

ARRS
AKOOPEL
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FROM: Det 6, 38th Aerospace Rescue & Recovery Sq, APO 96227

SUBJECT: Narrative Report (Mission 6-38-98-6 Jun 66)

7 JUN 1966

TO: 3d Aerospace Rescue & Recovery Gp (JSARC), APO 96307

1. At 1445 hours I was notified by 3JSARC that the Army needed to evacuate 4 wounded personnel by hoist from the jungle at YS 263 905 (1047N 10705E). (First coordinates were given as XS 263 905 heading 269° from Tan Son Nhut) Pedro 74 and Pedro 97 were refueled immediately and airborne at 1455L. Bien Hoa tower coordinated with the Army and lifted the artillery southeast of Bien Hoa so that we didn't have to skirt around the artillery area. Pedro 74 and 97 arrived over the pick up area at 1520L. The Forward Air Controller was unable to take off from Long Thanh because of a blocked runway. Contact was made with Gunslinger 33 (armed UH-1B escort helicopter) and also with Damage Charlie 5 (the ground party). Marker smoke was requested by Pedro 74. The smoke was spotted and Pedro 74 descended to the pick up point with Pedro 97 flying high cover, and both gunslinger ships circling the pick up point. Pedro 74 hoisted 1 seriously wounded with the stokes litter and had begun to lower the forest penetrator for a second pick up. The jungle canopy was 100 to 125 feet high with heavy jungle undergrowth. As the forest penetrator was being lowered (approximately 20 feet extended) (1525L) several bullets tore through the plexiglass on the pilots side and at this same time TSgt Common (hoist operator) was hit in the calf and thigh. The rotor RPM dropped to 230 and I immediately pulled the aircraft up and to the left away from the VC weapon fire. The co-pilot, Capt Potter, who had been operating the radio, transmitted that we had been hit. At this time the gunships closed for escort. Pedro 97 immediately began to descend to aid in case the aircraft went down. The aircraft felt like it began to sink. At this time I was mentally preparing for a crash landing in the trees. A2C Sanger began to help Sgt Common and also advised that oil was litterly pouring from the ceiling throughout the cabin. Then the "engine oil low" caution light came on. We skimmed along the tops of the trees trying to stay airborne. The rotor RPM held at 230 and I was able to pick up airspeed and a shallow climb to about 200 feet above the jungle. A clearing next to a rubber plantation was spotted and I headed the aircraft in that direction. The engine oil pressure dropped to zero and the engine oil temperature began to rise. Although knowing that the clearing was not secure, no choice remained but to land there. I landed the aircraft with no further damage to aircraft or crew and shut the aircraft down. The crew immediately climbed out with weapons in hand to secure the area. Within 30 seconds of shut down, Capt Nadler landed Pedro 97 along side and the stokes litter patient and Sgt Common were transferred to his chopper. The gunships were circling the area for protection. As soon as Pedro 97 lifted off one of the gunships landed but could only pick up one person. Airman Sanger boarded this aircraft. Capt Potter and I waited for the second Huey. Within a minute the second gunship landed and picked us up. Pedro 97 headed for the 93rd Field Evac Hospital with the gunships taking us to Long Thanh. The gunships then returned to protect the downed aircraft. Within 15 minutes the three of us were enroute to Bien Hoa by another Army helicopter. The following information was collected after my return to Bien Hoa. When Pedro 74 was hit by VC gun fire, Pedro 97 called MAYDAY on Bien Hoa tower frequency - which Major Kessler heard over the UHF receiver in the alert trailer. He became airborne in less than 1 minute

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in Pedro 73, and departed towards the downed helicopter. Shortly after take-off he contacted Capt Nadler in Pedro 97. Pedro 97 advised that he had both wounded aboard and was heading towards the 93rd Field Evac Hospital. Pedro 73 confirmed that all crew members from Pedro 74 had been safely evacuated. Pedro 73 met Pedro 97 enroute and both HH-43F's landed at the 93rd Field Evac Hospital at 1545L. After unloading the casualties Pedros 73 and 97 returned to Bien Hoa, landing at 1555L. Arrangements were made for an Army CH-47 to helilift Pedro 74 back to Bien Hoa AB. The area surrounding the downed helicopter was secured by Army ground forces. Pedro 73 and 97 departed Bien Hoa at 1655L with maintenance crew and equipment to remove the rotor blades and otherwise prepare the downed helicopter for airlift. Pedro 73 and 97 arrived at the downed aircraft at 1715L. The downed chopper was prepared for airlift at 1755L. The CH-47 arrived at 1805L and made an immediate pick-up. All helicopters returned to Bien Hoa AB without further incident at 1835L. Total sorties/flying hours were 12/5:10 by the 3 HH-43F helicopters. Two combat saves were logged. Crew coordination and radio discipline were normal. Weather was not a factor.

