

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

3:CJQ:jrs  
5750  
8 Oct 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) MAG-13 GruO 5750.1C  
(d) BrigO 5750.1B

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

1. In accordance with references (a) through (d), enclosure (1) is hereby submitted for the period 1 to 30 September 1967.

*Edison W. Miller*  
EDISON W. MILLER

ENCLOSURE ( 5 )

VMFA-323

CMD CHRON

SEP 1967

## COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

Unit: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323

Location: MCAS Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam

Period: 1-30 September 1967

PART I - Organizational Data

1. Commander and Staff

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BILLET</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>
Edison W. MILLER	Commanding Officer	LtCol	1-30 Sep
John L. THATCHER	Executive Officer	Major	1-30 Sep
Joseph B. WUERTZ	S-3 (Operations)	Major	1-20 Sep
Lee T. LASSETER	S-3 (Operations)	Major	20-30 Sep
Dave G. DREWLOW	S-1 (Administration)	Capt	1-30 Sep
William W. MACKEY	S-4 (Logistics)	Major	1-6 Sep
Henry D. FAGERSKOG	S-4 (Logistics)	Major	6-30 Sep
Charles W. BROWN	Maintenance Officer	Major	1-30 Sep
Rabun N. PATRICK	Aviation Safety Officer	Capt	1-30 Sep

2. Task Organization and Data

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Commanding Officer</u>
Marine Fighter Attack Sqdn 323	MCAS	LtCol Edison W. MILLER
Marine Aircraft Group 13	Chu Lai,	
1st Marine Aircraft Wing,	RVN	
Fleet Marine Force, Pacific		
		<u>Date of Office</u>
		15 Jul 67 - Present

3. Average Monthly Strength

a. Marine Officers

(1) Naval Aviators ..... 18  
 (2) Naval Flight Officers ..... 18  
 (3) Aviation Ground Officers .... 4

b. Naval Officers ..... 2

c. Marine Enlisted ..... 290

d. Naval Enlisted ..... 4

e. Total Average Strength ..... 336

4. Important Visitors to the Command. None

Enclosure (1)

PART II - Narrative Summary

The squadron entered its second month of combat operations on its third tour in Vietnam during September, dropping a squadron record total of 1343.8 tons of ordnance on the enemy. Fair weather during the first three weeks of the month assisted combat flight operations considerably; however, the last week saw the beginnings of the winter monsoon with its characteristic low ceilings and poor visibility.

The bulk of September's sorties were close air support missions in support of virtually all ground operations in the I Corps plus a large number of Tally-Ho Strikes in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam. In addition to these, a number of Red Blazer direct air support missions (principally to interdict roads at two points in the A Shau Valley) and TPQ-10 radar directed bombing missions were flown.

Enemy anti-aircraft reaction was particularly strong during this period with one aircraft lost and seven damaged by groundfire. Most of these incidents occurred in and immediately north of the DMZ, where Operation Kingfisher was in effect. This is an effort to destroy North Vietnamese rocket, mortar and artillery positions which have been bombarding Marine ground positions in the Con Thien - Gio Tinh - Dong Ha - Cam Lo Quadrangle. The squadron had moderate success in general due to the great difficulty of pinpointing heavily camouflaged positions and was further complicated by minimum altitude restrictions north of the Ben Hai River imposed by enemy anti-aircraft artillery activity and higher authority.

With the harbinger of the monsoon during the last week of September, an increased emphasis was placed on instrument work as well as the discussion of bad weather ordnance delivery tactics and techniques. Assisting in this, MCAS Chu Lai closed its main runway (10,000' concrete) for approximately 18 days in order to install centerline lighting and carry out needed repairs. With hardly a change in sortie rate, the squadron launched aircraft on 7000' of taxiway and recovered into the SATS arresting gear on Runway 03 with no incidents of note. This is believed to be the first extended use of a SATS field in a combat zone by F4's.

Some highlight missions flown during the month by the squadron were:

12 September - A CAS mission flown by Captains QUILTER, JENSON, DREWELLO and 1stLt GRIMSHAW in support of Operation Swift accounted for ten bunkers destroyed, six structures destroyed, 15 meters of trenchline destroyed and six enemy killed by air (probable), receiving intense small arms fire in the process.

