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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON 120
NAVAL AIR STATION, NORFOLK, VA 23511-5193

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5750
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22 FEB 1988

From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,
Washington, DC

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1987 (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.1D

- Encl: (1) CY-87 VAW-120 Command History
- (2) CO's Photo and Biography
- (3) CNAL ltr 3590 ser 02/12024 of 18 Dec 87
- (4) VAW-120 Squadron History

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted.

R. K. Zia
R. K. ZIA

Logged

COMMAND HISTORY 1987

Command Organization

CDR RALPH K. ZIA	COMMANDING OFFICER (19 SEPT 87 -PRESENT)
CDR CHARLES M. KRAFT, JR	COMMANDING OFFICER (25 APR 86 - 18 SEP 87)
CDR GEORGE H. MEARS	EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CDR [REDACTED]	MAINTENANCE OFFICER
LCDR [REDACTED]	OPERATIONS OFFICER
LCDR [REDACTED]	FLEET READINESS AVIATION MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL OFFICER (FRAMP)
LCDR [REDACTED]	ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
LCDR [REDACTED]	SAFETY OFFICER
LCDR [REDACTED]	TRAINING OFFICER

NUMBER OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ONBOARD

STAFF OFFICERS

46

STUDENT OFFICERS

72

STAFF ENLISTED

284

STUDENT ENLISTED

453

CIVILIANS

3

Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron One Hundred Twenty is the Fleet Replacement Squadron of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing Twelve. It is our primary duty to indoctrinate and train Naval Aviators, Naval Flight Officers, Flight Aircrew, and maintenance personnel in operating and maintaining the E-2C "Hawkeye" and reproced C-2A "Greyhound" aircraft.

January 1987 saw the ground breaking and actual construction of a new Fleet Replacement Aviation Maintenance Program (FRAMP) building. MILCON (Military Construction) project 103 (P-103), in design since 1982, provides a greatly expanded (8,500 square feet) training facility intended to replace an aging SP-32 (built in the 1940's and FRAMP's home since inception in the early 1970's) and allows for a "dual site" training capacity (ability to train all E-2/C-2 peculiar ratings e.g., AE/AT, AD/AMH/AMS). This facility, actually a new wing of SP-381 (Pilot/NFO Training) has an estimated completion date of November 1987. Unfortunately, due to weather delays and material delivery difficulties, completion of building was extended to early 1988.

Enclosure (1)

In mid-March, concern arose over the delivery of system trainers for both FRAMP and NAMTRADET 1026. A meeting was held in San Diego between NAVAIR (APC-205), NARF North Island (head of construction), NAMTRAGRU, Memphis and both FRAMPs (VAW-110/120). At this meeting, a realigned trainer delivery schedule was agreed to, taking into account construction difficulties, funding constraints and availability of adequate facilities to house the trainers. A major accomplishment at that meeting was the agreement to utilize a SLEP C-2A (in storage at NARF, North Island) as an "Aft Structural Trainer" for VAW-120 FRAMP (to be used in C-2A Loadmaster/Plane Captain/Maintenance Training). This aircraft can be converted to meet repro cured C-2A SPECS (cargo door only) at a fraction of the cost of building a dedicated trainer. In addition, having an entire aircraft for a trainer will provide invaluable training for related hydraulic/mechanical systems OJT. Although conversion of this aircraft into a trainer is not scheduled until 1990, NAVAIR sought and received approval for a one-time flight from North Island to Norfolk where the aircraft will again be preserved. VAW-120 pilots flew this aircraft in December and marked the last SLEP C-2A flight in the Navy. All SLEP C-2's are now permanently grounded.

The first "dual site" trainer was delivered to VAW-120 FRAMP on 19 September. This trainer, one of three to be eventually housed in the FRAMP building, will be used to train AD's beginning in mid-1988.

At year's end VAW-120 FRAMP was looking forward to occupying new facilities and introducing dual site training to the east coast VAW/VR(C) community. During the year, FRAMP trained a total of 453 students, from non-designated airmen to avionics specialists.

