



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

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VAW-126/10:cct
 5750
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 19 MAR 1982

NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER
 1980



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From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
 ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-SIX, Fleet Post Office, New York, NY 09501
 To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2), Department of the Navy,
 Washington, D.C. 20350

Subj: Command History

Ref: (a) OPMVINST 5750.12C

- Encl: (1) Annex I, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 JAN 81 - 31 JAN 81
 (2) Annex II, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 FEB 81 - 28 FEB 81
 (3) Annex III, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 MAR 81 - 31 MAR 81
 (4) Annex IV, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 APR 81 - 30 APR 81
 (5) Annex V, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 MAY 81 - 31 MAY 81
 (6) Annex VI, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 JUN 81 - 30 JUN 81
 (7) Annex VII, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 JUL 81 - 31 JUL 81
 (8) Annex VIII, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 AUG 81 - 31 AUG 81
 (9) Annex IX, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 SEP 81 - 30 SEP 81
 (10) Annex X, Periodic/Monthly Operating Report 1 OCT 81 - 25 OCT 81
 (11) Annex XI, Periodic Operating Report 26 OCT 81 - 4 DEC 81
 (12) Annex XII, Periodic Operating Report 5 December 81 - 3 FEB 82
 (13) Annex XIII, Command History Update
 (14) Annex XIV, Personnel Manning Rosters
 (15) Annex XV, End of Cruise Report - Mediterranean - AUG 80 - MAR 81

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following is submitted as VAW-126's Command History for calendar year 1981:

a. Basic History.

(1) CDR Gary M. Witzenburg, USN, [REDACTED]/1320 was Commanding Officer from 3 December 1980 until squadron change of command on 1 February 1982, when command was assumed by CDR John W. ("Jack") Bookhultz, USN, [REDACTED] 1310.

(2) The mission, composition of command, and homeport were unchanged in 1981. The officer and enlisted men manning records for 1981 are attached as enclosure (13).

b. Summary of Operations (specific details in Annexes I-XII)

(1) 01 JAN 81 - 17 MAR 81 - Deployed aboard USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67) to the Mediterranean Sea.

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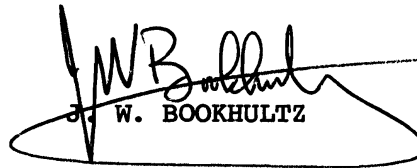
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- (a) 13-17 JAN 81: Participated in National Week exercises
 - (b) 31 JAN 81: Burning Wind, the KENNEDY Air Wing was tasked to provide coverage for reconnaissance aircraft in the Gulf of Sidra.
 - (c) 11 & 12 FEB 81: DASIX matched CVW-1 strike forces against the southern coastal defenses of France.
 - (d) 22-24 FEB 81: An amphibious operation off of the southern coast of Spain was participated in by the VAW-126 "SEAHAWKS" during PHIBLEX exercises.
- (2) 18-28 MAR 81: Transit to Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia
 - (3) 28 MAR 81 - 18 JUN 81: Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia
 - (4) 18 JUN 81 - 30 JUN 81: Fallon, Nevada for exercises with CVW-3, the "SEAHAWKS" new air wing.
 - (5) 01 JUL 81 - 23 AUG 81: Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia
 - (6) 24 AUG 81 - 13 SEP 81: Refresher Training
 - (7) 14 SEP 81 - 08 OCT 81: Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia
 - (8) 09 OCT 81 - 18 OCT 81: TYT I, VACAPES area
 - (9) 19 OCT 81 - 25 OCT 81: Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia
 - (10) 26 OCT 81 - 12 DEC 81: TYT II A/B, TYT III, ORE conducted in Puerto Rico Operating Area.
 - (11) 13 DEC 81 - 31 DEC 81: Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia


J. W. BOOKHULTZ

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HISTORY OF VAW-126

Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY SIX is a major element of the carrier airborne early warning (VAW) forces of the United States Navy. The squadron's primary mission is to use long range radars installed in their aircraft to provide the Carrier Task Force Commander with the earliest possible warning of impending air attack, and using the computer based weapons system, help defend the force by directing fighter aircraft to meet the threat. Moreover, the capabilities of its four Grumman E-2C HAWKEYE aircraft have proven to be exceptionally versatile, enabling the squadron's aircrews to play important roles in other varied operations, among them strike control, surface surveillance, and search and rescue missions.

VAW-126, the youngest of the E-2 squadrons in Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing TWELVE, was commissioned on 1 April 1969 in Norfolk, Virginia. The new squadron with its four E-2A aircraft was made part of Attack Carrier Air Wing SEVENTEEN, and began a long association with CVW-17 and with USS FORRESTAL (CVA-59) which ultimately included four extended deployments to the Mediterranean during the five year period through September 1974. After completing their first cruise with this team in July 1970, the squadron transitioned to the E-2B, a newer version of the same basic aircraft, but equipped with a more flexible computer weapons system. Also during this period with the CVW-17/FORRESTAL team, VAW-126 won the highly coveted NAVAIRLANT Battle Readiness Efficiency "E" and the CNO Safety Award in 1971, and then won the readiness "E" award a second time in 1974.

Winning three major competitive awards so early in its history VAW-126 became recognized as the outstanding performer among all East Coast VAW squadrons, and together with their truly unique and ever-growing accident-free record, clearly established VAW-126's record as the Navy's finest.

