

Patrol Bombing Squadron (VPB) Histories

VPB-1

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron ONE (VP-1) on 15 April 1943.

Redesignated as Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE (VPB-1) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished 6 March 1945.

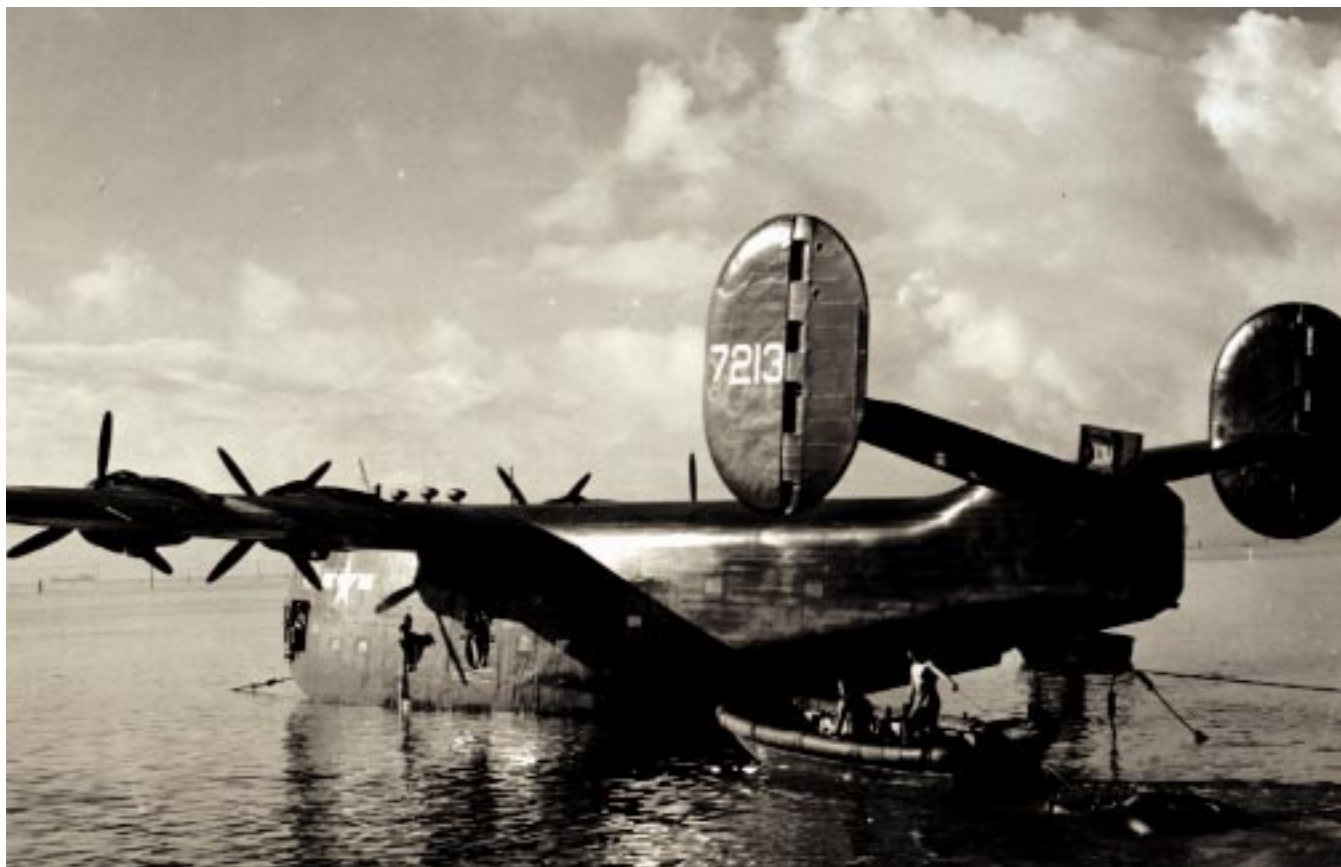
Squadron Insignia and Nickname

Some confusion existed over the proprietorship of the VP-1 squadron insignia, an elephant on a cloud

carrying a bomb in its trunk. The VP-1 squadron that eventually became VPB-29 kept the original elephant insignia throughout its existence until disestablished in 1945. VPB-1 was actually the fourth squadron to start its existence as a VP-1. Although it apparently used the elephant insignia and claimed it as its own, it was never officially sanctioned by CNO.

Chronology of Significant Events

15 April 1943: VP-1 was established at NAS San Diego, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-14, as a large seaplane squadron flying the four-engine PB2Y-3 Coronado. Air crews and ground support staff were assembled and familiarization training in the



A PB2Y being prepared for beaching.

PB2Y-3 seaplanes commenced. Twelve aircraft were assigned to the squadron out of a contract in which 254 were built for the Navy. The squadron was formed to be an antisubmarine patrol squadron, providing convoy coverage in the southwestern Caribbean, and utility assignments by FAW-3.

10 Oct 1943: VP-1 was transferred to NAS Coco Solo, Canal Zone, under the operational control of FAW-3. Convoy coverage and ASW patrols commenced immediately. The area patrolled out of Coco Solo extended roughly north as far as Jamaica, and from the east coast of Nicaragua to 77 degrees west longitude. Many utility flights were scheduled from Miami to Coco Solo, carrying up to 50 passengers each way. Early ASA radar equipment proved unsatisfactory for night patrols and was soon replaced by improved ASC radar. The electric propeller controls caused many problems during the early days of the deployment, resulting in the loss of one aircraft. Modifications to the controls eliminated the defect. Tropical modifications to the aircraft while at Coco Solo included removal of all interior heating units, de-icing equipment, armor plating and engine superchargers.

17 Oct 1943: A Coronado—flown by Lieutenant A. G. Overton, two other officers and an enlisted crew of eight—was making a ferry flight from San Diego to Coco Solo, when high winds and rough seas forced it to land at Puerto Castilla, Honduras. The storm, reaching hurricane proportions, tore the aircraft loose from its moorings. The crew struggled to taxi into the wind until rescued, but on the night of the 18th the starboard float was carried away and the aircraft capsized. Only two enlisted crewmen managed to exit the aircraft and inflate a life raft before the plane went down with the rest of the crew. AMM2c Bockus and ARM2c Smith drifted with the storm for four days. Nine days after the aircraft sank the survivors washed ashore at Buffalo Point, Great Swan Island, near a naval radio beacon station. They were rescued and given medical attention by the station personnel.

6 Jan 1944: Three Coronados and one Catalina were formed into a detachment and flown to NAAF Salinas, Ecuador. The detachment flew east-west patrols for the interception and identification of merchant shipping. On the 14th, a single PBY-5 was sent to NAAF Corinto, Nicaragua, to fly the north-south patrol to the Galapagos with VP-206. These detachments were relieved on 14 February for return to NAS Coco Solo.

Mar 1944: One by one, the four PBY-5 Catalinas were turned over to the HEDRON as replacement PB2Y-3 aircraft arrived from San Diego.

1 Jun 1944: A three-aircraft detachment was sent to the Galapagos Islands, working in conjunction with VP-15. Sections of squadron aircraft began flying the north-south track to the Galapagos, then the east-west track to Corinto, returning to Coco Solo the next day.

17 Jul 1944: Lieutenant W. D. Cauthan crashed on landing after patrol at Galapagos. Two pilots and three crew members were killed in the accident.

15 Oct 1944: Three PB2Y-3 aircraft were turned over to VPB-1 by VPB-15, which was to be disestablished.

20 Oct 1944: VPB-1 was relocated from NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., to NAAF Galapagos, Seymour Island, Ecuador. The squadron flew six patrol tracks daily.

19 Feb 1945: The squadron returned to NAS Coco Solo in early February and was relieved by VPB-209. Officers and enlisted personnel of the VPB-1 were detached and returned to NAS San Diego, Calif., ferrying their aircraft from Coco Solo to San Diego via Key West, Fla., and Corpus Christi, Tex. Two aircraft were lost out of 11 in the flight at Corpus Christi, Tex., due to high winds and rough water while moored after landing. There were no injuries in the accidents.

6 Mar 1945: VPB-1 disestablished at NAS San Diego, Calif.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS San Diego, Calif.	15 Apr 1943
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	10 Oct 1943
NAAF Galapagos, Ecuador	20 Oct 1944
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	3 Feb 1945
NAS San Diego, Calif.	19 Feb 1945

Commanding Officers

<i>Commanding Officers</i>	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Lyle L. Koepke	15 Apr 1943
LCDR R. J. Pflum	25 Jan 1944
LCDR A. W. Reece	16 Jun 1944

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB2Y-3	Apr 1943

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>PatWing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
10 Oct 1943	5 Jan 1944	FAW-3	Coco Solo	PB2Y-3	Carib
6 Jan 1944	14 Feb 1944	FAW-3	Salinas	PB2Y-3	EastPac

Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>PatWing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
14 Jan 1944	3 Mar 1944	FAW-3	Corinto	PB2Y-3	EastPac
1 Jun 1944	19 Feb 1945	FAW-3	Galapagos	PB2Y-3	EastPac

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		15 Apr 1943
FAW-3		10 Oct 1943
FAW-14		19 Feb 1945

Unit Awards Received

None on record.

VPB-4

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO (VP-102) on 1 March 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron FOUR (VPB-4) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 1 November 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

There is no record on file of any insignia used by VPB-4.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Mar 1943: VP-102 was established at NAS San Diego, Calif., as a patrol squadron flying the PB2Y-3 Coronado seaplane. Squadron training was continued at San Diego through October 1943, when preparations were begun for the transpac to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii.

