

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 542
Marine Aircraft Group 33
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac
MCAS El Toro, Santa Ana, Calif., 92709

1:HGh:jma
5750
31 July 1970

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Attn: G-3)
Via: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 33

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 January 1970 to 30 June 1970

Ref: (a) FMFPacO 5750.8
(b) WgO 5750.1D

Encl: (1) VMFA-542 Command Chronology

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosures (1) is herewith submitted.

H. G. Hutchinson
H. G. HUTCHINSON

ENCLOSURE (10)

VMFA-542 (final)

Jan - Jan 1970

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON-542
Marine Aircraft Group-33
3d Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac
MCAS El Toro, Santa Ana, California 92709

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 Jan 1970 to 30 June 1970

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PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONCOMMANDER

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron-542
 Lieutenant Colonel Keith A. SMITH
 Captain Homer G. HUTCHINSON III.

1 Jan - 3 Mar 70
 3 Mar - 30 Jun 70

SUBORDINATE UNITS

None

ATTACHED UNITS

None

2. LOCATION

Marine Aircraft Group-11
 Marine Aircraft Group-33

1 Jan - 31 Jan 70
 1 Feb - 30 Jun 70

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer
 Major Dan T. BENN

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70

S-1 Officer
 Captain Mell B. NOLLEY

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70

S-2 Officer
 First Lieutenant John FITZMAURICE
 First Lieutenant Andy VADYAK

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70
 12 Feb - 20 Mar 70

S-3 Officer
 Major George N. BAILEY
 Captain Larry G. KARCH

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70
 12 Feb - 20 Mar 70

S-4 Officer
 Captain Kenneth L. CROUCH

1 Jan - 20 Mar 70

Maintenance Officer
 Captain Dallas WEBER
 Captain Joseph E. WARD

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70
 12 Feb - 20 Mar 70

Aviation Safety Officer
 First Lieutenant Rod POWERS
 Captain Larry G. KARCH

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70
 12 Feb - 20 Mar 70

NATOPS Officer
 Captain Reid E. DAHART
 Captain David M. McKENNEY

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70
 12 Feb - 20 Mar 70

Sergeant Major
 Master Sergeant SAGAN

1 Jan - 11 Feb 70

4. Average Monthly Strength

	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>USMC</u> <u>ENLISTED</u>	<u>USN</u> <u>OFFICERS</u>
Jan	47	275	1
Feb	20	80	0
Mar	1	5	0
Apr	1	1	0
May	1	0	0
Jun	1	0	0

PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The last six months of VMFA-542 was marked by the transition from a highly trained combat squadron to a cadre status consisting of one officer.

January 13 marked the end of 542's combat flying in Vietnam with a night interdiction flight in Laos flown by Lt.Col. Keith Smith and 1stLt Roger Blair. From January 13 to January 31 the squadron devoted its time and efforts preparing for an 8,000 mile TRANSPAC from DaNang to El Toro. On 30 January a flight of five led by Major George Bailey marked 542's initial departure from Vietnam. Lt.Col. Smith on 31 January led the last five "Tigers" out of DaNang, marking the end of 542's participation in an active combat situation.

From 30 January to 11 February, 542 participated in Key Wallop II - the most monumental TRANSPAC effort ever undertaken by the Marine Corps, involving 35 tactical jet aircraft. The route was DaNang, Cubi Point, Philippines, Guam, Wake Island, Kaneohe, Hawaii, and El Toro.

On 10 February, a division of six aircraft left MCAS Kaneohe, led by Lt.Col. Smith bound for El Toro. An air rendezvous was effected with six KC-130 refueler aircraft 750 miles out of Hawaii. Approximately three hours later Lt.Col. Smith touched down at El Toro, marking 542's initial return to the United States. On 11 February, a division of five aircraft, led by Capt. Ken Crouch, left Hawaii for El Toro, marking the complete return of 542 to CONUS.

Shortly after 542 returned to CONUS they were earmarked for deactivation, with VMFA-323 slated to receive the squadron's fifteen F4-Bs. On 3 March, Lt.Col. Smith relinquished command of 542 to Capt. H. G. Hutchinson who was tasked with supervising the squadron's deactivation. On 20 March 542 entered a cadre status and the "Tigers" were formally deactivated on 30 June.

PART III

Sequential Listing of Significant Events

13 Jan 1970	Lt.Col. Smith and 1stLt Blair flew 542's last combat sortie.
30 Jan 1970	Major George Bailey led the first "Tigers" out of DaNang.
31 Jan 1970	Lt.Col. Smith led the last five "Tiger" aircraft out of DaNang
10 Feb 1970	A flight of six aircraft led by Lt.Col. Smith land at El Toro.
11 Feb 1970	Capt. Ken Crouch led the last five aircraft in to El Toro.
3 Mar 1970	Capt. H.G. Hutchinson took command of the squadron from Lt.Col. Smith.
20 Mar 1970	542 entered cadre status.
30 June 1970	VMFA-542 formally deactivated