

VPB-206

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED SIX (VP-206) on 15 November 1942.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED SIX (VPB-206) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 4 June 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

15 Nov 1942: VP-206 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., under the operational control of FAW-5 as a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3C Mariner. On 21 January 1943 the squadron was transferred to NAS Charleston, S.C., for advanced training in bombing, gunnery, navigation and ASW. The squadron then operated with its full complement of PBM-3C aircraft equipped with the ASV Mark II radar.

1 Apr 1943: VP-206 was transferred to NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., under the operational control of FAW-3. The squadron aircraft were loaded with as much of the squadron gear and personnel as possible. The remainder of the equipment, supplies and personnel were shipped aboard *Rockaway* (AVP 29), arriving on 8 April. Duties consisted of antishipping patrols, convoy coverage sweeps and shipping barrier patrols. On 1 June detachments were established at Salinas, Ecuador and Seymour Islands, Galapagos.

Jul-Aug 1943: The Galapagos detachment was relieved, and a detachment was sent to NAF Portland Bight, Jamaica, B.W.I.

7 Sep 1943: A detachment was sent to Corinto, Nicaragua. The rest of the squadron joined the detachment at Corinto on 5 February 1944.

24 Apr 1944: VP-206 was relieved at Corinto, Nicaragua, for return to Key West, Fla., coming under the operational control of FAW-5. Upon arrival, the squadron began an intensive ASW refresher course. The squadron's PBM-3C aircraft were retrofitted to the S or stripped, designation—removing armor plate, gun turrets and all extraneous gear to lighten the Mariners and increase range and speed.

7 May 1944: The squadron received orders to transfer to Quonset Point, R.I., under the operational control of FAW-9. VP-206 commenced convoy coverage and patrol sweeps over the Atlantic convoy approaches to the northeastern U.S. Five PB-5 Catalinas were added to the squadron's complement of aircraft during its stay at Quonset Point.

15 Jan 1945: VPB-206 was transferred to NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C., under the operational control of FAW-5. The Catalina aircraft were turned in before the transfer went into effect.

22 May 1945: After 30 months of operation without the loss of single aircraft, fate caught up with VPB-206. A severe hurricane struck North Carolina before any of the squadron aircraft could be flown out. Every one of the 12 aircraft at NAAS Elizabeth City were damaged, all but one severely, putting the squadron temporarily out of commission.

4 Jun 1945: VPB-206 was disestablished at NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	15 Nov 1942
NAS Charleston, S.C.	21 Jan 1943
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	1 Apr 1943
NAS Key West, Fla.	24 Apr 1944
NAS Quonset Point, R.I.	7 May 1944
NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C.	15 Jan 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Patrick Henry	15 Nov 1942
LT Harry E. Cook, Jr.	23 Jun 1943
LCDR Elwood N. Chase II	28 Oct 1943
LCDR William G. Logan, Jr.	31 May 1944

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3	Nov 1942
PBM-3C	Jan 1943
PBY-5	Jul 1943 (temporary)
PBM-3S	Apr 1944

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
1 Apr 1943	5 Feb 1944	FAW-3	Coco Solo <i>Rockaway</i> (AVP 29)	PBM-3C	Carib
5 Feb 1944	24 Apr 1944	FAW-3	Corinto	PBM-3C	Carib

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		15 Nov 1942
FAW-3		1 Apr 1943
FAW-5		24 Apr 1944
FAW-9		7 May 1944
FAW-5		15 Jan 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

A beaching crew prepared to haul a PBM-3S out of the water, circa 1944-1945, 80-G-K-14892.



VPB-207

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED SEVEN (VP-207) on 1 December 1942.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED SEVEN (VPB-207) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 26 June 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's insignia was approved by CNO on 16 December 1943, while it was still designated VP-207. The design featured an alligator holding a flaming bomb. No examples of the design exist in the records. Colors are unknown.

Nickname: None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Dec 1942: VP-207 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., as a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3C Mariner under the operational control of FAW-5. Training and aircraft familiarization was conducted through mid-January 1943.

22 Jan–Feb 1943: VP-207 was transferred to NS San Juan, P.R., under the operational control of FAW-11. After three weeks the squadron was transferred to NAAF Salinas, Ecuador. A detachment was sent to NAAF Galapagos, Seymour Island, Ecuador, arriving on 11 February 1943. The squadron flew patrol between Salinas, the Galapagos Islands and Corinto, Nicaragua. During the first month at Salinas, three crews and aircraft were on detached duty to NAS Jamaica, B.W.I., to assist in ASW "hot spot" searches.

13 May 1943: Lieutenant (jg) William Beyer and crew made a forced landing at sea two miles from San Juan, P.R. The aircraft sank, but no crewmen were injured.

15 Mar 1944: Crew P-42 with PPC Lieutenant Richard Boehme spotted a U-boat on the surface at 2319 hours and began circling for a favorable position preparatory to a bombing run. AA fire from the submarine damaged the aircraft before an attack could be made and wounded Ensign Douglas K. Kelsey. The aircraft returned safely to base. On 17 March what was suspected to be the same submarine was attacked at 0227 hours by crew P-50, flown by Lieutenant (jg) Bowen S. Larkins, with negative results. A third crew, P-44, spotted the same submarine on the same night at 0347 hours, but made no bombing run or exchange of gunfire. The pilot was later admonished by Commander Panama Sea Frontier for failure to engage the enemy.

16 Apr 1944: Lieutenant Wilson Van Alst, Jr., and crew made a forced night landing at sea after losing the port engine while on convoy escort duty. The aircraft was safely ditched 200 miles northeast of NAS Coco Solo, C.Z. The Mariner quickly sank, but all of the crew exited the aircraft without injury, spending 18 hours in life rafts before rescue the next day.

17 May 1944: VP-207 was relieved for return to NAS Key West, Fla. The squadron engaged in ASW training through 6 June 1944.

6 Jun 1944: Upon completion of the advanced ASW training syllabus, the squadron was transferred to NAS Bermuda, operating under the operational control of FAW-9, Bermuda Air Group. Duties consisted of training flights and convoy patrols.

20 Aug 1944: Lieutenant (jg) Stanley C. Smith and seven crewmen were killed in a crash approximately 25 miles north of Bermuda while on an ASW practice bombing hop. Cause of the crash was unknown.

