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HEADQUARTERS
PROVISIONAL MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 39
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
FPO San Francisco, California, 96602

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5750
Ser: 03A19868
16 July 1968

[redacted]

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, First Marine Aircraft Wing (Attn: G-3)

Subj: Command Chronology for the period of 1-30 June, 1968; submission of

Ref: (a) WgO 5750.1C

Encl: (1) Command Chronology for PROVMAG-39
(2) Command Chronology for PROVH&MS-39
(3) Command Chronology for HMM-161
(4) Command Chronology for HMM-262
(5) Command Chronology for VMO-6
(6) Command Chronology for MATCU-66 Det "A"
(7) Command Chronology for MATCU-62

Filed Sep

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

W. Shenko
W. SHENKO

PROV MAG-39

CMD CHRONOLOGY

ProvMAG-39
S&C #221-68
Copy #1 of 6 copies

1st MAW S&C No.	Copy No.
2715-68	1

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5750
Ser: 03A19868
16 July 1968

PROVISIONAL MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP-39
Command Chronology
1 June 1968 to 30 June 1968

PART I	ORGANIZATIONAL DATA
PART II	NARRATIVE SUMMARY
PART III	SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

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Enclosure (1)

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Ser: 03A19869
16 July 1968

PART I ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. Staff

a. Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39

(1)	Colonel John E. HANSEN	1-30 June 68	C.O.
(2)	LtCol. Louis A. GULLING	1-30 June 68	X.O.
(3)	Capt. Charles H. FEASELMAN	1-30 June 68	S-1/ADJ
(4)	Maj. John A. HATHAWAY	1-30 June 68	S-2
(5)	Maj. Arthur C. CRANE	1-30 June 68	S-3
(6)	Maj. David G. WORKMAN	1-30 June 68	S-4
(7)	Maj. William A. McGAW Jr.	1-30 June 68	AVNSAFO
(8)	LCDR Rodney R. SCHEER	1-30 June 68	CHAPLAIN
(9)	Lt. Drewry H. MORRIS	1-30 June 68	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 Control Unit 66 Detachment Alpha

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

g. Marine Air Control Unit 62

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

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3;RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03A19068
16 July 1968

2. Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39
1st Marine Aircraft Wing
FMF, Pacific, FPO San Francisco, California, 96602
Quang Tri Air Base, Republic of Vietnam
1-30 June 1968

3. Average Monthly Strengths

Marine Officers: 171 Marine Enlisted: 1050

Navy Officers: 4 Navy Enlisted: 13

4. Important Visitors:

LtGeneral Henry W. BUSE Jr.

MajGeneral Frank C. THARIN

MajGeneral Charles J. QUILTER

MajGeneral Norman G. ANDERSON

BGeneral Homer S. HILL

BGeneral Henry W. HISE

PART II NARRATIVE SUMMARY

During the month of June, Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39 units supported the following operations: Scotland II, Kentucky, Lancaster II and Napoleon/Saline.

Provisional Marine Aircraft Group 39 helicopters commitments were primarily directed in support of operation Scotland II. During the month the aircraft of the group flew 5981.1 hours, 22,890 sorties for a combined total of 3173.3 tons of cargo and 43,913 passengers being carried. The majority of the missions was for resupply of the deployed ground units south of the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

The tempo of operations in the Khe Sanh area continued at a fast moving pace, with many contacts being made with the NVA. The latter part of the month was devoted to the preparation of the evacuation of Khe Sanh Combat Base. Everything that might possibly be used by the enemy was flown from Khe Sanh to LZ Stud where a new combat base is

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03A19068
16 July 1968

being constructed. Complete evacuation of Khe Sanh is expected to be completed during the first week of July.

PART III SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Chronological Sequence of Events

1 June 1968. Recon inserts and extracts were the order of the day. Three hot inserts in the Scotland II area were attempted and five peaceful extracts in Kentucky were completed. Fixed wing was utilized effectively under low cloud cover in support of the proposed inserts and resulting immediate extracts.

