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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
CARRIER AIR GROUP FIVE

CVG5/A16-13/(gls)
Serial 06-52

[redacted]

2 February 1952

From: Commander Carrier Air Group FIVE
To: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. ESSEX (CV-9)

Subj: Action Report of Carrier Air Group FIVE (26 December 1951 - 1 February 1952).

Ref: (a) OpNav Instruction 3480.1
(b) CinCPacFlt Instruction 3480.1

1. This report is submitted in compliance with reference (a) for inclusion in the Action Report of U.S.S. ESSEX (CV-9) and the division of data between calendar months is shown in compliance with reference (b).

PART I: COMPOSITION OF OWN FORCES AND MISSION

a. The composition of the group follows:

UNIT	TYPE A/C	OPERATIONAL A/C 12/26	OPERATIONAL A/C 2/1	PILOTS 12/26	PILOTS 2/1
CVG-5 CDR H. U. BEEBE	None	None	None	1*	1*
VF-51 CDR E. M. BEAUCHAMP	F9F-2	16	13	21	19
VF-172 CDR M. E. BARNETT	F2H-2	14	15	22	21
VF-53 CDR H. J. TRUM III	F4U-4B	16	14	20	20
VF-54 CDR P. N. GRAY	AD-2	4	1	28**	25**
	AD-3	5	3		
	AD-4	4	3		
	AD-4L	3	1		
	AD-4Q	1	1		
VC-3 (Unit "B") LCDR J. F. DOHERTY	F4U-5NL	3	3	5	5
VC-11 LT M. R. MILLER	AD-4W	2	2	5	5
VC-35 LCDR F. F. BERTAGNA	AD-4NL	3	3	5	5
VC-61 LT S. L. JAYNES	F9F-2P	3	2	4	4
	F2H-2P		2		
	TOTAL	74	63	111	105

* The Air Group Commander flies regularly with VF-51 and VF-54.
** Includes the Air Group Operations Officer.

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b. MISSION

The primary mission of Air Group FIVE during the reporting period remained the support of United Nations ground forces in Korea. This support was primarily an interdiction program for destruction of enemy lines of communication. The problem of interdiction has become more difficult however, as a result of the increased accuracy and intensity of enemy anti-aircraft fire. Night Heckler Missions have proven again that by far the greatest percentage of enemy transportation was moving during the hours of darkness.

Photographic missions have been flown daily and netted excellent results in the identification of camouflaged targets and damage assessment in addition to special missions. AEW and ASP missions provided constant protection against the possibility of enemy air or submarine action, although no contacts were made.

PART II: CHRONOLOGY

15-25 December - In port period at Yokosuka. While in port personnel were encouraged to utilize the recreational facilities available in the immediate area and to utilize the rest camp billets. Approximately 50% of enlisted men and officers were able to take advantage of these camps. Five basketball games and two boxing smokers were held during this period. ComFairJap sent a representative to the USS ESSEX to show a training film and explain the fitting and modification of the new MK III Anti-Exposure Suit. All Parachute Riggers, Squadron Survival Officers and pilots of Carrier Air Group FIVE attended this lecture and training film.

All available and urgently needed survival equipment for cold weather operations was procured while in port. This included fifty-three (53) MK III Anti-Exposure Suits and accessories, ten (10) new droppable wing rack mounted survival kits, and one hundred sixteen (116) insulated boots for all Air Group pilots. LT C. C. JONES and LT C. C. COFFEY, helicopter pilots, who have done an outstanding job, were relieved by LT G. J. JOHNSON and TIERNEY, H. (n), ALC(AP).

On 26 December Carrier Air Group FIVE, aboard the USS ESSEX, departed Yokosuka, Japan at 0600 for it's fourth combat cruise against the North Korean Communists and their Chinese allies.

26-28 December - Underway to the operating area. Due to rough seas, no flights were scheduled. Replenishing was accomplished on the 28th.

29 December - Carrier Air Group FIVE went back into action again. 89 sorties were flown, 73 rail cuts were accomplished, four buildings and three railroad bridges destroyed.

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30 December - 88 Sorties flown. The Hecklers burned nine trucks and destroyed sixteen buildings and two heavily loaded oxcarts. A new high in rail cuts was established when 121 were chalked up for the day. Other accomplishments of the day were 12 trucks, 25 buildings, 3 oxcarts, ten troops, one bridge and 1 locomotive destroyed.

31 December - Replenishing day. No air operations.

1 January - 99 Sorties were flown. The first day of the new year brought another outstanding score: seventy-three rail cuts, 2 trucks, 3 oxcarts, 3 bridges and one locomotive destroyed.

2 January - 100 Sorties were flown. 10 gun positions destroyed, 21 trucks, 47 rail cuts, 4 bridges, one highway overpass, one camouflaged tank and one jeep.

