



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FIGHTER SQUADRON FOURTEEN
FLEET POST OFFICE
AE 09504-6103

1999 ✓
5750
Ser 00/086
17 Mar 00

From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN
To: Director of Naval History

Subj: 1999 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) VF-14's Command History for 1999
(2) Biography and photograph of CDR S.B. Richardson
and CDR B.W. Fecht
(3) Photograph of squadron's aircraft
(4) Copy of squadron's Welcome Aboard Message
(5) Copy of squadron's News Releases (five articles)
(6) Battle "E" Submission
(7) Maintenance Award Package

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

S. B. Richardson
S. B. RICHARDSON

FIGHTER SQUADRON FOURTEEN COMMAND HISTORY

1. Command Composition and Organization.

(a) Mission: To intercept and destroy enemy aircraft in all weather conditions, establish and maintain air superiority, and deliver ordnance on target, on time, first pass.

(b) Organizational Structure: VF-14's immediate senior in command is: Commander Carrier Air Wing EIGHT.

(c) Name of Commanding Officer: CDR Samuel B. Richardson

(d) Permanent Duty Station: NAS Oceana, Hangar 200, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23460.

(e) Type and Number of Aircraft Assigned: 11 F-14A, tailcode "AJ"

2. Chronology.

1-27 February 1999

JTFEX onboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71)

26 March - 22 September 1999

Mediterranean/Arabian Gulf Deployment onboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) supporting Operations ALLIED FORCE and SOUTHERN WATCH.

4-6 November

VF-14's 80th Anniversary

7 November - 18 December 1999

TOPGUN Detachment

10 December 1999

VF-14's Change of Command

3. Narrative.

a. Operations:

- (1) Sorties (2403/1439/864)
- (2) Hours (4369.7/2944/1425.7)
- (3) Sorties Embarked (1603/887/716)
- (4) Hours embarked (3404/2164.7/1239.3)
- (5) CV Landings (1642/923/719)

- (6) Landing Grades 3.3421
- (7) Boarding Rate 93.62%
- (8) Ordnance Expenditures FY 98 and 1st Quarter FY 99

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>USED/ALLOCATED</u>	<u>%EXPENDED</u>
AIM-54	3/3	100%
AIM-9	2/2	100%
20mm	7002/7002	100%
CHAFF	2470/2470	100%
BOL CHAFF	12402/12402	100%
FLARES	1624/1624	100%
LUU-2	6/6	100%
MK-58	5/5	100%
MK-76	519/519	100%
BDU-45	38/38	100%
MK-20	4/4	100%
MK-82	116/116	100%
MK-83	18/18	100%
LGTR	18/18	100%
GBU-12	181/181	100%
GBU-16	114/114	100%
GBU-10	71/71	100%
GBU-24	10/10	100%

b. Contributions to Weapons System and Tactical Development:

(1) The THEODORE ROOSEVELT Battle Group contributed 10% of all strike assets in Operation ALLIED FORCE. VF-14 provided only 2.4% of the strike assets but was responsible for the assessed destruction of 12% of all targets hit in Serbia, through own ordnance delivery or the control of other aircraft ordnance.

(2) It is significant to note that in the history of armed conflict, Operation ALLIED FORCE was the first to be decided by air power alone. VF-14 Forward Air Controller (FAC) Airborne (A) aircrews inflicted significant damage to Serbia's deployed forces in Kosovo. Unrelenting and effective targeting while operating in known surface to air missile and AAA envelopes was key to bringing about an end to the Kosovo conflict. VF-14 developed standoff weapons delivery tactics to provide additional safety margin for shooter aircraft. VF-14 supported 190 external weapons, including Laser-Guided Bombs (LGBs) and Laser Mavericks (LMAVs) and guided them to direct hits.

(3) VF-14 led the first Navy strike into Kosovo on 06 April 1999, during Operation ALLIED FORCE. The strike was a resounding military and psychological success resulting in the complete destruction of the Pristina POL facility. During this time, the locations of several Surface to Air Missile and Anti-Aircraft Artillery sites were identified and passed on to follow-on strike packages which ensured their success.

(4) VF-14 qualified more Strike Leads than any other squadron in Air Wing EIGHT. Under the leadership of nine designated Strike Leads, VF-14 led the highest number of combat missions in Air Wing EIGHT in two theaters of operation after developing new tactics to meet the threat.

(5) Committed to the Strike Fighter Warfare Tactics (SFWT) concept, VF-14 developed and executed aggressive SFWT training plan while providing the Air Wing's only F-14 SFWT instructor capable of completing F-14 SFWT checkrides. Though engaged in combat and contingency operations for nearly 50% of the entire deployment, VF-14 completed 162 SFWT flights.

(6) Developed innovative and exceptionally effective FAC(A) tactics over Kosovo, employing them in southern Iraq and subsequently exported them to other Battle Groups. Perfected mixed section employment tactics using the F-14 LANTIRN targeting system and the F/A-18 LASER Maverick. VF-14 recorded a perfect 100% success rate while guiding 35 weapons. These tactics were passed down and employed extensively by Constellation and Kennedy Battle Groups, who have recorded similar results.

(7) VF-14 led the one and only successful FAC(A) strike performed by Air Wing EIGHT in Iraq during Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. VF-14 FAC(A) aircrew guided four LASER Mavericks to direct hits, demonstrating to Commander Joint Task Force Southwest Asia (CJTF-SWA) the usefulness of this previously pioneered tactic. Based on the success of this strike, CJTF-SWA directed this tactic as the standard for employing weapons in high collateral damage areas.

(8) Provided first operational combat testing of the Infrared Zoom LASER Illuminator Designator (IZLID) pointing device by FAC(A) aircrew. Proved the usefulness of this device by demonstrating instantaneous designation of tactical targets

to other Night Vision Goggle (NVG) capable platforms resulting in immediate target identification and weapons delivery at night.

(9) First Tomcat squadron to use gyro-stabilized binoculars for enhanced visual acquisition and target area description. Validated their effectiveness by locating tactical targets quicker, achieving rapid targeting and providing more available time for armed reconnaissance and weapons employment.

(10) Responsible for the most sorties and hours ever logged on the LANTIRN Targeting System (LTS) during a deployment and recorded the best deployed pod availability. Utilizing a self-made training program for VF-14 Aviation Technicians to ensure maintenance success, VF-14 flew the LTS for 2693.2 hours and 1170 sorties and maintained an impressive 94.8% pod reliability rate.

(11) Developed enhanced LGB tactics to counter inclement weather in the target area. Modified the "Trombone" tactic to maximize standoff and minimize podium effect by executing a left-hand "Trombone". This modification allows the LTS complete and uninterrupted coverage during the entire delivery and eliminates masking concerns. The tactic was debriefed and submitted as change to the F-14 Tactical Manual (TACMAN).

(12) Perfected five variations of coordinated "buddy bombing" and successfully executed all of them in combat.

(13) VF-14's FAC(A)'s acted as force multiplier by using the LANTIRN to guide LGBs into tactical targets that other aircraft were unable to locate with their own onboard sensors. With the mark on the deck, the FAC(A) provided talk-ons for other aircraft enabling them to follow up with visual deliveries on additional targets.

