

Prov MAG-39
SEC# 543-68

HEADQUARTERS
Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
Fleet Marine Force Pacific
FPO San Francisco, 96602

3:RRR:vd
5750
13 October 1968

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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, First Marine Aircraft Wing (G-3)
Subj: Command Chronology for the period of 1-30 September 1968;
submission of
Ref: (a) WgO 5750.1C

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
✓(2) Command Chronology for Provisional Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 39
✓(3) Command Chronology for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161
✓(4) Command Chronology for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262
✓(5) Command Chronology for Marine Observation Squadron 6
✓(6) Command Chronology for Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 62
✓(7) Command Chronology for Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 66

1. In accordance with instructions contained in reference (a), enclosures (1) through (7) are submitted herewith.

W. Sienko
W. SIENKO

1st MAF SEC No.	Copy No.
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PROVISIONAL MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 39

Command Chronology

1 September 1968 to 30 September 1968

PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

PART III

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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5750PART I ORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. Staff

a. Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39

(1) Col.	Walter SIENKO	1-30 Sep 68	C. O.
(2) LtCol.	Louis A. GULLING	1-30 Sep 68	X. O.
(3) Capt.	Lawrence E. TANKSLEY	1-30 Sep 68	S-1/Adjutant
(4) Maj.	John A. HATHAWAY	1-30 Sep 68	S-2
(5) Maj.	Arthur C. CRANE	1-21 Sep 68	S-3
(6) Maj.	Charles E. CANNON	22-30 Sep 68	S-3
(7) Maj.	David G. WORKMON	1-30 Sep 68	S-4
(8) Maj.	William A. MCGAW Jr.	1-16 Sep 68	Avn Safety O
(9) Maj.	Robert N. SIMPSON	17-30 Sep 68	Avn Safety O
(10) LCdr.	Rodney R. SCHEER	1-30 Sep 68	Chaplain
(11) Lt.	Drewry H. MORRIS	1-30 Sep 68	Flight Surgeon

b. Provisional Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 39

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (2)

c. Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (3)

d. Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (4)

e. Marine Observation Squadron 6

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (5)

f. Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 62

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (6)

g. Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 66

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (7)

ENCLOSURE (1)

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2. Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing
 Fleet Marine Force Pacific, FPO San Francisco, 96602
 Quang Tri Air Base, Republic of Vietnam
 1-30 September 1968

3. Average Monthly Strength

Marine Officers	204	Marine Enlisted	1075
Navy Officers	5	Navy Enlisted	17

4. Important Visitors:

Major General ARTHUR H. ADAMS, Commanding General Third Marine Aircraft Wing

Major General J. QUILTER, Commanding General First Marine Aircraft Wing

PART II NARRATIVE SUMMARY

During the month of September, units of Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39 supported the following operations: SCOTLAND II and LANCASTER II.

Operation LANCASTER II utilized most of the Group's resources in troop lifts, resupply, recon team insertions and extractions, VIP hops and med-evac missions.

Statistically, the aircraft of ProvMAC-39 flew 12,612 sorties in 4,382.9 hours. There were 26,528 troops carried as well as 1,170.0 tons of cargo. There were 769 med-evac missions flown carrying 501 emergencies, 1091 priorities and 1136 routine medevacs.

Aboard Quang Tri Airfield, a shuttle bus service was established to alleviate the transportation problems between the mess hall and working areas.

There were twenty-six (26) SEA Huts constructed for billeting of ProvMAC-39 personnel.

Air Operations were curtailed for ProvMAC-39 by TYPHOON BESS as it passed near Quang Tri. The storm dropped 23 inches of rain in the three days of its passage limiting flight operations to emergency missions only.

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PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTSChronological Sequence of Events

1 September 1968. The Huey guns of VMO-6 started off the month by supporting units of TASK FORCE HOTEL with 100 2.75 rockets and 14,500 rounds of 7.62MM machine gun fire.

