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**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

FIGHTER SQUADRON TWO ZERO ONE

NAVAL AIR STATION

DALLAS, TEXAS 75211

IN REPLY REFER TO  
5750  
Ser 00/238  
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From: Commanding Officer, Fighter Squadron TWO ZERO ONE  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, DC 20374-0571

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY 1987

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D

Encl: (1) Supporting Documents

1. Per reference (a), the following information is submitted:

a. **Command Composition and Organization:** The mission of VF-201 is to provide air superiority required for strike warfare and fleet defense. When circumstances dictate, our mission extends to a support role in the air-to-ground weapons delivery arena. As one of the most frequently deployed tactical reserve force squadrons in the Navy, VF-201 has achieved an unprecedented level of combat readiness in all aspects of carrier based operations. VF-201's immediate senior in command is Commander, Carrier Air Wing Reserve Twenty, Naval Air Station, Cecil Field, FL 32215-0146. VF-201 currently has ten F-14A Tomcats onboard. VF-201 is known by our tactical call sign, HUNTER.

b. **Chronology:**

18 through 31 Jan: Final five aircrews complete F-14 transition training at VF-101, Naval Air Station, Oceana, VA

14 through 26 Jun: Squadron completes initial F-14 carrier qualifications and conducts cyclic operations aboard USS Forrestal (CV-59)

9 through 22 Aug: Selected Reserve enlisted completed F-14 maintenance training at VF-101, Naval Air Station, Oceana, VA

23 Aug through 3 Sep: Missile shoot and ACM training conducted at Pacific Missile Test Center and Naval Air Station, Miramar, CA

4 through 15 Oct: ACM Training with F-15's and F-16's at Tyndall Air Force Base, FL

13 through 17 Dec: ACM training, air-to-air and air-to-ground gunnery training at Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, AZ

c. **Narrative:**

(1) Fighter Squadron Two Zero One began 1987 with a tremendous challenge, completing the transition to the F-14 "Tomcat" fighter. The command was

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required to complete the qualification of aircrews and maintenance personnel on the new aircraft and achieve readiness in all primary mission areas. Air combat maneuvering, gunnery and carrier qualifications for aircrews and maintenance personnel training tracks were but a few of the areas in which all hands were required to exert maximum effort. VF-201 exceeded all goals and set remarkable readiness levels in a very short period of time.

(2) In January the final class of aircrew completed F-14 training at VF-101, the east coast replacement training squadron for F-14s. VF-201 was faced with maintaining, flight currency for all seventeen aircrews with minimal aircraft onboard. With exceptional effort from our maintenance department aircraft readiness was kept at a high level. Currency was maintained and readiness levels increased at a remarkable rate. The training matrix was systematically and effectively completed as the aircrew worked toward achieving 50 hours in the F-14 aircraft in preparation for the next evolution, carrier qualifications and a two week deployment aboard USS FORRESTAL (CV-59).

(3) After operating with the F-14 for only six months, the Hunters of VF-201 had completed all flight hour requirements and preparations for carrier qualifications. Not only did the squadron achieve all prerequisites for carrier qualifications, but excelled during the carrier qualification period aboard USS FORRESTAL (CV-59). Despite very limited time available, due to CVWR-20's cyclic operations plans during their annual Active Duty for Training (ACDUTRA), all aircrews were completely qualified in the first two days of operations. During the two week operation, the squadron flew 260 hours, completed 146 sorties, and had a 94 percent sortie completion rate while completing training in air-to-air and air-to-ground guns, integrated strike warfare, fleet air defense and electronic warfare. Additionally, the Hunters successfully introduced the F-14 Tomcat into the Air Wing by planning and leading an innovative fleet air defense exercise.

(4) Command inspections are always an event requiring a dedicated effort. Immersed in a transition to the F-14 the HUNTERS doubled their efforts to ensure that procedures and instructions were being followed completely. With a very hectic schedule in the preceeding months, VF-201 had to concentrate on doing everything right, not just for the inspection, but in order to meet it's demanding mission and schedule. The HUNTERS were extremely successful in being ready when CVWR-20 arrived in July to evaluate the squadron. Almost all areas received favorable comments. Throughout the detailed evaluation, the comment of "outstanding" was used to express VF-201's performance. A highly successful inspection, an overall adjective grade of satisfactory was given, a tribute to the unit's pride and professionalism.

