

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 323
Marine Aircraft Group 13
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, Pacific
FPO, San Francisco 96602

3:CJQ:bjw
5750
10 April 1967

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 13

Subj: Command Chronology; submission of

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2
(b) WGO 5750.1B
(c) GRO 5750.1C

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for the Month of April 1967

1. In accordance with references (a) through (c), enclosure (1) is hereby submitted for the period 1-30 April 1967.


G. H. KELLER, Jr.

ENCLOSURE (6)

DECLASSIFIED

VMFA-323

CMD CHRON

APR 1967

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

Unit: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323

Location: MCAS Chu Lai, Republic of South Vietnam

Period: 1-30 April 1967

Part I - Organizational Data

<u>A. Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Billet</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Gordon H. KELLER, Jr.	LtCol	Commanding Officer	1-30 Apr
John L. THATCHER	Major	Executive Officer	1-30 Apr
John (n) HUBNER	Major	Operations Officer	1-30 Apr
Ronald C. ANDREAS	Major	Administration Officer	1-30 Apr
Joseph B. WUERTZ	Major	Logistics Officer	1-30 Apr
Thomas (n) WILLIAMS	Captain	Maintenance Officer	1-15 Apr
Charles W. BROWN	Major	Maintenance Officer	16-30 Apr
Larry K. GRISSETT	Captain	Aviation Safety Officer	1-30 Apr

B. Unit Location and Dates

MCAS Chu Lai, Republic of South Vietnam - - 1-30 April 1967

C. Average Monthly Strength

<u>1. Officer</u>	<u>On Hand</u>	<u>Manning Level</u>	<u>Table of Organization</u>
a. Naval Aviators.....	19	21	26
b. Naval Flight Officers.....	16	21	26
c. Avn Ground Officers.....	5	5	5
d. Naval Flight Surgeons.....	1	0	0
2. <u>Enlisted</u>	315	325	318

ENCLOSURE (1)

D. Important Visitors

1. On 23 April 1967, Major General R. E. CUSHMAN, Jr., Deputy Commander, 3RD MAF, visited the squadron and was briefed on the combat mission and ordnance capabilities of the F4B aircraft.

Part II - Significant Highlights

A. During the month of April the squadron contributed the following partial BDA in support of the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force, the 7th Air Force, and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

Structures	208 Destroyed/34 Damaged
Enemy Killed by Air	74 Confirmed/82 Probable
Secondary Explosions	11
Bunkers	20 Destroyed/9 Damaged
Trench Line	210 Meters Destroyed
Road Cuts	18
AW Site Destroyed	1
Tunnels	8 Closed
Bridges	3 Destroyed/1 Damaged
Sugar Plants	1 Destroyed
Trucks	1 Destroyed
AA Positions	2 Destroyed/1 Damaged

B. Highlight Missions for April

3 April. Maj HUBNER (RIO Capt MEECE) and Capt QUILTER (RIO Capt JENSON) flying Close Air Support for Operation BOONE, destroyed 40 structures on one mission.

6 April. A flight led by LtCol KELLER (RIO Capt JULIAN, WM Capt ZIMMERMAN RIO Lt WARNER) caught a group of Viet Cong in the open south of Hoi An and killed 6 confirmed.

14 April. Lt CONLON (RIO Capt HUDSON) was diverted from a routine TPQ mission to attack a VC trench and bunker complex. Even though he was critically low on fuel, his single plane attack resulted in 35 enemy confirmed killed and 45 probable.

22 April. Capt SCHMIDT (RIO Capt HARE) and Capt LEIGH (RIO Capt REYNOLDS) were diverted from a Red Blazer mission and by pin-point bombing, killed 20 of the enemy (confirmed).

27 April. Capt R. H. BEDNARSKY flew his 300th combat mission in the F4B, which is believed to be an ahl-service record.

30 April. VMFA-323 launched 22 sorties off the hot-pad, all in support of Marines under attack in a large battle 4 miles northwest of Khe Sanh.

ENCLOSURE (1)

Part III- Significant Events

A. Personnel: Joined.....Officer 4 Enlisted 43

Dropped.....Officer 2 Enlisted 18

Promotions for April: Officer 3 Enlisted 62

B. Administration. April saw officer strength decline to the low point of the current combat deployment, particularly in F4B qualified crewmembers. It is hoped that the coming deployment to Japan will see the squadron built back up to strength as well as the qualifying of the three pilots who joined in April with no prior F4B training.

