

COMMANDING OFFICER
CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE
FLEET POST OFFICE, NEW YORK 09501

1972-
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VAW-125

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5000
Ser 57
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From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)
Subj: Command History (OPNAV Report 5750-1)
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1. In accordance with reference (a), the command history of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE for the year 1972 is submitted.


R. P. COMAN
By direction

Copy to:
Director of Naval History
Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet

CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE

Command History

1. The following is a chronological itinerary of VAW-125 activities and outstanding achievements for 1972.

JANUARY

01-04 In-port Barcelona, Spain
05-14 Cyclic Operations
14-16 In-port Naples, Italy
17-26 Cyclic Operations - SAR**
27-31 In-port Athens, Greece

FEBRUARY

01-03 In-port Athens, Greece
04-09 Cyclic Operations - NATIONAL WEEK XII**
10 Anchorage Augusta Bay, Sicily
11 Cyclic Operations
12-17 In-port Corfu, Greece
18-23 Cyclic Operations - EXERCISE QUICK DRAW**
24-28 In-port Athens, Greece

MARCH

01-08 In-port Athens, Greece
09-14 Cyclic Operations
15-17 In-port Thessaloniki, Greece
18-23 Cyclic Operations - MISSILEX**
24-31 In-port Rhodes, Greece

APRIL

01-03 In-port Rhodes, Greece
04-15 Cyclic Operations - SAR**
16-20 In-port Athens, Greece
21-25 Cyclic Operations
26-30 In-port Genoa, Italy

MAY

01-10 Cyclic Operations - Operation DAWN PATROL**
12-16 In-port Cannes, France
17-20 Cyclic Operations
21-25 In-port Barcelona, Spain
26-31 Cyclic Operations - Operation RED EYE**

JUNE

01-09 In-port Palma, Spain
10-14 Cyclic Operations
15-20 In-port Malaga, Spain
21-24 Cyclic Operations - MISSILEX**
25 In-port Gaeta, Italy
26-29 Cyclic Operations
30 CNO SAFETY STANDDOWN, GOLFO DE PALMA SARDINA

JULY

01 CNO SAFETY STANDDOWN GOLFO DE PALMA, SARDINA
02-05 Cyclic Operations
06-13 In-port Palma, Spain
14-20 Cyclic Operations - NATIONAL WEEK XIII***

21-23 Anchorage Augusta Bay, Sicily

24 Enroute Palma - GSP

25-31 In-port Palma, Spain

AUGUST

01-03 In-port Palma, Spain

04-10 Transit to Eastern Mediterranean

11-12 In-port Izmir, Turkey

13-19 Cyclic Operations - MISSILEX**

20-25 In-port Athens, Greece

26-29 Cyclic Operations - MISSILEX**

30 Anchorage Naples, Italy

31 Anchorage La Maddelena, Sardinia

SEPTEMBER

01-04 In-port Palma, Spain

05-06 Cyclic Operations

07-08 In-port Palma, Spain

09-28 Cyclic Operations - Exercise STRONG EXPRESS**

29-30 Enroute CONUS

OCTOBER

01-06 Enroute CONUS

07-26 STANDDOWN

27 Change of Command**

28-31 STANDDOWN

NOVEMBER

01-30 In-port Norfolk, Va.

DECEMBER

01-31 In-port Norfolk, Va.

BASIC NARRATIVE

II

A. The Command

The squadron's Commanding Officers during the year 1972 and their dates of command were as follows:

CDR Tom P. MC CLENAHAN	27 OCT 1971 - 27 OCT 1972
CDR Estill A. COOPER	27 OCT 1972 - Present

THE MISSION OF VAW-125

The primary mission of VAW-125 is to provide units of the Fleet with early detection and warning of approaching enemy forces. The principle is as old as warfare itself but as practiced by VAW-125, involves the use of long range radar and sophisticated computer controlled electronic systems to detect, identify and report enemy contacts while still many miles from the Task Force.