2 June 1968. The sweep south of Khe Sanh was commenced today with LtCol. MAAS (CO VMO-6) leading a flight of 4 Huey gunships and coordinating a regimental size troop lift, using 12 CH-46 transport helicopters. By the end of the day over 1200 Marines were successfully inserted into the operational area.

At approximately 1945 hours, tower called Crash Crew and reported an USA AH-1G crashed off station at LZ Sharon. The helicopter was burning with one of the crew trapped inside. Crash Crew dispatched four men and six 30 pound PKP extinguishers aboard a Marine CH-46 to the area. Crash Crew personnel knocked down the fire and pulled the man free.

3 June 1968. Upon being diverted from his re-supply mission, Maj. David L. ALTHOFF (HMM-262) flew an emergency med-evac mission in support of Grasshopper "E". Although weather was deteriorating and Huey gunships were not available, Maj. ALTHOFF successfully evacuated 5 emergency and 5 priority med-evacs from Grasshopper "E"'s position. The pick-up zone was extremely hot due to incoming mortars; but no damage to the aircraft was sustained. Four HMM-161 aircraft received battle damage and Lance Corporal W. R. GRUBY, a CH-46 gunner was responsible for 12 NVA KBA and 2 NVA .50 caliber weapons destroyed while returning enemy fire.

4 June 1968. An NVA rocket attack on LZ Stud caused considerable damage to H&MS-39 assets. The AVGAS tanks and pumps were destroyed.

5 June 1968. Prov MAG-39 received the word that there was to be a troop lift of 370 men, 50 minutes from the time the message was received. Thirty minutes after the call was received, 6 aircraft from HMM-262 were mustered, briefed and launched. The mission was completed without incident.

6 June 1968. Lance Corporal W. R. GRUBY (HMM-161) added 4 NVA KBA's to his existing 12 for a total of 16 in 5 days while serving as a helicopter

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03A19860
16 July 1968

gunner. More troop lifts in support of Task Force Hotel were conducted today. Sea Worthy 401 flight (VMO-6) controlled a battalion size lift into a hot zone. Chatterbox 6-8 (HMM-262) was forced to land at XD 922 289 after coming under heavy .50 caliber fire. The gunships covered the rescue of the crew and expended 277 2.75 inch rockets and over 19,000 rounds of 7.62 toosuccessfully complete the troop lift.

7 June 1968. Another enemy rocket attack was made on LZ Stud which destroyed aviation ordnance stored in the area.

8 June 1968. Two Huey gunships from VMO-6 and 6 CH-46's from HMM-161 made a tactical 600 man troop lift in the Khe Sanh area. The zone was prepped by artillery fire and the UH-1E gunships laid down supressive fire prior to the first landing wave. The troop lift was completed without incident. 2 UH-1E gunships from VMO-6 and 2 CH-46's from HMM-262 made a successful emergency recon team extraction. The team Marshall Hall, was in contact with NVA troops and receiving automatic weapons and small arms fire. Fixed wing aircraft were not available requiring the gunships to lay down suppressive fire while the CH-46 aircraft made the successful extraction. This mission was accomplished after dark without incident.

9 June 1968. Seaworthy 4-24 flight (VMO-6) was on its way home from a troop lift when mirror flashes were spotted. After several low passes a landing was made and a recon team without radios was located. Transport helicopters were called and the recon team extracted.

11 June 1968. Two UH-1E gunships from VMO-6 providing cover for 2 CH-46 aircraft from HMM-161 on a medevac from LZ Torch, supplied suppressive fire on a mortar position. The transport aircraft reported taking enemy mortar fire and .50 caliber fire. An O-1 from the Quang Tri detachment had called in an airstrike on the mortar position but the LZ continued to receive incoming. The 2 gunships rolled in on target, taking suspected .50 caliber fire. On completion of the gunship runs the transport aircraft were able to successfully complete the medevac.

12 June 1968. VMO-6 gunships flying in the Khe Sanh area in support of Operation Scotland II, observed what appeared to be tank tracks crossing a river on an underwater bridge. They followed the tracks to their end and began to investigate the area. They received .50 caliber fire from the area and returned same. After refueling and rearming the gunships continued their mission. They next spotted a probable camouflaged vehicle and a definite vehicle turn around area. They received fire and returned same. After rearming the gunships returned to fire on the position again before returning to Khe Sanh to debrief.

