

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

HSM-48 Command Operations Report - 2015

1. **Command Data:**

Command: Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron FOUR EIGHT

Unit Identification Code (UIC): 55151

Commanding Officer(s):

O'Grady, Edward J. CDR	02 MAY 14 - 20 AUG 15
Hill, Jeffrey W. CDR	20 AUG 15 - PRESENT

Executive Officers(s):

Hill, Jeffrey W. CDR	02 MAY 14 - 20 AUG 15
Crain, Bradford P. CDR	20 AUG 15 - PRESENT

Command Master Chief:

Messenger, Howard D. CMDCM	19 NOV 12 - 5 FEB 2016
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Maintenance Master Chief:

[REDACTED]	17 DEC 12 - 31 OCT 15
[REDACTED]	01 NOV 15 - PRESENT

Mission/Command Employment/Area of Operations: Deploy and support combat-ready MH-60R detachments to meet U.S. Atlantic Fleet operations. Areas of Operation include NORTHCOM, EUCOM, AFRICOM, and CENTCOM.

Permanent Location: NS Mayport, Florida

Immediate Superior In Command:

Operational: Commander, Helicopter Maritime Strike Wing Atlantic

Administrative: Commander, Helicopter Maritime Strike Wing Atlantic

Detachment/Units Attached

Detachment Officer in Charge

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. USS ROOSEVELT (DDG 80) | LCDR P. M. BORSZICH |
| 2. USS MONTEREY (CG 61) | LCDR J. M. EPPS |
| 3. USS VICKSBURG (CG 69) | LCDR C. A. ESQUIVEL |
| 4. USS TAYLOR (FFG 50)
USS ANZIO (CG 68) | LCDR R. V. PADILLA |
| 5. USS JAMES E. WILLIAMS (DDG 95)
USS VICKSBURG (CG 69) | LCDR R. P. MILLER |

MH-60R Aircraft Assigned to HSM-48 (Tail Code: HR)

<u>Side Number</u>	<u>BUNO</u>
500	168089
501	167005
502	167036
503	166597
504	167037
506	166545
510	167044
511	168086
512	168091
513	168092
515	167053

Number of Military Personnel Assigned:

	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
Sea UIC (55151)	46	212

Command Points of Contact:

OPERA

 [mil](#)
 DSN: 

PUBLI  ICER

 DSN: 

2. **Commander's Assessment:**

In 2015, the Vipers of HSM-48 continued to provide an overwhelming fleet presence by deploying six combat ready helicopter detachments. Exceptional leadership, an aggressive training program, and superior management of Viper personnel enabled the squadron to meet every commitment in Calendar Year 2015. The challenges associated with the Optimized Fleet Response Plan (O-FRP), the sustainment of six deployed detachments spanned two different airframes with MH-60R and SH-60B, and preparation of an additional surge capable combat-ready detachment was met with extraordinary success. Viper aircraft were available to Combatant Commanders in 5th and 6th FLEET and U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) Areas of Responsibility (AOR) supporting operations and exercises worldwide, including the Global War on Terrorism. Detachments exceeded O-FRP readiness and aircrew proficiency requirements through an efficiently managed maintenance effort that resulted in 1105.0 embarked mishap-free flight hours.

Supporting SH-60B and MH-60R airframes, HSM-48 led the way during Organizational Maintenance Program Audit (OMPA), Detachment Readiness Inspections (DRI) and Aircraft Material Condition Inspections (AMI) with assigned aircraft achieving some of the best scores from COMHELMARSTRIKEWINGLANT. The Viper Maintenance and Operations Team combined considerable talent and planning to execute an impressive 3759.0 flight hours and 2641 shipboard landings all within one year of completing an airframe transition and successful Safe-to-Operate inspection. During the same period, Viper aircrews successfully dropped 13 torpedoes and shot 11 Hellfire missiles in pre-deployment weapons detachments. A testament to the capability of Viper personnel and aircraft, not a single ordnance delivery mission was aborted. It is also significant to note Viper Maintenance led the way throughout the year across COMHELMARSTRIKEWINGLANT starting with an OMPA score of 95% followed shortly with a the Commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF) AMI score of 95.2% which was accomplished in conjunction with six of the Hellfire shots. Viper Maintenance trains the way we fight and the results show it!

In all, the squadron flew over 3759.0 flight hours with 1105.0 being flown by the deployed detachments during their combined 712 days underway. The commitment of the flight crews and maintenance personnel allowed for 1122 ASU hours, 522 ASW hours,

launched 11 AGM-114 Hellfire, dropped 13 Mk-54/46 Torpedoes, shot 17821 7.62MM, and 11300 rounds of .50cal for training.

