

U.S.S. VALLEY FORGE (CV-45)
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NAVHISTDIVINST 5500.1
By: OP-09892G

From: Commanding Officer, U.S.S. VALLEY FORGE (CV-45)
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Op-55)
Via: (1) Commander Carrier Division FIVE
(2) Commander Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN
(3) Commander SEVENTH Fleet
(4) Commander Naval Forces, FAR EAST
(5) Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet

Subj: Action Report for the period 24 May thru 13 June 1952

Ref: (a) OPNAV Instruction 3480.5 of 1 July 1951

Encl: (1) Commander, ATG ONE conf ltr ser 08 of 17 June 1952 p. 16

1. In accordance with reference (a), the Action Report for the period of 24 May through 13 June 1952 is hereby submitted:

PART I

COMPOSITION OF OWN FORCES AND MISSION

In compliance with CTF 77 conf dispatch 210222Z of May 1952, the USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45), Captain OSCAR PEDERSON, commanding, with ComCarDiv FIVE, Rear Admiral JOHN PERRY, embarked departed Yokosuka, Japan for the operating area on 24 May 1952. On 26 May 1952 the USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45) joined Task Force 77 close to the 38th Parallel on the east coast of Korea.

On 11 June 1952, the USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45) departed Task Force 77 in accordance with CTF 77 conf dispatch 091100Z of June 1952 and arrived in Yokosuka, Japan 13 June 1952 for a period of maintenance and upkeep.

The mission of Task Force 77 was in accordance with CTF 77 OpOrd No. 22-51 (2nd Revision).

Commander Air Task Group ONE is CDR C. H. CRABILL, JR., USN. See enclosure (1) for the on-board count of pilots and aircraft at the beginning of flight operations on 24 May 1952.

PART II

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF EVENTS

5-24-52: Departed Piedmont Pier, Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan. Underway for the operating area.

5-25-52: Enroute to the operating area. Conducted refresher training of air group pilots. Held damage control, CIC, gunnery and communications

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5-27-52: Conducted combat air operations. ENSIGN STERRETT was believed to be sighted late in the afternoon. ENSIGN R. BUSCH, VF 653, crashed into a hill side while participating in the rescue operation. He is listed as killed in action.

5-28-52: Replenished at sea. Launched photo planes on a special photo mission. Received helicopters from HMR-1, Marine Transport Helicopter Squadron to assist in rescuing ENSIGN STERRETT.

5-29-52: Conducted combat air operations. Rescue operations were resumed. Marine helicopter, Major D. L. LENGEL, pilot, crashed at scene; all personnel escaped uninjured. Inclement weather prevented further rescue operations. LTJG C. GARDNER, VF 653, crashed into the sea on take-off and was not recovered.

5-30-52: Replenished at sea in the morning. Conducted combat air operations in the afternoon. Inclement weather over downed personnel prevented further RESCAP. ENSIGN G. GALLOWAY, VF 653, while flying a "test flight", was seen to crash into the water near the Task Force. His body was recovered.

5-31-52: Conducted combat air operations. Rescue operations were continued. The downed helicopter crew were picked up uninjured and returned to the ship. In view of the fact that no further contact had been made with ENSIGN STERRETT rescue operations were discontinued. He is listed as missing in action.

6-1-52: Conducted combat air operations.

6-2-52: Conducted combat air operations.

6-3-52: Replenished at sea.

6-4-52: Conducted combat air operations.

6-5-52: Conducted combat air operations.

6-6-52: Conducted combat air operations.

6-7-52: Replenished at sea.

6-8-52: Conducted combat air operations.

6-9-52: Conducted combat air operations.

6-10-52: Conducted combat air operations. LCDR C. CLELAND, VF 653, ditched his F4U in Wonsan Harbor. He was recovered in good condition by helicopter.

6-11-52: Replenished at sea. Departed Task Force 77 for Yokosuka, Japan.

6-12-52: Enrouted to Yokosuka, Japan.

6-13-52: Launched aircraft for transfer to EscRon 11 at NAS, Ait.