(14) First squadron to operationally test and utilize the Tomcat Tactical Targeting (T³) LANTIRN software. This led to the recent clearance to use designated target coordinates via LANTIRN for Global Positioning System (GPS) guided munitions, allowing for real time targeting of high threat mobile tactical targets with GPS guided standoff munitions previously reserved for fixed targets.

(15) VF-14 developed and executed special air-air tactics as requested by JTF-SWA to counter Iraqi aircraft violations into the southern No-Fly Zone. A TOPHATTER aircrew

was selected to coordinate and brief this new tactic to Commander, JTFSWA, and the associated Air Force Units. VF-14 aircrew was selected to brief the Battle Group Commander in order to immediately implement this special tactic.

(16) VF-14 was consistently called upon to provide critically important Air Wing Liaison Officers (LNO) tasked with coordinating Air Wing and Battle Group assets with the Joint Force Air Component Commanders in support of Operation's ALLIED FORCE and SOUTHERN WATCH. In providing more LNOs than any other unit in the Battle Group, the theater commander complimented three individual VF-14 LNOs by name on their professionalism and tactical contributions.

(17) First squadron to successfully employ Fleet Tactical Imagery (FTI) operationally during combat. Following a strike in Iraq, VF-14 captured Bomb Hit Assessment (BHA) images and transmitted them back to USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT. The transmission was re-transmitted to JTFSWA and was received and verified before the originating aircraft returned overhead. This near real-time imagery proved the viability of reporting target destruction and threat assessment for follow-on packages.

(18) Established the F-14 as the FAC(A) platform of choice in two separate theaters of operation. Effective use of the LANTIRN targeting system to locate and identify enemy armor and emplacements and superb coordination of all airborne strike assets combined to showcase the success of the F-14 Tomcat over Serbia and Iraq. Given the task-management capability of a two-seat platform, airborne results greatly exceeded those achieved by sister service USAF A-10 and F-16 FAC(A)'s. In two separate warfighting Areas of Responsibility (AOR) the superb capability of the F-14 was demonstrated.

(19) Creatively managed the daily combat flight schedule to increase the availability of critical FAC(A) qualified aircrew. Thoughtful scheduling enabled VF-14 to provide the maximum number of FAC(A) qualified sections and resulted in significantly enhanced effectiveness. In addition to aircrew management, aircraft were also configured to maximize efficiency. Two aircraft were designated FAC(A) platforms and configured as "quad-bombers." These aircraft maximized the numbers of LGBs a FAC(A) could deliver (4) as a "mark" and maximized bringback capability. The remaining squadron aircraft were configured as "dual bombers". The combination of the FAC(A) with four GBU-12s and the escort with two GBU-10s resulted in unparalleled airborne flexibility.

(20) Carefully managed ordnance loading based on a real concern for ordnance bringback and preservation of ordnance assets. Routinely carried a combination of two GBU-10s on one aircraft and was never forced to jettison ordnance for weight considerations. VF-14 carried and delivered more GBU-10s than any other Navy squadron, and 50% of all those carried were recovered. VF-14 recorded an 88.1% combat success rate with the GBU-10.

(21) Due to a detailed LANTIRN Targeting System and delivery techniques training course within VF-14, the squadron enjoyed an increasing ordnance delivery success rate throughout its deployment. Initial overall rate was 65% the first week of ALLIED FORCE; however, the squadron's final rate swelled to over 82%. Additionally, the squadron's GBU-24 success rate was an unprecedented 100% in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH.

(22) Deputy JTF-SWA J3 acknowledged that the one dedicated FAC(A) mission led by VF-14 over Iraq was the finest strike Commander, JTFSWA had seen during his tenure in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and was in turn briefed up the Chain of Command to the Joint Staff.

(23) Provided COMFITWINGLANT, SWATSLANT, NSAWC, and fleet squadrons a LANTIRN Lessons Learned training CD to improve the overall strike warfare effectiveness of the Tomcat. VF-14 recorded and dissected every LANTIRN delivery to determine aircrew errors and system anomalies and provided audio and video debrief of these subtle yet critical lessons to improve performance. Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center (NSAWC) has established VF-14s submission to tactical advancement as the standard for all future F-14 squadrons.

(24) Provided COMFITWINGLANT, SWATSLANT, NSAWC and fleet squadrons the most comprehensive mid-cruise report ever submitted. This report included a squadron-produced CD-ROM to highlight LANTIRN Lessons Learned and F-14 employment in the Strike, Anti-Air Warfare, and FAC(A) roles.

(25) As a product of long-range planning, VF-14 deployed 11 F-14A aircraft, without outside assistance, and successfully entered combat operations over Kosovo 10 days after leaving Norfolk. Expertly managed timing and incorporation of all upgrade modifications on all assigned aircraft to include: Digital Flight Controls, ALR-67, BOL Chaff, Fast Tactical Imagery, and Night Vision Device Lighting Enhancement systems.

(26) VF-14 was the first fleet squadron to operate the Digital Flight Control System (DFCS). As the first to incorporate DFCS into squadron aircraft, VF-14 qualified the most outside aircrew in the Fleet, to include aircrew from SWATSLANT, COMFITWINGLANT, COMCARGRU EIGHT, COMCARAIRWING EIGHT, NSAWC, other Fleet squadrons.

c. General contributions to the Tomcat Community:

(1) Following deployment VF-14 aggressively prepared for the Conventional Weapons Technical Proficiency Inspection (CWTPI). The squadron recorded Outstanding results and quoted the Fighter Wing Gunner as saying, "the inspection was the best he has ever seen in Oceana". The inspection culminated with a flawlessly executed AIM-54 missile shoot.

(2) Led Air Wing EIGHT in ordnance release reliability while producing the lowest arming, fusing, and hung bomb malfunction rate on deployment.

(3) Maintained a squadron 98.4% FMC rate
99.6 % MC rate throughout 1999.

(4) Led Air Wing EIGHT by maintaining an overall 99.8 sortie completion rate and 99.62% Full Mission Capable rate.

(5) Provided aircraft to VF-101 to train
VF-154 aircrew in the FAC(A) syllabus.

(6) Provided aircraft to VF-101 for the final air demonstration of the season, at NAS Pensacola. This was the first time in over three years that a fleet aircraft was used to support an air demonstration.

(7) Provided two aircraft to support NSAWC during its TOPGUN class in the fall '99. The two TOPHATTER aircraft have fulfilled nearly all the F-14A requirements for that class.

(8) Provided aircraft for FTI testing before deployment. VF-14 was the "testbed" for the future installment of FTI in all fleet Tomcats.

(9) Since returning from deployment have flown more SWATSLANT aircrew for more hours than any other F-14 squadron.

(10) VF-14 had two recent graduates from the Naval Fighter Weapons School. The two pilots will detach from the TOPHATTERS and will report to SWATSLANT and NSAWC to train follow-on aircrew those tactics learned on the 1999 Mediterranean/Persian Gulf Deployment.

(11) Conducted 11 Aircraft Service Period Adjustments with outstanding material condition results. All aircraft were granted one-year extensions to their respective service lives.

