

CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR

1972 COMMAND HISTORY

CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR
1972 COMMAND HISTORY

Chronology of Events

January

In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia

February

In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia

March

In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia
27-30 Carrier qualifications aboard USS AMERICA (CVA-66)

April

1-9 In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia
10-20 VACAPES OPAREA
21-24 In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia
25-30 VACAPES OPAREA

May

1-2 VACAPES OPAREA
3-7 In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia
8-18 VACAPES OPAREA for ORE and Exotic Dancer Exercise
19-31 In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia

June

1-4 In port NAS Norfolk, Virginia
5-30 Enroute Subic Bay, Philippines

July

1-5 Enroute Subic Bay, Philippines
6-9 In port Subic Bay, Philippines
8 CDR W. O. EDBERG relieved by CDR S. A. FICK as Commanding Officer.
10-11 Enroute Southern Station
12-13 TYT
20-24 Yankee Station Operations
25-31 In port Subic Bay Philippines

August

1-8 In port Subic Bay, Philippines
9-10 Enroute Yankee Station
11-27 Yankee Station Operations
28-31 In port Subic Bay, Philippines

September

1-5 In port Subic Bay, Philippines
6 Enroute Southern Station
7-9 Southern Station Operations
10-30 Yankee Station Operations

October

1-7 Yankee Station Operations
8 Enroute Subic Bay, Philippines
9-10 In port Subic Bay, Philippines
11-13 Enroute Singapore
14-19 Inport Singapore
20-21 Enroute Yankee Station
22-31 Yankee Station Operations

November

1-30 Yankee Station Operations

December

1 Yankee Station Operations
2 Enroute Subic Bay, Philippines
3-7 In port Subic Bay, Philippines
8-9 Enroute Yankee Station
10-26 Yankee Stations Operations
27 Enroute Hong Kong
28-31 In port Hong Kong

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS

After the completion of the Mediterranean deployment in December, 1971 the squadron conducted its post-deployment standdown and reestablished its base of operations in Ranger SP-1 NAS Norfolk, Virginia. A "Back in the saddle" safety program was conducted prior to resumption of flying operations. Operations during February and March consisted mainly of FAM flights and WCLP's for the pilots and system refresher hops for the backend crews. During the last week in March CarQuals were conducted and completed aboard the USS AMERICA with eight pilots being designated day/night qualified and one pilot designated day qualified.

Three weeks of operations during April and early May served to prepare the squadron both mentally and professionally for May's ORI. Operations consisted mainly of AEW and intercept control, with a Mini National week being conducted that allowed the Air wing to exercise its search Birddog/SUCAP and attack tactics.

On 8 May the squadron commenced its third operating period in preparation for the forth coming cruise. During this period the squadron participated in the ORI and briefly in EXDAM V before a ship's engineering casualty forced early return to Norfolk on 20 May. During the ORI, the efforts of the flight crews both as individuals and as members of a team were reflected in a grade of satisfactory. This grade was the result of intense training by all squadron personnel.

The USS AMERICA departed from Pier 12, Naval Station, Norfolk on 5 June enroute for Southeast Asia. As the AMERICA crossed the equator on 12 June, the traditional and time honored ceremonies were conducted on the flight deck to initiate and welcome the scurvy pollywogs into the hallowed realm of King Neptunis Rex. Finally, after thirty one days at sea AMERICA arrived at the Naval Station Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. The squadron held a change of command ceremony on 8 July at which CDR. S. A. FINK relieved CDR W. O. EDWARDS. On 9 July AMERICA and her Air wing departed Subic Bay for operations off the coast of Vietnam.

AMERICA operated off the coast of South Vietnam until 19 July, then moved into the Gulf of Tonkin to conduct Alpha Strikes against North Vietnam. VAW 124's primary mission assigned in the Gulf of Tonkin was to provide the task force with early detection of possible hostile aircraft. However the major preoccupation was in providing flight following via radar for strike aircraft, communications relay, data link reporting, and search and rescue coordination.

USS AMERICA's first operating period was terminated approximately two weeks early because of an engineering casualty. On 26 July AMERICA entered Subic Bay, Philippines for repairs. After completion repairs on 9 August AMERICA departed for southern Station. Operations in South Vietnam were short as the ship moved to Yankee Station on the second day to support operations against North Vietnam.

