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FROM: Det 6, 38th Aerospace Rescue & Recovery Sq, APO US Forces 96227

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report

17 Mar 66

TO: 3rd Aerospace Rescue & Recovery Gp, (JSARC), APO US Forces 96307

1. Mission Number: 6-38-58-15 Mar 66.

2. SAR Alerted by: 3rd TFW Command Center.

3. Type SAR Aircraft Used: One (1) HH-43B and two (2) HH-43F helicopters.

Recovery Helicopter Crews:

Pedro 74 (3 saves)

RCC	Capt Edwin A. Henningson	Det 6, 38th ARRS
CP	1/Lt Mark C. Schibler	Det 6, 38th ARRS
HM	A1C Thomas C. Story	Det 6, 38th ARRS
RS	A1C Henry J. O'Beirne	Det 6, 38th ARRS

Pedro 97

RCC	Capt Raymond L. Murden	Det 6, 38th ARRS
CP	Capt Maurice G. Kessler	Det 6, 38th ARRS
HM	A1C Alexander Montgomery	Det 6, 38th ARRS
RS	SSgt David E. Milsten	Det 6, 38th ARRS

Pedro 79 (2 saves)

RCC	Capt Joseph E. Symonds	38th ARRS
CP	Capt Louis J. Pottschmidt	38th ARRS
HM	SSgt James M. Fitch	38th ARRS
MT	SSgt Howard L. Mott	38th ARRS

4. Reaction time from initial notification to pick-up: 25 minutes.

5. CAP assistance: One (1) USAF O-1F FAC; Rescort: Two (2) U.S. Army UH-1B helicopter gunships.

6. Area and type of pick ups: Day recoveries with rescue hoist and stokes litter from hostile area heavily wooded with trees 50-150 feet high.

7. Signalling equipment used to locate wounded evacuees: Smoke grenades.

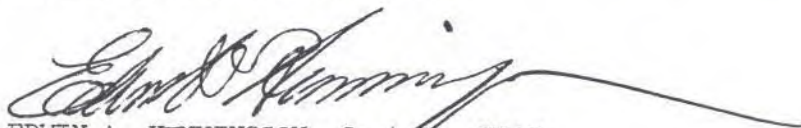
8. Survivor's names and serial numbers: Neither available nor possible to obtain

9. Summary of Events:

At 1345 hours word was received that an estimated 16 U.S. Army casualties were located in a heavily wooded jungle 105 degrees at 15 miles from Bien Hoa AB (coordinates 10° 55'N, 107° 05'E). Hoist and stokes litter operations would be required to recover them from this area which had a predominant tree line height of 125 to 150 feet. Pedro 74 was refueled, scrambled and airborne at 1355 hours for a reaction time of ten minutes. Pedro 79 was to be scrambled from Tan Son Nhut to act as our top cover ship; they were airborne a short time thereafter. Pedro 97 was experiencing maintenance difficulty and would scramble to the scene as soon as their situation permitted. Shortly after take off, radio contact was established with the USAF Forward Air Controller (FAC) who was orbiting the scene; he conducted a situation briefing for us during the enroute flight. Though the pick-up area was not described as secure, there were numerous "friendlies" in the vicinity, and ground fire was not observed at any time during the mission. There were only scattered clouds in the area and visibility was excellent, so weather was not a factor. Pedro 74 rendezvoused with the FAC over the scene a few moments later. He was able to point out exact pick up locations, and arranged to have them marked for us with smoke grenades. This assistance was invaluable and expedited the process considerably because the casualties were widely dispersed and without radio equipment. In only one instance was it necessary for us to lower a paramedic to the ground to determine if assistance was required. The first and second casualties to be picked-up were recovered from a "bowl" (low spot) in the jungle canopy approximately 50 to 75 feet below the rim of tree tops surrounding the immediate area. The initial survivor was hoisted aboard and secured in the cabin without incident and the crew proceeded to recover the second wounded man from the same spot. Then, while the helicopter was hovering at approximately 65 to 70 feet altitude with a casualty 50 feet off the ground in the hoisted stokes litter, a power loss occurred. Hover power settings had been a steady 36 psi torquemeter setting with 255 to 257 rotor RPM. The co-pilot confirmed that all performance instruments had been indicating "in the green". Without any noise, vibration or other indication of difficulty, except for a gradual settling of the aircraft, rotor RPM dropped to 230. Efforts to increase RPM with the engine speed governor switch were unsuccessful. A portion of the hover-clearance above the trees was sacrificed in an effort to regain RPM by lowering collective slightly; this technique was likewise unsuccessful. What little hover-clearance above the trees remained was "traded and played" in a desperate last-ditch effort to keep the helicopter airborne by sliding into translational lift. By a series of gentle turns to take advantage of low saddles in the tree tops the helicopter was nursed in a shallow climb up and out of the heavily wooded jungle. From the time that the power loss occurred until the helicopter had climbed out above the trees the rotor RPM never varied from 230 RPM. This 230 RPM remained constant despite the many and varied combination of factors, any of which should have produced a change, i.e., efforts to "beep" it up, the transition to forward flight (translational lift) and increased collective power settings to 39 psi of torque. Only after the trees had been cleared, the helicopter was accelerated to above 40 knots, and the collective power