8 Nov 1943: The squadron officially came under the operational control of FAW-2, NAS Kaneohe, and the combat training syllabus was begun for all hands in preparation for the squadron's first combat tour.

27 Jan 1944: A detachment of six aircraft was sent to Midway Island to augment VP-13. On 30 January 1944, the detachment participated in its first combat mission against Japanese positions at Wake Island. The purpose of the long range bombing attacks was to neutralize the threat it posed to forces then engaged in the occupation of the Marshall Islands. Five of these 2,400-mile round trip missions were completed between 30 January and 9 February.

3 Feb 1944: A second detachment of six aircraft was formed and deployed from Kaneohe to the Marshall Islands ferrying freight, mail, passengers, and



A squadron PB2Y at Midway Island, January 1944.

running patrols from NAB Ebeye and NAB Eniwetok, Marshall Islands. On 14 February, an aircraft piloted by Lieutenant Cannon hit a submerged coral head at Ebeye and quickly sank in shallow water. No casualties were incurred in this accident. The detachment completed this assignment in approximately six weeks.

14 Apr 1944: With the increase in squadron missions and dispersed nature of assignments, the need for additional crews soon became apparent. In April six more crews were assigned to VP-102, bringing the total up to 24.

21 Jun 1944: A detachment was deployed to NAB Kwajalein Atoll. The NAB Ebeye detachment continued, and the six new crews remained at NAS Kaneohe for additional combat training.

4 Jul 1944: The NAB Kwajalein detachment was re-deployed to Eniwetok, and was joined by the NAB Ebeye detachment, bringing the squadron together again. On 21 August 1944, the crews took turns conducting nuisance bombing attacks on Japanese positions on the island of Ponape. The squadron conducted 21 of these missions by the end of August.

30 Aug 1944: The entire squadron was transferred to Saipan in the Marianas Islands chain, with tender support provided by *Kenneth Whiting* (AV 14), under the operational control of FAW-1. The squadron remained on the tender until 16 November, when all personnel were moved ashore. Duties during this period consisted of routine patrols, test flights and special flights conveying passengers, mail and equipment between forward areas and the rear echelon. After approximately four months at this location the squadron was given orders for its return to NAS San Diego, Calif., departing on the first homeward leg of the journey on 1 December 1944.

9 Dec 1944–Nov 1945: The last VPB-4 aircraft arrived at NAS San Diego, coming under the operational control of FAW-14. Postdeployment leave was given to all hands through the end of the month. In January 1945, the squadron began to reform with new personnel and equipment, the PB2Y-5/5H. During this period a new mission was assigned, that of training replacement crews in the operation of the PB2Y-5/5H and 3R aircraft. Transpacs were conducted in May to July 1945 to bring replacement crews and aircraft to NAS Kaneohe for deployment in WestPac. With the conclusion of hostilities in September 1945, the wholesale disestablishment of squadrons began. VPB-4 was disestablished at NAS San Diego on 1 November 1945.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS San Diego, Calif.	1 Mar 1943
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	8 Nov 1943
NAS San Diego, Calif.	9 Dec 1944



A squadron PB2Y on the launching ramp, Midway Island, January 1944.



PB2Ys being prepared for beaching, Midway Island, January 1944.



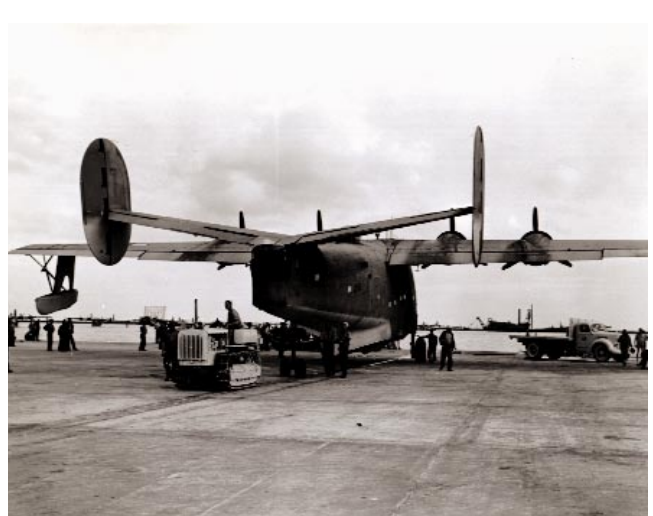
A PB2Y at anchor, Midway Island, January 1944.



A PB2Y being hauled in for beaching, Midway Island, January 1944.



A PB2Y being prepared for beaching, Midway Island, January 1944.



A PB2Y after beaching, Midway Island, January 1944.

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
LCDR Bowen F. McLeod	1 Mar 1943	PB2Y-3	Mar 1943
LCDR Frederick L. Crutis	29 Sep 1943	PB2Y-5/5H	Jan 1945
LCDR Thomas Robinson	22 Nov 1944	PB2Y-3R	Jun 1945
LCDR Frank L. DeLorenzo	Sep 1945		

Aircraft Assignment**Major Overseas Deployments**

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
8 Nov 1943	*	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB2Y-3	WestPac
27 Jan 1943	*	FAW-2	Midway	PB2Y-3	WestPac
3 Feb 1944	*	FAW-2	Ebeye/Eni.	PB2Y-3	SoPac
21 Jun 1944	*	FAW-2	Kwajalein	PB2Y-3	SoPac
4 Jul 1944	*	FAW-2	Eniwetok	PB2Y-3	SoPac
30 Aug 1944	9 Dec 1944	FAW-1	Saipan	PB2Y-3	SoPac
			<i>Kenneth Whiting (AV-14)</i>		

* Continued combat deployment in the South Pacific, moving from base to base.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		1 Mar 1943
FAW-2		8 Nov 1943
FAW-1		30 Aug 1944
FAW-14		9 Dec 1944

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	



PB2Ys in formation, July 1945.

VPB-6 (CG)

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron SIX (CG) (VP-6 (CG)) on 5 October 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron SIX (CG) (VPB-6 (CG)) on 1 October 1944.

Transferred to Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard on 10 July 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

There is no official letter of approval from CNO on file for the squadron's only known insignia, but it is



The squadron's insignia.

believed that the insignia was an authorized design. It was first in use when the squadron was designated VP-6, and it is not known if that design was carried over or modified when the VP-6 was redesignated VPB-6 in October 1944. The insignia featured a startled-looking cat, a creature favored among the Catalina squadrons, sitting on top of a depth charge coated in ice. Above its head was the familiar lightning bolt, signifying radar. The creature is superimposed on a large number 6, with VP to port, and CG to starboard. Colors: Cat, white with black outlines; depth charge, silver; number 6, VP and CG, red; background, green.

Nickname: BoBo's Flying Circus, 1944–1945.

Chronology of Significant Events

5 Oct 1943: VP-6 (CG) was established as a Coast Guard squadron under Navy operational control at NAS Argentia, Newfoundland, relieving VB-126. Squadron personnel had actually been arriving since 23 July 1943, by NATS. Upon arrival they commenced training and indoctrination in cold weather operations. The squadron's home port was Narsarssuak, Green-



Squadron PBY-5A at Greenland.

land, code name *Blue West-One* (BW-1). Upon establishment it came under the operational control of CTF-24, and administrative control of FAW-9. Personnel matters continued to be handled by Coast Guard Headquarters. The squadron flew the PBY-5A Catalina, with ten aircraft (one designated as a spare), 22 officers and 145 enlisted, including eight enlisted pilots. Operational flights began on 13 October 1943, after the first three PBY-5A Catalinas arrived at Narsarssuak. Two of the squadron's nine operational aircraft were detached to NAS Argentia. These aircraft and crews were rotated frequently to allow maintenance and repair work to be done on the other seven. At Narsarssuak all the squadron's aircraft sat outside and all maintenance, refuelling and arming took place in the open regardless of weather conditions because it was found that moving aircraft from warm hangars to the cold outside resulted in condensation and subsequent freezing in fuel pumps, controls and instruments. Herman Nelson F-1 portable heaters were needed to warm the engines and the aircraft interiors before starting. Crews were relieved every 12 months, with relief crews staggered every four months. The U.S. Army provided aerology support and daily weather briefings.

May 1944: By early 1944 the field at BW-1 was becoming crowded with aircraft making emergency landings while enroute to Europe. The squadron complement of aircraft was also increased at this time, from 10 PBY-5A Catalinas to 12. This did not add to the overcrowding at the field, as most of the squadron's aircraft were dispersed to remote bases.

Jul-Sep 1944: A detachment of two aircraft was sent to the Canadian Arctic to furnish ASW, air cover, reconnaissance and search and rescue for vessels entering the Hudson Bay. Patrols covered northern Labrador, Baffin Island and Cumberland Island. No Navy or Coast Guard ground support was available to these crews, despite the frequent bad weather operations flown by the detachment. Existing Army advanced facilities were utilized when available. The Catalina aircraft had no interior heaters, nor did the crews have heated flying suits. Several crews came down with frostbite during operations.

Jul-Aug 1944: A detachment of two aircraft was sent to RAFB Reykjavik, Iceland, operating in conjunction with the RAF Coastal Command, to provide coverage

and air support to vessels conducting operations against the Germans in waters off northeastern Greenland.

1-30 Nov 1944: The detachment at Argentia was increased to three aircraft. Two more aircraft were sent to work with the RAF Coastal Command at Reykjavik.

Dec 1944: Six aircraft remained at NAF Narsarsuaq, with the other four at NAS Argentia, until April 1945. The squadron then increased the Argentia detachment by one aircraft.

