

UNCLASSIFIED

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 164
 Marine Aircraft Group 15
 Ninth Marine Amphibious Brigade
 FPO San Francisco, California 96601

3:DJW:djw
 Ser: 00315967
 13 JUN 1967

REF ID: A65252
 SECRET - NOFORN

From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commander, Task Group 79.5

Subj: Command Chronology; 13 May 1967 thru 31 May 1967

Ref: (a) BdeO 5750.1B

Encl: ✓(1) Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164 Command Chronology for 13 May 1967 thru 31 May 1967

✓(2) After Action Report Operation Belt Tight Victory.
 1. In accordance with reference (a), the subject report is submitted as enclosure (1).

2. Upon removal of enclosure (1), downgrade to Unclassified.

R. D. McKITTRICK
 R. D. McKITTRICK

HMM-164

CMD CHRON

13-31 MAY 1967

HMM-164 S & G FILED

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REF ID: A65253
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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 164
Marine Aircraft Group 15
Ninth Marine Amphibious Brigade
FPO San Francisco, California 96601

13 May 1967 - 31 May 1967

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PART I - ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. CO	LtCol R. D. McKITRICK	14 February 1967
XO	Maj J. R. PLUMMER	16 September 1966
S-1	Maj E. T. LANGLEY	11 February 1967
S-2	Capt J. MAXWELL	17 February 1967
S-3	Maj C. H. O'BRIEN	16 January 1967
S-4	Maj J. D. WATSON	11 February 1967
MAINT	Maj A. B. COLBERT	16 January 1967

2. HMM-164, USS PRINCETON (LPH-5)

3. Average monthly strength:

Officer: 50

Enlisted: 185

4. Important visitors to the command: NONE

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PART II - NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS DURING
REPORTING PERIOD 13 MAY 1967 TO 31 MAY 196713 - 19 May 1967

A number of administrative flights were flown from the LPH-5 during this period. During the period 14 to 16 May (inclusive) the CH-46A aircraft of HMM-164 were grounded because of safety of flight.

20 May 1967

Six CH-46's of HMM-164 launched at 0630 on a strike mission in support of Operation HICKORY. These six aircraft were later augmented by two more CH-46's of HMM-164 and four CH-46's of HMM-165. Troops of 2/3 were landed by CH-46 at landing zone PARROT (YD 145775) and landing zone MOCKINGBIRD (YD 137773). Mortars and small arms fire was received by the strike aircraft coming into the LZ's. YT-13 received two hits on the third trip into landing zone PARROT; there was negative injury to personnel, and damage to the aircraft was minor. No other aircraft were hit.

At 1756 two CH-46's launched on a medical evacuation mission evacuating 16 U. S. battle casualties from YD 135776 and YD 148778. Both aircraft received fire in the zones, negative hits were received.

Several administrative flights were flown.

21 May 1967

At 0705 two aircraft launched from the LPH-5 to Dong Ha. While flying troop/logistic support missions out of Dong Ha, YT-20 received one hit from YD 102640. Damage to the aircraft was minor, and there was negative injury to personnel.

Numerous resupply and medical evacuation missions were flown throughout the rest of the daylight hours.

At 1820 two CH-46's launched from the LPH-5 on an emergency medical evacuation from YD 138775. Four aircraft of HMM-164, which were at this time on resupply missions, were diverted to this medical evacuation. Upon completion of the medical evacuations an emergency resupply mission was unable to enter the area due to intense artillery activity.

At 0045, 22 May, four CH-46's launched on an emergency resupply to YD 132770. On the return to the LPH-5, YT-11 reported taking .50 caliber fire from YD 2567; negative hits were received.

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Enclosure (1)

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22 May 1967

Numerous resupply and medical evacuation missions were flown from the LPH-5. YT-21 received one hit from .50 caliber fire at YD 138775 on a command and control mission. Damage to aircraft was minor; negative injury to personnel.

23 May 1967

Two CH-46's launched to Dong Ha in support of MAG-16 Forward. These aircraft flew numerous resupply missions in the Dong Ha area.

HMM-164 flew resupply and administrative flights in support of Operation BELT TIGHT/HICKORY from the LPH-5. No fire was received.

24 May 1967

Six aircraft launched to Dong Ha in support of MAG-16 Forward. These aircraft flew numerous resupply missions in support of III MAF. Included in the missions flown were two successful para-drops of 1200 pounds each.

At 2044 two CH-46's launched from the LPH-5 on an emergency resupply/medical evacuation mission of Echo Company, Second Battalion, Third Marines (YD 130730).

25 May 1967

A number of administrative flights were flown in support of the SLF. A detachment of eight CH-46's was launched to MMAF in support of MAG-16. The remainder of the squadron departed for Subic Bay, Philippines aboard the LPH-5.

26 May 1967

Two CH-46's launched from MMAF on aircraft augmentation at Dong Ha. They flew recon insertions and retractions at Khe Sanh.

