

MARINE LIGHT BATTALION SQUADRON 161
Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, MAFAC
APO San Francisco 96302

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5750
5 July 1969

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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code 44Z)
Via: (1) Commanding Officer, Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
(2) Commanding General, First Marine Aircraft Wing, MAFAC
Subj: COMMAND CHRONOLOGY
Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) MCO 5750.1
(c) MAFACCO 5750.3

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

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

D. L. Egan
D. L. EGAN

HM-161

CMDCRON

JUNE 1969

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COMBINED CHRONOLOGY OF
MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 161
QUANG BINH, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM
1 JUNE THROUGH 30 JUNE 1969

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Enclosure (1)

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CONFIDENTIALPART I. Organizational Data (U)a. Command and Staff (U)

Commanding Officer LtCol D. L. BLAM 1-30 June
Executive Officer	.... Major R. W. CARR	.... 1-30 June
S-3 Officer	.... Major J. C. ROBERTSON	.... 1-30 June
S-4 Officer	.... Major R. J. ADAMS	.... 1-30 June
A/C Maint. Officer	.... Major J. S. LOCK	.... 1-5 June
A/C Maint. Officer	.... Capt. R. D. ALFORD	.... 6-30 June
Aviation Safety Officer	.... Capt. R. D. ALFORD	.... 1-5 June
Aviation Safety Officer	.... 1stLt V. R. GERR	.... 6-30 June
AVIATION OFFICER	.... 1stLt V. R. GERR	.... 1-30 June
SgtMaj	.... SgtMaj J. GIBSON	.... 1-30 June

b. Designation/Location (U)

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161, Provisional Marine
 Airborne Group 30, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, MAFAC
 Quang Binh, Republic of South Vietnam.

c. Average Strength (C)

Officers Assigned (Naval Aviators)	.... 41
Officers Assigned (Ground)	.... 4
Officers Assigned (Navy)	.... 1
Enlisted	.... <u>157</u>
Total Strength	.... 203

d. Important Visitors (U)

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

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CONFIDENTIALPART III. Narrative Summary (C)

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 provided helicopter support for the Third Marine Division, the majority of which supported Operations BERKSHIRE MOUNTAIN, CLIMBON HILLS, VIRGINIA RIDGE and UMH HESA. Augmentation support was also given to the U. S. ARMY and the 2nd ARVN Division.

Statistics: 9,767 troops/passengers were carried, 710.5 tons of cargo transported, 704 personnel medically evacuated. This support resulted in 1,355.8 flight hours, 4,397 sorties flown, 2,402 tasks accomplished. The squadron was fragged for 146 missions of which 140 were completed for a completion rate of 95.5%.

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Part III. Significant Events

1 June HH-161 flew 17.2 hours while flying 150 sorties, completing 21 tasks. 139 passengers and 14 tons of cargo were carried. 6 medevac missions were flown to recover 9 medevacs. One aircraft took fire while hovering in the DD041 grid square. The aircraft was not hit.

2 June Prepared for six missions, the squadron flew 11.2 hours completing all six. 195 sorties were flown while completing 9 tasks. 359 passengers and troops were carried along with 21 tons of cargo. 21 medevac missions were flown to recover 21 medevacs.

During mission 501, 1/Lt G. W. MONTAGNA and 1/Lt R. J. [redacted], were hovering over a zone in order to hoist emergency medevacs aboard their aircraft. Upon receiving fire, and taking hits, the pilots tried to depart the area. The helicopter became uncontrollable, crashed and burned. The results were one destroyed aircraft, one alpha injury and five bravo injuries.

Maj J. S. DOB and 1/Lt J. A. COLLINS while flying the night medevac package, launched to recover an emergency medevac at the DD067 grid. The helicopter took fire on approach, while over the zone and while departing the zone. The first aircraft having taken several hits, returned to QUANG TRI to get another aircraft. One gunner received Fortbrot injuries but remained as a crew member for the second try.

After getting another aircraft, Maj J. S. DOB and 1/Lt J. A. COLLINS again launched on the emergency mission. Again taking fire on approach, on short final and while waving off the approach, the mission had to be aborted and the replacement landed at GIL LO having lost the forward transmission oil. There were no injuries on this try. Maj DOB and Lt COLLINS were relieved by 1/Lt S. E. WAINWRIGHT and 1/Lt J. A. WALKER. At first light on the third of JUNE, the relief aircraft again launched to recover the emergency medevac at the DD067 grid. The aircraft did not take fire until they were in the zone, then just as the emergency and one other medevac, were loaded on board, the aircraft came under fire. The aircraft immediately lifted out of the zone, taking hits. The emergency mission was completed and the aircraft returned to QUANG TRI for maintenance. The pilot received a slight wound from the broken windshield.

