

HEADQUARTERS
Marine Aircraft Group 36
1st Marine Aircraft Wing FMFPac
FPO San Francisco 96602

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13 May 1966

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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing (Attn: ACofS, G-3)
Subj: Command Chronology (U) *Apr 66*
Ref: (a) Wing Order 5750.1B

Encl: ✓(1) Part One - Organizational Data
✓(2) Part Two - Narrative Summary
✓(3) Part Three - Significant Events
✓(4) Part Four - Supporting Documents

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are hereby submitted for the month of April 1966.

William G. Johnson
WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

Copies to:

- CG, 1st MAW (Copy 1 of 7 plus enclosures)
CG, 1st MAW (Copies 2 thru 5 of 7 less enclosure (4))
File (Copy 6 less enclosure (4))
S & C (Copy 7 of 7 less enclosure (4))

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<i>2102-66</i>	<i>1</i>

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MAG-36

CND Chron

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PART I

1. Organizational Data - Period 1 to 30 April 1966.

a. Commanding Officer and staff of MAG-36:

CO	JOHNSON, William G.	COL
XC	PORTER, Mervin B.	LTCOL
ADJ	AMBROSE, Raymond H.	2NDLT
S-1	BRAY, Richard P.	MAJOR
S-2	YATES, Charles E.	CAPT
S-3	ZITNIK, Robert J.	LTCOL
S-4	GARROTTO, Alfred F.	LTCOL 1 to 22 Apr
	ALDWORTH, J.	LTCOL 22 to 30 Apr
Chaplain	HOWARD, Marvin	LCDR
Flt Surgeon	SCHENK, Thomas	LT (USN)
MTO	MOFFETT, Forrest L.	CAPT
EMB	PARKER, George R.	2NDLT
CRD	PARKER, George R.	2NDLT
MAINT	SCOTT, L. U.	1STLT
LEGAL	TROYER, Paul D.	1STLT 1 Apr
	MEISSNER, H. W.	CAPT 10 Apr to 30 Apr
COMM	MEEKS, Clarence I.	CAPT
Civil Affairs	MERRIT, Max A.	MAJOR
Avn Safety	BONNEY, R. A.	MAJOR

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NATOPS	KUGL, Richard A.	MAJOR
Security	JESSON, Thomas F.	CAPT 1 - 15 April
	TORREY, Phillip H.	CAPT 15 - 30 April

b. Commanders and Staff of attached units:

H&MS-36

CO	MOONEY, Thomas G.	LTCOL
ED	HATCH, Robert D	MAJOR
MAINT O	SCOTT, L. U.	1STLT

MABS-36

CO	TWINE, McDonald D.	LTCOL
XO	KENNEDY, Jack A.	MAJOR 1 to 8 Apr
	COLLINS, Michael E.	CAPT 9 to 30 Apr
OPS	COLLINS, Michael E.	CAPT

HMM-261

CO	COSTELLO, Keith W.	LTCOL
XO	GUAY, Robert P.	MAJOR
OPS	PATE, Gerald S.	MAJOR

HMM-362

CO	ALDWORTH, J.	LTCOL 9 to 22 Apr
	GARROTTO, Alfred F.	LTCOL 23 to 30 Apr
XO	DUVALL, R. L.	MAJOR
OPS	SMITH, W. R.	MAJOR

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HMM-363

CO	MC GOUGH, J. D.	LTCOL
XO	VOBORA, G. J.	MAJOR
OPS	GRAHAM, W. H.	MAJOR

VMO-6

CO	FRESSON, Robert R.	MAJOR
XO	FURCELL, Robert D.	MAJOR 1 to 15 Apr
	GOODSELL, William J.	MAJOR 15 to 30 Apr
OPS	HARNEY, Herbert J. Jr.	MAJOR 1 to 15 Apr
	FURCELL, Robert D.	MAJOR 15 to 30 Apr

