



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HELICOPTER COMBAT SUPPORT SQUADRON FOUR (HC-4)
UNIT 50011 BOX 3300
FPO AE 09627-3300

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Ser 00/065
12 Mar 03

From: Commanding Officer, Helicopter Combat Support Squadron FOUR
To: Director, Naval Aviation Historical Center, 805 Kidder Breese St SE,
Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374-5059

Subj: 2002 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12H

Encl: (1) 2002 Command History
(2) 3.5 Diskette [Damaged]

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) and (2) are submitted.


M. J. FITZPATRICK

2002 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 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	44 - 163053
40 - 162504	45 - 163055
41 - 163057	46 - 162516
42 - 163065	47 - 162505
43 - 164864	Mishap A/C - 162509

Manning: Officers: 55
Enlisted: 235

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

CO: Michael J. Fitzpatrick, CDR, USN (Sep 02 - Present)
CO: Daniel E. Braswell, CDR, USN (Apr 01- Aug 02)
XO: Kevin A. Bianchi, CDR, USN
CMC: Rodney A. Parks, SMCM(AW/SW), USN

**II. Chronology
(CY 2002)**

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>
ENDURING FREEDOM	Fujairah, U.A.E.	01 JAN - 31 DEC
PURPLE FLEX	Souda Bay, Greece	25 JAN - 30 JAN
USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71)	Rota, Spain	16 MAR - 27 MAR
PURPLE FLEX II	USS LASALLE (AGF 3)	19 MAY - 26 MAY
USS BIG HORN (TAO 198)	Souda Bay, Greece	31 MAY - 01 JUN
Class Alpha Mishap BUNO 162509	NAS Sigonella	27 June
MIO SURGE	USS LASALLE (AGF 3)	21 JUL - 23 JUL
USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67)	Dalaman, Turkey	26 JUL - 30 JUL
Change of Command	NAS Sigonella	31 August
USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	Lisbon, Portugal	28 SEP - 05 OCT
USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	Rota, Spain	05 OCT - 12 OCT
USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	Naples, Italy	16 OCT - 21 OCT
USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	Trieste, Italy	27 OCT - 02 NOV
PURPLE FLEX III	Naples, Italy	02 NOV - 03 NOV
USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	Souda Bay, Greece	14 NOV - 27 NOV
USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN 75)	Rota, Spain	08 DEC - 17 DEC

III. Narrative

Squadron Commanding Officer remarks:

(a) During CY 2002, an emphasis on readiness, flexibility and customer support resulted in uninterrupted service of five CVBGs, five ARGs and numerous smaller ships across FIFTH and SIXTH FLEET AORs. Short notice tasking and complex shipboard/high visibility missions required rapid response. The CY 2002 logistics data is impressive. HC-4 flew 3,420.6 flight hours, achieved a 96.5% mission completion rate, flew 300 missions to ships at sea, and delivered over 5.6 million pounds of mail and cargo to the fleet.

(b) Continued local support of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Eight enabled aircrews to maintain proficiency in Naval Special Warfare (NSW) training, a secondary mission of the command. In addition to aircrew proficiency, this NSW training significantly increased the combat readiness of both commands.

(c) HC-4 continued its high caliber support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. With an operating radius of more than 350 nautical miles from their base in Fujairah, UAE, the Black Stallions of DETACHMENT ONE flew 1,145.3 hours this year, completing 217 missions to ships at sea. DETACHMENT ONE delivered 1,275 passengers and over 2.3 million pounds of mail cargo in support of the war on terrorism.

(d) HC-4's support of SIXTH FLEET has expanded this year into the realm of Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO). Twice this year, HC-4 deployed aircraft aboard the USS LASALLE (AGF 3), providing the logistic support to quickly assemble the disparate forces necessary to conduct MIO in support of Operation MIO SURGE. HC-4 aircrews trained with control and boarding forces and were prepared to conduct daytime compliant MIO in place of unavailable organic helicopter assets.

(e) Focusing on readiness, service and flexibility, HC-4 was unwavering in supplying on time, every time, heavy helicopter combat support to the fleet.