(5) A fighter squadron's ability to perform its mission is totally dependent upon the maintenance personnel's ability to provide fully mission capable aircraft to the aircrew. Hard work alone will not make these aircraft available; however, hard work combined with a dedication to proper training and job performance will make fully mission capable aircraft available. Over seventy selected reserve maintenance personnel received two weeks of intense training vital to the command during August at Naval Air Station, Oceana, VA. Having highly trained selected reserve technicians played a vital role in the command's successful year. The training received was very important to each individual and was collectively the single largest evolution for the selected reserve maintenance personnel in regard to the F-14 transition. VF-201 strived to build on the training given to the selected reserve during its day to day operations throughout the year.

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(6) One of the greatest measures of F-14 squadron's capability is its ability to launch air-to-air missiles successfully. In late August, VF-201 proved its ability beyond any doubt. During the detachment, five AIM-7F Sparrows, two AIM-9L Sidewinders, and one AIM-54A Phoenix were fired, all on the first pass with good guidance. Also of note is that VF-201 had the distinction of being the first reserve squadron to fire an AIM-54 Phoenix. CVWR-20 A-3 "Sky Warrior" tankers were effectively utilized to optimize range times and were major factors in the successful shoot. Upon completion of the missile shoot, the mission became air-to-air in nature. Bogies consisted of VC-13 and NAS Dallas A-4's, F-21's from VMFT-401 at MCAS Yuma, F-18's from VFA-303 at NAS Lemoore, and F-5's, T-38's, and A-4's from Topgun. Numerous 1 v 1, 1 v 2, 2 v 2, and 2 v unknown sorties were flown. The TACTS range at MCAS Yuma was utilized to evaluate the aircrew's abilities and was a major contributor to the detachment. The command made great strides in its ability to perform air superiority missions during the highly successful deployment to NAS Miramar.

(7) Fighter aircrew learn more about their aircraft and its capabilities when they have a change to go "nose to nose" with new and more challenging adversaries. The "Hunters" flew south to Tyndall in October to work with F-15's from the 2nd Tactical Fighter training quadron and F-16's from the U.S. Air Force Fighter Weapons School. A-4's from NAS Dallas also participated in the two week detachment. Virtually all of the flights were flown on the Air Force ACMI range (TACTS Range) and proved USAF and VF-201 aircrews great training conditions within which to refine and employ sound fighter tactics. 2 v 2 sorties were most common, but numerous 4 v 4 engagements were conducted. The detachment was also the first time a NAS Dallas F-14 squadron deployed to a non-F-14 location, i.e. not NAS Oceana or NAS Miramar. VF-201 proved its planning expertise and executed outstanding aircraft availability throughout the period. NAF Detroit provided a C-12 for parts support between Tyndall and NAS Oceana, a concept which proved effective and efficient. The detachment received praise from the U.S. Air Force and was described by all participants as truly "outstanding".

(8) The end of 1987 found the command deploying to MCAS Yuma in December for gunnery and ACM. Air-to-ground strafing was conducted along with air-to-air gunnery pattern practice. Live ordnance was expended during the strafing mission. Other areas of training included low level navigation, air intercept training, and with the F-21's of VMFT-401. Valuable training was achieved at MCAS Yuma due to excellent aircraft availability, excellent ranges, good weather, and overall good facilities.

(9) 1987 began as a great challenge to Fighter Squadron Two Zero One; a new year, a new airplane, and numerous training goals to be identified and completed. The squadron accomplished all of its goals and excelled in all areas of endeavor. Aircrews progressed from the initial familiarization stage to employing the F-14 aircraft effectively in all mission areas at the end of the year. Maintenance personnel developed technical skills and management techniques that provided outstanding aircraft availability throughout the year, despite a limited number of aircraft on board and complex logistic problems. Throughout the year the squadron met, or exceeded, its flight hour requirements and training objectives. All hands take great pride in Fighter Squadron Two Zero One' mission capability and professionalism in all areas. 1987 was a year to be proud of for the "Hunters" of VF-201.

*Ross Burgess*

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