

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 165
Marine Aircraft Group 36
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
FPO San Francisco, 96602

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5 July 1973

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code HD)
Via: (1) Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 36, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FPO, San Francisco, 96602
(2) Commanding General, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac, FPO, San Francisco, 96602
(3) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, FPO, San Francisco, 96610

Subj: Semi Annual Command Chronology Report for period 1 January 1973 to 30 June 1973; submission of

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.1
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8_
(c) WgO 5750.1
(d) GruO 5750.1_

Encl: (1) Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a) through (d), enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. This letter is downgraded to UNCLASSIFIED upon removal of enclosure (1).

A. B. Colbert
A. B. COLBERT

HMM-165 S&C Files
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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 165
Marine Aircraft Group 36
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
FPO San Francisco, 96602

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 January 1973 to 30 June 1973

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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PART II

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONCOMMANDER

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 165
 Marine Aircraft Group 36
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing
 FPO, San Francisco, 96602

LTCOL A.B. COLBERT

2. LOCATION

1 January 1973 - 20 April 1973: Embarked on USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH-11)
 20 April 1973 - 30 June 1973: Embarked on USS TRIPOLI (LPH-10)

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Commanding Officer	1 Jan 73 - 1 May 73	LTCOL C.H.F. EGGER
	1 May 73 - 30 Jun 73	LTCOL A.B. COIBERT
Executive Officer	1 Jan 73 - 30 Jun 73	MAJOR R.P. ROGERS
Operations Officer	1 Jan 73 - 1 Feb 73	MAJOR J.D. SIMPSON
	1 Feb 73 - 18 Jun 73	MAJOR D.L. BLEDSOE
	18 Jun 73 - 30 Jun 73	MAJOR W.H. BIRT
Administrative Officer	1 Jan 73 - 30 Jun 73	CAPT W.H. HOFF
Maintenance Officer	1 Jan 73 - 1 Feb 73	MAJOR D.L. BLEDSOE
	1 Feb 73 - 30 Jun 73	CAPT J.B. GARTMAN
Logistics Officer	1 Jan 73 - 18 Jun 73	MAJOR W.H. BIRT
	18 Jun 73 - 30 Jun 73	CAPT L.E. PALMER
Intelligence Officer	1 Jan 73 - 1 Feb 73	1stLT J. FARLEE
	1 Feb 73 - 18 Jun 73	MAJOR D.L. BLEDSOE
	18 Jun 73 - 30 Jun 73	MAJOR W.H. BIRT
NATOPS Officer	1 Jan 73 - 1 Feb 73	MAJOR W.N. SIMMONS
	1 Feb 73 - 18 Jun 73	MAJOR R.C. MOORE
	18 Jun 73 - 30 Jun 73	CAPT D.D. SHOCKLEY
Aviation Safety Officer	1 Jan 73 - 15 Jan 73	CAPT J.B. SRAMEX
	15 Jan 73 - 1 Feb 73	CAPT J.B. GARTMAN
	1 Feb 73 - 18 Jun 73	CAPT R.S. BALARA
	18 Jun 73 - 30 Jun 73	CAPT D.D. SHOCKLEY

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<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>		<u>OTHER</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
24	130	1	2	0	6 *	25	138

* Three (3) USN SAR Swimmers; Three (3) USN SAR Corpsman.

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PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

1973 found HMM-165 in the Gulf of Tonkin. On 21 January 1973, while enroute to Singapore for liberty, the USS New Orleans crossed the Equator setting off traditional shipboard festivities. While on liberty in Singapore, the Vietnamese Cease Fire became a reality thereby terminating liberty and rushing HMM-165 back to Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, for a new and important assignment.

Upon arrival at Subic Bay, the squadron was instructed to begin aircraft modification for induction in OPERATION ENDSWEEP. Rapidly, the squadron was reduced to ten aircraft with only the necessary personnel being assigned. Instructions stated that the CH-53 Sea Stallions assigned to the squadron would tow the necessary mine counter-measure gear and sweep for American seeded mines in North Vietnamese waters. The CH-46 Sea Knights were to fly a primary mission of Search and Rescue (SAR) with a secondary logistics mission. UH-1E helicopters would be utilized for aerial reconnaissance and VIP transport.

