



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON FOURTEEN
FLEET POST OFFICE
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From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN
To: Director of Naval History

Subj: 2001 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) VF-14's Command History for 2001
(2) Biography and photograph of CDR B. W. Fecht
and CDR A. E. Ross Jr
(3) Photograph of squadron's aircraft
(4) Copy of squadron's Welcome Aboard Message
(5) Battle "E" Submission
(6) Maintenance Award Package

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (6) are forwarded.


B. W. FECHT

1. Command Composition and Organization.

(a) Command short title and UIC: FITRON 14, 09084

(b) 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.

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

(d) Name of Commanding Officer: CDR Bruce W. Fecht

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

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

2. Chronology.

16-30 January
COMPTUEX A onboard USS Enterprise (CVN-65).

26 February - 27 March
COMPTUEX B onboard USS Enterprise.

24 April - 10 November
Cruise 2001 onboard USS Enterprise.

14-20 May
Detached to Tunisia for air-to-air and air-to-ground training.

05-31 May
Detached to Corsica, France in support of multinational exercise, Trident D'or.

10-28 June
Supported Royal Air Force and Navy during Joint Maritime Course (JMC) off the northern coast of Scotland.

12-19 June
Detached in support of Juniper Hawk to conduct air-to-air and FAC(A)/CAS training.

29 July - 09 September

On station in Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Southern Watch

07-22 October

On station in Arabian Sea in support of Operation Enduring Freedom

3. Narrative.

A. OPERATIONS:

| | Total/Day/Night |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| (1) Sorties: | 2442/1468/974 |
| (2) Hours: | 4545.8/2801.2/1744.6 |
| (3) Sorties Embarked: | 2011/1126/885 |
| (4) Hours Embarked: | 3956.1/1996.0/1960.1 |
| (5) CV Landings: | 2094/1260/834 |
| (6) Landing Grades: | 3.447/3.515/3.360 |
| (7) Boarding Rate: | 94.6%/96.5%/92.2% |
| (8) Ordnance Expenditure | |

Total Expenditure:

| <u>Type</u> | <u>Allocated/Used</u> | <u>%Expended</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| AIM-54 | 3/3 | 100% |
| Chaff | 1205/1205 | 100% |
| BOL Chaff | 1861/1861 | 100% |
| Flares | 944/944 | 100% |
| MK-76 | 1446/1446 | 100% |
| BDU-33 | 13/13 | 100% |
| BDU-45 | 34/34 | 100% |
| MK-58 | 10/10 | 100% |
| MK-82 | 47/47 | 100% |
| LGTR | 6/6 | 100% |
| GBU-12 | 2/2 | 100% |
| GBU-16 | 1/1 | 100% |
| TALD | 2/2 | 100% |

Combat Expenditure:

| <u>Type</u> | <u>Southern Watch</u> | <u>Enduring Freedom</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| GBU-10 | 0 | 2 |
| GBU-12 | 4 | 96 |
| GBU-16 | 4 | 73 |
| GBU-24 | 0 | 3 |

B. Contributions to Weapons System and Tactical Development:

- 1) The ENTERPRISE Battle Group contributed 29% of all strike assets in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. VF-14 provided only 7% of the strike assets but was responsible for the assessed destruction of 12% of all targets hit in Afghanistan, through own ordnance delivery or the guidance of other aircraft ordnance.
- 2) VF-14 Forward Air Controller-Airborne (FAC(A)) aircrews inflicted significant damage to the Taliban forces in Afghanistan. Exercised unrelenting and effective targeting while operating in known surface-to-air missile and Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) envelopes, VF-14 supported 28 external weapons, including LGBs and Laser Mavericks (LMAVs), and guided them to direct hits.
- 3) VF-14 led the first Navy strike into Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan, on 07 October 2001, during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The strike was a resounding military and psychological success resulting in the complete destruction of the Kabul early warning facility. During this strike, the locations of several surface-to-air missile and AAA sites were identified and passed on to follow-on strike packages, contributing greatly to their success.
- 4) On the third night of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, VF-14 led the first long range TACAIR strike, covering over 1,700 miles round-trip into Mazar-e-Sharif. This strike used Time Sensitive Targeting (TST) as the aircraft were rolled from an assigned Defensive Counter Air (DCA) mission. With meticulous in-flight planning, two F-14s succeeded in destroying 3 MiG-21 and two transport aircraft while fending off multiple AAA and MANPAD launches.

