

MARINE AIR SUPPORT SQUADRON 2
Marine Wing Headquarters Group 1
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Aircraft, FMF, Pacific
FPO, San Francisco, 96601

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03AL2365
3 May 1965

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From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (-) (Attn: S-3)

Subj: Command Diary; submission of

Ref: (a) Brigade Order 3121.1

Encl: ✓(1) MASS-2 Command Diary for 1 April to 30 April 1965

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is hereby submitted.
2. This letter is down graded upon the removal of enclosure (1).

MASS-2

P. L. Hitchcock
P. L. HITCHCOCK

CMD DIARY

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Copy No. 1 of 1
 M.A.S.S.-2
 DaNang, Vietnam
 03A123 May 1965

Command Diary

Period Covered: 1 April to 30 April 1965

Ref: (a) Map: DaNang. Series L909, scale 1:12,500

1. Organizational Data:

- a. Reporting Unit: Marine Air Support Squadron Two
- b. Reporting Period: 010001H to 302400H April 1965
- c. Submission Date: 3 May 1965
- d. Commanding Officer: LtCol Paul L. HITCHCOCK
- e. Command Post: 108°21'E, 16°02'N
- f. Subordinate Units: Sub Unit One, MASS-2, NAS, Cubi Pt., R.P.I.
- g. Subordinate Unit Commanders: Capt Donald E. ANDERSEN

2. Narrative Summary: From 1 to 3 April this unit was performing normal garrison routine at the Naval Security Group Area, outside MCAF, Futema, Okinawa. Approximately 040030I the squadron was alerted by classified message to prepare one ASRT (Air Support Radar Team) for deployment. Subsequent communications alerted the squadron to perform an administrative move of the entire squadron from the vicinity of MCAF, Futema, Okinawa, to the 9th MEB TAOR, DaNang, Vietnam. From 5 to 9 April the squadron prepared for surface lift aboard the LST 1166, USS Washtenaw County. Staging of bulk cargo at Naha Port was started on 9 April. At 0900I on 10 April the vehicle convoy departed the NSG area and proceeded to Naha Port. Loading of all vehicles and bulk cargo was completed by approximately 1800I the same day. Squadron personnel billeted on board included 18 officers, 99 enlisted and one civilian technician. Two officers departed Okinawa by plane 12 April, proceeding directly to Vietnam to act as an advance party.

The LST slipped wharf at Naha Port about 0730I on 11 April. From 11 April to 16 April the ship was under way to South Vietnam. During this period routine personnel and rifle inspections were held, classes were conducted on first aid, guerilla tactics and current events in South Vietnam. Routine preventive maintenance was conducted on the vehicles. Contact was maintained with Sub Unit One, MAG-16 (rear), and MAG-16 (-) by periodic transmissions on the Wing Liaison Net.

LST 1166 made the boat ramp at Tourane Bay about 0730H on 17 April. Off loading was completed by 1420H. The last vehicles crossed on the ferry

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and reached the present CP just after dark. No vehicle or equipment damage was experienced during loading, underway, off loading or in transit to the present CP. Billeting aboard ship was adequate and the food was very good. Excellent relationships with the ships' company were maintained.

By 1530H on 16 April the DASC had been erected about 250 yds west of the DaNang runway. Office and maintenance tents were erected in the immediate vicinity of the DASC. Arrangements had been made with 1st LAAM Bn for billeting in tents within the LAAM compound. All personnel had billeting in tents the first night ashore. Squadron messing equipment was pooled with that of the LAAM battalion and a joint mess was established.

On Sunday morning, 18 April, a bomb accidentally exploded about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the squadron position. Several bomb fragments were picked up in the squadron antennae farm. Immediately, therefore, sincerity of purpose was noted in the construction of slit trenches and field fortifications.

By 1400H, 19 April, AN/TPQ-10 system A-9 was ready for operational flight checks. The location survey and antennae orientation had been completed and checked. The ground checks and system alignments were completed and all components were "go".

The afternoon of 20 April MASS-2 received its first official visitors: Rear Admiral MILLER and Brig General KARCH. The visitors observed a radar run in progress. Unfortunately a landing aircraft flew through the narrow beam and caused the radar to break track on the controlled aircraft. Two flights were requested and flown that day to make a radar map of the immediate area. The following day, 21 April, the shelter for system A-2 arrived from MCAS, Iwakuni, Japan.

The DASC assumed net control of the TAR and TAD nets at 0830H on 22 April. At this time these are the only functioning nets in the MEB close air support system. Twenty-four hour watches have been maintained in the DASC since net control was assumed. During the remainder of the reporting period 76 requests from MEB units have been processed; 14 medical evacuation requests are included in that total.

On 26 April liaison was completed with the brigade artillery group fire direction center for coordination and spotting of the proposed registration of the AN/TPQ-10 using hill 393, the artillery registration point, as a target. Two flights of 2 F4B's were requested and approved. Seven runs were controlled on the morning of 27 April and seven more that afternoon. Six 250 lb bombs were dropped. Two hits were not on target, but the misses were attributed to the radar's jumping track to the wingman aircraft during the turns. Four hits were on target with a mean point of impact 45 meters west and 8 meters south of the target, one hit was directly on target. These four runs were conducted with single aircraft and constant computer inputs. Therefore the survey of the antennae was considered to be accurate and system was declared ready for operational commitments.

On the morning of 27 April one officer from the ASRT accompanied a recon party on a recon of hill 700. The area was found to be inaccessible.

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Upon including the knowledge that the westward radar view would be masked through a 55 degree arc by hill 1167, it was decided that hill 700 would not be an acceptable sight for an ASRT.

At the request of the FSCC the alert flare aircraft was scrambled at 2305 on 29 April. From 0015 to 0045, 30 April, the ASRT conducted its first operational mission: controlling the flare aircraft over selected coordinates for the required illumination. A first had been established in the history of the AN/TPQ-10 system.

Since the DASC commenced operations 22 April, discussions have been held with MAG-16 (-) S-3, FSCC, I Corps ASOC and LtCol Edwards, Air Force advisor to the I Corps TOC, in an effort to establish a clear functioning program for the DASC within the current 9th MEB air support control system. A revision of the rules of engagement for in-country close air support has considerably reduced the control problems.

During the entire period Sub Unit One has been maintained at NAS, Cubi Pt., R.P.I.. This detachment has one AN/TPQ-10 system with supporting equipment, three officers and 15 enlisted. The unit has been performing garrison type maintenance and training while the targets have been closed for Naval Gun Fire practice.

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