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PART IV

BATTLE DAMAGE

- A. Damage to Ship:
None
- B. Damage to Aircraft:
See enclosure (1)
- C. Loss of Aircraft:
See enclosure (1)
- D. Damage inflicted on Enemy:
See enclosure (1)

PART V

PERSONNEL

A. Performance:

Personnel performance continued to be excellent.

During this operating period the on-board count of personnel averaged a satisfactory total of 1964. The total losses for various reasons were 26 and for this period there were no gains. There were 21 men on temporary additional duty and 15 absent on emergency leave. The critical shortage of petty officers continues in the gunnery, communications and engineering ratings. A vigorous training program is being continued for training lower-rated personnel to perform assignments of higher rates. This has enabled the ship to operate without loss of efficiency.

As this is the last action report for the current deployment, it is considered appropriate to comment upon the effectiveness of the Air Task Group concept. An Air Task Group is a carrier air group composed of trained squadrons equipped with specific aircraft to accomplish required operations in the theater to which deployed. Besides allowance and types of assigned aircraft it also differs from the conventional air group in that the air group commander has a minimum administrative staff composed of collateral duty officers from the squadrons. This plus ship assistance in administrative matters permits him to give maximum attention to operations. With this new type of organization, Air Task Group ONE has operated in an outstandingly effective manner during the ship's present deployment. Prior to deployment the group did not train or operate as a group. This group showed that an Air Task Group can be organized on short notice and deployed as an effective combat unit. The air group concept is considered sound in that it provides carrier aviation with important additional flexibility which must be available if Naval Aviation is to continue to progress.

B. Manpower:

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With the advent of warmer weather, the trend toward outdoor recreational activities showed a marked increase. The ship's baseball team played teams from other units during the in-port period, and numerous inter-divisional softball games were scheduled. The physical training rooms (Decontamination spaces) continued their high usage by officers and men.

The Hobby Shop had its largest month in May during which \$1,460.00 worth of supplies were sold to hobbyists. The excellent response to hobbying activities and the worthwhile opportunities of wholesome recreation afforded thereby point up the need for an assignment of adequate space to the Hobby shop which is presently housed in the Squadron Service Room (02 deck).

On the ship's last night in port, members of the WAC Detachment from Camp Yokohama presented a stage show on the hangar deck. The performance was much enjoyed by the ship's company.

Movies continued to be offered every night in a number of locations while underway and on the hangar deck in port. The ship-originated radio programs were even more popular than before. With the acquisition of V-Discs, it was possible to present full half hour canned radio shows.

Each day the intelligence summary over the LMC briefly recapitulated the activities of the Air Group.

The band continued to play at replenishment stations and the orchestral group performed in the GPO, First Class Petty Officers' and Wardroom Messes during the evening meal once a week.

C. Religious Activities:

The religious services mentioned in the last report were continued during this cruise. Religious counsel, training, and services continued to enjoy the advantage of having two chaplains assigned to the ship.

The Roman Catholic Holy Name Society sponsored a Mass and Communion Breakfast at the U. S. Naval Base, Yokosuka, on 22 May which was a feast day of that faith. Over 150 men attended the services at which Bishop John Ross officiated. The cooperation extended the ship by the base P. O. Club was much appreciated and contributed to the success of the affair.

D. Public Information Office:

The work of the officer assigned collateral duty as Public Information Officer continued as before. In order to provide even minimum coverage of newsworthy events, it became necessary to assign a rated man from another department to this work. His helpfulness therein, and the increasing amount of public information office activity shows again the desirability of having enlisted journalists assigned to the ship. A recommendation to Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet to this effect has been submitted.