3 January - 97 Sorties were flown. The big noise was the destruction of an ammo dump. 57 rail cuts, 6 bridges, 5 by-passes, 2 oxcarts, 15 buildings, 4 trucks and one boxcar destroyed. A very serious but unavoidable accident occurred today. A Banshee landed and taxied forward to the spot. When the engines were shut down, one of the 20mm guns fired a high explosive round which hit a Panther (F9F) and exploded, injuring 5 men. This accident was due to an ear broken off the breach block lock and a leak in the compressed air system of the 20mm gun. Four of the men were on the "not serious" list and one was seriously injured. A shrapnel from the 20mm projectile severed the spinal cord.

4 January - Replenishing.

5 January - 89 Sorties were flown. 5 trucks, 69 rail cuts, 5 bridges, 18 red troops, 24 gun positions, and 7 buildings were destroyed.

6 January - 89 Sorties were flown. 37 rail cuts, 10 trucks, 5 bridges, 2 by-passes, 10 buildings, one gun position, one oil tank and a supply dump were destroyed.

Ensign RICHELTON of VF-51 flying a Panther on a rail cut recco mission when hit by flak, went into a shallow glide from which he never recovered, and crashed into a hillside.

LT ZENNER of VF-54 was hit in the canopy of his AD. He received an eye and facial injuries from the shattered glass from the canopy, but made it back to the force. The nature of the eye injury required special treatment and he was transferred to U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka.

7 January - Replenishing.

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8 January - 86 Sorties. Despite the weather closing in from the north a good day was recorded. 57 rail cuts, 10 buildings, 2 bridges, 5 by-passes, 2 warehouses and sundry small targets were destroyed.

9 January - 89 Sorties were flown. Old man weather made this day of operations doubly difficult, although an excellent score was recorded. This included 38 rail cuts, 26 buildings, 5 bridges, one locomotive and seven cars, 4 by-passes, 4 trucks, 15 gun positions, 120 enemy troops, 2 jeeps and 4 oxcarts destroyed.

ENS KELLEY of VF-54 flying an AD was seen trailing smoke following an attack on a bridge, was advised to bail out, but before he could clear the plane it rolled over and went straight in and exploded. ENS KELLEY was not seen to leave the cockpit.

10 January - Another replenishing day.

11 January - 56 Sorties were flown. Due to very heavy weather, some flights were cancelled and others were shortened. In spite of this, a good score was posted. 18 rail cuts, one by-pass, 3 oxcarts, 106 enemy troops killed and an estimate of 100 wounded, and 2 buildings destroyed.

ENS GOLLER of VF-54 flying an AD made a normal take-off, pulled up to the right, flew for about 3 minutes, then made a slow right turn, lost altitude and spiralled until he hit the water. Two helicopters and a DD went to the scene immediately and searched the area with negative results. The cause of the accident is unexplained and a board of investigation was convened.

12 January - 89 Sorties. This day brought a heavy toll in enemy territory. The tally shows 55 rail cuts, 3 locomotives and 4 boxcars which exploded, 7 by-passes, 5 trucks, 1 jeep and 8 oxcarts destroyed. Other major damage inflicted.

Captain RODEE relieved Captain WHEELOCK whose orders take him to ComAirPac. Captain RODEE is no stranger to CVG-5. While the Air Group was in combat aboard U.S.S. VALLEY FORGE in 1950, CAPT RODEE was Chief-of-Staff to CarDivTHREE.

13 January - 89 Sorties were flown. A troop occupied town was the special target of the day. 7 fires were started and 20 buildings destroyed. A supply dump was spotted and 8 separate fires were started. 90 rail cuts, 3 bridges, 7 by-passes, one relay station, 2 oxcarts, 2 trucks, 2 revetments, 12 buildings, and a stockpile of supplies destroyed.

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14 January - Replenishing.

15 January - 83 Sorties. The normal amount of damage was inflict during the day. The gun on an AD exploded on firing, causing some damage to the wing. However a friendly field was reached without incident, and the pilot was uninjured. 38 rail cuts, 8 gun positions, 3 buildings, 1 by-pass, 2 bridges, 8 enemy troops, 4 oxcarts, and a locomotive were destroyed during the day's operations. LT PRENDERGAST of VF-54 in an AD picked up some flak and began throwing off smoke, and immediately headed for the sea, which he reached safely. He made a good water landing, inflated his life raft and was picked up by a destroyer in less than 5 minutes after leaving the plane.

16 January - 85 Sorties were flown. The big prize for the day was a locomotive and an ammunition train destroyed. Other accomplishments for the day include 40 rail cuts, 2 trucks, 3 bridges, 1 building, 3 oxcarts, all destroyed. Also a sub station was left blazing.

17 January - Due to uncertain weather, replenishing was the order of the day.

18 January - 77 Sorties. A concentration of attacks on railroad track demolished 1500 yds of track between Wonsan and Kowon. 6 buildings, 8 railroad cars badly damaged, 1 destroyed, four bridges, 25 gun emplacements, 2 trucks, 25 enemy troops, and one supply dump were destroyed. Also 4 fires were started in camouflaged supply piles.

