

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON-163
Marine Aircraft Group-16
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, Pacific
FPO, San Francisco 96602

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Ser: 03A7041
3 February 1967



From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, Marine Aircraft Group-16

Subj: Command Chronology, 1-31 January 1967 (U)

Ref: (a) Gru0 5750.1

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology, 1-31 January 1967

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. This letter is declassified to unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1).

R. D. Bianchi
R. D. BIANCHI

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c. 1 of 1 cc



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Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-163

1-31 January 1967

MCAF, HUE PHU BAI, Republic of Viet-Nam

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A. PART ONE - ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. Commanding Officer and Staff

- a. Rocco D. BIANCHI, LtCol., Commanding Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- b. Joseph P. BENO, Major, Executive Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- c. Daniel V. McDONALD, Major, Operations Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- d. Thomas J. COMPER, Major, Material Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- e. Albert B. AYRES, Major, Maintenance Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- f. John E. CARROLL, Major, Aviation Safety Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- g. John W. BOYAN, Captain, NATOPS Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- h. Robert L. THEIN, Captain, Administrative Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- i. James R. FOWLER, Lieutenant, USN(MC), Medical Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- j. Floyd W. HURLBUT, Captain, Intelligence Officer, 1-31 January 1967
- k. Frank CAUGHEY, 1stLt., Custodian, S&C, 1-31 January 1967

2. Task Organization

- a. Location - MCAF, Hue Phu Bai, Republic of Viet-Nam, 1-31 January 1967.

3. Average Monthly Strength

Marine		Navy	
<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
56	208	1	3

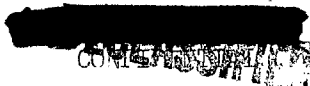
4. Important Visitors

- a. None, during this reporting period.

B. PART TWO - NARRATIVE SUMMARY

1 January 1967 - Bad weather caused the cancellation of flying in the Phu Bai and Dong Ha areas. One (1) emergency medevac mission was completed in the Phu Bai area.

2 January 1967 - Two (2) medevac missions were flown in the Phu Bai area. Major COMPER led both flights evacuating eight (8) emergency casualties. Normal operations conducted in the Dong Ha area with two medevacs being completed.



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3 January 1967 - Bad weather caused the cancellation of normal flight operations in the Phu Bai area. One medevac mission was attempted, but aborted, due to the weather. Normal operations were conducted in the Dong Ha area with one medevac mission being completed and a passenger transfer being completed late in the day by Major AYRES.

4 January 1967 - Bad weather caused the cancellation of routine flight operations in the Phu Bai area. One medevac mission led by Maj MCDONALD, evacuating two RVN personnel and two civilians was completed. In the Dong Ha area, in spite of marginal weather, Major AYRES completed a recon overflight and two recon team insertions and two recon team extractions. During the extraction of one team, automatic weapons fire was received. The A/W fire was believed to be .50 calibre, however, no hits were taken aboard the aircraft. Two medevac missions were also completed, evacuating a total of four (4) US casualties.

5 January 1967 - Flying was limited in the Phu Bai area to one medevac mission evacuating one civilian with gunshot wounds. In Dong Ha, the flying was again limited by marginal flying weather. Major AYRES led flights completing three recon overflights and two recon team extractions. Three medevac missions were attempted, with two completed and one aborted due to the weather conditions. Two administrative flights were also completed.

6 January 1967 - Flying in the Phu Bai area was limited due to weather conditions. A shuttle of medevacs to the hospital ship REPOSE was completed, while two recon team extractions and one recon team insertion was flown. Three medevacs were also flown. Normal operations were conducted at Dong Ha, with one recon overflight being led by Colonel MARTIN (CO, MAG-16 FWD) flying co-pilot for Major AYRES. After this aerial recon flight, Major AYRES then led a flight to insert four recon teams, two of which drew fire in the landing zones. YP-16 received 11 hits during one attempted insertion, and Major AYRES, who was the aircraft commander, flew it back to Dong Ha with two wounded aboard, a recon team member and his gunner. At Dong Ha, Major AYRES procured another aircraft and then led the flight on an emergency recon extraction of the team just inserted, which was completed without further incident.

7 January 1967 - Weather caused the cancellation of flight operations in the Phu Bai area this date. Four medevac missions were completed, evacuating eighteen (18) emergency and one priority casualty. Normal operations were conducted in the Dong Ha area, with Major BENO leading a flight completing three recon team insertions and two extractions. One insertion had to be aborted due to small arms fire being received in the LZ, however, no hits were taken on the aircraft. Five (5) medevac missions were completed, evacuating 4 RVN personnel and six civilians.

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8 January 1967 - Normal operations were conducted in the Phu Bai area, with Major MCDONALD leading a flight on four recon team insertions and one extraction. The flight was diverted from one insert to an emergency medevac and small arms fire was received from a suspected sniper. One US battle casualty was evacuated. Two other medevac missions were flown, with one being aborted due to weather, and the other completing the evacuation of one US casualty. In the Dong Ha area, weather limited the operations to one medevac mission which evacuated one US casualty.

9 January 1967 - Weather caused the cancellation of operations in the Phu Bai area, though two medevac missions were launched with one aborting due to weather, and the second evacuating a Marine with appendicitis. Recon team insertions were conducted in the Dong Ha and Khe Sahn areas. Three teams were extracted and one insertion was aborted due to weather.

10 January 1967 - Weather limited operations in the Phu Bai area to three emergency medevac missions. Captain BOYAN led all three medevacs and received small arms fire while picking up a civilian evacuee with head injuries. The lead aircraft received six (6) hits, and the chase aircraft received two (2). No injuries to the crews. The other two medevac missions evacuated two RVN personnel and two civilians. Normal operations were conducted in the Dong Ha areas, with two medevac missions being flown. Major CARROLL led a flight on two recon extractions and one recon team insertion. Recon overflights, and administrative flights constituted the remaining operations.

11 January 1967 - No flight operations in the Phu Bai area this date due to weather conditions. Flying in the Dong Ha areas were limited to three medevac missions evacuating four (4) US personnel and two (2) ARVN's.

12 January 1967 - Flying was limited in the Phu Bai area today, with Major SAMARAS leading a flight to insert one recon team and extract another. Small arms fire was received on the extraction, however no hits were scored on the aircraft. Two medevac missions were completed, one being a night medevac which reported fire being taken as it approached the zone, no hits were taken. Normal operations were conducted in the Dong Ha area, with Major CARROLL leading a flight on recon team insertions with Colonel MARTIN flying as co-pilot. Three teams were inserted, and one insert was aborted due to inavailability of suitable landing zones. Fire was received on the one flown medevac, but the aircraft did not take hits, and did evacuate 5 US casualties.

13 January 1967 - Normal operations were conducted in the Phu Bai area this date, with Major BENO leading a flight on three recon team insertions and a recon overflight. Fire was received on one team insertion, however no hits were taken. Three medevac missions were flown evacuating three casualties. Normal operations were conducted in the Dong Ha area, with four (4) medevac missions being flown evacuating thirteen (13) casualties.

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14 January 1967 - Normal operations conducted in the Phu Bai area, consisting of six (6) medevac missions being flown, evacuating twenty-two (22) personnel. Normal operations conducted in the Dong Ha area where two recon team insertions and two extractions were completed. Small arms fire was received on one insertion, however, no hits were taken. Major SAMARAS launched with Colonel MARTIN as co-pilot for an emergency extraction of a recon team reporting heavy contact. The team was extracted under intense fire, however no hits were taken. Two additional medevac missions were flown evacuating a total of nine (9) ARVN personnel.

a. Major General ROBERTSHAW presented the Purple Heart Medal to 2ndLt. R. M. NYE and Sgt. D. M. GREER in an unofficial ceremony at HMM-163 Headquarters this date.

15 January 1967 - Flight operations were limited in the Phu Bai area this date, being restricted to emergency medevac missions in support of I Corps, due to inclement weather. Eighteen (18) casualties were evacuated, 4 US, 14 ARVN personnel. Flight operations were cancelled at Dong Ha, due to weather.

16 January 1967 - Flight operations at both Phu Bai and Dong Ha were curtailed due to weather. At Phu Bai, seven (7) medevac missions carried six (6) emergency and twenty-one (21) priority casualties. At Dong Ha, four recon inserts were flown and two retractions were made by Major SAMARAS during the afternoon.

