

Gru 4-3

MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 223  
 Marine Aircraft Group 12  
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac  
 FPO, San Francisco 96602

1:HSM:jtg  
 5750  
 5 August 1968  
 OIA 21768

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Commanding Officer  
 To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 12 (Attn: S-3)

Subj: Command Chronology for July 1968; submission of

Ref: (a) GruO 5750.10

Encl: (1) VMA-223 Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. Upon removal of enclosure (1) this is downgraded to UNCLASSIFIED.

*E. D. Smith*  
 E. D. SMITH

VMA-223

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VMA-223  
 OIA 21768

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MA-12 SAC#	COPI#
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JULY 1968

MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 223  
Marine Aircraft Group 12  
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac  
FPO, San Francisco 96602

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

CONFIDENTIAL

1 JULY 1968 to 31 JULY 1968

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## PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

- |                                       |                          |                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. <u>Designation</u>                 | <u>Commander</u>         | <u>Dates</u>   |
| VMA-223                               | LtCol Erin D. SMITH      | 1-31 July 1968 |
| 2. <u>Location</u>                    |                          |                |
| Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of Vietnam |                          |                |
| 3. <u>Staff Officers</u>              |                          |                |
| Executive Officer                     | LtCol Charles W. HENRY   | 1-31 July 1968 |
| Operations Officer                    | Major Lawrence J. GODBY  | 1-31 July 1968 |
| Aircraft Maintenance Officer          | Major Geoffrey A. YORK   | 1-31 July 1968 |
| Materiel Officer                      | Major Richard T. THOMSON | 1-31 July 1968 |
| Administrative Officer                | 1stLt Ralph P. HUNDLEY   | 1-31 July 1968 |
| 4. <u>Average Monthly Strength</u>    |                          |                |
| A. Marine Officers                    |                          |                |
| Naval Aviators                        | 20                       |                |
| Aviation Ground Officers              | 5                        |                |
| B. Naval Officers                     | 1                        |                |
| C. Marine Enlisted                    | 176                      |                |
| D. Naval Enlisted                     | <u>0</u>                 |                |
| E. Total Average Strength             | 202                      |                |

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ENCLOSURE (1)

CONFIDENTIALPART IINARRATIVE SUMMARY

During the month of July, VMA-223 again exceeded the 1,000 hour monthly flight time mark by flying 1005.7 hours and 913 sorties. On 30 July, the squadron flew its 3000th combat flight hour since arriving at Chu Lai on 23 April 1968

Close air support and direct air support missions continued to be the bulk of VMA-223's air operations in the I Corps area. Additionally, 120 direct air support missions were flown over North Vietnam during Operation THOR and in the Tally-Ho area. A total of 718.658 tons of aviation ordnance were expended on enemy targets by squadron pilots.

In response to the build-up of enemy forces in the Chu Lai TAOR and the increasing threat of ground attack, VMA-223's Ground Defense Company, commanded by Captain Jon M. ZAYACHEK, conducted tactical briefings, test fired and zeroed their weapons, and fortified their defensive positions.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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## PART III

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS1. Administrative

A. During the month of July, VMA-223 again experienced a net loss in personnel strength. Four Naval Aviators were joined and three were transferred. A net loss of 15 enlisted personnel resulted from transferring 21 Marines and joining 6. Strength figures are reflected in the following table:

	<u>1 Jul 68</u>	<u>31 Jul 68</u>	<u>T/O</u>	<u>MANNING LEVEL</u>
Aviator Officers	19	20	35	28
Aviation Ground Officers	5	5	6	4
Enlisted	<u>183</u>	<u>168</u>	<u>218</u>	<u>169</u>
Total	207	193	259	201

B. Two aviators were recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross during the month, and squadron pilots earned 69 air medals under the strike/flight system.

C. There were four reenlistments and two career length extensions in the squadron during July. VMA-223 had the good fortune to retain the services of eight enlisted members who volunteered for six month extensions in RVN. These troops are presently enjoying 30 days special leave in CONUS.

D. Two Marines were promoted to Sergeant, concurrently with their reenlistments, and two were promoted to Corporal; one promotion being for meritorious service.

E. The Civil Action Program gained momentum with the assistance of GySgt MONGER and SSgt WASHINGTON. Playground equipment was added to the list of facilities constructed or repaired by squadron Marines at the Dong Cong School in Chu Lai New Life Hamlet.

