

1960-1962: Under contract to the US Navy, Northwestern University builds and tests the first airborne TV broadcast test platform using an R-5 (DC-5) aircraft and VHF TV broadcast frequencies. This effort becomes the "Proof of Concept" for future Project Jenny efforts.

1962: US Navy temporarily installs RCA radio/TV broadcast equipment in two C-118 aircraft with the intent of using the capabilities during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Installation was not completed in time to use during the crisis, so the two aircraft were put in storage for use at a later date. The aircraft were assigned to VR-1 and were nose numbers 611 and 429.

Late 1964: DOD formulates plan to develop airborne radio/TV broadcast capabilities to be used in Vietnam in Psychological Warfare Operations.

Nov/Dec 1964: Navy Capt. George Dixon recalled to active duty to become Project Manager. Capt. Dixon had previously retired from The Office of Director of Naval Communications and was a Vice President of Technical Materiel Corporation in New York. Capt. Dixon was an ex-Navy RM and WW II enlisted pilot who was commissioned (but not in the aviation field) after crashing a seaplane. He went on to become one of the founding fathers of the current naval communications system. Capt. Dixon holds discussions with RCA concerning the feasibility of Project Jenny. RCA states that the project is probably not feasible, but that they will provide equipment and technical expertise to support the project. Initial plans are developed to start construction using Navy enlisted personnel with technical assistance from TMC and RCA.

Jan 1965: Construction of the first Blue Eagle aircraft started at NAS Patuxent River. Blue Eagle I (BUNO 131627) provided by AEWTULANT at NAS Patuxent River becomes the first project aircraft and is configured for radio broadcast missions (AM, FM and SW). At the same time, two R6D's (BUNO's 131611 and 131429), provided by VR-1 at NAS Patuxent River, temporarily configured as TV Test Platforms, are used to test the design of various TV broadcast antennas. Initial fabrication efforts for Blue Eagle I were provided by enlisted ETs and SKs from Naval Communications Systems HQ and by aircrew members from AEWTULANT and VR-1.

Footnote - looking for info on exactly where the first aircraft were configured and names of the personnel who were involved. Those remembered by RM1 Robbins were ADRC George Orlandi, ET1 Bruce Paret, ET2 Herbert Braun, AT1 Kelly Goode, SKC Jim James and ATC Doug Naylor

20 May 1965: Technical training begins. Two groups of navy personnel are ordered to factory schools to train as crew members for Project Jenny. One group of 6 EM's and EN's are assigned to the TMC plant in Alexandria VA to learn the diesel generator that was initially used as a power source aboard the aircraft. A group consisting of 6 officers and approximately 20 enlisted men were assigned to attend broadcast engineering school at RCA Camden NJ/RCA

Meadowlands PA. Of the officers selected, two were Intelligence types from the Naval Security Group in Washington, DC and 4 were NFO's from VW-4. The enlisted selected to attend broadcast engineering school were primarily ET's mostly from the Nuclear Power School at Bainbridge, MD, 3 RMs who had commercial FCC licenses and 2 navy photographers. Footnote: all orders were issued on a 24 hour notice. The personnel going to RCA Camden received orders to report to Mr. Neil Vanderdusen on the corner of Front and Cooper streets, Camden NJ prior to 0800 the next morning. No other info was given on the orders, and by 0800 the next morning there were a bunch of very confused sailors standing on a street corner in Camden NJ. The officers decided that they didn't like not knowing what was going on, so Lt. Harris (from the SecGru) immediately turned over control of the group to ETC Lucas who was the senior enlisted man. During the entire training period the crew was not told why they were learning broadcast engineering. Given the labor mix, they rapidly determined they were going to be flying spy missions on a nuclear powered aircraft. The project mission was explained the day of graduation from the school on 13 June 65, and the initial estimate of what the mission was to be was not too far off.

14 June, 1965: Initial schooling completed and crews report to VR-1 at NAS Patuxent River to begin operational training and flight testing on the two R6D's that are configured as temporary broadcast platforms. Local flight testing begins supported by RCA Tech Rep Bill Daugherty.

1 July 1965: AEWTULANT becomes OASU (Oceanographic Air Survey Unit)

July 1965: NAS Paxuxent River tech crews detached from VR-1 and report to NAF Andrews AFB to commence work on construction of Blue Eagle II (BUNO 128444) and Blue Eagle III (BUNO 131641). Equipment is stripped off the R6D's to be repackaged for installation on BE II and III. Crews are transferred to OASU with TDY orders to Andrews AFB.

Sept 1965: Blue Eagle I ordered to NAS Roosevelt Roads Puerto Rico to fly PSYOPS missions in support of the revolution in the Dominican Republic. BE I flies radio broadcast missions when the radio station in the country is taken over by rebels. Aircraft on station for approximately 2 weeks and then returns to Andrews AFB

Oct 1965: Blue Eagle I ordered to Saigon to fly first broadcast mission (broadcasting the world series) based at Tan Son Nhut AB in Saigon, Republic of Vietnam in support of AFVN operations on 6 October 1965.

