

Prov MAG-39
Sic# 47-69
Copy # 1 of 7

HEADQUARTERS
Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
Fleet Marine Force, Pacific
FPO San Francisco 96602

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5750
QA1459
14 Jan 1969

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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, First Marine Aircraft Wing (G-3)
Subj: Command Chronology For the Period of 1-31 December 1968; submission of
Ref: (a) WgO 5750.1G

- Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
- ✓(2) Command Chronology for Provisional Headquarters & Maintenance Squadron 39
- ✓(3) Command Chronology for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161
- ✓(4) Command Chronology for Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262
- ✓(5) Command Chronology for Marine Observation Squadron 6
- ✓(6) Command Chronology for Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 62
- ✓(7) Command Chronology for Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 62 Detachment "A"

Filed
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1. In accordance with instructions contained in reference (a), enclosures (1) through (7) are submitted herewith.

W. Sienko
W. SIENKO

1st MAW SEC No.	Copy No.
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CMD CHRON

DEC 1968

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PART I ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. Staff

a. Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39

(1) Col. Walter SIENKO	1-31Dec68	CO
(2) LtCol. Paul W. NIESEN	1-31Dec68	XO
(3) Capt. Lawrence E. TANKSLEY	1-31Dec68	S-1/Adjutant
(4) Maj. John A. HATHAWAY	1-16Dec68	S-2
(5) LtCol. Billy D. BOULDIN	17-31Dec68	S-2
(6) LtCol. James A. WELLS Jr.	1-31Dec68	S-3
(7) Maj. Herman C. BROWN	1-31Dec68	S-4
(8) Maj. Robert N. SIMPSON	1-31Dec68	AvnSafetyO
(9) LCDR Rodney R. SCHEER	1-31Dec68	Chaplain
(10) LCDR Gordon F. KELLOGG	1-31Dec68	Flight Surgeon

b. Provisional Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 39

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (2)

c. Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (3)

d. Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (4)

e. Marine Observation Squadron 6

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (5)

f. Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 62

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (6)

g. Marine Air Traffic Control Unit 62 Detachment "A"

(1) See page (1) of enclosure (1) to enclosure (7)

2. Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39

1st Marine Aircraft Wing
Fleet Marine Force Pacific, FPO San Francisco 96602
Quang Tri Air Base, Republic of Vietnam
1-31 December 1968

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3. Average Monthly Strength

Marine Officers	196	Marine Enlisted	1166
Navy Officers	5	Navy Enlisted	15

4. Important Visitors: None.

PART II NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The last month in 1968 ended with ProviAG-39 supporting the 3RD MARDIV and 1st MARDIV in southern I CORPS. In operations with the 3RD MARDIV; ProviAG-39 aircraft and crews participated in operations; Dawson River, Kentucky II, Marshall Mountain and Scotland II. Monsoon type weather hampered operations on several days and early morning ground fog held up resupply and troop lift operations in the hills of the 3RD MARDIV TAOR.

Aboard Quang Tri Airbase, construction of various buildings and bunkers has been on the increase. Racks are being built for Motor Transport to work on their vehicles, and ten concrete bunkers for perimeter defense are nearing completion. The runway erosion repair has been 33% completed, taxiway 25% complete and parking mat erosion repair 1% complete. The handball court, a Special Service project was completed by Vietnamese contractor.

PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Chronological Sequence of Events

1 December 1968. WILLYT MILL aircraft logged 193.2 flight hours in recon inserts/extracts, med-evacs, resupply, trooplifts, visual recon and TAC(A).

2 December 1968. After being diverted from a resupply mission at Vandergrift Combat Base, 4 aircraft of MM-262 were called upon to insert and then extract a platoon sized reaction force in support of an Army recon unit. Army JH-1H lift birds extracted the Army team, then the CHATTERBOX aircraft extracted the Marine platoon under the cover of the VMO-6 gunbirds. Earlier in the day, SEAWORTHY 97-1 an O-1G was shot down, killing the pilot and the observer. A recovery force was inserted and the bodies extracted without enemy contact.

3 December 1968. On a recon team insert for the 3RD MARDIV, the transport helicopters of HH-161 took fire in the LZ. The team was removed under the cover of the JH-1E gunbirds of VMO-6.

4 December 1968. HH-161 was scheduled for a trooplift for the 1st ARVN Battalion. The two aircraft assigned flew 6.3 hours, carrying 293 troops and 4.0 tons of cargo. The group as a whole flew 190.9 Flt. Hrs. in 548 sorties.

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5 December 1968. On a SPARROW HAWK mission, HMM-161 inserted 67 troops against some NVA spotted by a SEAWORTHY observation aircraft. The SEAWORTHY gunbirds covered the 4 CH-46Ds and directed a flight of F-4's on the target, receiving 2 secondary explosions.

