

CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON 115

FPO 6601



VAW-115  
1972

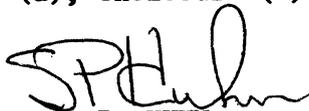
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VAW-115  
OPS:WFR:em  
5750  
Ser: 05  
11 February 1973

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (Unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1))

From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron  
ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN (VAW-115)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)  
Subj: Command History (OPNAV Report 5750-1); submission of  
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B  
Encl: (1) Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN  
Command History for calendar year 1972

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.

  
S. P. HUHN

Copy to:  
Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)

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A. (U) Command Organization.

1. CDR R. J. MIELDAZIS, USN, [REDACTED]/1310: 1 January to 1 April 1972.

2. CDR S. P. HUHNS, USN, [REDACTED]/1310: 1 April through 31 December 1972.

3. The squadron's primary mission utilizing the E-2B/ATDS aircraft is to provide the task force OTC with airborne early warning (AEW) data on targets entering the surrounding airspace. In addition to this mission, the ATDS unit is capable of performing many secondary command and control functions.

4. Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN was homeported at NAS North Island, California. From 10 April through 31 December 1972, the squadron was embarked onboard USS MIDWAY (CVA-41) for its fifth deployment to the Western Pacific.

5. The squadron reported to Commander Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing ELEVEN until 1 July 1972. On 1 July, COMCARAEWWING ELEVEN was dissolved and the squadron reported to Commander Attack Carrier Air Wing FIVE.

6. The standard organizational structure for VAW aviation commands was maintained by the squadron throughout the year. An average of 22 officers and 100 enlisted men were assigned. Twenty-six (10 aviators, 11 naval flight officers, and 5 flight technicians) flight crew personnel comprised five crews for continuous operation of four E2B aircraft. One ground maintenance officer was assigned.

B. (U) Summary of Operations.

1. General: Calendar year 1972 was subdivided into two major periods as follows:

a. 1 January - 9 April: The squadron was temporarily based ashore at NAS North Island undergoing training for deployment.

b. 10 April - 31 December: The squadron was embarked onboard USS MIDWAY (CVA-41) during type training and combat operations in Southeast Asia.

2. Detailed Schedule:

Ashore:

1-4 JAN	- - - - -	- - - - -	Safety Standown
5 JAN-15 FEB	- - - - -	- - - - -	Intensive flight crew training
16 FEB	- - - - -	- - - - -	Over-the-horizon missile shoot exercise with USS LONG BEACH

17-18 FEB - - - - - LINK-11 exercise with USS  
LONG BEACH/USS MIDWAY  
19-23 FEB - - - - - COMCARAEWWING ELEVEN  
qualification exercises  
24 FEB-14 MAR - - - - - Day/night FCLP's for pilots  
15-25 MAR - - - - - CVW-5 Fallon weapons deployment  
26-31 MAR - - - - - Intensive flight crew training  
1 APR - - - - - Change of Command  
2-9 APR - - - - - Onboard USS MIDWAY for  
Operational Readiness Inspection

Deployed:

10 APR - - - - - Departed CONUS  
11-21 APR - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.  
22-23 APR - - - - - Inport Subic, R. P.  
24-29 APR - - - - - Enroute Southern Station/TTY  
30 APR-12 MAY - - - - - Southern Station Operations  
13-31 MAY - - - - - Yankee Station Operations  
1 JUN - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.  
2-10 JUN - - - - - Inport Subic, R. P.  
11 JUN - - - - - Enroute Yankee Station  
12 JUN-7 JUL - - - - - Yankee Station Operations  
8 JUL - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.  
9-15 JUL - - - - - Inport Subic, R. P.  
16 JUL - - - - - Enroute Yankee Station  
17 JUL-13 AUG - - - - - Yankee Station Operations  
14 AUG - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.  
15 AUG - - - - - Inport Subic, R. P.  
16 AUG - - - - - Enroute Hong Kong  
17-22 AUG - - - - - Inport Hong Kong  
23 AUG - - - - - Enroute Yankee Station  
24 AUG-10 SEP - - - - - Yankee Station Operations  
11 SEP - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.  
12-17 SEP - - - - - Inport Subic, R. P.  
18-19 SEP - - - - - Enroute Yankee Station  
20 SEP-12 OCT - - - - - Yankee Station Operations  
13 OCT - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.  
14-20 OCT - - - - - Inport Subic, R. P.  
21-22 OCT - - - - - Enroute Yankee Station  
23 OCT-23 NOV - - - - - Yankee Station Operations  
24 NOV - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.  
25-30 NOV - - - - - Inport Subic, R. P.  
1-2 DEC - - - - - Enroute Yankee Station  
3-20 DEC - - - - - Yankee Station Operations  
21-22 DEC - - - - - Enroute Singapore  
23-29 DEC - - - - - Inport Singapore  
30-31 DEC - - - - - Enroute Subic, R. P.