27 May 1967

Four CH-46's launched from MMAF on aircraft augmentation at Dong Ha. 50,000 pounds of cargo was lifted to various zones. Numerous medevacs and passengers were carried.

Four aircraft launched from LPH-5 for a cargo and passenger movement to LPH-10.

Enclosure (1)

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28 May 1967

Two CH-46's departed MMAF for Phu Bai to stand Sparrow Hawk. These aircraft worked with two HMM-265 aircraft on Project Delta.

Five aircraft departed LPH-5 for Cubi Point for Maintenance purposes.

29 May 1967

Two aircraft departed MMAF for Dong Ha augmentation. 30,000 pounds of cargo was lifted to numerous zones on resupply.

Two aircraft launched from MMAF to Phu Bai on Administration troop lift from Fourth Marines' LZ to Phu Bai.

One aircraft flew from MMAF to hospital ship Sanctuary with 10 medevacs.

Five aircraft departed Cubi Point for LPH-10.

30 May 1967

Two aircraft departed MMAF for Phu Bai to stand Sparrow Hawk. The aircraft were launched on a recon insert and retraction mission, plus a Sparrow Hawk security team was put in for security of a damaged UH-1E at YD900235. Occasional fire was reported in the zone. No aircraft were hit.

31 May 1967

Four aircraft departed MMAF, two of them for Phu Bai augmentation and two for Dong Ha augmentation. Recon inserts and retractions were flown in Dong Ha area as well as resupply missions of Third Battalion, Fourth Marines, Second Battalion, Twenty Sixth Marine and Third Battalion, Ninth Marines.

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PART IV - SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

1. Maps: Series: 17014. 1:25,000 coverages of I Corps area.
2. All briefs were given by MAG-36 S-3.

[REDACTED]
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Enclosure (1)

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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 164
 Marine Aircraft Group 15
 Ninth Marine Amphibious Brigade
 FPO San Francisco, California 96601

3:CHO: djw
 3480

14 JUN 1967

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From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commander, Task Group 79.5

Subj: After Action Report, Operation BELT TIGHT/HICKORY;
 submission of

Ref: (a) CTG 79.5 Operation Plan 120A-67

Encl: (1) Chronology of Significant Events
 (2) Analysis of Helicopter Operations
 (3) Statistical Summary

1. In accordance with the instructions contained in reference (a), enclosures (1) through (3) are submitted.

2. This letter may be downgraded to UNCLASSIFIED upon the removal of enclosures (1), (2) and (3).

Ron McKittrick
 R. D. McKITTRICK

Ann 164
 a/c BELT TIGHT/HICKORY

20-25 May 67

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 164

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CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS20 May 1967

Six CH-46's of HMM-164 launched at 0630 on a strike mission in support of Operation BELT TIGHT/HICKORY. These aircraft were later augmented by two more CH-46's of HMM-164, and four CH-46's of HMM-165. Troops of 2/3 were landed by CH-46's at landing zone PARROT (YD 145775) and landing zone MOCKINGBIRD (YD 137773). Mortars and small arms fire were received by the strike aircraft coming into the LZ's. YT-13 received two hits on the third trip into landing zone PARROT; there was negative injury to personnel, and damage to aircraft was minor. No other aircraft were hit.

At 1756 two CH-46's launched on a medical evacuation mission, evacuating 16 U. S. battle casualties from YD 135776 and YD 148778. Both aircraft received fire in the zones; negative hits were received.

Several administrative flights were flown.

21 May 1967

At 0705 two aircraft launched from the LPH-5 to Dong Ha. While flying troop/logistic support missions out of Dong Ha YT-20 received one hit from YD 102640. Damage to the aircraft was minor, and there was negative injury to personnel.

Numerous resupply and medical evacuation missions were flown throughout the rest of the daylight hours.

At 1820 two CH-46's launched from the LPH-5 on an emergency medical evacuation from YD 138775. Four CH-46's of HMM-164, which were at this time on resupply missions, were diverted to this medical evacuation. Upon completion of the medical evacuations an emergency resupply mission was unable to enter the area due to intense artillery activity.

At 0045, 22 May, four CH-46's launched on an emergency resupply to YD 132770. On the return to the LPH-5, YT-11 reported taking .50 caliber fire from YD 2567; negative hits received.

22 May 1967

Numerous resupply and medical evacuation missions were flown from the LPH-5. YT-20 received 1 hit from .50 caliber fire at YD 138775 on a command and control mission. Damage to aircraft was minor; negative injury to personnel.

Enclosure (1)

[REDACTED] - NOFORN

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23 May 1967

Two CH-46's launched to Dong Ha in support of MAG-16 Forward. These aircraft flew numerous resupply missions in the Dong Ha area.

HMM-164 flew resupply and administrative flights in support of Operation BELT TIGHT/HICKORY from the LPH-5. No fire was reported.

24 May 1967

Six aircraft launched to Dong Ha in support of MAG-16 Forward. These aircraft flew numerous resupply missions in support of III MAF. Included in the missions flown were two successful para-drops of 1200 pounds each.