2. ARS Crewmembers Were:

Pedro 74

RCC	Capt	Harold D. Salem
CP	Capt	Dale L. Potter
HM	TSgt	Richard A. Connon
RS	A2C	Frederick L. Sanger

Pedro 97

RCC	Capt	Charles P. Nadler
CP	Capt	Karl G. King
HM	A1C	Gerald C. Hammond Jr.
RS	SSgt	David E. Milsten

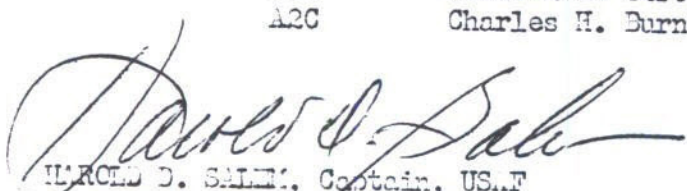
Pedro 73

RCC	Major	Maurice G. Kessler
CP	1st Lt	Mark C. Schibler
HM	A1C	Alexander Montgomery
RS	A3C	Gordon C. Thayer

3. Det 6 maintenance crew deployed to rig the downed chopper for airlift included:

SSgt	William D. Cole
SSgt	Larry G. Vance
A1C	Richard N. Stroheker
A2C	Charles H. Burnett

- Team Chief


 HAROLD D. SALEM, Captain, USAF
 Rescue Crew Commander

'OTHERS MAY LIVE'

Air Rescue Men Hailed As Heroes

By LESTER BELL
Coast News Service

WASHINGTON — Its motto is "that others may live" and it will dare anyone in and around Viet Nam to prove it's an idle slogan.

Reports of the Air Rescue Service reaching the Pentagon depict Air Force men snatching comrades from the hands of pursuing enemy troops, out of trackless jungles and from the open sea.

Some air rescue teams have died that others may live. In its four years in Viet Nam, the members of the service have earned more than 350 decorations, not a few awarded posthumously.

PRESIDENT'S CITATION

At last count, they had rescued more than 255 men in the combat zone, more than half (128) since January. Of that number, 134 were air crew members and 121 other combat personnel.

President Johnson was so impressed with the record of the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, he gave the outfit the presidential unit citation early this year for extraordinary gallantry in the Vietnamese military operations.

"Because the men of the 38th have risked their lives so that their comrades may live," Mr. Johnson said, "they join that company of the valiant to whom we all owe our freedom and our national honor."

As if spurred to even greater daring by the award, Air Rescue sent a helicopter 80 miles northwest of Hanoi last May 10 for its deepest rescue penetration of the war into North Viet Nam.

Capt. Robert D. Furman of Great Falls, Mont., and his crew went after an Air Force

F-105 pilot shot down near the North Vietnamese capital. They picked him up within two hours after he had parachuted from his disabled plane.

EVADE MIGs

To reach friendly lines, the helicopter and three prop-driven A-1E planes flying cover had to evade three Communist MIG-17s armed with Sidewinder-type missiles.

Enemy troops almost had captured a Marine F-4B pilot last April 11 when an Air Rescue helicopter hoisted him aboard. Then, the helicopter had to leave because the hoist operator had suffered a broken leg during the bailout from his disabled plane and was in danger on the ground.

The helicopter lowered a paramedic to help the radio-man, but ground fire wounded the hoist operator and forced the helicopter to withdraw. Another helicopter attempting a pickup was hit by ground fire and retired.

Cover planes finally pinned down the Communists, but by then the helicopter lost contact with the downed men.

MIRROR SIGNALS

The radio-man later managed to catch the helicopter's attention with mirror signals and was rescued. The paramedic was found uninjured the next day by another rescue helicopter.

Two rescue helicopters flew through flak April 20 to reach a downed F-105 pilot 50 miles west of Dong Hoi in North Viet Nam and in another April recovery, an Air Rescue helicopter landed on the open sea to the Gulf of Tonkin to pick up the two-man crew from a Navy ship.

Viet Communique

SAIGON — Air Force pilots kept up their heavy pace against North Vietnam in the week ending June 10, ripping roadways, rail lines, barges, bridges, ferry complexes and fords.

Pilots reported setting off 22 secondary explosions and starting 15 fires in one day's action in the North. Supply and storage areas around Dong Hoi figured heavily in the 90 targets blasted by the F-105s, F-4Cs and B-57s flying 43 missions.

A day earlier, 16 secondary explosions were set off, 13 in the Dong Hoi vicinity. Three radar sites were among the damaged areas. One rail line was cut in three places and box cars riddled by F-105s and F-100s.

On the same day, an HH-3C rescued Capt. James C. Hollis, an F-105 pilot who suffered a broken leg after parachuting. The rescue scene was about 25 miles southwest of Dong Hoi. Pararescueman A2C Lavern W. Kellerman assisted Hollis in the rescue.

In the South, Air Force pilots used the week by destroying or damaging almost 100 VC buildings. Eight F-4Cs were credited with damaging or destroying 45 buildings in raids 25 miles south of Da Nang. In 10 miles northwest of Saigon, F-100 pilots were credited with destroying or damaging 50 or more buildings.

Earlier, A-1E pilots were credited with killing 20 or more VC while flying close air support for Operation Crazy Horse, a 1st Cav. mission in the South.