2. Task Organization and Unit Location:

Unit Designation	Location	Date
H2MS-36	KY HA	1 - 30 Apr 66
MABS-36	KY HA	1 - 30 Apr 66
HMM-361	KY HA	1 - 30 Apr 66
HMM-362	(SLF) KY HA	1 - 8 Apr 66 8 - 30 Apr 66
HMM-363	KY HA	1 - 30 Apr 66
HMM-364	KY HA (SLF)	1 - 8 Apr 66 8 - 30 Apr 66
VMO-6	KY HA	1 - 30 Apr 66

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3. Average monthly strength: April 1966

Unit	Mar. Off.	Mar. Enl.	Navy Off.	Navy Enl.
H&MS-36	35	324	0	0
MAES-36	14	409	4	24
HMM-261	47	167	0	0
HMM-362	47	164	1	3
HMM-363	51	174	1	0
VMO-6	37	141	0	0

Average monthly strength of MAG-36 was 231 officers and 1379 enlisted.

4. The following VIPS visited the MAG-36 area during the month of April 1966:

Date

VIP

4 April

Senator Gale W. MCGEE
Honorable Paul R. IGNATIUS ASST SEC DEF
Honorable Cyrus R. VANCE DEP SEC DEF
MGEN FIELDS

18 April

BGEN ELWOOD
BGEN STILES

22 April

LTGEN WALT
MAJGEN MCCUTCHEON

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PART II

1. Narrative Summary:

a. In the month of April MAG-36's combat operations continued at the rapid pace characteristic of the Vietnamese conflict. During the first complete month of operations in conjunction with the 1st Marine Division, MAG-36 participated in several large operations against the Viet Cong within Quang Ngai Province.

(1) On 6 April, HMM-364 replaced HMM-362 with the SLF and HMM-362 returned to the operational control of MAG-36 at Ky Ha.

(2) Operation IOWA commenced at 080800H with the lift of 400 troops of 3rd Bn. 1st Marines into an unsecure LZ at BT 375 125. The LZ was prepared by fixed wing aircraft of MAG-11 and MAG-12 and the high ground west of the zone was effectively blanketed with smoke from the MAG-12 A-4 smoker. One UH-34D of HMM-261 made a precautionary landing at a secure zone on Ky Hoa Island (BT 523 123) due to engine malfunction. A CH-46A from MAG-16 lifted a new engine to the downed aircraft and it was recovered by 081835H. Med Evac and logistic support was maintained throughout this local operation.

(3) On 12 April Operation NEVADA began with the lift of two battalions of the 7th Marines from the Chu Lai Combat Base to unsecured LZ's at BS 688 848 and BS 692 882. VMO-6 TAC(A)'s controlled Oxwood and Condole aircraft in preparing the two zones. Four armed UH-1E's provided close-up fire suppression during the landing. In the course of the lift one UH-34D was struck by ground fire from the vicinity of BS 688 848. A total of 40 UH-34D's of HMM-261, HMM-362, and HMM-363 and eight armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 were utilized during this lift. 47 troops of the 1st Recon Bn. were emplaced at BS 658 881, BS 703 894 and BS 729 900 by eight UH-34D's of HMM-362 to report any enemy movement from the area of operations. Two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 remained on station throughout the day to provide observation and fire support for the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 7th Marines. MAG-36 established a forward CP for Colonel W. G. JOHNSON, the Tactical Air Commander, co-located with the 7th Marines at Buddha Mountain (BS 660 755). Direct support of the engaged battalion was provided by six UH-34D's operating from the LSA at Quang Ngai. During the afternoon, eight UH-34D's of HMM-363 shifted 190 troops of 1/7 from BS 693 879 to an unsecure LZ at BS 734 877 without incident. On 13 April, the second day of Operation NEVADA, the days activities commenced with the lift of "F" Company, 1/7 from BS 695 855 to a blocking position at BS 727 857 without incident at