E. Casualties:

See enclosure (1)

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net by concentrated and repeated efforts directed against rails, rolling stock, marshalling yards, rail bridges and rail by-passes. The eastern rail system is connected to the western rail network by the Samdong-Ni - Yongdok-Kowon route. The importance of the Kowon connecting point had been established and soon became increasingly important to the enemy as manifested by the increased activity in the Kowon marshalling yard and the intensity of anti-aircraft defenses encountered. Continued attacks have been made throughout combat operations on the rail lines to the west, north, and south of Kowon to effect the greatest possible interruption of this vital rail traffic. The rail line from Hamhung South to Wonsan and the line running west and south from Kowon to Yangdok became priority targets. In direct proportion to the intensity of our attacks, the enemy countered by increasing the number of heavy caliber AA guns along these lines, constantly re-positioning the emplacements for more effective defense. Addition of active machine gun emplacements have increased and the percentage of hits suffered by our planes, particularly props, attests to their growing accuracy. The repair of damaged rail facilities is immediate and bears the stamp of excellent organization and planning. Ties, rails, road bed material, ready-built supporting sections of bridges, pre-cut piling, and cranes, located along the rail lines have been much in evidence. Unless sectors of track and roadbeds are obliterated, rail cuts, despite the number or location, are repaired during the night and it is unusual if the line is not operational and in use before daylight. Severely damaged locomotives disappear to repair shops or tunnels or are dragged to graveyards where salvaged parts are utilized. There are approximately 45 damaged locomotives in a graveyard located in Chongjin and about 15 damaged locomotives in the marshalling yard and repair area in Wonsan. Spur lines are being utilized for repair of the main lines. Car-counting on various spur lines has indicated that approximately 400 good rail cars have been fed back in to main line operations. This has been substantiated by photos taken two months apart.

Recco assignment on the routes as presently designated have been carried out to gain information on supply and troop movements. It is suggested that all recco routes be re-evaluated to establish the active supply routes. A suitable photographic run of these routes would indicate targets such as bivouac areas, camouflage truck parking areas and refueling stations.

Daily analysis of flak consisting of caliber, range, intensity, type of control, location by coordinate and terrain and relationship of all probable and active positions within radius of assigned target is mandatory as a basis for operational flight planning. Flights with elements of flak suppression have been flown utilizing napalm, strafing, VT fuzed bombs and general purpose bombs on well defended targets with satisfactory results.

The photographic section has efficiently supported the squadron AIO's, by making available photographs for all types of briefings through the medium of a complete photographic library.

b. Communications:

Radio communications continued to be satisfactory in the main. No new problems were encountered. A total of 13,312 messages were handled in Radio I during the period 26 May through 10 June, of which 2,219 were transmitted and 11,093 were received. The total traffic handled in Radio I during

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the West Coast all communications equipment should be thoroughly checked and re-aligned. New modifications to equipment should be incorporated during yard availability.

The problem created by the shortage of qualified personnel remained critical. Strikers who were required to replace rated men showed constant and satisfactory improvement. A continuous educational program has been maintained in order to qualify non-rated personnel for watch standing on circuits.

As the shortage of qualified electronics personnel become more acute during the coming months, it is recommended that the Communication Officer for the Task Force Commander keep up-to-date records of communications personnel on board each carrier and other heavy ships present in the Task Force and assign guard assignments with careful consideration of the capabilities and limitations of personnel of individual ships. To the greatest extent practicable, the heavy ships other than carriers should be required to bear a proportionate share of the guard on circuits other than Task Force Common frequencies.

c. Photography:

During the current period, 26 May to 11 June 1952, the Photographic Laboratory turned out the following: 6,142 miscellaneous prints consisting of RUDM's, PI, I.D., Legal and Flight Deck Operations. These ranged in size from 1"x1" to 20"x24"; 2,040 damage assessment prints, 8"x10"; and 303, 798 sonne prints for a total of 368,988 prints. 82,050 feet of 16mm motion picture film was also processed during this period.

Cameras and equipage of this carrier are among the most valuable items on board, many cameras costing up to \$4000.00. Cribs, lockers, and spaces are provided for much less costly items in other departments, but few provisions are made for stowing photographic equipment. It is recommended that ready lockers be provided squadrons for film magazines, cameras and equipment that are in their custody. At present, although they sign custody cards, the items involved must be stowed in the photo lab when not in use.

Suitable lockers or spaces should be provided in the laboratory for the proper storage of ready film and printing paper to cut down on wastage caused by chemical deterioration and destruction.