19 January - 79 Sorties. Due to heavy weather, missions were directed against secondary targets. In spite of the turbulence, snow flurries and low ceiling, the day was relatively successful.

A turn table was destroyed and round house badly damaged, 53 rail cuts, 3 gun emplacements, 2 trucks, 4 buildings, 33 enemy troops, and 16 oxcarts were destroyed. 4 fires were started in supply dumps, and 8 stacks of oil drums were destroyed. The 1500 yds of rail track torn up was extended to 4000 yds during the day's operations. Major McCOLLOM, Air Force pilot with VF-172, while flying an F2H (Banshee) was hit by AA in the middle of his run. A long tongue of flame suddenly appeared behind his plane and the run ended in an explosion as his plane crashed into the ground. He was not seen to leave the cockpit.

20 January - Replenishing.

21 January - 99 Sorties. Weather conditions again necessitated diverting strikes to secondary targets but a heavy toll was inflicted upon the enemy.

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Three locomotives, one small train, 4 box cars, 1 rail by-pass, 53 rail cuts, 2 buildings, 4 railroad bridges, 2 trucks, 4 wagons, 2 warehouses, 1 gun position, 4 oxcarts, 1 truck shed and 10 troops were destroyed. Supplies and oil stowage fires were started and damage to a transformer station was accomplished.

22 January - 93 Sorties. Commander P. N. GRAY, squadron commander of VF-54, was hit by flak and was fortunate in reaching the sea, where he ditched and was rescued by a destroyer. LTJG John ABBOT of VF-53, flying an F4U was hit by AA on his fourth bomb run and headed for the water. The plane was afire and he was advised to bail out. He rolled the plane over and parachuted into the water. He was rescued by helicopter. LTJG E. V. LANEY, in attempting to drop a raft to the helicopter aircrewman who put ABBOT in the sling and remained in the water, had the raft foul up on the tail of his Corsair and he was forced to make a crash landing on the beach. After evading enemy gunfire and being chased into the water, he was picked up by helicopter receiving protection from accompanying planes which strafed enemy positions. The aircrewman from ROCHESTER was also successfully retrieved, making a total of 3 rescues for the ROCHESTER helicopter pilot.

The toll in damaged and destroyed targets was heavy against the enemy during the day. Fifty-one rail cuts, 7 buildings, 3 bridges and 2 by-passes were destroyed; 16 troops were killed and 4 trucks and 4 gun positions destroyed. Three camouflaged locomotives, which had been spotted by photo pilots from the day before, were badly damaged. Other major damage was inflicted upon train cars, buildings, and bridges.

23 January - 84 Sorties. Photo pilots located 7 locomotives in a marshalling yard, which were chosen as the main objective of the day. 21 rail cuts and 1500 yards of track were destroyed. One relay station was fired and appeared to explode. 3 buildings, 2 supply dumps, 2 bridges, 2 trucks and one by-pass were destroyed. The big prize for the day was 2 locomotives destroyed and 4 damaged, 10 rail cars destroyed and 19 damaged.

24 January - Replenishing.

25 January - Flight operations were cancelled, due to rough seas.

26 January - 83 Sorties. The major targets for the day were trains. One locomotive was destroyed and 5 badly damaged. 14 train cars were destroyed and 54 damaged. 55 rail cuts, were made. 2 gun positions, 4 trucks, 3 houses, 3 bridges, 1 by-pass and 9 buildings were destroyed. In a troop billeting area, 20 huts were destroyed and 40 damaged. At a supply point, 9 buildings were destroyed. 26 buildings were badly damaged, most of which were in a "Commie" Headquarters area. One relay station was bombed and left ablaze producing much fireworks. A huge fuel fire was ignited.

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LTJG L. R. CHESHIRE of VF-51 flying an F9F was the victim of a fatal accident. On his second run on a camouflaged locomotive, his plane was hit by AA and he headed for Wonsan Bay. His plane was on fire but he made a perfect let down for ditching near a destroyer. Suddenly, his ejection seat left the plane, which was almost on the water. The destroyer was at the scene immediately and despite a thorough search of the area LTJG CHESHIRE was not recovered.

27 January - 87 Sorties. In spite of the heavy weather closing in, a successful day of operations was accomplished.

Lieutenant R. L. HUGHES of VC-3 was hit during an early morning heckler mission and was forced to land at a friendly field south of the bombline.

The bad news carried to the enemy during the day included; 51 rail cuts, the destruction of one locomotive and 29 boxcars, two gun positions, 1 transformer, 9 buildings, 4 bridges, 2 by-passes, 2 trucks and 4 oxcarts. A relay station was also badly damaged.

28 January - Replenishing.

29 January - 77 Sorties. 57 rail cuts, 2 locomotives and 8 boxcars were destroyed. Six cars badly damaged. 6 trucks were destroyed and 4 badly damaged. 4 supply piles were destroyed. 17 enemy troops were killed. Two gun emplacements were silenced.

30 January - 67 Sorties. Due to the limited number of airplanes, two large strikes were scheduled in place of three smaller ones.