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03A19868
16 July 1968

14 June 1968. Five .50 caliber positions on the approach to the LZ made the first minutes of the troop lift interesting today. A battalion size lift south of Khe Sanh was greeted by previously concealed NVA after fixed wing and artillery prep failed to knock them out. The first wave was landed and the 50's were spotted. Before the second wave arrived Seaworthy 4-22 flight (VMO-6) combined with the AO's and fixed wing on station to knock out the automatic weapons positions enabling the completion of the mission to be uneventful.

15 June 1968. At approximately 1640 hours, Crash Crew hot spot noticed a large fire at FLSC fuel pit area. Crash Crew personnel responded with three vehicles and started to fight a large bunker fire. At 1845 the fire was extinguished and all crash vehicles returned to the Crash Crew area to refit.

19 June 1968. YR-31 (HMM-161) crashed in LZ Turkey near the Khe Sanh strip killing the pilot and co-pilot. The rest of the crew and passengers escaped without injuries. Cause of the accident is still under investigation.

20 June 1968. The Dong Ha ammunition dump caught fire by action of enemy rounds. The Crash Crew stoodby since they could not get close enough to the fire because of exploding shells. The Dong Ha ammo dump exploded along with the POL dump. The fire lasted for several hours.

21 June 1968. During the night Quang Tri airfield received several enemy rockets with no damage to personnel or equipment.

23 June 1968. Two CH-46 aircraft from HMM-161 and 2 UH-1E gunships from VMO-6 were called upon to extract a recon team that was in heavy contact with NVA troops north of Dong Ha. The gunships directed fixed wing aircraft which prepped the area for three hours, while the CH-46 aircraft orbited and waited to go in for the extract. The gunships rearmed three times and expended over 100 rockets and 10,000 rounds of 7.62 in suppressive fire. With darkness approaching the HMM-161 CH-46's went into the zone and extracted the team. All aircraft involved in the extraction were exposed to heavy .50 caliber fire but managed to complete the mission without taking any hits.

25 June 1968. While scouting an NVA mortar position, two UH-1E gunships from VMO-6 came under heavy .50 caliber fire. After delivering a full ordnance load on the position, the flight returned to Khe Sanh to inspect their aircraft for damage. Rearming and finding that no damage had been incurred, the gunships returned once more to the target. They were joined by two A-4 aircraft and during the attack one A-4 sustained battle damage and the pilot ejected. The pilot was picked up by one of the gunships and returned to Quang Tri.

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03A19868
16 July 1968

26 June 1968. Aircraft from ProvMAG-39 flew a tactical troop lift in support of Operation Kentucky. 20 CH-46 aircraft were supplied by HMM-161 and HMM-262. 4 UH-1E gunships for cover and 1 UH-1E slick aircraft was supplied by VMO-6. The lift was separated into two main elements. HMM-262 lifted approximately 800 troops from YD275668 and dropped them in a series of pre-selected landing zones in the vicinity of grid square YD1669. HMM-161 lifted approximately 600 troops from Camp Carrol to the zones in grid square YD1468, a third Marine force was to walk in from the vacinity of grid square 2167, thus forming a three pronged sweep from the North, Southwest and Southeast. A fourth force, consisting of ARVN units acted as a blocking force on the Eastern border of the TAOR. Fixed wing flights prepped the area with hard ordnance and napalm while the UH-1E gunships prepped individual landing zones. One UH-1E slick acted as a C&C bird carrying the troop commanders on an airborne reconnaissance of the landing area. Only one fire incident was reported by the transport helicopters. One aircraft was hit with small arms fire but damage was limited.

28 June 1968. At approximately 0930 the tower notified the Crash Crew that an Army UH-1H was inbound with tail rotor trouble. During the final approach the aircraft lost complete tail rotor control and crashed on the taxiway. The Crash Crew responded, extinguished the small fire and rescued five of the eleven personnel aboard.

