[redacted]

Detachment 5
Pacific Air Rescue Center (PARC)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO San Francisco 96337

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: DET 5 PARC

3 June 1965

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative

TO: ARS

1. Mission Det 5 PARC-529-1 June 1965.

2. SAR Alerted on Guard Channel by SUNDOWN 11, F4B.

3. HU-16B.

a. Pilot - Brunner, Edward M., Capt., 48ARSq.

b. Co-Pilot - Rechlitz, David J., 1st Lt., 48ARSq.

c. Navigator - Glover, Carl D., 1st Lt., 48ARSq.

d. Radio-Operator - Mailloux, Albert H., SSgt., 48ARSq.

e. Flight-Mechanic - Stradling, Norman L., A1C., 48ARSq.

4. Initial notification 0355Z, located survivor 0400Z, landed 0410Z, takeoff 0415Z.

5. CAP assistance SUNDOWN 11, already on scene.

6. Open sea pick-up.

7. ARA-25 Homer.

8. Lt Merrit R. Field, USN, VFP-63, USS Midway.

9. At 0355Z
we received a call on UHF Guard from SUNDOWN 11, calling us, by name, to advise he was circling a pilot decending in a chute. SUNDOWN gave his position as the SHARPNOTE 270 RADIAL at 37 miles.

Classification (cancelled) (changed to [illegible]).
effective on [illegible], under the authority of [illegible] by [illegible]

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS; DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS. DOD DIR 5200.10

[redacted]

Our position was the SHARPNOTE 285 RADIAL at 55 miles, heading 105 degrees, altitude 3,500 feet. I immediately started a turn to 270 degrees and requested a UHF tone from SUNDOWN. His bearing was 210 degrees from me and I took up this heading. I went to climb power and started a descent. SUNDOWN advised the bailout was now contacting the water and gave another TACAN position. I requested another tone and received the same 210 head on bearing. SUNDOWN and I now switched to 282.8 MC, the mission SAR Secondary UHF Frequency in order to clear guard frequency. Another tone was requested and received and the bearing was again the same. Now descneding through 1000 feet I observed on the surface a large circular greenish area. I asked SUNDOWN if the survivor was marked with sea marker dye. Simultaneously, SUNDOWN answered negative, I passed directly over the green spot and now easily recognized it to be the aircraft impact point heavily littered with debris SUNDOWN passed directly overhead myaircraft, and the co-pilot spotted the survivor, ahead, at approximately two miles. The water was very suitable for a landing. No boats were visible in the area. We marked the survivor with a smoke. The wind was light and variable. I made a low drag of the area, continued around, dropped the tanks on base, and landed. A two engine raft approache was completed with the aid of a lifeline. The survivor lost his grip on the line but contact was quickly re-established and the RC, FM and NAV all assisted the survivor into the aircraft. He was entangled in his survival gear which included his dingy. This was all brought into the aircraft where everything was disentangled. The survivor appeared to suffer nothing more than neck rope burns which were bleeding slightly. These were treated by the Navigator using the aircraft first aid kit. We reported the survivor's condition as Okay, took off, and returned him to Danang. Here he was turned over to medical personnel.

10a. At the time of the emergency, SHARPNOTE, Milestone 603 and 608, our rescap, and my aircraft were all working 364.2 MC Primary SAR UHF Frequency. Either 603 or 608, had a stuck microphone button and the frequency was completely unsuitable. SHARPNOTE and I were attempting contact with 603 or 608 to clear the frequency. I believe SHARPNOTE monitored the emergency squak and attempted to contact me unsuccessfully due to the frequency block. SUNDOWN's guard call overrode the block and I went to guard. The stuck mike button on Milestone has been a recurring problem and he has been notified about this same problem on two previous missions.

10b. The bailout position and my position were within from five to ten miles of each other. The surface wind was very light causing no whitecaps. Location of the survivor was uncomplicated for these two reasons. There was time to operate only the ARA-25. Total time elapse from initial notification until airborne from the water was approximately twenty minutes.

EDWARD M. BRUNNER
Capt., USAF
RCC

[redacted]

SECRET

| MISSIONS | RESCUERS | | LOCATIONS | SURVIVORS | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Name | Aircraft | | Name | Service | Aircraft |
| 5-PARC-70-8 Feb | Capt Hartley | HH-43F | 1607N - 10812E | Maj Hung | VNAF | A1H |
| 3-PARC-128-11 Feb | Capt Richardson | HU-16B | 1728N - 10646E | LT Majors | USN | A4C |
| 3-PARC-187-2 Mar | Maj La Dou | HU-16B | 1743N - 10634E | Lt Cullen | USA | F-100 |
| | Maj Ingraham | HH-43F | 1706N - 10640E | Capt Baird | USAF | F-105 |
| | Capt Freedman | HH-43B | 1615N - 10525E | Maj Panas | USAF | F-105 |
| | Lt Phelan | HH-43F | 1720N - 10655E | W/O Van Phu | VNAF | A1H |
| | Capt Kelly | HH-43B | 1604N - 10340E | Capt Spagnola | USAF | F-105 |
| 3-PARC-252-22 Mar | Maj Waechter | HU-16B | 1758N - 10638E | LCol Risner | USAF | F-105 |
| 3-PARC-266-26 Mar | Maj Shook | HU-16B | 1758N - 10635E | CDR Shugart | USN | A4E |
| | Lt Phelan | HH-43F | 1620N - 10823E | LT Wangman | USN | F8U |
| 3-PARC-277-29 Mar* | Maj Shook | HU-16B | 2010N - 10737E | CDR Donnelly | USN | F8U |
| 3-PARC-283-31 Mar | Capt Strayer | HH-43B | 1717N - 10545E | Capt Bigoness | USAF | F-100 |
| 3-PARC-319-9 Apr | Capt Reichardt | HU-16B | 1854N - 10541E | LCDR McNeil | USN | A4C |
| 3-PARC-393-27 Apr | Capt Rodenberg | HH-43B | 1727N - 10445E | LTJG Wilkes | USN | A1H |
| 3-PARC-428-7 May | Capt Reichardt | HU-16B | 1935N - 10605E | Maj Lambert | USAF | F-105 |
| 3-PARC-433-8 May | Capt Reichardt | HU-16B | 1753N - 10705E | LT Wilson | USN | RF8A |
| 3-PARC-448-12 May | Capt Ballinger | HH-43B | 1655N - 10443E | Capt Schneider | USAF | F-105 |
| 3-PARC-469-17 May | Capt Hepp | HH-43B | 1905N - 10442E | Capt Taliaferro | USAF | F-105 |
| 3-PARC-493-23 May | Capt Richardson | HU-16B | 1840N - 10600E | Maj Hernan | USAF | F-105 |
| 4-PARC-269-28 May | Capt Boyles | HH-43F | 1048N - 10640E | | USA | UH-1B |
| 3-PARC-529-1 Jun | Capt Brunner | HU-16B | 1847N - 10609E | LT Field | USN | F8 |
| 5-PARC-313-2 Jun | Capt Hartley | HH-43F | 1611N - 10808E | Capt Lockhart | USAF | HH-43F |
| | | | | SSgt Kilpatrick | | |
| | | | | A2C Smith | | |

* Recovered on 31 March



SECRET

| Mission Number | | | | Rescue Aircraft | | | Persons Saved | | | | Totals | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Det | ARC | Sq - Msn | Date | HU-16 | HH-43 | HH-3 | USAF | USN | USA | Fgn Mil | Indiv Msn | Accumulative |
| 5 | PARC | 70 | 8 Feb | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 3 | PARC | 128 | 11 Feb | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | PARC | 187 | 2 Mar | 1 | 4 | | 4 | | | 1 | 5 | 7 |
| 3 | PARC | 252 | 22 Mar | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 8 |
| 3 | PARC | 266 | 26 Mar | 1 | 1 | | | 2 | | | 2 | 10 |
| 3 | PARC | 277 | 29 Mar | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 11 |
| 3 | PARC | 283 | 31 Mar | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | 12 |
| 3 | PARC | 319 | 1 Apr | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 13 |
| 3 | PARC | 393 | 27 Apr | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 14 |
| 3 | PARC | 425 | 7 May | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 15 |
| 3 | PARC | 433 | 8 May | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 16 |
| 3 | PARC | [illegible] | [illegible] | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | [illegible] |
| 3 | PARC | 469 | 17 May | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | 18 |
| 3 | PARC | 493 | 23 May | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | 19 |
| 4 | PARC | 269 | 28 May | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 | 20 |
| 3 | PARC | 529 | 1 Jun | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | 21 |
| 5 | PARC | 313 | 2 Jun | | 4 | | 4 | | | | 4 | 25 |
| 3 | PARC | 562 | 8 Jun | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | 26 |
| 3 | PARC | 568 | 9 Jun | | 2 | | 2 | | | | 2 | 28 |
| 3 | PARC | 630 | 22 Jun | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | 29 |

1965, South Vietnam. PJ Bill Flowers is a pararescueman on an HH-43 out of Da Nang AB to recover a downed fighter pilot. Another HH-43, supporting the mission, is shot down. Flowers is lowered to the ground to give aid and effect the recovery of the HH-43 crew. After receiving medical aid, they are taken aboard the aircraft. But due to weight limitations, Flowers must be left behind. Enemy forces comb the area, and Flowers discovers his radio is not working. He conceals himself until the Huskie returns and recovers a much-relieved pararescueman.

# Chapter VII

## COMBAT LOSSES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

(U) Air Rescue Service suffered the loss of seven aircrewmen, missing in action, and three helicopters in combat situations in Southeast Asia during Calendar Year 1965. Accounts of these losses, compiled from mission reports, debriefings, and interviews, follow here and are identified by mission numbers. The times of all occurrences are shown in local time.