- 5) Perfected mixed section employment utilizing the F-14 LTS and the F-18 LMAV and recorded a 92.9% success rate while guiding 28 precision guided weapons. Refined previously designed tactics to allow for employment in mountainous terrain and guided multiple LMAVs simultaneously during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.
- 6) Established the F-14 as the FAC(A) platform of choice in two separate theaters of operation. Effective use of the LANTIRN Targeting System (LTS) to locate and identify enemy armor and emplacements along with superb coordination of all airborne strike assets combined to showcase the success of the F-14 Tomcat over Iraq and Afghanistan. Given the task-management capability of a two-seat platform, airborne results were expertly executed in both the FAC(A) and Strike Coordination and Reconnaissance (SCAR) role.
- 7) Creatively managed the daily combat flight schedule to increase the availability of critical FAC(A) qualified aircrews. 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 lethality. Five aircraft were designated FAC(A) platforms and configured as "quadbombers". These aircraft provided a total of four LGBs to be delivered as "marks" by the FAC(A) and maximized the 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-16s resulted in unparalleled airborne flexibility.
- 8) Provided FAC(A)s in support of Joint Combat Search and Rescue (JCSAR) tactics development. Instrumental in planning, establishing and exercising joint and combined FAC(A) tactics against an Integrated Air Defense System (IADS). Provided doctrinal combat service support as well as strategic and intra-theater deployment and redeployment. Leading FAC(A) sought out for his expertise to establish JCSAR Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the new Afghanistan combat theater.

- 9) Meticulous tape analysis discovered two critical reasons for misses in combat. One resulted in an all Navy bulletin to notify aviation commands concerning recently produced LGB kits which had poor laser code markings potentially resulting in the incorrect entry of laser codes. The other resulted in an NSAWC review of the LANTIRN delivery software.
- 10) Due to a detailed LTS and delivery technique training course within VF-14, the squadron enjoyed a sustained ordnance delivery success rate throughout its deployment. The initial and sustained overall success rate was 76% during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Additionally, the squadron's success rate was an unprecedented 86% in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH.
- 11) Developed new expendables gameplan for the Afghanistan theater of operations that maximized survivability while operating in a robust threat. Distributed findings the Air Wing EIGHT and the Carl Vinson and Theodore Roosevelt Battle groups.
- 12) During combat and contingency operations in two theaters, VF-14 logged 834 hours and launched 214 of 216 scheduled combat sorties. The squadron accomplished an impressive 99.1% sortie completion rate in support of Operations SOUTHERN WATCH and ENDURING FREEDOM.
- 13) Carefully managed ordnance loading based on a real concern for ordnance bringback and preservation of ordnance assets. Routinely carried a combination of two GBU-16s on one aircraft while never needing to jettison ordnance for weight considerations. VF-14 carried and delivered more GBU-16s than any other Navy squadron and 34% of all those carried were recovered. VF-14 recorded a 68.1% combat success rate with the GBU-16.
- 14) Meticulous management of the Ordnance Program, combined with comprehensive training, resulted in the safe expenditure of 179,324 pounds of air-to-ground ordnance and 2,603 countermeasure devices. Precise administration of the command's Non-combat Expenditure Allowance (NCEA) enabled the complete expenditure of 100% of valuable weapons training assets and provided vital aircrew training.

- 15) Guided 225 laser guided munitions, including external weapons, totaling over 189,000 pounds of ordnance and attained a combat success rate of 74.6% weapons on target. Throughout the year, VF-14 dropped 179,324 pounds of organic ordnance during training and combat operations.
- 16) Responsible for the most sorties and hours ever logged on the LANTIRN Targeting System (LTS) during a deployment and recorded an unequaled deployed pod availability. Utilizing a self-made training program for VF-14 ATs to ensure maintenance success, VF-14 flew the LTS for 4,086.7 hours and 2,195 sorties and maintained an impressive 89.9% pod reliability rate.
- 17) VF-14 successfully employed Fleet Tactical Imagery (FTI) during combat operations. While F-14s transited to strikes in Afghanistan, imagery was transmitted from the USS ENTERPRISE directly to the strikers. This near real-time imagery allowed the strike aircraft to re-roll when necessary to a new target area with a high confidence level of target acquisition.
- 18) Under the leadership of five designated Strike Leads, VF-14 led more strikes than any other squadron in Air Wing EIGHT during two theaters of operation after developing new tactics to meet the threat.
- 19) Superb guardianship of command OPTAR/7F/7B funds led COMFITWINGLANT activities in OPTAR accounting and expenditure. 7F and 7B accounts totaling over \$6.1M were expertly managed and expended to within 99.75% of the total grant and had 100% accuracy during three unannounced Material Obligation Validation inspections.
- 20) The TOPHATTERs fully maximized combat effectiveness. Executed greater than 100% of the available OPTAR every quarter of FY01. During the 2001 calendar year's first, second, third and fourth quarters, VF-14 flew 113%, 106%, 105% and 100% respectively of each quarter's grant. This enabled the squadron to maximize combat readiness by averaging 14 sorties and over 27 hours per aircrew each month of the calendar year.

