



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER CVN 69  
F.P.O. NEW YORK, 09501

1977

CVN69:011:ad1  
5750  
Ser 2914  
14 OCT 1978

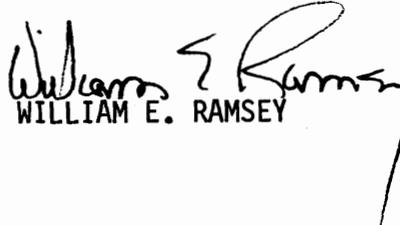
From: Commanding Officer, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05)

Subj: Command History; submission of (OPNAV Report 5750.1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

Encl: (1) Command History for USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) for  
calendar year 1977  
(2) USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) Commissioning Brochure

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) and (2) are forwarded.

  
WILLIAM E. RAMSEY

Copy to:  
Director of Naval History  
Naval War College  
U.S. Naval Academy Library  
CINCLANTFLT

COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)

FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1977

Table of Contents

Chronology of Major Events 1977

Basic Data

Documentary Appendices

- I. Resume of USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER operations
- II. Biography of Commanding Officer
- III. Biography of Executive Officer
- IV. 'IKE Facts' Summary Sheet

## CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS

1977

From 1 JAN USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) under construction at Pier 2, Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, (NNS&DDCo), Newport News, Virginia

9 FEB Reactor #2 goes critical for the first time

16 MAR Open House for IKE wives at Precommissioning Building, West Avenue, Newport News

11 APR Move aboard (first berthing and messing aboard)

16 MAY Reactor #1 goes critical for the first time

19 JUN Open House for families aboard ship

15 JUL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER placed "in service".

19-20 JUL Crew certification

23-28 JUL Fast Cruise

30 JUL - 1 AUG Builder's Sea Trials, in the Virginia Capes operating area (VACAPES)

30 JUL First landing on IKE (helicopter)  
LT [REDACTED], pilot

17-19 AUG Dockside trials (NNS&DDCo)

23-24 AUG Acceptance (Board of Inspection and Survey) Trials, VACAPES

10 SEP Open House aboard ship for NNS&DDCo workers and their families

12 SEP IKE delivered to the Navy  
First Dependents' Cruise  
Transit to and arrival at Norfolk homeport (Pier 12, Naval Station)

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS (con't)

15-20 SEP At-sea period, VACAPES

15 SEP First aircraft launch and arrested landing  
IKE Commanding Officer, CAPT William E. Ramsey, pilot

16 SEP First underway replenishment (with USS MARIAS TAO 57)

11-12 OCT Commissioning Party at Hampton Coliseum, Hampton, Virginia

18 OCT Commissioning, Pier 12, Naval Station, Norfolk  
Guest of Honor: Mrs. Mamie Doud Eisenhower  
Guest Speaker: Hon. Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense

20-27 OCT At sea (Father-son cruise) in VACAPES

20 OCT First jet arrested landing  
CDR Gary F. Wheatley, pilot, Commander Carrier Air Wing ONE

21 OCT First jet catapult launch  
LCDR [REDACTED], LT [REDACTED], pilots

21 OCT First Automatic Carrier Landing (ACLS)  
LCDR [REDACTED], pilot

7 NOV - 11 DEC Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Cruise

11 NOV - 31 DEC Inport Norfolk

## USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69)

### BASIC DATA

#### I. Command Organization

##### a. Commanding Officer

(1) Captain William E. Ramsey, USN, 10 October 1975 - Present

##### b. Executive Officer

(1) Commander E. W. Clexton Jr., USN, 10 October 1975 - Present

#### II. Mission of USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69).

a. The mission of USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) is to provide sea based tactical air power for defense of America's right to freedom of the seas as well as the protection of United States Sovereignty. As part of this mission, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER is capable of projecting tactical air power both over the sea and inland, as well as providing sea based air defense and anti-submarine warfare capabilities.

