Korean Combat Action Reports for Air Task Group 2

ATG-2 18 Jul-4 Sep 1952

ATG-2 5 Sep-1 Nov 1952

ATG-2 1-24 Nov 1952

ATG-2 25 Nov 1952-13 Jan 1953

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]

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.

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.

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

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.

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 pre-dawn 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.

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 definitelv 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.

[redacted]

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

[redacted]

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.

[redacted]

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-

[redacted]

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 ComFair-Japan, 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

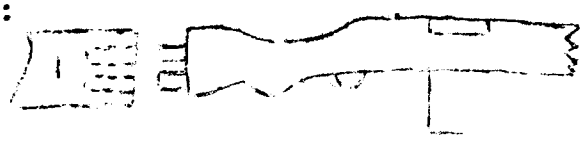
(g) Extra first aid Kit

(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

[redacted]

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.

[redacted]

[redacted] AIR TASK GROUP TWO FF12/A16-3
Ser: 01

[redacted]

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

Subj: Action Report of Air Task Group TWO for period of 25 November 1952 to 13 January 1953

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 (CVA-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 11/25	OPERATIONAL A/C 1/13	PILOTS 11/25	PILOTS 1/13
VF-23 LCDR C.C. AIKINS	F9F-2	13	14	21	20
VF-821 CDR. D.W. COOPER	F9F-2	13	15	24*	23*
VF-871 LCDR. F.C. HEARRELL, Jr.	F4U-4	13	13	24**	23**
VA-55 CDR. L.W. CHICK	AD-4	12	14	21	20
VC-3 LT. C.W. CHAPMAN	F4U-5N	4	4	5	5
VC-11 LCDR. D.W. KNIGHT	AD-4W	3	3	5	4
VC-35 LCDR. E. H. POTTER	AD-4N	4	4	6	6
VC-61 LT. T.L. NEILSON	F2H-2P	2	2	4	4

*Includes CATG-2.
**Includes ATG-2 Operations Officer.

MISSION

The mission of Air Task Group TWO is that set forth in CTF-77 OP Order NR. 2-52. The mission of this Air Group is 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]

7

CHRONOLOGY

25 November - 6 December - Restricted availability during catapult repairs at Yokosuka, Japan.

7 December - Total Sorties - 76 - Operational refresher training flights.

8 December - Total Sorties - 51 - Joined CTF-77.

9 December - Total Sorties - 108 - Lost one AD due loss of oil pressure - pilot rescued after ditching near friendly forces.

10 December - Total Sorties - 96

11 December - Replenishment - No Air Operations.

12 December - Total Sorties - 86 - Lost one F4U-4 due rocket engine explosion - aircraft crashed on landing at friendly airfield, received strike damage. Pilot uninjured.

13 December - Total Sorties - 89

14 December - Total Sorties - 101

15 December - Total Sorties - 58

16 December - Replenishment - No Air Operations.

17 December - Total Sorties 96

18 December - Total Sorties 104

19 December - Replenishment - No Air Operations.

20 December - Total Sorties - 105

21 December - Total Sorties - 70

22 December - Total Sorties - 101

23 December - Total Sorties - 98

25 December - Total Sorties - 49 (1/2 day due to Xmas)

26 December - Total Sorties - 99

[redacted]

27 December - Total Sorties - 101

28 December - Total Sorties - 98 - Lost one F9F-2 due flame out - pilot rescued uninjured.

29 December - Replenishment - No Air Operations.

30 December - Total Sorties - 109

31 December - Total Sorties - 98

1 January - Weather - No Air Operations.

2 January - Total Sorties - 92

3 January - Total Sorties - 98

4 January - Replenishment - No Air Operations.

5 January - Total Sorties - 52

6 January - Weather - No Air Operations.

7 January - Weather - No Air Operations.

8 January - Total Sorties - 84

9 January - Total Sorties - 49

10 January - Replishment.

11 January - Enroute Yokosuka - 45 ESSEX aircraft ferried to Atsugi, KING 3 and USS VALLEY FORGE.

12 January - Enroute Yokosuka.

[redacted]

PART II OPERATIONS

Flight Summary of Sorties

	F9F	F4U	AD-4	F4U-5N	ADW	ADN	F2H-2P	TOTAL
Strike	380	255	294	---	---	---	---	929
Recco	261	---	---	---	---	---	---	261
ASP (Day)	---	---	---	---	37	10	---	47
ASP (Night)	---	---	---	---	16	17	---	33
Night Heckler	---	---	---	55	---	49	---	104
NGF Spot	---	30	4	4	---	---	---	38
Photo	---	---	---	---	---	---	68	68
Photo Escort	70	---	---	---	---	---	---	70
ASP Escort (Day)	---	5	6	13	---	---	---	24
ASP Escort (Night)	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	1
CAP	234	---	---	---	---	---	---	234
TARCAP	55	---	---	---	---	---	---	55
CAS	---	81	73	---	---	---	---	154
RESCAP & Pilot Search	---	4	---	---	---	---	---	4
ECM	---	---	---	---	---	12	---	12
ECM Escort	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
AEW	---	---	---	---	3	3	---	6
OTHER	49	10	58	28	5	20	3	173
TOTAL	1049	385	435	101	61	111	71	2213

[redacted]

10

Per Pilot Data

Per Pilot	F9F	F2H	F4U-4	F4U-5N	AD-4	AD-4N	AD-4W
Sorties	25	17.0	15.8	14.7	20	18	12
Flight Hrs	37	28.6	42.7	47.1	55.1	51	30.2
Carrier Landings	24.6	17.0	16.6	16.8	19	18	12.2

Grand Total for period 18 July 1952 to 11 January 1953

Total Sorties 7,606

Total Combat Missions 5,719

Total Hours 15,565

Total Bombs and Rockets 30,990

Total Tons of Ammunition 5,522

Total 20MM and 50 Caliber rounds fired 1,185,224

[redacted]

Damage Inflicted on Enemy

	Destroyed	Probably Destroyed	Damaged
Oxcarts	12	2	6
Tanks	3	--	--
Trucks	126	56	84
Troops	25	--	--
RR Cars	56	37	10
RR Locomotives	9	--	11
Boats	37	--	--
Buildings	129	194	77
Barracks	38	11	9
Troop Shelter	11	2	--
Warehouses	71	17	38
Factory Buildings	6	--	--
Shore Battery	--	--	--
AA Guns	28	18	15
Artillery/Mortar Pos.	--	--	--
Bunkers	28	16	31
Supply Dumps	5	--	14
RR Cuts	53	23	58
Marshading (Yds)	---	--	--
Radar Site	--	--	1
Trenches	305 Yds	--	--
Hwy Bridges	11	4	3
Round Houses	1	1	3

[redacted]

DATE	SQDN	TYPE	BUNR	CAUSE	POSITION OF DAMAGE	CODE
DEC 12	VF871	F4U-4	96759	20MM	Port Wing starboard	D-1
20	VF23	F9F-2	123647	37MM Frag	Port wing starboard	D-3
20	VF23	F9F-2	123072	50 cal.	Leading edge	D-3
20	VA55	AD-4	126952	SA	Propeller Blade	D-3
20	VA55	AD-4	128925	SA	Engine cowl	D-3
20	VF871	F4U-4	81820	SA	Starboard horizonal stabilizer	D-3
20	VF871	F4U-4	81009	37MM	Port horizonal stabilizer	D-3
20	VF821	F9F-2	123405	37MM	Nose cone starboard wing stub	D-3
21	VA55	AD-4	129015	SA	Oil cooler cowl	D-3
21	VA55	AD-4	128949	SA	Lower dive brake	D-3
22	VF23	F9F-2	122588	37MM	Leading edge port wing	D-3
23	VA55	AD-4	128981	AA Frag	Starboard wing	D-3
26	VA55	AD-4	128963	AA Frag	Port wing	D-3
27	VA55	AD-4	128925	SA	Port aileron	D-3
27	VA55	AD-4	129013	SA	Starboard side fuselage aft.	D-3
27	VF23	F9F-2	127194	50 cal.	Port wing inspection plate	D-3
27	VF23	F9F-2	123513	SA	Trailing edge port aileron	D-3
28	VA55	AD-4	123811	AA Frag	Starboard wing	D-3
30	VA55	AD-4	128960	AA Frag	Starboard wing	D-3
31	VF821	F9F-2	123023	SA	Port side cockpit	D-3
31	VC61	F2H-2P	128826	37MM	Eppanage sec.	D-3
JAN 2	VF23	F9F-2	127139	37MM	Vertical fin	D-3
2	VF871	F4U-4	84141	50 cal.	Port aileron trim tab	D-3
5	VF23	F9F-2	127194	SA	Port wing tip tank	D-3
8	VA55	AD-4N	123704	SA	Starboard wing	D-3
8	VA55	AD-4N	125708	SA	Starboard wing	D-3

Loss of Aircraft

DATE	SQDN	TYPE	BUNR	CAUSE
Dec 9	VA55	AD-4NA	126927	Controlled water landing due to hit in oil line and loss of oil.
12	VF871	F4U-4	96759	Battle damage. Caused forced landing plane demolished on rough terrain
28	VF23	F9F-2	123435	Controlled water landing due to flame out.

