

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 263
Marine Aircraft Group 16
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac
FPO, San Francisco 96602

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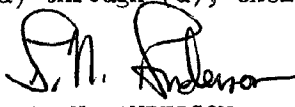
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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 16
Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 - 28 February 1971

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

Encl: (1) Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263, Command Chronology for
period 1 - 28 February 1971

1. In accordance with references (a) through (d), enclosure (1) is submitted.


D. N. ANDERSON
Acting

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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 263
Marine Aircraft Group 16
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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY 1 FEBRUARY to 28 FEBRUARY 1971

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PART IORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONCOMMANDER

HMM-263

LTCOL L. K. KECK 1-28 FEBRUARY 1971

2. LOCATION

During the period 1-28 February 1971, the Blue Eagles of HMM-263 were located at Marble Mountain Air Facility, Danang, Republic of Vietnam.

3. STAFF OFFICERS

EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Major D. N. ANDERSON	1-28 FEB
OPERATIONS OFFICER	Major T. J. TOBEN Jr	1-28 FEB
ASST. OPERATIONS OFFICER	1/Lt M. C. JONES	1-28 FEB
LOGISTICS OFFICER	Major L. L. PAYTON Jr	1-28 FEB
AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE OFFICER	Capt T. R. EDMUNDS	1-8 FEB
AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE OFFICER	Capt W. J. CAMP	8-28 FEB
ASST. MAINTENANCE OFFICER	Capt W. J. CAMP	1-8 FEB
ASST. MAINTENANCE OFFICER	1/Lt J. E. FALES	8-27 FEB
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	Capt L. R. BANCELLS	1-28 FEB
NATOPS OFFICER	1/Lt P. F. GOETZ	1-28 FEB
AVIATION SAFETY OFFICER	Major J. A. BARRY	1-28 FEB
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER	1/Lt L. M. STEWART	1-28 FEB
AWARDS OFFICER	Major L. L. PAYTON Jr	1-28 FEB
SERGEANT MAJOR	SgtMaj L. H. EDMONDSON	1-28 FEB

4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

	<u>USMC</u>	<u>USN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
OFFICER	41	1	0	42
ENLISTED	144	0	0	144

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PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

February was a busy month for the Blue Eagles of HMM-263. Peachbush aircraft launched on 943 flights, 118 of these being flown during the hours of darkness. During the month 4791 sorties were flown resulting in 1175.4 flight hours. Helicopters of HMM-263 carried 30.15 tons of cargo while 14978 passengers enjoyed rides in Peachbush aircraft. A total of 108 medevac missions were flown and 192 injured personnel were transported to medical facilities, of these 85 were emergencies, 72 were priority and 35 were routine. Enemy activity was on the rise as 17 fire incidents were reported and 4 hits were taken by Peachbush aircraft.

HMM-263 was involved in strikes, recon inserts and extracts during this period. Separate briefs and debriefs were given to pilots and aircrews.

To provide up to date intelligence, the intelligence unit conducted briefs at AOM's and before recon missions. Current fire incidents, recon and order of battle maps were kept and made available before all flights.

Four officers and three enlisted Marines attended Jungle Survival School at NAS Cubi Point R. P.

During the month enlisted personnel earned a total of 117 Strike Flight Awards and officers earned 147.

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03A06571PART IIISEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 1 Feb 71 Since February is a short month, Peachbush decided to get an early start toward another 1000 plus flight hour month. The Blue Eagles flew 209 sorties, hauled 636 passengers, and packed 7.2 tons of cargo on their way to a fruitful 55.0 total flight time day. Capt Tom Edmunds' Baldy crew on mission 86/5/41/51 bore the brunt of the day's labor executing two flawless troop inserts and routinely carrying out 10 medevac missions.
- 3 Feb 71 Mission 80 days usually are times for local instrument work and stand-by in the ready room resulting in low squadron flight time for the day. Not so on this day-after-Ground-Hog-day in south Vietnam. The sky was sunny and full of Blue Eagle aircraft. 190 sorties were flown, 594 passengers lifted, and 9.6 tons of cargo toted on Peachbush's strong backs. Msn 80/85 lead by Major L. L. PAYTON Jr. struck deep into Charlie territory with four aircraft loaded with troops to deal the enemy another hard blow in typical HMM-263 fashion.
- 4 Feb 71 Logging 45 hours in a day is no mean feat even in a Vietnam helicopter squadron. But HMM-263 today flew 55 hours today totaling almost 200 hours already this month. Baldy again lent its resources as a base for six Blue Eagle CH-46's on msn 86 led by LtCol KECK. Only one crew in the entire squadron logged less than 5.2 hours. Capt LORENZO (Hans) BANCELLS lead his section of msn 86 into the foothills of the Que Sons northwest of Baldy in an airborne ready strike status to strike at targets of opportunity. There were opportunities aplenty as a NVA/VC complex was discovered and destroyed by the troops aboard the Peachbush aircraft. A lucrative day indeed was compounded by the capture of two VC/NVA and 8 confirmed KBA.
- 6 Feb 71 Maj D. N. ANDERSON lead his afternoon division of msn 80 birds into the ROK Marine TAOR in a large troop insertion into a known enemy haven. Although only in the air for less than one hour Maj ANDERSON managed to provoke 2 separate groups of enemy enough to draw their errant fire. As poor as the VC are as marksmen, Maj ANDERSON managed to run into a couple of stingers in his forward pylon. The aircraft was sucessfully landed at MMAF with no casualties to the people aboard.
- 8 Feb 71 The rains came again today. For the first time in two weeks, the weather put the dampers on a busy MAG-16. HMM-263 came to a virtual halt as only 13.2 total hours were flown. But in spite of the incliment conditions Peachbush medevac continued to fly a totall of six medevac missions lead by 1/Lt Rob MEYERS and 1/Lt Isaac EPPERLY.