2 September 1968. A troop lift in the afternoon saw two aircraft of HMM-161 take fire resulting in the loss of one aircraft and damage to the other as well as injuries to two of the crew members.

3 September 1968. A recon team in trouble which required a night emergency extract called upon the SEAWORTHY gunbirds of VMO-6 to direct a flare ship for illumination and direct the transport into the zone. The extraction was successfully completed and no hits from enemy fire were received.

6 September 1968. In below marginal weather minimums after two days of a tropical storm, two gunbirds of VMO-6 and two CH-46 aircraft of HMM-262 launched to resupply units in the field who had not been resupplied in two days. Though the weather was at times well below operating minimums, the mission was successfully completed.

8 September 1968. HMM-161 took part in a 600 man Army troop lift. VMO-6 supplied two OH-1E gunbirds working with two Army gunbirds to cover for the troop lift.

9 September 1968. Recon insertions and extractions proved to be the highlights of the day. HMM-161 with VMO-6 gunships covering performed an emergency extract of a Third Marine Division recon team. There were also three inserts completed without incident.

10 September 1968. VMO-6 gunbirds, while covering a flight of aircraft from HMM-262 in an emergency recon extraction, found an active mortar tube firing on the recon LZ and expended their ordnance on the position, destroying it.

12 September 1968. The O-1 section of VMO-6 flew in support of units of the Third Marine Division and Task Force Hotel. After controlling four flights of fixed wing and three artillery missions the Battle Damage Assessment consisted of one enemy bunker destroyed, one secondary explosion and one confirmed KBA.

13 September 1968. Troop lifts were the order of the day, and they went smoothly until the third wave when the transport helos of HMM-161 took .50 cal and automatic weapons fire. The gunships of VMO-6 fired suppressive fire until an O-1 could get a flight of fixed wing on target. After the air strike, no more fire was received and the troop lift was successfully completed.

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14 September 1968. Troop lifts in support of the Army and recon team extractions were the order of the day as ProvMAG-39 aircraft flew 164.3 flight hours in 404 sorties.

17 September 1968. A group effort was made in a troop lift into the DMZ. The lift of the two Battalions of Marines was successfully completed without injury to the aircraft or crews. While in support of the troop lift, a flight of the UH-1E gunships spotted a small truck north of the BEN HAI RIVER. Several rocket and machine gun strafing runs were made, resulting in the probable destruction of the enemy truck.

21 September 1968. During an afternoon resupply mission, the second aircraft of the two from HMM-262 was hit by ground fire and crashed killing the entire crew. Aircraft from HMM-161 were used to recover the bodies from the crash as VMO-6 gunbirds provided escort.

On a night med-evac mission, another CH-46 of HMM-262 went to the same zone and after two attempts to get in was able to successfully get the med-evacs out. Heavy fire, automatic weapons and machine gun fire forced the pilot, Capt. A. F. DAVIS to wave off his first attempted landing.

The close co-ordination between the med-evac aircraft and the VMO-6 gunbird and the flare ship is to be credited with the saving of several Marines' lives.

A UH-1E slick from HMM-367 on augmentation to ProvMAG-39 crashed on approach to a mountainous zone seriously injuring the passengers and crew. General CHIP, CG of TASK FORCE HOTEL was among the injured who were taken to the hospital ship.

25 September 1968. Marginal weather reduced flying to almost an emergency nature only. The VMO-6 guns did launch to cover two transports on an emergency resupply mission.

29 September 1968. The UH-1E "slick" of VMO-6 assigned to the CG, Third MarDiv flew 8 hours, carrying General DAVIS into almost every Marine position in Northern I Corps to meet with his field commanders.

