



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 251

MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 31

2D MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, FMF, ATLANTIC

MCAS, BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29904-6127

5750  
S-3  
8 Jan 88

From: Commanding Officer, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251, Marine Aircraft Group 31, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort, South Carolina 29904

To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code HDH-4), Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, D.C. 20380

Via: (1) Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 31 (S-3), 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort, South Carolina 29904  
 (2) Commanding General, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina 28533  
 (3) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia 23511

Subj: VMFA-251 COMMAND CHRONOLOGY FOR 1 JULY 1987 TO 31 DECEMBER 1987

Ref: (a) MCO P5750.1F  
 (b) WgO 5750.1E  
 (c) GruO 5750.1E

1. In accordance with references (a) through (c), the Command Chronology is submitted.

SECTION 1

Unit Designation

- a. Reporting Unit Code: 01251
- b. Table of Organization: 8851

Period Covered and Location

1 July 1987 - 31 December 1987 at MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina 29904

Personnel Information

- a. Commanding Officer
  - LtCol Thomas L. WILKERSON  
1 July 1987 - 3 July 1987
  - LtCol Robert A. MADDOCKS, Jr.  
3 July 1987 - 31 December 1987
- b. Executive Officer
  - Maj Barney J. FISHER  
1 July 1987 - 31 December 1987

ENCLOSURE (4)

VMFA-251

Rec-Dec 87



Subj: VMFA-251 COMMAND CHRONOLOGY FOR 1 JULY 1987 TO 31 DECEMBER 1987

## SECTION 2

### Command, Operations, Training

In July 1987, VMFA-251 completed two pilots through HARM/EW training in St. Louis, Missouri. From 26-29 July, the squadron participated in Operation Solar Flare. Additionally, three pilots were worked up for ACT(I) certification.

In August 1987, VMFA-251 completed three pilots through ACT(I) certification and two pilots through HARM/EW training. On 10 and 11 August, seven pilots participated in AAMEX 4-87, firing 6 AIM-7 and 1 AIM-9 missiles, which took place off the Virginia Capes Area. The squadron deployed to NAS Oceana, Virginia for the Fleet Fighter ACM Readiness Program (FFARP) on 12 August. This major squadron deployment saw VMFA-251 honing its skills in all aspects of Air Combat Maneuvering in complex wartime scenarios.

On 4 September 1987, VMFA-251 returned to MCAS Beaufort from NAS Oceana having completed sixteen aircrew through the FFARP syllabus. The Thunderbolts flew three aircraft to NAS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico to participate in AAMEX 5-87, firing 3 AIM-9 missiles and dropped 3 LGBs, from 18-20 September. On 25 September VMFA-251 deployed to Nellis AFB, Nevada for Overland Air Combat Maneuvering (OACM). During September the squadron completed two pilots through HARM/EW training and sent two pilots to MCAS Yuma, Arizona for Weapons and Tactics (WTI) Course 1-88.

In October 1987, VMFA-251 completed the OACM deployment and returned to MCAS Beaufort on 11 October. Concurrently, two pilots and three aircraft continued training at WTI. From 26-30 October, eighty-nine squadron personnel completed annual rifle requalification at the MCRD Parris Island Rifle Range.

In November 1987, two pilots graduated from WTI and were certified as Weapons and Tactics Instructors. From 16-20 November, VMFA-251 participated in MAGEX 1-88, flying numerous missions in a simulated wartime environment.

In December 1987, VMFA-251 concentrated on the completion of ground training by sending a large rifle range detail to the MCRD Parris Island Range and by running a all hands squadron PFT. Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defense training was conducted for all hands and we were informed by 2d MAW that our NBC MCCRES performance in January 1987 was the best of all units inspected in 2d MAW during 1987. From 7-11 December 1987, the Thunderbolts participated in WingEx 1-88, flying offensive air support and air-to-air combat missions in the Cherry Point, North Carolina area. The Thunderbolts completed 1987 with 5,428.9 flight hours and 4,006 sorties.

### Personnel and Administration

The squadron has reached its goal of 17 pilots and is to be fully personnel stabilized for the upcoming WESTPAC deployment by January 1988.

### Legal Action

The Commanding Officer, VMFA-251 is the Special Courts Martial Convening Authority for the squadron. As such, he directed the following Legal proceedings during the period 1 July 1987 - 31 December 1987:

Subj: VMFA-251 COMMAND CHRONOLOGY FOR 1 JULY 1987 TO 31 DECEMBER 1987

Special Courts Martials: 0  
Summary Courts Martial: 0  
Non-Judicial Punishments: 0  
JAG Manual Investigations: 2

#### Medical

VMFA-251's Flight Surgeon completed all Flight Physiology training for squadorn aircrew and was present during every major squadron deployment.

