

VAW-115

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PART I. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1970

A. General. Calendar year 1970 can be subdivided into two major periods as follows:

- 1. 1 January-31 May. Deployed to the Western Pacific aboard USS  
RANGER (CVA-61)
- 2. 1 June-31 December. Temporarily based at NAS North Island  
undergoing training for deployment.

B. Detailed Schedule.

1-4 January	SPECOPS at Yankee Station as a part of CTF 77.
5-8 January	SPECOPS in Okinawa Operating Area.
9-13 January	CTF 71 operations in the Sea of Japan.
14-24 January	In port, Sasebo, Japan.
25-26 January	SPECOPS in Okinawa Operating Area
27-29 January	Enroute Yankee Station
30 January-17 February	SPECOPS at Yankee Station as as part of CTF 77.
18 February	Enroute Subic Bay
19 February	In port Subic Bay, Philippines
20 February	Enroute Hong Kong
21-26 February	In port Hong Kong BCC
27 February	Enroute Yankee Station
28 February-21 March	SPECOPS at Yankee Station as a part of CTF 77.

VAW-115 CLASSIFIED MATERIAL CONTROL

Control No. 0048-71

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22 March	In port Subic Bay, Philippines
23 March	Enroute Sasebo, Japan
24 March-12 April	In port Sasebo, Japan
13-15 April	SPECOPS in Okinawa Operating Area
16 April-12 May	SPECOPS at Yankee Station as a part of CTR 77
13 May	Enroute Subic Bay
14-16 May	In port, Subic Bay, Phillipines
17-31 May	Enroute CONUS
31 May	Fly-Off squadron aircraft to NAS North Island
1-2 June	Squadron personnel arrived NAS North Island via Airlift
3 June-30 June	Post-deployment leave period.
1 July	Commander Fredrik Seward BLACKMAR III relieved Commander Frederick Basil HOLLICK as Commanding Officer
1 August-31 December	E2B transition and training period. PAR rework cycle.

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PART II. SUMMARY OF CALENDAR YEAR 1970

A. GENERAL. Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN was assigned operationally to Attack Carrier Air Wing TWO and was deployed to the Western Pacific aboard USS RANGER (CVA-61) from 1 January through 31 May. The remaining period was spent based ashore at Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego, California, undergoing training for deployment. The squadron was commander by Commander Frederick Basil HOLLICK from 1 January to 1 July, when he was relieved by Commander Fredrik Seward BLACKMAR III.

B. COMPOSITION. Four E2A "Hawkeye" aircraft, buruea numbers 151712, 151714, 151716, and 151717 were assigned during the deployment period. Twenty-one officers were assigned. The breakdown of ten aviators, ten NFO's, and ground maintenance type remained essentially constant. An average of one hundred-ten enlisted personnel were assigned, of which six to eight at all times doubled as maintenance technicians and airborne Flight Technicians.

C. MISSION. The basic mission of the squadron is to provide Airborne Early Warning coverage on an continuous basis and to make this information readily available to the CTF Commander through the ATDS data link system.

D. SPECIAL TOPICS

1. Statistics. Only total operational statistics for the year are given here. These are broken down by month or operating period in the detailed narrative.

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TABLE I  
AIRCRAFT CUSTODY

<u>AIRCRAFT BUREAU NUMBER</u>	<u>CUSTODY DATES</u>
151712	1 January-15 December
151714	1 January-6 November
151716	1 January-31 December
151717	1 January-21 October
150539	23 November-31 December

TABLE II  
OPERATIONS

<u>TOTAL SORTIES</u>	257
<u>FLIGHT HOURS</u>	749.4
<u>CARRIER LANDINGS DAY/NIGHT</u>	227/159
<u>AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS</u>	NONE
<u>AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS</u>	E2A BUNO 151714 - considerable heat damage to the port nacelle wing fold area and leading eadge of port inbound wing section due to a bleed air duct failure in flight.

2. MAJOR CONVERSIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

All E2A aircraft released to PAR cycle for E2B Conversion

3. CASUALTIES OF MEN. NONE

4. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:

(1) Continued development of SPRA Control

(2) Continued ALQ-91 research.

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5. AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS.

ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL

NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION

43 AIR MEDALS

13 VIETNAMESE GALLANTRY CROSSES

3 NAVY COMMENDATION MEDALS

6 NAVY ACHIEVEMENT MEDALS

5 LETTERS OF COMMENDATION FROM 7th FLEET

8 USS RANGER LETTERS OF COMMENDATION

6. NOTABLE "FIRSTS" NONE

PART III. DETAILED NARRATIVE OF CALENDAR YEAR 1970.

A. GENERAL. Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN was commanded by Commander Frederick Basil HOLLICK until 1 July, when Commander Fredrik Seward BLACKMAR III assumed command. Essentially, Commander HOLLICK had command during the WESTPAC deployment. Commander BLACKMAR assumed command of the squadron for the pre-deployment training cycle. VAW-115 was based aboard USS RANGER (CVA-61) as a part of Attack Carrier Air Wing TWO with the exception of the period 1 June-31 December. During this period the squadron underwent E2B training and conversion while based at NAS North Island. The squadron reported dually to COMATKCARAIRWING TWO and Command Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing ELEVEN. The standard organizational structure for aviation commands was maintained by VAW-115 throughout the year. An average of twenty-one officers and one hundred-ten enlisted men were assigned. Twenty-six (ten aviators, ten NFO's, six Flight Technicians) flight crew personnel comprised five crews for continuous operation of four E2A aircraft (Table I). One

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ground maintenance officer was assigned.

B. JANUARY. Table 4.

Operational Statistics

Hours scheduled/ flown	246.2/181.2
Sorties assigned	83
Sorties Flown	66
Sorties cancelled, aircraft down	5
AEW Operational coverage	118.3
Successful Link 11 Time	118.6

The period 1-4 January was spent on Yankee Station and enroute to the Sea of Japan. SPECOPS in the Okinawa Operating Area took place 5-8 January. Sea of Japan operations were conducted from 9-13 January. 14-24 January was spent in port Sasebo, Japan. Enroute to Yankee Station, SPECOPS were undertaken in the Okinawa Area.

The most notable development of this line period was the high degree of success experienced with "Belfry Express". Together with other VAW squadrons in the Gulf, VAW-115 also attempted to provide a secure voice middleman. Man-hours spent were unrealistic due to suspected equipment problems but had test equipment available for equipment evaluation. "Clarinet Racer" proved successful only to the extent of equipment availability. VAW-115 operated with reduced fuel loads. A request to COMNAVAIRPAC for fuel load increase was denied, subject to engine gear box and truss assembly addition. This made it impossible to triple cycle the E2A. Restrictions were partially due to addition of avionics equipment not covered by formal aircraft service

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changes, i. e. SPRA, AIQ-91, ASW-25, IFF EMERGENCY ALARM, IFF DECODE SWITCHING UNIT, KG-23, and KY-28. The first opportunity to operate in a pure AEW environment was experienced in the Sea of Japan, where 30 minute alerts were stood during night hours with flight ops from sunup to sunset.

Significant maintenance problem areas occurred with vapor cycle unit and aircraft wiring. After contaminating 3 vapor cycle units it was discovered that supply had been issuing Type 2 refrigerant oil as an acceptable substitute for ANSUL 150 or Type 1 oil. Excessive maintenance hours were spent with aircraft wiring. Corrosion in connectors in the Wing Fold area was a major problem. Wire bundles being chafed by equipment removal/replacement also became very significant. Many ARA's were replaced before finding the wiring problems. It was suggested that concerned agencies take a strong look at E2A overhaul procedures if the airframe is expected to remain in service as the E2B.

C. FEBRUARY.

TABLE 5

Operational Statistics

Hours scheduled/flown	212.2/200.0
Sorties assigned	70
Sorties flown	65
AEW Operational coverage	185.1
Successful Link 11 Time	150.1

This period consisted of a three week period on Yankee Station, enroute steaming, and port calls at Hong Kong and Subic Bay, Philippines. The primary emphasis in the Okinawa Area was on Missile Control, providing squadron Op Conductors an opportunity to regain proficiency. Emphasis was also placed on

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the need to exercise the ASW-14 Interceptor Data Link. Availability of F4J's for data link intercepts was not as high as anticipated, but results were gratifying. A total of 12 actual intercepts were run by data link, 6 of them with the F4 coupled. BARGAP aircraft were returned to the ship using waypoint assignment on several occasions,

The personnel Qualification Standards Program was implemented by VAW-115 during this period. All divisions were introduced by lectures from their Division Officers. Subsequent follow-up discussions resulted in a qualification level of 53 percent for the squadron.