3 June Prepared for 6 missions, the squadron completed all 6 while flying 10.1 hours. 194 sorties were flown, completing 99 tasks. 327 passengers were carried along with 39.1 tons of cargo. 6 medevac missions were flown to recover 24 medevacs. 2 aircraft received fire, with one taking hits

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Maj L. J. LINDS and 1/Lt G. B. REED were diverted from mission 501 to mission 501. While hovering at the KD 0034 grid, Maj LINDS took fire, receiving 2 hits in the aircraft. There were negative injuries and the mission was complete.

4 June A quiet day with only one aircraft taking fire with negative hits. The squadron was fringed for and completed 6 missions. 217 sorties were flown completing 127 tasks while carrying 504 passengers/troops and 53.2 tons of cargo. 3 medevac missions were flown to recover 21 medevacs.

5 June HH-161 striking medevac and resupply had one aircraft receive intense fire with one major injury and one slight injury. The squadron flew 166 sorties, completing 97 tasks while carrying 283 passengers and 27.0 tons of cargo. 12 medevac missions were flown to recover 34 medevacs in 44.3 flight hours.

Maj J. S. LOOP and 1/Lt J. M. GEMIN, flying the afternoon portion of day medevac launched on an emergency medevac mission for the 9th MARIAS REGIMENT. (KD0136) On approach final, the aircraft came under intense fire. The aircraft took 6 hits, 4 in the cockpit, Maj LOOP received major injuries in both feet and his right leg. Lt GEMIN, hit in the body armor received a slight injury as the projectile bounced off and imbedded itself in his cartridge belt.

6 June Aircraft availability was down to 7 aircraft. The squadron flew 108 sorties, 94 tasks, in 42.6 flight hours while carrying 347 passengers and 10.5 tons of cargo. Five medevac missions were flown to recover 53 medevacs.

Two aircraft received fire, but neither aircraft were hit. The fire incidents taking place at the KD9733 and KD0135 grid.

7 June Aircraft now in end up status are 4. The squadron fringed for 3 missions, flew 141 sorties, 63 tasks carrying 364 passengers and 17.0 tons of cargo. 3 medevac missions were flown to recover 13 medevacs. Two aircraft were diverted from mission 501 to mission 505. A recon team "WRECKERS" KD 666, was in contact, and suspected to be surrounded with .50 Cal automatic weapons opposing them.

1/Lt R. H. PUGH and 1/Lt R. L. BAKER, with UH-1H gunships as air cover, began an approach to the recon zone. They received heavy .50 Cal fire, knocking out one engine, and possibly fouling the controls. As power was being lost from the second engine, the aircraft was landed in the KD 1066 grid. The aircraft was then destroyed by fire. One gunner received alpha injuries. The chase bird piloted by 1/Lt R. H. WILLIAMS and 1/Lt R. G. McCLUREY, picked up the crew of the downed aircraft, taking fire on departure from the zone and receiving one hit.

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8 June Fringed for day missions, 11-101 completed assigned tasks. The squadron flew 157 sorties, completing 80 tasks while carrying 110 passengers and troops and 31.5 tons of cargo. 7 medevac missions were flown to recover 10 medevacs for a total 41.0 hours.

While flying afternoon resupply, 1/Lt V. L. BERT and 1/Lt R. H. BAKER were diverted to mission 101, a recon extract. The team "MILKMAID" was in contact and needed to be extracted. As 1/Lt BERT was on approach final, the aircraft received heavy automatic fire. The aircraft, taking several hits, losing hydraulic pressure and oil from both transmissions, flew from KP 11000 to KP 12000, 121200, and made an emergency landing. One person was slightly wounded.

The night "MILKMAID" flown by 1/Lt J. H. BAKER and 1/Lt J. W. BAKER was launched to try and extract a recon team. Landing at the landing zone at dusk, a fixed wing strike was taking place. On station were four UH-1E gunships and an OV-10 of 110-6. After the fixed wing strike, the gunships made several gun runs on the zone and then led Lt BAKER to the zone. As the transport came to a hover over the zone, the aircraft took fire from the zone. The approach was waved off, to find an engine oil line cut by the hostile fire. The aircraft was flown to QUINN Hill on a single engine. The recon team was to be left in the zone until daybreak.

