

1992 ✓



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON 15

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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 1992

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15, 1992 Command History
(2) Command PAO Photo
(3) Squadron "Brief Sheet"

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (3) are submitted for the Calendar Year 1992 Command History for Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 (HM-15).


B. E. DEWEY

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HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON 15, 1992 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 Brian E. Dewey and is homeported at Naval Air Station Alameda, California. Commander Dewey graduated in 1974 from Lynchburg College and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1975. He has completed tours in HM-12, HM-14, HM-15, HM-16 and one tour onboard the USS CARL VINSON (CVN 70). Ashore, he has served at Naval Coastal Systems Center, staff tours with DCNO (Plans, Policy and Operations) and the Office of Secretary of the Navy. 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 Sikorsky Aircraft of Stratford, Connecticut. The squadron has 11 aircraft and is manned by 540 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 fifth year as part of the ASWWINGPAC and AIRPAC team. As the only west coast active duty Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM) squadron, dramatic achievements in operational readiness were obtained in all primary/secondary missions areas. Through a unified commitment to training and mission accomplishment, HM-15 has sustained across-the-board superior performance, and has achieved consistently outstanding results in all exercises and operational tasking. Most significant accomplishments include:

* In April, the Blackhawk's of HM-15 returned from a two plane VOD detachment in Bahrain, marking the end of thirteen months of outstanding logistics support to forward deployed ships in the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea for Operations DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM and DESERT CALM. During 1992, the detachment delivered 305,000 pounds of cargo and 427 passengers to Carrier Battle Groups and Amphibious Readiness Groups and provided collateral detachment maintenance and logistic support for a USMC CH-53E detachment.

* Employing dynamic, innovative and proactive leadership at all levels, HM-15 completed a comprehensive internal restructuring in early 1992. The entire squadron was organized into two distinct detachments, matching the projected operational structure of the squadron's newly approved ROC/POE. The results of the new structure increased aircraft readiness by 29 percent and improved material condition of aircraft and weapons systems, while simultaneously reducing the required maintenance manhours per flight hour.

* HM-15 "crew concept" flight training program successfully demonstrated that dedicated aircrews are highly efficient training teams. Crew-level emphasis on individual aircrew development through phased ground and tailored flight training has maximized aircraft utilization while improving mission readiness. Additionally, the efficiency of this training allowed a reduction in training flight hours.

* HM-15 successfully exercised "split site" (USS JUNEAU and NAS North Island) AMCM operations, simultaneously employing mechanical, influence and minehunting equipment during Exercise TANDEM THRUST 92, Commander MCM Group One's first integrated (Air, Surface, EOD) Mine Countermeasures exercise. This was the first deployment of the MH-53E aboard a LPD class ship. The squadron accounted for 64% of the total clearance level attained. Detachment crews swept ten mines and located the remaining exercise mines. These efforts were the predominant factor in the integrated force exceeding the pre-exercise goal of 80% clearance and validated the MCM Commander's reliance upon AMCM as a critical component for rapid mine clearance operations prior to an amphibious assault.

* Seeking to validate Very Shallow Water (VSW) MCM doctrine, HM-15 conducted an organic exercise, HAWKEX 92, the first very shallow water AMCM exercise utilizing the Commander, Surface Warfare Development Group's Shallow Water Mine Countermeasures TACMEMO. HM-15 planned, coordinated and executed this low cost integrated exercise. The squadron's VSW operations after action report was the focal point for the west coast MCM community VSW Tactics conference held in Jan 93 and provided valuable information for validation of the Navy's Mine Countermeasures capability in future exercises.

a. Deployed operations

(1) Detachments:

<u>DET #</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATES</u>
92-1	ARABIAN GULF	01JAN-18APR
92-2	NAS Whidbey Island	06APR-28APR
92-3	USS JUNEAU	15JUN-20JUL
92-4	USS NIMITZ	26JUN-28JUN
92-5	USS KANSAS CITY	16AUG-17AUG
92-6	NAS North Island	08SEP-28SEP
92-7	USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN	20OCT-24OCT