3. (U) Summary of shore-based period:

a. Training: During the minimal shore based period the squadron underwent intensive flight crew training. The pilot and NFO

weapons system trainers were utilized extensively during this time frame. An accelerated flight crew training program was initiated due to the short turnaround time and available squadron aircraft were utilized to the maximum extent possible in order to complete the training syllabus and qualify the flight crews. Aircraft rework cycles and post deployment maintenance precluded some tactical mission flights. Due to a reduced aircraft availability in the replacement VAW training squadron, VAW-115 provided additional sorties to RVAW-110 to help alleviate a student backlog.

b. Training Exercises: Exercises were conducted with USS MIDWAY and USS LONG BEACH in February utilizing the high speed LINK-11 system. These exercises met with limited success; however, they provided valuable training for the CIC crews.

c. Weapons Deployment: The squadron was deployed to NAF Fallon in March for commencement of integrated Air Wing FIVE pre-deployment training. The E-2B, in spite of its radar ineffectiveness over land, was employed in such a manner that maximum mission utilization was obtained on every flight. Flights flown during the deployment were largely in support of seven major coordinated Air Wing strikes. The squadron was responsible for providing strike control, control of opposition aircraft, SAR assistance, and ARTCC position reports for the strike cells. FCLP periods were completed which significantly increased the readiness of squadron pilots. A total of 64.8 hours were flown during the Fallon deployment.

d. ORE/ORI Inspection: The operational readiness exercise and inspections (ORE/ORI) were cancelled due to an early deployment of the squadron to the Western Pacific.

4. (C) Summary of deployed period:

a. (C) General: The squadron departed CONUS after a 90 hour notice on 10 April to augment the naval force build-up in the SEVENTH Fleet due to increased enemy operations in the Vietnam Theater. The squadron remained deployed through the end of calendar year 1972 with a scheduled return date of 3 March 1973. The flight crews saw the E-2B consistently employed to its maximum capability and the results were indeed gratifying. The E-2B, also a force asset, became the focal point of airborne tactical operations against North Vietnam. During the many days operating on station in the Gulf of Tonkin, the squadron played a substantial role in every significant overt campaign initiated by Commander Task Force SEVEN SEVEN; initial and subsequent mining of Haiphong Harbor, ALFA strikes, interdiction strikes into Northern route packs, tactical air support in Southern military regions, and support of the great aerial blitz initiated against the Hanoi/Haiphong heartland on 17 December. In such a demanding environment it was a tremendous pleasure to see the Air Wing and ship rely so heavily on the squadron and put great trust in the capabilities of the E-2B.

b. (C) WESTPAC Transit: One interesting aspect of the WESTPAC transit during the Russian BEAR aircraft alert posture was the minimum radiation (MIMIRAD) concept imposed by CARDIV ONE. Two E-2's were stationed about 80 miles from the force and were permitted only 3 radar scans each 5 minutes. The procedure proved unsatisfactory for contact identification or early warning. This period, however, was extremely beneficial for the flight crews and aircraft systems to gain much needed work.

c. (U) Flight Ops: Shortly after commencing combat operations in May, the squadron was forced to begin operating with only three aircraft onboard. Due to MIDWAY deck loading restraints this continued for the remainder of the deployment. In spite of a reduced aircraft compliment the maintenance department was able to produce at least one, and usually two, full system capable aircraft. Regular flight operations, both ALFA and cyclic, launched the E-2 ahead of the "pack"; however, normal early E-2 launches on MIDWAY were not permitted. Spare aircraft were manned only for extreme high priority missions; consequently, crew fatigue was always at a minimum and airborne crews were at peak efficiency. Utilizing the "hot spin" evolution when necessary, the squadron was able to provide maximum full system coverage. The "normal" seven event cyclic day consisted of four E-2 launches covering a double cycle (about 4.3 hours) each with a one cycle overlap on event six.

d. (U) Southern Station Operations: Operating on Southern Station during the initial twelve days of the deployment provided the flight crews with an opportunity to function as an airborne command and control center. Acting as a coordination interface between MIDWAY and the Seventh Air Force in Military Regions III and IV, the squadron performed strike control/flight following for CVW-5 aircraft, providing both manual vectoring and LINK-4A guidance.