30 September 1968. The aircraft of ProvMAG-39 flew 126.2 flight hours to close out the month.

1. Personnel. No critical shortages exist.

2. Administration. Administration continues to be hampered by the shortage of office equipment and materials.

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3. Awards. The following award recommendations have been submitted during this period:

a. DFC's	10	
b. Silver Star	1	
c. Bronze Star	6	
d. Air Medals	16 Single Mission	991 Strike/Flight
e. Navy Commendation	4	
f. Navy Achievement	0	

4. Casualties

a. Hostile:	KIA:	5	WIA:	12
b. Non-Hostile:	DAI:	0	OTHER:	7

5. Morale/Welfare Programs

a. A shuttle bus service was established to improve on base transportation.

b. Twenty-six (26) SEA huts were completed and are in use as troop housing.

6. Group Chaplain. The Chaplain reports the following statistical categories as he functions in his various roles of Priest, Educator, Counselor and Civic Action Officer.

<u>a. Sunday Celebrations:</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Communed</u>
Chaplain SCHEER (Lutheran)	10	240	96
Roman Catholic Assisting Chaplains	9	259	215
<u>b. Weekday/Holy Day/Memorial Services</u>			
Memorial Service	1	189	N/A
<u>c. Education</u>			
Religious Discussion Group	4	33	N/A
Religious Information	7	4	N/A

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Religious	12
Pre-Marital	4
Domestic Conflicts	9
Character Disorder	8
Psychoneurotic	6
Transfer-Discharge	4
Red Cross	7
Hospital Visits	4
Brig Visits	5
Miscellaneous	7
Above Individuals seen in therapy more than one time	22
Total Professional Counseling cases for September 1968	83

7. Civic Affairs

Fourteen Civic Affairs trips were made in the MAG-39 Civic Action Area of Responsibility. 88 persons from the Group composed the teams implementing Personal Response and Civic Action Projects. Three Dent-Caps were conducted by Dr. J. MUNCE and Dr. J. T. CURTISS. The dentists treated nineteen patients with twenty-three tooth extractions. The following material assistance was rendered to the Vietnamese people.

150 School Kits

2 trucks of rocket boxes
3 blackboards
1 roll of barbed wire
1 truck of scrap wood
200 bars of soap

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8. Intelligence

a. Enemy action against ProvMAG-39 this month consisted almost exclusively of ground-to-air fire against the Group's aircraft:

Fire Incidents	74
A/C Hit	19
A/C Destroyed	2
WIA	12
KIA	5

Sniper fire was received on the perimeter on 060050H, 070200H and 220800H. On 171200H, A. Co., 1st Recon Bn. swimmers, while checking THACH HAN River perimeter of the airfield discovered an apparent man-made tunnel three feet below water level and caved in from recent flooding. The tunnel was judged too dangerous to explore and was blown completely closed.

b. The enemy-threatened "Third Offensive" was badly blunted by aggressive Third Marine Division spoiling action and widespread flooding of logistic bunkers during Typhoon BESS, 4-7 September. The enemy's action after that date consisted of continued harrassing action and attempts to replace his ruined rice and ammo caches. There were concurrent indications of increased infiltration to build up personnel strength for the offensive.

c. Intelligence support of Group operations was highlighted by the initiation of "curb service" briefings for augmentation aircrews from MAG-36 at Phu Bai. An intelligence clerk briefs pilots in the fuel pits before they depart on their missions in the 3rd MarDiv A. O. In addition, the 3rd MarDiv Air Observer Section was relocated at the airfield and attached to VMO-6. This increased the Group's organic capability for intelligence collection, especially with hand-held photography.

9. Air Operations

a. September Totals

<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO</u>
12,612	4,382.9	26,528	1,170.0
<u>MED-EVACS</u>	2,728	<u>MED-EVAC MISSIONS</u>	769

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10. Medical Department

a. The following statistics represents the activity of the Medical Department during the month of September 1968:

(1) Total patients seen at sick call	914
(2) Total number of inpatients:	0
(3) Total number of physical examinations	92
(4) Total immunizations:	738

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