#### Logistics/Supply

VMFA-251 is currently assigned fifteen aircraft. The squadron is fully combat ready and is assigned to the Maritime Prepositioned Ships (MPS) Program.

#### Civic Action

Throughout the last six months, the squadron conducted numerous tours of the squadron area and static displays of squadron aircraft. These tours were given to local business and school groups; visiting educators from various Marine Corps Districts, ROTC units as well as active duty Marines.

#### SECTION 3

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| July 1987            | VMFA-251 flew 416 sorties/567.5 flight hours   |
| 17 July 1987         | One pilot completed HARM/EW School             |
| 26-29 July 1987      | VMFA-251 participated in Operation Solar Flare |
| 27-31 July 1987      | Three pilots undergoing ACT(I) Certification   |
| August 1987          | VMFA-251 flew 509 sorties/617.8 flight hours   |
| 3-4 August 1987      | Two pilots completed HARM/EW School            |
| 3-7 August 1987      | Three pilots completed ACT(I) Certification    |
| 10-11 August 1987    | Seven pilots participated in AAMEX 4-87        |
| 12-31 August 1987    | VMFA-251 deployed to NAS Oceana, VA. for FFARP |
| September 1987       | VMFA-251 flew 298 sorties/422.8 flight hours   |
| 1-4 September 1987   | VMFA-251 deployed to NAS Oceana, VA. for FFARP |
| 8-9 September 1987   | Two pilots completed HARM/EW School            |
| 18-20 September 1987 | Three pilots participated in AAMEX 5-87        |
| 21-30 September 1987 | Two pilots at MCAS Yuma, AZ. for WTI 1-88      |
| 25-30 September 1987 | VMFA-251 deploys to Nellis AFB. NV. for OACM   |

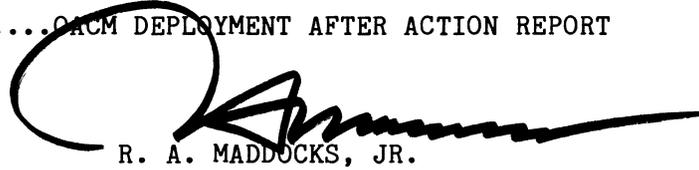
Subj: VMFA-251 COMMAND CHRONOLOGY FOR 1 JULY 1987 TO 31 DECEMBER 1987

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| October 1987        | VMFA-251 flew 338 sorties/399.7 flight hours             |
| 1-31 October 1987   | Two pilots/three aircraft at MCAS Yuma, AZ. for WTI 1-88 |
| 1-10 October 1987   | VMFA-251 at Nellis AFB, NV. for OACM                     |
| 11 October 1987     | VMFA-251 returns to MCAS Beaufort                        |
| 26-30 October 1987  | Eighty-nine (89) squadron personnel to Rifle Range       |
| November 1987       | VMFA-251 flew 218 sorties/274.8 flight hours             |
| 1-5 November 1987   | Two pilots completed WTI 1-88                            |
| 16-20 November 1987 | VMFA-251 participated in MAGEX 1-88                      |
| December 1987       | VMFA-251 flew 281 sorties/399.6 flight hours             |
| 1-4 December 1987   | Rifle Range  |
| 4 December 1987     | Squadron PFT/NBC Chamber Exercise                        |
| 7-11 December 1987  | VMFA-251 participated in WINGEX                          |

SECTION 4

Item 1.....FFARP DEPLOYMENT AFTER ACTION REPORT

Item 2.....OACM DEPLOYMENT AFTER ACTION REPORT



R. A. MADDUCKS, JR.



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON 251

MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 31

2D MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, FMF, ATLANTIC

MCAS, BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29904-6127

3000

S-3

16 September 1987

From: Commanding Officer, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251  
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 31  
Subj: FFARP DEPLOYMENT 12 AUGUST - 4 SEPTEMBER 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Ref: (a) MAG-31 TEEP  
(b) VMFA-251 FFARP LOI dtd 15 July 1987

1. In accordance with the references, this report is submitted.

PART I - COMMANDERS COMMENTS

1. The deployment was clearly a success from both an operational and a maintenance perspective. Sixteen pilots completed the 11 mission FFARP "A" Syllabus with exceptionally high mission success rates and kill ratios. VMFA-251's pre-merge success rate with the AIM-7 was the highest seen by VF-43. Of further note, the Thunderbolts flew an average of twenty sorties daily in addition to the normal FFARP missions.