#### III. Background.

a. Named after the 34th President and General of the Army, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) is the third nuclear powered aircraft carrier ever built. Originally named EISENHOWER on 21 February 1970, the ship was renamed DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER on 25 May 1970.

b. The keel of the ship (Hull 599, as designated by Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company) was laid on 15 August 1970 and was authenticated by the late President's grandson, D. David Eisenhower II. Five years later, on 11 October 1975, Mrs. Mamie Doud Eisenhower, widow of the President and ship's sponsor, christened the ship during launching ceremonies at the Newport News Shipyard.

c. On 18 October 1977, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) was placed into commission in ceremonies at Pier 12, U.S. Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.

## RESUME OF USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) OPERATIONS

The year 1977 is of special significance in the life of USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69), as it marked the successful transition from a period of over seven construction years to the genesis of her operational ones.

For the first nine months of 1977, IKE remained, (with two brief at-sea exceptions), in final construction and testing phases at Pier 2. Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company (NNS&DDCo.), Newport News, Virginia, before being officially delivered to the Navy 12 September. As the new year began, most of the nucleus crew, numbering about 500, worked in the Precommissioning Unit Building, 3311 West Avenue, Newport News, while certain other divisions carried out their daily work routine on board ship. Training and instruction for the ship's balance crew commenced in late February at the Naval Station, Norfolk. Also during this period, IKE's two reactors became operational for the first time, with Reactor #2 going critical 9 February and Reactor #1 on 16 May.

Monday, 11 April marked the official move aboard for officers and crew, resulting in several "firsts", including the start of messing, berthing and laundry services on IKE. Meanwhile, two Open Houses were held during this period, the first for IKE crewmen and their wives on 16 March in the Precommissioning Building and the second for crewmembers' families on board IKE on 19 June, marking the first time families were able to tour the ship and view her construction progress first-hand.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER was officially placed "in service" 15 July, in a short ceremony that included the IKE Marine Detachment's raising of the national ensign on the fantail. Then, following two days of crew certification (19 and 20 July), IKE crewmen simulated operating in an at-sea environment during a Fast Cruise evolution 23 - 28 July. Two days later, on Saturday, 30 July, IKE slipped out of her Pier 2 berth with about 700 civilian technical representatives aboard for three days of Builder's Sea Trials in the Virginia Capes (VACAPES) operating area. That Saturday afternoon, at exactly 1403, the first flight deck landing took place as LT [REDACTED] of HC-6, NAS Norfolk, touched down in a VH-3 helicopter.

Following the 1 August redocking at Pier 2, preparations were underway for two days of shipyard dockside trials from 17 - 19 August, before heading out once again to the VACAPES 23 - 24 August for Acceptance Trials, conducted by the Board of Inspection and Survey. Two weeks later, on Saturday, 10 September, IKE crewmembers conducted an Open House for Newport News Shipyard workers and their families.

Then, on Monday, 12 September, IKE was officially delivered to the Navy in a short morning ceremony on the flight deck, as Rear Admiral R. J. Eustace, Superintendent of Shipbuilding, Newport News, accepted the ship from Mr. Ralph Cousins, president of NNS&DDCo.. RAdm Eustace, in turn, transferred custody of IKE to Captain William E. Ramsey, the Prospective Commanding Officer. Later that morning, hundreds of IKE crewmembers and their families boarded the ship for the first dependents' cruise down the James River and into the Chesapeake Bay before mooring at her Norfolk berth (Pier 12) that evening.

Three days later, on Thursday, 15 September, IKE again put to sea for five days of certification trials in the VACAPES, establishing a number of impressive shipboard "firsts". The first aircraft launch occurred on 15 September as Capt. Ramsey lifted off the deck at 1519 at the controls of IKE's C-1A, "Mamie". Minutes later, he brought the aircraft back down on deck for IKE's first arrested landing. The following day, 16 September, IKE conducted her first underway replenishment by receiving aviation fuel from USS MARIAS (TAO 57). Ironically, the first UNREP also resulted in the first successful emergency break-away, as an unexpected reactor scram aboard IKE temporarily interrupted the alongside refueling operation.

Upon the ship's return to Pier 12 on 20 September, final preparations began for IKE's commissioning the following month, including a two-day commissioning party 11 and 12 October at the Hampton Coliseum, Hampton, Virginia.

