

VP-49

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron NINETEEN (VP-19) on 1 February 1944.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron NINETEEN (VPB-19) on 1 October 1944.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron NINETEEN (VP-19) on 15 May 1946.

Redesignated Medium Patrol Squadron (Seaplane) NINE (VP-MS-9) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron FORTY NINE (VP-49) on 1 September 1948.

Disestablished 1 March 1994.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's first design was submitted to CNO for approval in July of 1944. The design depicted an anatomically correct nude mermaid with arms raised overhead holding a bomb poised for delivery below. CNO did not approve this design stating "... it is not in keeping with the dignity of the service." The CNO letter further suggested "... that such themes other than those having as a central character ducks, cats, dogs, eagles and rabbits be used."

The next squadron design was submitted to CNO for approval by VP-MS-9 in 1947. It featured a shield encompassing an Orca killer whale rising from the surface of the sea assisted by two JATO bottles attached to a belt amidships. The whale in the design was similar to the shape of the PBM-3D Mariner flown by the squadron during World War II and through the Korean War. The JATOs were frequently used on the Mariner seaplanes to assist them in attaining a shorter takeoff. The primary role of the squadron after WWII was antisubmarine warfare. This design was approved by CNO on 15 January 1947. Colors: outline of shield, black; background, sky blue; body of whale, dark blue with white ventral surface; spout of whale, white; mouth, red with white teeth; eye, black; JATO units and belt, red; flames, red and white; squadron designation letters, black.



The whale with the squadron designation was the first officially approved insignia used by the squadron.

The first insignia had gone out of use after VP-MS-9 was redesignated VP-49 in late 1948 and the design was modified accordingly in 1951. The whale was placed in a circle instead of a shield, the squadron



The squadron's second insignia was a modification of its first design.

designation VP-MS-9 was removed, and a sinking submarine was placed in the background. Background colors were sky blue with dark blue ocean. The second insignia was approved by CNO on 22 June 1951.

The third insignia of the squadron was the version that remained in use until its disestablishment in 1994. It was a heraldic device designed to represent both the squadron's mission and its area of operation. The clouds and blue background represented the sky that the P-3 Orions traveled en route to and from their operational area at sea.

The sun and the stars on the dark blue quadrants of the shield represented the night and day capabilities of the squadron's aircraft and personnel. The upper right quadrant of the shield portrayed, from top to bottom, the ASW capabilities (trident) and the water which hid its adversary, the submarine itself. The lower left quadrant stood for the electronic detection capabilities of the P-3 (orbiting electrons) and the high speed with which the P-3 could transit to its operational area (lightning bolt). A scroll above the shield contained the motto "No Sanctuary in the Deep." The squadron designation was contained in a second scroll at the bottom of the design. This device was approved by CNO in August 1962.



The squadron's third insignia used a shield with various images to represent its operations.

Nickname: Woodpeckers, 1973–1994.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Feb 1944: VP-19 was established at NAS Alameda, Calif., as a seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3D Mariner. Personnel were given ground and operational patrol training through July under the operational control of FAW-8.

10 Jul 1944: The squadron began its transpac to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, from NAS Alameda, Calif. The last aircraft arrived on 18 July 1944. While at Kaneohe the squadron came under the operational control of FAW-2. Operational training in the use of JATO commenced immediately after the squadron was settled into its new quarters.

2–23 Nov 1944: VPB-19 flew to Parry Island, Eniwetok, based onboard the tender *St. George* (AV 16). On 23 November 1944, the squadron moved ashore at Parry Island. Activities consisted of daily sector searches, hunter-killer patrols, air-sea rescue and reconnaissance flights over Wake and Ponape islands. The squadron came under the operational control of Commander Shore-Based Air Force, Marshalls-Gilberts Area.

12 Feb 1945: VPB-19 was transferred to Iwo Jima via Saipan, with tender support provided by *Hamlin* (AV 15). Missions were flown to within 100 miles of the Japanese mainland.

6–17 Mar 1945: VPB-19 was transferred back to Parry Island, Eniwetok, based ashore with a detachments aboard various tenders. The squadron returned to combat operations consisting of sector searches, hunter-killer patrols and Dumbo missions in the vicinity of Ponape and Wake Islands.

May 1945: Squadron planes were equipped with expendable radio sonobuoys and the crews were trained in their use.



A squadron PBM takes off from Naval Station Bermuda, March 1951, 80-G-428477.

Jul 1951: The squadron was transferred to a new home base at NAS Bermuda under operational control of FAW-5. Intra-service training missions were conducted in cooperation with the USAF squadrons stationed at Bermuda.

1955: VP-49 provided support for the evaluation trials of the first nuclear submarine *Nautilus* (SSN 571).

Jul–Sep 1957: VP-49 participated in evaluations using an LSD-type tender to support the operation the squadron's P5M aircraft.

Oct 1962: VP-49 participated in the quarantine of Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The squadron joined several other regular and reserve patrol squadrons in surveillance flights over the approaches to Cuba during the period of quarantine from 15 October to 26 November 1962.

Jun 1963: A deployment to Cuba marked the last time the squadron operated as a seaplane squadron. From June to August 1963 the squadron turned in its SP-5B Marlin seaplanes in preparation for transition to a landplane squadron.

Aug 1963–Feb 1964: The squadron was transferred to NAS Patuxent River, Md. On 1 September 1963, NAS Patuxent River officially became the new home base for VP-49. However, the main body of the squadron remained at NAS Bermuda and only a detachment was



A squadron P5M in flight.

maintained at NAS Patuxent River. The squadron detachment began transitioning from the SP-5B Marlin seaplane to the Lockheed P-3A Orion. The main body of the squadron moved to NAS Patuxent River in February 1964.

1964: VP-49 joined VPs 8 and 44 in alternating convoy coverage from the East Coast of the U.S. to the coast of Spain in Operation Steel Pike I. It marked the first time that land-based escorts provided complete ASW coverage for a convoy transiting the Atlantic.

15–22 Jul 1966: A detachment of VP-49 aircraft deployed to Kindley AFB, Bermuda, to provide air sup-

port for the Project Gemini GTA-10 mission. On 21 July a helicopter from *Guadalcanal* (LPH 7) recovered astronauts John W. Young and Michael Collins after their landing in the Atlantic 460 miles east of Cape Kennedy, Fla., ending a mission that totaled over 70 hours in space.

6–15 Sep 1966: Aircraft from VP-49 deployed to Kindley AFB, Bermuda, to provide air support for the Project Gemini GTA-11 mission on 12 September. On 15 September a helicopter from *Guam* (LHA 9) recovered *Gemini 11* astronauts Charles Conrad and Richard Gordon at sea 700 miles off Cape Kennedy, Fla., after a three-day mission in space. The detachment operated under the operational control of Task Force 140 (Manned Space Flight Recovery Force, Atlantic).

27 May 1968: VP-49 began a split deployment with half of the squadron based at NS Sangley Point, R.P., and the other half at the Royal Thai Naval Air Base at U-Tapao, Thailand. The Philippine detachment was at Sangley Point when a magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck the area. Personnel of the squadron volunteered hundreds of hours in support of the international relief efforts. The U-Tapao detachment flew missions for the Seventh Fleet in Market Time surveillance operations in Vietnamese waters.

17 Jul 1970: VP-49 deployed to NAS Keflavik, Iceland, taking the P-3C on its first deployment. This model of the Orion featured the latest ASW warfare equipment including the AN/ASQ-114 computer system for navigation and sensor functions, the first of its kind in a maritime patrol aircraft. The P-3C had an AN/AQA-7 acoustic processing system with DIFAR, quadruple the number of directional sonobuoys, and a high capacity computer with related displays.

1 Jul 1971: VP-49 deployed to NAS Keflavik, Iceland, for a five-month tour. The squadron earned a Navy Unit Commendation for operations in the North Atlantic during 14 to 25 September 1971.

1 Oct 1972: The squadron deployed to Keflavik, Iceland. In March, two aircraft were detached to the Royal Netherlands Naval Air Station at Valkenburg, Katwijk, Netherlands, to provide Dutch aircrews a firsthand look at the ASW capabilities of the Orion aircraft.

8 Mar 1975: The squadron deployed to NAS Sigonella, Sicily, earning a Meritorious Unit Commendation during operations in the Mediterranean.

11–30 Jan 1976: VP-49 deployed a detachment to Ascension Island. Surveillance flights over high-interest Soviet units off the west coast of Africa earned the squadron a Meritorious Unit Commendation.

27 Jul 1976: VP-49 deployed to NAS Keflavik, Iceland, earning a Meritorious Unit Commendation for ASW surveillance operations against Soviet units in October.

2 Nov 1982: VP-49 deployed to NAS Sigonella, Sicily, under the operational command of CTF 67. Detachments were sent during the deployment to Souda Bay, Crete, and Rota, Spain. While on this deployment, the squadron earned the Navy Expeditionary Medal for missions off the coast of Lebanon during the Beirut crisis.

Jul 1985: VP-49 deployed to NAS Sigonella, Sicily. During the deployment, the squadron participated in the interception of the *Achille Lauro* hijackers. Palestinian terrorists had hijacked the Italian liner and murdered an American passenger of Jewish descent before putting into a neutral port. After negotiating for a passenger jet to take them to Syria, the terrorists were caught in the air by carrier aircraft supported by the airborne radar of the VP-49 Orions. The terrorists were escorted to a landing in Sicily where they were subsequently arrested.

Jul–Oct 1986: The squadron traveled to South America to participate in Unitas XXVIII and Swampfox 86 exercises, operating with the navies and air forces of Peru, Chile, Uruguay and Brazil.

1 Feb 1990: VP-49 deployed to NAS Bermuda, with a detachment assigned to NAS Roosevelt Roads, P.R. The detachment in the Caribbean participated in Department of Defense surveillance missions with the U.S. Coast Guard to curtail drug running. The “Woodpecker Vice” crews made five successful intercepts totaling over \$20 million in hashish and cocaine, one intercept alone included over \$12 million in drugs aboard. The latter was the largest seizure to date. Both detachments deployed to Keflavik in late April 1990.