In the first strike CDR P. N. GRAY, Commanding Officer of Fitron FIFTY-FOUR, flying an AD was hit by flak, which damaged his propeller and he was forced to make his third ditching in Wonsan Harbor. He was quickly recovered by the U.S.S. TWINING. The score for the day showed 52 rail cuts, 1 locomotive destroyed and 1 badly damaged, 3 cars destroyed and 21 badly damaged, 5 buildings destroyed, a marshalling yard repair building badly damaged, 2 relay station and three trucks damaged. Twenty-nine enemy troops were killed.

31 January - 96 Sorties. This day marked the thirty-seventh day out of port. A heavy toll was inflicted upon the enemy during this day, the last before a rest period in Japan. The damage inflicted included 74 rail cuts, 16 buildings destroyed. Three bridges destroyed and 2 railroad bridge approaches cratered, 3 trucks destroyed; one large barracks destroyed, 4 oxcarts and 2 gun positions destroyed, and an estimated 58 enemy troops killed on strafing runs. This concluded a period in which intensive destruction was wrought upon enemy installations, transportation and communication systems, supplies and troops.

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PART III. ORDNANCE

a. 20MM GUNS

The performance of the 20MM gun throughout the Air Group has been excellent. The maintenance procedures as outlined in OP 1910 are being used and have proven effective. Operating temperatures have been as low as 30° below zero with no ill effects upon the operation of the 20MM guns. The cold weather lubricants have made a marked increase in the operating efficiency.

Breakage of breech block locks, breech block slides, and magazine slide back plate screws has occurred in some 20MM guns installed on the F9F-2 which have fired 8 to 10 thousand rounds. However, replacing breech block locks and slides after every 25 thousand rounds and making routine checks after every 6 hundred was held stoppages to a minimum. Four extra guns were maintained in a ready state by both jet squadrons to replace broken guns in returning aircraft on short notice. Four additional guns were maintained to permit exchanging of an entire gun assembly on the flight deck when guns were due for routine check. This procedure permitted work to be done on the guns on the hangar deck or in a sheltered armory away from the cold weather.

One accidental firing of an F2H-2 20MM gun on the flight deck occurred as a result of a broken breech block locking sear partially jamming the gun before the locking sear had been engaged and after a failure of air pressure while taxiing out of the arresting gear after an arrested landing.

A new type plastic muzzle cover is now being used to eliminate moisture entering the muzzle. An appreciable decrease in broken gun parts has been noted. Stress on short bursts of fire rather than extended firing has helped decrease gun troubles.

b. BOMBS

Considerable trouble has been encountered with the MK 55 bomb rack during cold weather operations. Moisture collects in the release solenoid and freezes with a resultant inoperative rack and hung bomb. This malfunction was especially prevalent the first flight after a non-operating day and occurred most frequently in racks mounted on the starboard wing where the openings on the rack were up when the wings were folded. This problem has been solved by cleaning the release solenoid plunger and lubricating the core of the solenoid with cold weather grease prescribed in OML GV18-51 for feed mechanism lubrication and the other moving parts of the rack with E-51 gun oil. It was found that hung bombs caused by frozen release solenoids could be dropped by keeping the electrical circuit to the rack closed up to two minutes thereby generating heat in the solenoid to melt the ice.

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b. BOMBS (Cont'd)

VT fuzes have been used on 2000 pound G.P. bombs for flak suppression missions. The T-91 fuze has given excellent results but the T-90 fuze has not performed satisfactorily.

Sway braces for the MK 55 bomb rack installed on the F9F-2, after being modified have given satisfactory service under heavy usage of the 250 pound G.P. bomb. The modification consisted of welding pieces of stock shaped to the curvature of the 250 pound G.P. bomb to the original sway braces, thereby producing a longer, more effective sway brace.

The Aero 14 A bomb and rocket launcher installed on the F2H-2 is moderately satisfactory. Repeated difficulty was experienced in releasing 500 pound G.P. bombs at high speeds. Most failures were at speeds of 375 to 450 knots. No bombs were returned to the ship but as high as 20% of those carried would release only at slower speeds. It was found that the bomb could usually be released in a run if a slight negative "G" force was applied at the moment of release. It appears that the releasing solenoid might not be strong enough to properly release 500 pound bombs at high speeds. All launchers were checked for releasing action on deck and were found to function normally before and after each flight.

c. ROCKETS

Rocket pigtails still break but to lessen this trouble on the F2H-2 an added bracket was built and installed on the four outboard launchers with notches to ship the pigtail after the pigtail was plugged in.

