



**USS SAIPAN (LHA-2)  
FPO NEW YORK 09501**

IN REPLY REFER TO:

LHA2:01Q:ivm  
5750

Ser 123

**23 FEB 1978**

**From:** Commanding Officer, USS SAIPAN (LHA-2)  
**To:** Director of Naval History (OP-09B9), Washington Navy  
Yard, Washington, D. C. 20390

**Subj:** Command History 1977

**Ref:** (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

**Encl:** (1) Command History, USS SAIPAN (LHA-2)

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is sub-  
mitted.

  
F. W. JOHNSTON



COMMAND HISTORY  
USS SAIPAN (LHA-2)  
15 OCT 77 - 31 DEC 77

1. Command Organization

a. Commanding Officer

(1) Captain Fred W. Johnston, USN  
15 OCT 77 - 31 DEC 77

b. Mission

(1) To embark, deploy and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in an assault by helicopters, landing craft, amphibious vehicles or by a combination of all these methods.

(2) Evacuation and disaster relief.

c. Composition of Command

(1) The crew of SAIPAN consists of 50 Officers and 759 enlisted men. A Nucleus Landing Force is also embarked. Additional units embarked when fully loaded out will include a Marine Amphibious Unit, which consists of a Battalion Landing Team and a Composite Helicopter Squadron. USS SAIPAN has also served as flagship for Commander, Amphibious Group TWO.

(2) CNO MSG 092224Z AUG 77 authority for activation.  
(Annex)

d. Homeport

(1) Naval Base, Norfolk, VA

2. Summary of Operations.

a. 15 OCT 77 Commissioning Ingalls Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, MS.

b. 16 OCT 77 - 31 OCT 77 Post Commissioning, Outfitting, and Training Period.

c. 25 OCT 77 - 31 OCT 77 Transit to NORVA

d. 1 NOV 77 - 11 DEC 77 Upkeep, Training Restricted Availability.

e. 12 DEC 77 - 13 DEC 77 Independent Ship Exercise, Virginia Capes.

f. 13 DEC 77 - 31 DEC 77 Upkeep, Training Holiday Period.

3. Special Topics.

a. Major Command Problems.

(1) The major command problems during this period were the manpower, material, supply and training problems normally associated with the post commissioning, outfitting and shake-down period.

b. Significant Statistics.

(1) Hours flown 28.1, 100 landings 13 DEC 77.

c. Weapons Systems.

(1) 3 5"/54 Guns MK 45 Mod 0

(2) 6 20mm Machine Gun MK 16 Mod 5

(3) 2 Basic Point Defense Missile Launchers MK 25 Mod 0

(4) MK 115 MDO Fire Control System

(5) MK 86 MD4 Fire Control System

d. First Helicopter Landing 25 OCT 77  
First Boat into Well Deck 25 OCT 77

e. Distinguished Visitors.

(1) Senator John C. Stennis, Principal Speaker, Commissioning Ceremony.

(2) Louis A. Benavente, Mayor of Saipan, Commissioning Guest.

(3) Edward Hildalgo, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics, Commissioning Guest.

(4) Mrs. Isabelle Middendorf, Ship's Sponsor.

(5) Herman R. Guerrero, Speaker, Northern Marianas Legislature, Commissioning Guest.

4. Documentary Annexes.

a. Picture of USS SAIPAN (LHA-2).

b. Picture of Captain Johnston, Commanding Officer.

c. Commissioning Book

d. Welcome Aboard Brochure

e. CNO MSG 092224Z AUG 77