UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
AIR TASK GROUP TWO

FF12/A16-13
ATG-2:fc
Ser. 144

[redacted]ON

From: Commander Air Task Group TWO
To: Commanding Officer, USS ESSEX (CV-9)

Subj: Action Report of Air Task Group TWO for period of 18 July 1952 to 4 September 1952

Ref: (a) OPNAV Inst. 3480.4 of 1 July 1951

Encl: (1) Subject Action Report

1. This report is forwarded as enclosure (1) for inclusion in the action report of the USS ESSEX (CV-9) as required by reference (a).

J. G. DANIELS

[redacted]

CONTENTS OF ACTION REPORT

[redacted]

COMPOSITION OF FORCES

UNIT	TYPE A/C	OPERATIONAL A/C 7/18	9/3	PILOTS 7/18	9/3
VF-23 LCDR C.C. Aikins	F9F-2	16	14	24	24
VF-821 CDR. D.W. Cooper	F9F-2	16	13	25*	24*
VF-871 LCDR F.C. Hearrell Jr	F4U-4	16	14	25**	25**
VA-55 CDR. L.W. Chick	AD-4	16	15	24	24
VC-3 (Det I) CDR. D.E. Carr Jr	F4U-5N	4	4	6	6
VC-11 (Det I) LCDR D.W. Knight	AD-4W	4	4	5	5
VC-35 (Det I) LCDR E.H. Potter	AD-4N	4	4	6	6
VC-61 (Det I) LT. T.L. Neilson	F2H-2P	3	3	5	5

* Includes Commander Air Task Group TWO
** Includes Operations Officer Air Task Group TWO

MISSION

The mission of Air Task Group TWO at the beginning of the operating period, consisted of a "Show of Force" in the Formosan Straits area.

The mission was altered, on reporting to CTF 77, to that set forth in CTF 77 Op Order No 22-51 (2nd Revision). The mission of this force was to perform close air support, reconnaissance, interdiction, and air bombardment missions in order to destroy enemy forces, communications, and installations in support of United Nations forces.

[redacted]

18 July: Air Task Group TWO, aboard the USS ESSEX departed Subic Bay P.I. 0618 for the operating area as perscribed by Cinc-PacFlt. 12 F9F's and 4 AD-4's were transferred to the Philippine Sea. 5 F2H2P's came aboard in exchange.

19 July: 16 F2H-2P Photo Recco sorties - 12 F9F RAP-CAP Sorties. Moderate amount of photographic coverage was accomplished without incident. Full coverage was not accomplished due weather.

20 July No flight operations - enroute.

21 July No flight operations - enroute.

22 July 8 Sorties Photo Recco; 25 Sorties Air Parade; two pilots landed at a friendly air base and returned - no incident.

23 July 8 Photo Recco Sorties - 25 Air Parade Sorties.

24 July No flight operations - enroute Yokosuka.

25 July No flight operations - enroute Yokosuka.

26 July No flight operations - enroute Yokosuka.

27 July NavFltActs Yokosuka.

28 July NavFltActs Yokosuka.

29 July No flight operations - departed Yokosuka for operating area.

30 July Air operations conducted over South Korea for refresher purposes. 50 Sorties.

31 July Refresher Air operations over South Korea. 74 Sorties.

1 August First day of combat operations for Air Task Group TWO. Air Group 19 and ATG-2 flew combined strikes. Combined briefings were held aboard the USS PRINCETON. The strikes were successful.

[redacted]

2 August 48 total sorties flown. 39 offensive sorties in conjunction with Air Group 19, striking the city of Chongjin. LTJG Les ADDICOTT crashed his AD-4 into the water. LTJG Wesley RALSTON crashed his F4U-4 into the water. Both aircraft failed to have sufficient air speed in the take off run, crashed off the bow, escaped the cockpit and were rescued by the helicopter. No serious injuries were sustained.

3 August 105 total sorties on our own, combined Jet-Prop strikes were conducted. Jet flak suppression units were successful in quieting the big guns at Hamhung. Hydro-Electric plants were damaged today in the Air Task Groups first opportunity to strike a target of this nature.

4 August No flight operations - Replenishment

5 August 106 total sorties - ADs and F4U flew strike missions against Hamhung Marshalling Yards, with F9F's protecting them as a flak suppression element. Hydro Electric plants were damaged today in the Air Task Groups' first occasion to strike a target heavily defended by AA. Flak suppression was completely effective.

6 August Air operations were discontinued after 8 night sorties landed due to a fire aboard the USS BOXER - Condition One watches were stood throughout the day as precautionary measure.

7 August No flight operations - standing by for defensive missions in protection of the crippled BOXER.

8 August Two strikes against the city of Anbyon. F9F's, AD's and Corsairs in coordinated flak suppression and strike runs. LT J.C. NORTON ditched an AD4N in making an attempt to return to the force after losing oil pressure deep within enemy territory. The pilot and two crewmen were picked up by a Destroyer after one and a half hours in the water. A Res Cap of two F4U's was diverted from a strike. No injuries.

9 August No flight operations - Replenishment.

10 August 103 sorties flown of 105 scheduled.

11 August 95 total sorties flown: VC-35 participated in ECM exercises for the first time, locating one radar position and one possible position.

[redacted]

12 August 98 sorties. Jet aircraft launched before the Props made an attempt to combine an armed Recco flight and a flak suppression mission failed to coordinate with the strike group. Two aircraft received minor damage from small arms fire, one AD-4 and one F4U-4. Night Heckler aircraft were diverted to harrass enemy shore batteries that were shelling surface forces in the Wonsan sector. The guns were quieted.

13 August No flight operations - Replenishment.

14 August 99 sorties - Participated in close air support missions for the first time this cruise. Strike groups were diverted to strike gun positions firing on friendly surface units. LTJG D.H. HOWARD received facial wounds by enemy AA Fire.