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d. ORDNANCE EXPENDITURES

MUNITIONS	F9F-2 DEC	F9F-2 JAN	F9F-2 TOTAL	F2H-2 DEC	F2H-2 JAN	F2H-2 TOTAL	F4U-4B & F4U-5NL DEC	F4U-4B & F4U-5NL JAN	F4U-4B & F4U-5NL TOTAL
2000# GP									
1000# GP									
500# GP		8	8		106	106		143	143
250# GP	95	798	893	96	592	688	45	226	271
100# GP		329	329				160	1447	1607
260# FRAG		134	134		138	138	79	625	704
350# DB								485	485
5" HVAR								7	7
5" ATAR					344	344	8	8	16
3.25 SH					256	256		8	8
NAPALM #								24	24
20MM AMMO	6335	65930	72265	10530	128593	139123	10470	101130	111600
500# SAP								744	744
11.75 ROCK								5	5
								5	5

MUNITIONS	AD-4 & AD-4NL DEC	AD-4 & AD-4NL JAN	AD-4 & AD-4NL TOTAL	TOTALS DEC	TOTALS JAN	TOTALS TOTAL
2000# GP		152	152		152	152
1000# GP	99	809	908	99	952	1051
500# GP	8	12	20	53	352	405
250# GP	278	2627	2905	629	5464	6093
100# GP		475	475	79	1429	1508
260# FRAG	10		10	10	757	767
350# DB		23	23		30	30
5" HVAR				8	360	368
5" ATAR					264	264
3.25 SH	5	83	88	5	107	112
NAPALM #	240	1716	1956	240	2460	2700
FL RES MK6		4	4		4	4
20MM AMMO	5965	61860	67825	33300	357513	390813
500# SAP					5	5
11.75 ROCK					5	5

# Denotes pounds of Napalm Powder

DEC COLUMN FOR THE PERIOD 26 - 31 DEC 1951
JAN COLUMN FOR THE PERIOD 1 - 31 JAN 1952

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PART IV. DAMAGE*

a. DAMAGE TO ENEMY

	DAMAGED			DESTROYED		
	DEC	JAN	TOTAL	DEC	JAN	TOTAL
TANKS	-	7	7	-	2	2
TRUCKS	9	134	143	18	100	118
AUTOMOBILES	-	7	7	-	3	3
LOCMOTIVES	-	26	26	1	16	17
OXCARTS	-	31	31	5	68	73
HIGHWAY BRIDGES	-	8	8	-	2#	2
HIGHWAY BY-PASSES	-	4	4	-	1	1
HIGHWAY CULVERTS	-	-	-	-	2	2
SUPPLY DUMPS	-	28	28	-	12	12
WAREHOUSES	-	6	6	-	5	5
BARRACKS & BUILDINGS	20	244	264	29	198	227
GUN EMPLACEMENTS	3	51	54	-	20	20
LUMBER PILES	-	1	1	-	-	-
BOATS	1	25	26	3	5	8
BUNKERS	-	2	2	-	8	8
RAILROAD TRACK CUTS	-	44	44	202%	1374	1576
RAILROAD CARS	-	181	181	-	88	88
RAILROAD BRIDGES	3	39	42	4	32	36
RAILROAD BY-PASSES	2	20	22	-	32	32
RAILROAD TURNTABLES	-	3	3	-	3	3
RAILROAD TUNNELS	-	4	4	-	-	-
TROOPS KILLED	-	-	-	10	569	579
CRANES	-	1	1	-	-	-
OBSERVATION POSTS	-	1	1	-	1	1
FACTORIES	-	-	-	-	1	1
AMMO DUMPS	-	-	-	-	1	1
POWER INSTALLATIONS	-	7	7	-	3	3

* These figures include only targets positively identified and the actual damaged observed. Unobserved damage or unidentified targets are not tabulated.

Bridges with at least one complete break are counted as destroyed.

% Damages where tracks are broken or cratered are counted as rail cuts.

NOTE: DECEMBER COLUMN 26 DEC - 31 DEC
JANUARY COLUMN 1 JAN - 31 JAN

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PART IV. DAMAGE

b. DAMAGE TO OWN AIRCRAFT FOR PERIOD 28 - 31 DECEMBER 1951

DATE	TYPE A/C	DAMAGE	INFLICTED BY
		VF-51	
12-29-51	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
		VF-53	
12-30-51	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	50 cal.
12-30-51	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	20MM
12-30-51	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	50 cal.
12-30-51	F4U-4B	Flak Holes	Unknown
		VF-54	
12-29-51	AD-4	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
12-30-51	AD-3	Flak Holes	37MM I
12-30-51	AD-4	Bullet Holes	50 cal. I
12-30-51	AD-4L	Flak Holes	37MM T
12-30-51	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A

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DAMAGE TO OWN AIRCRAFT FOR PERIOD 1 - 31 JANUARY 1952

1-1-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM A
1-2-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM D
1-2-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	Unknown
1-3-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	20MM
1-5-52	F9F-2	Flak Holes	40MM
1-6-52	F9F-2	Plane crashed to earth. Exploded on impact.	Unknown Auto
1-11-52	F9F-2B	Bullet Holes	8MM A
1-13-52	F9F-2B	Bullet Holes	30 cal. D
1-15-52	F9F-2B	Bullet Holes	9MM A
1-15-52	F9F-2B	Bullet Holes	9MM A
1-19-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM D
1-19-52	F9F-2B	Bullet Holes	20MM T
1-22-52	F9F-2B	Bullet Holes	20MM T
1-26-52	F9F-2	Plane crashed with Pilot. Believed projectile hit main fuel line to engine.	Unknown
1-27-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM A
1-27-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	25 cal. A & Bomb Blast
1-29-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM A
1-29-52	F9F-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM A