16–26 Jun 1945: VPB-207 received orders to disestablish. The squadron assets were turned over to HEDRON-9 at NAS Bermuda, and the personnel boarded *Matagorda* (AVP 22) for return to NAS Norfolk, Va. On 26 June 1945 the squadron was disestablished.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	1 Dec 1942
NS San Juan, P.R.	22 Jan 1943
NAAF Salinas, Ecuador	14 Feb 1943
NAS Key West, Fla.	17 May 1944
NAS Bermuda, B.W.I.	6 Jun 1944
NAS Norfolk, Va.	16 Jun 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR F. G. Raysbrook	1 Dec 1942
LCDR Charles M. Brower	2 Aug 1943
LCDR R. G. Touart	6 Aug 1943
LCDR E. H. Seiler, Jr.	28 July 1944
LCDR Kenneth E. Wright	13 Jan 1945

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3C	Jan 1943
PBM-3S	Aug 1943

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
22 Jan 1943	11 Feb 1943	FAW-11	San Juan	PBM-3C	Carib
11 Feb 1943	17 May 1944	FAW-11	Salinas	PBM-3C/3S	Pac
6 Jun 1944	16 Jun 1945	FAW-9	Bermuda	PBM-3S	Lant

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		1 Dec 1942
FAW-11		28 Jan 1943
FAW-3 & 6th U.S. Army Bomber Command		20 Jun 1943
FAW-5		17 May 1944
FAW-9		6 Jun 1944

Wing Assignments—Continued

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		Jun 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

VPB-209

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED NINE (VP-209) on 1 January 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED NINE (VPB-209) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 20 June 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's insignia was approved by CNO on 17 December 1943, while still designated VP-209. The central figure in the design was the comic character



The squadron's cartoon insignia.

Bugs Bunny. The men of the squadron had chosen this cartoon personality because they felt his philosophy "... suited the philosophy of the squadron. That is to say, they are a happy-go-lucky, carefree bunch of fun-loving young fliers who can become serious, businesslike implementers of war to bring swift, accurate death from the sky when the occasion arrives ... [the] rabbit flying down on a swift eagle releasing his depth charges portrays both sides of the character of the pilots of this squadron." Colors: bottom of circle, blue; eagle, blue with darker blue outlines; eagle head and wing tips, white; beak and claws, yellow; top of circle, red; rabbit, gray; rabbit hat, white; bombs, gray; star on eagle's head, white with blue outline.

Nickname: none on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Jan–Aug 1943: VP-209 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., as a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3C Mariner under the operational control of FAW-5. Training and aircraft familiarization continued through mid-July 1943, when the squadron was relocated to NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., for shakedown training under Transitional Training Squadron Atlantic. On 9 August the squadron was transferred to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., training in advanced antisubmarine warfare tactics by Air Antisubmarine Development Detachment Atlantic.

23 Aug 1943: VP-209 was returned to Breezy Point, NAS Norfolk, Va., for commencement of convoy coverage patrols off the East Coast of the U.S. There were no enemy contacts during this period.

30 Dec 1943: The squadron complement of aircraft was increased from 12 to 15 PBM-3S aircraft.

2 Feb 1944: VP-209 was transferred to NAAF Salinas, Ecuador, where security patrols were flown in the Pacific sector of the Panama Sea Frontier. Three daily patrols were flown between Salinas, and Galapagos Islands, Ecuador and Corinto, Nicaragua.

14 Jul 1944: Lieutenant (jg) Robert C. Carlson and his crew made a forced landing at sea during a night mission due to fuel system failure. The aircraft was a total loss, but no serious injuries to the crew resulted from the ditching.

16 Jul 1944: Lieutenant Robert D. Spannuth and his crew crashed at sea during a night mission while investigating a possible surface target with their searchlight. The aircraft and crew were lost.

Oct 1944: VPB-209 was reduced from 12 to 9 aircraft, with three crews and aircraft being transferred to VPB-99.

28 Feb 1945: The squadron administrative headquarters were transferred from NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., to the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, with tender support provided by *Albemarle* (AV 5). During the deployment the squadron anchored in Tagus Cove, Isabella Island, Galapagos Islands. The headquarters remained at this site until 30 May 1945. There were no enemy contacts during this period.

31 May 1945: Orders were received to turn all of the squadron's aircraft to HEDRON-3 at NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., and proceed aboard *Sangamon* (CVE 26) to NAS Norfolk, Va., for disestablishment.

20 Jun 1945: VPB-209 was disestablished at NAS Norfolk, Va.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	1 Jan 1943
NAAS Harvey Point, N.C.	15 Jul 1943
NAS Quonset Point, R.I.	9 Aug 1943
NAS Norfolk, Va.	23 Aug 1943
NAAF Salinas, Ecuador	2 Feb 1944
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	Oct 1944
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador	28 Feb 1945
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	31 May 1945
NAS Norfolk, Va.	Jun 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR William E. Shafer	1 Jan 1943
CDR Raymond S. Thompson, Jr.	5 Apr 1944
LCDR Harold P. Gerdon	9 Oct 1944

Aircraft Assignment

	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
	PBM-3C	Feb 1943
	PBM-3S	Sep 1943

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
2 Feb 1944	28 Feb 1945	FAW-3	Salinas	PBM-3S	Pac
28 Feb 1945	30 May 1945	FAW-3	Galapagos Albemarle (AV 5)	PBM-3S	Pac

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		1 Jan 1943
FAW-9		1 Sep 1943
FAW-3		22 Jan 1944
FAW-5		Jun 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

VPB-210

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED TEN (VP-210) on 15 January 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED TEN (VPB-210) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 10 July 1945.