15 August Flight operations restricted due weather - 58 sorties against camouflaged supply and storage area. CDR L.W. CHICK hit by medium AA fire and was led to a friendly field by his wingman.

16 August Limited operations due weather offensive flights were unable to strike pre-briefed targets.

17 August No flight operations - Replenishment.

18 August No flight operations - Typhoon "Karen" precautions. Ship in storm condition I. All aircraft de-gassed and tied down in anticipation of heavy weather.

19 August No flight operations - Heavy seas.

20 August Launched 43 aircraft in order to participate in a special combined air strike against supply storage buildings at the extreme operating radius. The Air Group Commander led a total of 105 Navy aircraft in the first wave of a mass assult against the target. The Navy performed well, dropping all bombs in the pre-assigned target areas. The Air Force fighter bombers followed the Navy aircraft in the target area to participate in the second wave. Total results ATG-2 targets as follows:

10 buildings completely destroyed.
2 buildings 70% structural damage.
2 buildings 50% structural damage.
5 buildings 20% structural damage.

Enemy aircraft were sighted but made no runs on ATG-2 aircraft.

21 August 101 sorties - Night Hecklers participating fully in WX Recco and targets of opportunity along pre-assigned routes. Successful strike against enemy industrial plants, supply and troop billeting areas.

22 August No flight operations - replenishment.

23 August Sorties - Flight operations hampered due weather over targets.

24 August No flight operations - weather.

25 August No flight operations - weather.

26 August No flight operations - Replenishment.

27 August 102 sorties. 1000# General Purpose bombs were carried by the F4U's for the purpose of flak suppression. The 1000# bombs were VT fused for use on known heavy gun positions. No aircraft were damaged due to flak despite heavy, intense, accurate and medium, intense, accurate Anti Aircraft fire.

28 August Limited Air operations due weather.

29 August Air Task Group TWO participated in a "All United Nations Air Effort" on the city of Pyongyang, contributing 104 sorties to the effort. Target areas assigned were well covered.

30 August No flight operations - Replenishment.

31 August No flight operations due weather.

1 September Strike on the Synthetic Oil Refinery at Aoji was completely successful with 100% coverage and damage on all targets assigned. The absence of anti-aircraft fire made repeated runs permissable. Jet aircraft flew high-cover, other jets participated in the strike. This strike was conducted at extreme range.

2 September 70 sorties flown striking the cities of Hungnam and Songjin. Flight operations were restricted due weather.

3 September No flight operations due weather.

4 September No flight operations due replenishment schedule.

[redacted]

Flight Summary by Sorties

	F9F	F4U	F4U-5N	AD	ADN	ADW	F2H-2P
Strike	246	251		317	5		
Recco	112		3				
RR Heckler		7		7			
ASP (Day)		5	8		13	69	
ASP (Night)			1		9	17	
Night Heckler			26		27		
NGF Spot		14		6			
Photo							88
Photo Escort	51						
CAP	360	8					
ECM					12		
CAS		12		12			
Special Mission	13	29	5	38			
RESCAP		2					
TARCAP	47	5	2				
Other		27	21	67	21		
Total	829	361	66	447	87	86	88

Per Pilot Data

Per Pilot	F9F	F2H	F4U-4	F4U-5N	AD-4	AD-4N	AD-4W	Group Average
Sorties	17.2	17.6	13.8	11.0	16	17.4	17	15.7
Flight Hrs	27.7	30.9	42.5	29.6	43.6	41.9	47.5	37.7
Carrier Landings	17.7	17.6	13.8	9.7	16	17.2	17	15.5

[redacted]

[redacted]

Damage Inflicted on Enemy

	Destroyed	Probably Destroyed	Damaged
Oxcarts	15	4	19
Trucks	22	17	22
Troops	145		
RR Cars	12	6	50
Boats	1	4	4
Bldgs.	41	14	34
RR Bridges	2	7	19
Hwy Bridges	1		17
Vehicles	4		2
Warehouses	34	23	50
Gun Position	13	26	17
Supply Dumps	2	2	21
RR Cuts	152	2	20
Storage Tanks	8	2	15
Locomotives	1		
Barracks	19	15	37
Hydro Electric			8
Tanks			1
Ammo Dumps	2	3	9
RR Round House			2
Oil Refinery		1	
Marshalling Yard			12
Radar Site			1
Transformer Station	1	1	3
Factory	3		8
Lumber Stock Piles	1		4
Horses	3		
Bunkers	4		15
Mining Facilities			2
Brick Yard			1
High Line Tower	1		

DATE	SQDN	TYPE	BUNR	CAUSE	POSITION OF DAMAGE	CODE
Aug						
1	VF821	F9F-2	123420	SA	Starboard aileron	D-3
1	VF-23	"	123539	SA	" " air duct	D-3
5	VC-3	F4U-5N		SA	Severed main fuel line	D-3
8	VC-35	AD-4N	125710	Unknown	Oil system damaged	L *
10	VF-23	F9F-2	122508	AA(SA)	Starbpard aileron	D-3
12	VF-871	F4U-4	81403	AA(SA)	Port aileron	D-3
14	VF-23	F9F-2	123510	AA(SA)	Starboard wing & tip tank	D-3
14	VF-23	F9F-2	123435	AA(Med)	Hole in windshield, canopy lost	D-3
15	VA-55	AD-4	128925	AA(Med)	Starboard wing, replacement required	D-3
15	VA-55	AD-4	129016	AA(SA)	Starboard wheel fairing	D-3
23	VF-821	F9F-2	123051	AA(Med)	Port intake duct	D-3
23	VA-55	AD-4	128918	AA(Med)	Engine accessory section Major damage	D-2
27	VA-55	AD-4	128930	AA(SA)	Starboard aileron	D-3
27	VA-55	AD-4	129012	AA(HV)	Propeller	D-3
29	VF-23	F9F-2	122588	AA(SA)	Starboard wing	D-3
Sep						
1	VA-55	AD-4	123820	AA(Med)	Starboard stub wing spar	D-2

NOTE * Cause of damage unknown - possibly not enemy action.