[redacted]

1. **JET Operations (Summary)**

a. CAP - Most CAP hops were flown at 20,000 feet. As the hops were usually 1 1/2 hours a fairly high power setting of about 87% could be carried and the flight would still land with 2,000 pounds of fuel. The formation used was a section trail. Section was maintained by either an ellipse or a figure eight.

b. RECCO.

Four plane reccos were flown. In this squadron two planes flew low and two high. Both sections flew as very loose elements with a three dimentional separation of 300 to 500 feet. The recco was flown so as to cover 3 or 4 miles either side of the route. The major portion of the flight was parallel to the route but not down the MSR. Base altitude varied between 1,000 and 3,000 feet. The latter altitude was the safer as far as flak was concerned and provided better navigational information for the flight leader. However camouflaged objects could be more easily detected at the 1,000 foot level. By continual evaluation on this cruise, it is believed that a very efficient recco can be conducted using 3,000 feet as the base altitude. However, pilots must be trained along these lines, if they are to realize any practical benefits from the higher altitude search.

c. STRIKES.

1. For strikes it has been the policy to make only one run on heavily defended targets. Approach altitude varies between 10,000 and 20,000 feet, using the sun for cover when practicable. A dive angle of 35 to 40 degrees was used with excellent results with a power setting between 82 and 90 percent. This usually gave a speed of 430 to 470 knots.

2. On poorly defended targets 2 to 4 runs were made with a different type of approach and retirement for each run.

d. COORDINATED STRIKES.

On coordinated strikes, the jet mission normally was flak suppression. One division or section would immediately precede the propellar aircraft. If the flak positions were known the other jets would go in with the props. If the flak positions were not known the remaining jets would go in behind the props and cover the flanks during the retirement. On occasions when the target was not easily detected, the lead section of jets was used to mark the target.

[redacted]

e. TARCAP.

For TARCAP's on the strikes near the Manchurian Border, 4 plane elements were used with stations 10 to 15 miles from the target in the direction of expected attack. Station was maintained by using a section trail figure eight parallel to the border. Base altitude was usually 22,000 feet and base speed 260 to 290 knots. No enemy aircraft were encountered although several sightings were made in the WONSAN and NAJIN area. In all cases the MIG's remained above 30,000 feet.

2. SCHEDULING.

a. LENGHT OF TOUR.

A 20 to 25 day operating tour would be desirable from the pilots and maintenance view point. This Air Group has had 3 tours of over 30 days each. By the end of the third week the pilots are tired and their efficiency drops. About the same time, the aircraft also get tired and the availability drops. On the last tour on the line, usually 4 days were flown followed by a replenishment day. On the fourth day of flying, availability was usually down 15 to 20 percent from the third day.

b. FLIGHT SCHEDULING.

The 1 1/2 hour jet flight presents no problem for the F9F-2. However, there are many cases where a little simple navigation prior to scheduling would readily reveal the desired launch separation of prop and jet aircraft conducting coordinated strikes. Numerous cases in recent weeks have arisen where the distance to the target was 35 to 40 miles and the jets were launched 40 minutes after the props. For strikes under 50 miles, they could easily be launched in one continuous launch. A recommended table of launch separation is as follows:

DISTANCE PIM TO TARGET	JET LAUNCH AFTER PROPS
Under 50 Miles	0 Minutes
50 - 100 Miles	20 Minutes
100 - 140 Miles	30 Minutes
140 - 170 Miles	40 Minutes
170 - 200 Miles	50 Minutes

Strong upper winds will require minor modification in these times.

[redacted]

3. COMMUNICATIONS.

a. CALLS - The four digit call system is at best cumbersome; to abbreviate it results in confusion. When operating on our own ship land launch which was used for strikes over the beach, we used the squadron color plus a number - e.g. WHITE 1, WHITE 2, etc. It is recommended that a study be made to improve the present naval aircraft call system using one syllable words only as few of these as possible.

JET PHOTO COMMENTS

1. This unit has successfully located the K-18 and K-38 24" camera in the aft bay, without alteration of the basic design, so that it can be rotated from the cockpit, from the vertical position to any of the four oblique positions. The use of a 24" camera with a 9 x 18" negative offers the advantages of increased scale, longer slant ranges and the addition of orientation coverage to pinpoint obliques.

2. The incorporation of a forward firing camera in all photo configurated aircraft is strongly recommended. A forward firing camera should have at least a 24" focal length in order to get large scale phots from relatively high altitudes. The reconnaissance mount in the F2H-2P could be easily adapted to interchange a forward firing 24" camera with the 6" camera presently mounted in the forward bay by modifying the nose of the F2H.

3. In using the forward viewfinder in the F2H-2P when operating a 36" camera, difficulty was experienced in estimating the areas of coverage due to the lack of a 36" template. It is recommended that a 36" coverage template similar to the 6" and 12" templates be installed in the forward viewfinder.

4. Fulfilling the 90% forward overlap requirement of oblique photography is presently a matter of guess work. In order to correct this defect it is recommended that the Interval Computer in the F2H-2P be modified to permit the selection of either 60 or 90% forward overlap for any slant range (altitude) and ground speed combination.

5. Several instances of camera failure in flight have been caused by the blowing of the camera power fuze located in the nose section. The relocation of this fuze in the cockpit would enable the pilot to replace it and preclude the loss of this vital circuit.

NIGHT ATTACK

The launch and recovery times of night hecklers remained

approximately the same this tour as last, however, the shorter days at this time of the year allowed hecklers to have more time over the beach during hours of darkness, thus increasing their effectiveness and value to the night interdiction program.

ASW COMMENT

In order that ASW teams may maintain a high state of teaming, an exercise with a fleet submarine should be scheduled at regular intervals. It is recommended that once each 30 days would be sufficient.

ORDNANCE COMMENT

a. The use of ATAR's on one run targets with a split load (Bombs and Rockets) is in effective due to lack of suitable targets and the lack of training in this type of run as has been commented before the training period should include at least four flights using split loads on a one run target.

PART III ORDNANCE

ORDNANCE EXPENDITURES

TYPE ORDNANCE	AD4	F4U4	F9F2	AD4N	F4U5N	TOTAL
2000 #GP	38					38
1000 #GP	729	58				787
500 #GP	329	276		56	44	705
250 #GP	1276	896	1467	119	80	3838
100 #GP	376	132	1164	288		1960
350 #Depth Bomb	2	3			16	21
260 #Frag	266	250	1026	57	382	1981
3".25 ASAR	15	24		114	66	219
5". ATAR		132	86			218
1000 # SAP	8					8
500 # SAP		4				4
NAPALM	12	4				16
MK 6 Flares				250		250
20MM	54,684		105,466	13,950	22,500	196,600
.50 Cal.		155,000				155,000
TOTAL LBS	1,583,684	610,560	889,244	134,827	171,855	3,389,869
TOTAL TONS	791.5	305.5	444.	67.5	86.	1694.5

HUNG ORDNANCE REPORT

Type Ordnance	AERO 14A	MK 51	MK 55-1	MK 9	TOTAL
ATAR	2			12	14
260 #FRAG	1		10		11
250 #GP	4		9		13
100 #GP			10		10
500 #GP		1			1
TOTAL	7	1	29	12	49

DISPOSITION OF HUNG ORDNANCE

TYPE ORDNANCE	REMAINED ON RACK	TOTAL
ATAR	14	14
260 #FRAG	11	11
250 #GP	13	13
100 #GP	10	10
500 #GP	1	1
TOTAL	49	49

[redacted]

ORDNANCE

1. 20MM and .50 Caliber Guns

The performance of all guns installed in aircraft has continued to be excellent. Very few stoppages occuring could be attributed to cold weather. Cold weather had some effect on 20MM links causing them to become brittle and more subject to breakage. An occasional slippage of 20MM feed mechanism occurred. As soon as this was detected, feed mechanisms were removed and relubricated with specified winter lubricant as specified by BuOrd Material Letter GU 18-15. No shortage of .50 Cal. and 20MM gun parts were noted.