Forward Air Controllers, who averaged about 70 missions a day during the week, credited two F-100 pilots with killing possibly 25 or more VC in a raid in the Mekong Delta. On the same day, an HH-43 of Det. 6, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq., Bien Hoa AB, was shot down while trying to evacuate wounded soldiers of the Army's 1st Infantry Div.

A second copter, commanded by Capt. Charles P. Nadler, flew cover and picked up some of the wounded soldiers. Later, the downed helicopter crew was picked up. The rescue was the unit's 202d pickup since it arrived in Bien Hoa last October. This year, it has rescued 85 men.

C-130s of the 315th Air Div set a one-day mark for cargo and passenger tonnage to South Vietnam, Col. Charles W. Howe, 315th chief, announced.

In one day, C-130 crews airlifted 1899 tons, up 210 tons from the last reported high in April.

In other milestones, F-100s of the 308th Tactical Fighter Sq. completed six months of combat, and the 311th Air Commando Sq., flying C-123s out of Da Nang, passed the 50,000 mark in combat sorties. The 311th arrived here in 1963.

6 JUN 66

PAPRU 74 DOWNER

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3d ARRGp Hist, Apr - Jun 66

The 3ARRGp including Det's 1 and 2, 37ARRSq, and 38ARRSq with eleven detachments has a total manpower authorization of 217 officers and 548 airmen. The total assigned officers are 156; assigned airmen are 352. At the time of this report, the 3ARRGp is 67% manned.

9. (C) Equipment. Mission Aircraft.

<u>Type, Model, Series</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
HH-43B	18
HH-43F	10
HH-3E	8
HU-16	4 (TDY)
HC-130H	4 (TDY)

10. (U) Additional Remarks.

The Group Operations Officer, Lt Col William A. Ryan, Jr., was shot in the left leg during a terrorist attack in downtown Saigon on the morning of 10 May 66, while waiting for bus transportation to work. Small arms firing began between the military police and suspected terrorists in the vicinity of the Brinks Hotel. Hospitalized for approximately a month, Lt Col Ryan was awarded the Purple Heart for his injury.

Aircrew recovery in hostile areas is often times very hazardous; several of our rescue crewmembers have been wounded by enemy fire during pick-up operations. They are: TSgt Richard A. Cannon (HM) hit in the leg on mission 6-38-98-6 June; ALC Dennis J. Kraft (PJ) hit in the right knee and elbow on mission 2-3-60-18 May; SSgt Bernard D. Loughry (HM) hit in the shoulder on mission 2-3-46-22 Apr.

ALC William H. Pitsenbarger, paramedic, was fatally wounded on mission 6-38-80-11 Apr. Airman Pitsenbarger voluntarily rode a rescue hoist to the ground to help Army personnel prepare casualties for evacuation; after making several hoist pickups, the US Force's position was over-run and ALC Pitsenbarger was killed. For his heroic actions in assisting the defenders during the onslaught, ALC Pitsenbarger has been recommended for posthumous award of the Medal of Honor.

11. Appendixes. None

12. (U) Documentation.

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3d ARRGp Hist, Apr - Jun 66

Det 6-38-81-13 Apr

(U) Two HH-43's scrambled to search for Air America light aircraft at 1027N 10658E; however, the two survivors were recovered by an unidentified helicopter just before SAR aircraft arrived in the area.

Det 6-38-82-28 Apr

(U) Two HH-43's scrambled to pick up survivors of an A-1 aircraft down 3 miles SW of Bien Hoa; however, a VNAF vehicle had picked up the two crewmen before the helicopters arrived on the scene.

Det 6-38-84-29 Apr

(U) Medical evacuation of injured soldier from Bien Hoa by an EH-43F.

Det 6-38-85-7 May

(U) Patient with a stab wound transported to 93d Med Evac Hospital from 3d TFW dispensary by HH-43F helicopter.

Det 6-38-86-8 May

(U) Two HH-43's made hoist pickups of two deceased and seven wounded Army soldiers using the stokes litter and the forest penetrator from 1117N 10605E and transported them to field hospital near Tay Ninh.

Det 6-38-89-14 May

(U) Med evac of US Army wounded using stokes litter and hoist for recovery.

Det 6-38-94-29 May

(U) HH-43F recovered wounded soldier by stokes litter and transported him to 93d Evac Hospital.

Det 6-38-97-5 June

(U) Recovered US Army wounded and deceased personnel from jungle by hoist and flown to field hospital.

Det 6-38-98-6 June

(U) After hoisting a seriously wounded soldier aboard an HH-43 at 1047N 10705E, the helicopter was hit twice by ground fire; the HM was wounded and the engine began losing oil. The helicopter was landed in the first available open area. The backup HH-43 landed and boarded the two wounded men and took them to the 93d Field Hospital. Two Army gunships landed and picked up the rest of the crew, returning them to Bien Hoa. Army ground troops secured the downed helicopter until a CH-47 arrived and airlifted it to Bien Hoa.

Det 6-38-99-11 June

(U) Air evacuation of seriously wounded soldiers from 1150N 10735E to Loc Ninh using HH-43 helicopters and hoist.

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