(12) Performed over 40 depot level repairs on all assigned aircraft upon their acceptance.

(13) Maintained an impeccable safety record flying over 4300 flight hours with only one engine FOD.

(14) Emphasis on quality maintenance resulted in the release of 39 Naval Aviation Maintenance Discrepancy Reports to increase productivity, enhance safety and reduce material failures. The result of these submissions will also enhance the survivability of the combat-proven F-14 to unprecedented levels.

(15) Authored three critical Hazard Reports (HAZREPs) on Breather Pressure switches that have made a significant impact on the F-14 community. The first HAZREP brought the significance of the poorly designed system to light. VF-14 is the community leader in identifying and tracking problems with the Breather Pressure switches in the F-14A.

(16) Submitted HAZREP on the inspection cycle of the Wiggins Fittings associated with the fuel boost pumps of the F-14. After experiencing a unique fuel transfer problem the squadron released a recommendation for a NATOPS change to solve this type of fuel transfer failure.

(17) Expeditiously released 32 Conventional Ordnance Deficiency Reports for all identifiable bomb manufacturer deficiencies.

(18) Identified a problem with DFCS computers causing wire bundle chaffing. Micarta boxes were adjusted in all DFCS Tomcats avoiding electrical fires and fusing problems through wiring associated with the AWG-15.

(19) Paved the way for all future F-14 squadrons by being the first squadron to deploy with the Digital Flight

Control System and provided a detailed technical debrief from a VF-14 Technician to DFCS engineers on system reliability and malfunctions following the deployment.

(20) Squadron established itself as the local experts on DFCS. Experienced only one lost sortie due to a DFCS discrepancy during deployment and experienced only one critical malfunction airborne this year.

(21) Hand-picked to host Matt Lauer of the "Today Show" and represent the F-14 community and U. S. Navy on national television. On the very day the squadron left on deployment, the TOPHATTERs flew Matt Lauer to the THEODORE ROOSEVELT and was host to him when NBC filmed the live broadcast of the Today Show from the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

(22) Requested by Second Fleet Commander to fly the German Chief of Naval Operations, VADM Dirk Horten. VF-14 represented the entire U. S. Navy in hosting, briefing, and flying the German Admiral on a familiarization flight. VADM Fallon acknowledged the squadron's exceptional effort in flying the VIP and relayed that "this event was the highlight of his time in the United States."

(23) Hosted the the exceptionally successful TOPHATTER 80th Anniversary. Living up to the reputation as the Navy's "Oldest and Boldest" squadron, VF-14 organized and executed a three day celebration to revive camaraderie for eight decades of naval aviation and personally host over 300 VF-14 alumni spanning five decades of Naval Aviation history. The event involved planning for over 10 months and included a Golf Tournament and a Cocktail Party that were open to the entire flightline, and a formal dinner for all alumni. The dinner itself was the largest gathering the Oceana O'Club has ever hosted, and all who attended from former Demon Drivers to Flag Officers recognized the event as "First Class all the way."

(24) Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN enjoyed an 81% retention rate for all enlisted and 55% retention for first term sailors which greatly exceeded the F-14 fleet average of 46% and 28%, respectively.

(25) The squadron was manned with 20% females. With exceptional leadership and proper guidance, VF-14 flawlessly incorporated and deployed with nearly twice the quota established by the Navy as a minimum.

(26) Successfully embarked women onboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT and provided enlisted senior leadership for all Air Wing EIGHT enlisted females. Incorporated numerous training programs for a smooth transition and a successful Mediterranean/Gulf deployment with the highest number of Air Wing EIGHT females.

TOPHATTERS DEPART FOR MED DEPLOYMENT

By LT Jim Stanley

It was a cold and rainy day on Saturday March 27th when the Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN aircrews reported to work. Hangar spaces once filled with computers, paperwork, tools, and aircraft parts already stood empty and quiet; the ground maintenance crew had packed their bags, loaded the trucks, and said their good-byes to family and loved ones two days earlier. With the help of the professional ground crew from VF-211, the Tophatter jets quickly took off into the overcast skies on a one way flight to the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71), their home for the next six months.

It seemed like only a few months ago that the Tophatters returned from their last cruise, especially for some of the family members who remember the 6-month separation. Actually, the Tophatters spent a great deal of time in the last 15 months preparing for this deployment period. They practiced their gunnery and Air Combat Maneuvering skills in Key West last February; fought against F-15s and F-16s while working with the Air Force in Panama City, Florida last March; then they started the initial phases of the work-up cycle beginning with Air-to-Air Strike-Fighter Advanced Readiness Program (SFARP) in Oceana in June. That was followed shortly by Air-to-Ground SFARP in El Centro, California. Finally, their first embarkation on the Roosevelt came in early September for the initial phases of the carrier work-up cycle. Then it was off to Fallon, Nevada in October for several weeks of Airwing training; followed by a six week embarked period on the ROOSEVELT to practice what was learned in Fallon. One final embarked training period came in February before Airwing Eight and the Roosevelt team was considered "ready for deployment."

The Tophatters will bring the latest technology with them on this deployment, as the F-14A Tomcat has seen numerous modifications in the last year. The latest change was new software for the Tomcat's AWG-9 radar control system. Designed in the 1960's and one of the oldest air-to-air radar systems, the AWG-9 is still the most powerful and the new software will increase its capabilities for the 21st century. One of the most exciting improvements was the incorporation of a new Digital Flight Control System (DFCS) that replaced the analog system in use since the aircraft's inception. All pilots agree that the Tomcat is now more maneuverable and has crisp response to pilot control inputs. Along with the DFCS modification came a new, more advanced Radar Warning Receiver that gives the Tophatter aircrew earlier and more accurate indications of enemy radar trying to detect and lock onto their aircraft. Another significant improvement was an upgraded software package for the LANTIRN pod, the infrared targeting and tracking pod which allows the Tomcat to employ numerous types of laser guided munitions. The enhanced software allows the F-14 to more accurately employ weapons as well as record more accurate target coordinates.

"This is perhaps the greatest new bit of technology for us to put to use," said Commander Ted Carter, CO of VF-14.

Using the newly installed Fast Tactical Imagery (FTI) system, the F-14A Aircrew can transmit digital images captured from the LANTIRN pod video to another Tomcat or to the Battle Group Commander. These images could be used for immediate attack by

ENCLOSURE (5)

another aircraft, for damage assessment, for locating targets of opportunity, or simply for determining precise coordinates for targeting by other weapons.

Although the separation will seem long, and is trying at times, family members know the importance of the challenges their loved ones face in the Navy. Beneath the strain of family separation lies an undercurrent of excitement for the Tophatters who, along with their sister squadron VF-41, will deploy with the most advanced modifications to the F-14A Tomcat yet to be employed. In view of the current combat operations underway by NATO Former Republic of Yugoslavia, the Tophatters stand poised and ready to carry out any mission safely, swiftly and in the professional manner that has been the Tophatter trademark since we were founded 80 years ago. All the Tophatters look forward to that most emotional of moments when we return at the end of our deployment to the waiting arms of our loved ones, knowing that we met the challenge head on and not only succeeded, but excelled.

