

1988



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HELICOPTER COMBAT SUPPORT SQUADRON FOUR (HC-4)
FPO NEW YORK 09523

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IN REPLY REFER TO:
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From: Commanding Officer, Helicopter Combat Support Squadron FOUR
To: Director of Naval History (Op-09BH), Washington, D.C.
20374-0571

Subj: CY 1988 COMMAND HISTORY SUBMISSION

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) Biography of CDR R. L. Payne, JR.
(2) Biography of CDR John Walter Mullarky
(3) HC-4 CY-88 Battle Efficiency and CNO Annual Aviation
Safety awards submission (C).

1. In accordance with reference (a), the HELSUPPRON FOUR Command History with enclosures (1) through (3) are submitted for review.

D. J. Smania
D. J. SMANIA
By direction

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OPNAVINST 5513.16 SERIES
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COMMAND HISTORY

I. Command Composition and Organization.

a. Mission - To provide day/night logistic support to SIXTH Fleet units and U.S. Forces Europe.

b. Organizational Structure - Chief of Naval Operations, COMNAVAIRLANT, COMHELTACWING ONE, COMFAIRMED, HC-4.

c. Commanding Officers - 01 Jan-22 July, CDR R. L. Payne, JR. /22 July-31 December, CDR J. W. Mullarky. See enclosures (1) and (2) for biographical information.

d. Permanent Duty Station: Naval Air Station (NAS) Sigonella, Sicily, Italy.

e. Assets: Six (6) Sikorsky CH-53E Helicopters:
BUNO's: 161532, 161536, 161537, 161538, 161539, 161540.
Anticipate 161988 to arrive in June 89.

II. Chronology

<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Event</u>
01-08 Jan	Detachment (Det) to Naples, Italy in support of CV-67
17-24 Jan	Det to Hyeres, France in support of CV-67
01-08 Feb	Det to Alexandria, Egypt in support of CV-67
09-16 Feb	Det to Izmir, Turkey in support of CV-67
21-27 Feb	Det to Tel Aviv, Israel in support of CV-43
04 Mar	Received COMFAIRMED Silver Anchor Award for 1987
05-20 Mar	Det to Rota, Spain in support of CV-43/LHA-4
06-11 Mar	Det to Alicante, Spain in support of CV-43
08 Mar	MEDIVAC one patient from LHA 4 to Rota, Spain
11 Mar	MEDIVAC one patient from CV-43 to Alicante, Spain
14-17 Mar	Det to Decimomannu, Sardinia in support of CV-43/CVN-69
15 Mar	MEDIVAC one patient from CV-43 to Decimomannu, Italy
18-24 Mar	Det to Palma, Spain in support of CVN-69
20 Mar	MEDIVAC one patient from CVN-69 to Palma, Spain
29 Mar-07 Apr	Det to Hyeres, France in support of CVN-69
07-20 Apr	Det to Naples, Italy in support of LPH-2
08-17 Apr	Det to Hyeres, France in support of CVN-69
11 Apr	Received Navy Unit Commendation for meritorious service during operations in the Libyan area, March/April 1986
11 Apr	MEDIVAC one patient from LPH-2 to Naples, Italy
25 Apr-01 May	Det to Hyeres, France in support of CVN-69
01-10 May	Supported Exercise "Dragon Hammer 88", CAPO Teulada, Sardinia

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04 May MEDIVAC one patient from T-A0187 (USNS Henry J. Kaiser) to Naples, Italy

06-21 May Det to Cigli, Turkey in support of CVN-69

13 May Supported "No Notice" Navy Special Warfare Exercise

20-27 May Det to Alexandria, Egypt in support of CVN-69

24 May MEDIVAC three patients from CVN-69 to Antayla, Turkey

07 Jun INF Mission, transported 25 members of INF Inspection Team from NAS Sigonella to COMISO Air Base and return

08-20 Jun Det to Palma, Spain in support of CVN-69

12 Jun Supported "No Notice" Navy Special Warfare Exercise

15 Jun MEDIVAC one patient from CVN-69 to Palma, Spain

17 Jun MEDIVAC four patients from CVN-69 to Palma, Spain

07-22 Jul Det to Tel Aviv, Israel in support of CVN-69 and Exercise "Juniper Falconry 88"

