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PROJECT CORONA HARVEST

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REQUIREMENT

STUDY

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REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

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ARDC # 631815

SEP 63

ATCH 30-25
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Headquarters
SECOND AIR DIVISION
Thirteenth Air Force
United States Air Force
APO 143, San Francisco, California

REPLY TO
ATTN OF:2CCR

7 Nov 1963

the in front of folder (same subject)
SUBJECT: Requirement for Professional Rescue Forces in Republic of Viet Nam

TO: 13AF, APO 74, US Forces
PACAF, APO 953, US Forces
IN TURN

1. In response to the request in message PFARS-OP-152K, dated 2 Oct 1963, the attached study concerning rescue capabilities in RVN is forwarded. It has not been coordinated with MACV.
2. This study outlines deficiencies in rescue function in Republic of Viet Nam and emphasizes the need for professional rescue capability. It is believed to be the first time that the combined effort of all military forces have been presented from the viewpoint of required rescue support. Professional rescue forces are currently nonexistent in this theater; however, the requirement presently exists and increases daily as the tempo of the counterinsurgency effort gains momentum.
3. Recommended within this study is the establishment of a professional rescue force that will be the nucleus of the entire rescue effort. These recommendations are considered realistic and the minimum required to support the mission in the Republic of Viet Nam.
4. It is recommended that the study be adopted and that coordination be accomplished as necessary at PACAF/CINCPAC level to minimize delay in correcting the existing deficiencies therein.

Rollen H. Anthis
ROLLEN H. ANTHIS
Major General, USAF
Commander

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"Study" - Requirement for
Professional Rescue Forces in
the Republic of Viet Nam

ARODC # 631815

HQ ARS SC NO. 632534

1-3905-26

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Headquarters
SECOND AIR DIVISION
Thirteenth Air Force
APO 113, San Francisco, California

SUBJECT: Requirement for Professional Rescue Forces in the Republic of Vietnam

REFERENCES:

- a. PACAF Regulation 55-90, Search and Rescue.
- b. CINCPAC Instruction 3130.1B, Search and Rescue in the Pacific Command.
- c. Headquarters 2nd Air Division Regulation 55-20, Search and Rescue Operations.
- d. Joint US/Vietnamese Search and Rescue Agreement.

1. PURPOSE:

- a. To analyze the combined US/Vietnamese counterinsurgency effort in South Vietnam with regard to rescue requirements.
- b. Recommend a rescue force to provide equipment and professional rescue personnel to conduct and assist in all rescue functions.

2. DISCUSSION:

a. General: The mission of the combined forces of the United States and the Republic of Vietnam dictate extensive air/ground operations over mountainous and jungle terrain that for the most part is inaccessible except by air. Recovery of distressed personnel via airborne methods is necessary in all areas of South Vietnam, including the delta or lowland areas. This method of recovery is necessitated by the absence of adequate road or waterway systems.

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military and civilian personnel through, and within the Republic of Vietnam.

(a) The rotation of approximately 14,000 military personnel on a yearly basis presents a fixed transportation requirement.

(b) Transportation of a portion of these personnel to and from their duty station in Vietnam is also a relatively fixed requirement.

(c) Additional personnel movement is dictated largely by the current combat situation. This affects US/Vietnamese military and civilians assigned to assist in a variety of positions.

(d) The "in country" movement of personnel exposes them to hostile actions for a longer period than the "in/out country" flights; however, all flights conducted in and over the Republic of Vietnam are exposed to enemy ground fire.

f. Aircraft:

(1) Currently there are no Air Rescue Service aircraft assigned to Vietnam. In addition, none of the assigned aircraft in the joint services are designated solely for rescue operations. This fact has the following adverse affects during all rescue operations:

(a) Rescue aircraft are not immediately available for rescue missions.

(b) Available aircraft are not equipped for rescue missions; to wit, hoist, medical gear, slings, etc.

(c) Available aircraft do not have a hoist cable long enough to effect a pickup in jungle areas where tree heights often exceed 200 feet.

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(d) Available aircraft are subject to recall at any time by the operational commander to complete their primary combat mission.

g. Personnel:

(1) Personnel assigned to operational units do not possess rescue training other than basic procedures taught to all aircrews. Their knowledge of pickup procedures, aerial delivery and search patterns, coordination requirements and search control is nil. Moreover, no personnel are assigned who are trained to parachute into mountainous and jungle terrain to assist survivors and provide medical aid. Since Viet Cong controlled areas are predominantly in this terrain, the requirement for rapid response and recovery is paramount in the mountainous/jungle sections of the Republic of Vietnam. Under existing conditions recovery has taken as long as four (4) days after the downed aircraft was located due to the inability to deliver rescue personnel to the distressed area.