During this operating period the squadron effected an exchange of flight crews with VAW 114 aboard the USS KITTY HAWK. This exchange, believed to be the first of its kind between east and west VAW squadrons, proved mutually beneficial. The free exchange of information, procedures and ideas proved to be a great training experience and resulted in better operational techniques.

AMERICA spent the period 28 August - 5 September in port Subic Bay. On 7-9 September her aircraft struck targets in South Vietnam, then moved to Yankee Station for North Vietnam operations. This third and longest line period to date proved to be especially beneficial to the squadron. Extensive briefing in the Air Wing and within the Squadron crystallized the capability and employment of the E-2B and the arrival of COMCARDIV SEVEN, Rear Admiral CHRISTIANSEN, aided the squadrons mission in that he clearly established that the command and control mission of the E-2B was essential to carrier combat operations.

The third line period was terminated on 7 October and AMERICA proceeded via Subic Bay to Singapore for six days of well deserved and welcomed liberty. On 20 October AMERICA departed Singapore to begin her fourth line period on Yankee Station. The tempo of operations was eased somewhat because of bad weather, periodic ready alert days and limitations imposed by higher authority due to peace negotiations. However, the length of the line period was extended from the original twenty one days to forty-four days.

After the Inport period from 3-7 December in Subic Bay AMERICA returned to Yankee Station to conduct operations against targets in North Vietnam south of the twentieth parallel and in South Vietnam. On 18 December, with a breakdown in peace negotiations, the bombing restrictions against North Vietnam were lifted, and AMERICA aircraft destroyed targets in the Hanoi/Hiaphong areas for the first time since October. Christmas Day was spent flying in the Gulf of Tonkin but on 27 December AMERICA departed Yankee Station for Hong Kong.

COMMAND ORGANIZATION

Commanding Officer:

29 June 1971 to 8 July 1972
Commander Walter O. EDBERG, U. S. Navy
8 July 1972 to Present
Commander Siegfried A. PINK, U. S. Navy

Executive Officer:

29 June 1971 to 8 July 1972
Commander Siegfried A. PINK, U. S. Navy
8 July 1972 to Present
Commander Charles A. TIETGEN, U. S. Navy

Location Command:

1 January 1972 to 10 April 1972
NAS Norfolk, Virginia, OPCON COMCVW-8
11 April 1972 to 4 June 1972
NAS Norfolk, Virginia VACAPES OPAREA, OPCON COMCVW-8
5 June 1972 to 5 July 1972
Transit to southeast Asia
6 July 1972 to 31 December 1972
WESPAC Operations CTF SEVENTH FLEET and COMCVW-8

Mission of Command:

To act as an airborne tactical command and control center for offensive and defensive fleet operations by providing airborne early warning and aircraft services through data link and voice communications.

Composition of Command:

Aircraft: Four (4) Grumman E-2B "Hawkeye" aircraft Bureau Numbers: 151702, 151708, 151720, and 152483

Personnel on Board (31 December 1972)

22 Officers - 21 in a flight status
117 Enlisted - 6 in a flight status

Squadron Nickname: Bullseye Hummers

Squadron Motto: "The Bullseye Squadron - Center of Fleet Defense".

Flight hours/Statistics

Total Hours	4170 FLT Hours
Avg. Hours/month	347 Hours
Carrier Landings	602

MAINTENANCE HISTORY 1972

JANUARY 1972

The Maintenance department enjoyed the last half of the 1971 Mediterranean cruise standdown through 16 JAN. BUNO 151702 was on loan to RVAW 120 this entire month. BUNOs 151708 and 151720 were used primarily for pilot refresher training. Consequently, the avionics gear got little use which probably contributed to the troubles in later months. BUNO 152483 was sent to PAR on 6 JAN. Milestones reporting CW-8 was begun in preparation for a series of short deployments in the VACAPES operating area beginning in April and the long deployment beginning JUV - JULY. During this period the squadron had an average of 2.2 aircraft aboard, 3.0 aircraft in reporting custody, was OpReady for 994.5 HRS (60.9%) with 8.8 DTH/FH.

FEBRUARY 1972

BUNO 151708 was discovered to have sheared flap track "A" frame bushings and BUNO 151720 was down for 24 days for a cracked "A" frame that probably resulted from shoulder bushing failures: ALC-131 and ALQ-108 mounts were installed on all aircraft. BUNO 151702 was accepted from RVAW 120 on 24 FEB and immediately went into acceptance inspection.