2. Bomb Racks and Bomb Ejectors

All bomb racks with the exception of the MK 55. Mod 1. racks have given satisfactory service. Four bombs were dropped during catapult launch from these racks. In all cases, wear and rounding of the shoulder on the trigger release caused rack failure. Sway braces of the MK 55-1 rack still showed a marked weakness and many breakages occurred. Fahnstock clips in current supply are of a very poor quality. About one fourth are faulty and connot be used. The spring tension of clips vary to such extent that pull required to extract two clips from arming wire will range from 6 to 20 pounds. Clips of this type make it impossible to assure bombs will drop safe or if arming wire will be held safely prior to drop from aircraft. Clips are difficult to install on arming wires and use of tools to install clip makes them all the more unreliable.

Several douglas bomb ejector foot assemblies have been lost during combined operating periods. Excessive wear on the piston assemblies and piston assembly retaining keys has been the cause of the majority of these losses. A RUDM has been forwarded to BuOrd concerning metal fatigue of these parts.

3. Rockets and Rocket Launchers

Very few rockets were used during this operating period. No noted difficulties were experienced.

[redacted]

MAINTENACE PART IV

1. JETS

Many TJC's were changed in December due to unexplained surging of engine R.P.M., most noticeable on throttle retardation. While the cause was not definitely determined, it is believed the failures were caused by malfunction of either the governor or regulator valves. Many of the replacement TJC's were overage in preservation and failed to check-out. It is recommended that steps be taken to remove from the supply system any remaining overage TJC's. The difficulty encountered earlier in the cruise with sticking aneroid shafts seems to have been corrected by installing new aneroid shafts and bushings lubricated with "lubriplate" where failures occurred. Three high pressure pumps were changed in December. The commonest failures for the entire cruise were malfunction of the amplifying system, causing pressure spillage, and leaks past the motor shaft chevron seals or through the overboard drain.

Several instances have been noted where sections of wiring which lie near the commonest sources of hydraulic leaks have in time been liberally doused with hydralube (H-4). This water-base fluid attacks the insulation over a period of time and can destroy the wiring. In high-time aircraft, the condition of the wiring could well be the limiting factor in the service life of the aircraft. Accordingly, it is suggested that both the hydraulic and electrical systems of F9F aircraft receive special attention in overhaul with particular attention being paid to the condition of all cannon plugs.

A high number of tailhook point changes continued to be necessary due to chips, cracks, nicks, and one complete failure in which the hook point split and came off, permitting the aircraft to go into the barricade. One double-wire engagement occurred. This was the first time in three such engagements experienced ny this squadron in which the hook point bolt did not experience a tensile failure. RUDMS have been submitted in all cases.

2. AD's

Maintenance problems of the AD-4, AD-4N, and AD-4W aircraft were not unusual. Availability, computed in accordance with the Naval Warfare Reporting Manual, has declined under that of the last period because of non-availability of spare parts. ACOG's issued six (6); flight days lost twenty-one (21). Several instances of rough running engines were reported, but were decreased by pilot indoctrination on the proper utilization of

alternate air and engine cylinder head temperature control. The AD without the nose cowl flaps is not recommended for use during the winter in Korea. Oil dilution was not used during this period; however at each shut-down the oil diverter valve was closed for easier starts. APU's were not required for all aircraft but were used on each for the early morning plane captain warm up start. Ignition harness trouble has been nil since drilling vent holes in compliance with ComAirPac R-3350 Engine Technical Bulletin No. 16. Some moisture is still being found in the distributor bowls, indicating that a better design is required. AD armor plate saved another aircraft from loss or strike damage.

Inspection of the landing gear spindle at the knuckle in accordance with the request of ComFairJap was not accomplished in all aircraft because of the pressure of operations, the lack of hoisting and jacking space and the inherent danger of a jacked up aircraft during carrier operations and rolling seas.

ELECTRONICS

1. Electronics maintenance remained at a high level for the tour. No major discrepancies appeared. There was a rise in the number of reported malfunctions to the actual break downs. There was also a slight rise in normal maintenance required to keep equipment available during this last period of cruise.

2. Electronic personnel have experienced no major break downs of equipment this cruise which has resulted in an excellent state of readiness for the entire period in WesPac.

PART V

AIR INTELLIGENCE

Comments and Recommendations.

1. Comments.

a. The Air Intelligence Officer of CAG-9 reported aboard the USS ESSEX (CVA-9) for a period of five days to study the methods of the Air Intelligence team under actual combat operating conditions.

b. Air Group FIVE sent a detachment of nine officers aboard for a period of seven days for indoctrination and participating in flights. These pilots, (CO's, XO's and Operations Officers), were given several comprehensive briefings by Air Group Air Intelligence Officers as well as by the Squadron Commanding Officers. This group of officers spent their "spare time" gathering information and ideas from pilots which were recently experienced in Korean combat, and also preparing maps and procedures for assistance to their own squadrons.

2. Recommendations.

a. It is recommended that Air Group Intelligence Officers be ordered to the most experienced carrier on the line, for a period of two weeks, to benefit from the experience gained by a seasoned Air Group.

b. It is believed that a group of pilots, (CO's, XO's and Operations Officers), benefit greatly from active participation in strikes and the intelligence briefing received, based on recent experiences. It is recommended that the practice of sending such a group of pilots aboard for a period of active participation be continued.

[redacted]

PART VI

1. Performance.

Performance has been excellent and morale outstanding during this period of operation. However, during the phase of this period in which the prop pilots were required to fly two combat missions per day, the effects of fatigue on the various pilots personalities began to become evident, and the morale of these pilots suffered somewhat of a drop. This was corrected by starting the policy of allowing only one combat hop per day to the prop pilots.

2. Illness.

a. There have been 52 pilots grounded for this period of operation; 22 for periods of 7 days or more, 30 for shorter periods of time. The predominant reason for grounding was respiratory illness.

b. There have been 6 aircrewmen grounded for short periods of time during this period of operation. The predominant reason for grounding was respiratory illness.

3. Casualties

a. Wounded in Action - LTJG Gordon "H" FARMER 498155/1310, USN, received medical treatment for multiple lacerations and abrasions about the right eye and contusions of the right shoulder which he suffered as a result of flying debris or missiles striking his plane on a combat mission over Communist Territory, North Korea, 22 December 1952.

b. Missing in Action - There have been no personnel declared missing in action during this period.

4. Psychiatric Disorder.

a. One pilot was grounded during this period for excessive nervousness and apprehension resulting from marked drop in motivation.

5. Venereal Disease.

a. There were 12 cases of venereal disease; 10 of which were gonorrhea, 2 of which were chancroid.

6. Deaths.

a. There have been no deaths reported for this period.

7. Recommendations.

a. It is recommended that a more satisfactory arrangement be made regarding the wearing of exposure suits. It is assumed that many of the respiratory illnesses encountered were predisposed by the rapid temperature changes involved in going from Ready Room to aircraft plus going from aircraft to Ready Room while perspiring freely.

b. It is further recommended that, if at all feasible, the policy of flying prop pilots only one combat hop per day be adopted at the beginning of the curise. It is strongly believed that the fatigue associated with two combat hops per day greatly influenced the health of the pilots. The predominance of illness was found among the prop pilots.

