

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

03:ADP:tm  
5750  
03A31568  
10 Nov 1968

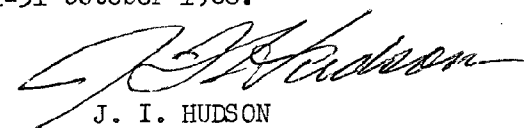
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 13

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 1-31 October 1968

1. In accordance with references (a), (b) and (c), enclosure (1) is submitted for the period of 1-31 October 1968.

  
J. I. HUDSON

VMFA-115 S&O  
CONTROL NO. 05768-68  
DATE REC'D 40 NOV 1968

COPY 1 OF 1 COPIES

MARINE FIGHTER/ATTACK SQUADRON 115  
Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam  
1-31 October 1968

03:ADP:tm  
10 Nov 1968

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      | Maj         | 1-31        |
| KROPP, R. G.       | Executive Officer       | Maj         | 1-31        |
| BIBLER, J. N.      | Operations Officer      | Maj         | 1-31        |
| DENTON, J. R.      | S-1 Officer             | Capt        | 1-31        |
| MCMAHON, W. A. Jr  | S-2 Officer             | Capt        | 1-24        |
| CRIFE, D. L.       | S-2 Officer             | 1stLt       | 25-31       |
| YATSKO, A. A.      | Logistics Officer       | Capt        | 1-31        |
| CORSON, E. H.      | Aviation Safety Officer | Capt        | 1-15        |
| DERBY, P. D.       | Aviation Safety Officer | Capt        | 16-31       |
| HUEY, S. P. Jr     | Maintenance Officer     | Capt        | 1-15        |
| SLONE, H. A.       | Maintenance Officer     | Maj         | 16-31       |
| HOLZKAMP, F. W. Jr | Sergeant Major          | SgtMaj      | 1-31        |

2. Task Organization and Data

| <u>ORGANIZATION</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> | <u>COMMANDING OFFICER</u> | <u>DATE OF OFFICE</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| VMFA-115            | Chu Lai AB, RVN | Major John I. HUDSON      | 1-31 Oct 1968         |

3. Average Strength

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| a. Marine Officers           | 42  |
| (1) Naval Aviators           | 21  |
| (2) Naval Flight Officers    | 18  |
| (3) Aviation Ground Officers | 3   |
| b. Naval Officers            | 1   |
| c. Marine Enlisted           | 237 |
| d. Naval Enlisted            | 1   |
| e. Total Average Strength    | 281 |

ENCLOSURE (1)

03:ADP:tm  
10 Nov 1968

PART II NARRATIVE SUMMARY

During the month of October the "Silver Eagles" of VMFA-115 flew 373 combat sorties in support of operations throughout the I Corps area, the DMZ and the southern panhandle of North Vietnam.

Operations supported by the officers and men of VMFA-115 included Dodge City, Dragon Victory II and III, Maui Peak, Mameluke Thrust, Mongoose Run, Nanking, Nevada Eagle, Texas Pete, Trailer Park 14 and Scotland II. Marine Corps units receiving planned or on call close air support included 1st Recon Bn, the 7th, 11th, 24th and 26th Marines; and other unspecified units of the 1st and 3rd Marine Divisions. Other units receiving air support from VMFA-115 were Task Force Hotel, the Americal Division, ROK Marines and the 51st ARVN Regt.

The versatility of the F4B weapons system was demonstrated during the month in the variety of missions flown. These included high and low angle conventional ordnance delivery, high altitude TPQ radar bombing and visual reconnaissance missions, as well as air-to-ground and air-to-air hot pad duty.

Bomb damage assessment for the month of October was hindered by the onset of monsoon weather conditions. In those strikes assessed VMFA-115 was credited with 54 enemy held structures destroyed, 56 bunkers destroyed, 3 rocket sites, 1 bridge, and 190 meters of enemy trenchline knocked out. Ordnance dropped triggered 7 secondary fires and 1 secondary explosion. Other assessed damage included 9 road cuts, 2 cave entrances exposed, 1 vehicle and 1 bridge damaged.

