



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS ELROD (FFG 55) ✓

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From: Commanding Officer, USS ELROD (FFG 55)  
To: Commanding Officer, Naval Historical Center  
Bldg. 57, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC 20374-0571

Subj: SUBMISSION OF COMMAND HISTORY, USS ELROD (FFG 55)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) Narrative Summary of Command History  
(2) Copies of Command Familygram File  
(3) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet  
(4) Change of Command  
(5) Ship's Photograph

1. In accordance with reference (a) the command history of USS ELROD (FFG 55) for 1987 is forwarded. The attached enclosures highlight the year experienced by ELROD's officers and crew.

*P. W. Bolin*  
P. W. BOLIN

NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF COMMAND HISTORY

The new year found ELROD pierside in her homeport of Charleston, South Carolina. But much of the next two months would be spent underway under the operational control of Commander, Fleet Training Group in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. On 6 January, ELROD departed Charleston for a short transit to Port Everglades, Florida. The ship arrived on 7 January, mooring at Pier 15. Tours of the ship were given each of the days inport. After three great days in Port Everglades ELROD was underway on the 10th, enroute to the Atlantic Underwater Test Evaluation Center Range off Puerto Rico for three days of ASW operations. Leaving the Andros Island area on the 13th, the ship moored in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on 15 January prepared to start the required refresher training. Daily training at Guantanamo Bay typically began with a low visibility sea detail exercise while transiting out to the operating areas, followed by exercises to train all personnel onboard. General Quarters, man overboard and sets of basic engineering casualty control exercises were daily events. Special exercises included an underway replenishment with USS MERRIMAC on the 26 January and a tow and be towed evolution on 12 February. On 24 February ELROD passed the final battle problem and completed a mass conflagration drill, thereby concluding training at Guantanamo Bay. ELROD left Cuba and steamed to Tampa, Florida for what proved to be another great three day port visit.

On 2 March, the ship sailed for Mayport, Florida to embark a propulsion examining board (PEB) team for an Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE). Enroute to Mayport the ship landed a helicopter from HSL-44, the squadron with which the ship would be making its next deployment. The OPPE certification team came aboard 5 March, intending to conduct its examination during ELROD's transit from Mayport to Charleston. The test was cut short, however, due to a casualty to the controllable pitch propeller system. ELROD completed the transit to Charleston, repaired the casualty and was underway to begin OPPE certification on 12 March.

After successful completion of the OPPE ELROD conducted a short leave/upkeep period prior to beginning her first Intermediate Maintenance Availability period with SIMA, Charleston on 14 March. The work done during this availability period included the cleaning and hydrostatic testing of the auxiliary seawater cooling systems in the Main Engine Room, and the opening and inspection of the main reduction gear.

During April ELROD continued the availability period. On 29 April a Change of Command ceremony took place. Commander Richard W. Moore was relieved by Commander Phil W. Bolin. Attendees included the Commander Destroyer Squadron SIX, Captain Giufredda, several Commanding Officers of ships in port as well as many friends and family members. ELROD's next task was to complete a one day sea trial to operationally test the Engineering Plant followed by a trip up the Cooper River on 1 May to the Naval Weapon Station, Charleston to load exercise missiles.

On 5 May ELROD left Charleston to begin its participation in FLEETEX 2-87, in both the basic and advanced phases. In the advanced phase, 2-9 May, USS ELROD and USS YORKTOWN simulated Soviet combatants attacking the Saratoga Battle Group. ELROD and YORKTOWN were successful in avoiding contact by the Battle Group throughout the entire hostilities phase. The basic phase of the FLEETEX was conducted with the ships of the Coral Sea Battle Group, the group with which ELROD was to deploy to the Mediterranean later in the year.

The basic phase began on 11 May 1987 with an opposed breakout from Naval Base, Norfolk, VA. The following day the group received a simulated attack by Air Force B-52's conducting a war at sea strike as the group continued southward toward the Puerto Rican Opareas. ELROD and YORKTOWN were part of an anti-ship missile defense (ASMD) firing exercise which included Exocet missile firings by a German Task Force. ELROD's training continued on the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility range off St. Croix, Virgin Islands. The principal exercises conducted involved the use of the ship's two LAMPS MK III helicopters in the detection and tracking of submarines in conjunction with the AN/SQR-19 towed array sonar. Training was concluded with the completion of CNO Project 179-5 which evaluated every combat related system onboard ELROD, ensuring the subsystems comprising the Combat Systems suite worked well together. Launching SM-1 missiles, firing the 76MM gun, and conducting over the horizon targeting problems with the LAMPS helicopter and the Harpoon system in an ECM environment fully demonstrated ELROD's combat readiness and system reliability and culminated a lengthy and successful training period.

