1969

Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR
1969 Command History

Chronology of Events

January

1-3	Inport Athens, Greece
3-10	SIXTH Fleet Operations (Mediterranean)
	5-10 Exercise PHIBLEX 8/69 with USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59)
11-18	Inport Palma, Majorca
19	Relieved by USS SHANGRI-LA (CVA-38) at Polensa Bay, Majorca/ departed SIXTH Fleet for NAS Norfolk, Virginia
27	Arrived at NAS Norfolk, Virginia

February

1-17	Post-deployment reduced availability period

March

15-16	Static display at NAS, Cecil Field, Florida
16/21	VIP Flight - Captain H. S. MATHEWS, Commanding Officer of USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62)
17	VIP Demonstration Flight - Vice Admiral Benedict J. SEMMES, Jr., Commander SECOND Fleet
25	Exercise SINKEX
27	Static display at NAS Oceana, Virginia Beach, Virginia for NATO Officers

April

13	Pilots carrier qualifications on board the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62)

May

18-19	Airshow and static display at NAS Pensacola, Florida
21-23	Exercise EXOTIC DANCER II, SECOND Fleet, NAS Cecil Field, Florida

June

14	Airshow and static display at NAS Albany, Georgia
20-25	Airshow and static display at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas

July

11	CDR. R. A. SPARGO relieved by CDR. C. C. ROSE as Commanding Officer

August

8-9	Pilots carrier qualifications on board the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62)

September

No important events

October

	Tailhook Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada
24	Pilots carrier qualifications on board the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62)

November

5-8	Exercise QUIKLANT, Kindley Air Force Base, Bermuda
11-14	CVW-9 Commanding Officers Conference, NAS Lemoore, California
22-26	Pilots carrier qualifications on board USS AMERICA (CVA-66)

December

6	Dependent's Day Cruise aboard USS AMERICA (CVA-66)

Enclosure (2)

Narrative

Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR (VAW-124) started the new year inport Athens, Greece aboard the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62). This SIXTH Fleet deployment had commenced on 29 April as a member of Attack Carrier Air Wing SEVEN (CVW-7).

On 3 January, Independence departed Athens for operations which included an exercise with the USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). Completing operations, INDEPENDENCE sailed for Palma, Majorca on 11 January. After 8 days in port, the ship departed for Polensa Bay, Majorca, the final stop of the cruise. Arriving in Polensa Bay on 19 January, INDEPENDENCE was relieved by the USS SHANGRI-LA (CVA-38) and departed for home.

After 9 months at sea, INDEPENDENCE moored at the Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia on 27 January. From 27 January through 31 December 1969, VAW-124 was based ashore at NAS Norfolk. During these months, there were relatively few major events since most of the time was spent in type training and aircraft maintenance.

In March, the squadron participated in 2 static displays. The first was at NAS Cecil Field, Florida, and the other was at NAS Oceana, Virginia Beach, Virginia for visiting NATO Officers. Also during March, VAW-124 had 2 VIP flights. Captain H. S. MATHEWS, Commanding Officer of the USS INDEPENDENCE, and Vice Admiral B. J. SEMMES, Jr., Commander SECOND Fleet, were given E-2A demonstration flights in the Norfolk area.

During the month of April, the squadron participated in pilot carrier qualifications on board the USS INDEPENDENCE. In May, VAW-124 participated in two significant events. On the 18th and 19th, a squadron aircraft went to NAS Pensacola,Florida for an Air Show and static display. This was followed by a major SECOND Fleet Exercise at NAS Cecil Field, Florida. This exercise, EXOTIC DANCER II, was an excellent opportunity for squadron refresher training.

In June, the squadron participated in 2 Air Shows and static displays. The first was on the 14th at NAS Albany, Georgia and the second from the 20th thru the 25th at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, in conjunction with the annual Navy Relief Society Campaign.

