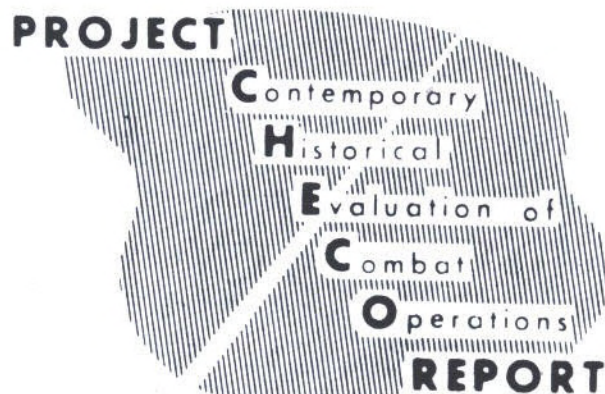


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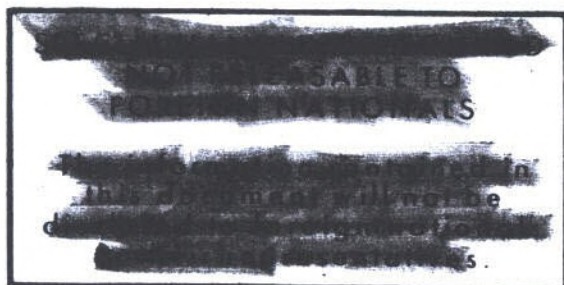


THE WAR IN VIETNAM 1966

23 OCTOBER 1967

HQ PACAF

Directorate, Tactical Evaluation
CHECO Division



Prepared by:
Mr. Wesley R. C. Melyan
Miss Lee Bonetti
SEAsia Team

OTE-TSC-67-1790

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SEARCH AND RESCUE

Few Air Force activities could match the drama and human interest of the 3d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group (ARRG), the parent organization of the "Jolly Green Giants." The 3d ARRG was activated on 8 January 1966, after a reorganization of SAR forces in SEA was undertaken to establish more effective command and control. The 3d ARRG was assigned to the Pacific Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (MAC) and came under operational control of the Commander, 7AF. The Group had a joint Search and Rescue Center, two Rescue Coordination Centers, and two squadrons--the 37th ARRS, Udorn and 38th ARRS, Tan Son Nhut. 149/

The Joint Search and Rescue Center (JSARC) was responsible for coordinating and controlling rescue missions both in-and out-country. In addition, it helped locate overdue aircraft, coordinated intercept for distressed aircraft, provided assistance for medical evacuation and local base rescue efforts. 150/

To accomplish the combat rescue mission, the 3d ARRG staged HH-3 helicopters from Udorn, at forward operating locations/bases so as to be immediately available should an aircraft go down. The HC-130 control aircraft from Udorn flew daylight orbit over Laos, carrying an Airborne Mission Commander (AMC), who was prepared to assume control over the Search and Rescue Task Force when it was launched by the JSARC. The HU-16s from Da Nang flew daylight orbit off the coast of North Vietnam. They would land

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(sea conditions permitting) and recover downed airmen, or remain over their position, while the AMC coordinated the recovery by other means. Aircrews from HH-3E helicopters at Da Nang, or those from the forward operating locations, stood by for rapid reaction to search and rescue missions as directed by JSARC. Whenever possible, the HH-3Es (nicknamed the Jolly Green Giants) were launched in pairs for mutual support. Their reaction speed was approximately 100 knots, endurance 4½ - 5½ hours, and they were equipped with some armor plating, and a hoist with a forest penetrator. ^{151/}

In his trip report of 7 June 1966, Dr. John S. Foster, Jr., Office of the Director of Defense Research and Engineering, stated that the following characteristics were urgently needed in the Jolly Green Giants: ^{152/}

1. Much more speed in transit.
2. Somewhat greater range than the CH-3Cs, although they currently had forward refueling points which helped in this regard.
3. Better night navigation capability, probably best solved by the addition of LORAN D.
4. Night vision devices to permit search for the pilot after dark.
5. More defensive armoring of critical parts, and more armament for fending off capture parties.

