

1996 ✓



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

**STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON 15
FPO AA 34099-6201**

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750
Ser 10/050
24 Feb 97

From: Commanding Officer, Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN
To: Director, Naval Aviation History and Publication Division,
Naval Historical Center

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY REPORT

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E
(b) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990
(c) OPNAVINST 3120.32 series

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronological History
(3) VFA-15 Narrative History of 1996
(4) Commanding Officer's biography and picture
(5) Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN History
(6) Squadron Aircraft Photograph
(7) Battle Efficiency Award Summary
(8) VFA-15 Change of Command program

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (7) are submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. K. Stuart, Jr.", written over the typed name.

J. K. STUART, JR.

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron 15 is to maintain a maximum state of air combat readiness as a deterrent or striking capability against any and all enemies of the United States of America, as may be directed by higher command authority. The primary function of Strike Fighter Squadron 15 within that mission is to conduct offensive air superiority and air-to-surface attack operations.
2. Strike Fighter Squadron 15 is organized in two primary levels; command and department. The organizational structure has been established within the framework of primary billets authorized by the Chief of Naval Personnel and within the guidelines established in references (b) and (c). In this particular application, the organizational structure and billet descriptions depicted in reference (c) have been tailored, as necessary, to fit the structure of a deployable aviation command.
3. Strike Fighter Squadron 15 was based at NAS Cecil Field, FL and commanded by CDR John K. Stuart, Jr., USN, for calendar year 1996 and has external command relationships as outlined below:

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. Command/Operational Control | Commander, Carrier
Air Wing EIGHT NAS
Oceana, Va |
| b. Administrative Control (embarked)
(ashore) | Commander, Carrier
Air Wing EIGHT
Commander, Strike
Fighter Wing,
ATLANTIC
NAS Cecil Field,
FL |
| c. Technical Material | Commander, U.S.
Naval Air Force
ATLANTIC/Naval
Air Systems
Command Control
NAS Norfolk, Va |
| d. Support Control | Commander, Strike |

Fighter Wing
ATLANTIC

4. The twelve (12) FA-18C HORNET aircraft assigned to the squadron have AJ tail code markings. The bureau number breakdown is as follows:

AIRCRAFT	BUREAU NUMBER
300	164627
301	164629
302	164643
303	164646
304	164655
305	164661
306	164666
307	164669
310	164673
311	164680
312	164631
314	164678

5. Strike Fighter Squadron 15 consists of 194 enlisted members and 23 officers.

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY 1996

LIVE AIR TO AIR GUNNERY	16-18 JAN
CQ ABOARD USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74)	22-24 JAN
STENNIS PULLS OUT FOR ORANGE AIR NORFOLK TO PUERTO RICO/ SHAKEDOWN	29 FEB
CQ USS JOHN C. STENNIS CVN 74	1-8 MAR
AIR-GROUND/ AIR-AIR MISSILE SHOOT	21-23 MAR
ST. MAARTEN PORT VISIT	25-28 MAR
MAYPORT OFF LOAD	1 APR
AARP CECIL	7-26 APR
CHNGE OF COMMAND (CDR J.K. STUART, JR. RELIEVED CDR T.N. BRANCH)	19 APR
ADMAT INSPECTION	1 MAY
SFARP FALLON	6-24 MAY
NORLANT	17 JUN-27 JUL
DUBLIN, IRELAND PORT VISIT	30 JUN-6 JUL
PORTSMOUTH, ENGLAND PORT VISIT	12-15 JUL
VALION PICNIC	17 AUG
TSTA I/II	30 AUG-13 SEP
JFK FAMILY AND FRIENDS CRUISE	14 SEP
PREDEPLOYMENT BRIEF	26 SEP
FALLON AIRWING DETACHMENT	4-20 OCT
TSTA III/ COMPTUEX PHASE I	5 NOV-13 DEC
MISSILE SHOOT	25-16 NOV
ST. MAARTEN PORT VISIT	23-26 NOV

VFA-15 NARRATIVE HISTORY OF 1996

1996 was exceptionally busy, challenging, and tremendously successful for the VALIONS of VFA-15. Wasting no time during an aggressive turn-around cycle, the VALIONS met every operational and administrative commitment with professional excellence and superior teamwork, maximizing training opportunities to maintain a high level of tactical proficiency. As a result, the success of VFA-15 for 1996 can be attributed to the accomplishments of the VALIONS over the course of the year.

Strike Fighter Squadron FIFTEEN enjoyed an exceptional year for safety, averting both aviation and ground mishaps. Through this strong emphasis on safety, the VALIONS reached 19,680 class "A" mishap free hours. In addition, VFA-15 promulgated safety concerns throughout the fleet by submitting seven Hazard Reports and one change to the OPNAV 3710 manual concerning the requirements for FA-18/F-14 mixed employment when using night vision devices. The VALIONS were extremely proud to have two Sailors designated as AIRLANT Safety Professionals.

Operationally during CY96, squadron pilots flew 4404.2 hours, with 1166.9 hours flown while embarked in both USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) and USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67). Squadron pilots made 933 arrested landings, displaying their professional expertise around the ship by earning the Air Wing "TOP HOOK" award for three consecutive at-sea periods. Additionally, 544.8 hours were flown while detached to Fallon, NV for the Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program and the CVW-8 Weapons detachment.

The VALIONS began the year with an Orange Air/Shakedown detachment in USS JOHN C. STENNIS to the Puerto Rican operating Area. The VALIONS, along with CVW-8, provided threat aircraft simulation for the blue forces, as well as capitalizing on some unique unit-level training opportunities. Once back at Cecil Field the squadron never missed a beat, completing the Advanced Attack Readiness Program in typical VALION fashion. CDR Jack "STU" Stuart took command of VFA-15 in April, and the squadron headed west to Fallon to complete the Strike Fighter Advanced Readiness Program.

The squadron made an historic journey across the Atlantic in USS JOHN F. KENNEDY for NORLANT, visiting Ireland and England during the 6-week at-sea period. Once home from NORLANT, the VALIONS commenced an aggressive work-up cycle in preparation for a 1997 deployment. Demanding operational tempos were nothing new

to the warriors of VFA-15. In fact, the squadron maintained an overall operational tempo of 40% during a non-deployment year!

The Valions continued to excel around the boat, capturing the "TOP HOOK" award for TSTA I/II in September. After a couple of weeks of unit-level training back at Cecil Field, the squadron once again headed west to Fallon for the CVW-8 Weapons detachment in October. This challenging detachment presented the opportunity for the VALIONS to refine the FA-18/F-14 mixed employment tactical doctrine that the squadron developed, ensuring that it will soon set the standard of excellence for Naval Aviation.

November presented the VALIONS with another challenging hurdle. The squadron returned from Fallon and departed for COMPTUEX in CV 67 an impressive nine days later. The squadron successfully completed a live missile shoot during COMPTUEX, flawlessly employing three Sparrow and three Sidewinder missiles. Upon return from COMPTUEX, the squadron earned some well-deserved leave for the holidays.

As one of the oldest squadron's in the Navy, the VALIONS have historically been one of the premiere squadrons in Naval Aviation and 1996 was no exception. VFA-15 excelled as a result of a professional mind-set which pervaded throughout the command to motivate every member to strive towards "VALION EXCELLENCE".