At 2044 two CH-46's launched from the LPH-5 on an emergency resupply/medical evacuation mission of Echo Company, Second Battalion, Third Marines (YD130730).

25 May 1967

A number of administrative flights were flown in support of the SLF.

A detachment of eight CH-46's was launched to MMAF and placed under operational control of MAG-16.

Casualties: NONE

Intelligence/Counter-Intelligence

<u>A/C Fired On</u>	<u>Incidents</u>	<u>A/C Hit</u>	<u>Hits</u>	<u>Sorties</u>	<u>Hours</u>
14	8	3	3	798	282.7

Ratio of aircraft hit to aircraft fired on:	<u>1:4.67</u>
Ratio of aircraft hits to sorties flown:	<u>1:266.0</u>
Ratio of aircraft hit to sorties flown:	<u>1:266.0</u>
Ratio of aircraft hit to hours flown:	<u>1:95.90</u>
Ratio of aircraft hits to aircraft fired on:	<u>1:4.67</u>

Breakdown of fire incidents with respect to altitude:

<u>Incidents</u>	<u>A/C Hit</u>	<u>Altitude</u>
8	3	0-499
0	0	500-999
0	0	1000-1499
0	0	1500 plus

Enclosure (1)

[REDACTED] - NOFORN

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ANALYSIS OF HELICOPTER OPERATIONS1. General

The operational concepts employed during this operation were in consonance with approved doctrine for helicopterborne operations. Since the landing force was placed under operational control of other forces ashore and not returned to Amphibious Ready Group shipping, there was no withdrawal phase.

2. Analysisa. Initial Troop Movement

(1) Due to the limited aircraft availability of the SLF helicopter squadron, a request was submitted and approved for four additional CH-46 aircraft from the First Marine Aircraft Wing to participate in the initial troop movement. The late arrival of these aircraft plus mechanical failures on two of the SLF Squadron's helicopters caused the first wave of troops landed in the primary landing zone to be only half of the planned number of troops. One of the SLF squadron's aircraft was repaired in time for the second wave, and the First Marine Aircraft Wing's four CH-46's arrived in time to join the third wave.

(2) Two armed UH-1E aircraft were attached for support of the ship-to-shore movement. These two aircraft arrived on the morning of D-Day, allowing only a minimum briefing of the pilots prior to launch of the first wave.

(3) The first wave of troops from the USS Ogden (LPD-5) were landed in the alternate landing zone. This situation resulted in a minimum force (thirty troops) in landing zone MOCKINGBIRD until they could be reinforced by subsequent waves.

b. Operations Ashore

(1) Operations ashore consisted of resupply, medical evacuation and administrative/command and control flights. The lack of UH-1E aircraft for command and control flights necessitated the use of CH-46A aircraft to accomplish these missions.

(2) On D+1, D+3 and D+4, aircraft were sent to Dong Ha airfield to augment Marine Aircraft Group 16 operations from that base. By D+4 all helicopter support of forces ashore was being conducted from Dong Ha.

Enclosure (2)

[REDACTED] - NOFORN

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3. Problems Encountered

a. Non-availability of aircraft spare parts continues to be a critical problem for the embarked squadron. Only slight improvement of this situation has been realized during the five days of this operation.

b. Aircraft utilization problems continue to exist due to the assignment of only one model helicopter to the SLF. CH-46 aircraft were utilized for command and control and medical evacuation missions that could have been more efficiently accomplished by unarmed UH-1E aircraft.

4. Conclusions

a. Aircraft attached for augmentation of the initial troops movement must arrive in sufficient time to participate in detailed operational briefings and be available for initial landing waves. Since L-Hour is usually early on D-Day, augmentation aircraft should normally arrive at the LPH on the evening of D-1.

b. The degradation of combat effectiveness of CH-46A equipped squadrons due to inadequate spare parts support is still a cause for serious concern at all echelons of command.

c. Embarked helicopters of the landing force should include at least two armed UH-1E and one unarmed UH-1E aircraft. Addition of these aircraft would enhance the effectiveness of the landing force by providing armed escort of assault waves, tactical air control (airborne), improved command and control capability and evacuation of casualties without the adverse diversion of CH-46 aircraft from other missions. The comments contained in this paragraph are the same as those made in the after action report for Operation BEACON STAR. The validity of these conclusions remains unchanged.

Enclosure (3)

[REDACTED] - NOFORN

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STATISTICAL SUMMARYOPERATION BELT TIGHT / HICKORY

20 MAY - 25 MAY 1967

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>PASSENGERS</u>	<u>CARGO*</u>	<u>MEDEVACS</u>	<u>FLIGHT HOUR</u>
20 May	209	826	7.2	50	60.2
21 May	152	137	35.2	153	67.7
22 May	117	69	45.2	103	38.1
23 May	153	164	83.2	134	57.9
24 May	124	143	69.2	17	47.2
25 May	43	82	1.0	9	11.6
TOTAL	798	1421	241.0*	466	282.7

* Denotes short tons

Enclosure (3)

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