

VFA-25

Lineage

Established as Torpedo Squadron SEVENTEEN (VT-17) on 1 January 1943.

Redesignated Attack Squadron SIX B (VA-6B) on 15 November 1946.

Redesignated Attack Squadron SIXTY FIVE (VA-65) on 27 July 1948.

Redesignated Attack Squadron TWENTY FIVE (VA-25) on 1 July 1959.

Redesignated Strike Fighter Squadron TWENTY FIVE (VFA-25) on 1 July 1983. The first squadron to be assigned the VFA-25 designation.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's first insignia was approved by CNO on 28 September 1944. Colors for the four leaf clover, horseshoe and flying torpedo insignia were: a blue background with white shading; green four-leaf clover with black markings; white horseshoe with black markings; the wings and nose of the torpedo were yellow with black markings and the remaining part of the torpedo were white with black markings.



The squadron's first insignia was indicative of its mission as a torpedo squadron.

approved by CNO on 9 June 1949. Colors for the insignia are: a gold background with a black border; black fist with gold markings and a red lightning bolt. On 24 July 1959, CNO approved a modification to the insignia. The modified insignia added a scroll with the designation VA-25. The scroll was yellow with black markings and lettering.

On 24 January 1974 CNO approved another modification to the insignia, adding three black stars. When the squadron was designated VFA-25 it continued to use the fist and lightning bolt insignia but dropped the three stars.

Nickname: Fist of the Fleet, 1949-present.



The clenched fist and lightning bolt became the squadron's second insignia and has been in use, with some modifications, since 1949.



This modification to the insignia was approved by CNO on 24 January 1974.



This is the current insignia used by the squadron.

Chronology of Significant Events

10 Sep–2 Oct 1943: The squadron was embarked in *Bunker Hill* (CV 17), enroute from Norfolk to Pearl Harbor via the Panama Canal and San Diego.

11 Nov 1943: The squadron flew its first combat sorties, striking targets in Rabaul.

Nov 1943–Feb 1944: The squadron flew numerous combat missions, striking targets in Kavieng, Kwajalein, Eniwetok, Truk and Tinian.

2 Feb 1944: During operations over Eniwetok, the squadron's commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander F. M. Whitaker, was lost in a midair collision.

Feb 1945: The squadron flew numerous combat missions against targets in Japan and the Bonin Islands and provided ground support for the invasion of Iwo Jima.

19 Mar 1945: For their actions against the Japanese Fleet in the Kure Bay area of the Inland Sea, the following squadron personnel were awarded the Navy Cross: Lieutenant Commander W. M. Romberger; Lieutenant H. E. Clark; Lieutenant (jg)s T. J. Coghlan, H. W. Foote, H. C. Johnson, A. C. Traxler and Ensign J. Behl. Lieutenant J. A. Tew was awarded the Silver Star for his actions during this attack.

Mar 1945: Squadron aircraft struck Japanese ships in the East China Sea, Inland Sea and around the Ryukyu Islands and land based targets in and around Okinawa.

7 Apr 1945: VT-17, along with other units from the task force, attacked a Japanese naval force composed of the superbattleship *Yamato* and her escorts. Squadron aircraft scored several torpedo hits on the *Yamato* and sunk one of her destroyer escorts. For their actions in this battle the following squadron personnel were awarded the Navy Cross: Lieutenants T. C. Durkin and S. G. Sullivan; Lieutenant (jg) J. F. Monaghan and Ensign W. F. Nickel. Lieutenant H. E. Clark, Lieutenant (jg) T. J. Coghlan and Ensign R. S. Hanlon were awarded the Silver Star for their actions.

Apr 1945: Combat missions were flown against tar-

gets in and around Okinawa in preparation for the invasion of that island.

May–Jun 1945: VT-17 aircraft struck targets in and around Okinawa, Kyushu, Shikoku and ships in the East China Sea.