2. Personnel. Critical shortages exists as follows:

a. VMO-6

MOS	REMARKS
7563	A critical shortage exists in second tour or experienced aviators.
6319	A critical shortage exists in the supervisory ranks E-5 through E-7.

b. HMM-161. No critical shortages exists.

c. HMM-262

MOS	REMARKS
6320	A critical shortage exists in supervisory personnel in ranks E-5 through E-7.

d. H&MS-39. No critical shortages exists.

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3. Administration. Administration continues to be hampered by the shortage of office equipment and materials.

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03119860
16 July 1968

4. Awards. The following award recommendations have been submitted during this period.

a. DFC's - 2
b. Bronze Star - 1
c. Silver Star - 2
d. Air Medals - 2121
e. Navy Commendation - 5
f. Navy Achievement - 2

5. Casualities

a. Hostile: KIA: 3
WIA: 5

b. Non-hostile: DAI: 1
OTHER: 5

6. Morale/Welfare Programs

a. The officer's club is in the final stages of completion. Opening is anticipated during the month of July.

b. As the new mess hall is completed the old one will be utilized as an enlisted club and recreation hall.

c. A new prefab building for special services has been received and construction is anticipated very soon.

d. Religious Services

(1) Sunday Services	Number	Attendance	Communed
A. M.	5	248	83
P. M.	5	86	63
Roman Catholic Mass	5	279	215
LDS (Mormon)	4	18	N/A

(2) Education

Religious Discussion Group: Attendance 22

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 0341 368
16 July 1968

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(3) Counseling

Religious	8
Pre-Marital	6
Domestic Conflict	10
Character Disorder	15
Psychoneurotic	4
Transfer-Discharge	6
Red Cross	6
Miscellameous	11
Above individuals seen in therapy more than once	32
Total professional counseling cases for June	98

7. Civic Action

The Group Chaplin,,LCDR RODNEY R. SCHEER, CHC, USN, a Lutheran Pastor, also serves as the Civic Action Officer. During the month of June the Group Civic Action Program was organized. The area of responsibility for PROVMAG-39 is in Trieu Phong District bordering the Song Thach Han River. A Personal Response School was conducted on 25 June 1968 with 27 students attending. The following contributions were made through the PROVMAG-39 Chapel and Civic Action Program:

180 pencils
1 pair children's shoes
2 dolls
15 pads writing paper
1 case cherry pie filling
1 case dehydrated onions
1 case dehydrated cabbage
15 cases cornmeal
38 cases powered milk

These items were given to the Trieu Phong District Chief for further distribution to the refugees in the district.

8. Intelligence

a. General. Intelligence support of Group Operations continued to improve with an increased utilization of aerial photography and visual reconnaissance. Low level oblique aerial photography was obtained of HLZ's for a multi-battalion vertical assualt below Khe Sanh 1-10 June. Efforts to provide more detailed intelligence briefings before large operations were more successful, especially that prior to a multi-battalion lift into "Leatherneck Square" (Operation Kentucky) beginning 16 June.

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The intelligence net crystallized during this month into the channels shown in the appendix to Part III section 8 of enclosure (1).

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5750 [redacted]
Ser: 03819868
16 July 1968

b. Statistics

Fire incidents	104
Hit incidents	24
Total hits	84
Aircrew casualities	5 WIA (m) (from hostile fire)
Spot reports	3

c. Significant Intelligence Developments. Enemy action against PROVMAG-39 was reflected by the large number of ground to air incidents (see paragraph b above) and an attack on the Quang Tri Combat Base at 2250H on 21 June. 15 Rockets impacted in the 3RD MARDIV (Rear) area with 1 rocket landing on the air base's light aircraft ramp inflicting light damage. The rocket attack was accompanied by a light ground probe (small arms fire and B-40 rockets) on the NW side of the QTCB perimeter.

Enemy initiated ground action was very light with NVA/VC Main Force Units apparently moving into their base areas. Agent reports said they were preparing an Autumn-Winter Offensive to begin around 20 July, the anniversary of the partition of North and South Vietnam.