VF-14 Tophatters Enjoy Success in Operation Allied Force

By Lieutenant Jim Stanley, VF-14 PAO

Months of pre-cruise preparation and training finally paid off for the Tophatters of Fighter Squadron Fourteen (VF-14), who led the first Navy air strike in Operation Allied Force. During the first week of strikes over Former Yugoslav Republic, Navy forces met with significant opposition, including numerous surface-to-air missile launches and anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) fire, but successfully countered the threat and executed each strike. In the weeks that followed, the battlefield picture changed and the NATO campaign moved to another level, where Tophatter Forward Air Controller, Airborne (FAC(A)) aircrews took on the assigned task of striking Serbian Military ground forces deployed throughout Kosovo. The experienced guidance of strike leaders, solid planning, and respect for the capabilities of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia's ground forces resulted in zero damage to Navy aircraft and the smooth control of Navy and Air Force aircraft over the hostile skies of Kosovo.

Knowing that NATO had ordered bombing to begin on Serbian Forces in Kosovo in late March, no one was surprised when, just a week after leaving Norfolk, the Tophatters, with Carrier Air Wing Eight, were stationed off the Coast of Italy with live ordnance loaded onto their F-14A Tomcats. The first Navy strike led by VF-14 aircrew took place at night. Despite the heavy concentration of AAA and numerous surface to air missiles launched from all around, the Tophatter aircrew, along with Tomcats from Fighter Squadron Forty-One (VF-41) and F/A-18s from Carrier Air Wing Eight, fought their way into the target area and delivered their weapons with deadly accuracy. All airplanes made it safely out of the target area and returned to the waiting carrier late that evening. This was followed in quick succession by a second strike that same night. The aircrews who were on that first strike did not sleep until they heard from their fellow squadron mates that the second strike was also a success.

Tophatter aircrew continued to stay busy from early morning until late in the evening planning subsequent strikes against fixed targets to degrade the Former Republic of Yugoslavia's command and control structure. The success of those strikes was a result of careful planning by all the Navy Strike Leaders. They used up-to-date intelligence reports in order to plan an efficient strike of their assigned targets, while at the same time minimizing the danger to Navy aircrew. The Tomcat LANTIRN (Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting, Infrared at Night) pod was the critical asset most called upon for those missions. Capable of identifying targets from considerable distances, the LANTIRN pod was used to find targets in daytime and at night and guide Laser Guided Bombs to impact with incredible accuracy.

As Navy strikes continued, the need to locate and target Serbian military forces became apparent. FAC(A) aircrews from VF-14 and VF-41 were sent over Kosovo to do the job, under the protective watch of the EA-6B Prowler jets from Electronic Attack Squadron One Forty One (VAQ-141). Tophatter F-14s routinely managed the battlespace while they located hostile ground targets. Once they found a target, they called upon sections of F-14 Tomcats or F/A-18 Hornets from the Air Wing, or Air Force

aircraft such as A-10 Thunderbolts and F-16 Falcons, to deliver their weapons. The ability of the Tomcat FAC(A) aircrews to quickly pass targeting information to other aircraft, and to efficiently flow those aircraft into a target area was the result of many hours of pre-flight planning and airborne flexibility. The value of a Tomcat FAC(A) quickly became evident against the rapidly advancing Serbian forces in Kosovo. Commander Ted Carter, Commanding Officer of VF-14 stated: "The Tomcat has truly come of age. After 27 years of service to the fleet, this has been the aircraft's and the aircrew's greatest contribution. Our success in Operation Allied Force was a total team effort that has proven the value of a two-seat cockpit." No one familiar with the operations over Kosovo can argue that statement.

Tophatter F-14 Tomcats expended over 395,000 pounds of ordnance on various targets in support of Operation Allied Force. Commander Carter added: "Our tireless ordnancemen loaded over 800,000 pounds of ordnance in 2 months in VF-14 alone. Combined with an outstanding maintenance effort, the work of our troops was most impressive."

Tophatter aircrews led the Air Wing in strike missions as Airborne Forward Air Controllers. By using the capabilities of their state-of-the-art LANTIRN pod to the fullest in this conflict, the Tophatters of VF-14 helped to prove that the F-14 Tomcat is one of the most accurate and lethal aircraft in the air-to-ground arena and truly the Commander in Chief's airborne platform of choice.

Homecoming for Tophatters Includes 80th Anniversary Reunion

By LT Jim Stanley

On September 24th, the Navy's oldest squadron, the Fighting Fourteen *Tophatters* (VF-14), arrives home after a six-month deployment aboard the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN-71). As with the homecoming of every Navy Battle Group from a long deployment, there will be the emotional reunion of husbands, wives, fathers, parents, sons, and daughters. For the *Tophatters*, however, their return from this six-month deployment carries greater significance. This year marks the *Tophatters'* 80th Anniversary of continuous service, which means they will play host to a large gathering of alumni. Their reunion will be an exciting opportunity for the aviators of *Tophatter* history to meet with each other and see the capabilities of their counterparts today.

As part of Airwing Eight embarked in *Theodore Roosevelt*, the *Tophatters*, who currently fly the F-14A *Tomcat*, became involved in Operation *Allied Force* almost immediately after leaving Hampton Roads. *Allied Force* was an intense 75-day air campaign initiated by NATO to prevent Serbian forces from displacing millions of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo. In fact, Fighting Fourteen's Commanding Officer, Commander Ted Carter, was the airborne lead of the Navy's first strike into Kosovo on 6 April 1999. That night he guided his strike package through an extremely heavy surface-to-air threat and successfully delivered his ordnance on target, which ensured the first Navy mission in the campaign was a success. For the next two and a half months, jet fighters from the *Theodore Roosevelt* flew missions over Kosovo and the F-14 *Tomcat* played an important role in many of those missions.

After the completion of combat operations in Kosovo, the *Theodore Roosevelt* sailed to the Persian Gulf to support Operation *Southern Watch*. In addition to their regular missions of enforcing the southern no-fly zone over Iraq, the Air Wing and VF-14 executed several strike missions on Iraqi targets in response to being fired upon by Iraqi surface-to-air threats. With the experience gained from their combat time in Kosovo, VF-14 completed their missions successfully thus helping to make Carrier Airwing Eight the first Air Wing in many years to fly combat missions in two different theaters of operation during the same deployment period.

Flying combat missions safely and successfully is old-hat for a squadron with as much history as the *Tophatters*.

Tophatter history began when the *Air Detachment, Pacific Fleet* was established in September 1919. Soon thereafter the squadron was given multiple designations and eventually became VF-1 in 1920. Through the years the squadron's designation has changed 14 times, mainly due to the different types of aircraft and the respective mission specialties of those airplanes. On December 15th, 1949, however, the *Tophatters* were given the current VF-14 designation to mark them as a Fighter Squadron.

The *Tophatters* flew numerous models of biplanes in the '20s and early '30s, most notable the TS-1 Fighter. Just prior to the start of World War II, the *Tophatters* began flying monoplanes, beginning with the Vought SB2U-1 *Vindicator*. During World War II, the *Tophatters* made numerous combat deployments in the Atlantic Fleet and in the

Pacific Theater of operations where they participated in strikes on Manila harbor, Subic Bay, and Iwo Jima.