During 1987, Aviation Training Support System (ATSS) continued expansion and equipment upgrades for 37 NAS Norfolk users (squadrons, wings, FRAMPS). Efforts were made throughout the year to obtain additional space in the form of a 24 x 60 foot trailer to house new computer equipment. Unfortunately, funding constraints prevented acquisition. At the end of 1987, with new computer equipment on hand, renewed efforts were being made to provide the required space to house the expansion.

In January, the command received support from COMFITMATAEWWINGSLANT for its proposal for the construction of a follow-on FRAMP facility; a hangar to be co-located with future VAW/FRS expansion. This hangar would consolidate all FRAMP training as well as provide space for an eventual dedicated FRAMP aircraft. By year's end, this entire project was on hold due to severe funding cutbacks.

The following areas were covered by VAW-120's Retention Program during FY-87:

Obtained an overall retention percentage of 74%. Hosted Navy Recruiting District, New York's CO along with 104 educators/placement counselors. VAW-120 personnel have reenlisted in the CO's Office, on the steps of the White House in Washington, D.C. and even onboard a flying C-2.

We provided a 2 1/2 day Career Information Training Course for officers and enlisted personnel of VAW-120 along with FRAMP students.

Our Command Career Counselor made detailer trips monthly to assist in any personnel actions.

The Operations Department provided scheduling and coordination which enabled 46 pilots, 36 NFO's and 20 flight technicians to complete the E-2C/C-2A(R) syllabus. The NFO's and flight technicians also received their wings while onboard VAW-120.

During calendar year 1987, the squadron flew 4,711 hours without a Class A or B mishap. Many of those hours occurred during the preparation and execution of four carrier qualifications which took place aboard the USS VINSON (CVN-71), USS FORRESTAL (CV-59), and USS EISENHOWER (CVN-69).

In addition to pilot and NFO training, the Operations Department organized and provided orientation briefings and aircraft indoctrination tours for various VIP's and visiting foreign dignitaries including representatives from the Egyptian Air Force.

Routinely VAW-120 is tasked with briefings for visiting groups such as NROTC Units, NJROTC Units and Naval Sea Cadets. Those briefings are designed to orient prospective Naval officers and enlisted personnel to the capabilities and mission of the E-2C Hawkeye and C-2A(R) Greyhound.

In March 1987 VAW-120 was presented with the Chief of Naval Operations 1986 Safety "S" Award in recognition of its ongoing safety program and policies. These programs were directly responsible for a heightened safety awareness among squadron members along with a reduction of personnel accidents, injuries and equipment damage. Distinct improvements in the safety program were made during 1987 through the efforts of Safety Department personnel and squadron member participation and it is foreseeable that the 1987 Safety "S" Award will be forthcoming shortly.

As of 21 October 1987 VAW-120 exceeded two years of mishap-free flying with a total combined E-2C/C-2A(R) flight time of 8,853 hours. This achievement was made possible by the high degree of professionalism exhibited by all squadron members and the overriding attitude of "Get the job done...safely!"

The E-2C community was plagued with both center wing and outer wing panel cracks. This took its toll on aircraft availability. All aircraft were down five to ten days for AFC-344 center wing crack inspections and all but two aircraft were down for five days for AFB-243/244 outer wing panel crack inspections. Two aircraft had their outer wings removed for installation on fleet aircraft which drastically affected aircraft availability.

A/C received:

020	160007	01/08/87	from NAVPRO
017	159107	03/27/87	from VAW-122
011	162615	04/27/87	from VAW-126
015	161785	07/06/87	from VAW-124
023	162158	07/30/87	from VRC-40
022	162142	11/26/87	from VR-24

A/C transferred:

011	161225	04/24/87	to VAW-114
017	160011	04/29/87	to VAW-127
017	159107	04/30/87	to VAW-121
015	161780	05/06/87	to VAW-124
021	158639	06/26/87	to NAVPRO
023	162152	07/31/87	to VRC-40
020	160007	10/16/87	to VAW-123

012 returned to AIO on 05/27/87. Aircraft had been down since 26 March 1986 for extensive fire damage.