The first three weeks of February consisted of aircraft modifications and training personnel to handle the newly assigned missions. Since no SOP had ever been published for SAR operations in a mine field, the task for implementing such procedures were given to the squadron.

On 21 February 1973, the squadron, still aboard the USS New Orleans, departed Subic Bay for Haiphong Harbor in the waters off North Vietnam. For two months, ship and squadron personnel, while performing their new mission, encountered low ceilings, fog and instrument flight conditions resulting in long hours and hard work.

As minesweeping operations were in progress, a breakdown in the Vietnamese Cease Fire during April 1973 resulted in the United States withdrawal from OPERATION ENDSWEEP returning Task Force 78 to Subic Bay. The sixty day operational period prior to the United States withdrawal had provided valuable reinforcement for squadron procedures. HMM-165 utility helicopters had flown American negotiators from CAT BI Airfield in North Vietnam back aboard ship enabling the Task Force to steam with all personnel aboard. UH-1E's also flew reconnaissance missions plus ship to ship VIP and logistics flights. CH-46 SAR procedures also proved more than adequate when the SAR aircraft were scrambled to extract the crew of a crashed Navy CH-53 from the mine filled waters. CH-53 pilots from HMM-165 were the first U.S. Marine Corps pilots to sweep mines in an actual mine-field.

The return to Subic Bay was not to be a period of rest for HMM-165. Upon arrival in Subic Bay, the squadron crossdecked from the USS New Orleans (LPH-11) to the USS Tripoli (LPH-10). The squadron move was executed skillfully allowing HMM-165 to be operational the next day.

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On 1 May 1973, Lieutenant Colonel C.H.F. EGGER, Commanding Officer of HMM-165, passed the squadron colors to Lieutenant Colonel A.B. COLBERT during change of command ceremonies held on the hanger deck of the USS Tripoli. The continuation of May and early part of June 1973 placed HMM-165 in additional training activities involving both ship and squadron personnel. One such training period consisted of an amphibious exercise to test the control capabilities aboard the amphibious ships.

With ship and squadron personnel in a ready standby status, 17 June 1973 sent the USS Tripoli back to Haiphong Harbor and the Gulf of Tonkin. Here, HMM-165 once again resumed the tedious task of sweeping mines as well as the numerous support missions required. Mine sweeping operations in Haiphong Harbor were completed on 26 June 1973 sending the squadron south where it was tasked with clearing harbors off the coast of Vinh, Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

This reporting period has been a busy and demanding period for the Marines of HMM-165, having been embarked aboard ship for more than twenty-one months, to include the entire fiscal year 1973.

HMM-165, while steaming the South China Sea, has visited such ports as Manila, Singapore and Keelung. During this reporting period, HMM-165 has not seen its home base in Okinawa. While afloat, the squadron has been recommended for the Navy Unit Citation, and now participates in the closing chapter of the Vietnamese Conflict.

Within the past six months, the Marines of HMM-165 have accomplished every mission inherent to a Marine Corps Helicopter Squadron. The missions have ranged from SAR, amphibious readiness and mine sweeping operations. Every mission has been performed in a highly professional manner with safety always being the guidelines.

This reporting period began with HMM-165 afloat in the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of South Vietnam and ends with the squadron still at sea, still in the Gulf of Tonkin.