Preparations were also made to send the advance party of 45 enlisted and 9 officers to Iwakuni in early May in connection with our impending deployment there.

G. Awards. Squadron members received a total of 47 awards and decorations in April as follows: 3 Navy Commendation Medals with Combat "V", 34 Air Medals, 9 Good Conduct Medals, and 1 Meritorious Mast.

D. Flight Operations. The increased tempo of operations started in March continued through April in spite of the loss of nine crewmembers to FAC, various ground duties and rotation home. The average daily availability for pilots was 14 and NFO's 13. A large increase in the percentages of CAS/DAS type missions flown was also noted. The following statistical summary is presented:

Total Combat Sorties.....	607
Total Flights.....	613
Total Combat Hours.....	722.8
Total Flight Hours.....	726.8
Avg Pilot Strength.....	16
Avg Sqdn Pilot Sorties.....	31.0
No. of Group and Associated Pilots	
Flying with 323 in April.....	7
Avg Sorties for Group	
and Associated Pilots.....	9
Avg NFO Strength.....	17
Avg NFO Sorties.....	34.0
High Day Sorties.....	31 (30 Apr)
High Day Hours.....	34.5 (30 Apr)

ENCLOSURE (1)

E. Ordnance. During April, the squadron expended a total of 1124.5 tons of ordnance. By type and number:

MK-81.....	1212
MK-81 S.E.....	330
MK-82.....	3028
MK-82 S.E.....	344
MK-77 NAP ALM.....	314
MK-79 NAP ALM.....	1
2.75 " FFAR	950
20 MM Rds.....	12,770
CBU.....	2

F. Maintenance

1. Monthly Averages: Aircraft Assigned 18
 Avg Aircraft on Board 14
 Avg Aircraft Available 8.4 (60.2%)
 Avg Aircraft on Board Hrs Flown 60.6

2. PAR - A/C BuNo's 151456 and 151452 were sent to the Overhaul and Repair facility at NAS Atsugi, Japan.

3. Battle Damage - One aircraft sustained battle damage and was repaired.

4. Aircraft BuNo 151486 was lost at sea and is presumed to be ALPHA damage.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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Marine Aircraft Group 13
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Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for the Month of March 1967

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G. H. KELLER, Jr.

ENCLOSURE (5)

V/MFA-323

CMD CHRON

MAR 1967

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

Unit: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323

Location: MCAS Chu Lai, Republic of South Vietnam

Period: 1-31 March 1967

Part IA. Organization

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Billet</u>
Gordon H. KELLER, Jr.	LtCol	Commanding Officer
John L. THATCHER	Major	Executive Officer
John (n) HUBNER	Major	Operations Officer
Ronald C. ANDREAS	Major	Administration Officer
Joseph B. WUERTZ	Major	Logistics Officer
Tom (n) WILLIAMS	Captain	Maintenance Officer
Larry K. GRISSETT	Captain	Aviation Safety Officer

B. Unit/Location/Inclusive Dates

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323, MCAS Chu Lai, Republic of South Vietnam, 1-31 March 1967

C. Average Monthly Strength1. Officer

- a. Naval Aviators - 20
- b. Naval Flight Officers - 21
- c. Aviation Ground Officers - 5
- d. Naval Flight Surgeons - 1

2. Enlisted - 289 (USMC)

Enclosure (1)

Part II

A. During the month of March the squadron contributed the following partial BDA to the war efforts.

Structures	208 Des/66 Dam
KBA	51 Conf/74 Prob
Bunkers	22 Destroyed
Trench Line	525 Mtrs Des
Secondary Explosions	14
Command Post	1 Destroyed
AW Pos	6 Destroyed
Mortar Pos	2 Destroyed
57MM Gun	1 Destroyed
Gun	2 Damaged
Road Cuts	16
Ford Cuts	7
Trucks	4 Destroyed
Bridges	1 Des/3 Dam
Tunnel Complexes	6 Damaged

Part IIIA. Significant Events

1. Personnel: Joined - 4 Officer/17 Enlisted
Dropped- 5 Officer/ 9 Enlisted
2. Total Promotions for March: 16 Officer/48 Enlisted

B. Administration. March was highlighted by an A&M Inspection conducted by MAG-13. The squadron received an overall rating of satisfactory.