PART VII

1. Personnel

In consideration of the high incidence of sickness incured during winter operations and the heavy requirement of squadron personnel by the ships TAD requirements, it is recomended that the squadron non-rated allowance be increased by 15 men. This increase in complement would allow 1.5 men per assigned aircraft as plane captains. This is considered by this unit to be the minimum number compatible with efficient operations.

AD's - The recent policy of CTF-77 on restricting the pilots of the AD and F4U's to one combat (over enemy territory) flight per day during the winter months while wearing the exposure suit will require from 175% to 200% pilots per plane in order to fulfill present scheduling requirements. This will be noticed more particularly when the three jet, one AD squadron, Groups arrive in the area.

[redacted]

SURVIVAL

1. The requirement for all pilots to wear oxygen masks, when over enemy territory has paid dividends. One pilot, shot down in flames, had an oxygen mask casualty on the flight and was not wearing his mask and suffered facial burns of greater intensity than on his hands which were covered by gloves. It is noted that this pilot hasn't had any trouble with his mask since that time. Another pilot very severely burned about the collar line, would have been fatally burned without the mask. The burns he suffered about the face were inflicted after the burning mask was removed. Another pilot suffered minor facial lacerations through the mask when shrapnel entered the cockpit. His wounds would have been serious without the additional mask protection.

2. The MK 3 exposure suit is barely satisfactory - comment on it is not made because it is known that the MK 4 is now being furnished to fleet units. However, cockpits of modern aircraft that are to be used by pilots wearing exposure suits must have all projecting knobs, bolts, and levers smoothed off or eliminated to prevent damage to the suit or accidental actuation of mechanisms due the baggy fit of the suits.

[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
AIR TASK GROUP TWO

FF12/A16-3
ATG-2:ffc
Serial: 03

[redacted]

1 November 1952

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

Subj: Action Report of Air Task Group TWO for period of 5 September 1952 to 1 November 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 (CVA-9) as required by reference (a).

J. G. Daniels

J. G. DANIELS

[redacted]

[redacted]

CONTENTS OF ACTION REPORT

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMPOSITION OF FORCES

UNIT	TYPE A/C	OPERATIONAL A/C 9-18	OPERATIONAL A/C 11-1	PILOTS 9-18	PILOTS 11-1
VF-23 LCDR C.C. Aikins	F9F-2	15	14	24	23
VF-821 CDR. D.W. Cooper	F9F-2	15	15	24*	24*
VF-871 LCDR F.C. Hearrell Jr.	F4U-4	14	13	25**	24**
VA-55 CDR. L.W. Chick	AD-4	16	13	24	24
VC-3 (Det I) LT. C.W. Chapman	F4U-5N	4	4	5	5
VC-11 (Det I) LCDR D.W. Knight	AD-4W	3	3	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	4	4

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

MISSION

The mission of Air Task Group TWO is that set forth in CTF-77 OP Order NR. 22-51 (Second Revision) and CTF-77 OP Order NR. 25A-52. The mission of this force is to perform close air support, reconnaissance, interdiction, air bombardment missions and support of amphibious operations in order to destroy enemy forces, communications and installations and to support landing of amphibious troops.

[redacted]

[redacted]

CHRONOLOGY

18 September	Enroute CTF 77
19 September	Enroute CTF 77
20 September	Total sorties - 89
21 September	Total sorties - 97
22 September	Total sorties - 111
23 September	Enroute Sasebo
24 September	FltActSasebo
25 September	FltActSasebo
26 September	FltActSasebo
27 September	Enroute CTF 77
28 September	No flight operations, bad weather
29 September	Total sorties - 95
30 September	Total sorties - 104
1 October	Total sorties - 112
2 October	No flight operations - replenishment
3 October	Total sorties - 102
4 October	Total sorties - 104
5 October	Total sorties - 105
6 October	No flight operations - replenishment
7 October	Total sorties - 94
8 October	Total sorties - 95
9 October	Total sorties - 94
10 October	No flight operations - replenishment

[redacted]

[redacted]

11 October Total sorties - 38

12 October Total sorties - 105

13 October Total sorties - 57

14 October Total sorties - 107

15 October Total Sorties - 47

16 October Total Sorties - 59

17 October Total Sorties - 111 - 2 planes shot down behind enemy lines by anti aircraft fire. One pilot was rescued by helicopter, the other pilot was not rescued due to darkness. Rescue operations were to be resumed at first light.

18 October Total sorties - 4. Replenishment. These sorties were flown from K-18 in Korea in search of pilot that was shot down on 17 October 1952. During this operation one plane was shot down and seen to crash in enemy territory. The pilot is listed missing in action.

19 October Total sorties - 98

20 October Total sorties - 128 - One plane was shot down in enemy territory. The pilot was rescued by helicopter despite severe burns.

21 October Total sorties - 56

22 October Replenishment cancelled - bad weather

23 October No flight operations - replenishment

24 October Total sorties - 105

25 October Total sorties - 100

26 October Total sorties - 5 - Replenishment

27 October Total sorties - 106

28 October Total sorties - 98

[redacted]

[redacted]

29 October Total sorties - 109 - One plane was forced to ditch due to damage received from enemy anti aircraft fire. The pilot was rescued by a destroyer.

30 October No flight operations - replenishment

31 October Total sorties - 92

1 November Repenishment - Enroute Yokosuka

NOTE: Sorties as listed above with the exception of 18 October were flown from the USS ESSEX (CVA-9). Fifty-five other sorties were flown from emergency or auxiliary fields in South Korea.

[redacted]

[redacted]

OPERATIONS

Flight Summary by Sorties

	F9F	F4U	F4U-5N	AD	ADN	ADW	F2H-2P
Strike	280	344	---	343	---	---	---
Recco	372	2	---	---	---	---	---
RR Heckler	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
ASP (Day)	---	10	16	10	17	56	---
ASP (Night)	---	---	2	---	19	24	---
Night Heckler	---	---	67	---	51	---	---
NGF Spot	---	30	5	2	---	---	---
Photo	---	---	---	---	---	---	100
Photo Escort	83	---	---	---	---	---	---
CAP	343	---	---	---	---	---	---
ECM	---	---	---	---	27	---	---
CAS	---	98	3	165	3	---	---
Special Mission	---	---	1	---	---	---	---
RESCAP	---	11	19	8	---	---	---
TARCAP	67	---	---	---	---	---	---
AEW	---	---	---	---	1	4	---
Other	---	41	---	42	14	4	---
Total	1145	536	113	570	134	88	100

GRAND TOTAL 2686

Per Pilot Data

Per Pilot	F9F	F2H	F4U-4	F4U-5N	AD-4	AD-4N	AD-4W	Group Average
Sorties	23.8	25.5	22.5	15	24	23	18	23.4
Flight Hrs	38.0	41.1	62.6	61.4	66.6	65	46	52.0
Carrier Landings	24.3	25.5	20.1	21.0	22.8	23	18.8	22.7

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Damage Inflicted by enemy.

