

An aerial view of a fighter jet, likely an F-16, in flight. The cockpit is visible on the left, with a pilot wearing a helmet featuring a red, white, and blue checkered pattern. The wing and tail section of the aircraft are visible, with a large white smoke plume trailing behind. The background shows a hazy sky and a ground area with some structures.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
MAINTENANCE
AWARDS PROGRAM

STRIKE FIGHTER SQUADRON 211

2013
Field Maintenance
Small Category

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Section 1 - Basic Unit Information

1. **Service:** United States Navy
2. **Specific Unit Designation:** Strike Fighter Squadron TWO ONE ONE (VFA-211)
3. **Category/Size of Nominated Unit:** Small/244 personnel

4. **Commander's Name and Mailing Address:**

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

5. **Points of Contact:**

Primary:

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

Alternate:

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

6. **Unit Size:** 41 Officers (34 pilots & weapon system operators). 203 Enlisted from E-9 to E-1.
7. **Unit Location:** Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia Beach, VA.

8. **Unit Mission Statement:**

*"The mission of Strike Fighter Squadron 211 is to **Fly, Fight and Win** in support of our Nation's objectives. We will do so by launching the Nation's best trained tactical aviators in the world's most combat-ready aircraft. We will be mission ready to meet and destroy the enemy in the air, on the ground, or at sea whenever and wherever required in support of American Forces, our Allies and our way of life."*

9. **Significant Operational Events, Deployments and Major Training Exercises:**

<u>Operation</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
USS Enterprise (CVN 65) Carrier Strike Group 2012 Deployment	CENTCOM and EUCOM Areas of Responsibility	01OCT12-04NOV12 (final month of an 8-month deployment)
USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) Flight Deck Certification	Western Atlantic	09JAN13-14JAN13
Qatari / Boeing Foreign Military Sales	NAS Fallon, NV	11FEB13-22FEB13
Naval Weapon System Evaluation Program (NWSEP)	Tyndall AFB	08JUL13-19JUL13
USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Flight Deck Certification	Western Atlantic	11SEP13-20SEP13



Fox Two! AIM-9M Sidewinder launch. Gulf of Mexico, July 2013



Sunset recovery
 USS Enterprise, Red Sea, 2012.



Final Homecoming for the Big 'E'
 USS Enterprise, Norfolk, Va 2012.

mean smooth sailing for the Checkmates in 2013, however. As detailed in Section 2.2.3, the squadron began to flow its aircraft through a depot-level Planned Maintenance Interval (PMI) cycle soon after returning from deployment. As most of the depot's workforce are civilians, the furloughs of 2013 had a definite impact on the squadron's operations. When jets did not emerge from PMI on schedule yet continued to be inducted at pre-specified intervals, the impact at the operational level was significant. During the last half of FY13, the squadron met or exceeded 100% of operational goals that called for 5-6 aircraft to execute despite having as few as 2 of 11 aircraft available to fly due to field/depot level PMI or aircraft awaiting an engineering disposition. Despite this, the squadron was able to advance 14 aircrew through the Strike Fighter Weapons and Tactics syllabus and provided the invaluable experience needed to bolster future combat readiness.