On 11 July, Commander R. A. SPARGO was relieved by Commander C. C. ROSE in a ceremony held in Hangar SP-1 at NAS Norfolk, Virginia. During his year as Commanding Officer, CDR. SPARGO led the squadron through the long Mediterranean deployment. The guest speaker for the change of command was Captain T. D. QUINN, Commander Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing TWELVE.

In order for the squadron to maintain their proficiency, VAW-124 participated in carrier qualifications aboard INDEPENDENCE in August. Although the next two months were relatively inactive, one event that several squadron officers will never forget occurred in Las Vegas, Nevada - the "Tailhook Convention."

Command Organization

Commanding Officers:
20 July 1968 to 11 July 1969
Commander Richard A. SPARGO, U. S. Navy, 586046/1310
11 July 1969 to Present
Commander Charles C. ROSE, U. S. Navy, 525323/1310

Executive Officers:
27 September 1968 to 11 July 1969
Commander Charles C. ROSE, U. S. Navy, 525323/1310
11 July 1969 to 11 August 1969
Lieutenant Commander Charles G. NORRINGTON, U. S. Navy, 605845/1320
11 August 1969 to Present
Commander James H. KARLEN, U. S. Navy, 526771/1310

Location of Command:
30 April 1968 to 27 January 1969: Mediterranean; SIXTH Fleet CVW NINE
27 January 1969 to Present: NAS Norfolk; OPCON CAEWW TWELVE

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 services through data link and voice communications.

Composition of Command:
Four (4) Grumman E-2A "Hawkeye" aircraft, Bureau Numbers 152476, 152477, 152478, and 152479 for January 1969. Aircraft 152478 went to VAW-123 in January 1969.

Personnel on board 31 December 1969:
22 Officers - 21 officers in a flight status
107 Enlisted - 4 enlisted in a flight stutus

Squadron Nickname:
"The BULLSEYE HUMMERS"

Squadron Motto:
"The BULLSEYE Squadron - Center of Fleet Defense"

Activity picked up in November with the squadron's participation in a QUIKLANT operation, from 5 thru 8 November, in the Bermuda Area. The squadron also became a member of Attack Carrier Air Wing NINE (CVW-9) scheduled for embarkation aboard the USS AMERICA (CVA-66). On 11 November, squadron officers attended a CVW-9 Commanding Officers' Conference at NAS Lemoore, California to make plans for the subsequent WESTPAC deployment in April 1970, and the Change of Command ceremnoy for Commander Attack Carrier Air Wing NINE. In late November, the squadron conducted carrier qualifications aboard the USS AMERICA.

A major event, on 6 December, was the Dependent's Day Cruise aboard the USS AMERICA. As the tempo of training slackened off for the Christmas season, preparations for the REFTRA cruise early in January commenced. VAW-124 proudly completed a second successful and accident free year.

SQUADRON MAINTENANCE HISTORY

1969

January - February 1969

The U. S. S. INDEPENDENCE, CVA-62, out-chopped from the Mediterranean in the middle of January, arriving in Norfolk, Virginia on 28 January. A stand-down period was in effect from 1 to 17 February as the entire squadron went on leave. On 29 January BUNO 152478 was transferred to VAW-123. The calendar inspection on BUNO 152476, begun in August 1968, was finally completed. There were recurring problems with several actuator assemblies leaking where the electro-servo valve mounts to the body of the actuator cylinder. Upon the third occurrence, UR-06-69 of February 1969 was written.

March 1969

Supply shortages continued to be the major impediment to high readiness. NOR(SUPPLY) requisitions have been outstanding on a nose landing gear spring cap assembly for ninety days, a nose landing gear assembly, and two rudder hinge fittings for thirty days. The rudder hinge fittings were finally received and installed in BUNO 152479 at the end of the month.

Corrosion control materials were a problem of particular concern. Due to supply procedures, thirty days or more are normally required for delivery of corrosion control material. The squadron has been able to maintain a corrosion control program only by "borrowing" materials from the local Naval Aircraft Rework Facility.