Loss of Aircraft

DATE	SQDN	TYPE	BUNR	CAUSE
Aug 2	VF-871	F4U-4	96951	Insufficient air speed leaving bow.
" 2	VA-55	AD-4	129011	" " " " " "
" 8	VC-35	AD-4N	125710	Oil pressure lost.

1. General.

a. The one week training period aboard our parent carrier prior to departure West Coast was invaluable in eliminating those minor difficulties which could have caused much harmful feeling between the Air Group and ship later on. All hands, when departure from the West Coast was taken, felt we were part of the ship. A well integrated organization that proved its value during the ORI in the Hawaiian Area.

b.

[redacted]

Operations Officer recommended close liaison between the ships Operation Department and the Air Task Group's Operation Officer. Immediately after the arrival of a CTG-77 Air Plan, the groups flight schedule is drawn up through this cooperative effort. Early information from the squadron as to aircraft availability, AOG's permanent duds etc. aids materially in planning the schedule.

c. The shift in emphasis from rail interdiction to prime targets, as in the power complex strikes requires squadrons be able to conduct capable and effective coordinated attacks involving all types of aircraft. With the major build up of flak throughout the primary target areas in North Korea, flak suppression and coordinated attacks on well defended objectives are mandatory. Coordination of strikes involving jets and props requires the finest timing and maneuvering.

2. Jets

a. Flak Supression.

Over 50% of the offensive missions were flak suppression for propeller aircraft. Two types of attacks with approaches for both at 15,000 to 20,000 feet have been attempted. One places all jet aircraft in before the prop aircraft, and the other puts 50% of the jets in before and the remaining jets in with the last of the prop aircraft. Timing and location of the flak are the keys to success in this mission. Too often the flak has not been pin pointed with the result that area strafing and bombing must be used. This is inefficient and will usually keep the gunners heads down for only short periods of time. This is the reason that timing is so important. The prop aircraft should be well in their dive when the jets pull out. On a few occasions where there was considerable lag between the jet and prop attacks, the flak was of heavier intensity and more accurate.

Recommendation:

1. All groups include in their training several group gropes utilizing jets for flak suppression.

2. Jet aircraft conduct training for bombing clean in 40^{0} dives with pull out speed 430 to 470 knots.

3. On maximum range strikes it would be desirable to remove rocket rails and carry only full load of 20MM ammunition. This would increase range, time over target and performance against enemy aircraft.

[redacted]

[redacted]

4. Squadrons training stateside should vary their approach to the pushover point when on the rocket-bombing range for realistic approach to combat conditions.

b. Recco Flights.

These have been flown with the low section at 1500 to 2000 feet and the high section 3500 to 4000 feet, base speed 280 to 300 knots. Both wing men fly very loosely 150 to 600 feet from their leader. Only four jets have been hit on recco flights.

Recommendation:

1. Jet squadrons train for reconnaissance flights using 1500 to 2000 feet as base altitude for the low element and 280 to 300 knots as base speed.

2. Emphasize recco training hops during the training period. Photos could be taken of some simulated targets in the mountains or open country approximately 100 to 130 miles from base. Pilots could then be briefed by the AIO and strike leader. The planes should then proceed to the target and obtain gun camera pictures.

3. On recco training flights pilots should observe and record buildings, cars, trucks, trains, animals, bridges and other likely targets, so this information could be pin pointed to the squadron AIO in his debriefing after the flight. It is highly revealing to some pilots to know how much they don't see on a flight of this kind.

c. Flight Planning.

On coordinated strikes with other groups, it has been noted that the flight was not well prepared for before take off. The flights proceeded to the target area over known heavy flak positions and arrived in the target area ahead of time where it became necessary to orbit in the vicinity of the target.

Recommendation:

1. Flights be planned utilizing all available intelligence to determine the route to the target, method of attack and retirement

2. When flights are ahead of attack schedule, time be killed either off the coast by orbit or by dog legs well away from target.

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[redacted]

d. Photography.

1. Photo Missions.

The escort of F2H's with F9F's has presented no great difficulty; however, it does reduce the range of the mission. On long range missions another F2H has acted as escort. The work of VC-61 Team ITEM has been excellent.

2. K-25 on F9F.

Some training was done in the U.S. utilizing K-25's mounted on F9F's. No trouble was encountered at this time, however, the first time the mount was used in combat it tore off at about 430 knots.

Recommendation:

1. A camera mount be developed for installation on the F9F which will remain on up to the limiting MACH of the aircraft and this mount should house a camera of at least 12" focal length.

3. Photo Jet Tactics.

a. An effort has been made to catapult photo planes and escorts simultaneously for two reasons.

1. A quicker rendezvous and attendant fuel saving.

2. To prevent hold-back catapult rings from being thrown into F2H intakes, two engine changes were required due to this reason

b. A loose wing position for photo escorts has proven satisfactory for F9F escorts with frequent and shallow weaves directly astern while in photo run. Speed surprise and terrain are used to an advantage and were completely effective. No enemy air opposition has been encountered to date.

4. Photo Jet Aircraft and Equipment.

a. The F2H-2P has proven to be the finest photo plane in service Its' speed, maneuverability, visibility, range and endurance far exceed any other fighter photo in Navy use. The present photo nose configuration incorporates many features, i.e., accessibility, design, repair, heating etc., desired and required for combat photography. Due to the longer focal length cameras afforded by this configuration, large scale photography is possible at 10,000 feet and above.

