



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

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From: Commanding Officer, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: SUBMISSION OF COMMAND HISTORY, CALENDAR YEAR 1990

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15, 1990 Command History
(2) Command PAO Photo
(3) Squadron "Brief Sheet"
(4) Rotor Review Winter 1990, "HM-15 AMCM Excellence"
(5) NAS Alameda Carrier, "HM-15 Puts Helos to Test in Minesweeping Exercise"
(6) NAS Alameda Carrier, "Top of the News"
(7) NAS Alameda Carrier, "HM-15 Excels in Rapid Deployment Exercise"

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (7) are submitted for the Calendar Year 1990 Command History for Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 (HM-15).

J Sherman

J. W. SHERMAN
By direction



HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON 15, 1990 COMMAND HISTORY

1. Command Composition and Organization. Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 (HM-15) is one of only two airborne mine countermeasures (AMCM) squadrons capable of deploying within 72 hours via C-5 airlift to counter any hostile mine threat throughout the world. HM-15 is commanded by Commander Bruce F. Russell and is homeported at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. Commander Russell graduated in 1973 from Purdue University and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1975. He has completed tours in HM-12, HM-14, HM-15, and HM-16 as well as the Naval Air Systems Command and DCNO. He obtained a Master of Science degree in Logistics Management from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California in 1979. The squadron's immediate senior in command (ISIC) is Commander, Anti Submarine Warfare Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet located in San Diego, California. HM-15 flies the MH-53E "Sea Dragon" helicopter manufactured by the Sikorsky Corporation of Stratford, Connecticut. The squadron possesses twelve aircraft and is manned by 590 enlisted men and 40 officers. The squadron's call sign is "Hurricane" and the Unit Identification Letters are "Tango Bravo".

2. Chronology. HM-15 has completed its third year as part of the ASWWINGPAC and AIRPAC team with dramatic achievements in all areas. Through a unified commitment to mission accomplishment and dedication to the needs of assigned personnel, HM-15 has sustained its superior performance and earned the continued respect of Commands throughout the fleet. Most significant accomplishments include:

- * Completed two and one half years Class A mishap free - over 9500 hours. One year free of any Class mishaps.

- * Flew 102% of flight hours allocated utilizing 99% of OPTAR, an increase of 11.2% from previous year.

- * Attained 43.2% of flight time as AMCM time, an increase of 23.3% from previous year.

- * Major participant in NAS Fallon "Off Range" ordnance Clean-up.

- * Demonstrated multi-Det, shipboard, and remote site deployed operations utilizing self lift and air lift capabilities. Conducted primary AMCM and secondary logistics support vertical on-board delivery (VOD) missions.

- * COMASWWINGPAC nominee for Golden Anchor Award.

- * Conducted successful operational evaluations on the minefield Precise Navigation System (PNS), and the AN/37U-1 AMCM system.

- * Maintained superior all-time-high combat readiness.

- * First to deploy and exercise the new portable PNS in simulated minefield.

a. Deployed Operations.

(1) Detachments:

<u>Det#</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
90-1	NAS North Island	31 JAN-13 FEB
90-2	NAS North Island	22 MAR-04 APR
90-3	NAS North Island	16 MAY-20 MAY
90-4	NAS Fallon	17 JUN-29 JUN
90-5	MCAS El Toro	05 AUG-09 AUG
90-6	NAS Whidbey Island	09 SEP-21 SEP
90-7	USS Pelelieu (LHA-5)	03 OCT-04 OCT
90-8	USS Pelelieu (LHA-5)	11 OCT-13 OCT
90-9	Monterey, Ca.	21 OCT-27 OCT
90-10	USS Pelelieu (LHA-5)	14 NOV-16 NOV
90-11	MCB Camp Pendleton	05 DEC-14 DEC

(2) Exercises:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
HAWKEX 90-1	Alameda, CA	07 MAY-11 MAY
MARDEZEX CENCAL 90-2	Long Beach, CA	05 AUG-09 AUG
FLEXEX	Whidbey Island, WA	09 SEP-21 SEP
EODEX 90-1	Alameda, CA	10 SEP-14 SEP
EODEX 90-2	Monterey, CA	21 OCT-27 OCT
CAMPEX 90-1	Oceanside, CA	05 DEC-14 DEC

b. Fleet Support Operations.

