

1969



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE
FPO NEW YORK 09501

DECLASSIFIED

VAW123/PA0/swf
OPNAV 5750-1
Ser: 03

DECLASSIFIED

27 MAY 1970

[REDACTED] Unclassified when annex (1) of enclosure (1) is removed

From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE

To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History, submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAV INST 5750.12A

Encl: (1) Command History

1. In accordance with reference (a) Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE's command history for calendar year 1969 is hereby submitted.

W. R. EELS, Jr.

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Copy to:
Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)

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DECLASSIFIED CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE

COMMAND HISTORY
1969

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Enclosure (1)

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CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

DATE	EVENT
1 JAN 70 28 Feb	Submitted in 1968 report.
1 March 1969	Departed Athens.
3 March 1969	Participated in exercise National Week II.
10 March 1969	Entered port of Trieste, Italy.
17 March 1969	Departed Trieste.
22 March 1969	Anchorage at Pollensa Bay, Spain.
26 March 1969	Departed Pollensa Bay.
29 March 1969	Entered port of Barcelona, Spain.
7 April 1969	Departed Barcelona.
9 April 1969	Participated in exercise Mini National Week.
15 April 1969	Entered port of Marseilles, France.
19 April 1969	Departed port of Marseilles.
22 April 1969	Passed through Straits of Gibraltar and anchored at Rota, Spain for turnover with <u>USS John F. KENNEDY</u> . Departed Rota and chopped to the 2nd Fleet.
29 April 1969	Returned to NAS Norfolk, Virginia.
7 May 1969	Commander Charles J. BERTHE, Jr. relieved Commander Kenneth G. SMITH as Commanding Officer of VAM-123.
25 November 1969	VAM-123 pilots flew carrier-qualification flights aboard the <u>USS AMERICA</u> (CVA-66).
2 December 1969	Carrier-qualification flights flown aboard <u>USS INDEPENDENCE</u> (CVA-62).

The first two months of 1969 were reported in the 1968 report

BASIC NARRATIVE

1 1969

Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE (VAW-123) is presently commanded by CDR C. J. BERTHE, Jr. who assumed command on 7 May 1969. Past commanding officers are CDR L. W. HILL, commanding from 1 April 1967 to 16 April 1968, and CDR K. G. SMITH, commanding from 16 April 1968 to 7 May 1969. The squadron is home-ported at Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia and deploys aboard the Navy's largest attack carriers.

VAW-123 flies the E-2A "Hawkeye" with a crew of five. Their primary missions are early warning for the fleet and intercept control. The E-2A is equipped with a data link which sends information on the tactical situation to CIC aboard tactical data system ships. Other missions are strike control, surface search, and cat (automatic relay of UHF communications), search and rescue, anti-submarine aircraft control, reconnaissance aircraft flight following and control, and approach control.

The squadron is comprised of four aircraft. The complement is twenty-nine (29) officers, and 143 enlisted men. The complement of flight personnel is thirty-five (35).

VAW-123 began the month of March participating in the exercise National Week II on board USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59). In this exercise the E-2A performed the valuable role of controlling and vectoring search aircraft over surface contacts within a 150 mile radius of the CVA. The week of March 10 through March 17 was spent in the port of Trieste, Italy. This was followed by a four day anchorage at Pollensa Bay, Spain.

The first week in April found the FORRESTAL in the port of Barcelona, Spain. This was followed by another National Week exercise—the last major exercise

before leaving the Mediterranean. The ship spent four days in Marseilles, France before heading toward the Straits of Gibraltar and home.

On 22 April the FORRESTAL transited the Straits and anchored at Rota, Spain for turnover with the USS John F. KENNEDY. On the same day, 22 April, 1969, the FORRESTAL dropped to the Second Fleet, departed Rota and steamed toward Norfolk Virginia. The squadron's four aircraft launched from the FORRESTAL for the last time on 28 April 1969 and flew to NAS Norfolk, Virginia. The following day, 29 April, the FORRESTAL, with the rest of VAW-123 arrived at pier 12, Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.

On 7 May 1969 CDR Charles J. BERTHE, Jr. relieved CDR Kenneth G. SMITH, and became VAW-123's third Commanding Officer. The squadron then enjoyed several weeks of relaxed operations during a "standown" after the long Mediterranean cruise. During the summer months, VAW-123 had a large turnover of personnel. Local flights were conducted at a steady pace to train new pilots and flight officers. On the 25th and 26th of November the pilots flew Carrier-qualification flights aboard the USS AMERICA (CVA-66). On 2 December 1969 Carrier-qualification were conducted aboard the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62).

VAW-123 Pilots and crew-members flew 803 flights in 1969 for a total of 1, ~~389.3~~ hours. Monthly summaries were as follows:

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>
JAN	208.4	67
FEB	116.6	39
MAR	269.0	81
APR	137.2	44
MAY	2.0	1
JUN	86.2	52
JUL	55.9	31
AUG	96.8	52
SEP	111.0	50
OCT	75.7	36
NOV	103.1	47
DEC	125.4	57