

Marine Observation Squadron 251

30 September, 1942.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: The Commanding Officer.

To: (1) The Chief of Naval Operations. (Office of Naval Records and Library.)

(2) The Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps.

(3) The Commanding General, 2nd Marine Air Wing.

(4) The Commander, Amphibious Force, Pacific.

(5) The Commander, Carriers, Pacific.

Subject: War Diary, continuance of, and submittance of.

Reference: (a.) 2nd Marine Air Wing General order 16-42 dated 2nd June, 1942.

(b.) Pacific Fleet letter. 11L-42 dated 11 March, 1942.

(c.) Op Nav Ltr file FF1/A12-1 (7) (291) A12-1 (420222) dated Feb. 1942.

1. In accordance with references (a), (b), and (c) The War Diary of Marine Observation Squadron Two Fifty One is submitted this date.
2. Copies of this diary dating from 1 September to 30 September are herewith submitted.

JOHN N. HART,
Lt. Col., USMC.

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

1 September, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty); 267 Enlisted (two
detached). Planes assigned, 24 (1 temporary), Planes in commission
20. Three additional TBF's and five additional pilots added to
transient mess and quarters. Command paid...Large drop switchboard
in operation....Continuous land and sea patrols.

COW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

2 September, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty); 267 Enlisted (two
detached)....Orders received to ferry six F4F-4's to Guadalcanal.
Four from VMO 251; two from VMF-224....Pfc. Wills and Pfc. Vincent
on B-17 photographic mission....Continuous land and sea patrols
assisted by SBD's....Gunnery routine for pilots.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

3 September, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty, one temporarily
attached); 267 Enlisted (two detached, two temporarily attached).
Planes assigned 24 (one temp.) Planes in commission 20....Brig.
Gen. Gieger, Commanding Officer 1st. Marine Air Wing, Col. Wood,
Lt. Col. P.K. Smith, Lt. Col. Munn arrived at 0930 in VMJ-253,
RD-1. Departed for Cactus at 1300.....Lt. Kirk and Lt. Livingston
departed in F4F-4's to VMF-224 Cactus at 1200....Lt. Freeman and
Lt. Massey VMF-212 arrived at 1530 with two F4F-4's for assignment
to us for further transfer to Cactus.....Increased land and sea
patrols. Pfc. Wills and Pfc. Vincent returned from Photographic
mission.

OPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

4 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (one temp. attached); 267 Enlisted (two
detached, two temp. attached.).....Planes in commission 21.....
Belly tanks and wing tanks arrived from E'fate in B-17....Lt. Col.
Hayes and Lt. Rutledge returned from STAD at Cactus.....Lt. Kirk
and Lt. Livingston returned from ferry of F4F-4's to Cactus. Lt.
Kirk's prop hub was lost, flew 2½ hours at 2700 RPM's. Dropped from
formation and proceeded to Cactus alone. Arrived with 12 gallons
of gasoline and navigated under trying conditions....One Squadron
SNJ-3 assembled and tested by Captain Yeaman.....Lt. Schuessler,
and Lt. Kirby carried on the rolls as missing in action by
authority ComTaskForce 62.....Normal land and sea patrols.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

5 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (one temporarily attached) 267 Enlisted
(two detached).....Planes assigned 24; Planes in commission 21.....
Normal land and sea patrols.....Gunnery routine for pilots.....
Tests made with F4F-7.....Major Little in VJ, RD-1 arrived Col.
Webb, Lt. Col. Williams from Fiji, 1600.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

6 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (two detached).....
Force command post in operation at Painter's dock, Brig. Gen. Rose,
U.S.A., Commanding.....Ferry flight of Capt. Yeaman, Lt. McGlothlin,
Lt. Railsback, Lt. Yunck, TSgt. Garton took off for Cactus at 1130.
TSgt. Garton in F4F-7 forced down 50 miles at sea. Ferry flight
returned to Button. Major Campbell, Lt. Kirk took off in J2F-5....
PBY arrived at scene of forced landing. Water too rough for PBY.
Major Campbell landed J2F near crash. Lt. Kirk thrown from J2F
by propeller blast. F4F-7 #5265 plane lost. TSgt. Garton flown
back by J2F after taxiing 15 miles for suitable take-off conditions.
Major Little, Col. Webb, Lt. Col. Williams, Ens. Kahn, SSgt. Peak
departed for Guadalcanal at 1200. B-17 returning from Guadalcanal
arrived with Major Morrell wounded in fight with zeros. Turned into
sick bay until further evacuation to evacuation hospital, New
Caledonia. Captain Welch arrived from Cumberland.

CM

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

7 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (two detached)....Planes
assigned, 21 (one temp.); Planes in commission 17.....Captain
Yeaman, Lt. McGlothlin, Lt. Kobler, and Lt. Schwethelm to Guadal-
canal ferrying F4F-4's. Departed 1130, arrived Guadalcanal 1510.
Normal land and sea patrols.

OPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

8 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (two detached).....

Captain Yeaman, Lt. McGlothlin, Lt. Kobler, Lt. Schwethelm, arrived
from Guadalcanal at 1345 in RD-1, VJ-253. Major Kimball and Lt.
Williams, pilots, gassed transport and continued to Tontouta.....

Normal land and sea patrols.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

9 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (two detached)..... Lt.
Schwethelm in forced landing in SNJ-3 #7008 with Pfc. Miller on
beach at Pt. Pussey 272°, 35 miles from base. Landed on beach
damaging prop only. Major Campbell, Capt. Yeaman and Sgt. Holmes
to the scene in J2F-5. Major Campbell returned to base with Lt.
Schwethelm and Pfc. Miller in J2F. Major Campbell in J2F returned
to scene with Pfc J.V. Madden and A. Madden, propeller and tools.
Landed in heavy seas and damaged wheel mechanism. At dusk Major
Campbell and Pfc. A. Madden after considerable difficulty took
off in J2F and landed in channel tying up to Curis buoy. Captain
Yeaman and Pfc. J. Madden worked in downpour on propeller; task
incomplete at dusk. Captain Yeaman and Pfc. J. Madden stayed in
native village.....Normal land and sea patrols.

CMW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

10 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (two detached).....

Planes assigned 41; planes lost 3; planes in commission 37.....

At Point Pussey, Capt. Yeaman and Pfc. J. Madden completed installations of prop at 0700. Plane checked and OK'd . After 1½ hours of take-off attempts in soft sand, Capt. Yeaman got the plane in the air and returned at 0915 leaving Pfc. J. Madden to be picked up by seaplane.....In fighter tactics Lt. Kirk and SSgt. Anderson crashed in mid-air. Both pilots chuted to safety. Sgt. Anderson unhurt and Lt. Kirk received bad bruises about the face and legs....Received 19 F4F-4's and one F4F-7 from the Hornet. One unidentified plane observed over field on possibly reconnaissance patrol....Normal land and sea patrols.

(CW)

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

11 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (two detached)....Planes
assigned--41; Planes lost--3; planes in commission--37. Planes
are assigned as follows;

13	F4F-3's	
3	SNJ-3's	
19	F4F-4's	(from Hornet)
1	F4F-7	
2	F4F-3's	Lost.
1	F4F-7	Lost.
1	J2F-5	Not assembled.
1	JRB-2	At New Zealand.

At 0500 entire squadron on condition two air raid alert. Plane
crews and field installations on standby stations. All clear sound-
ed at 0930. Col. Parmelee, (W-1), Col Schilt, (W-4); 1st. Wing
Major Cram, and Major Renner arrived from the U.S.....Col. Hart,
Adm. McKain, Adm. Turner to Cactus.....Air raid alert sounded at 1500.
Secure at 1700.....Lt. Collins and Lt. Weiland received notification
of promotions to Captain.....Increased land and sea patrols.

OW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing, F.M.F.

12 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (two detached).....
Planes assigned---24; planes lost---4; planes in commission---18.
Alert at 0500. Continuous for entire day.....R4D-1 Major
Johnson pilot, arrived from Tontouta. Stayed overnight due to
hostile conditions at Guadalcanal.....Ten SBD's from Hornet
and six TBF's from Wasp arrived with 19 pilots to fly F4F-4's
aboard Wasp and Hornet for further transfer to Guadalcanal.

VMO pilots assigned to:

Hornet
Captain Longley
Lt. Spurlock
Lt. Baesler
Lt. Whitten
Lt. Schwethelm
Lt. Wojcik
Lt. Yunch
Lt. McGlothlin
Lt. Railsback
Sgt. Garton

Wasp
Captain Welland
Lt. Peters
Lt. Livingston
Lt. Rutledge

Also five VMF-212 Pilots.

CPW

The above named pilots were taken to the respective carriers
in TBF's and SBD's to fly F4F-4's to Guadalcanal from carriers.
One SBD with Lt. Railsback in rear seat bound for Hornet crashed
on take-off into the sea. Lt. Railsback suffered broken arm and
head lacerations. The pilot, serious head lacerations and possible
skull fracture. One F4F-4 retained due to bent stabilizer and tab.
Transferred 18 F4F-4's to Guadalcanal....Modified black-out at nite.

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing, F.M.F.

13 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted.....Planes assigned--24;
planes lost--4; Planes in commission--19.....Nine pilots arrived
from 212 for patrol and alert duty. Lt. Col. Bowers arrived from
E'fate.....Alert condition two all day. Intensified patrols. Con-
struction of camp facilities halted pending moving status.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing, F.M.F.