- 21) VF-14's 2,442 sorties and 4,545.8 flight hours, in 2001, eclipsed the record-setting performance of 1999 by 4% and 6% respectively and 2000's numbers by 5% and 34% respectively.
- 22) Provided a vital Air Wing liaison officer tasked with coordinating Air Wing and Battle Group assets with the Joint Force Air Component Command (JFACC) in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. The JFACC commander complimented VF-14's LNO on his professionalism and tactical contributions.
- 23) Before deployment, outstanding foresight and scheduling allowed the squadron to aggressively pursue CFWL sponsored intra-squadron competitions. VF-14 competed in the LANTIRN Employment Training Program (LETP), LANTIRN Derby, Bombing Derby, and ACM Derby for FY 2001. The only derby VF-14 did not compete in was Banner Blaster, an air-to-air gunnery competition, due to a lack of ordnance available at NAS Oceana.
- 24) Committed to the SFWT concept, VF-14 developed and executed an aggressive SFWT training plan while providing the Air Wing three F-14 SFTIs capable of completing F-14 SFWT standardization checkrides. Though engaged in combat and contingency operations for 41% of the entire deployment, VF-14 completed 165 SFWT flights including ten Stan/Eval flights for both VF-14 and VF-41.
- 25) Developed and executed an aggressive SFWT training plan. Implemented strong academic training, developed an automated SFWT program and focused on SFWT qualifications. Completed 200 SFWT sorties, qualified ten Level II candidates, five Level III candidates and nine Level IV candidates.
- 26) VF-14 held multiple training seminars for Battle Group Air Intercept Controllers (AICs) to improve standardization and quality of tactical control during air-to-air intercepts.
- 27) A leader in LANTIRN training. Obtained the new LANTIRN desktop trainer from SWATSLANT for deployment, which dramatically improved aircrew training.

Additionally, used squadron developed "haystack" target folders for training on every mission. For Paveway II deliveries, VF-14 had only three switchology errors in over 190 drops during combat operations, none of which failed to guide.

- 28) Expanded LANTIRN tactics to include guiding Hellfire missiles. Worked with HS-3 subject matter experts to provide a detailed tactics and utilization brief for COMCRUDESQU-12.
- 29) Provided VF-11, VF-143 and VF-32 a comprehensive deployment lessons learned briefing. This report, along with PowerPoint presentation, armed deploying squadrons with LANTIRN and F-14 employment lessons learned in the STW, AAW and FAC(A) roles. VF-11's Commanding Officer lauded this brief as the most important brief his squadron received prior to deployment. This brief was distributed to all F-14 commands and garnered accolades from NSAWC and TOPGUN.
- 30) Front-runner in fleet product improvement. Through Operational Advisory Group (OAG) Program participation, the squadron was recognized for its combat experience in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.
- 31) While on detachment in support of Juniper Hawk, VF-14 flew 41 DACT sorties over two weeks while training with the allied forces and accomplished a 100% sortie completion rate. The detachment tested the Digital Flight Control F-14A against a CAT IV aircraft and provided the squadron's most junior aviators a chance to fly against combat experienced pilots in F-16s.
- 32) Throughout the entire year, VF-14 maintained an exceptional 64.5% Full Mission Capable (FMC) rate and a 79.2% Mission Capable (MC) rate while completing 97.5% of assigned sorties. Specifically:
 - a. Embarked onboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) for COMPTUEX A from 16-30 JAN 01. The squadron flew 150 sorties and logged 158 traps for a 99.3% sortie completion rate.
 - b. Embarked onboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) for COMPTUEX B from 26 FEB 01 - 27 MAR 01. The squadron flew 318 sorties and logged 328 traps for a 94.9%

sortie completion rate.

c. Embarked onboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) for deployment from 25 APR 01 - 10 NOV 01. The squadron flew 1,636 sorties and logged 1,608 traps for a 97.6% sortie completion rate.

d. Detached to Tunisia, 14-20 May 01, for valuable air-to-air and air-to-ground training. The squadron completed 22 sorties, and expended 123 Mk-76s with a 100% sortie completion rate.

e. Detached to Corsica, France, 22-31 May 01, for multinational exercise Trident D'or. The squadron flew 25 sorties with a 100% sortie completion rate. During a Sinkex, VF-14 Tomcats delivered the critical blows with MK.82s to a decommissioned French destroyer that resulted in it's sinking.

f. Concurrently supported the Royal Air Force and Navy requirements during the Joint Maritime Course while aggressively pursuing air-to-ground SFWT training in Scottish ranges successfully expending over 156 MK.76s and 24 live MK-82s. Squadron flew 146 sorties and 266.6 hours with a 100% sortie completion rate.

g. While on detachment in support of Juniper Hawk for valuable air-to-air and FAC(A)/CAS training, VF-14 expended over 85 pieces of ordnance including nine live MK-82s. The squadron completed 41 sorties with a 100% sortie completion rate.

