RULES FOR NAVY AVIATION SQUADRON LINEAGE PROGRAM AND APPROVAL
PROCEDURES

1. These guidelines establish a lineage policy for Navy
aviation squadrons in order to eliminate confusion and to ensure
consistency. Chapter 1 of reference (a) provides a historical
treatise on the evolution of squadron designations.

2. Applicable terms are as follows:

    a. Establishment. A squadron's lineage and history begins
on the date it is formally designated into existence and
assigned a designation (such as helicopter strike maritime
(HSM), strike fighter squadron (VFA), etc.). A squadron may be
redesignated and assigned a new designation (such as Helicopter
Antisubmarine Squadron Light HSL-51 being redesignated HSM-51).
The history of such a squadron begins the day it was originally
established and includes the period with both the old and new
designations.

    b. Deactivation. A squadron is deactivated by reassigning
its personnel and equipment and placing it in an inactive
status. The designation remains on naval aviation's record of
inactive squadrons until it is reactivated and returns as an
active operating unit.

    c. Reactivation. A squadron may be reactivated from naval
aviation's inactive record and placed in active operational
service, when assigned new personnel and equipment. When a
squadron is reactivated, it must use the last designation it was
assigned prior to deactivation. The history of this reactivated
squadron may be traced using the lineage of the squadron prior
to its deactivation. To preclude confusion surrounding the
reactivation of a squadron, a squadron cannot be reactivated and
redesignated on the same day. NOTE: Squadrons do not receive
commissioning pennants when they are established. Hence, the
terms "commission" and "decommission" generally refer to ships
only.

3. Background on how squadron designations are tracked by OPNAV
(N98).

    a. Per the definitions in paragraph 2, once a squadron
letter and number have been assigned to a squadron, that letter

and number combination can never be assigned to another
squadron. As an example, VFA-15 was established as Fighter
Squadron 67 (VA-67) on 1 August 1968. It was redesignated VA-15
on 2 June 1969 and then redesignated VFA-15 on 1 October 1986.
Therefore, the letter and number combination of VA-67, VA-15 or
VFA-15 may never be used by another squadron. If VFA-15 were to
be deactivated, it could only be reactivated using the VFA-15
designation. No other squadron could be activated or
reactivated as VA-67 or VA-15 since those designations belong to
VFA-15.

    b. When a squadron is deactivated, the designation and
approved insignia used by that squadron are placed on the naval
aviation inactive record. The insignia used by the squadron is
retired and remains with the history of that deactivated
squadron. A newly established or redesignated squadron cannot
adopt the exact same insignia of a deactivated unit. However,
if during the establishment or redesignation of a squadron, an
informal tie to past squadron or community lineage can be made
to honor the past legacy, portions of that insignia may be used
in an updated fashion. An example of this would be a newly
established squadron paying homage to a disestablished squadron
that performed a similar role or mission by adopting elements of
that insignia. In this case, however, it must be made clear
that there is no direct tie to the past squadron's lineage.

    c. The history of a deactivated squadron will be held in
the records of OPNAV (N98).

    d. The baseline for the new policy on squadron designations
is the current squadron lineage list provided in enclosure (2).
These squadron letter and number combinations may never be used
or assigned to another squadron. All previous squadron
designations used by the Navy from the early 1920's to 2011,
excluding those in enclosure (2), may be used for the
establishment of any new squadron.

    e. Approval procedures of assignment of Navy aviation
community or squadron designations.

    f. Any Navy aviation command responsible for establishing,
redesignating or activating a community or squadron must contact
OPNAV (N98) and request a record review to ensure that the
designation and squadron letter-number combination has not been

previously used or is not on the naval aviation squadron inactive list. If the designation meets the criteria established above, it will be approved for use by the requesting authority and a permanent record of the designation will be maintained by OPNAV (N98). All squadron designations must be officially approved by OPNAV (N98) prior to being assigned to a unit. This includes reserve squadrons as well as active squadrons.

    g. Initial verification or pre-coordination of a particular squadron designation should be directed to OPNAV (N98) at (202) 433-2321 or by sending an e-mail to aviationhistory@navy.mil. Once a verbal or e-mailed agreement is made regarding the designation, community or squadron authorities should request in writing formal designation, with endorsements through the administrative chain of command (typewing, Naval Air Forces). Mailing address is: Chief of Naval Operations, Director, Air Warfare Division Assistant for Naval Aviation History and Publications, c/o Naval History and Heritage Command, 805 Kidder Breese Street SE, Washington DC 20374-5060. OPNAV (N98) will then send a formal letter approving the use of that squadron designation.

4. The Marine Corps Aviation Squadron Lineage Program is maintained by Commandant, Marine Corps, Code HDR, as outlined in Marine Corps Order 5750.1H (Manual for the Marine Corps Historical Program).