



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON FIFTEEN  
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From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN  
To: Director of Naval History, Aviation History Branch,  
Naval Historical Center

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F  
(b) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990  
(c) OPNAVINST 3120.32 series

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Chronological History  
(3) VFA-15 Narrative History of 1998  
(4) Commanding Officer's biography and picture  
(5) Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN History  
(6) Squadron Aircraft Photograph  
(7) Battle Efficiency Award Summary  
(8) VFA-15 Change of Command program

1. Per references (a) through (c), enclosures (1) through (8) are submitted.

  
K. H. THOMPSON

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron 15 is to maintain a maximum state of air combat readiness in the Carrier Strike Forces and to utilize that readiness as a deterrent or striking capability against any and all enemies of the United States of America, as may be directed by higher command authority. The primary function of Strike Fighter Squadron 15 within that mission is to conduct offensive air superiority and air-to-surface attack operations.

2. Strike Fighter Squadron 15 is organized in two primary levels: command and departmental. The organizational structure has been established within the framework of primary billets authorized by the Chief of Naval Personnel and within the guidelines established in references (b) and (c). In this particular application, the organizational structure and billet descriptions depicted in reference (c) have been tailored, as necessary, to fit the structure of a deployable aviation command.

3. Strike Fighter Squadron 15, based at NAS Cecil Field, FL, is currently moving to NAS Oceana, VA and is commanded by CDR Kenneth H. Thompson, USN. VFA-15 has an immediate external command relationship as outlined below:

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. Command/Operational Control                       | Commander, Carrier<br>Air Wing EIGHT NAS<br>Norfolk, Va  |
| b. Administrative Control (embarked)<br><br>(ashore) | Commander, Carrier<br>Air Wing EIGHT<br>Commander, Strike<br>Fighter Wing,<br>ATLANTIC<br>NAS Cecil Field,<br>FL |
| c. Technical Material                                | Commander, Naval<br>Air Force<br>ATLANTIC/Naval<br>Air Systems<br>Command Control<br>NAS Norfolk, Va             |

d. Support Control

Commander, Strike  
Fighter Wing,  
ATLANTIC

4. The twelve (12) FA-18C HORNET aircraft assigned to the squadron have AJ tail code markings. The bureau number breakdown is as follows:

<b>AIRCRAFT</b>	<b>BUREAU NUMBER</b>
300	164627
301	164629
302	164643
303	164646
304	164655
305	164661
306	164691
307	164689
310	164673
311	164680
312	164631
314	164678

5. Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN consists of 161 enlisted members and 27 officers.

## CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY 1998

VFA-15 AT NAS CECIL FIELD, FL	01-17 JAN 98
ORANGE AIR DETACHMENT, PUERTO RICO	17-21 JAN 98
ORANGE AIR DETACHMENT, PUERTO RICO	04-21 FEB 98
FALLON TOP GUN MAINTENANCE DETACHMENT	20 MAR-10 MAY 98
CQ DETACHMENT ABOARD USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67)	06-13 APR 98
MISSILEX DETACHMENT, TYNDAL AFB	03-09 MAY 98
MAPLE FLAG 2-98 DETACHMENT, COLD LAKE, CANADA	29 MAY-12 JUN 98
SFARP DETACHMENT, NAS FALLON	29 JUL-15 AUG 98
TSTA I/II ABOARD USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71)	24 AUG-12 SEP 98
CHANGE OF COMMAND (CDR K. H. THOMPSON RELIEVED CDR M. D. GUADAGNINI)	17 SEP 98
FALLON AIRWING DETACHMENT	29 SEP-23 OCT 98
TSTA III/COMPTUEX ABOARD USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71)	10 NOV-18 DEC 98
ST. MARTEEN PORT VISIT	25-28 NOV 98
VFA-15 AT NAS CECIL FIELD, FL	19-31 DEC 98

## VFA-15 NARRATIVE HISTORY OF 1998

1998 was an extremely challenging and tremendously rewarding year for Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN. The VALIONS were busy executing the aggressive turn-around cycle as well as intense internal training that has ensured VFA-15 remains the premier squadron in Naval Aviation. The VALIONS successfully met every operational and administrative commitment with the highest level of professionalism, while maximizing training opportunities to maintain a high level of tactical proficiency. The success of VFA-15 in 1998 can be attributed to VALION teamwork, professionalism, and dedication to duty.

Operationally during 1998, squadron pilots flew 4,373.8 hours, with 1,181.9 hours flown embarked on both USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67) and USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71). Squadron pilots logged 810 arrested landings with a proficiency that made them one of the top squadrons in Carrier Air Wing Eight. Additionally, the VALIONS flew 741.0 hours while at Fallon, NV for the Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program (SFARP) and the CVW-8 Airwing Detachment.

1998 began with two Orange Air Detachments out of Puerto Rico in support of Carrier Airwing One. These detachments also provided the VALIONS with some unique unit level training opportunities. In April, squadron pilots were afforded the opportunity for refresher Carrier Qualification aboard USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67). In May, five VALIONS participated in missile shoots at Tyndal AFB representing realistic and challenging scenarios. The missile shots included two AIM-7 Sparrows, two AIM-9 Sidewinders versus a drone in a dogfight scenario, and an AIM-120 AMRAAM. These successful missile shots significantly contributed to the VALIONS selection as the 1998 Grand Slam Award winner for air to air weapons firing acumen.

The squadron spent two weeks in Cold Lake, Canada in June participating in Maple Flag 2-98. During this exercise, pilots flew alongside their counterparts from Italy, Germany, Britain, and Canada as well as the

Encl (3)

U.S. Air Force. This exercise provided valuable training for the VALIONS in the coalition force operations that are the foundation of the United States' current foreign policy. While at Cold Lake, VFA-15 pilots flew 131.0 hours while training side by side with other nation's pilots.

After several weeks at Cecil Field, Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN headed west to Fallon, NV to complete the Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program. This detachment marked the start of the inter-deployment training cycle. Nine days after returning from Fallon, the VALIONS embarked on USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71) to take part in TSTA I/II, integrating the ship and the airwing. The squadron then returned to Cecil Field for three weeks, during which CDR Kenneth H. "STALK" Thompson relieved CDR Mark D. "GUAD" Guadagnini as Commanding Officer on 17 SEP 98.

The VALIONS continued work-ups and headed back to Fallon, NV for the CVW-8 Airwing detachment in late September. After spending one month re-learning how to work together and compliment one another's tactical strengths, the VALIONS displayed their tactical prowess during the SFWSL Ball by winning the SE Strike and Top Dome competitions. In November, CVW-8 once again embarked on USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71) for TSTA III/ COMPTUEX to provide for the integration of the entire TR Battle Group. During COMPTUEX, the ROOSEVELT pulled into port at St. Marteen, allowing the VALIONS to enjoy a very Caribbean Thanksgiving. Following COMPTUEX, VFA-15 returned to Cecil Field for some well-deserved time with family through the holidays.

The VALION's rich tradition of excellence as one of the oldest and finest squadrons in Naval Aviation was continued in 1998. VFA-15 excelled as a result of the professional attitude and the dedication each member of the VALION team took to ensure the continuation of "VALION EXCELLENCE."