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0930H. This movement was followed by the lift of 250 troops of 1st Battalion, 7th Marines from BS 732 872 to unsecure zones at BS 765 834 and BS 780 826 by 24 UH-34D's of HMM-261 and HMM-363. Two 106 Recoilless rifles on mules and seven tons of cargo were also landed. (Annex A, Tab A). VMO-6 provided TAC(A) and escort for the lift and utilized fixed wing aircraft to suppress enemy fire at BS 725 880 and BS 730 879. One UH-34D was hit in the pick-up zone resulting in minor damage. Six UH-34D's operated from the Quang Ngai LSA throughout the day on direct support missions for the engaged ground units. On the next day, 14 April, 24 UH-34D's lifted 366 ARVN Rangers from BS 745 823 to BS 855 730. VMO-6 UH-1E's escorted and provided TAC(A) over the zones. Two VC were killed by the escorting UH-1E's as they attempted to cross the river at BS 573 755. Several armed UH-1E search and destroy missions were performed in support of ARVN units sweeping to the west of Quang Ngai. One VC was killed in the river at BS 573 755. Enemy resistance to the ground forces advance at BS 545 252 was suppressed by destroying nine structures. A total of eighteen structures were destroyed in this operation. A raft of supplies was also sunk in the Son Tra Khuc River. Two gunships operating in support of the ARVN forces under the control of a Bird Dog aircraft killed six VC (confirmed) and six VC (possible) at BS 548 754. Light small arms fire was encountered throughout the area and .50 caliber fire was received from BS 537 759. At 0730H the 15th of April, 115 troops of 1/7 were lifted from BS 660 755 to BS 779 826 by eight UH-34D's of HMM-363 escorted by two armed UH-1E's. This was followed by the retraction of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines from BS 785 855 to the Chu Lai Combat Base by 24 UH-34D's of MAG-36 accompanied by two UH-1E's and 2 A-4's. On 16 April the persistence of MAG-36 helos was demonstrated during the following skirmish. At 1120H two HMM-261 UH-34D's launched to pick up heat casualties of "G" Company, 2/5 from a secure LZ at BT 433 051. Upon his approach to the zone the lead aircraft flown by Capt. F. P. ACCOMANDO and 1/LT T. E. LEIBY came under heavy fire. Both pilots received minor scratches from plexiglass fragments which damaged the rotor blades of the aircraft to such an extent that the pilot was forced to make a precautionary landing at Hill 69. HMM-261 immediately launched a second Med Evac flight accompanied by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6. The lead UH-34D of this flight, flown by Capt. J. R. CRUSING and Capt. J. P. KENNY also took heavy small arms fire on final resulting in a minor wound to the gunner in the aircraft Corporal J. T. FERRARO. The aircraft aborted the mission and proceeded to 1st Med Battalion to get treatment for the gunners' wound. Two UH-34D's of HMM-363 operating in the vicinity of the action on a normal resupply then volunteered to attempt the evac. With the cover of three UH-1E's (an additional UH-1E had diverted from a TAOR recon to assist in the evac) 1/Lt R. J. JANSEN

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and his co-pilot, then successfully evacuated the wounded Marines from the zone. Upon procuring a replacement aircraft for his damaged one, Capt. CRUSING of HMM-261 launched once more to evacuate the heat casualties that the Med Evac had originally been called for. He encountered only light fire during this successful pick-up. During the process of running this Med Evac mission the ground commander called for a Sparrow Hawk flight to relieve the pressure on the ground unit. At 1238H, three UH-34D's of HMM-362 and 1 UH-1E of VMO-6 launched to insert an 18 man squad at BT 442 050. During this landing fire was received from three sides of the zone hitting two of the UH-34D's. The three UH-1E's operating in support of the Med Evac flights in the area applied suppressive fire for the landing. Upon completion of the Sparrow Hawk flight and the Med Evacs, VMO-6 maintained a TAC(A) and observation flight over the area throughout the afternoon. On 17 April at 0730H 24 UH-34D's of MAG-36 retracted 889 troops of 1st Battalion 7th Marines from BS 778 827 to the Chu Lai Combat Base. VMO-6 UH-1E's and Oxwood A-4's provided air cover for this retraction. This lift concluded Operation NEVADA. (See Annex A).

