

VFA-137 Command Operations Report  
Calendar Year 2006

1. Command Data

- a. Name: Strike Fighter Squadron One Three Seven
- b. UIC: 55142
- c. Commanding Officer: Baker, Stuart P., CDR, USN
- d. Assumed Command: 2006-12-01
- e. Mission: To provide combat ready, trained and educated forces to Carrier Air Wing TWO enabling sustained, carrier based, air power projection.
- f. Home Port: Naval Air Station Lemoore, California
- g. Immediate Superior: Operational – Commander, Carrier Air Wing TWO  
Administrative – Commander, Strike Fighter Wing Pacific
- h. Task Force: None
- i. Forces under operational control: None
- j. Aircraft: 12 F/A-18E, tail code NE
- k. Tenant Activities: None
- l. Personnel Assigned: 23 officers, 207 enlisted
- m. Point of Contact: LTJG [REDACTED]  
Public Affairs Officer  
[REDACTED]@navy.mil  
[REDACTED]@navy.smil.mil  
(559) [REDACTED]  
DSN: [REDACTED]  
  
Commanding Officer  
STRKFITRON 137  
Unit #60148  
FPO AP 96601-6239
- n. Organizational Structure:
  - Commanding Officer – CDR H.M. Flanagan, Jan – Dec  
CDR S.P. Baker, Dec
  - Executive Officer – CDR S.P. Baker, Jan – Dec  
CDR D.D. Kindley, Dec
  - Command Master Chief – CMDCM (AW/SW) J.L. Stone, Jan – Aug  
AMCS (AW) W.P. Tungate, Aug – Nov  
CMDCM (AW/SW) J.E. Williams, Nov – Dec

Command Career Counselor – NC1 [REDACTED], Jan – Jun  
AE1 (AW) [REDACTED], Jun – Dec

Administrative Officer – CWO2 [REDACTED], Jan – Dec

Operations Officer – LCDR [REDACTED], Jan – May  
LCDR [REDACTED], May – Oct  
LCDR [REDACTED], Oct – Dec

Maintenance Officer – LCDR [REDACTED], Jan – May  
LCDR [REDACTED], May – Oct  
LCDR [REDACTED], Oct – Dec

Safety Officer – LCDR [REDACTED], Jan – Oct  
LCDR [REDACTED], Oct – Dec

## 2. Commander's Assessment

2006 saw the Kestrels participate in major joint and combined exercises while on deployment, as well as receive well-deserved recognition for the maintenance department. We deployed in March to the Western Pacific with Carrier Strike Group NINE and were privileged to work with the British, Japanese, Thai, Australian, Singaporean and South Korean militaries. While much of the media attention was focused on events in the Middle East, VFA-137 was answering the CNO's call to engage with foreign militaries in an effort to build long term relationships.

The Kestrel Maintenance Department was recognized as setting the standard by Commander, Strike Fighter Wing Pacific, with the LTJg Bruce Carrier Award for Maintenance Excellence. In June, VFA-137 participated in VALIANT SHIELD, an exciting exercise bringing together three Carrier Strike Groups and many U.S. Air Force assets. We finished the year with an outstanding air-to-air training detachment to NAS Key West, Florida.

## 3. Chronology and Narrative

2006 01 10: Squadron surpassed 80,000 mishap-free flight hours.

2006 01 12 – 01 22: Embarked onboard USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN 72) as part of Carrier Air Wing TWO and Carrier Strike Group NINE for Strike Group Sustainment Training. The squadron was awarded CVW 2's TOP HOOK Award for the line period beginning in June 2005. The Kestrels flew 174 sorties, 295 flight hours, and achieved a 96% sortie completion rate.

2006 02 13: Squadron awarded the Bruce Carrier Award for Maintenance Excellence by the Commander, STRIKE FIGHTER WING PACIFIC.

2006 03 04 – 08 04: Embarked onboard USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN 72) as part of Carrier Air Wing TWO and Carrier Strike Group NINE for Western Pacific Deployment in support of CDR USPACOM Maritime Influence Strategy. Overall, the squadron amassed 2,779.7 flight hours and 1,702 sorties with a 97.7% sortie completion rate. The squadron was awarded CVW 2's TOP HOOK Award for the third and final line period of the deployment.

2006 03 26 – 03 31: Participated in exercise FOAL EAGLE. Under the command of US Forces Korea, this yearly bi-lateral exercise involved training with the Republic of Korea Air Force, United States Air Force and United States Marine Corps as well as forward-deployed Navy assets. Overall, the squadron flew 98 sorties, 165 flight hours, and achieved a 94% sortie completion rate.

2006 04 06 – 04 10: Port call to Hong Kong, China

2006 04 20 – 04 24: Port call to Laem Chabang, Thailand. USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN 72) was the first nuclear powered vessel ever to visit the port at Laem Chabang.