DATE	SQDN	TYPE	BUNR	CAUSE	POSITION OF DAMAGE	CODE
SEP						
21	VF821	F9F-2	123571	AA(Med)	Stbd side cockpit	D-3
22	VF-23	F9F-2	123647	AA(Med)	Stbd horizontal stabilizer	D-2
22	VA-55	AD-4	129015	AA	Port aileron	D-3
22	VA-55	AD-4	123791	AA	Port flap, fuselage stabilizer	D-2
22	VA-55	AD-4	128930	AA	Port wheel door	D-3
22	VF-871	F4U-4	97225	AA(Med)	belly tank & oil cooler	D-3
29	VF-871	F4U-4	81403	AA	Nose section	D-2
29	VA-55	AD-4	127879	AA	Carburetor Air Scoop	D-3
29	VF-821	F9F-2	123451	AA(Med)	Port Flap	D-3
29	VF-821	F9F-2	123425	AA(Med)	Port Wheel Fairing	D-3
30	VC-61	F2H-2P	128858	AA(SA)	Stbd Tip tank	D-3
30	VF-821	F9F-2	123435	AA(Med)	Stbd Tip tank	D-3
30	VA-55	AD-4	129012	AA	Port Wing	D-3
30	VA-55	AD-4	129007	AA	Stbd wheel well	D-3
30	VA-55	AD-4	129013	AA	Port wheel well	D-3
OCT						
1	VF-23	F9F-2	122585	AA(SA)	Inboard flap	D-3
3	VF-23	F9F-2	123510	AA	Nose section	D-3
3	VF-821	F9F-2	123023	AA(Med)	Wheel well door & stub wing	D-3
4	VF-23	F9F-2	123703	AA	Stbd tip tank & aileron	D-3
5	VF-871	F4U-4	81574	AA(med)	Stbd outboard wing panel	D-3
8	VF-23	F9F-2	123521	AA(med)	Nose, port tip tank both intakes & stabilizer	D-3
11	VF-23	F9F-2	123435	AA(SA)	Sliding nose section	D-3
12	VF-23	F9F-2	123532	AA(Light)	Complete tail section	D-3
14	VF-23	F9F-2	123587	AA	Sliding nose section	D-3
14	VF-23	F9F-2	123513	AA(Light)	Stbd tip tank, stbd wing	D-3
14	VF-23	F9F-2	123647	AA(Light)	Stbd wing, port flap	D-3
14	VF-821	F9F-2	123452	AA(SA)	Port flap	D-3
14	VA-55	AD-4	128930	AA	Propeller	D-2
17	VA-55	AD-4	123922	AA(Med)	Engine Accessory Section	L
17	VA-55	AD-4	128920	AA	Stbd wing	D-3
17	VA-55	AD-4	127873	AA	Port elevator	D-3
17	VF-23	F9F-2	123513	SA	Nose section	D-3

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DATE	SQDN	TYPE	BUNR	CAUSE	POSITION OF DAMAGE	CODE
OCT						
17	VF-23	F9F-2	123072	SA	Left aileron	D-3
17	VF-23	F9F-2	123647	SA	Stbd cockpit	D-3
17	VF-871	F4U-5N	122015	AA(L)	Port wing panel	D-3
17	VF-871	F4U-4	97282	AA(SA)	Port & stbd wing & fuselage	D-3
17	VF-23	F9F	122585	AA(Med)	Unknown	L
18	VF-871	F4U-4	97230	AA(SA)	Stbd cowling, cylinder intake	D-3
18	VF-871	F4U-4	80782	AA(SA)	Port & stbd wings	D-3
18	VF-871	F4U-4	96941	AA(Med)	Unknown	L
20	VA-55	AD-4	127873	AA	Port fuselage	D-2
20	VA-55	AD-4	128952	AA	Port stabilizer, aileron, wing, stbd wing, aileron	D-3
20	VA-55	AD-4	123950	AA	Port flap, spray cover, wing, aileron stbd wing, flap wheel door	D-3
20	VA-55	AD-4	123813	AA	Engine	L
21	VF-23	F9F	123033	SA	Port tail fairing	D-3
24	VF-23	F9F	123016	SA	Sliding nose section	D-3
25	VF-23	F9F	123510	AA(L)	Fuselage	D-3
29	VA-55	AD-4	128958	AA	Engine	L
31	VF-821	F9F	123425	AA(Med)	Port wing stub, wing stbd wing stub, in board flap	D-3

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Damage Inflicted on enemy

	Destroyed	Probably Destroyed	Damaged
Oxen & Oxcarts	18	-	15
Trucks	58	63	63
Troops	187	57	13
RR Cars	41	16	33
Boats	97	-	33
Bldgs (small)	187	13	132
RR Bridges	8	-	31
Hwy Bridges	-	-	16
Vehicles	10	1	5
Warehouses	72	1	51
Gun Postions	68	26	27
RR Cuts	82	2	40
Storage Tanks	5	1	-
Locomotives	-	2	6
Barracks	59	12	25
Hydro Electric	-	1	2
Tanks	1	3	2
Ammo Dumps	2	5	2
RR Round House	-	-	1
Radar Site	2	3	-
Transformer Station	1	-	-
Factory	4	2	6
Saw Mill	-	2	2
Bunkers	32	8	8
Mining Facilities	2	-	9
Tunnels	-	2	-
Command Post	1	-	1
Piers & Docks	-	-	1
Locomotive Repair Facilities	2	-	-

[redacted]

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1. Jets

The use of VT frags on flak suppression hops has proved very satisfactory, but it is considered that six HVAR is the ideal loading for Recco hops. Aircraft on Recco hops do not have either the time or the altitude necessary for an accurate bombing run. If shortage in supply of rockets should necessitate the use of bombs, mixed loadings should be avoided. Half the aircraft loaded with bombs and half loaded with rockets is far more satisfactory than loading an aircraft with both bombs and rockets.

Some of the present Recco routes and combination of routes as assigned are much too long for satisfactory coverage. For example:

P10, P9, and G3	- 120 nautical miles
P13, and B1	- 105 nautical miles
B13, and B11	- 115 nautical miles
B16	- 85 nautical miles
B8, and B9	- 105 nautical miles

Camoflaged objects are often missed on first pass due to too rapid passage in an effort to cover the entire route.

One run flak suppression hops are not considered satisfactory. In areas where heavy flak is expected an initial run by all jets assigned flak suppression prior to the initial push over by the bomber type aircraft should be made on the known positions. This run to be made two to three minutes before the props there by permitting the jets to recover and take a position to make a second run either with the props or just following them when the flak is most evident and the props are most vulnerable. The effectiveness of the 20MM gun for flak suppression has been greatly underestimated and is considered to have great effect on suppressing flak when used to cover the bombers in their run and during their pull out.

It is recommended that spare aircraft for the last strike hop of the day be launched to join with the strike group, operational commitments permitting. These additional aircraft would add additional strength to the strike group, make it unnecessary to respot or unload the spare, and increase the number of sorties flown by type by at least one per day.

In order to facilitate and expedite replacement of aircraft it is suggested that replacement aircraft be made available at K18 for pick up until approximately six operating days prior to

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the ships departure from the line.

Comments and Recommendations:

Aircraft and Equipment.

1. The F2H-2P has proven to be the finest photo plane in service. It's speed, maneuverability, visibility range and endurance far exceed any other fighter photo in Navy use. The present photo nose configuration incorporates many new features desired and required in combat photography. Due to the longer focal length of the cameras afforded by this configuration, larger scale photography is possible at 10,000 feet and above. The viewfinder is of great help in photo mapping and should be included in all future designs. However, a thirty-six inch grid should be included so that it will be of value when using this camera.

2. The Whipple Stamping Machine, used for the annotating of negatives wore out and broke down after the first ten thousand negatives had been stamped. After some experiment with the Roberts Numbering Machine, Model 79P it was made usable and has proven to be a much better machine and results with its use have been gratifying. This machine was used for aerial film marking several years ago, and while the wheel designs do not conform with the present system, they can be changed around to work.

3. Freshly annotated ink has not been drying due to the colder weather and so this Unit designed and built a film drying hot box, consisting of an old file cabinet, five film spools, six electric bulbs and connections at a total cost of two dollars thirty cents ($2.30). This hot box is now in use and is so successful that it is impossible to smear any mixture of ink under any annotating condition.

4. A forward firing camera has become a necessity in combat photography with the high speeds of the jet aircraft. It is therefore recommended that a twenty-four or thirty-six inch forward firing camera be installed in all future photo designs.

2. F4U's.

On aircraft recovery under high wind conditions, one F4U-4 left wingfold cylinder was broken due to folding wings immediately after landing with flaps down. It is recommended that when high winds

[redacted]

prevail pilot wait until the aircraft crosses the barrier and retract flaps before folding wings.

During this period COMFRON-3 Unit ITEM has had ample oportunity to maintain pilot proficiency as compared to the last tour on the line. With the exception of two days, no night heckler missions were cancelled due to weather. At the beginning of this period Unit ITEM was cut to five pilots, which number is considered adequate to handle all assigned missions.

3. AEW Unit

During the reporting period COMFRON-11 Air Early Warning Unit ITEM was utilized primarily for anti-submarine patrols. Although a few flights utilizing the primary mission were conducted.