(4) The 19th of April was marked by the midmorning lift of 186 troops of "F" Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines from LZ Carp to an unsecure zone at BS 462 962. The zone was prepped by artillery and two VMO-6 UH-1E's and six A-4's provided air cover. Fire was received from a village at BS 471 958 hitting one UH-34D. The escorts, both fixed and rotary winged, applied suppressive fire to the target.

(5) Operation HOT SPRINGS commenced on 21 April with the simultaneous lift of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines and 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines to a zone at BS 523 890 and the lift of the 1st VN Marines Battalion and 5th ARVN Airborne to a zone about 1000 meters south. The operation was initiated by information gained from a VC rallier and proved to be one of the most profitable in which MAG-36 has been involved so far. The object of this operation was to destroy the enemy forces reported to have returned to the area so recently cleared by Operations UTAH and TEXAS during March of 1966. Only light opposition was met during the assault and a large amount of enemy weapons, including six 12.7AA guns, were captured by the ground forces to the great satisfaction of the pilots of MAG-36 who had encountered these weapons on previous operations. During the initial lift an armed UH-1E flown by Capt. W. H. HUFFCUT of VMO-6 received a .50 caliber hit in the cockpit. The armor plating on the pilots' seat saved Capt. HUFFCUT from serious injury and he received only a minor scratch from shrapnel.

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During the afternoon of the 21st, thirty-two UH-34D's of MAG-36 lifted the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines into the operating area (BS 567 825). Some light fire was received from BS 581 826 but no aircraft were hit. This operation amply demonstrated MAG-36's ability to perform on short notice and at the highest efficiency. In a little more than twenty-four hours MAG-36, under the direction of Colonel W. G. JOHNSON, who acted as Tactical Air Commander for this operation, had planned and successfully executed the assault landing of five battalions in the operating area. Eight UH-34D's operated out of Quang Ngai ISA in direct support of the engaged ground forces for the duration of this operation. The 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines was withdrawn from the HOT SPRINGS area on the 22nd by thirty-two UH-34D's and 2 armed UH-1E's. MAG-36 support of Operation HOT SPRINGS was concluded with the escort of the convoy of returning troops from the operating area to the Chu Lai Combat Base by armed UH-1E's of VMO-6. In the course of this mission heavy fire was received from a village at BS 582 950. When the UH-1E delivered suppressive fire into the area the fire intensified. The UH-1E then called for fixed wing air support and acted as TAC(A) for two flights of MAG-12 A-1's who struck the village with napalm and bombs. (See Annex B)

(6) The northwestern section of the Chu Lai TAOR received the attention of MAG-36 during the closing days of April as Operation WYOMING was begun. On 26 April, thirty-two UH-34D's of MAG-36, accompanied by four armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted 516 troops of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines into an unsecure zone at BT 320 140. Some very light sniper fire was encountered but no aircraft were hit and the operation proceeded smoothly. Upon conclusion of the main lift eight UH-34D's of HMM-362 lifted recon teams to positions east and west of the LZ proper to observe any enemy movement from the area. The aircraft then brought 587 troops of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines from their home base at Hill 69 to a zone at BT 335 182 east of the original one. Logistic and Med Evac support of the two battalions in the field was performed by MAG-36 throughout the operation which concluded on 30 April with the retraction of 3/1 from BT 366 055 to Ky Ha AF by 18 UH-34D's of HMM-261 and HMM-362. Although the flight received fire from the vicinity of the LZ, the escorting UH-1E's and A-1's were unable to return fire due to the proximity of friendly troops. The UH-1E's were able to apply suppressive fire to the enemy at BT 357 652 during the final stages of the lift. During the logistics missions flown in support of the ground units MAG-36 received its only serious casualty of this operation when 1/Lt R. J. JANSEN of HMM-363 was struck in the shoulder by enemy small arms fire as the UH-34D departed from a company LZ at BT 438 100. The injured man was immediately evacuated to the 1st Med Bn. by the pilot of the aircraft.