### (U) Mission: Det 5 - PARC - 313 - 2 Jun 65[1]

(S) At 1904 hours on 2 June, tower operators at Da Nang Airport, Vietnam, alerted Detachment 5 helicopter crews, via the crash telephone, to the crash of a Marine Corps 0-1E aircraft (a Cessna, formerly designated L-19A) ten miles north of the airport at 16-11N 108-08E where it was burning on the mountainside. Three minutes later HH-43F helicopters 63-9713 (Rescue 95) and 63-9714 (Rescue 96) piloted by Captains Floyd R. Lockhart and Jim E. Hartley, respectively, were airborne and enroute to the crash site, with Captain Hartley flying top cover. Arriving on the scene at 1915 hours, Captain Lockhart hovered the "Huskie" while SSgt Dewey A. Kilpatrick, mechanic and hoist operator, lowered A2C Randolph M. Smith, pararescueman,

1. Data obtained from mission reports in Mission Folder 50 in ARSCP files and from interview with Capt. Hartley.

in the sling, after which he attempted to suppress the O-1E fire with rotor wash. At this point in time, Lockhart and others, on the ground, heard a sharp and loud explosive noise, repeated several times, similar to that of a .45 caliber pistol shot. Immediately, a gradual deterioration of fore and aft cyclic control, cyclic roughness, and ineffectual pitch control was experienced by the pilot. Captain Lockhart was unable to prevent the helicopter from pitching forward and descending to the forested hillside, where the left rotorhead struck a tree before the helicopter contacted the ground in the hostile area at 1925 hours.

(S) A2C William J. Flower, pararescueman aboard Rescue 96, observed the crash of the other helicopter and informed Captain Hartley, who executed a hover over the crashed helicopter and ordered his mechanic, SSgt Homer L. Ramsey, to lower the pararescueman in the hoist sling to investigate the condition of Captain Lockhart and his crew of two others. Fowler determined that SSgt Kilpatrick and A2C Smith were in shock and Captain Hartley made the decision, because his helicopter was at the maximum gross weight limit, to move those two from the crash to the Da Nang hospital and return for Captain Lockhart, who was believed to have only minor injuries. He arrived back at the crash site at 1935 hours and delivered Lockhart into the hands of the hospital personnel at 1950 hours, thereby terminating the flight portion of this mission.

(S) Subsequently, troops of the Republic of Vietnam made the area secure for salvage operations. An examination of the downed "Huskie" revealed that rotors, tailbooms, the right main and nose gears, and the right side of the fuselage had suffered major damage. Those parts which were salvagable were recovered and the remainder of the craft was destroyed by explosives.

(S) All crew members of both helicopters are identified below:

63-9713 (Rescue 95)

| | |
|---|---|
| Pilot: | Capt. Floyd R. Lockhart, AO3058376<br>Minor injuries |
| Mechanic: | SSgt Dewey A. Kilpatrick, AF14289763<br>Minor injuries (was in cabin) |
| Pararescueman: | A2C Randolph M. Smith, AF1866374<br>Minor injuries |

63-9714 (Rescue 96)

| | |
|---|---|
| Pilot: | Capt. Jim E Hartley, AO2206098 |
| Copilot: | Capt. James V. Berryhill, 57344A |
| Mechanic: | SSgt Homer L. Ramsey, AF17311555 |
| Pararescueman: | A2C William J. Flower, AF16758877 |

first night mission picking up a Vietnamese A-1 pilot shot down in an attack on the Viet Cong Zone D headquarters in Phuoc Thanh Province northwest of Saigon. For the first night aircrew rescue conducted by an Air Rescue Service unit in Southeast Asia, the pilot received the Vietnamese Air Force Distinguished Flying Cross with a gold star.[13]

With the limited number of helicopters available for aircrew recovery missions, rescue personnel at both detachment and headquarters level felt that combat should be avoided. Kaman provided gun mounts for the M-60 machine gun, but there was not enough room in the HH-43B/F for a gunner. The parajumper was usually too involved with getting the survivor aboard to man a gun. Additionally, the Air Rescue Service did not want their rescue choppers to become gunships. Therefore, the machine guns were rarely mounted. If a situation demanded suppressive fire from their rescue choppers crew members usually fired an AR-15 or M-16 rifle from the door or out the window. In an effort to conserve the available choppers, rescue crews refused to take off on recovery missions until a survivor had been located. Rescue headquarters supported these decisions.[14]

Further developing the argument that Air Rescue Service could not afford needlessly to risk helicopters in search missions, Brig. Gen. Adriel N. Williams, commander of the Air Rescue Service, in a letter to the chief of staff of the Air Force, Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, cited ARS Programming Plan 563 which estimated that the HH-43B/F force would suffer a forty percent attrition rate in the first year of combat operations. Williams also noted that whereas the plan called for a minimum of nine HH-43Bs to be modified as F models, in fact Air Force headquarters directed only six modifications.[15] Attrition rates matched the estimates as three HH-43Bs and two HH-43Fs were either damaged or destroyed during the Viet Cong attack at Bien Hoa. In May 1965 an F model sustained battle damage and on June 3, enemy gunners brought down one of the beefed-up Huskies on a recovery mission.[16]

Helicopters, because of their slow speed and the mechanical complexity of the gearing in the exposed rotor system, have always been vulnerable to antiaircraft and small arms fire. Initially ill-prepared to meet the demands of aircrew rescue in Southeast Asia, rescue personnel had to develop tactics and doctrine. It was during this time that the Search and Rescue Task Force evolved.

In late 1964, due to the limitations of the HH-43 helicopter, Air Rescue Service units were not providing dependable aircrew recovery. In Vietnam, Army and Marine choppers often picked up their own downed flyers. In Laos, Air America pilots, thoroughly familiar with the nuances of terrain and weather, still performed most of the aircrew recoveries. For instance, between June 1964 and June 1965, Air America helicopters picked up twenty-one downed aircrew members. Air Rescue Service choppers rescued only five flyers downed in Laos.[17] Nevertheless, it was in this period that

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 63-9712 | 26 Jan 69 | 38th ARRS Pleiku | SVN | PEDRO 74 | William F. Clark | Warren Kaufman | Donald W. Gooding | Luther T. Jones | Gus Jones | George Bogner (observer) | Helo lost power and c revealed helo had rec |
| 63-9713 | 2 Jun 65 | unknown unit/station | SVN | unknown | Lockhart | | Kilpatric | R. Smith | | | Flying rescue cap for ( was hit by ground fire downed O-1F aircraft |
| 63-9715 | 8 May 67 | 38th ARRS Tan Son Nhut | SVN | unknown | J.J. Hoye | Jacox | | P.S. Resos | | | Aircraft crashed while from base on a medic |

Return to the Jolly Green Home Page

Detachment 5
Pacific Air Rescue Center (MATS)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO San Francisco 96337

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: Det 5 PARC

7 June 1965

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative

TO: HQ ARS (ARSCP)

1. Mission Number: 5-313 - 2 June 1965

2. SAR Alerted by: Danang AB Tower

3. SAR Aircraft Used: HH-43F

4. Crew;

a. Rescue Crew Commander: Capt Jim E. Hartley

b. Co-pilot: Capt James V. Berryhill

c. Crew Chief: SSgt Homer L. Ramsey

d. Pararescue: A2C William J. Flower

5. Rescap: UH-1B

6. Narrative: At 1904 hours on 2 June 1965, the primary crash phone rang and tower advised us that a L-19 had crashed and was burning on a mountain side ten miles north of Danang (1611N 10808E). At 1907 hours helicopters63-9713 and 63-9714 were airborne proceeding to the crash site. I was the rescue crew commander on 63-9714 flying cover for 63-9713. We arrived at the crash site at 1915 hours and 713 made an approach and lowered his pararescue man down by hoist to determine if there were any survivors. At approximately 1920 hours my pararescue man stated 713 just crashed. I started descending and made an approach over the downed helicopter. SSgt Ramsey (crew chief) lowered A2C Flower (pararescue) down the hoist to render assistance. The two crewmembers that were in a state of shock were hoisted up first. Knowing that the remaining personnel had only minor injuries and being at maximum gross weight, I elected to return the injured crewmembers to Danang. I returned to the crash site at 1935 hours and picked up the other crewmembers. We returned to Danang arriving at 1950 hours.

JIM E. HARTLEY
Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

Info Copy to: HQ PARC(DOARO)
Det 3 PARC

SECRET

Classification (cancelled) (changed to UNCLAS).
effective on 14-3-85, under the authority of GDS by [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: Det Prov Sec [illegible]

11 Jun 1965

SUBJECT: Det 3, PARC Rescue Mission #552, 8 Jun 1965 [illegible]

IAW AFR-205-2
13 MAY 1970

TO: Det 3, PARC

1. [illegible] called Invert Control and advised that the pilot of [illegible] was ejecting in the vicinity of the target area at 17°5[illegible]N 10[illegible]E.

2. [illegible] Invert Control called the Rescue duty officer and passed information [illegible]. The helicopter RCC's proceeded to [illegible].

3. 0934Z. Initiated call to [illegible] via SSB and intercepted the duty officer's call to me. He advised me of the ejection and to standby for scramble of our helicopters. He also stated that Buyer Charlie was enroute to the scene. Fuel requirements for the radius, and an out of ground effect hover had been preplanned and the auxilliary tanks were being filled with the required fuel at this time.

4. 095[illegible]Z. Received a [illegible] from Major Lawrence. He advised us to scramble the helicopters and that Buyer 44 was departing Udorn as soon as possible.

5. 1005Z. Curse 22 and 21 airborne and climbing to 9,000 feet. Crossed the Mekong River under Invert's control as we were unable to contact either Buyer Charlie or Buyer 44.

6. Milestone 604, a RESCAP A1H, joined with Curse Flight as we leveled at 9,000. An initial heading of 045° was maintained to avoid known AAA positions.

