



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HELICOPTER COMBAT SUPPORT SQUADRON FOUR (HC-4)
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From: Commanding Officer, Helicopter Combat Support Squadron FOUR
To: Director of Naval History, (OP 09BH), Washington Navy Yard, Washington
DC 20374-0571

Subj: 2001 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Command composition, organization, chronology and narrative
(2) Biography of CDR Daniel E. Braswell
(3) Biography of CDR Michael E. Zamesnik
(4) Biography of CDR Michael J. Fitzpatrick
(5) Helicopter Combat Support Squadron Four's Pamphlet
(6) Helicopter Combat Support Squadron Four's History and Fact Sheet
(7) Future Naval Heavy Lift, Long Range Helicopter Shortfall in
European AOR
(8) End of Detachment Report 3-8 June 2001
(9) End of Detachment Report for 5-12 May 2001
(10) End of Detachment Report for 2-25 May 2001
(11) End of Detachment Report for 03-27 July 2001
(12) End of Detachment Report for 22-24 July 2001
(13) End of Detachment Report for 29 August - 09 September
(14) End of Detachment Report for 7-25 October
(15) CTF61 141803Z NOV 01 Bravo Zulu
(16) COMCARAIRWING ONE 110729Z OCT 01 Bravo Zulu
(17) CNO WASHINGTON DC 251828Z SEP 01 Bravo Zulu
(18) CINCLANTFLT NORFOLK VA 142224Z SEP 01 Bravo Zulu
(19) COMSIXTHFLT 190520Z AUG 01 Bravo Zulu
(20) USS ENTERPRISE 060745Z AUG 01 Bravo Zulu
(21) USS LASALLE 072039Z AUG 01 Bravo Zulu
(22) HELSUPRON EIGHT 171800Z JUL 01 Bravo Zulu
(23) CTF 61 151810Z JUL 01 Bravo Zulu
(24) USS KEARSARGE 281310Z SEP 01 Bravo Zulu
(25) CTF 62 211320Z SEP 01 Bravo Zulu
(26) COMNASARG 101330Z MAY 01 Bravo Zulu
(27) USS LASALLE 271725Z JUN 01 Bravo Zulu
(28) COMSIXTHFLT 130407Z AUG 01 Bravo Zulu
(29) USS NASSAU 301420Z MAR 01 Bravo Zulu
(30) Submission for CY01 Battle Efficiency Award
(31) COMHELTACWINGLANT Presentation
(32) 3.5" Diskette 2001 Command History

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (32) are submitted.


M. J. FITZPATRICK
Acting

2001 Helicopter Combat Support Squadron FOUR Command History

I. *Command Composition and Organization*

Title: The Command's short title is HC-4 and is nicknamed The Black Stallions. The Unit Identification Code is 52959 (sea) and 55248 (shore).

Mission: Operate from Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy, to fixed land-bases and U.S. Naval ships certified for H-53E helicopter operations in support of COMFIFTHFLT and COMSIXTHFLT. Although primarily operating within the European and Arabian Gulf theaters, HC-4 is capable of operating worldwide to provide passenger and cargo transportation, vertical onboard delivery, search and assistance, MEDEVAC services, Naval Special Warfare Training and Explosive Ordnance Disposal operations support, and airborne fire fighting as directed by higher authority.

Established: 06 May 1983
Homeport: NAS Sigonella, Sicily

Aircraft: 9 MH-53E Sea Dragon Helicopters
(Side Number - Buno)

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 00 - 163068 | 40 - 162509 | 41 - 163057 |
| 42 - 163065 | 43 - 164864 | 44 - 163053 |
| 45 - 163055 | 46 - 162516 | 47 - 162505 |

Manning: Officers: 38
Enlisted: 231

Organization: Normally operate two to four aircraft at NASSIG and two to three autonomous detachments of two aircraft each.

CO: Michael E. Zamesnik, CDR, USN (Dec 99 - Apr 01)
CO: Daniel E. Braswell, CDR, USN (Apr 01-present)
XO: Michael John Fitzpatrick, CDR, USN
CMC: Rodney A. Parks, SMCM(AW/SW), USN