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PART III

1. RECON INSERTIONS.

The month of April saw MAG-36 helicopters employed in almost daily insertions and retractions of reconnaissance teams throughout northern Quang Ngai and Southern Quang Tin Province. A total of twenty-five insertions of teams ranging in size from four to sixty-three men were performed. A total of nineteen withdrawals was also successfully executed. For a two week period in mid April, two UH-34D's of HMM-362 equipped with 300 ft hoist remained on a fifteen minute standby to support the operations of an Army unit conducting deep reconnaissance (Project Delta) to the west of Chu Lai. These aircraft launched seven times on emergency retractions of compromised teams deep in the mountains and successfully extracted teams by hoist. The policy of accompanying the UH-34D on recon insertions and retractions by armed UH-1E's is of significant value in reducing enemy sniper fire on these missions.

2. SEARCH AND RESCUE.

On the third of April two UH-34D's of HMM-364 were dispatched to search for a drowning victim who had fallen from a cliff in the vicinity of the LAAM Battery on Ky Hoa Island. The victim was soon located by the aircraft and the corpsman HN 2 A. J. LARSON was lowered by hoist to recover him. He was given mouth to mouth resuscitation throughout the trip to the 1st Med Battalion.

At 1900H on 14 April two UH-34D of HMM-363 on SAR standby were launched to recover the crew members of 2 Air Force B-57's which had apparently collided in the vicinity of grid square BT 4040. Three of the four crew members were picked up by the HMM-363 aircraft while the fourth man was rescued by the Air Force SAR helicopter from Danang. The crew members apparently unhurt, were taken to Danang.

The SAR UH-34D's have also been utilized to provide water hoist training for MAG-12 pilots throughout the afternoon of 5 April 1966. This water hoisting skill of MAG-36 was put to good use by Capt. R. C. MARSHALL of HMM-363 in his rescue of a Vietnamese civilian from his sinking boat during April. (See Annex C)

3. MED EVAC.

During April MAG-36 continually maintained two aircraft on a ten minute Med Evac alert. Through most of the month 2 UH-34D's were main-

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tained at Quang Ngai AF during daylight hours for I Corps Med Evac standby. These aircraft transported a total of 453 ill and wounded U. S. and ARVN personnel between the field and the various medical facilities of the I Corps area. The presence of the hospital ship, USS REPOSE, has aided significantly in providing specialized medical care in the shortest possible time to the helo evacuated battle casualty, particularly during large scale operations. Field Med Evacs were performed by MAG-36 aircraft despite the most hazardous conditions of battle, weather, terrain, and darkness. (See Annex D)

4. I CORPS RESUPPLY.

MAG-36 provided UH-34D's throughout the month to resupply the ARVN posts throughout the I Corps area. A total of 318.2 tons of cargo were lifted during 683 hours of flight time. (See Annex E.)

5. CHU LAI DEFENSE.

On 2 April MAG-36 became an integral part of the Chu Lai Defense Command of the 1st Marine Division, as a subsector command MAG-36 coordinates the security efforts of DET A MASS 2; MACS 7; 2nd Platoon, Co A, 1st Artrac Bn.; NSA Chu Lai; 1st Hospital Company; and MCB-3. A section of M-48 Tanks of the 1st Tank Battalion have been assigned in direct support of the security forces.

6. THE ARMED HUEY.

During MAG-36's tour in Vietnam the armed UH-1E, or "Gunship", as it is commonly known, has demonstrated its worth many times over. In April its versatility was exploited as it was used to support assault landings by the UH-34D's, and provide cover and observation for ground units. The value of the gunship is amply demonstrated by the cumulative totals for the month of April. 24 VC KBA (confirmed), 13 VC KBA (poss), and 4 structures destroyed. The armed UH-1E have done yeoman service as observation aircraft especially in close support of ground troops (See Annex F). The UH-1E's fill a vital gap between the defensive M-60's mounted in the UH-34D and the heavy ordnance of fixed wing aircraft. Its chief advantage is its ability to locate and attack the individual snipers and small groups of enemy so elusive in counter insurgent warfare. By virtue of being directly on the spot, in close contact with ground units, and having trained pilots for TAC(A), it can not only suppress fire in extremely close proximity to ground units, but can advise the ground commander of enemy activities and bring more fixed wing attack aircraft to bear on them.

