

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

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 5750  
 03A27669  
 3 October 1969

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From: Commanding Officer  
 To: Commanding Officer, Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39

Subj: Command Chronology

Ref: (a) WgO 5750.4

Encl: ✓ (a) Command Chronology for period 1 through 30 September 1969

1. In accordance with reference (a), the subject report is hereby submitted.

*R. W. Carr*  
 R. W. CARR

HMH-161

CMD CHRON

Downgraded at 3 year  
 Intervals; Declassified after  
 12 years.

ENCLOSURE (3)

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY OF

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON-161

QUANG TRI, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM

1 SEPTEMBER THROUGH 27 SEPTEMBER 1969

PHU BAI, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM

28 SEPTEMBER THROUGH 30 SEPTEMBER 1969

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

Commanding Officer.....	Major R. W. CARE.....	1-30 September
Executive Officer.....	Major R. J. ADAMS.....	1-30 September
S-3 Officer.....	Major L. G. POOL.....	1-30 September
S-4 Officer.....	1stLt S. H. PHILLIPS.....	1-30 September
A/C Maint. Officer.....	Capt. P. D. ALFORD.....	1-30 September
Aviation Safety Officer	1stLt V. R. GEER.....	1-30 September
NATORS Officer.....	1stLt J. N. BONNER.....	1-30 September
Sgt Maj.....	SgtMaj J. GIBSON.....	1-30 September

b. Designation/Location (U)

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-161, Provisional Marine Aircraft Group-39, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFRC  
Quang Tri, Republic of South Vietnam 1 through 27 September,  
Phu Bai, Republic of South Vietnam 28 through 30 September.

c. Average Strength (C)

Officers Assigned (Naval Aviators).....	40
Officers Assigned (Ground).....	3
Officers Assigned (Navy).....	1
Enlisted.....	<u>177</u>
Total Strength.....	221

d. Important Visitors (U)

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

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**PART II. Narrative Summary (C)**

Although HMM-161 was operating on reduced aircraft availability because of the damage by Typhoon Dora on 2 September, the squadron still flew 986.1 hours for the month. During a two day critical period, the squadron received augmentation assistance from HMM-263. Resupply was conducted throughout the month on a routine basis to Marine, Army and ARVN units deployed in the field. The squadron, in providing helicopter support to the Third Marine Division, supported Operations IDAHO CANYON, ARLINGTON CANYON and GEORGIA TA.R. In addition to a battalion size assault, the 2nd ARVN Division also received logistic assistance as HMM-161 once again played an important role in their TAOR. Med-Evac missions were prevalent daily, though enemy contact was sporadic. Those casualties withdrawn from the field of battle were courageously and expertly evacuated to medical facilities by the flight crews of HMM-161.

The latter part of September saw HMM-161 enter a new phase of logistical combat support in the Republic of South Vietnam. Due to the reduction of Marines within the Northern I.C.T.Z., the squadron's main tasks were the withdrawal and relocation of elements of the Third Marine Division along the Northern and Northwestern frontiers of South Vietnam.

During the period 26 through 28 September, HMM-161 assumed a stand-down status as the squadron prepared to redeploy from Quang Tri (ITU Air Base) to Phu Bai. Normal operations were continued on 29 September 1969.

**Statistics:** There were 12,752 troops/passengers carried, 308.4 tons of cargo transported, 236 personnel medically evacuated. This support resulted in 986.1 flight hours, 3,510 sorties flown, 2,114 tasks accomplished. The squadron was flagged for 141 missions of which 135 were completed for a completion rate of 95.7%.

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## COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 Sep HMM-161, fragged for four missions, flew 27.0 hours completing 119 sorties and 75 tasks. Five medevac missions were flown with one emergency and five priority medevacs being transported to medical facilities. It was necessary to hoist one of the priority medevacs; this was expertly done by Lt. M. FINNERTY. His professional ability prevented further injury to the wounded Marine.

2 Sep Today Quang Tri was hit by Typhoon Dora. Winds were in excess of 70 plus knots and all operations were cancelled. The high wind caused excessive blade flapping and new rotor blades were required for 18 of our aircraft.

3 Sep Crews worked around the clock last night and were able to get one aircraft in an up status. A total of 7.8 hours were flown completing 25 sorties and 20 tasks, carrying 117 passengers. HMM-161 supplied two crews this evening to relieve the crews of the two HMM-263 aircraft which were augmented to us.

4 Sep HMM-161 operations were still slowed down because of the storm damage to aircraft. Even though rotor blades were slow in coming, three aircraft were available for frag. Fifty sorties and thirty-two tasks were completed in 14.4 flight hours. The squadron transported 121 passengers, one of which was a priority medevac.