Verified AFB-487
Verified PPB-81

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

162614/E-2C	01/01/87-----	12/31/87
162615/E-2C		04/27/87-----12/31/87
162615/E-2C		RECEIVED FROM VAW-126
161551/E-2C	01/01/87-----	12/31/87
159494/E-2C	01/01/87-----	12/31/87
161785/E-2C		07/06/87-----12/31/87
161785/E-2C		RECEIVED FROM VAW-124
161783/E-2C	01/01/87-----	12/31/87
162142/C-2A		11/26/87--12/31/87
162142/C-2A		RECEIVED FROM VR-24
162158/C-2A		07/30/87-----12/31/87
162158/C-2A		RECEIVED FROM VAW-122
159107/E-2C		03/27/87 - 04/30/87
159107/E-2C		RECEIVED FROM VAW-122
159107/E-2C		TRANSFERRED TO VAW-121
160007/E-2C	01/08/87-----	10/16/87
160007/E-2C		RECEIVED FROM NAVPRO
160007/E-2C		TRANSFERRED TO VAW-123
158639/E-2C	01/01/87-----	06/26/87
158639/E-2C		TRANSFERRED TO NAVPRO
161225/E-2C	01/01/87-----	04/24/87
161225/E-2C		TRANSFERRED TO VAW-114
161780/E-2C	01/01/87-----	05/06/87
161780/E-2C		TRANSFERRED TO VAW-124

160011/E-2C
160011/E-2C

01/01/87-----04/29/87
TRANSFERRED TO VAW-127

162152/C-2A
162152/C-2A

01/01/87-----07/31/87
TRANSFERRED TO VRC-40

VAW-122 CHRONOLOGY 1987

Jan 01 - Jan 13 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Jan 14 - Jan 21 - Tomahawk OTL Support, Eglin AFB
 Jan 26 - Feb 08 - Exercise Quick Thrust
 Feb 09 - Feb 11 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Feb 12 - Feb 28 - Orange Air, NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads, P.R.
 Mar 01 - Mar 22 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Mar 23 - Mar 26 - Cruiser Week|Dare County
 Mar 28 - Apr 11 - Green Flag 87-3
 Apr 12 - Apr 19 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Apr 20 - Apr 30 - FFARP|FCLP
 May 01 - May 05 - Sea Trials|CQ
 May 06 - May 19 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 May 20 - May 29 - REFTRA
 May 30 - Jun 06 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Jun 07 - Jun 26 - NAS Fallon, NV
 Jun 27 - Jun 30 - NAS Norfolk, Va
 Jul 01 - Jul 30 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Jul 13 - Jul 17 - FAST Training
 Jul 22 - Change of Command
 Jul 31 - Aug 17 - Advanced Phase Training
 Aug 18 - Aug 27 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Aug 28 - Aug 31 - Ocean Safari
 Sep 01 - Oct 08 - Ocean Safari '87
 Oct 09 - Oct 31 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Oct 19 - Oct 21 - VANDALEX
 Nov 01 - Nov 01 - NAS Fallon, NV
 Nov 08 - Nov 13 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Nov 14 - Nov 16 - CQ - USS FORRESTAL
 Nov 14 - Nov 20 - NAVSTA Roosevelt Roads, P.R.
 Nov 21 - Dec 02 - NAS Norfolk, VA
 Dec 03 - Dec 09 - CQ - USS FORRESTAL
 Dec 13 - CV 59 MISSILEX
 Dec 10 - Dec 31 - NAS Norfolk, VA Holiday Routine

VAW 122 NARRATIVE HISTORY 1987

The 1987 year began with the Steeljaws undertaking three major operational exercises during January. The first consisted of a one plane detachment to Eglin Air Force Base, FL for range surveillance and control during 3 Tomahawk missile test firing. Exercise Quick Thrust soon followed as the Steeljaws were called upon to conduct joint Navy-Airborne Strike training, including extensive control of airborne strikes into South Carolina target range and Dissimilar Air Combat Training. The end of the month witnessed the Steeljaw team demonstrating the capabilities of the E-2C Hawkeye to the Pakistani Air Force, first in Bethpage, New York and then cross country to San Diego, California. Within thirty days, the Steeljaws had operated across the country and influenced a nation half a world away.

