



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS WASP (LHD-1)
FPO AE 09556-1660

5700 IN REPLY TO:
Ser EXEC/117
AUG 04 2004

From: Commanding Officer, USS WASP (LHD 1)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), 805 Kidder Breese
Street, SE, Washington Navy Yard, DC 20374-5060

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY, USS WASP (LHD 1), 2003 (OPNAV 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12H

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Supporting Documents

1. Per reference (a), USS WASP (LHD 1) Command History for 2003 has been compiled and is forwarded as enclosure (1) through (4).

James E. Wise II
J. E. WISE II

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J. E. WISE II

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. **Mission.** USS WASP (LHD 1) is a multipurpose amphibious assault ship whose primary mission is to embark, deploy, support and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in amphibious assault operations by helicopter, landing craft, amphibious vehicles, V/STOL or any combination of these methods. USS WASP has a secondary mission of sea control.

2. **Chain of Command.**

Administrative

COMNAVSURFLANT NORFOLK VA (UIC 53824)

RADM Terrance T. Etnyre, USN

COMPHIBGRU TWO (UIC 55333)

RADM Michael Nowakowski, USN (1 JAN - 21 AUG)

RADM Reubin B. Bookert, USN (22 AUG - Present)

Operational

COMSECONDFLT (UIC 08961)

VADM Cutler J. Dawson, USN (1 JAN - 15 AUG)

VADM Gary Roughead, USN (15 AUG - Present)

COMPHIBGRU TWO (UIC 55333)

RADM Michael Nowakowski, USN (1 JAN - 21 AUG)

RADM Reubin B. Bookert, USN (22 AUG - Present)

COMPHIBRON FOUR (UIC 55336)

CAPT Peter J. Frothingham, USN (1 JAN - 30 AUG)

CAPT Steve C. Joachim, USN (30 AUG - Present)

3. **Commanding Officer.**

CAPT Edward P. McNamee III, USN (1 JAN-28 AUG)

CAPT James E. Wise II, USN (28 AUG-Present)

4. **Embarked/Attached Commands and Detachments.**

COMPHIBRON FOUR (UIC 55336) (1 APR - Present)

TACRON TWO TWO Det One (UIC 09812) (1 JUL - Present)

CNBG 2 LNO

SPECWARGRU 2 LNE

FLTSURGTEAM EIGHT (UIC 39846) (SEP - 31 DEC)

EODMU SIX DET NORFOLK VA (UIC 45682)

HELSPRON EIGHT (UIC 55218)

ACU FOUR Det (UIC 47106)

BMU TWO Det (UIC 53211)

22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit

Det, MLE

Det, 8th Communication Battalion (JTF Enabler)

Det, 2d Radio Battalion

Det, Interrogator/Translator Platoon

BLT 1/6

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 266 (Reinforced)

Marine Service Support Group 22

Enclosure (1)

Aircraft on board.

12 CH-46 Sea Knights
4 SH-53 Super Stallions
4 AH-1 Cobras
3 UH-1 Hueys
5 AV-8 Harriers
2 SH-60 Seahawks

6. **Homeport.**

Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia.

7. **Command Employment**

JAN-JUN DPMA 03
MAY LOA
JUN Sea Trials
JUL FMAV
AUG CART II
SEP TSTA
OCT TSTA, PMINT
NOV FEP, Ammo Onload, MISSILEX
DEC ESGEX

8. **CY-03 Awards**

Battle Efficiency Award, SECNAV Safety Excellence Award, CNO Safety Award, Admiral Flatley Award, The Ogden Award, Chief of Naval Information Merit Award

CHRONOLOGY

January 2003

01-10 JAN Holiday Standdown.
01 JAN-20 JUN Continued DPMA.
01 JAN Moored Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Va.
14 JAN Partners in Leadership luncheon at St. Helena Elementary School.
22 JAN All hands CO's call.
IDA ship visit.
24 JAN Inspector General Focus Group discussions.
31 JAN WASP's night out with the Norfolk Admirals.
Officers' promotion ceremony.