The squadron entered the jet age when they began flying the F3D-2 *Skynight*. They eventually found themselves flying the McDonnell F-4B *Phantom II* and were involved in combat operations in Vietnam in 1966. In 1974, VF-14 transitioned to flying the F-14A *Tomcat*.

Over its 80 years of service, the squadron has flown 22 different types of aircraft and has operated from 16 different carriers plus several battleships all under the command of more than 60 Naval Aviators and Naval Flight Officers.

As one might expect for a squadron with such a long history, they can claim some major milestones in the history of aviation. A *Tophatter* pilot, LT John D. Price, flying a TS-1 fighter, made the first night carrier landing on April 8th, 1925. They were the first squadron to inflict damage on the German war machine in World War II when they destroyed five ships and damaged six more while the ships were berthed in Norway's inner harbor. When the *Tophatters* left their tour of duty in Vietnam in February of 1967, they were the first squadron up until that time to bring back all their aircrew and not suffer a single aircraft loss to combat. The *Tophatters* were the first Atlantic Fleet squadron to begin flying the F-14A *Tomcat*, which also makes them the oldest squadron to still be flying the F-14A model.

With this rich history it's no surprise that the squadron expects to play host to an estimated 300 alumni, representing most every decade of their long existence. Five years ago, while the squadron celebrated their 75th Anniversary, they were nearly dis-established. However, due to the needs of the Navy, and probably some intense lobbying by the squadron's alumni, they remained on active service. Now, those faithful alumni have the opportunity to return and see the outstanding accomplishments that the current *Tophatters* have made over the last few years.

"The *Tophatter* team has performed incredibly well in the past few years," said CDR Carter. "I think our alumni will enjoy seeing the success we achieved in our missions over Kosovo and Iraq. They'll certainly be amazed with the incredible effort of our maintenance team. The cohesiveness of this unit is what has allowed us to perform safely and so impressively over the last year."

LCDR Armando Segarra is in charge of planning the 80th Anniversary Reunion weekend. "We're going to kick-off our weekend with a golf tournament on Thursday morning," he said. "We're expecting nearly 150 participants to play. However, our biggest event should be the open house on Friday afternoon. All of our *Tophatter* alumni will have a chance to visit our Hangar spaces, see the F-14 *Tomcat* close up, and hear about the combat conditions from our Aviators, all of whom flew missions over Kosovo."

The golf tournament at the Aeropines golf course on NAS Oceana will start early on November 4th. On Friday, November 5th, the squadron will host an open house in their hangar on the flight line of NAS Oceana. Friday evening they play host to a cocktail party at the Oceana Officer's Club. Finally, on Saturday evening, November 6th, they will hold a special Reunion Dinner, also at the Oceana Officer's Club. The golf tournament and Reunion Dinner have space limits so invitations will be mailed to all the former *Tophatters*.

“The itinerary and reservation form are also available on our website, in case there is any former *Tophatter* who is not on our mailing list,” said LCDR Segarra. Their website address is www.topedge.com/panels/aircraft/sites/vf14/index.html.

“We’ll have some laser guided bombs and other weaponry on display, similar to what we flew with over Kosovo, and we’ll play our cruise highlights video,” LCDR Segarra added. “We want to show them how the technology has changed the operational procedures that our alumni helped to create.”

During their deployment on the *Theodore Roosevelt*, the *Tophatters* of Fighter Squadron Fourteen delivered over 400,000 pounds of ordnance during numerous missions in Kosovo and several in Iraq, a tremendous accomplishment considering they did so without any damage to their F-14A *Tomcats* and without a single loss of life. Their separation is over, and the celebration is about to begin now that the *Tophatters* are home and ready to welcome their alumni to their 80th Anniversary Reunion.

History of the Fighting Fourteen *Tophatters* 1919-1999 80 Years of Excellence “The Oldest and Boldest”

As you read the history that follows, keep in mind that *Tophatter* history isn't solely about Fighter Squadron *Fourteen*, rather it is more a picture of the proud history and significant accomplishments of Naval Aviation in general. VF-14 has the honor of being the oldest continuously designated squadron, which makes it convenient to chronicle some of the historic accomplishments of Naval Aviation by reviewing a history of the *Tophatters'* eighty years of existence.

The squadron was established in September of 1919 at NAS San Diego as the Air Detachment, Pacific Fleet. The first aircraft flown by the Fleet Air Detachment was the MTB and was followed shortly by numerous other aircraft during the early 20s that included the R6L torpedo bomber, Vought VE-7 fighter, and the JN *Jenny*. By July 1922, the squadron had been designated Fighter Plane Squadron One (VF-1) and its career as a carrier-deployed squadron began on the U.S. Navy's first carrier, USS *Langley* (CV-1). In fact, Lieutenant John D Price, piloting a TS-1, made the historic first night carrier landing on April 8th, 1925. The squadron went on to set a record on August 9th, 1926 when one hundred twenty seven landings were completed by the end of flight operations.

In June 1926, LCDR Gerry F. Bogan took command of VF-1 notable for the historic change to the squadron that occurred under his leadership, adopting the High Hat insignia.

At the time LCDR Bogan took command, the squadron emblem had been an eagle with its wings outstretched and its claws open. LCDR Bogan adopted the 'High Hat' in 1927 to symbolize the very best and as a boost to the morale of the aviators. After all, a high hat, in the 1920s, symbolized high class and nobility. However, rumor holds that after attending a party that lasted all night, Skipper Bogan showed up the next day wearing a high hat from the night before with his uniform. When the aviators saw him, the idea of the high hat as their squadron insignia just fit. Although it wasn't the traditional coat-of-arms with Latin motto that is the standard for Navy insignia, the High Hat was approved and has stuck ever since.

In 1928, the squadron was assigned to USS *Saratoga* (CV-3), where it began as a fighter squadron and transitioned to a bomber squadron in 1934. The *Tophatters* flew various aircraft through the 30's including the Boeing FB-5 fighter, the Boeing F2B-1, the Curtiss F3B, the F8C-4 *Helldiver*, the Boeing F4B and the Curtiss F11C-2 *Goshawk*, (which was redesignated the BFC-2). In 1939, while flying their first monoplane, the Vought SB2U-1 *Vindicator*, the squadron was transferred to the Atlantic fleet aboard their newest carrier, the USS *Ranger* (CV-4), which operated on neutrality patrol in the Atlantic Ocean until the start of World War II.

The *High Hatters* proved formidable foes during World War II. In November of 1942, flying the Douglas SBD-3 *Dauntless* dive-bomber, the *High Hatters* were deployed on the *Ranger* to the coast of Morocco in support of Operation "Torch," the Allied landing in Northern Africa. Here, over a 4-day period, they distinguished themselves by damaging numerous enemy warships and several submarines. Then, in the spring of 1943, the *High Hatters* and the *Ranger* had the distinction of providing air cover for the SS *Queen Mary* as she carried British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to Quebec for a meeting with President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The *High Hatters* deployed on the *Ranger* again to the Northern Atlantic in late 1943 where they participated in the first American air strikes against German occupation forces in Norway. They destroyed five ships and damaged six more in Norway's inner channel.

