

SQUADRON HISTORY
CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR
CALENDER YEAR ENDING
31 DECEMBER 1967
OPNAV REPORT 5750-1
SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH
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SQUADRON HISTORY 1967

CONTENTS

Chronology	1
Narrative	2
Command Organization	3
Operations and Activities	5
Operational Statistics	5
Performance of Material and Weapons Systems	6
Adequacy of Manning Levels	6
Supply and Logistics	6

DOCUMENTARY ANNEX

1. Biography of Commanding Officer.
2. Biography of Executive Officer.
3. Commanding Officer's Remarks at Commissioning.
4. Program from Commissioning Ceremony
5. Officer and Enlisted rosters for 31 December 1967.
6. Photographic Supplement.
7. Embroidered Squadron Insigne and Description.

CARAEWRON-124 HISTORY 1967

Chronological Events

- 1 September 1967 Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR commissioned.
- 1 October 1967 VAW-124 received custody of squadron aircraft, and began acceptance checks.
- 15-18 October 1967 VAW-124 aircraft and pilots commenced initial qualifications on board USS LEXINGTON (CVS-16). Four CAPC's qualified.
- 17 October 1967 VAW-124 participated in acceptance of CNC Aviation Safety Award presented to members of CAEWW-12.
- 26 October 1967 VAW-124 participated in CAEWW-12 Anti-Air Warfare Exercise.
- 8-9 November 1967 VAW-124 assisted USS INDEPENDENCE in validating Ship's Inertial Navigation System.
- 1-3 December 1967 VAW-124 provided aircraft to USS INDEPENDENCE to familiarize flight deck crew with E-2A characteristics.
- 12 December 1967 VAW-124 participated in CAEWW-12 Anti-Air Warfare Exercise.

CARAEWRON-124 HISTORY 1967

Narrative

Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR was commissioned on the morning of 1 September 1967 in Sea Plane Hangar ONE at the Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia, thereby furthering the reorganization of the VAW structure. VAW-124 was the fifth squadron to be formed from the original VAW-12, which was re-designated Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing TWELVE (CAEWW-12). Although VAW-124 had four sister squadrons in existence at the time of commissioning, she is the only Atlantic Fleet E-2A squadron to be commissioned without having previously been organized as a detachment. At the commissioning ceremony, Captain S. L. CORNER, USN, Commander Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing TWELVE, introduced Captain C. A. HILL, Jr., USN, Commanding Officer, USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62), as distinguished guest and speaker. Captain HILL in his address, told of the increased capability for fleet early warning provided by the E-2A "Hawkeye" as compared with its predecessor, the E-1B "Tracer". At the completion of Captain HILL's remarks, Commander Thomas R. OVERDORF, USN, read his orders, and assumed command as VAW-124's first Commanding Officer. Upon assuming command, Commander OVERDORF in his remarks to the newly commissioned squadron, pointed out that as plank-owners each person had a great responsibility to do his best in order to maintain a safe, effective weapons system. Lieutenant Commander Maurice J. AHRENSTEIN, USN, became the fourth Naval Flight Officer to assume the position of Executive Officer of an aviation squadron.

CARAEWRON-124 HISTORY 1967

On 1 October 1967, VAW-124 received its four Grumman E-2A HAWKEYE aircraft. Later in the month, on 17 October 1967, VAW-124 participated in ceremonies in which the Chief of Naval Operations' Aviation Safety Award for Fiscal Year 1967 was presented to CAEWW-12 and all member squadrons. Captain D. C. RUMSEY, USN, Commander Fleet Air Norfolk, presented the award to the Commander Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing TWELVE, and its five squadron commanding officers.

From 1 September 1967 until 31 December 1967, VAW-124 was based ashore at the Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia. During the month of September the squadron was concerned with basic organization which would allow immediate operational training upon receipt of aircraft. With the delivery of its aircraft on 1 October 1967, aircraft acceptance inspection checks commenced. The rapid, thorough completion of the inspection checks facilitated the immediate commencement of training of pilots and aircrews.

Command Organization

Commanding Officer:

Commander Thomas R. OVERDORF, USN, 510882/1310

1 September 1967 to present.

Executive Officer:

Lieutenant Commander Monroe J. AHRENSTEIN, USN, 614678/1320

1 September 1967 to present.

Location of Command:

1 September 1967 to present: NAS NORFOLK; OPCON CAEWW TWELVE

CARAERON-124 HISTORY 1967

Mission of Command:

To act as an airborne tactical command and control center for offensive and defensive fleet operations by providing airborne early warning and aircraft control services through data link and voice communications.

Composition of Command:

Four (4) Grumman E-2A HAWKEYE aircraft, Bureau Numbers 152476, 152477, 152478, and 152479.

Personnel on board 31 December 1967:

25 Officers, of which 24 are flight personnel;

104 Enlisted, of which 6 are flight personnel;

Squadron Nickname:

"The BULLSEYE Squadron"

Squadron Motto:

The BULLSEYE Squadron--Center of Fleet Defense

CARAEWRON-124 HISTORY 1967

Operations and Activities

The month of October 1967 provided the first chance for operational training for VAW-124 as a squadron. From 15 October until 18 October, three of VAW-124's aircraft operated from USS LEXINGTON (CVS-16) at Pensacola, Florida. During this time four of the plane commanders were designated Carrier Aircraft Plane Commanders (CAPC). On 26 October VAW-124 participated in a CAEWW-12 Anti-Air Warfare Exercise AAWEX. This AAWEX provided additional operational training for the aircrews. In November, on the 8th and 9th, VAW-124 provided USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62) two aircraft to assist the ship in validating its Ship's Inertial Navigation System (SINS). From 1 December until 3 December three aircraft worked with the INDEPENDENCE to familiarize the flight deck crews with the characteristics of the E-2A. During this time the aircrews worked with the ship's Combat Information Center (CIC) in establishing basic data-link communication procedures. On 12 December VAW-124 participated in a second CAEWW-12 AAWEX. During the remaining portion of December, the squadron concentrated on aircrew training in preparation for its initial at-sea period, scheduled for the first few weeks of 1968.

Operational Statistics

Total hours flown (from 1 OCT 67): 290.1
Average hours per month: 96.7
Total Carrier Landings: 108
Total night Carrier Landings: 33
Total Catapult Launches: 95
Carrier Aircraft Plane Commanders designated: 4

CARAEWRON-124 HISTORY 1967

VAW-124's first arrested landing: CDR T. R. OVERDORF

VAW-124's first bolter: LCDR J. G. DEMAREST

Performance of Material and Weapons Systems

Many minor problems were initially encountered as crews familiarized themselves with the subsystems of the aircraft. In the avionics systems, for example, many man hours were expended until a consistent and reliable system resulted. The FJ 108A Drum Program was installed in a major modification during this period and successfully evaluated.

Adequacy of Manning Levels

At the time of commissioning on 1 September 1967 our manning level was 52% of OPNAV 1000 Authorization Allowance. By 31 December 1967, VAW-124's manning level had reached 92% of the authorized allowance. The squadron's legal and discipline problems during this difficult organizational period were minimal attesting to the high morale of squadron personnel. The re-enlistment rate for this period was 100%.

Supply and Logistics

Overall supply, both shore-based and on board ship, was and still is a major problem. There is no rotatable pool of E-2A parts on the east coast. This forces avionics to improvise parts or to cannibalize from other squadron aircraft in order to provide an aircraft capable of carrying out a mission.