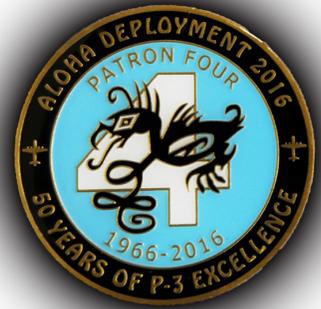




# PATROL SQUADRON FOUR SKINNY DRAGONS DEPLOYMENT NEWSLETTER 2016



CDR CHRIS SMITH

COMMANDING OFFICER



CMDCM CARROL-GILLIS  
COMMAND MASTER CHIEF



CDR BRYAN HAGER

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

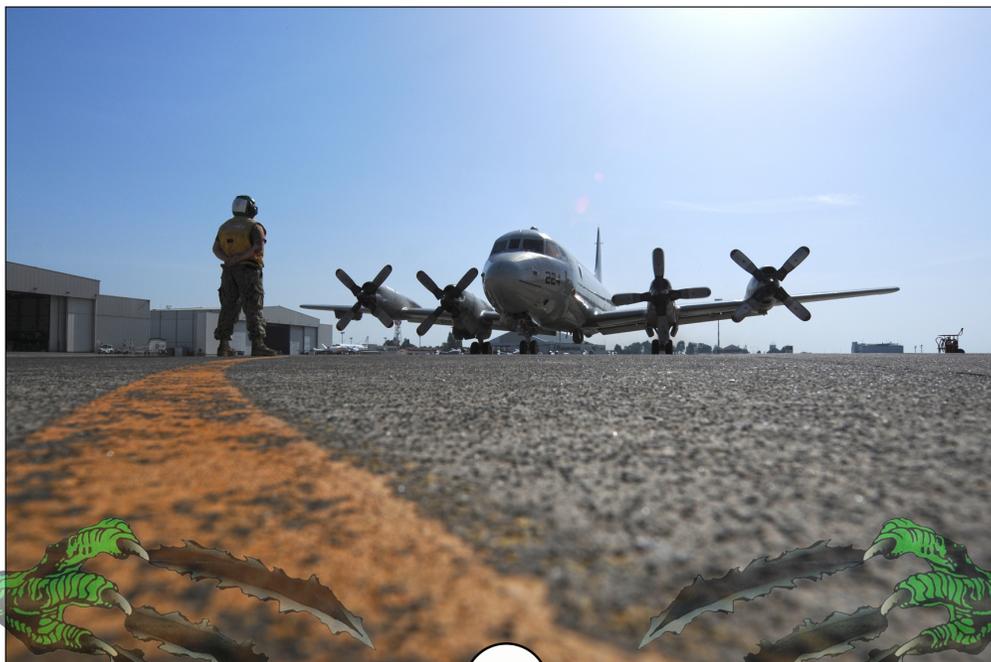
## On-station Vol.2 -- May 2016

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# SKIPPERS CORNER



Hola Skinny Dragons and Families,

I am writing to you this month having just finished an outstanding visit with our Sailors on detachment in El Salvador. LCDR John Houston and Senior Chief Travis Walton are expertly leading a fantastic team. The whole team is doing amazing work there and they have had excellent results on their missions. In addition to the work they are doing from the air and maintaining our aircraft, they have also completed multiple trips out into the local community to volunteer their off-duty time with local charities. Our detachment works from the Cooperative Security Location, Comalapa and their Commanding Officer had very high praise for the efforts of our Skinny Dragons there. Thank you for hosting the CMC and me and keep up the great work!

While in El Salvador and in Sigonella, I had the opportunity to conduct CO's Calls with all the Sailors in those locations. You have made it very clear to me that you are concerned about how we will execute our return to Whidbey Island and Kaneohe Bay. I share your concerns and I understand your concerns. LCDR DiPaolo is leading our efforts in this area.