II. 2001 Chronology

| <u>Location</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Event</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|---|
| Sigonella, Italy | 2 Jan - 13 Jan | USS Nassau (LHA-4) Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) Logistic Support |
| Sigonella, Italy | 19 Feb - 27 Feb | USS Nassau Logistics Support |
| Sigonella, Italy | 3 Mar - 5 Mar | USS Nashville (LPD-13) Logistic Support |
| Sigonella, Italy | 7 Mar - 30 Mar | USS Nassau Logistic Support |
| Bari, Italy | 3 Apr - 12 Apr | USS Nassau Logistic Support |
| HC-4 | 6 Apr | CDR Braswell assumes command of HC-4 from CDR Zamesnik |
| Gibraltar, U.K. | 2 May - 9 May | GIBEX, HAR USAF KC-130, supported Army 10 th Special Forces Para drops, Insertion & Extraction |
| Dalaman, Turkey | 5 May - 9 May | USS Harry S. Truman (CVN- 75) Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) Logistic Support |
| Souda, Greece | 9 May - 12 May | USS Harry S. Truman CVBG |
| Palma, Spain | 9 May - 15 May | USS Enterprise (CVN-65) CVBG Support |
| Gibraltar, U.K. | 15 May - 24 May | Exercise Royal Echo, Spec Ops Training with U.S. and British Forces |
| Tirana, Albania | 30 May - 3 Jun | Site Survey |
| Hyerres, France | 23 May - 30 May | USS Enterprise Battle Group Logistic Support |

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Solenzara, France | 31 May - 3 Jun | USS Enterprise CVBG Logistic Support |
| Tirana, Albania | 30 May - 3 Jun | CASEX, U.S. Spec Ops Training, Albanian Army and Albanian Air Force, Insertion and Extraction of Forward Air Controllers |
| Aviano, Italy | 3 Jun - 7 Jun | VENITO RESCUE, Supported the 173 rd USA Brigade, USMC FAST Platoon, USAF 31 st fighter Wing |
| Souda, Greece | 5 Jun - 30 Jun | USS Kearsarge (LHD-3) ARG Logistic Support |
| Bournemouth, England | 10 Jun - 18 Jun | USS Enterprise CVBG Logistic Support |
| Kinloss, Scotland U.K. | 18 Jun - 29 Jun | USS Enterprise CVBG Logistic Support |
| Montijo, Portugal | 29 Jun - 8 Jul | USS Enterprise CVBG Logistic Support |
| Tirana, Albania | 3 Jul - 11 Jul | Naval Special Warfare Support |
| Hyerres, France | 8 Jul - 14 Jul | Naval Special Warfare Support |
| Souda, Greece | 25 Jul - 27 Jul | USS Enterprise Support For Operation Juniper Hawk |
| Hyerres, France | 22 Jul - 24 Jul | USS Kearsarge (LHD-3) ARG Logistic Support |
| Gibraltar, U.K. | 29 Aug - 9 Sep | Operation Royal Sierra |
| Plodiv, Bulgaria | 10 Sep - 13 Sep | Exercise Cooperative Key |
| Rota, Spain | 29 Sep - 2 Oct | USS Theodore Roosevelt (CV-71) CVBG Logistic Support Inchop |
| Cairo, Egypt | 7 Oct - 25 Oct | Exercise Bright Star LNO for JFACC |

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|---|
| Aviano, Italy | 9 Oct - 18 Oct | Exercise Chianti Storm Helicopter Aerial Refueling Training with USAF KC-130's. |
| Pisa, Italy | 28 Nov - 30 Nov | Italian Special Operations Training Support. Maritime Interdiction Training to FFG and cruise ship. |
| Fujairah, U.A.E. | 4 Nov- 31 Dec | Operation Enduring Freedom: CVBG's Logistic Support for USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63), USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN- 71), USS John C. Stennis (CVN-74). ARG support USS Peleliu (LHA-3), USS Bataan (LHD-3). Logistic Support USS Detroit (AOE- 4). |

III. *Narrative*

This was an extremely successful year for HC-4 as the Black Stallions provided uninterrupted support to FIFTH and SIXTH Fleet units operating in NAVEUR and NAVCENT. The operational tempo was high. The squadron provided support to five Carrier Battle Groups and three Amphibious Ready Groups, while participating in every major operation and exercise in theater. Numerous short notice tasking, involving complex shipboard and high visibility missions, required rapid response and tested the readiness of the squadron. A strong maintenance program, producing one of the highest FMC/MC and utilization rates within the MH-53E community, coupled with an aggressive safety posture produced a record setting year. HC-4 flew its second highest yearly total of 3,678 hours and transported 7,643 passengers, 571,600 pounds of mail and 2,205,600 pounds of cargo with a 98.8% mission completion rate. HELSUPPRON FOUR continues to spearhead the utilization of the MH-53E as the premier platform for long range, heavy helicopter combat support.

Following the 11 September 2001 Terrorist Attacks, HC-4 provided critical Long Range support lifting COMFAIRMED's HC-2 Naples Detachment personnel and equipment to the USS Lasalle (AGF-3) on 12 September 2001. From 15 September to 22 September 2001 HC-4 transported the U. S. Marines of 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) from NAS Sigonella to the USS Kearsarge (LHD-3). Two Six MEU personnel had been on exercise in Albania and needed to get back aboard the USS Kearsarge ARG ships as soon as possible. The 26th MEU personnel were transported to Sigonella via USAF transports and transferred to the Black Stallion MH-53E's.