9 June A quiet day of several operation missions. The squadron flew 108 sorties completing 63 tasks while carrying 253 passengers and 1.12 tons of cargo. 12 medevac missions were flown to recover ~~nineteen~~ medevacs, 36.3 hours were flown in the operations.

10 June Another day with two aircraft shot down. The squadron fringed for troop lifts and resupply along with MAID MAID stand by. 11-101 flew troops and 21.3 tons of cargo. 5 medevac missions were flown to recover 10 medevacs. The squadron flew 43.2 flight hours.

Afternoon resupply was on standby to extract the recon team "MILKMAID" and "MILKMAID". As the extraction got under way, one of the UH-1E gunships, making a low pass over the zone, took fire and was forced to land. Maj R. J. BAKER and 1/Lt J. W. BAKER flying the lead transport, touched down as the UH-1E did and picked up the downed crew.

1/Lt W. C. BAKER and 1/Lt J. H. BAKER also flying resupply were diverted to pick up an emergency medevac. While making a low pass to inspect the zone, at KP 12637, the aircraft was hit by .50 Cal fire and forced to land near the QUINN Hill Hill. There were negative injuries.

Fringed for MAID MAID stand by, 1/Lt V. L. BERT and 1/Lt J. H. BAKER were diverted to night medevac. They were launched to recover the emergency medevacs at KP 12637. After collecting the medevacs from one man, the aircraft came under small arms fire and .50 Cal automatic fire. Taking hits, Lt BERT was able to fly the aircraft to QUINN Hill village

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before being forced to land. There were negative injuries aboard the aircraft.

11 June Fragged for medevac missions, HH-161 flew 106 sorties, 62 tasks while flying 23 medevac missions to recover 37 medevacs. 240 passengers and 0.5 tons of cargo were carried in 39.2 flight hours.

The two aircraft left in the field over night were recovered, one by a CH-54 the other temporarily repaired and flown back to QUANG TRI.

12 June Again fragged for medevac and resupply, the squadron flew 115 sorties, completing 67 tasks while carrying 228 passengers and 20.0 tons of cargo. 15 medevac missions were flown to recover 40 medevacs. The squadron flew 33.1 flight hours.

1/Lt D. C. CLAYTON and 1/Lt J. J. GUMMERS made a successful emergency recon extract while launching on night 30%. Negative hits were taken in the aircraft.

13 June HH-161, while flying 35.9 flight hours, was again fragged for medevac and resupply. 127 sorties were flown completing 72 tasks while carrying 237 passengers and 10.0 tons of cargo. 25 medevac missions were flown to recover 40 medevacs. None of our aircraft were hit by hostile fire today.

14 June HH-161 today flew 223 sorties and 106 tasks while flying 49.0 hours. 396 passengers and 11.6 tons of cargo were carried by the squadron.

LtCol D. L. MAH led an 8 plane troop lift for the 2nd AAVT Division. 659 combat troops were inserted into the zone without any enemy contact. In the afternoon Maj R. H. Carr led six HH-161 aircraft and two aircraft from HH-262 into HULLCORNERS VALLEY. The troop lift was completed without incident. Three medevac missions were flown carrying a total of 11 medevacs.

15 June HH-161 flew 24.5 hours today completing 60 sorties and 36 tasks. Flying only medevac missions today 31 medevacs were carried in 12 missions.

16 June HH-161 flew 137 sorties and completed 50 tasks in 41.3 flight hours. While completing the 4 missions fragged to them, HH-161 carried 391 troops and 36.8 tons of cargo. Although not fragged for medevacs today, 10 medevac missions were completed by HH-161's working birds. Nine emergency medevacs were carried in 5 missions while 3 priority medevacs were carried in 2 missions and 3 routine medevacs were completed in 3 missions.

