

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 161
Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPAC
APO San Francisco 96602

3:JNB:mbb
5750
5 May 1969

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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code MAZ)
Via: (1) Commanding Officer, Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
(2) Commanding General, First Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPAC.

Subj: COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) MCO 5750.1
(c) FMFPACO 5750.8

Encl: (1) Command Chronology for period 1 through 30 April 1969

1. In accordance with references (a) through (c), enclosure (1) is submitted.

D. L. Elam
D. L. ELAM

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ENCLOSURE (3)

HMM-161

CMD CHRON

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY OF
MAJINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 161
QUANG TRI, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM
1 APRIL THROUGH 30 APRIL 1969

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~PART I. Organizational Data (U)a. Command and Staff (U)

Commanding Officer	LtCol D. L. ELAM	1 - 30 Apr 69
Executive Officer	Major C. E. THOMPSON ..	1 - 25 Apr 69
Executive Officer	Major R. W. CARR	26 - 30 Apr 69
S-3 Officer	Major R. W. CARR	1 - 25 Apr 69
S-3 Officer	Major R. J. ADAMS	26 - 30 Apr 69
S-2 Officer	1stLt R. T. GAGNON	1 - 30 Apr 69
S-4 Officer	Major C. D. RIORDAN	1 - 25 Apr 69
S-4 Officer	Capt P. D. ALFORD	26 - 30 Apr 69
Maintenance Officer	Major J. S. LOOP	1 - 30 Apr 69
Safety Officer	Capt P. D. ALFORD	1 - 30 Apr 69
WATOPS Officer	Capt T. H. SMITH	1 - 5 Apr 69
WATOPS Officer	1stLt V. R. GEAR	6 - 30 Apr 69
SgtMaj	SgtMaj J. H. GOODFELLOW	1 - 30 Apr 69

b. Designation/Location (U)

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161, Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, 7th AF, Quang Tri, Republic of South Vietnam.

c. Average Strength (C)

Officer Assigned (Naval Aviators)	42
Officer Assigned (Ground)	6
Officer Assigned (Navy)	1
Enlisted	<u>184</u>
Total Strength	233

d. Important Visitors (U)

There were no important visitors to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 during the period 1 - 30 April 1969.

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Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 provided helicopter support for the Third Marine Division, the majority of which supported Operations MAINE CRAIG, PURPLE MARTIN and the 2nd ARVN Division.

Statistics: 6,552 troops/passenger carried, 716.6 tons of cargo transported, 891 personnel medically evacuated, no reconnaissance teams inserted, while 1 team extracted. This support resulted in 1,146.0 flight hours, 3,726 sorties flown and 2,408 tasks accomplished. The squadron was fraged for 125 missions of which 123 were completed for a completion rate of 98.4%.

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PART III. Significant Events (C)

- 1 Apr - HMM-161 flew 120 sorties, completing 61 tasks, carrying 327 troops/passengers and 19.0 tons of cargo during 43.1 flight hours in support of Operations MAINE CRAIG and PURPLE MARTIN. Two aircraft were fired upon, with one taking five hits. None of the crew or passengers were injured and the plane was flown to Quang Tri and repaired.
- 2 Apr - Due to poor visibility and low ceilings HMM-161 only flew 112 sorties, completing 60 tasks, carrying 135 troops and 19.5 tons of cargo while flying 41.6 hours.
- 3 Apr - HMM-161 flew 157 sorties completing 83 tasks carrying 617 troops and 6.8 tons of cargo while flying 53.4 hours.
- 4 Apr - Again weather hampered flight operations. HMM-161 flew 74 sorties, completing 42 tasks carrying 201 troops and 4.3 tons of cargo while flying 22.6 flight hours.
- 5 Apr - HMM-161 flew 28 sorties completing 16 tasks carrying 42 troops, 4.6 tons of cargo in 11.0 hours of flight time. Weather severely hampered flight operations.
- 6 Apr - A normal day of resupply. HMM-161 flew 111 sorties completing 65 tasks carrying 145 troops and 33.8 tons of cargo in 32.7 flight hours.
- 7 Apr - While flying mission 401, HMM-161 flew 253 sorties completing 119 tasks while carrying 675 troops and 13.6 tons of cargo while flying 61.6 flight hours, the majority of which were in support of Operation MAINE CRAIG.
- 8 Apr - HMM-161 flew 38.6 hours of resupply and Med-Evac missions. The Squadron flew 126 sorties completing 65 tasks carrying 128 troops and 25 tons of cargo along with 13 Med-Evac missions carrying 9 emergency, 17 priority and 29 routine Med-Evacs.
- 9 Apr - Under poor weather conditions, HMM-161 was able to complete 107 sorties, 55 tasks while carrying 24.6 tons of cargo and 131 troops. The Squadron C.O. (LtCol D. L. BLAM) accomplished an extremely difficult emergency Med-Evac mission to a mountain-top landing zone. The problem being that the zone was hidden by clouds.