On 01 November 2001 HC-4 received diplomatic clearance to send Detachment One, a two aircraft detachment from Sigonella, to Fujairah, U.A.E. Detachment One departed Sigonella 02 November 2001 self lifting all of its equipment, six pilots and nine aircrewmembers 3,000 nautical miles in two days. Detachment One was in position to provide Heavy Helicopter Combat Support to the Kitty Hawk, Carl Vinson and Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Battle Groups (CVBG's) engaged in combat operations in the North Arabian Sea by the morning of 05 November 2001. The USS Peleliu (LHA-5) and USS Bataan (LHD-5) Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG's) were also receiving Heavy Helicopter Combat Support in the North Arabian Sea. The detachment has been

flying up to 400 miles each way in support of the CVBG and ARG ships engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom.

During the first six weeks of operation Detachment One moved 652,000 pounds of cargo and mail which included 42 JDAM Weapons kits, 11 Tactical Jet Engines and one E-2 prop assembly. The 42 JDAM Kits were flown in from Ramstein AFB Germany via C-5, transferred to the Black Stallion aircraft and flown out to the Carl Vinson and Theodore Roosevelt. These weapons systems were running in short supply and critically needed by the tactical aircraft providing close air support to U. S. Special Forces in Afghanistan.

Prior to 11 September 2001, HC-4 has become fully entrenched in the COMSIXTHFLT NSW training continuum, participating in eight major exercises supporting U.S. and multi-national forces. The Black Stallions were the only asset available in the Mediterranean to ensure critical training was completed. Additionally, HC-4 participated in COMSUBIN in Pisa, Italy providing Helicopter Rope Suspension Training for Italian Special Forces. This exercise included fast rope training to both an Italian frigate and a cruise ship underway.

The Black Stallions are quickly becoming recognized as the best asset in-theater for both U.S. and bilateral Naval Special Warfare training. This visibility and experience drives HC-4 to pursue the implementation of Night Vision Devices(NVDs) to the airframe to safely execute the primary and secondary mission areas in the ROC/POE.

Numbers alone do not do justice to the tremendous efforts put forth by the entire Black Stallion team. Between at sea replenishment and participation in multinational exercises, HC-4 was unwavering in supplying on time, every time logistical support. The men and women of this command operate in diverse environments, positively reacting to short fused tasking and producing bench mark mission capable numbers. HC-4 continues to distinguish itself as the leader in Heavy Helicopter Combat Support.

HC-4 SQUADRON FACT SHEET

Mission: Operate from Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy, to fixed land-bases and U.S. Naval ships certified for H-53E helicopter operations in support of COMFIFTHFLT and COMSIXTHFLT. Although primarily operating within the European and Arabian Gulf theaters, HC-4 is capable of operating worldwide to provide passenger and cargo transportation, vertical onboard delivery, search and assistance, MEDEVAC services, Naval Special Warfare and Explosive Ordnance Disposal operations support, and airborne fire fighting as directed by higher authority.

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Homeport: NAS Sigonella, Sicily

Aircraft: 9 MH-53E Sea Dragon Helicopters
Manning: Officers: 35
Enlisted: 241

Organization: Normally operate two to four aircraft at NASSIG and two to three autonomous detachments of two aircraft each.

| <u>Current Detachments</u> | <u>Mission</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| HC-4 DET I | SUPPORT AS DIRECTED | AS ASSIGNED |
| HC-4 DET II | SUPPORT AS DIRECTED | AS ASSIGNED |
| HC-4 DET III | SUPPORT AS DIRECTED | AS ASSIGNED |
| HC-4 DET IV | SUPPORT AS DIRECTED | AS ASSIGNED |

CO: CDR MICHEAL E. ZAMESNIK
XO: CDR DANIEL E. BRASWELL
CMC: SMCM (AW/SW) RODNEY PARKS

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co/xo DSN: 624-6677 COMM: 011-39-095-86-6677
Fax: DSN: 624-5760 COMM: 011-39-095-86-5760

Website: <http://www.sicily.navy.mil/hc4/index.htm>

HC-4 RECENT CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT - Greece, Italy, Macedonia (3 Nov 99 - 25 Nov 99)
Supported from Athens, Greece, Pisa, Italy and Skopje, Macedonia
1) Logistics support for President of the United States visit

OPERATION AVID RESPONSE - Turkey (20 Aug 99 - 12 Sep 99)
Earthquake Relief
Deployed aboard USS KEARSARGE (LHD - 3)
1) Survivor Relief
2) Logistics support to USS Kearsarge (LHD - 3)