8 May 1945: With the cessation of hostilities in Europe and resulting surrender of all Axis submarines, the mission of the squadron was changed to ice patrols and air-sea rescue.

Aug 1945: New radar, LORAN, IFF, VHF and flux-gate compasses were installed in the squadron aircraft at NAS Argentia. The AN/APX-3 radar gear was needed for operations in low visibility weather. The LORAN AN/APV-4 was an accurate navigational aid that allowed crews to get a fix on their location relative to the beacons. The IFF model AN/APX-2 was used for air-sea rescue operations and the VHF was the newest improvement in radio line-of-sight trans-



A squadron PBY-5A tied down in the snow, note the depth bombs on the wing (Courtesy Jess Barrow Collection).



A squadron PBY-5A at Greenland, NH-95428-KN.



A squadron PBY-5A being refueled for a patrol (Courtesy Jess Barrow Collection).

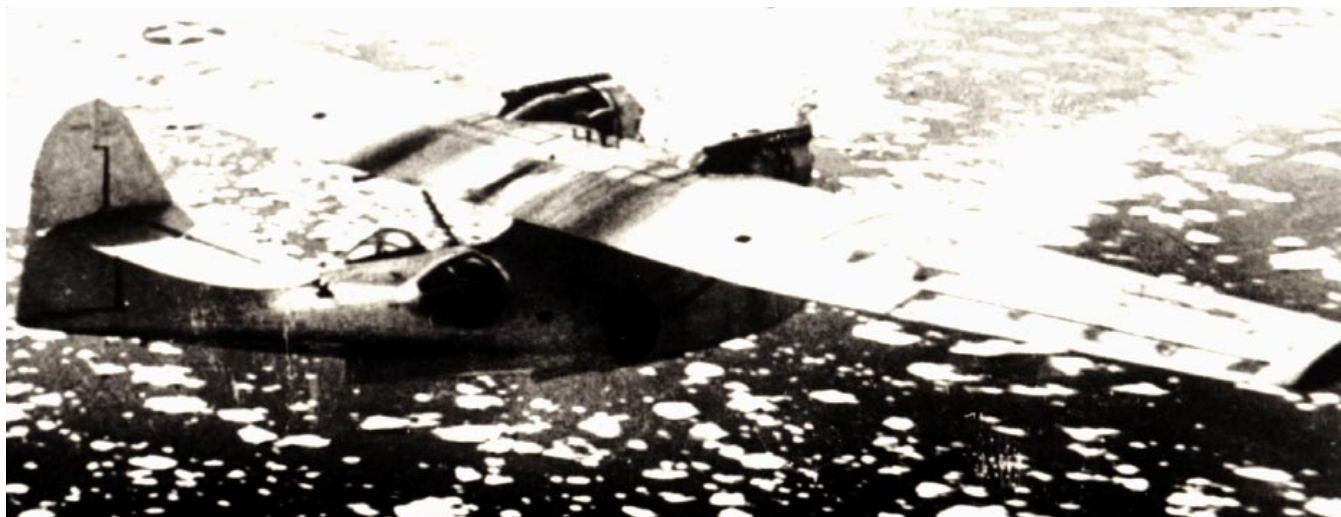
mission. The fluxgate compasses reduced the influence of the magnetic anomalies encountered in regions of the far North.

June 1945: The VPB-6 (CG) complement of aircraft was reduced from nine to six, with one spare. This came at a very bad time, as the surrender of Germany meant the return of thousands of aircraft back to the U. S., with many getting lost, and others landing on the ice.

10 Jul 1945: VPB-6 was transferred back to the control of Commander, U. S. Coast Guard.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAF Narsarsuak, Greenland	5 Oct 1943



A squadron PBV-5A on patrol (Courtesy Jess Barrow Collection).

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Donald B. MacDiarmid	5 Oct 1943
CDR W. I. Swanston	15 May 1944
CDR L. H. Seeger	30 May 1945

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBV-5A	Oct 1943

A plane crewman mans one of the waist .50 caliber guns in a squadron PBV-5A, NH-95429-KN.



Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
13 Oct 1943	10 Jul 1945	FAW-9	Narsarssuak	PBY-5A	NorLant
13 Oct 1943	10 Jul 1945	FAW-9	Argentia	PBY-5A	NorLant
Jul 1944	Aug 1944	FAW-9	Reykjavik	PBY-5A	NorLant

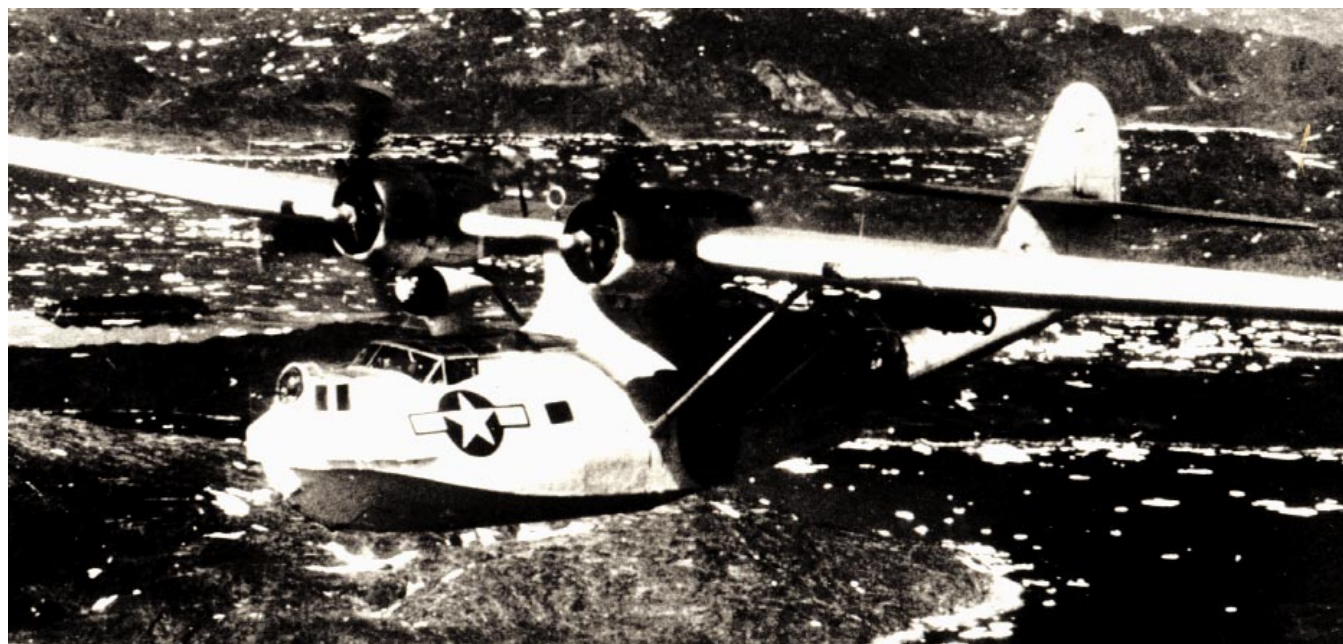


The runway at Greenland being cleared of snow, 1944.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>	<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
FAW-9		5 Oct 1943	None on record.	

Unit Awards Received



A squadron PBY-5A on patrol (Courtesy Jess Barrow Collection).

VPB-11

Lineage

Established as Torpedo & Bombing Squadron NINE-TEEN-D14 (VT-19D14) on 7 February 1924.

Redesignated Torpedo & Bombing Squadron SIX-D14 (VT-6D14) on 1 July 1927.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron SIX-B (VP-6B) on 1 April 1931.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron SIX-F (VP-6F) on 17 July 1933.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron SIX (VP-6) on 1 October 1937.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron TWENTY-THREE (VP-23) on 1 July 1939.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron ELEVEN (VP-11) on 1 August 1941.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ELEVEN (VPB-11) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 20 June 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

VP-6F was the originator of the squadron's first insignia in 1933. Although official approval of the design was never requested of

BuAer, defacto recognition of the new insignia appeared

when it was reproduced in the 20

October 1933 issue of the *Bureau of*

Aeronautics Newsletter. The design selected was the

Pegasus, a winged horse from Greek

mythology. To the

Greeks, Pegasus represented the

Pegasus, from Greek mythology, was used for the squadron's insignia.

strength embodied in the warhorse combined with the advantage of aerial agility. Colors: white horse with shaded gold wings, on blue field inside red circular border. The same insignia continued in use by the squadron through all its numerous redesignations.

Nickname: None known.

Chronology of Significant Events

7 Feb 1924: VT-19 was established as a torpedo squadron based at NAS Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, flying 13 DT-2 aircraft.

25 Apr 1925: Several of the squadron's pilots made the first successful night landings on an aircraft carrier



A squadron DT-2 in flight, circa 1924.

under way. The landings, made under varying lighting and weather conditions, were part of a program to determine the feasibility of night landings on an aircraft carrier as a military operation.

9 Apr 1927: VT-19 was redesignated VT-6D14 during the reorganization of squadrons by BuAer in 1927. The D14 represented the 14th Naval District, Pearl Harbor.

1 Jul 1927: The squadron's DT-2 type aircraft were declared obsolete. SC-2 aircraft replaced the squadron's DT-2 aircraft.

21 Jan 1931: VT-6D14 was redesignated VP-6B, converting from torpedo bomber squadron to patrol squadron under Fleet Aviation, Base Force, Commander Minecraft, Battle Force. Although officially a patrol squadron, the 12 aircraft assigned were T3M-2 torpedo bombers. *Pelican* (AVP 6) and *Avocet* (AVP 4) were assigned to provide tender support.



A formation of squadron T4M-1s in flight, circa 1931.