19 Jul MEDIVAC 10 patients from CVN-69 to Tel Aviv, Israel

22 Jul Change of Command: CDR John W. Mullarky relieves CDR Robert L. Payne as Commanding Officer, HC-4

01-05 Aug NATOPS Evaluation

07-17 Aug Det to Hyeres, France in support of CVN-69

10-19 Aug Supported Exercises in the Western Mediterranean during "National Week 88"

15-28 Aug Det to Rota/Alicante, Spain in support of CV-59/CVN-69

20 Aug INF Mission, transported 30 members of Soviet, Italian, and U.S. Inspection Teams from NAS Sigonella to COMISO Air Base and return

27 Aug MEDIVAC four patients from CV-59 to Alicante, Spain

29 Aug-11 Sep Det to Alexandria, Egypt in support of CV-67 and Exercise "Sea Wind 88"

12-19 Sep Det to Hyeres, France in support CV-67

04-17 Oct Det to Balikesir/Antalya, Turkey in support of CV-67, LPH-9 and Exercise "Display Determination 88"

27 Oct-04 Nov Det to Palma, Spain in support of CV-67

05-10 Nov Det to Naples, Italy in support of LPH-9

08 Nov MEDIVAC one patient from LPH-9 to Naples, Italy

14-18 Nov Det to Naples, Italy in support of CV-67

17-29 Nov Det to Rota, Spain in support of CV-67/LPH-9

18 Nov INF Mission, transported 31 members of Soviet, Italian and U.S. Inspection Teams from NAS Sigonella to COMISO Air Base and return

29 Nov-12 Dec Det to Rota, Spain in support of CV-67, LPH-9 and Exercise "African Eagle 88"

14-21 Dec Det to Palma, Spain in support of CV-67/LPH-9

21-31 Dec Det to Hyeres, France in support of CV-67

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NARRATIVE

1988 was an economic transition year for HC-4, as Navy-wide budget reductions loomed as a potential menace to an operational expenditure posture previously unaffected by serious financial constraints. However, through impressive and continual strategic planning, the Black Stallions consistently demonstrated the ability to do more with less. Although operational funding was reduced by 21 percent when compared to 1987, the squadron still documented a 15 percent increase in the number of passengers transported, and a two percent increase in the amount of cargo hauled, while logging six percent less total flight hours.

To increase effective logistic support while faced with fewer operating dollars, HC-4 investigated the options of embarking aircraft detachments onboard CV's whenever feasible. For the first time, five separate detachments operated from three different CV's, demonstrating the squadron's unique capability to work successfully from sea or shore locations.

HC-4 was the experimental test-bed, in early 1988, for determining the effectiveness of the Brooks and Perkins dual-point pallet system. Used in conjunction with the CH-53E's dual-point suspension system, the pallet was intended as a method for accelerating cargo transfer, while simultaneously reducing on-load and off-load time. While extensive testing in both the training and operational environment supported the viability of the system, its' use was not proven practical for HC-4's "heavy lift" mission. Pallet utilization was discontinued in May.

The squadron's overall mission of logistic support to the Sixth Fleet was diversified slightly with the ratification of the INF Treaty. HC-4 was assigned with providing helicopter transportation for the Soviet Inspection Team between COMISO Air Base and NAS Sigonella, Italy. Providing critical support in June, August, and November, these missions constituted a national obligation of the highest order.

Once again HC-4 had a tremendous year providing unprecedented support to Sixth Fleet Units. To preclude duplication of reporting, enclosure (3) has been provided as supporting documentation to the narrative. It includes explanations of the support provided by HC-4 to key Sixth Fleet operations, in addition to achievements in maintenance, personnel retention and advancement, safety, awards and commendations, tactical and weapon systems improvements, and lessons learned.

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