5 Sep HMM-161 was fragged for and completed six missions. One hundred and eighty four sorties were flown in 46.8 hours. Five hundred and twenty nine passengers and 15.5 tons of cargo were transported by the squadron. At 0200H two aircraft launched on an emergency medevac to 280°/26½ NM from Quang Tri for a recon team member who had been bitten by a snake. After several unsuccessful attempts to hoist the medevac, the aircraft had to return to Quang Tri for fuel. Upon returning, the recon team had cleared a zone for the plane. Lt L. D. TIMMERMAN attempted to back into the zone following instructions from the crew chief and the recon team radio operator but hit a tree with his aft blades. Because of severe vibrations the pilot was forced to make an emergency landing approximately 1500 meters away. A security force was inserted as soon as possible.

6 Sep The squadron was fragged for five missions. We flew 73 sorties completed 52 tasks while flying 24.3 flight hours. Two hundred and five pax were carried and 3.4 tons of cargo were delivered. One emergency, four priority and three routine medevacs were transported to medical facilities in eight medevac missions. At 1000H, a recovery team was launched to repair the aircraft downed the night before. The team took sporadic small arms fire while working on the A/C, but continued to repair the damage. The aircraft recovery team and security force were flown out without further incident.

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7 Sep Fraged for four missions today; we flew 212 sorties and completed 130 tasks in 48.4 flight hours. Five hundred and ninety-seven pax and 32.0 tons of cargo were transported for the 3rd Marine Division. Two hundred forty-seven pax and 20.0 tons of cargo were carried in 15.7 flight hours in support of operation GEORGIA TAR. One emergency and six priority medevacs were carried in four medevac missions.

8 Sep HMM-161 was fraged for medevac and administrative flights. Fifty-nine sorties were flown completing 37 tasks while carrying 105 pax and 1.2 tons of cargo in 25.0 flight hours. The medevac aircraft flew a total of 5.9 hours while carrying one emergency, three priority and one routine medevac.

9 Sep HMM-161 flew 33.8 hours while completing 147 sorties and 90 tasks. Two hundred eighty-two pax and 25.0 tons of cargo were delivered. There were 9.7 hours flown in support of operation IDAHO CANYON with 17.0 tons of cargo and 46 pax being delivered. Two emergency and eight routine medevacs were transported to medical facilities in eight medevac missions.

10 Sep The squadron flew 55 sorties completing 31 tasks while carrying 131 pax and 0.5 tons of cargo in 21.4 flight hours. One emergency, three priority, and three routine medevacs were transported to medical facilities in seven medevac missions. LT J. N. BONNER led a two plane flight that dropped three strings of sensors west of Vandegrift Combat Base.

11 Sep HMM-161 flew 220 sorties, completing 180 tasks while carrying 1,659 troops and transporting 13.5 tons of cargo in 49.3 flight hours. Maj L. G. POOL led a six plane troop lift in support of operation ALEXINGTON CANYON flying 122 sorties completing 100 tasks, carrying 1,192 troops and 7.0 tons of cargo in 26.5 flight hours.

12 Sep We flew 145 sorties, completing 95 tasks, while carrying 381 pax and delivering 25.0 tons of cargo in 46.6 flight hours. Two emergency, 12 priority and five routine medevacs were transported to medical facilities. HMM-161 sent two aircraft south to support the 1st MARDIV. They flew 19.2 hours and completed 68 sorties and 43 tasks while carrying 116 troops and 24.0 tons of cargo.

13 Sep HMM-161 flew 259 sorties to complete 161 tasks. Eight hundred and ten pax were carried and 35.7 tons of cargo delivered. Two emergency and five priority medevacs were carried to medical facilities. Two aircraft flew 15.0 hours in support of the 1st MARDIV completing 39 sorties and 26 tasks while carrying 43 troops and 12.7 tons of cargo.

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14 Sep Fragged for five missions, the squadron flew 62 sorties and completed 46 tasks in 24.0 flight hours. One hundred and sixty six pax were carried and two tons of cargo delivered. Two priority and 13 routine medevac were carried in five medevac missions.

15 Sep The squadron flew 24.1 hours in support of the 3rd Marine Division completing 93 sorties and 70 tasks while carrying 285 pax and two tons of cargo. One emergency medevac was also completed. ~~CATFIRE~~ CALL 1 & 2 were fired upon while delivering resupply in the vicinity of the DMZ.

16 Sep HMM-161 flew 106 sorties and completed 59 tasks while flying 37.6 hours. Two hundred and fifty-nine pax were carried and 7.5 tons of cargo delivered. Two priority and nine routine medevacs were carried in four medevac missions.

17 Sep HMM-161 flew 156 sorties and completed 90 tasks in 47.4 flight hours. Four hundred and forty-nine pax were carried and 16.5 tons of cargo delivered while 7 emergency, 23 priority and 30 routine medevacs were transported to medical facilities in 11 medevac missions.

18 Sep We flew 126 sorties and completed 72 tasks in 38.3 flight hours. Four hundred and ninety pax and 9.5 tons of cargo were delivered by the squadron. Lt R. C. ALLEN completed an emergency medevac for ~~ALEXANDER~~ ~~HMAB~~ 3/4 positioned at 278°/26 NM from Quang Tri. The zone had to be assaulted by ~~SEMA~~ 3/4 before the medevac could be completed. An additional emergency medevac was taken by the company during the assault.

19 Sep Today the squadron was fraged to fly resupply for the 3rd Marine Division. Seventy three sorties were flown with 36 tasks completed for 19.6 flight hours. One hundred and forty-one pax were carried. Fifteen and half tons of cargo were delivered.

20 Sep Major Richard CARR, Commanding Officer of HMM-161, led a six plane assault troop lift in support of the Second ARVN Division. Five hundred and thirty-nine pax were inserted in a zone bearing 240°/10 NM from Quang Tri. The Second ARVN Division required 74 sorties to complete 34 tasks. Two hours elapsed time was required to complete the lift. The remainder of the day saw HMM-161 fly 153 sorties and 89 tasks in support of the 3rd Marine Division. Major CARR led his flight on the initial withdrawal of the 3rd Regiment, 3rd Marine Division. The 3rd Marines were extracted from their positions along the DMZ and delivered to Cam Lo and Vandegrift Combat Base. Nine hundred and eighty three Marines were transported in 47.3 flight hours.

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21 Sep The squadron flew all its fraged missions in support of the 3rd Marine Division. One hundred and eighty-three sorties were flown completing 99 tasks. Total flight operations required 48.0 flight hours. HMM-161's aircraft carried 753 pax and 14.5 tons of cargo.

22 Sep HMM-161 flew 122 sorties and 72 tasks in support of the 3rd Marine Division. The squadron's primary mission was medevac. Nineteen medevacs were extracted and delivered to medical facilities. Four medevacs were emergency, 13 were priorities and two were routine. Three hundred pax and three tons of cargo were also carried. Thirty-three flight hours were flown. At 2045H CATTLE CALL 92-11 and 92-12 were launched on an emergency recon extract. CATTLE CALL 92-11, piloted by Major Richard GARR, extracted the team without incident. The pickup zone was located on the 266° Bearing 25½ NM from Quang Tri. Two men of the recon team had been wounded by enemy action.

23 Sep The squadron was assigned a troop lift and resupply as its primary missions. Two hundred and fifty-four sorties were flown completing 122 tasks. Nine hundred and eighty-six troops were carried and 19.0 tons of cargo delivered in 51.2 flight hours.

24 Sep HMM-161 flew 93 sorties and 66 tasks in support of the 1st Marine Division, 3rd Marine Division, and 1st MAW. Two aircraft supported the Seventh Regiment, 1st Marine Division. The two aircraft carried a total of 91 pax and 10.5 tons of cargo in 13.0 flight hours. The squadron also maintained the day long medevac stand-by for the 3rd Marine Division. Five medevac missions accounted for two priority and 16 routine medevacs. A total of 35.3 flight hours were flown. Three hundred and eighty-six pax and 12.7 tons of cargo were delivered by HMM-161 aircraft.

25 Sep Flight operations were curtailed in preparation for the embarkation of HMM-161 from Quang Tri to Phu Bai. Nineteen sorties were flown and eight tasks were completed in 8.1 flight hours. Thirty-four pax and 3.8 tons of cargo were carried by squadron aircraft. The squadron's ground support crews prepared their equipment for embarkation. Lt S. H. PHILLIPS, Embarkation Officer, directed the operation. Three truck convoys were loaded and readied for an early morning departure to Phu Bai.

26 Sep HMM-161 assumed a stand down status. Three truck convoys departed for Phu Bai at dawn. Two more convoys were packed and departed for Phu Bai by noon.

27 Sep Although the squadron remained in a stand down status, forty sorties and 28 tasks were flown in support of the embarkation of the squadron personnel and material. One hundred and fifteen pax were carried and 29.0 tons of cargo was transported by helicopter from Quang Tri to Phu Bai. At 1700H hours the last A/C landed at Phu Bai. The embarkation was completed.

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28 Sep HMM-161 remained in a stand down status. We flew eight sorties and five tasks on administrative runs in support of the squadron. Eight pax and 0.5 tons of cargo was carried in 3.3 flight hours.

29 Sep HMM-161 assumed normal operations out of Phu Bai. Two hundred and forty-one sorties and 112 tasks were flown in support of the 3rd Marine Division. Nine hundred and seventy-three pax were carried. Eleven tons of cargo were delivered. Five inserts and three extracts were accomplished in support of the 3rd Recon Battalion. Eight missions were fragged and all were completed in 55.8 flight hours. CAFELE CALL 92-9, piloted by Lt V. R. GEER and Lt B. A. FRALLIC, was assigned an emergency recon extract. An eight man recon team located at 290°/21 NM Quang Tri tacan made contact with an NVA force. After getting shot out of the zone on the first two approaches, Lt GEER successfully extracted the team. The aircraft received .50 cal and .30 cal fire, but was not hit.

30 Sep Fragged for eight missions, the squadron flew 45.7 hours and completed all missions. One hundred fifty-four sorties were flown and 97 tasks were completed in support of the U.S. Army and Third Marine Division. Five hundred and two pax were carried and 9.8 tons of cargo was delivered.

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