February 2003

03-05 FEB Medical SHOTEX.
06 FEB Volunteers support Project H.E.L.P.
20-23 FEB WASP's night out with the circus.

March 2003

06 MAR Medical SHOTEX.
06 MAR E-6 advancement exam.
12 MAR DD(X) quality of life briefs.
Community relations project at Norfolk Union Mission.
13 MAR E-5 advancement exam.
20 MAR E-4 advancement exam.
26 MAR Volunteers support Project H.E.L.P.
NMCRS fundraiser.

April 2003

04 APR Conducted 2M certification.
09 APR Community relations project at Norfolk Union Mission.
11 APR Sailors attend all hands MCPON call.
12 APR Family Support Group Easter egg hunt at Mt. Trashmore.
16 APR Community relations project at Brighton Elementary, Portsmouth, VA.
17 APR Stinger Drydock Invitational golf tournament.
23 APR Volunteers support Project H.E.L.P.
24 APR Blood drive.
29 APR ATG visit.

May 2003

01 MAY E-8 frocking ceremony.
05 MAY Flood drydock.
06 MAY WASP moved berths to pier 6 (Norfolk Naval Shipyard)
7-9 MAY Pay and Advisory Assist Team visit.

Enclosure (2)

12-17 MAY Aviation Assist visit.
14 MAY Community relations event at the Foodbank.
15 MAY E-6/E-6 frocking ceremony.
21 MAY Volunteers support Project H.E.L.P.
28 MAY Light Off Assessment.

June 2003

02-06 JUN Spring PRT.
03 JUN Conducted Weapons Platform weight testing.
06 JUN Student/tutor softball game at St. Helena Elementary.
10 JUN Conducted safety standdown.
13 JUN E-4 frocking ceremony.
17 JUN Depart NNSY for sea trials.
Aviation Readiness Qualification.
19 JUN Returned to NNSY.
23-25 JUN Material Assessment Training Team visit.
25 JUN Volunteers support Project H.E.L.P.
26 JUN Command Picnic.

July 2003

01-18 JUL Conducted FMAV.
03 JUL Conducted AVCERT Radar certification.
15 JUL Departed NNSY for sea trials and return to Naval Station Norfolk.
16 JUL Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk VA.
21-25 JUL Conducted Welldeck Certification.
23 JUL Departed NAVSTA Norfolk for underway training.
29-31 JUL Conducted Initial Assessment.
31 JUL Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk.

August 2003

01 AUG Fleet Surgical Team 8 embarked.
01-03 AUG Selected Reservist orientation visit.
07 AUG Naval Intelligence Basic Officers Course tour.
07 AUG Conducted COMLANTFLT Postal Assessment.
08 AUG Conducted TACAN certification.
11 AUG Departed NAVSTA Norfolk.
12-14 AUG Conducted Medical SHOTEX.
15-17 AUG Cape Canaveral, FL, port visit.
18-21 AUG Conducted CART II inspection.
19 AUG Departed Cape Canaveral, FL.
20 AUG Burial at sea.
22 AUG Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk, VA.
25 AUG German Armed Forces Command and Staff visit.
25-29 AUG Conducted Supply Management Assessment.
28 AUG WASP Change of Command ceremony.

September 2003

03 SEP Conducted Aviation Facility Certification.
04 SEP E-6 advancement exam.

06 SEP Departed NAVSTA Norfolk, VA, for Tactical
Commander's Amphibious Training.
13 SEP Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk, VA.
11 SEP E-5 advancement exam.
18 SEP E-4 advancement exam.
16 SEP Departed NAVSTA Norfolk, VA, due to Hurricane
Isabel.
17 SEP Conducted Chief Petty Officer Pinning Ceremony.
20 SEP Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk, VA.
4 SEP Kentucky ESGR tour.