7. 1035Z. Curse 22 and 21 turned to a heading of 085° and proceeded direct to the target area. Established radio contact with Buyer Charlie. Milestone 604 still flying RESCAP for the flight.

8. 1040Z. Established visual contact with Buyer Charlie and advised Invert that the HU-16 would assume navigation for us.

9. 110[illegible]Z. Milestone 601 was continuing to fly low RESCAP on the downed pilot and had a good mark on his location. He had received the [illegible] beacon at intermittent intervals in addition to a visual sighting of a flare.

DOWNGRADED AT [illegible] INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER [illegible] YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

USAFHDC # 653083

Hq PARC Log No. 1331-65

Hq ARS SC No. 653489

Incl. 1

**SECRET** [redacted]

[illegible] Task [illegible] observed any movement [illegible]. Curse 22 started a descent from 9,000' and Curse 21 was instructed to remain at altitude unless required to make the pick up. Milestone 601 continued to fly low RESCAP and gave a final mark on the area.

11. [illegible]Z. Curse 22 called for radio silence and then flew directly over the survivor on the first pass. A good URT 21 signal was received and the pilot [illegible] requested a pen gun flare. Since the first pass was downwind, a hard 180° turn was made to get in position over the smoke before it dissipated. An out-of-ground effect hover was established on the east side of the ridgeline which was quite steep and covered by 100' trees and dense undergrowth. The helicopter was lowered as much as possible into the trees and the full length of the hoist cable was required to reach the survivor. The hover required [illegible] lbs of torque initially and [illegible] lbs after the survivor was in the sling. (Coordinates of pick up point [illegible])

12. [illegible]Z. The hoist pick up was completed and a climb was made directly over the area to 5,000'. Curse 21 joined up and a climb on course was made to 10,000'. Buyer Charlie departed for home plate and Buyer 44 assumed on-scene command. Curse Flight maintained 10,000' over a broken to occasionally overcast [illegible] until [illegible] miles from Nakhon Phanom. We found a hole and descended VFR below the clouds. Milestone and Teak Flight continued to fly RESCAP until we crossed the Mekong River at 1225Z.

13. 1235Z. Curse Flight landed at Nakhon Phanom. Mission complete.

14. Helicopter Crew Members:

<u>Curse 22 (Save Helicopter)</u>

P Curtis, Thomas J., Capt, 47753A
CP Hepp, Bruce C., Capt, 58924A
HM Cutillo, David M., A2C, AF12679668
PJ Wallace, Richard A., A2C, AF19755004

<u>Curse 21 (Cover Helicopter)</u>

P Schaetzle, Stanley O., Capt, 62882A
CP Turk, Walter F., 1st Lt, 83155A
HM Alvarado, Francisco, A1C, AF18[illegible]3905
PJ [illegible], Michael [illegible], A2C, AF1[illegible]755001

DOWNGRADED
IAW AFR 205-2

**SECRET** [redacted]

Detachment Provisional Second (PARC)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO U. S. Forces 96310

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: Det Prov Second

SUBJECT: Det 3, PARC Rescue Mission Number #568 [illegible] Jun 65

TO: [illegible] PARC

1. At 0505Z Radar Operations notified us that there was a flame-out approximately 70 nautical miles SSW of Invert. The helicopter crew, call sign "Flesh 22" commenced to scramble.

2. At 0506Z both pilots successfully ejected from Leopard [illegible] after an unsuccessful attempt to make an emergency refueling. The wing man, Leopard [illegible], reported both chutes in sight.

3. During the helicopter scramble, the crew received new information from Invert that the pilots ejected 67 nautical miles on the 198° radial. Flesh 22 was airborne at [illegible] and departed on a heading of 198°.

4. When airborne, Flesh 22 contacted [illegible] commander, who was also [illegible] Leopard [illegible] located [illegible] nautical miles on the 200° radial [illegible].

5. At [illegible] Flesh 22 was notified [illegible]

[illegible]

8. [illegible] Rescue 562 arrived and [illegible]

9. At 0655Z Rescue 562 departed to Lion with both survivors [illegible] escorted by [illegible] 43.

10. At 0700Z Flesh 22 departed for Invert and landed at 0810Z.

11. Additional information is as follows:

Crew of Flesh 22

P Capt Richard A. Laine
CP Capt Joe K. Ballinger
HM A3C Darwin L. Devers
PJ A2C Michael T. Henebry

Number of Sorties - 2

Total Time - 1+55

12. Recommendations: Instructions not to pick up survivors should not be given to a rescue crew until the survivors' condition is positively determined.

FOR THE COMMANDER

RICHARD A. LAINE
Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

Note:

Pilots recovered were Capt Jerry E Getman, A03050200 45TFS and Capt Carroll D Keeter, A03047419 43TFS

Ref Para 12. Instructions were passed from K ASOC on the assumption that survivors were in good condition as reported by rescap. Request [illegible] survivors parent unit [illegible] considered [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Date of Loss: [illegible]

Country of Loss: [illegible]

Loss Coordinates: [illegible]

Status (in 1973): Killed/Body Not Recovered

Category: [illegible]

Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: [illegible]

Refno: [illegible]

Other Personnel in Incident: [illegible] (remains [illegible])

Source: Compiled by Homecoming II Project 01 April 1990 [illegible] from U.S. Government agency [illegible] correspondence [illegible] POW/MIA [illegible] published sources [illegible] interviews. Updated by the P.O.W. NETWORK [illegible] 1992.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

SPECIAL ORDER 20 April 1966
GB-104

The Aviators' Valor Award for 1965 is awarded to CAPTAIN ANTHONY A MUEHLING JR, FV3065528, who distinguished himself as pilot of an amphibious aircraft on the South China Sea, on 18 June 1965, in the rescue of five personnel from a mid-air collision between two B-52 aircraft. The collective acts of CAPT MUEHLING were responsible for saving the lives of the survivors of the mid-air collision as well as his fellow crew members. Arriving in the impact area shortly after dawn, CAPTAIN MUEHLING spotted one man lying motionless in a life raft in extremely rough seas generated by a passing typhoon. He accomplished an open sea landing near the raft. This man was recovered and found deceased due to wounds suffered during ejection. CAPTAIN MUEHLING then water-taxied the amphibian and recovered two other survivors. Enroute to a fourth survivor, progressively rougher seas swamped the HU-16, causing an electrical fire on the flight deck. All electrical power was turned off and the fire extinguished. However, the single side band radio and two inverters were rendered inoperative. The fourth survivor was then recovered and given medical attention. By this time, prolonged taxiing, extremely rough seas, and extreme heat in the aircraft caused physical exhaustion and sea sickness among the crew members and survivors alike. CAPTAIN MUEHLING, although fatigued, maneuvered the HU-16 to permit the opening of windows and hatches to ventilate the aircraft and dissipate the extreme heat. An assisting aircraft, however, spotted a fifth survivor and CAPTAIN MUEHLING taxied to and recovered this man. He then attempted to return to base. Several water takeoffs were attempted, but an engine power loss, high seas and wind prevented liftoff. An aircraft was contacted and surface vessels requested for assistance. The closest vessel, however, was over two hours distant and no alternative remained except to maintain directional control by use of engine power in the face of ever mounting seas. All hatches were closed to prevent water entry and as sea conditions worsened, all personnel aboard suffered from sea sickness, dehydration, and exhaustion. While CAPTAIN MUEHLING was physically laboring to maintain directional control, a large swell struck the propeller of number two engine, bending one blade and forcing it into a full reverse position. Takeoff was impossible and CAPTAIN MUEHLING strenuously fought to control the amphibian with the one remaining engine until help arrived. A merchant vessel arrived at mid-day and all survivors and crew members, less the pilot, co-pilot and one pararescueman were transferred. Later, a U. S. Navy vessel arrived and these personnel were transferred to this vessel. The attempt to hoist the HU-16 commenced. The remaining crewmen entered a raft while CAPTAIN MUEHLING stayed aboard the HU-16 for hoisting to begin. While holding the raft close to the HU-16 by means of a life line, a large swell tossed the amphibian up and then suddenly dropped it, snapping the hoisting cables. Seeing the drop tank about to crush the crew members in the raft, CAPTAIN MUEHLING physically pulled the raft clear of the drop tank, narrowly averting injury to these crew members. The Captain of the Navy vessel ordered all crewmen removed from the amphibian and the HU-16 rigged for towing. However, due to extremely rough seas and damage incurred during the attempted hoisting,

SO GB-104, DAF, 20 April 1966, continued:

the HU-16 sank during the night. CAPTAIN MUEHLING had spent over fourteen hours on the open sea under extremely adverse conditions of rough seas, physical exhaustion, dehydration, and aircraft malfunction. His individual acts of heroism, and disregard for his own personal safety, coupled with sheer determination, made possible the saving of four lives, the recovery of a deceased pilot, and insured the safety of his crew. By his extraordinary courageous actions and humanitarian regard for his fellowmen, CAPTAIN MUEHLING has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE:

J. P. McCONNELL, General, USAF
Chief of Staff

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE · OFFICIAL · HEADQUARTERS U.S. AIR FORCE

R J PUGH, Colonel, USAF
Director of Administrative Services

DISTRIBUTION
GO

Briefed 18 Jun

At 2103Z 17 June, 2 B-52's had a mid-air collision approximately 100 miles West of Clark AFB. An HU-16 from the 31st ARS made an open sea landing and took aboard 4 survivors and 1 deceased. Due to rough seas, the HU-16 could not take off therefore, Naval Helicopters were dispatched from CUBI PT to make a hoist pick up. Apparently before the choppers arrived, an LST arrived on the scene, took the survivors and the para rescuemen aboard and took the HU-16 in tow. Plans are to turn the tow over to a Navy Destroyer when it arrives on scene. The status of the search as of [illegible] is as follows. Signals have been heard on a URC-21. As of [illegible] the 31st had 7 acft in the air and planned to keep two acft up all night. At first light they plan to launch 9 acft. The 31st has requested assistance from the 79th and that unit has dispatched two HC-54's to assist. An HC-97 already en-route to Clark for normal 31st [illegible] will take minimum [illegible] and proceed [illegible] to Clark.