2.1.6 RESPONSIVE TO ADDITIONAL TASKING

- a. VFA-211 supported the **Flight Deck Certification for USS George H. W. Bush (CVN-77)** from 09-14 January in preparation for the carrier's second deployment in support of EUCOM and CENTCOM.
- b. In February, VFA-211 continued its prominent role in a **Foreign Military Sales campaign for the nation of Qatar** by sending a detachment to NAS Fallon, NV with the purpose of demonstrating the Electronic Warfare (EW) and self-protection capabilities of the FA-18E/F. This detachment served as a continuation of efforts begun in Qatar during a 3-week detachment while concurrently supporting combat operations from the USS Enterprise. Building upon relationships with Boeing and Qatari personnel, VFA-211's leadership of a multi-squadron team, consisting of 32 personnel and three aircraft, was critical to the success of the detachment. Objectives included the demonstration of the ALQ-214 jammer, ALR-67 radar warning receiver, ALE-47 countermeasures dispenser, and JDAM employment. During this time, the Checkmates became one of the only fleet squadrons to deploy the ALE-50 towed decoy. While the outcome of the FMS campaign is pending, a resultant multi-billion dollar sale of the FA-18E/F to Qatar could potentially lower the cost of future system upgrades and aircraft procurements.
- c. Contributing to the future combat survivability and lethality of Naval Aviation, VFA-211 provided aircraft, manpower, and material support during three 13-week detachments to NAS Fallon, NV. The squadron's efforts directly contributed to the training of more than 30 pilots and weapon systems operators attending the Navy Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor Course (**TOPGUN**).
- d. In June, the squadron supported **BOLD QUEST**. Working closely with USAF, USMC, USN and Coalition units, the Checkmates helped provide a realistic evaluation of combined interoperability in the critical mission area of establishing and communicating the positive identification (PID) of aircraft.
- e. The Checkmates participated in live-fire exercises at Tyndall AFB from 08-19 July as part of the **Navy Air-to-Air Weapon System Evaluation Program (NWSEP)**. The squadron successfully launched five missiles (2 x AIM-120, 2 x AIM-9M, and 1 x AIM-9X) in support of TOPGUN launch-zone expansion initiatives as well as the collection of end-to-end reliability and effectiveness data. The squadron also expended 3,300 rounds of 20mm ammunition against aerial banner targets and conducted mutually-beneficial Dissimilar Aircraft Combat Training (DACT) with F-15 and F-22 units.
- f. From 11-20 September, VFA-211 provided aircraft and personnel for **another flight deck certification**, this time in support of the **USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71)**. The squadron contributed significantly to clearing the Roosevelt for subsequent Fleet Replacement Pilot qualification and flight deck operations after a 4-year hiatus during reactor core overhaul. Additionally, by successfully re-qualifying its pilots, the Checkmates will save *dozens* of sorties during the upcoming 2014 workup cycle via a reduction in field carrier landing practice (FCLP) and carrier re-qualification requirements. With a reduced burden of training to an administrative (but critical) aspect of carrier aviation, these sorties will instead be available for tactical training to the benefit of the squadron's future combat readiness.
- g. Other training initiatives supported by the Checkmates in FY 13 are:
 - Expeditionary Warfare Training Group Atlantic's **Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC)** course.
 - JTAC proficiency training for deploying **Naval Special Warfare** teams.
 - Threat aircraft support for deploying **carrier strike group exercises** and unit-level training.
 - **Independently-deploying warships** were supported with both simulated threat aircraft and the rare opportunity for frigate and destroyer crews to control 'blue' fighters during air intercept scenarios.
 - **CVW-1 'Strikes of the Month'**, during which many junior aircrew received their first exposure to large-force missions and senior aircrew attained designation as Air Wing Strike Leads.

Section 2.2 - Effective Use of Maintenance Resources

Salt Water: *A challenging aspect of maintaining high-performance aircraft at sea.*

2.2.1 CORROSION CONTROL – THE FOUNDATION OF SQUADRON OPERATIONAL SUCCESS

Much like an automobile, the Super Hornet has scheduled maintenance that is both calendar-based as well as usage-based. ‘Special inspections’ are conducted every 14, 28, 84, 168, 336, and 728 days. ‘Phase inspections’ (A/B/C/D) focus on different components of the aircraft and are executed on a revolving basis every 200 flight hours. Some inspections entail the replacement of high-time components, but ALL inspections have ‘Corrosion Control’ on the to-do list. While the squadron is always vigilant for deficiencies in material condition, these inspections provide the structure required to ensure the entire aircraft receives a regular examination. This adaptive process is continually updated by community managers based on actual aircraft deficiencies noted fleet-wide.



The upper ‘65’ is the hull number (CVN-65) while the lower ‘65’ indicates there are 65 knots of wind blowing down the flight deck. (65 kts is equivalent to 75 mph...the wind velocity of a Category I hurricane!)



Long-period Atlantic swells break over the homeward-bound USS Enterprise.

On the low end, the 14-Day is essentially a ‘wash & lube’ procedure. *The heart and soul of a field-level FA-18 corrosion program is the 84-day inspection.* This is the most-frequent evolution in which many of the panels not associated with routine flight operations are opened up. When the panels are open, the contents of each equipment bay, compartment, and void are thoroughly inspected and treated along with the panels themselves. It is *possible* for the requisite 84-Day panels to be opened, *some* corrosion work completed, and then to return the jet to service in as few as two days. While a quick 84-Day conducted in this manner may be within the letter of published guidance, the detailed work needed comply with the spirit of an 84-day requires an entire week.

