

ODS

1987



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON 15
FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96601-5701

5750
Ser 00/354
6 September 1988

From: Commanding Officer, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15
To: Director, Naval Aviation History, Naval Historical Center, Building
159E, Room 513, Washington Navy Yard Annex, Washington, DC 20374-1595

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D
(b) HM-15 ltr 5750 ser 00/57 of 20 Feb 88
(b) Director, Naval Aviation History, Naval Historical Center ltr 5750
ser AVH/9608 of 31 Aug 88

Encl: (1) HM-15 Command History

1. Per reference (a), reference (b) was forwarded on 20 February 1988. By reference (c), enclosure (1) is hereby resubmitted.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "L. J. O'Brien".

L. J. O'BRIEN
By direction

COMMAND HISTORY

Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 (HM-15) was established on 2 January 1987. As the first of two deployable airborne mine countermeasures squadrons to receive the Sikorsky MH-53E "SEA DRAGON" helicopter, a derivative of both the RH-53D and the CH-53E helicopters, HM-15 commenced transition ground and flight training while still in Norfolk, Virginia. On 21 April 1987 HM-15 was officially notified by the Chief of Naval Operations to execute a homeport change from Norfolk, Virginia to Alameda, California effective 1 October 1987.

Initial squadron flight operations commenced in July 1987 with the receipt of the first MH-53E and continued through September 1987. On 28 September 1987, the squadron's three aircraft departed NAS Norfolk, Virginia and arrived at NAS Alameda, California on 1 October 1987 completing the Chief of Naval Operations directed homeport change. The arriving flight crews and squadron personnel were welcomed aboard NAS Alameda by the Commander, Naval Base San Francisco, and officially reported for duty under operational and administrative control of Rear Admiral John W. Adams, Commander Anti-Submarine Warfare Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

November 1987 marked a major flight training milestone for HM-15 as initial AMCM flight training commenced employing the MK-105 Influence Sweep System (Hydrofoil Sled), MK-104 Acoustic System and the AN/SPU-1W. Additionally in December, the squadron disassembled and loaded two MH-53E helicopters in a USAF C-5A Galaxy aircraft, certifying the Galaxy's air transport capability for the MH-53E.

From January through June of 1988, squadron flight and ground training continued to focus heavily on AMCM operations using the AN/AQS-14 Side-Scan Sonar and the MK-103 Mechanical Sweep Systems. By June, the squadron had developed requisite proficiency in all mission areas and was selected by the Chief of Naval Operations to perform flight operations support for OPTEVFOR to conduct follow-on test and evaluation of the MH-53E helicopter.

In July 1987 the squadron successfully completed a Mine Warfare Readiness Certification Inspection (MRCI) and in August, achieved Initial Operating Capability (IOC) on schedule. At establishment, HM-15 had a compliment of 150 enlisted personnel, 15 Officers and no aircraft or AMCM equipment. At IOC, the squadron has grown to 390 enlisted, 34 Officers, eight aircraft and an extensive suite of AMCM equipment enabling HM-15 to provide the full range of mine countermeasures capabilities, anywhere in the world. As the "BLACKHAWKS" of HM-15 move towards Full Operational Capability scheduled for 1989, they will continue to grow and mature as the Pacific Fleet's first Airborne Mine Countermeasures squadron.