The squadron has four of the Grumman built E-2B "HAWKEYE" Aircraft, a twin engine turbo-prop capable of reaching a station well ahead of the force at speeds up to 300 knots and altitudes above 30,000 feet. The E-2B, with its 80 foot wing span and gross weight of over 25 tons, is one of the largest aircraft operated from the deck of an aircraft carrier. The crew consists of a pilot, co-pilot, combat information center officer, air control officer and flight technician, who fly the aircraft and operate the complex electronic equipment which it carries. This equipment, collectively called the Airborne Tactical Data System, forms an airborne extension of the modern Navy Tactical Data System employed aboard all of our newer warships. The heart of the ATDS is a powerful, long range radar which transmits its energy through the 24 foot rotating antenna dome atop the aircraft.

Contacts detected by the radar are analyzed and identified by computer controlled electronics subsystems which simultaneously display the contacts to the operators and automatically report them back to the Task Force Commander. If a contact is a threat to the force, aircraft can be immediately dispatched to intercept it and, if necessary, destroy it. The intercepting aircraft are directed in this flight by the E-2B's computer through a radio data link. This assures that the aircraft reaches a position in relation to the target to permit final visual identification and attack.

The inherent flexibility of the ATDS, when operated by the highly trained flight crews, allows its use in a variety of secondary missions. Significant among these are its use in directing Strike Aircraft to their targets, as an automatic radio relay to assist in long range communications and in the vital role of control and coordination during search and rescue missions.

As of 31 December 1972 the squadron numbered 23 officers and 121 enlisted men. Of these, 22 officers and 5 enlisted men were in a flight status.

B. The following is a summary of squadron operations and activities in chronological order for the year 1972.

JANUARY: SAR - On the evening of 17 January, information was received that a C-1A aircraft was overdue at NAF Sigonella and believed to be down somewhere east of that destination. At first light on 18 January, the KENNEDY's task group joined the search, with the E-2 assigned as Airborne SAR Coordinator for the Air Wing. After six fruitless days of searching under adverse weather conditions the ship was released from the SAR effort. The KENNEDY then proceeded to the missile firing areas south of Malta, where the E-2 provided range sanitation and surveillance for surface-to-air and air-to-air missile shoots, acting as primary control for the surface-to-air portion. On the afternoon of the 21st a search was hastily launched under E-2 control to locate a high interest surface target. It was, not, however, among the 189 positively identified targets located within 200 miles of the carrier.

FEBRUARY: NATIONAL WEEK XII - The E-2 provided SSSC control along with AEW to assist in the defense of the Amphibious Task Force during the high speed transit from Crete to the Western Mediterranean. Great emphasis was placed on SSSC during the exercise, and the principally E-2 controlled effort was extremely successful. The squadron was not involved in the AAW effort, but did provide the usual assistance in communications relay.

EXERCISE QUICK DRAW - Although the exercise was primarily a SSSC effort, the E-2 was significantly involved in providing AEW and TDS link for the Orange Forces, primarily Italian units plus the USS YARNELL. On the last day of the exercise, the squadron provided bandit warning for an opposed Alpha strike.

MARCH: MISSILEX - The E-2 acted as primary control station for a surface-to-air missile exercise on 20 March and for an extensive air-to-air missile exercise on 20 March and for an extensive air-to-air missile exercise on 21 March. Despite the unfavorable radar environment and the small radar area of the drones, the exercise control was highly successful. Eleven Sparrow and six Sidewinder missiles were launched from F-4 aircraft under E-2 control.

APRIL: SAR - SAR procedures were initiated on the evening of 13 April, after the disappearance of an A-6A on a night bombing exercise. The ship directed that an E-2 remain airborne throughout the night. A total of 37.0 consecutive full system hours were flown in the SAR effort, during which the E-2 acted as primary SAR coordinator, maintaining communications with an advisory control of up to 25 aircraft per cycle. Wreckage from the A-6 was located on 15 April and the search was discontinued.