During the month of October, VMFA-115 expended 761.93 tons of ordnance against the insurgent enemy forces for a daily average of just over 27.7 tons. Ordnance dropped during October by types were:

- 298 MK-81, 250lb bombs
- 2247 MK-82, 500lb bombs
- 183 MK-77, 500lb fire bombs
- 150 MK-117, 750lb bombs
- 26 5 inch Zuni rockets
- 770 2.75 inch, FFAR
- 2270 rounds 20mm ammo

ENCLOSURE (1)

03:ADP:tm  
10 Nov 1968

Typical of the missions flown by VMFA-115 crews during October was that of Maj BIBLER/Maj KROPP and Capt MAGO/Lt MINAHAN during the afternoon of 22 October. Launched as Lovebug 534 at 1335 the flight reported in to their controller Cat Killer 19 at 1401. During the next 5 minutes the flight expended their ordnance load of 12 MK 81 Snake eye bombs and 6 MK77 fire bombs on target and departed the area at 1406. A resulting BDA of 2 bunkers and 1 structure destroyed with 2 secondary fires and 30 meters of trenchline knocked out was reported. The mission was conducted in a High SAM threat area at the eastern end of the DMZ and the flight returned to Chu Lai at 1430.

Another typical mission was that flown by Capt HUEY/Lt SINGLETON and Lt KRALOVEC/Lt WATSON during the late afternoon of 12 October. Launched as Lovebug 563 at 1825 the flight joined up and reported in to their TAC(A) Hostage Hotel at 1835 over the Thu Bon river about 15 NM southwest of Danang. During the next 7 minutes the flight expended their ordnance load of 12 MK 81 snake eye bombs and 6 MK 77 fire bombs on target in support of the 1st MarDiv. BDA was reported as 6 structures and one bunker destroyed, 60 meters of trenchline knocked out. The area was earlier reported hot but the flight observed no fire and returned to land at Chu Lai out of instrument approach at 1902.

During the month monsoon weather restricted ordnance delivery but combat sorties continued as illustrated by another VMFA-115 mission. Launched as Lovebug 411 Capt YATSKO/Lt MARTIN and Capt DERBY/Lt CRIPE departed Chu Lai on the morning of 21 October under a 2500' ceiling at 1143. In flight it became evident that low ceilings would prohibit high or low angle delivery. The flight was diverted by Hillsboro to the Camp Carroll ASRT. Arriving in the vicinity of Camp Carroll the flight was locked up by the TPQ radar and high altitude radar controlled bombing run was made at 1231 in support of 7th Air Force. The mission was conducted in a high SAM threat area along the northern edge of the DMZ. The flight returned to Chu Lai without incident and landed out of GCA approaches at 1257.

### PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1. Personnel. The month of October signaled the departure of a number of the "Silver Eagles" of VMFA-115 and the arrival of other new officers from stateside. Capt WILLIAMS departed for VT-7, NABTC, and Lt HENRY left for MAD, NATTC Glynco. 1stLt SALMONS, 1stLt ROBSON and WO-1 "J". "D". STEWART departed for 2ndMAW, and 1stLt BARKER for 3rd MAW. Officers reporting aboard were Maj SLONE from NARF, Cherry Point, 1stLt KIMERLY from VMGR-152 and 1stLts BOOTH, CRIPE AND CANNAVA from F4 squadrons of the 2nd MAW.

ENCLOSURE (1)

03:ADP:tm  
10 Nov 1968

2. Casualties. On Tuesday afternoon, 8 October 1968, Capt Joseph W. JONES and Capt Daniel J. COONON were killed as a result of enemy action while flying on a close air support mission near Danang, South Vietnam.

3. Awards. Recommendations to higher authority during October included 2 Navy Achievement Medals, 1 Navy Commendation Medal, and 15 Air Medals. Awards presented during the month included the Bronze Star in lieu of Single Mission Air Medal to Maj KROPP and the Purple Heart to Cpl GRADDOCK. 9 Meritorious masts were awarded by Maj J. I. HUDSON during the month. Receiving the Commanding Officers' recognition were Cpls SMELTZER, HONKANEN, WEISS, COLWELL, HALL, ROBINSON, HUNTER and LCpls KING and STACKPOLE.

4. Promotions. October brought promotions for 9 members of VMFA-115. Effective 10 October Cpl BENOIT and LCpl MULLINSON assumed their present ranks. Cpl PAULSON, LCpl POLITOWSKI and LCpl VANMETER were awarded Meritorious promotions to their present ranks on 16 October. SSgt GILLEY, R. W. and GABOR M. J. received meritorious combat promotions to their present rank during the month, and Capt KALIHNER was promoted on 29 October. Also at the end of the month, temporary 1stLt "J" "D" STEWART received his warrent as permanent WO-1.