Squadron PD-1s on the line at Pearl Harbor during President Roosevelt's visit, 27 February 1934, note the Pegasus insignia on the bow of the first aircraft.

17 July 1933: VP-6B was redesignated VP-6F, reflecting the change in organization at Pearl Harbor to Commander Aircraft, Base Force, Fleet Air Base. The squadron had transitioned to the T4M-1 and the T2D-1, both with twin floats.

1933: VP-6F transitioned from floatplanes to seaplanes, operating from FAB Pearl Harbor with six PM-1 and six PD-1 seaplanes.

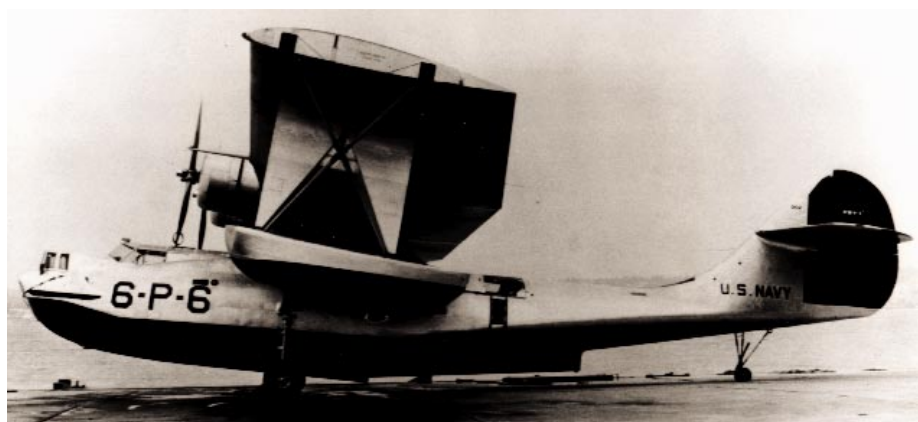
22 Apr 1935: VP-6F, along with VPs 1, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10, participated in Fleet Problem XVI off Midway Island. The intent of the exercise was to give elements of the fleet an opportunity to become familiar with Midway and adjacent waters while practicing landing operations. Both the Army and Coast Guard took part in the problem. The exercises were marred by a series of crashes, two from VP-6F resulting in 12 deaths, and

numerous instances of aircraft being forced down by mechanical difficulties and sinking (no casualties). The tenders supporting the fleet were found to be so slow that they had to be sent ahead of the main body so as not to delay the exercises.

1937: VP-6F transitioned to the PBY-1 Catalina seaplane, giving the squadron for the first time an aircraft that was both reliable and with long enough range to adequately support the fleet from either tenders or advanced bases. The Catalina was already obsolete by the start of WWII, but was used by the navies of several nations throughout the war in large numbers in a wide variety of roles ranging from ASW to air and sea rescue work.

1 Oct 1937: VP-6F was reorganized under Commander, Patrol Wing TWO, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

A squadron PBY-1, circa 1938.



1 Jul 1939: VP-6F was redesignated VP-23, under Patrol Wing TWO, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The squadron continued to fly the older PBY-1 seaplanes, and had been assigned to *Childs* (AVP 15) for tender support.

9 Apr 1940: PatWing TWO aircraft of VPs 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 participated in Fleet Problem XXI with the Army 72nd Bombardment Squadron and the Army 4th Reconnaissance Squadron. The combined squadrons defended the Hawaiian Islands against a carrier attack. The exercise revealed glaring deficiencies in the coordination between the air arms in defense of the islands.

1 Jul 1941: VP-23 was redesignated VP-11, still flying the PBY-1 and at that time operating from NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. During this period the squadron began search and reconnaissance in the central Pacific from Kaneohe and tender-supported locations near Johnston Island.

3 Oct 1941: Aircrews of VP-11 undertook a ferry flight from Kaneohe, Hawaii, to NAS San Diego, Calif.; NAS Jacksonville, Fla.; and NAS Corpus Christi, Tex., returning on 22 October 1941 with new PBY-5 aircraft.

7 Dec 1941: During the attack on Pearl Harbor the majority of the squadron's aircraft at NAS Kaneohe were destroyed or damaged beyond repair. One witness to the carnage, an Army P-40 pilot, Lieutenant George S. Welch, 46th Pursuit Group, Wheeler Field, stated that the Japanese dive bombers were stacked up over the airfields in a "... regular traffic pattern around the field. They never got more than 100 to 200 feet high . . . they flew around with their pattern to the right. When they returned, they used the same formation and signals that we do—shallow left run, wiggling the wings. They would come back into formation, peel off and come down again. There was no resistance . . . so that they had a perfect pattern, and could pick out individual ships that they could see weren't on fire and shoot at them with both their 7.7s and 30-mm cannon."

1 Apr 1942: Losses were replaced in April with new PBY-5 seaplanes from the U.S., equipped with ASE radar for spotting ships on the ocean surface. Sector searches around Oahu were begun as soon as crews could be checked out on the new equipment.

30 Apr 1942: A two-aircraft detachment was sent to Johnston Island for sector searches. Two new crews relieved the detachment each week. On 29 May the detachment size was increased to six aircraft.

20 May 1942: A three-plane detachment was sent to Barking Sands, Kauai. On 22 May the detachment was increased by three aircraft.

1 Jul 1942: VP-11 deployed to Suva, Fiji Islands. Over the next several months the squadron would be moved from Suva to Noumea, New Caledonia, Tongatabu and Espiritu Santo to conduct search and reconnaissance missions in connection with the land-

ings at Guadalcanal and other fleet operations in the South Pacific.

13 Jul 1942: A three-plane detachment was sent to Noumea.

17 Jul 1942: One aircraft was dispatched to Auckland, returning on 19 July.

26 Jul 1942: A three-plane detachment was sent to Tongatabu, with two aircraft returning to Suva on 28 July.

1 Aug 1942: The Noumea detachment was increased by three aircraft. Tender support was provided by *Curtiss* (AV 4). The next day the detachment was further supplemented by two aircraft from VP-14.

4 Aug 1942: VP-11 headquarters was shifted from Suva to Saweni Beach with six aircraft, the remainder still based at Noumea. The headquarters group was provided tender support by *McFarland* (AVD 14).

11 Aug 1942: The Noumea detachment was redeployed with *Curtiss* (AV 4) to Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides.

7 Sep 1942: VP-11 claimed one submarine kill but a postwar review of Japanese records indicates no loss of a Japanese submarine on that date and location.

29 Oct 1942: Lieutenant F. Joe Hill and his crew spotted a surface submarine about three miles off his starboard beam. The submarine crash-dived and was below the surface when Hill dropped his two 650-pound depth charges. A large quantity of oil appeared and remained on the surface the following day. Postwar records indicate the submarine sunk by Lieutenant Hill was *I-172*, Lieutenant Commander Takeshi Ota commanding. *I-172* was lost with all 91 hands aboard, including Rear Admiral Yoshisuke Okamoto, Commander of the 12th Squadron of the Kure Submarine Flotilla.

5 Nov 1942: VP-11 claimed a third submarine sunk but a postwar review of Japanese records indicates no loss of a Japanese submarine on that date and location.

1 Feb 1943: VP-11 was withdrawn from combat and returned to NAS San Diego, Calif., for refit and home leave.

20 Apr 1943: The reforming of the squadron was completed on this date. Aircrews flew the transpac to Kaneohe on 21 April, while the remainder of ground personnel and assets departed on transports. Upon arrival all hands undertook intensive combat preparation while simultaneously conducting patrols over the ocean in the Hawaiian area.

22 May 1943: Combat training was completed at Kaneohe. VP-11 aircrews departed for Perth, Australia, followed later by ground crew and squadron assets in transports. Upon arrival in Perth on 8 June aircrews commenced combat search and reconnaissance patrols in the southwest Pacific under the operational control of FAW-10.

9 Sep 1943: VP-11 departed for Brisbane, and then to New Guinea and Palm Island. The squadron came



A squadron PBY-5 beached on the Sepik River, New Guinea, January 1943 (Courtesy Richard C. Knott Collection via Frank W. Morris).

under the operational control of FAW-17 and relieved VP-101. Black Cat (PVY's painted black) nighttime operations commenced in the areas around New Guinea, New Ireland, and the Bismarck Sea.

1 Oct-19 Nov 1943: VP-11 was based aboard *San Pablo* (AVP 30) in Jenkins Bay. Night searches for surface ships were conducted, and bombing attacks on



A squadron PBY-5 on the Sepik River being loaded by natives.

Japanese installations on Garove Island were conducted over several nights. On 9 October, *Half Moon* (AVP 26) relieved *San Pablo*.

16 Nov 1943: Lieutenant Jack D. Cruze and his crew were exceptionally busy during the period 1 to 9 November. They attacked Japanese facilities in the Bismarck Archipelago and Solomon Sea under severe weather conditions and strafed enemy merchant vessels, barges, shore installations and wharves. On the night of 16 November they located the biggest target yet, a Japanese task force. Despite the heavy concentration of fire from the escorts, Cruze made a low-level bombing attack that destroyed a large transport in the task force. For his courage under fire and aggressive pursuit of the enemy during this period, Lieutenant Cruze was awarded the Navy Cross.

19 Nov 1943: VP-11, relieved at Jenkins Bay by VP-52, reported to Port Moresby to relieve VP-101. On 23 November Black Cat operations were commenced in conjunction with daytime attacks by the 5th Bombardment Group, 5th USAAF.

30 Dec 1943: VP-11 transferred to Palm Island, Australia, and was taken off combat operations. Routine administrative and passenger flights were conducted daily to Port Moresby, Samari and Brisbane.