[redacted]

b. This aircraft is limited in use by the shutter speed of the K-18B and K-38 twenty four and thirty six inch focal length cameras. Image motion occurs above 240 knots at 10,000 feet due to the 1/50 sec. shutter speed of these cameras. Image motion compensating magazines should be supplied with these cameras and every effort of this unit to obtain them has met without success. The A-8B magazine film load is too great for the gear ratio and 1½ second recycle speed thereby causing frequent film breakage.

Recommendation:

1. Image motion compensation magazines should be made immediately available for all photo units using the 24 and 36 inch focal length cameras.

5. F4U's.

a. Tactics.

A vast majority of the flights assigned to Fighter Squadron EIGHT HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE have been strikes. A great number of these strikes have been operated in such a manner that very close timing and coordination is required between the main body of the attack consisting of F4U and AD type aircraft, and jet aircraft acting as fighter cover and flak suppression units.

It has been found that by dividing the route to the proposed target into thirds and using these points for reference or check points that the main body is able to affect a rendezvous with the jet aircraft on schedule. Whenever possible this rendezvous is affected at the second check point so that the jets may proceed to the target for their flak suppression shortly before the props make their bombing runs. Propeller aircraft, in turn, make their runs as soon as possible after the jets in order to obtain maximum benefit from the flak suppression.

The fifteen hundred foot pull-out as perscribed by CTF-77 is considered to be a definite factor in decreasing the attrition rate of the Air Group. In areas of intense and accurate flak this pull-out may be limited to three thousand feet by the flight leader. The number of runs made on the target is also at the discretion of the flight leader and in the event of heavy flak is limited to one run only whenever possible. Runs into the target, if repeated, are made from varied positions, altitudes, and at varying dive angles. The rendezvous after each bombing run is affected outside the target area with each pilot "jinxing" to offer as difficult a target for as short a period of time as possible to AA fire.

[redacted]

The activities of this unit, "TEAM I", have been curtailed because of cancellations due to weather during the period of this report. The combat tactics as developed by this unit in the parent squadron have thus far proved adequate.

The night qualifications of Team ITEM in particular are suffering badly in that the average number of night landings since March 1952 is one per pilot. In one case the pilot has had no night landings since March. The weather during the period of this report has been extreme and has necessitated many cancellations.

In conjunction with the above paragraph, it must be noted that the instrument qualifications are also suffering due to lack of night or instrument flight time.

It is recommended that VF(N) pilots and planes be used for Naval Gunfire Spot Hops. One of this team pilots flew many of these hops during his previous cruise and observed them to be relatively safe insofar as enemy action was concerned. This type hop would serve three purposes.

1. It would relieve other aircraft now used for this purpose to go on assigned strikes.

2. Flight time for pilots of this team would be built up considerably along with number of carrier landings per pilot.

3. The experience and versatility of VF(N) pilots would be increased.

During the period from 1 August to 4 September 1952, thirty-one hops over Korea and eight anti-sub patrols were flown by this team. This number averages 6.5 hops per pilot which is not considered enough to maintain night and all-weather pilot proficiency.

6. AD's

a. F-56 Camera.

The FAIRCHILD F-56 aircraft camera is being evaluated by the AD squadron for use as a pod carried, damage assessment camera in lieu of the K-25.

The camera being used has a twenty inch telephoto lens, and produces a negative measuring 6 5/8 x 7 inches. It is magazine loaded and is capable of carrying enough film to give approximately two hundred negatives of the size mentioned above. Shorter rolls can also be accommodated. The magazine is equipped with a vacuum back. Total weight of the camera loaded is approximately forty two

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pounds.

The pod used for mounting the F-56 is a modified TWIN K-25 CAMERA NACELLE and is carried on the wing Aero 14A bomb rack, station number seven on AD aircraft. This arrangement allows for a maximum loading of ordnance and utilizes the existing wiring configuration for the K-25.

The results thus far obtained for damage assessment have been very gratifying. The photograph on the cover of this report is an example of those taken. Because of the image size produced by the F-56, slightly more than three times greater than that of the K-25 for any given range, photographs can be taken at altitudes and ranges beyond the effective range of small aims fire. At present, this squadron has three cameras and pods in use making at least one camera available per strike.

Details for modifying the TWIN K-25 CAMERA NACELLE, manufacture of mounts required, and installation of the F-56 in the pod are being forwarded to BUAER by VA-55 squadron.

b. AEW Unit ITEM

During the reporting period Air Early Warning Unit ITEM was utilized almost exclusively to conduct anti-submarine patrols these were flown at all times when the task force had other planes in the air, in accordance with TF-77 standard practice. No radar contacts were evaluated as submarines, nor possible submarines

Recommendation:

1. It is believed that more extensive utilization of specially configured Airborne Early Warning Aircraft in conjunction with strike and target combat air patrol planes would be of material value. Continuous air surveillance, over targets withing enemy jet proximity, is not over feasible but highly desirable and positive airborne control of the TARCAP, together with communications relay equipment, render these AEW aircraft a valuable addition to the strike operation. It is recommended that early evaluation of this procedure be accomplished.

c. VA(N) Team ITEM

Recommendation:

1. It is recommended that heckler sections be composed of only two aircraft. It is very difficult to coordinate more than two aircraft at night on combat heckler missions.

[redacted]

2. It is recommended that heckler flights be assigned different frequencies over the beach. Due to the necessity of frequent communications between planes of the same flight it is mandatory that different frequencies be used.

3. Request that the statement "special configured" aircraft shall not fly over the beach" be clarified. On every morning predawn heckler flight our aircraft spend from 30 minutes to 1 1/2 hours covering their assigned MSR routes after day light. Our aircraft should not be included with the day strike group, but the restriction leaves doubts as to our freedom of maneuverability on ECM and weather reconnaissance flights.

4. Very few vessels challanged by our aircraft at night during this period have replied with the correct signal. Usually there is no response made to our challange. They might presume that we are friendly but even so they should answer correctly.