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April's good weather allowed MAG-36's construction program to proceed at an increased pace. Fifteen structures, including a Post Office and Post Exchange were completed and the finishing touches were made on the MAG-36 Chapel. In addition, a TAFDS dispensing system was set up and is being maintained by MAG-36 personnel at the Tam Ky district headquarters. (See Annex G)

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DOCUMENTATION

PART IV

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✓ Annex C -	Newspaper Clipping of HMM-363 making Sea Rescue
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✓ Annex G -	Picture of MCAF, KY HA, RVN

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OPERATION NEVADA GETS GOOD RESULTS

CHU LAI—The men arched their backs and let the fresh warm water of the field shower splash against their dirty bodies. Four days of sweat and sand and dirt fell from the tired frames of 2nd Bn., Seventh Regiment Marines as they washed off the residue of Operation Nevada.

The battalion had covered more than 13,000 linear meters of Viet Cong territory, loaded more than 12 tons of rice the enemy would possibly eat and completed their sixth major operation against the Viet Cong since they landed here from Qui Nhon in November, 1965.

Nevada—

(Continued From Page 1)

the same. When the Marines stopped, talk of previous battles passed from author to author. The past loomed up like a sober reminder of readiness. New men in the battalion sat quietly but attentive, listening to the stories. When the units moved out on line again, the new men held their rifles a bit tighter, watched the terrain more carefully, became more alert.

Time and distance on Operation Nevada was measured by sweat. Corpmen walked within their areas of responsibility passing out salt tablets to keep the men from heat exhaustion. A few Marines fell victim to the heat as they trudged through heavy sand carrying 60-pound packs on their backs.

At dusk when the battalion set into position, entrenching tools could be heard chewing at the ground as Marines dug safely from enemy mortars.

When the battalion moved out toward the landing zone on the last day, Marines who had been on Operation Harvest Moon tensed and watched the thorny hedgerows and bushes for another possible ambush like they had experienced at Ky Phu.

"They're watching us," a perspiring Marine muttered as the battalion weaved along the village paths toward the landing zone, "They're watching us."

When they were loaded into the choppers, veteran Marines scanned the terrain carefully and held their stock grips firmly. The tension didn't relax until the last helicopter landed at the battalion's Chu Lai base.

Then the men shuffled easily toward their areas and the pleasure of a warm shower they had earned.

The enemy had been lucky. There was little contact. A few probes on the last night, a few suspects captured along the way, including a Viet Cong-paid teacher, summarized the enemy forces encountered. But the battalion was ready for anything.

Their creed, "Ready For Anything, Counting On Nothing" stuck in each man's mind. The operation was not a nothing. A Marine had been shot twice by sniper fire in a helicopter approaching the landing zone.

Experience, the hard, brutal, blood letting type that the battalion had known in Operation Utah and Harvest Moon, kept the Marines alert. Dispersion was emphasized and reemphasized from battalion commander to fire team leaders and was automatically contagious to the troops who had felt the sting of enemy fire on Utah and Harvest Moon.

Eyes flashed rapidly and professionally when battalion elements moved across open rice paddies, searching the paddy dikes for the unforgettable Viet Cong bunker slits — the same slits where the enemy had opened up with murderous .50 caliber machine gun fire during Operation Utah. On Utah the battalion met the hard corps Viet Cong face-to-face in an Agamemnon which yielded more than 600 dead enemy.

Operation Nevada was hot and humid. Operation Utah had been
(Continued on Back Page)

2 Annex A

Enclosure (4)
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OPERATION NEVADA STATISTICS

Dates	12 - 17 April
Sorties	4,267
Flight Hours	1372.0
Troops/Pax	6767
Tons Cargo	274
Battle Evacs	185
A/C Hit	7
A/C Down	0
WIA	9
KIA	0
VC KBA (CONF)	9
VC KBA (POSS)	9

Annex A Tab A

3

Enclosure (4)

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'NEVADA' RESULTS RELEASED

CHU LAI — Operation Nevada was wrapped up by U. S. Marine and Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces April 18 with a reported 38 Viet Cong killed and five captured. Marine and ARVN casualties were light for the eight-day operation.

