

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 265
Marine Air Group 15 (Rein)
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMFPac
FPO, San Francisco, California 96602

3:JLM:wdt
5750
Ser: 00316-69
8 October 1969

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1-30 September 1969

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8
(c) BrigO 5750.1C

Encl: (1) Command Chronology

W/ Combat A/A Rpt, Opn DEFLANT STAND

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a), (b), and (c), enclosure (1) is submitted herewith.


ROBERT L. GRAY

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MARINE MEDICAL HELICOPTER SQUADRON 265
Marine Aviation Group 15 (Rein)
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMFPac
APO, San Francisco, California 96602

CONTENTS AND CHRONOLOGY

1 September 1969 to 30 September 1969

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I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. IDENTIFICATION

HAM-265

COMMANDERLTCOL. ROBERT L. GRAY JR.
1-30 SEPTEMBER 1969SUBC STATE UNITS

NONE

AD ED UNITS

NONE

2. LOCATION

1-30 SEPTEMBER 1969: USS TWO MA (LPH-2)

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer	Ma.	GEORGE M. SHIFFLER JR.	1-30 Sep 1969
Administration Officer	Ca.	JOSEPH W. KIM	1-30 Sep 1969
Intelligence Officer	1st Lt	EARL R. WEBSTER	1-30 Sep 1969
Operations Officer	Major	JOHN L. MACFARLANE	1-30 Sep 1969
Logistics Officer	Major	LYNN M. HAINES	1-30 Sep 1969
Maintenance Officer	Major	JAMES W. BRIDGES	1-30 Sep 1969
Aviation Safety Officer	1st Lt	THOMAS R. CONROY	1-30 Sep 1969
Squadron Flight Surgeon	Lt(MC)	STEPHEN A. WILSON USNR	1-30 Sep 1969

4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

<u>USMC</u>	
<u>OFFICER</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
47	180

<u>USN</u>	
<u>OFFICER</u>	<u>ENLISTED</u>
1	3

Enclosure (1)

RT II

N. LIVE SUMMARY

1-6 September 1969: HMM-265 launched an average of five aircraft per day in support of CTG 79.4. The missions consisted of Command and Control, Administration and Liaison in preparation for Operation Defiant Stand. The squadron flew 94.0 hours, 24 sorties, carried 769 passengers, 4 medevacs, 9.6 tons of cargo and completed 116 tasks.

7-19 September 1969: Operation Defiant Stand. HMM-265 launched an average of 10 aircraft per day in support of 1st Battalion, 26th Marines and the 2nd ROKMC Brigade. The missions consisted of troop inserts, troop extracts, resupply, day and night medevac, command and control, and administrative and liaison flights. The squadron flew 512.5 hours, 2198 sorties, carried 4,820 passengers, 107 medevacs, 186.5 tons of cargo and completed 353 tasks.

20 September 1969: HMM-265 launched 10 aircraft in support of 1st Battalion, 26th Marines and CTG 79.4. Selected elements of BLT 1/26 were lifted to predesignated landing zones within the 1stMARDIV TAOR. Other flights consisted of administrative and liaison in support of 79.4, and maintenance test flights. The squadron flew 32.4 hours, 137 sorties, carried 353 passengers, 3 medevacs, 12.7 tons of cargo and completed 19 tasks.

21-30 September 1969: HMM-265 had negative flight operations. The squadron remained aboard LPH-2 on its visit to Hong Kong. Flights were not conducted enroute to, or from this port due to adverse winds and high seas. The Royal Port of Hong Kong prohibits military flight operations while in the harbor.

PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS1. FMF Organizations Committed to Combat and the SLF

a. Combat Missions Assigned: See paragraph 1b below

b. Significant Operations Conducted: On 7 September 1969, HMM-265 inserted elements of BLT 1/26 into LZ Quail (BT 175495) and LZ Eagle (BT 215467) to begin Operation Defiant Stand. A total of eleven aircraft were launched in the initial assault. Both zones were cold and no enemy fire was received during the assault. It is felt that enemy resistance was greatly nullified by the excellent zone preps by Naval gunfire and Marine fixed wing aircraft. However, a supporting arms problem did exist and is discussed in paragraph n.

During the period 8-11 September the squadron continued to support BLT 1/26 with resupply, C&C, medevac and admin missions. On 9 September

one aircraft received 6 hits. The pilot was returned to duty and the aircraft received fire on both the 10th and 11th of September but no hits were sustained.

ending the pilot and gunner. The pilot was medevaced to CONUS. Aircraft received fire on both the 10th and 11th of September but no hits were sustained.

