

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

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5750
03A10571

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 16
Subj: Command Chronology for Period 1 - 14 April 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 - 14 April 1971

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


D. N. ANDERSON

HMM-263, S & C Files

Control #. 52-1

Date rec'd. 16 APR 1971

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY 1 APRIL to 14 APRIL 1971

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UNCLASSIFIED

ENCLOSURE (1)

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03A10571PART IORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONCOMMANDER

HMM-263

Major D. N. ANDERSON 1-14 April 1971

2. LOCATION

During the period 1-14 April 1971, the Blue Eagles of HMM-263 were located at Marble Mountain Air Facility, Danang, Republic of Vietnam.

3. STAFF OFFICERS

EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Major T. J. TOBEN Jr.	1-14 April 1971
OPERATIONS OFFICER	Major L. L. PAYTON Jr.	1-14 April 1971
Asst OPERATIONS OFFICER	1stLt M. C. JONES	1-2 April 1971
	Capt F. D. SMITHSON	3-14 April 1971
LOGISTICS OFFICER	Capt F. D. SMITHSON	1-2 April 1971
	Major W. J. HAYES	3-14 April 1971
AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE OFFICER	Capt W. J. CAMP	1-14 April 1971
ASST. MAINTENANCE OFFICER	1stLt J. C. MORHARDT	1-14 April 1971
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	Capt L. R. BANCELIS	1-14 April 1971
NATOPS OFFICER	1stLt R. F. MEYERS	1-14 April 1971
AVIATION SAFETY OFFICER	1stLt S. C. BRANDT	1-14 April 1971
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER	1stLt L. M. STEWART	1-12 April 1971
	1stLt D. M. TENNANT	13-14 April 1971
AWARDS OFFICER	Major T. J. TOBEN Jr.	1-14 April 1971
SERGEANT MAJOR	SgtMaj L. H. EDMONDSON	1-14 April 1971

4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

	<u>USMC</u>	<u>USN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
OFFICER	49	0	0	50
ENLISTED	156	0	0	156

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PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The first half of April remains an active time for Peachbush personnel. Rumors of an impending stand down haven't kept the Blue Eagles from carrying on their mission with a 100 percent effort. During the first 14 days of the month Peachbush aircraft launched on 548 flights, 66 of these being flown during the hours of darkness. So far this month 1900 sorties have been flown resulting in 557.3 flight hours. Helicopters of HMM-263 carried 93.4 tons of cargo and carried 5484 passengers. A total of 34 medevac missions were flown resulting in 50 injured personnel being rushed to prompt medical care. These personnel included 21 emergency, 20 priority, and 9 routine injuries. Enemy activity appears on the decline with a report of only 7 fire incidents reported and only one incidence of an aircraft being hit. The latter involved shrapnel striking an aircraft as the result of personnel setting off a booby trap in a landing zone.

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 enlisted Marines attended Jungle Survival School at NAS Cubi Point R. P. during this period.

During this same period enlisted personnel earned a total of 62 Strike/Flight Awards and officers earned 45.

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PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 1 Apr 71 April started out with a "big day" by recent standards with a total of 50.1 hours of flight time logged. The day was largely routine with the largest portion being the carrying of nearly 12 tons of resupply to the Marine elements that remain in the field.
- 2 Apr 71 In spite of a slow day hour-wise, a total of 29.5 hours logged, the Medevac sections were kept busy with a total of 12 medevacs (6 emergency, 5 priority, and 1 routine). Two of the medevac aircraft reported taking light small arms fire but none of the aircraft received hits.
- 4 Apr 71 With a total of 31.7 hours this is becoming the average day much to the dismay of the always eager Blue Eagles. Once again the medevac crews carried a large portion of the load.
- 5 Apr 71 As more and more Marines leave the field Peachbush flight hours seem to dwindle. Although the Blue Eagles put out a complete effort for any mission assigned many yearn for the action of the "old days". The days total of 34.4 hours consisted of mostly Admin runs with 171 passengers and very little cargo being transported.
- 6 Apr 71 31.0 hours were logged today. Resupply missions accounted for approximately 50 percent of the time and carried over 18 tons of cargo to the field. Medevac missions accounted for most of the other flight time. Completing 6 missions, carrying 9 casualties (2 emergency, 3 priority, and 4 routine) to life saving care.
- 7 Apr 71 This was the biggest day of the period so far. 52.5 hours were logged on 211 sorties. The always anxious Blue Eagles are anticipating a continuation of more of these 50 plus days.
- 8 Apr 71 Today was a high point for the month. Even though the war seems to be winding down and people are thinking of going home as missions become routine, Peachbush showed that it is always ready. 14 Peachbush aircraft were launched as a spearhead of a large strike force. All hands performed professionally in showing that we are a "force in readiness". With an aircraft availability of 98 percent our maintenance team can share equally the pride of the crews in this tremendous exhibition of teamwork.

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- 10 Apr 71 Today the "Skipper" (Major ANDERSON) received the first battle damage recorded by 263 during this period. On a resupply mission to an un-secure LZ he landed and disembarked two passengers who immediately triggered a booby trap injuring both men severely, and giving minor shrapnel damage to the aircraft. The crew promptly recovered the wounded Marines and immediately medevaced them to 1st Med Bn.
- 11 Apr 71 Again the Blue Eagles rise to the occasion! The strike force inserted earlier in the week was brought out of the field. Today eight Peachbush aircraft launched in the morning to lead the way for eight other 46's and a flight of 53's. The Peachbush flight led by Major ANDERSON proceeded to the I.P., made the pick-up, and returned the troops safe and sound without a hitch, the entire Blue Eagle flight working together as if it was an everyday occurrence.
- 12 Apr 71 Despite the active schedule of flying and the problems of preparing for embarkation HMM-263 made a tremendous showing on today's A&M Inspection. Peachbush's readiness and flexibility are brought to the forefront once again.
- 14 Apr 71 The big news today is that the latest, revised stand down date for HMM-263 is 1 May 1971. The more cynical Blue Eagles can recall other stand down dates being cancelled so the squadron remains ready for action until the day arrives.

