



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON FOURTEEN (HM-14)
UNIT 60180
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From: Commanding Officer, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures
Squadron FOURTEEN
To: Director of Naval History, Aviation Branch,
Washington, D.C.
Subj: SUBMISSION OF 2003 COMMAND HISTORY
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G
Encl: (1) 2003 Command History for HELMINERON FOURTEEN
(2) Command History Summary for Change of Command Program
from 2003
(3) 2003 Battle Efficiency Award Submission
1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (3) are submitted.


T. M. CASHMAN

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON FOURTEEN (HM-14), UIC 53827, is based at Naval Air Station Oceana Detachment Norfolk, Virginia. The squadron maintained a permanent Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM) / Vertical Onboard Delivery (VOD) Detachment (DET ONE) in Bahrain and a second Detachment (DET TWO) aboard USS PONCE (LPD-15). The squadron also houses the Fleet Replacement Detachment and conducts all of the Navy's MH-53E aircrew and pilot training.

HM-14 reports operationally to Commander, Mine Countermeasures SQUADRON TWO (MCMRON TWO) and administratively to Commander, Helicopter Tactical Wing, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (COMHELTACWINGLANT). HM-14 is the largest combat deployable aviation squadron in the Atlantic Fleet. Uniquely, it is fully integrated with both active duty and reserve sailors. HM-14's primary mission is to provide a rapid response AMCM capability worldwide. The squadron is manned to maintain and operate fifteen Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopters; eleven in Norfolk for FRD training and squadron operations and four permanently deployed in Bahrain. HM-14 employs numerous minesweeping and minehunting devices and related support equipment. The squadron has the capability and expertise required to independently plan, execute and evaluate the effectiveness of a complete airborne mine countermeasures operation from ship or shore. CDR Ian C. McIntyre relieved CDR Steven A. Borden on 7 February 2003. CDR T. M. Cashman assumed the duties of Executive Officer.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS, 1 JANUARY - 31 DECEMBER 2003

JANUARY:

1-31: Detachment ONE Conducted AMCM/VOD operations in Arabian Gulf in support of Operations SOUTHERN WATCH and ENDURING FREEDOM.
16-23: Participated in AQS-24 Fleet Re-Introduction in Panama City, FL.

FEBRUARY:

1-28: Detachment ONE Conducted AMCM/VOD operations in Arabian Gulf in support of Operations SOUTHERN WATCH and ENDURING FREEDOM.
7: CDR Ian C. McIntyre relieved CDR Steven A. Borden and CDR T. M. Cashman assumed the duties of Executive Officer.

MARCH:

1-31: Detachment ONE Conducted AMCM/VOD operations in the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations SOUTHERN WATCH/IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

1-31: Detachment TWO Conducted AMCM/VOD operations in the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. (aboard USS PONCE LPD-15)

APRIL:

1-30: Detachment ONE Conducted AMCM/VOD operations in the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations SOUTHERN WATCH/IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

1-19: Detachment TWO Conducted AMCM/VOD operations in the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. (aboard USS PONCE LPD-15)

MAY:

1-15: Detachment ONE Conducted AMCM/VOD operations in the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

JUNE:

Nothing to highlight.

JULY:

24-28: Participated in Selfridge Airshow, Selfridge, MI.

AUGUST:

Nothing to highlight.

SEPTEMBER:

15-26: Participated in MIREM 03-4 in the Virginia Capes Operation Area.

16-19: Prepared for Hurricane Isabel Humanitarian Assistance. Sortied eight MH-53E aircraft to Dayton, Ohio within a 24 hour window of notification.

OCTOBER:

2-5: Participated in the 10th Anniversary of Gothic Serpent at Fort Campbell, KY.

21-31: Participated in AQS-24 and MK-105 Training Exercise in Panama City, FL.

NOVEMBER:

1-13: Participated in AQS-24 and MK-105 Training Exercise in Panama City, FL.

DECEMBER:

5-8: Conducted VOD/Passenger movement in Key West and Jacksonville, FL in support of the USS George Washington (CVN-73).
15: Participated in the 100th Anniversary of the First Flight at Kitty Hawk, NC.

