

1995

VAW-115 COMMAND HISTORY FOR CY 1995

1. COMMAND COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE. VAW-115 is a carrier-based Airborne Early Warning squadron, forward-deployed as a part of Carrier Air Wing FIVE (CVW-5) embarked on USS INDEPENDENCE (CV 62), homeported in Yokosuka, Japan. VAW-115 flies the E-2C Hawkeye whose mission is to detect, identify, and track long range threats to the carrier battlegroup. The E-2C is an integral component of the Carrier Battle Group's Command and Control architecture. Additional missions include air intercept control, surface surveillance control, and strike control for coordinated attacks. VAW-115 was commanded by Commander Martin J. Erdossy III, U.S. Navy, and Commander Richard B. Wren, U.S. Navy, during the calendar year. The VAW-115 "Liberty Bells," call sign "Liberty," fly and maintain five E-2C Hawkeyes, tailcode "NF".

2. CHRONOLOGY:

01 JAN - 02 FEB	TEMPORARILY BASED ASHORE, NAF ATSUGI, JAPAN.
27 JAN	COMMANDER RICHARD B. WREN RELIEVED COMMANDER MARTIN J. ERDOSSY AS COMMANDING OFFICER. COMMANDER ROBERT J. SCHOPPE ASSUMES DUTIES AS EXECUTIVE OFFICER.
03 FEB - 17 FEB	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, LOCAL AREA OPERATIONS-WESTERN PACIFIC AND PHILIPPINE SEA.
18 FEB - 13 MAR	TEMPORARILY BASED ASHORE, NAF ATSUGI, JAPAN.
14 MAR - 29 MAR	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, LOCAL AREA OPERATIONS-WESTERN PACIFIC, SEA OF JAPAN, YELLOW SEA.
30 MAR - 11 APR	TEMPORARILY BASED ASHORE, NAF ATSUGI, JAPAN.
12 APR - 22 APR	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE.
23 APR - 27 APR	INPORT HONG KONG, B.C.C.
28 APR - 10 MAY	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, GULF OF THAILAND IN SUPPORT OF COBRA GOLD '95.
11 MAY - 15 MAY	INPORT PATTAYA BEACH, THAILAND.
16 MAY - 01 JUN	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE.
02 JUN - 18 AUG	TEMPORARILY BASED ASHORE, NAF ATSUGI, JAPAN.
17 AUG	ACHIEVED TEN YEARS MISHAP FREE.
19 AUG - 11 SEP	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, LOCAL AREA OPERATIONS AND TRANSIT TO ARABIAN GULF.
11 SEP	INCHOP USNAVCENT, U.S. FIFTH FLEET.
12 SEP - 22 SEP	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, NORTH ARABIAN GULF IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH
23 SEP - 28 SEP	INPORT JEBEL ALI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.
29 SEP - 10 OCT	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, NORTH ARABIAN GULF IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH.
11 OCT - 15 OCT	INPORT JEBEL ALI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.
16 OCT - 27 OCT	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, TRANSIT TO YOKOSUKA, JAPAN.
19 OCT	OUTCHOP USNAVCENT, U.S. FIFTH FLEET.
28 OCT - 02 NOV	INPORT HONG KONG, B.C.C.
02 NOV - 07 NOV	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, TRANSIT TO YOKOSUKA, JAPAN.
08 NOV - 11 NOV	INPORT YOKOSUKA, JAPAN.
12 NOV - 18 NOV	EMBARKED ABOARD USS INDEPENDENCE, LOCAL AREA OPERATIONS-WESTERN PACIFIC.
19 NOV - 31 DEC	TEMPORARILY BASED ASHORE, NAF ATSUGI, JAPAN.

3. NARRATIVE

JANUARY: VAW-115 began the year temporarily based ashore at NAF Atsugi. A detachment for Field Carrier Landing Practice was made to Iwo Jima from 16 to 23 January. On 27 January, Commander Richard B. Wren relieved Commander Martin J. Erdossy III as Commanding Officer.

FEBRUARY: The first half of February was spent underway in preparation for the upcoming spring exercises. While at sea, the Liberty Bells conducted normal carrier operations in the Western Pacific around Japan. VAW-115 spent the last two weeks of the month back at NAF Atsugi conducting routine

operations in support of Carrier Air Wing FIVE. This month, the squadron received the VAW Navy Battle Efficiency Award for 1994, recognizing the Liberty Bells as the best E-2C squadron in the Pacific Fleet.