1 May 1990: VP-49 deployed to NAS Keflavik, Iceland, marking the first time a P-3C squadron



A VP-49 P-3C at NAS Jacksonville in October 1982 (Courtesy Rick R. Burgess Collection via Mr. Archer).

equipped with the Update III package had conducted operations against the Soviet Red Banner Northern fleet. The aircraft had an entirely new underwater acoustic monitoring system, doubling the number of sonobuoys that could be monitored concurrently over earlier marks. IBM signal processors provided a four-fold gain in isolating sounds of submerged targets from ocean background noise. Improvements in avionics, computers (AN/AYA-8) and cooling systems were added, along with a retractable forward-looking infrared turret under the chin of the aircraft and Harpoon air-to-surface missile capability.

10 Mar 1993: VP-49 deployed to Keflavik under CTG 84.1. Duties included ASW NATO operations, joint training with the *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) battle group, navigation training to the North Pole, and ice reconnaissance missions to Thule, Greenland. With the end of the Cold War, the squadron conducted historic visits to Poland and the former Soviet Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

25 Sep 1993: Upon return from Iceland, the squadron immediately commenced Haitian Assistance Group Operations. These patrol flights flown by the squadron were part of the efforts at enforcing the United Nation's blockade against the Haitian military coup.

1 Mar 1994: VP-49 was disestablished at NAS Jacksonville, Fla., after concluding more than 32 years and 214,000 hours of accident-free flying, a record in the patrol aviation community.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Alameda, Calif.	1 Feb 1944
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	10 Jul 1944
NAAF Eniwetok*	2 Nov 1944
NAS Alameda, Calif.	Jan-Feb 1946
NAS Norfolk, Va.	9 Apr 1946
NAS Pensacola, Fla.	1 Jun 1949
NAS Norfolk, Va.	25 Aug 1949
NAS Bermuda	5 Jul 1951
NAS Patuxent River, Md.	1 Sep 1963 [†]
NAS Jacksonville, Fla.	31 Jan 1972

* The squadron was moved to Iwo Jima during February to March 1945 and then returned to NAAF Eniwetok.

[†] The squadron's home port was officially changed on 1 September 1963 to NAS Patuxent River. However, only a squadron detachment was maintained at NAS Patuxent River between September 1963 to January 1964. The main body of the squadron stayed at NAS Bermuda and did not move to NAS Patuxent River until February 1964.



A squadron P-3A in flight.

A squadron P-3C flies over a Soviet helicopter carrier, December 1977.



Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LT W. B. Brinkmann (actg.)	1 Feb 1944
LCDR J. A. Masterson	9 Feb 1944
LCDR J. M. Richards	11 Aug 1945
LCDR L. E. DeCamp	21 Nov 1945
LCDR O. P. Johnstone	29 Jul 1946
LCDR W. R. Dunne	16 Jun 1947
CDR R. Y. McElroy	11 Jun 1948
CDR James B. Wallace	Jun 1949
CDR Ellis J. Fisher	Oct 1950
CDR James P. Lynch	Jul 1952
CDR Edward A. Taber, Jr.	Sep 1953
CDR John M. Arbuckle	Aug 1954
CDR William H. Sours	Sep 1955
CDR John S. Reef	Jan 1957
CDR Elmer D. Anderson	1 Mar 1958
CDR H. J. Woodward	3 Mar 1959
CDR T. R. McClellan	9 Mar 1960
CDR P. E. Hill	30 Mar 1961
CDR Howard C. Hansen	Nov 1961
CDR Robert E. Gayle, Jr.	Nov 1962
CDR K. Carter	31 Mar 1964
CDR R. D. Campbell	28 Jan 1965
CDR James A. McCaig	17 Jan 1966
CDR R. T. Lemon	28 Feb 1967
CDR R. S. Zeisel	22 Jan 1968
CDR R. E. Blandine	20 Jan 1969
CDR Robert Wisdom	24 Nov 1969
CDR Eugene A. Tansey	10 Dec 1970
CDR Robert A. Hall	17 Dec 1971
CDR Jerry Funderbark	15 Dec 1972

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Victor S. Gulliver	14 Dec 1973
CDR Gerald W. McDonald	9 Dec 1974
CDR Craig S. Campbell	22 Aug 1975
CDR William C. Bloh	16 Jul 1976
CDR Robert M. Howard	22 Jul 1977
CDR Bryon E. Tobin	Jul 1978
CDR Joseph C. Payne	16 Jul 1979
CDR Michael A. Nash	11 Jun 1980
CDR Jon S. Coleman	Jul 1981
CDR James L. Minderlein	25 Jun 1982
CDR James A. Dvorak	1 Jul 1983
CDR Michael D. Glerum	19 Oct 1984
CDR Larry D. Newsome	21 Feb 1986
CDR Larry L. Sakre	27 Mar 1987
CDR Michael A. Trudell	25 Mar 1988
CDR Charles R. Sipe, Jr.	17 Mar 1989
CDR Robert P. Coonan	1990
CDR Edward Waller	1991
CDR James Drodgy	1992
CDR Mark Anthony	26 Mar 1993

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3D	Feb 1944
P5M-1	Dec 1952
P5M-2	Jun 1960
SP-5B	Dec 1962
P-3A	Aug 1963
P-3C	Sep 1969
P-3C UIIR	1989

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
10 Jul 1944	15 May 1946	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PBM-3D	EastPac
2 Nov 1944	Feb 1945	*	Eniwetok	PBM-3D	SoPac
			<i>St. George (AV 16)</i>		
Feb 1945	Mar 1945	FAW-1	Iwo Jima	PBM-3D	WestPac
			<i>Hamlin (AV 15)</i>		
Mar 1945	Jan 1946	*	Eniwetok	PBM-3D	WestPac
			<i>Corson (AVP 37)</i>		
			<i>Norton Sound (AV 11)</i>		
			<i>Gardiners Bay (AVP 39)</i>		
Oct 1962†	Nov 1962	FAW-5	Guantanamo	SP-5B	Carib
Jun 1963†	Aug 1963	FAW-5	Guantanamo	SP-5B	Carib
31 May 1965	Aug 1965	FAW-5	Argentia	P-3A	NorLant
14 Jan 1966	3 Jun 1966	FAW-10	Adak	P-3A	NorPac
13 Jan 1967†	28 Jun 1967	FAW-5	Argentia	P-3A	NorLant
13 Jan 1967†	28 Jun 1967	FAW-5	Bermuda	P-3A	Lant
1 Jun 1968†	16 Dec 1968	FAW-8	Sangley Pt.	P-3A	WestPac
15 Jun 1968†	14 Dec 1968	FAW-8	U-Tapao	P-3A	WestPac
17 Jul 1970	6 Nov 1970	FAW-5	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant



Squadron aircraft at Keflavik, Iceland, 1971.

Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
1 Jul 1971	1 Dec 1971	FAW-5	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
1 Oct 1972	Mar 1973	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
Jan 1974	Jul 1974	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
8 Mar 1975	12 Aug 1975	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
11 Jan 1976	30 Jan 1976	PatWing-11	Ascension Is.	P-3C	SoLant
27 Jul 1976	29 Dec 1976	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
14 Sep 1977	19 Feb 1978	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
Jan 1978	1 Jun 1978	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
Feb 1979	28 Jun 1979	PatWing-11	Bermuda	P-3C	Lant
May 1980	Oct 1980	PatWing-11	Bermuda	P-3C	Lant
7 Jul 1981	17 Dec 1981	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
2 Nov 1982	21 Apr 1983	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
Apr 1984 [†]	Sep 1984	PatWing-11	Rota	P-3C	Med
Apr 1984 [†]	Sep 1984	PatWing-11	Lajes	P-3C	Lant
Jul 1985	31 Dec 1985	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
Jul 1986	Oct 1986	PatWing-11	Multi-site	P-3C	SoLant
Feb 1987	Aug 1987	PatWing-11	Bermuda	P-3C	Lant
10 Jul 1988	10 Jan 1989	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
1 Feb 1990 [†]	Apr 1990	PatWing-11	Bermuda	P-3C UIIIR	Lant
1 Feb 1990 [†]	Apr 1990	PatWing-11	Roosevelt Rds.	P-3C UIIIR	Carib
1 May 1990	Aug 1990	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C UIIIR	NorLant
1 Jul 1991	Jan 1992	PatWing-11	Rota	P-3C UIIIR	Med
10 Mar 1993	24 Sep 1993	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C UIIIR	NorLant

^{*} The squadron came under the operational control of Commander Shore-Based Air Force, Marshalls-Gilberts Area. However, it continued to be listed under FAW-2, most likely as part of their administrative control.

[†] The squadron conducted split deployment to two or more sites on the same dates.

[‡] The main body of the squadron did not deploy, only detachments were on these deployments.

Wing Assignments

Wing	Tail Code	Assignment Date
FAW-8		1 Feb 1944
FAW-2		10 Jul 1944
*		2 Nov 1944
FAW-1		Feb 1945
*		Mar 1945
FAW-5	EA [†] /LP [‡]	4 Mar 1946
FAW-11/ PatWing-11 [§]	LP	31 Jan 1972

^{*} The squadron came under the operational control of Commander Shore-Based Air Force, Marshalls-Gilberts Area. However, it continued to be listed under FAW-2, most likely as part of their administrative control.

[†] The squadron remained a part of FAW-5, but was assigned the tail code EA on 7 November 1946.

[‡] The squadron's tail code was changed from EA to LP in 1957. The effective date for this change was most likely the beginning of FY 1958 (1 July 1957).

[§] FAW-11 was redesignated PatWing-11 on 30 June 1973.

