RADAR MODES

Typical Radar modes are listed below in the general functional category for which they were designed. Not all of these modes are applicable to all radars and certain radars have additional modes.

• NAVIGATION

Terrain avoidance - A mode in which the radar is set at a fixed depression angle and short range to continuously sweep the ground area directly in front of the aircraft in order to avoid mountains. This is particularly useful during flight into unfamiliar territory when clouds, haze, or darkness obscure visibility.

Ground mapping - A mode in which the radar uses a variety of techniques to enhance ground features, such as rivers, mountains and roads. The mode is unlike air-to-air modes where ground return is rejected from the display.

Precision velocity update / Doppler navigation - A mode in which the radar again tracks ground features, using Doppler techniques, in order to precisely predict aircraft ground speed and direction of motion. Wind influences are taken into account, such that the radar can also be used to update the aircraft inertial navigation system.

• FIGHTER MISSIONS

Pulse search - Traditional pulse techniques are used to accurately determine range, angle, and speed of the target. Limitations are easy deception by enemy jamming, and less range when compared to other modes.

Velocity search - A high PRF Pulse Doppler waveform is used for long range detection primarily against nose aspect targets, giving velocity and azimuth information. Although velocity search can work against tail-on targets, the Doppler return is weaker, consequently the maximum detection range is also much less. When the target is in the beam (flying perpendicular to the fighter), the closure (Doppler) is the same as ground return and target return is almost zero.

Track While Scan (TWS) - A system that maintains an actual track on several aircraft while still searching for others. Since the radar is sharing it's computing time between targets, the accuracy is less precise than for a single target track (STT) mode of operation.

Raid assessment - A mode in which the radar has an STT on a single target, but is routinely driven off by a small amount in order to determine if multiple aircraft exists in the immediate vicinity of the target aircraft.

Single-Target-Track (STT) (including air combat maneuvering modes) - Highly precise STT modes are used to provide the most accurate information to the fire control computer so that accurate missile or gun firing can be accomplished. The fire control radar continuously directs energy at the target so that the fired missile locates and tracks on the reflected energy from the target. Air combat maneuvering modes are automatic modes in which the radar has several sweep patterns fixed about the aircraft axis, such that little or no work is required of the pilot in order to lock up a target.

• AIR-TO-GROUND MISSIONS

Weapons delivery - A mode in which ground features are tracked, and particular emphasis is placed on determining range to the ground target, angle of dive, weapons ballistic tables, and aircraft speed.

Surveillance/tracking of ground forces/targets - Similar to the above with emphasis on multiple ground features and less on weapons delivery data.

Reconnaissance - A specific navigational mode to aid in identifying specific targets.

• AIR-TO-SURFACE MISSIONS

ASW - Navigational techniques specializing in specific search patterns to aid in detection of enemy submarines.