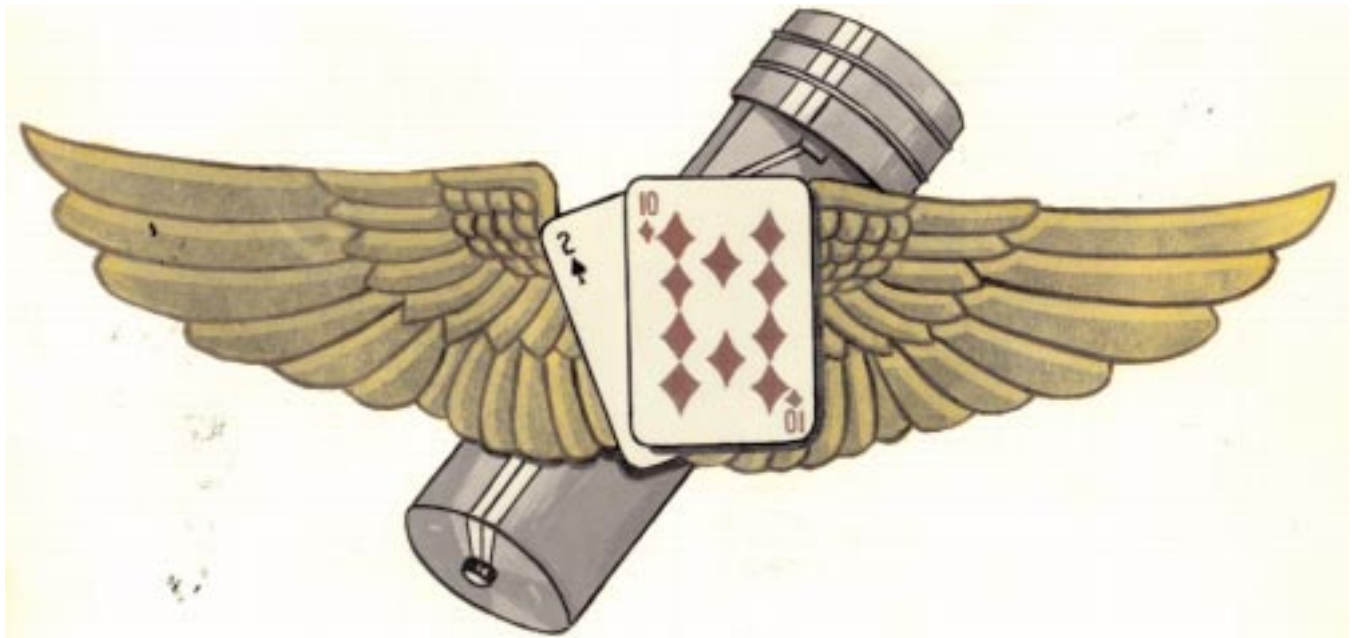
Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The insignia for VP/VPB-210 was approved by CNO on 18 August 1944. The design was drawn up after the squadron had been in service for a year with 17 of its members killed in action. The symbolism was "... wings of the naval aviators to provide a dignified

Chronology of Significant Events

15 Jan 1943: VP-210 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., as a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3C Mariner under the operational control of FAW-5. Ground training for the squadron continued through April, with aircraft familiarization training given with crews alternating at Banana River, Fla. Ground and flight training was completed in August, and the squadron was transferred to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., on 9 August for advanced antisubmarine training. Training was completed with shakedown at NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., from 25 August through 10 September 1943.

11 Aug 1943: The first section of six VP-210 aircraft was transferred to NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Duties consisted of convoy coverage, antisubmarine sweeps and rescue missions. The squadron's first casualties occurred on the 18th, when Lieutenant (jg) Joseph P.



The squadron's insignia.

symbolic background. . . . Crossed behind the wings is the dreaded flatnose bomb, with which the anti-submarine patrols deliver their deadly blows. The two cards, in addition to representing the squadron numbers, are the best possible hand that can be held playing Casino. The black of the deuce of spades represents the night, in which most of our squadron operations have been carried out, and the red of the ten of diamonds represent the blood of our squadron members who have died for their country." Colors: bomb, gray with black outlines; wings, gold; two of spades, black and white; ten of diamonds, red and white.

Nickname: None on record.

Willetts and his crew crashed while training with a friendly submarine 12 miles south of Montauk Point, Long Island. All hands were lost.

12 Oct 1943: Lieutenant (jg) Daniel T. Felix, Jr., and the crew of P-9 made a radar contact at night with a surface target during coverage of the Guantanamo-Trinidad convoy. The U-boat submerged after flares were dropped, but reappeared a second time. Lieutenant Felix and his crew were opposed by intense AA fire from the submarine, which submerged again before a bombing attack could be made.

Oct-Dec 1943: A three-aircraft detachment of USAAF 23d Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy) was attached to VP-210 for ASW operations in the Caribbean.

This detachment flew the B-25 Mitchell medium bomber equipped with 75-mm cannon. The PBM aircraft of VP-210 were to locate the U-boats and illuminate them with flares for the B-25s. Unfortunately, no enemy contacts developed to test the effectiveness of this unique tactic.

1 Nov 1943: A five-aircraft detachment was based at Great Exuma, B.W.I., remaining until relieved by VP-32 in December. The detachment relieved VP-32 again from 30 June through 23 August 1944.

26 May 1944: Lieutenant J. F. Slavic and his crew made a forced landing during patrol due to a loose engine cowling. After landing safely and securing the cowl, the aircraft lost one engine during the takeoff. In the subsequent crash, the crew safely exited the sinking aircraft. All hands were rescued after 11 hours.

1 Jul 1944: Lieutenant Francis Gerli collided with the crash boat during takeoff at Great Exuma, B.W.I., resulting in an explosion which destroyed the boat and the aircraft. Six personnel in the aircraft were killed in the accident, with five more seriously injured.

4 Oct 1944: The squadron was reduced from 12 aircraft to 9 aircraft, with 14 combat aircrews. Personnel and aircraft detached from the squadron were sent to VPB-99.

Nov 1944: Two VPB-210 Mariners were fitted with two L8 searchlights apiece. Four of the squadron's crews were given training in use of the lights.

17 Jun–10 Jul 1945: Operations were discontinued at NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and preparations

were begun for disestablishment of the squadron. Aircraft were flown to NAS San Juan, P.R., and turned over to HEDRON-11. On 2 July 1945, the entire squadron boarded *Rehoboth* (AVP 50) for transportation to NAS Norfolk, Va. On 10 July 1945, the squadron was disestablished.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	15 Jan 1943
NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	11 Aug 1943
NAS Norfolk, Va.	2 Jul 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LT William J. Scarpino	15 Jan 1943
LCDR F. W. Sheppard	18 Jan 1943
LCDR Harry L. Harty, Jr.	1 Apr 1944
LCDR V. G. Holzapfel	25 Feb 1945
LCDR John S. Reef	10 Jun 1945

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3C	Feb 1943
PBM-3S	Aug 1943

Squadron PBM-3s in formation off the coast of Cuba.



Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
11 Aug 43	17 Jun 45	FAW-11	Guantanamo	PBM-3S	Carib
1 Nov 43	23 Aug 44	FAW-11	Great Exuma	PBM-3S	Carib

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		15 Jan 1943
FAW-11		11 Aug 1943
FAW-5		2 Jul 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	



A squadron PBM-3 being prepared for hoisting aboard Albemarle (AV 5) at Guantanamo Bay, 5 January 1945, 80-G-304427 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).



A squadron PBM-3 being hoisted aboard Albemarle (AV 5) at Guantanamo Bay, 5 January 1945, 80-G-304428 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).

VPB-211

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED ELEVEN (VP-211) on 15 February 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED ELEVEN (VP-211) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 14 June 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

15 Feb 1943: VP-211 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., as a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3C Mariner under the operational control of FAW-5. Training continued at Norfolk through May. Shakedown training was conducted at NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C., commencing on 21 May 1943.

7 Aug 1943: Lieutenant (jg) E. C. Scully and crew attacked and damaged a surfaced U-boat off the coast near Elizabeth City, N.C. On the first and second bomb run, the bomb release malfunctioned. By the third bombing run the submarine was below the surface.

The manual release was used and the U-boat was blown back to the surface. Lieutenant (jg) Scully made several strafing passes on the damaged submarine, but one after another of his aircraft's machine guns froze up until only the tail gun, firing single shots, remained. By this time the heavy AA fire from the U-boat had severely damaged the hull of the Mariner. Scully was forced to leave the area before leaking fuel tanks forced him down. He managed to land safely and beach the aircraft on a spit of sand before it sank.

25 Aug 1943: A detachment of eight crews was sent to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., for advanced ASW warfare training at AsDevLant, returning on 25 September.

27 Sep 1943: VP-211 received orders to deploy to NAF Aratu, Bahia, Brazil. The squadron's last section of four aircraft arrived at Aratu on 16 October and relieved VP-74, coming under the operational control of FAW-16. VP-211 became a part of Task Force 44, an integral part of the Fourth Fleet. A detachment of six aircraft was maintained at Governor's Island, NAF Galeao, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, due to the distance of Aratu from the "slot" where U-boat hunting was so abundant. The slot was the area where the U-boats traversed the Atlantic from north to south via a regular route. On 12 November the squadron shifted its headquarters to Galeao for a three-month period, leaving a three-aircraft detachment at Aratu. NAF Galeao, while nearer to the hunting area, had primitive living condi-



A squadron PBM-3 being beached at Galeao, Brazil, 17 December 1943, 80-G-56943 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).

tions and frequently was shrouded in early morning fog. The squadron's first searchlight mission was conducted in February, and from that time on, nearly all of the squadron's patrols were conducted at night.

Jan 1944: The squadron's 14 to 16 hour patrols began to take their toll on the aircraft. Maintenance facilities in the area were very basic, so engine changes were made at sea off Florianapolis, Brazil. Engine changes were made in four sections of three aircraft each, with one Mariner undergoing the change, while the second stood by to assist in the maintenance, with the third hauling supplies, gasoline, personnel and food.

12 Jan 1944: The squadron suffered its first operational loss during a training exercise when Ensign Thomas E. Donahue and crew P-8 dropped a depth charge from too low an altitude. The munitions exploded near the tail, causing the plane to crash and burn. Crew P-4 landed immediately and rescued five critically injured survivors from the water.

10 Jun 1944: VP-211 was relocated to NAF Natal, Brazil, the equal of Galeao in terms of primitive living conditions. In addition, the operating area of the seaplane base at NAF Parnamirim Field was located on the Potengy River 18 miles down river from the crews' quarters. The primary duties while at this location consisted of barrier sweeps, which were plots predicated on the relative movement of German submarines conducted at distances approximately 800 miles from base.

28 Sep 1944: Crew P-4 located a surfaced U-boat by radar and was driven off by the heavy AA fire before an attack could be made. An accurate fix on the location of the submarine was made, and on 29 September two VB-107 aircraft flown by Lieutenants E. A. Krug and J. T. Burton made a coordinated attack on *U-863*, Kapitänleutnant Dietrich von der Esch commanding. The U-boat was found in the same vicinity as the sighting made by VP-211 on the previous day. The sinking was confirmed by postwar review of enemy records.

29 Sep 1944: VP-211 was reduced in size from 12 aircraft to 9; these aircraft and personnel were sent to join VPB-98 at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas.

21 Nov 1944: The squadron's second operational loss occurred when Lieutenant Robert H. Lind and crew P-2, while on patrol between Natal and Aratu, encountered a violent thunderstorm and crashed into the sea, losing all hands.

Jan 1945: VPB-211 was temporarily based aboard *Matagorda* (AVP 22) at Bahia Bay to assist in the training of the ship's crew in handling seaplanes at advanced bases.

Feb 1945: VPB-211 was temporarily based aboard *Rehoboth* (AVP 50) at Bahia Bay to assist in the training of the ship's crew in handling seaplanes at advanced bases.

1–31 Mar 1945: The squadron was temporarily based aboard *Rockaway* (AVP 29) for advanced base training.

Apr 1945: VPB-211 was based aboard *Humboldt* (AVP 21) at Bahia Bay to assist in the training of the ship's crew in handling seaplanes at advanced bases. The squadron personnel speculated that all this training might be in preparation for the imminent transfer of VPB-211 to the Pacific theater of operations.

16 May 1945: Convoy patrols were discontinued. On 24 May orders were received to turn over the squadron's aircraft to HEDRON-11 at NAS San Juan, P.R., and proceed to NAS Norfolk, Va., for disestablishment.

14 Jun 1945: VPB-211 was disestablished at NAS Norfolk, Va.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	15 Feb 1943
NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C.	21 May 1943
NAF Aratu, Bahia, Brazil	27 Sep 1943
NAF Galeao, Brazil	12 Nov 1943
NAF Aratu, Bahia, Brazil	Jan 1944
NAF Natal, Brazil	10 Jun 1944
Bahia Bay, Brazil	1 Jan 1945
NAS Norfolk, Va.	24 May 1945



Squadron PMB-3s in formation flight in Brazil, December 1943.

