

FROM: Det 7, 38th ARRSq

17 July 1966

Subject: Mission Narrative No 1-3-46, 15 July 1966

TO: 3d ARRGp (RGRC)

1. Cigar notified the primary and secondary Pedro aircraft at 0925Z that a Marine F-4B (Condol 52-2) crew had ejected 15 miles west of Quang Tri. The coordinates of 16°56' N and 106°49'E were given as the bailout area.
2. The Pedro flight launched immediately and proceeded to the bailout location. As the Pedro flight left Quang Tri, the FAC of the Condol flight, Bird Dog 32, gave Pedro flight information as to conditions in the recovery area. Bird Dog informed Pedro flight that he had a visual on both pilots but no voice contact had been established and that he had requested several aircraft in the area to act as rescap during the pickup if needed. Bird Dog 32 then informed me both pilots were in the same general area about 30 meters apart but evidently didn't know of the other's close proximity to one another. I was also informed that the area was clear of trees but there was elephant grass of an unknown height surrounded by bushes. The hoist was then prepared for the pickup in case no landing could be made.
3. Bird Dog 32 established radio contact with one of the pilots just prior to our arrival at the scene. I instructed the pilot through Bird Dog 32 to inform the crew not to release any signaling devices until we were on scene. The FAC had the downed crew in sight and consequently any signaling devices could reveal the exact position of the downed crew to the enemy before recovery could be made.
4. On my command, the pilot released his smoke grenade. The bright orange smoke revealed the clearing and location of the 1st pilot and subsequent position of the second. As the primary Pedro aircraft approached the site for landing, it was evident no landing could be made as the ground was completely obscured by elephant grass and shrub bush.
5. The first pilot was motioned to the aircraft hoist cable from his hiding place at the edge of the clearing. As soon as he was secure aboard the aircraft, the aircraft was positioned for the second pickup and the second pilot motioned to the aircraft hoist cable from his hiding place at the edge of the clearing. When the pilot was secure, I departed the recovery scene as quickly as possible and requested instructions from Cigar as to where we should take the recovered pilots. After a refueling stop, Cigar advised us to bring the crew back to DaNang Air Base and the 1st Marine Air Wing area.

6. During the recovery phase, moderate small arms fire was heard but the location could not be pinpointed from the air. No damage was done to any of the recovery aircraft by the ground fire.

7. Factor affecting the rescue were:

- a. Weather was VFR
- b. Communications between recovery aircraft was excellent. No unnecessary conversation was encountered.
- c. One pilot didn't know the correct use of the forrest penetrator device. He was briefed on the correct use and asked to pass on the information to other squadron pilots as briefed.
- d. The one pilot with whom voice contact had not been made didn't turn off his emergency beeper, during the pickup which made communications difficult between pilot and hoist operator. He was briefed on the correct use of the radio and the importance of turning it off at the time of hoist pickup.

8. Specific Facts Recapped:

- a. Type A/C F-4B (Condol 52-2)
- b. Coordinates: 16°56N 106°49'E
- c. Time of Pickup: 0957Z
- d. Time from scramble to pickup: 27 minutes
- e. Sorties: 2/1+00

9. Crew Members:

PRIMARY: RCC 1st Lt John M. Armstrong
 CP 1st Lt Tommy L. Brown
 HM SSgt Curtis F. Yancy
 RS SSgt William L. Sutton

Secondary RCC Capt Joseph Symonds Jr
 CP 1st Lt David R. Stevenson
 HM TSgt Patrick Bowers
 RS ALC Albert Foster III

FOR THE COMMANDER

John M. Armstrong
 JOHN M ARMSTRONG, 1/Lt, USAF
 RCC