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- 17 June HMM-161 completed 8 missions today while having only six aircraft available for flight. Two hundred and ninety one passengers and 2.5 tons of cargo were carried while flying 101 sorties and completing 59 tasks in 38.7 flight hours. In an attempt to pick up an emergency night medevac the lead bird was hit by an RPG and forced to land near the zone. One gunner received wounds in the leg but the rest of the crew was unhurt. Another aircraft was sent into the zone and successfully extracted the wounded gunner along with the rest of the emergency medevacs but because of the high risk to the aircraft and crew the crew members were left in the zone over night. The squadron flew 21 medevac missions carrying 41 medevacs. Eight missions and 14 medevacs were classified as emergency.
- 18 June HMM-161 flew 30 sorties while completing 40 tasks in 34.1 flight hours. One hundred and eighty five passengers and 13 tons of cargo were transported by the squadron. Eleven medevac missions were flown carrying 48 medevacs.
- 19 June With only five aircraft available for frag HMM-161's day was mainly made up of medevac missions. The squadron flew 103 sorties and completed 50 tasks in 25.9 flight hours. A total of 165 passengers were transported between the hospital ship and Quang Tri. The squadron carried a total of 49 passengers today.
- 20 June HMM-161, fragged for 4 missions, flew 186 sorties and completed 114 tasks in 55.9 flight hours. One hundred and ninety troops and 47.5 tons of cargo were carried and 8 medevac missions flown. Eleven emergency medevacs were carried in 4 missions, 8 priority medevacs were carried in one mission and 7 routine medevacs were flown in 3 missions. The squadron flew 51 sorties and 26 tasks carrying 32 passengers and 16.5 tons of cargo in support of Operation Utah Mesa.
- 21 June HMM-161 flew 140 sorties and 72 tasks while carrying 306 troops and 15 tons of cargo in 34.4 flight hours. Thirteen medevac missions carried 20 medevacs.
- 22 June HMM-161 flew 194 sorties and completed 106 tasks while flying 45.3 hours. Two hundred and fifty three passengers and 35.1 tons of cargo were carried by the squadron. Sixty nine passengers and 25 tons of cargo were carried in support of Operation Merklemer Mountain. Five medevac missions were completed carrying six medevacs.
- 23 June Having nine aircraft available for fragging, HMM-161 was fragged for and completed 7 missions. One hundred and seventy nine sorties were flown and 113 tasks completed in 50.5 flight hours. The squadron carried 358 troops and 35.0 tons of cargo while completing 14 medevac missions carrying 29 medevacs. The squadron flew 42 sorties, completing 31 tasks carrying 88 passengers and 15 tons of cargo in support of Operation Virginia Ridge.

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- 24 June HMM-161 was flagged for and completed 6 missions while flying 164 sorties and completing 77 tasks. Two hundred and eighty one passengers and 29.0 tons of cargo were carried in 49.3 flight hours. Four emergency medevacs were carried in one mission. Fifty four sorties were flown and 26 tasks completed carrying 210 passengers 3.5 tons of cargo in support of Operation Virginia Ridge.
- 25 June HMM-161 was flagged for and completed 4 missions while flying 117 sorties and completing 59 tasks. Two hundred and eight troops and 3.4 tons of cargo were carried and 16 medevac missions completed in 36.7 flight hours.
- 26 June HMM-161 flew 213 sorties and completed 127 tasks in 49.3 flight hours. Six hundred and seventy six troops and 49.5 tons of cargo were carried. Two emergency medevacs were picked up in one emergency medevac mission, while 3 priority missions carried 4 medevacs and one routine mission accounted for one medevac. Ninety five sorties were flown and 59 tasks completed for Operation Herkimer Mountain.
- 27 June HMM-161 flew 125 sorties and completed 79 tasks in 42.3 flight hours. Three hundred and four troops and 13.0 tons of cargo were delivered. Fourty two medevacs were carried in 15 missions.
- 28 June HMM-161 flew 173 sorties and completed 108 tasks in 50.3 flight hours. Two hundred and ninety six troops and 43.6 tons of cargo were carried. Nine medevacs missions carried 17 medevacs. Nine emergency medevacs were carried in six missions while 1 priority mission carried one priority and two routine missions carried 7 medevacs. One hundred and thirty two troops and 15.5 tons of cargo were carried in 64 sorties in support of Operation Utah Mesa.
- 29 June HMM-161 flew 61 sorties and completed 61 tasks in 34.1 flight hours. One hundred and seventy passengers and 19 medevacs were carried. Four missions were flown carrying 5 emergency medevacs while 5 priority medevacs were carried in two missions and 10 routine medevacs were carried in eight missions. The squadron began to prepare for the bad weather ahead by flying 6 GCA's, 4 Tacan and one ADF approaches today.
- 30 June HMM-161 flew 161 sorties and completed 104 tasks in 49.2 flight hours. Two hundred and seventy troops and 42.4 tons of cargo were carried. Six medevac missions carried 15 medevacs. One hundred and fourteen passengers and 24.9 tons of cargo were carried in 77 sorties in support of Operation Herkimer Mountain.

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