5. Visitors. On 30 October LtGen Lewis W. WALT, LtGen Herman NICKERSON, LtGen Robert E. CUSHMAN and MajGen Charles J. QUILTER visited and toured the MAG-13 area. LtGen NICKERSON toured the VMFA-115 hangar area. LtGen WALT presented SSgt GABOR with his meritorious combat promotion.

6. Aircraft Maintenance. During the month of October, aircraft on hand rose to 16 as several planes returned from O & R and mod programs in Japan. By the end of the month 7 of the F4B aircraft assigned to VMFA-115 were equipped with the new H-7 rocket seat with ground level ejections capabilities, and 6 aircraft had received airframe change 400, incorporating utility hydraulic pressure into the Flight Control system. Also during October, 36 of the new AN/PRC-90 survival radios were received by the squadron and distributed to aircrewmembers. On the flight line, significant events included the completion of 1700 combat launches by plane captain LCpl KUHN during his twice extended tour in RVN.

7. Operations. The list of aircrews flying significant missions during October is headed by Maj HUDSON who reached the 300 mission mark. Maj KROPP and Capt MARSHALL also reached the 300 mission mark. Maj BRITTON brought his total number of combat missions to over 200 and 1stLt MARTIN topped the 100 mission mark.

ENCLOSURE (1)

03:ADP:tm  
10 Nov 1968

8. Bonds and Voting. At the end of October the Savings Bond program had a 91.8% participation rate, and members of VMFA-115 participating in either the Savings Bond or Savings Deposit program hit the 97.1% mark.

The voting program for the November 5 general election was completed by the middle of October. By that time all eligible voters in VMFA-115 had been contacted by Lt WATSON and assisted where necessary in obtaining absentee voting materials.

9. Civic Action. The VMFA-115 Civic Action program continued to work on a school repair project in Long Phu II during October, with the cooperation of Mr. TRU the village chief. The Civic Action team also assisted in the weekly Med Cap to Long Phu II.

10. Informational Services. 1stLt SINGLETON, Squadron ISO sent out 247 Home Town News Releases during October, describing the work and accomplishments of individual Marines in all shops and departments of VMFA-115.

11. Training. During the month of October, Marines of VMFA-115 were undergoing training at a number of schools throughout the Far East. Capt BUTTERFIELD attended the 3M course at Danang. 1stLt KALIHHER and 1stLt HOOVER attended the Jungle Escape and Survival Training (JEST) at NAS Cubi Point, in the Phillipines. Capt HUNTER, 1stLt CARROLL and 1stLt COLLINS traveled to Camp Hansen, Okinawa for ALO/FAC Training. LCpl ALTAVILLA attended Corrosion Control School at Tachikawa, Japan and LCpl BENSON took in the KY-28 Course at Danang.

12. Morale. During October, 19 officers and men of VMFA-115 took advantage of R&R quotas to Hawaii; Penang, Malaysia; Sydney, Australia; Tokyo, Japan; Okinawa; and Hong Kong. Work continued on construction of the new EM Club and Red Cross workers visited the squadron several times during the month. An all hands squadron party was held 18 October at the MAC-12 beach, and was a considerable success in spite of unfavorable weather.

13. "Semper Paratus." Cpl E. W. WEDEMYER who was plane captain for Maj J. I. HUDSON on his first combat launch with VMFA-115 was also the plane captain for the Major's 300th flown 30 October.

ENCLOSURE (1)

03:ADP:tm  
10 Nov 1968

14. Air Operations.

|                              |       |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Total Flight Hours           | 445.6 |
| Total Sorties                | 404   |
| Combat Flight Hours          | 408.1 |
| Combat Sorties               | 373   |
| High Day Hours               | 17.3  |
| High Day Sorties             | 16    |
| Average Pilot Hours          | 21.2  |
| Average Pilot Sorties        | 16    |
| Average RIO Hours            | 29.7  |
| Average RIO Sorties          | 24.6  |
| Non Squadron Aircrew Hours   | 30.2  |
| Non Squadron Aircrew Sorties | 28    |

ENCLOSURE (1)