Unit Awards Received

Unit Award	Inclusive Date	Covering Unit Award
NUC	14 Sep 1970	25 Sep 1970
	8 Feb 1979	27 Jun 1979
	15 May 1980	15 Oct 1980
	14 Jun 1985	30 Nov 1985
MUC	1 Jun 1975	16 Jul 1975
	10 Oct 1976	20 Oct 1976
	Jul 1985	Jan 1986
	18 Mar 1987	8 May 1987
	1 Feb 1990	31 Mar 1991
	10 Jul 1991	1 Dec 1991
(Det)	11 Jan 1976	30 Jan 1976
RVNGC	21 Nov 1968	31 Dec 1968
NEM	1 Jan 1985	31 Dec 1985
	1 Jan 1990	31 Dec 1990
(Sel. Crews)	3 Nov 1982	20 Apr 1983
AFEM (Sel. Crews)	11 Apr 1984	31 Jul 1984
JMUA	1 Oct 1982	20 Sep 1985
	15 Aug 1990	12 Oct 1990
	4 Dec 1991	10 Jan 1992



A close up of the tail of a squadron P-3 showing the LP tail code and the design used on the squadron aircraft. Note, this design is different from the approved squadron insignia design.



A squadron P-3C in flight.

VP-50

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron NINE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN (VP-917) on 18 July 1946.

Redesignated Medium Patrol Squadron (Landplane) SIXTY SEVEN (VP-ML-67) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron EIGHT HUNDRED NINETY TWO (VP-892) in February 1950.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron FIFTY (VP-50) on 4 February 1953.

Disestablished on 30 June 1992.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

In 1952, VP-892 requested assistance from CNO in creating a squadron insignia. CNO referred the matter



The squadron's one and only insignia.

to the Heraldic Branch of the Army Quartermaster General, which prepared a design acceptable to both the squadron and the office of CNO. This design was approved by CNO on 10 February 1953. It was a circular design with a winged dragon in the center, poised over a surfaced submarine with its claws outstretched. Colors: background of disk, white; dragon, blue with red barbed tongue, horn, claws and tail; submarine, black; sea, blue; border of insignia, red.

Nickname: Blue Dragons, 1953–1992.

Chronology of Significant Events

18 Jul 1946: VP-917 was established at NAS Sand Point, near Seattle, Wash. The squadron came under

the operational control of FAW-14 and administrative control of the Naval Air Reserve Training Command (NARTC). The squadron was one of 21 naval reserve squadrons established after the war to accommodate the large number of aircrews recently released from active duty and utilize the enormous stocks of aircraft in the inventory. The squadron flew the PBY-5A/6A Catalina seaplane and the PV-2 Harpoon landplane.

15 Nov 1946: All patrol squadrons were redesignated. Regular Navy patrol squadron designations began with 1 and reserve patrol squadrons began with 5 or higher. VP-917 was redesignated VP-ML-67. The ML for reserve squadrons included twin-engine medium amphibious seaplanes, as well as twin-engine land-based bombers. Regular Navy patrol squadron ML designations were for twin-engine medium land-based bombers only. The amphibious medium seaplanes like the PBY-5A were in the AM category.

Feb 1950: VP-ML-67 was redesignated VP-892 during the reorganization of Naval Aviation Reserve units in 1949, but the change did not take effect until February 1950. During this period the number of Naval Aviation reserve squadrons was reduced from the 1949 total of 24 to 9. By this date the squadron had transitioned to the PBM-5 Mariner.

20 Jul 1950: VP-892 was called to active duty as a result of North Korean forces invading the Republic of Korea on 25 June 1950. The squadron reported for duty to Commander Naval Air Force Pacific Fleet at NAS San Diego, Calif. At the start of hostilities the Navy patrol forces on active duty numbered just 20 squadrons, and it quickly became apparent that this meager figure was inadequate to meet the increased demands. By the end of 1950 seven reserve patrol squadrons were called to active duty to augment the active duty Navy patrol squadrons. The squadron reported aboard NAS San Diego on 4 August 1950 for training under FAW-14.

23 Nov 1950: VP-892 began its first deployment at Iwakuni, Japan, reporting to Commander Fleet Air Japan and FAW-6 on 13 December 1950. During the deployment the squadron was involved in ASW, reconnaissance and weather information flights in the Sea of Japan and along the coasts of China and North Korea. The squadron's first mission was flown on 18 December 1950, making it the first flown by any reserve squadron in the Korean Conflict.

Aug 1951: VP-892 returned to NAS San Diego, Calif., to begin transitioning to the PBM-5S/S2 seaplane. The squadron became operational in January 1952.

12 Feb–1 Mar 1952: VP-892 deployed to NS Sangley Point, R.P., for duties under FAW-1. On 1 March 1952, the squadron began its second tour of operations in the Korean combat zone conducting patrols over the China coast and China Sea.

1 May–27 Jul 1953: VP-50 deployed to NS Sangley Point, R.P., with patrol duties covering the South China



A squadron PBM in flight, note the insignia just below the cockpit.

Sea. On 1 June 1953, a detachment began operations at MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, flying patrols in the combat zone over the Korean coastline, Yellow Sea and Sea of Japan. On 30 June 1953, a squadron Mariner sank near Iwakuni while taxiing to test engines. No one was injured or lost, and boats from *Kenneth Whiting* (AV 14) rescued the crew from the water. The tender later made several unsuccessful attempts to raise the sunken aircraft. On 17 July *Deliverer* (ARS 23) destroyed the sunken PBM with underwater demolition charges to eliminate any danger to vessels navigating in the area. The detachment rejoined the squadron at NS Sangley Point on 27 July 1953.

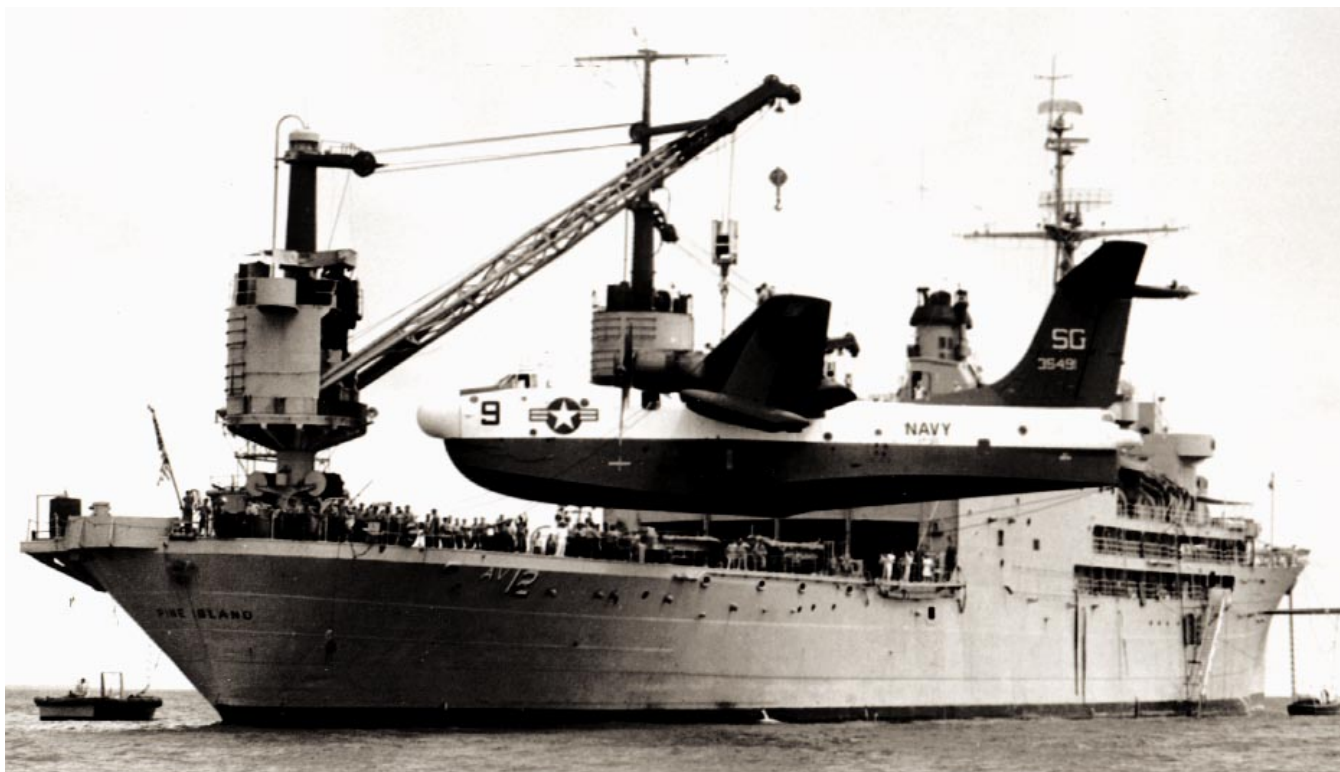
31 Aug 1954: VP-50 deployed to MCAS Iwakuni, Japan. The aircraft designated by the squadron as “Seven Madness” was forced down with a burning port engine while returning from a routine patrol in the Yellow Sea. It was ditched safely and the crew was rescued. However, the seaplane sank while under tow.

1 Jun 1956: VP-50 became the last active duty Navy patrol squadron to replace its PBM Mariners with the new Martin P5M-2 Marlin seaplane. Upon completion of the transition, the squadron’s permanent home port was changed from NAS North Island, Calif., to NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.

1 Apr 1960: VP-50 was given a new home port at MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, under the operational and administrative control of FAW-6.

1 Oct 1961: VPs 50, 4, 28 and 40 were assigned to Task Force 72, U.S. Taiwan Patrol Force, keeping watch over international waters bordering communist territory from Siberia to North Vietnam. This action was in response and result of the renewed tension over the divided city of Berlin. Units of the Naval Air Reserve, including five patrol and 13 carrier antisubmarine squadrons were called to active duty.

30 Jun–6 Aug 1964: VP-50 received a permanent change of station relocating its home port from MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, to NAS North Island, San Diego, Calif. The squadron was the last of five overseas patrol squadrons to return to home ports in the continental U.S. Other unit moves included: VP-40, from NS Sangley Point, R.P., to NAS North Island, Calif.; VP-4,



A squadron P5M being hoisted aboard Pine Island (AV 12).

from Naha, Okinawa to NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii; VP-45 from Bermuda to NAS Jacksonville, Fla.; and VP-49 from Bermuda to NAS Patuxent River, Md. The squadron's 12 SP-5B Marlins were turned over to the Bureau of Weapons for storage at Iwakuni. Upon arrival at NAS North Island, VP-50 accepted 12 similar aircraft from VP-47, becoming fully operational on 6 August 1964.