October 2003

06-08 OCT Conducted Anti-terrorism Force Protection
exercise.
09-17 OCT Departed NAVSTA Norfolk, VA, for PMINT
10 OCT Conducted Medical SHOTEX.
17 OCT Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk, VA.
22 OCT Conducted Predeployment Brief.
27-31 OCT Supply Management Inspection.

November 2003

03 NOV Conducted Medical Readiness Assessment.
06 NOV Sailors attended WASP Holiday Party.
10-12 NOV Departed NAVSTA Norfolk, VA, for operations in
VACAPES
11-12 NOV Conducted ENG TSTA.
11-13 NOV Conducted FEP.
13 NOV Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk, VA.
17-21 NOV Conducted 3M Assessment.
18 NOV Departed NAVSTA Norfolk, VA, for NWS Earle, NJ for
ammunition onload.
19-22 NOV Conducted ammunition onload at NWS Earle, NJ.
23 NOV Departed NWS Earle, NJ.
24-25 NOV Conducted MISSILEX.
25 NOV Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk, VA.

December 2003

01 DEC Departed NAVSTA Norfolk, VA, for ESGEX/SACEX.
23 DEC Returned to NAVSTA Norfolk, VA.
23-31 DEC Commenced Holiday standdown.

NARRATIVE

January 2003

USS WASP began 2003 moored at Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Va., continuing a seven-month Post Deployment Maintenance Availability (PMA). Since November 2002, WASP has undergone a \$100-million renovation package to include improving the ship's mission readiness and quality of life. WASP Sailors recommitted its adopt-a-school partnership with St. Helena Elementary School, located in Norfolk, Va. Tutors attended a luncheon and were welcomed by the school's principal, teaching staff and students. The ship's MWR committee continued to provide recreation and liberty engagements during the shipyard period. Beginning in January Wasp's Supply Department funded and completed over \$280,000 in habitability contracts during the Docking Phased Maintenance Availability, modernizing and improving numerous shipboard spaces to include crew, 1st class, and CPO messes, LMRC, wardroom lounges, CO and XO cabins, and numerous other habitability spaces. The renovations improved the quality of life for all WASP crew members. Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Department completed Lot 2 and 3 AV8 specific test program set (CASS HP test equipment) during the month.

February 2003

USS WASP chaplain services began actively supporting the Hampton Roads volunteer programs by arranging many opportunities for WASP Sailors. Catholic Charities of Hampton Roads Project H.E.L.P. became a monthly engagement, with Sailors volunteering to spend one afternoon a month doing lawn maintenance and small home repairs for elderly Hampton Roads residents. For the next several months, the ship's repair locker personnel received extensive fire fighting training at Fleet Training Center Atlantic on Norfolk Naval Station.

March 2003

USS WASP continued its support of Project H.E.L.P. through chaplain services and volunteer assistance. WASP medical department held a SHOTEX 6 MAR and DD(X) quality of life briefs 12 MAR. WASP volunteers also participated in a community relations project at Norfolk Union Mission 12 MAR. E-6, E-5 and E-4 advancement exams were held on 6, 13 and 20 MAR. CI division ran 12,000 feet of cable, made 500 electrical connections, and installed 24 phone stations throughout the ship as part of the AI phone installation. This ship's force upgrade significantly increased communications capabilities between key command and control stations while saving over \$7500 in installation costs. CI also coordinated the installation of AN/WSN-7 ring laser inertial navigation sets, and completed the upgrade of the Definity Telephone system, including the installation and testing of 600 digital phone sets.

April 2003

WASP conducted a 3M certification 4 APR and volunteers again participated in a community relations project at the Norfolk Union Mission 9 APR. Sailors attended an all hands MCPON call 11 APR. The Family Support Group Easter egg hunt at Mt. Trashmore in Virginia Beach, Va., was held 12 APR. On 16 APR, WASP volunteered in another community relations project at Brighton Elementary, Portsmouth, Va. During its maintenance availability, WASP held the Stinger Drydock Invitational golf tournament 17 APR. USS WASP continued its support of Project H.E.L.P through chaplain services and volunteer assistance. WASP held a blood drive 24 APR, and the Afloat Training Group came aboard 29 APR. The medical department was awarded on behalf of WASP its 6th consecutive Green "H" for excellence in health promotions for 2002. AIMD received a new ALQ-144 test fixture, which enables AIMD to perform repairs on H-46, AH-1 Whiskey, and ALQ-144, previously a BCM item. C5I completed an NTCSS II upgrade.