27 Oct–23 Nov 1949: VA-65, embarked in *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVB 42), operated in the Davis Straits area conducting cold weather exercises.

15 Sep 1950: Squadron aircraft participated in combat strikes against shore defenses in and around Inchon, Korea, just before the landings at Inchon.

1 Oct 1950: Squadron aircraft struck the North Korean capital of P'yongyang, hitting the airfield and scoring a direct hit on a large electrical power plant.

23 Jun 1952: Squadron aircraft participated in a coordinated four carrier strike on North Korean hydro-electric power plants. VA-65's Skyraiders hit the Suiho power plant on the Yalu River.

6 Aug 1952: Embarked in *Boxer*, the squadron was preparing for routine combat operations when a fire broke out on the hangar deck. Squadron personnel assisted in removing armed ordnance from planes on the flight deck and helped fight the fire on the hangar deck. One casualty was suffered by the squadron as a result of the fire.

Feb 1955: While embarked in *Essex* (CVA 9) and operating in the Formosa Straits, the squadron provided air support during the evacuation of Nationalist Chinese forces from the Tachen Islands which had come under bombardment by the People's Republic of China.

25 Aug 1958: *Midway* (CVA 41), with VA-65 embarked, was ordered to discontinue its ORI and proceed to the vicinity of Taiwan following the shelling of the Quemoy Islands on 23 August by the Chinese Communists.

Mar 1961: The squadron, while embarked in *Midway*, operated in the South China Sea due to the crisis in Laos.

Apr 1965: The squadron engaged in its first combat operations in the Vietnam theater.

20 Jun 1965: Four of the squadron's Skyraiders engaged enemy fighters over North Vietnam resulting in the shoot down of a MiG-17. Lieutenant Clinton B. Johnson and Lieutenant (jg) Charles W. Hartman III were awarded Silver Stars for their actions in downing the MiG-17.

14 Sep 1966: While on a combat sortie near Vinh, North Vietnam, the squadron's commanding officer, Commander C. W. Stoddard, was shot down by a surface-to-air missile and lost at sea.

Jan 1968: Squadron aircraft provided close air support for U.S. Marines besieged at Khe Sanh, South Vietnam.

6 Apr 1968: The squadron returned to NAS Lemoore from a combat deployment to Vietnam, bringing to a close an era for the A-1 Skyraider. It was the last

attack squadron to deploy and operate the A-1. The A-1's last combat mission with VA-25 came to an end on 20 February when the aircraft touched down on the deck of *Coral Sea* (CVA 43).

Apr 1969: Following the shoot down of a Navy EC-121 aircraft by the North Koreans, *Ticonderoga* (CVA 14), with VA-25 embarked, was ordered to the Sea of Japan.

21 Nov 1970: Squadron aircraft flew Rescue Combat Air Patrol sorties while an Army-Air Force search and rescue team landed at the Son Tay POW compound, 20 miles west of Hanoi, in an attempt to free American POWs. Unfortunately the POW compound had already been evacuated by the North Vietnamese.

Dec 1972: The squadron participated in Linebacker II Operations, heavy air strikes against targets primarily around Hanoi and Haiphong.

15 Jan 1973: The squadron participated with several other squadrons in a large laser bombing attack against bridge targets in North Vietnam. This coordinated strike used the A-6's Pave Knife Laser Designation System to guide laser-guided bombs dropped by A-7 aircraft.

Jan–Feb 1973: Following the cease fire with North Vietnam on 27 January, the squadron concentrated its attention on strikes against lines-of-communication targets in Laos until an agreement was reached with that country.

Jul 1976: Following the Israeli raid on Entebbe and the threatened military operations against Kenya by Uganda, the *Ranger* (CV 61), with VA-25 embarked, was ordered to transit from the South China Sea to the western Indian Ocean and operate off the coast of Kenya.