Between 3 March and 5 March, the AN/ASA-27 computer indicators of all squadron aircraft were modified to permit critical area symbols display. The CD-413/ASA-27 computer detector modules were also changed. On 24 March BUNO 152476 departed for PAR. On 26 March the squadron received BUNO 151704 from PAR, NAS North Island, California. The acceptance inspection on this aircraft revealed a deteriorated engine mount, secondary corrosion on both engines, and a faculty nose landing gear actuator. These discrepancies required over 300 man-hours to correct.

April 1969

A large amount of unscheduled maintenance on aircraft 151704 was due to four engine changes during the month. Two were removed for corrosion treatment and replacement of engine mounts following the acceptance inspection. Upon replacement, one engine was found to have a bearing oil leak and was removed again. During the turn-up on the replacement engine, a bleed-air leak was discovered. Inspection also uncovered several wiring bundles damaged by high heat. The engine was removed and an inspection into the cause of the bleed-air leak was conducted.

BUNO 151704 was also involved in a series of incidents occurring at the end of March and the beginning of April. On 27 March, the landing gear had to be cycled three times at NAS Memphis, Tenn. and twice at NAS Norfolk, Va. to get a safe nose gear down indication. The aircraft was drop-checked a minimum of five times with no malfunction. The nose gear actuating cylinder assembly was removed and replaced. A UR request for engineering investigation was forwarded to NAVAIRSYSCOMHQ. On 18 April, another message (182211Z April 69) went to NAVAIRSYSCOMHQ concerning UR 0016 of 16 April 69. A nose landing gear would not lock in the up position during an operational check after changing an actuating cylinder. It was binding against the crank assembly (P/N 123LM10186-11) due to insufficient clearance of the piston terminal assembly. It was removed and replaced by a different type piston terminal (UR 0018 of 29 April 69 refers).

On 22 April, BUNO 152477 flying from Cherry Point to Norfolk suffered failure of a regulator assembly due to damaged slip rings caused by electrical shorts. UR 0019 of 24 April 1969 was written. The regulator was replaced and a closer visual inspection of this part was recommended.

Aircraft 152479 was out of NOR reporting status awaiting NARF rework on rudder hinge fittings and inboard flap skin. IACB #136, aircraft main landing gear drag braces, were installed on all aircraft during April. IACB #138, oxygen regulator diluter demand modifications were also completed.

MAY 1969

Between 5 May and 13 May IFPM alarm monitor thermostats were added to the IFPM systems of all aircraft in accordance with AVC #683.

Three aircraft and 29 maintenance personnel were sent TAD to NAS Cecil Field, Florida, to participate in Operation "Exotic Dancer II". To fulfill this mission, one aircraft, BUNO 152478, was gained on a temporary basis from VAW-123. Upon completion of the commitment the aircraft was returned to VAW-123.

JUNE 1969

Aircraft 151707 was inducted into calender inspection. There were several problems with starters during the month. On 19 June, while attempting a start, it was found that the engine on BUNO 152476 would not rotate. The aircraft had 47 flight hours without any unusual indications prior to this incident. Preliminary investigation revealed a cracked starter case (P/N 383076-1-1), a sheared drive shaft, and disintegration of the clutch assembly. Investigation of the problem by manufacture was recommended. (UR 0029 of 19 June 69 refers.) On 23 June, prior to starting BUNO 152479, the pilot directed the ground crew to connect the start unit to the aircraft. Upon signal from the pilot air was directed to the engine. The propeller rotated approximately one and a half times and stopped. Preliminary investigation revealed a sheared starter. No exterior damage to the starter occurred (UR 0030 of 27 June refers).

JULY 1969

Early in the month AFC 70, emergency escape hatch light panels, was installed on all aircraft. Vapor cycle temperature indicator wiring was also modified.

BUNO 151707 was still in calender inspection. Due to a lack of parts in the supply support rotary pool, squadrons were having to turn in a part and wait for the same part to be processed through IMA, thus extended the down time on an aircraft. A shortage of vapor cycles has had a direct impact on the squadron's mission capabilities.

