

DECLASSIFIED

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 363
 Marine Aircraft Group 36
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac
 FPO, San Francisco, 96602

3:WHG:fe
 5750
 23 June 1966

From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 36 (Attn: S-3)

Subj: Command Chronology for period of 1-23 June 1966; submission of

Ref: (a) GruO 5750.1A

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology Report

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.

J. D. Mc Gough
 J. D. MC GOUGH

HMM-363

CMD CHRON

MAG-36
 S-3 ROLL

S-3	3
3-A	✓
3-B	
3-C	
3-D	
NCOIC	✓

DECLASSIFIED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
 DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
 DOD DIR 5200.1D

1071

1-23 June 1966

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PART I - ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

a. Squadron Commander and staff, with inclusive dates of duration in assigned billets:

Commanding Officer	1-23 June 1966	LtCol. J. D. MC GOUGH
Executive Officer	1-23 June 1966	Major G. J. VOBORA
Operations Officer	1-23 June 1966	Major W. H. GRAHAM
Administrative Officer	1-23 June 1966	Capt. M. R. BANNING
Logistics Officer	1-23 June 1966	Major J. L. MAXWELL
Maintenance Officer	1-23 June 1966	Capt. B. M. GRIMES
Safety Officer	1-23 June 1966	Capt. T. W. AMIS
Intelligence Officer	1-21 June 1966 22-23 June 1966	1stLt. H. C. WHITNEY Capt. R. M. NEBEL

b. Task organization and unit location with inclusive dates:

HMM-363, MAG-36, 1stMAW, FMFPac, Chu Lai, RVN - 1-23 June 1966

c. Average monthly strength of squadron: 225

d. Important visitors to the squadron: None

PART II - NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS DURING REPORTING PERIOD

The month of June was a busy one for HMM-363 as the squadron worked in gradual preparation for its coming tour with the SLF, plus flying over 1000 hours in support of III MAF and I Corps combat operations.

From the 1st to the 20th, the squadron averaged a strike about every third day, with an abundance of recon team insertions and retractions included. And, as usual, a great number of medical evacuation and logistic support missions were flown.

Typical of the action common to recon retraction missions, was that experienced by our squadron pilots on the 2nd and 16th of the month. On the 2nd, 4 Millpoint helos launched expeditiously for an emergency pick-up of a 16 man Marine recon team at BT 265072. Escorted by 2 VMO-6 gunships, and preceded into the pick-up zone by a heavy barrage of artillery fire, the H-34's cautiously descended into the zone one by one, receiving enemy fire in spite of the prep fire placed on the area. The VMO aircraft rolled into place suppressing fire around the landing zone, and as the last H-34 cleared the area the Hueys were firing their last rounds of ammunition. As a result of this suppressive fire, which was supplemented by the crewmen of the H-34's, and a considerable amount of good fortune, not a single hit was taken by any of the aircraft. With all the troops clear of the zone, the Oxwood A-4's which had been on station over-head, were called in to rake the area with their cannon and bombs.

On the 16th, four aircraft were launched at 0300 to retract a recon party from a zone at coordinates BT 130205. On this occasion, the aircraft were met by such intense enemy ground fire that an approach and landing could not be made. In the process of arriving at this conclusion, one aircraft incurred Echo damage from the extensive ground fire as the pilot attempted to land. No injuries were received, and the mission was aborted until later in the day when the site had been softened by numerous air strikes. At this time additional troops were taken in to clear and secure the area, after which the remaining members of the recon party and the reaction force were retracted. Considerable support was given to the I Corps ARVN forces from the 6th to the 12th, with three strike lifts and numerous med evac missions being flown in this period.

Strikes flown on the 6th and 7th were supported by 12 and 15 Millpoint helos, respectively. No significant incidents were reported on these lifts, which were also supported by VMO, HMM-361, and MAG-12 aircraft.

The strike flown on the 12th started a tragic day for 2 Vietnamese Battalions which were landed at BS 653573. The strike lift itself was nearly unopposed with only light sniper fire reported, but as the units commenced their push toward Highway One along the south bank of the Song Ve River, the enemy struck. One Vietnamese battalion was attacked from the rear by a large VC force, receiving heavy casualties. Among the many dead

or wounded were all but one of the U. S. advisers to the Vietnamese unit which was hardest hit.

About 1330, two Millpoint aircraft arrived in the area to begin evacuation of the many wounded and dying. Due to the havoc and confusion prevailing in the area upon their arrival, the pilots were ordered to shut down at the hill top CP over-looking the battle zone until the exact situation could be established.

About two hours later, the helos were launched to attempt to reach the one secure landing zone along the southern bank of the river to which most of the wounded had been carried. With the area still smoking from a devastating blow delivered by fixed wing aircraft, and an Army UH-1 on hand as escort, the first Millpoint helo sped into the zone. No fire reached the aircraft, and in a few moments it lumbered out of the zone with 17 wounded Vietnamese Marines aboard. The second aircraft was given a much different reception when it received such intense ground fire that a wave-off was necessary. The pilot re-evaluated the situation, chose an alternate approach route into the zone, and on his second attempt the aircraft was on the deck in the zone before the fire started. The fire was of such a large volume that even though an extremely expeditious exit from the zone was executed, the aircraft took six hits, and the co-pilot was wounded in the leg. The pilot nursed the wounded bird back to the Quang Ngai Airfield, where the co-pilot was immediately transferred to the other helo and flown to Delta Med.

Two Millpoint helos returned to the area afterward, and worked well into the night under the light of air dropped flares clearing the zone of wounded and dead, and resupplying the troops who remained there.

After the extraction which the squadron participated in on the 16th, when one of the aircraft was so severely damaged by ground fire, there seemed to be at least one insertion or retraction to be flown each day. These missions were primarily into and out of the area northwest of Tam Ky on the lower side of the Phouc Valley. These missions fortunately were uneventful and bore no resemblance to the 16 June extraction.

On the afternoon of the 21st, the squadron turned its attention to the final preparations for joining the SLF on the 24th. Several crews and aircraft continued to standby in compliance with MAG-36 commitments, as all other available hands worked toward mobilizing the squadron's operating materials. The busy movement of men about the squadron area, and the alert posture of the crews on the flight line displayed a scene that was exemplary of the squadron's last month at Ky Ha.

PART III - MISCELLANEOUS

a. Casualties

Circumstances surrounding the below listed pilot's injury are described in the narrative portion of this report for 12 June (Page 3).

CEDERBLOM, C. E. 1st Lt. 091154/7335