14 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (three STAD).....
Planes assigned--24; planes lost--4; planes in commission--19.
At 1200 pilots returned from Cactus in R4D-1's. All pilots
returned with exception of Lt. Rutledge, who crashed on take-
off at Cactus during air raid operations. Injuries; fractured
jaw and head lacerations. Plane F4F-4 totally demolished.....
Enemy task force reported headed for this vicinity. Patrol of
B-17's on reconnaissance mission to bomb force. Two B-17's lost
at sea.....Strict alert all day.....Total blackout at nite. Lt.
Rutledge sent to Roses.

CMW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

15 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (3 STAD).....Planes
assigned, 24; planes lost 4; planes in commission, 19.

Condition one at reveille (0400) strict alert and condition
of preparedness until 0930.....Lt. Kirk returned from hospital
aboard U.S.S. Curtis. Orders received to transfer mechanics
to Cactus.

OPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

16 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 267 Enlisted (6 STAD) R4D-1. Major
Little piloting arrived at 1430 with injured from Cactus for
Roses.....Parts of two squadrons arrived from the carrier Wasp.
Trips made to new location at fighter strip for camp site
location.....Condition two alert at 0400. Secure at 0900.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

17 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 256 Enlisted (7 STAD). Eleven of
squadron personell transferred to Marine Aircraft group 23.
Awaiting available aircraft transportation.....P-39 from Roses
crashed and burned on landing. Slight injuries to pilot.....
Normal patrol routine.....MTSgt. Garton on STAD to Fiji to
ferry F4F-7.

CJW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

18 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers; 256 Enlisted (7 STAD)....Carpenters
and equipment loaded for take off to new fighter strip. Radar
equipment moved to fighter location. MTSgt. Bailey and Sgt.
Nichols returned from Cumberland.....Normal patrol.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

19 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalescent) 256 Enlisted (STAD).
Planes assigned 24; planes in commission 18; planes lost, 4;
planes damaged, 1.....Radar moved.....Carpenter in operation at
camp location.....Col. Moss arrived from Cactus.....Lt. Kobler
crashed SNJ-3 into roller on take-off. No injury to passenger
or pilot. Six of personell transferred to Cactus in B-17. Lt.
Kirk, Lt. Railsback and Lt. Whitten to Roses in R4D-1 for hos-
pitalization.....MTSgt. Garton left for Fiji.....Normal land
and sea patrol assisted by 212.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

20 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalesing) 256 Enlisted (8 STAD).
Lumber being hauled to new camp. Carpenters building decks and
structures. Promoted five Master Technical Sergeants, and
four Tech Sgts. as of 10 Sept., 1942. Normal land and sea patrols,
assisted by 212.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

21 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalescing); 256 Enlisted (8 STAD)
Planes assigned 23; planes lost, 4; planes damaged 1, planes
in commission 17.....Radar personnel (only) returned from
Cumberland. F4F-7 ferried to Cactus by Lt. Baesler. Normal
land and sea patrol. Capt. Adams and MG Gilmore on TAD to
Guadalcanal.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

22 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (2 STAD, 4 convalescing), 256 Enlisted
(8 STAD).....Lt. Baesler returned from ferry flight of F4F-7 to
Guadalcanal. All lumber moved to fighter strip. Normal patrol.

APW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

23 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (2 STAD, 4 convalesing); 256
Enlisted (8 STAD).....Captain Longley on TAD to Guadalcanal as
pilot of F4F-7.....Normal patrols.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

24 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalescing, 3 STAD) 256 Enlisted
(8 STAD).....Moving operations to fighter strip.....Dr. Kalez
and Captain Welch to sick hospital.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

25 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalescing, 3 STAD) 256 Enlisted
(8 STAD).....Planes assigned 23; planes lost 4; planes damaged
1; planes in commission 17.....Moving operations.....Normal
patrols.

QJW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

26 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalescing, 3 STAD); 256
Enlisted (8 STAD). Dr. Kalez from E. K. Hospital to sick
quarters.....Moving operations.....Normal patrols.

QW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

27 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalesing, 3 STAD); 256
Enlisted (8 STAD).....Moving operations. Pvt. Batistich sent-
enced by Deck Court Martial to 20 days bread and water, \$15.00
per month for two months.

W

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

28 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalesing, 3 TAD) 256 Enlisted
(8 STAD).....Moving operations.....Normal patrols.....SNJ-3
side panel torn from fusilage. Pilot, Lt. McGlothlin, passenger
Pvt. James. No injury to personnel.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operation under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

29 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalescing, 3 TAD) 256 Enlisted
(8 STAD).....Planes assigned 23; planes lost 4; planes damaged
1; planes in commission 17.....Moving operations. Normal
patrols. Pvt. Batistich confined on bread and water for 20
days. Promoted 33 Pfc's, 21 Corporals and 1 Sgt, 1 Stf Sgt.
as of 14 and 15 September, 1942. Planes moved to fighter strip.

CMW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

30 September, 1942.

Strength 30 Officers (4 convalescing, 3 TAD) 256 Enlisted
(8 STAD).....Moving operations. MG Gilmore returned from Cactus
on two day stay from TAD.

CGW