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PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 2-5 Jan 73 - HMM-165 aircraft supported BLT 3/4 in a field operation in the Republic of the Philippines.
- 7 Jan 73 - HMM-165 departed Subic Bay aboard the USS New Orleans and sailed for the Gulf of Tonkin.
- 9 Jan 73 - HMM-165, aboard the USS New Orleans, arrived in the Gulf of Tonkin. The daily Da Nang MARLOG and the morning and afternoon MARLOGS between the ships of ARG "A" were resumed. Two CH-46's were provided for a VIP flight for Colonel T.J. STEVENS, CO, 31st MAU and party to Huong Dien.
- 10 Jan 73 - HMM-165 provided two CH-46's to pickup 54 South Vietnamese Marine Corps troops and transported them to the USS Monticello (LPD-35). The squadron also provided one CH-46 to transport Colonel T.J. STEVENS from the USS New Orleans to the USS Monticello and back to the USS New Orleans.
- 11 Jan 73 - HMM-165 provided three CH-46's and one UH-1E on a VIP flight to Da Nang with Rear Admiral W.D. TOOLE, CTF 76.4, Colonel T.J. STEVENS and party aboard. The squadron also launched two CH-46's on a liaison flight to Huong Dien and Hue FRAC with members of the 31st MAU aboard.
- 12 Jan 73 - HMM-165 provided two CH-46's to transport UDT personnel from the USS Paul Revere (LFA-248) to China Beach and returned after completing the mission with one MEDEVAC from 95th MED.
- 15 Jan 73 - HMM-165 launched two CH-46's to transport 54 South Vietnamese Marine Corps troops from the USS Monticello to Huong Dien.
- 16 Jan 73 - HMM-165 provided VIP support for Brigadier General R.W. TAYLOR, Assistant Wing Commander, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on his visit to the squadron aboard the USS New Orleans.
- 18 Jan 73 - HMM-165 launched one UH-1E and one CH-46 on a liaison mission to Huong Dien with Colonel T.J. STEVENS aboard.
- 21 Jan 73 - HMM-165 conducted holiday routine and participated in the celebration of crossing the Equator, prior to entering Singapore for four days of liberty.
- 26 Jan 73 - HMM-165, aboard the USS New Orleans, departed Singapore and sailed for Subic Bay. This was in response to a general recall due to the Vietnam Cease Fire and the preparation being made for the upcoming Special Operation (End Sweep).
- 31 Jan 73 - HMM-165 launched two CH-46's from the USS New Orleans and recovered them at NAS Cubi Point, R.P. The squadron also provided VIP support for Major General M.P. RYAN, Commanding General, III MAF and members of the 31st MAU.
- 1 Feb 73 - Transferred six CH-53's, thirteen CH-53 pilots and 35 enlisted personnel to HMM-164.

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- 5-9 Feb 73 - HMM-165 participated in MINE X Operations, conducted in Subic Bay, R.P.
- 10-19 Feb 73 - CH-46 crews attended lectures and practiced in overwater SAR procedures.
- 13 Feb 73 - Three CH-53's and their crews were returned to HMM-165. With their return, the squadrons primary mission was changed to include both SAR and Airborne Mine Counter-measures.
- 14-19 Feb 73 - CH-53 pilots and crews practiced utilization of the RAYDIST NAVIGATIONAL SYSTEM while towing the MOP Mine Sweeping Device.
- 20 Feb 73 - Five CH-46's, three CH-53's and two UH-1E's were flown back aboard the USS New Orleans. HMM-165 departed for Haiphong Harbor.
- 23 Feb 73 - Arrived Haiphong Harbor, Democratic Republic of Vietnam.
- 24-27 Feb 73 - Conducted VIP and Administrative flights to and from the USS New Orleans and Haiphong (CAT BI) Airfield, DRV, carrying both U.S. and DRV negotiators. HMM-165 also conducted logistic flights to the three RAYDIST NAVIGATION SITES established on the shores of Haiphong Harbor.
- 28 Feb 73 - Extracted eleven American negotiators from Haiphong, DRV. Departed Haiphong Harbor aboard the USS New Orleans.
- 1 Mar 73 - The squadron conducted routine MEDEVAC from USS Dubuque (LPD-8) to the USS New Orleans.
- 4-31 Mar 73 - Three daily negotiation flights were flown from the USS New Orleans to CAT BI, Haiphong Airfield.
- 5 Mar 73 - Negotiators from the U.S. and DRV were flown from CAT BI to the USS New Orleans; The DRV representatives were then returned to CAT BI later in the day.
- 7 Mar 73 - The first sweep of an actual mine field using the MARK-105 AMCM sled was conducted by HMM-165. A practice launch of the SAR was conducted to test response time of the SAR crew; the aircraft was launched in a little over three minutes.
- 8 Mar 73 - Rear Admiral MCCAULEY, CTF 78, was flown to CAT BI for negotiations and returned to the USS New Orleans. A group of DRV representatives accompanied the logistics resupply of coastal RAYDIST SITES. Conducted visual reconnaissance of sweep area for Captain VECCHIONE, CTF 78.1.
- 14 Mar 73 - Launched five minute SAR aircraft because CH-53 was experiencing difficulty in a mine field. The CH-53 returned safely to its ship and the SAR aircraft was returned to the USS New Orleans.
- 17 Mar 73 - Conducted mine sweeping operations with MARK-105 AMCM equipment. Rear Admiral MCCAULEY and Captain VECCHIONE were flown to CAT BI for negotiations.

