

1. Command Composition and Organization

- a. Service: United States Navy
- b. Command Title: Carrier Airborne Early Warning ONE TWO FIVE (VAW-125). Squadron call sign: "TIGERTAILS" UIC: 09922
- c. Mission Statement: To provide airborne early warning and command and control to the Battle Group Commander to support sustained, forward-deployed combat operations, and to carry out that mission when required.
- d. Organizational Structure: VAW-125 operates under the direction and control of Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN commanded by Captain Dana R. Potts.
- e. Commanding Officer: Commander Glen C. Ackermann
- f. Duty Station: Naval Station Norfolk, VA.
- g. Aircraft: The squadron currently maintains and operates four Grumman E-2C Group II Navigation Upgrade "Hawkeye" aircraft.

Side Number	Serial Number
600	165302
601	165304
602	165507
603	165508

2. Chronology of Events

OPERATION	LOCATION	START DATE	END DATE
Air-to Ground Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program (SFARP)	NAS Fallon	14 JAN 02	23 JAN 02
Air Wing Fallon Det	NAS Fallon	28 JAN 02	16 FEB 02
TSTA III/COMPTUEX	USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	22 MAR 02	27 APR 02
JTFEX	USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	28 APR 02	06 MAY 02
JTF 02-02 Deployment	USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	20 JUN 02	20 DEC 02
Change of Command	USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)	30 JUL 02	30 JUL 02

Operation ENDURING FREEDOM	Deployed	21 JUL 02	27 AUG 02
Operation SOUTHERN WATCH	Deployed	02 SEP 02	09 SEP 02
Exercise MED SHARK	Deployed	21 SEP 02	25 SEP 02
Exercise DESTINED GLORY	Deployed	08 OCT 02	14 OCT 02
Operation JOINT FORGE/JOINT GUARDIAN	Deployed	24 OCT 02	08 NOV 02

3. Narrative

a. Air-to-Ground Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program (A/G SFARP)/Air Wing Fallon Det: With approximately 100 flight hours, the TIGERTAILS completed nearly 500 live air-to-air intercepts while conducting numerous exercise strike missions.

b. TSTA III/COMPTUEX: During these exercises, CVW-17 and CVN 73 continued to hone communication skills and close coordination to ensure safe and efficient carrier based operations. Additionally, the Mid-Atlantic Electronic Warfare Range provided VAW-125 outstanding training opportunities with tactical targets for end-to-end systems checks of the E-2C Passive Detection System (PDS).

c. JTFEX: Through communication and coordination, the TIGERTAILS worked closely with all branches of U.S. services to combine all assets to establish a unified Joint Task Force.

d. Joint Task Force 02-02 Deployment: Mediterranean and Arabian Sea Deployment 20 JUN 2002 - 20 DEC 2002.

e. Change of Command: CDR Harry M. Robinson was relieved by CDR Glen C. Ackermann as Commanding Officer of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 125 in a ceremony aboard USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73). CDR Eric W. Gardner assumed the position as the squadron's new Executive Officer.

f. Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF): To support the Global War on Terrorism, Tigertail aircrew were tasked to provide airborne command and control services to coalition aircraft flying over Afghanistan and Pakistan.

g. Operation SOUTHERN WATCH (OSW): Emergent tasking by Commander, U.S. Fifth Fleet redirected the Tigertails to rapidly deploy to support OSW. VAW-125 was the first E-2C squadron to operate in the OSW theater in more than a year and with slightly less than a week's notice were able to provide seamless integration into OSW for Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN (CVW-17) and the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON Battle Group (GWBATGRU), participating

in several Response Options and a strike against a coastal missile battery.

h. Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet Exercise MED SHARK: Following over two months of combat operations in OEF and OSW, the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON Battle Group returned to the Mediterranean and proceeded through the Strait of Gibraltar to participate in Exercise MED SHARK with the Royal Moroccan Air Force (RMAF). Missions included direct air control with F-5's, overland strikes, and low level flights thus providing excellent training opportunities for VAW-125 pilots.

i. NATO Exercise DESTINED GLORY: In the deployment's only major multinational exercise, DESTINED GLORY, the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON Battle Group assumed the role of red force against British and Spanish Naval Forces. Missions in DESTINED GLORY included War-at-Sea Exercises, Air defense exercises, and direct air control training with the 555th Fighter Group F-16 squadron.

j. Operation JOINT FORGE/JOINT GUARDIAN: Operating in the Adriatic Sea, the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON Battle Group participated in Operation JOINT FORGE/JOINT GUARDIAN. The primary role of the Tigertails was to coordinate packages into and out of Bosnia and Kosovo. The bulk of the missions were either into the Forum airspace in Bosnia for Time Critical Targeting/Battlefield Air Interdiction, or into the Emilion airspace in Kosovo for Tactical Air Reconnaissance. One high visibility item in the Area of Responsibility was the datalink picture. During the entire fly day, the Tigertails of VAW-125 maintained an airborne E-2 in order to provide the crucial link picture.