During calendar year 2015, HSM-48 advanced 5 Sailor to the rank of Chief Petty Officer; 5 Sailors to E-6; 20 Sailors to E-5; and 10 Sailors to E-4. In addition, AO2 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were meritoriously promoted to E-6 and E-5 respectively. [REDACTED] meritoriously promoted to E-5 and LSSN [REDACTED] meritoriously promoted to E-4 through the Meritorious Advancement Program (MAP) due to their outstanding work ethic and steadfast commitment to excellence.

3. Chronology and Narrative:

<u>Det/CEL Ship</u>	<u>Operations</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1. USS LEYTE GULF (CG 55)	DEPLOYED	CTF-80	23JUN14-04JAN15
3. USS VICKSBURG (CG 69)	DEPLOYED	EMED	04DEC14- 11JUL15
4. USS TAYLOR (FFG 50)	DEPLOYED	CTF80	08JAN15-06FEB15
4. USS ANZIO (CG 68)	JW 15-1	NLANT	24FEB15-20MAY15
5. USS JAMES E WILLIAMS (DDG 95)	DEPLOYED	CTF-80/84	21AUG15-08OCT15
5. USS VICKSBURG (CG 69)	DEPLOYED	CTF-84	09OCT15-16OCT15

Detachment ONE:

Detachment ONE "The Kraken" stood up in July 2015 in support of CSG-10 and Carrier Air Wing Three. Detachment ONE consists of three fully qualified combat aircrews and 25 expert maintenance personnel employing two MH-60R's. In August 2015, The Kraken quickly completed a successful Combat Systems Ship Qualifications Trials (CSSQT) period with USS BARRY (DDG 52), testing the ability of its crew to integrate shipboard ASW systems with the MH-60R acoustic sensors and torpedo attack capability. In conjunction, Detachment ONE dropped one Mk 54 REXTORP and flew 15 hours. In September 2015, Detachment ONE honed their tactical capabilities during an extremely successful HARP/AUTEC period. The tremendous efforts by the maintenance team and aircrew assigned to the Detachment led to the qualification of three combat ready crews, the employment of three Hellfire Missiles, and the perfect placement of three Mk 54 torpedoes while flying 108.5 hours. Subsequently,

Detachment ONE deployed in USS ROOSEVELT (DDG 80) in October 2015 and quickly and safely completed an Integrated Ship Training Team demonstrating the ability to operate in the seagoing environment. Immediately following ISATT, Detachment ONE and USS ROOSEVELT took part in Submarine Commander's Course 46 in the AUTEK OPAREA involving several surface combatants from CSG-10. The exercise rigorously tested the tactical ASW capabilities of Detachment ONE against the world's finest subsurface warriors. Detachment ONE was successful on five out of five torpedo attacks and was commended for its capability in the arena. Next, in November 2015, The Kraken continued its time at sea by taking part in GRUSAIL with all members of CSG-10. This afforded Detachment ONE the opportunity to fully integrate with IKE and CSG-10 by conducting numerous SSC, VBSS, and ASW events. During this full workup period, Detachment ONE flew 130 mishap-free flight hours with a 100% sortie completion rate. Detachment ONE continues its FRTP workup cycle into 2016 looking forward to dominating at sea.

Detachment TWO:

The "Heros" of Detachment TWO stood up in July 2015 in support of CSG-10 and Carrier Air Wing Three. In September 2015, during the "Basic" phase of their Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP), Detachment TWO honed their tactical capabilities during an extremely successful HARP/AUTEK period. The tremendous efforts by the maintenance team and aircrew assigned to the Detachment led to the qualification of three combat ready aircrews, the employment of three Hellfire Missiles, three Mk 54 torpedoes, and execution of over 108 mishap free flight hours. Detachment TWO is assigned to USS MONTEREY (CG 61) and is scheduled to deploy on time to the Fifth Fleet Area of Responsibility in support of her Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) mission.

Detachment THREE:

Detachment THREE "The Minutemen" continued their deployment in USS VICKSBURG (CG 69). USS VICKSBURG served as the flagship for Standing NATO Maritime Group TWO (SNMG2) relieving USS LEYTE GULF (CG 55) and HSM FOUR EIGHT Detachment ONE. SNMG2 led a flotilla represented by Canada, Turkey, Italy, Spain, Germany, France, and The Netherlands. Detachment THREE served as the Helicopter Element Coordinator (HEC) and coordinated flight operations for six foreign Navy helicopter detachments accumulating over 1000 mishap free flight hours. SNMG2 supported several passing exercises (PASSEXES) throughout the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Baltic Sea AORs. The flotilla

participated in JOINT WARRIOR 15-1, a COMSUBNATO-led DYNAMIC MONGOOSE, and BALTOPS 15. SNMG2 also supported OPERATION ACTIVE ENDEAVOR, NATO's on-going anti-terrorism mission in the Mediterranean Sea. SNMG2 units patrolled high density traffic lanes throughout the Mediterranean Sea looking for illicit trafficking operations and vessels of interest. Operational and exercise highlights include EW data collection, providing near real time ESM updates to the fleet. Detachment THREE also gained extensive on top time and joint dual dipping against very capable American, British, German, and Swedish adversaries proving to be invaluable ASW training. The Minutemen flew nearly 500 hours and led the way as HSM 48's flagship MH-60R detachment. Detachment THREE returned home to Mayport, FL in July 2015.

