

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 323
Marine Aircraft Group 13
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, Pacific
FPO San Francisco 96602

JAD:sjm
5750-01
26 March 1969

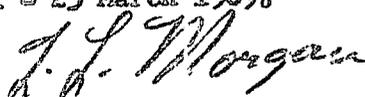
From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 13 (Attn: S-3)

Subj: Command Chronology; Submission of

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2
(b) WgO 5750.1B
(c) GruO 5750.1C

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for the period 1 - 25 March 1969

1. In accordance with references (a) through (c), enclosure (1) is hereby submitted for the period 1 - 25 March 1969.



I. L. MORGAN

V/MFA-323

CMD CARON

1-25 MAR 1969

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

Unit: Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323

Location: Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of Vietnam

Period: 1 - 25 March 1969

PART I Organizational Data

1. Commander and Staff

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BILLET</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>
Ira L. MORGAN	Commanding Officer	Lt Col	1-25 Mar 69
John K. COCHRAN	Executive Officer	Major	1-25 Mar 69
Henry C. IVY	Operations Officer	Major	1-25 Mar 69
James R. BRYAN	S-1 (Administration)	Capt	1-25 Mar 69
William C. RYAN	S-2 (Intelligence)	1/Lt	1-25 Mar 69
James E. BIRDWELL	S-4 (Logistics)	Capt	1-25 Mar 69
Donald D. BEREMAN	Maintenance Officer	Major	1-25 Mar 69
Vincent C. MARKS	Aviation Safety Officer	Capt	1-25 Mar 69

2. Task Organization and Data

Organization

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323
 Marine Aircraft Group 13
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing
 Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

Location

Chu Lai Air Base, Republic of Vietnam

Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Ira L. MORGAN

Date of Office

12 December 1968 - Present

3. Average Monthly Strength

a. Marine Officers

(1) Naval Aviators.....	17
(2) Naval Flight Officers.....	18
(3) Aviation Ground Officers.....	11

b. Naval Officers.....	1
c. Marine Enlisted.....	205
d. Naval Enlisted.....	0

4. Important Visitors to the Command. There were no visits to this Squadron by any important visitors during the period 1-25 March 1969.

PART II Narrative Summary

In March, VMFA-323 flew 319 sorties. This figure is significantly lower than the previous months figure of 586. During the month, VMFA-323 gradually decreased its number of sorties in preparation for the impending transfer to the Third Marine Aircraft Wing. Among significant developments was the changing of aircraft configuration by installing centerline tanks on the aircraft. The Squadron continued to fly combat missions with the centerline configuration, however, only low drag bombs mounted on the inboard wing TERS were employed. During the month, the Squadron either transferred or received a total of seventeen (17) aircraft in preparation for the relocation.

As the month closed, VMFA-323 aircraft were on their way Cubi Point NAS and thence aboard ship to be transferred to the Third Marine Aircraft Wing. The Squadron Flag and Bible will accompany the aircraft to their new home. This closes, at least for the present, VMFA-323's combat tour in Vietnam. The Squadron first arrived in-country on 1 December 1965 and remained in Vietnam, except for two short cut-of-country deployments, until the date of this Command Chronology.

During this period the "Death Rattlers" have served in the Republic of Vietnam in support of U.S. and other allied ground forces. Since joining Marine forces in RVN, VMFA-323 has been awarded its sixth star on the Squadron's Presidential Unit Citation Pennant. VMFA-323 was the first F4 squadron to be based at Chu Lai. The "Death Rattlers" story in Vietnam was one of unexcelled valor, dedication and professional excellence. During this tour, the Squadron flew more than 17,000 combat sorties. When the "Death Rattlers" return to combat, they will have much to live up to if they are to match the record they have set during this combat tour.

The Squadron supported the following operations during the month: Eager Pursuit, Kentucky Jumper, Russel Beach, Massachusetts Striker, Dewey Canyon, Victory Dragon IX, Tayler Common and Iron Mountain.

Some of the March mission highlights were:

On 6 March, a flight of two (2) F4's (1/Lt MURPHY(pilot)/1/Lt SPRAGUE(RIO) and Maj DENTON(pilot)/Capt BRYAN(RIO)) under the control of LOPEZ 57 attacked enemy troops and automatic weapons positions. The accurate delivery of the flights ordnance resulted in 3 structures destroyed, 3 bunkers destroyed, 2 tunnels destroyed and 1 automatic weapons position damaged.

On 7 March, LtCol MORGAN(pilot)/Capt BRYAN(RIO) and 1/Lt COLLYAR(pilot)/1/Lt SIMPSON(RIO) were directed in on a VC fortified village by HOSTAGE UNIFORM. The resulting BDA consisted of 8 structures destroyed, 2 bunkers destroyed, and 1 large secondary fire.

On 9 March, Maj COCHRAN(pilot)/Capt LONDON(RIO)/1/Lt BAIN(pilot)/1/Lt RYAN(RIO) were directed on another fortified village by LOPEZ 58. The accurate delivery of ordnance resulted in 13 structures destroyed and 7 others damaged.

On 14 March, a CAS mission resulted in 6 structures destroyed, 2 structures damaged and 1 confirmed KBA. The flight consisted of Capt NICHOLSON(pilot)/1/Lt SIMPSON(RIO) and 1/Lt WALKER(pilot)/Capt MASSEY(RIO).

