

1977  
Commanding Officer  
Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE  
Fleet Post Office, New York 09501

VAW-125/14:alm  
5750  
Ser: C14  
8 June 1978

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To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-0502)

Subj: Command History (OPNAV Report 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Command Organization and Mission  
(2) Summary of Operations (C)  
(3) Chronological Itinerary  
(4) Biography of Commander Henry R. DOMBROWSKI, USN  
(5) Biography of Commander James E. CONNERTON, Jr., USN  
(6) Special Topics  
(7) VAW-125 Officer Precedence List  
(8) VAW-125 Enlisted Personnel Assigned

1. In accordance with reference (a), Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE Command History is submitted as enclosures (1) through (8).

  
E. CONNERTON, JR.

Copy to:  
Director of Navy History  
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COMMAND ORGANIZATION AND MISSION

1. The Command. The Squadron's Commanding Officers during the year 1977, and their dates of command were as follows:

Commander Henry R. DOMBROWSKI 1 July 1976 - 4 July 1977

Commander James E. CONNERTON, Jr. 4 July 1977 - Present

2. The Mission of VAW-125.

a. The primary mission of VAW-125 is to provide units of the Fleet with early detection and warning of approaching forces. The principle is as old as warfare itself but as practiced by VAW-125, involves the use of long range radar and sophisticated computer controlled electronic systems to detect, identify and report contacts while they are still many miles from the Task Force.

b. The Squadron's aircraft, the Grumman built E-2C "HAWKEYE", is a twin engine turbo-prop capable of reaching a station well ahead of the force at speeds up to 300 knots and altitudes above 30,000 feet. The E-2C with its 80 foot wing span and gross weight of over 25 tons, is one of the largest aircraft operated from the deck of an aircraft carrier. The crew consists of a pilot, co-pilot, combat information center officer, air control officer and flight technician, who fly the aircraft and operate the complex electronic equipment which it carries. This equipment, collectively called the Airborne Tactical Data System, forms an airborne extension of the modern Navy Tactical Data System employed aboard all of our newer warships. The heart of the ATDS is a powerful, long range radar which transmits its energy through the 24 foot rotating antenna dome atop the aircraft.

c. Contacts detected by the radar are analyzed and identified by computer controlled electronics subsystems which simultaneously display the contacts to the operators and automatically report them back to the Task Force Commander. If a contact is a threat to the force, aircraft can be immediately dispatched to intercept it and, if necessary, destroy it. The intercepting aircraft are directed in this flight by the E-2C's computer through a radio data link. This assures that the aircraft reaches a position in relation to the target to permit final visual identification and attack.

d. The inherent flexibility of the ATDS, when operated by the highly trained flight crews, allows its use in a variety of secondary missions. Significant among these are its use in directing Strike Aircraft to their targets, as an automatic radio relay to assist in long range communications and in the vital role of control and coordination during search and rescue missions.

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SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

JANUARY. During the first part of the month, the Squadron conducted extensive day and night FCLP's in preparation of the upcoming deployment to the Mediterranean. On the 11th and 12th the Squadron was aboard the USS JOHN F. KENNEDY for a short refresher training and CQ period in the VACAPES area. KENNEDY returned to Norfolk, VA. for two days and deployed to the Mediterranean on the 15th. VAW-125, aboard KENNEDY, arrived in Rota, Spain on the 26th, conducted refresher training and CQ the 28th through the 30th, and began exercise "LOCKED GATE" on the 31st.

FEBRUARY. VAW-125 participated in exercise "LOCKED GATE" from the 31st of January until the 9th of February. This exercise involved approximately 40 NATO ships and was designed to improve coordination of NATO forces in control of the sea lanes of the Straits of Gibraltar. The Squadron's primary tasking in the exercise was SSSC. The Squadron also provided AEW detection of ORANGE air opposition and strike control on ORANGE surface forces.

On the 5th of February, while flying a normal AEW mission, two non-squawking air contacts were detected by the E-2C aircraft. The contacts were intercepted by F-14's under E-2C LINK 4A control and subsequently proved to be Soviet Bear "D" reconnaissance aircraft. The Soviet aircraft were escorted continually while within 100 NM of the Task Force, under the direction of the E-2C.

On 10-11 February, VAW-125 conducted cyclic OPS enroute to Naples, Italy. On the 26th of February, the KENNEDY conducted a guest and dependent's cruise. One of VAW-125's squadron members, LT Frank T. BOSSIO played an integral part, remaining on the bridge during the entire day, translating all pertinent information into Italian, thus making the cruise much more enjoyable and informative for the Italian national's aboard.

CLASSIFIED BY: CO VAW-125  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULED OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED ON 31 DECEMBER 1984.

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MARCH. During the first week in March the Squadron conducted cyclic operations in the Tyrrhenian Sea participating in exercise "QUICKDRAW", a series of anti-ship strike simulations against Italian surface combatants. The Squadron also participated in an air-to-air missile shoot on the NAMFI missile range North of Crete, providing primary air control and range surveillance in support of the shoot. After ten days in port Naples, Italy, the Squadron began National Week XXII. Phase I of the National Week XXII consisted primarily of AAW/ASW exercises with minimal BLUE/ORANGE force interaction. VAW-125's primary tasking in phases II and III of National Week XXII was SSSC to locate the ORANGE surface units, including the USS F. D. ROOSEVELT, the ORANGE forces main high value unit. During phase II/III the Squadron was tasked with and provided over 60 continuous hours of AEW coverage with a "HUMMER in the air-around-the-clock" for three days.