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR L. W. Mang	19 Feb 1943
LCDR C. Fink Fischer	18 Aug 1943

Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
LCDR D. C. Rumsey II	28 Aug 1944	PBM-3C PBM-3S	May 1943 Jun 1943

*Aircraft Assignment**Major Overseas Deployments*

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
27 Sep 1943	*	FAW-16	Aratu	PBM-3S	SoLant
16 Oct 1943	*	FAW-16	Galeao	PBM-3S	SoLant
10 Jun 1944	*	FAW-16	Natal	PBM-3S	SoLant
Jan 1945	Apr 1945	FAW-16	Bahia Bay <i>Matagorda (AVP 22)</i> <i>Rehoboth (AVP 50)</i> <i>Rockaway (AVP 29)</i> <i>Humboldt (AVP 21)</i>	PBM-3S	SoLant

* Continued combat deployment in South Atlantic, moving from base to base.



Squadron PBM-3s in formation over the Brazilian naval dockyard at Rio de Janeiro, December 1943, NH-94610.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		15 Feb 1943
FAW-16		27 Sep 1943
FAW-5		16 May 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	



A squadron PBM-3 in flight in Brazil.

VPB-212

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED TWELVE (VP-212) on 15 March 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED TWELVE (VPB-212) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 15 May 1946.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's only official insignia was approved by CNO on 25 February 1946, while it was designated VPB-212. The original submission, forwarded to BuAer



The squadron's cartoon insignia.

in 1944, was disapproved by CNO as being too cartoonish and not in keeping with the dignity of the Navy. The later, almost identical design featured a fox in boots, standing on a cloud while holding a spy-glass in one paw and a depth charge in the other. Colors: background, yellow; fox, reddish brown with white jowls and chest; nose, black; eyes, white with black pupils; tongue, red; mouth, black; boots, black; bomb, marine green; spy glass, marine green with blue green lens.

Nickname: None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

15 Mar–Sep 1943: VP-212, a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3S Mariner, was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., under the operational control of

FAW-5. Ground school and flight training continued at Norfolk through September. Since 90 percent of the flight crews had no flying experience in the PBM aircraft, most of the officers in the unit were sent to NAS Banana River, Fla., for the three-month course, while 10 percent took the shorter three-week course. On 11 August the squadron was relocated to NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., for shakedown. On 25 August the squadron was sent to the AsDevLant at NAS Quonset Point, R.I., for advanced training in ASW and use of radar. The squadron returned to Harvey Point on 10 September for completion of flight training.

24 Sep 1943: The squadron suffered its first operational losses when Lieutenant William J. Walker, the squadron executive officer, and five members of his crew were killed in a crash while attempting a night landing at NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., in stormy weather.

30 Sep 1943: VP-212 was transferred to NAS San Juan, P.R., under the operational control of FAW-11. Duties at this location consisted of convoy coverage and ASW sweeps. A detachment was maintained at NAF Antigua, B.W.I. The primary function of the squadron was to block the entrances to the Caribbean used by the convoys and their predators, the U-boats. Sweeps were flown north and south of Mona Passage, and north and south of Anegada Passage.

17 Dec 1943: Lieutenant H. M. Whaling and crew were providing night convoy coverage for transports en route to Curacao, N.W.I., when they approached what they believed to be one of the escort vessels. As it turned out, they had approached a surfaced U-boat and were driven off by intense AA fire before an attack run could be made. Although not successful in sinking the submarine, the aircraft did interrupt the firing plot the U-boat commander was preparing to execute on the Spanish tanker *Campestra*.

1 Apr 1944: Lieutenant (jg) G. R. Gregory and crew attacked a surfaced U-boat northeast of Puerto Rico in broad daylight. Although a perfect straddle of depth charges was made, damage was assessed as minimal. The sonobuoys dropped on the second run had failed to work due to dead batteries, a recurrent problem in the tropics.

27 May 1944: The squadron was relocated to NAF Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I., with a detachment maintained at NAF Esquibo, British Guyana. In August, continuous coverage of convoy traffic was discontinued. One unusual duty assigned the squadron during this period was searching for U.S. Navy mines that had broken loose from their moorings and drifted into the shipping lanes. *Pelican* (AVP 6) served as the advanced base at NAF Paramaribo and NAF Esquibo, British Guyana, until relieved by *Thrush* (AVP 3) in November 1944.

12 Jan 1945: VPB-212 was relocated back to NAS San Juan, P.R., with a detachment maintained at NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

4 Apr 1945: VPB-212 was transferred to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., under the operational control of FAW-9, relieving VPB-84. Duties at this location consisted of convoy coverage and ASW sweeps. These activities were discontinued with the receipt of a dispatch on 21 May and training flights only were scheduled.

30 May–Jun 1945: VPB-212 began transferring its aircraft in sections of four to Harvey Point, N.C., coming under the operational control of FAW-5. Upon arrival of the last crew on 4 June the entire squadron was given home leave through the 15th. Upon return, the squadron was issued new PBM-5E aircraft. A period of reforming and retraining in navigation, communications and recognition began. Day and night familiarization hops were flown, and target practice on gunnery sleeves was conducted.

19 Jul–13 Aug 1945: VPB-212 was transferred to NAS Norfolk, Va. When the last of the squadron's three sections arrived on 24 July, all of the squadron personnel were granted leave through 13 August.

25 Aug 1945–Mar 1946: VPB-212 was transferred to NAS Alameda, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-8. On 27 August the squadron was sent to NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., on temporary duty. The squadron had barely begun training when the war ended and orders were received to begin demobilizing officers immediately, leaving inexperienced personnel to carry on. New replacement crews were often demobilized before they reached operational capability. The situation did not improve until March 1946, when 10 crews were certified as ready for operations.