26 Aug 1965: The Blue Dragons deployed to NS Sangley Point, R.P., with a detachment at Buckner Bay, Okinawa, and Cam Ranh Bay, RVN. Tender support at Buckner Bay was provided by *Salisbury Sound* (AV 13), and at Cam Ranh Bay by *Pine Island* (AV 12). The squadron flew 162 Market Time missions and its aircraft were hit by ground fire on 10 occasions.

23 Aug 1966: VP-50 deployed to NS Sangley Point, R.P., with FAW-10. During the deployment a detachment operated out of Cam Ranh Bay, RVN, supported by the tender *Currituck* (AV 7). On 6 January 1967, aircraft SG-13, while on a training flight, crashed in the South China Sea 20 miles west of Corregidor killing all 10 men aboard. Cause of the accident could not be determined.



A squadron P5M being brought aboard Salisbury Sound (AV 13).

1 Jul 1967: VP-50's home port was changed from NAS North Island, Calif., to NAS Moffett Field, Calif. And the squadron began the transition from the P5M-2 Marlin seaplane to the P-3A Orion landplane.

1 May 1968: VP-50 deployed to NS Sangley Point, R.P., with a detachment at NAF Cam Ranh Bay, RVN. The squadron was the first P-3 Orion unit to operate from the Cam Ranh Bay facility and earned a Meritorious Unit Commendation for the performance of its duties during this period.

11 Jun–Aug 1979: The Dragons deployed to NAF Kadena, Okinawa, relieving VP-47. During August, numerous missions were flown in support of the Vietnamese refugees, locating distressed vessels and directing rescue ships to them.

17 Apr 1980: A squadron P-3C, BuNo. 158213, SG-03, after dropping six paratroopers as part of a Samoan Flag Day celebration, crashed on the island. Six crewmen were killed in the mishap.

10 Dec 1983: VP-50 deployed to NAF Misawa, Japan, with a detachment at NAS Adak, Alaska, relieving VP-40. During the deployment the squadron conducted numerous peacetime aerial reconnaissance program flights monitoring the transit of Soviet military vessels.

1986: VP-50 upgraded its P-3C baseline with the P-3C MOD avionics package, including new acoustic processors, long-range navigation gear, secure communications enhancements and Harpoon missile capability.

3 Jan 1987: VP-50 deployed to NAF Kadena, Okinawa, with a detachment at Diego Garcia, B.I.O.T. On 10 January the Kadena detachment repositioned to Diego Garcia where operations were focused on the gulf, North Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. Detachments were established at intervals at Masirah, Oman.

22 Jun 1987: The squadron's first P-3C MOD aircraft was accepted for P-3C Update III retrofit program. The aircraft had an entirely new underwater acoustic monitoring system, doubling the number of sonobuoys that could be monitored concurrently over earlier systems. IBM signal processors provided a four-fold gain in isolating sounds of submerged targets from ocean background noise. Improvements in avionics, computers (AN/AYA-8) and cooling systems were added, along with a retractable forward-looking



A squadron P-3A in flight, 1967.

infrared turret under the chin and Harpoon air-to-surface missile capability. The squadron became fully operational with the new updates during its first ready alert on 1 March 1988.

6 Feb 1988: The squadron's record of 49,000 mishap-free flying hours was broken when an aircraft was damaged during a touch-and-go landing in an area where the runway was under construction. The pilot was able to make a wheels-up landing with three engines at nearby Cecil Field with no injury to any of the five crew aboard.

15 May 1988: H. Lawrence Garrett III was sworn in as the 68th Secretary of the Navy. Secretary Garrett had served as a Naval Flight Officer with VP-50 in Vietnam.

4 Aug 1988: The Blue Dragons deployed to NAF Misawa, Japan. During the deployment the squadron was able to conduct several Pony Express operations (missile shot surveillance) on the Peoples Republic of China.

1 Nov 1989: VP-50 deployed to NAS Cubi Point, R.P., with a detachment at NAF Diego Garcia, B.I.O.T. In December 1989 Philippine insurgents attempted to

overthrow the government of President Corazon Aquino. VP-50 flew battle group support missions to cut off the potential supply lines for the rebels.

21 Mar 1991: Two VP-50 Orions, P-3C, BuNos. 158930 and 159325, had a midair collision off the southern coast of California, killing all 27 aircrewmen aboard. The cause for the mishap could not be determined.

30 Jun 1992: VP-50 was disestablished at NAS Moffett Field, Calif.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Sand Point, Wash.	18 Jul 1946
NAS San Diego/North Island, Calif.*	4 Aug 1950
NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.	1 Jun 1956
MCAS Iwakuni, Japan	1 Apr 1960
NAS North Island, Calif.	30 Jun 1964
NAS Moffett Field, Calif.	1 Jul 1967

* NAS San Diego was redesignated NAS North Island in 1955.

A VP-50 P-3C preparing to land at NAS Moffett Field in April 1981 (Courtesy Rick R. Burgess Collection via Michael Grove).



Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR H. T. Byler	18 Jul 1946
LCDR Edward R. Swanson	9 Sep 1948
CDR W. H. Chester	20 Sep 1951
LCDR N. D. McClure	26 Sep 1952
CDR D. C. Davis	1954
CDR Constantine J. Economou	1955
CDR W. D. Harrington	1956
CDR Andrew H. Cowart	15 Nov 1957
CDR Robert J. Ney	Jun 1959
CDR F. G. Koenig, Jr.	4 Jun 1960

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR O. B. Gray	10 Mar 1961
CDR William H. Locklin	22 Jun 1962
CDR H. W. Smith	4 Jun 1963
CDR W. A. Van Train	22 Jun 1964
CDR H. B. Lansden	22 Jun 1965
CDR Harlan Purdy	21 Jun 1966
CDR Owen A. Kidd	29 May 1967
CDR Carl O. Hausler	29 Jun 1968
CDR Charles K. Anderle	16 Jun 1969
CDR C. O. Prindle	3 Apr 1970

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Jerry L. Mitchell	18 May 1971
CDR H. S. Van Dusen	1 Jul 1972
CDR William R. Hodge	15 Jun 1973
CDR Francis H. Stoodley	21 Jun 1974
CDR Donald U. Calvin	20 Jun 1975
CDR George T. Lloyd	18 Jun 1976
CDR Gary C. Ledbetter	10 Jun 1977
CDR Robert J. Arnold	9 Jun 1978
CDR John H. Grotenhuis	17 May 1979
CDR Jerry F. Huss	4 Jun 1980
CDR Robert L. Bushong	19 May 1981
CDR Quentin S. Masters	21 May 1982
CDR Albert J. Begbie	27 May 1983
CDR Donald A. Giles	10 Aug 1984
CDR Denis F. Beaugureau	8 Nov 1985
CDR Gregory M. Zorbach	10 Nov 1986
CDR Daniel R. Veldstra	20 Nov 1987
CDR J. E. Boyington, Jr.	6 Oct 1988

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR E. F. Carter	3 Nov 1989
CDR John Mauthe	2 Nov 1990
CDR Fredrick B. Horne	25 Oct 1991

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBY-5A/6A	Jul 1946
PV-2	Jul 1946
PBM-5	1949
PBM-5S/S2	Aug 1951
P5M-2	Jun 1956
SP-5B	Dec 1962
P-3A	Jul 1967
P-3B	1970
P-3C	1971
P-3C MOD	1986
P-3C UIIR	Jun 1987



A couple of squadron PBMs in flight, April 1956.

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
23 Nov 1950	9 Jun 1951	FAW-6	Iwakuni <i>Gardiners Bay (AVP 39)</i> <i>Curtiss (AV 4)</i> <i>Suisun (AVP 53)</i>	PBM-5	WestPac
12 Feb 1952	18 Sep 1952	FAW-1	Sangley Pt. <i>Salisbury Sound (AV 13)</i>	PBM-5S/S2	WestPac
1 May 1953	1 Sep 1953	FAW-1	Sangley Pt.	PBM-5S/S2	WestPac
1 Jun 1953†	27 Jul 1953	FAW-6	Iwakuni <i>Kenneth Whiting (AV 14)</i>	PBM-5S2	WestPac

Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
			<i>Gardiners Bay (AVP 39)</i>		
			<i>Floyds Bay (AVP 40)</i>		
31 Aug 1954	Jan 1955	FAW-6	Iwakuni	PBM-5S/S2	WestPac
Jul 1957	4 Nov 1957	FAW-6	Iwakuni	P5M-2	WestPac
1 Nov 1958	Apr 1959	FAW-6	Iwakuni	P5M-2	WestPac
26 Aug 1965*	14 Mar 1966	FAW-8	Sangley Pt.	SP-5B	WestPac
26 Aug 1965*	14 Mar 1966	FAW-1	Buckner Bay	SP-5B	WestPac
			<i>Salisbury Sound (AV 13)</i>		
26 Aug 1965*	14 Mar 1966	FAW-8	Cam Ranh	SP-5B	WestPac
			<i>Pine Island (AV 12)</i>		
23 Aug 1966*	6 Feb 1967	FAW-8	Sangley Pt.	SP-5B	WestPac
23 Aug 1966*	6 Feb 1967	FAW-8	Cam Ranh	SP-5B	WestPac
			<i>Currituck (AV 7)</i>		
1 May 1968*	2 Nov 1968	FAW-8	Sangley Pt.	P-3A	WestPac
1 May 1968*	2 Nov 1968	FAW-8	Cam Ranh	P-3A	WestPac
15 Jul 1969*	15 Jan 1970	FAW-1	Naha	P-3B	WestPac
15 Jul 1969*	15 Jan 1970	FAW-8	Cam Ranh	P-3B	WestPac
29 Sep 1970*	31 Mar 1971	FAW-8	Sangley Pt.	P-3B	WestPac
29 Sep 1970*	31 Mar 1971	FAW-8	Cam Ranh	P-3B	WestPac
8 Sep 1971	31 Dec 1971	FAW-10	Adak	P-3C	NorPac



A squadron PBM being launched at Iwakuni, Japan. Oriskany (CVA 34) is in the background, NH-94618.

Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
1 Jan 1972*	30 Jun 1972	FAW-10	Adak	P-3C	NorPac
1 Jan 1972*	30 Jun 1972	FAW-1	Agana	P-3C	WestPac
1 Jul 1973*	31 Dec 1973	PatWingPac	Adak	P-3C	NorPac
1 Jul 1973*	31 Dec 1973	PatWing-1	Agana	P-3C	WestPac
24 Jan 1975*	10 Aug 1975	PatWingPac	Adak	P-3C	NorPac
24 Jan 1975*	10 Aug 1975	PatWing-1	Agana	P-3C	WestPac
10 Aug 1976	11 Feb 1977	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3C	WestPac
26 Jan 1978	11 Jul 1978	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3C	WestPac
11 Jun 1979	11 Nov 1979	PatWing-1	Kadena	P-3C	WestPac
10 Jul 1980	10 Nov 1980	PatWingPac	Adak	P-3C	NorPac
10 Jun 1981	10 Dec 1981	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3C	WestPac
10 Oct 1982	10 Feb 1983	PatWing-10	Adak	P-3C	NorPac
10 Dec 1983*	10 Jun 1984	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3C	WestPac
10 Dec 1983*	10 Jun 1984	PatWing-10	Adak	P-3C	NorPac
10 Jul 1985	10 Jan 1986	PatWing-1	Diego Garcia	P-3C	IO
3 Jan 1987	10 Jul 1987	PatWing-1	Diego Garcia	P-3C MOD	IO
4 Aug 1988	7 Feb 1989	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3C UIII	WestPac
1 Nov 1989*	10 May 1990	PatWing-1	Cubi Pt.	P-3C UIII	WestPac
1 Nov 1989*	10 May 1990	PatWing-1	Diego Garcia	P-3C UIII	IO
4 Aug 1991	10 Jan 1992	PatWing-10	Adak	P-3C UIII	NorPac

* The squadron conducted split deployments to two or more sites on the same dates.

† A detachment deployed to MCAS Iwakuni and then returned to the squadron during its WestPac deployment to NS Sangley Point, R.P.



A squadron P-3C at Adak, Alaska, with Mount Moffett in the background.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14	SE [†]	18 Jul 1946
COMFAIRALAMEDA	SE	1951
FAW-14	SE	1952
FAW-1	SE	late 1952
FAW-14	SE	mid 1953
COMFAIRALAMEDA	SE	late 1953
FAW-4	SE/SG [‡]	late 1956
FAW-6	SG	1 Apr 1960
FAW-14	SG	30 Jun 1964
FAW-10	SG	1 Jul 1967
COMPATWINGSPAC	SG	30 Jun 1973
PatWing-10	SG	1 Jun 1981

[†] The squadron was assigned the tail code SE after it was called to active duty in July 1950.

[‡] The squadron's tail code was changed from SE to SG in 1957. The effective date for this change was most likely the beginning of FY 1958 (1 July 1957).

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>	
MUC	16 Nov 1970	22 Nov 1970
	10 Oct 1982	28 Oct 1982
	8 Dec 1982	17 Dec 1982
	1 Mar 1988	1 Mar 1989
NUC	1 Jan 1967	31 Mar 1968
KSM	23 Nov 1950	9 Jun 1951
	1 May 1953	1 Sep 1953
RVNGC	15 Sep 1966	20 Sep 1966
	1 Oct 1969	31 Jan 1970
	1 Sep 1970	21 Nov 1970
NEM (Sel. Crews)	10 Jun 1981	20 Jul 1981
AFEM (Sel. Crews)	23 May 1972	28 Jun 1972
HSM (Guam Det)	2 Apr 1975	21 May 1975



A squadron P-3C flying over Mount Fuji, Japan, January 1977.

Third VP-51

Lineage

Established as Air Early Warning Squadron ONE (VPW-1) on 1 April 1948.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron FIFTY ONE (VP-51) on 1 September 1948, the third squadron to be assigned the VP-51 designation.

Disestablished on 1 February 1950.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

On 9 September 1949, the commanding officer of VP-51 responded to a CNO request of 10 May 1949 that the squadron submit a design for an insignia. The



The squadron's cartoon insignia.

submission was the motif of an early bird catching a worm, alluding to a snorkeling submarine. The bird, snatching the worm from the depths of the ocean, stands astride the North American continent, with the sun peeping up over the rim of the globe. In the bird's hands are clutched two signal flags attached to lightning bolts. Colors: bird, brown with coral stomach; bird feet, yellow; cap, red with number 51 on front; flags, one yellow with blue cross, second flag red with yellow stripes; earth, blue and brown; sun, orange; worm, pale green; background, pale blue and white.

Nickname: None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Apr 1948: VPW-1 was established at NAS Quonset Point, R.I., as an Air Early Warning squadron flying the PB-1 Flying Fortress. Some of the personnel identified for assignment to VPW-1 had been ordered to VX-4 for training on the PB-1W aircraft prior to their unit being established as a separate squadron. Another group of personnel for VPW-1 was located at Kwajalein Atoll participating in Operation Sandstone when the squadron was established on 1 April. This detachment consisted of 17 officers and 29 enlisted personnel. The detachment's mission during this operation was to patrol a designated danger area during hours of darkness to ensure no unauthorized craft entered the atomic experimental test area.

1 Apr 1948: Immediately following the squadron's establishment at NAS Quonset Point it was assigned a new home port at NAAS Ream Field, Imperial Beach, Calif.

2–3 Apr 1948: The squadron received its first four PB-1Ws on 2 April. These aircraft had been B-17G's, held by the U.S. Army Air Force in reserve storage, and released to the Navy for modification by the NAMU Johnsville, Pa. The APS-20 search radar was installed, with a distinctive large fairing projecting from the chin of the aircraft for the scanning unit. The bomb bays were sealed since no weapons were carried and extra fuel tanks were installed to increase range. On 3 April the squadron began the move to its new home port at NAAS Ream Field.

Apr–May 1948: The squadron participated in various fleet radar relay and search and rescue exercises.

29 May 1948: The squadron's Kwajalein Detachment return to NAAS Ream Field.

7 Jul 1948: VPW-1 was relocated to NAAS Miramar, north of San Diego, Calif.

July 1948: The squadron established a detachment at NAS Agana, Guam. The detachment operated under the control of FAW-1. The primary mission of the detachment was typhoon reconnaissance.

1 Sep 1948: The squadron was redesignated VP-51. VP-51 was the first operational land-based AEW squadron. The primary mission of the squadron was ASW but it was also responsible for developing, improving and evaluating all aspects relating to the operational use of AEW.

May 1949: VP-51 received the PB4Y-2 Privateer to replace the PB-1W aircraft being taken out of service.

Jul–Aug 1949: The squadron participated in AEW intercept exercises in July and August and ASW hunter/killer exercises in August.

1 Feb 1950: VP-51 was disestablished at NAAS Miramar, Calif. Personnel from the disestablished squadron were used to form a detachment of VX-4.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Quonset Point, R.I.	1 Apr 1948
NAS Ream Field, Calif.	3 Apr 1948
NAAS Miramar, Calif.	1 Aug 1948

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR F. P. Anderson (actg.)	29 Jun 1949
CDR Harold W. McDonald	16 Dec 1949

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Harold W. McDonald	1 Apr 1948

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB-1W	2 Apr 1948
PB4Y-2	Jun 1949

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
Apr 1948*	May 1948	CTG 7.3	Kwajalein	PB-1W	WestPac
Jul 1948*	Dec 1948	FAW-1	Agana	PB-1W	WestPac

* Deployments are for squadron detachments, not the full squadron.

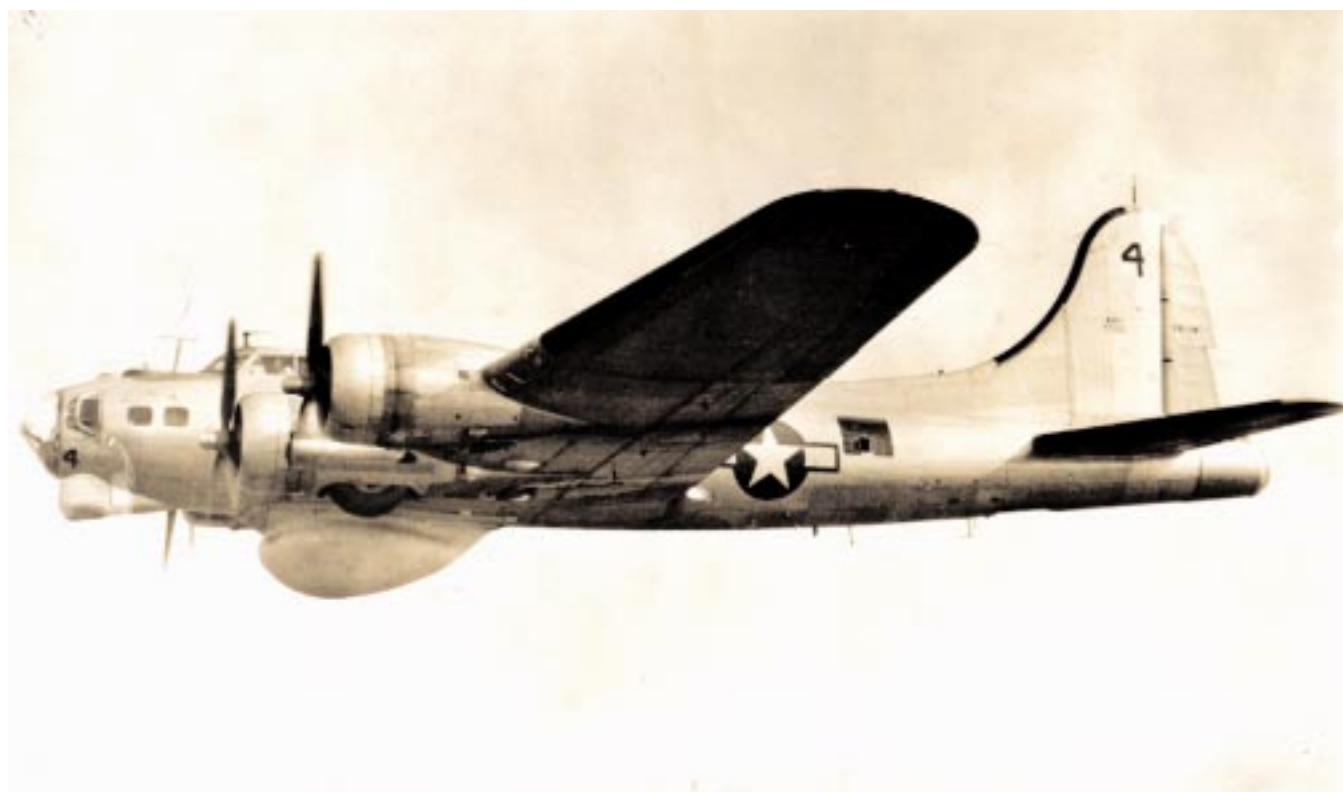
Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
COMFAIR Quonset*	EW	1 Apr 1948
FAW-14	EW	1 Apr 1948

* The squadron was established at NAS Quonset Point under Commander Fleet Air Quonset and, on the same day, reassigned to FAW-14 on the West Coast.

