



Robert C. Johnson, Colonel, USMC (Ret.)
 "Bob"

Date of Designation: 17 August 1956 NA# V-10062

Dates of Active Duty: 15 April 1955 - 30 June 1983

Total Flight Hours: 5,100

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 39

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 4,600 Prop: 500 VF/VA: 4,200

VT: 300 Other: 600

Combat Tours:

Vietnam: VFMA-323, Nov. 1965-Dec. 1966, DaNang/
 Chu Lai (F4B)

Vietnam: VMFA-314, Jul. 1969-Jun. 1970, Chu Lai/
 DaNang (F4B)

Total Combat Missions: 500 (F4B)

Aviation Commands:

CO, VMFA -122, April 1972 - December 1973

CO, MAG-15, July 1978 - June 1979

CO, MAG-41, July 1980 - June 1983

Combat Awards:

2 Distinguished Flying Crosses

2 Single Mission Air Medals

32 Strike/Flight Air Medals

Bronze Star w/Combat "V"

Duty Assignment Chronology

4/55-8/56 Naval Air Training Command,
 Pensacola (Preflight), Whiting, Saufley, Barin,
 (Primary SNJ), Kingsville (Advanced) (T-28,
 TV-2, F9F2/5), NAVCAD.

9/56-9/59 VMF-314/VMF(AW)-314, MCAS El Toro,
 NAS Atsugi, Ping Tung North AB, Taiwan
 (F9F-5, F4D).



- 10/59-9/60 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marines, 2nd Mar Div,
 Forward Air Controller (JRB).
- 9/60-3/62 VMF-235 Instructor Pilot, F8U Transition, LSO
- 3/62-4/63 VMF(AW)-122, Assistant Operations, LSO, (all
 series F-8 thru 2NE).
- 5/63-12/64 Royal Air Force Exchange duty, No. 23 Squ-
 adron, Leuchars Fife, Scotland, (Javelin,
 Hunter, Meteor).
- 1/65-6/65 MAG-24, 2d MAW, Cherry Point, NC,
 Assistant Operations.
- 6/65-12/66 VMFA 323, Cherry Point, NC, Iwakuni JN,
 DaNang, RVN, Tainan, Taiwan Assistant
 Operations (F4B).
- 1/67-6/69 Aviation Plans and Programs, D/CS Air,
 HQMC Aircraft Allowance/Programs Officer
 (T-39, T-28, TV2).
- 7/69-2/70 VMFA-314, Chu Lai RVN, Asst. Ops. (F4B).
- 2/69-6/70 G-3, 1st MAW, Assistant Operations (F4B).
- 7/70-1/72 Bootstrap Program, Degree Completion,
 University of Maryland, College Park MD
 (TV2).
- 2/72-8/73 Commanding Officer, VMFA-122, MAG-24,
 Iwakuni JN, MCAS Kaneohe, HI (F4B).
- 8/73-6/74 Operations Officer, MAG-24 (F4B).
- 7/74-6/75 J-3 (Exercise Division), CINC PAC, Camp
 Smith Hawaii, Exercise Planner/Special
 Projects (T-28).
- 7/75-7/76 Student, Naval War College, Newport, RI.
- 8/76- 6/78 Member, HQMC Advanced Amphibious Study
 Group, MCB, Quantico VA (T-28).
- 7/78-6/79 Commanding Officer, MAG-15, 1st. MAW,
 Iwakuni, JN (F4B, F4J).
- 7/79-6/80 Assistant Director, USMC Command and Staff
 College, MCB, Quantico, VA
- 6/80-6-83 Commanding Officer, MAG-41, NAS Dallas,
 TX (F4N, F4J).
- 6/30/83 Retired from active duty.

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Summary of Significant Career Events

- (1) It has been my pleasure to have served my country for over 28 years with some of the finest men and women this nation has to offer. When I retired, my wife said it was time for me to get a job. I had been having too good a time in the Marine Corps. I never argue with my wife.
- (2) My indoctrination to the Marine Corps began with VMF-314. Squadron size “wake up” calls from Mojave to El Toro, or reverse, at 6:00 am. Great deployment to the Far East and redeployment to Taiwan and tent city. Proof that the hardest times are the best times. I was placed in charge of the MAG logistics retrograde to Atsugi. Loaded out 11 NAVY ships with all MAG equipment.
- (3) At Beaufort flying the F8, I learned to become an LSO. Worked USS *Intrepid*, USS *Roosevelt*, USS *Shangri-La*. Great flying, great airplane. Participated in Cuban Missile crisis flying photo cover.
- (4) The tour with the Royal Air Force was a truly memorable experience. Their hospitality and airmanship were second to none. Numerous deployments to Cyprus, Libya, Malta, Italy, France, Germany, and Norway. With exchange partner, initiated the first of a now annual 4th of July party for our hosts. We were complete in colonial costumes and we fed them ham burgers, hot dogs, baked beans and potato salad. A great and memorable time was had by all. They hanged us afterward.
- (5) What can best be described as organized chaos, early DaNang was indeed a challenge. We lost our first aircraft over Hanoi in Dec. 1965. Our high sortie rate bothered the Air Force. Later in our tour, I took a detachment of 4 aircraft to Chu Lai to do some operational trials off the aluminum runway. We briefed and armed up for a mission and proceeded to the catapult. First up, after some delay, I gave the salute and away we went. At lift off, the starboard engine blew. Noticing all the troops and trucks at a check point directly ahead and an ammo dump just beyond, I elected not to throw my 12-500lb. bombs and 600 gallons of fuel just yet as the airplane was still flying. I saw an open area slightly to the right which appeared to offer a solution when the stick gave a kick and froze in my hand. My RIO immediately responded to my command to eject, and hearing his departure, followed suit. Fortunately, I was over a depression and going horizontal to the ground when the chute opened and dropped me in a concertina fence. My Rio and I were then picked up by the CG in his helicopter. Good timing.
- (6) I am one of maybe a few people who actually enjoyed their tour in Washington. I worked very closely with MajGen Keith McCutcheon in the reorganization of the Marine Corps Helicopter Force Structure. Such reconstruction resulted in the addition of new AH-1J and UH-1N aircraft to the force structure. Pending delivery of these aircraft, I negotiated a loan of 49 AH-1G from the Army for immediate employment by the Marine Corps.
- (7) I became the principal action officer for the evacuations of Cambodia and Vietnam at CINCPAC, reporting directly to the J-3 and the CINC.
- (8) As a member of the Advanced Amphibious Study, conducted several studies involving new concepts of employment including the use of Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) as a means of complementing our helo assault and expanding the littoral of the world for assault from the sea. Now in use.
- (9) As CO of MAG-15, I had a detachment of VMCJ aboard USS *Midway* in the Sea of Japan. I requested permission to visit them aboard ship. The ship agreed and offered to send the COD. I allowed as how I had my own aircraft, (F-4) and would like to fly aboard. They were pleased and allowed as how it had never been done before by an O-6. They gave me 2 T&G, and 2 traps, 4 for 4. Not bad after 17 years.
- (10) I finished my flying as CO of MAG-41 with some of the finest crews available with most 1,000 hours + in type. The saddest day of my life was on 30 June 1983, my last day of active duty, when I flew 2 ACM sorties. On the second, as we approached the break, I passed the lead and command to Mike Sullivan.