It is recommended that the matte dryer be eliminated. Very little matte work is done and this amount can be dried on the glossy dryer.

The one big bottleneck experienced in the past deployment period, in the photo lab, has been the drying of sonne prints. It is felt that two sonne dryers are a minimum for required results. Also necessary are two sonne printers. The current allowance list calls for only one.

d. Photo Interpretation:

A total of twenty-nine photographic reconnaissance missions were flown during the operating period utilizing the F2H2 Banshee photographic plane. Cameras used in the Banshee were the K-17 with the 6, 12 and 24 inch cones, the K-18 with the 24 and 36 inch cones and the K-38 with the 36 inch cone.

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A number of missions were flown using infra red film. The results were quite satisfactory and continued use is recommended.

A larger amount of photography was devoted to target search especially in the build up area south of Wonsan in the foothills west of Ason-Ni. One days photography alone disclosed well over 800 camouflaged barracks and storage buildings plus many caves and revetments. Considerable effort at camouflage has been carried out by the enemy in concealing barrack and storage buildings. Generally, the buildings are located in valleys off the main road and hidden among the trees. The buildings will often be revetted, sometimes covered with earth or brush. Every effort is made to blend the buildings in with the surrounding terrain. However, the lack of understory vegetation results in track activity which tends to make the overall area conspicuous. A training program in identification of camouflaged military areas and individual buildings is recommended.

Continued work on flak analysis was carried out during the period resulting in the production of six (6) flak studies or "Touraids". Considerable flak was noted and received from pilot reports over the camouflaged military areas indicating the need for thorough flak analysis on such targets.

B. Summary of Entire Cruise:

a. Air Operations:

Operating data for the period from 11 December 1951 to 10 June 1952:

Missions assigned	- - - - -	7,290
Missions accomplished	- - - - -	7,113
Percentage completed	- - - - -	97.5%
Total days of air operations	- - - - -	95 days
Average daily hours flown	- - - - -	166.2 hours

Sorties by type:

F9F	Photo	F4U	F4U-5N	AD	ADN	ADW
3371	296	1326	199	1418	237	266

the above figures are based on combat missions.

During the Korean conflict to date the VALLEY FORGE based aircraft have flown 15,411 combat sorties. An interesting comparison between World War II and the present Korean conflict is noted. During World War II the USS ESSEX Air Groups expended 4,688 tons of bombs. CATG-1 has dropped 4,045 tons and fired 1,722,333 rounds of ammunition during their present tour.

From the period 3 July 1950 to 13 June 1952, the VALLEY FORGE has completed 20,853 landings.

b. Photography and Photo Interpretation:

The Photo Interpretation Unit aboard the VALLEY FORGE utilized space made available in the Air Intelligence Office. Working space was restricted and filing space was at a minimum. The unit began its work with one LCDR. Additional personnel were assigned and during most of the operating period consisted of one LCDR, one LTJG, one QM2, and one AN. The P. I. unit was

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The greatest work load was in the preparation of route flak studies or "Touraids". The flak studies required the detailed study of two or three large scale photo runs along a route usually at a scale of 1/5,000 to 1/6,000. A series of mosaics, usually four to six, were prepared from small scale photos of 1/12,000 to 1/15,000 scale. Proper legends were placed on the mosaics plus six digit coordinates of all targets. Flak positions obtained from stereo study of the large scale photos would be properly placed on the small scale mosaics by appropriate symbols. The mosaics were reproduced on 8x10 prints and assembled into the Touraid booklets. The VALLEY FORGE produced approximately 75 Touraid studies using over 28,000 8x10 prints. Approximately two thirds of the Touraid studies used by the Task Force during the last three months were produced by the VALLEY FORGE.

A considerable amount of time was spent in target search. All targets located were reported by dispatch and, whenever possible, an annotated mosaic and report would be distributed to the force. Damage assessment, route surveillance, and flash interpretation of call photography was reported by dispatch.

c. Recommendations:

That the F2H2 Banshee photo plane be used for aerial reconnaissance purposes on all CV-9 type carriers.

