

MARINE FIGHTER/ATTACK SQUADRON 115
Marine Aircraft Group 13
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, Pacific
FPO San Francisco, 96602

03:JNB:rmc
5750
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10 Oct 1968


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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 13 (S-3)
Subj: Command Chronology

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.1A
(b) WGO 5750.1C
(c) GruO 5750.1D

Encl: (1) VMFA-115 Command Chronology for the period 1-30 September 1968

1. In compliance with references (a), (b) and (c), enclosure (1) is submitted for the period 1-30 September 1968.


J. I. HUDSON

VMFA -115 S&O
CONTROL NO. 04668-68

DATE REC'D 10 OCT 1968

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VMFA-115

CMD CHRON

SEP 1968

[REDACTED]

MARINE FIGHTER/ATTACK SQUADRON 115
CHU LAI, REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
1-30 SEPTEMBER 1968

[REDACTED]

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PART I. Organization Data

1. Commander and Staff

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>BILLET</u> | <u>RANK</u> | <u>DATE</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| HUDSON, J. I. | Commanding Officer | Major | 1-30 |
| KROPP, R. G. | Executive Officer | Major | 6-30 |
| BIBLER, J. N. | Operations Officer | Major | 1-30 |
| DENTON, J. R. | S-1 Officer | Captain | 1-30 |
| MCMAHON, W. A. Jr. | S-2 Officer | Captain | 1-30 |
| YATSKO, A. A. | Logistics Officer | Captain | 1-30 |
| CORSON, E. H. | Aviation Safety Officer | Captain | 1-30 |
| KROPP, R. G. | Maintenance Officer | Major | 1-5 |
| HUEY, S. P. Jr. | Maintenance Officer | Captain | 6-30 |
| HOLZKAMP, F. W. | Sergeant Major | SgtMaj | 1-30 |

2. Task Organization and Data

| <u>ORGANIZATION</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> | <u>COMMANDING OFFICER</u> | <u>DATE OF OFFICE</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| VMFA-115 | Chu Lai, RVN | Major John I. HUDSON | 1-30 Sep 1968 |

3. Average Strength

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| a. Marine Officers | 46 |
| (1) Naval Aviators | 21 |
| (2) Naval Flight Officers | 20 |
| (3) Aviation Ground Officers | 5 |
| b. Naval Officers | 1 |
| c. Marine Enlisted | 234 |
| d. Naval Enlisted | 1 |
| e. Total Average Strength | 282 |

PART II Narrative Summary

In the month of September, the Silver Eagles of VMFA-115 flew 426 combat sorties in support of operations throughout the I Corps area, the DMZ and the southern panhandle of North Viet Nam.

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Operations supported by the officers and men of VMFA-115 included Kentucky, Nevada Eagle, Jeb Stuart II, Mameluke Thrust, Allen Brook, Lancaster II, Scotland II, Jeb Stuart III, and Lavish Item. Units receiveing scheduled or on call close air support included, 1stBw5th Marines, the 4th, 7th, 9th, 11th and 26th Marines; 1st AirCav, Americal Div, Task Force X and the ROKs. The multi-mission capability of the F4B was demonstrated by the diversity of missions flown by the Silver Eagle crews. These included close air support, direct air support, visual reconnaissance and air-to-air hot pad launches.

Bomb damage assessment for the month of September included 27 enemy killed by VMFA-115 strikes, 9Ø enemy held structures destroyed and 14 damaged, 57 bunkers destroyed and 19 damaged, 3 trucks and 1 artillery carriage destroyed, 4 automatic weapons positions and one mortar position destroyed as well as 3 other mortar positions were damaged. Additionally, 5 sampans were reported sunk and 865 meters of enemy trench line destroyed by VMFA-115 ordnance.

During the month of September, VMFA-115 dropped 811.37 tons of ordnance on the insurgent enemy forces for an average daily tonnage of just over 27 tons. Expended ordnance was 622 MK 81 25Ø lb bombs, 2Ø26 MK 82 5ØØ lb bombs, 3Ø1 MK 77 5ØØ lb fire bombs and 1Ø8 M117 75Ø lb bombs. In addition 2755 of the 2.75 inch FFAR were fired as well as 13Ø of the 5 inch Zuni rockets.

In the late afternoon 19 September, Capt WILLIAMS/Lt BARKER and Lt KALIHHER/Lt CHURCH launched on a CAP mission as Lovebug 524. Diverted to Helix 11 for control they expended 11 MK 81s and 8 rocket pods in support of Americal Division troops in contact, resulting in a BDA of 11 structures destroyed, 1 secondary explosion and 7 secondary fires.

On the morning of 21 September, Maj HUDSON/Capt MARSHALL and Capt HUEY/Lt MAJOR were scrambled from the air-to-ground alert pad in support of the 1st Marine Division. With their TAC(A) Hostage Papa controlling, the flight expended 12 25Ø lb Snakeyes and 6 napes, resulting in 2 structures and 1Ø bunkers destroyed, plus 7 enemy killed by Marine Air.

