



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON FIFTEEN
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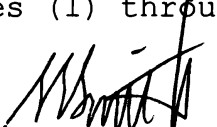
From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN
To: Director of Naval History, Aviation History Branch,
Naval Historical Center

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F
(b) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990
(c) OPNAVINST 3120.32 series

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronological History
(3) VFA-15 Narrative History of 1999
(4) Commanding Officer's biography and picture
(5) Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN History
(6) Squadron Aircraft Photograph
(7) Battle Efficiency Award Summary
(8) VFA-15 Change of Command program

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (9) are submitted.


S. E. SMITH

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron 15 is to maintain a maximum state of air combat readiness in the Carrier Strike Forces and to utilize that readiness as a deterrent or striking capability against any and all enemies of the United States of America, as may be directed by higher command authority. The primary function of Strike Fighter Squadron 15 within that mission is to conduct offensive air superiority and air-to-surface attack operations.

2. Strike Fighter Squadron 15 is organized in two primary levels: command and departmental. The organizational structure has been established within the framework of primary billets authorized by the Chief of Naval Personnel and within the guidelines established in references (b) and (c). In this particular application, the organizational structure and billet descriptions depicted in reference (c) have been tailored, as necessary, to fit the structure of a deployable aviation command.

3. Strike Fighter Squadron 15, based at NAS Oceana, VA, is commanded by CDR Scott E. Smith, USN. VFA-15 has an immediate external command relationship as outlined below:

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Command/Operational Control | Commander, Carrier
Air Wing EIGHT NAS
Oceana, VA |
| b. Administrative Control (embarked)
(ashore) | Commander, Carrier
Air Wing EIGHT
Commander, Strike
Fighter Wing,
ATLANTIC
NAS Oceana, VA |
| c. Technical Material | Commander, Naval
Air Force
ATLANTIC/Naval
Air Systems
Command Control
NAS Norfolk, VA |
| d. Support Control | Commander, Strike
Fighter Wing,
ATLANTIC |

4. The twelve (12) FA-18C HORNET aircraft assigned to the squadron have AJ tail code markings. The bureau number breakdown is as follows:

AIRCRAFT	BUREAU NUMBER
300	164627
301	164629
302	164643
303	164646
304	164655
305	164661
306	164691
307	164689
310	164673
311	164680
312	164631
314	164678

5. Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN consists of 174 enlisted members and 25 officers.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY 1999

JTFEX

01-27 FEB 99

JTG99/2 ABOARD USS THEODORE
ROOSEVELT (CVN 71)

26 MAR - 22 SEP 99

CVW-8 DACT DETACHMENT,
DECIMOMANNU, SARDINIA

23 JUN - 05 JUL 99

VFA-15 NARRATIVE HISTORY OF 1999

Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN has completed a remarkable year that culminated in the winning of the Naval Air Force Atlantic Battle Efficiency Award and Chief of Naval Operations Estocin Fleet Trophy for 1999. VFA-15, a squadron rich in fighting history, led the way in combat operations over Kosovo during Operation ALLIED FORCE (OAF). Later, the same VALION team again went into harm's way in the skies of Iraq in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH (OSW). By all accounts, 1999 was a banner year for the VALIONS. VFA-15 saw combat in two theaters, made significant contributions to the strike fighter community, and was awarded numerous individual and unit awards.

The VALIONS began 1999 in the midst of workups, and completed Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) on February 27, 1999. During this time, the VALIONS sharpened their skills and prepared for combat as part of the Carrier Air Wing EIGHT team. VFA-15 began their two theater combat cruise on March 26, 1999. Departing Norfolk, VA on the heels of winning the 1998 Grand Slam Award for superior air to air proficiency, the VALIONS began preparations for conducting operations in Kosovo in support of Operation ALLIED FORCE. USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT steamed across the Atlantic while the VALION team developed strike plans and prepared both people and aircraft for combat.

The VALIONS flew 575 combat sorties, more than 1400 hours, and expended over 400,000 lbs. of ordnance in direct support of Operation ALLIED FORCE. Missions included interdiction, Close Air Support (CAS), Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD), and Combat Air Patrol (CAP) during 65 days of combat operations. The squadron's performance as part of the air wing's overall effort directly contributed to the halt of Serbian aggression in Kosovo.

In addition to the validation of current strike fighter tactics, VFA-15 was instrumental in the development of new tactics and weapons employment methods. Specifically, VFA-15 led the airwing in the integration of AGM-65 Laser Maverick and Laser Designator/Tracker tactics into the Close Air Support (CAS) mission.

Upon cessation of hostilities in Kosovo, VFA-15 coordinated and spearheaded a highly lauded Dissimilar Air Combat Training (DACT) detachment in Decimomannu, Sardinia.

During this time, the VALIONS proudly and capably represented the US Navy as they trained with German Air Force MiG-29 Fulcrum and F-4E Phantom II fighters from the JG 73 squadron.

After the conclusion of the MiG-29 detachment, nearly half of the deployment still remained for VFA-15. The VALIONS departed Cannes, France aboard USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT on July 5, 1999 and transited the Suez Canal to take station in the Arabian Gulf. Called to deliver in combat immediately after arriving in the Gulf, VFA-15 flew 175 missions, including eight large coordinated strikes, and more than 480 hours in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. VALIONS also led the Navy and CVW-8 in smart weapons employment and tactics development. Quickly recognized as the most experienced Joint Stand Off Weapon (JSOW) squadron in the U.S. military, the VALIONS flawlessly planned and executed 12 JSOW deliveries during Operation ALLIED FORCE (OAF) and Operation SOUTHERN WATCH (OSW).

Additionally, the VALIONS swept all of the carrier landing performance competitive line periods and were awarded the CVW-8 Top Hook award with a remarkable squadron GPA of 3.52. VFA-15 pilots earned 38 individual landing awards, including 7 of the 10 airwing "Top Ten" awards for landing performance for the entire cruise.

In addition to the demands of deployed combat operations, VFA-15 planned and carried out a difficult homeport change for nearly 200 personnel, 12 aircraft and support equipment from NAS Cecil in Jacksonville Florida. On September 22, the VALIONS returned from cruise to their new homeport at Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia. The VALIONS commenced training immediately and captured first place in the annual Strike Fighter Wing Atlantic Bombing Derby in November 1999.

The VALIONS' rich tradition of excellence as one of the oldest and finest squadrons in Naval Aviation continued in 1999. "Consistent excellence throughout the year produced VALION success," remarked CDR Scott "Blazer" Smith, the Commanding Officer of VFA-15. "We set high standards and are proud of our accomplishments. Individual excellence and teamwork, focused on a common goal of success in combat with no losses, sets the VALIONS apart."