10 Feb 1944: The squadron returned to Perth to conduct convoy patrols in Australian waters under the operational control of FAW-10.

19 Jul 1944: VP-11 returned to New Guinea and Schouten Islands for Black Cat night combat operations under the operational control of FAW-17. A three-aircraft detachment was sent to Woendi Lagoon, Biak.

23 Aug 1944: VP-11 continued to conduct Black Cat operations after its transfer to Middleburg Island.

18 Sep 1944: The squadron continued Black Cat operations while based on Schouten Island and Morotai until 21 September when daytime operations were then started. Daytime operations consisted of anti-submarine patrols and air-sea rescue missions in the South Pacific.

1 Oct 1944: VP-11 was redesignated VPB-11. On 6 October the squadron was stationed at Morotai with tender support provided by *San Pablo* (AVP 30). Air-sea rescue and routine ASW patrols were conducted daily. On 12 October half of the squadron was quartered aboard *Orca* (AVP 49) to provide more room for the crews.

14 Nov 1944: The squadron was relocated to Woendi with 15 aircraft. On 5 December VPB-11 was moved to Morotai, then back to Woendi on the 11th for boarding on *Pocomoke* (AV 9) and transportation back to the U.S.

19 Dec 1944: VPB-11 was officially withdrawn from combat and 15 aircraft and crews departed Woendi for return to NAS San Diego, Calif.

20 Jun 1945: VPB-11 was disestablished at NAS San Diego, Calif.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii	7 Feb 1924
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	1940
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Feb 1943
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	Apr 1943
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Dec 1944

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LT E. C. Peterson	29 May 1924
Unknown	1925–1926
LT C. D. Glover, Jr.	1 Jul 1927
LT W. D. Johnson, Jr.	9 Jun 1928

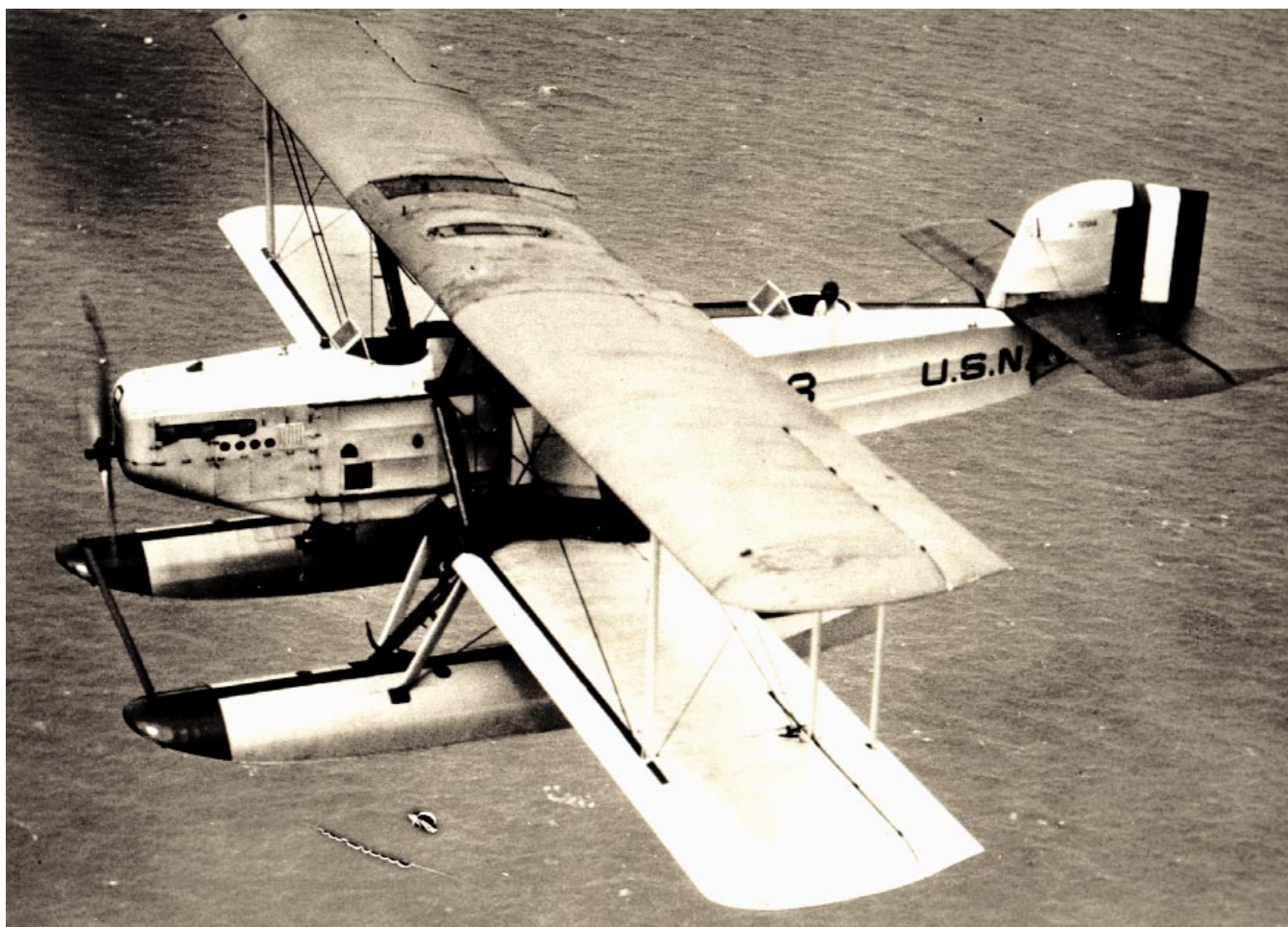
Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
Unknown	1929–1930
LT William Sinton	1931
LTJG Richard M. Oliver (actg)	1932
LT James R. Tague	Mar 1932
LCDR Rossmore D. Lyon	1933
LCDR William M. McDade	Sep 1935
LCDR Robert F. Hickey	8 Jul 1937
LCDR George Van Deurs	5 Jul 1939
LCDR Leon W. Johnson	22 Jul 1941
LCDR Francis R. Jones	11 Dec 1941
LT W. P. Schroeder (actg)	Apr 1942
LCDR Clayton C. Marcy	4 May 1942
LCDR C. M. Campbell	16 Mar 1943
LCDR Thomas S. White	24 May 1944

*A T2D-1, circa 1932.***Aircraft Assignment**

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
DT-2	Feb 1924
SC-1/2	Jul 1927
T3M-2	Jun 1929
T4M-1	Sep 1931
T2D-1	Jan 1932
PM-1	1933
PD-1	1933
PBY-1	1937
PBY-5	Nov 1941

*A squadron SC-2 in flight, circa 1927.*



A T3M-2 in flight, circa 1929.

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
1 Jul 1942	*	FAW-17	Fiji Islands <i>McFarland</i> (AVD 14)	PBY-5	SoPac
13 Jul 1942	*	FAW-17	Noumea <i>Curtiss</i> (AV 4)	PBY-5	SoPac

A squadron PBY-5 on the Sepik River, New Guinea, 1943.



Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
11 Aug 1942	1 Feb 1943	FAW-17	Espiritu Santo <i>Curtiss</i> (AV 4)	PBY-5	SoPac
22 May 1943	19 Dec 1943	FAW-10	Perth	PBY-5	SoPac
9 Sep 1943	*	FAW-10	Palm Island <i>San Pablo</i> (AVP 30) <i>Half Moon</i> (AVP 26)	PBY-5	SoPac
19 Nov 1943	*	FAW-10	Port Moresby	PBY-5	SoPac
30 Dec 1943	*	FAW-10	Palm Island	PBY-5	SoPac
10 Feb 1944	*	FAW-10	Perth	PBY-5	SoPac
19 Jul 1944	*	FAW-10	New Guinea	PBY-5	SoPac
19 Jul 1944	*	FAW-10	Woendi	PBY-5	SoPac
23 Aug 1944	*	FAW-10	Middlebg. Isl.	PBY-5	SoPac
18 Sep 1944	*	FAW-10	Morotai <i>San Pablo</i> (AVP 30) <i>Orca</i> (AVP 49)	PBY-5	SoPac
14 Nov 1944	11 Dec 1944	FAW-10	Woendi	PBY-5	SoPac

* Continued combat deployment in the South Pacific, moving from base to base.



Two squadron PBY-5s in flight, note the Battle E on the bow of the lead aircraft (Courtesy John M. Elliott Collection).

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
Scouting Force		7 Feb 1924
Minecraft, Battle Force		21 Jan 1931
PatWing-1		1 Oct 1937
FAW-14		1 Apr 1943
FAW-2		30 Apr 1943
FAW-10		30 May 1943
FAW-17		11 Sep 1943
FAW-10		16 Feb 1944

Wing Assignments—Continued

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-17		19 Jul 1944
FAW-14		19 Dec 1944

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>	
PUC	15 Sep 1943	1 Feb 1944



A squadron PM-1 with the Battle E on the bow.

VPB-13

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron THIRTEEN (VP-13) on 1 July 1940.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron THIRTEEN (VPB-13) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 1 December 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The request for approval of the insignia for VP-13 was submitted to BuAer on 13 September 1940, shortly after the squadron's establishment. The design featured a resplendent Neptune standing on the backs of



The squadron's only insignia.

four galloping wild horses, left hand upraised holding bolts of lightning. The four horses were symbolic of the four-engine PB2Y-2 Coronado airplanes flown by the squadron at its establishment. Neptune driving the horses embodied the global oceans and was even suggestive of the squadron's ambition to rule the waves. The bolts of lightning indicated striking power. Colors: circumference of design, red band; background, sky blue; clouds behind Neptune, gray and white; Neptune, cream color body, green kilt with red border, brown beard, gold crown; lightning in hand of Neptune, yellow; horses, white with red flared nostrils. The design was approved on 27 September 1940 and

featured in the National Geographic Magazine *Insignia and Decorations of the U.S. Armed Forces*, Revised Edition, December 1, 1944.