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS

JANUARY:

(1) **HM-14 Detachment ONE, Manama, Bahrain (1 January - 15 May 2003)**. HM-14 Detachment ONE was a permanent, forward-deployed four aircraft detachment supporting COMFIFTHFLT AMCM and VOD initiatives. The detachment was responsible for contingency AMCM and logistics support to afloat assets in the COMFIFTHFLT Area of Responsibility. This detachment added a robust mine countermeasures (MCM) capability to the region, completing Commander, U.S. Naval Central Command's mine warfare triad of surface and underwater MCM assets. During this period Detachment ONE transported 1,810,200 pounds of mail and cargo and 2,506 passengers to ships participating in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH/IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

(2) **Participated in AQS-24 Fleet Re-Introduction in Panama City, FL (16 - 23 JANUARY 2003)**. The squadron conducted training for the re-introduction of the AQS-24 into the fleet in Panama City, FL.

FEBRUARY:

Change of Command (7 February 2003). CDR Ian C. McIntyre relieved CDR Steven A. Borden as the Commanding Officer. CDR T. M. Cashman assumed the duties of the Executive Officer.

MARCH:

HM-14 Detachment TWO, Arabian Gulf, USS PONCE LPD-15 (1 March - 19 April 2003). HM-14 Detachment TWO deployed two aircraft aboard the USS PONCE (LPD-15) to conduct Airborne Mine

Countermeasure missions in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Together with surface and underwater MCM units Detachment TWO cleared vital waterways and seaports in Southern Iraq allowing U.S. forces and necessary humanitarian aid to enter the country. Detachment TWO transported 533 passengers and transported 231,600 pounds of cargo and mail to and from USS PONCE (LPD-15) in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

APRIL:

Nothing additional to highlight.

MAY:

HM-14 Detachment ONE, Turnover (15 May 2003). At the conclusion of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, HM-14 Det ONE turned over to HM-15. This allowed HM-14 Detachment ONE to return to Naval Station Norfolk and resume operations as a single-location squadron for the first time in four years.

JUNE:

Nothing additional to highlight.

JULY:

Selfridge Airshow (24 - 28 July 2003). HM-14 aircraft participated in the Selfridge Airshow boosting support from the local community by providing the base with a valuable Naval asset. This was the first airshow that the Selfridge Air National Guard put on in over 3 years because of the September 11, 2001 tragedies.

AUGUST:

Nothing additional to highlight.

SEPTEMBER:

(1) Mine Warfare Readiness and Efficiency Measuring Operation 03-4 (MIREM 03-4) (15 - 26 September 2003). The squadron participated in exercise MIREM 03-4 to evaluate current AMCM tactics. The exercise validated the tactics for the newly acquired AN/AQS-24, a minehunting sonar system.

(2) Hurricane Isabel Humanitarian Assistance (16 - 19 September 2003). The squadron deployed eight aircraft to Dayton, Ohio in anticipation of Hurricane Isabel.

OCTOBER:

(1) **AQS-24 and MK-105 Training Exercise (21 October - 13 November 2003).** The squadron sent 3 helicopters to participate in AQS-24 and MK-105 training in Panama City, FL.

(2) **10th Anniversary Gothic Serpent (2 - 4 October 2003).** The squadron participated in the 10th Anniversary of Gothic Serpent at Ft. Campbell, KY.

NOVEMBER:

Nothing additional to highlight.

DECEMBER:

(1) **USS George Washington CVN-73 Support (5 - 8 December 2003).** Conducted VOD/Passenger transport of stranded crewmembers assigned to the USS George Washington (CVN-73) from Naval Station Key West and Naval Air Station Jacksonville, FL.

(2) **100th Anniversary of First Flight (15 December 2003).** The squadron participated in the 100th Anniversary fly-by for the First Flight at Kitty Hawk, NC.