UR 0005 was the beginning of a series of URs describing shoulder bushing failure around the flap track support fittings. A beefed-up shoulder bushing was needed with a longer screw. Interim solution recommended was an added washer on the bushing shoulder which also required a longer screw to be secured firmly into the rivnut. During this period the squadron had an average of 2.2 aircraft aboard, 3.2 aircraft in reporting custody, was OpReady for 457.9 HRS (30.0%) with 14.7 DTH/FH.

MARCH 1972

BUNO 151702 caused much down time after an inspection showed all shoulder bushings to be sheared. Shortly after the discovery of the sheared bushings, the Flap Track Support Fitting Assembly was also found to be cracked. UR 0013 described a 5" crack in a collapsed Main Landing Gear Strut. Probable cause was determined to be stress corrosion. During this period the squadron had an average of 3.0 aircraft aboard, 3.0 aircraft in reporting custody, was OpReady for 471.5 HRS(21.1%) with 20.6 DTH/FH.

APRIL 1972

Two deployments were made during this period. The most persistent problem was Link 11. The ship used the KG-40 and the squadron used KG-23's necessitating the use of compatible codes which were difficult to obtain while based ashore. The second at-sea period saw the appearance of many radar difficulties. Multiple failures, with confirmed discrepancies by AIMD for each, occurred, with one aircraft having every major component changed. Much overtime by avionics and Grumman Tiger Team personnel had little effect against the high failure rates. BUNO 151702 experienced additional shoulder bushing failures. During this period the squadron had an average of 3.9 aircraft aboard and 3.8 aircraft in reporting custody, was OpReady for 1670.3 HRS(60.3%) with 14.1 DTH/FH.

MAY 1972

The three major avionics systems of the E-2B played major roles in affecting total down time, namely the IFF, radar, and Link 11 systems. Retraining in alignment and troubleshooting procedures for the radar was necessary because of the continued high failure rate of subcomponents. The Tiger Team was particularly helpful in tracing wiring and connector problems that were causing trouble shooting difficulties. Part failures exceeded the replacement rate resulting in only one up radar system at the end of this period. Highest failed part of the radar subassembly was the power amplifier (6). The Link 11 equipment unreliability played havoc with coordination attempts with the ship. Not solved at sea, the problem was further investigated ashore. Finally, a successful link was obtained between two aircraft and later with the USS T. WHITNEY. Prior to departure from Norfolk attempts to link with the USS AMERICA, were not satisfactory.

Initial results were promising, but within thirty minutes, three black boxes failed and the Linkex was terminated.

IFF problem, which gave 30 to 90 degrees wide code and decode and paints, was solved with a rotodome change.

A large requirement for props occurred, caused by high-time changes and crunches. The squadron began its long deployment with no spare props on board.

UR 0021 described the failure of a rotodome motor housing. The housing separated just prior to BUNO 151720 making an arrested landing, and causing an undetected hydraulic leak. Ground personnel spotted the leak during shutdown. UR 0024 described the connectors of the lines in AFC 152 kits. The wire ends from the lines extended into the thread area of the connectors. NAVAIRSYS COMHQ stated this was an acceptable condition with no chance of hydraulic FOD unless the lines were loosened. Nothing was said, however, about the wire ends causing a probable lack of seal inside the connector. The squadron had an average of 4.0 aircraft onboard and in reporting custody, was OPREADY for 1945.7 hrs (65.4%) with 22.7 DMMH/FH.

JUNE 1972

With the limited flight operations in transit from Norfolk to SEASIA there were few maintenance problems. Much time was spent in routine turnups to maintain system integrity. The transit time allowed much corrosion work to be accomplished. During this period, the squadron had an average of 4.0 aircraft onboard and in reporting custody, was OPREADY for 1699.7 hrs (59%) with 26.8 DMMH/FH.

JULY 1972

The first line period showed relatively few maintenance problems as the squadron maintained 75% link capability. Radar alignment every 14 days gave good results. The lowest return of A799 equipment in the entire Air Wing indicated that troubleshooting was a strong point. This trend continued for the next six months. Some trouble was experienced with the new ALQ-108

equipment due to lack of parts and experience in troubleshooting. A large increase in corrosion work was made over the previous months. Parts in serious shortage were radar and GI power supplies, modulator parts, hose connectors/clamps, fittings for the KC-75 and SF-6, IHF antennas, stalos and cannon plugs. There was an average of 4.0 aircraft aboard and in reporting custody with an OPREADY of 1125.5 hrs (33.8%) with 26.8 DMMH/FH. BUNO 151702 experienced problems with its port engine, flaming out in flight with RPM fluctuating from 94% - 100%. The prop governor was changed, but the problem did recur later. UR 0026 described the beginning of noticeable trend of skin corrosion resulting in delamination of skin layers. A nose landing gear door was repaired first, with following recommendations to reexamine the lamination process.