Nickname: None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Jul 1940: VP-13 was formed from a cadre of personnel and equipment taken from VP-14 at NAS San Diego, Calif., coming under the operational control of PatWing-1. The squadron had been formed as a de-



A squadron PB2Y-2 in flight, November 1940.

tachment of VP-14 in March 1940 when training in the new XPB2Y-1 Coronado was begun at San Diego. The four-engine, heavy seaplane had been designed to bomb, protect itself with its own heavy armament, land on water, rescue downed flyers, conduct long-range patrols, and carry heavy freight and passengers. After its establishment the squadron had a complement of four PB2Y-1 aircraft to train crews and iron out the wrinkles from the factory as the newer PB2Y-2 models were coming off the production lines.

Jan 1941: The squadron commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander S. B. Cooke, was killed in an air accident while flying as a passenger in a military transport aircraft.

Aug 1941: Tests in aerial refueling were conducted to see if the range of the Coronados could be extended. Although tests were positive, the fuel transfer procedure was judged too complicated and time consuming to be of operational value.

7 Dec 1941: The squadron went to wartime footing. Over the next few days the three PB2Y-2 aircraft assigned to the squadron were fully equipped with machine guns, ammunition, bomb racks and bombs.

10 Dec 1941: War preparation activities were interrupted when two of the squadron aircraft flew Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox and his party to

Hawaii. Unfortunately, at this stage of the war the aircraft were not equipped with self-sealing fuel tanks, and the aircraft Knox boarded developed leaks after its tanks were fully loaded. He was eventually delivered to Pearl Harbor, but only after many flight cancellations and delays. That incident gave the PB2Y a bad reputation in Washington that it would never completely overcome.

24 Dec 1941: VP-13 dispatched a Coronado to Pearl Harbor carrying Admiral E. J. King and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, followed the next day by a Coronado bearing Rear Admiral McCain and Vice Admiral Halsey. Upon arrival, both aircraft were attached to PatWing-2, as the Flag Detachment of VP-13, based at NAS Ford Island, Pearl Harbor. Duties assigned were generally those of long, 14 to 15 hour patrols, broken by occasional trips to Australia and areas of the South Pacific needing quick deliveries of supplies or important personnel. The runs to Sydney became so frequent that a maintenance unit was set up at the Qantas Empire Airways seadrome on Rose Bay. By June 1942, four PB2Y Coronados were in constant service flying 12 round trips a month from Kaneohe Bay to Rose Bay, over 4,000 miles one way.

1 Apr 1942: The San Diego-based portion of VP-13 was assigned to transition training for new aircrews destined for other squadrons, using the PB2Y-2, PB2Y-5A and XPBM-1 aircraft. During this period the San Diego detachment continued to provide shuttle service between Pearl Harbor and San Diego for high priority cargo and VIPs.

Jun 1942: VP-13 received the first PB2Y-3 for testing and operations. All of the new aircraft were equipped with pilot armor and self-sealing fuel tanks. The earlier PB2Y-2 models had been retrofitted three months earlier.

20 Sep 1942: The San Diego-based detachment sent one PB2Y-3 on a trip to Miami, Fla., returning by way of the Caribbean and several South American countries. It returned to San Diego on 13 Oct 1942.

Nov 1942: The Flag Detachment at Kaneohe Bay returned to NAS San Diego, Calif., having been relieved by squadron VR-2 of the Navy Air Transport Service (NATS).

27 Dec 1942: Lieutenant W. O. Carlson and his crew were killed during a practice landing at Salton Sea near San Diego. No cause for the crash was determined.

8 Jan 1943: VP-13 made the transpac from San Diego to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, with 12 PB2Y-3 aircraft, 36 pilots and 264 enlisted personnel. On 20 January, the squadron became operational at NAS Kaneohe under the operational control of FAW-2. It was assigned the primary duties of anti-task force and antisubmarine patrol. Three daily 700-mile patrols were flown with an average duration of 12 hours. Numerous special cargo flights were flown to

Johnston, Midway, Canton, Palmyra and Samoa. Special passenger flights covered the entire South Pacific.

1 Mar 1943: The squadron was split into two detachments, one with six aircraft remaining at NAS Kaneohe, the other with six aircraft at Johnston Island along with VP-15 supported by tenders. One third of the squadron personnel were detached to form the cadre for a new squadron, VP-15. This left VP-13 with only six patrol plane commanders, which was further reduced at the end of the month when Lieutenant (jg) O'Donnell and his crew were killed during a Dumbo mission from Johnston Island while attempting to locate a missing aircraft.

19 Nov-6 Dec 1943: A detachment of four aircraft was sent to Funafuti, Ellice Islands, primarily to serve as evacuation aircraft for the wounded in the forthcoming invasion of the Gilbert Islands. Only one evacuation flight was made, as the aircraft were quickly put into service transporting tactical commanders and vital equipment to Tarawa, Makin and Apamama. No advanced base facilities were available at these sites, and the crews serviced their own aircraft.

1 Dec 1943: The few PB2Y-1 and 2 aircraft still operated by the squadron were flown to San Diego and replaced with new PB2Y-3 aircraft fresh from the factory.

6 Dec 1943: Two of the VP-13 aircraft sent to Funafuti returned to NAS Kaneohe. One other returned on 20 December 1943.

25 Jan 1944: A detachment of four of the squadron's PB2Y-3s were converted to transport-ambulance aircraft (PB2Y-3H) and sent to Tarawa. In the following months, the detachment made numerous trips to Majuro, Apamama, Kwajalein and Eniwetok evacuating wounded, carrying mail and transporting passengers.

30 Jan-9 Feb 1944: Based at Midway Island, VP-13 carried out four historic heavy bombing raids on Wake Island, first ever conducted by a formation of heavy seaplanes over a long distance. The neutralization of the airfields on Wake was considered so important that the commander of FAW-2, Rear Admiral John D. Price, accompanied the bombers on two of the raids. Six crews and aircraft from VP-102 were included in the missions. Previous raids on Wake had resulted in high casualties due to poor navigation and breaking of radio silence which had alerted the Japanese defenders. VPs 13 and 102 made four raids over 2,100 miles each way, dropping 60 tons of bombs in 50 sorties without a single casualty to personnel or aircraft.

26 Jan-7 Mar 1944: A detachment of four aircraft was sent to Tarawa, with tender services provided by *Curtis* (AV 4). The mission of the detachment was to evacuate casualties and carry mail, cargo and personnel between the various Gilbert and Marshall Islands. One round-trip flight was made each day, carrying ap-



A squadron PB2Y at Midway Island, January 1944.

proximately 13,000 pounds. More could have been carried, but rough water and lack of beaching facilities reduced the operational capacity of the Coronados on these trips. By March, the construction of airstrips on land in the occupied areas allowed the NATS R4D aircraft to assume the services provided by VP-13.

17–18 Apr 1944: VP-13 conducted five mine-laying sorties (Mark 10/Mod.6 mines) from Eniwetok in the waters surrounding the island of Truk. It was found that the external wing mounts for the mines so affected the handling and airspeed of the Coronados that they could scarcely attain an air speed of 116 knots.

11–22 May 1944: The Ebeye detachment conducted 11 nights of nuisance bombing on the island of Wotje, 200 miles from Ebeye. Three aircraft flew in four-hour relays each night to the island, dropping one 500-pound bomb every half-hour. Poor visibility resulted in 40 percent of the drops being made with radar, and approximately 80 percent of the bombs landed in the general target areas.

26 Feb–22 Jun 1944: VP-13 was ordered to the Marshall Islands to assume antishipping and ASW responsibilities over the fleet. The first stop for the squadron was at Kwajalein, followed by Eniwetok two days later. Here VP-13 began conducting two 600 to 900 mile patrols each day, the longest search sectors ever flown by a PB2Y-3 to date. *Chincoteague* (AVP 24) provided tender services. No enemy convoys were spotted, but several submarines were seen while on patrol. Since this area was then a sanctuary for friendly submarines, no attacks were delivered, but the posi-

tion of any contact was reported for investigation by surface units. On 1 April, the squadron was split in half with six aircraft being sent to Ebeye Island, where PATSU 2-6 was located. On 22 June, the squadron was relieved by VP-102 for return to Kaneohe. During this deployment VP-13 shot down no less than five Japanese Mitsubishi G4M Betty bombers with their large, unwieldy seaplanes, as follows: 7 Mar—Lieutenant Roger A. Wolf, at position 10-02N 159-20, at 0415 Greenwich civil time (GCT); 13 Mar—Lieutenant (jg) Robert D. Cullinane, at position 11-30N 154-25, at 0319 GCT; 12 May—Lieutenant John P. Wheatley, at position 13-03N 154-37, at 0112 GCT; 18 May—Lieutenant (jg) Robert E. Peach, at position 13-45N 155-25, at 0215 GCT; and 10 Jun—Lieutenant John P. Wheatley, his second in one month, at position 16-42N 156-30, at 0225 GCT.

14 Jul 1944: The last VP-13 Coronado touched down in San Diego Bay, Calif. All personnel were granted 30 days of home leave, with 60 percent of the squadron receiving orders to report back to VPB-13 for the reforming of the squadron.