MAY: EXERCISE DAWN PATROL - During this extensive NATO exercise, which involved units from France, Great Britain, Italy, Germany and other U.S. Services, the squadron conducted normal operations consisting of AEW, In-

intercept Control and SSSC missions, the latter being conducted on a large scale between Sicily and Crete during the last two days of the exercise. The E-2 was utilized and performed effectively throughout the exercise, providing the Blue Force with a high percentage of AEW and Link 11 coverage.

OPERATION RED EYE - This joint operation with the Spanish was conducted on 26 May. E-2 utilization was primarily communications coordinator between Spanish GCI units and CVW-1 aircraft which were simulating attacks on targets deep within Spanish territory.

JUNE: MISSILEX - On 23 and 24 June, the squadron participated in a surface-to-air missile exercise east of Sardina, providing range surveillance and control for F-4 drone launch aircraft. The E-2's performed exceptionally well and were recognized in a CTF 60.2 message applauding the squadron's typically exceptional performance during the exercise.

The CNO SAFETY STANDDOWN was conducted from 30 June to 1 July while KENNEDY was anchored at Golfo de Palma, Sardina. This provided an opportunity for all hands to participate in lectures, discussions and equipment inspections which re-emphasized safety and safety procedures.

JULY: NATIONAL WEEK XIII - The primary missions of the E-2 crews were an intense SSSC birddog effort and the control of departures from and the initial phase of approaches to the CVA, which remained in EMCON. The effectiveness of our efforts was readily apparent to everyone concerned with the exercise. Only 30 minutes elapsed from the beginning of hostilities until all of the Orange Forces were declared out of action. Commendatory letters from CAG, CTF 60.2 and COMNAVAIRLANT described NATIONAL WEEK XIII as a complete success and attributed a major portion of that success to the performance of the E-2 during the exercise.

AUGUST: MISSILEX - The first missile shoot of the month was an RMW-8 exercise using the F-4 towed TDU-22 target. It provided low altitude intercepts/sparrow firings for CVW-1 aircraft and firings for the CVA's Sea Sparrow point defense missile system.

MISSILEX - The second missile shoot involved both U.S and Italian missile firing units. Five AQM-37 drones were presented with coordinated Navy/Air Force aircraft ECM, so that the firings took place in a heavy EW environment which included extensive chaff and intensive electronic jamming and interference. During both of these exercises, the E-2 crews provided essential range sanitation and control.

SEPTEMBER: STRONG EXPRESS - Two brief operating periods before the exercise began were used almost exclusively for pilot proficiency in anticipation of inclement weather conditions in the Norwegian Sea. During this large multi-nation NATO exercise, Air Wing ONE provided conventional strikes, close air support, SSSC and selective nuclear release. Although the E-2's primary mission was SSSC, the squadron was also tasked with AEW. The heavy workload of the SSSC mission frequently required two Hummers airborne to ensure that the double mission was not jeopardized.

OCTOBER: Post Deployment STANDDOWN CHANGE OF COMMAND - On 27 OCT CDR E. A. COOPER relieved CDR T. P. MC CLENAHAN as Commanding Officer.

NOVEMBER and DECEMBER: Activities for these two months consisted of in-squadron training primarily for pilots and enlisted personnel.

C. SPECIAL TOPICS:

1. Operational Statistics:

	HOURS FLOWN	FLIGHTS PER MONTH	CARRIER LANDINGS	CAT SHOTS
JAN	138.4	59	58	58
FEB	87.0	41	40	40
MAR	76.4	321	35	35
APR	182.2	63	86	86
MAY	166.1	55	56	56
JUN	162.7	51	54	54
JUL	89.7	23	28	28
AUG	158.6	58	54	54
SEP	213.1	73	74	74
OCT	-----POST DEPLOYMENT STANDDOWN-----			
NOV	71.3	26	00	00
DEC	70.0	32	00	00
Totals	1415.5	513	485	485

2. Personnel:

During the year the squadron enjoyed a 23% first term reenlistment rate and a 100% second term reenlistment rate. The manning level for the squadron at the end of the year was 97.6% of our allowance.