HELICOPTER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON FOURTEEN

HM-14 was established on 12 May 1978, at Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia. An independent and self-contained operational Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM) Squadron, today the Vanguard consists of approximately 650 enlisted personnel and 50 officers, and is homeported in Norfolk, Virginia. Using the USAF C-5A "Galaxy" and C-141 "Starlifter" transport aircraft, the squadron is capable of providing a rapid response mine countermeasures (MCM) capability to any location in the world where a mine threat may exist. The aircraft used by the squadron in its MCM operations is the Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopter.

Since its establishment, HM-14 has conducted a multitude of operations at home and abroad. In 1978, the squadron participated in exercise OLIVES NOIRES off the coast of Toulon, France and in exercise CRAZY HORSE near La Spezia, Italy. In April 1980, the squadron embarked on USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN 69) and deployed to the Indian Ocean for operation EVENING LIGHT during the Iranian hostage crisis. Elements of the squadron remained in the Indian Ocean until November 1980, when the main body of the squadron rejoined the detachment and established the first AMCM capability in the Indian Ocean/Arabian Gulf theater. In April 1981, the squadron deployed to Europe for 5 1/2 months as the AMCM element of the first integrated MCM Task Group, along with surface and underwater MCM units. HM-14 earned two Meritorious Unit Commendations during this period.

During 1982, HM-14 participated in two major exercises: OCEAN VENTURE '82 at NAS Jacksonville, Florida, and CANUS MARCOT 1-82 at Canadian Forces Base Shearwater, Nova Scotia, Canada. The Squadron was the recipient of the 1982 Battle "E" Award and the CNO Safety Award. Exercises and AMCM demonstrations in Belgium, Scotland, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Portugal, Japan, Philippines and South Korea graphically demonstrated to NATO Allies that the U.S. Navy is capable of countering diverse mining threats anywhere in the world.

In June 1984, HM-14 took delivery of the AN/AQS-14 Mine Hunting Sonar and established the Fleet's first operational airborne mine hunting capability. In August 1984, the squadron responded to a JCS-directed rapid deployment order in support of operation INTENSE LOOK. HM-14 conducted split site AMCM operations in the Gulf of Suez in support of the Egyptian Government, and in the Red Sea in support of the Saudi Arabian Government. During this period, HM-14 also responded to provide vertical onboard delivery (VOD) support following the Beirut embassy annex bombing. For its performance during these operations, the squadron was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

In August 1987, the Squadron executed another JCS-directed rapid deployment order operating off the USS GUADALCANAL (LPH-7) and USS OKINAWA (LPH-3) in the Arabian Gulf as part of Operation EARNEST WILL. During these operations, HM-14 was credited with the first live moored mines swept by a U.S. Navy unit since the Korean Conflict. As a result of superb performance in the hostile and extremely demanding environment of the Arabian Gulf, HM-14 received the Navy Unit Commendation.

In October 1990, HM-14 deployed to the Arabian Gulf for Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. Maintaining a nine month presence in the Arabian Gulf staged in Abu Dhabi, UAE and later aboard USS TRIPOLI (LPH-10) and USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH-11), HM-14 flew 5315 hours clearing over 768 square miles of Iraqi-mined Gulf waters. Together with the surface and explosive ordnance disposal elements of the U.S. MCM Group, these actions re-established mine free passage for commercial and military shipping in the North Arabian Gulf and renewed commerce into and out of Kuwait. For the Vanguard's accomplishments, the Squadron earned the Navy Unit Commendation and Combat Action Award.

In January 1992, HM-14 rapidly deployed via self-lift to Atlantic City, New Jersey, for Operation TOXIC LOOK. Searching for several containers of hazardous arsenic which were swept over the side of a cargo ship during high seas, the Squadron successfully located the entire spillage area within six days of intense AQS-14 operations. The TOXIC LOOK detachment was awarded the Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Award for this action.

In January of 1993, HM-14 participated in the first integrated exercise at Naval Station Ingleside, Texas. In March, HM-14 deployed to Northern Europe aboard USS INCHON (LPH-12) to participate in NATO Exercise BLUE HARRIER '93.