Helilifted April 11, into an area east of Highway One immediately north of the Tra Khuc river at Quang Ngai, the 1st and 2nd Bn.'s of the Seventh Marine Regiment, and troops from the 2nd Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam advanced against light opposition toward the Batangan peninsula, the site of a reported Viet Cong POW camp.

No prison camp was found but the Marine and ARVN troops combed caves and bunkers, uncovering large quantities of rice, Viet Cong documents and weapons. Eighty Viet Cong suspects and 14 small arms were taken during the operation. In addition, 100 refugees were escorted from the battle area to be relocated by the government of the Republic of Vietnam.

The infantry battalions were supported by artillery from the 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines, and aircraft and helicopter support was provided by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. On April 12, aircraft from the Marine Air Group (MAG)-12 accounted for 40 Viet Cong possibly killed, when they were caught in the open by both air and artillery.

Heading the command group for the operation was Col. Eugene Haffey, commanding officer, Seventh Marine Regiment.

Although the Batangan Peninsula had been the scene of several operations, the most recent being Operation Piranha, Col. Haffey stated, "This is the first time we have had the time to really clean out the area. In many respects this has been a good operation." —

4 Annex A - Tab B

Enclosure (4)

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5 Annex A - Tab C

Enclosure (1)
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OPERATION HOT SPRINGS STATISTICS

Dates - 21 - 22 April

Sorties - 708

Flight Hours - 548.6

Troops/Pax - 4135

Tons Cargo - 36.4

Battle Evacs - 46

A/C Hit - 4

A/C Down - 0

WIA - 1

KIA - 0

VC KBA (CONF) - 12

VC KBA (POSS) - 0

6 Annex B

Enclosure (4)

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HMM-363 Copter Crew Makes Daring Sea Rescue

By: Sgt. S. R. Driver

CHU LAI, Vietnam, April 18—Waves crashed over a Vietnamese fisherman hanging onto the mast and sail of his sunken boat.

A Marine lance corporal was lowered by a helicopter hoist to pull him to safety.

LCpl. Robert M. Conner, was flying aerial gunner on a Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron, (HMM)-363 aircraft sent to investigate reports of an overturned fishing boat six miles northwest of here, and a mile offshore.

Searching the South China Sea in the reported area, Capt. Robert C. Marshall, piloted his helo low over the water as gusts of wind up to 30 knots whipped the aircraft making maneuvering difficult.

The crew chief, SSgt. Francis C. Bonin, lowered the helo's hoist cable with a sling spotting the Vietnamese fisherman hanging onto the mast and sail, all that was left of his boat.

Pulling the sling through the water, Capt. Marshall maneuvered the aircraft to the stranded Viet-

namese.

The fisherman reached out and grabbed the sling but refused to let go of the mast.

Conner called on the radio and told the pilot he would go in after the Vietnamese.

Bonin raised the hoist and Conner hooked it around himself then was lowered into the 14-foot high waves.

The wind was still blowing the helo around and Marshall had to pull Conner through the water to get him near the fisherman.

Reaching out and grabbing the fisherman, Conner tried to get

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Sea Rescue—

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him to release the mast and sail.

The Vietnamese refused.

Battered against the heavy wooden mast and dunked under the crashing waves, Conner managed to wrap himself around the Vietnamese while the pilot backed the helo up, sliding the fisherman's grip off the slick mast.

The crew chief ran the hoist lifting the two up to the helo.

As they helped the Vietnamese into the aircraft he accidentally bumped into Conner, causing him to lose his grip and fall back into the water from 30 feet.

With his life preserver on he bobbed up and down in the waves.

Marshall again put the hoist through the water until Conner could hook onto the sling and be lifted to safety.

A quick trip to "B" Med and a check up found the fisherman and Marine okay.

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'364 Pilot Drops In For 'Hot Zone' Evac

CHU LAI—Literally dropping the last 40 feet into a landing zone, a Marine helicopter pilot braved Viet Cong fire to evacuate wounded Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) soldiers.