15 Aug 1944: VP-13 reformed at NAS San Diego, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-14. By 16 September, the first of the new Coronados, the PB2Y-5, began arriving. The new models sported improved radar (AN-APS-2), total fuel cell protection, reinforced hull surfaces, and improved cockpit instrumentation. In a departure from earlier squadron practice, each crew was assigned its own aircraft and held responsible for its proper shakedown prior to the coming transpac back to the combat zone.

17 Oct 1944: Lieutenant Cullinane and his entire crew perished in a crash on one of the Coronado Islands.

19 Nov 1944: VPB-13 departed San Diego for Tanapag Harbor, Saipan, Marshall Islands, arriving on 20 November. The squadron came under the operational control of FAW-1. Patrols were begun within a few days of arrival, and by 13 December, three daily patrols with 500-mile search sectors toward Japan and one nightly patrol were being flown by the squadron guarding convoys and shipping. Although enemy air attacks on Saipan were frequent, most were concentrated on the Army Air Force side where the B-29s were located. Almost all patrols during this period were long, tiresome and fruitless.

2 Feb–30 Mar 1945: VPB-13 was ordered to Ulithi Atoll to provide coverage for the invasion of Iwo Jima, and upon arrival began operations based off tenders *Casco* (AVP 12) and *Shelikof* (AVP 52). By 5 February, the squadron began flying 800-mile patrols between Ulithi and the Philippines. On the 24th the entire squadron moved aboard *Kenneth Whiting* (AV 14). On 30 March, a barge broke loose during a storm and destroyed one of the squadron aircraft; the next day, a second aircraft was lost when it broke in half while attempting a take off in rough seas. There were no casualties in either accident.

7 Apr 1945: The squadron flew all of its aircraft to Saipan for reconditioning. On 26 April, VPB-13 departed Saipan for Kerama Rhetto, Ryukus Islands. Upon arrival, tender support was provided by *Kenneth Whiting* (AV 14). The next day, a kamikaze attempted to ram *Whiting*, but missed and hit *Pinkney* (APH 2) moored nearby. On 30 April another kamikaze struck *St. George* (AV 16), causing several casualties but only minor damage. All hands spent a considerable amount of time at General Quarters throughout May, manning the turrets of the aircraft in the mooring area. From Kerama Rhetto, the squadron conducted patrols and strikes along the coast of China to the southeast coasts of the Japanese main islands. Two aircraft were shot down and one ship sunk on these patrols. One PB2Y-5 made a forced landing after suffering damage from AA fire during a strafing attack. The entire crew was rescued.

9 May 1945: Lieutenant P. R. Harris and his crew were returning from a patrol and arrived in the middle of an air raid. After 14 hours in the air the Coronado's fuel state was critical. Lieutenant Harris attempted an open sea night landing ten miles south of Kerama Rhetto. At 0300 the Coronado crashed, killing the pilot and seven other crewmembers. Three crewmen survived with injuries.

10 May 1945: Lieutenant William L. Kitchen and Lieutenant (jg) John A. Hoppe and their crews shared a kill when they surprised a Kawasaki H6K, Navy Type 97 Flying-Boat (Mavis) at position 32-38N 128-50, at 1345 hours local time.

24 May 1945: Lieutenant Donald C. Frenz and Lieutenant Herschel M. Cummins, Jr. and their crews

shared a kill while on patrol, shooting down an Aichi E13A, Navy Type O Reconnaissance Seaplane (Jake) at position 32-35N 126-00, at 1350 local time.

2 Jun 1945: Lieutenant George Head was returning from patrol when a call for rescue of a downed pilot was received. Lieutenant Head damaged his aircraft on landing and the crew was forced to join the downed fighter pilot in the water. A PBM was able to land and pick up both the fighter pilot and Head's crew, taking off with JATO assistance. The favor was returned the next day when a VPB-13 crew spotted a downed PBM crew and steered a nearby submarine to their rescue.

19 Jul 1945: VPB-13 evacuated the Kerama Rhetto area in the face of an approaching typhoon, returning to Tanapag Harbor, Saipan. The squadron returned to the Ryukus on the 21st.

14 Jul 1945: VPB-13 relocated from Kerama Rhetto to Kimmu Bay, Okinawa. Tender support was provided by *Kenneth Whiting* (AV 14), *Hamlin* (AV 15), *Gardeners Bay* (AVP 39), *Mackinac* (AVP 13) and *Suisun* (AVP 53).

1 Sep 1945: VPB-13 moved to NAB Chimu Wan, Okinawa. It remained there as crews were received and old ones were relieved for return to the States through the 19th, when orders were received for movement to Sasebo, Japan. *Kenneth Whiting* (AV 14) departed for Sasebo, and the aircrews berthed aboard *Pine Island* (AV 12) until their departure for the new base on the 22nd. Upon arrival at Sasebo, the squadron began flying patrols over the Sea of Japan and commenced courier flights between Okinawa and Tokyo.

28 Sep 1945: VPB-13 flew to NS Sangley Point, Philippines. On 15 October, courier flights were begun between the Philippines and Hong Kong.

30 Nov 1945: VPB-13 was relieved at Hong Kong for return to NAS San Diego, Calif., where the last aircraft arrived on the 17th. The squadron turned in its aircraft to FAW-14 and was disestablished on 21 December 1945.



An overhead shot of a squadron PB2Y-2 in flight (Courtesy John M. Elliott Collection).

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS San Diego, Calif.	1 Jul 1940
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii (Det)	24 Dec 1941
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	8 Jan 1943
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Jul 1944
NOB Saipan	19 Nov 1944
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Dec 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR S. B. Cooke	1 Jul 1940
LCDR C. W. Oexle	Jan 1941
LCDR William M. Nation	Aug 1941

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Tom F. Connolly	Mar 1943
LCDR J. A. Ferguson	30 Sep 1944
CDR James R. Jadrnicek	6 Sep 1945

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
XPB2Y-1	Mar 1940
PB2Y-1	Jul 1940
PB2Y-2	Apr 1942
PB2Y-3	Jun 1942
PB2Y-3H	Jan 1944
PB2Y-5	Sep 1944

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
Feb 1942	Nov 1942	FAW-2	Ford Island	PB2Y-2	WestPac
8 Jan 1943	*	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB2Y-3	WestPac
19 Nov 1943	*	FAW-2	Funafuti	PB2Y-3	SoPac
25 Jan 1944	*	FAW-2	Tarawa	PB2Y-3	SoPac
26 Jan 1944	*	FAW-2	Tarawa	PB2Y-3	SoPac
			<i>Curtis (AV 4)</i>		
30 Jan 1944	*	FAW-2	Midway	PB2Y-3	WestPac
26 Feb 1944	*	FAW-2	Eniwetok	PB2Y-3	SoPac
			<i>Chincoteague (AVP 24)</i>		



A squadron PB2Y at Midway Island, January 1944.

Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
1 Apr 1944	*	FAW-2	Ebeye	PB2Y-3	SoPac
17 Apr 1944	*	FAW-2	Eniwetok	PB2Y-3	SoPac
22 Jun 1944	14 Jul 1944	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB2Y-3	WestPac
20 Nov 1944	*	FAW-1	Saipan	PB2Y-3	SoPac
2 Feb 1945	*	FAW-1	Ulithi	PB2Y-5	SoPac
			<i>Casco</i> (AVP 12)		
			<i>Shelikof</i> (AVP 52)		
			<i>Kenneth Whiting</i> (AV 14)		
7 Apr 1945	*	FAW-1	Saipan	PB2Y-5	SoPac
26 Apr 1945	*	FAW-1	Kerama R.	PB2Y-5	SoPac
			<i>Kenneth Whiting</i> (AV 14)		
14 Jul 1945	*	FAW-1	Kimmu Bay	PB2Y-5	SoPac
			<i>Kenneth Whiting</i> (AV 14)		
			<i>Hamlin</i> (AV 15)		
			<i>Gardeners Bay</i> (AVP 39)		
			<i>Mackinac</i> (AVP 13)		
			<i>Suisun</i> (AVP 53)		
1 Sep 1945	*	FAW-1	Chimu Wan	PB2Y-5	SoPac
19 Sep 1945	*	FAW-1	Sasebo	PB2Y-5	SoPac
			<i>Kenneth Whiting</i> (AV 14)		
28 Sep 1945	30 Nov 1945	FAW-1	Sangle Point	PB2Y-5	SoPac

* Continued combat deployment in the South Pacific, moving from base to base.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
PatWing-1		1 Jul 1940
PatWing-14/FAW-14*		15 Oct 1942
FAW-2		8 Jan 1943
FAW-14		14 Jul 1944
FAW-1		19 Nov 1944
FAW-14		30 Nov 1945

* Patrol Wing 14 was redesignated Fleet Air Wing 14 on 1 November 1942.

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

A squadron PB2Y-2 in flight.



VPB-15

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron FIFTEEN (VP-15) on 15 March 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron FIFTEEN (VPB-15) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 23 November 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The design submitted to BuAer by VPB-15 in 1944 featured a silhouette of the PB2Y-5 Coronado, the



The squadron's insignia.

squadron's assigned aircraft. It is superimposed on a circular globe map in the lower left (Pacific) portion, with a compass rose in the upper right (Atlantic) portion. Marked on the continents were the locations where the squadron had been deployed during its brief existence as VP-15: Bermuda; Quonset Point, R.I.; Coco Solo, C.Z.; Galapagos Islands, Ecuador; and San Diego, Calif. Colors: field, pale blue; plane, indigo; star, indigo; continents and islands, yellow; letters and outlines, black.

