



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

FIGHTER SQUADRON ELEVEN

UNIT 60554

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From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron ELEVEN  
To: Director, Naval Historical Center (Attn: Aviation History Branch)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2000

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Chronology of Outstanding Events  
(3) Narrative of Outstanding Events  
(4) Biography of CDR Milton D. Abner  
(5) Photo of CDR Milton D. Abner

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (5) are hereby submitted.

  
M. D. ABNER

Copy to:  
COMCARGRU SIX  
COMCARAIRWING SEVEN  
COMFITWINGLANT (N002)

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

COMMANDING OFFICER  
CDR Milton D. Abner

EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
CDR John C. Aquilino

LOCATION OF COMMAND  
Naval Air Station Oceana  
Virginia Beach, Virginia

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL ASHORE  
Commander, Carrier Air Wing SEVEN  
Commander, Fighter Wing, U.S. Atlantic Fleet  
Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet

OPERATIONAL CONTROL AFLOAT  
Commander, Carrier Air Wing SEVEN  
Commander, Carrier Group SIX

AIRCRAFT  
F-14B Tomcat  
Tail Code "AG"

CARRIER ASSIGNMENTS  
USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69)  
Homeported at Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia  
USS JOHN F KENNEDY (CV 67)  
Homeported at Naval Station, Mayport, Florida

MISSION  
Fleet Air Superiority and Power Projection Missions, including:  
Combat Air Patrol, Air Intercept, Maritime Air Superiority,  
Strike, Strike Escort, Forward Air Control (Airborne), Close Air  
Support and Combat Search and Rescue.

## CHRONOLOGY OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

### JANUARY

01-08 Holiday Leave Period

### FEBRUARY

17 Deploy on board USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69)

### MARCH

06-09 Adriatic Operations

15 Change of Command: CDR Milton D. Abner relieves CDR Douglas L. Whitener

### APRIL

20-29 Exercise JUNIPER STALLION with Israeli Air Force

23-30 1st Detachment, Nevatim Air Base, Israel

30 Host Croatian President and Prime Minister on board USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69)

30 Adriatic Operations

### MAY

06-08 Adriatic Operations

20 Southbound Suez Canal Transit

24-30 Operation SOUTHERN WATCH

### JUNE

01-30 Operation SOUTHERN WATCH

10-12 Exercise NAUTICAL ARTIST with Royal Saudi Air Force

17 Delivered first bombs ever dropped in anger from deck of USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69) against Iraqi Air Defense targets

### JULY

01-19 Operation SOUTHERN WATCH

24-26 Exercise INDIGO ANVIL with Royal Saudi Air Force in Red Sea

28 Northbound Suez Canal Transit

### AUGUST

16-17 Tiger Cruise on board USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69)

18 Return from Deployment

### SEPTEMBER

14-15 POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony, Pentagon, Washington, DC

22-24 Tomcat Air-to-Ground Demo, NAS Oceana Air Show

OCTOBER

4-6 F-14B Tape 322 OFP Eval, Point Mugu, CA  
17-19 Combat Search and Rescue Exercise, Dobbins AFB  
22-28 Orange Air in support of USS HARRY S TRUMAN (CVN 75)

NOVEMBER

4-6 Deck Certification, USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69)  
6 Dependent's Day Air Show, USS DWIGHT D  
EISENHOWER (CVN 69)  
22-26 Thanksgiving Holiday Leave Period

DECEMBER

11-15 Deck Certification, USS JOHN F KENNEDY (CV 67)  
18-31 Holiday Leave Period

## NARRATIVE OF OUTSTANDING EVENTS

The year 2000 proved to be momentous for the Red Rippers of Fighter Squadron ELEVEN (VF-11). From a highly successful deployment that included a Change of Command and support to numerous operations and exercises to deck certifications at the end of the year, the Rippers were busy from start to finish.

Deployment 2000 began on 17 February 2000 as the USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69) departed Norfolk, Virginia. Ripper jets and aircraft from all of Carrier Air Wing SEVEN (CVW-7) soon joined the ship as it steamed east toward the Mediterranean Sea.