17 January 1967 - With improved weather in the Phu Bai area, the insertion of three recon teams and the extraction of one additional team was permitted. Major MCDONALD led the insertion flight, and while making an aerial recon of the area for a suitable LZ, noted the presence of enemy troops. The insert was aborted and an air strike called in. One emergency medevac was flown evacuating 4 ARVN casualties. Weather cancelled flight operations at Dong Ha.

18 January 1967 - Flight operations were again hampered by weather. Two operational missions were flown in support of two recon extractions, while three medevac missions evacuated three emergency and one priority casualty. At Dong Ha, operations consisted three insertions of recon teams, three extractions and three medevac flights, evacuating 3 US, 4 ARVN and one civilian casualty.

19 January 1967 - Flight operations were limited in the Phu Bai area, weather permitting only one medevac mission and an administrative flight from Dong Ha to Phu Bai. At Dong Ha, flights consisted of medevacs to move 2 US casualties from Dong Ha to the USS REPOSE, and to evacuate 9 ARVN's. Major SAMARAS led a recon flight inserting three teams and extracting two additional.

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20 January 1967 - Due to weather limitations, flying was restricted to shuttle flights from "A" Medical to the hospital ship USS REPOSE, moving fifty (50) personnel. Afternoon clearing permitted normal operations including resupply of Hill #230. Two emergency medevacs were flown for 1 US, and 4 ARVN casualties. During the early hours of the morning, the HUE PHU BAI TAOR was mortared by a suspected platoon of Viet Cong, from within $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the airfield. Thirty-five (35) rounds were fired, none damaging HMM-163 aircraft or injuring HMM-163 personnel. Ready reaction forces were alerted and security doubled, with no further incident. At Dong Ha, Major MCDONALD led a recon overflight and an insertion flight for two recon teams, extracting two additional teams.

21 January 1967 - Weather limited flying to the afternoon hours at Phu Bai, permitting four recon insertions and two extractions, and other normal flight commitments. Major BENO led the insertion flight and received fire from entrenched small arms positions, though the aircraft took no hits. Five emergency medevacs were flown to evacuate three ARVN personnel and one civilian to Hue Hospital. Three priority medevacs lifted six US casualties and one VC prisoner.

22 January 1967 - Weather curtailed flying in the Phu Bai area to emergency medevac flights for the evacuation of 6 ARVN and 1 US casualty. At Dong Ha, Major MCDONALD led recon flights for the insertion and retraction of one recon team, while two medevac flights were launched for five (5) ARVN casualties.

23 January 1967 - Flight operations cancelled at Phu Bai due to the weather, with the exception of medevac. Major CARROLL took small arms fire while extracting critically injured US personnel in the "OPERATION CHINOOK" LSA, though no hits were taken on the aircraft. A total of seven medevac flights evacuated twenty-four (24) personnel this date. At Dong Ha, flying was limited due to weather, however, two recon overflights were made, along with one medevac for one ARVN casualty.

24 January 1967 - Normal flight operations at Dong Ha with the insertion of three recon teams and the extraction of two additional teams. At Phu Bai, a weather break permitted normal operations of resupply and admin flights. Eleven medevac flights were flown this date, with fire being received on two separate flights. No hits were taken on board the aircraft. A total of twenty-six (26) personnel were evacuated, 21 US, 3 ARVN, 1 civilian and 1 VC prisoner.

25 January 1967 - Normal operations in the Phu Bai area, with Major BENO leading a flight inserting four recon teams and extracting four additional teams. Normal admin flights and medevac flights were the remaining activity for the day. A medevac was launched to lift a pregnant civilian with severe internal complications.

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26 January 1967 - Normal operations in the Phu Bai area, consisting of logistic and admin flights, with four medevac missions being flown, by Captain BOWMAN. On one mission fire was received and the aircraft took four (4) rounds, with a round inflicting minor injury to the copilot. At Dong Ha, Major SAMARAS led a flight completing two recon inserts and one extract, and a shuttle of personnel between Dong Ha ("D" Medical) and the USS REPOSE. On one recon insert at Khe Sahn, 1stLt HEIN led a section into a zone that was briefed possibly unsecure, and the aircraft took twenty (20) rounds through the airframe immediately upon touchdown. The mission was aborted immediately and there were no injuries to the passengers or crew.