Their commitment to solid preventative maintenance is a prime example of how the Checkmates value long-term readiness over short-term gains in operational capacity.

FIP SEALS: A Checkmate success story. Form-in-place (FIP) sealants are used on the FA-18F under numerous panels to counter moisture intrusion, reduce wear, and even *decrease the aircraft’s radar cross section*. FIP seals were not used on some legacy aircraft, so many transitioning squadrons and personnel experienced a learning curve when it came to the application and maintenance of this specialized material.

FIP sealant is not cheap. With technicians using putty knives to spread FIP sealant dispensed from manually-squeezed tubes, a typical 84-Day inspection *used to* require as many 20 tubes of sealant. For an 11-plane squadron like VFA-211, this would translate to approximately 950 tubes being expended, costing greater than \$230,000 during the conduct of 48 major (84-Day and above) special inspections per year. *VFA-211 has witnessed a dramatic decrease in the use of FIP materials through the implementation of three initiatives:*



FIP SEALANT (dark gray)

- **TRAINING.** While special inspections are an all-hands effort, only personnel within the Corrosion Control work center apply FIP sealant, and the squadron has been diligent with sending them to a dedicated FIP sealant application course to ensure they have mastered the skill.
- **PROPER TOOLS.** The Checkmates were on the leading edge of utilizing a pneumatic application gun with a grooved applicator tip. When compared to a manual push-tube, the compressed-air gun delivers a steady flow of sealant. The Grooved Applicator Tip ensures that only the proper depth and width of FIP is dispensed. Besides being wasteful, an over-application of FIP sealant can result in an uneven and

therefore ineffective seal against moisture. Additionally, over-applied FIP sealant can pose a Foreign Object Damage hazard if excess FIP detaches within the airframe as a panel is secured.

- **WORKFLOW MANAGEMENT.** By scheduling a full week to perform an 84-Day, FIP sealant can be applied to the entire airplane on a specified shift and after ample surface preparation can be conducted and inspected. If the maintenance crew is trying to rush through a special inspection, panels can be reassembled piecemeal and there is a potential for partially-expended tubes of FIP sealant to be wasted.

IMPACT: A \$19,000 monthly expense has been reduced by 85% - a yearly cost-avoidance of almost \$200,000

Simple tools + training + leadership = huge savings



Left: ‘Grooved applicator tip’ for FIP seals. *Ensures the only proper amount is dispensed.*

Middle: Non-metallic scraper. *Removes old FIP sealant without marring the aircraft. The longevity and effectiveness of FIP sealant is directly impacted by the quality of surface preparation prior to application. Replaced metal putty knives which can damage the aircraft.*

Right: Nylon bore-bristle brush. *Used to treat corrosion in fastener holes. The Checkmates were also the first fleet squadron to widely use these surprisingly effective brushes. It is critical to treat fastener holes for corrosion before it becomes an issue.*

2.2.2 MAINTENANCE INSPECTION RESULTS

Approximately 90 days following a return from deployment, all carrier-based squadrons complete a Material Condition Inspection (MCI), the results of which can either validate a squadron’s long-term maintenance practices or highlight its deficiencies. During this inspection, two squadron aircraft are selected and completely stripped of all panels that can be safely removed by field-level maintenance. In addition to every nook and cranny of the aircraft, even the panels themselves receive close scrutiny. **VFA-211 earned an evaluation of ‘SATISFACTORY’** on this inspection, conducted by the staff of Commander, Strike Fighter Wing, U.S. Atlantic Fleet (CSFWL). While *satisfactory* doesn’t sound terribly impressive, VFA-211 was *the first squadron to earn a first-attempt MCI passing grade in over two years* and only the second squadron to do so after inspection standards were made dramatically more stringent by community managers in 2008. The Checkmates were hailed by the inspection team as *the* model squadron for hazmat, corrosion control, and manpower management. In recognition of VFA-211’s tremendous maintenance and operational excellence, the Checkmates were awarded the **2013 CSFWL “Golden Wrench”** and the squadron’s ‘best practices’ have subsequently been disseminated throughout the strike fighter community.

FINANCIAL EXCELLENCE – The squadron also excelled during a Procurement Performance Management inspection performed by the Navy Supply Systems Command. This inspection entailed a comprehensive review of critical program elements, transaction, and internal management controls. The squadron received zero discrepancies and was lauded by inspectors as possessing an ‘outstanding, model program’.