MARCH: The squadron began the month ashore. Getting underway on the 14th, the Liberty Bells flew regular sorties while embarked on the USS INDEPENDENCE. The underway period began with a large-scale multinational joint air defense exercise that included U.S. Forces, Japan assets encompassing the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps. During that time, the squadron supported Battle Force SEVENTH Fleet while operating in the Yellow Sea. One of the squadron's aircraft played a key role in the successful weather divert of 15 airplanes to Kunsan Air Base, Korea. VAW-115 returned for the last three days of the month.

APRIL: Beginning the month in port at NAF Atsugi, the Liberty Bells departed with the USS INDEPENDENCE to participate in Exercise Cobra Gold '95. The squadron supported several MISSILEX's that included shooting the AGM-84 Harpoon, HARM, AIM-120 AMRAAM, AIM-7 Sparrow, AIM-9 Sidewinder, and RIM-7 NATO Sea Sparrow missiles. The Liberty Bells then made a port call in Hong Kong, B.C.C. from 23 to 27 April before transiting to the Gulf of Thailand. This month, VAW-115 also celebrated its 28th year of operations.

MAY: While operating in the Gulf of Thailand, the E-2C's of VAW-115 provided airborne early warning for numerous overland strikes into Chandy Range, Thailand, and air defense exercises in the Gulf. The Liberty Bells participated with assets from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, and Royal Thai Air Force. The Liberty Bells made a port call to Pattaya Beach, Thailand from 11 to 15 May. The end of the month brought the transit of the USS INDEPENDENCE and its embarked air wing back to NAF Atsugi.

JUNE: The squadron began the month with NAF Atsugi's annual Wings Airshow. The Liberty Bells provided static display of one E-2C and flew two others in the most successful Wings Airshow to date on June 3rd and 4th. The remainder of the month was spent supporting Carrier Air Wing FIVE in normal land-based operations.

JULY: The Liberty Bells were based ashore at NAF Atsugi the entire month. While ashore, VAW-115 maintained a ready-for-sea posture and flew daily sorties in support of air wing missions.

AUGUST: VAW-115, beginning the month ashore, sent a detachment to Iwo Jima from the 1st to the 4th for Field Carrier Landing Practices. The Liberty Bells embarked on board the USS INDEPENDENCE on the 19th. In response to urgent national tasking, the INDEPENDENCE Battle Group and Carrier Air Wing FIVE transited directly to the Arabian Gulf, delaying only to conduct an open ocean RIM-7 NATO Sea Sparrow missile shoot. The Liberty Bells celebrated 10 years mishap free flying on the 17th.

SEPTEMBER: The Liberty Bells and USS INDEPENDENCE Battle Group "in chopped" to U.S. FIFTH Fleet and U.S. Central Command on the 11th and conducted a face-to-face turnover with the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN Battle Group on the north side of the Strait of Hormuz. VAW-115 flew in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH enforcing the southern no-fly zone. From the 23rd to the 28th a port call was made in Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates.

OCTOBER: VAW-115 began the month flying in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. A port call to Jebel Ali, U.A.E. was made from the 11th to the 15th. Following this port call, the USS INDEPENDENCE transited the Strait of Hormuz for its return trip to Yokosuka, Japan. The INDEPENDENCE Battle Group "out-chopped" on the 19th and returned to the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet area of responsibility. The battle group then made a port call to Hong Kong, B.C.C. due to multiple typhoons in the Western Pacific blocking safe passage to Japan.

NOVEMBER: VAW-115 began the month embarked onboard USS INDEPENDENCE flying in support of ANNUALEX, a combined, joint U.S. and Japan Self Defense Force exercise. The Liberty Bells flew numerous airborne early warning, war-at-sea, strike, and air defense exercise missions that included controlling U.S. Air Force and Japan Air Self Defense Force assets. The exercise also involved participation with USS INDEPENDENCE Battle Group and Japan Maritime Self

Defense Force assets. A brief port call was made in Yokosuka from the 8th to the 11th before the end-of-cruise fly off on the 17th. Following the 18th off-load of squadron material and personnel from USS INDEPENDENCE, the rest of the month was spent at NAF Atsugi.

DECEMBER: VAW-115 continued normal land-based operations from NAF Atsugi.

4. Other Accomplishments and Noteworthy Events. The Liberty Bells performance throughout 1995 was exemplary. The VAW-115 Maintenance Department earned the CVW-5 Golden Wrench for professionalism in aircraft maintenance for the 1st and 4th quarters of calendar year 1995. The Liberty Bells' Sailor of the Year was Aviation Structural Mechanic (Structures) Petty Officer First Class Christopher Bren. The Liberty Bells' Operations Department provided representatives to the U.S. Central Command JFACC in Dharam, Saudi Arabia, U.S. FIFTH Fleet LINK-11 Conference in Bahrain, and numerous INDEPENDENCE Battle Group LINK-11 conferences and Anti-Air Warfare syndicate meetings.