2. As VMFA-251's first major deployment in two years, the FFARP also provided us an opportunity to develop unit esprit and cohesiveness on the road.

3. The Fleet Fighter ACM Readiness Program is "must" training for all MAG-31 squadrons.

PART II - STATISTICAL DATA

1. Detachment General Information:

- a. Deployment Site: NAS Oceana, Virginia
- b. Dates: 12 August - 4 September 1987
- c. Number of Aircraft: Twelve F/A-18A
- d. Number of Personnel: 24 Officers/37 SNCOs/107 Enlisted
- e. Training Objectives: To complete sixteen pilots through the 11 hop, "A" syllabus Fleet Fighter ACM Readiness Program conducted by VF-43.

2. Flight Hours:

- a. Total: 578.4

Subj: FFARP DEPLOYMENT 12 AUGUST - 4 SEPTEMBER 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

- b. Day: 577.9
- c. Nite: 0.5
- d. Actual Inst: 97.3
- e. Ferry: 28.0

3. Sorties:

- a. Air-To-Air: 461
- b. Admin: 28
- c. CNX: 60 (WX - 34, Ops\* - 18, Maint - 8)

\* Primarily due to Bogey non-availability

PART III -PROBLEM AREAS/LESSONS LEARNED

1. Administration:

(a) Item: Pre-Deployment Meetings

Discussion: Conducted well in advance of the deployment dates, these meetings were a key element in the successful preparation of the Administrative requirements for the deployment. As a result, squadron and MAG-31 administrative personnel had adequate time to react to changes.

Recommendation: For future deployments continue pre-deployment meetings with a schedule similar to that of FFARP.

(b) Item: Pre-Cut Checks

Discussion: Pre-cut pay checks for those not on direct deposit are essential on a deployment covering a payday. At FFARP the host squadron agreed to secure the checks in one of their safes but subsequently the checks (6) were lost and presumed destroyed. A JAG investigation was conducted. The squadron had to replace three lost/unserviceable ID cards at Oceana. These ID cards had to be replaced by MACS-24 at Camp Pendleton. The Squadron Admin Department did not take ID cards because there was no place to secure them.

Recommendation: S-4 should procure a single-drawer combination safe from Marine Corps Property for use by the Squadron Administrative Department on deployments. Since the safe would contain no classified material (only ID cards and pay checks), it would not have to be bolted down and could be checked for security by the SDO during non-working hours.

(c) Item: Meal Card vs. TAD Rats

Subj: FFARP DEPLOYMENT 12 AUGUST - 4 SEPTEMBER 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Discussion: All squadron enlisted personnel TAD to FFARP were given TAD Rats and Per Diem at the "Messing Available" rate although the messing facilities at NAS Oceana were not used (due to the high surcharge involved and the requirement to provide messmen). Out of pocket expenses for food were incurred by the enlisted personnel due to the minimum amount of Per Diem and the fact the TAD Rats are not paid in advance, but credited upon return. This situation creates financial hardship on the troops and may result in missed or insufficient meals because of the high surcharge or subsisting at commercial establishments.

Recommendation: Department Heads should provide input to the Commanding Officer as to how the transportation, work schedule and Per Diem/TAD Rats affect the subsistence schedule of squadron personnel. Consideration should be given to use of TAD Rats/Per Diem for short deployments (2 weeks or less), meal card issue for long deployments, or individual preference if mission requirements allow.

2. Intelligence: None

3. Operations:

(a) Item: Hot Refueling Pits

Discussion: NAS Oceana normally operates one or two hot refueling pits even when the back-up exceeds ten aircraft. When extra pits were requested to support the peak times during the day, Station Operations refused to open any extra pits. In addition to the lack of hot refueling lanes, the pressure was so low that the average fuel flow to an aircraft was 500 lbs/min.

Recommendation: That future units deploying to NAS Oceana realize the hot refueling pit problems and schedule the delay times accordingly.

(b) Item: ODO Communications to Maintenance and Aircraft

Discussion: Although VF-43 shared their base radio and one telephone, this proved inadequate. The ODO was unable to communicate with maintenance and aircraft at all times.

Recommendation: There is a need for a Det Base Radio capability with a remote intercom feature (or a hand-held walkie-talkie on Maint Net) for det locations where Base Radio and Maintenance direct intercom is not available.