_____, senior enlisted member of the VFA-211 Maintenance Department and a recognized expert in the field of aircraft corrosion prevention and treatment.

2.2.3 MANAGING MAJOR MAINTENANCE

Starting in January 2013, the Checkmates began to cycle its 11 aircraft through a depot-level Planned Maintenance Interval (PMI) process. While MCI examines two aircraft in order to judge a squadron, PMI looks at *all* of them and delivers a more comprehensive review. *The persistent focus and extra efforts placed upon corrosion prevention during deployment became evident as the panels were removed at the depot facilities at NAS Jacksonville and NAS Oceana.* The squadron’s unprecedented cost-avoidance and efficiency trends are:

- Total required man-hours **12% lower** than fleet average.
- Planning and Estimating (P&E) hours **42% lower** than fleet average.
- VFA-211 jets have required **eight fewer** Engineering Investigations than average.
- P & E costs **75% below** the fleet average of \$32,838.
- PMI materials consumed **49% lower** than fleet average.
- 7R (repairable) materials consumed **94% lower** than fleet average.

(Note: A common 7R expense in PMI is replacing flight control surfaces that have been damaged by corrosion.)

A *conservative* estimate is that the Checkmates will attain at least \$782,000 of cost-avoidance throughout this scheduled maintenance evolution when compared to fleet-wide averages. Additionally, the commendable material condition of squadron aircraft afforded depot-level maintenance some much-needed ‘catch-up’ capacity to get back on production timelines that were impacted by the furloughs of 2013. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the effect a deliberate focus can have upon corrosion control is to compare the experiences of VFA-211 and a fellow Super Hornet squadron which operates the next 12 aircraft that rolled off the assembly line. These aircraft have experienced exactly the same highoperational tempo and environmental conditions, yet the tale coming out of PMI is vastly different. In terms of Requests for Engineering Investigation (REIs), the Checkmates required eight less REIs than fleet average while the other squadron, employing a more conventional corrosion control program, required 32 more REIs than average in order to return their jets to a flyable condition. The average PMI days-in-work bears a similar correlation of 22 vs. 50 days. *This is a marked difference considering these jets have spent their entire service lives within ½ mile of each other.*

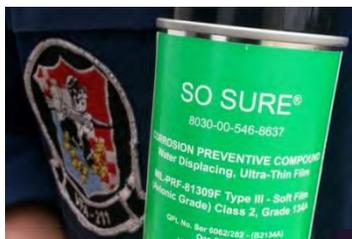
2.2.4 IMRL / TOOLS

The Checkmate Tool Room plays an important role in the squadron’s corrosion control effort by ensuring the proper materials are on-hand, properly organized, and easily accessible to maintenance technicians. Additionally, VFA-211’s inventory of Individual Material Readiness List (IMRL) support equipment consists of 853 mission critical test sets valued at \$11.8 million. In order to be **good stewards of assigned equipment** and to maintain a superior level of readiness, a quarterly 100 percent inventory was conducted to verify the condition of IMRL assets. Based on these comprehensive inventories, VFA-211 developed and refined SOPs to streamline custody transfers and improve accountability. Furthermore, in 2013 the command processed over 600 Tool Control Manual changes valued at \$125,000 with zero discrepancies.



Above- A locally-produced pouch containing corrosion-control essentials. This kit also ensures that the proper accountability of tools is maintained so

While the squadron has won accolades for its diligence with *scheduled* maintenance, it would be an omission to overlook their **energetic approach to *unscheduled* maintenance**. Or, in other words, ‘when something breaks’. An example of this is how the squadron leaned heavily upon the assistance of Technical Representatives to obtain the manufacturing diagrams and schematics when faced with complex discrepancies. This forward-leaning mindset enabled the squadron to pinpoint exact failures in minimal time, expedite parts shipment and develop new maintenance procedures to reduce the gaps in existing technical publications. *It is with regret that the squadron notes that some of ‘tech rep’ assistance is scheduled to terminate in 2014.*



LEFT- Liberal use of Corrosion Preventive Compound (CPC) is another vital aspect of a successful corrosion control program. It is dispensed via an aerosol can and is a close relative of the familiar civilian product WD-40*. Properly applied, a thin coating of CPC will prevent water from contacting the protected material. When the USS Enterprise ran low of the preferred low-viscosity CPC on deployment, VFA-211 alone flexed to using the thicker ‘Type 1’ CPC which required much greater diligence in application to ensure proper coverage. **RESULT** – The squadron discovered minimal corrosion in these areas during subsequent inspections to include MCI and PMI.
*Of note, the ‘WD’ in WD-40 stands for Water Displacing.