4. Supporting Documents

a. Published Documents

(1). VAW-125 TIGERTAIL periodic newsletter, "The Torch": Attached

(2). VAW-125 Welcome Aboard Pamphlet: Attached

(3). VAW-125 Change of Command Program: Attached

b. Reports on Performance of Weapons System, Major Projects or Material:

(1). The Tigertails made significant contributions to

the operational test and evaluation of the E-2C Group II Navigation Upgrade Tactical Software Version N9MFHDDD. Flight evaluation of this software began while VAW-125 was embarked onboard USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) for COMPTUEX. VAW-125 dedicated over 30 flight hours evaluating and documenting software issues for this version in an operational environment. The extensive evaluation process involved numerous assessments including: data link Air Control Revision, improved Link 4A to 2-way CEM F-14Bs, evaluation of the new "bull's-eye" feature during tactical air intercept control, 4 digit TN/IFF Hook functionality with Link 16, duplicate Mode II alert issues, and verification of EMDU load N9005DD. VAW-125's evaluation provided Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center (SSC) San Diego with specific and extensive feedback that aided in the release of an improved version of software available to all E-2C Group II and Navigation Upgrade squadrons in 2002.

(2). Replacement MFCDU (rMFCDU) testing. VAW-125 assisted dramatically in rMFCDU testing in February. The rMFCDU is a powerful and easily upgradeable MFCDU. Testing included reaction to ground power, reaction to switching aircraft power and basic interface functions with the current generation of MFCDU. Testing was significant in discovering faults that were not discovered in the Northrop Grumman Company Laboratory. The support that VAW-125 provided enabled PMA-231 to move forward to the next milestone of this important piece of E-2C avionics.

(3). Tigertail aircrew's encompassing vision of increased sensor integration within the E-2C Hawkeye led to the development of innovative data management techniques using tactical laptops during aircraft flight. This initiative provided instantaneous access to the numerous documents and data required for the ABC2 mission flow during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, greatly enhancing mission capability and providing a significant force multiplier inside the E-2C. This approach has already been adopted by relieving VAW squadrons, Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center N6 Department, and as noted above, is the genesis of a CNO Tactical Development and Evaluation submission. This community-wide support for VAW-125's tactical adaptation of the laptop has spawned an officially sponsored and funded E-2C program.

(4). Quickdraw 2 PRC-112B Testing. At CVW-17 staff's request and with the help of the OEF Joint Search and Rescue Center (JSRC), VAW-125 tested the use of the pocket size Quickdraw 2 PRC-112B interrogator in the E-2C. Informal testing revealed that the Quickdraw 2 is E-2C compatible and simply

connects into the ICS cord. The squadron utilized the Quickdraw 2 interrogator during two Combat Search and Rescue Exercises in southern Pakistan. Lessons Learned and procedures were provided to NSAWC N6 along with the recommendation to incorporate this tool into Airwing Weapons Detachment and DESERT RESCUE scenarios. This will allow E-2C Airborne Mission Commander crews to become more familiar with the PRC-112B interrogation systems during workups and provide alternative tools for PRC-112B interrogation when the suitcase Hook-112 Interrogator is unavailable.

(5). Persistent squadron Hazardous Material Reports documenting T56-A-427 Engine Reduction Gear Box (RGB) oil pressure indication discrepancies (known as "indicator strobing") were instrumental in preventing needless endangerment of aircrew and aircraft. Tigertail Maintainers first diagnosed an analog-to-digital incompatibility between the engine reduction gearbox and the indicator. Follow-on coordination with NADEP North Island engineers addressed electromagnetic interference design flaws, resulting in E-2C community-wide awareness, greatly reducing unnecessary engine shutdowns due to abnormal indications. Through squadron persistence, RGB strobing was added to the E-2 community's Top Ten Safety Issues presented to the E-2C/C-2A System Safety Working Group in November, 2002. Subsequently, a system redesign, funding, and aircraft implementation now appear forthcoming.

(6). Another example of VAW-125's dedication to safety in carrier aviation was a Hazard Report concerning in-flight arcing of a Radar box. The possibility of a catastrophic electrical fire in the aircraft is a hazard faced by all E-2C aviators on every flight, yet in this case, the built-in safeguards and interlocks did not provide a guarantee of protection against severe electrical arcing. This Hazard Report illustrates the fact that quick aircrew recognition and response to something as subtle as a "funny smell" may be all that stands between a minor failure and Class Alpha damage.

(7). VAW-125 also explored other ways to improve safety for the Hawkeye fleet. Long flights and prolonged engine operating time have become the norm when participating in OEF. The squadron's policy of shutting down and servicing both engines during hot pump/crew switch evolutions reduced the probability of engine degrades and failures, ensuring safety and enhancing sortie completion rate. This method has been recommended to all E-2C squadrons through Lessons Learned.

c. Unique Awards/Events

(1). The Tigertails talent and airmanship around the ship set the standard for Air Wing SEVENTEEN as they won overall Top Hook squadron. Squadron pilots took 5 Top Pilot / Top Nugget Pilot awards. This pilot talent resulted in receiving the inaugural Hawkeye-Greyhound Association Top Hook Award.

(2). Safety Milestone: On 2 October 2002, VAW-125 achieved a truly remarkable milestone of 34 years and 67,000 flight hours Class "A" mishap-free. This record serves as an unmistakable testament to safety awareness throughout the command.

d. Photographs of E-2C Hawkeye: Attached