



James M. Seely, RADM, USN (Ret.)
"Jim"

Date of Designation: 6 December 1956 NA # V-10955

Dates of Active Duty: 12 July 1955 to 1 October 1989

Total Flight Hours: 5,000

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 1,001

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 4,700 Prop: 300 Helo: 15 VF/VA: 4,200
VT: 320

Combat Tours:

Vietnam: VA-93, USS *Enterprise* (CVN-65), A-4C, March-June 1966, 59 combat missions into North/South Vietnam and Laos.

Vietnam: VA-93, USS *Hancock* (CVA-19), A-4E, January - June 1967, 89 combat missions into North/South Vietnam and Laos.

Vietnam: VA-93, USS *Bon Homme Richard* (CVA-31), A-4F, January-April 1968, 56 combat missions into North/South Vietnam and Laos.

Vietnam: X.O. VA-152, USS *Shangri-La* (CVA-38), A-4E, March-December 1970, 97 combat missions into North/South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Vietnam: X.O. VA-165, USS *Constellation* (CVA-64), A-6A, October 1971-June 1972, 135 combat missions into North/South Vietnam and Laos.

Vietnam: C. O. VA-165, USS *Constellation* (CVA-64), A-6A, January-June 1973, 11 combat missions into North/South Vietnam.

Total Combat Missions - 447

Aviation Commands:

CO, VA-165, Jul. 1972-Jun. 1973

COMCVW-9, Jul. 1974-Jul. 1975

CO, NAS Whidbey Island, WA., Aug. 1977-Sept. 1979

COMMATVAQWINGPAC, Sept. 1984 - Oct. 1986



Combat Awards:

4 Distinguished Flying Crosses

43 Air Medals (5 individual and 38 strike/flight)

7 Navy Commendation Medals with combat "V"

Presidential Unit Citation

Duty Assignment Chronology

- 6/55-8/55 Fleet Aircraft Service Squadron (FASRON) - 6 at NAS Jacksonville, FL. Numerous orientation flights in helos and SNBs prior to flight school.
- 8/55-8/56 Naval Air Basic Training Command at NAS Pensacola, FL. Student. (T-34, T-28 and SNJ (for gunnery and carquals)).
- 8/56-12/56 Advanced Training Command at NAS Corpus Christi, TX. Student. (TV-2 for instrument training and F9F-2/5 for tactics).
- 12/56-6/57 FASRON-4, NAS North Island, CA. Admin/Legal. (F9F-6/8, SNB, R-4D).
- 6/57-3/60 VA-63 (redesignated VA-22) at NAS Alameda, CA. Asst. Maint. and Admin. FJ-4B Fury. Two WESTPAC cruises on USS *Midway* (CVA-41). Taiwan Straits crisis in '58.
- 4/60-8/61 VA-126 at NAS Miramar, CA. RAG instructor. Maintenance Training. (A-4, FJ-4B and F9F-8T).
- 8/61-5/63 VA-125 at NAS Lemoore, CA (plankowner). RAG instructor. Weapons Delivery instructor. (A-4A, B, C).
- 5/63-11/65 USS *Wright* (CC-2) ships company tour at NOB Norfolk, VA. ADP Watch Officer. Qualified OOD underway and CDO in port. Proficiency flying in T-28 and SNB.
- 12/65-3/66 VA-125 at NAS Lemoore, CA. RAG student. (A-4B, C).
- 3/66-5/68 VA-93, NAS Lemoore, CA. Maint./Ops. (A-4C, E, F). Three Vietnam combat cruises on USS *Enterprise*, *Hancock* and *Bon Homme Richard*.

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Duty Assignment Chronology continued

5/68-7/68 VA-125 at NAS Lemoore, CA. RAG instructor. (A-4 series).

7/68-7/69 Naval War College at Newport, RI. Student.

7/69-10/69 VA-44 at NAS Cecil Field, FL. RAG student. (A-4 series).

11/69-1/71 VA-152 at NAS Alameda, CA. Executive Off. (A-4E). Combat cruise to Vietnam on USS *Shangri-La*.

2/71-6/71 VA-128 at NAS Whidbey Island WA. RAG student. (A-6A).

6/71-6/73 VA-165 at NAS Whidbey Island WA. XO/CO. A-6A. Two cruises on USS *Constellation*. First cruise and part of the second were in combat in Vietnam.

6/73-2/74 Light Attack Wing, Pacific at NAS Lemoore, CA. Special Projects.

2/74-7/74 Pre-CAG training based at VA-122 at NAS Lemoore, CA. To qualify in A-7E, F-4, E-2, and to re-qualify in A-6.

7/74-7/75 Commander, Carrier Air Wing Nine (CVW-9) at NAS Lemoore, CA. A-6A, A-7E, F-4J, etc. One WESTPAC cruise on USS *Constellation*.

7/75-8/76 National War College at Ft. Mc Nair, Washington, DC. Student.

8/76-8/77 Office of CNO in Pentagon. Deputy Director Projection Forces Branch (OP-962).

8/77-9/79 CO, NAS Whidbey Island WA. (A-6E, C-2, CH-46).

9/79-8/82 Office of CNO in Pentagon. Aviation Plans and Requirements (OP-50). OP-50W, OP-506, OP-50B & Acting Director, OP-50. (F/A-18).

8/82-9/84 Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (OJCS) in Pentagon. Director, Joint Analysis. Directed all Conventional, Strategic and Politico Military War Gaming for the JCS.

9/84-10/86 Commander, Medium Attack Tactical Electronic Warfare Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMMATVAQWINGPAC) at NAS Whidbey Isl. WA. Directed the operational training and readiness of all PAC Fleet A-6 squadrons and all Navy EA-6B squadrons. (A-6E, EA-6B, HS-3, F/A-18).

10/86-4/88 Office of CNO in Pentagon. Director, Aviation Plans and Requirements Division (OP-50).

4/88-10/89 Office of SECNAV in Pentagon. Deputy/ Acting Comptroller of the Navy.

10/1/89 Retired from active duty.

Summary of Significant Career Events

(1) The crisis in the Taiwan Straits in 1958 spurred an early deployment for the USS *Midway* and CVW-2. Flew many missions up and down the Straits, but saw no actual combat. On the other hand, the Chinese Nationalist and Chinese Communist fighter aircraft were engaging daily.

(2) As Weapons Training Officer in VA-125 (A-4 RAG) in 1961-63, directed classroom instruction and deployed for two weeks with each RAG class to NAS Fallon, NV or MCAS Yuma, AZ to teach students conventional and nuclear bombing tactics in the A-4.

(3) During the three combat cruises in 1966-68 flew day and night missions in North Vietnam (NVN), mostly to Route Packages III, IV and VI, to targets in areas such as Vinh, Nam Dinh, Thanh Hoa, Haiphong, Hai Duong, Hanoi, Hong Gay, Kep and many more that I can't spell either. We also did considerable work in Laos, the passes between NVN and Laos along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, heavily defended Tchepone, and FAC directed targets in the Steel Tiger and Barrel Roll sectors of Laos. Also, flew close air support for the besieged Marines in Khe Sanh and cover for the many logistics flights in and out of the airstrip there. Sent home in April '68 because of the combat limitation rule (14 months on the line). The President ordered a stop to the bombing of NVN as I was leaving. Flew 204 combat missions on those cruises.

(4) In 1970, as X. O. VA-152 on the USS *Shangri-La*, flew 97 combat missions (combat limitation rule evidently lifted) mostly to SVN, Laos, a few into Cambodia, and a few in the DMZ and Route Package I in NVN (protective reaction flights). Both the *Shang* and VA-152 were decommissioned after the cruise.

(5) Transitioned into the A-6A in 1971 and joined VA-165 as X.O. and C.O. for two cruises on the USS *Constellation*. Flew 135 combat missions in the first cruise which started in SVN and Laos except for several days, during "Christmas vacation", of heavy bombing around Vinh in terrible weather. The A-6s excelled. The cruise was supposed to end on 1 April 1972, but (April Fool) was extended for about three months during the Linebacker I campaign in NVN. We flew day and night missions into Route Packages III, IV and VI against much more significant military targets than had been assigned in 1966-1968. The targets were better, but they were also more heavily defended. Our A-6 Intruders mined NVN waterways, struck SAM sites in Route Package VI in the pre-dawn hours prior to B-52 strikes, flew numerous night, low level, single plane strikes, and many Alpha strikes. On 10 May 1972, *Connie* fighter pilots shot down 7 MIGS, *Coral Sea* got 1 and the USAF bagged 3. During the second cruise flew only 11 combat missions before the bombing was halted. The highlight of the cruise, indeed the war, was watching the repatriated POWs flying overhead on their way to the Philippines then home.