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- 10 Apr - While flying 33.0 flight hours, HMM-161 flew 97 sorties completing 63 tasks while carrying 179 troops and passengers and 11.5 tons of cargo. Fifteen Med-Evac missions were flown to recover 1 emergency, 21 priority and 23 routine Med-Evacs. One aircraft had to make a precautionary landing due to mechanical troubles. The crew was rescued by the chase bird and the downed aircraft was guarded during the night by a mechanized section of the Army.
- 11 Apr - Although weather caused a delay in the launch, HMM-161, fragged for a 401 trooplift, flew 202 sorties completing 154 tasks carrying 1,222 troops and passengers and 17.9 tons of cargo. One emergency Recon extract was made during the day's operations.
- 12 Apr - HMM-161 flew 185 sorties completing 105 tasks carrying 158 troops along with 57.6 tons of cargo in 44.5 flight hours. The Med-Evac package carried three (3) wounded POW's from XD 79-64 to Task Force Hotel.
- 13 Apr - Fragged for resupply, the squadron flew 131 sorties completing 64 tasks carrying 120 troops and passengers and 22.7 tons of cargo in 43.5 flight hours. A SPARROWHAWK Force of 60 men was inserted by two aircraft and three other transport aircraft into the YD 01-59 grid square.
- 14 Apr - Fragged for a 401 trooplift, 6 aircraft of HMM-161 flew two helicopter assault lifts. The assault landing zones were PUSAN (YD 09-25) and FISHER (YD 03-28). There were 326 combat troops and one ton of cargo carried on the airborne assault.
- 15 Apr - Due to poorly planned trooplift, aircraft utilization was low. The squadron flew 115 sorties completing 63 tasks, carrying 322 troops and 9.9 tons of cargo. The Med-Evac package completed three missions while carrying 21 Med-Evacs. On another mission two HMM-161 aircraft were called upon to insert a forward patrol to guard a downed UH-1E. The patrol was used because a security force was not readily available.
- 16 Apr - HMM-161 flew 140 sorties completing 77 tasks carrying 76 troops and 31.8 tons of cargo. Eleven Med-Evac missions were flown to recover a total of 48 Med-Evacs.