e. (C) Yankee Station Operations: The vast majority of MIDWAY combat operations was conducted on Yankee Station. During cyclic operations and ALFA strikes, the squadron was responsible for airborne early warning, surface surveillance, personal identification radar advisory zone (PIRAZ) assistance, strike control, flight following, "feet dry/wet" reports, OV-1D aircraft control (NIGHTHAWK mission), surface combat air patrol (SURCAP) control, MIG monitoring, communications relay for the secure Air Force GREEN circuit, search and rescue coordination, and China/Hainan border warnings. A detailed operational/maintenance analysis is contained in Annex H.

f. (U) Operational Overview: The multi-capabilities of the E-2B aircraft and the consistent overall superior performance of VAW crews permitted Force Commanders to include, as a matter of course, the E-2 in all phases of force tactical operations. More and more, message traffic guidance and directives placed heavy demands upon VAW squadrons to play a significant role in Attack Carrier Striking Force Operations.

g. (U) Morale: The major frustration of the deployment was the uncertainty of return to CONUS. It was disheartening, to say the least, to go early and to be extended time after time. In spite of the extensions and long hours of hard work, with occasional breaks at Subic, squadron morale remained high and the maintenance personnel and flight crews responded to the challenge in an unequalled manner.

C. (C) Special Topics.

1. (C) Statistics:

a. (U) The following squadron aircraft were assigned:

Bureau No. 150538 (24 JAN - 31 DEC)  
Bureau No. 150539 (01 JAN - 06 MAR)  
Bureau No. 151705 (10 MAR - 08 AUG)  
Bureau No. 151716 (01 JAN - 10 JAN)  
Bureau No. 151719 (01 JAN - 06 APR)  
Bureau No. 151714 (09 APR - 31 DEC)  
Bureau No. 152480 (01 JAN - 31 DEC)

b. (U) The following operational statistics are for the shore based period (1 January - 9 April):

Sorties Flown - - - - - 158  
Hours Flown - - - - - 373.6  
Successful LINK-11 Hours - - - - 26.7  
Carrier Landings Day/Night - - - 15/6

c. (C) The following operational statistics are for the WESTPAC transit period (10 - 29 April):

Sorties Flown - - - - - 22  
Hours Flown - - - - - 65.2  
Successful LINK-11 Hours - - - - 0  
Carrier Landings Day/Night - - - 14/0

d. (C) The following summary of performance data are for combat operations (30 April - 31 December):

Sorties Scheduled - - - - - 560  
Sorties Flown - - - - - 530  
Hours Scheduled - - - - - 1,478.9  
Hours on Station - - - - - 1,326.1  
Hours AEW System Coverage - - - 1,267.7  
Hours Successful LINK-11 - - - 1,049.8  
Hours FSC - - - - - 1,047.1  
Hours AEW Degraded - - - - - 46.4  
AEW Coverage Unscheduled - - - 50.9  
Total Hours Flown - - - - - 1,791.7  
Carrier Landings Day/Night - - 321/172

e. (C) The following operational statistical totals are for calendar year 1972:

Sorties Flown - - - - - 710  
Hours Flown - - - - - 2,230.5  
Successful LINK-11 Hours - - 1,076.5  
Carrier Landings Day/Night - 350/178

2. (C) New Equipment/Modifications:

a. (C) During the Subic inport period in April, the AN/ALQ-108 sensor was installed in squadron aircraft. This device was most beneficial in MIG aircraft detection during combat support operations in North Vietnam.

b. (U) The squadron received the updated ASA-27 computer magnetic tape (Number 24) for installation in squadron aircraft during April. The new tape contained significant modifications which greatly enhanced the overall performance capability of the airborne tactical data system (ATDS).

3. (U) Aircraft/Personnel Losses:

a. Aircraft Bureau No. 151705 was lost at sea on 8 August (31-19N/131-59E) while enroute from Cubi Point, R. P. to NAF Atsugi, Japan. The aircrew consisted of the following personnel:

Pilot - LCDR J. L. ANDERSON (fatally injured)  
Co-pilot - LTJG C. L. MARBURGER  
Passenger - AZ1 B. D. COBB (fatally injured)  
Passenger - ADJ3 R. O. BLAIR

b. While transiting at 21,00 feet the aircraft developed severe oscillations. The pilot ordered the crew to bailout and subsequently remained at the controls of the aircraft until final impact. The co-pilot and both passengers egressed from the aircraft while at altitude. LTJG MARBURGER and ADJ3 BLAIR were successfully rescued by Japanese surface units.

4. (U) Notable Records/Firsts:

a. LTJG C. L. MARBURGER and ADJ3 R. O. BLAIR were the first aircrew to effect a successful bailout from an E-2 aircraft in an actual emergency situation.

b. The highlight of the Fallon deployment in March was the CVW-5 bombing derby. For the second year in a row VAW-115 was successful in winning the coveted first place "Manual Low Level Tin Bomb Award" with a CEP of 15 feet.