The increased AEW coverage experienced during this line period was due to three up systems. A bleed air leak in the port nacelle of NE 011 reduced the status to two up systems at the end of the period. Severe heat damage caused a need for 500 man-hours repair time at STRAAD. A one time inspection for pin hole leaks by pressure testing was strongly recommended.

Secure relay problems were resolved by using a known RFI C-2791A UHF control unit to troubleshoot hardware. Numerous capacitors and diodes were faulty. Significant man-hours were recorded troubleshooting wiring problems in the ASQ-52 plenum, APS-96 LVPS, and Signal Comparator Chassis. Computer Detector (CP-413) reliability was significantly lower this deployment, due primarily to reduced number of ARA's received from AIMD with AVC-689 incorporated.

D. MARCH.

TABLE 6

Operational Statistics

Hours scheduled/flown	225/168.2
Sorties assigned	73
Sorties flown	51

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AEW Operational coverage	143.6
Successful Link 11 Time	100.9

The three week line period on Yankee Station was successful, considering aircraft status. With two aircraft down for fire damage and corrosion problems, and another down with major engine problems, we operated with one up aircraft covering all but two cycles each day for all but four days.

Poor weather over target areas caused rescheduling of many cancelled flights. Project Belfry Express suffered the most to date. The requirement for an up aircraft for launch coincident with B, E, caused many lost AEW coverage hours. Secure voice relay evolved to a required mission any time other facilities (Air Force) were not airborne. The relay tied up two UHF transceivers and both KY-28's. Secure voice relay often degraded AEW coverage when troubleshooting of "Black Boxes" was required.

BUNO 151716 was grounded during this line period for extensive intergranular corrosion on the aft side of the Port main wing beam in the vicinity of the wing fold actuator.

Damage investigation of E2A BUNO 151714's incident revealed the fuel cell was exposed to extreme temperatures damaging the fuel probes. It is considered imperative that pressure testing procedures for the bleed air system be closely supervised.

Two vapor cycle failures occurred in BUNO 151712 due to failure of a quick disconnect fitting P/N 3205-11. Extreme over-pressure in the compressor motor is experience due to this failure. Excessive man-hours were expended troubleshooting engines that would not start or accelerate after ignition. In two cases, engines were changed after all related components were thoroughly

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checked out. No special lessons were learned, nor action required.

E. APRIL-MAY

This period consisted of an in-port period at Sasebo, Japan, two day operating period at Okinawa, and a three week line period on Yankee Station. The period 17-31 May was spent enroute CONUS. The fly-off of squadron aircraft to NAS North Island occurred on 31 May. Squadron personnel arrived on airlifts the following day, 1 June.

F. End of Cruise Report

1. General. The airborne radar remains the only system with the ability to display a complete picture, both surface and air, of the Gulf of Tonkin. Overland capabilities are reduced; however, the ALQ-91 has effectively given the E-2A an overland detection capability. Communications relay, traffic control and other special missions required a proportionately larger share of E-2A airborne time during Yankee Station operations than normal task force operations.

2. Training. The short turn-around between 1968-1969 and 1969-1970 deployments afforded little time for training. A 50% turn over of personnel also hampered the squadron. The heavy commitment of FAAWTC and RVAN AIC training leaves few assets available to fleet squadrons. However, CARQUALS went smoothly and the squadron deployed 100% combat ready. Proficiency in AIC was maintained by use of BARCAP whenever possible.

3. Special Equipment. The ALQ-91 proved successful for overland detection capability, possibly precluding the use of low station tactics. LINK-4 ASW-14 interceptor data link with F4J's was exercised on 153 occasions, of which 109 actual intercepts were successful (and 32 with the F4J coupled).

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151716 and 150539 were the first E-2B aircraft the squadron received in the year of 1970. Very little actual flight training was accomplished. However, many trainer hours were scheduled to warm up for the forthcoming training and deployment period in early Spring of 1971.

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