- 33) Conducted multiple joint training operations. Performed extensive Close Air Support (CAS) training with USMC AV-8Bs during COMTUEX A and B.

C. General contributions to the Tomcat Community:

- 1) The squadron flew a total of 4,545.8 hours, of which 3,956.1 were embarked. Throughout the year, VF-14's night hours reflected 47.3% of the total flight time. While deployed, night hours reflected 43.1% of the embarked flight time.
- 2) Of the 2,094 total traps logged by VF-14 in CY01, 40%, or 834, were performed at night.

- 3) Continued an outstanding safety record, flying over 4,500 mishap free flight hours and recording only one FOD incident in CY 2001.
- 4) Provided Red Air sorties in support of VFA-15, VFA-87 and VF-41 SFWT training programs.
- 5) Handpicked to fly the USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) Commanding Officer, the Air Boss, and Sailors of the Year for 2000.
- 6) Fully supported fleet professional organizations. VF-14 boasts 100% membership in the Tailhook Association.
- 7) Handpicked to conduct interviews during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM resulting in on air broadcasts of the "Today Show", "Good Morning America" and "CBS Sunday Morning" representing the F-14 community and U.S. Navy on national television.
- 8) Provided two aircraft for display as part of the *Garth Brooks Coast to Coast to Coast Live* broadcast onboard the USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) 20 November 2001. VF-14 aircrew were asked to film commercials as representatives of the U.S. Navy to promote this public affairs event.
- 9) Provided two aircraft for static display for President Bush's visit to honor the 60th Anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor onboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) 07 December 2001. VF-14 aircrew were handpicked to meet the President because of their recent combat experience in Afghanistan. Personally congratulated and praised by the President for their work during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.
- 10) Provided three aircraft for a flawlessly executed flyby of Arlington cemetery for the interment of CDR Halsey-Best on 06 December 2001. Received accolades from the Admirals on hand via COMFITWINGLANT.
- 11) Led Air Wing EIGHT in ordnance release reliability while producing the lowest arming, fusing and hung bomb malfunction rate while deployed.

- 12) Conducted five Aircraft Service Period Adjustments (ASPAs) with outstanding material condition results. All aircraft were granted one year extensions to their respective service lives. Astute foresight in the scheduling of these inspections during the height of the turnaround cycle enabled the command to exceed all CNO aircraft readiness goals while meeting every operational commitment.
- 13) Incorporated 165 technical directives into all assigned aircraft increasing their capabilities and life spans. TOPHATTER maintenance personnel specifically coordinated and refined aircraft availability sequencing to enable the department to coordinate and resolve nine depot-level repairs requiring Planner and Estimator (P&E) services thereby decreasing aircraft down time and increasing aircraft availability.
- 14) Emphasis on quality maintenance resulted in the release of 19 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) Fighter Squadron FOURTEEN enjoyed a 74% retention rate for all enlisted and 67.5% retention for first term sailors which greatly exceeded Navy goals.
- 16) Successfully embarked women onboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) and provided enlisted senior leadership for all Air Wing EIGHT enlisted females. Incorporated numerous training programs for a smooth transition and a successful Mediterranean/Arabian Gulf deployment.
- 17) Dedicated to the professional development of VF-14 sailors. Organized highly effective EAWS boards for squadron personnel and aided 41 members in achieving their Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist designation and four Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist designations.
- 18) Dedicated to the professional development of all enlisted members. The leadership instilled a deep

sense of pride and professionalism in all TOPHATTERS to form the foundation for the command's exceptional advancement and retention rate.

- 19) The command distributed an unprecedented number of awards to recognize the superior performance of squadron personnel in 2001 and during combat operations in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and SOUTHERN WATCH. The following figures represent a 30% increase over CY 2000:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Advanced via the Command Advancement Program | 3 |
| Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals | 18 |
| Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals | 88 |
| Outstanding Volunteer Service Medals | 4 |
| Letters of Commendation (Flag) | 57 |
| Letters of Commendation/Appreciation | 105 |
| Sailor of the Year | 1 |
| Supervisors of the Quarter | 4 |
| TOPHATTERs of the Month | 12 |
| Petty Officers of the Month | 12 |
| Plane Captains of the Month | 12 |
| Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialists | 41 |
| Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists | 4 |

- 20) Submitted a critical flight deck procedure change to prevent FOD and arresting gear personnel injuries. Operational Risk Management tools revealed that maintenance on the arresting gear stansions during taxi will result in injury to personnel or parts being dispersed on the flight deck if personnel are moved to prevent injury. The recommended control was to not perform maintenance when aircraft are being taxied or remove all parts and tools if an aircraft is to be taxied.

- 21) Submitted 24 Conventional Ordnance Deficiency Reports (CODRs) in an effort to resolve an ongoing problem with certain weapons systems.