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Critical Requirements for MATS Professional Air Rescue Service Forces in Viet Nam (C)

14 SEP 1990

MATS
Scott AFB, Ill

SMC

No 0005429

1. (C) We fully concur with PACAF's stated requirement for a suitable aircrew recovery vehicle (CH3C) and attendant resources in South Viet Nam. References:

a. Hq ARS (C) Ltr (ARXDC), Subject: (U) ARS Area Rescue/Recovery Force Requirements, dated 25 Oct 1963.

b. Hq PACAF (S) Ltr (PFODC), Subject: (U) Requirements for an Aircrew Recovery Vehicle in the Pacific Command, dated 28 Oct 1963.

2. (C) Highly trained, professional Air Rescuemen, equipped with a minimum of six, high speed, long range, all weather CH3C helicopters are most urgently required to comply with USAF, CinC-PAC, PACAF and MATS (WPS) Plans tasking Air Rescue to recover downed air crews engaged in the "dirtiest war on earth." Air Rescue tasks in these plans stem from USAF policy and objectives stated in AFR 55-7(C), "Wartime Search and Rescue (SAR)." They are:

- a. (U) The recovery of personnel.
- b. (C) To deny the enemy a source of intelligence information.
- c. (U) To contribute to morale of combat forces.

3. (C) USAF wartime SAR policy and objectives are not being achieved in Viet Nam because the required resources are not available within Air Rescue Service to do the job. By utter default then, USAF combat aircrews are made dependent upon ill-equipped and ill-trained (for the task) U.S. Army and Marine Corps helicopter resources diverted to accomplish our mission. (Atch #1, Mission Reports - Use of Army/USMC helo's). Their noble efforts have wrought confusion and even disaster when engaged in some attempts to prosecute Air Rescue Service missions. In one case, disaster born of confusion took the lives of five times the number of people initially in need of Air Rescue. Two H-34 helicopters collided in mid-air attempting the rescue of a downed T-28 crew in the Da Nang Region (Det 3, PARC Mission #25/8 Oct 63 - Coordinates 1542N 107 33, 1541N 107 34 on Atch #2). Had professional USAF Air Rescue Service forces been available, the techniques employed would have automatically averted collision and disaster. Air Rescue Service techniques and procedures had their baptism of fire in Korea.

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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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