AUGUST 1972

Three Tech Reps were aboard to assist in troubleshooting training for the Avionics personnel. Lack of supply assistance began to show this period. A power amplifier was now outstanding for 89 days. Flight and hangar deck crunches were becoming a nemesis, though none affected missions readiness for more than a couple of days. UR 0030 described the need for an improved cannon plug construction that would resist shattering and corrosion. Several connectors were found broken in the wing butt and nacelle areas. The squadron had an average of 4.0 aircraft onboard and in reporting custody, was OPREADY for 1183.7 hrs (55.5%) with 31.6 DMMH/FH.

SEPTEMBER - 7 OCTOBER 1972

Two more incidents were experienced with BUNO 151702's port engine. On 15 Sep after a bolter the engine torched and was feathered. The fuel control and speed sensitive valve were changed. On its next test hop the pilots went to full power and backed it off a little resulting in the same torching and pilots secured the engine. This time the prop regulator was changed and no further problems were experienced. Display converters were the primary source of avionics problems. Two had been on order for 55 days and a third failed on 24 Sep. Finally, on 6 Oct, two were received, of which, one was non-RFI. In addition, three HD-419 Air Compressors ailed with only one aircraft many hot spins and triple cycles were flown. Some Link 11 problems were encountered with frequent failures of Units 1, 2, and 4 and the ARC-80 transmitter or receiver. During the month of September the squadron had an average of 3.7 aircraft aboard and in reporting custody, and was OPREADY for 1279.8 hrs with 21.1 DMMH/FH. UR 0042 described severe intergranular corrosion found by the Quality Assurance Division on BUNO 151708's starboard wing, most of which was corrected by PAWPRA Cubi, Cubi Point.

OCTOBER - 2 DECEMBER 1972

Propeller vibration required the prop pylon deicing system of BUNO 151708 to be repaired by AIMD Cubi. When blade cuff separation was discovered, the prop was changed. Two aircraft were found to have sheared mounting studs on the rotodome rotation motor and all aircraft were checked for this problem. The squadron began experiencing major vapor cycle problems when repeated failures of amplifiers and compressor motors resulted in a serious shortage of replacement parts which turned out to be fleet wide. At the

line period only the typical engine problems were small 1000 hour. A problem that bedeviled maintenance crews for some time occurred when they attempted to install an airframe boost pump. The pump was received from the overhaul facility with one of the bolts assembled backwards. Two prop crutches further increased the maintenance workload. One of these was discovered prior to a flight without explanation and the second occurred when a flight deck control latch latched into the propeller as the aircraft taxied over it. Replacement props were cannibalized from the "hangar queens", 8000 Q10, and the aircraft were flown to Cubi Point for prop balancing when the schedule allowed.

Avionics difficulties this period were generated by a lack of replacement parts rather than particular system complications. High wage rates on F-2 C 3 units, HD-419's and Radar Receivers contributed to the problem and an exchange of assets with VAW 115 on the HIBMAI helped to overcome it. Some difficulty with pushed pins in the computer cabinets began to appear and were temporarily repaired. This problem had occurred since that time and required major repair efforts and some technical assistance. During the month of October the squadron had an average of 4.0 aircraft aboard and in reporting custody, and was operationally ready 1932.1 hrs with 23.3 OTHA/TH. In November the squadron had an average of 3.6 aircraft aboard and an average of 4.0 in reporting custody. The squadron was operationally ready for 1446.5 hours with 16.9 OTHA/TH.

DECEMBER 1972

A failure of the rotodome gearbox cost the squadron one of the rotary systems aircraft for this line period and cost of \$25,000. There was some doubt concerning the level of maintenance of this gearbox, as the work had been done by the squadron, but repair parts were available throughout the period. A replacement part was cannibalized for aircraft 24. The other major problems for the month were F-28 engine burner nozzle failures. These nozzles had to be replaced on several engines and no engine was cannibalized from the "hangar queens" when the supply of replacement nozzles was exhausted. Particular difficulties were experienced with the Link II system which appeared to have originated in the 21st cycle. The squadron had an average of 4.0 aircraft aboard and in reporting custody for the month and was operationally ready for 1705.5 hrs with 21.9 OTHA/TH.