[redacted]

ORDNANCE EXPENDITURES

TYPE ORDNANCE	AD4	AD4NL	F4U4	F4U5NL	F9F2	TOTAL
2000# GP	70					70
1000# GP	456		42			498
500# GP	380	33	227	29		669
260# Frag	126	36	339	44	337	882
250# GP	595	56	348	104	195	1298
100# GP	90	84	150	40	107	471
NAPALM	54		25			79
ASAR 3.25	18	34	16	5		73
ATAR 5"	107		68		1264	1439
20 MM	62.748	10.200		10.410	59.691	143.049
.50 CAL			145.300			145.300
350# DEPTH CHARGE	10	3		3		16
MK 6 FLARES		45				45
INCENDIARY	240		42			282
TOTAL LBS	1.286.644	63.760	467.639	70.754	412.576	2.301.373
TOTAL TONS	643.32	31.98	233.82	35.37	206.49	1150.61

HUNG ORDNANCE REPORT

TYPE ORDNANCE	AERO 14A	MK 51	MK55,MOD 1	MK 9	TOTAL
100# GP	1				1
250# GP	14		8		22
260# FRAG	5				5
3.25 ROCKET	2				2
5" ROCKET	6			105	111
NAPALM		2			2
TOTAL	28	2	8	105	143

DISPOSITION OF HUNG ORDNANCE

TYPE ORDNANCE	RELEASE BY JERKING	REMAINED ON RACK	DROP OFF AT LANDING	TOTAL
100# GP		1		1
250# GP		22		22
260# FRAG		5		5
3".5 ROCKET		2		2
5". ROCKET		111		111
NAPALM	1		1	2
TOTAL	1	141	1	142

[redacted]

1. 20 MM and 50 Caliber Guns.

All aircraft of the Air Group are armed with 20 MM guns with the exception of the F4U4 aircraft which carry .50 Caliber guns.

The performance of the .50 Caliber guns has been excellent. Very few stoppages and no malfunctions occured. The performance of the 20 MM guns has been good. Some stoppages and malfunctions have occured but these have been greatly reduced as crews gained more experience. Near the end of the operating period practically all difficulties had been overcome and the 20 MM gun performance became excellent. All maintenance crews have been instructed in the maintenance proceedures outlined in O.P. 1910. A few stoppages occured which were probably caused by faulty primers in some lots of incendiary ammunition.

Change kits for the re-lubrication of the 20 MM feed mechanism have recently been obtained and work schedules include the modifying of all feed mechanisms in accordance with BuOrd material letter GU 18-51, prior to cold weather operations.

A critical shortage of 20 MM gun chargers and charger parts exists on board. These items are on order but none received. The on board supply of plastic muzzle covers has been exhausted. Tape and make shift covers have been used for the past two weeks.

2. Bombs and Bomb Racks.

All F9F2 and F4U-5N aircraft of this group are equipped with the MK 55, Mod 1. bomb racks. This rack is definitely superior to the MK 55, Mod 0. rack. Only eight hung bombs have been returned to the ship. All remained on the racks. In no case was the malfunction caused by the rack itself. The cadmium plating on the sway braces is of poor cuality and rust breaks out under the plating after a week or so exposure to salt air. The chrome plating on the suspension hook is of a poor quality and will probably cause trouble after an extended period of use.

All AD4, AD4NL and F4U4 aircraft of this group are equipped with the Aero 14A Combination wing racks. This rack has proven quite satisfactory, with few exceptions. One objection to this rack is that it requires an additional man to lock the rack while hanging bombs and that it requires considerable time to adjust sway braces. Handles or parts for adjusting sway braces should be part of rack and automatic lock incorporated. Due to the poor milling of the 250 GP bomb lugs, it has been found that many of thesebombs may be hung in the Aero 14A rack with the bomb canted or off center position. When bomb is suspended and hanging in

a normal position, rack will not release bomb. If sway braces are loosened and bomb canted, release will be effected. Due to this condition, some play must be left when setting down on sway braces. Fourteen hung 250# GP bombs were returned to the ship. In all but two cases the rack functioned properly after sway braces were loosened and a slight cant given the bomb. The Aero 14A does not function well when the 100# incendiary cluster is suspended in flight. This is probably due to the light weight and high air resistance caused by the bomb structure. Some difficulty was encountered in suspending the 2000# GP bomb to the MK 51 rack. The trouble was due to the unfinished milling of the lugs of the suspension bands. The difficulty was overcome by filing of the side surface of lugs prior to hanging of bomb. The Mark-51 bomb racks are not equipped for two bomb hoists. Unless the 2000# bombs are equippped with the Mark 10 combination hoisting and suspension band it is extremely difficult to load these bombs with only one hoist. There is a need for the development of a suitable mechanical hoist.

3. Rockets

1439 rockets were carried by aircraft of this group. Of this number, 111 were duds and were returned to the ship. All were retained in launchers or racks upon aircraft landings. 75% of these dud rockets were due to broken pigtail leads. The number of broken pigtails have been reduced by tapeing the excess part of lead to rocket body. About 10% of returned rocket failures were due to improper soldering of ground lead wire to jack plug. Considerable difficulty was experienced in repeated attempts to perform a surge voltage test and plug in rocket pigtails after jet aircraft engines were started. After many tests were conducted and no stray or surge voltage was found in rocket circuits. It was decided that jet aircraft rocket circuits would be tested for stray and surge voltage at each 30 hour check with engine start and running. After that test, rocket circuits would again be tested for stray or surge voltage in accordance with technical order Nr. 20-49 by energizing aircraft circuits with an APU and conducting tests for stray or surge voltage. After this test rockets were hung and then plugged in a few minutes prior to the starting of jet aircraft engines. This proceedure has proven satisfactory and has reduced the number of returned rockets by one third.

