	COMMANDING
3rd JUNE	First launch Monday morning was a 4 aircraft strike with 2 escorts on a splash in R550. The strike was led by the new S.P. LEUT OLLSON. The flight went as briefed until R550 was reached when the SAR boat towing the splash could not be located. A search of the area failed to reveal anything resembling a SAR boat so the strike turned for home. The two escorts had a minor engagement with MIRAGE CAP aircraft but the encounter was shortlived and the flight proceeded to NAS NOWRA. For the remainder of the day and night, flying was concentrated on ARF and FCLP. The C.O. flew an IRT with the IRE in a TA4 from VC724. Tuesday was to be a sad day for VF 805. The second in the series of strikes in R550 briefed and took to the air. Shortly after take-off the escort leader developed undercarriage problems and returned to NAS Nowra. The remainder of the flight - 4 strike and 1 escort - proceeded up the coast to wreak havoc on the "hard to find" splash target. All went well until the first encounter with the MIRAGE aircraft. Strike 2 was detached to act as Escort 2. The ensuing air engagement proved a little to much for 873. After breaking off the fight and accelerating, 873 developed loud engine noises. SBLT DERKINDEREN

3rd JUNE cont the pilot, climbed, headed for RAAF WILLIAMTOWN, transmitted a MAYDAY call and endeavoured to trouble shoot and remedy the situation. NATOPS emergency procedures failed to rectify the problem. After being advised of flames emitting from his jet pipe by Escort 2, flown by SBLT SIEBERT, SBLT DERKINDEREN decided to to eject. The ejection sequence worked as advertised and a wet and cold SBLT was recovered by a RAAF helicopter approximately 20 minutes later. The end results were:

(a) The RAN one A4G down on its P.L.
(b) SBLT DERKINDEREN listed as the first pilot to have ejected from an RAN A4.
(c) The RAAF justly proud of its efficient SAR team.
(d) Both aircrew and maintenance personnel more than happy that all survival equipment worked as advertised.
(e) VF 805 down one bent probe aircraft.
(f) SBLT SIEBERT wishing he had taken along his camera.

In the evening when the intrepid birdman was returned to NAS by an HT 723 Iriquois and declared fit to sleep in his own bed, a social gathering in the wardroom ensured his early retirement for the evening. All that remained was for the Board of Inquiry to convene and the paper war to start. According to a reliable source, as soon as the weight of paper exceeds the weight of the aircraft lost, the war stops. Wednesday was a productive day for the Squadron with 13 sorties being successfully completed out of a programmed 17. Flying included CAP, bounce, strike progression, night air refuelling and FCLP. Thursday, aircrew and aircraft had a chance to clear the cobwebs out of their systems as flying was concentrated on ACM. After some heart felt discussions on "KILLS" an early night was had by most in preparation for the dawn patrol the next day. Another productive day go t underway at 0530 Friday morning when VF 805 crews briefed with 6 VC 724 crews to act as CAP against 16 MIRAGES programmed for 0700 strikes on BEECROFT. The defence forces were split - VF 805 to seaward and VC 724 coastal in the ULLADULLA area. VF 805 used its previous experience in dealing with MIRAGE aircraft and had all external fuel tanks and racks removed to enable higher speeds to be achieved. The MIRAGES were intercepted and the CAP aircraft achieved their objective when most of the MIRAGES failed to deliver their weapons in the target area. At 0730 all our aircraft were shut down and a very eventful week of flying came to an end.

	DAY	NIGHT
SORTIES	33	12
HOURS	39:45	12:40

09th JUNE

L.C.D.R. R.A.N.
COMMANDING OFFICER VF 805