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- 9 Feb 71 Bald Eagle launched again as a ready strike force lead by Maj T. J. TOBEN in the A/M and Capt L. R. BANCELLS in the P/M. Due to the mobility provided by the Blue Eagles another enemy surge on Charlie Ridge was thwarted. 263 flew 47.0 hours carrying out the sunday missions required in the Republic of Vietnam carrying 608 pax and 16.3 tons of cargo.
- 14 Feb 71 The so called "ask and trash" admin missions sometimes have their moments of excitement as LtCol L. K. KECK can attest. While running a routine visual reconnaissance of the 1st Marines TAOR north and west of Danang, LtCol KECK's aircraft came under fire twice. Fortunately the only damage was a new rivet hole in the lower ramp. LtCol KECK logged an incredible 9.7 in leading the fighting 263rd to another 40 plus hour day. Peachbush reliably flew 231 sorties with 628 pax and 20.9 tons of cargo.
- 15 Feb 71 As unquestioned as LtCol KECK's ability to draw fire, is his ability to turn msn 80 standby into a recon emergency medevac. Late in the afternoon LtCol KECK and his wingman 1/Lt O'DONNELL launched to extract team "Cayenne" from their beleaguered position south of An Hoa in the western Que Son Mountains. Cooly and adroitly LtCol KECK swooped in under enemy fire and successfully avoided enemy fire. No sooner had "Cayenne" been safely deposited at LZ 401 than team "Cossack" reported that they too were in contact and an emergency extract would be necessary. With a shrug LtCol KECK's section launched again, and again, under fire, saved the Swift, Silent and Deadly to fight again.
- 16 Feb 71 When Peachbush magnets were passed out 1/Lt Rob MEYERS was able to receive an equal amount as LtCol KECK. While logging 6.1 flying medevac out of LZ Baldy, 1/Lt MEYERS returned into the middle of the Que Son Mountains terrain and intense enemy fire notwithstanding. Lt MEYERS, his guns blazing from his AH-46D successfully completed his mission with no damage to his aircraft or crew. Meanwhile the rest of the squadron was compiling 68.8 total flight hours. With the departure of HMM-364 the load in the Marine Corps TAOR is now divided between 2 squadrons. HMM-263 pulled its share today.
- 18 Feb 71 66.3 fht hours were flown today during which 1029 pax were carried and 12.8 tons of cargo lifted. HMM-263's aircraft were in the air constantly as the unsung heroes of the Vietnam war, the aircraft maintenance personnel, worked overtime to provide the aircraft to do the work now necessitated by the departure of HMM-364.
- 19 Feb 71 50.9 fht hours were logged today as Maj T. J. TOBEN took his msn 80/85 division onto Charlie Ridge to destroy an enemy company above Hill 65.

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1/Lt Bob MEYERS then proceeded with his afternoon division of 80/85 to the same area and encountered heavy enemy fire around the zone. No hits were taken and Peachbush returned safely home.

- 20 Feb 71 Today 315 sorties added up to 76.5 total flight time, the highest since last June. 906 pax were carried and 11.0 tons of cargo safely reached their destinations.
- 22 Feb 71 The "load hackers" continued to march toward another 1000 plus hour month with 69.5 hours today. The day was long and hard, not exciting and colorful. CH46's from HMM-263 faithfully fulfilled the unglamorous role of a transport squadron with a "it's all in a days work" shrug.
- 25 Feb 71 Bad weather held the fighting 263rd to only 23.3 hours today, but 1/Lt Gary NEUMANN bore the bunt of the load by logging 4.8 hours of nite medevac in extremely incliment weather. 1/Lt NEUMANN launched six times, single bird, to exceute emergency medevacs. With ceilings ~~after~~ below 300' and forward visibility reduced at times below $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, 1/Lt NEUMANN, though taking enemy fire on each medevac, safely brought 12 emergency Marine casualties to safety and medical aid. Peachbush 22 lived up to and exceeded the finest traditions of HMM-263.
- 27 Feb 71 Days in which 50 or more flight hours are logged are now so common that todays 36.0 hours seems to amount to a virtual stand-down. But Victor Charlie is always there to provide a few chills and thrills. At 1800 Peachbush 5 (Maj D. N. ANDERSON) and his wingman on msn 80, 1/Lt GARNER were launched to LZ 401 to rig up for a spie rig extract of team "~~Cos-1~~ ~~tant~~" who always seem to favor night emergency extracts. Even though a spie rig extract requires hovering for an extended period in an exposed position over the pickup zone and in spite of the fact that heavy enemy contact was in progress, Maj ANDERSON, quickly and skillfully performed the hazardous mission (under fire) and returned the team safely to LZ 401.

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PART IV
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

NONE SUBMITTED

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