The AEW flights were scheduled to evaluate the capability of the APS-20A radar to hold planes inland, with an eye toward airborne control of the TARCAP, and early warning of enemy aircraft in the target area. This procedure is complicated by the sensitivity of the gear itself and the difficulty of seeing through the land return on the PPI scope. Results were inconclusive, but in general it is believed that this procedure is not feasible with current gear. Good results were obtained from a communications standpoint, however, the AEW plane acting as relay between strike groups and the Task Force, both with and without the use of Middleman.

A dual purpose training program was conducted by this unit during the period of report. The first purpose of this program was to train their own personnel, currently in a non-crew status, in the equipment and methods of operation of the APS-20A radar and airborne controlling. The second purpose was a program to acquaint the Ship's CIC personnel and members of AEW Unit ITEM with each other's problems, capabilities and modes of operation. This was accomplished by a series of exchange watches and flights by ship's CIC personnel in the aircraft of this unit. Ship's personnel spent a total of 25.4 hours airborne under insturction, pilots, controllers and technicians of the AEW Unit spent 96 hours observing in CIC. It is believed that this program has been of great value to all concerned.

4. VA(N) Unit

Since joining ATG-2 and prior to this operating period very few night carrier landings were made by COMFRON-35. It is believed

a minimum of four night landings per pilot per operating tour be made to maintain maximum pilot proficiency.

It is recommended that a submarine be made available sometime during a cruise, possibly entering or leaving Yokosuka, to conduct training exercises with pilots and aircrewmen of this squadron (COMFRON-35). In order to maintain proficiency in ASW at least one training flight per crew is considered essential.

During the majority of this period ECM flights were conducted in accordance with an Air Plan that gave no indication of the area to be searched nor the frequencies to be scanned. It is recommended that in the future this information always be contained in the Air Plan.

During this period a substantial increase of enemy truck traffic was noted during the hours of darkness, the majority being along route Green 3, and the Red routes south to the bomb line. On numerous occasions several hundred vehicle lights were visible from one location. Since the traffic does not move until after dark it is recommended that night heckler flights be launched at an hour that will allow the maximum time over land during darkness.

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ORDNANCE

ORDNANCE EXPENDITURES

Type Ordnance	AD4	F4U4	F9F2	AD4N	F4U5N	Total
2000 #GP	63					63
1000 #GP	692	40				732
500 #GP	791	403		39	54	1287
250 #GP	1958	848	894	208	404	4312
100 #GP	391	456	735	200	92	1874
350 #Dept Bomb		4		2	14	20
260 #FRAG	596	491	987	12	12	2094
3"25 ASAR	10	18		96	54	178
5" ATAR	439	345	1086			1870
5" HVAR	20	44	48			112
20 MM	88656		123166	20000	30650	262472
150 GAL		202900				202900
MK 6 FLARES				255		255
NAPALM	5					5
TOTAL LBS	2209508	812192	830487	132975	181163	4166325
TOTAL TONS	1104.25	406.10	415.24	66.49	90.58	2083.11

HUNG ORDNANCE REPORT

Type Ordnance	AERO 14A	MK 51	MK55 MOD 1	MK9 Launchers	TOTAL
ATAR	30			83	113
260# Frag			4		4
100# GP	1		4		5
250# GP	6		9		15
1000# GP		1			1
TOTAL	37	1	17	83	138

DISPOSITION OF HUNG ORDNANCE

Type Ordnance	Remained on Racks	Later Released Manually	Released by Jerking	Dropped off at Launch	Dropped off Landing	TOTAL
ATAR	112				1	113
260# Frags	3				1	4
100# GP	5					5
250# GP	14		1			15
1000# GP	1					1
TOTAL	135	0	1	0	2	138

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ORDNANCE

AD4 Aircraft

The performance of the 20MM guns installed in the AD4 aircraft has been excellent. Few malfunctions have occurred. Some stoppages have been caused by defective ammunition or by insufficient lubrication of ammunition. All 20MM feed mechanisms have been re-lubricated for cold weather operation. All gun heaters have been installed and are given prescribed operational tests and care. No difficulty is anticipated during coming cold weather operations. Ordnance crews have becomed skilled in both rearming and maintenance operations. Shortages still exist in supplies of driving springs, chargers and charger spare parts.

All types of bomb racks and bomb ejectors have given satisfactory service. There were only two cases of hung bombs, these were returned aboard and remained on racks upon recovery of aircraft. One was the result of tight sway braces and the other caused by defective electrical circuit.

F4U Aircraft.

The .50 caliber machine guns used in the F4U aircraft have given excellent performance during this operating period. There were no malfunctions, and few stoppages occurred. During the first few days of this period some difficulties were encountered from ejection brass breaking rocket pigtails. Deflectors were manufactured and attached to the rack mounts on stations numbers 1, 2, 5, and 6, just forward of the pigtail plug socket. Since deflectors were installed there has been no reoccurance of this trouble. An additional switch was added to the ordnance circuit to allow the pilot to drop the entire load of bombs. This switch when in the "on" position, connects the leads from the "bomb rocket" together, energizing the center pylons and all the wing racks. This makes possible a salvo of all ordnance with one touch of the firing switch. The Aero 14A racks have given excellent service.

F9F-2 Aircraft

No particular difficulties with maintenance or operation of 20MM guns were experienced during the operating period. The MK 55, MOD 1 bomb racks have given satisfactory service with the exception of the sway braces. Several of these braces have broken during launch or in flight. The break usually occurs on the after brace

[redacted]

near the supporting post. As there are no spares on hand, repairs have been made by welding the broken braces if broken end is still available. The igniters of racks are starting to show some wear and some will require replacement in the near future. Many of the female rocket firing receptacles (igniters) have been found faulty and required replacement. There were 83 hung rockets out of 1,134 rockets carried. The majority of these failures occurred during the first week of the period and most of them were due to broken pigtails. Tape was used to secure excess lead to rocket body. During the later part of the period one squadron installed a double spring clip to the wing structure about 6 inches forward of rocket receptacle. No failures have been experienced on rockets carried by planes on which these clips were used.

General.

Bomb carts continue to give trouble when it becomes necessary to move bombs to the after part of flight deck over arresting gear and cables. This difficulty has been partially overcome by close cooperation between plane handling personnel and ordnance personnel whereby all planes are loaded forward inasmuch as scheduling permits.

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MAINTENACE

1. JETS

a. The most significant maintenance problem encountered during the operating period was malfunction of the altitude compensating unit of the TJC fuel control as installed on the J 42-P-8 engine. The malfunction consisted of the aneroid shaft seizing fast in its bushing. Since deploying to the forward area, jet units have had 39 separate instances of stuck aneroid shafts and 6 flame outs at altitudes above 23,000 feet to which frozen aneroid shafts directly contributed. The only satisfactory corrective action was to replace the entire TJC, leaving the aneroid unit sealed. Even replacing the aneroid shaft and bushing with a new, but old type, assembly afforded only temporary relief, perhaps because of the difficulty of properly preparing the parts for installation aboard ship. It is strongly recommended that modified aneroid shafts and bushings be supplied to units in forward areas immediately upon availability of the parts. Refer USS ESSEX REST dispatch 200726Z OCT.

2. AD

a. During the period of this report, overall availability for VA-55 was 90%. Maintenance problems were largely confined to ignition system troubles as in the previous operating period. Moisture condensation in distributors was determined to be the underlying cause of ignition trouble. ComAirPac was notified by dispatch of this re-occuring trouble.and its probable effect on spark plug life. Suggestions were made for improvement in the venting system of the distributors and harness and instructions or a possible "fix" requested. In the last several operating weeks the problem seemed to be solved within the squadron by frequent removal and cleaning of harness leads, and removal, cleaning, and baking of distributor bowls. Noticeable improvement in plug life was immediately apparent with some sets lasting the 120 hours between major checks. Hydraulic and Electrical troubles were minor. Structurally, troubles were confined to extensive repair and patching of flak damage. Refer USS ESSEX REST dispatch 190458Z OCT.

