

HEADQUARTERS  
Marine Aircraft Group 12  
1st Marine Aircraft Wing  
Fleet Marine Force Pacific  
FPO San Francisco 96602

3:PDW:rlb  
5750  
003A00173  
1 January 1973

SECRET (Unclassified upon removal of enclosures)

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code HD)  
Via: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Pacific

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 December 1972 to 31 December 1972

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.1  
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8  
(c) WgO 5750.14

Encl: (1)-Marine Aircraft Group 12 (Fwd) Command Chronology  
(2)-Sub Unit #2, H&MS-12 Command Chronology and MABS-12 (Fwd)  
*Subd* (3)-Marine Attack Squadron 211 Command Chronology  
*ref* (4)-Marine Attack Squadron 311 Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a), (b), and (c), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted.
2. This cover letter is downgraded to unclassified upon removal of enclosures (1) through (4).

*D. C. Macho*  
D. C. MACHO

1st MAW S&C No	Copy No
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MAG 12 S&C	
CONTROL #	COPY #
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MAG-12 (Fwd)

Dec 1972

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1st Marine Aircraft Wing  
Fleet Marine Force Pacific  
FPO San Francisco 96602

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 December 1972 to 31 December 1972

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SECRETPART IORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONCOMMANDER

CTU 79.3.7/MAG-12 (FWD)

MACHO, D. C. Col USMC  
(1-31 December)SUBORDINATE UNITS

Sub-Unit 2, H&amp;MS-12

PIXTON, M. F. Maj USMC  
(1-31 December)

CTE 79.3.7.3/VMA-211

RANNEY, D. G. LtCol USMC  
(1-31 December)

CTE 79.3.7.4/VMA-311

CALDAS, J. J. LtCol USMC  
(1-31 December)2. LOCATION

Bien Hoa Air Base, Republic of Vietnam (1-31 December)

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer

MAAG, E. R. LtCol USMC  
(1-31 December)

S-1

CLINE, J. T. Maj USMC  
(1-19 December)DITTO, J. H. Maj USMC  
(19-31 December)

S-2

SERRATA, A. T. CWO USMC  
(1-31 December)

S-3

HOLLAND, K. D. Maj USMC  
(1-31 December)

S-4

BLACKINGTON, R. C. Maj USMC  
(1-31 December)

HAD

PRIDGEN, N. E. Maj USMC  
(1-31 December)SECRET

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4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>		<u>OTHER</u>		
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>CIV</u>
76	723	3	13	0	0	1

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SECRETPART IINARRATIVE SUMMARY

1. During the past month, the average strength for Marine Aircraft Group 12 (Fwd) has been 79 officers and 736 enlisted. This is the lowest on-listed strength since the Group arrived in-country. Rotation losses were not excessively heavy during the reporting period but inbound replacements have not kept up with losses. We are currently 62 persons below our authorized in-country strength.

The Group suffered no hostile casualties during the month. One Marine on-listed was killed when accidentally shot in the head. A total of five on-listed Marines have been evacuated to CONUS during the reporting period due to non-hostile injuries/illness.

The discipline rate remained about the same as last month with 31 cases of NJP and 1 Summary Courts-Martial.

Ground transportation is still being utilized for in-country R&R with very good success. During the reporting period 113 enlisted were granted three (3) day R&R in Vung Tau and another 121 were granted one (1) day and (1) night R&R in Vung Tau. Twenty requests for annual leave have been processed during the reporting period.

During the month of December, Protestant services were held by Chaplain Claude FARRIS each Sunday at 10:00. Catholic services are being held at this base and at the request of the Army chaplains at F Troop, 8th Cav. Company.

During the month of December Catholic Services were held on Sunday 14 times with a gross attendance of 920. Communion numbered 731. Personnel attending regularly included Australians, Koreans, Vietnamese and MAG-12 Marines. Weekday Catholic Services numbered 27 with a net attendance of 89.