15 May 1946: VPB-212 was disestablished at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	15 Mar 1943
NAAS Harvey Point, N.C.	11 Aug 1943
NAS San Juan, P.R.	30 Sep 1943
NAF Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I.	27 May 1944
NAS San Juan, P.R.	12 Jan 1945
NAS Quonset Point, R.I.	4 Apr 1945
NAAS Harvey Point, N.C.	30 May 1945
NAS Norfolk, Va.	19 Jul 1945
NAS Alameda, Calif.	25 Aug 1945
NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.	27 Aug 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR C. E. Robertson	15 Mar 1943
LCDR J. M. Kipp	17 Sep 1943
LCDR N. R. Lincoln	5 Mar 1945

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3S	Mar 1943
PBM-5E	May 1945

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
30 Sep 1943	*	FAW-11	San Juan	PBM-3S	Carib
27 May 1944	*	FAW-11	Trinidad	PBM-3S	Carib
27 May 1944	*	FAW-11	Esquibo	PBM-3S	Carib
			<i>Pelican (AVP 6)</i>		
			<i>Thrush (AVP 3)</i>		
12 Jan 1945	4 Apr 1945	FAW-11	San Juan	PBM-3S	Carib

* Continued combat deployments in the Caribbean, moving from base to base.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		15 Mar 1943
FAW-11		30 Sep 1943
FAW-9		4 Apr 1945
FAW-5		30 May 1945
FAW-8		25 Aug 1945
FAW-6		27 Aug 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

VPB-213

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED THIRTEEN (VP-213) on 1 October 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED THIRTEEN (VPB-213) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 10 July 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Oct–Nov 1943: VP-213, a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3S Mariner, was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., under the operational control of FAW-5. Training for squadron personnel commenced on 2 October 1944 at NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., and continued through the end of November. Twenty-eight of the assigned pilots were PBM qualified when reporting aboard. These officers assisted in training the remaining 15 new pilots by distributing them among the more experienced crews.

12 Dec 1943: The squadron's first operational loss occurred during a night training flight with a crew of 12 enlisted and four officers aboard. The aircraft, piloted by Lieutenant (jg) Lincoln G. Nordby, vanished without a trace, despite the efforts of 21 aircraft searching the sector over a two-day period. All hands were presumed lost.

18 Dec 1943: VPB-213 was transferred to NAS Key West, Fla., under the operational control of FAW-12 and brought to operational status with ASW patrols and coverage of the convoy lanes off the East Coast.

1 Jan 1944: The squadron was transferred to Nassau, Bahamas, for advanced base operations with tender support provided by *Christiana* (YAG 32). On 12 February a detachment was sent to NAAS Great Exuma, B.W.I., for night patrols due to inadequate lighting facilities at Nassau.

26 Jan 1944: The squadron suffered another night operational loss when aircraft P-3, flown by Lieutenant (jg) B. C. Herod, landed in an ammunition dump on Fleming Key, NAS Key West. The flight crew was using a flashlight to illuminate the instrument panel after the panel lights failed. The resulting glare blinded the pilots, who mistook the perimeter lights of the ammunition dump for the landing lights of the bay. Two officers and nine enlisted personnel were killed in the resulting explosion.

13 Mar 1944: The squadron came close to losing another aircraft while making an approach to NAS Key

West, Fla., in daylight. An Army antiaircraft battery was practicing with live ammunition at nearby Fort Taylor. One 37-mm shell penetrated aircraft P-11, flown by Ensign J. B. Clausen, removing the foot of AOM3c Morris. The Army officer in charge was subsequently tried by general court martial.

1 May 1944: VP-213 departed Nassau, Bahamas, for NAF Grand Cayman Island, B.W.I. A detachment was maintained at Royal Island, B.W.I., aboard *Christiana* (YAG 32).

13 Sep 1944: A VPB-213 aircraft was sent out to locate *Warrington* (DD 383) as a hurricane moved towards the Bahaman Islands. The destroyer was spotted on radar but could not be reached due to the intensity of the storm. Water had entered her vents during the night causing power loss and electrical failure. The crew abandoned ship at 1250 after fruitless attempts to save her and she went down almost immediately. Surface craft in the area were able to rescue only five officers and 68 enlisted personnel out of a complement of 321.

5 Oct 1944: The squadron complement of aircraft was reduced from 12 to 9. The extra aircraft and flight crews were transferred to VPB-99 at NAS Corpus Christi, Tex.

1–11 Nov 1944: The squadron was returned to NAS Key West, Fla., with eight aircraft and one on detached duty to Eleuthra Island, B.W.I. On 4 November, six aircraft were detached to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., for temporary duty with Naval Air Task Unit, Quonset, returning on the 11th.

20 Nov 1944: VPB-213 was deployed to NAS Trinidad, B.W.I., coming under the operational control of FAW-11. The squadron provided convoy coverage from Trinidad to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with a detachment of aircraft at NAF Paramaribo, Dutch Guyana. The detachment was provided tender support by *Thrush* (AVP 3), based on the Surinam River.

27 Jan–7 Feb 1945: Detachments of five aircraft each participated in advanced base training with tender *Albemarle* (AV 5).

2 Apr–Jun 1945: A three-aircraft, four-crew detachment was sent to NAS San Juan, P.R., to relieve VPB-212. After completing the deployment to San Juan, two of the aircraft returned to Trinidad, B.W.I., to rejoin the squadron and the other plane was turned over to HEDRON-11 at NAS San Juan. With the cessation of hostilities in Europe on 8 May, the duties of the squadron were reduced to training and ferrying of supplies and personnel between Trinidad and San Juan. On 27 June orders were received to turn in all aircraft to HEDRON-11 at NAS San Juan. This was accomplished and all squadron personnel were loaded aboard *Matagorda* (AVP 22) for transportation to NAS Norfolk, Va.

10 July 1945: VPB-213 was disestablished at NAS Norfolk, Va.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	1 Oct 1944
NAAS Harvey Point, N.C.	2 Oct 1944
NAS Key West, Fla.	18 Dec 1943
Nassau, Bahamas	1 Jan 1944
NAF Grand Cay Island, B.W.I.	1 May 1944
NAS Key West, Fla.	1 Nov 1944
NAS Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I.	20 Nov 1944
NAS Norfolk, Va.	Jun 1944

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR William A. Sullivan	1 Oct 1943
LCDR F. M. Beck	10 Jun 1944

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3S	Oct 1943

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
1 Jan 1944	1 May 1944	FAW-12	Gr. Exuma <i>Christiana</i> (YAG 32)	PBM-3S	Carib
1 May 1944	1 Nov 1944	FAW-12	Gr. Cayman <i>Christiana</i> (YAG 32)	PBM-3S	Carib
20 Nov 1944	27 Jun 1944	FAW-11	Trinidad	PBM-3S	Carib
20 Nov 1944	27 Jan 1944*	FAW-11	Paramaribo <i>Thrush</i> (AVP 3)	PBM-3S	Carib

* Deployment dates are only for a squadron detachment, the main squadron remained at NAS Trinidad.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		1 Oct 1943
FAW-12		18 Dec 1943
FAW-11		20 Nov 1944
FAW-5		27 Jun 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

VPB-214

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED FOURTEEN (VP-214) on 18 October 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED FOURTEEN (VPB-214) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 21 June 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

18 Oct 1943–8 Jan 1944: VP-214, a medium sea-plane squadron flying the PBM-3S Mariner, was established at NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., under the operational control of FAW-5. Training was conducted at Harvey Point through December 1943. On 8 January 1944, the squadron was transferred to NAS Key West, Fla., for shakedown and advanced training in ASW.