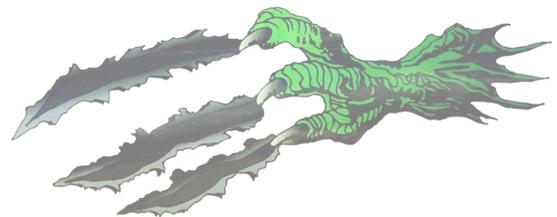
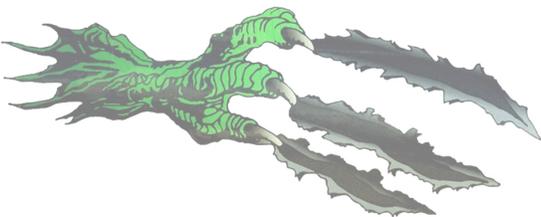
He and our Department Heads and the Department LCPOs will be working tirelessly to make sure we get this right and I am confident that we will. They will develop a plan to capture the major muscle movements such as the transfer of our aircraft, tools and IMRL and the movement of personnel from our three deployment sites back to either Whidbey Island or Kaneohe Bay. This plan will also explain post deployment leave dates and how Sailors will detach from VP-4 from Kaneohe Bay. This is a very complicated situation with many moving parts.

With that said, each Sailor and family must make their own preparations as well. I know that many of you are awaiting PCS orders. If you already have your orders or once your orders are released, please begin the process of planning your move immediately. Procrastination in this area could result in significant financial burdens. Until we have exact dates for turnover with the next squadrons, it is safe to plan for a return from deployment no later than September 15th. As a reminder, the effective date of our Permanent Duty Station Change is October 1st. On that date, Sailors who are still attached to VP-4 will start receiving entitlements associated with a permanent duty station of NAS Whidbey Island. There is no COLA for Whidbey Island and BAH is about half of what we are receiving in Hawaii.

While I recognize this return from deployment is weighing heavily on your thoughts, I also want to remind you that we must not let this distract our focus from the mission at hand. At the CO's Calls, I told you that our mission is to dominate from the air and decisively win in combat. That is why our squadron exists and we must continue to get that right even while we prepare for this very complicated return home.

The month of May has been a great month for the entire squadron across all our detachments sites. At the Change of Command, I borrowed a line from an old VP squadron, VP-44. I told you that, "Its not the platform, its the people". It was true in 1991 for VP-44 and it is true today for VP-4. Our success is 100% due to the outstanding Sailors that make up our squadron. Because of you, we dominate from the air every time we fly and we are ready today to decisively win in combat.

Adios and Buenos Dias,  
Skipper



# DJIBOUTI DIRECT

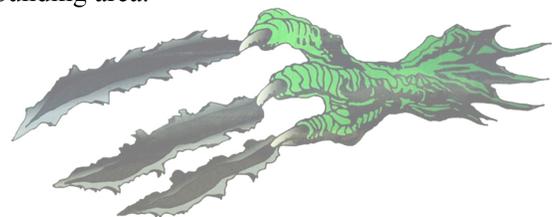
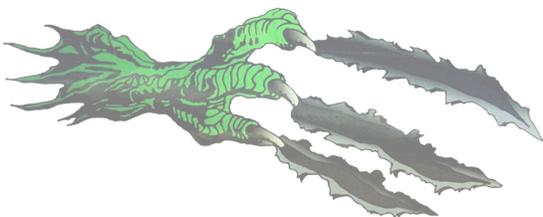
Aloha from Djibouti!!!

Deployment life in Djibouti continues into month two, and it is hotter than ever. The rainy season is all but over, and with an average rainfall of 3 inches, you can imagine how short it lasts. Over the past month, our team of aircrew and maintainers has been diligent and committed in their work. Given the extremely high temperatures, safety has been a primary concern for all in Djibouti, and the individuals here make sure to look after each other while they work tirelessly in the intense desert heat. Once their work is complete, these Desert Dragons keep busy in their spare time by playing sports, working out, and getting involved in camp organizations. Over the month, many have been busy volunteering with Friends of Africa, a group of Sailors who take it upon themselves to do cleanup projects around the camp. International friendships have also been strengthened by our presence here as VP-4 hosted members of the Japanese Navy. Our Sailors shared their love and knowledge of the P-3C, while acting as dignitaries to our Japanese allies. Also over the past month, Commander Hager, the new Skinny Dragon Executive Officer, and Command Master Chief Carroll-Gillis visited Djibouti in order to give special recognition to the maintenance professionals and aircrew of VP-4 Djibouti Detachment. Their visit was an excellent opportunity for our warriors to demonstrate the effectiveness, professionalism, and leadership it takes to complete our mission each and every day.