(2) Exercises:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATES</u>
PUGET SOUND MINEX	NAS Whidbey Island	06APR-28APR
OPEN ARMS 92	San Francisco Bay Area	16APR
TANDEM THRUST	San Diego	15JUN-20JUL
MK-103 DET I	NAS North Island	08SEP-28SEP
MK-103 DET II	NAS North Island	21SEP-25SEP
GUNNEX	NAS North Island	21SEP-25SEP
HAWKEX 92	NAS Alameda	30NOV-07DEC

b. Fleet support operations

(1) Fleet support:

<u>COMMAND</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATES</u>
OPEN ARMS 92	FEDERAL DISASTER DRILL	16APR
WESTERN AEROSPACE MUSEUM	A-7 AIRCRAFT EXTERNAL	22MAY
U.S. PRESIDENT	PRESIDENTIAL VISIT	17JUN-18JUN
USS NIMITZ	ON/OFFLOAD	26JUN-28JUN
USS KANSAS CITY	DAY LANDING QUALIFICATIONS	14JUL
USS KANSAS CITY	DECK CERTIFICATION	16AUG-17AUG
USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN	ON/OFFLOAD	09SEP
BLUE ANGEL SUPPORT	SAN FRANCISCO FLEET WEEK	06OCT-10OCT
USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN	ON/OFFLOAD	20OCT-24OCT
OPEN ARMS 92	FEDERAL DISASTER DRILL	22OCT

(2) Airshows supported:

<u>LOCATION/EVENT</u>	<u>DATES</u>
PHOENIX AIR SHOW, AZ	20MAY-22MAY
PORTLAND AIR SHOW, OR	12JUN-14JUN
VAN NUYS AIR SHOW, CA	17JUL-19JUL

c. Achievements in Aviation Safety

(1) Class A mishaps	1
(2) Class B mishaps	0
(3) Class C mishaps	0
(4) Number of hazard reports submitted	1
(5) Number of NATOPS changes submitted	21
(6) Safety Standdowns	7

d. Achievements in Command Inspections

(1) Completed NATOPS Evaluation in June: grade - SAT

(2) Completed Mine Warfare Readiness Certification Inspection
grade - SAT

(3) Completed 3M Inspection: grade 96.3% - Excellent

e. Achievements in Personnel Readiness

(1) Retention: (HM-15 RECEIVED THE SILVER STAR AWARD FOR RETENTION)

	<u>ELIGIBLE</u>	<u>NOT ELIGIBLE</u>	<u># REENLISTED</u>	<u>GROSS%</u>
First Term	78	18	28	29%
Second Term	12	0	9	75%
Career	41	7	40	98%

(2) Advancement:

	<u>TIS ELIGIBLE</u>	<u>TIR ELIGIBLE</u>	<u>TOOK EXAM</u>	<u>NOT RECOMMENDED</u>	<u>SELECTED</u>	<u>PNA'S</u>
<u>MARCH</u>						
E-4	105	105	100	5	20	80
E-5	114	114	111	3	7	104
E-6	73	73	72	1	2	70
<u>SEPTEMBER</u>						
E-4	101	101	101	0	21	78
E-5	80	80	80	0	11	64
E-6	66	66	66	0	4	60

f. Contributions to Tactical Development Improvement

(1) HM-15 spearheaded R&D solutions to problems encountered in operations conducted in very shallow water environment (10-40ft). HAWKEX 92 evaluated operation of MK-105/2g, MOP/2g, and MK-106 providing realistic numbers for the depth limitations and weapon system effectiveness against magnetic/acoustic mines. Results will be used to plan future exercises in this new AMCM field of operations.

(2) In coordination with MCM Commander's staff during Exercise TANDEM THRUST 92, HM-15's goal was to improve command and control of integrated forces (EOD, ship and air assets) during mine countermeasures operations. Ideas presented by squadron tactics officers concerning capabilities and limitations of the air assets allowed the group to better understand and utilize assets at hand, maximize clearance capability and formulate future tactical plans.

(3) Thoroughly researched and documented shortcomings in NWP-27 series. Attended seven NWP-27 review conferences providing numerous inputs on the rewrite of the mine countermeasures publications.