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ELECTRONICS

1. AN-CRC-7

a. Radio transceiver batteries received aboard were very poor. Only 20 out of 50 batteries checked out properly when tested under load. The batteries appear to be very old and in many cases completely dead.

b. A battery tester was made up on board to test the AN-CRC-7 batteries in accordance with Section II, paragraph 2 of the AN-CRC-7 handbook. Subject tester enables technicians to make a quick thorough check of batteries before placing them in the transceiver. A report is being forwarded on subject tester.

2.

a. Hook drop of F9F aircraft was experienced in two cases, catching the barrier while coming out of the arresting gear. This was due to a faulty micro switch which had an intermittent break in the ground return. This opened the circuit allowing the hook to drop. This type of trouble is extremely hard to isolate as the circuits check out when the aircraft is stationary.

3. AN-ARC-1

a. No unusual trouble was experienced with this gear with the exception of one unit getting flooded with hydro lub, R51H110, due to battle damage. The gear was cleaned with carbon tetrachloride and reinstalled. This particular set is being examined daily for signs of corrosion due to the action of the hydro lub.

4. AN-APX-6

a. Several cases of resistors repeatedly burned out in one bank of resistors was believed to be caused by high surge currents, the source of which is being investigated. However it is believed that the F-104 fuse is too large to properly protect this circuit. This fuse required 250 mil-amperes to break the circuit. Due to the fact that the 5Y3 rectifier is capable of producing only 134 mil-amperes. It appears that the fuse could be a 1/8 amp. instead of 1/4 amp. This would allow protection for any high currents above 125 mil-amperes, which should be ample protection due to the fact that the normal current in this circuit is 102 mil-amperes. Refer USS ESSEX REST dispatch 310442Z OCT.

[redacted]

[redacted]

5.

a. Electronics maintenance and availability has been excellent. All other equipment performed satisfactory.

Recommendations

It is recommended that batteries for the survival radio be thoroughly checked under load in accordance with the respective handbook for each type. The common practice of checking two transceivers with each other for transmission and reception is good for the transceiver check, but it is a needless drain on the battery. The transceiver would check out during test, but might operate for only a short time when really needed due to the short life of the aged batteries.

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MEDICAL

1. Performance

a. Performance has been oustanding during this period of operation. Morale had been excellent until the last 5 [redacted] 7 days, at which time a slight generalized feeling of depression and dissatisfaction made itself evident. This is attributed to the length of this tour being extended greatly from that which was anticipated.

2. Illnesses.

a. There have been 12 pilots grounded during this period; 9 for short periods of time, 3 for longer periods. Of the 3, there were 2 cases of severe burns and one case of infectious hepatitis. The case of infectious hepatitis is no longer attached to the air group as he is under prolonged hospital treatment. Two pilots have been grounded more than once.

b. There have been two aircrewmen grounded for short periods of time during this period. One was grounded more than once.

3. Casualties.

a. Wounded in action:

(1) LT. Roger Duboise NELSON, Jr., 320661/1310, USN, received minor wounds of the face and left leg as a result of enemy anti-aircraft fire while flying a combat mission in an AD4 over communist territory, North Korea, on 29 September 1952.

(2) ENS. Peter Manx MORIARTY, 507799/1315, USNR, received first and second degree burns of the face, neck and knees as a result of his airplane having caught fire after being hit by anti-aircraft fire while flying a combat mission in an AD4 over communist territory, North Korea, on 17 October 1952.

(3) LTGJ Joseph Norman KANEVSKY, 521579/1310, USN, received wounds of the left thigh and right forearm as a result of enemy action anti-aircraft fire while flying a combat mission in an F9F-2 over communist territory, North Korea, on 17 October 1952. At present this pilot is on a hospital ship and has not yet returned to his squadron.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(4) LTJG John LAVRA, 492220/1315/USNR, received first and second degree burns of the face, neck, right axilla, and both hands as a result of his airplane having caught fire due to enemy anti-aircraft fire while flying a combat mission in an AD4 over communist territory, North Korea, on 19 October 1952.

b. Missing in action:

(1) LCDR Maury Fontaine YERGER, Jr., 165477/1310, USN, was reported as missing in action after he crash-landed his airplane in communist territory, North Korea, 17 October 1952, while on a combat mission in an F9F-2. Pilot was seen to leave aircraft immediately thereafter in apparently good physical condition.

(2) LT. Alfred Edward NAUMAN, Jr., 304153/1310, USN, was reported as missing in action after his airplane was seen to crash in communist territory, North Korea, 18 October 1952, while on a rescue mission in an F4U.

(3) Gordon Harwood CHANDLER, AO3, 345 36 23, USN, was last seen at 2200 on 31 October 1952 and was missing for muster the following day. Search has not yet revealed his presence aboard.

4. Psychiatric disorders.

a. No man hours were lost due to psychiatric disorders.

5. Venereal disease.

a. There were 17 cases of venereal disease; sixteen of which were gonorrhea, and one of which was chancroid.

6. Deaths.

a. There were no deaths reported for this period.

7. Recommendations.

a. It is recommended that either the tours on the line be shortened, or the personnel should be informed of the probability of long tours prior to departure. Not adhering to this definitely influenced the morale of the entire group, and hence diminished their motivation somewhat. Although performances were not measureably affected in this instance, it is firmly believed that repeated similar episodes will produce a noticeable drop in performance.

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33

DECLASSIFIED

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE
AIR TASK GROUP TWO

FF12/A16-3
ATG-2:ffc
Serial: 016

26 November 1952

[redacted]

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

Subj: Action Report of Air Task Group TWO for period of 1 November 1952 to 24 November 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 (CVA-9) as required by reference (a)

J. G. Daniels
J. G. DANIELS

[redacted]

[redacted]

CHRONOLOGY

1 to 12 November restricted availability Yokosuka Japan
13 November underway to operating area
14 November Total Sorties - 42 - Operational refresher flights.

15 November Total Sorties - 79 - operational refresher flights.

16 November Total Sorties - 80 - joined CTF-77.

17 November Total Sorties - 96

18 November Total Sorties - 43

19 November Replenishment - No air operations.

20 November Total Sorties - 91 - lost one F2H-2P due to malfunctioning of the catapult, pilot rescued.

21 November Total Sorties - 108 - F9F-2 crashed in water following catapult launch - pilot killed.

22 November Total Sorties - 97 - F9F-2 disappeared over enemy territory - pilot missing in action

23 November Total Sorties - 102 - AD-4 crashed as result of AA fire while on search for a missing pilot. Pilot killed in action.

24 November replenishment - No air operations.

[redacted]

1 ENCLOSURE (1)

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COMPOSITION OF FORCES

UNIT	TYPE A/C	OPERATIONAL A/C 11-1	OPERATIONAL A/C 11-24	PILOTS 11-1	PILOTS 11-24
VF-23 LCDR. C. C. AIKINS	F9F-2	15	13	23	21
VF-821 CDR. D. W. COOPER	F9F-2	14	13	24*	24*
VF-871 LCDR. F.C. HEARRELL	F4U-4	14	13	24**	24**
VA-55 CDR. L. W. CHICK	AD-4	14	12	22	21
VC-3 (DET I) LT. C.W. CHAPMAN	F4U-5N	4	4	5	5
VC-11 (DET I) LCDR. D.W. KNIGHT	AD-4W	3	3	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	2	4	4

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

MISSION

The mission of Air Task Group TWO is that set forth in CTF-77 OP Order NR. 2-52. The mission of this Air Group is 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.

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OPERATIONS

Flight Summary by Sorties.

	F9F	F4U	AD-4	F4U-5N	ADW	ADN	F2H-2P	TOTAL
Strike	105	67	89	--	--	1	--	262
Recco	56	--	--	--	--	--	--	56
ASP (Day)	--	--	--	--	9	--	--	9
ASP (Night)	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	2
Night Heckler	--	--	--	11	--	14	--	25
NGF Spot	--	13	--	--	--	--	--	13
Photo	--	--	--	--	--	--	22	22
Photo Escort	22	--	--	--	--	--	--	22
ASP (Escort (Day)	--	1	4	--	--	2	--	7
ASP Escort (Night)	--	--	--	2	--	2	--	4
CAP	90	--	--	--	--	--	--	90
TARCAP	19	2	2	--	--	--	--	23
CAS	--	24	16	--	--	--	--	40
Pilot Search	--	4	4	--	--	--	--	8
ECM	--	--	--	--	--	8	--	8
ECM Escort	--	6	--	--	--	--	--	6
AEW	--	--	1	--	1	--	--	2
Other	47	32	40	11	7	7	--	144
Total	339	149	156	24	19	34	22	743

Grand Total: 743

[redacted]

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Per Pilot Data.