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	



A PB-1W in flight. This aircraft was assigned to VX-4 and was used to train VPW-1 personnel.

Second VP-56

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron NINE HUNDRED (VP-900) on 1 July 1946.

Redesignated Medium Patrol Squadron (Landplane) SEVENTY ONE (VP-ML-71) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron SIX HUNDRED SIXTY ONE (VP-661) in February 1950.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron FIFTY SIX (VP-56) on 4 February 1953, the second patrol squadron to be assigned the VP-56 designation.

Disestablished on 28 June 1991.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's first insignia was developed and submitted to CNO during its existence as VP-661 in 1952. CNO approved the design on 15 March 1952.



The squadron's first dragon insignia.

The central figure of the design was a fierce winged dragon, breathing fire and smoke above the up-thrust bow of a sinking submarine. Colors: background, white; dragon, blue with yellow belly, red eyes and mouth; sea, light green; border, red. The squadron retained this design after its redesignation to VP-56.

The second insignia of VP-56 was a modernized rendition of the first design. It was submitted to CNO and approved on 23 October 1968. The winged dragon, still the central feature, breathed fire against a circular background of red, white and blue. A scroll at the top displayed the designation PATRON 56. The scroll at the bottom contained the nickname Dragons. Colors: dragon, black body, white belly, red flames; background, divided into red, white and blue sec-



The squadron's second insignia had a more stylized dragon design.

tions; letters on top and bottom of design, black on white background.

Nickname: Dragons, 1952–1991.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Jul 1946: VP-900 was established at NAS Anacostia, D.C. It came under the operational control of FAW-5 and administrative control of the Naval Air Reserve Training Command. The squadron was one of 21 naval reserve squadrons established after the war to accommodate the large number of aircrews recently released from active duty and utilize the enormous stocks of aircraft on the inventory. The squadron flew the PBV-5A/6A Catalina seaplane and the PV-2 Harpoon landplane.

15 Nov 1946: All patrol squadrons were redesignated. Regular Navy squadron designations began with 1 and reserve patrol squadron designations began with 5. VP-900 was redesignated VP-ML-71. The ML for reserve patrol squadrons included twin-engine medium amphibian seaplanes, as well as twin-engine land-based bombers. Regular Navy patrol squadron ML designations were for twin-engine medium land-based bombers only. The amphibian medium seaplanes like the PBV-5A were in the AM category.

Feb 1950: VP-ML-71 was redesignated VP-661 during the reorganization of the Naval Air Reserve units in 1949, but the redesignation did not take effect until February 1950. During this period the number of Naval Aviation reserve squadrons was reduced from the 1949 total of 24 to 9.

15 Sep 1950: VP-661 was called to active duty as a result of North Korean forces invading the Republic of



Squadron P5Ms in flight.

South Korea on 25 June 1950. The squadron reported for duty to Commander Naval Air Force Atlantic Fleet at NAS Norfolk, Va. At the start of hostilities Navy patrol forces on active duty numbered just 20 squadrons, and it quickly became apparent that this meager figure was inadequate to meet the increased demands. By the end of 1950 seven reserve patrol squadrons were called to active duty to augment the regular Navy patrol squadrons. After reporting for duty at NAS Norfolk, Va., the squadron was sent to NAS Corpus Christi, Tex., for six weeks of transitional training in the PBM-5 and PBM-5S2 Mariner seaplane.

May 1953: The first of the squadron's new P5M-1 Marlin seaplanes began to arrive as replacements for the aging PBM Mariners. Pilots and ground crew personnel were sent to the Glenn L. Martin P5M school in Baltimore, Md., for training in operation and maintenance of the new aircraft.

Feb 1958: The Dragons came to the assistance of sister squadron VP-45 when one of its aircraft became frozen in the ice at NAS Norfolk. A group of volunteers from VP-56 found and old WWII amphibious tractor and made their way to the aircraft over the ice. They were able to chop the aircraft out of the ice and tow it to the beach.

25 Jan–Jun 1961: VP-56 received its first Lockheed P2V-7 Neptune and began transitioning from the Marlin seaplane. Transition training was completed by 8 June 1961.

1 Oct–Nov 1962: VP-56 deployed a detachment of five aircraft to NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. On 22 October 1962, President John F. Kennedy announced the imposition of quarantine on Cuba after photographic intelligence analysis had ascertained the presence of numerous medium-and long-range intercontinental missile sites. On 24 October 1962, the squadron moved the rest of its aircraft to Cuba. The Dragons and 14 other patrol squadrons played a key role in the surveillance of Soviet bloc vessels approaching Cuba, and later the verification count of missiles being removed. The squadron returned to NAS Norfolk in late November 1962, after earning a letter of commendation for their efforts.

15 May 1966: The Dragons deployed to NAF Sigonella, Sicily, relieving VP-23. Detachments operated at various times from RHAF Souda Bay, Crete; Capodichine, Italy; Athens, Greece; Tripoli, Libya; and Izmir, Turkey. While at Crete, the squadron was supported by *Tallahatchie County* (AVB 2).

27 May–5 Jun 1968: The Dragons were among the patrol squadrons and other naval units called upon to assist in the search for the ill-fated *Scorpion* (SSN 589), last heard from on 21 May 1968 50 miles south of the Azores. The search proved futile, and the four VP-56 patrol aircraft were released for return to NAS Norfolk on 5 June 1968. *Scorpion* was struck from the Navy list on 30 June 1968. In late October 1968 the remains of *Scorpion* were discovered in 10,000 feet of water 400



*Squadron P2Vs
in formation.*

miles SW of the Azores. No cause was ever determined for the sinking.

7 Jun 1968: VP-56 received a permanent change of station from NAS Norfolk, Va., to NAS Patuxent River, Md. Upon arrival, the Dragons began preparing for transition from the SP-2H Neptune to the P-3B Orion.

8 Aug 1968: VP-56 received its first P-3B Orion. Eight P-3Bs would be received by the end of the transition, replacing 12 SP-2H Neptunes.

Sep 1969: VP-56 received its first P-3C Orion and completed the transition training in October 1969. The Dragons were the first fleet patrol squadron to receive the P-3C. The baseline model incorporated the AN/ASQ-114 computer system for navigation and sensor functions, the first of its kind in a maritime patrol aircraft. It had an AN/AQA-7 Jezebel acoustic processing system and quadruple the number of directional sonobuoys, with a high capacity computer and related displays.

Feb 1970: The squadron's first P-3C baseline Orion was retrofitted with DIFAR gear.

1 Nov 1970: VP-56 conducted its first deployment to NAS Keflavik, Iceland, as a P-3C squadron. The squadron was subsequently awarded a Navy Unit Commendation for its activities in surveillance of the Soviet submarine fleet during November and December 1970.

1 Dec 1971–Feb 1972: The Dragons deployed to NAS Keflavik, Iceland. On 25 February 1972, a disabled H-class Soviet submarine was located on the surface. Squadron aircraft flew around-the-clock surveillance for five days until other Soviet ships could enter the area to assist the vessel.

6 May–Jul 1974: VP-56 deployed to NAF Sigonella, Sicily. On 22 July, the American ambassador requested the assistance of the Sixth Fleet in evacuating American citizens from Cyprus due to the outbreak of hostilities between Turkish and Greek factions. VP-56 flew 68 sorties in support of *Forrestal* (CVA 59) while it covered the evacuation carried out by the Marines.

Apr 1983: The squadron's P-3C baseline aircraft were retrofitted with the AQA-7V Acoustic DIFAR System.

1 Jan 1986: VP-56 deployed to NAF Sigonella, Sicily. The squadron established a record for the number of hours spent on ship-to-aircraft tactical computerized communications, called data link, while tracking Soviet submarines in the Mediterranean.

24 Mar–15 Apr 1986: The squadron provided a detachment for support of the task force involved in operations against Libya. Operation Freedom of Navigation in the Gulf of Sidra was conducted in support of American carrier aircraft operating in international waters. In retaliation for missiles fired at U.S. Navy aircraft, strikes were conducted by the battle group against Libyan missile sites at Surt and three Libyan missile boats. On 14 to 15 April 1986, strikes were conducted against Benghazi and Tripoli by *Coral Sea* (CV 43) and *America* (CV 66) battle group aircraft and USAF F-111s staging out of bases in England.

7 Aug–Oct 1987: The Dragons deployed to NAS Bermuda and received a Meritorious Unit Commendation in connection with Hurricane Emily and the recovery efforts in its aftermath during the period 25 September to 23 October 1987.

21 Jul 1989: The Dragons completed 25 years and 170,253 hours of mishap-free flying.

28 Jun 1991: VP-56 was disestablished at NAS Jacksonville, Fla., with over 26 years and 178,000 hours of accident-free flying.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Anacostia, Md.	1 Jul 1946
NAS Norfolk, Va.	15 Sep 1950
NAS Patuxent River, Md.	7 Jun 1968
NAS Jacksonville, Fla.	Jul 1971

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR W. Sheehan	1 Jul 1946
Unknown	1947–1950
LCDR Thomas G. Monahan, Jr.	Sep 1950



A VP-56 P-3C at NAS Moffett Field in November 1975 (Courtesy Rick R. Burgess Collection via Michael Grove).