27 January 1967 - Normal operations were conducted in the Phu Bai area, with LtCol BIANCHI leading a flight to attempt to locate the site of a sporadic survival radio "Beeper" tone. Other operations included a troop lift to the USS REPOSE and logistic, admin and aerial recon flights. Two priority medevac missions were launched carrying three US and one ARVN casualty.

28 January 1967 - Normal operations were conducted consisting of resupply and logistic cargo flights to Hill #230 and #180. A total of 10,900 pounds were carried during the day. Two emergency medevacs were launched carrying a total of 11 battle evacuees.

29 January 1967 - Normal operations in the Phu Bai area with Major McDONALD leading a flight inserting four teams and retracting three additional teams. Normal admin, resupply and maintenance flights were flown. At Dong Ha, Major AYRES flew a medevac that received small arms fire, inflicting damage to the left strut of the aircraft and shrapnel damage to the airframe. The medevac was completed without further combat damage.

30 January 1967 - Normal operations were conducted in the Phu Bai area, with the normal resupply of Hill #230, admin and maintenance flights being flown. One recon overflight and four medevac missions were flown, evacuating one emergency and five priority casualties.

31 January 1967 - Weather caused the cancellation of flight operations in the Phu Bai and Dong Ha areas this date, permitting only two medevac missions evacuating two emergency casualties.

C. PART THREE - SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1. Personnel

a. The squadron experienced a slight decrease in personnel over the month, with thirteen (13) personnel being joined and twenty-four (24) being detached. The total number of personnel on hand as of 31 January 1967 were fifty-five (55) officers and two hundred six (206) enlisted.

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2. Administration

a. The squadron realized three (3) re-enlistments, three (3) extensions of overseas tour, and twenty-eight (28) enlisted promotions during the month of January 1967.

3. Awards

a. The following personnel were awarded the PURPLE HEART MEDAL during the month of January 1967:

- (1) Major P. N. SAMARAS 069223 USMC
- (2) Major J. D. WAY 068014 USMC
- (3) 1stLt. N. A. SNIDER 090701 USMCR
- (4) 2ndLt R. M. NYE 092807 USMCR
- (5) Sgt. D. M. GEER II 1452464 USMC
- (6) Sgt. G. E. WILLIAMS 1514201 USMC
- (7) Pfc R. J. DENNY 2183803 USMC

The above mentioned men were presented medals for wounds inflicted by Communist (Viet Cong) forces, in informal ceremonies during the month of January, by Major General ROBERTSHAW, USMC, 1st MAW Commander.

b. No other awards were presented.

4. Casualties

a. The squadron experienced two (2) casualties as a direct result of enemy action. One (1) crewmember received minor injuries when a bullet penetrated his flak vest while he manned his position in an insecure landing zone. One (1) pilot was injured by shrapnel fragments in the leg, when a bullet penetrated the cockpit enclosure and fragmented against the airframe. Both wounded were treated and returned to duty.

5. Civic Action

a. No significant events.

6. Morale/Welfare Programs

a. No significant events.

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7. Informational services
 - a. No significant events
8. Intelligence/Counter Intelligence
 - a. The squadron S-2 section is currently updating and maintaining the intelligence briefing charts for aircrews in the Dong Ha.
9. Air Operations
 - a. Flight hours - 918.6
 - b. Flights/Sorties - 519/2281
 - c. Passengers - 3033
 - d. Cargo - 68.7 short tons
11. Special Operations
 - a. None
12. Ground Defense
 - a. Maximum emphasis was placed on building of bunkers and fortified positions around the squadron area.
13. Training
 - a. One officer and one enlisted were ordered to attend Escape and Evasion School, at Clark AFB and Cubi Pt., R.P., respectively.
14. Logistics
 - a. No significant events
15. Motor Transport
 - a. No significant events
16. Maintenance
 - a. Ground crews found spark plug seizure in Engine 1820-84D due to prolonged utilization and operating environment, even when lubricated with required lubrication.

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17. Avionics

a. No significant events

18. Base Development

a. No significant events

19. Communications/Electronics

a. No significant events

D. PART FOUR - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. None.

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