May 2003

WASP started MAY off in drydock with an E-8 frocking ceremony. On 5 MAY, WASP was ready to be put back in the water. The drydock was flooded. The following day, WASP moved berths to pier 6 Norfolk Naval Shipyard. From 7 to 9 MAY, the Pay and Advisory Assist Team visited WASP, followed by the Aviation Assist visit 12-17 MAY. Volunteers participated in a community relations event at the Norfolk Food Bank 14 MAY. E-5/E-6 frocking ceremonies were held 15 MAY. On 21 MAY, volunteers again supported Project H.E.L.P. C5I completed a GOTS Delta upgrade and began a NALCOMIS MARTIER installation. Concluding the month, WASP held a Light Off Assessment 28 MAY. Medical participated in the Light Off Assessment by ensuring the command completion percentage for audiograms was well above the recommended passing score.

June 2003

WASP Sailors participated in the spring physical readiness test 2-6 JUN, and conducted Weapons Platform weight testing the next day. Volunteers participated in a student/tutor softball game at St. Helena Elementary 6 MAR. After spending time in drydock, WASP and its Sailors conducted a safety standdown on 10 JUN. The E-4 frocking ceremony was held 13 JUN for all new petty officers. 17 JUN marked WASP's first at-sea period as it departed NNSY for sea trials and earned its Aviation Readiness Qualification. Two days later, it returned to NNSY where it received a visit from the Material Assessment Training Team 23-25 JUN. Volunteers participated again in June to support Project H.E.L.P. On 26 JUN, Sailors, friends and families enjoyed the afternoon at the WASP Command Picnic. The Supply Department completed a comprehensive Integrated Logistics Overhaul, inventorying and reconciling the Basic Material Files on over

35,000 line items to achieve a 100 percent inventory accuracy rate. AIMD completed an HP CASS Installation and installed six new EE battery chargers. The installation was a much-needed change. Though not a system upgrade, the old chargers had exceeded their operating life and constantly required repair. C5I completed the NALCOMIS MARTIER installation and began work on 75 new LAN drops for the Marines on ES4U. CE Division saved more than \$2.4 million with its mast preservation project. Medical added an updated Digital X-Ray unit to its inventory. IM4 Division offloaded 150 items of Support Equipment from the ship for complete rework at NNSY. Rework was completed by June 03 and loaded back on the ship in like new condition in preparation for ESG-2 deployment. USS WASP EKMS Manager received accolades from COMPHIBGRU on CMS Inspection, graded best CMS Vault within COMPHIBGRU TWO.

July 2003

The first half of July, WASP conducted FMAV. During that time, WASP also went through AVCERT Radar certification. WASP changed berths 15 JUL, as it departed Norfolk Naval Shipyard for sea trials, then returned to Naval Station Norfolk 16 JUL. From 21 to 25 JUL, WASP conducted Welldeck Certifications, and got underway on 23 JUL for underway training. While at sea, WASP conducted an Initial Assessment before returning to NAVSTA Norfolk 31 JUL. C5I successfully ran two separate LAN systems, aboard the barge APL-66 and on WASP during the DPMA from NOV 02 to JUL 2003. C5I also completed the 75 LAN drop installation project for the Marines on ES4U, as well as a CENTRIXS and NIDTS installation. DPMA projects completed include a 35C install, AN/SPS-49(V)5 groom, AN/SPS-67 groom, AN/SPS-67 antenna replacement, AN/UPX-37 install, MX-400 repair, NITES install and SMQ-11 groom. Other installs included Common Data Link Management System (CDLMS), Joint Tactical Terminal (JTT), Bridge to Bridge Radio (URC-139), HF ALE (Modification to URC-109), Digital IFF (AN/UPX-37), Ring Laser Gyro Navigator (AN/WSN-7), and the Havequick (AN/WSC-3(V)11). Other major evolutions included the replacements of RADOMES for WSC-8, WSC-6 AFT Antenna, SPN-43 Antenna, and the SPS-67 Antenna.