# EL SALVADOR DIRECT

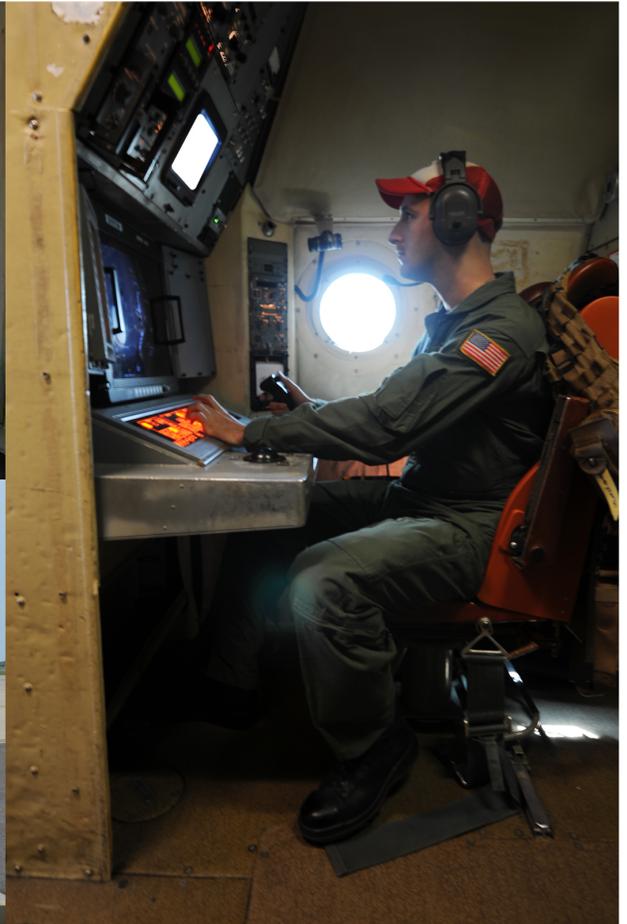


Another month down in El Salvador and the detachment is becoming increasingly effective at its mission. To date, the Skinny Dragons have been credited with the seizure of nearly \$250 million in drugs, making a sizable dent in the efforts of drug traffickers in the region. The aircrews of VP-4 have demonstrated their excellence in maritime patrol operations and have distinguished themselves as a valuable asset in both the Eastern Pacific and Western Caribbean. Aside from the unique missions, this month has also been filled with unique opportunities at CSL Comalapa and El Salvador. The U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador, Ms. Jean Elizabeth Manes, toured the compound and expressed great interest in our missions. She met with Senior Chief Walton and senior aircrew personnel to discuss our role in the country and get a better idea of how maritime patrol aircraft fit into the big picture of drug interdiction operations. April also provided a unique opportunity for Sailors to get off of the compound and explore the country. Skinny Dragons traveled north to La Libertad, El Salvador to assist Iglesia Gran Comision, a non-profit organization that assists the local youth in raising money for college tuition, to help upgrade their facilities. The Skinny Dragons were put to work clearing out parking lots, painting fences and ceilings, and weeding out flowerbeds. Ultimately the work of VP-4 Sailors accomplished over the course of the visit was graciously received and enabled the organization to focus their resources on reaching out more to the local population. It also provided a welcome opportunity for the aircrew and maintenance professionals involved to see another part of the country. As the detachment moves into its third month in El Salvador, everyone is looking forward to more exciting missions and opportunities to explore the surrounding area.



# SKINNY DRAGON THANGS





# KEFLAVIK ICELAND



# SKINNY DRAGON SOFTBALL

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