PART III Significant Events

1. Personnel. The month of September brought many changes in the lair of the Silver Eagles. On 6 September, Maj KROPP officially assumed the duties as Executive Officer, filling a billet that had been temporarily vacent. A number of pilots and RIOs joined the squadron during the month. Maj O. W. BRITTON reported aboard from 2nd MAW; Capts EVANS, TRUE, PARKER, 1stLts HARDY, COLLINS, BLAHNIK, REICH, BLAND and BAKER joined from 2nd MAW. Silver Eagles transferred to new duty stations included Capt DAVIS to 2ndMAW, 1stLt

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ABRAJANO to 1stMarBrig, Capt GRAVES to NAAS Meridian, and Lt GERMAN USN(MC) to NAS Seattle.

2. Casualties. On Saturday evening, 21 September 1968, Capt Robert F. CONLEY and 1stLt Steven R. MAJOR were killed as a result of enemy action while flying on a close air support mission near Phu Bai.

3. Awards. Recommendations to higher authority this month included 1Ø DFCs, 2 Purple Hearts, 6 single mission Air Medals, 1 Bronze Star, 3 Navy Achievement Medals, 2 Navy Commendation Medals, 9 Air Medals and 2 Commanding General's Certificates. Approval was received from higher authority for 13 Air Medals, 2 single mission Air Medals and 4 Good Conduct Medals. Also during the month Maj J. I. HUDSON awarded 6 meritorious masts. The recipients of these masts were Cpls ESTES, HALL, TRAVIS, WEBER and LCpls SMITH and WEST.

4. Promotions. During the reporting period there were four promotions. Capt HUNTER and Capt JONES received their permanent promotions to 1stLt. Cpl BROWN, J. R. and LCpl JEROME, K. H. were promoted to their present ranks.

5. Bonds and Voting. At the end of September, VMFA-115 has a 92.9% participation rate in the Savings Bond Program. SgtMaj HOLZKAMP's efforts have been instrumental in raising and keeping bond participation at this high level. Postal voting material was distributed to all hands on 2Ø September and Lt WATSON is busy daily assisting individual Marines in the preparation of registration cards and absentee ballot requests.

6. Ground Defense. The construction project for additional ground defense and rocket protection started last month was completed by the middle of September. Five new bunkers were constructed in the squadron area as well as four individual fighting holes. In addition, Officers in the new TAQ area have several bunkers under construction near their quarters.

7. Morale. During the month of September, thirteen Marines from VMFA-115 took advantage of R&R quotas to travel to Hawaii, Penang, Malaysia, Bangkok, Thailand, Sydney, Australia, and Taipei, Formosa. Work continued on construction of a new EM Club to replace the structure destroyed by fire, and Red Cross workers visited the squadron several times during the month.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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8. Civic Action. The VMFA-115 Civic Action program continued to work on a school repair project at Long Phu II. Emphasis this month was on repair of classroom equipment and desks and the replacement of window shutters and sun screens. The squadron Civic Action team also continued to assist medical personnel in the weekly Med Cap to Long Phu II.

9. Informational Services. 1stLt SINGLETON, squadron ISO, sent out 105 hometown news releases during September, describing the work and accomplishments of individual Marines in all shops and departments of VMFA-115.

10. Training. During the month of September, Marines of VMFA-115 were undergoing training at a number of schools throughout the Far East. Capt ACUFF and Cpl MYERS attended Embarkation School at Camp Hansen, Okinawa while LCpl KING attended NCO Leadership School at nearby Camp Butler. 1stLt SINGLETON and 1stLt HOOVER attended the Jungle Escape and Survival Training (JEST) course in the Philippines. 1stLt KRALOVEC and 1stLt MARTIN attended Sea Survival school at Numazu, Japan and LCpl ARTHUR attended Corrosion Control school at Tachikawa, Japan. LCpl HODGES attended the KY-28 course at Danang and Cpl SIMONSON traveled to NAS Cubi Pt, Philippines for training on the ALQ-51A.

11. Operations. Operations sponsored lectures given on 21 and 23 September by Mr. GREENALACH, the Danang representative for Applied Technology Corp. on the APR-25/27 ECM system. Significant missions were flown in September by Maj BIBLER, who reached the 400 mission mark and 1stLt CHURCH who surpassed 300 missions during the month. Capt HUEY hit the 100 mission mark.

12. Air Operations

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Total Flight Hours | 505.4 |
| Total Sorties | 441 |
| Combat Flight Hours | 490.1 |
| Combat Sorties | 426 |
| High Day Hours | 25.7 |
| High Day Sorties | 20 |
| Average Pilot Hours | 23.1 |
| Average Pilot Combat Sorties | 21.3 |
| Average RIO Hours | 28.1 |
| Average RIO Combat Sorties | 24.8 |
| Non Squadron Aircrew Hours | 31.9 |
| Non Squadron Aircrew Sorties | 30 |