In mid 1944, the squadron, flying the Curtiss SB2C-3 *Helldiver*, was ordered to the West Coast to participate in the Pacific Campaign and eventually deployed onboard the USS *Bunker Hill* (CV-17). On November 11th, 1944, near Leyte Island, aircraft from the *Bunker Hill* and other carriers attacked several Japanese destroyers and half a dozen transports, sinking most of them. Over 10,000 troops were thought to have perished in the attack with only nine American planes lost. In the following days, they participated in strikes on Manila Harbor and after transferring to the USS *Essex* (CV-9) they struck Subic Bay. They also supported the assault on Iwo Jima and struck a Japanese air base at Lingayen, Luzon Island to complete their service in World War II.

In 1947 the squadron began to fly the F4U-4 *Corsair*, which rekindled the dual role of fighter/bomber from their biplane days. The *Top Hatters*, as they were now known, deployed with the

F4U-4 on the USS *Tarawa* (CV-40) to show American might in China during the Chinese civil war. After they returned to the U.S. in February of 1949 they moved to their new homeport of Cecil Field, Florida and on December 15th, 1949, they changed their designation to the familiar Fighter Squadron *Fourteen* (VF-14). They also began to fly a more powerful version of the *Corsair*, the F4U-5.

In 1954, they transitioned to the jet age with the F3-D *Skynight* and shortly thereafter, in 1956, they became the first squadron to fly the F-3H *Demon*. In May 1963, the *Tophatters* transitioned to the F-4B *Phantom II* and were the first F-4B squadron to be permanently based at NAS Cecil Field as well as the first *Phantom* squadron to operate onboard the USS *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVA-42). In 1966, they deployed to the China Sea while embarked in the *Franklin D. Roosevelt* and flew 967 combat strike sorties, in addition to their normal combat air patrol and fighter escort missions, which resulted in over 651,000 pounds of ordnance delivered against targets in North Vietnam.

In the summer of 1967, having moved their home base to NAS Oceana, the *Tophatters* deployed onboard the *Franklin D. Roosevelt* again, but to the Mediterranean Sea.

In 1969, the Navy's oldest squadron deployed on the Navy's newest carrier, the USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67) and, ironically, the *Tophatters* celebrated their 50th anniversary at the same time the *John F. Kennedy* celebrated its first. While embarked on the *Kennedy* in 1970 for operational training, the carrier was ordered to immediately deploy to the coast of Israel during the Syrian invasion of Jordan. Ready for combat, the *Tophatters* and the task force helped to calm the situation, for which Fighter Squadron *Fourteen* was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

The *Tophatters* deployed for the third time on the *Kennedy* for another Mediterranean tour of duty and after they returned to the U.S., the squadron immediately began preparations for a second combat tour in Vietnam; however, the Vietnam Cease-Fire Agreement was signed in February 1973. They quickly switched plans and proceeded with their fourth deployment on the *Kennedy* in 1973. During this cruise, the *Tophatters* learned that they and their sister squadron, VF-32, would be the first Atlantic Coast squadrons to transition to the Grumman F-14A *Tomcat*.

Interestingly, on November 21st, 1973, a former VF-14 Operations Officer, CDR John "Smoke" Wilson and a VF-14 RIO, LCDR Jack H. Hawver, were the first aircrew to successfully fire six *Phoenix* missiles simultaneously; additionally, the VF-14 Skipper at that time was CDR George White, who was the first Navy pilot to fly the F-14A.

In January 1974 the squadron began to take delivery of their newest aircraft and in June 1975, the *Tophatters* became the first squadron to deploy to the Mediterranean with the F-14A *Tomcat*.

What followed was a very successful period for VF-14, employing the *Tomcat* in various conflicts throughout the world. In the fall of 1976, the squadron completed a highly successful NATO cruise in the harsh weather of the North Atlantic. In October 1978, *Tophatter* aircrew set an all time F-14 flight hour record when they flew 977 hours in one month while on deployment in the Mediterranean Sea. In late 1980, during another deployment on the *Kennedy*, VF-14 won the Silver Anchor award and the 1980 Naval Air Atlantic Battle Efficiency award for combat readiness for the second year in a row.

The *Tophatters* left the *Kennedy* for a while and embarked onboard USS *Independence* (CV-62) for a four-year stint that included over 80 combat missions while engaged in Operation "Urgent Fury" over Grenada in November 1983. In early December 1983, VF-14 was proclaimed the "Best Fighter Squadron" by the Commander, Fighter Wing One for their superb performance in the Atlantic Fleet Readiness Program. Later that same month they participated in operations off the coast of Lebanon and provided support for multi-national forces in Beirut. They were on extended deployment on the USS *John F. Kennedy* during the Lebanon Hostage crisis of 1986. In 1989, VF-14 was presented with the Naval Air Atlantic "Grand Slam" award in recognition of their perfect missile firing record. The competition for this annual award included all East-Coast F-14 and F/A-18 squadrons.

On August 10th, 1990, eight days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the *Kennedy* was ordered to emergency deploy to the Red Sea in support of operation "Desert Shield." During the months leading up to the war, the *Tophatters* played an integral role in enforcing the embargo against Iraq. On the morning of January 17th, 1991, the *Tophatters* once again flew in combat when they joined UN forces in the air assault on Iraq. After returning from their war cruise, the *Tophatters* began training for their new air-to-ground mission in the F-14A. By the end of 1992, the *Lids* (as they sometimes referred to themselves) were again on deployment with the *Kennedy* flying missions over the former Yugoslavia in support of United Nations policies and in Operation "Provide Comfort" in Iraq.

In April 1994 dark times fell on the squadron as they were slated for disestablishment and they were transferred to Fighter Wing Atlantic to await reassignment. However, due to the needs of the Navy,

and the support and lobbying efforts of former *Tophatters* after their Seventy-Fifth Anniversary celebration, VF-14 was spared from disestablishment and began to prepare for another deployment on the *Kennedy*. The *Tophatters* proved their worth on deployment in 1997 and eventually won the Naval Air Atlantic Battle Efficiency award from among all East Coast F-14 squadrons. In addition, they won the Fighter Wing Atlantic Golden Wrench award, the coveted Joseph C. Clifton award from among all F-14 squadrons and, even more surprisingly, the Arleigh Burke Fleet trophy, which recognized VF-14 as the most improved command in the Navy, a first for any squadron. Following their extremely successful year, the *Lids* spent 1998 getting ready for their next deployment on their newest carrier, the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN-71).

Just a week after leaving on deployment, the *Roosevelt* took station in the Ionian Sea to provide the only Navy support in Operation "Allied Force" over Kosovo. The F-14 *Tomcat*, and the aircrew of VF-14, played a key role in the success of "Allied Force," which marked the longest combat time since the Vietnam War. During that historic deployment, the *Tophatters* flew over 650 combat missions both into Kosovo and while providing support for Operation "Southern Watch" over Iraq. They delivered over 400,000 pounds of precision-guided munitions without any damage to their *Tomcats* and without a single loss of life to their aircrew or maintenance personnel.