28

setting was reduced by 10 or more psi of torque was it possible to regain rotor RPM to the normal operating range, and even then it seemed a slow process. It appeared as if the rotor RPM responded very sluggishly to efforts at restoring it to 248 RPM. The helicopter was flown to the nearest clear area, landed, shut-down and inspected. No damage or deficiencies were noted and so the helicopter was thoroughly run-up, checked in emergency fuel, etc., and then flown back to home base with minimum crew and a UH-1B gunship escort. Pedro 74's two recoveries had been transferred to Pedro 79 who evacuated them to the 93rd U.S. Army Field Hospital. Pedro 79 then returned to the pick-up area to recover two more casualties who were awaiting evacuation. After dropping off 2 of Pedro 74's crew members at Bien Hoa AB, Pedro 97 also returned to the pick up scene, but recoveries had been temporarily secured in the area while the ground search for additional casualties continued. Both Pedro 79 and Pedro 97 then recovered at Bien Hoa AB to refuel and await further developments/instructions. At 1745 hours a request was received from the incident site for the recovery of one deceased which was supposed to have represented the final casualty in the area. However, a short time later it was determined that there was another injured survivor for pick-up. Pedro 74's crew took off (in another helicopter) for the scene at 1800 hours, arriving in the area approximately 10 minutes later. As before, the FAC directed the helicopter to the exact pick-up site, and except for the complication of strong and gusty 15 knot surface winds in the area, the final survivor and the deceased were hoisted out without difficulty. Both were then flown to the 93rd U.S. Army Field hospital near Bien Hoa, after which Pedro 74's crew returned to home base, mission completed. The coordination and support from rescap (FAC) and rescort (UH-1B) crews during this mission was outstanding; both parties were very cooperative and responsive to our needs. This was especially true during the period complicated by Pedro 74's in-flight emergency. The rescort and rescap personnel were also instrumental in simplifying identification of pick-up locations through radio instructions, smoke drops, etc. Their assistance made possible a smooth running operation free from confusion and excessive radio chatter. The crews of the three rescue (Pedro) helicopters performed very well; cooperation among them was excellent. Especially worthy of note was the skillful performance of Pedro 74's hoist operator. He was faced with an extremely critical and difficult set of circumstances when the in-flight emergency occurred as he was hoisting a casualty. His quick-thinking and professional response to this situation were vital factors in preventing further injury or loss of the survivor during the sequence of events that followed. With regard to the in-flight emergency, it should be noted that it was necessary to evacuate the helicopter (if at all possible) for two reasons: First, in an unsecure area such as that, the helicopter might likely have been destroyed by hostile forces. Second, maintenance activities at that forward area would have been enormously complex. The return flight to home station was uneventful, and the malfunction did not reappear. However, no real effort was made to duplicate the situation; every effort was made to "baby" the helicopter power-wise in order to make it home successfully. An engine fuel control malfunction was the suspected cause of Pedro 74's emergency. The fuel control has been replaced, and OHR and EUR reports have been/will be submitted.


EDWIN A. HENNINGSON, Captain, USAF
Rescue Crew Commander

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to rescue the man but were unsuccessful. When rescue helicopters had maneuvered into position for hoist pickup the man never reappeared.

DET 6-38-22-7 Feb

(U) HH-43 were launched, from Bien Hoa AB, on a combat medical evacuation for a number of Australian soldiers. Helicopters landed and evacuated one seriously wounded.

DET 6-38-23-12 Jan

(U) HH-43F, from Bien Hoa AB, using stokes litter evacuated a seriously injured Army troop from a combat area under fire.

DET 6-38-41-1 Mar

(U) HH-43F, from Bien Hoa AB, evacuated a wounded Army troop utilizing the stokes litter from a jungle combat zone.

DET 6-38-47-8 Mar

(U) HH-43F, from Bien Hoa AB, evacuated a wounded Vietnamese Air Force man from a mine field while grass fire burned around him.

DET 6-38-8 Mar

(U) HH-43F, from Bien Hoa AB, evacuated four Vietnamese and one seriously wounded US Army troop from a jungle clearing in a combat zone.

DET 6-38-52-13 Mar

(U) HH-43F, from Bien Hoa AB, utilizing stokes litter and forest penetrator evacuated 8 seriously wounded US troops from a jungle site under attack.

DET 6-38-53-14 Mar

(U) US Army O1F with 2 personnel crashed in South Vietnam. HH-43F from Bien Hoa AB, recovered one survivor and one deceased from a hostile area.

DET 6-38-57-15 Mar

(U) Six critically wounded Army personnel were combat evacuated utilizing stokes litter and forest penetrator rescue seat.

DET 6-38-57-15 Mar

(U) One wounded Army troop evacuated from a combat zone by HH-43F utilizing a stokes litter.

DET 6-38-58-15 Mar

(U) Six Army casualties rescued from heavily wooded jungle area with trees 125 feet high.

DET 6-38-59-16 Mar

(U) Combat evacuation of one wounded Australian from D zone.

DET 6-38-68-19 Mar

(U) Evacuation of two wounded Australian Army personnel from forward jungle site.

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