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- 17 Apr - Poor visibility and ground fog greatly hindered flight operations. HH-161 flew 127 sorties completing 90 tasks carrying 118 troops and 55.4 tons of cargo. Seven Med-Evac missions were flown to extract 13 men needing medical assistance. Operations in the XD 83-64 grid square were hampered by mortar fire, however the resupply was accomplished.
- 18 Apr - HH-161 flew 99 sorties completing 58 tasks carrying 206 passengers and 10.5 tons of cargo. Eleven Med-Evac missions were flown to carry 25 Med-Evacs.
- 19 Apr - HH-161 flew 180 sorties, 122 tasks carrying 218 troops and 57.6 tons of cargo. On the night Med-Evac package, two aircraft delivered four loads of emergency resupply and extracted 25 wounded personnel from an Army position located at YD 11-62.
- 20 Apr - Flying resupply and Med-Evac missions, HH-161 aircraft flew 123 sorties completing 63 tasks carrying 223 passengers and 18.3 tons of cargo. 46 personnel were medically evacuated within 11 missions.
- 21 Apr - HH-161 flew 123 sorties completing 77 tasks while carrying 187 passengers and 36.3 tons of cargo. Eight Med-Evac missions were flown to recover 32 wounded men. An emergency extraction of a Recon team was made from XD 905-605 at night with air cover provided by VM0-6.
- 22 Apr - HH-161 flew 56 sorties completing 20 tasks carrying 168 passengers. Five Med-Evac missions were flown to extract 34 Med-Evacs. While working a trooplift for the 2nd AAVN Division into an assault zone, the first aircraft into the zone was destroyed by a command detonated mine with three AAVN injuries. The second aircraft after returning his troops to the pick-up point returned to the assault zone and after having to abort two approaches due to heavy hostile fire was able to get into the zone and hoist 14 of the Med-Evacs from the zone.

The assault was tried again in the afternoon by Army helicopters into a different assault zone. One of the Army OH-1H's was hit by a mine explosion and two HH-161 aircraft launched to recover the crew and passengers. The lead aircraft took heavy ground fire and received 8 hits but was able to extract the personnel. The CATTLE-CALL aircraft was piloted by Major J. S. LOOP and Colonel E. A. PARNELL (C.O. MAG-39).

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23 Apr - Flying 105 sorties, completing 48 tasks, carrying 491 troops and 3.8 tons of cargo HMM-161 carried out a full days operations. Five Med-Evac missions were completed evacuating 5 wounded.

Again HMM-161 was fragged for the assault of LZ JUNIOR (YD 013-643 by troops of the 2nd ARVN Division. The assault was completed despite heavy rifle and mortar fire. The second aircraft into the zone was hit by fire and rolled down the hill trapping the pilots. The pilots were freed after 7 hours, but the co-pilot ~~received~~ ~~ALPHA~~ injuries.
received

24 Apr - Hampered by weather, the squadron was only able to fly 54 sorties completing 36 tasks, carrying 65 passengers and 0.5 tons of cargo. 51 Med-Evacs were carried on 21 missions.

Two aircraft were launched on a BALD EAGLE operation to insert troops around two HMM-262 aircraft which had been shot down at the YD 03-20 grid. After one load of troops had been inserted in order to get the downed aircraft crews; the troops and crews were extracted leaving the aircraft in the field.

25 Apr - A normal day of resupply and Med-Evac missions. The squadron flew 123 sorties completing 69 tasks carrying 157 troops and 35.0 tons of cargo. Seven Med-Evac missions were completed.

26 Apr - HMM-161 flew 84 sorties completing 46 tasks carrying 62 passengers and 19.0 tons of cargo. The Med-Evac package was launched on 6 missions and carried 59 Med-Evacs.

27 Apr - Flying resupply and an administrative trooplift the squadron flew 105 sorties completing 55 tasks carrying 295 troops and 24.0 tons of cargo. One emergency Med-Evac mission was carried out.

28 Apr - The day began at 0630 as the Med-Evac Package and 2 resupply aircraft were launched on an emergency Med-Evac mission in support of the Army's 5th Mechanized Division. The 1/77 Armor and 1/61 Infantry had been ambushed at their night position XD 795-634.

During the day the squadron flew 103 sorties completing 64 tasks carrying 210 troops and 19.2 tons of cargo. 15 Med-Evac missions were flown to recover 52 personnel.

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- 29 Apr - HMM-161 flew 171 sorties, 97 tasks in 45.4 flight hours carrying 334 troops and 39.0 tons of cargo. 31 men were medically evacuated while flying 8 missions.
- 30 Apr - Flying 31.7 hours HMM-161 aircraft accomplished 70 tasks, 108 sorties while carrying 186 troops and 32.5 tons of cargo. Fourteen Med-Evac missions were completed carrying a total of 30 personnel.

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