Assigned med-evac standby for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-364, 1stLt. Robert A. Patneau, and his crew, manned one aircraft of a two-plane flight after receiving a call that ARVN soldiers were under heavy small arms fire and several were wounded 15 miles southwest of here.

"Could HMM-364 assist?"

Affirmative.

Arriving at the zone 1stLt. Patneau landed and began loading the wounded ARVN.

1stLt. Robert W. Kirby, his wingman, began approaching the zone and came under heavy small arms fire.

Flying in orbit out of range of the VC small arms fire, Kirby waited until Patneau had cleared the zone, then flew through the VC fire, landed, loaded up and took off for Quang Ngai hospital.

The mission had called for only one trip, but the pilots, seeing more wounded in the zone, knew they had to go back.

Rather than return to the LZ empty, they loaded their 'copters with artillery and rifle ammunition for the troops in the zone.

Beginning his descent towards the zone Patneau spiraled his helicopter down towards the ground some distance away from the zone, then made a tree hopping approach at full speed.

The Viet Cong began laying down a blanket of fire over the zone from the north, east and west.

A gusty tail wind caught the aircraft and began floating it until it looked as though they would over-shoot the zone.

Clutching the controls tightly, Lt. Patneau spun the aircraft around in the opposite direction and made a controlled drop into the LZ.

The ammo was unloaded and med-evacs put on board and they again returned to Quang Ngai hospital, then back to Ky Ha, their home base.

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Loadmasters Overcome Barrier In Lift of Vital Cargo by '261

CHU LAI—More than 80,000 pounds of rice and ammunition line the runway at Quang Ngai Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) outposts, as eight helicopters from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (MM)-261 from Ky Ha landed to haul the vital cargo.

With the helo's came four HMM-261 loadmasters, SSgt. Ralph S. Carrop, Sgt. Richard G. Howard, Cpl. Marcus L. Carter, and LCpl. Charles P. Munt.

These four were working with a Vietnamese interpreter responsible for insuring that the stacks of supplies were loaded on the correct helicopters and sent to the right outpost.

Working quickly they directed the helos in next to the stacks of supplies, loaded them up and the long afternoon's work had begun.

LCpl. Munt accompanied the first flight to the outpost of An Hoa. On the return flight he had to group 80 Vietnamese passengers into small units to be flown out.

There was no interpreter and through hand and arm motions he overcame the language barrier and organized the passengers into lines to await the next flight, then climbed aboard the

last helicopter out.

Through the heat of the afternoon they worked with the sand, dirt and sweat turning into rivulets of mud running down their bodies.

As darkness began to set in and the supplies were gone, the weary loadmasters climbed aboard the HMM-261 helos for the last load of the day. Their trip back to Chu Lai.

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Our 'Eyes' In The Air; The Chopper And Its Crew

CHU LAI—"Those Marines up there in the choppers are our 'eyes'—as long as they're up there I feel a little safer."

This is the way 1stLt. Wayne M. Lingenfelter, commanding officer of "K" Co., Seventh Marine Regiment, feels about the role Marine helicopters play in the Marine air ground team.

Two platoons of "K" Co. were wading through rice paddies while the third platoon and the company command group moved down a small road to their right and Marine gunships flew overhead.

It was the second day of Operation Virginia, and the company was pushing hard toward an area known to be filled with Viet Cong.

Suddenly, one of the gunships opened fire on a small hill just ahead of the Marines.

At the first burst of fire the entire hill seemed to erupt with automatic weapons fire directed both at the choppers and Marines on the ground.

While the Marines in the gunships continued to pour a withering fire at the hill, "K" Co. went into action on the ground.

They too concentrated their fire-power on the hill, as another platoon rushed the hill to finish off the enemy.

When the skirmish ended it was estimated that a platoon-sized force of the enemy had been laying in ambush, waiting for the Marines on the ground.

"We probably would have walked right into the enemy's trap if the choppers hadn't been up there," Lingenfelter said.

"I'm glad they're up there looking out for us, and I'm really glad they're on our side," he added.

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Enclosure (4)
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