OPERATION JOINT GUARD - Kosovo (Jun-Jul 99) - Kosovo Peacekeeping Mission
Deployed aboard USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3)
1) MEU airbridge USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3) - Skopje, Macedonia
2) Logistics support to USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3) - USS PONCE (LPD-15), USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD-44) and USS NASSAU (LHA-4)

OPERATION NOBLE ANVIL - Kosovo (May-Jun 99) - U. S. Air Campaign

Supported from Bari and Sigonella, Italy

- 1) Logistics support to USS ROOSEVELT (CVN-71)

OPERATION SHINING HOPE - Kosovo (Mar-Jun 99) - Kosovo Refugee Support

Supported from Bari and Sigonella, Italy

- 1) Logistics Support to USS INCHON (LPH-12) and USS LaSALLE (AGF-3)

OPERATION ALLIED FORCE - Kosovo (Mar-May 99) - NATO Air Campaign

Supported from Bari and Sigonella, Italy

- 1) Logistics support to USS KEARSARGE (LHD-3), USS PONCE (LPD-15), USS GUNSTON HALL (LSD-44), USS ROOSEVELT (CVN-71), USS INCHON (LPH-12), USS LASALLE (AGF-3) and USS NASSAU (LHA-4)

OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH - Iraq (Jan-Jul 99) - Iraq No Fly Enforcement

Supported from Manama, Bahrain

- 1) Logistics Support to USS CARL VINSON (CVN-70), USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65), USS KITTY HAWK (CV-63) and USS ROOSEVELT (CVN-71)

OPERATION DESERT FOX - Iraq (Dec 98) - Allied Air Campaign Supported from Manama, Bahrain

- 1) Logistics Support to USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) and USS CARL VINSON (CVN-70)

OPERATION AUTUMN SHELTER - Democratic Republic of Congo (Aug 1998)

Deployed aboard USS SAIPAN

- 1) PMC support to USS SAIPAN ARG
- 2) Standby NEO

OPERATION ALBANIA SECURITY CONTINGENCY - (Aug 1998)

Deployed aboard USS AUSTIN

- 1) Logistics support
- 2) Standby NEO

OPERATION DELIBERATE FALCON - Kosovo (Jun 1998)

Supported from Bari, Italy

- 1) Logistics support to USS SAIPAN ARG

OPERATION DELIBERATE FORGE (Jun-Oct 1998)

Supported from Bari and Sigonella, Italy

- 1) Logistics support to USS AUSTIN, USS SAIPAN and USS EISENHOWER
- 2) Standby MEDEVAC and NEO

OPERATION SILVER WAKE - Albania (Mar-Apr 1997)

Supported from Bari, Italy

- 1) Logistics support
- 2) Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO)

OPERATION GUARDIAN RETRIEVAL - Zaire, Africa (Apr-May 1997)

Deployed aboard USS NASSAU and USS KEARSARGE

- 1) Logistics support
- 2) Tactical Retrieval of Aircrew Personnel (TRAP)
- 3) Standby Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO)

OPERATION NOBLE OBELISK - Sierra Leone, Africa (May-Jun 1997)

Deployed aboard USS KEARSARGE

- 1) Logistics support
- 2) Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO)

HC-4 UNIT AWARDS

SECDEF Maintenance Award 1996

CNO Safety Award CY94, CY96

CINCUSNAVEUR Golden Anchor Award (medium category)
FY 91, FY 92, FY 94, FY 99

COMNAVAIRLANT

2000 17 Consecutive Class 'A' Flight Mishap Free Year Certificate
1999 Top NATOPS Program Award
1998 Battle E

NAS SIGONELLA 1997 and 1998 Large Tenant Command Safety Award

Navy Unit Commendation

Operation ALLIED FORCE (NOBLE ANVIL)
Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM
Operation UNITED SHIELD
Operation SOUTHERN WATCH
Operation RESTORE HOPE
Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR

Meritorious Unit Commendation

Operation DESERT STORM
Operation SOUTHERN WATCH
Operation UNITED SHIELD
Operation PROVIDE COMFORT

Joint Meritorious Unit Award

Operation PROVIDE COMFORT
Operation SILVER WAKE
Operation UNITED SHIELD

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal

Operation UNITED SHIELD
Operation SOUTHERN WATCH

Kuwait Liberation Medal

Operation DESERT STORM

Humanitarian Services Medal

Operation PROVIDE COMFORT
Operation SILVER WAKE
Operation INTERNAL LOOK
Operation SHARP EDGE
Operation ASSURED RESPONSE

NATO Medal

Operation DELIBERATE GUARD

Navy Expeditionary Medal

Operation DELIBERATE GUARD
Operation SHARP EDGE

Southwest Asia Service Medal
Operation DESERT SHIELD
Operation SOUTHERN WATCH

Armed Forces Service Medal
Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR