

ProvMA6-39  
SAC#742-68

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

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 5750  
 03A35168  
 16 December 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 November 1968; sub-  
 mission of

Ref: (a) WgC 5750.1C

Encl: (1) Command Chronology for Provisional Marine Aircraft Group-39  
 (2) Command Chronology for Provisional Headquarters and Main-  
 tenance 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-62  
 Detachment "A"

Filed  
Sep

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

W. Siemko  
 W. SIEMKO

1st MAW Svc No.	Copy No.
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PROVISIONAL MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP-39  
Command Chronology  
1 November 1968 to 30 November 1968

PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

PART III

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

ENCLOSURE 1  
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## a. Provisional Marine Aircraft Group-39

(1) Col. Walter SIENKO	1-30 Nov 68	CO
(2) LtCol. Louis A. GULLING	1-18 Nov 68	XO
(3) LtCol. Paul W. NIESSEN	19-30 Nov 68	XO
(4) Capt. Lawrence E. TANKSLEY	1-30 Nov 68	S-1/Adjutant
(5) Maj. John A. HATHAWAY	1-30 Nov 68	S-2
(6) Maj. Charles E. CANNON	1-14 Nov 68	S-3
(7) LtCol. James A. WELLS, Jr.	15-30 Nov 68	S-3
(8) Maj. David G. WORKMAN	1-18 Nov 68	S-4
(9) Maj. Herman C. BROWN	19-30 Nov 68	S-4
(10) Maj. Robert N. SIMPSON	1-30 Nov 68	AvnSafO
(11) LCDR Rodney R. SCHEER	1-30 Nov 68	Chaplain
(12) LCDR Gordon F. KELLOGG	1-30 Nov 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-62 Detachment "A"

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

## 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 November 1968

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3. Average Monthly Strength

Marine Officers - 207  
Marine Enlisted - 1200

Navy Officers - 5  
Navy Enlisted - 15

4. Important Visitors

Lieutenant General Lewis W. WALT, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Brigadier General Henry W. HISE, Assistant Wing Commander, First Marine Aircraft Wing.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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PART II NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The month of November saw the aircraft of ProvinMAG-39 supporting the Third Marine Division in Operations Napoleon/Saline, Kentucky 11, Scotland 11 and Lancaster 11. Six CH-46D helicopters from HM-161 supported the First Marine Division in "Operation Meade River."

November also saw the introduction of the OV-10A's into VMIO-6. The pilots for these observation aircraft quickly familiarized themselves with the area and began conducting visual reconnaissance missions as well as artillery control, naval gunfire spotting and tactical air coordination (Airborne) which is the control of close air support missions flown by fighters and bombers.

Aboard Quang Tri Airbase two SEA huts were constructed to house the ProvinMAG-39 S-1, with another hut under construction for the Communications Building. A new Base Defense Command Bunker is under construction, with a completion date expected in early December.

The over crowded conditions in the Officer's Mess has been alleviated by enlarging the mess and completing the construction of the storage area.

Efforts to prepare for the next downpour have been intensive in the area of drainage and bunkering. Erosion control in the aircraft parking mat area is under way, as well as concrete culvert headwalls. The Mess-hall's and the Enlisted Men's Club drainage system has been repaired.

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PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTSChronological Sequence of Events

1 November 1968. ProviMAG-39 flew 206.8 flight hours in support of Third Marine Division. The hours were primarily devoted to trooplifts and resupply of units at fire support bases and in the field.

At Quang Tri Airfield, full honors were extended to the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps; Lieutenant General Lewis L. WALT.

2 November 1968. Another light day of action saw ProviMAG-39 log 150.2 flight hours in the usual activities of resupply, trooplifts, Med-evacs and aerial recons. An O-1 was hit by shrapnel, slightly wounding the AO in the back seat.

3 November 1968. The first week of November remains light in commitments for ProviMAG-39, resulting in 159.2 flight hours. There were 19 Med-evac missions flown which evacuated 2 emergency, 8 priority and 60 routine med-evacs.

4 November 1968. The action picked up in the field as the CH-46 aircraft of HMM-262 took fire, receiving 5 hits on a resupply mission for the Third Marine Division.

5 November 1968. At Quang Tri Airfield, the crash crew responded quickly to a fire on and around an Army AH-1G. The man refueling was taken to the hospital where he later died of burns.

6 November 1968. Low ceilings and poor visibility kept flight hours down to 58.7 for ProviMAG-39.

7 November 1968. The OV-10A's of VM0-6 found an NVA base camp area and controlled 3 flights of F-4's against the position, destroying 7 bunkers, a .50 Cal. position and 10 meters of trench line.

