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MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 214

Marine Aircraft Group 12

1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III MAF, AirFMFPac
FPO, San Francisco 96601

3:RMC:scrh
3480
4 July 1965

SECRET

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 12

Subj: Command Diary

Ref: (a) MCO 3480.1
(b) CG, FMAW 151242Z MAY 65

Encl: ✓(1) Command Diary

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosure (1) is hereby submitted.

K. O'KEEFE

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VMR-214
CMD DRAFT

3 FEB - 30 JUNE 1965

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ENCLOSURE (4)

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I - ORGANIZATION DATA SHEET

- A. MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON TWO ONE FOUR
- B. REPORT PERIOD
 - 1. PRE-COMBAT - 5 FEBRUARY THRU 20 JUNE 1965
 - 2. COMBAT OPERATIONS - 21 JUNE THRU 30 JUNE 1965
- C. REPORT SUBMITTED 4 JULY 1965
- D. K. O'KEEFE, LTCOL., USMC
- E. MCAF, CHU LAI, SOUTH VIETNAM

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1. Introduction. In order to lend continuity to this initial report, it will be divided into two phases; Pre-combat Operations and Combat Operations.

A. Pre-combat Operations. Prior to deployment to the First Marine Aircraft Wing, VMA-214 was attached to Marine Aircraft Group-13, First Marine Brigade, based at MCAS, Kaneohe, Hawaii. The squadron was engaged in normal phase training type operations and support of First Marine Brigade Ground Units. Not being a stabilized squadron, pilots were in various phases of training at all times.

On 3 February, VMA-214 embarked on ships to participate in Exercise "Silver Lance" and arrived at San Clemente Island on 16 February 1965. MAG-13, upon arrival at San Clemente, was ordered to backload and return to Hawaii. VMA-214 arrived back at Kaneohe on 1 March and departed on surface shipping for the far east on 14 March, arriving at Okinawa on 26 March 1965. The squadron chopped OPCEN to MAG-12 on 27 March and departed for Iwakuni on 27 March 1965.

We arrived in Iwakuni with only 20 pilots available and a ship-load of aircraft at Kizarazu, which had been embarked since 29 January 1965. The aircraft situation was cleared up by acquiring aircraft previously belonging to VMA-121.

During the next four weeks, MAG-12 rendered maximum assistance in providing this squadron with group equipment and training facilities to compensate for the long period of non-flying while we were afloat. Minimum personnel requirements were placed on the squadron and the sole goal was to increase training readiness. From 28 March to 22 April, 1965, the squadron conducted flight operations placing training emphasis on conventional weapons delivery. A total of 247 sorties and 459 hours were flown by the squadron during this period.

To further increase our combat readiness, MAG-12 requested this squadrons deployment to NAS, Cubi Point, Philippines, and Naha, Okinawa, which was approved by the 1stMAW. The squadron departed MCAS, Iwakuni on 23 April for Cubi Point. This was the last we saw of Iwakuni. By 25 May the squadron had qualified all but four newly assigned pilots in Conventional Ordnance Delivery. The Naha deployment was cancelled and the squadron remained at NAS, Cubi Point. While at Cubi, the squadron flew 1,134 sorties for a total of 1,424 hours and achieved a combat readiness of 70.3%.

The squadron received word about 2 May 1965 of possible commitment to the Republic of Vietnam and was later confirmed by receipt of MAG-12's Operation Plan and Admin Plan on 17 May 1965.

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~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ The advance party of VMA-214, consisting of the Material Officer and 40 enlisted personnel, embarked on shipping from Iwakuni to Chu Lai on 19 and 25 May and arriving 26 and 30 May respectively. This lift consisted mainly of Section "M" Equipment, Supply Officers Stores and Camp Equipment. The main body remained at Cubi preparing for the deployment and conducting limited flight operations. On 22 May the squadron received MAG-12's Air Movement Annex which directed the squadron to assume a 24 hour alert status for deployment to RVN on order. The squadron assisted VMA-225 and VMA-311 as they passed through on their way to Chu Lai. On 13 June the squadron received a message from MAG-12 directing four pilots to proceed to Chu Lai for the purpose of flying missions with VMA-225. MAG-12's intention was to provide the maximum number of pilots of VMA-214 with some combat experience while the squadron was waiting to be brought in to Chu Lai. Eventually all pilots would be rotated through for the orientation flights. LtCol O'KEEFE and two pilots arrived 14 June and flew two hops each on 15 and 16 June. On 16 June LtCol O'KEEFE was informed VMA-214 would commence deploying to Chu Lai on 21 June. The Col. departed for Cubi on 17 June and the squadron commenced preparation for the deployment. The squadron was staged and aircraft ready to go by Saturday 19 June.