Per Pilot	F9F	F2H-2P	F4U-4	F4U-5N	AD-4	AD-4N	AD-4W
Sorties	7.7	5.5	6.2	4.8	7.0	5.7	4.0
Flight Hrs.	11.9	9.5	16.4	10.7	19.3	15.0	8.1
Carrier Landings	7.7	5.3	6.1	4.4	7.0	5.7	4.0

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Damage Inflicted by Enemy.

DATE NOV	SQDN	TYPE	BUNR	CAUSE	POSITION OF DAMAGE	CODE
16	VF-23	F9F-2	127194	AA	Port stub wing	D-3
17	VA-55	AD-4	129016	AA Med	Propeller & Fuselage	D-2
20	VF-821	F9F-2	123054	AA Med	Port stabilizer	D-3
21	VF-821	F9F-2	123425	AA Med	Nose cone	D-3
21	VA-55	AD-4	129013	AA Med	Empanage	D-3
22	VA-55	AD-4	128920	AA Med	Stbd wing stub	D-2
22	VF-23	F9F-2	123033	Undt	Aircraft disappeared over enemy territory	L
23	VA-55	AD-4	129012	AA	Aircraft crashed in enemy territory	L
23	VF-821	F9F-2	125106	AA	Empanage fuselage	D-2

[redacted]

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Damage Inflicted on Enemy.

	DESTROYED	PROBABLY DESTROYED	DAMAGED
Trucks	22	7	33
Troops	15	50	--
RR Cars	8	--	4
Boat	13	--	3
Bldgs (Small)	32	10	31
RR Bridges	1	1	4
Hwy Bridges	2	--	6
Warehouses	50	33	22
Gun Positions	12	24	3
Supply Dumps	4	--	3
RR Cuts	15	--	--
Locomotive	--	--	2
Barracks	12	---	8
Factory	3	--	1
Saw Mill	--	--	1
Bunkers	12	3	--
Ammo Dumps	1	--	--
Vehicle Shelters	2	--	--
Transformer Station	1	--	--

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OPERATIONS

The development of semi-coordinated strikes (those of two or more groups by carriers on targets within 3 to 5 miles of each other) have eliminated the mandatory requirement of conferences between strike leaders and further eliminates the all to frequent "briefing in the Air". On this type of strike the land-launch frequency must be utilized by individual groups, making the strike more efficient and less complicated. A common channel, for "time of strike coordination" between strike leaders, can be assigned at the Staff level.

Proper radio channelization of flights between operating units is assuming more importance as the targets shift from the strategic to the tactical.

JET OPERATIONS

On missions involving an Air Controller, within the immediate vicinity of the main line of resistance, it is extremely important that the "time on target" be specified and that the controller is on station, on time. Any delay forces jet aircraft to orbit and can only be accomplished at the expense of the mission involved and in many instances has forced jets to completely abort the flight and dump ordnance on relatively unimportant targets.

MAINTENANCE

Average availability for Squadrons attached to Air Task Group TWO were as follows:

VF-23	92.4%
VF-821	93.7%
VF-871	99.3%
VA-55	90.0

Composite Detachments are included in squadron aircraft availability.

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ORDNANCE

ORDNANCE EXPENDITURES

Type Ordnance	AD4	F4U4	F9F2	AD4N	F4U5N	TOTAL
2000 #GP	34					34
1000 #GP	155	29				184
500 #GP	141	73		14	10	238
250 #GP	244	236	352	42		874
100 #GP			283	84	54	421
350 #Depth Bomb	2				1	3
260 #FRAG	102	64	320		38	524
3".25 ASAR	12			14	12	38
5" ATAR	86	136	56			278
MK 6 Flares				76		76
20MM	16,228		22,485	5,900	4,500	49,113
.50 CAL.		33,000				33,000
TOTAL LBS	438,899	181,680	238,226	37,397	26,945	923,129
TOTAL TONS	219,449	90.84	119.113	18.689	13.474	461.565

HUNG ORDNANCE REPORT

Type Ordnance	AERO 14A	MK 55-1	MK 9 LAUNCHERS	TOTAL
100 #GP		1		1
250 #GP	2	1		3
260 #FRAG		3		3
ATAR	14		5	19
TOTAL	16	5	5	26

DISPOSITION OF HUNG ORDNANCE

Ordnance	Remained on rack	Dropped off at Landing	TOTAL
100 #GP	1		1
250 #GP	3		3
260 # FRAG	3		3
ATAR	18	1	19
TOTAL	25	1	26

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[redacted]

ORDNANCE

1. 20MM and .50 Caliber Guns

The performance of all guns installed in aircraft was excellent. Very few stoppages and only two malfunctions have occurred. The barrel of one 20MM gun installed in an AD4 aircraft exploded about four inches from muzzle causing minor damage to wing of aircraft. Another gun barrel was found to have a slight bulge about 4 inches from the muzzle end. 49.113 rounds of 20MM and 33,000 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition were fired during this period. In only two cases were stoppages reported that might have been caused by cold weather.

2. Bombs and Bomb Racks

A total of 2,273 bombs of all types were dropped during this period. Only five bombs failed to release properly. These were returned aboard and all remained on racks during recovery. The overall performance of all types of bomb racks was considered excellent.

3. Rockets

A total of 316 rockets of all types were carried by aircraft during the operating period. Of this number carried, nineteen rockets failed to fire and were returned aboard, all except one remaining on launchers during recovery. Broken pigtails attributed to the return of nine rockets, six rockets came unplugged and the remainder failed for various causes. The overall performance of rockets and launchers was considered to be good.

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DECLASSIFIED

MEDICAL

1. Performance

a. Performance has been excellent and morale outstanding during this period of operation. However the loss of three pilots in a very short period of time during the latter part of the period severely impaired the motivation of the air group personnel in general. This drop was noted with the loss of the third pilot on the last hop of the period, and it is believed that the effect will be only temporary.

2. Illness

a. There have been 23 pilots grounded during this period; 14 for short periods of time, 9 for longer periods. Upper respiratory infections were the predominant causes for grounding the various personnel. Of the 9 grounded for longer periods of time, 2 were grounded for Thrombosed Hemorrhoids, 1 for severe burns, 1 for a fractured arm, 1 for a generalized Pruritis of undetermined origin, 1 for respiratory illness. No pilots have been grounded more than once for this period.

3. Casualties

a. Wounded in action.

1. There were no personnel wounded in action during this period of operation.

b. Missing in action.

1. LTJG Daniel Lorenz MUSETTI, 507308/1315, USNR was reported as missing in action following a strafing run over communist territory, North Korea, 22 November 1952, in which he was flying "tail end Charlie" position. Last radio contact with him was made just prior to commencing the run, and upon pulling out, it was noted that he was no longer with the flight group. Repeated searches for evidence of the pilot and the aircraft proved unsuccessful.

4. Psychiatric Disorder.

a. There were no man hours lost due to psychiatric disorders.

5. Venereal Disease.

a. There were 10 cases of veneral disease; 8 of which were gonorrhea, 2 of which were chancroid.

[redacted]

[redacted]

6. Deaths.

a. LTJG Leo Thomas FREITAS, 508154/1315, USNR, was declared dead on 21 November 1952 when the F9F-2 he was flying was seen to strike the water about 250 yards off the port bow following a normal catapult shot. The plane disintegrated instantly, and no trace of the pilot was found.

b. LTJG John William HEALY, 486199/1310, USN was declared dead on 23 November 1952 following a search mission over communist territory, North Korea. His plane was seen to explode into flames, the tail section break off, and the aircraft go into a spin prior to crashing and exploding on the ground. His wingman followed him down and did not notice any evidence of a parachute opening. He reported that there was no chance for survival.

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