

1991-



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON 25
FPO AP 96601-6203

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5750
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13 Apr 92

From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron 25
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Command History
(2) Change of Command Program

1. In accordance with reference (a), the Command History for Strike Fighter Squadron 25 during the calendar year 1991 is submitted.


D. B. FENNESSEY

Legger



COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

MISSION

The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron Twenty Five is to maintain maximum air combat readiness in the Carrier Striking Forces and to utilize that readiness as a deterrent against any and all enemies of the United States of America as may be directed by higher authority. The primary function of Strike Fighter Squadron Twenty Five within that mission is to conduct offensive air-to-air and air-to-surface strike operations.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

VFA-25 is one of nine FA-18 fleet squadrons under the functional command of Commander, Strike Fighter Wing, U. S. Pacific Fleet based ashore at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California. Operational Control is provided by Commander Carrier Air Wing Fourteen which deployed aboard the USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62) and USS MIDWAY (CV-41) during 1991.

COMMANDING OFFICER: COMMANDER DONALD B. FENNESSEY

Commander Donald B. Fennessey is a native of [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and was commissioned in the Navy upon graduation from the NROTC program at Dartmouth College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. He arrived at VT-1 at NAS Saufley Field, Pensacola, Florida for flight training in July 1972 followed by VT-26 and VT-25 at NAS Chase Field, Beeville, Texas. He earned his Naval Aviator wings in October 1973 and reported to VA-122 NAS Lemoore, California for Replacement Pilot Training in the A-7E Corsair II. His first fleet assignment was with VA-27 from June 1974 to March 1977 where he served as First Lieutenant, Landing Signal Officer, Educational Services, Comm/Nav, Personnel and Quality Assurance Officer. During his tour with the "Royal Maces" he deployed on two WESTPAC cruises aboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65), including Operation "Frequent Wind" supporting the evacuation of Saigon in May 1975.

Commander Fennessey next reported to HT-8 at NAS Whiting Field, Milton, Florida for helicopter transition training prior to Personnel Exchange Program duties with the Royal Air Force flying the Harrier GR MK3. Initial training was at 233 OCU at Wittering, England from September 1977 to March 1978. He reported to No.3(F) SQN at RAF Gutersloh, West Germany for service as a combat ready pilot in support of British Forces Germany from April 1978 to April 1980. While there he participated in several NATO exercises and field deployments.

Returning to VA-122 as an instructor Pilot from June 1980 until August 1982, he served as the Familiarization Stage, Ground Training and Assistant Operations Officer. Commander Fennessey's Department Head tour was spent from November 1982 to July 1985 with the VA-146 "Blue Diamonds" where he was assigned as Safety, Administrative, Maintenance and Operations Officer. While attached to the squadron he made a WESTPAC/Indian Ocean cruise aboard USS KITTY HAWK (CV-63).

CHRONOLOGY

1 January After returning to NAS Lemoore in December, VFA-25 is standing Ready Carrier alert in support of Desert Storm. After the war, VFA-25 and CVW-14 begin their turnaround training cycle.

17-29 March VFA-25 supports the U. S. Air Force Fighter Weapons School at Nellis Air Force Base, Las Vegas, Nevada. The FIST work for two weeks providing airborne threats for the Air Force students.

14-28 April VFA-25 and her sister squadron return to support the USAF Fighter Weapons School during the Mission Employment Phase. FIST pilots plan and execute 20 plane sorties in offensive and defensive roles.

16-28 June VFA-25 deploys with CVW-14 on board the USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62) for Refresher Training off the coast of Southern California.

4 August- 17 September VFA-25 deploys with CVW-14 to Hawaii for the last time aboard USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62). The INDEPENDENCE transfers to forward basing in Yokosuka, Japan. Pierside at Pearl Harbor, VFA-25 transfers her LOT XI aircraft to VFA-192 and receives their LOT VIII aircraft. VFA-25 and CVW-14 return with the USS MIDWAY (CV-41) to San Diego.

16 September VFA-25 leads the Air Superiority Demonstration on board USS MIDWAY off San Diego for the NATO Chiefs of Staff and the United States Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, GEN Colin Powell.

27 September CDR Donald B. Fennessey relieves CDR Gregory R. Peairs as VFA-25 Commanding Officer.

4 November Five Fist pilots perform for the opening of President Reagan's Library in Simi Valley, California. The ceremony was the first known occasion for five living Presidents to meet at once.

NARRATIVE

In January 1991, VFA-25 was completing its Carrier Alert status for the Persian Gulf war. After the war ended in late March, VFA-25 began a new training cycle. This cycle included very intensive operations with the U. S. Air Force Fighter Weapons School. For four weeks at Nellis Air Force Base, Fist pilots flew 18 sorties daily in a multi-bogey environment on the Nellis AFB TACTS Range. The training simulated the Strike Operations that VFA-25 would plan for CVW-14 while deployed.

After a brief work-up and carrier refresher cycle in June 1991, VFA-25 deployed with CVW-14 again to Hawaii on board the USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62). After a two week refresher training cycle off the southern California coast, the INDY headed west to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Upon arriving at Pearl Harbor, the USS INDEPENDENCE replaced the USS MIDWAY (CV-41) as the forward deployed carrier. While pierside VFA-25 exchanged her LOT XI FA-18C aircraft with VFA-192's older LOT VIII FA-18A aircraft and along with CVW-14 transferred to the USS MIDWAY. Following the swapout, MIDWAY and her new air wing steamed home via Seattle, Washington.

The trip home was the last leg for the MIDWAY after 45 years of service in the U. S. Navy. As a part of USS MIDWAY's return to America, VFA-25 participated in a display of air superiority for the NATO Chiefs of Staff. The display included supersonic flight, weapons employment, and a display of the Hornet's maneuvering characteristics.

After returning home, CDR Gregory R. Peairs was relieved by CDR Donald B. Fennessey in ceremonies at Hangar 2 at NAS Lemoore. In November, VFA-25 took part in the historic opening of President Reagan's Library in Simi Valley. Five aircraft flew by in formation to honor the five living Presidents present at the occasion.

In December, VFA-25 took delivery of its first new Lot XIV Hornet. These aircraft include several upgrades from the older Hornets and will ensure that the U. S. Navy maintains a strong strike capability into the 21st Century. VFA-25 will continue to receive these aircraft in 1992.