21 Feb 1985: VFA-25 and 113, embarked in *Constellation* (CV 64), were the first to deploy with the F/A-18 Hornet. During the deployment the Hornets operated in the western Pacific and Indian Ocean.

Jul 1987: Due to the increased attacks on merchant and tanker shipping in the Persian Gulf during the Iran/Iraqi War, the United States began to escort reflagged Kuwaiti oil tankers. During operation Earnest Will, VFA-25 provided air cover for reflagged tankers transiting the Straits of Hormuz.

Aug 1990: Due to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, *Independence* (CV 62), with VFA-25 embarked, was ordered to operate in the Gulf of Oman.

Aug–Nov 1990: VFA-25 flew sorties from *Independence* in support of Operation Desert Shield, the build-up of American and Allied forces to counter a threatened invasion of Saudi Arabia by Iraq and as part of an economic blockade of Iraq to force its withdrawal from Kuwait. On 2 October *Independence* entered the Persian Gulf and operated in those waters for two days before returning to the Northern Arabian Sea and being relieved on station by *Midway* (CV 41).



A squadron TBF-1C prepares to take off from Bunker Hill (CV 17) during its combat cruise on the carrier from October 1943 to March 1944.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
NAS Norfolk	01 Jan 1943
NAS Kaneohe	03 Oct 1943*
NAS Alameda	10 Mar 1944†
NAS Hilo	12 Nov 1944*
NAB Agana	28 Dec 1944*
NAS Alameda	08 Jul 1945
NAAS Fallon	Sep 1945
NAS Brunswick	01 Feb 1946
NAS Norfolk	15 Aug 1946
NAAS Oceana	05 Mar 1949
NAS Alameda	15 Aug 1950
NALF Santa Rosa	11 Jul 1951
NAS Alameda	25 Sep 1952
NAS Moffett Field	28 Sep 1961
NAS Lemoore	07 Jan 1963

* Temporary shore assignment while the squadron conducted training in preparation for combat deployment.

† During the squadron's reforming and training cycle it operated from numerous other shore stations, including NAAS Monterey, NAAS Vernalis, and NAAS Arcata.

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Frank M. Whitaker	01 Jan 1943
LT Gordon N. Owens	02 Feb 1944
LT Jack Martin (acting)	18 Apr 1944
LCDR William M. Romberger	02 May 1944
LT Arnold C. Traxler (acting)	18 Aug 1945
LCdr William N. Janes (acting)	21 Aug 1945
CDR Rubin H. Konig	11 Oct 1945
LCDR Glen B. Butler	31 Oct 1947
LCDR Michael J. Hanley	08 Dec 1948
CDR Richard W. Phillips	01 Feb 1950
CDR Gordon A. Sherwood	31 Aug 1951
LCDR Marvin R. Novak (acting)	22 Oct 1952

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Harry M. Thompson	28 Oct 1952
LCDR J. A. Rapp	12 Mar 1954
CDR John R. Bowen II	15 Jul 1955
CDR William C. Bates	22 May 1957
CDR Edward V. Izac, Jr.	15 May 1958
CDR John W. Fairbanks	03 Apr 1959
CDR Warren H. Ireland	08 Apr 1960
LCDR M. E. Mann (acting)	11 May 1960
CDR William S. Hertig	16 May 1960
CDR C. R. Bradford	03 Aug 1961
CDR John A. Overn	11 Aug 1962
CDR Herman W. Presson	25 Jun 1963
CDR Ralph F. Smith	29 May 1964
CDR Harry E. Ettinger	24 May 1965
CDR C. William Stoddard	13 Apr 1966
CDR James D. Burden	14 Sep 1966
CDR Clifford E. Church	01 Oct 1967
CDR Scott L. Smith	Mar 1968
CDR Fred J. Orrik	09 Jun 1969
CDR F. M. Humphreys	26 Jun 1970
CDR Juan H. Carcaba	26 May 1971
CDR Edwin A. Greathouse	19 May 1972
CDR Paul M. Moore	02 Jun 1973
CDR George R. Vezina	05 May 1974
CDR Peter W. Ogle	08 Jul 1975
CDR James B. Hamilton	29 Oct 1976
CDR Warner L. Butler	31 Jan 1978
CDR Donald J. Wright	26 Mar 1979
CDR John A. Lockard	29 Jul 1980
CDR Robert W. Leone	07 Oct 1981
CDR Steve L. Webb	25 Apr 1983
CDR C. J. Leslie	16 Nov 1984
CDR Jeorme L. Arbiter	Feb 1986
CDR Anthony V. Colantoni, Jr.	02 Sep 1987
CDR Daniel W. Gabriel	23 Nov 1988
CDR Gregory R. Peairs	31 May 1990