(c) Item: GCI Support

Discussion: The mix of 4 GCI Controllers (one dedicated to each Division) was optimum to support sixteen pilots through the FFARP syllabus. This allowed sections to work with the same controller every hop prior to working at the division level the last week. The only drawback was that the GCI gear used was outdated and not the same gear that would be used by MACS controllers.

Subj: FFARP DEPLOYMENT 12 AUGUST - 4 SEPTEMBER 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Recommendation: That future Marine Corps F/A-18 squadrons participating in FFARP coordinate with MACS-26 so controllers can use the same GCI equipment they normally use.

4. Logistics:

(a) Item: Single Ops C-141 Support

Discussion: Main body movement was scheduled for 5 September 1987 (Saturday PM) supported by two C-141's. Five days prior to movement the squadron was informed that only one C-141 would be available on 5 September, making an AM/PM run. This change in the C-141 plan forced Maintenance to shut-down flying on Friday (cancelling 24 sorties) in order to pack-up for the Saturday morning C-141 lift.

Recommendation: That future deployments realize MAC will send only one C-141 to cover a request for two C-141 lifts, if the distance between the Deployment Site and Home Base will allow one C-141 to do both lifts within one eight hour period.

(b) Item: Quarters

Discussion: Because of base loading and a major fleet exercise, NAS Oceana was packed and quarters were not available on base. In order to participate in FFARP we chose to stay in less than optimum quarters at Camp Pendleton vice having the det cancelled.

Recommendation: That 2d MAW, through the TEEP, prioritize and ensure confirmation of quarters for MAG-31 FFARPs.

5. Maintenance:

(a) Item: FOD

Discussion: The runways, taxiways, and fuel pits at NAS Oceana are under construction in some areas, and in a serious state of disrepair in others. This resulted in one confirmed FOD'ed engine from runway asphalt.

Recommendation: All future MAG-31 deployments should be acutely aware of less than desirable FOD working conditions.

(b) Item: Hangar Spaces/Aircraft Spots

Discussion: Prior to our departure from Beaufort we knew working spaces and hangar deck aircraft spots would be far less than desirable due to base loading. This was in fact the case. We put 3 divisions in one small office with Maintenance Control, Admin, and QA next door. It was tight but workable. Additionally, we were unable to get hangar space for two Phase Inspections and two engine changes.

Subj: FFARP DEPLOYMENT 12 AUGUST - 4 SEPTEMBER, 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Recommendation: That VF-43 coordinate with the Hangar-200 Coordinator to ensure at least one aircraft spot in the hangar.

(b) Item: Supply Pack-Up

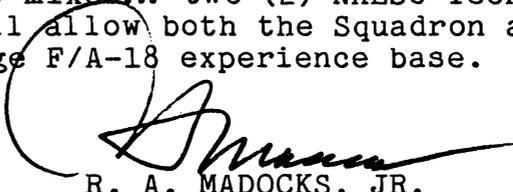
Discussion: Pre-deployment planning with MAG-31 aviation supply proved invaluable. Supply response was timely throughout the deployment. The extremely high sortie rates achieved every day could not have been done without them. When we needed parts not available in the pack-up an F/A-18 parts run to Beaufort was made with total supply support during the effort. Overall, a superb job.

Recommendation: None, information only.

(c) Item: Technical Representative Support

Discussion: MACAIR Tech Rep support was superb. These gentlemen were there every day, all day, right alongside our troops. They were eager and willing to get in and help whenever and wherever they could.

Recommendation: In the future as the NAESU Tech Reps begin taking the deployment load from the MACAIR reps, we strongly recommend that these teams be mixed.. two (2) NAESU Tech Reps and two (2) MACAIR Reps. This will allow both the Squadron and the NAESU folks the benefit of this large F/A-18 experience base.

  
R. A. MADOCKS, JR.

Copy to:  
CO, VF-43  
CO, MAG-31, S-3  
CO, MAG-31, S-4  
CO, VMFA-451  
CO, MACS-5  
CO, MACS-6  
OIC, NAESU Tech Reps  
Ed Reynolds, MACAIR Beaufort



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2D MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, FMF, ATLANTIC

MCAS, BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29904-6127

3000

S-3

16 October 1987

From: Commanding Officer, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251  
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 31

Subj: OACM DEPLOYMENT 25 SEPTEMBER - 11 OCTOBER 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Ref: (a) MAG-31 TEEP  
(b) VMFA-251 OACM LOI dtd 14 September 1987

1. In accordance with the references, this report is submitted.

PART I - COMMANDERS COMMENTS

1. The deployment was a complete success. We completed thirteen pilots through the 4477th TES OACM Syllabus, supported the Air Force's F-16 Fighter Weapons School (2v2, 4v4), and flew 400 Series DACT (2v2, 4v4, 6v6 and 8v8) with the F-15/16 Test and Evaluation Squadron (422nd TES).