4. General

The present type of bomb cart used is quite unsatisfactory in moving bombs on the ESSEX type carrier deck. Moving carts over barriers and arresting cables when heavily loaded is quite difficult and usually requires two or more men. This is a waste of manpower and presents a definite safety hazard and frequently causes

damage to bomb fins when carts tip up. Until obstructions can be eliminated from carrier decks it is recommended that carts be provided with larger wheels with a pneumatic or soft composition tire, be provided for the moving of heavy munitions.

Five Douglas bomb ejector assemblies have been expended due to material failure. Only Six in section "B" allowance. Suggest increase in allowance.

1. Jets.

a. During the period of this report the overall availability for VF-23 was 93%. VF-821 had the overall availability of 94.6%. Photo team ITEM had an overall availability of 99.9%. No comments or recommendations.

2. F4U.

a. Jury struts have been kept in place by the squadron during engine run-up and check, then removed only after all checks are completed. It is believed that this practice has prevented possible wing damage. The availability of aircraft has been 94%. The F4U-5N's had an availability of 95%. No comments or recommendations.

3. AD

a. The squadron experienced an above normal amount of engine trouble - usually rough running engines. An excessive number of spark plugs were used when in many cases new plugs were failing after approximately twenty hours of operation. Two ignition harnesses were changed and many instances of moisture condensation in distributors was encountered. Four propeller linkage failures were experienced in the air. These failures were reported by dispatch and by VA-55 RUDM 16-52. Three instances of propeller governor failure were experienced and reported on VA-55 RUDM's 13, 14, and 15-52. Fire on carrier landing resulted in major damage to BUNO. 123828. A ruptured flange gasket on the main fuel pump (Thompson) had allowed fuel to collect in the accessory section and fuselage aft to the tail. This failure and recommendation for redesign was reported on VA-55 RUDM 17-52. The plane is to be transferred to overhaul. Value of armor plate installation on the squadrons aircraft was conclusively proven on 23 August when BUNO 128918 received a direct 37 MM hit on the port side at the engine accessory section. Full force of the resulting explosion was taken by the armor plate and engine mount resulting only in damage to the accessory section and stub wing. The plane was flown to the carrier safely and the pilot uninjured. Pictures and accompanying speedletter of this "definite save" were forwarded to proper authorities. The plane is to be transferred to overhaul.

b. AEW Unit Item and VA(N) Team Item had no outstanding maintenance problems during this period.

[redacted]

1. APX-6 Destructor Firing.

Two destructor circuits of APX-6 were fired during this period. One was fired in flight by a malfunction of the Douglas bomb ejector which actuated the impact switch. The second firing occured due to unknown causes while the aircraft was aboard ship.

2. The VHF relay equipment, (ARC-28) aboard the AD4-W, has been utilized between aircraft and surface forces, with generally successful results.

Recommendations.

It is recommended that the section "R" allowance list include one each I.F. coupling transformer of the following numbers J-406, J-407, J-408, and P-405.

[redacted]

1. Upon arrival in the operating area, little change was noted in the intelligence techniques and aids which were in use when ATG-2 left the combat zone one year ealier. Three intelligence officers were sent out early to serve with CTF-77 for about two weeks. These officers joined the ship in Pearl Harbor and conducted briefings enroute West.

a. First Period

(1) Introduction to Korea (including photography).
(2) General instruction to the Operating Areas, Command Breakdown and functions and Air Operational Planning.
(3) Flak Intelligence

b. Second Period

(1) Mission Types.
(2) Restrictions of Flight and Attack.
(3) Search and Rescue.

c. Third Period

(1) Survival.
(2) Combat Doctrine and Tactics.
(3) Ordnance.
(4) Shore Leave in Japan.

The Air Group particularly avoided briefing pilots on Escape and Evasion techniques, due to the changing Nature of E and E methods. The ComNavFE briefing team was scheduled to disseminate this information.

2. Combined briefings for Coordinated Strikes. From the experience of ATG-2, during the period of this action report, it has been found that the majority of the offensive Missions (those requiring intelligence briefings) were scheduled as coordinated strikes.

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Jet aircraft, Corsairs and Skyraiders were striking in the same target area at the same time, flak suppression being the primary mission of the Jets. It was evident that all pilots participating in the combined strike should received the same intelligence and operational briefing. ATG-2 suggests this method of briefing.

Call flight leaders from each squadron, as soon as assignment of target is known, together with the Air Intelligence officer who has been assigned the "combined briefing duties" for a particular strike. All available target information, photo's maps and aids are studied.

The Strike leader proposes the method of attack, direction of pullout, coordinate times for rendezvous, pushover, target assignment ect., discussing problems with the flight leaders. The intelligence officer is present to advise on problems in the catagory of "intelligence".

The briefing of all pilots takes place in one of the larger ready rooms (1 or 3) one and onehalf hours before the first prop launch. The intelligence officer opens the briefing, passing the following information or material:

a. Target description.
b. Reason for striking the target.
c. Photos and/or Maps of the target area.
d. Flak information.
e. Weather.
f. Ordnance carried (paying particular attention to fusing).
g. Emergency proceedures which include Search and Rescue facilities and proceedure, location of friendly units, lost plane and damaged plane proceedure, hung ordnance proceedure, location and condition of friendly air field.
h. Communications such as channels, call signs of own and friendly units operating in the same area.
i. Recognition signals and information on possible intercept by enemy.
j. Restricted Areas.
k. Air Data, recognition turns, YE Guard, Strike Control, Approach sectors, Shackle Code and Authenticators.
l. The AIO then turns the briefing over to the Strike leader who conduets the operational briefing.