On 12 September the second phase of Operation Defiant Stand was implemented when HMM-265 lifted elements of the 2nd ROKMC RLT into LZ Sparrow (BT 183513) and LZ Dove (BT 173553). This was the first amphibious operation for the 2nd ROKMC Brigade since its arrival in Viet Nam 5 years ago. Negative enemy fire was received which may be attributed to the outstanding zone prep fires.

phase of Operation Defiant Stand was implemented when HMM-265 lifted elements of the 2nd ROKMC RLT into LZ Sparrow (BT 183513) and LZ Dove (BT 173553). This was the first amphibious operation for the 2nd ROKMC Brigade since its arrival in Viet Nam 5 years ago. Negative enemy fire was received which may be attributed to the outstanding zone prep fires.

During the period 13-18 September, HMM-265 continued to support BLT 1/26 logistically and maintain a day/night medevac package for both BLT 1/26 and 2nd ROKMC BLT. Two more aircraft received battle damage.

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On 19 September Operation Defiant Stand was concluded when HMM-265 extracted elements of BLT 1/26 from the AOA and returned them to LPH-2. Three aircraft received fire but negative hits were sustained.

c. Casualties Inflicted On the Enemy: None confirmed.

d. Casualties Sustained: First Lieutenant T. B. BARRON and Corporal P. G. MANFRE were injured on 9 September when their aircraft came under enemy fire. Lt. BARRON received superficial cuts on the face and was returned to duty. Cpl. MANFRE received bullet wounds of the arm and foot and was treated aboard the USS Two Jima (LPH-2) and was later evacuated to CONUS.

e. New Techniques Employed: None

f. Combat Relations: The liaison effected between CTG 79.4 and the Republic of Korea Marine Corps proved highly effective. The heliborne portion of the operation was thoroughly briefed and was executed "by the book". This portion of the operation was termed highly successful and was a "first" for the ROKMC in the Republic of South Viet Nam.

g. Equipment: The use of vertical pendants on externals appreciably sped up the off-load and on-load. These vertical reach pendants had heretofore been unavailable to the SLF.

h. Logistics: A total of 208.8 tons of combat cargo, 5,952 combat troops and 114 medevacs were transported during the reporting period.

No Action: None

Administration: None

k. Personnel: Promotions of
to Sergeant, two (2) Lance Corporals
Class to Lance Corporal and one

this period were nine (9) Corporals
to Corporal, two (2) Privates First
Private to Private First Class.

l. Intelligence: On 6 September
pilots on pending Operation Defiant
and aircrewmembers were debriefed on
were updated and the information
passed to SIF ALPHA intelligence

the Intelligence Officer briefed all
stand. Throughout the operation pilots
on flights and all intelligence reports
submitted as required. All reports were

m. Communications: As noted in the HMM-265 After Action Report on
Defiant Stand, no communication was established between aircraft and civilian
medical facilities concerning individuals wounded. This resulted in a delay,
when carrying civilian wounded, before medical care became available to them.

n. Weather: On 7 September weather for the insert of 1/26 was
extremely marginal. L hour was delayed 62 minutes but prep fires were lifted
just prior to L hour. As a result, the zone was under no suppressive fires
for one hour prior to landing the helicopter assault troops. A more detailed
discussion was covered in the HMM-265 After Action Report on Defiant Stand.

o. Fire Support: On 7 September and 12 September Naval gunfire and
artillery fires provided LZ prep fires prior to L hour.

p. Air Support: On 7 September and 12 September air support was
provided during the assaults by four AH-1G Cobra gunships from VMCO-2. Prep
fires were provided by 4 sections of A-6A's on both days with an OV-10A on
station as TAC(A). Medevac support on 8, 9, 11, 12, 16 and 17 September was
again provided by AH-1G Cobras from VMCO-2.

q. Activations/Deactivations/Redesignation: None

r. Air Operations:

1. Total Hours Flown	638.9
2. Number of Sorties	2,759
3. Tons of Cargo	206.8
4. Number of Passengers	5,942
5. Number of Medevacs	114

s. Units Supported: All support units for III MAF including the 2nd ROKMC Brigade.

t. Major Operations Support

1. Defiant Stand

u. Maintenance Department: The average daily availability was 79%. Of the downed aircraft, 8% were due to supply (NORS) and 13% were due to normal discrepancies (NORM). The high percentage of availability was due to a maximum effort by the Squadron Maintenance Department.