(2) The assigned pilot and medical personnel could be trained in rescue procedures; however, the highly specialized training requirements of pararescue personnel prohibits "in the field" training of these men.

h. Support: Assigned personnel and equipment currently have support from their parent units. A requirement does exist for specially designed rescue kits for aircraft and ground personnel. (See Tab E). Support activity does not exist for any specific rescue function; however, the necessary equipment, with the exception of specialized rescue items, is available from operational units.

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3. CONCLUSIONS:

a. The facts presented indicate an urgent need exists for professional men and equipment, specially trained and designed for one mission - RESCUE. The combat sorties, high density traffic, extensive airlift of personnel and adverse weather, combine to establish a high risk environment demanding professional rescue coverage.

b. The establishment of a professional rescue force at strategically located fields in the Republic of Vietnam, capable of rapid recovery of personnel and equipment, would have the following immediate results:

(1) Provide a capability to prevent extensive and unwarranted loss of human life.

(2) Higher morale among air and ground personnel due to the knowledge that adequate equipment, manned by professional crews, is on alert 24 hours a day to execute rescue operations in all areas the Republic of Vietnam.

(3) Preclude the frequent diverting of aircraft from tactical missions to conduct rescue functions.

(4) Reduce, and possibly eliminate, a source of supply of arms and ammunition to the Viet Cong forces operating in the Republic of Vietnam. This would be a bonus dividend resulting from the recovery of munitions and equipment from a crash site before opposition forces could salvage these materials that are vital to guerilla operation.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. It is recommended that rescue forces be assigned at the

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following existing bases in the Republic of Vietnam; Bien Hoa, Can Tho, Da Nang and Pleiku. The maximum distance between these locations is 185 nautical miles, and the minimum distance is 100 nautical miles.

(See Tab F). The location of these bases allow for a reasonable reaction time to any site within the area of responsibility; in addition, these bases provide two items of primary consideration:

(1) The necessary support is available, including an airstrip suitable for evacuation aircraft, if injuries are beyond the capability of the base medical facility.

(2) Forces are available to secure the rescue facilities from hostile action while on alert at the home base.

b. It is recommended that two aircraft be based at each base.

Two aircraft at each site will insure continuous rescue coverage, allow for air and ground crew training, and provide aircraft to supplement areas of accelerated rescue requirements, (increased combat operations), while maintaining a rescue capability for the entire area.

It should be pointed out that this should not be confused with an LER unit. Although the helicopters could function as LER units, their primary mission would be area SAR coverage and operational control of these units should be vested in 2nd Air Division AOC/SARCC.

(1) It is recommended that the Air Rescue Service HH-43 helicopter be initially assigned this mission pending receipt of helicopters into Air Rescue inventory with the following characteristics in addition to those possessed by the HH-43:

(a) Longer Range. When conducting a rescue operation in this area, many times the helicopter must remain airborne until the area

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is secure or hover for extended periods during a jungle operation. If the rescue site is located on the outer perimeter of a unit's area of control (i. e., area along 17th parallel for the Da Nang unit, see Tab F), the range of the HH-43 would be insufficient under the above conditions.

(b) Less Vulnerable to Enemy Action. Enemy fire takes a heavy toll of helicopters in the RVN. During a recent four month period, eight helicopters were shot down by ground fire of which five were UH-1B's, one H-34 and two H-21's.

(2) The HH-43 aircraft possesses the capability to successfully conduct most rescue operations in the area of responsibility, whereas conventionally powered helicopters cannot complete missions because of insufficient performance. This point was forcefully brought home on 9 March 1963, on a rescue mission of a Mohawk crew at the 6000 foot level in mountainous jungle terrain. A Marine H-34, while attempting to lower communications to the crash site, crashed and burned due to lack of sufficient power. Adequate equipment was not available to retrieve the injured crew and the pilot and VNAF observer died during the night. The following day another H-34 was lost on the same mission injuring two crew members. The US Officer and VNAF Observer could have possibly been saved if adequate rescue equipment and trained personnel had been available.

(a) The current lack of jet fuel at three of the four recommended bases is a logistics problem that can be resolved locally.

c. It is recommended that six pilot and six paramedics be assigned to each selected base to provide for maximum effort missions, training and crew rest requirements. It is further recommended that six crew

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chiefs be assigned to each base to provide for alert and rescue commitments, aircraft inspections and crew rest. (See Tab G).

d. It is recommended that the alert crew be composed of following crew members; two pilots, two pararescue and one crew chief. Because of the combat conditions, lack of navigational facilities, terrain and marginal weather in Vietnam the requirement for two pilots is apparent. The pararescue crew members will operate as a team, and provide on the spot medical assistance for survivors. The crew chief will act as hoist operator, and in case of mechanical malfunction his presence and knowledge will be invaluable.

e. It is recommended that the helicopters assigned to this mission be equipped with a hoist with a minimum of two hundred and fifty feet of cable. This one item of special equipment will allow personnel pickups to be completed in jungle area without deployment of ground parties in at least thirty percent of the anticipated missions.