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
TBF-1	Jan 1943
TBF-1C	Oct 1943
TBM-1	May 1944
TBM-1C	Oct 1944
TBM-3	Feb 1945
TBM-3E	Sep 1945
SB2C-4E	Mar 1946
SB2C-5	Nov 1946
AD-1	23 Sep 1947
AD-1Q	Jul 1948
AD-4	02 Dec 1949
AD-3	14 Nov 1950
AD-2	05 Dec 1950
AD-4Q	05 Dec 1950

Aircraft Assignment—Continued

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
AD-1/2/3/4	1951*
AD-4NA	03 Dec 1952
AD-4B	23 Dec 1952
AD-5	Jul 1955
AD-6/A-1H†	Jul 1955
AD-7/A-1J†	Apr 1959
A-7B	Oct 1968
A-7E	Dec 1969
F/A-18A	11 Nov 1984
F/A-18C	Jun 1989

* Between July and December 1951 the squadron received and transferred numerous models of the AD Skyraider.

† The AD-6 and AD-7 designations were changed to A-1H and A-1J respectively in 1962.



Photo of squadron officers aboard Philippine Sea (CV 47) in 1951. A squadron AD-2 Skyraider is in the background.

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Carrier</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operation</i>
21 Oct 1943	04 Mar 1944	CVG-17	CV 17	TBF-1C	Pacific*
02 Feb 1945	08 Jul 1945	CVG-17	CV 12	TBM-1C/3	Pacific†
04 Jan 1949	05 Mar 1949	CVG-6	CVB 41	AD-1	Med
24 Aug 1950	11 Nov 1950	CVG-2	CV 21	AD-4	WestPac/Korea
06 Dec 1950	09 Jun 1951	CVG-2	‡	AD-2	WestPac/Korea
08 Feb 1952	26 Sep 1952	CVG-2	CV 21	AD-4	WestPac/Korea
03 Aug 1953	03 Mar 1954	CVG-2	CVA 10	AD-4B/NA	WestPac
03 Nov 1954	21 Jun 1955	CVG-2	CVA 9	AD-4/4B	WestPac
13 Nov 1956	22 May 1957	CVG-2	CVA 38	AD-6	WestPac
16 Aug 1958	12 Mar 1959	CVG-2	CVA 41	AD-6	WestPac
15 Aug 1959	25 Mar 1960	CVG-2	CVA 41	AD-7	WestPac
16 Feb 1961	28 Sep 1961	CVG-2	CVA 41	AD-7	WestPac
06 Apr 1962	20 Oct 1962	CVG-2	CVA 41	A-1H/J	WestPac
08 Nov 1963	26 May 1964	CVW-2	CVA 41	A-1H/J	WestPac
06 Mar 1965	23 Nov 1965	CVW-2	CVA 41	A-1H/J	WestPac/Vietnam
29 Jul 1966	23 Feb 1967	CVW-2	CVA 43	A-1H	WestPac/Vietnam
26 Jul 1967	06 Apr 1968	CVW-15	CVA 43	A-1H/J	WestPac/Vietnam
01 Feb 1969	18 Sep 1969	CVW-16	CVA 14	A-7B	WestPac/Vietnam
27 Oct 1970	17 Jun 1971	CVW-2	CVA 61	A-7E	WestPac/Vietnam
16 Nov 1972	23 Jun 1973	CVW-2	CVA 61	A-7E	WestPac/Vietnam
07 May 1974	18 Oct 1974	CVW-2	CVA 61	A-7E	WestPac
30 Jan 1976	07 Sep 1976	CVW-2	CV 61	A-7E	WestPac/IO
21 Feb 1979	22 Sep 1979	CVW-2	CV 61	A-7E	WestPac
10 Sep 1980	05 May 1981	CVW-2	CV 61	A-7E	WestPac/IO
07 Apr 1982	19 Oct 1982	CVW-2	CV 61	A-7E	WestPac/IO
21 Feb 1985	24 Aug 1985	CVW-14	CV 64	F/A-18A	WestPac/IO
04 Sep 1986	20 Oct 1986	CVW-14	CV 64	F/A-18A	NorPac
11 Apr 1987	13 Oct 1987	CVW-14	CV 64	F/A-18A	WestPac/IO
01 Dec 1988	01 Jun 1989	CVW-14	CV 64	F/A-18A	WestPac/IO
16 Sep 1989	19 Oct 1989	CVW-14	CV 64	F/A-18A/C	NorPac
23 Jun 1990	20 Dec 1990	CVW-14	CV 62	F/A-18C	WestPac/IO/ Persian Gulf

