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3d ARRGp Hist, Apr - Jun 66

The LBR mission is presently being performed with six HH-43 pilots, four flight mechanics, and five rescue specialists. Two pilots, two flight mechanics, and two rescue specialists are on alert each day. LBR had 79 scrambles in April, 69 in May and 58 in June for a total of 206 scrambles during this reporting period, and two pilots were recovered in Thailand. During this quarter, eight pilots have been upgraded to RCC. Since 5 June, there has been no training time available due to the requirement to have six HH-3E helicopters on alert each day. Maintenance has continued to enjoy an outstanding in-commission rate on the HH-3E (88%) and HH-43B (95%) during this quarter. The major problem continues to be a lack of parts. During this reporting period, maintenance has never failed to provide the required number of aircraft to meet the alert commitment. The future for maintenance however is not too bright. Six HH-3E helicopters are coming up on their 500 hour TOC's. Due to the increase from four to six aircraft on alert each day, maintenance will find it harder to provide the necessary aircraft for alert each day. The HH-3E is a modified CH-30 helicopter with improved engines, external tanks for increased range, armor plating for crew protection, and a high speed hoist with 240 feet of useable cable. Due to the large size and color of the HH-3E, it is called "The Jolly Green Giant" a name well known among all pilots in Southeast Asia. The HH-43B is standard LBR equipment Air Force wide. On twelve different occasions, rescue helicopters received damage from enemy ground fire. During twelve pickups, the rescue forces were subjected to enemy fire but due to the determination of the crews, successful pickups were accomplished in spite of the ground fire.

k. (U) On 11 June 66, a (USMC) F4B's #2 engine stuck in 100% power while being run up for maintenance at DaNang. It jumped the nose wheel chock and ran into an HU-16 aircraft (#294) assigned to the 33 ARRSq which was TDY to the 37 ARRSq. It sheared off the nose of the HU-16; investigation revealed that 900 manhours would be required to repair the Albatross and 150 manhours to fix the F4B, resulting in a major accident assessed to the USMC.

l. (U) In recovering a B-57 crewman from the water off DaNang an aircraft accident with no damage to the aircraft occurred. The pararescueman (PJ) was deployed from an HH-43 helicopter to aid the crewman in getting into the rescue device. The survivor's knife was protruding from its scabbard causing the pararescueman to sever a tendon in his little finger. The PJ received surgery at Clark and was grounded for approximately 6 weeks. No ground accidents were reported during this quarter.

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m. (U) During the period of this history, the aircraft assigned to the 3 ARRGp were operationally ready 83.1% of the time. The 16.9% of time not operationally ready were contributed to 9.4% NOR (M) and 7.5% NORS. Our aircraft are in a combat theater located approximately 8000 miles from the main supply source, the U.S., this creates a very extended pipeline and often causes logistical problems. Many of our Detachments are located at bases which were constructed and put in operation in a short period of time; however, we have been getting good support from all the host bases.

n. (U) The missions flown by the crew members of 3 ARRGp expose them continually to hostile fire. The 141 combat saves attributed to this Group from April thru June could not have been possible were it not for continued acts of heroism and bravery on the part of the devoted members of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service. During this quarter members of this Group have been recommended for 24 Silver Stars, 68 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 256 Air Medals, 3 Purple Hearts, 23 Commendation Medals, 2 Bronze Stars, 2 Airman's Medals and 1 Medal of Honor.

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At this period we have received approval for 160 Air Medals, 3 Purple Hearts, 1 Airman's Medal, 1 Bronze Star, 24 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and 4 Silver Stars.

o. (U) MISSIONS.

(1) Combat.

Det 1-3-21-10 Apr

(C) Four USN WIA and one KIA aboard Swift Boat, call sign Red Dog 6. 3 ARRGp dispatched 2 H-34's and HU-16 with Flight Surgeon aboard to rendezvous with boat at 1700N 10735E for air evacuation. Meanwhile SH-3A's were enroute from ship with another doctor. HU-16 Crown Charlie located Red Dog 6 and reentered SH-3A's in to lower doctor. (USN) SH-3A airlifted one survivor to DaNang; two survivors, two deceased and doctor remained on boat.

Det 1-3-22-13 Apr

(U) An OLE pilot took a hit in his engine at 1635N 10632E and had to make a forced landing. Pilot was recovered and returned to Khe Sanh by USMC H-34's assigned to 3 ARRGp for primary SAR.

Det 1-3-23-14 Apr

(U) Two B-57 crews involved in a mid air collision bailed out near DaNang. HU-16 located four survivors and directed Marine helicopters in the area to the crew members. USMC H-34's picked up three survivors and a 3 ARRGp HH-43 picked up the last survivor. The pararescueman (SSgt Charles A. Kezer) while assisting the crewman board the rescue device was injured on the survivor's knife which protruded from its scabbard.

Det 1-3-24-17 Apr

(C) Two Navy pilots bailed out of their A6 Intruder when the wing caught fire about 45 NM north of DaNang. A 3ARRGP HU-16 from DaNang located the two pilots, made an uneventful open sea landing and returned survivors to DaNang AB, RVN.

Det 1-3-25-17 Apr

(C) Eight Special Forces personnel were stranded 5 miles S.W. of Khe Sanh. 3 ARRGp coordinated with USMC for pickup; two USMC H-34's returned 8 survivors to Khe Sanh.

Det 1-3-26-18 Apr

(C) An A1E was hit in the right wing by automatic weapons fire over Tiger Island. Crown Alfa HU-16 from DaNang recovered pilot who was in excellent condition.

Det 1-3-27-5 May

(C) An A4C pilot bailed out of his aircraft into the water at 2040N 10728E. SAR HU-16 in the area made an open sea landing and recovered the Navy pilot in good condition by use of a heaving line.

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