6 December 1968. WALNUT HILL aircraft logged 197.3 flight hours, carrying 907 troops and 66.6 tons of cargo. An emergency recon team extraction was successfully completed by HMM-262 with VMO-6 gunbirds covering.

7 December 1968. An "emergency" troopleft of 1300 men was ordered and the WALNUT HILL aircraft of resupply and normal troopleft mission for Vandergrift Combat Base were diverted to conduct the mission. There were 8 CH-46's from HMM-262 and 3 from HMM-161 with 4 gunbirds from VMO-6 to make up the flight. There were several proposed landing zones briefed, but enemy fire narrowed the choice; and caused alternate zones to be used. The entire lift was completed without any accidents or injury to personnel.

8 December 1968. The CH-46's of HMM-262 were highlighted in an emergency extraction of a recon team under fire. CAPTAIN VAN WINKEL was able to get the team out even though his aircraft sustained several small arms hits. The group as a whole logged 217.8 flight hours in support of the 3RD MARDIV.

9 December 1968. A CH-46 from HMM-161 was hit by enemy fire and forced down across the border into LAOS. All hands were picked up by another CATTLECALL CH-46. The aircraft was destroyed by fixed wing when NVA were observed in and around the aircraft.

10 December 1968. An O-1C, SEAWORTHY 97-1, received credit for 3 KBA's while controlling a flight of fixed wing on bunkers and a .50CAL position. The group flew 242.2 flight hours in which 1,953 troops and 77.9 tons of cargo were carried.

11 December 1968. While controlling several flights of fixed wing on NVA positions, SEAWORTHY 98-3 an O-1C counted numerous secondary explosions and destroyed one .50CAL position.

12 December 1968. Recon extractions were the highlight of the day. CATTLECALL CH-46's received damage from an RPG round during an insert, while being covered by the SEAWORTHY gunbirds.

13 December 1968. Recon team "OLD COLONEL" captured an NVA prisoner in the DMZ and was extracted as the gunbirds of VMO-6 covered the extract by laying down accurate suppressive fire. Else where, one CH-46 from HMM-262 made a hoist pick up of a recon team after damaging his aft rotor blades in an attempted landing in high elephant grass.

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14 December 1968. WALNUT HILL aircraft flew 217.2 hours in 605 sorties. Trooplifts were the biggest operations of the day, but were all completed in spite of enemy small arms fire.

15 December 1968. Trooplifts, resupply, artillery spotting, med-evac and gunship escort accounted for 161.8 flight hours for the aircraft of ProvMAG-39.

16 December 1968. When the lead aircraft of a trooplift took fire in a pass over the zone, the SEAWORTHY gunbirds controlled a flight of fixed wing aircraft on the zone and then further prepped the area with machine gun fire. The CATTLECALL aircraft then went into the zone again, taking no fire the second time.

17 December 1968. In light action, the crews and aircraft of WALNUT HILL logged 144.0 flight hours in 383 sorties. There were 19 med-evac missions flown which carried 4 emergency, 2 priority, and 90 routine medevacs.

20 December 1968. Flying in support of the 3RD MARDIV, there were three recon missions flown, 1 insert/extract and 1 emergency extract. The emergency extract was under enemy fire which was suppressed by three SEAWORTHY gunbirds.

21 December 1968. Again, recon team emergency extracts proved to be the highlight of the day. The UH-1E gunbirds, O-1C observation birds and the OV-10A "BRONCO"s of VMO-6 worked successfully as a team to suppress heavy enemy fire on DRIVING TEST recon team. Many flights of fixed wing were controlled on target very close to the team with excellent results. The CH-46's of HMM-161 arrived and successfully extracted the team without sustaining any hits.

22 December 1968. The aircraft and crews of ProvMAG-39 flew 81.6 hours on a day of low ceilings, poor visibility and drizzling rain. Even though the weather was poor, a 500 man trooplift in Operation DAWSON RIVER was conducted without incident.

23 December 1968. The gunbirds of VMO-6 and the transports of HMM-262 joined forces to perform an emergency extract in the DA KRONG Valley of a recon team surrounded by an unknown sized enemy force. Heavy fire was taken but suppressive fire by the gunbirds enabled the transports to successfully extract the team in the poorest weather conditions possible.

24 December 1968. With good weather again, flight operations picked up. There were 182.3 flight hours logged, 1480 troops and 79.4 tons of cargo carried, and 24 med-evac missions flown carrying 30 emergency, 44 priority and 57 routine med-evacs.