[redacted]

[redacted]

3. Briefing schedules. The Air Group AIO assigns the squadron AIO to brief the various strike on a rotational basis, allowing the jet AIO to participate in the combined briefs as often as the prop AIO's. The briefing schedule is prepared and attached to the Daily Flight Schedule, so there can be no confusion as to the briefing and debriefing time and ready room.

4. Ready Room Display. Each squadron ready room is equipped with a "swing down" Map Panel and display board in the front of the room. The Panel is 7' by 7' with a hinged section approximately 3' from the bottom, installed in approximately the same position as the standard blackboard. The panel is manufactured aboard using ¼ "plywood, reinforced with 3/4" by 2" strips. The forward display panel is particularly useful in briefings of 15 to 40 pilots. In the back of each ready room is a set of "swing out" display panels which are particularly useful in displaying Recco Routes, Bomb line, Flak concentrations, Terrain Charts, Recognition Display ect. These panels are manufactured aboard using 4' by 5' by ¼" plywood without reinforcement. In debriefing, both the front and back of each ready room is in use by the AIO and his assistant, especially when missions of two different types are being debriefed at the same time.

6. Graphic Aids for Strike. Through the effort of the Ship's Photo Interpreter, very excellent annotated photographs have been furnished each pilot for each target. The target photograph, as annotated, serve as flak studies, and show graphically individual targets outlines, Orientation and restricted areas within the target area (hospitals, POW Camps ect.). The photographic department has been able to produce this photgraphy though , through no little effort, by the reduction of "Touraid" requirements. These photographs have contributed to the success of "one run" flak suppression elements and "one run", pin point bombing.

7. Chart Mounting. Wall paper paste, made of starch and boiling water, has been found to be an ideal binder for map displays. Instead of using rubber cement or Scotch tape, maps and charts are applied wall paper style, removing wrinkles and bulges, allowing a smooth, flat overlay of acetate.

[redacted]

1. Performance

Performance has been outstanding and morale excellent during this period of operation.

2. Illnesses

a. Ten pilots were grounded for medical reasons for short periods of time. Only one pilot was grounded more than once.

b. One aircrewman was grounded for a short period of time.

3. Casualties.

a. LTJG Donald H. HOWARD, USNR, while flying a F9F-2 over enemy territory, received minor lacerations of the face when his aircraft was hit in the canopy by an enemy projectile.

b. No injuries of serious consequence were received by enlisted men.

(1) Prior to reaching Yokosuka, many cases of minor burns of the hands, abrasions from falling down, and foreign bodies in the eyes were seen among air group personnel working on the flight deck. This is attributed to lack of availability of gloves, goggles, and flight deck shoes. The marked drop in incidence of such accidents following obtaining these items in Yokosuka upholds the lack of availability as a cause.

4. Psychiatric disorders.

No man hours were lost due to psychiatric disorders.

5. Venereal Diseases.

There were no venereal diseases reported.

6. Deaths.

There have been no deaths in this period.

7. Recommendations.

a. It is recommended that all units deploying, be supplied with all personal safety equipment before departure.

b. It is recommended that all Venereal Disease lectures be given to small groups by competent personnel. Group discussion should follow the lectures.

[redacted]

1. Administration.

a. COMAIRPAC Instruction 3120.2 of 21 September 1951 quoted in part (because of the temporary nature of the ATG, the commander will assume only those minimum administrative burdens as are essential to the exercise of his task command) has been taken very literally in that the administrative functions of the Air Task Group have been held to the barest minimum, only those functions absolutely necessary in order to carry out the mission assigned, which in this instance is a routine deployment, were considered.

The discussion of an Air Task Group Administration Organization is aptly described in Part VIII of CATG-1 CONF letter serial 08 of 17 June 1952 to USS VALLEY FORGE (CV-45) Action Report of 24 May 1952 to 13 June 1952 serial 0141 of 18 June 1952, however, certain modifications as to the Air Task Group Staff integration within the Squadron Organization and the assignment of officers and men thereto requires comment.

b. When Air Task Group TWO embarked in the USS ESSEX (about 2 weeks prior to deployment WESTPAC) for operations and shake down of the Air Group, the assignment of Air Group spaces both working and living had been decided upon by the Squadron Commanding Officers and the shake down involved only the availability of storage space which is known to be limited in the 27A conversions and the rapidity with which the Squadron Personnel could become accustomed to their new working conditions. By the time the Group completed its O.R.I., in which the group received an "excellent", only very minor operational difficulties needed to be ironed out.

c. The following comments on a functional staff are generally in concurrance with CATG-1. Officers were assigned to the Squadrons for duty and personnel accounting as a functional Air Group Staff but performed no squadron duties.

(1) The Air Task Group Commander is attached to COMAIRPAC Staff and further TAD to USS ESSEX as Commander Air Task Group TWO. This accounting procedure offers no problems to the ship and has been accepted with no comment.

(2) The Flight Surgeon is attached for accounting purposes same as Commander Air Task Group TWO and is an absolute requirement at least three months prior departure West Coast to prepare the Group for deployment. The function of assisting Squadrons Commanding Officers in cutting the assignment of pilots to the deployment figure and arranging and supervision of shots and predeparture physicals. Dentally speaking this Group was in

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bad shape due to the extreme length of time to arrange appointments within the Continental U.S. which in part was due to Squadron movements i.e. (carrier qualifications, El Centro, Fallon etc.)

(3) Operations Officer an absolute requirement recognized in standard Air Group Assignments.

(4) Ordnance officer an absolute requirement aboard ship to work with the Air Department Gunner.

(5) Electronics Officer extremely valuable in early stage of reformation and training and who could double as Maintenance Officer if he has the proper qualifications.

(6) An Administrative Officer is not needed provided a competent yeoman is available. The elimination of paper work by relying on the offices of the squadron effects the economy in the elimination of this billet.

(7) A Group Maintenance Officer is required if squadrons are not assigned non-aviators as Maintenance Officer. Non flying officers can maintain the continuity required with the Ships V4 Division Officer.

