

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

3:RCA:crm
5750
03A29069
17 October 1969

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A03D)
Via: Commanding Officer, Provisional Marine Aircraft Group-39

Subj: Command Chronology

Ref: (a) WgO 5750.4

Encl: (1) Command Chronology for period 1 through 15 October 1969

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


R. W. CARR

HMN-161-

CMD CHRON

1-15 OCT 1969

Downgraded at 3 year
Intervals; Declassified after
12 years.

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY OF
MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON-161
PHU BAI, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM
1-15 OCTOBER 1969

Enclosure (1)

-1-

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

Commanding Officer.Major R. W. CARE.....1-15 October
 Executive Officer.Major R. J. ADAMS....1-15 October
 S-3 Officer.Major L. G. POOL....1-15 October
 S-4 Officer.1stLt S. H. PHILLIPS.1-15 October
 A/C Maint. Officer.Capt. P. D. ALFORD...1-15 October
 Aviation Safety Officer.1stLt V. R. GEER.....1-15 October
 NATOPS Officer.1stLt J. N. BONNER...1-15 October
 Sgt Maj.SgtMaj J. GIBSON...1-15 October

b. Designation/Location (U)

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-161, Provisional Marine
 Aircraft Group-39, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPAC
 Phu Bai, Republic of South Vietnam 1-15 October.

c. Average Strength (C)

Officers Assigned (Naval Aviators).....	38
Officers Assigned (Ground).....	3
Officers Assigned (Navy).....	1
Enlisted.....	<u>163</u>
Total Strength.....	205

d. Important Visitors (U)

On 3 October Lieutenant Général NICKERSON accompanied
 by Major General THIRASU paid an informal visit to HMM-161.

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DECLASSIFIEDCONFIDENTIALPART II. Narrative Summary (C)

The Phu Bai area recorded 57.93" of rain during the first eight days of October. Because of the high moisture content of the air, our navigation and communication equipment often failed to function. Even though flight operations were extremely curtailed, F4U-161 still flew 488.6 hours while supporting the 3rd Marine Division, Army, and ARVN units in the field. In many instances we were called upon to accomplish assigned missions under IFR conditions in hazardous mountain areas. The missions were always completed in a highly professional and commendable manner. In keeping with the recent reduction of Marines in Northern ICTZ, the Squadron was involved in the relocation of Marine units as well as completing numerous Recon inserts and extracts.

Statistics: There were 4,513 troops/passengers carried, 28.9 tons of cargo transported, 81 personnel medically evacuated. This support resulted in 488.6 flight hours, 1,312 sorties flown, 717 tasks accomplished. The Squadron was fraged for 82 missions of which 78 were completed for a completion rate of 95.1%.

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

PART III. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- 1 Oct - Because our Provisional MAG-39 sister squadron was in a stand-down status in preparation for their embarkation to Phu Bai, HMM-161 was the only CH-46 Squadron supporting the Third Marine Division today. We were fragged for and completed 6 missions including Med-Evacs, Recon, Troop Lift and Admin Flights. We flew 118 sorties and completed 63 tasks in 41.0 flight hours. Two emergency, three priority and one routine med-evacs were transported to medical facilities. The Squadron transported 586 passengers and 6.5 tons of cargo.
- 2 Oct - With our sister squadron still in a stand-down status, the Squadron again completed all of the 3rd Mar Div CH-46 missions unassisted. Despite the heavy rain and poor visibility that continued throughout the day, the Squadron flew two hundred and twelve sorties while completing one hundred and eight tasks in 59.2 flight hours. Five hundred and eighty-four passengers and 21.5 tons of cargo were transported by the squadron. The Squadron also flew four hours carrying 22 passengers and seven tons of cargo in support of the U. S. Army.
- 3 Oct - Today HMM-161 carried 491 passengers and 36.1 tons of cargo while flying 103 sorties and completed 68 tasks in 36.1 flight hours. CATTLECALL 92-3, piloted by Major L. G. POOL and Lt. F. B. LEE, were diverted from a troop lift to extract the Recon team FANCY DAN. The team had been in contact with the enemy and had requested to be extracted at once. A flight of F-4's and two Huey gunships were on station to provide cover for CATTLECALL 92-3. The extraction was successfully completed without incident.
- 4 Oct - The Squadron was assigned Medevac and troop lifts as its primary missions. We carried 227 passengers and two tons of cargo while flying 83 sorties and completed 68 tasks in 34.8 flight hours. At 1130H the Medevac Package was launched to pick up a marine with serious head and body wounds inflicted by the accidental discharge of a grenade. On the way to the hospital ship, the wounded marine stopped breathing on numerous occasions. The medic, J. W. HALL, and the crewchief, LCpl J. R. HANSEN, did a very commendable job in performing mouth to mouth resuscitation. The marine was still alive upon reaching the hospital ship.
- 5 Oct - The Quang Tri/Phu Bai area was plagued with extremely heavy rain which caused very low ceilings and poor visibility throughout the day. Operations were virtually at a stand still with a total of 14 sorties being flown in support of the 3rd Marine Division.