Chronology of Significant Events

15 Mar 1943: VP-15 was established at NAS San Diego, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-14. The squadron was equipped with the PB2Y-3 Coronado four-engine heavy seaplane.

15 May 1943: Upon completion of the squadron shakedown of personnel and equipment, VP-15 was transferred to NAS Bermuda under the operational

control of FAW-5. Principal duties were to provide ASW, patrol searches and convoy coverage along the eastern seaboard. On 1 August 1943, administrative control shifted from FAW-5 to FAW-9.

21 Apr 1944: VP-15 was transferred to NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., under the operational control of FAW-3. One detachment was deployed to Corinto, Ecuador, and a second to the Galapagos Islands.

15 Oct 1944: VP-15 was transferred NAS San Diego, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-14. The squadron was reformed, training for all hands commenced, and refitting of all equipment was begun in preparation for transfer to the South Pacific.

1 Dec 1944: The squadron's well-worn PB2Y-3 aircraft were replaced with 15 new PB2Y-5s fresh from the factory.

2 Mar 1945: VPB-15 began the transpac to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. All 15 aircraft arrived safely. After a brief period for settling in, the squadron began a period of intense training in preparation for combat.

12 Apr 1945: The squadron departed Kaneohe for Tanapag Harbor, Saipan, arriving on 15 April, where it commenced daily patrols and antishipping patrols immediately upon arrival. During this period the squadron came under the operational control of FAW-1.

4 May 1945: The Search and Reconnaissance Command was established at NAB Saipan under the operational control of FAW-18. VPB-15 was brought into this command shortly thereafter.

16 May 1945: A detachment of three aircraft was sent to Kerama Rhetto. The remainder of the squadron at Saipan continued long-range patrols, and on 1 July 1945, extended them to Marcus Island. By the end of September 1945 the squadron was based ashore at NAB Saipan, awaiting orders to stand down.

23 Nov 1945: VPB-15 was disestablished at Saipan.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS San Diego, Calif.	15 Mar 1943
NAS Bermuda	15 May 1943
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	21 Apr 1944
NAS San Diego, Calif.	15 Oct 1944
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	2 Mar 1945
NAB Saipan	12 Apr 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Samuel M. Pickering	15 Mar 1943
LCDR Ward T. Shields	21 Aug 1943
LCDR R. K. Henderson	26 Nov 1944

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB2Y-3	Mar 1943
PB2Y-5	Dec 1944

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
15 May 1943	21 Apr 1944	FAW-5/9	Bermuda	PB2Y-3	Lant
21 Apr 1944	15 Oct 1944	FAW-3	Coco Solo	PB2Y-3	Carib
21 Apr 1944*	15 Oct 1944	FAW-3	Corinto	PB2Y-3	Pac
21 Apr 1944*	15 Oct 1944	FAW-3	Galapagos	PB2Y-3	Pac
2 Mar 1945	12 Apr 1945	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB2Y-5	WestPac
12 Apr 1945	23 Nov 1945	FAW-1/18	Saipan	PB2Y-5	SoPac
16 May 1945	23 Nov 1945	FAW-18	Kerama R.	PB2Y-5	SoPac

* The deployment dates are for squadron detachments.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		15 Mar 1943
FAW-5		15 May 1943
FAW-9		1 Aug 1943
FAW-3		21 Apr 1944
FAW-14		15 Oct 1944
FAW-2		2 Mar 1945
FAW-1		12 Apr 1945

Wing Assignments—Continued

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-18		4 May 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	



A PB2Y in flight.

VPB-16

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron SIXTEEN (VP-16) on 20 December 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron SIXTEEN (VPB-16) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 30 June 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The insignia chosen by VPB-16 focused on the element of luck or good fortune in the mission of the patrol squadron. Its design featured two dice—one showing six, the other a one—superimposed over a lightning bolt on a circular background. The lightning bolt could typify either the strike from above or the electronic nature of squadron communications. If the latter, the squadron's luck almost deserted it in its



The squadron's only insignia.

most important time of need (see the chronology entry for 17 June 1944). Colors: background, black; die, white with black dots; lightning, yellow.

Chronology of Significant Events

3 Jan 1944: VP-16 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., under operational control of FAW-5, as a seaplane patrol squadron flying the twin-engine PBM-3D Mariner.

12 Mar 1944: After a brief period of shakedown training, the squadron was relocated to NAS Key West, Fla., for further training in ASW. On 6 April 1944, orders were received to transfer the squadron assets and personnel to NAS Alameda, Calif., for deployment to the South Pacific.

11 Apr 1944: VP-16 began the transpac from NAS Alameda, Calif., to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. By 8 May 1944, the squadron was ready for continuation of combat training, commencing with patrols and ASW training in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands under the operational command of FAW-2. Lieutenant W. R. Briggs and his crew ditched enroute and spent 44 hours in life rafts before being rescued without injuries.

7 Jun 1944: VP-16 departed for Eniwetok, having been operational at the beginning of the month. By 17

June 1944, the squadron was conducting searches and patrols during the Marianas Campaign. Tender support at Eniwetok was provided by *Pocomoke* (AV 9).

17 Jun 1944: When word of the approach of the Japanese fleet reached Admiral R. A. Spruance, commander of the forces engaged in the capture of Saipan, he called for patrol aircraft from the Marshalls to assist other forces in guarding against a surprise attack. Five PBMs of VP-16 arrived off Saipan on 17 June 1944 and based aboard *Ballard* (AVD 10), which was operating in the open sea within range of enemy guns ashore. One of the aircraft became inoperative, reducing the number available for patrol to four. These aircraft conducted a search to the west, and at 0115 on 19 June one of them located the enemy force of about 40 ships 470 miles west of Guam. Unable to contact the base because of radio problems, the pilot was forced to fly back to deliver the message. The information did not reach Admiral Spruance until seven hours after the contact. Because the exact location of the enemy was not known, he launched the aircraft of Task Force 58 late, but just in time to catch the enemy aircraft as they approached. The resulting battle became known as the "Marianas Turkey Shoot," and was the opening day of the Battle of the Philippine Sea.

19 and 22 Jun 1944: Casualties from friendly fire occurred on two occasions. On the 19th one crewman was killed after a squadron PBM returning from patrol was fired on by F6F Hellcats. On the 22nd, Lieutenant Harry R. Flachsbarth and his crew were shot down at night by a destroyer of TG 58. There were no survivors.

1 Aug 1944: The remaining squadron aircraft arrived at NAB Saipan. At that time, VP-16 was the only night flying PBM squadron in the Pacific. *Pocomoke* (AV 9) became overcrowded, and the overflow crews moved aboard *Onslow* (AVP 48). The squadron flew 249 missions during the remainder of the Saipan campaign. It was relieved on 19 August 1944 by VP-18.

21 Aug 1944: VP-16 had been operating from several remote bases with tender support for two months. It regrouped at Ebeye Island for maintenance and repair before further deployment. The squadron was transferred to FAW-1 for operations in the western Caroline Islands.

17 Sep 1944: VP-16 was transferred to Kossol Passage, Palau, with tender support by *Pocomoke* (AV 9). During this period the squadron conducted night operations and Dumbo work during the Palau Campaign.

28 Sep 1944: Lieutenant Daniel U. Thomas crashed at sea while on night patrol. One crewman survived and was rescued the next day.

1 Oct 1944: VP-16 was redesignated VPB-16. The squadron continued to conduct antishipping patrols at night and Dumbo missions in the area around the Palau island group through the middle of November 1944. On the night of 1–2 October 1944, a squadron

PBM-3D flown by Lieutenant Floyd H. Wardlow, Jr., dropped a Mark 24 mine on a suspected submarine target 50 miles northwest of Palau. No further sonobuoy contact was obtained after the attack and Lieutenant Wardlow and crew returned to their patrol sector. The next day a hunter-killer group located a badly damaged submarine 12 miles from Lieutenant Wardlow's attack, indicating that his efforts were successful in at least damaging the enemy. *Samuel B. Miles* (DE 183) sank the submarine, later identified by postwar records as *I-177*. Commanding officer of *I-177* was Lieutenant Commander Masaki Watanabe and there were 101 men aboard when she was sunk. Also aboard the submarine when she was sunk was the commanding officer of Submarine Division 34, Captain Kanji Matsumura.

23 Nov 1944: VPB-16 was relieved at Kossol Passage for return to NAS Kaneohe and the continental United States. After a brief period of maintenance and refit, the squadron commenced the transpac back to NAS Alameda on 9 December, with the last squadron aircraft arriving on 13 December 1944.

30 Jun 1945: VPB-16 was disestablished at NAS Alameda, Calif..

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	3 Jan 1944
NAS Key West, Fla.	12 Mar 1944
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	11 Apr 1944
NAS Alameda, Calif.	9 Dec 1944

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR W. J. Scarpino	20 Dec 1943

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3D	Mar 1944

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
11 Apr 1944	*	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PBM-3D	WestPac
7 Jun 1944	*	FAW-2	Eniwetok	PBM-3D	SoPac
			<i>Pocomoke</i> (AV 9)		
1 Aug 1944	*	FAW-2	Saipan	PBM-3D	SoPac
			<i>Pocomoke</i> (AV 9)		
			<i>Onslow</i> (AVP 48)		
17 Sep 1944	23 Nov 1944	FAW-1	Palau	PBM-3D	SoPac

* Continued combat deployment in the South Pacific, moving from base to base.

Air Wing Assignments

<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		3 Jan 1944
FAW-14		6 Apr 1944
FAW-2		11 Apr 1944
FAW-1		21 Aug 1944
FAW-14		9 Dec 1944

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	