B. Combat Operations. The Commanding Officer of VMA-214, LtCo. K. O'KEEFE, with a flight of 4 aircraft landed at Chu Lai at 0825H and the CP was established at that time. On 22 and 23 June, a total of 11 more aircraft were flown in. Three aircraft remained at Cubi with outstanding AOCP's and four aircraft are presently in PAR. By the end of the reporting period, 24 pilots and all but 16 enlisted personnel were aboard at Chu Lai.

The squadron commenced flight operations on 22 June. Missions flown for the period 22 through 30 June were Blue Blazer, Helo escort, CAS and TPQ as directed by MAG-12. A total of 115 sorties for 164 hours were accomplished with a daily average availability of 11 aircraft. Total ordnance expended for the period is as follows: 212 MK-81, 84 MK-82, 17 MK-79, 28 LAU-10, 14 M57A1 and 913 rds. of 20MM.

On 27 June, the flight leader of Apple 7-1 flight, while attempting to drop bombs under an overcast, received four hits from his own bomb blast. The pilot was unable to lower his nose gear and had a utility hydraulic failure. He made the decision to eject but on blowing the canopy was unable to do so. He returned to the field and landed successfully into the MOREST. The pilot received no injuries and the aircraft received BRAVO damage. The following is a chronological list of significant events.

21 June 1965. LtCol. O'KEEFE arrived at Chu Lai with a flight of 4 aircraft at 0825H. No flight operations were conducted. Maintenance and line personnel had not arrived as yet. Aircraft availability was 4.

22 June 1965. Two flights of 4 aircraft each arrived at Chu Lai bringing the total aircraft aboard to 12. One Blue Blazer mission was flown for 3 sorties for a total of 2.8 hours. A KC-130 brought in the first load of personnel and equipment. Aircraft availability was 12. Ordnance expended was 12 MK-82 and 213 rds. 20MM.

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23 June 1965. Three more aircraft arrived bringing our total aircraft aboard to 15. 4 sorties were flown for a total of 6.0 hours. More personnel and equipment arrived by KC-130. Aircraft availability was 11. Ordnance expended was 16 MK-81 and 128 rds. 20 MM.

24 June 1965. Personnel and equipment continue to arrive by KC-130. 12 sorties were flown for 15.1 hours. The aircraft availability was 11. Ordnance expended; 28 MK-81, 4 LAU-10 and 579 rds. 20 MM.

25 June 1965. 12 sorties for a total of 16.7 hours were flown. The squadron commenced preparations of defensive positions as directed by MAG-12. Aircraft availability was 11. Ordnance expended; 18 MK-81 and 108 rds. 20 MM.

26 June 1965. Remaining personnel, with the exception of 16 enlisted and one W.O. working on aircraft at Cubi Point, are aboard. 8 sorties for a total of 8.9 hours were flown. Aircraft availability was 13. Ordnance expended; 32 MK-81 and 814 rds. 20MM.

27 June 1965. The squadron flew 22 sorties for a total of 38 hours. One aircraft was damaged, the details are in the narrative summary. Aircraft availability was 12. Ordnance expended; 28 MK-81, 18 MK-82, 4 MK-79, 1b LAU-10 and 1669 rds. 20MM.

28 June 1965. All squadron equipment and supplies are now aboard Chu Lai. Three aircraft still remain at Cubi Point. 20 sorties were flown for a total of 31.9 hours. Aircraft availability was 10. Ordnance expended; 17 MK-81, 23 MK-82, 2 MK-79 and 1132 rds. 20MM.

29 June 1965. One man was promoted to Lance Corporal. The squadron's working and living areas are pretty well squared away. 20 sorties were flown for 25.4 hours. Aircraft availability was 11. Ordnance expended; 41 MK-81, 20 MK-82, 3 MK-79, 5 LAU-10 and 1030 rds. 20MM.

30 June 1965. None personnel were transferred to CONUS and one to Iwakuni. 14 sorties were flown for a total of 19.6 hours. Aircraft availability was 11. Ordnance expended; 32 MK-81, 8 MK-82, 6 MK-79, 4 LAU-10 and 920 rds. 20MM.

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III - Supporting Documents. None enclosued with this report.

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