August 2003

WASP started August off with a Selected Reservist orientation visit and a Naval Intelligence Basic Officers Course tour. The COMLANTFLETC Postal Assessment was conducted 7 AUG, with Supply scoring an Outstanding (98 percent) on the Postal Audit. Postal Inspectors specifically noted WASP as having "one of the finest postal operations on the waterfront." Following the assessment, WASP conducted its TACAN certification. On 11 AUG, WASP departed NAVSTA Norfolk. While at sea, Medical held SHOTEX for all Sailors. From AUG. 15-17 WASP stopped in Cape Canaveral, Fla., 15-17 AUG for a port visit before conducting a CART II inspection. Departing Cape Canaveral 19 AUG, WASP headed back to

NAVSTA Norfolk, Va. During its return trip, WASP held a burial at sea ceremony. During CART II, C5I earned a 94 percent on its inspections. On 25 AUG, the German Armed Forces Command and Staff visit WASP for a familiarization tour. The COMNAVSURFLANT Afloat Training Group (ATG) conducted a Supply Management Assessment (SMA) 25-29 AUG. Food Service and Retail Operations (S2/5 and S3 divisions) received high enough scores on the SMA (93.2% and 96.0% respectively) to validate their portions of the follow-on Supply Management Inspection (SMI) conducted OCT 2003. WASP held a Change of Command ceremony 28 AUG, with CAPT James E. Wise II relieving CAPT Edward P. McNamee III.

September 2003

On 3 SEP, WASP conducted its Aviation Facility Certification. The following day, WASP Second Class Petty Officers took the E-6 advancement exam. On 6 SEP, WASP departed Naval Station Norfolk for a seven-day Tactical Commander's Amphibious Training. Third Class Petty Officers and Seamen had the opportunity to take the advancement exam on 11 and 18 SEP, respectively. In mid-September, WASP and 40 other ships evacuated Norfolk Naval Station to avoid Hurricane Isabel. During the evacuation, WASP held a Chief Petty Officer Pinning ceremony. WASP returned after the hurricane on 20 SEP and hosted a Kentucky ESGR tour on 24 SEP. Throughout the month, an extensive \$135,000 stateroom modification contract, converting 20 WASP and PHIBRON staterooms from 2-man to 3-man rooms, was completed to support the additional officer billeting requirements generated by the Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) concept. AIMD installed two pretest fixtures for APX 100, allowing AIMD to perform BIT tests and current readings on APX 100 RT, previously requiring BCM.

October 2003

WASP began October by conducted Anti-terrorism/Force Protection exercises at Naval Station Norfolk. Preparing for deployment, WASP participated in PMINT exercise 9-17 OCT. During the exercise, WASP medical department conducted SHOTEX. WASP held a predeployment brief 22 OCT, and COMNAVSURFLANT ATG conducted a successful Supply Management Inspection 27-31 OCT where Supply scored an overall grade of 91 percent. The Readiness Divisions (S1, S6, S8) successfully passed the SMI receiving an overall General Stores score of 91.1 percent. C5I earned a 97.5 percent on the SMI. C5I participated in CRC and C5RA each with a 95 percent grade. CR Division met several milestones. It completed Exercise White Pinnacle within 3 minutes (required COMLANTFLT goal is 20 minutes). The previous USS WASP record was 8 minutes set in 2000. WASP was the first ship to conducted a successful MDU DATA transfer via EHF Point-to-Point, NECC, and STE utilizing newly acquired PCMDS system. WASP was the first amphibious ship (large deck) to activate SIPR/NIPRNET email connectivity via EHF MDR ADNS. And Wasp was the first

COMPHIBGRU TWO ship to complete EKMS PHASE IV in accordance with DCMS Washington, D.C., to enhance Navy's Electronic Key Management system.