5. SUMMARY: The risk environment, passenger flow and loss rate, (Tab A, B, D), each in itself justifies professional rescue forces, and taken in total these factors stress the urgency for these forces. The proficiency level of assigned personnel must be high because the combined adverse weather, terrain and combat conditions demand that air and ground crews be the best available. The steady growth in air support missions emphasizes the requirement for Professional Rescue Forces in the Republic of Vietnam.

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RESCUE KIT:

QTY	ITEM
1 *	Pyrotechnic gun with six flares.
6 *	Day/night distress flares.
2 *	Blankets.
1 *	URC-11 radio.
1 *	Battle dressing kit, including airway pharyngeal and morphine.
2 *	Machete.
2 *	Quarts plasma or glucose.
1 *	Crash entry kit:
	2 Shovel, D handle.
	1 Crash axe.
	1 Pry bar, long.
	1 Pry bar, short.
	2pr Gloves, heavy work.
1	Inter aircraft signal light (Aldis Lamp).
1	Canvas folding or stokes litter.
1	Sling hoist, (horse collar).
1	Hoist operators safety harness.
1	Rope, 200'.
6	Message drop container.
2	Gallons water in 1 pint cans.

(*) Items stored in back packs to be lowered or carried as a kit.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT IN STANDBY KIT:

1	Rescue basket.
3	Portable battery powered light.
1	Gasoline powered chain saw, 24".
1	Body bag.
1	PRC-10 radio.

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LOSS RATE: The number of aircraft known to have been forced down in the Republic of Vietnam due to battle damage and mechanical malfunction for the period 1 January through 31 August 1963 is indicated below. Many of the aircraft were shot down by ground fire. Aircraft that made controlled forced landings, and those that crash landed are shown in separate columns. Personnel killed in action (KIA), and wounded in action (WIA) are also shown. The KIA and WIA totals are considered to be extremely conservative for the period covered. This is caused by the difficulty in obtaining exact data from each of the joint services, due to incomplete records being available. The total number of downed aircraft are also considered conservative for the same reason.

COMMAND	DOWNED	CRASHED	FORCED LAND	KIA	WIA
USAF	9	9	0	7	0
USA	58	32	26	20	36
USMC	6	2	4	1	4
VNAF	8	7	1	2	14
OTHER	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/A</u>
TOTAL	83	52	31	30	54

TAB B
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No finer confirmation of their validity exists than is attested to by the 9,219 lives saved by ARS helicopters in that war. Famed ARS "Battle-Taxi" helicopter operations fully achieved USAF wartime SAR objectives in KOREA. With at least six ARS configures CH3C's, and attendant resources, USAF wartime SAR objectives can be met with at least equal success in South Viet Nam.

4. (C) For less than the equivalent cost of eight days aid support of Viet Nam, the US can equip, train and deploy a professional air rescue unit of six CH3C's to protect our most valuable asset, the trained combat aircrew. The US has been supplying roughly \$200 million a year in economic aid to South Viet Nam, and about \$300 million in military aid. The bulk of these aid programs continued throughout the Buddhist crisis and the coup d'etat. Directly, or indirectly, US Air "Advisors" administer, direct, and train the VNAF with these funds. Such "training" has cost the US at least 137 fatalities since January 1961. One hundred and nine have given their lives in direct combat actions against the Viet Cong Communists. For less than 3% of one year's American military aid dollar investment in South Viet Nam, U.S. Airmen can be accorded the benefit of a professional Air Rescue Unit.

5. (C) By having a minimum of 12 HH3C's in PACAF, trained crews can rotate within the PACAF theater of operation. Thus, we recommend:

a. First USAF priority be given the acquisition and assignment of six HH3C's and attendant resources for combat aircrew recovery duty in South Viet Nam.

b. Second USAF priority be given the acquisition of six HH3C's (for Pacific Area Squadron) requested in Reference 1. a.

ADRIEL N WILLIAMS
Brigadier General USAF
Commander

*2 Atchs
w/d*

2 Atch

- ~~1. Mission Reports Use of Army, USMC helicopters. (S)~~
2. Mission Report #25, Det 3, PARC, dtd 8 Oct 63. (C)

When Attachment #1 is withdrawn,
the classification of this letter may be
downgraded to CONFIDENTIAL.