February ^{began} with the conclusion of the Pakistani Air Force demonstration at Naval Air Station Miramar in beautiful San Diego, California. After a week of re-grouping, the squadron set out on a three plane detachment to Roosevelt Roads, P.R. to oppose CVW-17 and the USS SARATOGA Battle Group in FLEETEX 1-87. As Orange Forces, we exercised the defenses of the SARATOGA and enabled vital training objectives to be met with dramatic success.

March began with Cruiser Week as the first challenge. Successful surface Navy interoperability training, SM-2 surface-to-air missile firings and Dare County overland coordinated strikes provided extensive aircrew training and were valuable preparations for our next indepth operation. Without pause we traveled to the Nevada desert to participate in operation Green Flag 87-3, an Air Force sponsored exercise designed to provide highly intensive training in a simulated combat environment, with a heavy emphasis on electronic warfare.

April brought our crews home from Nevada and a short-lived break from the intensive flying as seen to date. We concluded the month in high fashion, participating in Fleet Fighter ACM Readiness Training (FFARP) coordinated by Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) and Field Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP) to prepare our pilots for the ultimate test of skill and courage - carrier operations.

May was a significant part of the command training cycle as we placed increased emphasis on carrier operations and integrated airwing training. The FORRESTAL's early May sea trials phase provided an excellent opportunity to succeed. Throughout a four day period the Steeljaws were able to complete over 150 arrested landings during an intensive qualification evolution. The final ten days of the month brought the entire CVW-6 Airwing together for refresher training at sea, including war-at-sea strikes, air intercept control and surface search operations from USS FORRESTAL.

The Steeljaws departed for Naval Air Station Fallon, Nevada in June for a three week airwing weapons deployment. Superbly integrated into every level of the numerous missions supported by Naval Aviators, the VAW-122 Steeljaws played a major role in the three week scenario. The events focused on power projection, strike planning, Dissimilar Air Combat Training and an aggressive flight schedule designed to maximize the training available in the open desert airspace.

The Steeljaws commenced July with an ambitious training schedule, including FAST training to hone the skills of both E-2 and F-14 aircrews and FCLP in preparation for advanced phase training with the USS FORRESTAL, beginning 31 July. On 22 July 1987, Commander Thomas C. Lang assumed the helm of the Steeljaws from Commander James R. Porter. Commander Joseph J. Grosel is now on board as Executive Officer.

The first seventeen days of August were spent deployed on the USS FORRESTAL for advanced phase training. Routine CQ, airwing training, periods of around-the-clock operations, and an Anti-Air Warfare Exercise flexed CVW-6 readiness, as well as squadron aircrew proficiency. After a ten day respite at Naval Air Station Norfolk, Virginia, the Steeljaws once again embarked on the USS FORRESTAL for the six week NATO exercise Ocean Safari '87.

Ocean Safari '87 was the main event during September. Carrier Qualifications and AAWEXes accompanied the USS FORRESTAL's transit to the North Atlantic exercise area. The free play phase of the exercise commenced as we neared the United Kingdom, followed by operations in both Vestfjord and Andfjord. A week in Portsmouth, England concluded the exercise at the end of September.

The Steeljaws headed west from Portsmouth at the beginning of October. The big event for the transatlant was the location and simulated sinking of the USS CORAL SEA, which simulated a Kiev. Upon returning to Norfolk on 8 October, we resumed a routine flying and training schedule, including a VANDALEX conducted from Wallops Island Firing Range from 19 to 21 October. The final week of October was spent in preparation for a two aircraft detachment to Naval Air Station Fallon, Nevada for Airwing Strike Training.

In November the Steeljaws focused on turn-around training and aircrew re-qualifications in preparation for FLEETEX 88. Exercises at Fallon from 1-7 November aimed at those crewmembers who did not participate in the June Fallon detachment. The Steeljaws also flew numerous FCLP periods in preparation for a three day CQ aboard the USS FORRESTAL. A detachment to Puerto Rico consisted of airwing training and Orange Air training for the USS EISENHOWER Battle Group. Following the Thanksgiving holiday, FCLP resumed for another CQ session in December.

December began with a CQ session from 3-9 December, followed by a USS FORRESTAL Missilix in the JAX operating area. Christmas holiday leave periods were mixed with pilot and NFO proficiency training and planning by all departments for the impending FLEETEX 88.