

VAW-123

1975

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CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE  
FPO NEW YORK 09501

VAW-123/ADMIN/bh  
5700  
Ser 96  
1 March 1974

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[REDACTED] (Unclassified upon removal of annex (A) of enclosure (1).)

From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE (VAW-123)

To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)

Subj: Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12A

Encl: (1) Command History

1. In accordance with reference (a), the Command History for Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE for calendar year 1973 is hereby submitted.

*R. A. Sage*  
R. A. SAGE

Copy to:  
Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)

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CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON  
ONE HUNDRED TWENTY THREE  
FPO NEW YORK 09501

COMMAND HISTORY  
1973

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Enclosure (1)

**SUMMARY OF EVENTS**  
**1 JAN 1973 - 31 DEC 1973**

<b>1 JAN - 8 JAN</b>	<b>SPECIAL OPERATIONS; YANKEE STATION IN SUPPORT OF LINE-BACKER II.</b>
<b>9 JAN</b>	<b>ENROUTE SUBIC BAY, R. P.</b>
<b>10 JAN - 11 JAN</b>	<b>INPORT SUBIC BAY, R. P.</b>
<b>12 JAN - 14 JAN</b>	<b>ENROUTE SINGAPORE.</b>
<b>13 JAN</b>	<b>TRANSFERRED FIRST E-2B TO VAW-115 IN PREPARATION FOR E-2C TRANSITION.</b>
<b>24 JAN</b>	<b>OUTCHOP SEVENTH FLEET.</b>
<b>12 FEB</b>	<b>FLY-OFF USS SARATOGA TO NAS NORFOLK, VA.</b>
<b>13 FEB</b>	<b>SQUADRON PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT AIRLIFTED FROM NS MAYPORT, FLA. TO NORFOLK.</b>
<b>13 FEB - 13 MAR</b>	<b>POST DEPLOYMENT STANDDOWN.</b>
<b>14 MAR</b>	<b>COMMENCED GROUND TRAINING FOR E-2C TRANSITION.</b>
<b>9 APR</b>	<b>CDR R. A. SAGE RELIEVED CDR J. D. LARISON, JR. AS COMMANDING OFFICER. VAW-123 IS AWARDED THE COMNAVAIRLANT BATTLE EFFICIENCY 'E' AT CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONIES.</b>
<b>25 AUG - 26 AUG</b>	<b>SQUADRON PARTICIPATED IN STATIC DISPLAY AND AIR SHOW AT NAS OCEANA WITH E-2C AIRCRAFT.</b>
<b>21 SEP</b>	<b>TRANSFERRED LAST E-2B AIRCRAFT.</b>
<b>19 OCT</b>	<b>VAW-123 AWARDED CNO SAFETY AWARD FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR BY VADM MICHAELIS, COMNAVAIRLANT IN CEREMONIES AT NAS NORFOLK.</b>
<b>25 OCT</b>	<b>SQUADRON WENT ON ALERT DEFCON 3 AS A RESULT OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT.</b>

15 NOV- - - - - SQUADRON RECEIVED ITS FIRST  
E-2C AIRCRAFT FROM GRUMMAN  
AEROSPACE CORPORATION.

19 NOV- - - - - ADJ1 WILLIAM M. FULLER DIED  
AS A RESULT OF MULTIPLE GUN  
SHOT WOUNDS RECEIVED DURING  
AN ASSAULT.

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS  
1 JAN 1973 - 31 DEC 1973

The year 1973 was a roller-coaster twelve months for VAW-123. From the peaks of Southeast Asia combat support missions and the introduction of the E-2C to the fleet, to the valley of shore basing without aircraft for seven months, the squadron was faced with diversity and adversity.

The heralding of 1973 found VAW-123 on the line at Yankee Station deeply embroiled in LINEBACKER II combat support operations. These operations concluded when the USS SARATOGA and CVW-3 moved south to Dixie Station on 8 January and flew their last strikes of the Vietnam conflict on that day. From the Gulf of Tonkin to Subic Bay, R. P. the squadron prepared for the long trip back to the East Coast of the U. S. with the realization that the highly successful cruise to the combat zone was finally over, and the new era of the first fleet E-2C squadron was about to begin. The transfer of the squadron's E-2Bs commenced at this time as the SARATOGA headed for a short stay in Singapore and then on to the U. S. via the Indian Ocean and South Atlantic which she had traversed some nine months earlier.