Among the many awards held by the *Tophatters* are two Presidential Citations, the Navy Unit Commendation, two Meritorious Unit Commendations, five Battle stars, four CNO Aviation Safety awards, the Admiral Joseph C. Clifton award, the Arleigh Burke Fleet trophy, and seven Naval Air Atlantic Battle Efficiency awards.

The *Tophatters* have been flying the F-14A for 25 years, which makes them the oldest F-14A squadron, and among the first squadrons to transition the *Tomcat* to the air-to-ground role. Through their eighty years, the *Tophatters* were often the first squadron to fly a new type of airplane, strike the enemy first, or set records in carrier aviation. In 1999, they deployed with the newest technology available to the F-14 and pushed the limits of the *Tomcat's* capabilities. The *Tophatters* proved once again why they alone could claim to be the Oldest and Boldest Fighter Squadron in the United States Navy.



VF-14 TOPHATTERS RECEIVE 1999 BATTLE "E"

By LT Van Kizer, PAO

The VF-14 TOPHATTERS received official word through message traffic sent on February 04, 2000 that Commander, Naval Air Forces Atlantic selected Fighter Squadron Fourteen for the prestigious "Battle Efficiency" award for 1999, ranking it first among all East Coast F-14 squadrons. "This award comes after an extremely successful year", stated Commander Samuel B. Richardson, Commanding Officer of Fighter Squadron Fourteen. "I couldn't be more pleased for this officially recognizes the tremendous efforts made by the officers and the men and women of Fighter Squadron Fourteen over the past year."

Just one week after deploying in March 1999 onboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71), the TOPHATTERS and Carrier Air Wing EIGHT took station in the Ionian Sea as part of the only Carrier Battle Group in support of Operation *Allied Force* over Kosovo. Upon reaching station, the TOPHATTERS proved themselves by leading the first Navy strike into Kosovo on April 06, 1999 and marked the beginning of Operation *Allied Force*. Leading the charge in

expanding the Tomcat's combat effectiveness, they developed and implemented new tactics utilizing Low Altitude Navigational Targeting Infrared at Night (LANTIRN), Fast Tactical Imagery (FTI), Night Vision Device (NVD) enhancement systems, and provided first operational combat use of the Infrared Zoom Laser Illuminator Designator (IZLID) pointing device. With these systems, the TOPHATTERS effectively guided themselves and other Air Wing EIGHT strikers to their designated targets. VF-14 also employed gyro-stabilized binoculars for enhanced visual acquisition and target description in the Airborne Forward Air Controller, FAC(A), role. In another first, the TOPHATTERS utilized Tomcat Tactical Targeting (T³) LANTIRN software and successfully employed Fleet Tactical Imagery (FTI) during combat. These systems allowed aircrew to capture and transmit Bomb Hit Assessment (BHA) images to the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71) while still airborne. Further expanding the Tomcat's capability was making the initial deployment with the Digital Flight Control System (DFCS). This system dramatically improves aircraft maneuverability and slow speed handling characteristics in combat situations and around the carrier.

The F-14 Tomcat, along with the men and women of VF-14, played a key role in the success of Operation *Allied Force*, which marked the longest air campaign since the Vietnam War. During this historic deployment, the

TOPHATTERS flew 551 of 552 assigned combat missions, flying sorties both into Kosovo as well as over Iraq. They delivered over 409,000 pounds of precision-guided munitions without any aircraft damage or mishaps and without a single loss of life to aircrew or maintenance personnel. They were also responsible for supporting 190 weapons from other airwing assets that included Laser Guided Bombs (LGBs) and Laser Mavericks (LMAVs), guiding them to direct hits. While on deployment, the squadron sustained a 99.8% sortie completion rate. "This maintenance department is the backbone of this command and it was through their superb efforts that the TOPHATTERS excelled in combat", stated Commander Richardson.

All in all, the reception of this award and honor is certainly appreciated, but moreover, it proves to the tactical air community that the Tomcat remains, and will continue to remain, an extremely effective combat capable aircraft. We've proven that the Tomcat is a very capable and versatile platform and that's something to be proud of. The Battle E was an honor not sought by the men and women of VF-14, but attained through hard work and relentless determination to do the job right the first time, and it is an honor that we are all very proud of.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FIGHTER SQUADRON FOURTEEN
FLEET POST OFFICE
AE 09504-6103

1650
Ser 10/322
05 NOV 99

From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN
To: Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet
Via: Commander, Fighter Wing, U.S. Atlantic Fleet

Subj: NOMINATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
MAINTENANCE AWARD FOR FIGHTER SQUADRON FOURTEEN

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 4790.3
(b) COMNAVAIRLANTINST 1650.5A
(c) DOD 1348.30

Encl: (1) Award Nomination
(2) Proposed Citation

1. Per references (a) through (c), enclosures (1) and (2) are submitted.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W E Carter", is written above the printed name.

W. E. CARTER

ENCLOSURE (7)

I. BASIC INFORMATION:

1. Service: United States Navy
2. Nominee: Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN (VF-14)
3. Category/Unit Size: Small (25-300 Personnel)

4. Points of Contact:

Primary

LCDR [REDACTED], USN
Maintenance Officer
[REDACTED]

Alternate

LCDR [REDACTED], USN
Assistant Maintenance Officer
[REDACTED]

5. TYCOM Points of Contact:

Primary

CAPT(SEL) Carlos Lozano
COMFITWINGLANT
Maintenance Officer
[REDACTED]

Alternate

LCDR [REDACTED]
COMFITWINGLANT
ASST Maintenance Officer
[REDACTED]

FAX: [REDACTED]

FAX: [REDACTED]

6. Mailing Address:

Commanding Officer
FIGHTER SQUADRON FOURTEEN
Unit 60119
FPO AE 09504-6103

7. Message address: FITRON FOURTEEN

8. Background information for nominated Unit:

Size: 28 Officers, 227 Enlisted
Location: Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia Beach,
Virginia

9. Mission Statement: To intercept and destroy enemy aircraft in all weather conditions, establish and maintain air superiority, and deliver ordnance on target, on time, first pass.

II. SUMMARY OF ACTION

The "TOPHATTERS" of Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN have had a phenomenally successful year reaching unprecedented levels of maintenance excellence in the F-14A community. During the

ENCLOSURE (1)

Inter-Deployment Training Cycle (IDTC), the command completed the most extensive aircraft systems modifications and upgrades in its 27 year history.. Despite the reduced availability of aircraft assets due to system modifications, the maintenance department surpassed CNO turnaround training goals and aircraft readiness rates every single month while exceeding the standard operational tempo. Following the turnaround training cycle, the command departed for a highly successful MED 99-2 deployment aboard the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71). While deployed the squadron employed extensive use of all system modifications such as the LANTIRN system while supporting Operations ALLIED FORCE and SOUTHERN WATCH. These system upgrades offered the Battle Group Commander unsurpassed flexibility by dramatically increasing the F-14A's multi-mission combat capability. Additionally, VF-14 demonstrated extraordinary foresight and leadership while producing the most pristine aircraft in the fleet. Significant achievements include:

Mission Accomplishments

Operational Chronology:

- CVW-8 Air Wing Strike Training Detachment, NAS Fallon, NV (25 September - 28 Oct 1998)
- COMPTUEX onboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) (10 November 1998-18 December 1998)
- JTFEX onboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) (1-26 February 1999)
- Mediterranean/Arabian Gulf Deployment onboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT; supporting Operations ALLIED FORCE and SOUTHERN WATCH (26 March 1999- 22 September 1999).

