

AIR DEPARTMENT



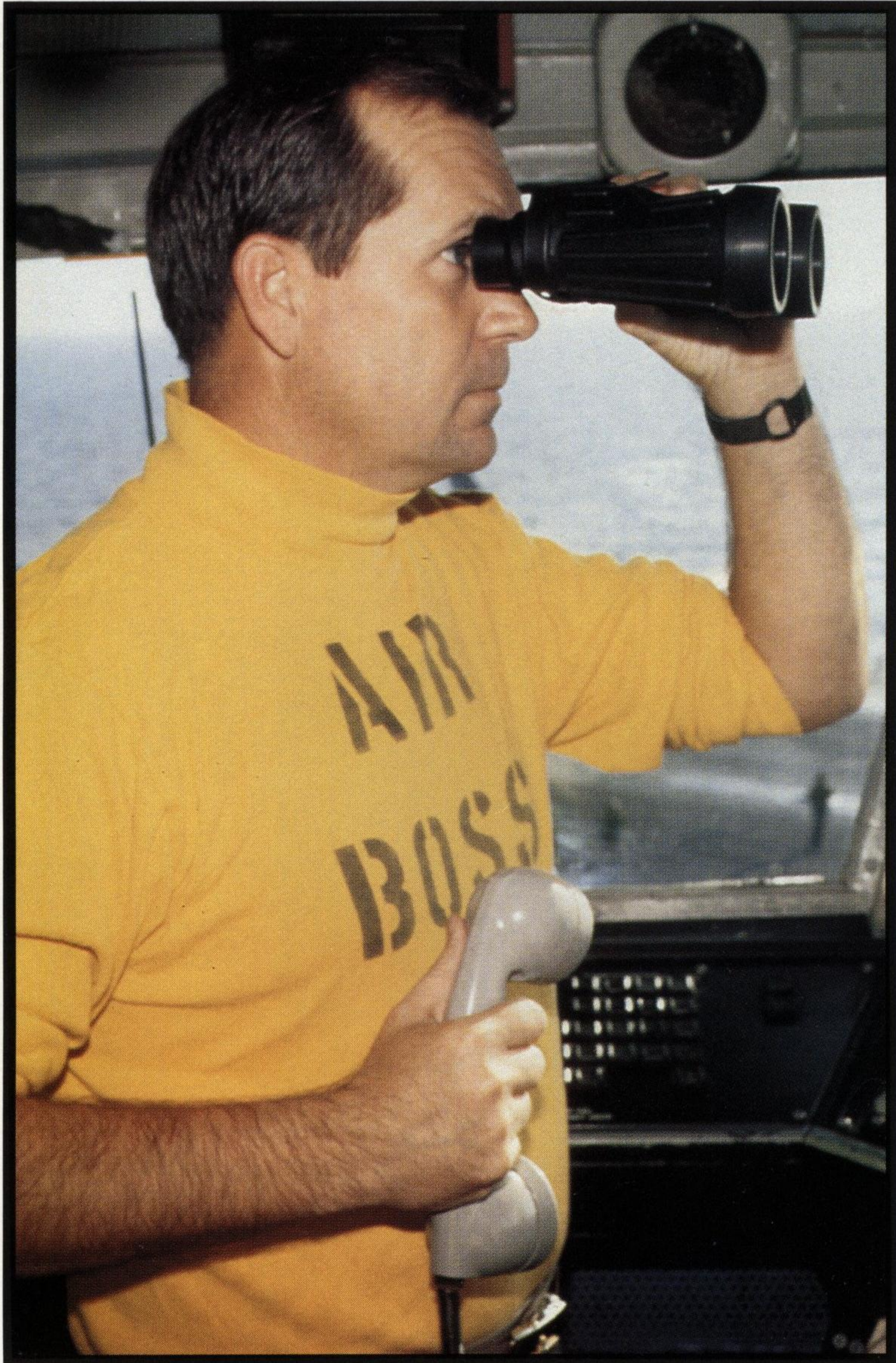
CAPT Arboth A. Rylant

With a total of 540 personnel, RANGER's Air Department is one of the largest departments on board. It controls aircraft in the air immediately around the RANGER, as well as launching, landing, landing, fueling, fire fighting and moving aircraft on the hangar and flight decks, and for operating the aircraft elevators.

The Air Boss and his assistant, the Mini Boss, are in overall control of these evolutions from Primary Flight Control, which is like the control tower at an airport. They are assisted by the Aircraft Handling Officer who is responsible for moving all aircraft on board, fueling/defueling, launch and recovery, crash and salvage, and elevator operation. The

Administrative Assistant serves as an Air Admin Officer to coordinate the flow of paper work between the various divisions.

The people and divisions of Air Department coordinate closely with the embarked air wing and its squadrons, as well as, with the various departments on board RANGER to ensure that the aircraft are launched on their missions and safely recovered when they return. It is a never-ending battle to overcome problems caused by last-minute schedule changes including aircraft that have to be swapped just prior to launch. The hours are long and hard, but Air Department comes through to get the job done safely and on time — every time.



The crew that takes care of Air Dept's paper work duties are (back row) ABECs Bud Cophern, LCDR Rod Kagy, ABFC Dave Thomas, (front row) YNSN Brian Gohlke, and YN3 Kenny Marrow. (Photo by PHAN Daniel P. Rich)

Left: The Air Boss, Capt. Arboth A. Rylant, checks the movement of aircraft from the tower. (Photo by PHAN Daniel P. Rich)