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25 December 1968. Christmas in Quang Tri saw ProvMAG-39 aircraft log 133.1 flight hours. The O-1 observation aircraft of VMO-6 noted NVA movement in the DMZ, north of the BEN HAI River, in the form of trucks, a crane and personnel.

26 December 1968. The runway at Quang Tri was closed for repairs, causing the OV-10A's and the O-1's to operate out of phu Bai and Dong Ha respectively. Recon insertions were the highlights of the day, with 4 teams inserted.

27 December 1968. There were 7 recon insertions for 3RD RECON. All were completed successfully. The group as a whole logged 157.4 flight hours in 399 sorties.

28 December 1968. Recon teams surrounded called for support in the form of suppressive fire and emergency extraction. After rearming and refueling, the gunbirds of VMO-6 covered the transports of HMM-161 while they inserted a reaction force to aid the surrounded recon team and exploit contact.

29 December 1968. Trooplifts and recon team extractions under fire were the order of the day. Heavy fire on the extraction of recon team SETTLEMENT and BELMONT TONES was received but suppressive fire by SEAWORTHY and the skill of the CATTLECALL transport helos successfully extracted the teams.

30 December 1968. Recon team extractions again proved to be the highlight of the day for ProvMAG-39 aircraft. On the whole, the group logged 172.3 flight hours in 516 sorties.

31 December 1968. In support of the 1st MARDIV and 3RD MARDIV, ProvMAG-39 aircraft logged 219.9 flight hours in 621 sorties. There were 7 recon team insertions, 2 extractions, and suppressive fire missions flown for recon. The year ended with ProvMAG-39 aircraft logging 5,553.0 flight hours for December.

1. Personnel. No critical shortages exist.
2. Administration. Administration continues to be hampered by the inadequacy of office equipment and materials.
3. Awards. The following award recommendations have been submitted during this period:
 - a. Silver Star - 2
 - b. DFC's - 6
 - c. Bronze Star - 1
 - d. Air Medals - 3 Single Mission 114 Strike/Flight

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- e. Purple Heart - 6
- f. Navy Commendation - 17
- g. Navy Achievement - 11
- h. Certificate of Commendation - 1

4. Casualties.

- a. Hostile: KIA - 1 WIA - 3
- b. Non-Hostile: DAI - 0 Other - 12

5. Moral/Welfare Programs.

- a. A Vietnamese constructed handball court was completed and is now in use.
- b. The Group provided a helicopter that transported sixteen (16) persons to the BILLY GRAHAM Service in Phu Bai on 22 December 1968.

6. Statistical Analysis. The Chaplain reports the following statistical categories as he functions in his various roles of Priest, Educator, Counselor and Civic Action Officer.

<u>a. Sunday Celebrations:</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Command</u>
Chaplain SCHEER (Lutheran)	10	264	121
Chaplain ECKER (Roman Catholic)	10	307	270
Total	20	571	391
<u>b. Weekday/Holy Day/Memorial Services:</u>			
Chaplain SCHEER (Lutheran)	2	132	30
Chaplain ECKER (Roman Catholic)	6	131	119
CAP Units	8	80	13
Memorial Services	1	128	N/A
<u>c. Education:</u>			
Religious Discussion Group	3	24	N/A
Religious Instructions	7	7	N/A

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8. INTELLIGENCE.

a. Enemy initiated incidents or offensive activity remained at a very low level. Lack of contact or evidence of enemy unit presence indicates that the major enemy units are still located in LAOS and NVN and are using the bombing halt to continue to build up their logistical support activities. Enemy action against PMAG-39 was limited to ground fire against Group aircraft. This was the fourth consecutive month that Quang Tri Airfield was not targeted by enemy rocketeers. The number of aircraft receiving hits was 14 less than in November.

Ground to air fire statistics:

<u>INCIDENTS</u>	<u>NO. AIRCRAFT HIT</u>	<u>AIRCRAFT DESTROYED</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>KIA</u>
67	10	2	3	1

b. PMAG-39 S-2 welcomed aboard a new officer-In-Charge on 16 December, when LtCol. B. D. BOULDIN arrived. The Group Intelligence Section now has 3 officers (LtCol, Major, 1stLt) and 4 enlisted (1 GySgt, 3 LCpl's).

9. MEDICAL.

a. The following statistics represents the activity of the Medical Department during the month of December, 1968.

(a) Total patients seen at sick call	795
(b) Total number of inpatients	0
(c) Total number of Physical examinations	54
(d) Total immunizations	563

10. AIR OPERATIONS.

a. DECEMBER TOTALS

<u>HOURS</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>TONS OF CARGO</u>	<u>MED-EVAC MISSIONS</u>
5,553.8	36,685	1968.8	654

MED-EVACS

3,884

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