



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON TWO FIVE
FPO AP 96601-6203**

IN REPLY REFER TO
5750
Ser 00/01
9 Jun 05

From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron 25
To: Chief of Naval Operations (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CY-2004

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12H

Encl: (1) VFA 25 Command History

1. Per reference (a), enclosure (1) is forwarded.


M. A. PRITCHARD

Command History 2004
Strike Fighter Squadron 25
"FIST OF THE FLEET"

1. Command Composition and Organization

Short title: STRKFITRON TWO FIVE, UIC: 09637

a. The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron 25 is to maintain a maximum state of air combat readiness, originating from the sea aboard a Carrier Strike Group, serving as a deterrent against all potential enemies of the United States of America. The primary function of VFA-25 within that mission is to conduct offensive air-to-air and air-to-surface strike operations as directed by the national chain of command.

b. Immediate Senior Command: Commander, Carrier Air Wing 14
CAPT S. T. Craig, USN
Jun 2004 - Present

c. Commanding Officer: CDR Donald H. B. Braswell, USN

d. Executive Officer: CDR Marcus A. Pritchard, USN

e. VFA-25 is home based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California, under the functional command of the Commander, Strike Fighter Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. Commander, Carrier Air Wing FOURTEEN (CVW-14), provides operational command. VFA-25 maintained twelve F/A-18C Hornet aircraft, carrying the tail code "NK," bureau numbers as follows:

| <u>Side #</u> | <u>Bureau #</u> | <u>Build Lot</u> |
|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 400 | 164639 | XIV |
| 401 | 164635 | XIV |
| 402 | 164637 | XIV |
| 403 | 164633 | XIV |
| 404 | 164642 | XIV |
| 406 | 164654 | XIV |
| 410 | 164676 | XIV |
| 411 | 164645 | XIV |
| 420 | 164027 | XII |
| 421 | 164060 | XII |
| 422 | 164034 | XII |
| 423 | 164018 | XII |

2. Squadron chronology for Calendar Year 2004

a. January

- (1) Local training
- (2) Air Wing Detachment, Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon, Nevada 12 January - 06 February

b. February

- (1) Return from Air Wing Detachment
- (2) Local training

c. March

- (1) Local training
- (3) Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) Detachment, USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74), 24 March - 10 April

d. April

- (1) Return from JTFEX detachment
- (2) Local training

e. May

- (1) Local training
- (2) WESTERN PACIFIC 2004 deployment begins May 24th aboard the USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74).

f. June

- (1) "Blue Water" operations
- (2) NORTHERN EDGE EXERCISE 10-16 June
- (3) Port visit, Victoria, British Columbia 18-22 June
- (4) Port visit, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, 29 June - 06 July

g. July

- (1) "Blue Water" operations

(2) RIMPAC 2004 EXERCISE 07-22 July

(3) Port visit, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, 23-26 July

h. August

(1) "Blue Water" operations

(2) Port visit, Sasebo, Japan, 15-20 August

(3) Port visit, Malaysia, 27 August - 01 September

i. September

(1) "Blue Water" operations

(2) Port visit, Perth, Australia, 29 September - 04
October

j. October

(1) "Blue Water" operations

(2) Port visit, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, 25-26 October

k. November

(1) Return from WESTERN PACIFIC 2004 Deployment, 01
November (Planned Operational Maintenance (POM) stand down period)

(2) Local training

l. December

(1) Local training

4. Narrative

a. In January 2004, VFA-25 returned from holiday leave and continued with the next step of their Inter-deployment Training Cycle, detaching to NAS Fallon, Nevada to participate in CVW-14's Air Wing Training.

b. The squadron returned to NAS Lemoore in February and conducted local area training until deploying aboard USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) for JTFEX during the last week of March 2004. After returning from the STENNIS, VFA-25 made final preparations for cruise and completed local area training sorties.

c. On 24 May, VFA-25 deployed onboard USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) for WESTPAC 2004. Initially, the STENNIS headed north to participate in a joint exercise with the U.S. Air Force, NORTHERN EDGE, off the coast of Alaska. Also, four VFA-25 aircraft participated in a brief 3-day detachment to Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, Alaska.

d. Following a brief port visit to Victoria, BC, the STENNIS headed west to Naval Station Pearl Harbor, HI. Between port visits to Pearl Harbor at the beginning and end of July, VFA-25 and the STENNIS participated in the 2004 Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise with navies from eight other nations.

e. Leaving Pearl Harbor at the end of July, the STENNIS traveled further West to operate in the waters surrounding Iwo Jima. Following a brief joint exercise with the USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63), the STENNIS made a port call in Sasebo, Japan.

f. Shortly after leaving Japan, the STENNIS traveled to Malaysia for another port visit. After leaving port, two VFA-25 pilots were able to conduct air combat training with Malaysian Air Force MIG-29s. On 31 August, each squadron Ready Room received a visit from CAG announcing the Battle Group will be extended for "a few weeks" due to the requirement for Carrier Strike Group presence in the Western Pacific. This was déjà vu for this Air Wing as they had previously endured a lengthy four-month extension to their planned six-month 2002 WESTPAC deployment.

g. In September the STENNIS sailed through the straits of Malacca to arrive off the western coast of Australia. After several weeks of operating in heavy seas due to fierce weather often accompanied by a pitching deck, the STENNIS pulled into Fremantle, Australia for a well-deserved, five-day port visit.

h. After leaving Australia in early October, the STENNIS transited East through the Pacific, returning for a brief visit to Naval Station Pearl Harbor. Friends and relatives of the Carrier Strike Group participated on a "Tiger Cruise" during the remaining five-day trip to San Diego. On 31 October, VFA-25's jets departed the carrier heading home to NAS Lemoore while the STENNIS was operating off the coast of Southern California. The next day, 1 November, the STENNIS pulled into San Diego, CA completing a five-month deployment. The remaining VFA-25 personnel disembarked the carrier on that day.

i. For the remainder of 2004, VFA-25 conducted local area operations and made accommodations for squadron personnel to take holiday leave.