Enclosure (1)

- 22-25 Sept - On a night scramble to the DMZ, Captains QUILTER, JENSON, KEHOE and STIMLER were flying toward the Ben Hai River when a rocket sight fired four rockets toward Dong Ha just below them. They rolled in without benefit of flares, bombed the rocket sites and caused two tremendous secondary explosions. Three days later, on a Tally-Ho Strike, a flight led by Major FAGERSKOG with Capt DEVANEY and RIO's 1stLt's DRISCOLL and GLISAN attacked and destroyed two active rocket positions.
- 22 September - Major LASSETER (RIO - Capt STILES, Wingman 1stLt's CULWELL and WARNER) flew CAS for Operation Shelby, attacking VC in the open and killing nine (confirmed) and five (probable) plus destroying four structures and damaging three more while taking hostile fire. The same day, another CAS hop for Shelby led by Major FAGERSKOG (RIO - 1stLt DRISCOLL, Wingman Major BOOZMAN and 1stLt KERR) accounted for three structures destroyed, three bunkers destroyed, 200 meters of trenchline damaged and 10 enemy KBA (probable).
- 30 September - LtCol LUNDIN with 1stLt's NORTHLICH and O'MARA, and Captain DOUGLAS destroyed 20 structures in a fortified village for Operation Kingfisher near the Ben Hai River.

During September, the squadron received on occasion battle damage assessments from controlling agencies as follows:

Enemy Killed by Air.....	35 Conf/84 Prob
Structures .....	291 Dest/65 Dam
Bunkers .....	47 Dest/17 Dam
Secondary Explosions .....	37
Trenchline .....	820 Meters Dest
Mortar Positions .....	3 Destroyed
Rocket Positions .....	5 Destroyed
Weapon Positions .....	9 Dest/1 Dam
Road Cuts .....	8
Tunnels/Caves .....	4 Destroyed
Sampans .....	3 Dest/1 Dam
Trucks .....	1 Damaged

### PART III - Significant Events

1. <u>Personnel:</u>	Joined	Officer 2	Enlisted 4
	Dropped	Officer 4	Enlisted 14
	Promotions	Officer 0	Enlisted 44

Enclosure (1)

2. Casualties. On 8 September, Captains J. B. CASKEY and R. L. DRAGE were shot down by enemy groundfire near the DMZ while flying Aircraft BuNo 152238. Captain CASKEY was injured during ejection and was subsequently MED-EVAC'd to Guam. Captain DRAGE was only slightly injured and was returned to the squadron at Chu Lai.

3. Morale/Welfare Programs. During September a standard pool table was set up in the squadron recreation/duty hut for use by squadron enlisted members under the aegis of Captain G. O. JENSON.

4. Electronic Countermeasures. The installation of the "Shoehorn" ECM/Warning package continues at a moderate pace as aircraft are returned from NAS Atsugi, Japan. At the end of the month, three aircraft were fitted with operational surface-to-air missile warning systems. A considerably larger number of warning systems are expected to be readied in October.

5. Air Operations. The following statistical summary is presented for September:

Total Combat Sorties .....	595
Total Flights .....	597
Total Combat Hours .....	685.3
Total Flight Hours .....	686.7
Average Pilot Strength .....	17
Average Pilot Sorties .....	30
Average Pilot Hours .....	30
#Group/Other Pilots Flying	
with 323 .....	8
Avg Grp/Other Pilot Sorties .....	9
Avg Grp/Other Pilot Hours .....	11
Avg NFO Strength .....	17
Avg NFO Sorties .....	30
Avg NFO Hours .....	30
High Day (Sorties) Date .....	29th (31)
High Day (Hours) Date .....	29th (35.2)

6. Air Defense. To increase proficiency at scramble intercepts, during September the squadron adopted a policy of scrambling the air-to-air alert pad against returning squadron missions, achieving a greater degree of realism. This has also provided crews with radar intercept practice to the extent of two to three times a month. Since the squadrons present role in Vietnam is that of primarily ground attack, such practice has been difficult to otherwise obtain.

Enclosure (1)

7. Motor Transport. The desperate motor transport situation of August continued into September, but was alleviated slightly by sporadic assignation of a cerlist-type vehicle to the squadron. This vehicle is also used to tow ordnance from the dump area to the line when a tractor is not available.

8. Maintenance. Data for September includes:

a. Monthly Averages: Aircraft Assigned ..... 22  
 Avg Aircraft On-Board ..... 15  
 Avg Aircraft Available ..... 9 (57%)  
 Avg Hrs Per Aircraft On-Board ..... 47.2

b. Aircraft Transferred/Received:

BuNo 152275 Fm VMFA-314 Date - 2Sep67  
 BuNo 150648 Fm VMFA-314 Date - 5Sep67  
 BuNo 152322 Fm VMFA-314 Date - 12Sep67  
 BuNo 151443 Fm VMFA-314 Date - 20Sep67

9. Ordnance. During September, the squadron expended 1343.8 tons of ordnance on the enemy, a new squadron record.

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
MK81	1191
MK81S	589
MK82	2439
MK82S	242
MK77	368
D26	846
ZUNI	64
D27	19
MK83	12

Enclosure (1)