Combat Element FOUR:

Combat Element FOUR was established in July 2014. The single MH-60R detachment is manned with three combat crews. CEL FOUR has the unique role to provide helicopter/detachment assets to battlegroups, fleet exercises and joint training missions and it does not follow the typical detachment training or deployment timeline. CEL FOUR embarked USS TAYLOR (FFG 50) January 2015 to participate as COMPTUEX OPFOR. CEL FOUR was the last rotary wing element to land and operate on USS TAYLOR as the frigate decommissioned in May 2015. In February 2015, Combat Element FOUR sortied to sea with USS ANZIO (CG 68). USS ANZIO had not operated with a helicopter department for nearly four years. CEL FOUR expertly integrated warfighting capabilities of the MH-60R with those of ANZIO to create a highly-effective combat unit. This was integral to ANZIO's success during JOINT WARRIOR 15-1. Ever flexible and ready for tasking, CEL FOUR was hand-selected by COMNAVSURFLANT to evaluate and certify USS BAINBRIDGE (DDG 96) AND USS PORTER (DDG 74) for aviation operations while embarked ANZIO. The expertise and training provided to these units enabled both ships to deploy on schedule and PORTER to complete its homeport shift to Rota, Spain. The "Iron Horsemen" of Combat Element FOUR returned to home port May 2015.

Detachment FIVE:

Detachment FIVE was established in December 2014 to support various Fleet Forces exercises and missions. The dual MH-60R detachment also supported Theater Anti-Submarine Warfare tasking. Due to the unique role filled by Det FIVE, they did not follow the typical detachment training or deployment timeline.

With three pilots still completing their FRS transition from the SH-60B to the MH-60R, Det FIVE attended Helicopter Advanced Readiness Program (HARP) in March 2015. Immediately after completing the HARP academic and simulator events, Det FIVE sent two aircraft and a full maintenance team to AUTEK to support a Seahawk Weapons and Tactics Instructor (SWTI) qualification course. Two weeks later, the aircrew joined the maintainers and completed all Hellfire missile shoots, torpedo drops, and tactical events on the island.

Detachment FIVE embarked in USS JAMES E. WILLIAMS (DDG 95) for Integrated Ship Aviation Training Team (ISATT) in May 2015 and rolled immediately into Submarine Commanders Course 44 (SCC-44) in AUTEK. The Det remained embarked for two weeks in Norfolk, then deployed for a month-long escort of the tow of the Ex-USS MIAMI from Portsmouth, ME to the Panama Canal. Det FIVE provided critical force protection and logistical support for the tug and tow. In August 2015, Det FIVE received tasking to mobilize and deploy the next day for urgent national tasking. The Det supported Operation IRON SPECTRE in the Atlantic basin until October 2015. Due to JAMES E. WILLIAMS scheduled maintenance availability, Det FIVE cross decked to USS VICKSBURG (CG 69) in 24 hours and got underway to conduct ISATT with VICKSBURG. Upon completion of ISATT and CTF-80 DLQs, Det FIVE disembarked in Mayport and remained on Theater ASW Recall through the fall.

Host Squadron Support

While Viper Detachments were forward-deployed and bringing combat capability to Fleet Commanders, the squadron's Homeguard element demonstrated the squadron's capabilities to the community and to the future of Naval Aviation. The squadron hosted midshipmen, providing ground training, flight simulators, and flying opportunities in the MH-60R. This experience is critical in helping future Naval Officers determine their career path. Additionally, HSM-48 squadron representatives provided invaluable mentorship, setting the example for JROTC/ROTC tour groups from high schools across the nation and volunteering at various local elementary schools.

Ranges Utilized

As the Vipers worked to dramatically expand their lethality, they took advantage of numerous training ranges in the Southeastern United States. HSM-48 utilized the Pinecastle,

Rodman, Townsend, Grand Bay, Ft. Stewart, and Camp Blanding ranges on a regular basis throughout the year to achieve required FLIR/CATM/SCAR/SACT crew served weapons qualifications for assigned pilots and aircrewmembers.