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DAMAGE TO OWN AIRCRAFT FOR PERIOD 1 - 31 JANUARY 1952

VF-53

DATE	TYPE A/C	DAMAGE	INFLICTED BY
1-2-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-2-52	F4U-4B	Bullet and Shrapnel Holes	30 & 50 cal. & Shrapnel
1-6-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-6-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-6-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-6-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-8-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-9-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	50 cal.
1-11-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	50 cal.
1-13-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-21-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-22-52	F4U-4B	Pilot bailed out due to fire in cockpit. Plane crashed.	20MM
1-22-52	F4U-4B	Pilot attempted to drop raft to helicopter crewman in water. Raft caught in tail of A/C. Plane crashed on beach.	
1-22-52	F4U-4B	A/C exploded and crashed in water.	
1-27-52	F4U-5NL	Flak Holes	37MM
1-29-52	F4U-4B	Bullet Holes	20MM

VF-54

1-5-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-5-52	AD-3	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-5-52	AD-3	Flak Holes	37MM T
1-6-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-6-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-6-52	AD-2	Bullet Holes	20MM A
1-8-52	AD-4L	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-8-52	AD-2	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-8-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-9-52	AD-3	Flak Holes	37 MM T
1-9-52	AD-3	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-9-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-9-52	AD-3	Plane burst in flames and crashed with pilot.	
1-11-52	AD-4L	Flak Holes	37MM T
1-11-52	AD-2	Plane crashed with pilot three minutes after take-off.	
1-12-52	AD-4L	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-12-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A

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DAMAGE TO OWN AIRCRAFT FOR PERIOD 1 - 31 JANUARY 1952

VF-54

DATE	TYPE A/C	DAMAGE	INFLICTED BY
1-13-52	AD-2	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-13-52	AD-2	Bullet Holes	20MM
1-13-52	AD-4L	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-13-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-15-52	AD-4NL	Bullet exploded in feed mechanism starting small fire.	20MM
1-15-52	AD-2	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-15-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-15-52	AD-3	A/C hit in engine resulting in complete loss of oil. Controlled landing made in Wonsan Harbor.	Unknown
1-16-52	AD-4L	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-16-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-16-52	AD-4L	Dents in Starboard wing	30 cal. A
1-16-52	AD-4L	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-16-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-18-52	AD-4	Flak Holes	37MM F
1-21-52	AD-4L	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-21-52	AD-3	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-21-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-21-52	AD-4	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-21-52	AD-4	Shell hit engine and exploded on contact. Plane ditched.	20MM E
1-22-52	AD-3	Plane ditched in water	Unknown
1-23-52	AD-4	Flak Holes	37MM E
1-26-52	AD-3	Bullet Holes	50 cal. A
1-27-52	AD-4L	Bullet Holes	20MM A
1-27-52	AD-3	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-30-52	AD-2	Plane ditched in water	

VF-172

1-2-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	30 cal. A
1-3-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-6-52	F2H-2	Flak Holes	88MM
1-6-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	20MM E
1-9-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	88MM & 30 cal. A
1-9-52	F2H-2	Flak Holes	40MM E
1-9-52	F2H-2	Warped aileron and large dent when HVAR went off.	HVAR
1-12-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM

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DAMAGE TO OWN AIRCRAFT FOR PERIOD 1 - 31 JANUARY 1952

VF-172

DATE	TYPE A/C	DAMAGE	INFLICTED BY
1-12-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM
1-15-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	30 cal.
1-19-52	F2H-2	Plane burst into flames and crashed with pilot. Exploded upon impact.	Unknown
1-21-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM
1-21-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM
1-26-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM
1-27-52	F2H-2	Bullet Holes	12.7MM

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PART V. PERSONNEL

a. OFFICER

At the end of four (4) periods of operations in the combat area, the pilot factor of 1.5 for squadrons deployed is believed to be realistic in view of the losses sustained and the average number of sorties required by current operating plans. At this point, additional losses would in all probability necessitate the requirement of replacement pilots, which would be considered undesirable in view of the time required to integrate new pilots into the teams of the squadrons. It is strongly recommended that the 1.5 pilot factor remain in effect for all squadrons in order that sustained operational committments may be met.