(1) Fleet Support:

<u>Command</u>	<u>Location/Event</u>	<u>Dates</u>
COMMINWARCOM	Operational Tests	05 FEB-15 FEB
	(PNS and AN/37U-1)	26 MAR-06 APR
USS Arkansas COMNAVAIRPAC	Aerial Photo	21 MAY
	NAS Fallon	17 JUN-29 JUN
USS New Jersey	Ordinance Sweep	
	Media/VIP Transport	16 JUN
USS Missouri	Media/VIP Transport	28 JUN
	HM-19	MK-105 Ground
HS-85	Crew Training	
	Material Transport	11 SEP
USS Nassau	Fleet Week Support	OCT 90
USS Pelelieu	Fleet Week Support	OCT 90
MIUW 104	Under Sec Navy	17 NOV 90
	AMCM Demo	
USS Lincoln	Media/VIP Transport	20 NOV 90
USS Wichita	Aerial Photo	14 DEC 90

(2) Airshows Supported (Static Displays):

<u>Location/Event</u>	<u>Dates</u>
El Centro, CA	17 MAR 90
Norton AFB, CA	24 MAR 90
Spokane, WA	07 APR 90
Scottsdale, AZ	21 APR 90
Hamilton AFB, CA	02 JUN 90
Mountain Home AFB, ID	09 JUN 90
Chico, CA	08 SEP 90
Bakersfield, CA	20 OCT 90
NAS Alameda, CA	03 NOV 90

c. Achievements in Aviation Safety.

(1) Class A Mishaps	0
(2) Class B Mishaps	0
(3) Class C Mishaps	0
(4) Number of Hazard Reports submitted	5
(5) Number of NATOPS changes submitted	25

d. Achievements in Command Inspections.

(1) Completed Aircraft Maintenance Evaluation (AME) on 23 March 1990 Grade Above Average (89%).

(2) Completed NATOPS Unit Evaluation on 18 May 1990 - Grade Satisfactory.

(3) Completed Mine Warfare Readiness Certification Inspection (MRCI) on 10 August 1990 - Grade Satisfactory.

(4) Completed ISIC Inspection on 28 August 1990 - Grade Satisfactory.

e. Achievements in Personnel Readiness.

(1) Retention:

	<u>ELIGIBLE</u>	<u>NOT ELIGIBLE</u>	<u>NUMBER REENLISTED</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
FIRST TERM	58	15	37	64
SECOND TERM	27	2	25	93
CAREER	31	0	27	87

(2) Advancement:

	<u>TIS</u> <u>ELIG</u>	<u>TIR</u> <u>ELIG</u>	<u>TOOK</u> <u>EXAM</u>	<u>NOT</u> <u>RECOM</u>	<u>SELECTED</u>	<u>PNA</u>
Cycle - MAR 90						
E-4	90	90	76	2	23	53
E-5	79	79	73	1	14	59
E-6	76	76	72	2	7	65
Cycle - SEP 90						
E-4	131	131	107	4	34	73
E-5	86	86	79	2	18	59
E-6	79	79	70	3	11	59

f. Contributions to Tactical Development Improvement.

(1) Tactical Documents Submitted:

(a) HM-15 Detachment 1, PNS OPEVAL, end of Det Report.

(b) Change 1 to Required Operational Capability (ROC) and Projected Operational Environment (POE).

(c) HM-15 Detachment 5, MARDEZEX CENCAL 90, end of Det Report.

(d) Tentative Operational Requirement for AN/AQS-14 Mine Hunting Sonar Upgrade; Ser C007 DTD 17 SEP 90.

(e) Tentative Operational Requirement for Data Link for AMCM Forces; Ser C009 DTD 09 Nov 90.

(2) Significant Tactical Projects:

(a) Conducted MH-53E PNS Certification of Readiness for Operational Testing (OT-IIIA Phase 3).

(b) Conducted Operational Evaluation of AN/37U-1 Mine Clearing Set, Moored Mine.

(c) Participated in AN/ALQ-141 training at Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Procedures to be incorporated into NWP 27-1-3.

(d) Researched, drafted, and submitted entire rewrite of six chapters to NWP 27-3 for Navy-wide use.

(e) Participated in numerous COMINWARCOM Adhoc Working Groups and the Operations Tactics Group establishing long term developmental objectives for the Mine Warfare community.

g. Awards.

(1) Squadron Awards:

<u>Awarding Authority</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Dates</u>
COMASWWINGPAC	Retention Award	01 Apr-30 Sep
HELANTISUBRON 85	Letter of Appreciation	11 Jan 90
COMNAVBASE SAN FRAN	Bravo Zulu	19 Apr 90
COMNAVAIRSYS COM	Bravo Zulu	30 Apr 90
COMINWARCOM	Bravo Zulu	30 Apr 90
COMNAVAIRPAC	Bravo Zulu	18 Jul 90
CTU 16.3.5.1	Bravo Zulu	31 Jul 90
COMASWWINGPAC	CINCPACFLT Golden Anchor Nominee	30 Sep 90
COMARDEZSEC CENCAL	Bravo Zulu	30 Sep 90
COMHELWINGRES	Bravo Zulu	12 Oct 90
COMCOGARDGRU SFO	Bravo Zulu	16 Nov 90
USS PELELIEU	Bravo Zulu	Oct 90