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PART III. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- 6 Oct - Operations were still curtailed because of extremely bad weather existing in the Northern ICTZ area. The Squadron successfully flew 39 sorties completing 20 tasks while carrying 201 passengers and 3.8 tons of cargo in 14.0 flight hours. While flying a troop lift mission CATTLECALL 92-1 piloted by Lt. E. E. BARRICKS was diverted to pick up a Recon team which had just been in contact with the enemy 5000 meters south of Vandergrif Combat Base. The extract was made without incident.
- 7 Oct - The Squadron was assigned recon inserts/extracts and troop lifts as its primary missions today. Twenty-seven sorties were flown completing 43 tasks in 25.6 flight hours. Three hundred and sixty-two passengers and 3.5 tons of cargo were transported by the Squadron.
- 8 Oct - The weather in Northern I Corps cleared sufficiently for flight operations to take place on fairly routine basis. However, parts of the working area were still plagued with low ceilings, rain and poor visibility making the completion of some missions very difficult. CATTLECALL 92-1 piloted by Lt. G. V. BLACKBIRD and Lt. G. L. LONG completed a medevac mission that required them to enter a zone that was completely IFR because of low clouds and heavy rain. The mission was accomplished because of the well coordinated team work on the part of the entire crew. Several CATTLECALL aircraft went completely IFR on numerous occasions while airtaxiing up mountain sides, attempting to deliver much needed food and water.
- 9 Oct - HMM-161 was fragged for four missions today, we flew 66 sorties to complete 46 tasks in 28.5 hours. Operations were highlighted by the Medevac aircraft which flew 10 missions accumulating 10.4 flight hours while delivering 2 emergency, 13 priorities, and 24 routine medevacs to medical facilities. While flying a routine administrative flight for the 3rd Marines, Lt. J. R. WAGNER was called to an area 3000 meters north of the Rock Pile to pick up an emergency medevac. Although he had no wingman and there were no guns aboard his aircraft, he unhesitatingly answered the call and delivered the wounded marine to medical facilities.
- 10 Oct - The Squadron was fragged for eight missions today. HMM-161 aircraft flew 51.7 hours completing 77 tasks in one hundred and twenty-nine sorties. Four hundred and eighty-three passengers were carried and 13.2 tons of cargo were delivered in support of the Third Marine Division.

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

PART III. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- (CONT) - CATTLECALL 3, piloted by Lt. J. E. PANSKA delivered one medevac to the ship under very marginal weather conditions after another H-46 Squadron declined to accept the mission. CATTLECALL 5 piloted by Lt. J. N. BONNER assisted at the crash site of SCARFACE 40 and carried two fatal casualties to Quang Tri. CATTLECALL 5 also inserted a reaction team to set up recovery operations.
- 11 Oct - HMM-161 was fragged for four missions and flew 20.0 hours. We completed 27 tasks in 45 sorties, carrying 92 passengers and delivered 1.5 tons of cargo in support of the 3rd Marine Division and the 1st Marine Air Wing. One priority medevac was picked up and carried to the Quang Tri medical facility. Three emergency patients were carried from 3rd Med to the ship by CATTLECALL aircraft.
- 12 Oct - We were fragged for six missions today. The Squadron flew 116 sorties and completed 62 tasks in 40.2 hours. In a normal day of resupply our aircraft delivered 19.5 tons of cargo and carried three hundred and ninety-one passengers. CATTLECALL ONE and TWO were involved in supporting the 3rd Recon Battalion. They completed four recon team insertions and three extracts. Two were normal "flipflops" and one involved inserting the team and orbiting near by while the team destroyed a bridge along a known enemy supply route. This insert and extract was completed by CATTLECALL TWO piloted by Lt. J. R. WAGNER.
- 13 Oct - Today the Squadron was delegated three missions and flew 40 sorties completing 24 tasks in 17.6 flight hours. We carried 121 passengers and two medevacs, one priority and one routine. The priority medevac was a malaria case which had to be hoisted from among the trees for lack of a suitable landing zones. Major R. W. CARR completed this medevac hoist exhibiting fine professional skill and ability completing the task and rushing the medevac to the Quang Tri medical facility in a minimum amount of time.
- 14 Oct - HMM-161 was fragged for six missions today. We flew 118 sorties and completed 56 tasks while flying 39.4 hours. A total of three hundred and forty-six passengers were carried by Squadron aircraft while 14.8 tons of cargo were delivered. Two aircraft were assigned to support the 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion and successfully completed four insertions and four extractions under marginal weather conditions.

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

PART III. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

15 Oct - Today HM-161 was fraged for medevac and administrative flights. We flew 77 sorties completing 43 tasks while carrying 237 passengers in 22.1 flight hours. Two emergency and two priority medevacs were picked up in 4 medevac missions.

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