Orphanage participation decreased slightly since VMA-211's orphanage has become self-sufficient. Contributions by the Group to the orphanage fund for the month were \$1725.00. Donations from the MAG-12 (Rear) included two sewing machines and six cases of baby food.

2. During this reporting period the MAG-12 (Fwd) Intelligence Section continued to receive, process, and report intelligence information in the form of daily intelligence briefs to the Commanding Officer, Group and Squadron staff officers, Security Officer, pilots flying combat air support missions, and visiting dignitaries. This information was received through agent reports, prisoner of war reports, intelligence summaries, strike mission results and advisories from the Third Regional Assistance Command Tactical Operations Center (TRAC, TOC), 98th Advisory Group (Bien Hoa Province), III DASG, 21st TASS (FAC), USAF Security Police, VNAF Intelligence Organization, Combined Intelligence Center, Vietnam, and Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. The Command's daily Intelligence Summary (INTSUM) was prepared from information received from these intelligence organizations and pilot debriefings for the 24 hour period.

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Marine pilots flying combat air support missions continued to be briefed and debriefed by the S-2 section. During this reporting period 780 missions were briefed and debriefed with the following significant results inflicted on the enemy: 495 KBA, 219 Fortified Fighting Positions destroyed, 67 Fortified Fighting Positions damaged, 241 structures destroyed, 66 structures damaged, 35 sampans destroyed, 2 sampans damaged, 484 bunkers destroyed, 84 bunkers damaged, 7 bunkers uncovered, 2 mortar positions destroyed, 3 tunnels destroyed, 286 secondary explosions, 12 secondary fires, 41 sustained fires, 15 x 55 gallon drums destroyed, 6 bridges destroyed, 9 bridges damaged, 31 supply caches destroyed, 4 tents destroyed, 4 trucks destroyed, 5 trucks damaged, 6 trails destroyed, 91 fighting holes destroyed, 2 fighting holes damaged, 1570 meters trench-line destroyed, 7 observation platforms destroyed, 2 machineguns destroyed, 5 x 51 caliber positions destroyed, 1 x 51 caliber position damaged, 1 water tower destroyed, 3 ammo caches destroyed, 1 x 130mm artillery gun destroyed, and 9 VC captured.

The S-2 conducted intelligence briefings and processed personal authenticator cards for newly assigned pilots.

The Counterintelligence Section provided guidance and assistance in security matters to sections of MAG-12 (Fwd) holding classified material. Counterintelligence also maintained liaison with other investigative agencies at Bien Hoa and Saigon. Assistance was provided to the Naval Investigative Service Office, Saigon, in conjunction with an investigation aboard Bien Hoa Air Base.

3. Combat operations for MAG-12 (Fwd) continued undiminished throughout the month of December. The scheduled daily combat sorties remained stabilized at 52 equating to a 1.62 sortie rate. Aircraft utilization has been 1.93 hours per aircraft per day with an average availability of 84% at the start of daily flight operations. December saw relatively few missions cancelled due to low ceilings and the subsequent lack of workable targets. The month brought a succession of bright cloudless days with temperatures soaring to the mid-90s by afternoon. MAG-12 (Fwd) weather service remained dependant upon the VNAF metro facility at Tan Son Nhut and the time consuming and only partially successful process of attempting to achieve a telephone connection between Bien Hoa and Saigon. Since weather has not been a factor, the lack of reliable weather forecasting/reporting has not been considered significant. The most reliable meteorological information received by returning pilots continues to be passed by the MAG-12 duty Operations Briefer who merely looks out the back door at local conditions when queried. UHF communications between Group and airborne aircraft remains stable and excellent due to the reliability of the ARC-51 located in the S-3 office.