In March 1995, HM-14 completed an unprecedented integration with their Naval Reserve sister squadron, HM-18. Given the CNO directive to integrate at the squadron level, HM-14 developed a model plan with HM-18 to combine material assets and nearly 700 Regular, TAR and Selected Reserve personnel, becoming the first squadron in the Atlantic Fleet to integrate in such a manner. This achievement, combined with the squadron's participation in four major MCM exercises, FRS training and Fleet Support services, set the standard in AMCM and Air Logistics excellence and culminated in the awarding of the 1995 Battle "E" and CNO Safety Awards.

From March to June 1996, HM-14 participated in two major NATO exercises: WESTLANT MCMV Phases I, II, & IV and CJTFEX 96 (Purple Star). These exercises employed separate detachments in Charleston, South Carolina, New River, North Carolina, Halifax, Nova Scotia, and split site operations on the USS SHREVEPORT (LPD-12) and at New River, North Carolina, over a four month period.

In November 1996, HM-14 began the initial work-up cycle training with the newly configured MCM command ship USS INCHON (MCS-12). Training continued in January 1997 followed by deployment of an integrated MCM task force to the North Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea in support of "EURO 97". During this deployment, HM-14 towed over 5000 linear miles, playing a pivotal role in three major NATO exercises: BLUE HARRIER '97, OLIVES VERTES and ALCUDRA.

From May to June 1998, HM-14 again embarked on INCHON for training and participation in GOMEX 98 and NATO Exercise UNIFIED ENDEAVOR/MARCOT 98 supporting amphibious exercises in Saint John's Bay, Newfoundland.

1999 was a busy year as the squadron established the first permanent forward-deployed AMCM detachment in the Arabian Gulf. In addition to the Bahrain detachment, the Vanguard participated in exercise KERNEL BLITZ off the coast of California, provided relief in Kosovo during Operation Shining Hope, provided support for the salvage of Egypt Air 990, and provided humanitarian support in the wake of Hurricane Floyd.

In the year 2000, HM-14 participated in tasking that included VOD support and AMCM exercises, ARABIAN GAUNTLET and Coordinated Exercise LATE SAIL in the Arabian Gulf, and operations throughout the continental United States, such as MERCURY/GOMEX 2000-2 in the Gulf of Mexico and JTFEX 2000-2 in the Atlantic.

In 2001, HM-14 began conducting, in conjunction with Airborne Mine Countermeasures and Weapons Systems Training School (AWSTS), all replacement aircrew training for the MH-53E. The squadron also participated in exercises ARABIAN GAUNTLET, CASUAL GANDERI and supported the fleet following the terrorist attacks of September 11th during Operations NOBLE EAGLE and ENDURING FREEDOM.

Flying over 5,000 hours in fiscal year 2002, HM-14 participated in both a JTFEX and a MEUEX in support of various deployments. In Bahrain, Det-1 continued to sharpen mine countermeasures skills through MIREM-20 and the introduction of the Q-24 sonar/laser system. HM-14 also transported the Vice President throughout the Arabian Gulf, transported British and US Army parachutists in the Neptune Air Show at NAS Oceana, recovered a UAV in the Arabian Gulf for the US Air Force, and assisted with Blue Heron nest-building in the Northern Chesapeake Bay.

In 2003 HM-14 augmented its existing four aircraft Bahrain detachment with three additional aircraft in preparation for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Det-1 performed vital troop insertion and VOD missions while Det-2 operated off USS Ponce (LPD-15) to conduct Airborne Mine Countermeasure missions in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Together with surface and underwater MCM units Det-2 cleared vital waterways and seaports in Southern Iraq allowing U.S. Forces and necessary humanitarian aid to enter the country. In Mid May 2003 the Bahrain detachment was turned over to HM-15, allowing HM-14 to return to Naval Station Norfolk as a single-location squadron for the first time in four years. At home the squadron continued to train FRS students as well as SELRES pilots and prepare for future operations. HM-14 also participated in MIREM-03-4 amidst the chaos caused by Hurricane Isabel and sent a training and proficiency detachment to Panama City, FL.