(4) Due to drastic increases in aircraft availability and by pushing the known envelope of AMCM tactics, HM-15 is challenging the AMCM research and development facilities to solve the factors limiting our effectiveness. Specific discoveries include mission processing hardware and software limitations and inaccuracies in equipment limitations formerly taken for granted.

g. Contributions to Weapons Systems Development. HM-15 continues to be the benchmark of the AMCM community. The contributions to safety and maintenance programs have made significant improvements to the safety and reliability of the CH/MH-53E helicopter. Most significant accomplishments include:

TPDRs Submitted	41
HMR/EIs Submitted	25
MILCAPs Submitted	22
QDRs Submitted	12

* HM-15 was selected to verify RAMEC on tail rotor driveshaft drain line incorporation.

h. Awards

(1) Squadron awards:

Southwest Asia Service Medal for DET II Persian Gulf VOD Operations

Silver Star Retention Award

BZ from COMUSNAVCENT for DET II Persian Gulf VOD Operations

BZ from USS AMERICA (CV 66) for DET II Persian Gulf VOD Operations

BZ from COMASWINGPAC for DET II Persian Gulf VOD Operations

BZ from USS NIMITZ (CV 68) for DET II Persian Gulf VOD Operations

BZ from COMINEWARCOM for DET II Persian Gulf VOD Operations

BZ from HC-4 for DET II Persian Gulf VOD passdown

BZ from COMINEWARCOM for DET II AMCM OPS during Exercise TANDEM THRUST

BZ from COMCMGRU ONE for DET II AMCM OPS during Exercise TANDEM THRUST

BZ from USS JUNEAU (LPD 10) for DET II AMCM OPS during Exercise TANDEM THRUST

BZ from COMNAVAIRPAC for support of CVW/USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN on/offloads

BZ from COMNAVAIRPAC for second nominee for the Navy Bronze Hammer Award

(2) Individual awards:

<u>AWARDING AUTHORITY</u>	<u>AWARD</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
CNO	Meritorious Service Medal	1
CNET	Navy Achievement Medal	1
CINCPACFLT	Navy Commendation Medal	1
USCINCCENT	Navy Commendation Medal	2
COMNAVAIRPAC	Navy Commendation Medal	1
	Letter of Commendation	1
COMNAVSURFLANT	Navy Commendation Medal	1
COMASWINGPAC	Navy Achievement Medal	1
	Letter of Commendation	6
COMFAEW	Navy Achievement Medal	1
EPMAC	Letter of Commendation	1
COMSTRKFITRONPAC	Letter of Commendation	1
COMSUBPAC	Letter of Commendation	1
COMPATWINGSPAC	Letter of Commendation	1
COMUSNAVCENT	Navy Achievement Medal	5
	Letter of Commendation	32
COMFAIRWESTPAC	Navy Achievement Medal	1
COMHELWINGSLANT	Navy Achievement Medal	1
COMMSCPAC	Navy Achievement Medal	1
COMSTRKFIGHTWINGPAC	Navy Achievement Medal	2
HELSUPPRON	Letter of Commendation	1
NAVAIRMANTTRAGRU MOFFETT	Letter of Commendation	1

2. Narrative

a. HM-15 did not spend 1992 simply sharpening combat readiness, but redefining it. The BLACKHAWKS achieved unprecedented aircraft availability in the H-53E community by simply challenging the structure of helicopter maintenance.

b. The squadron's new crew concept has proven most valuable as a means for increasing both crew proficiency and aircrew coordination dramatically increasing combat readiness and crew confidence.

c. HM-15 observing a changing warfare threat is the Navy's forerunner in tactical development in the VSW pre-amphibious landing scenario, making the squadron's MH-53E's the most flexible mine countermeasures platform in the world.

d. The great advances made by HM-15 in training and readiness and the proven success in seven exercises have left the squadron ready to be "wheels in the well" in 72 hours to provide a world wide mine countermeasures force.

e. HM-15 has established itself as the front-runner in the AMCM community. By stressing training and readiness the squadron has developed an outstanding reputation throughout the fleet as the premier AMCM/VOD squadron.