Several crewmembers and squadron Man-of-the-Month selectees were allotted spaces on the Early Bird flights and returned to Norfolk in mid January to prepare for the remainder of the squadron's arrival in February. This always happy occasion took place on 12 and 13 February with the fly-in of two squadron aircraft on the 12th and the airlift of remaining squadron personnel and equipment on the 13th. With the advent of the return of VAW-123 to NAS Norfolk, the 30 day post deployment standdown commenced the transition period from the E-2B to the E-2C.

The next eight months were full of training and preparation for the new aircraft, coupled with various ceremonies and evolutions which kept VAW-123 in the spotlight. On 9 April CDR R. A. SAGE relieved CDR J. D. LARISON, Jr. as the squadron's Commanding Officer. At the ceremonies, the COMNAVAIRLANT Battle Efficiency 'E' was presented to the squadron, and AFCM [REDACTED] AK [REDACTED] was selected as the winner of the squadron's LCDR Jim L. DELANEY Memorial Award for the most outstanding performance during the previous year. On 16 June the squadron conducted its annual Cyclops Road Rally which brought all drivers the challenge of a timed course followed by an all hands picnic. On 3 July, the LCDR Paul M. WRIGHT Safety Award, given annually to the squadron individual who has done the most to foster safety practices, was awarded jointly to AE1 [REDACTED] and ADJ3 [REDACTED]. The squadron held an All Hands Picnic on 26 July at Breezy Park to heighten the summer activities.

On 25 and 26 August the squadron participated in the NAS Oceana Open House by providing a static display E-2C aircraft and also providing an E-2C in the CVW-3 airshow. The E-2C aircraft were borrowed from RVAW-120, as VAW-123 crews were at this time going through ground and flight syllabus training in RVAW-120 and

had not received aircraft of its own.

On 19 September the squadron completed an Administrative Inspection conducted by Commander, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Wing TWELVE. All departments were graded satisfactory and the inspection was culminated by a personnel inspection and awards ceremony conducted by CAPT J. R. ECKSTEIN. On 13 October the squadron held an Open House for family and friends as an adjunct to Navy Birthday. Displays, movies, refreshments and favors for the children were in the order of the day.

On 19 October in ceremonies at NAS Norfolk, VAW-123 was awarded the CNO Safety Award for the second consecutive year. Making the presentation was VADM F. H. MICHAELIS, Commander Naval Air Forces, Atlantic in recognition of the squadron's continuing safety record during the previous competitive year.

Along with the rest of the armed forces of the United States, the squadron went into DEFCON THREE on 25 October in response to developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict. With no aircraft assets the squadron's primary emphasis was on increased security in the squadron area of NAS Norfolk.

The culmination of preparation and waiting reached fruition on 15 November when the squadron received its first E-2C aircraft from Grumman Aerospace Corporation in Long Island, N. Y. The advanced model of the HAWKEYE early warning and command and control aircraft was followed by three others in rapid succession with the full compliment of four being achieved on 22 December. An immediate schedule of systems training flights and pilot FCLP and refresher training was commenced in preparation for exercises to be conducted in January 1974, and eventual deployment of the squadron as the first E-2C squadron in the fleet.

The squadron was shocked and saddened by the death of ADJ1 William M. FULLER on 19 November. Petty Officer FULLER died from multiple gunshot wounds, the victim of an aggravated assault on the Naval Air Station at Norfolk.

On 17 December, CAPT J. R. ECKSTEIN, COMCARAEWWING TWELVE, conducted a ceremony for squadron personnel receiving awards for individual actions in the Vietnam conflict. This ceremony brought to full circle the year's activities which started in the waters of Vietnam and ended with acknowledgement of the accomplishment of the squadron members in that area. With the past duly recognized, the squadron looks forward with eager anticipation to the future of the E-2C and its impending deployment.