BDA continues to be significant with a good percentage of the air-strikes being troops in contact. Again, this month saw the majority of the Group's air effort concentrated in MR III and particularly around Bien Hoa Airbase. Strikes within five nautical miles of the field were common as continual intelligence revealed the presence of numerous groups of the

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enemy in close proximity. The SA-7 threat present in the western quadrant of airspace from Bien Hoa continues high and 7th Air Force has enlarged its Air Traffic Control Caution Area to include airspace bounded by the 270 degree radial to the 020 degree radial from five to fifty nautical miles off Tan Son Nhut TACAN from the deck to 11,000 feet. Unless absolutely necessary, or upon pilot request, ATC will not vector aircraft through this airspace. Normal operations include avoidance of this area by executing immediate turns to the South on takeoff and a short descending, decelerating entry into the break. Although the SA-7 threat has increased considerably and there were several SA-7 fire incidents involving helicopters, A-1s, and other slow-movers, the instances of hostile fire against MAG-12 aircraft dropped slightly during the reporting period. Most hostile fire occurred during strikes in support of the Khmer Republic while incidents in MR IV dwindled considerably. The high angle, high release bomb delivery techniques utilized by MAG-12 (Fwd) pilots have proved highly successful in that the aircraft are minimally exposed to hostile fire. There were no hit incidents during the reporting period. During the month, 7th AF requested MAG-12 (Fwd) to fly combat sorties in MR II. Since this necessitated running out as far as 300 nautical miles prior to dropping any ordnance, MR II fragged aircraft were configured with two 300 gallon drop tanks and fully fueled for the longer mission. By the end of the reporting period the standard frag of 52 daily combat sorties routinely included ten sorties in MR II.

December saw an increase in the instances of VNAF FACs controlling MAG-12 (Fwd) aircraft. Once the initial language problem was understood the program became quite successful. The Group learned that Vietnamese FACs could be equally effective as USAF FACs and by the end of the month it made no difference who were controlling airstrikes.

The multiple attacks by fire the mornings of *1, 4, 15 AND 16* December numbered six and included 45 rounds of mixed 122mm and 107mm rockets. The Group suffered no casualties, no damage to aircraft, and only minor damage to facilities. The rapid response to the requirement for a FOD walkdown of the dual 10,000 foot runways allowed the full frag to be flown with only minor delays on each occasion.

MAG-12 (Fwd) continued to provide assistance to Navy aircraft flying from the USS RANGER and ORISKANY when they diverted to Bien Hoa with emergencies or hung ordnance. Mechanical problems with the carriers forced as many as 13 aircraft to bingo simultaneously to Bien Hoa. By the end of the month Marines had downloaded and turned around over 30 Navy aircraft including A-7s, F-8s, F-4s, and A-6s.

The 24 hour truce on Christmas Day provided the first holiday in seven months for MAG-12 (Fwd). All hands celebrated Christmas at five separate unit parties prior to resuming the war and a full schedule the following morning.

Significant cumulative BDA since MAG-12 (Fwd) deployed to Bien Hoa AB in mid-May is as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
KBA(C)	2350	

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<u>Description</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Structures	1719	490
Sampan	273	93
Fortified Fighting Positions	1043	215
Bunkers	1891	244
Gun Positions	61	4
Mortar Positions	42	4
Tunnels	114	8
Trucks	19	12
Tanks	8	8
Bridges	43	57
Secondary Explosions	1824	
Secondary Fires	227	

During the month of December the Air Group's gun squadrons flew a total of 1893.0 flight hours, 1569 combat sorties, and delivered 2137.0 tons of ordnance.

4. In mid-December a cash sales point was established within Group Supply for the sale of underclothing, caps and other items which were in very short supply. CWO STAFFORD accompanied this material from MAG-12 (Iwakuni) and ran a very successful operation that lasted through the end of the month.

H&MS-12 Ordnance has retrograded all MK-4 gunpods, established a MER/TER rotatable pool and processed over 9000 items during the month.

The combined Marine/VNAF EOD team responded to 51 runway emergencies, 28 of which required EOD assistance; 23 on station calls were answered involving explosive items. Additionally, seven tons of hazardous/unserviceable munitions were destroyed.

During December, PAC Area IMRL Listings were received, updated and returned to MAG-12 for consolidation.

On the medical side of the house, 2210 patients were seen at the joint Navy/USAF dispensary. These patients were Navy, USAF, Marines, US Army, American and Vietnamese civilians.