2. All MAG-31 Squadrons should participate in OACM and DACT at Nellis AFB as often as available. The quality adversaries, excellent ranges, and great weather continue to produce the most outstanding training opportunities for any squadron.

PART II - STATISTICAL DATA

1. Detachment General Information:

- a. Deployment Site: Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, Nevada
- b. Dates: 25 September - 11 October 1987
- c. Number of Aircraft: Nine F/A-18A
- d. Number of Personnel: 17 Officers/24 SNCOs/54 Enlisted
- e. Training Objectives:

(1) To complete thirteen pilots (seven initial) through the OACM Syllabus (32 sorties w/4477th TES).

(2) Continue with follow-on 400 Series DACT Training 2v2, 4v4, 6v6 and 8v8 (120 sorties with the 422nd TES, F-16 FWS and 474th TFW).

2. Flight Hours:

- a. Total: 305.8

Subj: OACM DEPLOYMENT 25 SEPTEMBER - 11 OCTOBER 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

- b. Day: 301.2
  - c. Nite: 4.6
  - d. Actual Inst: 3.0
  - e. Ferry: 128.4
3. Sorties:
- a. Air-To-Air: 155 (45 OACM / 110 DACT)
  - b. Other: 78
  - c. CNX: 2 (Maint)

PART III - PROBLEM AREAS/LESSONS LEARNED

- 1. Administration: None
- 2. Intelligence: None
- 3. Operations:
  - (a) Item: Scheduling Prior to Det

Discussion: Although the OACM schedule is hard to obtain early, other units at Nellis schedule 30+ days in advance. Scheduling directly with a local Nellis unit does not mean the squadron will fly exclusively with that unit. The overall Wing Commander for the respective unit makes that call.

Recommendation: That future units deploying to Nellis schedule early and ensure they work through the 57th FWW Schedules Office first.

- 4. Logistics:
  - Item: Billeting Requirements

Discussion: MAG-31 Fiscal and Nellis Billeting were unsure of per diem requirements and billeting location, resulting in an under funding of Enlisted personnel and requiring the S-1 to extensively modify orders two days prior to embarkation.

Recommendation: Squadron ensure that billeting location is identified early. MAG-31 Fiscal and the Billeting Chief at the deployment site identify per diem requirements and billeting location prior to embarkation.

- 5. Maintenance:
  - (a) Item: FOD

Subj: OACM DEPLOYMENT 25 SEPTEMBER - 11 OCTOBER 1987 AFTER ACTION REPORT

Discussion: The Nellis flight line is not FOD free. Two FOD walks a day were required to keep the line completely FOD free. Mid-morning and afternoon winds tend to blow rocks, pebbles, safety wire, etc., down the line. Only constant FOD awareness by all hands prevented FOD incidents.

Recommendation: None, information only.

(b) Item: Maintenance Spaces/Line Proximity

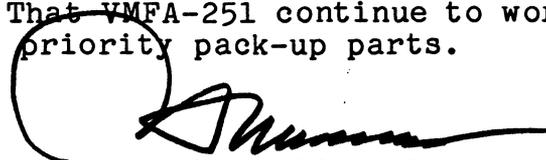
Discussion: The distance between Maintenance Control, the Ready Room, and the flight line necessitated extra vehicles for the troops and pilots. Initially, we thought this would be unworkable, however, in good Marine Corps fashion, we walked early and the troops turned-up the momentum and the jets were ready to fly on time for each sortie. After three Nellis deployments in the last year, we have learned that transportation problems at Nellis are the norm, not the exception.

Recommendation: Information only. Be prepared for transportation problems at Nellis AFB.

(b) Item: Supply Pack-Up

Discussion: GySgt R. Rivas and his MAG-31 Supply Marines did a superb job. They made every effort to identify, locate, and requisition every AKO part during the detachment. There were however, numerous items requested by us on the supply pack-up which were not included. This situation was solved by cannibalization of 251 aircraft in MCAS Beaufort. Timely repair of squadron jets was not always the case and we were forced to cannibalize from jets at Nellis.

Recommendation: That VMFA-251 continue to work closely with MAG-31 Supply to identify priority pack-up parts.

  
R. A. MADDOCKS, JR.

Copy to:  
CO, MAG-31, S-3  
CO, MAG-31, S-4