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PROJECT CORONA HARVEST

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INTERVIEW BETWEEN

Ernest J. Trexler, Lt Col USAF
Joseph S. Granducci, Maj, USAF

14 SEP 1990

7 January 1969

No 0005369

Lt Col Trexler: The 13th AF SAR responsibility for SEA included the Manila, Saigon, Bangkok and Rangoon FIR's. Maj Zagrodny was at Det 2, PARC, at the 13th AF JSARC; I wrote him ^{experimentally} what was required to change the 13th AF Regulation.

Maj Granducci: Before you got there, 13th AF possessed the SEAsia SAR responsibility. How did 2d ADVON get the responsibility for SAR?

Lt Col Trexler: I wrote the proposed regulation for 13th AF delegating the Saigon, Bangkok and Burma FIR's to the Commander, 2d ADVON.

Maj Granducci: That was drafted when, Sir?

Lt Col Trexler: I don't know the month -- it was a couple months after I got there -- I would say the latter part of 1962. I also wrote the 2d ADVON Regulation which gave the Bangkok FIR SAR responsibility to the Commander of Don Muang, and we also gave him the Rangoon responsibility. Maj Scott was at Don Muang, TDY from PARC. He had a little desk set up in a tent; he had the maps and everything he would need to run a SAR mission. He was there to control SAR missions in Thailand or Burma.

Maj Granducci: What didn't he have?

Lt Col Trexler: Civil SAR authority which is ICAO. . . he had military SAR.

Maj Granducci: I think what you are saying is that he did not, in fact, have any SAR authority until the 13th AF Regulation was published.

Lt Col Trexler: The same would hold true for us at 2d ADVON. You see, PARC sent Al McNamee and Al Sherry over there TDY as early as, I believe, January 62; there were TDY people there until I arrived in 62 (Jul). It was several months later (when the 13th AF Reg was published) because I was trying to get my feet on the ground and get SAR forces together. It was several months though before I got around to writing the regulation.

Maj Granducci: I'm trying to get at the atmosphere within the AOC when you arrived. The AOC had been controlling the Rescue function. When you got there what were you expected to do? How much problem, if any, did you have in drafting and selling the necessity for proper promulgation of SAR authority and SAR directives?

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Lt Col Trexler: When I walked in they said, "You are to assume the entire SAR responsibility for SEA. . . ." There was a period of time between the TDY of the PARC people and when I got there. I got busy writing up rules, regulations and procedures on how to get Vietnamese, Army, Navy, Marine and the few USAF forces together and function as a SAR team.

Maj Granducci: Did you have any indications that there had been any work done in this area before you got there?

Lt Col Trexler: No. I saw not one single piece of paper, procedure or anything else when I walked in. In fact, there wasn't even a desk.

Maj Granducci: How about informal?

Lt Col Trexler: The AOC had been controlling SAR during the period of time when the PARC TDY people were gone; and when I got there, the AOC people were pretty well versed on how to run a SAR mission, where to get forces and the like. I got all the information from them. I then visited the Vietnamese over at their headquarters and the Saigon Fire Department for SCUBA divers and the like. After this, I started putting procedures together on how to get various types of aircraft, boats and the SCUBA divers. The big headache in the whole show over there was lack of equipment to conduct the SAR mission. Also, we had no communications; we didn't even have communications within the base. Trying to get Da Nang and Soc Trang was an impossibility. However, we really had no trouble in accruing SAR forces; the only thing is we had to take what was available, what was not out on a tactical mission, which many times left a lot to be desired. We had the Army H-21 helicopters; but they were not hoist equipped, so I got 250 ft. of rope to put in every helicopter, both Marine and Army. We got litters by sending an emergency requisition out to all bases in the Pacific. We found 8 litters to be carried on helicopters; they were old, either damaged in shipment or broken before they were shipped. So we went downtown, got old rings and cable, fixed them all up and sent them all out to strategic locations. I believe, there were only four of those locations; and they were the same locations for which we later requested dedicated SAR forces: Da Nang, Pleiku, Bien Hoa and Soc Trang. At that time the Army was at Soc Trang.

Maj Granducci: To your knowledge, when you arrived in SEA as the first PCS Det 3 Commander, was there any degree of SAR authority vested in the 2d ADVON?

Lt Col Trexler: To my knowledge, there was nothing published; however, there could have been verbal or printed messages between 13th AF and 2d ADVON indicating or vesting SAR authority for that area. I'm unaware of any written document vesting SAR in 2d ADVON.