* The combat deployment time frame covers the squadron's departure from Pearl Harbor aboard *Bunker Hill* (CV 17) and its return to Pearl Harbor on 4 March 1944. The squadron detached from *Bunker Hill* on 4 March and returned to the States on 10 March 1944.

† The combat deployment time frame covers the squadron's 2 February 1945 embarkation in *Hornet* (CV 12) at Ulithi atoll and its return to the States on 8 July 1945.

‡ VA-65 deployed to Korea embarked in *Valley Forge* (CV 45). On 29 March 1951 the squadron, along with the rest of CVG-2, transferred to *Philippine Sea* (CV 47) for continued operations in Korea. It returned to the States embarked in *Philippine Sea*.



Squadron A-1H Skyraiders on the deck of Coral Sea (CVA 43) in 1966 during their deployment to Vietnam.

Air Wing Assignments

<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
CVG-17/CVBG-17/ CVBG-5/CVG-6*	C†	01 Jan 1943
CVG-2/CVW-2§	M/NE‡	01 Aug 1950
CVW-15	NL	31 Mar 1967
COMFAIRALAMEDA		1968**
CVW-16	AH	1968
CVW-2	NE	1970***
CVW-14	NK	Jan 1984

* CVG-17 was established on 1 January 1943. It was redesignated CVBG-17 on 22 January 1946 and then became CVBG-5 on 15 November 1946. The CVGB-5 designation was changed to CVG-6 on 27 July 1948.

† The tail code was assigned to CVBG-5 on 12 December 1946.

‡ The tail code was changed from M to NE in 1957. The effective date for this change was most likely the beginning of FY 58 (1 July 1957).

§ CVG-2 was redesignated CVW-2 when Carrier Air Groups (CVG) were redesignated Carrier Air Wings (CVW) on 20 December 1963.

** During the squadron's transition to the A-7B Corsair II, its administrative superior was Commander Fleet Air Alameda. Once the transition was complete it was assigned to CVW-16.

*** CVW-2 returned from a WestPac deployment on 1 June 1970 and VA-25 was assigned to the air wing sometime in the summer or fall of 1970.