2006 04 27 – 05 01: Port call to Singapore.

2006 05 02: VFA-137 crosses the equator at 106° 36.1' E longitude.

2006 05 25 – 05 29: Port call to Sasebo, Japan.

2006 06 19 – 06 23: Participated in exercise VALIANT SHIELD. The first ever iteration of this exercise included the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN72), USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76) and USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63) representing the largest assemblage of naval power in the western Pacific since the Vietnam War. The squadron conducted joint interoperability training with many Air Force platforms along with her sister Navy squadrons. The Kestrels flew 105 sorties and 198 flight hours with a 100% sortie completion rate during the exercise.

2006 06 31 – 07 05: Port call to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

2006 07 05 – 07 26: Participated in exercise RIMPAC 2006. The squadron joined 35 ships, 160 aircraft, 6 submarines and 19,000 personnel from Australia, Canada, Chile, Great Britain, Japan, Peru and South Korea in this biannual, multi-lateral exercise focusing on international interoperability and combined warfare operations at sea. The Kestrels flew 375 sorties and 662 flight hours with a 100% sortie completion rate.

2006 07 26 – 07 29: Port call to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

2006 07 29 – 08 04: Tiger Cruise from Pearl Harbor, Hawaii to North Island, San Diego, California.

2006 09 12: Material Condition Inspection (MCI) conducted by Commander, STRIKE FIGHTER WING PACIFIC. The evaluators stated squadron's jets were "the best aircraft seen in years" and commented that the squadron had "the best Tool Control Program on base."

2006 10 12 – 10 27: Detached to NAS Key West, Florida for Fighter Tactics Training. The squadron was opposed by F-15 Eagles of 125<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing of the Florida Air National Guard flying from Homestead Air Force Base and supported by CVW-2's E-2C squadron, the Sun Kings of VAW-116.

#### 4. Supporting Reports

##### a. Statistical Data:

##### i. Hours Flown

Ashore:	1,637	Embarked:	3,071.9
Total:	4,708.9		

##### ii. Sorties

Ashore:	1,110	Embarked:	1,876
Total:	2,986		

iii. Carrier Landings:	1,896	Night:	657
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##### b. "Battle Efficiency Award" submissions

##### i. Squadron Cover Letter

- ii. Data Spreadsheet
- iii. CVW-2 Endorsement
- c. "LTjg Bruce Carrier Award for Excellence in Maintenance" submissions
  - i. Squadron Application
  - ii. Maintenance Data
  - iii. CVW-2 Endorsement
- d. "CNO Annual Safety Award" submissions
  - i. Squadron Cover Letter
  - ii. Safety Data Enclosure
  - iii. CVW-2 Endorsement
- e. "Secretary of Defense Phoenix Award for Maintenance Excellence" submissions
  - i. Squadron Cover Letter
  - ii. Nomination Package
  - iii. Summary of Action
  - iv. Proposed Citation
  - v. CVW-2 Endorsement

5. Published Documents

- a. Professional Articles:
  - i. "Article about Bruce Carrier Award," SFWSP PAO, *Golden Eagle*, 10 Feb 2006
  - ii. "Kestrels Surpass 80,000 Hours, Win Top Hook," ENS [REDACTED], *Golden Eagle*, 24 Feb 2006
  - iii. "Kestrels Make Retention Honor Roll," ENS [REDACTED], *Golden Eagle*, 17 Mar 2006
  - iv. "Kestrels Participate in FOAL EAGLE," ENS [REDACTED], *Golden Eagle*, 14 Apr 2006
  - v. "Flanagan Takes Final Trap as Kestrel," ENS [REDACTED], *Golden Eagle*, 11 Aug 2006
  - vi. "High-Flying Change of Command," Wendy Arevalo, *The Hanford Sentinel*, 02 Dec 2006
  - vii. "Kestrels Hold Airborne Change of Command," ENS [REDACTED], *Golden Eagle*, 15 Dec 2006
- b. Change of Command Pamphlet: "CDR S.P. Baker relieves CDR H.M. Flanagan," 01 Dec 2006
- c. Command Website: <http://www.lemoore.navy.mil/vfa-137/>
- d. Biography of Commander: "CDR S.P. Baker, USN"

6. Photographs

- a. Commanding Officer's Official Photograph: "CDR S.P. Baker, USN"
- b. Aircraft: "VFA-137, #202"
- c. Historic Events:
  - i. Exercise VALIANT SHIELD
  - ii. Change of Command, 01 Dec 2006
    - 1. Three ship formation transferring command in flight.
    - 2. CDR Flanagan, outgoing CO, CDR Baker, incoming CO, and CAPT Klunder, Commanding Officer, CVW-2 (L to R)
    - 3. CDR Flanagan being sprayed down by fellow pilots and his family to mark his last flight with the squadron.