22 Jan 1944: The squadron's first loss in training occurred when Lieutenant Francis Mitchell and his crew crashed during a practice drop of live ordnance. The cluster of depth charges exploded upon impact with the water, removing the tail of the aircraft. Four crewmembers were killed.

23 Jan 1944: VP-214 became operational at NAS Norfolk, Va., while based ashore at Breezy Point. Duties included convoy escort and ASW sweeps of the offshore approaches.

12 Sep 1944: VP-214 was deployed to NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, under the operational control of FAW-11. Duties consisted of convoy escort and ASW sweeps of the approaches to the Caribbean basin.

1 Oct 1944: The squadron complement of aircraft was reduced from 12 to 9, with a corresponding reduction in personnel.

15 Jan–Apr 1945: VPB-214 was transferred to NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., under the operational control of FAW-3. On 18 February the squadron was based aboard the tender *Albemarle* (AV 5) at Almirante Bay, Panama, for advanced base operations. The squadron returned to NAS Coco Solo on 1 March. On 1 April the squadron began flying a series of ASW sectors on the Pacific side of the canal from Coco Solo to the Galapagos Islands to Corinto, Nicaragua and back to Coco Solo.

31 May 1945: Orders were received to turn in all of the squadron's aircraft and assets to HEDRON-3 at NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., and proceed to NAS Norfolk, Va., for disestablishment. The squadron personnel were put aboard *Sangamon* (CVE 26) for return to Norfolk. The squadron's aircraft were later towed out to sea and used as strafing targets by the Army Air Force fighters.

18 Jun 1945: VPB-214 was disestablished at NAS Norfolk, Va.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAAS Harvey Point, N.C.	18 Oct 1943
NAS Key West, Fla.	8 Jan 1944
NAS Norfolk, Va.	23 Jan 1944
NAS Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	12 Sep 1944
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	15 Jan 1945
NAS Norfolk, Va.	31 May 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Malcolm C. McGrath	18 Oct 1943
LCDR Leslie A. Pew	15 Aug 1944

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3S	Nov 1943

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
12 Sep 1944	15 Jan 1945	FAW-11	Guantanamo	PBM-3S	Carib
15 Jan 1945	18 Feb 1945	FAW-3	Coco Solo	PBM-3S	Carib/Pac
18 Feb 1945	1 Mar 1945	FAW-3	Almirante Bay	PBM-3S	Carib/Pac
1 Mar 1945	31 May 1945	FAW-3	Coco Solo	PBM-3S	Carib/Pac
			<i>Albemarle</i> (AV 5)		

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		18 Oct 1943
FAW-9		23 Jan 1944
FAW-11		12 Sep 1944
FAW-3		15 Jan 1945
FAW-5		31 May 1945

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

A PBM-3S on the apron at NAS Norfolk, 80-G-K-2909.



VPB-215

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN (VP-215) on 1 November 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN (VPB-215) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 28 May 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The VP-215 insignia was approved by CNO on 15 July 1944. The design consisted of a pair of Navy



The squadron's insignia.

binoculars fitted with gull wings superimposed on a background of ocean and sky. A depth charge was shown between the lenses. The gull wings and rubber eyepieces resembled the PBM aircraft, with the binoculars representing the mission of patrol and the depth bomb the mission of antisubmarine warfare. Colors: background, indigo; binoculars, ocher yellow; wings, ocher yellow; lenses, yellow with and black outlines; depth charge, ocher yellow with white and black outlines; sky, white; cloud, white with black outline.

Nickname: None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

1 Nov 1943–Jan 1944: VP-215, a medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3S Mariner, was established at NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., under the operational control of FAW-5. Training at Harvey Point continued through January 1944, when the squadron was transferred to NAS Key West, Fla., for shakedown and advanced ASW training.

26 Feb–Mar 1944: VP-215 achieved operational status and was transferred to NAS Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I., for convoy coverage and ASW sweeps of the Caribbean basin under the operational control of FAW-11. On 8 March, a six-aircraft detachment was sent to NAS Coco Solo, C.Z., for ASW sweeps under the operational control of FAW-3.

16 Apr 1944: VP-215 was transferred to NAS Bermuda, B.W.I., for daytime convoy coverage and ASW sweeps under the operational control of FAW-9.

4 Oct 1944: VPB-215 was reduced in personnel by 25 percent, with three aircraft being transferred permanently to NAS Corpus Christi, Texas.

17 Apr–May 1945: VPB-215 was transferred to NAS Norfolk, Va. Wartime operations of convoy patrols and ASW sweeps ceased on 18 May 1945. Orders were received to deliver all squadron aircraft to HEDRON 5-2 at NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., in preparation for disestablishment of the squadron.

28 May 1945: VPB-215 was disestablished at NAS Norfolk, Va.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAAS Harvey Point, N.C.	1 Nov 1943
NAS Key West, Fla.	Jan 1944
NAS Port of Spain, Trinidad, B.W.I.	26 Feb 1944
NAS Bermuda, B.W.I.	16 Apr 1944
NAS Norfolk, Va.	17 Apr 1945

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR William M. McCormick	1 Nov 1943
LCDR Charles L. Lambing	24 Jun 1944

Aircraft Assignment

	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
	PBM-3S	Nov 1943

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
26 Feb 1944	16 Apr 1944	FAW-9	Trinidad	PBM-3S	Carib
8 Mar 1944*	16 Apr 1944	FAW-3	Coco Solo	PBM-3S	Carib
16 Apr 1944	17 Apr 1945	FAW-9	Bermuda	PBM-3S	Lant

* Deployment dates are only for a squadron detachment, the main squadron remained at NAS Trinidad.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		1 Nov 1943
FAW-11		26 Feb 1944
FAW-9		16 Apr 1944

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

VPB-216

Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED SIXTEEN (VP-216) on 15 November 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron TWO HUNDRED SIXTEEN (VPB-216) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 7 April 1945.