In late March VAW-125 became the first VAW squadron to be assigned an Air Intelligence Officer (1635 designation).

APRIL. After a short port visit to Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, the Squadron participated in an ASW-Shoot Out exercise, providing flight following and communications relay for the surface, sub-surface, and airborne participants in the exercise in addition to conducting normal cyclic operations. The Squadron spent two weeks in port Naples, Italy, followed by four days of cyclic operations in the Ionian Sea and a two day training anchorage in Souda Bay, Crete. The KENNEDY then proceeded to the Eastern Mediterranean where the Squadron participated in exercise "SHAHBAZ", a CENTO exercise designed to test the coordinated defense capabilities of the Central Treaty Organization. The Squadron's primary mission in this exercise was AEW, and in a three day period, 119 AIC's were completed. The Squadron was also involved in HARPOON missile targeting exercises, the details of which are classified SECRET.

MAY. The first week of May was spent in a port visit to Alexandria, Egypt, the KENNEDY being the first U. S. carrier to visit Egypt since 1947. During the middle of May, the Squadron participated in DAWN PATROL 77, an exercise designed to test NATO sea control capabilities. During this exercise VAW-125 provided 151 hours of continuous E-2C coverage, providing a variety of missions including AEW, AIC, SSSC divert coordination, communication relay, and Hummer Controlled Approaches. The squadron controlled 134 AIC's against ORANGE aircraft, and 661 air-to-surface intercepts (ASI's/SSSC) resulting in the initial detection of six submarines, and all ORANGE surface units. During the exercise an innovative SSSC tactic was developed. In a properly functioning LINK 11 environment of the S-3A

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can be vectored successfully to surface contacts by means of reporting tracks over LINK 11. The S-3A crew can identify the contact and report it to the E-2C using the proper PIF code. Association of the two tracks by the E-2C transmits the identify of the contact to all TDS units. This tactic significantly reduces the amount of secure voice traffic. The Squadron spent the last two weeks of May in a mid-cruise standdown period in Naples, Italy.

JUNE. During the first week in June, VAW-125 conducted normal cyclic operations and participated in a PASSEX with the HMS MELBOURNE. The Squadron's mission in the PASSEX was SSSC and strike control which resulted in early detection of the MELBOURNE and two successful simulated strikes. An air-to-air MISSILEX was also conducted during this period at the Aalto de Querra range East of Sardinia. The E-2C was assigned secondary air control responsibility on several occasions when the primary control units suffered radar casualties. The Squadron spent from 6 until 13 June in port Barcelona, Spain. Cyclic operations were conducted in the Western Mediterranean from 14 until 22 June. During this period, numerous Harpoon targeting exercises were conducted utilizing the E-2C in a number of different roles, including the use of two airborne E-2C's passive detection information for position fixing. The details and results of these exercises are classified SECRET.

JULY. On the 1st of July, VAW-125 had a Change-of-Command in port Palma de Mallorca, Spain, with Commander J. E. CONNERTON, Jr. relieving Commander H. R. DOMBROWSKI. Lieutenant Commander W. J. MOOBERRY assumed the duties of Executive Officer of the Squadron. VAW-125 was at sea from 5 until 12 July participating in exercise PHIBLEX-77. This was an amphibious exercise which took place at Caplo Teulada, Sardinia. The purpose of E-2C participation was to assess the aircraft's capability to control the ship-to-shore movement of Marine Corps assault helicopters. The Squadron was in port Malaga, Spain 13-19 July, transited directly to Rota, Spain on 19 July and turned over with VAW-123 on the USS SARATOGA. The KENNEDY transited the Atlantic from 23-31 July and arrived in Norfolk, Virginia on the 1st of August.

AUGUST. The Squadron spent the month of August in a post-cruise standdown.

SEPTEMBER. Extensive ground training was conducted both for pilots and NFO's. Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing 12 conducted an ADMAT on the squadron for which the squadron received an overall rating of excellent.

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The annual NATOPS evaluation was also held. The Squadron performed very well, with the pilots receiving a cumulative average of 98.5%, and the NFO's receiving a cumulative average of 97.5% for an overall average of 98%, one of the highest evaluations ever recorded in the community.

OCTOBER. Numerous training flights were conducted in preparation for the upcoming deployment aboard the USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.

NOVEMBER. VAW-125 embarked on USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER on 7 November and transited to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba from 7 through 9 November. On 8 November a VAW-125 E-2C was the recipient of the EISENHOWER's first operational catapult shot and recovery, as the "HUMMER" was launched on a simulated Bear alert. Operations during the period aboard the EISENHOWER consisted mainly of CQ for pilots and AIC training for aircrew. During the short EISENHOWER cruise, the Squadron conducted 230 hours of embarked flight operations, and the controllers logged 143 ASI's and 485 AIC's.