PART IV

CHRONOLOGY OF SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. All of the information for this report was obtained from the following sources:

- a. CTG 79.4 OPORD for Operation Defiant Stand.
- b. OPNAV form 3760.2 (Part D).
- c. Squadron After Action Reports.
- d. Squadron Unit Diary.

2. The above list of supporting documents are held by this command. If verification of any portion of this report is required, subject documents will be available at this command.

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 265
 Marine Aircraft Group 15 (Rein)
 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMFPac
 FPO, San Francisco, California 96602

3:TBB:dde
 3000
 Serp-0031-69
 29 SEP 1969

From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commander, Task Force 79.4

Subj: Combat After Action Report (Operation Defiant Stand)

Encl: (1) Overlay of Operation Area

1. Name of Operation.

Operation Defiant Stand

2. Inclusive Dates and Location of the Operation.

a. Inclusive dates. 070700H Sep 1969 to 191700H Sep 1969

b. Location. Landward AOA boundary: From BT 220576 southwest along Qua Dai River to BT 172542, southwest to BT 165532, to BT 160530, to BT 150530, southwest to BT 145523, south to BT 144513, southwest to BT 133505, south following Song LyLy to BT 146460, southeast to BT 175443, northeast to Truong Giang River at BT 220460, northeast along a trail to the sea at BT 243480.

The boundary between the ROKMC RLT AOA and the SLF AOA is defined as follows: From the Song LyLy at BT 144480, east along the 48 grid line to the provincial boundary at BT 156480, northeast along the provincial boundary at BT 183500, then to BT 190503, to BT 200509, to BT 210518, to BT 213520, to BT 220523, then east to the junction of the provincial boundary and the South China Sea.

3. Command Headquarters.

CTG 79.4 embarked aboard the USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2)

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4. Task Organization.

- a. Task Group 79.4 (Through 171110H Sep 69) Col DOTY
- b. Task Group 79.4 (From 171110H Sep 69) Col BOYD
- c. BLP 1/26 LtCol GOODIN
- d. HMM-265 LtCol GRAY

5. Intelligence.

a. Outline of AOA. The outline of the AOA, including coordinates will be included on the S-2 map accompanying this brief.

b. Helicopter LZ's. The helicopter LZ's should pose no hazard to landing. All are above sea level, flat and either covered with sand or in a shallow rice paddy. The tree lines bordering the LZ's are far enough away, and dense enough to allow the enemy clear field of fire for automatic weapons with a nominal amount of cover. If any fire is received it will be from the center of the island, where most of the vegetation on the island is prominent.

c. Enemy Weapons. Previously received reports from intelligence sources indicate that the enemy has a variety of weapons on hand, to include a confirmed .50 caliber antiaircraft gun as well as RPG's, .30 caliber machineguns, B40-B41 rockets, 60 MM and 81 MM mortars.

d. Enemy Strength. The estimated enemy units in the immediate area include V-25 LF BN, with a strength of 150 men, and the Q-30 LF BN, with a strength of approx 125 men. There is also a sapper unit, operating in the Hoi An river area north of the AOA. The strength of this unit is unknown, but is believed to be about 2 platoons in strength (100 men). The primary mission of the unit is to mine the river.

e. Reinforcements. There are no large forces near the AOA available as reinforcements. There are confirmed movements of 50-100 men southwest of LZ BALDY (BT 132453). It is unlikely that these units would pose an immediate threat to the friendly forces in the AOA due to the hazards involved in crossing the Cay Dai river and infiltrating the friendly lines which incircle the AOA.

f. Survival. Due to the size of the AOA, no problems are expected for long term survival. However, it was pointed out that the northern end of the island, along the river banks, is most likely mined and the natives on the island are VC/NVA sympathizers, and very little or no help at all can be expected from them.

g. Resupply. Resupply of the enemy is normally carried out by the use of small fishing boats and sampans along the inland water ways as well as fording the shallow parts of the river. Resupply is a definite problem of the enemy in this area.

h. Tactics. The enemy will not usually oppose the initial flight of aircraft, but can be expected to fire on the succeeding waves, or after the troops have concentrated in the AOA. They have been known to disguise themselves as women in order to get close to friendly positions. They are unlikely to attempt a large scale ground attack against friendly forces. They usually wait and attack isolated units, such as platoon-size patrols and smaller units.

i. Previous contacts on the island have been small in size and not much change is expected.

j. Weather. Marginal weather can be expected for the first day of the operation with the weather gradually improving after the first 48 hours.