AUGUST 1969

Beginning about 11 August the tachometer generators were modified on both engines of all squadron aircraft. There occurred some difficulties with the rotodome on BUNO 151707 during this time. On 4 August, while airborne at 1500 feet, the dome lowered. The rotodome "UP" switch was actuated with no effect. The pilot re-entered the landing patern with the dome in the down position. On roll-out the dome extended and locked in the up position. Probable cause was believed to be corrosion under the sealing compound on the Port Wing-Butt Electrical connection around pins J, R, H, K, D, S, and N. Pin "J" shorted directly to ground (see VAW-124 111925Z AUG 69). On 22 August the rotodome lowered again during pre-taxi turn-up. The aircraft continued its turn-up while the line trouble shooter corrected the discrepancy. The problem was caused by residual moisture from aircraft washing earlier in the day. Further investigation revealed that the potting compound was separated from the wire bundle leading into the receptacle, thus allowing water to enter (UR 0037 of 1969 refers).

SEPTEMBER 1969

On two separate occasions within the month the pilot reported excessive RPM fluctuations on the starboard engine of BUNO 152476. Each time a propeller governor was replaced, but, the discrepancy reoccurred. On subsequent testing with the propeller electronic control test set, it was determined that the rotary actuator was malfunctioning - stopping at an intermediate position rather than stopping at the "normal" position. The actuator was removed and replaced. On 19 September 1969, BUNO 152477 was discovered to have a defective cuff on the number two blade of propeller P/N 6509028, S/N 72152. The cuff was loose over an area of approximately 20 square inches near the cuff sealant. On 29 September the propeller was removed. The cuff separation had propagated and the sealant had also come loose. Improper bonding of the cuff was suspected. The propeller was replaced and turned into the supply department.

OCTOBER 1969

Aircraft 152476 was inducted into Calender Inspection (Even) and completed. The high NOR(SUPPLY) time during the month was due essentially

to the fact that NAS Norfolk Supply did not carry elevator actuators. These had to be shipped from NARF North Island.

Other problems were: (1) on 20 October, upon starting BUNO 152477 the RPM reached 25% when dropped off. A second attempt to start was made but this time the engine did not turn at all. Preliminary investigation revealed a sheared starter with no exterior damage to the starter; 2.) On 22 October the fuel manifold drain valve on BUNO 152476 dumped fuel on start and the engine would not light off. The ignition relay would energize but no power was being routed through the relay contacts to the associated engine components. The ignition relay was replaced.

NOVEMBER 1969

On 3 November, during maintenance trouble shooting on BUNO 152477, the electrical connector at the Starboard wing outer panel was found to be corroded and deteriorated to a degree where the retaining ring had separated from the outer shell and allowed the connector to come apart. The corrosion was so bad it was impossible to determine if necessary modifications had taken place during PAR which had been completed 12 August.

On 17 November BUNO 152476 again suffered an ignition relay failure. This was the second occurrence in less than 30 days. It was recommended that the manufacturer investigate causes of these failures.

On 23 November BUNO 152479 was received from PAR with extremely high oil consumption noted by the ferry pilot (UR 0069 of 28 November 1969 refers). Further investigation resulted in changing the starboard engine.

Beginning on the 17th of the month, E-2A Avionics IFF Emergency Alarm Kits (PMR/ID-41APX) were installed in all aircraft (AFC #137). The installations were completed on 29 November.

During the acceptance inspection on BUNO 152479, the elevator actuator was discovered to be leaking from the slide valve. The actuator was removed and replaced.

DECEMBER 1969

For the first part of the month, BUNO 152477 was not available because of a T56-A8A Engine removal for a "high time" turbine. On 17 November, while being tested, a bleed-air valve assembly was discovered leaking at the pressure selector valve seat. The valve would not maintain pressure during the leak check as required by maintenance requirement cards during calender inspection. The defective unit was replaced and turned into supply.

All other maintenance problems during the month were minimal.