DECEMBER. On 7 December and again on 9 December, the "Alert Hummer" was launched on a Bear alert. Both launches resulted in the early detection of Soviet Bear "D" aircraft over 300 miles from the EISENHOWER. In both cases, E-2C controlled F-14 fighters intercepted the Bear aircraft and escorted them while they remained in the vicinity of EISENHOWER. The Squadron flew 73 sorties during this short deployment. VAW-125's pilots accumulated 77 arrested landings, and won the CVW-1 hook score competition with a mark of 3.53. The Squadron returned to Norfolk, Virginia on 11 December. The remainder of this month was devoted to normal shore base operations.

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CHRONOLOGICAL ITENERARY

The following is chronological itinerary of VAW-125 activities for 1977.

1-10 JAN	Inport NORVA, extensive FCLP
11-12 JAN	REFTRA/CQ Virginia Capes
13-14 JAN	Inport NORVA
15 JAN	Deployed aboard USS JOHN F KENNEDY to the MED
16-25 JAN	Transit, Atlantic
26-28 JAN	Inport, Rota, Spain
29-30 JAN	REFTRA/CQ, Mediterranean
31 JAN - 9 FEB	Exercise LOCKED GATE
10-11 FEB	Cyclic OPS, enroute Naples, Italy
12-25 FEB	Inport, Naples, Italy
26 FEB	Guest and dependent's cruise, vicinity of Naples, Italy
27 FEB	Inport, Naples, Italy
28 FEB - 6 MAR	OPS: Tyrrhenian Sea
7-17 MAR	Inport, Naples, Italy
18-19 MAR	OPS: Tyrrhenian Sea
20-21 MAR	OPS: Ionian Sea (Phase I of National Week XXII)
22 MAR	Anchored, Golfo de Castellamare, Sicily
23 MAR	OPS: Tyrrhenian Sea (Phase II of National Week XXII)
24-25 MAR	OPS, Ionian Sea (Phase III of National Week XXII)
26 MAR	Anchored, August Bay, Sicily (PXD National Week XXII)
27 MAR	OPS: Transit Ionian Sea
28 MAR - 2 APR	Inport, Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia
2-4 MAR	OPS: Adriatic/Ionian Sea
5-18 APR	Inport, Naples, Italy
19-22 APR	OPS: Ionian Sea
23-24 APR	Anchored, Souda Bay, Crete
25 APR - 1 MAY	OPS: Eastern MED (CENTO Exercise "SHAHBAZ" 25-28 APR, evacuation of Ethiopia, 29 APR)
2-5 MAY	Inport, Alexandria, Egypt
6-16 MAY	OPS: Eastern MED (NATO Exercise "DAWN PATROL 77")
17-31 MAY	Inport, Naples, Italy
1-5 JUN	OPS: Tyrrhenian Sea (PASSEX with HMAS MELBOURNE 5 JUN)
6-13 JUN	Inport, Barcelona, Spain
14-22 JUN	OPS: Western MED
23 JUN - 4 JUL	Inport, Palma de Mallorca, Spain (Change of Command 1 July)
5-12 JUL	OPS: Western MED

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13-19 JUL	Inport, Malaga, Spain
19 JUL	Transit, Rota, Spain
19-22 JUL	Inport, Rota, Spain
22-31 JUL	Transit, Norfolk, VA
1 AUG - 1 SEP	Inport, Norfolk VA (Post Cruise Standdown)
2 SEP - 1 NOV	Inport, Norfolk VA (Squadron training)
2-6 NOV	Extensive FCLP Pilot Training
7 NOV	Embarked aboard USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
8-9 NOV	Transit, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (FTG embarked)
10-11 NOV	Anchored, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
12-25 NOV	OPS: FTG Caribbean Area
26-27 NOV	Anchored, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
28-30 NOV	OPS: FTG Caribbean Area
1 DEC	Transit, Roosevelt Roads
2-8 DEC	OPS: AFWTF Areas
9-10 DEC	Transit, Norfolk, VA
11-31 DEC	Inport, Norfolk, VA

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Special Topics

1. Operational Statistics:

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>HOURS FLOWN</u>	<u>FLIGHTS PER MONTH</u>	<u>CARRIER LANDINGS</u>	<u>CAT SHOTS</u>
JAN	72.0	39	30	25
FEB	147.9	48	48	48
MAR	212.6	70	69	69
APR	176.9	58	58	57
MAY	196.6	57	55	55
JUN	246.5	76	89	86
JUL	189.2	59	61	65
AUG	17.8	7	00	00
SEP	70.8	33	3	3
OCT	65.9	27	00	00
NOV	64.2	26	3	6
DEC	46.0	26	00	00
	<u>1506.4</u>	<u>526</u>	<u>416</u>	<u>414</u>

ATDS MISSION TIME

Scheduled: 1119.8 hours, Flown 1117.9 hours - 99.8%.

SORTIES

Scheduled: 480, flown: 467 - 97.3%.

TOTAL INTERCEPTS - 2036

TOTAL ASI's - 2329