

UNCLASSIFIED

5750
03A24772
4 September 1972

PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. (U) DESIGNATION

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232

COMMANDER

LtCol. E. R. MAAG
1 August - 31 August 1972

2. (U) LOCATION

1 August - 31 August - Nam Phong AB. THAILAND

3. (U) STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer	Maj J. K. ALBRIGHT JR	1 - 31 August 72
Operations Officer	MAJ A. E. PEET	1 - 31 August 72
Administrative Officer	Capt W. L. DOMINA	1 - 31 August 72
Logistics Officer	Capt R. B. RAMSDEN	1 - 31 August 72
Maintenance Officer	Capt C. L. CULLER	1 - 31 August 72
Aviation Safety Officer	Capt R. K. WARD	1 - 31 August 72
Intelligence Officer	Capt E. SALANIUK	1 - 31 August 72

4. (C) AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

a. Marine Officers	<u>AUGUST</u>
(1) Naval Aviators	18
(2) Naval Flight Officers	15
(3) Aviation Ground Officers	3
(4) Naval Flight Surgeon	0
(5) Air Force Exchange Aviator	0
b. Marine Enlisted	222

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PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

(C) During the month of August 1972, VMFA-232 flew a total of 277 sorties accounting for 433.2 flight hours. Operating from Royal Thai Air Base Nam Phong, Thailand the squadron flew 255 combat sorties in support of the RVN. This was the lowest monthly output of combat sorties since VMFA-232 was reintroduced to the combat zone on April 6, 1972. This was due primarily to two factors: (1) Reduction of available on-hand aircraft explained further below, and (2) the squadron's continuation of its air-to-air mission in support of USAF Linebacker Series missions over North Vietnam. In spite of this, the squadron's average aircraft utilization factor was 35.2 (hrs./o/h acft), the second highest in the past twelve months.

(C) During August the Linebacker mission was cancelled 18 days due to adverse weather conditions over the target area, reducing significantly (approximately 140) the combat sorties programmed for the month. To compensate for this high percentage of cancellations of the Linebacker Series, a plan was devised which will enable quick transition of air-to-air aircraft to bombers, and thus make-up combat sorties which would otherwise be lost. When Linebacker is cancelled, the 4 Sidewinders are unloaded and replaced by 2 TER's loaded with 3 MK-82 bombs apiece. Although this is not an optimum air-to-ground configuration, it is an acceptable innovation that enables maintenance to change the mission of the aircraft in a rapid and efficient manner. This new policy should result in a significant increase in VMFA-232's combat sortie rate in the coming months.

(C) The squadron's average on-hand aircraft was reduced to 12.3 during the month; this resulted from the loss of two (2) aircraft, one on 2 August (5nm south of Nam Phong, fuel starvation when flight was lost; both aircrew recovered, one minor injury), the other a combat loss on 26 August. This occurred on the Laotian - North Vietnam border, coordinates 20°31N, 104°32E; BarCap mission in support of USAF Linebacker mission; tactical wing (number two) aircraft in a section (call sign: Motion Alpha) was apparently hit by an air-to-air missile (ATOLL) fired by an enemy MIG; crew status: Bravo member recovered, Alpha member (1st/Lt. S. G. CORDOVA) MIA.

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Enclosure (1)

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(U) Since the first week in July, when VMFA-232 started flying air-to-air combat missions into North Vietnam, the squadron has been flying ACM training flights in the local area as often as possible in order to qualify all aircrews. During August we approached that goal, and now most of VMFA-232 aircrews are completely qualified for both the squadron's missions: air-to-air and air-to-ground.

(C) When first introduced to air-to-air combat missions, VMFA-232 encountered several problem areas. One of the most significant was that the Air Force was not used to seeing friendly non-camouflaged aircraft, and they often initially mistook us for MIGs. This problem was solved by sending representatives to Udorn Air Base and explaining the type tactics we use and the various differences from their tactics. This exchange of ideas was an important step toward the fluid integration of Marine fighters into an otherwise all-Air Force strike force. It should be noted that VMFA-232 follows the guidelines of the F-4 Tactical Manual and finds it to be valid and adequate information. In addition, by VMFA-232 closely adhering to the 7th Air Force Frag, in respect to location and time on station, the Air Force pilots know what area we were going to be in and what time we will be there. With an understanding of our tactics and our geographical location the problem of recognition has been solved.