As an **independent auditor** of the Maintenance Department, the VFA-211 Quality Assurance (QA) division is charged with enforcing the most rigid standards possible by carefully reviewing each and every aspect of squadron practices. Their proactive involvement with the Naval Aviation Maintenance Discrepancy Reporting Program (NAMDRP) enhanced fleet-wide safety and productivity as well as assisted in reducing material failures of aircraft, systems, and ordnance.

Section 2.3 - Innovative Management

2.3.1 PROCESS IMPROVEMENT / F414 VARIABLE ENGINE NOZZLES

This section highlights another area where the squadron is at the forefront of preventative maintenance in the FA-18 community. **Background:** The Variable Exhaust Nozzle (VEN) is a key component of the General Electric F414 engine. The purpose of the VEN is to adjust the diameter of the exhaust nozzle in order to

maximize both performance and efficiency. The VEN segments - commonly referred to as 'turkey feathers' - are actuated by a ring similar to a metal hula hoop with rollers that surrounds the engine. As this ring is driven forward and aft by three pistons, it forces the VEN to open and close.



Variable Exhaust Nozzles – the arrow points to one of the pistons that drive the (hidden)

The beginning of *this* success story can also be traced to the unmatched

emphasis the squadron places upon corrosion control. While servicing the VENs during 200-hour phase inspections, the VFA-211 PowerPlants work center routinely observed troublesome wear and corrosion. Various components and sometimes the entire engine were prematurely replaced due to severe corrosion forming on the VEN rollers.

As a result of these findings, the maintenance department proactively increased the frequency of these inspections to every 84 days *independent of flight hours*. The impact of this measure ensures a thorough corrosion inspection is completed on a predictable basis; ultimately ensuring adequate lubrication of moving hardware such as VEN Rollers, VEN Flaps and Seal Supports.

While it is possible that a squadron conducting long-duration missions over Afghanistan may see a jet fly through a 200-hour phase inspection cycle in less than an 84-day special inspection period, this is clearly the exception. On the other hand, it is more likely for a particular aircraft to go many months without the VEN rollers receiving corrosion treatment. This could be due to the aircraft being in a long-term 'down' status or the entire squadron executing a reduced flight-hour funding profile. The benefit of this procedural deviation was vividly illustrated by VFA-211's aircraft 200. While in a non-flying status for over 300 days, most of which while awaiting an engineering disposition, the engines received a 300% increase in VEN corrosion treatments in comparison to the standard usage-based practices.



Checkmate PowerPlants installing an engine. Hangar bay, USS Enterprise,

*While going beyond the procedures specified by technical publications has added slightly to the time it takes the squadron to complete an 84-Day, the ensuing reduction in replacement parts, man hours, and systems discrepancies has been substantial. Since these local procedures were instituted, the squadron has not experienced a single VEN failure, a leading cause of Unscheduled Engine Removals (UER). The F414 Engine Fleet Support Team (FST) noted this while investigating the reasons behind VFA-211 consistently posting fleet-leading engine readiness and efficiency numbers. Specifically, VFA-211 had a **10% lower UER rate than any other Super Hornet squadron** in the two calendar years that encompass FY13. If discounting a case where VFA-*

211 was directed to transfer a known-good engine to a higher priority squadron in exchange for a known-bad one, the squadron's advantage in UER rates is closer to 13% less than the nearest comparable squadron. **This translates into VFA-211 being responsible for three fewer engine turn-ins with a per-unit minimum replacement cost of \$667,507.** Since the squadron is also responsible for the cost of any replacement parts required to return the engine to a Ready For Issue (RFI) status, the savings realized by VFA-211 are likely in excess of \$2.5M.