On 15 March, an enemy truck and outpost area were attacked by 1/Lt MURPHY (pilot)/1/Lt SPRAGUE(RIO) and 1/Lt BAIN(pilot)/1/Lt RYAN (RIO). Pinpoint bombing resulted in 4 trucks destroyed, 8 secondary explosions, and 75 meters of trenchline being destroyed.

On 18 March, 7 structures destroyed, 6 structures damaged, 4 bunkers destroyed, 1 secondary fire and 3 secondary explosions were credited to 1/Lt MURPHY(pilot)/1/Lt SPRAGUE(RIO) and Capt DAVIS(pilot)/1/Lt RYAN(RIO) while supporting AMERCAL Division on an attack on enemy positions north of Chu Lai.

On 22 March, Capt BIRDWELL(pilot)/1/Lt HUBIS(RIO) and Maj SMITH(pilot)/Capt MASSEY (RIO) zeroed in on enemy automatic weapons sites. Working with HOSTAGE HOTEL, the flight destroyed 6 structures, 1 bunker and damaged 6 other structures.

On 24 March, Maj BERGMAN(pilot)/1/Lt WHITING(RIO) and 1/Lt CAMPBELL(pilot)/1/Lt STAPLETON(RIO) destroyed 8 structures, 4 bunkers and were credited with 1 large secondary explosion on an attack on VC positions.

During the period covered by this report, the combined Squadron Battle Damage Assessment received from controlling agencies was as follows:

Enemy Killed by Air.....	1 Confirmed
Secondary Explosions.....	16
Secondary Fires.....	27
Military Structures.....	105 Destroyed/24 Damaged
Bunkers.....	74 Destroyed/1 Damaged
Automatic Weapons Positions.....	3 Destroyed/1 Damaged
Road/Trail Cuts.....	150m Destroyed
Trench Line.....	396m Destroyed
Bridges.....	1 Destroyed
Trucks.....	4 Destroyed
Tunnels.....	11 Destroyed
50 cal Positions.....	1 Destroyed

PART III Significant Events

1. <u>Personnel:</u>	Joined	Officers	2	Enlisted	7
	Dropped	Officers	27	Enlisted	14
	Promotions	Officer	0	Enlisted	9

2. Awards: Strike/Flight Air Medals = 37
Meritorious Mast = 1

3. Air Operations:

Total Combat Sorties.....	319	# Group/Other Pilots.....	10(pilot)/3(RIO)
Total Flights.....	329	Avg Group/Other Sorties..	4(pilot)/8(RIO)
Total Combat Hours.....	367.0	Avg Group/Other Hours....	4(pilot)/9(RIO)
Total Flight Hours.....	376.0	Avg NFO Strength.....	13
Avg Pilot Strength.....	17	Avg NFO Sorties.....	25
Avg Pilot Hours.....	16	Avg NFO Hours.....	29
Avg Pilot Sorties.....	19	High Day (Sorties).....	2 Mar/24
		High Day (Hours).....	1 Mar/31.9

4. Maintenance: March Monthly Averages

Aircraft Assigned.....	16
Aircraft on Board.....	13
Aircraft Available.....	8
Avg Hours for Aircraft on Board.....	28.9

Aircraft Transferred/Received:

151015 from VMFA-115 on 5 Mar 69	150468 from VMFA-542 on 8 Mar 69
152253 from VMFA-542 on 6 Mar 69	152223 from VMFA-122 on 14 Mar 69
148377 from VMFA-122 on 8 Mar 69	152299 from VMFA-115 on 22 Mar 69
151406 to VMFA-122 on 5 Mar 69	152217 to VMFA-115 on 14 Mar 69
151012 to VMFA-115 on 5 Mar 69	152282 to VMFA-314 on 19 Mar 69
152313 to VMFA-314 on 6 Mar 69	151446 to VMFA-115 on 21 Mar 69
150427 to VMFA-314 on 7 Mar 69	152211 to VMFA-314 on 21 Mar 69
152213 to VMFA-115 on 8 Mar 69	152270 to VMFA-314 on 22 Mar 69
152237 to VMFA-314 on 10 Mar 69	

Aircraft Sustaining Battle Damage:

152983 sustained limited damage when one (1) 50 cal. round hit the aircraft CADC package. There was also some damage to the BLC ducting. No crewmember was hit. This action occurred on 11 Mar 69.

151463 received a 30 cal. round through the starboard external wing tank on 17 Mar 69. No crewmember was hit.

150448 sustained a small arms round through the right external wing dump mast on 17 Mar 69. Damage was extremely light and no crewmember was hit.

5. Ordnance: March expenditures by type and number are as follows:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>TONNAGE</u>
MK-81 250 lb LD/GP	202	29.290
MK-82 500 lb LD/GP	1871	467.124
MK-83 1000 lb LD/GP	150	75.334
MK-77 500 lb Fire Bomb	132	34.584
MK-77 (Modified)	10	2.620
CBU-24	74	29.880
2.75 Rockets (19 shot pod)	17	4.650
5" Zuni Rockets (4 shot pod)	26	8.528
Fuzes	2244	44.086
Boosters	2244	77.217
	<u>2476</u>	<u>773.241</u>

Total Stores Tonnage = 773.241

Total Bomb Tonnage = 760.063

Drop/Shot Rate = 98.6%