4. Supporting Reports:

Personal Awards

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals: 17

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals: 86

Annual HSM-48 Awards

Officer of the Year: LCDR [REDACTED]

Pilot of the Year: LT [REDACTED]

Aircrewman of the Year: AWR1 [REDACTED]

Outstanding CPO of the Year: AEC [REDACTED]

Enlisted Aviation Maintenance Person OTY: AO1 [REDACTED]

Sailor of the Year: AWR1 [REDACTED]

Junior Sailor of the Year: AT2 [REDACTED]

Plane Captain of the Year: AD3 [REDACTED]

Safety Pro of the Year: AM3 [REDACTED]

Admin Support Person of the Year: LS2 [REDACTED]

Blue Jacket of the Year: PR3 [REDACTED]

Annual CMHSMWL Awards

CAPT C. J. Nechvatal Award: LTJG [REDACTED]

5. Published Documents:

Wings of Gold:

- a. "The Vipers of HSM-48" (published Winter 2015)

6. **Photographs:**

Official Photo of CDR Hill, Commanding Officer of HSM-48



7. Attachments:

Command Philosophy

Viper Nation: No Better friend, no worse enemy. No better friend to our shipmates, our community and those who call us in their time of need. No worse enemy to those who would do our Nation harm. While maintaining an environment of dignity and respect, we'll endeavor to be the most operationally and combat effective HSM squadron in the Navy - *Si vis pacem, para bellum!*

VIPERS LEAD THE WAY!

J. W. HILL

Commanding Officer, HSM-48

Copy Requirement*

Official Group/Squadron Name: HELICOPTER MARITIME STRIKE SQUADRON 48

Date Founded: 7 September 1989

Based: Naval Station Mayport, Mayport, Florida

Current Commanding Officer: CDR Edward J. O'Grady III

Mission: To deploy combat-ready MH-60R detachments on U.S. Atlantic Fleet combatant ships. Areas of Operation include NORTHCOM, EUCOM, AFRICOM, and CENTCOM AOR's.

Brief History:

HSL-48 was established 7 September 1989.

In 1991, over 330 underway days and 3,500 flight hours were logged in support of Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM.

In June 1994, HSL-48 was presented the Admiral Arleigh Burke Trophy as the most improved combat unit in the entire U.S. Atlantic Fleet, a first for a helicopter squadron since the award's inception in 1962.

In 1997, the Vipers received the Battle "E" Award for overall combat readiness. HSL-48 was the first COMHSLWINGLANT squadron to deploy with the Hellfire missiles, GAU-16 .50 caliber machine gun and Forward Looking Infrared Radar Laser Designating Unit (FLIR).

From 1998-1999, the Vipers supported combat operations in support of Operations DESERT FOX (Iraq) and ALLIED FORCE (Serbia). The Vipers also executed the first LAMPS Mk III night firing of a Hellfire missile.

In 2000, the squadron achieved three years of mishap-free flight and won the coveted Chief of Naval Operations Safety Award.

In 2005, in support of the victims of Hurricane Katrina, the Vipers flew 178 hours, rescued 126 people, conducted 37 MEDEVACs and delivered thousands of pounds of food and water. HSL-48 was also part of Joint Task Force Rita and was directly involved in the rescue operations in the wake of the hurricane.

From 2008-2009 detachments flew 2,675 flight hours in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

In 2013, the HSL 48 Vipers were recognized as CHSMWL's 2013 Battle "E" and Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy awardee.

In 2013, HSL-48 began the transition to HSM-48 and MH60R operations; completing safe for flight in May 2014.

In 2014, the Vipers of HSM-48 deployed five combat ready helicopter detachments. These detachments spanned three different airframes with MH-60R, SH-60B, and MQ-8B aircraft.

In early 2015, the last SH-60B detachment returned, and in spring 2015 the last SH-60B was delivered to Davis-Monthan AFB for preservation, completing the transition.

Aircraft Flown: SH-60B, MH-60R, MQ-8B Fire Scout

Number of People in Unit: 46 officers, 209 enlisted

Significant Accomplishments:

In 2014 HSL-48 transitions to HSM-48

Transitioned from SH-60B to the MH-60R

Supported Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM

Supported Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM

Two-time recipient of the Admiral Arleigh Burke Trophy

Eight- time Captain Arnold J. Isbell Award winner, for excellence in Anti-Submarine Warfare

Three-time COMNAVAIRLANT Battle "E" Award recipient

HSL-48 was the first COMHSLWINGLANT squadron to deploy a detachment with the Hellfire missiles, GAU-16 .50 caliber machine gun and FLIR.

HSM-48 was the first squadron to deploy helicopter electronic attack modules in 2014.

Vipers Lead The Way!!

Graphics Requirement



Security Policy Review Required

Ensure the squadron Commanding Officer has reviewed and approved all content for public release.

Submit to NANNEWS@navy.mil and copy jeffrey.m.newman.ctr@navy.mil

**All content subject to NAN Editorial Staff review and copy editing.*