While homeward bound following their final deployment with FORRESTAL in September 1974, the squadron was transferred to the USS AMERICA (CVA-66). This first mid-ocean transfer of an entire E-2 squadron provided CVW-8 with vital VAW assets for an extensive NATO exercise in the North Atlantic, and added a new dimension of flexibility to Navy carrier operations. The NATO cruise also marked VAW-126's final E-2B flying as well. Following their return to Norfolk in October 1974, the squadron began its transition to E-2C HAWKEYE, an aircraft similar in appearance to its predecessors, but with a significantly more capable and reliable weapons system.

By August 1975, the squadron had commenced a whirlwind series of short operations in the Caribbean, and with their future airwing, CVW-9, in Miramar, California. In May 1976, they began the first of many trips moving the entire squadron back and forth between Norfolk and the western coast of the United States to operate with CVW-9, and prepare for their upcoming deployment on the USS CONSTELLATION (CV-64). The first deployment was Fallon, Nevada where the new E2C/F-14 TOMCAT team worked together in fleet anti-warfare exercises.

Following several short periods of refresher training operations the squadron returned to California in January 1977 for a major deployment which included several at-sea periods for refresher training. In April, VAW-126 left San Diego for the Philippines, and in the following months, the squadron visited such places as Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan. The Western operating area provided wide-open "Blue Water" operation which allowed the aircraft and aircrews to operate at their fullest potential. The WESTPAC 77 deployment was a particularly significant evolution in that it concluded the highly successful Pacific Fleet introduction of the E-2C by VAW-126. In May 1978 VAW-126 returned to the West Coast and rejoined CVW-9 for the squadron's second and final Western Pacific deployment.

The "SEAHAWKS" of VAW-126 deployed from San Diego aboard USS CONSTELLATION on 26 September 1978 and sailed to the Philippines with a brief stop for operations and liberty in Hawaii. This cruise ultimately lasted nearly eight months, covered over 52,000 miles ranging over three-fourths of the earth's longitudes, and took CONSTELLATION and the "SEAHAWKS" to Korea, Japan, Singapore, Philippines, and the Indian Ocean while spending over 70% of the cruise steaming in support of national objectives. Upon the squadron's homecoming at NAS Norfolk on 17 May 1979, VAW-126 began transitioning to the new ARPS version of the E-2C.

The VAW-126 "SEAHAWKS" joined the USS JOHN F. KENNEDY/CVW-1 team upon its return to the East Coast. In refresher training in the Caribbean. Training continued through April and May, with TYT I and II conducted off the coasts of Virginia and Florida. Prior to the final phases of training leading up to the Operational Readiness Exam (ORE), USS JOHN F. KENNEDY on 30 May 1980 steamed into Boston harbor for OPSAIL 80. The "SEAHAWKS", along with a host of sailing ships from around the world, received a very warm welcome from the citizens of Boston during the city's 350th birthday celebration.

On August 4, 1980 the globe-trotting "SEAHAWKS" set off for the Mediterranean. Their travels included seven different ports in a total of six countries including such exotic ports as Alexandria, Egypt; Haifa, Israel; and Athens, Greece. The "SEAHAWKS" returned to Norfolk on 28 March 1981.

In July 1981, VAW-126 joined CVW-3 which replaced CVW-1 as the air wing attached to USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV-67). The squadron began workups for their upcoming Indian Ocean Cruise with refresher training in late August in the Caribbean. TYT I was conducted off the coasts of Virginia and North Carolina in early October. TYT II and III were completed during a busy November with the "SEAHAWKS" setting a new squadron record of 462 flight hours during the month. The Operational Readiness Evaluation was completed in early December and the squadron returned to Norfolk for a well deserved Christmas rest on the 11th of December.

The VAW-126 "SEAHAWKS" departed Norfolk the 4th of January 1982 for the Indian Ocean and a six month deployment. The squadron is looking forward to several port calls including the cities of Malaga, Spain, Perth, Australia, and Mombassa, Kenya.

Enclosure (13)

Most unique throughout VAW-126's history, and by far their proudest overall achievement, is the squadron's continuing history of totally accident-free operations. Since its commissioning in April 1969, the squadron has completed 59 months of intensive deployed carrier operations, logged 21,642 accident-free hours. Through their professionalism on the ground and in the air, and by their constant and total dedication to safety, VAW-126 personnel have maintained this enviable record through the years. Each new accident-free moment now sets a new standard for excellence in Naval Aviation units. VAW-126, a justly proud squadron, is certainly "showing the way."

COMMANDING OFFICERS

01 APR 69 - 05 APR 70.	CDR Albert W. OLDHAM
05 APR 70 - 01 APR 71.	CDR Robert M. HARP
01 APR 71 - 28 JAN 72.	CDR Floyd A. FRIESEN
28 JAN 72 - 03 JAN 73.	CDR George ORMOND JR
03 JAN 73 - 07 FEB 74.	CDR Harold J. BERNSEN
07 FEB 74 - 16 JAN 75.	CDR David M. KLETTER
16 JAN 75 - 28 APR 76.	CDR Horace M. WALTER JR
28 APR 76 - 15 JUL 77.	CDR Robert E. KORDALSKI
15 JUL 77 - 08 SEP 78.	CDR Dennis M. KINNEY
08 SEP 78 - 05 SEP 79.	CDR Vady R. CLARK
05 SEP 79 - 08 DEC 80.	CDR Herman J. LONG JR
08 DEC 80 - 01 FEB 82.	CDR Gary M. WITZENBURG

Enclosure (13)