Accomplishments:

- During Operations Allied Force and Southern Watch the squadron flew 1,546.3 operational flight hours and 491 operational sorties with a 100% combat sortie completion rate.
- Expended over 380 laser-guided munitions, for a total of over 409,000 pounds of ammunition. Maintained a combat success rate of 82.2% bombs on target.

- Ordnance crews led the airwing in ordnance loaded and bombs on target while producing the lowest arming, fusing, and hung bomb malfunction rate within the airwing. VF-14 was responsible for loading and expending more ordnance than any other F-14 squadron in the history of the F-14 Tomcat.

Effective use of Maintenance Resources

- Currently the front runner for CVW-8 maintaining an overall 99.98 % sortie completion rate, and providing a 99.62 % Full Mission Capable Rate.
- Prior to deployment, the maintenance department completed upgrade modifications on all assigned aircraft to include: Digital Flight Controls, Fast Tactical Imagery, and Night Vision Device Lighting Enhancement systems, which significantly increased the war fighting capability of the F-14A Tomcat. The squadron deployed with 11 full mission capable aircraft ready for combat 10 days into the deployment without impacting CFWL's inventory.
- The first squadron to drop a series of laser guided bombs in a combat theater utilizing LANTIRN and Fast Tactical Imagery Systems for real time recording.
- Conducted 11 Aircraft Service Period Adjustments with outstanding material condition results. All aircraft were granted one-year extensions to their respective service life.
- Incorporated over 300 technical directives in all assigned aircraft, which increased the capability and overall life span of each aircraft.
- Performed over 40 depot level repairs on all assigned aircraft upon their acceptance.

Innovative Management Accomplishments

- Continued an outstanding safety record, flying over 3,000 mishap free flight hours in fiscal year 99.
- Submitted three critical HAZREPs that have made a significant impact on the F-14 community.
- Submitted HAZREP on the inspection cycle of the Wiggins Fittings associated with the fuel boost pumps of the F-14.

After experiencing a fuel transfer problem on CAMELOT 200 in Feb 99, the squadron released a recommendation for a NATOPs change to solve this unique fuel transfer failure.

- Identified a problem with DFCS computers causing wire bundle chaffing. Micarta boxes were adjusted in all DFCS Tomcats avoiding electrical fires and fuzing problems through wiring associated with AWG-15 computers.

- The community leader in identifying problems with the Breather Pressure switches in the F-14A. Authored three HAZREPs on B/P switches, the first of which brought the significance of this poorly designed system to light.

- Expeditiously released 13 Conventional Ordnance Deficiency reports for all identifiable bomb manufacturer deficiencies.

- Zero class A/B/C mishaps.

- Emphasis on quality maintenance resulted in the release of 32 Naval Aviation Maintenance Discrepancy Reports to increase productivity, enhance safety and reduce material failures.

- Precise management of the Command's Non-combat Ordnance allocation enabled the complete expenditure of 100 percent of these valuable training assets, providing vital aircrew training.

- Outstanding manpower management and diligent recruiting of qualified personnel resulted in increased manning levels and technical expertise in critical maintenance ratings.

Personnel Quality of Life Programs

- Positive command atmosphere resulted in an 85 percent retention rate.

- Advanced 34 percent of all eligible squadron personnel from March 1999 advancement cycle.

- Quality of life for the troops is of utmost priority. Ensured E-mail capability was up and running as early as possible and available to all personnel allowing communications with family and friends throughout the 6 month deployment.

- The Maintenance Department fully utilized the Navy's Award Program to recognize the hard work and superior professionalism

of deserving personnel. VF-14 takes great pride in ensuring timely recognition of outstanding individual achievement by presenting awards at all-hands quarters. Articles on awardees are submitted to the base and hometown newspapers. The following awards were presented during FY99:

- 3 Advanced via the Command Advancement Program
- 6 Distinguished Flying Cross
- 1 Bronze Star
- 75 Air Medals (strike/flight)
- 27 Air Medals (individual)
- 4 Meritorious Service Medals
- 13 Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals
- 10 Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals (combat "V")
- 122 Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals
- 71 Letter of Commendations (Flag)
- 55 Letter of Appreciations
- 1 Sailor of the Year
- 4 Supervisor of the Quarters
- 12 TOPHATTERS of the Month
- 12 Petty Officers of the Month
- 12 Plane Captains of the Month
- 30 Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist

VADM James Bond Stockdale Leadership Award winner
COMFITWINGLANT Fighter Pilot of the Year Award winner

III. CLOSING SUMMARY

Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN is without a doubt the finest squadron in the United States Navy today. They have set the standard of maintenance excellence throughout the fleet. The command's commitment to doing it right the first time, combined with an aggressive training program has been proven repeatedly throughout combat operations and the Inter-deployment Training Cycle. There is no finer Naval Aviation Maintenance Department. Their unwavering commitment and flawless management of personnel and assets have made the difference. VF-14's Maintenance Department is richly deserving of this special recognition.

IV* , PROPOSED CITATION:

The Secretary of Defense takes pleasure in presenting The 1999 Secretary of Defense Maintenance Award to:

FIGHTER SQUADRON FOURTEEN

for services set forth in the following
CITATION:

For outstanding meritorious achievement in the field of Aviation Maintenance for the period of 1 October 1998 to 30 September 1999. Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN has set unprecedented standards of excellence marked by innovative leadership and determined performance. During this demanding year, the squadron was at the forefront of every major tactical improvement in the war fighting capability of the F-14A. Despite an intense aircraft modification schedule, the squadron exceeded CNO aircraft readiness rates in large measure every month throughout the Inter-deployment Training Cycle. While deployed onboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71) in support of Operations ALLIED FORCE and SOUTHERN WATCH, the maintenance effort proved to be the cornerstone of the command's outstanding success. The squadron extensively employed and flawlessly maintained the Low Altitude Navigation Targeting Infrared for Night (LANTIRN) and Night Vision Device (NVD) systems installed in the F-14A, dramatically increasing the F-14's multi-mission capability throughout combat operations. Additionally, the squadron continued to exceed all operational and training commitments while flying the best maintained and finest looking jets in Naval Aviation. The innovation, professionalism and Esprit De Corps of the TOPHATTER maintenance department is a large part of the fighting spirit that makes "FIGHTING FOURTEEN" , by far the best squadron in Naval Aviation. The superior dedication and performance of the officers, men and women of Fighter Squadron

ENCLOSURE (-)

FOURTEEN, in its 80th year of continuous active service, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Department of Defense. They are most deserving of the 1999 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MAINTENANCE AWARD.

Secretary of Defense,