Oct 1965: Aircraft 313 is used to fly the tech crews from Andrews AFB to RCA Meadowlands Pa to observe transmitter construction techniques. The Pilot lands at the wrong airport outside of Pittsburgh PA and sets a record for the only 4 engine aircraft to land at this small airport.

Nov 1965: Fabrication of Blue Eagle II is completed and the first test flight of a TV mission takes place. WRC Channel 4 Washington DC goes off the air at midnight and the remaining reel of a black and white film is broadcast from BE II flying an orbital path around the DC beltway. During the test flight the 4 channel VFTG Teletype equipment is also tested with NSS (NavComSta Washington).

Dec 1965: Blue Eagle II departs for Saigon to begin operations. Problems occur when the Vietnamese govt. changes the frequency allocation for TV Broadcasts and the TV transmitters require retuning. ET2 O'Donnell is dispatched to Saigon to help with the conversion and becomes known as "Shaky" O'Donnell when he is badly burned with RF while working on the TV transmitters.

Jan 1966: Fabrication of Blue Eagle III complete and aircraft departs for Tan Son Nhut. On 21 Jan 1966, OASU Det Westpac is officially established at Tan Son Nhut AB in the Republic of Vietnam. First test flight of a Blue Eagle aircraft (BE III) in Vietnam occurs on 23 Jan 66. LCDR E.C. Henderson becomes the first OIC.

1 February 1966: Blue Eagle III moved near TSN base operations building to tape the opening broadcast message from Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, US Ambassador to Vietnam Henry Cabot Lodge and General William Westmoreland.

7 February 1966: First successful dual channel AFVN and THVN TV broadcast is completed. Blue Eagles are now officially on the air, with Blue Eagles II and III flying TV broadcast missions in South Vietnam and Blue Eagle I flying PSYOPS missions in the Gulf of Tonkin over North Vietnam.

13 April 1966: First mortar attack at Tan Son Nhut AB. Blue Eagles I and III receive minor damage from shrapnel, but Blue Eagle II receives two direct hits, one above the aft cargo hatch going directly into the diesel that powered the broadcast systems and one in the aft vertical stabilizers. Inspectors estimated repairs on the other two A/C would take from 9 to 13 weeks. Blue Eagles I and III are repaired within days, and Blue Eagle II is repaired within 30 days. Three officers and one enlisted man receive purple hearts for wounds received during attack. Television programming was continued, but on a reduced, 5 day per week schedule.

11 May 1966: All Blue Eagle repairs completed and full broadcast schedule resumed.

25 October 1966: AFVN and THVN Ground Stations in Saigon become operational. Blue Eagle TV broadcasts are shifted from the Saigon Area South into IV Corps in the delta region of the country.

22 April 1967: Blue Eagle I returns to Vietnam from PAR at JFK airport in NYC

and shifts its base of operations to the Naval Air Facility at Danang airbase and VXN-8 Det Danang is established with LT Gidge as the first OinC.

1 July 1967: OASU redesignated as VX-8 (Air Development Squadron 8)

2 November 1967: Blue Eagle 6 (BUNO 131655) returns to VX-8 from LASI.

26 December 1967 Blue Eagle 6 departs PAX for Vietnam, arrives 3 January 1968.

31 January 1968: Vietnamese Tet offensive starts. AFVN Station at Hue under attack for next 4 days by North Vietnamese Regulars and VC.

4 February 1968: AFVN Hue is overrun and CO and four enlisted are taken POW and two enlisted are executed by VC. VOA/USIA broadcast station in Hue also destroyed with many employees taken POW. Additional damage was received at the Danang AFVN station which received over 800 hits putting it out of commission. Northern AFVN/THVN TV operations now off the air and are rapidly replaced by Blue Eagle TV birds flying broadcast missions in the I Corps Area.

20 February 1968: Blue Eagle III begins flight operations from Cam Ranh Bay.

29 August 1967: Blue Eagle I arrives at PAX for overhaul at LASI.

1 January 1969: VX-8 redesignated VXN-8

6 February 1969: DET WESTPAC awarded RVN Psychological Warfare Medal, 1<sup>st</sup> Class.

10 May 1969: Quonset huts replace Jamesway tents at Tan Son Nhut AB DET HQ.

30 September 1970: Blue Eagles fly last regular TV broadcast missions in Vietnam. According to information received from Jim Andrews, AFVN Broadcast Engineer 1970-1971, Project Jenny personnel stripped off some of the broadcast equipment and left it in Saigon for AFVN/THVN use and Blue Eagle VI was left behind to support contingency operations.

1 December 1970: Project Jenny Terminated.

January, 1971: Blue Eagles I,II,and III transferred to Davis Monthan AFB in Arizona and eventually scrapped.

1971: Meritorious Unit Commendation awarded to VXN8 DET WESTPAC

The Project Jenny mission eventually evolved to become a part of Air Force Project Coronet Solo, the forerunner of Project Commando Solo (now flown by the 193rd Special Operations Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard) that still provides PSYOPS radio broadcast services.