



**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 5750.12G  
(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 2001  
(4) Commanding Officer's biography and picture  
(5) Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN History  
(6) Squadron Aircraft Photograph  
(7) Battle Efficiency Award Summary

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (7) are submitted.

*D. C. Stewart*  
D. C. STEWART

*D. C.*  
*Col.*

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN (VFA-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 FIFTEEN 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 FIFTEEN, based at NAS Oceana, VA, is commanded by CDR David C. Stewart, USN. VFA-15 has an immediate external command relationship as outlined below:

### ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. Command/Operational Control                   | Commander, Carrier<br>Air Wing EIGHT<br>NAS Oceana, VA   |
| b. Administrative Control (embarked)<br>(ashore) | Commander, Carrier<br>Air Wing EIGHT<br>Commander, Strike<br>Fighter Wing,<br>ATLANTIC<br>NAS Oceana, VA |
| 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<br>Fighter Wing,<br>ATLANTIC   |

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

<u>AIRCRAFT</u>	<u>BUREAU NUMBER</u>
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 220 enlisted members and 20 officers.

## CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY 2001

<u>EXERCISE/OPERATION</u>	<u>DATES</u>
COMPTUEX	15-31 Jan 2001
JTFEX	27 Feb-27 Mar 2001
JTG 02-01	25 Apr-10 Nov 2001
Manar Tunisia	14-21 May 2001
Exercise TRIDENT D'OR, Corsica	21-31 May 2001
Exercise FANAL	16-21 May 2001
Joint Maritime Course	18-29 June 2001
Exercise JUNIPER HAWK	12-19 July 2001
Operation SOUTHERN WATCH	29 July-10 Sept 2001
Operation ENDURING FREEDOM	3-22 Oct 2001

## VFA-15 NARRATIVE HISTORY OF 2001

During the year 2001, VFA-15 F/A-18C Hornets engaged in combat operations in two separate theaters, including participation in the first airstrikes into Afghanistan as part of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM. The VALIONS as well participated in several large multinational exercises with NATO and other allies during their April to November deployment with CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT.

During 2001 VFA-15 pilots flew 5554.6 flight hours, with 4619.8 hours flown while embarked aboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65). Squadron pilots logged 2450 arrested landings during two final workup at-sea periods and a six and a half month deployment.

VFA-15 honed its warfighting skills during an at-sea period aboard USS ENTERPRISE in January 2001 for COMPTUEX A, and again in March for COMTUEX B and JTFEX. The final stages of workups provided the VALIONS with opportunities to work in concert with other U.S. services, training that would pay off later in the year in the skies over Afghanistan. VFA-15 deployed for the Mediterranean aboard USS ENTERPRISE in late-April, and the VALIONS would continue their tradition of superior performance in combat later in the deployment, when VFA-15 was again called to arms in defense of the United States and its interests.

During the first half of the deployment, VFA-15 and CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT participated in the JOINT MARITIME COURSE, a combined exercise held in the North Sea with the United Kingdom and other NATO Allies. During the deployment VFA-15 also participated in several other multinational exercises with friends and allies in the Mediterranean region, including detachments ashore in Tunisia, Sardinia, and Israel. VFA-15 and CARRIER AIR WING EIGHT then transited the Suez Canal and the Straits of Hormuz and took station in the Persian Gulf, patrolling the skies of southern Iraq and employing weapons on targets in Iraq on several occasions.

Soon after returning through the Straits of Hormuz in early fall 2001 to begin the long trip home, personnel deployed aboard USS ENTERPRISE watched with horror as the terrorist attacks of 11 September unfolded on the other side of the globe. For the next four weeks the VALIONS took station in the Northern Indian Ocean and prepared for combat, with flight operations in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM beginning on 4 October as CVW-8 aircraft began flying combat air patrols over Pakistan. Missions into Afghanistan began on 7 October, and over the next several weeks the VALION team put its training into action, flying four to eight-hour missions deep into Afghanistan to deliver a wide variety of air-to-ground ordnance, including laser-guided bombs,

Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM), and Maverick air-to-ground missiles. In total the VALIONS flew 185 sorties for a total of 795 hours, and dropped 232,000 pounds of ordnance in support of the United States' war on terrorism.