(8) A Group Intelligence Officer is required at all times and it is further recommended that this officer be an active carrier pilot.

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SURVIVAL

Comments and Recommendations

1. In the Air Task Group organization, there is no billet for a Survival Officer. It was found that the Air Intelligence Officer spent a great portion of his time prior to and including the first two weeks of operations, occupied with survival problems and in coordinating the issue and instructions in use of survival equipment. After this period of time, with full cooperation from the Squadron Survival Officers and the Flight Surgeon the time spent on survival matters occupies less than five minutes per day. Therefore, for all practical purposes, the effort of a Survival Officer is concentrated for about 6 weeks. After which the billet is in excess of Air Group requirements.

2. It was found that items of survival equipment were very difficult to obtain upon reporting to the forward area. Examples follow:

   a. AN-CRC-7 Radio Tranceivers - None were on hand for immediate issue. 75 were issued one day before entering combat in the Korean Theater, of this number 33 were defective due to reasons other than batteries. These 33 were returned for repair and about 10 days after combat operations, 33 tranceivers were received aboard. 12 of this number were defective due to reasons other than batteries.

   b. C-1 Vests - On arriving to the forward area six vests were delivered on board. Representatives of ComAirPac had assured ATG-2 that a C-1 vest would be available to each pilot and air crewmen. The lack of vests became a morale factor.

3. Necessity became the mother of inovation due to pilots having no personal survival gear on arrival to the forward area. An allowance of PSK-1 kits were ordered (without knowing what the kit contained or for what it was designed) to supplement the meager supply of survival items on hand. On receipt of the PSK-1, the contents were examined and found to be very satisfactory, so much so that the first aid items eleminated the need for a First Aid Kit which was "unavailable". However, the container of the PSK-1 was unsatis-

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factory due to its bulk. Eighty cartridge belts were "borrowed" from the ships landing force and a belt was issued to each pilot desiring to use this inovation instead of a C-1 vest. The pilots could store all items of the PSK-1 with the exception of the signal mirror, in the pockets of the cartridge belt. The belt-PSK-1 combination became so popular that the majority of pilots prefer this to any other method of carrying survival gear.

4. Through the efforts of LTJG G. GRAHAM, Survival Officer of ComFairJapan material that was not available for issue on arrival was delivered on board by the first available transportation. LTJG GRAHAM and LT A. TIERNEY (AIO) came aboard the ESSEX and assisted in matters of Survival and Intelligence. Their assistance was very valuable to the departments they represented. A dispatch from a deploying carrier to ComFairJapan, requesting the services of a representative of the Survival Department, is necessary before they can remain aboard for a period of one week.

5. Attack Squadron FIFTY FIVE made the following modifications of the DSK-1, (Droppable Survival Kit). These changes and modifications were made with the approval of all squadrons and are intended to increase the efficiency of the DSK-1.

a. Inventory Changes

(1) Depleted from the inventory as undesirable for summer use and/or generally unsuited for survival in the Korean area;

(a) Knap Sack

(b) Hand Axe

(c) Flight Boots (fleece lined)

(d) Hood (fur trimmed)

(e) Fur lined mittens

(f) Whisk Broom

(2) Substituted or added to inventory:

(a) Webb belt

(b) Canteen

(c) Two hand-grenades (frag)

(d) URC-4 Radio

(e) Poncho (Marine Type)

(f) Mosquito Head-net

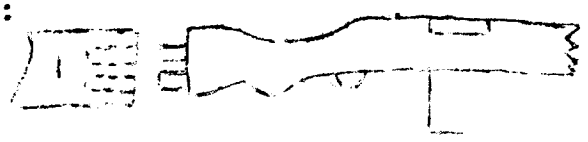
(g) Extra first aid Kit

(h) Knap Sack and Haver Sack (Marine Type)

b. Carbine Modification

The standard issue 30 cal. M-1 carbine was modified by cutting the stock approx. 5 inches from the butt plate and drilling and inserting dowels. The carbine is now carried assembled and loaded, ready to fire. The Butt Section is held to the rest of the assembly by the carrying strap and is easily slipped into place.

Note:



c. DSK-1 Parachute Container - Modification

The modification of the cover plate to the Parachute container was advised by the Survival Officer attached to ComFairJap since it was found that the cover plate had a tendency to jam and prevent the Drop Kit parachute from streaming and opening.

This modification consisted of reducing the overall circumference of the cover plate by grinding approx. 1/8 inch off the edge and also enlarging the two (2) holes in the cover plate that slip over the upright lugs of the parachute container. These modifications allow more clearance and reduce the chance of jamming and malfunction of the parachute.

d. Modification of aircraft wiring

It was also found advisable to modify the wiring of the port, inboard, wing bomb rack (Station # 12) where the kit is carried. This modification eliminates

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inadvertent drops of the DSK-1 by incorrect selection of stations and/or overrun. This modification was achieved by cutting the wire, AR38A16 (AD4, 1 2 3 series) or wire AR65A16 (AD4, 1 2 7 series and subsequent) behind the wing bomb rack selector (behind the armament panel) and installing switch AN 3022-2B with the switch guard, AN 3229-1 in this circuit. Splice the necessary lengths of wire between the switch and the break to complete the circuit. This modification puts a definite switch controlled break in the electrical system of the #12 station. This station is now controlled separately from the remainder of the system. The guard cover is also safety wired in the closed position. This system was designed by R. C. MARTENS AEC, of Attack Squadron FIFTY FIVE.

Recommendations:

1. The billet for a Survival Officer CAG Staff be deleted and in lieu there of, an experienced Survival Officer be ordered to each deplying Air Group on a temporary additional duty basis for 2-3 months duty.

2. The issue of survival equipment be accomplished before deployment from the U.S.

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