Sender: bvargas@pjassn.org
Received: from srv1.thuntek.net (srv1.thuntek.net [206.206.98.18])
by hpamgaaa.compuserve.com (8.8.8/8.8.8/HP-1.1) with ESMTP id ? AA12261
for <rlapointe@compuserve.com>; Thu, 18 Mar 1999 19:31:08 -0500 (EST)
Received: from default (abq-052.thuntek.net [207.66.52.52]) by srv1.thuntek.net (8.9.1/8.6.12TNT1.0) with SMTP id RAA17130 for <rlapointe@compuserve.com>; Thu, 18 Mar 1999 17:30:56 -0700 (MST)
Message-ID: <004501be71a2$67d670a0$0c3442cf@default>
From: "Bill Vargas" <bvargas@pjassn.org>
To: "Robert LaPointe" <rlapointe@compuserve.com>
Subject: Re: HU-16
Date: Thu, 18 Mar 1999 17:49:08 -0700
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain;
charset="iso-8859-1"
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
X-Priority: 3
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 4.72.2106.4
X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V4.72.2106.4

Bob

The mid-air happened on 18 June, 1965 about 250 miles from Subic Bay on the way to Vietnam. I called Tony Muehling (the AC on the mission) and he is going to send me copies of the statements all of the rescue crew member had to submit. I think you will find it very interesting. When you go to Maxwell see if you can find anything on it. It was kept very hush hush by SAC. All you saw in the news was that they had an accident. The first survivor I got into the HU-16 was the Navigator/Bombardier (Lt. Col. who found out he made O-6 just before he took off) of one of the aircraft and the first words out of his mouth was SAC goes to war for the first time and the "fuck up". I'll send you the stuff when I get it from Tony.

Bill

MAXWELL

~~18 - 19 June 1965~~

~~18/1200/~~

18/1350/CCP Called Clark AFB and made contact with Maj Clark, Det 2, PARC (13th AF JRCC) RE. B-52 Mid-air. The HU-16 that made an open sea landing was piloted by Capt Muehling. PJ did not jump. Confirmed pick up of 4 survivors and 1 deceased. All were taken from HU-16 by Norwegian Motor Ship, Argo. The US Naval ship, Point Defiance, a sub-tender (modified LST), took the survivors and deceasee aboard from the Argo. The Point Defiance is attempting to hoist the HU-16 on board. If unable, will tow to port. HU-16 reportedly bent a prop blade but did not lose an engine. Prop blade reportedly bent by water contact. Search status: Still have 7 personnel mission. Plan to launch following at 2200Z: 8- C-130, 3- HU-16, 2-KC-135, 2-B-57, 2-C-47, 3-P3 , 1-HC-54, and 3-HC-97. The C-130 will probably split the period - 4 & 4. The HC-54 from the 79th and the HC-97s may get off late. The 79th could only furnish one HC-54 due to other missions. Last position of HU-16 and Point Defiance was 1655N 11750E. This puts him approx 200 miles NE of Cubic.

CONFIDENTIAL

TES [illegible] ZCZCVC[illegible]
[illegible] RUCSCN
RE RUMADA 12F 18/0[illegible]
R 18[illegible]
FM DETS PACARRESCUECEN CLARK AB PI
TO RUEAHQ/HQ USAF
RUCDAA/HQ MATS
RUHLAM/PACIFIC AIR RESCUE CENTER HICKAM AFB HAWAII
RUHLKM/HQ PACAF
RUCSC/HQ SAC
RUCDSH/HQ ARS ORLANDO AFB FLA
[illegible]/13AF CLARK AB PI
[illegible]/6TH CSG CLARK AB PI
[illegible]/31ST ARS CLARK AB PI
RUHRDA/[illegible] ADIV GUAM
BT

DOWNGRADED IAW AFR-205-2 13 MAY 1970

S E C R E T 1[illegible]. 18 JUNE 65. HQ USAF
(AF-XOPCE), HQ MATS ([illegible]), HQ ARS (ARS-CP), HQ PARC (COMMAND
POST). HQ PACAF (PFCCO-H), HQ SAC (COMMAND POST).
THE FOLLOWING SECRET SECRET MSG IS RETRANSMITTED FOR YOUR INFORMATION
AND DISSEMINATION. QUOTE:
FOR [illegible] CON
SECRET
SAR SITREP NR 2 (U)
1. FOLLOWING SURVIVORS OF CREW E ZERO 9 ABOARD AND UNINJURED:
CO-PILOT 1ST LT KENNETH D. HARTEN A0[illegible]36457

CONFIDENTIAL SECRET

PAGE 2 RUMADA 12F S E C R E T
ELECTRONIC WARFARE OFFICER 1ST LT J.L. ERBES 76[illegible]54A
NAVIGATOR 1ST LT J. [illegible]. COLLIER III A0[illegible]31965
2. FOLLOWING SURVIVOR OF CREW E ZERO 4:
RADAR NAVIGATOR LT COL C.P. ANDERMAN A0439897 POSSIBLE RIB
FRACTURES PROGNOSIS GOOD.
3. 1ST LT HARTEN AND 1ST LT ERBES BELIEVE THEY SIGHTED ONE EACH
OTHER PARACHUTES
4. 1ST LT COLLIER STATES THE RADAR NAVIGATOR CAPT LOWERY SHOULD
HAVE GOTTEN OUT UNLESS THERE WAS A SEAT MALFUNCTION.
5. LTCOL ANDERMAN [illegible] SIGHTING [illegible] OTHER PARACHUTES -
THESE ARE PROBABLY THOSE OF OTHER SURVIVORS.
6. COURSE OF AIRCRAFT TAIL NO 947 BELIEVED PASSING THROUGH 1[illegible]5
DEG, IN A TURN THIS IS ESTIMATE OF CREW E ZERO 9.
7 COURSE OF OTHER AIRCRAFT TAIL NO 17[illegible] BELIEVED TO BE 285 DEG,
THIS IS ESTIMATE OF CREW ZERO 4.
8. CAUSE OF ACCIDENT MID AIR COLLISION BETWEEN AIRCRAFT NO 947
AND NO 179.
9. CAPT ROBERTSON AIRCRAFT COMMANDER OF CREW ZERO 4 DEAD WHEN
PICKED UP FROM WATER BY HU-16.
10. SURVIVAL CHANCES OF OTHER CREW MEMBERS UNKNOWN BY SURVIVORS.

CONFIDENTIAL SECRET

PAGE 3 RUMADA 12F S E C R E T
11. LT SLOCOMBE NAVIGATOR OF HU-16 STATES THAT ALL SURVIVORS WERE
PICKED UP WITHIN AN AREA OF 4 TO 5 SQUARE MILES.
12 EFFORTS TO TAKE ABOARD HU-16 ABORTED WHEN LIFTING PAD STRIPPED
DUE TO EFFECT OF SUDDEN SWELL WHEN PLANE SUSPENDED FROM HOOK
ONLY ALTERNATIVE NOW APPEARS TO BE TOWING, ATTEMPTING TO TAKE
PLANE IN TOWEN [illegible] GRAPPLE [illegible] WITH ME AND ACCEPT TOW.
GP-4.
BT

CONFIDENTIAL

TBSHA2292C0VC313
PP RUCOSH
DE RUMABA 12F 19/0500Z
P 190208Z
FM DET2 PACARESCHECEN CLARK AB PI
TO RUEAHQ/HQ USAF
RUCDAA/HQ MATS
RUHLKM/PACIFIC AIR RESCUE CENTER HICKAM AFB HAWAII
RUHLKM/HQ PACAF
RUCSC/HQ SAC
RUCOSH/HQ ARS ORLANDO AFB FLA
ZEN/13AF CLARK AB PI
ZEN/405TH CSG CLARK AB PI
ZEN/31ST ARS CLARK AB PI
RUMRDA/3 ADIV GUAM
BT
S E C R E T 130AR 50010. 19 JUNE 65. HQ USAF
(AF-XOPGF), HQ MATS (MAOCO), HQ ARS (ARS-CP), HQ PARC (COMMAND
POST), HQ PACAF (PFOCO-H), HQ SAC (COMMAND POST).
THE FOLLOWING SECRET SECRET MSG IS RETRANSMITTED FOR YOUR INFORMATION
AND DISSEMINATION. QUOTE:
FOR BASE COM
SECRET
SAR SITREP NR 2 (U)
1. FOLLOWING SURVIVORS OF CREW E ZERO 9 ABOARD AND UNINJURED:
CO-POLIT 1ST LT KENNETH D. HARTEN A03136457

PAGE 2 RUMABA 12F S E C R E T
ELECTRONIC WARFARE OFFICER 1ST LT J.L. ERBES 768[illegible]4A
NAVIGATOR 1ST LT J. A. COLLIER III A03131965
2. FOLLOWING SURVIVOR OF CREW E ZERO 4:
RADAR NAVIGATOR LTCOL C.P. ANDERMAN A0439897 POSSIBLE RIB
FRACTURES PROGNOSIS GOOD.
3. 1ST LT HARTEN AND 1ST LT ERBES BELIEVE THEY SIGHTED ONE EACH
OTHER PARACHUTES
4. 1ST LT COLLIER STATES THE RADAR NAVIGATOR CAPT LOWERY SHOULD
HAVE GOTTEN OUT UNLESS THERE WAS A SEAT MALFUNCTION.
5. LTCOL ANDERMAN INDICATED SIGHTING FOUR OTHER PARACHUTES
THESE ARE PROBABLY THOSE OF OTHER SURVIVORS.
6. COURSE OF AIRCRAFT TAIL NO 047 BELIEVED PASSING THROUGH 165
DEG, IN A TURN THIS IS ESTIMATE OF CREW E ZERO 9.
7 COURSE OF OTHER AIRCRAFT TAIL NO 179 BELIEVED TO BE 285 DEG,
THIS IS ESTIMATE OF CREW ZERO 4.
8. CAUSE OF ACCIDENT MID AIR COLLISION BETWEEN AIRCRAFT NO 047
AND NO 179.
9. CAPT ROBERTSON AIMCRAFT COMMANDER OF CREW ZERO 4 DEAD WHEN
PICKED UP FROM WATER BY HU-16.
10. SURVIAL CHANCES OF OTHER CREW MEMBERS UNKNOWN BY SURVIVORS.