(2) Individual Awards:

<u>Awarding Authority</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Number</u>
CNO	Humanitarian Service Medal	1
SECNAV	Meritorious Unit Commendation	1
SECNAV	Navy Commendation Medal	1
COMNAVAIRPAC	Navy Commendation Medal	2
	Letter of Commendation	1
CINCPACFLT	Meritorious Service Medal	1
CINCPACFLT	Navy Commendation Medal	7
COMASWWINGPAC	Navy Achievement Medal	16
	Letter of Commendation	34
NAVSTA TREASURE IS	Navy Achievement Medal	2
	Letter of Commendation	3
NASA BRANCH CLINIC	Letter of Commendation	1
HELMINERON FIFTEEN	Navy Achievement Medal	11
	Letter of Commendation	75
	Letter of Appreciation	57
	Safety Pro's	46

3. Narrative.

1990 was a year dedicated to sharpening the combat readiness of the command. All AMCM weapon systems were employed in real world scenarios designed to fully exercise all capabilities. A highly focused training program was implemented, maximizing the qualifications and operational readiness of the flight crews.

The PNS and AN/37U-1 were introduced to the Navy through operational evaluations conducted by HM-15. The command received accolades from COMINWARCOM and COMNAVAIRSYS COM for maintaining 100% aircraft/mission systems op-ready rate while completing all assigned operational tests ahead of schedule.

The squadron participated in five West Coast Operations. In preparation for support of Operation Desert Shield, two exercises were dedicated to joint operations with EOD Mobile Units and the employment of the new PNS portable ground net.

HM-15 initiated a highly aggressive flight crew training program and increased the number of combat ready crews from 9 to 16 for CY90. Exceeding CY89 flight hours by 11.2% and AMCM hours by 23.3%, HM-15 flew over 4400 hours for 1990 and in July celebrated two years of class "A" mishap free flying.

With two maintenance departments totalling over 400 personnel, HM-15 has provided quality maintenance to 12 aircraft, 6 AMCM waterborne turbine hydrofoils, and over 73 pieces of tactical support equipment including boats, trucks, and cranes. Setting the AMCM community standard for Aircraft, AMCM and CESE equipment readiness, HM-15 has maintained 90 percent mission system availability for all operational/training commitments.

As the Navy's first MH-53E fleet squadron, HM-15 has pursued an aggressive NATOPS program. Responsible for over 25 major NATOPS changes, the squadron has lead the way in procedural development and evaluation for effective AMCM system employment.

**HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON
FIFTEEN
"BLACKHAWKS"
CALLSIGN: "HURRICANE"**

HM-15 was established on 2 January, 1987 as the first of two currently active, deployable US Navy Airborne Mine Countermeasures squadrons. Flying the Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopter, the squadron conducts training flights in and around San Francisco Bay, towing a variety of mine countermeasures devices through the water.

Initial squadron flight operations commenced in Norfolk, Va. in July, 1987 with receipt of the first MH-53E. In September of that same year, 3 aircraft departed NAS Norfolk and arrived at NAS Alameda, California, completing a homeport change from East to West Coast and establishing the nucleus for the unit to grow to present strength. The squadron is under operational and administrative control of Commander, Anti-Submarine Warfare Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet, located in San Diego, California.

MISSION

Operate a deployable twelve aircraft MH-53E Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM) Squadron. Maintain a 72-hour quick response readiness posture, providing rapid deployment AMCM detachments as required, world-wide, via air or surface lift. Squadron personnel, aircraft and airborne mine countermeasures assets may be deployed in support of theater (Joint Chiefs of Staff directed) mine countermeasures operations. Conduct AMCM operations from fixed land bases, aircraft carriers, air capable and amphibious aviation ships.

AIRCRAFT

MCM

Sikorsky MH-53E Helicopter: "Sea Dragon"	Rigid Inflatable Boats:	7
Engines: Three/T64-GE-416 turboshaft, producing 4380 shaft horsepower each	Four Wheel Drive Trucks:	8
Armament: Two .50 caliber machine guns for mine neutralization; Anti- missile chaff and flares	6 Wheel Drive 2 1/2 Ton Trucks:	4
Length: 99' 1/2"	15 Ton Trucks:	2
Main rotor blades: 7	Vans:	5
Tail rotor blades: 4	Forklifts:	6
Blade path diameter: 79'	MK-105 Mine Countermeasure Sleds:	6
Max gross weight: 73,500 lbs.		
Top speed: 180 knots		
Max external lift capability: 36,000 lbs		

ADMINISTRATION

Annual squadron salary:	\$12,700,000
Operating budget:	\$4,900,000
Number of aircraft:	12
Personnel:	591 enlisted 42 officers