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
PUC	11 Nov 1943	23 Feb 1944
	16 Feb 1945	10 Jun 1945
NAVE	01 Jul 1948	30 Jun 1949
	01 Jul 1949	30 Jun 1950
	01 Jul 1964	30 Jun 1965
	01 Jan 1986	31 Dec 1986
	01 Jan 1987	31 Dec 1987
	01 Jan 1990	31 Dec 1990
KSM	14 Sep 1950	26 Oct 1950
	16 Dec 1951	30 Mar 1951
	15 Apr 1951	02 Jun 1951
	10 Mar 1952	09 Sep 1952
HSM	25 May 1976	01 Jun 1976
	20 Mar 1981	
NUC	29 Mar 1951	31 May 1951
	16 Apr 1965	04 Nov 1965
	12 Aug 1966	01 Feb 1967
	13 Aug 1967	19 Feb 1968
	02 Aug 1990	
	01 Nov 1990	
AFEM	06 Sep 1958	10 Sep 1958
	12 Sep 1958	29 Sep 1958



A squadron A-7E Corsair II at NAS North Island, California, in 1975.

Unit Awards Received—Continued

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
	12 Oct 1958	30 Oct 1958
	11 Nov 1958	15 Nov 1958
	30 Nov 1958	12 Dec 1958
	24 Mar 1961	25 Mar 1961
	28 Mar 1961	07 Apr 1961
	09 Apr 1965	11 May 1965
	20 May 1965	28 Jun 1965
	20 Apr 1967	27 Apr 1967
	23 Jan 1968	22 Mar 1968
	20 Apr 1969	27 Apr 1969
	04 Aug 1969	
	16 Aug 1969	24 Aug 1969
	30 Aug 1969	
MUC	18 Feb 1969	07 Sep 1969
	18 Nov 1970	02 Jun 1971
	01 Jan 1988	31 Aug 1989
NEM	30 Oct 1980	12 Mar 1981
RVNGC	05 Oct 1965	
	09 Oct 1965	
	20 Nov 1966	21 Nov 1966
	29 Dec 1966	
	23 Nov 1967	
	02 Dec 1967	
	04 Dec 1967	
	20 Dec 1967	22 Dec 1967
	20 Jan 1968	
	23 Jan 1968	27 Jan 1968
	29 Jan 1968	19 Feb 1968
	04 Mar 1969	08 Mar 1969
	10 Mar 1969	
	12 Mar 1969	19 Mar 1969
	29 Mar 1969	31 Mar 1969

Unit Awards Received—Continued

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
	02 Apr 1969	03 Apr 1969
	06 Apr 1969	07 Apr 1969
	09 Apr 1969	15 Apr 1969
	10 May 1969	29 May 1969
	31 May 1969	03 Jun 1969
	28 Jun 1969	30 Jun 1969
VNSM	22 Jul 1965	26 Aug 1965
	10 Sep 1965	09 Oct 1965
	18 Oct 1965	04 Nov 1965
	12 Sep 1966	19 Oct 1966
	30 Oct 1966	
	01 Nov 1966	04 Dec 1966
	26 Dec 1966	01 Feb 1967
	26 Aug 1967	01 Oct 1967
	12 Oct 1967	28 Oct 1967
	04 Nov 1967	05 Nov 1967
	11 Nov 1967	08 Dec 1967
	16 Dec 1967	07 Jan 1968
	15 Jan 1968	21 Feb 1968
	03 Mar 1969	20 Mar 1969
	29 Mar 1969	16 Apr 1969
	09 May 1969	04 Jun 1969
	25 Jun 1969	01 Aug 1969
	18 Nov 1970	18 Dec 1970
	27 Dec 1970	13 Jan 1971
	02 Feb 1971	17 Mar 1971
	31 Mar 1971	18 Apr 1971
	25 Apr 1971	18 May 1971
	09 Dec 1972	03 Jan 1973
	14 Jan 1973	30 Jan 1973
	01 Feb 1973	06 Feb 1973
SASM	05 Aug 1990	04 Nov 1990



Two squadron F/A-18 Hornets on deck preparing to launch, circa 1988 or 1989.