On 16 June enemy helicopters were spotted on radar, apparently resupplying artillery positions along the DMZ from Tiger Island. Helicopter sightings continued for about two weeks and were accompanied by increased incidents of artillery fire on our northern positions culminated by the complete destruction of the Dong Ha Ammo Supply Point.

9. Air Operations

a. June Totals

CARGO	PAX	MEDEVACS	MEDEVAC MISSIONS	HRS	SORTIES
3173.3 Tons	43,913	2020	554	[illegible]	22,8[illegible]

b. Quarterly Totals

6787.0 Tons	83,064	8023	2150	14,924.1	53,948

c. Totals from 28 Feb 68 to 30 June 68

7[illegible] Tons	89,757	9868	2652	18,394.9	63,408

10. Command Relationships

a. An auxiliary headquarters First Marine Aircraft Wing was established and operating at Quang Tri, RVN on 20 June 1968. BGen HOMER S. HILL, USMC, Assistant Wing Commander, First Marine Aircraft Wing is presently assigned

Enclosure (1)

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03419868
16 July 1968

to this command post.

b. The following congratulatory message was received:

The support provided Task Force Hotel by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing during the recent Robin North and South actions was magnificent. Total logistic and combat support rendered by Marine Air to two regiments in the assualt wrote a new page in the history of the Marine Air-Ground Team. Skillful and tireless helicopter support carried the seven infantry battalions of the 1st and 4th Marines in a rapid series of assualts and maneuvers through major enemy strong holds in the rugged terrain south of Khe Sanh. Through the rapidly changing and widely spread operation 18,700 troops were lifted in combat assualt and maneuvers. The seven infantry battalions, plus 9 firing batteries of artillery were resupplied continually. Altogether, 3,200 tons of food, water, ammunition, and other necessary supplies were delivered by Marine helicopters during Robin North and South. The high mobility plus the massive level of logistic support delivered directly to the engaged companies and battalions wherever they were located, gave ground commanders a new freedom of action which contributed directly to their ability to out maneuver and to out shoot the enemy at every turn, on his own ground.

Day and night air support, closely woven into the scheme of ground maneuver by 1st MAW fixed wing attack aircraft, observation pilots, and air support radar teams rounded out the Air Ground Team Package. Maneuver of ground units by foot and by helicopter, behind a screen of highly accurate, timely, and lethal air support, helped keep friendly losses to minimum levels during bold maneuvers in strongly held enemy terrain. Marine fixed wing aircraft flew over 1,300 sorties in 18 days, delivering 2,180 tons of ordnance including 235 missions and 439 tons delivered at night and during bad weather. Fixed wing air during the actions caused 69 secondary explosions, destroyed 17 mortars, 27 automatic weapons and (unknown) antiaircraft positions, 2 artillery positions, 380 enemy bunkers and 35 fighting holes and caves.

The effectiveness of the Marine Air-Ground Team Package was again manifestly clear. 696 regular troops of the North Vietnamese Army were killed in Robin North and South between 1 and 9 June in what was before an enemy stronghold. The professional excellence and can-do spirit by 1stMAW personnel were key factors in making this extremely challenging operation possible. Well done and congratulations to the personnel of 1st Marine Aircraft Wing for a superb performance. BGen HOFFMAN sends.

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3:RTR:gac
5750
Ser: 03A19868
16 July 1968

11. Ground Defense

a. The MP unit and the TAD personnel from the squadrons were merged into one security unit, providing more effective utilization of existing manpower and more complete control.

b. The watch tower was taken over from 3rd Recon and is manned on a 24 hour basis. The laying of wire and minor earthwork repairs to the perimeter were completed.

12. Base Development/Military Construction

a. The below listed items were completed or started during the month of June 1968:

(1) Completion of two (2) TAFDS berms at LZ Stad.

(2) Installation of a complete new laundry unit, this should give us somewhat better service than in the past with fewer mechanical breakdowns.

(3) The new messhall has finally been completed, construction wise, by MCB-11. We still lack many modifications and equipment changes which is being accomplished by the utilities section. The opening date is undetermined.