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- 18 Mar 73 - Rear Admiral MCCAULEY and Captain LINDSAY (CTU 78.2.2) were flown to inspect an MSO that had experienced an engine fire the preceeding night. Launched both the five minute and fifteen minute SAR standby aircraft for possible pickup of downed CH-53 crew. The crewmembers were picked up by boats from the USS Cleveland (LPD-7) and the USS New Orleans. The crewmembers were MEDEVACED from USS Cleveland to the USS New Orleans by aircraft from HMM-165 and one aircraft from HMM-164.
- 20 Mar 73 - A VIP flight from the USS New Orleans to CAT BI Airfield was conducted for Rear Admiral MCCAULEY and Captain VECCHIONE.
- 28 Mar 73 - Conducted VIP flights for Major General BROWN, CG First MAW, and Colonel MALONEY, CO MAG-36.
- 1-16 Apr 73 - Three daily negotiation flights were flown from the USS New Orleans to CAT BI Airfield, DRV.
- 2 Apr 73 - Provided VIP support flights to CAT BI for Rear Admiral MCCAULEY and Captain VECCHIONE. Launched the five minute and fifteen minute SAR standby aircraft to recover the pilots and crew of a Navy CH-53 which crashed. All crewmembers of the downed aircraft were returned to the USS New Orleans. Launched five minute SAR standby aircraft to assist a second CH-53 which was experiencing mechanical difficulties. The CH-53 returned to its' home deck and the SAR aircraft returned to the USS New Orleans.
- 3 Apr 73 - Provided a VIP flight for Rear Admiral MCCAULEY to and from the USS Ogden (LPD-5). Provided a surveillance flight of Hong Gai for Captain VECCHIONE.
- 17 Apr 73 - Departed Gulf of Tonkin for Subic Bay, R.P.
- 20 Apr 73 - Conducted crossdeck from USS New Orleans (LPH-11) to USS Tripoli (LPH-10) while ships were docked at pier in Subic Bay, R.P.
- 1-31 May 73 - HMM-165 conducted air and ground training for pilots/air-crewmembers while operating in the Subic Bay area.
- 17 May 73 - HMM-165 conducted the first CH-46 MCM Tow evaluation flight for the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.
- 18-20 May 73 - HMM-165 provided twenty-four hour SAR standby aircraft.
- 23 May 73 - HMM-165 participated in MCM exercise in Subic Bay, R.P.
- 24 May 73 - HMM-165 conducted day and night carrier qualifications for CH-46 and CH-53 pilots.
- 1-15 Jun 73 - Conducted flight training which included formation flights, Instrument, NATOPS and carrier qualifications.
- 15 Jun 73 - HMM-165 provided one CH-46 to pickup CTF 78 interpreters at Manila International Airport.

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- 17 Jun 73 - HMM-165, while on board the USS Tripoli, departed Subic Bay and sailed for the Gulf of Tonkin to resume OPERATION ENDSWEEP.
- 19 Jun 73 - One HMM-165 CH-46 landed at CAT BI Airfield, DRV, with a negotiation team.
- 19-30 Jun 73 - Conducted VIP and Administrative flights carrying both U.S. and DRV negotiators.
- 20 Jun 73 - HMM-165 resumed mine sweeping operations in the Haiphong Harbor area with Task Force 78.
- 26 Jun 73 - Task Force 78 completed mine sweeping operations in the Haiphong Harbor area and HMM-165, embarked on the USS Tripoli, sailed to an anchorage just off the coast of Vinh, DRV.

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PART IV

SUPPORTING STATISTICS1. FLIGHT OPERATIONS (1 Jan 73 - 30 Jun 73)

Cargo Tons	234.8
Passengers	5114
Sorties	4044
Flight Hours	1909.7

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