ELROD returned to Charleston to begin a second Intermediate Maintenance Availability in June 1987. Concurrently, a satisfactory diesel inspection was conducted 11 June and a pre-deployment gas turbine readiness review was completed 12 June. On the morning of 22 June ELROD left Charleston to take part in Tailship Proficiency Training (TPT) in the Narragansett Bay Op areas. A two plane detachment from HSL-44 (DET 3) was embarked throughout this period. The overall objective was for P-3 aircraft and the ships involved, USS CONNOLLE (FF 1056), USS VALDEZ (FF 1096), USS CAPODANNO (FF 1093), USS SIMPSON (FFG 56), and USS ELROD (FFG 55), to gain contact on USS TINOSA (SSN 606) and USS BATON ROUGE (SSN 689) and conduct localization and attack simulations. The Tailship Proficiency Training lasted until 26 June and ELROD completed her transit back to Charleston on the 28 June.

ELROD remained inport Charleston until getting underway on 7 July to onload 76MM ammunition at the Naval Weapons Station in Charleston. On 8 July the ammunition onload was completed and the ship steamed down the Cooper River for dependants day cruise, returning to Pier "N", Charleston Naval Base. On 13 July ELROD again was underway on her way to the Puerto Rican operating area for further testing in the CNO Project. Both Magnum 442 and 446 from HSL-44 (Detachment 3) were onboard. The transit was completed on 16 July, and the ship moored at Pier 3 Naval Station, Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. Other ships present were the USS NARWHAL (SSN 671) and the Brazilian frigate LIBERAL (F 43). The CNO Project was a test of the ASW command and control systems onboard ELROD, the object being to determine how well the SQR-19 TACTAS system and the LAMPS MK III system worked together. ELROD's was tasked to detect, localize and simulate attacks on NARWHAL using airborne and onboard sensors.

Throughout the CNO Project the SQR-19 was constantly streamed and at least one helicopter was in the air at all times. On 21 July a 76mm pre-action calibration fire (PACFIRE) was conducted. On 22 July two SML missiles were fired at a drone, destroying the target. ELROD returned to Roosevelt Roads on 22 July, mooring at Pier 3.

On 23 July ELROD was underway for Norfolk, Virginia. On the transit, 76mm pre-action calibration fires, basic engineering casualty control drills, small arms familiarization action firings and man overboard drills were conducted. On 26 July ELROD completed the transit, mooring outboard USS KING (DDG 41) at Pier 5. On 28 July ELROD entered the drydock USS SUSTAIN (AFDM 7) for work on the SQS-56 sonar. Modifications were required since the original installation and were completed. ELROD departed the drydock on 9 August and traveled up Chesapeake Bay to the Naval Weapons Station in Yorktown, Virginia. Ammunition was loaded on 10 August, and ELROD returned to the Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia mooring at Pier 5.

On 12 August ELROD left Norfolk as a participant in FLEETEX 4-87 under the tactical control of Commander, Carrier Group TWO embarked in USS CORAL SEA (CV 43). ELROD received fuel from USS MILWAUKEE (AOR 2) on 14 August from the USS SAVANNAH (AOR-4) on 20 August and from USS SEATTLE (AOE 3) on 24 August. Transit from the Cherry Point Operating Area to Charleston began on 26 August, after another UNREP with USS SEATTLE. ELROD moored at Naval Station, Charleston, South Carolina at Pier "N" on 28 August, and began a Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) period.

Throughout the POM period an Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV) was in progress. All work was completed by 14 September, when the main engines and ship's service diesel generators were started for operational testing during a transit up the Cooper River to the Charleston Naval Weapons Station. A final ammunition loadout prior to deployment was completed and ELROD returned to Pier "Q" at the Naval Station. ELROD began her deployment to the Middle East Force on 22 September under the tactical control of Commander Destroyer Squadron 36, embarked in USS RICHMOND K. TURNER (CG 20). The other units in the transit group were USS GALLERY (FFG 26) and USS CARR (FFG 52). On 25 September the group was refueled by USNS NEOSHO (T-AO 143).