C. Awards. Members of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 received a total of eighty three decorations during the month of March.

1. Air Medals - 79
2. Good Conduct - 3
3. Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry - 1

a. Captain Thomas (n) WILLIAMS was decorated by the Government of South Vietnam with the Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star.

Enclosure (1)

D. Flight Operations. During March, the squadron was favored with good weather and outstanding aircraft availability. This combination contributed heavily to the squadrons' best month in terms of hours, sorties and BDA for the current deployment in South Vietnam. The following statistical summary is presented:

Total Combat Sorties.....	721
Total Flights.....	752
Total Combat Hours.....	904.4
Total Flight Hours.....	948.4
Avg Pilot Strength.....	20
Avg Sqdn Pilot Sorties.....	34.5
Number of Group and Associated Pilots	
Flying with 323 during March.....	9
Avg Sorties for Group and Associated	
Pilots.....	7.5
Avg NFO Strength.....	21
Avg NFO Sorties.....	35.8
High Day, Sorties (29 Mar).....	47 (Total)
	44 (Combat)
High Day, Hours (29 Mar).....	55.1 (Total)
	50.2 (Combat)

1. Highlight Missions for March

1 March. A flight led by Lt GRIFFANTI (RIO Lt HUDSON), WM Capt SCHMIDT (RIO Lt HARE), worked under a 700' ceiling with visibility of about one mile to attack a force of VC in the open. They accounted for at least 5 KBA as well as damaging a cave complex.

3 March. Two flights from VMFA-323 (Ldr. Major THATCHER/RIO Lt MIGLARESE, WM Lt GRIFFANTI/RIO Lt HANSEN and Ldr Lt DEVANEY/RIO Lt CURTIS, WM Lt QUILTER/RIO Lt JENSON) were scrambled on CAS missions in the DMZ. They accounted for 32 KBA confirmed and 20 probable.

19 March. Capt SCHMIDT (RIO Lt HARE, WM Capt BERTHELSON/RIO Lt RAMSDELL) were scrambled off the air-to-air hot pad to attack VC near the Gia Vuc Special Forces Camp which was being overrun. They destroyed 13 bunkers, 1 structure, 1 bridge, and 15 meters of trench line.

21 March. A hot pad scramble led by Major HUBNER (RIO Capt JULIAN, WM Capt DEVANEY/RIO Lt JENSON) attacked a heavily wooded area in which a large force of VC had taken refuge. They accounted for 20 KBA, 15 structures destroyed and 1 secondary explosion.

28 March. One of the largest strikes of Marine aircraft into North Vietnam was led by VMFA-323 CO LtCol G. H. KELLER, Jr. (RIO Capt JULIAN). It consisted of 16 aircraft from MAG-13 and MAG-12 and attacked 57MM Anti-aircraft guns and a truck park, receiving intense hostile ground fire.

Enclosure (1)

E. Ordnance

Total Ordnance	1302.794 Tons
250# Bombs.....	799
500# Bombs.....	3777
250# S.E.	496
500# S.E.	470
2.75 FFAR	2011
500 Nape	432
Zuni	16
20MM	14948

F. Maintenance

1. Monthly Averages: Aircraft On-board 16
Aircraft Available..... 52% (8 per day)
Aircraft Assigned 19
Avg A/C On Board Hrs Flown..... 59.2
2. PAR - 1 to PAR; 4 out of PAR
3. Battle Damage - Six aircraft sustained battle damage. Five were repaired and the sixth is awaiting transportation.
4. Transferred - 0

G. Training. Due to the squadrons present combat deployment, only necessary technical and on-the-job training was carried out during the month of March.

1. The following air crewmembers were attendant to the subject courses during March.

a. Jungle Environment Survival Training

QUILTER, C.J.	Capt
SHORE, M.S.	Capt
GRIFFANTI, E.L.	Lt
O'MARA, K.P.	Lt

b. Pressure Chamber/Ejection Seat Training

COSTELLO, M.E.	Capt
SMITH, C.D.	Capt
RAMSDALL, J.K.	Capt
STILES, C.F.	Capt

c. Pacific Air Forces Jungle Survival School - JENSON, G.O. Lt

Enclosure (1)