Then, on 18 October, as over 10,000 spectators looked on, USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER was officially placed into active naval service. The actual commissioning ceremony took less than 15 minutes. Standing on Elevator No. 1, Capt. Ramsey read his orders and issued the directive to place DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER into commission. IKE's Executive Officer, Commander E. W. Clexton Jr., in turn, issued the order to the Navigator, Commander Roger W. Gaskin, to "prepare the first watch and hoist the commissioning pennant." Then, at exactly 1111, under CDR Clexton's order to "break the commissioning pennant", USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER "came to life" with the traditional manning of the rail and setting of the first watch.

Official guests on hand for the commissioning included: Dr. Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense and principal speaker; ADM James L. Holloway III, Chief of Naval Operations; ADM Issac C. Kidd Jr., Commander-in-Chief Atlantic; VADM Howard Greer, Commander Naval Air Force Atlantic Fleet; Ambassador John S. D. Eisenhower and the ship's sponsor, Mrs. Mamie Doud Eisenhower.

Two days later on 20 October, IKE again put to sea for eight days of operations off the Virginia coast, embarking pilots from the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Md., who were on board for extensive testing and certification of IKE's flight deck. During this period, a number of shipboard firsts were recorded, including the first high-performance jet landing on 20 October; an A-7 flown by Commander Gary F. Wheatley, Commander Carrier Air Wing ONE. The following day, the first jet was catapulted off the deck by LCDR [REDACTED] and LT [REDACTED], while later that day, LCDR [REDACTED] touched down on deck to become the first pilot to land on IKE utilizing the Automatic Carrier Landing System (ACLS). Also during this period, the first firings of IKE's Basic Point Defense Missile System (BPDMS) were conducted against AQM-34 drones with excellent results; six hits for six shots.

Following a seven day Norfolk in-port period, IKE embarked Carrier Air Wing ONE and put to sea 7 November for carrier qualifications and damage control training in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where liberty call was granted 24 - 26 November.

The following week, tragically, IKE recorded her first aviation fatality. On Saturday, 3 December, a mechanical malfunction forced LCDR Hal Andersen, of VF-72, to eject from his A-7 seconds after launch from catapult #4. A later investigation revealed LCDR Andersen apparently drowned after becoming entangled in his own parachute shrouding while rescue was being effected. The plane was not recovered.

IKE arrived back at Pier 12 on 13 December to begin a Christmas - New Year in-port period.

# IKE FACTS

Propulsion.....Nuclear Power  
Number of Reactors..... Two  
Speed..... In excess of 30 knots  
Length, overall..... 1,092 feet  
Extreme breadth, flight deck..... 257 feet, 5.5 inches  
Height, keel to mast top..... 206 feet, 6 inches  
Area of flight deck.....About 4.5 acres  
Displacement (with full combat load..... About 95,000 tons  
Complement (with Air Wing embarked)..... 6,287  
Daily meals served aboard..... 18,861  
Number of Rudders..... Two  
Weight of Rudders..... About 45.5 tons each  
Number of Anchors..... Two  
Weight of each Anchor..... 30 tons  
Weight of each link in anchor chain..... 365 pounds  
Weight of each entire anchor chain..... 250,860 pounds  
Number of Propellers..... Four with five blades each  
Weight of each Propeller..... 11 tons  
Number of shipboard telephones..... Over 1,900  
Number of aircraft elevators..... Four  
Size of each aircraft elevator..... 3,880 square feet  
Number of catapults..... Four

\* \* \* \* \*

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER is virtually a floating city, equipped with air conditioning plants, an armory, a bakery, barbershops, a butcher shop, a carpenter shop, a chapel, a chilled drinking water plant, dentist office, a dry cleaning plant, electric generating station, fire stations, a garbage disposal plant, a hospital, ice cream stores, a jail, a laundry, a library, a movie theater, a pharmacy, photographic laboratories, a post office, a printing plant, radio and television stations, and a weather bureau.

IKE has the following furniture aboard: 6,410 berths and bunks, 544 secretary-bureaus, 813 wardrobes, 924 bookracks, 256 flat-top desks, 543 file cabinets, and 5,803 chairs and stools.

There are 29,814 lighting fixtures in IKE, and the electronic equipment varies in weight from six ounces to more than 22,000 pounds.