On 1 October the transit group conducted a brief stop for fuel in the Azores. After refueling, the four ships left the Azores on their way to Palma in the Islas De Mallorca. On 5 October ELROD passed through the Straits of Gibraltar and joined the Sixth Fleet. ELROD entered Palma on 6 October for seven days of liberty. ELROD was again underway transiting the Mediterranean and anchored in Port Said, Egypt on the evening of 17 October and began transiting the Suez Canal early on the morning of 18 October. After the Canal transit, ELROD headed for Djibouti. During the five day transit, ELROD was engaged in a freedom of navigation exercise off the coast of Yemen. After stopping in Djibouti on 24 October for fuel, ELROD proceeded to the Gulf of Oman to rendezvous with USS BARBOUR County (LST 1195), USS ESTEEM (MSO 438) and USS FEARLESS (MSO 442), to escort them into the Persian Gulf. The escort group entered the Gulf on 28 October and anchored at Sitrah Anchorage off Bahrain on 30 October.

Leaving Bahrain on 31 October, ELROD proceeded to the Northern Persian Gulf to relieve USS THACH (FFG 43) of patrol duties. On 8 October ELROD was relieved by USS FORD (FFG 54) and refueled JP-5 fuel from USS MOUNT VERNON (LSD 39) off Bahrain Bell. After refueling, ELROD was assigned as radar picket off Bahrain and patrolled there until 12 November, when ELROD entered Bahrain for a port visit. ELROD moored at Mina Sulman Pier outboard USS LASALLE (AGF 3), and remained there until 16 November, when ELROD was ordered to the Northern Persian Gulf again to relieve USS FORD (FFG 54).

ELROD departed for Kuwait on 22 November to begin Earnest Will 87019, anchoring off Kuwait on 23 November, and actually began the escort mission southward on 24 November. Earnest Will 87019 continued through 30 November, when the convoy disbanded at Khor Fakkan. Waiting there was the MV Gus Darnell, which ELROD was to escort from Khor Fakkan to Bahrain and back. This escort mission began 1 December, with the two ships arriving in Bahrain on 2 December. MV Gus Darnell began to unload cargo while ELROD completed a brief stop for fuel and cargo and left port to patrol off Bahrain. On 5 December MV Gus Darnell and the USNS SEALIFT MEDITERRANEAN (T-AOT 173) left Bahrain escorted by ELROD. An uneventful transit followed and the ships safely arrived at Khor Fakkan on 7 December.

On 9 December Earnest Will 87020 began, with USS ELROD and USS FORD escorting the Gas King, Gas Princess and Gas Queen. Commander, Destroyer Squadron 23 arrived to tour the ship and left the same day. On 10 December ELROD arrived at Sitrah Anchorage, and went alongside USS MOUNT VERNON to refuel JP-5. On 11 December ELROD returned to Khor Fakkan to pick up the MV Ocean City and escort her to Kuwait in Earnest Will 87020A. The two ships arrived in Bahrain on 14 December, where ELROD refueled and reprovisioned and got underway the same day. The ships arrived off Kuwait on 15 December. ELROD anchored until Earnest Will 87021 started on 19 December. Vessels being escorted on Earnest Will 87021 were the MV Gas Princess and Ocean City. On 22 December the Gas Princess and Ocean City were detached, to be escorted by USS FORD, while ELROD rendezvoused with USNS MISPELLION (T-AO 105) to refuel. On 23 December ELROD reentered the Persian Gulf, relieved USS CHANDLER (DDG 994) and began a patrol in the Central Persian Gulf. On 25 December the tanker "HYUNDAI 7" was attacked. A LAMPS MK III helicopter from USS ELROD and a LYNX helicopter from HMS SCYLLA evacuated 20 crewmen to HMS SCYLLA. On 27 December ELROD was relieved in the Central Persian Gulf and steamed to Khor Fakkan in company with USS THACH to begin Earnest Will 87022 involved the escort of MV Lawrence H. Gianella and USNS Sealift Antarctic (T-AOT 176) to Bahrain. ELROD entered Bahrain on 30 December, and moored portside to USS MOUNT VERNON. The 31 December was spent at Mina Sulman Pier, Bahrain.