5. During the month of December Human Affairs continued to hold seminars on racial relations, traditions and customs, and other subjects of interest with groups of approximately fifteen Marines twice per week. These seminars have proven to be very informative and have brought out many different views on the subjects discussed.

The troop orientation program for newly arrived Marines to MAG-12 was presented to all incoming personnel for the month. This program strives to help the newly arrived Marine identify with the role and mission of MAG-12 at Bien Hoa.

Three hundred forty two personnel participated in the World Wide Urinalysis Screening Program during the month. There were twenty nine clinically confirmed cases of Drug Abusers, of which 3 were repeats. At the end of this reporting period, MAG-12 had twenty-one Marines on the Drug Exemption Program. There is presently one Marine awaiting an Administrative Discharge for repeated drug abuse. One Marine was medevaced to a drug rehabilitation center in CONUS during the month.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

SECRETPART IIISEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1 December: Messrs. Craig WHITNEY and Sylvan FOX, New York Times, visited MAG-12 between 1145H and 1345H.

2 December: Ten sorties cancelled by 7th AF due to target weather.

3 December: At 0420 Bien Hoa Air Base received eight rounds of 122mm rockets. MAG-12 sustained no casualties or aircraft damaged. Flight operations were not affected.

Sixteen sorties cancelled by 7th AF due to target weather.

5 December: Eight Japanese newsmen from Ashahi Shimbun and NHK TV visited MAG-12 (Fwd), spoke with the Group Commander and interviewed the Operations Officer.

9 December: At 1445H, Capt G. L. EISERT completed the 10,000th combat sortie flown by MAG-12 during the present deployment at Bien Hoa, RVN.

CTU 79.3.7 OPR&P-3/001 Oct 72 (C) closed. Primary cause of the accident was determined to be ground commander being unaware of friendly positions.

12 December: MajGen BROWN, CG 1st MAW, visited MAG-12 (Fwd) from 1040H to 1615H. Tour included luncheon with Chief of Staff, VNAF, and a brief by CG, TRAC, USA.

13 December: Mr. Don NEFF, Time Inc., visited Bien Hoa this date, toured MAG-12 facilities, and interviewed Col MACHO.

14 December: At 0100H and 0410H Bien Hoa AB received 17 rounds of 122mm rockets. MAG-12 sustained no injuries or major damage to facilities. Flight operations were normal.

15 December: At 0115H, 0320H, and again at 0910H Bien Hoa AB received 20 rounds of mixed 122 and 107mm rockets marking the first instance during the present deployment that there have been three attacks by fire in a twelve hour period. There was no damage to MAG-12 personnel, facilities or equipment. Flight operations were delayed forty minutes due to FOD.

Messrs. Judd HAMBRIK, CBS News Dallas, and Joseph YUE, CBS News Hong Kong, visited MAG-12 (Fwd). They interviewed Marines from the Greater Dallas-Ft. Worth area.

17 December: Mr. G. HILLENBRAND, Time Inc., visited MAG-12 Marines and interviewed the CO. He remained overnight and departed at 1215H next day.

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20 December: Messrs. Barr ASHCRAFT, Time Inc., Neal ULEVICH, AP, and Murrie PAGANETTI, "Sitedias Ilustrados", visited MAG-12, spoke with Col MACHO and toured flight line area.

22 December: BGen TAYLOR, Ass't Wing Commander, FMAW, arrived Bien Hoa AB at 1145H. During his visit he toured squadron working areas extending holiday greetings to all MAG-12 Marines. BGen TAYLOR departed at 1445H.

24 December: 275 MAG-12 Marines were transported from Bien Hoa to Tan Son Nhut by Marine 6x6 vehicles where they saw the Bob Hope Show.

25 December: MAG-12 (Fwd) stood down from combat operations for twenty-four hours in observation of the Christmas truce.

27 December: Mr. William CARTER, UPI Correspondant, and two photographers visited MAG-12 arriving 0900H and departing 1100H.

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PART IV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Enclosures (1) through (4).

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