That the shore-based photo interpretation unit be rapidly established within air carrier distance of the operating area to reduce in as much as possible the work load on the carrier photo lab and interpretation unit. A close coordination between P. I. units in Korea, Japan and aboard ship is deemed essential.

A program of pilot identification from aerial photos of gun positions, camouflaged military areas and use of photographic aids be carried out prior to the arrival of a new squadron in the operating area.

The inexperienced ship's photo interpreters be sent to the forward area prior to the arrival of the carrier for a period of indoctrination.

C. Air Department:

a. Aircraft Handling:

Nylon Tie-down - The nylon tie-down developed and tested under actual conditions by this ship is considered to be the answer to aircraft securing problems. The nylon tie-down can be manufactured locally and possesses the advantages of strength, quick action, lightness and durability. It is superior in every respect to the tie-down reel and 21 thread line.

The locally designed shuttle used in place of the change 30 shuttle arrangement has been superior in all respects. Complete data on the locally designed shuttle arrangement and bridle catcher will be reported by separate correspondence.

b. Aircraft Maintenance:

The Sperry Engine Analyzer on board was not

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the tank top and the pressure gauge. A pet cock was installed under each gauge to bleed off this entrapped air which gave an accurate reading of the tank top pressure. An overall improvement in the fueling rate was noted and a rate in excess of 60,000 gallons per hour was realized when pumping into the outer tanks.

d. Personnel:

The Air Department complement as recommended in USS VALLEY FORGE letter serial 1353 dated 23 May 1952 has continued over the past 18 months to prove the most effective and efficient complement for a CV-9 class carrier. While this complement efficiently supports 90 to 100 sorties per day plus short periods of high tempo operations, it is not adequate for extended "around the clock" operations.

D. Dental Department:

The Dental Department rendered outstanding service to the ship's company during the entire tour. Major equipment is adequate and in fair condition, and no critical shortage in supplies exist.

The need for a prosthetic unit on all ship's of this class has been recognized, and recommended by the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. The outstanding cooperation of the prosthetic clinic in Yokosuka Naval Hospital provided means of mastication for all our edentulous patients.

E. Supply Department:

a. Summary Data:

(1) Aviation spare parts and material:

Number of individual requests from squadrons per month	- -	1582
Number of such requests filled from stock on board per month	- - - - -	1472
Number of such requests passed to other sources supply:		
Allowance list items	- - - - -	25
Non-allowance list items	- - - - -	84
% efficiency, over-all	- - - - -	93.1%
% efficiency for allowance list items	- - - - -	98.3%
Major components issued during operating period:		
Engines	- - - - -	32
Wings	- - - - -	17
Propellers	- - - - -	25

(2) General Stores and non-aviation repair parts:

Individual issues per month	- - - - -	1650
Monthly average of items received aboard from all sources:		
General stores	- - - - -	950
Ship's repair parts	- - - - -	200
Electronics parts	- - - - -	150

(3) Commissary:

Receipts at sea	- - - - -	647 tons
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Evaluation of area sources of supply and related transportation methods was included in reply to ComAirFac's Supply Support Questionnaire by this ship.

Photographic supplies represented a recurring source of trouble in a sensitive area of operations. This ship's itemized recommendation regarding six months' requirements of photographic supplies for a CV flagship operating in the Korean action has been forwarded to ComAirFac.

F. Gunnery Department:

a. Air Defense:

Air Defense drills "Warning Magenta" were conducted by the task force frequently during the period 12 December 1951 to 11 June 1952. Records were kept of acquisition results and are available for 124 separate raids up to 2 June 1952. These raids break down into 90 jet raids and 34 prop raids. Tabs (1) and (2) present the results obtained by the Mk 37 directors in graphic form. Records were also kept for the Mk 56, Mk 63 and Mk 51 directors, but uncontrolled factors, such as blanking on certain bearings which precluded attempts at acquisition until minimum range had been reached, make the data difficult to present graphically.