Squadron Insignia and Nickname

None on record.

Chronology of Significant Events

15 Nov 1943–26 Feb 1944: VP-216 was established at NAAS Harvey Point, N.C., as medium seaplane squadron flying the PBM-3S Mariner, under the operational control of FAW-5. From 5 December 1943 to 24 January 1944 intensive ground and flight training was conducted. Upon completion of the syllabus, the squadron was equipped with new PBM-3D Mariner aircraft. Almost immediately, problems began to appear with the valve inserts in the Wright R2600-22 engines of the Mariners, resulting in grounding of all squadron aircraft through 26 February 1944. These problems were not completely resolved until late May.

2–23 Mar 1944: Twelve squadron aircraft were transferred to NAS Key West, Fla., for intensive shake-down training in ASW, glide bombing and use of radar in bombing.

24 Mar 1944: VP-216 transferred aircraft and personnel in three-aircraft elements to NAS Alameda, Calif., via MCAS Eagle Mountain Lake, Texas, and NAS San Diego, Calif. “How goes it” curves were developed on each aircraft, enabling the crew to determine each individual aircraft’s capabilities for the forthcoming transpac to Hawaii. The curve was a plot of speed, distance, engine settings, remaining fuel, etc., that assisted the crew in assessing the crucial “point of no return” for the over-water transit to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii.

29 Mar–1 Apr 1944: Ten of the squadron’s 15 aircraft were able to complete the 2,200-mile transpac from NAS Alameda, Calif., to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, coming under the operational control of FAW-2. Three required engine replacements at the MCAS Eagle Mountain Lake, Texas, refueling point and two needed major repairs upon arrival at NAS Alameda. These five aircraft rejoined the squadron at NAS Kaneohe on 30 April.

1 Apr–23 Jun 1944: The next three months were spent at NAS Kaneohe undergoing intensive combat training and repairs to the erratic engines. During this period the squadron conducted 700-mile sector patrols, made final equipment check runs and conducted bomb-dropping and gunnery exercises on a daily basis. Deficiencies in crew member training were eliminated by proficiency checks and refresher courses.

28 May 1944: 12 officers and 42 men departed aboard *Chandeleur* (AV 10) for Saipan, Marianas Island Group.

23 Jun 1944: VP-216 deployed to Saipan, anchoring in Tanapag Harbor, under the operational control of FAW-2. *Chandeleur* (AV 10) provided berthing and maintenance support for the squadron during this period. Primary duties involved day and night reconnaissance patrols for Fifth Fleet operations. During the period through 10 August the squadron attacked and damaged three Japanese cargo vessels. Although numerous enemy aircraft were spotted, none could be attacked successfully due to the slower speed of the Mariner.

31 Jul 1944: A VP-216 Mariner flown by Lieutenant Richard P. Gavin developed engine problems and landed at sea, damaging a wingtip float in the process. No injuries to the crew were incurred and 24 hours later ships of TF 51 rescued the crew. The aircraft,



A squadron PBM-3D beached on Saipan, 10 July 1944.

which could not be salvaged or towed due to the damage, provided useful target practice to the destroyers on the scene.

10 Jul–10 Sep 1944: By this date, enemy snipers and scavengers had been largely eliminated ashore on

Saipan. VP-216 began using the Japanese-constructed seaplane ramp at Tanapag Harbor to permit on-shore maintenance and crew rest on dry land. Armed guards were posted and assisted in the capture or killing of over 20 Japanese soldiers in their perimeter. Throughout August the tempo of operations decreased and the squadron was put on standby for redeployment to the Palau Island group.

10 Sep 1944: The first three-aircraft element of VP-216 was transferred to Kossol Passage, Palau Island group, under the operational command of FAW-1. At 0400 hours the next day, the squadron received a sharp lesson on watch tending when a group of Japanese boarded an adjacent PB2Y-3 Coronado in the anchorage, blowing up the aircraft and killing themselves in the process. The remainder of the squadron arrived at Kossol Passage by 17 September. *Chandeleur* (AV 10) and *Pocomoke* (AV 9) provided seaplane tender services at Kossol Passage. Operations at Kossol Passage were the same as at Saipan, providing coverage for the Third Fleet under Admiral Halsey.

6 Oct 1944: Lieutenant Arthur W. Doherty encountered typhoon weather while returning from a night patrol. With his radio direction-finder gear and radar inoperative, Lieutenant Doherty managed to establish his position and began a correct heading towards base. On the morning of 7 October, approximately 80 miles from base, the Mariner ran out of gas, forcing Lieutenant Doherty to attempt a stall landing. In the

process a wing was torn off and 9 crewmembers escaped the wreckage. One officer and two enlisted men were lost in the accident.

18 Nov 1944: The first three-aircraft element of VPB-216 left Kossol Passage, Palau Islands, for return to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, en route to NAS San Diego, Calif.

7 Apr 1945: VPB-216 was disestablished.

Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAAS Harvey Point, N.C.	15 Nov 1943
NAS Key West, Fla.	2 Mar 1944
NAS Alameda, Calif.	25 Mar 1944
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	1 Apr 1944
NAS San Diego, Calif.	21 Nov 1944

Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Harry E. Cook, Jr.	15 Nov 1943
CDR R. D. Cox, Jr.	Dec 1944

Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBM-3S	Nov 1943
PBM-3D	Jan 1944

Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
29 Mar 1944	18 Nov 1944	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PBM-3D	WestPac
23 Jun 1944	*	FAW-2	Saipan	PBM-3D	SoPac
10 Sep 1944	18 Nov 1944	FAW-1	Palau <i>Chandeleur</i> (AV 10) <i>Chandeleur</i> (AV 10) <i>Pocomoke</i> (AV 9)	PBM-3D	SoPac

* The squadron was forward deployed, moving from base to base in the Pacific.

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		15 Nov 1943
FAW-8		24 Mar 1944
FAW-2		29 Mar 1944
FAW-1		10 Sep 1944
FAW-2		18 Nov 1944

Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		21 Nov 1944

Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	



A squadron PBM-3D being hoisted aboard Chandeleur (AV 10) for repairs, 24 June 1944.

A squadron PBM-3D aboard Chandeleur (AV 10) for repairs, 24 June 1944.