PAGE 3 RUMABA 12F S E C R E T
11. LT SLOCOMBE NAVIGATOR OF HU-16 STATES THAT ALL SURVIVORS WERE
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12 EFFORTS TO TAKE ABOARD HU-16 ABORTED WHEN LIFTING PAD STRIPPED
DUE TO EFFECT OF SUDDEN SWELL WHEN PLANE SUSPENDED FROM HOOK
ONLY ALTERNATIVE NOW APPEARS TO BE TOWING, ATTEMPTING TO TAKE
PLANE IN TWVEM DESIRE GRAPPLE RDVU WITH ME AND ACCEPT TOW.
GP-4.
BT

*Confidential F-1 ... Orig* SECRET

PRIORITY

*31-336-*

NNNNASBSHA267ZCQVB545
PP RUCCSH
DE RUMABA 302F 19/1835Z
P 191708Z
FM 31ARESCUESQ CLARK AB PHIL
TO RUCCSH/HQ ARS ORLANDO AFB FLA
RUCDAA/HQ MATS
RUEAHQ/HQ USAF
RUHLKM/HQ PACARESCUECEN HICKAM AFB HAWAII
RUHLKM/HQ PACAF HICKAMAFB HAWAII
ZEN/DET 2 PACARESCUECEN CLARK AB PHIL
ZEN/405FTRWG CLARK AB PHIL
ZEN/13 AF CLARK AB PHIL
RUMRDA/3ADV ANDERSON AB GUAM
RUHLKM/76ARESCUESQ HICKAM AFB HAWAII
RUMRDA/79ARESCUESQ ANDERSEN AB GUAM

20 JUN 65 01 10 *Proc #2*

*Posted* *Action: ARCO* *Info: ARCO*

Classification (cancelled) (changed to *Unclassified*) effective on *14-5-95*, under the authority of *IAW AFR 205-2*, by *[illegible]*

18 MAY 1970

BT

S E C R E T /31 ARCO 50253 19 JUN 65. FOR HQ ARS ARSCP): HQ MATS (MTCP):HQ USAF (AF-XOPCF): HQ PARC (COMMAND POYT): HQ PACAF (PFCCO-H): 405FTCWG (WCC): 13AF (VCMMAND POST):

1. RCS: 1-ARS-F1, PROCESS REPORT NUMBER TWO
2. 31-336-65
3. 19 JUNE 1965 1600Z
4. 1715N 11700E, 1715N 11930E, 45NM; 80 PERCENT EFFECTIVE; EFFECTIVENESS LIMITED BY ROUGH SEAS.
5. 1500 SCATTERED VARIABLE BROKEN, VISIBILITY 15. OCCASIONAL RAINSHOWERS; WINDS 200 DEGREESAT 15 KNOTS9

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PAGE 2 RUMABA 302F S EC R E T

6. NUMEROUS DEBRIS SIGHTED IN SEARCH AREA, INCLUDING LIFE RAFTS, TIP TANKS, HELMET BAG OILSLICK (1654N 11807E), DYE MARKER.
7. SEARCH WILL CONTINUE IN SAME AREAS AS INDICATED IN PARAGRAPH 7, PROGRESS REPORT NUMBER ONE. MINIMUM OF 20 USAF AIRCRAFT (HC-97, C-130, C-47, HC-54, B-57) WILLPARTICIPATE PLUS USN ANDUNCG AIRCRAFT AS AVAILABLE.
8. USN P3E, 23 PLUS 00, 1 SORTIE; USAF C-47, 16 PLUS 40, 3 SORTIES; USAF B-57, 0PLUS10, 4 SORTIES; USCG HU-16, 27 PLUS50, 3 SORTIES: USAF HC-97, 11PLUS10 1 SORTIES; USN PM. 9PLUS35, 1 SORTIES: USAF C-54, 5PLUS10, 1 SORTIES; USAF C-130, 99PLUS 00 0 SORTIES.
9. ASSISTING SURFACE VESSELS: USN PT. DEFIANCE: USN GRAPPLE; USCG KUKUI.
10. USN SALVAGE VESSEL IN AREA PICKING UP DEBRIS AND TRANSFERRING TO USCG CUTTER KUKUI. HELMET BAG WITH NAME LOWRY, A 3026915, RECOVERED AND PASS TO CRASH SITE. KUKUI CONDUCTING CREEPING LINE SEARCH AND RECOVERING WRECKAGE. BEEPER TONES REPORTED AND INVESTIGATED; NEGATIVE RESULTS. FOLLOWING CLASSIFIED SECRET: RUSSIAN VESSEL, POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED (FLAG WITH HAMMER AND SICKLE), SPOTTED AS FOLLOWS 0344Z, 1700N 11055E, HEADING 210; 0945Z, 1700N 1 815E, HEADING 005. CREW FROM AF RESCUE 17987 AND FOUR SURVIVORS RETURNED TO CLARK AT

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 3 RUMABA 302F S E C R E T

1130Z. CONDITION OF CREW OK; CONDITION OF FOUR SURVIVORS; MINOR INJURIES. ONE HARNESS, DINGY AND PARACHUTE (OPEN) FOUND BY CREW OF 17987; HARNESS STRAPS WERE NOT BUCKLED. GP-4.

BT

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

CONFIDENTIAL

ARCO # [illegible]

65-3195

NNNNASBSHA267ZCCVE545
PP RUCCSH
DE RUMABA 302F 19/1835Z
P 191708Z
FM 31ARESCUESQ CLARK AB PHIL
TO RUCCSH/HQ ARS ORLANDO AFB FLA
RUCDAA/HQ MATS
RUEAHQ/HQ USAF
RUHLKM/HQ PACARESCUECEN HICKAM AFB HAWAII
RUHLKM/HQ PACAF HICKAMAFB HAWAII
ZEN/DET 2 PACARESCUECEN CLARK AB PHIL
ZEN/405FTRWG CLARK AB PHIL Classification (cancelled) (changed)
ZEN/13 AF CLARK AB PHIL effective on 14-3-75
RUMRDA/3ADV ANDERSON AB GUAM GAS, by
RUHLKM/76ARESCUESQ HICKAM AFB HAWAII
RUMRDA/79ARESCUESC ANDERSEN AB GUAM
BT
S E C R E T /31 ARSQ 50753 19 JUN 65. FOR HQ ARS(ARSCP): HQ MATS (MTCP):HQ USAF (AF-XOPCF): HQ PARC (COMMAND POYT): HQ PACAF (PFOCO-H): 405FTRWG (VCC): 13AF (VCOMMAND POST):
1. RCS: 1-ARS-F1, PROGESS REPORT NUMBER TWO
2. 31-336-65
3. 19 JUNE 1965 1600Z
4. 1715N 11700E, 1715N 11930E, 45NM; 80 PERCENT EFFECTIVE; EFFECTIVENESS LIMITED BY ROUGH SEAS.
5. 1500 SCATTERED VARIABLE BROKEN, VISIBILITY 15, OCCASIONAL RAINSHOWERS; WINDS 200 DEGREESAT 15 KNOTS9

PAGE 2 RUMABA 302F S EC R E T
6. NUMEROUS DEBRIS SIGHTED IN SEARCH AREA, INCLUDING LIFE RAFTS, TIP TANKS, HELMET BAG OILSLICK (1654N 11807E), DYE MARKER.
7. SEARCH WILL CONTINUE IN SAME AREAS AS INDICATED IN PARAGRAPH 7, PROGRESS REPORT NUMBER ONE. MINUMUN OF 20 USAF AIRCRAFT (HC-97, C-130, C-47, HC-54, B-57) WILLPARTICIPATE PLUS USN ANDUSCG AIRCRAFT AS AVAILABLE.
8. USN P3E, 23 PLUS 00, 1 SORTIE; USAF C-47, 16 PLUS 40, 3 SORTIES; USAF B-57, 6PLUS10, 4 SORTIES; USCG HU-16, 27 PLUS50, 3 SORTIES; USAF HC-97, 11PLUS10 1 SORTIES; USN PM. 9PLUS35, 1 SORTIES: USAF C-54, 5PLUS10, 1 SOGTIES; USAF C-130, 99PLUS 00 10 SORTIES.
9. ASSISTING SURFACE VESSELS: USN PT. DEFIANCE: USN GRAPPLE; USCG KUKUI.
10. USN SALVAGE VESSEL IN AREA PICKING UP DEBRIS AND TRANSFERRING TO USCG CUTTER KUKUI. HELMET BAG WITH NAME LOWRY, AC3026918, RECOVERED AND PASS TO CRASH SITE. KUKUI CONDUCTING CREEPING LINE SEARCH AND RECOVERING WRECHAGE. BEEPER TONES REPORTED AND INVESTIGATED; NEGATIVE RESULTS. FOLLOWING CLASSIFIED SECRET: RUSSIAN VESSEL, POSITIVELY INDENTIFIED (FLAG WITH HAMMER AND SICKLE), SPOTTED AS FOLLOWS 0344Z, 1720N 11855E, HAEDING 210; 0949Z, 1700N 11815E, HEADING 005. CREW FROM AF RESCUE 17287 AND FOUR SURVIVORS RETURNED TO CLARK AT