The results of the Mk 37 director acquisition effort is presented for two periods. The first period, 12 December 1951 to 11 February 1952, represents a learning stage, and the results, in general, could be rated as unsatisfactory. This assessment is based on only 26% of the jet raids and 60% of the prop raids being acquired early enough for maximum fire to have been delivered at maximum open fire range at 10,000 yards advance range. The second period, 5 March to 2 June 1952, roughly represents the performance which can be expected from an average, well trained, director crew. This performance is considered satisfactory in that 70% of the prop raids were acquired early enough to have delivered maximum fire at maximum range.

These minimum acquisition ranges are based on the range at which the director must pick up the target and still have time to get a solution, get the guns into automatic, and open fire before advance range reaches 10,000 yards. If the gun mounts are kept in automatic during the latter part of the designation phase several seconds can be saved and satisfactory acquisition phase several seconds can be saved and satisfactory acquisition made at a shorter range. Under these conditions 78% of the jet raids and 81% of the prop raids were acquired at a wholly satisfactory range during the second period. It is noted that if a raid had not been acquired by 10,000 yards (a partially satisfactory acquisition range) it was usually not fired on at all.

The Mk 56 and Mk 63 directors complemented the Mk 37 directors on five occasions, which increases the total satisfactory acquisitions by a percentage point or two. In general, the Mk 56 director performance was about the same as that of the Mk 37 directors. It probably should have been better, in that the equipment is of a better design for acquisition work.

It is concluded that frequent task force acquisition drills were vitally important in reaching a satisfactory state of training in the gun batteries. Without these drills improvement could have been expected, but would probably not have reached the level indicated for the second period.

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at sea was accomplished on 10 occasions and 950 short tons of fresh and dry stores were received. Mail received by high line from tankers while refueling totaled 1,845 bags. 433 personnel were either received or transferred by high line to ships of the replenishment group.

Occasionally it was necessary to refuel destroyers of the screen. 24,952 barrels of fuel oil were transferred to destroyers during 24 destroyer refueling operations.

Although the helicopter has relieved the escorting ships of much of the routine transfer of guard mial, personnel, and freight between ships, it was necessary to receive destroyers along side on 65 separate occasions in order to effect transfers of this type.

2. The comments and recommendations made by Commander, Air Task Group ONE in enclosure (1) are concurred in.

3. The following dispatch was received from Com7thFlt on 18 June 1952:

"COMMANDER 7TH FLEET SENDS HEARTY WELL DONE TO COMCARDIV 5, VALLEY FORGE AND AIR TASK GROUP 1 ON OCCASION OF YOUR DEPARTURE FROM KOREA WATERS X YOU COMPILED AN OUTSTANDING RECORD DURING 6 LONG AND DIFFICULT MONTHS OF RELENTLESS ACTION AGAINST THE ENEMY IN NORTH KOREA X YOUR TIRELESS DEVOTION TO DUTY AND YOUR WILLINGNESS TO CARRY OUT ANY ASSIGNMENT NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT HAS BEEN INSPIRATION TO ALL X GOOD LUCK AND BON VOYAGE X VADM CIARK"

Oscar Pederson

OSCAR PEDERSON

Copies to:

CNO (2 advance)
CINCPACFLT (2 advance)
CINCPACFLT EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COMNAVFE (1 advance)
COMNAVFE EVALUATION GROUP (1)
COM7THFLT (1 advance)
CTF 77 (1 advance)
COMAIRPAC (5)
COMSEWPAC (1)
COMFAIRALAMEDA (1)
COMFKIRJAPAN (1)
NAVAL WAR COLLEGE (1)
COMCARDIV ONE (1)
COMCARDIV THREE (1)
CO, FAIRBETUPAC (2)
CO, USS ESSEX (CV-9)(1)
CO, USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CV-31)(1)
CO, USS ANTIETAM (CV-36)(1)
CO, USS PHILIPPINE SEA (CV-47)(1)
CO, USS PRINCETON (CV-37)(1)
CO, USS BOXER (CV-21)(1)
CO, USS KEARSARGE (CV-33)(1)
CVG 2
CVG 5
CVG 11