k. Capabilities. The enemy strength of between 300 and 400 allows the enemy the capability of attempting to defend his present positions. It is unlikely the enemy will stay and defend his position, hence he will probably choose to use hit and run tactics. Assault by fire and attempts to evade the superior forces and supporting arms of friendly forces seem most desirable for the enemy.

l. Spot Reports. All indications of movements in or near the AOA will be reported to the units in the immediate area, and further reported to HHC and Squadron intelligence chief for action.

m. Situation anticipated. It is believed that the enemy will use only small arms and automatic weapons against the aircraft in the assault. However, it was pointed out that the confirmed .50 cal machine gun is still in the area. The likelihood of its use in daylight is doubtful.

n. Summary. As the operation progressed, there were primarily only small arms fire used against the aircraft. On 9 September one CH-46A, while taking off from a LZ, BT 205499, received moderate automatic weapons fire. The aircraft took 6 hits, and wounded the pilot and gunner (none fatal). On the morning of 10 September while landing at LZ BT178487 an aircraft took moderate small arms and automatic weapons fire with no hits. At 1855 the same day an aircraft took light small arms fire from BT 205525 sustaining no hits. On 11 September at 0330, while on a night medevac mission at BT 210501, an aircraft received light small arms and automatic weapons and RPG fire while in the zone. The aircraft received no hits.

At 1630, on the same day, an aircraft received light small arms fire while taking off from LZ BT 184495, sustaining no hits.

There were several moderate size contacts of platoon strength or smaller during the operation. Most of the attacks were nothing more than probing actions. Several of BLT 1/26 positions came under harassing fire during early morning hours.

6. Mission. To conduct an amphibious helo born operation against VC/NVA forces in the amphibious objective area in Quang Nam and Quang Tin province of the ICFZ or other operations as agreed upon with CG III MAF or his representative.

7. Concept of Operation.

HHM-265 will operate from UH-2 in support of BLT 1/26 and elements of the 2nd ROKMC Brigade in ship to shore movement and as directed by CTG 79.4 helo frag orders.

8. Execution.

a. 7 September 1969: Operation Defiant Stand commenced at 0700H. The squadrons primary mission was to carry elements of BLT 1/26 to two designated landing zones, LZ Quail (BT 175495) and LZ Eagle (BT 215467), in the AOA. Eleven aircraft were launched on the initial assault, 8 for troop lift, two airborne spares, and one command and control aircraft. The squadron flew 60.0 hours, 215 sorties, carried 654 passengers, 2 medevacs, 26.6 tons of cargo and completed 36 tasks. There were no fire incidents for the reporting period.

b. 8 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. Missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, resupply, and medevac. The squadron flew 37.9 hours, 164 sorties, carried 315 passengers, 5 medevacs, 14.7 tons of cargo and completed 35 tasks. There were no fire incidents for the reporting period.

c. 9 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. Missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, resupply, and medevac. One resupply aircraft received automatic weapons fire and sustained 6 hits. The pilot and the gunner were wounded. The pilot was returned to duty and the gunner was medevaced to CONUS. The fire incident occurred at BT 208499. The squadron flew 22.7 hours, 109 sorties, carried 165 passengers, 3 medevacs, 6.5 tons of cargo and completed 19 tasks.

d. 10 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. Missions consisted of administrative and liaison, psychological operations, resupply, and medevac. Two aircraft flying resupply received fire, one at BT 183483, and the other at BT 205495. Neither aircraft received hits. The squadron flew 31.1 hours, 182 sorties, carried 404 passengers, 5 medevacs, 9.7 tons of cargo and completed 32 tasks.

e. 11 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. Missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, resupply, and medevac. The night medevac package was launched for the first time during the operation. The night medevac received fire at BT 210501. The aircraft was not hit. The squadron flew 35.8 hours, 137 sorties, carried 318 passengers, 11 medevacs, 12.6 tons of cargo and completed 28 tasks.

f. 12 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. The squadron's primary mission was to carry elements of the 2nd ROK RHT and cargo to two designated landing zones, LZ Sparrow (BT 183513) and LZ Dove (BT 173553), in the AOA. This was in support of the 2nd ROKMC Brigade as part of the second phase of Operation Defiant Stand. Other missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, search and rescue, and medevac. One aircraft received fire at BT 198485, but did not receive any hits. The squadron flew 68.6 hours, 217 sorties, carried 555 passengers, 9 medevacs, 31.9 tons of cargo and completed 36 tasks.

g. 13 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. Missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, medevac, and resupply. The squadron flew 35.6 hours, 173 sorties, carried 286 passengers, 8 medevacs, 7.0 tons of cargo and 19 tasks. There were no fire incidents for the reporting period.