PAGE 3 RUMABA 302F S E C R E T
1130Z. CONDITION OF CREW OK; CONDITION OF FOUR SURVIVORS; MINOR INJURIES. ONE HARNESS, DINGY AND PARACHUTE (OPEN) FOUND BY CREW OF 17287; HARNESS STRAPS WERE NOT BUCKLED. ~~/GP-4.~~
BT

P 180615Z
FM 31 ARS CLARK AB PI
TO RUCQSH/HQ ARS ORLANDO AFB FLA
INFO RUCDAA/HQ MATS
RUEAHQ/HA USAF
RUHLKM/HQ PACARESCUECEN HICKAM AFB HAW
ZEN/DET 2 PACARESCUECEN CLARK AB PI
ZEN/405 FTRWG CLARK AB PI
ZEN/HQ 13AF CLARK AB PI
RUMRDA/3AD ANDERSEN AB GUAM
RUHLKM/76ARESCUESQ HICKAM AFB HAW
RUMRDA/79ARESCUESQ ANDERSEN AB GUAM
ET

Classification (cancelled) (changed to UNCLAS
effective on 11-3-75, under the authority of
GDS, by

C O N F I D E N T I A L 31ARSO 50249 18 JUN 65. FOR HQ ARS (ARSCP): HQ MATS (MTCP): HQ USAF (AF-XOPCF): HQ PARC (COMMAND POST): HQ PACAF (PFOCO-H): 405FTRWG (WCC): 13AF (COMMAND POST).
1. RCS: 1-ARS F1, OPENING REPORT
2. 31-336-18 JUN 65.
3. MISSION CONTROL PASSED TO 31ST BY 13TH JSARC.
4. TWO B-52 AIRCRAFT CRASHED FOLLOWING MID-AIR COLLISION. CALL SIGN ZELDA 12 AND ZELDA 14 ASSIGNED 3RD AIR DIVISION.
5. 1735N 11710E
6. WALLACE AIR STATION NOTIFIED 13 JSARC FROM INFORMATION FROM

300 NW
CLARK

PAGE 2 RUMABA 269E C O N F I D E N T I A L
BETTY 10 AT 17/2110Z -
7. TWELVE PERSONNEL.
8. 1500 SCATTERED VISABILITY MORE THAN 15.
9. HU-16 51-5287 AIRBORNE AT 2207Z.-
10. HC-97 30115 ASSIGNED ON SCENE COMAND WITH TWO COAST GUARD HU-16E FOR SEARCH. MAX EFFORT SEARCH TO CONTINUE WITH 6 B-57 UNTIL LAST LIGHT. ONE MERCHANT SHIP ARGO IN AREA AND ONE US NAVY FT DEFINANCE ESTIMATING AREA AT 18/0700Z. NIGHT SEARCH TO INCLUDE FLARE DROPS TO CONTINUE DURING HOURS OF DARKNESS. RYBOS, MISSION COMMANDER.
11. HU-16 15287 MADE OPEN SEA LANDING AT 17/2358Z. 5 SOULS PICKED UP AS FOLLOWS: FROM CREW ECHO 09 1LT KENNETH B HARTON, 1LT JAMES A COLLIGE III, AND 1LT JAMES L ERVES. FROM CREW ECHO 04- LT COL CHARLED P ANDERMANN, FROM CREW ECHO 04 ONE DESEASED CAPT JOE ROBERTSON. SEARCH WILL CONTINUE FOR MISSING SEVEN CREW MEMBERS. H-16 15287 LOST NUMBER TWO ENGINE. ATTEMPTING SURVIVOR EVACUATION FROM HQ-16. NAVY WILL TOW HU-16 TO CUBI PT NAS.
ET

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

P 180615Z
FM 31 ARS CLARK AB PI
TO RUCQSH/HQ ARS ORLANDO AFB FLA
INFO RUCDAA/HQ MATS
RUEAHQ/HA USAF
RUHLKM/HQ PACARESCUECEN HICKAM AFB HAW
ZEN/DET 2 PACARESCUECEN CLARK AB PI
ZEN/405 FTRWG CLARK AB PI
ZEN/HQ 13AF CLARK AB PI
RUMRDA/3AD ANDERSEN AB GUAM
RUHLKM/76ARESCUESQ HICKAM AFB HAW
RUMRDA/79ARESCUESQ ANDERSEN AB GUAM
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L 31ARSO 50249 18 JUN 65. FOR HQ ARS (ARSCP): HQ MATS (MTCP): HQ USAF (AF-XOPCF): HQ PARC (COMMAND POST): HQ PACAF (PFOCO-H): 405FTRWG (WCC): 13AF (COMMAND POST).
1. RCS: 1-ARS-F1, OPENING REPORT
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PAGE 2 RUMABA 269E C O N F I D E N T I A L
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7. TWELVE PERSONNEL.
8. 1500 SCATTERED VISABILITY MORE THAN 15.
9. HU-16 51-5287 AIRBORNE AT 2207Z.-
10. HC-97 30115 ASSIGNED ON SCENE COMAND WITH TWO COAST GUARD HU-16E FOR SEARCH. MAX EFFORT SEARCH TO CONTINUE WITH 6 B-57 UNTIL LAST LIGHT. ONE MERCHANT SHIP ARGO IN AREA AND ONE US NAVY FT DEFINANCE ESTIMATING AREA AT 18/0700Z. NIGHT SEARCH TO INCLUDE FLARE DROPS TO CONTINUE DURING HOURS OF DARKNESS. RYBOS, MISSION COMMANDER.
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BT

the hospital at 1053L. Crew: RCC Capt Larry C Evans, CP Capt Marvin L Palmer, MT A1C Charles A Sullivan (USAF Hosp), RS A1C James S Thresher and A1C Leonard C Walker (405th CES).

(3) HU-16 Open Sea Pickup Mission 31-336-18 June 1965. Det 2 PARC Joint Search and Rescue Center notified the squadron that two B-52 aircraft had collided in mid-air. An immediate scramble was initiated and shortly after arriving on the scene a 31st Air Rescue Squadron HU-16 spotted two survivors in their rafts. After effecting an open sea landing, the HU-16 was directed by a KC-135 orbiting the area, until four surviving and one deceased crewmembers had been picked up. The HU-16 however, suffered a power loss in one engine and was unable to take-off. While awaiting surface assistance a large wave struck propeller of good engine bending the blade. Some survivors and HU-16 crewmembers were subsequently transferred to a foreign surface vessel, then retransferred to a U.S. Navy vessel when it arrived on scene. This vessel the Defiance attempted to save the aircraft, but in towing was lost. Pararescue personnel continued to render first aid to the survivors during this entire period. Mission 31-336-18 was in progress until the 22nd and entailed 70 sorties for a total of 619 hours. Meanwhile, at Clark the 31st helicopters were active in related missions. First a KC-135 assisting in the search remained on station until reaching an emergency fuel state. The aircraft declared an emergency and headed for Clark. Two HH-43's were scrambled to cover the KC-135. Shortly after it landed a B-52 with electrical problems and control difficulties declared an emergency and again two HH-43's were utilized. The HU-16 crew: RCC Capt Anthony A Muehling Jr, CP Lt David W Haines, N Lt Jack O Slocombe, AM SSgt Charles A Fakkema, RO SSgt Bobby R Tyndall, PJ's TSgt William V Vargas and A1C Colin Lane.

(4) HU-16 Open Sea Pickup Mission 31-342-21 June 1965. While engaged in the search mission described above, an HU-16 received word that an F-102 pilot had ejected from his disabled aircraft in the South China Sea. The HU-16 proceeded to the area and effected an open sea landing. On takeoff rough seas sheared the float and damaged the aircraft. The survivor was returned to Clark. Crew: RCC Capt David K Richardson, CP Capt Richard Lund, N Lt John I Glasgow, AM SSgt David E West, RO SSgt Ralph Schreiner, RS A2C John C Jeffers.

(5) HU-16 Open Sea Air Evacuation Mission. While deployed in SEA an HU-16 from 31st Air Rescue Squadron was notified that a navy man aboard a U.S. destroyer was suffering from acute appendicitis. The HU-16 made an open sea landing in rough seas in the Gulf of Tonkin and the patient transferred aboard. He was flown to a base in SEA where a field hospital was located. CREW: RCC Capt Harold K Pike, CP Capt John Gjovig, N Capt John M Gilreath, AM SSgt Kearney V Lundy, RO SSgt Paul L Fait, PJ's TSgt Austin Little and SSgt Donald G Smith.

(6) HH-43B Helicopter Pickup Mission 31-355-29 June 1965. While flying an airborne alert training mission, an HH-43B received a distress at 0813L from the wingman of a Philippine AF F-86 pilot who had ejected from his disabled aircraft. The helicopter immediately headed for the area 15 miles away. The wingman directed the helicopter into the survivor who was picked up at 0827L and returned to Basa AB, at 0830L. Crew: RCC Capt James L Wissert, CP Capt Larry C Evans, MT SSgt Donald J Glassford.

31ST AIR RESCUE SQUADRON
AIR RESCUE SERVICE (MATS)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96274

REPLY TO ATTN OF: 31ARSC

20 July 1965

SUBJECT: Monthly Historical Report (RCS: AU-D5(ARS) 1 - 30 June 1965

TO: Hq ARS (ARCOI)
Orlando AFB, Fla

1. NAME OF UNIT: 31st Air Rescue Squadron

2. REPORTING PERIOD: 1 June thru 30 June 1965

3. STATION: Clark Air Base, Philippines

4. ASSIGNMENT: 31st Air Rescue Squadron
Hq Pacific Air Rescue Center
Air Rescue Service
Military Air Transport Service

5. COMMANDER: Lt Col Karol F Rybos
33822A, Regular Commander

6. MISSION: To operate and maintain assigned search and rescue equipment to search for, locate and recover personnel and/or aerospace hardware in support of Air Force and other agencies in global air and space operations, including research and development.