The following is a breakdown of combat pilot casualties suffered by Air Group during the period 22 August 1951 to 31 January 1952:

	NUMBER PILOTS DEPLOYED	ON-BOARD 31 JAN 1952	CASUALTIES
CVG-5 Staff	2	2	0
VF-51	24	19	5
VF-172	27	21*	5
VF-53	24	20**	3
VF-54	29	24%	8
VC-3	6	5#	0
VC-11	5	5	0
VC-35	6	5	1
VC-61	4	4	0
TOTAL	127	105	22

* One (1) officer transferred for discharge.
** One (1) officer ATAD FASRon SEVEN, San Diego.
% Three (3) replacement pilots report in December 1951.
# Change of teams effected with five (5) reporting.

b. ENLISTED

No Comments

c. CASUALTIES

The Air Group suffered the following casualties during this reporting period:

ENS Glen Howard RICKELTON, 527838/1315, USNR, VF-51. Aircraft hit by anti-aircraft fire during strafing run, crashed and burned. Killed in action on 6 January 1952.

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c. CASUALTIES (Cont'd)

LT Harold J. ZENNER, 413993/1310, USN, VF-54. Wounded on 6 January 1952 when enemy anti-aircraft fire shattered the canopy of his aircraft. Fragments of metal and plexiglass penetrated his right eye. Transferred to U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka.

ENS Raymond Gene KELLY, 508187/1315, USNR, VF-54. Aircraft hit by anti-aircraft fire, plane nosed over in near vertical dive, crashed and exploded. Killed in action on 9 January 1952.

LTJG Joseph Henry GOLLNER, 521481/1310, USN, VF-54. Following normal take-off, plane jettisoned one 1000 pound bomb, then climbed to an estimated 900 feet. Made three shallow right turns, the last turn steepening into a nose down spiral, and then crashed. Two helicopters conducted fruitless search. Killed on 11 January 1952.

Major Francis Norman McCOLLOM, 6386A, USAF, VF-172. Aircraft hit by anti-aircraft fire during strafing run, crashed and burned. Killed in action on 19 January 1952.

LTJG Leonard Ray CHESHIRE, 496751/1315, USNR, VF-51. Aircraft hit by anti-aircraft fire. During ditching process in Wonsan Harbor, ejection seat actuated at about 100 to 200 feet. Search proved fruitless. Killed on 26 January 1952.

d. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The strenuous operations currently conducted impose tremendous demands upon flying personnel. The concept of World War II operations when Task Forces cruised continually, seeking-out the enemy and, then, making all-out efforts in strikes against his forces and installations for periods of short duration does not hold in the Korean Theatre. Due to the lack of enemy opposition off the coast of Korea, Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN is able to remain continuously within striking range of enemy forces and installations; thus, the Navy's air war can be, and is, carried to the enemy almost at will and persistently.

Current operating plans require each carrier with embarked Air Group to remain with Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN for a period of about 30 days, and with an availability period in port of 10 days. U.S.S. ESSEX (CV-9) departed Yokosuka on 26 December 1951 and joined Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN on 28 December 1951. On 29 December, air operations were commenced for the fourth operating period. During this period, the tell-tale effects of fatigue began to show its marks after 20 days. The last

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d. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont'd)

day of operations ended on 31 January 1952 after 37 days out of port and "combat fatigue" was apparent in varying degrees among a percentage of the pilots.

The average number of sorties for the Air Group for the period 22 August 1951 to 31 January 1952 is 56 sorties per pilot, with Fighter Squadron FIFTY THREE averaging 66 sorties per pilot.

In view of the above, an operation period of 21 days, with 6 days in port and 4 days enroute, is believed to be optimum. The negative effect of longer periods are considered to have detrimental affects, both physical and psychological, on the flying personnel, with a high probability of many being grounded.

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PART VI. OPERATIONS

The fourth combat period for Carrier Air Group FIVE in the operating area ends with the major effort being placed on interdiction of enemy lines of communication.

Operating procedures of the Air Group have not changed to any great extent but the methods of conducting the interdiction program have been revised since this Air Group first entered the combat area last August. The rail cutting program has been continued throughout this period but instead of cutting track over a wide area, the concept has been to make concentrated breaks in one section of track for several miles. It is believed that by this method the enemy will be unable to make repairs readily. The effectiveness of this program is exemplified by the fact that no rail traffic has moved over the target route, Kowen to Wonsan, since the program was initiated 18 January.

Key bridges and by-passes were also assigned as primary targets on the east-west rail routes along with the eastern railroad. Bridge targets are heavily protected by anti-aircraft emplacements. The group has continued to use the coordinated attacks for flak suppression on these targets with excellent results.

Two F2H-2P photo aircraft were ordered to this group during the operating period and were found to be a great improvement over the F9F-2P because of the types of cameras installed. The F2H-2P has one (1) K-38 camera with a 36 inch focal length and two (2) K-17s, one with a 12 inch focal length and one with a 6 inch focal length. The F9F-2P has two (2) K-17s with 12 inch focal length.

Fighter Squadron FIFTY FOUR installed a K-17 camera with a 24 inch focal length in a wing package on the AD aircraft and has obtained excellent results for target assessment. This camera is a great improvement over the K-25 which is most generally used for this type of work. A report of construction and installation of the K-17 camera package is being submitted by separate correspondence.