2. Operations

A. VMA-223 conducted combat air operations on all 31 days of the month. Flight hours and sorties totalled 1005.7 and 913 respectively, including 941.8 combat hours and 855 combat sorties. Of this total, 120 sorties and 145.4 hours were flown over North Vietnam.

B. In-country, close air support missions were dedicated primarily to Operations SCOTLAND, HOUSTON, ALLENBROOK, NEVADA EAGLE, JEB STUART, MAMELUKE THRUST, and DRAGON PALACE. VMA-223 participated actively in Operation THOR by striking AAA positions, artillery positions, truck parks, and supply routes in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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## PART III

**CONFIDENTIAL**SIGNIFICANT EVENTS (CON'T)2. Operations (Con't)

C. Two aircraft received battle damage during July. WP-4 received a small caliber round in the wing fuel cell on 2 July, and WP-5 was struck on the port wing tip by small arms fire on 10 July.

D. One aircraft was inducted into Progressive Aircraft Rework, one was returned, and one remained in PAR on 31 July. Additionally, one A4C was transferred to our custody from a CONUS-bound Navy Squadron.

E. Maintenance efforts continued to be hampered by shortages and failures of GTC-85's, starter probes, SATS loaders, and other support equipment. An average of 3 aircraft were carried as NORS, with an average level of 30 AOCF's. Critical items for the month were ailerons, hydraulic pumps, TACAN couplers, compass adapters (AJB-3), and temperature control switches. Extreme demands of taxiing from East Field continued to take their toll of tires and brakes. A redoubled effort by VMA-223 maintenance personnel resulted in an increase of availability to 75%, with an average daily availability of 14 aircraft.

F. Pilots of VMA-223 delivered 718.658 tons of ordnance on enemy targets during the month. A breakdown of individual expenditures is presented below:

MK 81 Conical	58	CBU-24	22
MK 81 S.E.	304	LAU-10	68
MK 82 Conical	20	LAU-60	92
MK 82 S.E.	2185	MK-77	208
M 117A1	80	20mm	18,4500

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ENCLOSURE (1)

MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 223  
 Marine Aircraft Group 12  
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac  
 FPO, San Francisco 96602

1/EDS/rjb  
 5750  
 5 Sep 1968

## CONFIDENTIAL

From: Commanding Officer  
 To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 12 (Attn: S-3)

Subj: Command Chronology for August 1968; submission of

Ref: (a) GruO 5750.1C

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*E. D. Smith*  
 E. D. SMITH

VMA 223  
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 1 of 7

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VMA-223

CMD CHRON

AUG 1968

MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON 223  
Marine Aircraft Group 12  
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac  
FPO, San Francisco 96602

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 AUGUST 1968 TO 31 AUGUST 1968

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PART II NARRATIVE SUMMARY

PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

ENCLOSURE (1)

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## PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

- | <u>1. DESIGNATION</u> | <u>COMMANDER</u>     | <u>DATES</u>     |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| VMA-223               | LtCol. Erin D. SMITH | 1-31 August 1968 |
2. LOCATION
- Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of Vietnam
3. STAFF OFFICERS
- |                              |                          |                   |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Executive Officer            | Major Robert K. SLACK    | 1-31 August 1968  |
| Operations Officer           | Major Lawrence J. GODBY  | 1-12 August 1968  |
|                              | Major Donald E. JACKETT  | 13-31 August 1968 |
| Aircraft Maintenance Officer | Major Geoffrey A. YORK   | 1-31 August 1968  |
| Material Officer             | Major Richard T. THOMSON | 1-18 August 1968  |
|                              | Captain Donald E. LOVE   | 19-31 August 1968 |
| Administrative Officer       | Captain Ralph P. HUNDLEY | 1-31 August 1968  |
4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH
- |                              |          |
|------------------------------|----------|
| a. Marine Officers           |          |
| (1) Naval Aviators           | 17       |
| (2) Aviation Ground Officers | 5        |
| b. Naval Officers            | 1        |
| c. Marine Enlisted           | 144      |
| d. Naval Enlisted            | <u>0</u> |
| e. Total Average Strength    | 167      |

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## PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

During August 1968, Marine Attack Squadron 223 once again surpassed the 1,000 hour mark by flying 1,074 sorties and 1,174.3 flight hours. The squadron has now accumulated over 4,000 combat hours since arriving in Vietnam on 23 April 1968.