November 2003

WASP's Medical Department underwent a Medical Readiness Assessment earning a C-1 Status. WASP Sailors enjoyed dinner and dancing at an annual Winter Holiday party held at the Waterside Marriott 8 NOV. WASP departed Norfolk Naval Station for the VACAPES operating area where the Engineering Department participated in an Engineering TSTA and FEP. A 3M assessment was conducted 17 NOV. Returning to Naval Station Norfolk, Sailors participated in the Physical Readiness Test before and during the Ammunition Onload at Earle Naval Weapons Station in New Jersey. The ammo onload was conducted 19-23 NOV, followed by a Missile Exercise 24 NOV before returning to Norfolk Naval Station 25 NOV. Medical added Bio-weapons detection equipment to its inventory.

December 2003

USS WASP participated in ESGEX 1-23 DEC, a fully comprehensive exercise involving all ESG assets. During the exercise, Marines raided the beaches of Eglin Air Force Base while ships bombarded the coast with sea-to-shore munitions. During ESGEX, WASP was evaluated on its ability to respond to mass casualty situations. WASP medical passed all facets of the inspections and was certified to the competency level as a Level II Trauma center. USS WASP held a media availability 11 DEC with local and national media flying to the ship in the morning and departing via LCAC the same evening. This media availability helped inform the public about the mission of USS WASP and the ESG concept. Distinguished visitors toured WASP 14, 15 and 16 DEC. Supply department provided unparalleled logistical support during ESGEX to the six combatant ships, one fast attack submarine, and 3,000 Marines of the 22nd MEU that comprised the WASP ESG. Supply processed, expedited, and delivered more than 50 high-priority repair parts to the ships of the ESG. Returning to NAVSTA Norfolk 23 DEC, Sailors began their Christmas leave period. During December, AIMD earned its certification of two 2M stations in work center 690, enabling it to perform multiple repairs in support of the ACE and SARDET squadron. AIMD also replaced the Flight Deck Scrubber with 2 new upgraded 1550 TENNANT Flight Deck Scrubbers. Medical added a VITROS chemical analyzer to its inventory of equipment. Over the course of the last few months, AIMD implemented several improvements, including the implementation of more than 3,000 digital publications, eliminating the need for most paper publications, which saved the department from dedicating countless man hours towards the upkeep of publication binders. AIMD established a Quality Assurance audit tracking system ensuring all audits are accounted for in a timely manner. Overhauled SE PMS program and developed a Local Command Procedure to ensure the program functions more

efficiently. IM1 also developed a comprehensive Technical Directive tracking program to effectively implement all incoming TDs on aircraft equipment. IM2 was certified Navy Oil Analysis Laboratory to support 22nd MEU and various ESG assets (W/C 470). IM2 also received advanced training on A/F27T-10 hydraulic test stand raising readiness and customer support abilities for 22nd MEU and in support of all ESG IMA requests (W/C 520). IM3 supervised the installation of the CASS HP station, which increased repair capabilities, allowing IM3 to run Lot 2 & 3 APG-65 RADAR systems for the AV8, previously a BCM system. IM3 received the ANVIS 9 adapter plate enabling repair of ANVIS 9 NVGs, previously a BCM item. C5I had several post DPMA projects that affected quality of operations, including grooms of AN/SPS-73, AN/TPX-42 IFF, AN/SPQ-12, AN/SPA-25G, AN/URN-25, AN/UPX-29/28/AIMS MK XII IFF, AN/SPN-43C, AN/SPN-41, ECDIS, UMQ-12, and AN/UQN-4A. In addition, C5I completed an AN/URN-25 TACAN cable repair, an AN/SPN-43C antenna replacement, EPLRS-DR install, and an AAFTDS (AN/KSQ-1) install, as well as installations of the Battle Force Tactical Trainer (BFTT), and the Peripheral emulation System (PES).