7. OPERATIONS: Flying time for the month of June was as follows:

| TYPE A/C | MISSION | TRAINING | OTHER | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HU-16B | 301:25 | 20:45 | 7:30 | 329:40 |
| HH-43B | 15:40 | 54:55 | 9:30 | 80:05 |
| HC-54 | 42:45 | | | 42:45 |
| HC-97 | 92:40 | | | 92:40 |
| TOTAL | 452:30 | 75:40 | 17:00 | 545:10 |

a. Squadron mission activity remained at a very high level for the month. A comparison of the last three quarters clearly shows an ever increasing upward trend in precautionary orbits:

[redacted]

Detachment 5
Pacific Air Rescue Center (MATS)
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
APO U.S. Forces 96337

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: DET 5 PARC

26 Jun 65

SUBJECT: Narrative of Mission Report

Classification (cancelled) (changed to UNCLASSIFIED), effective on 14-3-75, under the authority of GDS, by AR

TO: Pac ARescue Cen
33 ARescue Sq
DET 3 Pac ARescue Cen

1. This report reflects action taken by Figmo Bravo on Det 3 PARC Mission Number 630, 23 June 1965. Figmo Bravo, HU-16 10058, of the 33 Air Rescue Sq was commanded by Captain Donald C. Hollfelder, A02227005. Additional crew members were: Captain David P. Westenburger, 62088A, Co-Pilot; 1st Lt Donald S. Price, A03121056, Navigator; SSgt Frank J. Trombino, AF19484611, Radio-Operator; A1C James M. Allen, AF14568604, Flight-Mechanic; A1C Eldrige M. Neal, AF13753971, Pararescue; and SSgt Patrick Abernathy, AF14519776, Photographer.

2. Cronology of Events:

1415 Figmo Bravo intercepted the following call on UHF Guard "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, This is Pine Two. Pine lead has been hit, bailed out over target, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY". At this time Figmo Bravo was on SAR Patrol at Coordinates 18:10 N 106:35 E with Locket 581 and Wingman (two Navy A-1H Aircraft) as Rescap. Climb was immediately commenced from 2000 feet, SAR patrol altitude. Captain Hollfelder responded to the distress on guard obtaining bailout coordinates and bearing to distressed pilot. Simultaneously, Det 3 PARC was notified of the emergency via single side band. Figmo Bravo then returned to UHF SAR patrol frequency and advised Texaco, a U.S. Navy Destroyer, of the emergency. Pine Flight left distress scene due to low fuel.

1425H Figmo Bravo crossed the coast of North Vietnam west bound, 10 miles north of Dong Hoi at 7,000 feet and climbing. Locket Flight was in loose trail formation. The coastal weather was 2,500 feet scattered, 5,000 feet broken, Tops 7,000 feet. Det 3 PARC was notified of penetration, estimate for the search area of 1446H and helicopters were requested. Bailout position was confirmed as 4 miles west of 17 degrees 52' N 105:52 E with Pine Two. Texaco was advised of our departure from SAR Patrol station and intentions.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DOD DIR 5200.10

[redacted]

Hq PARC Log No. 65-1141

1436H Det 3 PARC advised that UNCAP 32, HC-54, was also enroute to the area and that a top cover of fighters was on the way.

1440H UHF radio contact was established with UNCAP 32 who had received a different set of bailout coordinates. It was mutually decided that UNCAP 32 would commence search at his coordinates and Figmo Bravo would commence at 17: 52'N 105: 52E.

1446H Figmo Bravo arrived on scene at 11,000 feet and commenced an expanding square electronic search using a two mile track spacing.

1449H On the third leg of the search pattern a loud distress homing signal was received. Bearings indicated Figmo Bravo was over the downed pilot. Captain Hollfelder assumed on scene command. Uncap 32 was directed to proceed to 17 52'N 105 52'E at 12,000 feet. Locket Flight was sent down to attempt to pin point the survivor with their UHF homers while making low passes. Det 3 PARC was advised of the situation.

1502H Uncap 32, Whiplash (F-4C Highcover) and Bango Flight (F-105) were all on station. Hobby 21 and 22 HH-43F's were enroute. Weather was low scattered, high broken to overcast with light rain, thunder storms surrounded the area. Figmo Bravo commenced descent to 6,000 feet for more effective visual and electronic pin pointing of the downed pilot. Uncap 32 was to maintain altitude, assist in vectoring Hobby 21 and 22 to the area and keep invert (RADAR) appraised of the on scene situation.

1530H Locket 581 reported sighting a pen gun flare from the downed pilot. Det 3 PARC advised that there were known flack positions 5 miles north and 5 miles south of the bail out site. Location of flack positions was relayed to all aircraft by Figmo Bravo and East/West flight path was reccommended over the bail-out site. Rescap aircraft were further advised to keep a look out for troops moving into the area. Locket 581 acknowledged.

1532H Figmo Bravo established radio contact with Pine Lead, the downed pilot on UHF Guard. Pine lead advised that he was OK and had no broken bones. Captain Hollfelder acknowledged and suggested that he conserve his radio batteries by maintaining radio silence until the choppers entered the area. ETA of the choppers was relayed to Pine lead as 1550H. Voice contact with survivor could only be made directly over his position.

1550H Pine lead again called on Guard stating that he was OK and that the A-1 Rescap had just passed directly over head. Captain Hollfelder advised that weather had caused a slight delay of the choppers. Their ETA was now 1610H. Captain Hollfleder again suggested that Pine lead conserve his batteries pending arrival of the choppers.

1610H Hobby 22 arrived and commenced a circling descent from 8,000 feet. While Figmo Bravo and Locket 581 pointed out the downed pilot's position.

1612H Pine lead began vectoring Hobby 22 into him on Guard.

1613H Pine lead set off the day end of a Mark 13 Flare. The orange smoke was clearly visible to all.

1617H Hoist pick-up of Pine lead was completed by Hobby 22. Det 3 PARC was advised.

1618H Locket Flight was assigned to escort Hobby 21 and 22 to MAKHON PHANOM accompanied by Uncap and Bango aircraft. Figmo Bravo commenced climb to 10,000 feet and relinquished SAR Control to Uncap 32.

1625H Figmo Bravo departed scene east bound at 10,000 feet and established radio contact with Texaco.

1645H Figmo Bravo recrossed the coast of North Vietnam at 10,000 feet descending and reestablished SAR Patrol with Locket 589, two Navy A-1H's, as rescap.

1800H Figmo Bravo was released from SAR Patrol by Det 3 PARC.

3. Specific Comments.

A. Communications with Det 3 PARC were excellent throughout the mission. Services of Rescap and Top cover aircraft were both adequate and timely.

B. The great value of the UHF distress homer and UHF voice communications employed by the downed pilot cannot be overemphasised. Without these elctronic signals, this pilot could not have been located from the air. He had landed in a heavily forrested area and his chute was not visible.

C. A faster and longer range helicopter stationed at NAKHON PHONOM would immeasurably reduce time period during which SAR Forces and survivors are exposed to possible attack by hostile forces. In this instance the on scene time could have been cut in half if faster helicopters with IFF capability had been available to make the pick-up.

D. Cooperation between the various forces on scene was especially outstanding in view of intermittant UHF contacts resulting from the requirement to constantly change between UHF Guard for homing/survivor contact and UHF 364.2 SAR Frequency for coordination of on scene forces. No common VHF coordination was possible due to an apparent lack

of operable VHF Equipment on Uncap and Bango Aircraft.

4. Recommendations.

A. Faster and longer range helicopters should be placed at NAKHAI PHANON.

B. SAR Aircraft should have dual UHF equipment in order to permit simultanious coordination and homing capability as well as provide continued capability should one of these invaluable transceivers fail.

DONALD C. HOLLFELDER
Capt., USAF
RCC

Pictures ?

SECRET

[illegible]tachment Provisional Second (PARC)
[illegible]ITED STATES AIR FORCE
[illegible]O U. S. Forces 96310

Classification (cancelled) (changed to UNCLAS
effective on [illegible] under the authority of
[illegible] by [illegible]

[illegible]LY TO
[illegible] OF: Det Prov Second

SUBJECT: Det 3, PARC Rescue Mission #630, 23 Jun 1965

DOWNGRADED
IAW AFR-205-2
13 MAY 1970

TO: Det 3, PARC

[illegible]. At 0618Z the alert duty pilot, located in Radar Operations at [illegible], was notified that a pilot from Pine Flight was ejecting. A set of coordinates were given by the wing man. They were plotted on a map, and a flight plan was initiated. It was estimated that 2[illegible] gal of extra fuel would be needed. The 2 alert aircraft were fueled and all other necessary equipment was loaded.

2. At 0622Z a second set of coordinates (WE 82 76) were obtained from [illegible]vert Operations. These were plotted and found to be about 13 miles farther north than the original set. Maps were drawn up with a flight [illegible] route to avoid known enemy positions and AAA.

[illegible] At 0638Z Maj Lawrence at ASOC-V called to initiate an [illegible] crew members prepared for takeoff.

[illegible] At 0653Z both Helicopters, Hobby 22 and 21 were airborne [illegible] with Uncap 32. Several steers were given by Uncap [illegible] aircraft, who were orbiting in the pickup area.