On an emergency trooplift of the 2nd Bn. 4th Marines, the lead CH-46 of the HMM-262 flight took heavy fire on his approach to the zone and was forced down to a clear zone on the valley floor, on fire. The second aircraft in the flight, flown by Capt. KNESE went down to pick up the downed crew and troops, then completed the rest of the trooplift without incident. The lead aircraft was totally destroyed, but there were no serious injuries.

8 November 1968. There were 204.5 flight hours logged by ProviMAG-39 in trooplifts, and the usual missions. A Change of Command was held in HMM-161 with LtCol. HLM relieving LtCol. NIESER who became XO of ProviMAG-39.

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9 November 1968. On a trooplift barely south of the DMZ a 122mm rocket landed close to a CH-46 of HM-262. One of the other pilots in the flight saw the rocket launching site and directed the VMO-6 gunbirds on them. The fixed wing on station were directed onto the rocket site and destroyed it, enabling the trooplift to continue.

10 November 1968. Happy Birthday. The aircraft assigned to Med-evac flew 17 missions, evacuating 31 emergency, 9 priority and 45 routine med-evacs in support of Third MarDiv units.

11 November 1968. The weather was good as ProviMAG-39 aircraft logged 245.0 flight hours. There were 1595 troops carried as well as 65.9 tons of cargo.

12 November 1968. VMO-6 flew 100.5 flight hours with the three types of aircraft now organic, the UH-1E, O-1C/G and the new OV-10A. With HM-161 and HM-262, ProviMAG-39 logged 214.8 flight hours.

13 November 1968. A tactical trooplift involving 10 CH-46D transport helicopters and 4 UH-1E gunbirds carried 1144 troops into three tactical landing zones. Fire was taken and two crew members received minor wounds but the lift was completed successfully.

14 November 1968. Twenty-four calls for Med-evacs were answered, resulting in the evacuation of 5 emergency, 29 priority and 70 routine med-evacs in support of Third MarDiv units.

15 November 1968. Resupply missions by the two transport helicopter squadrons carried 103.3 tons of cargo as the Group flew 211.9 flight hours uneffected by weather.

16 November 1968. An NVA mortar position was hampering an emergency resupply for a Third MarDiv unit. The gunbirds of VMO-6 effectively suppressed the fire with their rockets and machineguns.

17 November 1968. A total of nine med-evac missions evacuated 3 emergency, 10 priority and 43 routine med-evacs. In 91 external and 5 internal loads, ProviMAG-39 aircraft carried 83.4 tons of cargo.

18 November 1968. ProviMAG-39 aircraft logged 237.0 flight hours performing med-evac, resupply, gun escort, visual recon, recon team insertions, extractions and trooplifts.

19 November 1968. Trooplifts, resupply and med-evacs were part of the commitment on ProviMAG-39 as 208.5 flight hours were logged.

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20 November 1968. Six CH-46Ds from HMM-161 participated in a trooplift in support of 1st MarDiv units in "Operation Meade River". Four of the six received battle damage.

21 November 1968. In 212.4 flight hours, ProviMAG-39 aircraft carried 2043 troops, 60.9 tons of cargo and conducted 13 med-evac missions which carried 5 emergency, 4 priority and 55 routine med-evacs. Also covered was an Army CH-47 who ran out of fuel in the Ba Long Valley. While VMO-6 gunbirds covered, HMM-161 inserted a reaction force and then 4 barrels of JP-4, enabling the CH-47 to return to his base prior to night fall.

22 November 1968. A VMO-6 gunbird, Seaworthy 9-6, had an engine failure and made a successful autorotation into the Da Krong Valley where a transport helicopter from HMM-161 picked up the crew. A CH-53 from HMM-162 recovered the downed aircraft and returned it to Quang Tri.

23 November 1968. Aircraft in ProviMAG-39 logged 167.2 flight hours with few incidents. In VMO-6, Capt. G. CARPENTER was hit by a .50 Cal. bullet in the left leg while on a VR mission north of Dong Ha Mountain.

24 November 1968. On a trooplift in support of Army and ARVN units from north of the Rockpile to the Ba Long Valley, HMM-262 carried 854 troops while VMO-6 provided cover, suppressing the light small arms fire encountered.

25 November 1968. The observation aircraft of VMO-6 received several hits on several separate aircraft while on visual recon missions near Freedom Bridge in the DMZ. None of the crews received any hits.

26 November 1968. The aircraft of ProviMAG-39 flew 255.6 flight hours carrying 1464 troops and 63.3 tons of cargo. Twenty-five med-evac missions evacuated 5 emergency, 65 priority and 28 routine med-evacs.

27 November 1968. A Third MarDiv recon team in contact needed to be extracted and two transport CH-46's from HMM-262 answered the call. Small arms fire and mortars impacting in the zone prevented an immediate extraction, but on the third attempt into the zone, the recon team was extracted leaving behind one KIA. Another CH-46 took a reaction force into the zone and recovered the body.

