilla operation in a 270 square mile area south of Quang Ngai, 376 helo sorties were flown in the first 19 days of the operation. The results obtained, to 31 December, are largely due to the

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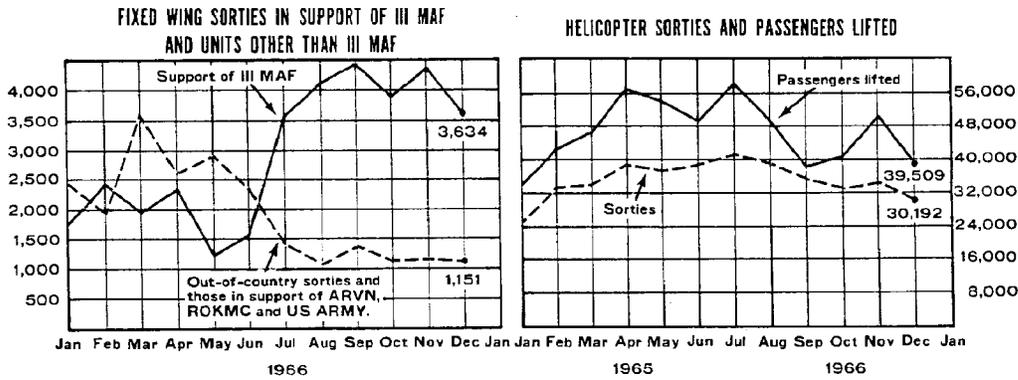
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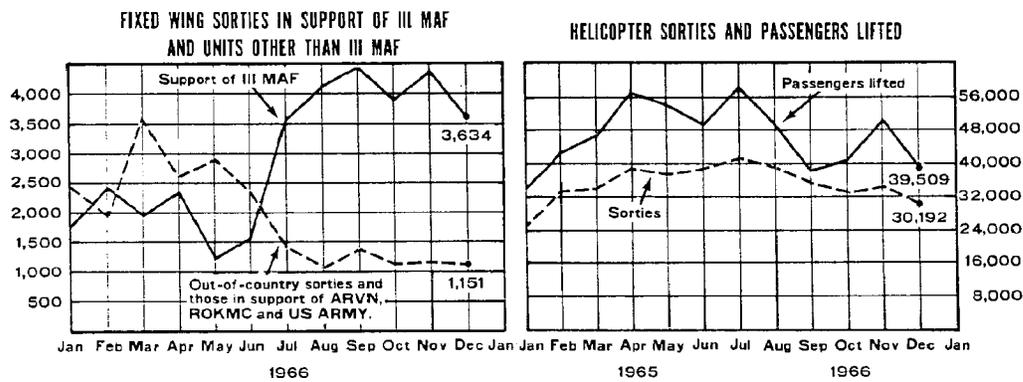
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