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Henry G. McDonough	Apr 1952
CDR Charles L. Bardwell	Sep 1953
CDR Elmer T. Stonecipher	Jul 1954
CDR Donald G. Miller	Oct 1955
CDR Douglas M. Birdsall	Jan 1957
CDR J. A. Jones	4 Mar 1958
CDR B. S. Larkins	1 Jun 1959
CDR J. A. Montgomery	15 Jun 1960
CDR R. L. Morris	3 Jul 1961
CDR D. W. Herlong	7 Jun 1962
CDR G. G. Berkstresser	8 Jul 1963
CDR L. E. Mathwick	11 Apr 1964
CDR J. Miller	5 Jan 1965
CDR Gerald F. Thummel	8 Dec 1965
CDR J. M. Brozena	8 Dec 1966
CDR Ralph J. Touch	28 Dec 1967
CDR John J. McIntyre	12 Dec 1968
CDR Melvin Meltzer	15 Dec 1969
CDR Steven E. Kish	15 Dec 1970
CDR H. P. Fillingane	23 Nov 1971
CDR James B. Kramer	12 Dec 1972
CDR Charles S. Cornett, Jr.	15 Jan 1974
CDR William H. Compton	12 Dec 1974
CDR James E. McNulla III	10 Dec 1975
CDR Roger F. Donodeo	13 Dec 1976
CDR Robert C. Leslie	1 Dec 1977
CDR D. G. Oakes	21 Nov 1978

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR N. W. Ray	Jan 1980
CDR C. R. Cramer	Feb 1981
CDR Kenneth G. Johnson	Jan 1982
CDR Michael J. Caruso	Apr 1983
CDR Donald L. Riffle	Jul 1984
CDR H. Michael Wilson	Oct 1985
CDR Robert G. Simpson	3 Oct 1986
CDR James E. Dolle	14 Oct 1987
CDR Stewart R. Barnett III	28 Oct 1988
CDR C. Max Lindner III	6 Oct 1989
CDR Rush E. Baker III	12 Oct 1990

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBY-5A/6A	May 1946
PV-2	May 1946
PBM-5/5S2	Sep 1950
P5M-1	May 1953
P5M-2	1955
P2V-7	Jan 1961
SP-2H	Dec 1962
P-3B	Jun 1968
P-3C	Sep 1969
P-3C (MOD)	1986
P-3C UIIR	Jul 1989



A squadron P5M just after launching from the boat ramp.

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
Aug 1956	Nov 1956	FAW-5	<i>Currituck</i> (AV 7) and LST-32	P5M-2	Med
1 Jul 1959	1959	FAW-5	Halifax <i>Albemarle</i> (AV 5)	P5M-2	NorLant
11 Apr 1962*	11 Sep 1962	FAW-5	Rota	P2V-7	Med
11 Apr 1962*	11 Sep 1962	FAW-5	Keflavik	P2V-7	NorLant
11 Apr 1962*	11 Sep 1962	FAW-5	Rota	P2V-7	Med
1 Oct 1962	Nov 1962	FAW-11	Guantanamo	P2V-7	Carib
15 May 1966	13 Nov 1966	FAW-5	Sigonella <i>Tallahatchie County</i> (AVB 2)	SP-2H	Med
27 Jun 1967	17 Dec 1967	FAW-5	Rota	SP-2H	Med
1 Nov 1970	5 Mar 1971	FAW-5	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
1 Dec 1971	5 May 1972	FAW-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant



A squadron SP-2H in flight, 1964.

Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
15 Mar 1973*	Aug 1973	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
15 Mar 1973*	Aug 1973	PatWing-11	Souda Bay	P-3C	Med
6 May 1974	24 Sep 1974	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
25 Sep 1975	27 Feb 1976	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
6 Nov 1976	15 Apr 1977	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
4 Apr 1978	20 Sep 1978	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
25 Jun 1979	4 Dec 1979	PatWing-11	Bermuda	P-3C	Lant
1980	1980	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
1981	1981	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
Feb 1982	Aug 1982	PatWing-11	Bermuda	P-3C	Lant
30 May 1983*	9 Nov 1983	PatWing-11	Rota	P-3C	Med
30 May 1983*	9 Nov 1983	PatWing-11	Lajes	P-3C	Lant
Aug 1984	17 Jan 1985	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C	NorLant
1 Jan 1986	11 Jul 1986	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C	Med
7 Aug 1987	23 Oct 1987	PatWing-11	Bermuda	P-3C MOD	Lant
1 Jan 1989	28 Jun 1989	PatWing-11	Sigonella	P-3C MOD	Med
2 Aug 1990	8 Feb 1991	PatWing-11	Keflavik	P-3C UIIR	NorLant

* The squadron conducted split deployments to two or more sites on the same dates.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5	EH [†] / LQ [‡]	1 Jul 1946
FAW-11/PatWing-11 [§]	LQ	1 Jul 1971

[†] The squadron was assigned the tail code EH when it was called to active duty in September 1950.

[‡] The squadron's tail code was changed from EH to LQ in 1957. The effective date for this change was most likely the beginning of FY 1958 (1 July 1957).

[§] FAW-11 was redesignated Patrol Wing 11 (PatWing-11) on 30 June 1973.

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>	
NUC	4 Nov 1970	15 Nov 1970
MUC	23 Mar 1986	31 Mar 1986
	11 Feb 1982	11 Aug 1982
HSM	25 Sep 1987	23 Oct 1987
	2 May 1980	
AFEM	19 May 1980	31 May 1980
	(Sel Crews)	6 Jun 1983
NEM	(Sel Crews)	20 Jan 1986
	27 Jun 1986	



A squadron P-3C, 1977.

VP-60

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron SIXTY (VP-60) on 1 November 1970.

Disestablished on 1 September 1994.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The insignia chosen by VP-60 was approved by CNO on 28 December 1971. The device featured a



The squadron's cobra insignia.

large Cobra coiled around a submarine, symbolizing the squadron's primary mission of antisubmarine warfare. Colors: snake, blue green body, yellow belly, red tongue and eyes; water, green; submarine, black; scroll at bottom had PATRON 60 lettering in blue on a white scroll background.

Nicknames: Cobras, 1970–1994 (aka, Snake Snappers, 1974).

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Nov 1970: VP-60 was one of 12 VP and three VR squadrons established in 1970 as a continuation of a program initiated in July 1968 to give Naval Air Reserve squadrons an improved combat readiness. The concept, known as the 12/2/1 had 12 VP squadrons under two commands, Commander Fleet Air Reserve Wings Atlantic and Commander Fleet Air Reserve Wings Pacific, both under the control of one

central authority, Commander Naval Air Reserve. VP-60 was established at NAS Glenview, Ill., under Commander Reserve Patrol Wings, Atlantic. It was formed by combining personnel from VPs 70V1, 70V2, 70V3 and 49V4, at NAS Glenview and NAS Twin Cities, Minn. The squadron conducted flying operations with nine SP-2H Neptunes.

1 Jul 1975: Administrative control for VP-60 was transferred from Commander Reserve Patrol Wings, Atlantic to Commander Reserve Patrol Wings, Pacific.

Jun–Nov 1980: The Cobras transitioned from the P-3A airframe to the P-3B. The B-model Orions came with more powerful engines and improved avionics. Transition training was completed in November.

27 Mar 1981: VP-60 deployed to NAF Kadena, Okinawa, with detachments at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., and NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii. Crews operating with the two detachments completed basic and advanced antisubmarine warfare qualification flights in the weapons systems trainer. The unit at Kadena provided the only available on-the-spot sea-air rescue support in April when one of the Navy's SSBNs collided with a Japanese freighter that resulted in the sinking of the freighter.

Mar 1983: The first of the squadron's 10 P-3B Orions was sent to the Naval Air Rework Facility (NARF) at NAS Alameda, Calif., for retrofit to the P-3B Tactical Navigational Modification (TAC/NAV MOD).

1993: In its last year of operational flying, VP-60 provided support to UNITAS XXXIV/93, a series of ASW exercises conducted with naval units in Uruguay.

17Aug 1993: VP-60 was selected to conduct a live over-the-horizon HARM (high-speed antiradiation missile) and Harpoon launch at NAS Point Mugu, Calif. The exercise was unique in that the crew launched their Harpoon using coordinated satellite targeting data delivered straight to the cockpit instead of the aircraft's onboard radar data.

1 Sep 1994: VP-60 was disestablished at NAS Glenview, Ill.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Glenview, Ill.	1 Nov 1970

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Robert A. Galbraith	1 Nov 1970
CDR George L. Young, Jr.	30 Jun 1971
CDR Alfred M. Fenstad	6 Jan 1973
CDR Richard C. Riebe	4 Jan 1975
CDR Stephen G. Snipes	17 Jul 1976



A squadron P-3B in flight.