While Unscheduled Engine Removal (UER) rates can vary depending on where squadrons are located, how much flying they are doing, and what type of missions are being performed, this feat has been chiefly attributed by FST personnel to the Checkmates' unique and relentless corrosion control efforts. Beyond a reduction of engine turn-ins, the lack of VEN failures experienced by VFA-211 is further significant in that it:

1. Reduces the number of non-defective parts that are replaced for troubleshooting.
Some parts that are commonly changed while troubleshooting a VEN are:
 - a. VEN Pump (\$56,640)
 - b. VEN EHSV (\$6,848)
 - c. FADEC (\$26,548)
2. Has 100% eliminated squadron incidents of VEN-related 'Things Falling Off Aircraft' (TFOA)
3. Has contributed to the Checkmates ability to maximize limited airframe ability during PMI.

Community managers have decided that the push the changes that the Checkmates have made fleet-wide, with **a potential fleet-wide yearly cost-avoidance of over \$50 million and greater than 17,000 man hours.**

2.3.2 FOCUSED ON SAFETY



performs a video borescope examination of internal engine components. The red crescent is an off-the-shelf swimming pool noodle' that has been placed over the edges of engine bay doors during maintenance operations in the crowded hangar bay. Intended to protect both the aircraft and personnel, this is another example of the ingenuity resident within Checkmate Maintenance.

During FY13, the squadron surpassed **45,000 hours and 11 years of mishap-free flight operations**. A critical component to this impressive record is the manner in which maintenance empowered the Quality Assurance division to analyze all aspects of carrier and shore-based operations. With a solid understanding of the inherent hazards, the squadron developed and implemented numerous controls to reduce its risk exposure. The squadron's safety culture is emphasized both on and off duty. Tippy Taxi, SafeRide, and the motorcycle safety program are prime examples of 'Checkmates taking care of Checkmates'. The excellence of the squadron's Safety program was formally recognized through its selection by Commander, Naval Air Forces, US Atlantic Fleet to receive the CY 2012 CNO Safety 'S' award.

2.3.3 TRAINING / BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

The Checkmates are committed to long-term readiness and the training that is required to attain it. In addition to schools external to the command, a great deal of deliberate in-house training is conducted beyond the normal 'OJT' that occurs as maintenance actions are performed by a mix of experienced and junior personnel. Once a week the squadron takes a pause from flight operations to conduct structured Maintenance Training. While this often increases the difficulty with which operational milestones are achieved, command leadership has deemed it the #1 priority around which the weekly flight schedule is built.

Additionally during 2013, with over 75 percent of eligible squadron personnel having earned their designation as an Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist (EAWS), **the Checkmates were honored to receive the Chief of Naval Operations 'EAWS pennant'**. To qualify as an Aviation Warfare Specialist, a candidate must demonstrate the specific professional skills, knowledge, and military experience that are required for service in a Naval aviation unit. Qualification consists of two Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS). The first is the Common Core which consists of concepts, policies, and tasks that are common throughout Naval aviation. The second is an FA-18 specific PQS which consists of numerous training tasks designed to ensure a broad knowledge of the Super Hornet and increases the cross-links between work centers.

Section 2.4 - Personal Quality of Life Programs

2.4.1 SELF-HELP PROGRAMS

The Sailors of VFA-211 are its most important asset, and the squadron sustains a positive command climate by promoting their personal and professional development. The **Sponsorship Program** strives to get new command members rapidly integrated to the team, and **Career Development Boards** provide VFA-211 Sailors with both personal and professional goals as well as a roadmap to achieve them. Numerous **education opportunities** are also actively promoted in addition to officer accession programs.



Checkmate Sailors were afforded the opportunities for continued education through the Program for Afloat College Education, the Tuition Assistance program, the Navy College, and through the US Military Apprenticeship Program,

2.4.2 PERSONNEL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

The command possesses a robust **Sailor recognition program** to acknowledge outstanding performers both by functional area as well as pay grade. Of particular note, VFA-211's Sailor of the Year for 2012 and newest Chief Petty Officer, [REDACTED], was further selected as the Sea Sailor of the Year by CSFWL. He was the also recipient

of the 2013 Douglas L. Scott Maintainer of the Year Award, presented by Project Management Area 202 of the Naval Air Systems Command, which recognizes the Navy's most outstanding technician and leader in the field of life-support and egress systems. Additionally, 23 Checkmates were selected as the USS Enterprise Sailor of the Day while on deployment. Finally, VFA-211 personnel were recognized by CVW-1 and CSG-12 for their outstanding contributions to the success of deployment.

