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Detachment Provisional Second (PARC)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO US Forces 96310

REPLY TO

ATTN OF: Det Prov Second

1 APR 1965

SUBJECT: Det 3 PARC Mission No. 283 31 May 65

TO: Headquarters Pacific Air Rescue Center

Classification (cancelled) (changed to UNCLASS)
effective on 14-3-18, under the authority of
GAS, by 114

INFO: Det 3 PARC

1. By coincidence, one of our HH-43's was flying a local training flight and heard the distressed pilot's initial "Mayday". The helicopter pilot relayed it to Invert at 1000 hours (all times approximate and local), and Invert, in turn, alerted the alert duty officer, myself. The fact that our aircraft are placed on alert each morning at 0900, put us in good position for immediate scramble, even though today's official alert did not begin until 1120.

2. I notified Det 3, PARC of the pilot's ejection at 1030 and relayed his approximate position (098° @ 58 miles) as given me by Invert. The alert crews in the meantime, had been alerted by the still airborne HH-43 and initiated final aircraft combat mission configuration, including the "Range Extension Fuel System" (REFS). Final readiness was confirmed at 1040 and takeoff was accomplished at 1050.

3. Takeoff, climb to 4000' MSL, and cruise progressed smoothly, and initial contact with Invert was established on frequency 278.4. We learned that F-100 Rescap aircraft and Basil 66, HU-16, were enroute to the scene. Soon after border penetration, we established contact with Air America's Victor Rescue Control aircraft. Changes of frequencies had proceeded from 278.4 through 321.0, 311.0, to 364.2 before satisfactory communication was established among all aircraft. Prior to reaching the target area, both helicopters jettisoned the 55 gallon drums, making up REFS. REFS procedures were considered routine and the system functioned as expected.

4. The target area was reached at 1150. A few signals from the survivor's DRT-21 were heard faintly, but neither Alban aircraft (HH-43's) could home on it. Some confusion existed at this time as to the exact location of the crash site, and we experienced a considerable amount of chatter over the SAR frequency as we tried getting within visual range of Basil and/or Victor Control aircraft.

5. At 1230, I (in Alban 21) sighted a small amount of smoke. I circled the area at 3500' MSL four or five times. I saw what I thought to be a signal mirror flashing. The area was made up of very dense jungle and no visual habitation was within 8 - 10 miles. I advised Alban 41 I was

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descending for investigation. (In the critique following the mission, it was felt that I should have perhaps requested that Rescap aircraft go down for the initial look. I certainly agree with this concept if time and conditions warrant.) The area was, in fact, the crashed aircraft and what I had seen flashing was the sun reflecting from scattered metal pieces. All of this time, both Alban helicopters were intermittently receiving weak signals from the survivor's URT-21 radio beacon. They would come and fade, but never get strong. The HU-16 could not pinpoint the location, and Victor Rescue had no ADF homing equipment. By turning until the signal got louder, we got closer to the survivor. Finally the signal became strong enough that our ADF could home on it. We passed over the survivor's chute approximately 1250 and one of my crew members spotted it. Alban 41, circling above us, called simultaneously that he had it spotted also. One of my crew dropped a smoke grenade to mark the area and the survivor released one about the same time.

6. The foliage was so thick, we could not see the survivor. The URT-21's signal was coming in exceptionally loud at this time. We have since conjectured that a combination of a weak battery and dense vegetation limited the signal intensity, thereby shortening its range.

7. Assuming the pilot was injured, I lowered a paramedic to him with the hoist. I hovered over a small opening about 50-100' from the parachute canopy. I estimate the trees to have been 100' tall, as it took all the hoist cable to reach the ground, even with the helicopter touching the tree foliage in places. As the paramedic reached the ground, the survivor walked up to him. Though he had a suspected broken arm, the survivor managed to hold himself in the sling safely enough to allow his exit through the surrounding foliage. The paramedic was subsequently hoisted aboard at 1300 and both Alban aircraft proceeded home.

8. The crew for the mission consisted of the following personnel:

Low A/C (Alban 21)

Captain Jay M. Strayer,
Captain James C. Rodenberg,
A1C Cecil A. Boothby,
SSgt Elson J. Farmer,
A1C Herbert H. Romisch,

(P)
(CP)
(HM)
(PJ)
(PJ)

High A/C (Alban 41)

Captain Israel Freedman,
Captain Warren K. Davis,
A3C Frank P. Hamtke,
SSgt Harold G. Stroud,
A2C Eric A. Anderson Jr.,

(P)
(CP)
(HM)
(PJ)
(PJ)

Sorties flown 2, hours flown 6+00.

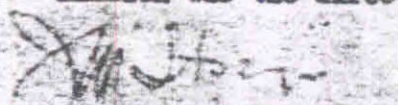
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9. In summary, the mission was carried through without any significant drawbacks. Two outstanding factors were responsible for our success:

a. The makeshift HH-43B supplementary fuel system (REFS), that allowed us an extra 35 minutes "stay" time. Considering the time it took to locate the survivor, the lack of REFS would have delayed his recovery by an unknown and perhaps crucial, length of time. Jettisoning of the REFS tank was a definite advantage in that it allowed much more cabin room for crew members and eliminated the danger of spilled fuel in case of a hit from ground fire.

b. The survivor's possession of an operating UHF-21 radio beacon. Without this device, it is quite conceivable the survivor might never have been located because of his injury and the surrounding high, dense foliage. The advantages of possessing a properly operating signal - supplemented by smoke flares, a strobe light and signal mirror - cannot be overstressed to crew members flying over hostile territory. There can be no doubt in anyone's mind that the success of this particular mission was the direct result of such an operating signal device.


JAY M. STRAYER
Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander