

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

1:HSM:tss
5000
5 October 1968

CONFIDENTIAL

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

Subj: Command Chronology for September 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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1 of 7

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CMD CHRON

SEP 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 September 1968 to 30 September 1968

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PART IORGANIZATION DATA

- | | | | |
|----|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | <u>Designation</u>
VMA-223 | <u>Commander</u>
LtCol Erin D. SMITH | <u>Dates</u>
1-30 September 1968 |
| 2. | <u>Location</u>
Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of Vietnam | | |
| 3. | <u>Staff Officers</u> | | |
| | Executive Officer | Major R. K. SLACK | 1-25 September 1968 |
| | | Major C. D. ROBINSON | 25-30 September 1968 |
| | Operations Officer | Major D. E. JACKETT | 1-30 September 1968 |
| | Aircraft Maintenance Officer | Major G. A. YORK | 1-30 September 1968 |
| | Material Officer | Captain D. E. LOVE | 1-30 September 1968 |
| | Administrative Officer | Captain R. P. HUNDLEY | 1-30 September 1968 |
| 4. | <u>Average Monthly Strength</u> | | |
| | A. Marine Officers | | |
| | Naval Aviators..... | | 26 |
| | Aviation Ground Officers..... | | 5 |
| | B. Naval Officers..... | | 1 |
| | C. Marine Enlisted..... | | 160 |
| | D. Naval Enlisted..... | | 0 |
| | E. Total Average Strength..... | | 192 |

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PART IINARRATIVE SUMMARY

During September, VMA-223 flew its' 5,000th combat hour since arriving in Vietnam on April 22, 1968. The tempo of air operations was reduced somewhat during the month with 817 sorties being launched and a total of 906.7 hours being compiled.

Third Marine Amphibious Force and U. S. Army units received close air support from squadron aircraft in the I Corps TAOR, and direct air support missions were flown against 7th Air Force targets in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam. Squadron pilots delivered 671,302 tons of aviation ordnance on enemy targets.

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PART III1. Administration

A. Personnel strength was increased slightly during the month. Seven naval aviators were joined and two were transferred, while twelve enlisted were joined and nine transferred. Strength figures are composed in the following table:

<u>USMC</u>	<u>1Sep68</u>	<u>30Sep68</u>	<u>T/O</u>	<u>M/L</u>
Aviators	23	28	35	28
Aviation Ground Officers	5	5	6	4
Enlisted	<u>160</u>	<u>163</u>	<u>218</u>	<u>187</u>
Total	188	196	259	219

B. Six aviators were recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross during the month, and a total of 54 Strike/Flight air medals were earned by squadron and attached pilots during the month.

C. There was one officer promoted to 1st Lieutenant during the month, and two enlisted promotions; one to Lance Corporal and one to Corporal. There were two reductions in rank, one from Corporal to Lance Corporal and one from Lance Corporal to Private First Class.

D. Five (5) six month overseas extensions were approved during the month and two are pending. Ten enlisted Marines enjoyed special leave to CONUS during the month as a result of 6 month extensions tendered in the preceding month. Twenty seven officers and men enjoyed R&R during September.

2. Operations

A. VMA-223 conducted an operation on all 30 days of the month. A total of 817 sorties were launched and 906.7 flight hours were logged, of which 765 were combat sorties and 846.1 were combat hours. 44 sorties and 56.6 hours were flown on Tally Ho missions into North Vietnam.

B. Close air support missions continued to be flown in support of 3rd Marine Amphibious Force and U. S. Army troops in the I Corps TAOR. Operations supported were Scotland II, Kentucky, Nevada Eagle, Lancaster II, Dragon Victory, Victory I, Mongoose, Jeb Stuart III, Mamaluke Thrust, Red Devil, and Houston.

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C. During the month of September, 3 aircraft received battle damage. On 6 September, WP-17 received a fragment hole in the Starboard wing. On 18 September, WP-9 received major damage when struck by a .50 caliber round in the starboard intake while attacking a target in the DMZ. Fire and FOD damage resulted and an emergency landing was accomplished at Phu Bai. On 19 September, WP-3 received damage to the port wing and flap while attacking a target in North Vietnam. Loss of fuel resulting from a ruptured fuel cell necessitated an emergency landing at Phu Bai.

D. For an average of 19 aircraft on hand, the VMA-223 maintenance department established an availability level of 76% for operating periods. AOCIP's were reduced considerably and a NORS rate of 8.7% was favorably reflected. A NORM rate of 22.5% was due primarily to four aircraft being down for Calendar Inspection in excess of 100 hours each. Other significant maintenance problems areas were:

1. Shortage of hangar space to accomplish maintenance during inclement weather.
2. Shortage of jet engine mechanics; MOS 6313/6316.
3. Shortage of support equipment such as high pressure air compressors, hydraulics test stands and tow tractors.
4. Shortage of 12 volt batteries for ground support equipment.
5. Lack of facilities to wash aircraft.

E. The Progressive Aircraft Rework program progressed normally with one aircraft being inducted into PAR and one aircraft returning during the month. Two aircraft remained in PAR on 30 September.

F. Pilots of VMA-223 delivered 671.302 tons of aviation ordnance on enemy target during the month. A breakdown of individual expenditures is presented below:

MK 81 S.E.	463
MK 81 Conical	84
MK 82 S.E.	1585
MK 82 Conical	52
M117A1	86
MK 77napalm	180
LAU-60	64 (2432 rockets)
LAU-69A	10 (380 rockets)
LAU-10A	76 (304 rockets)
CBU-24	2
20 M.M.	10,200 rounds