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FLIGHT SUMMARY BY COMBAT SORTIES

A/C TYPE	F9F-2		F2H-2P F9F-2P		F2H-2		F4U-4B		F4U-5NL		AD-4		AD-4NL		AD-4W		TOTALS		
SQUADRON	VF-51		VC-61		VF-172		VF-53		VC-3		VF-54		VC-35		VC-11				
MONTH	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	DEC	JAN	TOTAL
STRIKE		48				71	35	340			33	319					68	778	846
CAP	12	165			12	140											24	305	329
RECCO	24	193			20	175											44	368	412
PHOTO			8	*24 63													8	87	95
PHOTO ESCORT	4	35			4	47											8	82	90
ASP															2	72	2	72	74
ASP ESCORT								6		4		38	2	24			2	72	74
NGF							4	32				4					4	36	40
HECKLER									3	33			5	27			8	60	68
FIGHTER SWEEP					4												4		4
FIGHTER ESCORT								2										2	2
WEATHER RECCO										2								2	2
SPECIAL MISSION														2				2	2
TOTALS	40	441	8	87	40	433	39	380	3	39	34	361	7	53	2	72	172	1867	
TOTAL FOR COMBAT PER	481		95		473		419		42		395		60		74			2039	

* F2H-2P PHOTO PLANE

NOTE: COMBAT PERIOD COVERED 26 DEC 1951 - 31 JAN 1952

DEC COLUMN FOR PERIOD 26 - 31 DEC 1951
JAN COLUMN FOR PERIOD 1 - 31 JAN 1952

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SQUADRON	TOTAL COMBAT HOURS DEC	JAN	TOTAL	AVERAGE COMBAT HOUR PER PILOT DEC	JAN	TOTAL	AVERAGE COMBAT SORTIE PER PILOT DEC	JAN	TOTAL
VF-51	59.6	678.4	738.0	2.9	34.0	36.9	2.0	22.0	24.0
VF-172	62.9	734.8	797.7	3.0	35.0	38.0	1.9	21.5	23.4
VF-53	111.7	1098.9	1210.6	5.6	54.9	60.5	1.9	19.0	20.9
VF-54	97.3	1038.7	1136.0	3.5	41.9	45.4	1.21	15.8	17.0
VC-3	8.5	101.9	110.4	1.7	20.4	22.1	.6	7.8	8.4
VC-11	2.9	155.3	158.2	.6	31.0	31.6	.2	14.2	14.4
VC-35	19.2	169.2	188.4	4.8	33.8	38.6	1.8	13.2	15.0
VC-61	11.9	87.6	99.5	3.0	21.9	24.9	2.0	15.8	17.8
TOTAL AVER	374.0	4064.8	4438.8	3.0	34.2	37.2	1.4	16.2	17.6

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PART VII. MAINTENANCE

a. CONVENTIONAL MAINTENANCE

No Comments

b. JET MAINTENANCE

Although all TJ-C1 barometric unit aneroid shafts in F9F-2s were closely inspected and oiled prior to commencing operations on 28 December, many instances of aneroid shaft seizure continued to occur. After fifteen days of operating, all shafts were inspected and four were found to be frozen. Engines again have been checked, all shafts removed, cleaned, and coated with Molybdenum Disulfide No. 2. Sufficient time has not elapsed since the Molycoat has been applied and accurate information as to its ability to prevent re-occurrence of the difficulties is not yet available. Pump surging as reported in the last action report has been virtually eliminated by careful and punctual cleaning of the fuel pump filters. However, the lack of replacement seals and filters is beginning to cause internal leaks which eventually will necessitate pump replacement.

PART VIII. MATERIAL

The first AOG items to be requisitioned for F9F-2s since commencing combat operations occurred during this period. The lack of adequate support to the parent supply agency aboard has resulted in depleting the reserve stocks, causing serious shortages in many items. AOG stub requisitions submitted this period are:

Damper, shimmy	R82-HL-A-14096
Unit, ignition #1	R85-GLA1-3400-1
Motor	R17-M-3196-50
Amplifier, master compass	R88-A-499

Other items for F9F-2s that are considered critical include:

Tip Tanks, Right & Left	R82-GR-132860
Pumps, fuel	R85-BPD-368005-BU,BL
Seal	R85-BPD-368532
Seal	R85-BPD-361608
Filter assembly	R85-BPD-368559
Stabilizer assembly	R82-GR-130908
Ring, packing	R85-BPD-316-S-14

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PART VIII. MATERIAL

For the F2H-2s, the lack of main landing gear wheels is becoming critical. At present seven (7) wheels are approaching the safety limits and, if new wheels are not received in the near future, it is likely that the F2H-2s will become AOG.

Due to the large number of hits by anti-aircraft fire, and the type of repair necessary to repair the damage, lack of the more common metal extrusions is becoming apparent. No extrusions common to the F2H-2s are in stock at present and it is recommended that a stock of extrusions be maintained aboard ship such that more structural repairs can be accomplished thereby reducing the number of structural replacements necessary.

M. U. EBBE

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