28 November 1968. A HMM-262 CH-46 experienced an engine failure as he disembarked troops while on a mission with U.S. Army forces. Upon attempting a single engine take-off, the second engine had a power loss causing him to make a forced landing in the valley below. An Army CH-54 carried the downed aircraft back to Quang Tri.

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29 November 1968. Weather limited flight operations to 99.2 flight hours as only 229 troops and 26.6 tons of cargo were carried in support of the Third MarDiv.

30 November 1968. The weather improved to permit 227.9 flight hours in which 2380 troops were carried as well as 69.8 tons of cargo. The aircraft of ProvMAG-39 ended the month with 5820.9 flight hours.

1. Personnel. No critical shortages exist.

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

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

- a. Silver Star - 1
- b. DFC's - 4
- c. Bronze Star - 5
- d. Air Medals - 10 Single Mission 130 Strike/Flight
- e. Navy Commendation - 12
- f. Navy Achievement - 1

4. Casualties

- a. Hostile: KIA - 0 WIA: 9
- b. Non Hostile: DAI: 0 OTHER: 5

5. Morale/Welfare Programs

- a. Special Services has completed an amphitheater and has a handball court under construction due to be completed in January.
- b. There have been 25 new tube urinals installed around the living and working areas.
- c. The Officer's Mess has been enlarged and the mess storage area completed.
- d. Drainage systems have been repaired in the SNCO showers, EM Club and messhall.

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6. Statistical Analysis. 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>Communion</u>
Chaplain SCHEER (Lutheran)	8	204	81
Chaplain KLAIPS (Roman Catholic)	4	114	86
Chaplain BORECZKY (Roman Catholic)	1	30	20
Chaplain ECKER (Roman Catholic)	3	114	93
Total	16	462	280

  

<u>b. Weekday/Holy Day Memorial Services:</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Communion</u>
Feasts of all Saints (RC)	2	22	20
CAP Units	8	71	9
Tuesday evening RC Mass	2	16	14
Thanksgiving Day	1	11	N/A

  

<u>c. Education:</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Communion</u>
Religious Discussion Group	4	37	N/A
Religious Information	5	8	N/A
Character Guidance	1	38	N/A

  

<u>d. Pastoral Counseling and Therapy:</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Communion</u>
Religious	7		
Pre-Marital	5		
Domestic Conflicts	10		
Character Disorder	9		
Psychoneurotic	6		
Transfer-Discharge	7		
Miscellaneous	6		
Above individuals seen in therapy more than one time	43		
Total professional Counseling cases for Nov 68	93		
Red Cross	32		
Brig Visits	1		
Hospital Visits	4		

7. Civic Affairs: Twenty Civic Affairs trips were made in the Prov-MAG-39 Civic Action Area of Responsibility. 110 persons from the Group composed the teams implementing Personal Response and Civic Action Projects. 1 Den-Cap was conducted by Dr. J.T. Curtiss. The Dentist treated

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3 patients. Med-Cap was conducted by Dr. G. KELLOGG and Dr. R.A. FERGUSON in 5 trips to AN MO Hamlet with 204 patients treated. 26 hours of English was taught to the Vietnamese of the TRIEU PHONG secondary school. The following material assistance was rendered to the Vietnamese:

1 case of pineapples	600 lbs. of lumber	600 sheets of paper
1 case of grapes	1 hand saw	200 plastic Medical Bottles
3 cases of vegetables	2 Garden Kits	3 boxes (25 lbs.) soap
3 cases of cabbage	1 hoe	4 blackboards
4 cases of apples	3 shovels	1 sickle

8. Intelligence. Enemy initiated incidents of offensive activity remained at a very low level. Lack of contact or evidence of enemy unit presence indicates that the major enemy units have withdrawn to Laos and NVN. Enemy action against ProwMAG-39 was limited to ground fire against Group aircraft. This was the third consecutive month that Quang Tri Airfield was not targeted by enemy rocketeers. The number of aircraft receiving fire more than tripled in comparison with the previous month, and the number of aircraft hit was 15 more than in October. Ground to air fire statistics:

<u>INCIDENTS</u>	<u>NO. AIRCRAFT HIT</u>	<u>AIRCRAFT DESTROYED</u>	<u>WIA</u>
105	24	1	9

Agent reports indicate that enemy is continuing to refit and resupply his major units, while taking advantage of the bombing halt to build up his logistical support activities in the DMZ and NVN.

#### 9. Air Operations

##### a. November Totals:

<u>Sorties</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Fax</u>	<u>Tons of Cargo</u>
17,540	5820.9	38,640	1810.8

<u>Med-Evacs</u>	<u>Med-Evac Missions</u>
2,554	550

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ENCLOSURE (1)