[illegible] At approximately 0730Z both Hobby aircraft were [illegible] cloud build-ups and moderate [illegible] entered a cloud bank and was [illegible] [illegible]ted and Hobby 21 was notified to start a [illegible] [illegible] was started and Hobby 22 [illegible] [illegible] was established and steers were transmitted [illegible] separated. Hobby 22 located a hole and [illegible] overcast so that the flight could [illegible] [illegible]ly 1,500' AGL, it was [illegible] [illegible] level. A climb was again [illegible] [illegible] area was located and Hobby 22 managed to get [illegible] [illegible] area and proceed VFR to the pickup site.

[illegible] At 0810Z Hobby 22 arrived over the pickup site and was [illegible] 21 signal. The A1Hs flying low cover made several [illegible] where the survivor was suppose to be located. [illegible] [illegible],500' AGL. A transmission from the survivor [illegible] [illegible], "Helicopter turn right, turn right". A [illegible] The survivor was requested to fire a flare. [illegible] [illegible] give us some smoke. No smoke was observed so a [illegible]

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER [illegible]

ARODC # 65-3436 [illegible]
HQ ARS SI No. [illegible]

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At approximate [illegible] the parachute was spotted hanging in a tree top in the bottom of a small valley. The location was approximately ½ mile from the position originally indicated by the A1E. One more orbit was required to position the helicopter over the survivor so a pickup could be accomplished. Approximately 60 feet of hoist cable was necessary to reach the survivor. He was located high in the top of a large tree. It was estimated that his position was about 150 feet above the ground. The helicopter hovered to within 2 or 3 feet rotor tip clearance from other trees which were beside the aircraft. Some rather careful maneuvering was required to thread the hoist cable down to the survivor. He entered the hoist sling at which time he dropped his survival equipment. The hoist was started up; however, the survivor became tangled in the shroud lines from his chute. The hoist was let down a short distance and the survivor pulled free. The hoist was again started up. No further complications were encountered. The pickup was completed at 0615Z and an immediate takeoff was initiated. A climbing [illegible] was utilized to obtain enough altitude to clear AAA in the immediate vicinity. During the climb Hobby 21 joined up with Hobby 22. Hobby 21 had been orbiting over the pickup area while Hobby 22 was making the pickup. A heading of 270° was established after reaching 5,500'. The climb was continued to 9,000'. [illegible] and Sandy 31 escorted Hobby Flight back to Invert where a landing was made at 0735Z. The survivor was transferred to the Udorn aircraft for return to Da Nang. Mission closed for both Hobby aircraft.

7. Survivor: Major Robert W. Wilson, 357 TFS, Korat AB, Thailand

8. Crews:

| Low Hobby 22 | High Hobby 21 |
|---|---|
| RCC Bruce C. Hepp, Capt | P Walter F. Turk, 1st Lt |
| CP Thomas J. Curtis, Capt | CP Stanley O. Schaetzle, Capt |
| HM Francisco Alvarado, A1C | HM David M. Cutillo, A2C |
| PJ James E. Poole, A2C | PJ Michael T. Henebry, A2C |

FOR THE COMMANDER

BRUCE C. HEPP
Capt, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

[redacted]

ARS 653436 [illegible]



SECRET

Hq ARS SC No. 653731

HH-43Fs at Bien Hoa and Da Nang often relied on U.S. Army and South Vietnamese UH-1 Huey gunships for rescue escort.[29]

The Douglas A-1 Skyraider, with its 7,000-pound bomb load, four 20-mm cannons, heavy armor plating, and excellent loiter capability, met the needs of rescue escort better than any other aircraft. On May 30, 1964, six A-1Es arrived at Bien Hoa for duty with the 1st Air Commando Squadron as replacements for the T-28s and B-26s which had been operating there since 1961. The Skyraiders soon showed themselves to be rugged, hard-hitting aircraft, well suited to the counterinsurgency role and rescue escort.[30]

In early 1965 the Navy agreed to provide A-1Es for escort duty and stationed from four to six of these planes at Udorn on a rotating basis. Unfortunately, the Navy could not always meet this commitment because of other operational considerations. Attempts to fill the rescue escort need in Laos by flying A-1s from carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin proved unsatisfactory due to the relatively slow speed of the Skyraiders. This forced the newly appointed American Ambassador to Laos, William H. Sullivan, to request more use of U.S. pilots in T-28s than he liked. He, like his predecessor Leonard Unger, dreaded the possible political repercussions.[31]

Sullivan's fears were never realized. In August 1965, to meet the needs of rescue escort over northern Laos and North Vietnam, the 602d Fighter Squadron (Commando) rotated its A-1Es from Bien Hoa to Udorn. Two TAC CH-3Es had, meanwhile, arrived at Nakhon Phanom on July 5, and two HH-43Bs moved up from the Mekong River town to Udorn where they were joined by two factory-fresh HH-43Fs. The addition of the A-1Es meant that with the HC-54s in place, and the HU-16s operating out of Da Nang to cover the water rescue mission, a full search and rescue task force was in Southeast Asia. Over the years equipment improved and aircraft changed but the search and rescue task force of 1965 closely resembled that of 1973 in doctrine, tactics, and procedures.[32]

Because of the limitations of the HH-43B/F, the Air Force rescue capability in Southeast Asia still left a lot to be desired. Nevertheless the Air Rescue Service had come a long way from the days when the rescue controller in Saigon had to depend on whatever Army, Marine, or Vietnamese choppers might be available for a rescue effort. In fact, by June 1965 rescue missions were being performed which only a year before would have been all but impossible.

A typical search and rescue for the period occurred on June 23, 1965, when Maj. Robert Wilson's F-105 was hit by ground fire while on a mission over southwestern North Vietnam. Wilson could not fly his damaged Thunderchief over a ridgeline, so he ejected. After a normal descent he found himself suspended upside down in a tree 150 feet above the jungle floor. Wilson managed to swing into a crotch of the tree where he wiggled out of his parachute harness. He then took out his survival knife and cut a

small branch from the tree. Wilson used the branch to snag his seat pack which contained all his survival equipment. After drawing the pack over to where he stood, he retrieved his URC-11 survival radio. Wilson contacted the HC-54 airborne rescue command post called "Crown" which, in response to his mayday, had moved off its orbit along the Thai-Laotian border and now flew nearby. Half an hour later four Air Force A-1 Skyraiders droned into view and contacted the survivor. Soon the pilots spotted Wilson's chute and, after radioing the downed pilot's exact position to Crown, flew to an orbit several miles away so as not to reveal Wilson's location to any enemy troops that might be lurking nearby. Had Wilson or the A-1 pilots spotted the enemy, the A-1s would have attacked them with 20-mm cannon fire, rockets, and fragmentation bombs. Ninety minutes after Wilson's ejection, an HH-43, from a forward operating base in Laos, showed up. Wilson fired off a small flare that was part of his survival equipment. The Huskie pilots spotted it and moved their chopper directly overhead while the parajumper lowered the penetrator through the foliage. Wilson grabbed it, strapped himself on, and began his ascent to the helicopter. A few hours later, safe at the Nakhon Phanom officer's club, Wilson set up drinks for the chopper pilots. The next day he returned to Korat.[33]

Of course not all HH-43 rescue missions went so smoothly, and the enemy sometimes bested the search and rescue task forces. On September 20, 1965, Capt. Willis E. Forby's F-105 was hit by large caliber antiaircraft fire while attacking a target near Vinh, North Vietnam. Forby turned his damaged F-105 toward Laos and ejected a few minutes later. His wingman circled until he received a signal from the downed pilot's survival radio indicating he was alive. Then Crown launched two HH-43s from a Lima Site. All seemed normal as Captain Forby dispensed smoke to mark his exact location and make voice contact with one of the rescue choppers piloted by Capt. Tom J. Curtis. Forby did not know that enemy troops had hidden themselves in the jungle all around to make him the live bait on a flak trap. Captain Curtis was concentrating on holding the chopper in a hover near the survivor when several black clad figures stepped from the underbrush and fired their automatic weapons. The helicopter shivered as bullets impacted, then it dropped into the trees. In an almost automatic response, the pilot of the second helicopter, orbiting above as part of the search and rescue task force, moved in to pick up any survivors as A-1s blasted the surrounding area. Again the troops opened fire forcing the backup chopper to pull up and return to the Lima Site. Crown called for a massive rescue task force but the armada of A-1s failed to find any trace of the downed men. Tom Curtis spent the next seven years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. His copilot, 1st Lt. Duane W. Martin remained a prisoner of the Pathet Lao. Martin escaped captivity a year later. He was, however, murdered by a Laotian peasant before he could be rescued.[34]

and escort them to safety on foot. However, helicopters were the key elements of most SARTFs, and despite their limited capabilities, the HH-43s greatly improved combat rescue operations in Southeast Asia. By mid-1965, rescues were being performed that just a year earlier would never have been possible.[34]

A typical HH-43 rescue mission took place on June 23, 1965, when an F-105 was shot down over North Vietnam. After making a distress call, the pilot ejected from his crippled ship and began a normal parachute descent. As he broke through the jungle canopy, a tree snagged his chute, and the pilot found himself suspended upside down 150 feet above the ground. He managed to swing himself into a crotch of the tree and free himself from his parachute harness. Using the emergency radio in his survival kit, the downed pilot made contact with an HC-54 rescue airplane that had set up an orbit near the area in response to the distress call. Half an hour later, four A-1Es arrived on the scene and located the survivor's position. Shortly thereafter, an HH-43 from a forward operating base in Laos came into view. The downed airman fired off a signal flare. Spotting it, the HH-43 maneuvered overhead and lowered its cable and penetrator--a device designed to penetrate the thick jungle canopy--down to the survivor. The F-105 pilot grabbed it, strapped himself on, and was hoisted aboard the helicopter. A few hours later, the rescued man was celebrating his deliverance at Nakhon Phanom officer's club.[35]

Not all rescue missions were so happily resolved. Sometimes, the enemy's resistance not only blocked recovery attempts but also caused additional loses. Such was the case when on September 20,