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PART IV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

NONE SUBMITTED

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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 263
 Marine Aircraft Group 16
 3d Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMF Pac
 FPO San Francisco 96602

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From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 16
 Subj: Command Chronology for Period 15-30 April 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 15-30 April 1971

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

D. N. Anderson

D. N. ANDERSON

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY 15 APRIL to 30 APRIL 1971

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HMM-263

Major D. N. ANDERSON 15-30 April 1971

2. LOCATION

During the period 15-30 April 1971, the Blue Eagles of HMM-263 were located at Marble Mountain Air Facility, Danang, Republic of Vietnam.

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer	Major T. J. TOBEN Jr.	15-30 April 1971
Operations Officer	Major L. L. PAYTON Jr.	15-30 April 1971
Asst Operations Officer	Capt F. A. SMITHSON	15-30 April 1971
Logistics Officer	Major W. J. HAYES	15-30 April 1971
Aircraft Maintenance Officer	Capt W. J. CAMP	15-30 April 1971
Asst Maintenance Officer	1stLt J. C. MORHARDT	15-30 April 1971
Administrative Officer	Capt L. R. BANCELLS	15-30 April 1971
NATOPS Officer	1stLt R. F. MEYERS	15-30 April 1971
Aviation Safety Officer	1stLt S. C. BRANDT	15-30 April 1971
Intelligence Officer	1stLt D. M. TENNENT	15-30 April 1971
Awards Officer	Major T. J. TOBEN Jr.	15-30 April 1971
Sergeant Major	SgtMaj L. H. EDMONDSON	15-30 April 1971

4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

	<u>USMC</u>	<u>USN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
OFFICER	47	1	0	48
ENLISTED	159	0	0	159

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The closing of the month of April showed a gradual decline in the operational activity of the Blue Eagles. The decrease in operations did not, however, mean a decrease in squadron activity. The 1 May stand down date is now a reality, thus the tedious process of preparing for embarkation is in full swing. All hands are giving a 100 percent effort to get the squadron packed and ready to pull out. This period from 15-30 April saw PEACHBUSH aircraft launch on 410 flights, 52 of these being flown during the hours of darkness. A total of 1691 sorties were flown resulting in 452.5 flight hours. Helicopters of HMM-263 carried 77.2 tons of cargo and transported 4491 passengers. A total of 27 medevac missions were flown resulting in 32 injured personnel being rushed to prompt medical care. These injuries consisted of 14 emergencies, 13 priorities, and 5 routines. Enemy activity appeared on the decline during this period. Three fire incidents were reported and although no aircraft took hits Victor Charlie let us know he is still around.

HMM-263 was involved in strikes and 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.

During the same period enlisted personnel earned a total of 38 strike/flight awards and officers earned 30.

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03A12371PART IIISEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 17 Apr 71 The days of flying over 50 hours appear to be a thing of the past. Today was a really big one (47.9 hrs) by recent standards. PEACHBUSH accumulated this total mainly through flying resupply. As more and more Marines are going home, the once lengthy resupply missions become shorter and shorter. Today was probably the last of the big ones.
- 24 Apr 71 The Blue Eagles get their last chance for the thrills and chills of combat! Nine PEACHBUSH aircraft were launched at dawn, led by the SKIPPER, as part of a large strike force in Operation Golden Dragon. More than 1000 ROK Marines were inserted in the infamous Que Sons. All went well and no one seemed to really miss the thrills and chills. There ~~was~~ was one slight exception. 1/Lt J.P. MARTIN better known as TURKEY proved that he is probably the biggest magnet in the squadron. His was the only aircraft that took fire. He didn't take any hits this time however!
- 26 Apr 71 The once mighty fleet of Blue Eagle's proud 46's was reduced to three aircraft today. The remaining aircraft have begun the process of being wrapped up for embarkation. The flight line looked rather barren with only three birds setting there waiting for action. The three planes were utilized 100 percent as the eager crews got in their last hours in Vietnam.
- 30 Apr 71 The last day of operations in Vietnam for the proud Blue Eagles. 1/Lt WILLMAN and 1/Lt HACKLEY launched on the morning portion of the last mission. They almost got a little unwanted excitement on their last hop in country. After orbiting a ROK position in the Que Sons on an admin run for some time, they decided not to land, but to carry out another portion of the mission first. As the dauntless pair departed they were informed that the LZ had just started taking incoming rockets. Needless to say both pilots had renewed faith in their perceptive powers. 1/Lt's ALEX HORSTER and SAM MORRIS flew the afternoon portion of the mission. They can claim the title as the last Blue Eagles to fly in Vietnam during this phase of HMM-263's illustrious history. Meanwhile the remaining members of the squadron are busy packing up and anticipating the beginning of a new phase. Since its first appearance in RVN, the Blue Eagles of HMM-263 have flown 107,094 sorties, logged 30,169 flight hours, carried 232,898 passengers and lifted 10,189.35 tons of cargo. This is a fine record that the entire squadron can be very proud of, and is a good foundation to Build on for the future.

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PART IV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

NONE SUBMITTED

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