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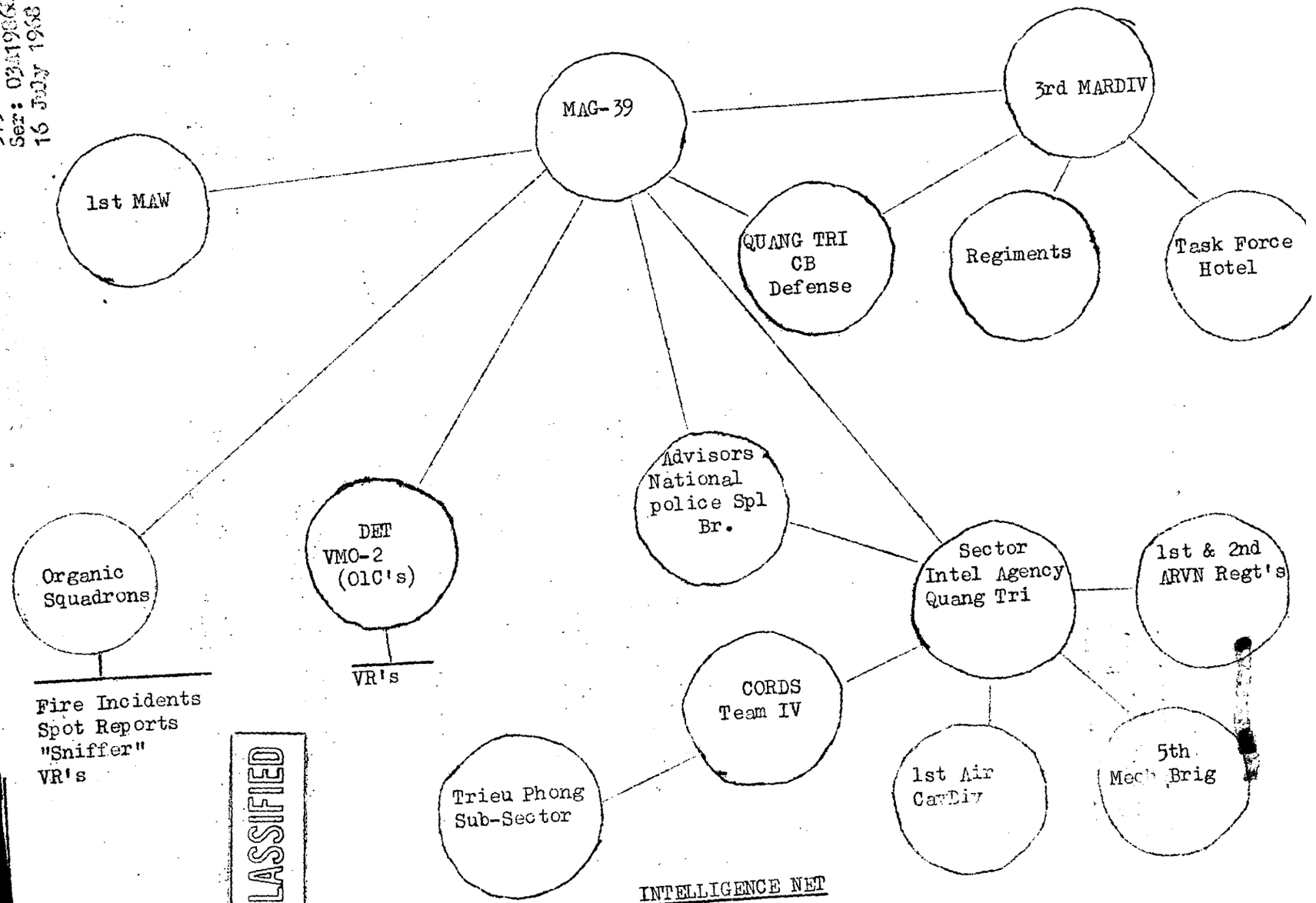
Ser: 031198
16 July 1968



INTELLIGENCE NET

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