(C) Another problem area has been that of airborne control. With as many as 100 - 150 aircraft flying in North Vietnam at once, there was often confusion as to who was who. Unfortunately this has contributed to the loss of several aircraft. This problem has decreased significantly by lowering the number of aircraft in the strike force, staying in the briefed geographical areas, and maintaining strict radio discipline. Attendance at the daily Linebacker mission debriefs hosted by the 7th/13th AF at Udorn AB has added immensely to the squadron's knowledge and effectiveness in support of these missions.

(U) Although the BarCap is our primary mission, VMFA-232 continues to complete air-to-ground missions very successfully. The standard procedure for this squadron is to fly a mission into the RVN, recover at Danang Air Base, and fly another mission on the way back to Nam Phong. VMFA-232 provides 10 men to the H&MS-15 maintenance crew at Danang for turning around the aircraft and reloading them with ordnance. During August the missions varied from close air support to hitting active gun emplacements. It should be noted that the AAA threat was as high as for any previous period.

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(U) Administratively, VMFA-232 got a definite boost during August when there was more inbound personnel than outbound. This enabled the squadron to move up a little further in the C-2 personnel category.

(U) A large boost to morale has been accomplished by the liberty program in the squadron. Personnel, both officer and enlisted have been able to go on a 36 hour liberty to Udorn once every 10 - 12 days. This has enabled the men to get away from the daily rigors of living in Nam Phong, and relax and enjoy themselves.

PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS1. (U) Personnel

a. On 23 August there were 21 Marines Promoted to Corporal.

b. On 23 August Captains D. C. BREUER, E. SALANIUK and G. D. TAYLOR were promoted to their present rank. Date of rank 1 August 1972.

2. (C) Aviation Safety

a. Operational loss, 2 August, when WT-17 flamed out 9 NM south of the airfield. (Fuel starvation) 1 minor injury. AAR 2-73A.

✓ b. Combat loss, 26 August, on BarCap mission in North Laos. Motion A wingman was shot down by MIG. RIO was recovered. Pilot, 1stLt S. G. CORDOVA, MIA.

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MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 232
Marine Aircraft Group 15
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
FPO San Francisco, 96602

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 August to 31 August 1972

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Enclosure (1)

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Aug 1972



MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 232
Marine Aircraft Group 15
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
FPO San Francisco 96602

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PART IV

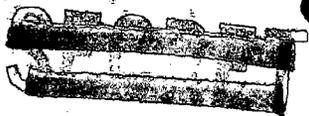
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- A. - (C) LIST OF VMFA-232 BDA FOR AUGUST
- B. - (C) PERSONNEL
- C. - (C) AIR OPERATIONS
- D. - (C) MAINTENANCE
- E. - (U) AVIATION SAFETY
- F. - (U) PHOTO OF LTCOL E. R. MAAG, COMMANDING OFFICER

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TABS



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A. (C) A list of VMFA-232 BDA for August follows:

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------|----|---------------------------|
| 39 | Secondary Explosions | 1 | 15 meter Trench Destroyed |
| 10 | Secondary Fires | 4 | Roads Cut |
| 1 | Tank Destroyed | 1 | APC Destroyed |
| 1 | Tank Damaged | 17 | Bunkers Destroyed |
| 7 | Trucks Destroyed | 20 | POL Fires |
| 4 | Trucks Damaged | 2 | 130mm Guns Destroyed |
| 19 | Structures Destroyed | 2 | 130mm Guns Damaged |
| 2 | Mortar/Guns Damaged | 14 | No BDA - Smoke & Foliage |
| 2 | 37mm Guns Damaged | | |

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TAB A

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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B. (C) Personnel

	<u>OFFICER</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
Joined	2	30
Transferred	4	22
Promoted	3	30

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[REDACTED]

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TAB B

[REDACTED]

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C. (C) Air Operations

Total Sorties	277
Total Flight Hours	433.2
High Day Sorties	15
High Day Hours	32.9
Average Pilot Strength	18
Average Pilot Hours	25
Average Pilot Sorties	15
Average RIO Strength	15
Average RIO Hours	29
Average RIO Sorties	18

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

TAB C

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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D. (C) Maintenance

Aircraft Assigned	19
A/C Operational Readiness	60.4%
Average A/C Available	12
Calendar Inspection	3

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

TAB D

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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E. (U) Aviation Safety

Accident	3
Incident	1

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



LTCOL E. R. MAAG
COMMANDING OFFICER
VMFA-232
NAM PHONG, THAILAND
8 AUGUST 1972