Air operations during August were primarily Direct and Close Air Support missions in support of the 1st and 3rd Marine Divisions and U. S. Army units in the I Corps TAOR. In addition, 93 sorties were flown over North Vietnam in support of the 7th Air Force. A total of 933.5 tons of aviation ordnance was delivered on enemy targets by squadron pilots.

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## PART III

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS1. ADMINISTRATIVE

a. During the month of August, VMA-223's personnel strength was again reduced slightly. Six Naval Aviators were joined and four were transferred. Eight enlisted were joined, but sixteen enlisted personnel were transferred. Strength figures are reflected in the following table:

	<u>1Aug68</u>	<u>31Aug68</u>	<u>T/O</u>	<u>Manning Level</u>
Aviator Officers	20	23	35	28
Aviation Ground Officers	5	5	6	4
Enlisted	<u>168</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>218</u>	<u>169</u>
Total	193	188	259	201

b. Squadron pilots and assigned MAG-12 pilots completed qualifications for 76 Air Medals. One pilot was recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

c. There were three promotions in the squadron during August. Captain Ralph P. HUNDLEY was promoted to his present rank and there was one promotion each to Lance Corporal and Corporal. Seven special leaves were granted to personnel who extended their tours or reenlisted during the month.

2. OPERATIONS

a. VMA-223 conducted combat air operations on all 31 days of the month. Combat sorties and hours were 1,008 and 1,118.2 of the total of 1,074 sorties and 1,174.2 hours. Of this total, 93 sorties and 107.9 hours were flown over North Vietnam. 185 sorties and 210.9 hours were flown at night.

b. The majority of the close air support missions were in support of operations SCOTLAND II, LANCASTER III, JEB STUART III, ALLENBROOK, NEVADA EAGLE, MAMELUKE THRUST, and SOMERSET PLACE. Direct Air Support missions were launched against artillery and AAA positions, truck parks and supply routes in North Vietnam in support of the 7th Air Force.

c. Three aircraft received battle damage during the month. BUNO 148538 received a small caliber round in the fuselage, BUNO 148474 received multiple small caliber hits in the wing and horizontal stabilizer, and BUNO 145118 received a small caliber round in the engine air intake resulting in engine damage and requiring an emergency landing at Danang.

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## PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

d. The overall experience level of the squadron was reduced somewhat by the transfer of four seasoned pilots and the assignment of two others to Forward Air Controller duties. Five of the six newly assigned pilots were first tour aviators with no previous combat experience. Efforts were concentrated on these pilots to elevate them to a combat-ready status in the shortest possible time.

e. The Progressive Aircraft Rework Program continued normally with three aircraft remaining in PAR on 31 August. One aircraft was received from the O&R facility during August. No new aircraft were delivered by rotating Navy squadrons.

f. The Maintenance Department established a 72.4% availability level during the month of August. Of 19 aircraft in an A1 status, the readiness figures were as follows:

Operationally Ready	- 65.7%
NOR (Supply)	- 14.6%
NOR (Maintenance)	- 19.7%

The 19.7% NORM rate was due to unscheduled maintenance, in excess of 100 hours each, on five aircraft.

The 14.6% NORS rate resulted from five aircraft being down (NORS) in excess of 200 hours each. Critical items were compass adopters, fuel controls, gear boxes, air pressure shut-off valves and air turbine starters (A4G probe). The squadron averaged 41 AOCPI's per day and ended the month with 56 NORS-G's outstanding.

g. The dedicated efforts of VMA-223 maintenance and ordnance crews enabled squadron pilots to deliver 933.5 tons of ordnance on enemy targets. The following is a breakdown of individual expenditures:

MK81 S.E.	573
MK81 CONICAL	30
MK82 S.E.	1,774
MK82 CONICAL	496
MK117A1	231
MK77	212
MK77(CS)	4
LAU-60	27 (513 rockets)
LAU-69/A	33 (627 rockets)
LAU-10/A	137 (548 rockets)
CBU-24	16
20 M.M.	19,880

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PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

h. VMA-223's Ground Defense Company was alerted and deployed to defensive positions on the nights of 22 and 23 August, in response to enemy rocket attacks and ground movement around the Chu Lai perimeter. No fire incidents or contact resulted.

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