2.4.3 CHECKMATES GIVING BACK

VFA-211 Sailors are an **active part of their Hampton Roads community** supporting:

ALLFORKIDS
 American Red Cross
 Annual Rubber Duck Race
 Boy Scouts of America
 Central Baptist Church Soup Kitchen
 Chesapeake Arboretum
 Chesapeake Jubilee
 Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters
 CHKD Run/Walk for the Kids
 Clean the Bay Day

Combined Federal Campaign
 Denim Day Walk
 Fisher House
 Food Bank of Southeastern Virginia
 Girl Scouts of America
 Haven House Emergency Shelter
 Hoffer Creek Wildlife Foundation
 Kettle Krush 5K
 Munden Point Children's Fishing Clinic
 Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society

Navy Junior ROTC
 New Life Christian Center Storehouse
 Northside Middle School
 Run for the Dream
 Salvation Army
 Spartika Run for Fallen Heroes
 Step Up for Down Syndrome
 Toys for Tots
 VA Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad (EMT)
 Virginia Zoo



2.4.4 PUBLIC OUTREACH

Over 20 **tours of squadron aircraft and facilities** were provided to various youth, civic, and veteran organizations. The squadron also provided **flyover support** for the 2012 Army-Navy football game, the USS Enterprise inactivation, and two 'missing man' formations executed over Arlington National Cemetery.

2.4.5 HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

Checkmate Sailors were frequent participants in **humanitarian and international outreach programs** organized by the USS Enterprise Religious Services Department while on deployment. These events occurred every time the carrier pulled into a foreign port, and projects typically included material and maintenance support for churches, schools, and orphanages.

2.4.6 FAMILY SUPPORT

Starting with the 'command triad' VFA-211 is dedicated to supporting its Navy family. The command **Ombudsman** provides a direct link between the Commanding Officer, families, and support resources such as the Fleet and Family Support Center as well as Military OneSource. The **Family Readiness Group (FRG)** provides assistance and camaraderie for families when the squadron is deployed. Both the Ombudsman and the FRG are critical to the dissemination of rapid and accurate information to squadron families. Not to be overlooked is the support provided to the command's '**Single Sailors**'. In advance of the squadron's return from deployment, the FRG volunteered their time and money to spruce up the barracks rooms that junior Checkmates would reside in upon return to NAS Oceana. In addition to general cleanliness, the members returned to find clean beds and 'goody bags' with some essentials. The command has also stood up a chapter of the **Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions** to promote responsible activities while off-duty. Additionally, a home-style Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings is prepared at the hangar by the officers and chief petty officers for all hands. This 'touch of home' is particularly valued by young Sailors who may be spending their first holiday season away from their families. By focusing on its people and their families, the command affords a 'peace of mind' to its Sailors by building confidence that they and their families will be cared for in times of personal crisis. This was demonstrated on numerous occasions while deployed when the squadron facilitated Sailors' return home when their presence was needed to provide care for their families during personal emergencies.

The Checkmates are:

Combat Proven Aviators

Flying **SUPERBLY MAINTAINED** strike fighters
supported by

Exceptional Field-Level Technicians

MOTIVATED and **TALENTED**
JUSTIFIABLY PROUD of their operational accomplishments
and their hard-earned reputation as

Preventative Maintenance Experts

Using fewer resources while taking world-class care of squadron aircraft
FORMALLY RECOGNIZED by Material Condition Inspection results
CONSISTENTLY REINFORCED by depot-level maintenance feedback
COMMUNITY LEADING maintenance and material managers

By every measure - both ashore and afloat - Fiscal Year 2013 was a resounding success that was only made possible through the unsurpassed professionalism of the Checkmate Maintenance team.



The Fighting Checkmates

Section 3 - PROPOSED CITATION

For meritorious service from October 2012 to September 2013. Demonstrating sustained superior leadership, planning, and execution, The Fighting Checkmates of Strike Fighter Squadron 211 attained unmatched levels of aircraft material readiness while meeting or exceeding every operational standard both on deployment and ashore. Their tireless efforts resulted in unprecedented results during depot-level maintenance and potentially extended the service life of 11 valuable aircraft. Additionally, their proactive maintenance efforts in the area of corrosion control initiated process improvements that will result in over \$50 million in annual cost-avoidance across Naval Aviation. By their truly distinctive achievements, unrelenting perseverance, and unfailing devotion to duty, the personnel of Strike Fighter Squadron TWO ONE ONE reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.





knows how to spot a winner!