In early March 2000, VF-11 supported operations in the Adriatic Sea as NATO forces kept the peace in Kosovo. Soon thereafter, a Change of Command was conducted as CDR Milton D. Abner relieved CDR Douglas L. Whitener. CDR Abner took the helm as Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron ELEVEN on 15 March 2000.

April 2000 was equally busy and extremely rewarding. The Rippers brought the fight to the Israeli Air Force, both in support of Exercise JUNIPER STALLION and during a 1v1 detachment to Nevatim Air Base in Israel. The end of the month saw the squadron briefly supporting Adriatic operations while also acting as the primary host for the Croatian President and Prime Minister on board "IKE."

In May 2000, VF-11 once again flew in support of Adriatic operations. However, the EISENHOWER Battle Group's focus now turned south as they transited the Suez Canal enroute to the Arabian Gulf. On 24 May 2000, CVW-7 flew its first sorties in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. These sorties focused on denying Iraqi use of their southern air space while also conducting strikes on Iraqi air defense units south of the 33<sup>rd</sup> parallel. CVW-7 would support this operation throughout June and July as well. The most memorable of these sorties was on 17 June 2000, when the Rippers became the first squadron to drop weapons in anger from the deck of USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69).

While real-world operations were underway, the Air Wing continued its support of multi-national exercises. From 10-12 June 2000, Exercise NAUTICAL ARTIST supported the Royal Saudi Air Force in an air defense exercise. As the battle group transited north through the Red Sea in late July 2000, the Air Wing again worked with the Royal Saudi Air Force in Exercise INDIGO ANVIL.

On 16 August 2000, the battle group got its first sight of American soil as the ship pulled into Naval Station Mayport, Florida. While some squadrons off-loaded, the Rippers brought on board their "Tigers," friends and family members who would experience Navy life on board the "IKE" as the ship returned to Norfolk, Virginia. The Ripper aircraft flew into NAS Oceana the next day while the ship returned to Norfolk on 18 August 2000.

The months following deployment brought a slower pace to the squadron as all Rippers reacquainted themselves with friends and family. In September 2000, VF-11 conducted a fly-by of the Pentagon to honor a POW/MIA remembrance ceremony. VF-11 was then selected to represent the Tomcat community by flying the air-to-ground demonstration in the 2000 NAS Oceana Air Show.

September 2000 also brought accolades to the Red Rippers. At Fighter Fling 2000, the Tomcat community's annual ball, the squadron won an astounding three awards. Commander, Fighter Wing, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (COMFITWINGLANT) awarded the squadron the 1999 "Grand Slam" award. This award is given to that F-14 or F/A-18 squadron that most successfully employed air-to-air weapons in the previous fiscal year. LCDR [REDACTED] was also named the COMFITWINGLANT Fighter Pilot of the Year, while LT [REDACTED] was named COMFITWINGLANT Intelligence Officer of the Year.

In October 2000, VF-11 aircrew provided support to the initial evaluation of Tape 322 in Point Mugu, California. Soon thereafter, a Ripper jet participated in a joint Combat Search and Rescue exercise on Dobbins Air Force Base, Georgia. The month ended with the Rippers acting as "Orange Air" for the USS HARRY S TRUMAN (CVN 75) Battle Group.

VF-11 conducted two deck certifications to close out 2000. The first, in November 2000, supported the crew of the USS DWIGHT D EISENHOWER (CVN 69) and included the Rippers leading their Dependent's Day Air Show. The second, in December 2000, was the squadron's first opportunity to come aboard their new home, the USS JOHN F KENNEDY (CV 67). Squadron operational control shifted to Commander, Carrier Group SIX.

The year 2000 may well have been the most successful year in recent Red Ripper history. With a 98% sortie completion rate on cruise, successful employment of weapons against Iraqi air defense targets and numerous awards won by the squadron, the Rippers once again proved that they are the finest fighter squadron in the world.