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Howard C. Lysne	29 Jul 1978
CAPT Gary L. Engel	12 Jul 1980
CDR John J. Mumaw	16 Jan 1982
CDR Richard D. Nilson	6 Aug 1983
CDR Michael Mazurczak II	3 Mar 1985
CDR John I. Hallquist	21 Sep 1986
CDR James B. Johnson	19 Mar 1988
CDR James C. Schultz	9 Sep 1989
CDR James L. Cook	1990

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Jerome D. Kulenkamp	1992
CDR Brian P. Burghgrave	1993

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
SP-2H	1 Nov 1970
P-3A	1975
P-3B	Jun 1980
P-3B MOD	Mar 1983

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
Mar 1976	Apr 1976	PatWing-1	Agana	P-3A	WestPac
10 Mar 1977	10 Apr 1977	PatWing-2	Barbers Pt.	P-3A	WestPac
7 Apr 1979	6 May 1979	PatWing-5	Lajes	P-3A	Lant
3 Apr 1980	4 May 1980	PatWing-5	Lajes	P-3A	Lant
27 Mar 1981	Apr 1981	PatWing-1	Kadena	P-3A	WestPac
7 Mar 1982	4 Apr 1982	PatWing-1	Cubi Pt.	P-3B	WestPac
3 Mar 1983	3 Apr 1983	PatWing-1	Cubi Pt.	P-3B	WestPac

Major Overseas Deployments—Continued

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
Jun 1984	Jul 1984	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3B	WestPac
Mar 1985	Apr 1985	PatWing-2	Barbers Pt.	P-3B	WestPac
Jun 1986	Jul 1986	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3B	WestPac
Mar 1987	Apr 1987	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3B	WestPac
Mar 1988	Apr 1988	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3B	WestPac
Feb 1989	Mar 1989	PatWing-1	Misawa	P-3B	WestPac
1993	1993	PatWing-10	Uruguay	P-3B	SoLant

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
COMRESPATWINGLANT	LS	1 Nov 1970
COMRESPATWINGPAC	LS	1 Jul 1975

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
NEM	1 Oct 1976 30 Sep 1978

A VP-60 P-3A at NAS Glenview in February 1980 (Courtesy Rick R. Burgess Collection).



Third VP-61

Lineage

Established as Photographic Squadron FIVE (VD-5) on 1 June 1944.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron (Photographic) ONE (VPP-1) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron SIXTY ONE (VP-61) on 1 September 1948, the third patrol squadron to be assigned the VP-61 designation.

Disestablished on 17 January 1950.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Jun–18 Sep 1944: VD-5 was established at NAS San Diego, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-14. The unit was established as a photographic squadron flying the PB4Y-1P Liberator and F6F-5P Hellcat. Squadron personnel were assembled at NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif., on 3 June 1944 for training on the two aircraft types. On 15 June training on the F6F was deleted from the syllabus. Training was completed on 18 September 1944, and the squadron began preparations for a transpac to Hawaii. Ground personnel departed for Hawaii aboard *Ticonderoga* (CV 14) on 18 September.

25 Sep 1944: VD-5 aircraft departed NAS San Diego, Calif., for NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii, with the last aircraft arriving on 28 June. The next day the squadron officially reported for duty to FAW-2. VD-5 conducted training for combat operations through mid-November 1944.

15–21 Nov 1944: VD-5 began its transit to NAB Agana, Guam, with the last aircraft arriving on 20 November. Once onboard, the squadron came under the operational control of FAW-1, Photo Group 2. The squadron's first mission on 21 November was a series of photographic coverage flights over Chichi Jima and Haha Jima.

1 Dec 1944: The squadron's ground support staff arrived at Guam. Throughout the remainder of the month the squadron participated in photographic reconnaissance missions over the Bonin Islands, and in operations Sledgehammer, Rockcrusher I and II over Iwo Jima.

1–31 Jan 1945: VD-5 continued photoreconnaissance over the Bonins, with two missions each over Truk, Puluwat and Woleai.

1–27 Feb 1945: VD-5 continued flying missions over Iwo Jima and Truk. At this time the squadron acquired a Douglas SBD-3P Dauntless to assist in the missions.

28 Feb 1945: VD-5 deployed a forward echelon of five aircraft and crews to Guinan Field, Samar.

1–11 Mar 1945: VD-5 continued to fly photo missions from Guam over Okinawa, Marcus, Chichi Jima, Haha Jima and Yap.

11 Mar–1 May 1945: The forward echelon at Samar was relocated to Clark Field, Luzon, Philippines. The detachment at that time came under the operational control of FAW-17. By April 1945, VD-5 was operating with the headquarters portion of the squadron at Agana, Guam; a forward detachment at Clark Field, Philippines; and two small detachments at Ulithi and Pelelieu. The squadron was providing photographic reconnaissance over Okinawa, Marcus, Chichi Jima, Haha Jima, Yap and Palau islands. VD-5's complement of aircraft was expanded on 20 April 1945 to include eight Grumman F6F-5P Hellcats. On 1 May 1945, all of the VD-5 elements rejoined the squadron at Agana, Guam.

13 May 1945: VD-5 received orders to prepare for return to the U.S. Photographic personnel were transferred to Interpretation Squadron 2 (InterpRon-2) and all maintenance personnel were transferred to Photo Group 2. This group departed the combat zone in early June onboard SS *Poelau Laut* and SS *Winfield S. Stratton*.

26 May 1945: The squadron departed the combat zone in two elements of four and three aircraft. The last element arrived at NAS Kaneohe on 30 May, and all squadron aircraft were turned over to FAW-2 HEDRON.

2–18 Jun 1945: VD-5 departed Pearl Harbor aboard *Kalinin Bay* (CVE 68), arriving at San Diego, Calif., on 8 June. Personnel were given orders and home leave. The ground staff of VD-5 arrived from Guam on 18 June 1945. Personnel were given orders and home leave.

20 Jul 1945: VD-5 was reformed at NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-14. The squadron was scheduled to become operational for a second combat zone deployment in October 1945, but the cessation of hostilities in September changed those plans.

Oct 1945–Nov 1946: The squadron was based at various Japanese airfields while deployed to Japan to conduct aerial surveys of the Japanese home islands for CNO and the Navy Hydrographic Office.

15 Nov 1946: Shortly after returning from Japan to NAAS Miramar (formerly NAAS Camp Kearney), Calif., VD-5 was redesignated VPP-1. Its mission was long-range photographic reconnaissance utilizing six PB4Y-1P Liberator and four SNB-2P aircraft.

Jun 1947–Sep 1947: The squadron deployed a detachment to conduct an aerial survey of Kodiak Island, Alaska. The detachment surveyed Kodiak from 20,000 feet by flying 35 flight lines paralleling each other on a north-south axis.

Oct-Dec 1947: The squadron conducted aerial surveys of Trinity and Tonto National Forests.

Apr-Sep 1948: The squadron deployed to Alaska to conduct an aerial survey of the Naval Petroleum Reserves in northern Alaska. During this deployment the squadron also surveyed the Tongass National



Squadron photographers piece together mosaics of the Alaskan aerial photo coverage conducted by the squadron, 1949.

Forest, St. Matthew Island and St. Lawrence Islands in the Bering Sea and an area in the vicinity of Fairbanks and the Richardson Highway. During this deployment the squadron exposed 800 rolls of aerial film each 200 feet long, for a total of 350,000 aerial photographs.

May-Sep 1949: The squadron deployed to Alaska to continue its aerial survey of the Naval Petroleum Reserves as well as additional aerial surveys in other areas of Alaska. During this deployment the squadron processed almost 400,000 aerial photographs for dissemination to various federal mapping agencies.

17 Jan 1950: VP-61 was disestablished at NAAS

Miramar, Calif. All of its assets and personnel, and those of VP-62, were incorporated into Composite Squadron 61 (VC-61). For almost one year, VC-61 was the only long-range photographic squadron left in the Navy.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS San Diego, Calif.	1 Jun 1944
NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif.	3 Jun 1944
NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii	Jun 1944
NAAS Camp Kearney/ NAAS Miramar, Calif.*	20 Jul 1945†

* NAAS Camp Kearney was redesignated MCAS Miramar on 1 May 1946 and then NAAS Miramar on 30 June 1947.

† Squadron personnel departed Hawaii in early June 1945 and arrived stateside in June. All personnel were given home leave and the squadron's home port was assigned as NAAS Camp Kearney on 20 July 1945, the date they became to reform following home leave.

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR L. R. Gehlbach (actg.)	1 Jun 1944
CDR A. D. Fraser	19 Jun 1944
LT Charles M. Witt (actg.)	26 May 1945
LCDR Robrt W. L. Ross	13 Aug 1945
LCDR Arnold E. Allemand, Jr.	10 Sep 1945
LCDR W. E. Hardy	15 Nov 1946
LCDR C. A. Van Dusan	20 Jun 1947
CDR W. H. Davison	10 Dec 1948

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB4Y-1P	Jun 1944
SBD-3P	Feb 1945
F6F-5P	Apr 1945
SNB-2P	Nov 1946

A squadron PB4Y-1P in flight over Alaska, 1950.



Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
15 Nov 1944	8 Jun 1945	FAW-1	Agana	PB4Y-1P/ F6F-5P	SoPac
28 Feb 1945	†	FAW-1	Samar	PB4Y-1P	SoPac
11 Mar 1945	†	FAW-17	Luzon	PB4Y-1P F6F-5P	SoPac
Oct 1945	Nov 1946	FAW-1	Japan‡	PB4Y-1P SNB-2P	WestPac
Jun 1947§	Sep 1947	**	Kodiak	PB4Y-1P SNB-2P	NorPac
Apr 1948	Sep 1948	**	Alaska	PB4Y-1P SNB-2P	NorPac
May 1949	Sep 1949	**	Alaska	PB4Y-1P SNB-2P	NorPac

† While the squadron was operating from Agana, Guam, it also deployed combat detachments in the South Pacific, moving from base to base.

‡ The squadron was based at various Japanese airfields while deployed to Japan to conduct aerial surveys of the Japanese home islands for CNO and the Navy Hydrographic Office.

§ The entire squadron did not deployment to Kodiak, only a detachment.

** While deployed to Alaska the squadron came under the operational control of Commander Alaskan Sea Frontier.



Squadron PB4Y-1s at Marks Air Force Base, Nome, Alaska, September 1949. Note the tail structure and wing tips are a different color than the rest of the aircraft. They were painted orange to help locate the aircraft if it crashed in snow.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		1 Jun 1944
FAW-2		29 Sep 1944
FAW-1		21 Nov 1944
FAW-2		30 May 1945
Commander Fleet		
Air West Coast		8 Jun 1945
FAW-14		Jun 1945
FAW-1		Oct 1945

Wing Assignments—Continued

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14	SD*	15 Nov 1946

* The squadron remained part of FAW-14 but was assigned the tail code SD on 7 November 1946.

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>	
NUC	20 Nov 1944	26 May 1945



PB4Y-1Ps in formation near Mount McKinley, Alaska, 1947, NH-95584-KN.