h. 14 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. The missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, psychological operations, resupply, and medevac. HMM-265 also supported elements of the 2nd ROKMC Brigade with missions consisting of command and control and medevac. The squadron flew 31.6 hours, 157 sorties, carried 177 passengers, 11 medevacs, 10.5 tons of cargo, and completed 25 tasks. There were no fire incidents reported.

i. 15 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. The missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, resupply, and medevac. HMM-265 also supported the 2nd ROKMC Brigade with one command and control mission. The squadron flew 37.8 hours, 165 sorties, carried 278 passengers, 9 medevacs, 13.1 tons of cargo and completed 28 tasks. There were no fire incidents for the reporting period.

j. 16 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. The missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, resupply, and medevac. HMM-265 also supported the 2nd ROKMC Brigade with missions consisting of command and control and medevac. The squadron flew 37.6 hours, 153 sorties, carried 220 passengers, 21 medevacs, 13.9 tons of cargo and completed 19 tasks. There were no fire incidents for the reporting period.

k. 17 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. The missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, medevac, and resupply. The night medevac was launched for the second time during the operation. The squadron flew 37.9 hours, 169 sorties, carried 240 passengers, 5 medevacs, 1 POW, 16.0 tons of cargo and completed 24 tasks. There were no fire incidents for the reporting period.

l. 18 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand. The missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, medevac, and resupply. The squadron flew 22.6 hours, 103 sorties, carried 273 passengers, 1 medevac, 6.1 tons of cargo, and completed 13 tasks. There were no fire incidents reported.

m. 19 September 1969: The squadron continued support of Operation Defiant Stand as elements of BLT 1/26 were withdrawn from the AOA. The missions consisted of administrative and liaison, command and control, resupply, medevac, and troop lift. The squadron flew 42.0 hours, 195 sorties, carried 607 passengers, 1 medevac, 15.7 tons of cargo and completed 27 tasks. Three aircraft received fire from BP 2249 grid during the BLT extract, but no hits were sustained.

9. Results.

DATE	FLT HRS	SORTIES	TASKS	PAX	MED	TONS CARGO	FIRE INCIDENTS	HITS	INJURIES
7 Sep	60.0	215	36	654	2	26.6	0	0	0
8 Sep	37.9	164	35	315	5	14.7	0	0	0
9 Sep	22.7	109	19	165	3	6.5	1	6	2
10 Sep	31.1	182	32	404	5	9.7	2	0	0
11 Sep	35.3	137	28	318	11	12.6	1	0	0
12 Sep	68.6	217	36	555	9	31.9	1	0	0
13 Sep	35.6	173	19	286	8	7.0	0	0	0

DATE	FLT HRS	SORTIES	TASKS	PAX	MED	TONS CARGO	FIRE INCIDENTS	HITS	INJURIES
14 Sep	31.6	157	25	177	11	10.5	0	0	0
15 Sep	37.8	165	28	278	9	13.1	0	0	0
16 Sep	37.6	158	19	220	21	13.9	0	0	0
17 Sep	37.9	169	24	240	5	16.0	0	0	0
18 Sep	22.6	103	13	273	1	6.1	0	0	0
19 Sep	42.0	195	27	607	1	15.7	1	0	0
TOTALS	501.2	2,144	341	4,592	88	184.3	6	6	2

10. Commanders Analysis.

a. Due to the extremely bad weather on 7 September, L hour was delayed for 62 minutes. During this period of time the prep of LZ Chail was discontinued. This created a potentially dangerous situation in that enemy forces were given over an hour to reposition in and around the landing zone. Fortunately this did not occur, but it does point out a basic weakness of the fire support plan. Fire support should be capable of continuing prep fires in the event of L hour being delayed due to unforeseen circumstances.

11. Lessons Learned.

a. During the operation the pilots had been instructed to deliver all civilian medevacs to the Hoi An airstrip. Due to incompatibility of radios the aircraft would not be able to communicate directly with Hoi An but would relay all requests for medical assistance to the ship, who would in turn, notify Hoi An that medevacs were inbound. Due to poor communications there were rarely any medical personnel at Hoi An to receive the wounded Vietnamese. The pilots generally elected to proceed to Danang Surgical Hospital with the wounded rather than wait on the deck at Hoi An for medical assistance that failed to show. It is strongly recommended that, in future operations, positive radio communications be available between the aircraft and civilian medical agencies.

Robert L. Gray
ROBERT L. GRAY