Dr. Foster indicated his awareness of Air Force intentions to buy a small number of faster helicopters to augment the Jolly Greens within the next year. He was also cognizant of a joint Navy/Air Force effort to establish a requirement for a new SAR vehicle, however, this might require several years. In the interim, he was anxious to have a more rapid

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investigation conducted of available means to improve the reaction times
of the SAR forces. ^{153/}

During missions, Jolly Green Giants were protected en route and over the rescue site by A-1E aircraft. In the role of escort (RESCORT), A-1Es located survivors and determined the best routes for the helicopter to approach the survivors. They also took measures to discourage hostile forces from interfering with the rescue effort. The excellent coordination between rescue helicopters and their A-1E RESCORT resulted in a highly efficient team, enabling combat rescues to be made under extremely adverse conditions. ^{154/}

Immediately upon receiving a Mayday transmission, tactical support units were launched or diverted to the area to make initial contact with the downed pilot and protect him. The task force was then augmented with fighter, FAC, tanker, ECM, Jolly Green Giants, etc. This small armada was controlled by the JSARC and rescue coordination centers through the AMC. The size of the SAR force was determined by the number and type of aircraft or surface vessel available, that was suitable and necessary for the pickup. The helicopter was the limiting factor in getting to and from the scene. Distance, terrain, and hostile fire, coupled with the vulnerability of the slow, low-flying helicopter, precluded pickup in certain areas. For instance, a 45-degree area bordered by the Red River and the rail lines north to China, and the area within a 30-mile radius of Hanoi, were generally considered inaccessible for rescue forces. If a pilot were downed in the Gulf, at least five miles offshore, however, his chances of rescue were

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better. Deep in enemy territory, it might take up to two hours for rescue forces to reach the scene. Because of limited night rescue capability, especially in a hostile environment, rescue pickup was usually delayed until daybreak. ^{155/} There were no "typical" rescue missions since each had unique features and problems. (See Project CHECO Study, "USAF SAR in SEA-1961-1966," 24 Oct 66.) ^{156/}

Rescue aircraft also performed emergency medical evacuations when directed by proper authority. The U.S. Army was usually able to air evacuate its own wounded from combat areas; however, rescue helicopters frequently were required to evacuate wounded soldiers from areas inaccessible to Army helicopters. ^{157/}

In addition, HH-43 helicopters of the 3d ARRG were located at 12 air bases in SEA, that had tactical aircraft to provide crash rescue and aircraft fire suppression within close proximity of the base. Some of the HH-43s were configured with self-sealing tanks, auxiliary fuel tanks, and armor plating. This gave them a combat rescue capability, in addition to their local base rescue function. ^{158/}

The following data reflects the activities of the 3d ARRG during 1966: ^{159/}

	<u>In-Country</u>	<u>Out-Country</u>
Missions	270	288
Med Evac	134	32
SAR	136	250
Sorties	1,097	952
Combat Saves	239	173
Non-Combat Saves	31	49

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On 17 September 1966, a Joint Personnel Recovery Center (JPRC) was activated for the purpose of establishing a capability within MACV, for personnel recovery operations subsequent to termination of sea-air rescue efforts. It served as the coordination authority and focal point for all post-SAR recovery matters in RVN, NVN, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. 160/

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS, EASTERN AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY CENTER (MAC)
ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, GEORGIA 31093

PROJECT CORONA HARVEST

DO NOT

23 October 1968

18 SEP 1990

No

0005157

ATTN OF: ERSTN (Capt Heeter/5352)

SUBJECT: Corona Harvest Study

TO: Hq ARRS (ARXDC)

1. In reply to your letter, same subject, dated 24 Sep 68, the following is submitted:

- a. Period assigned to SEA - Sep 66 thru Aug 67.
- b. Unit of assignment - Det 5, 38 ARRSq, Udorn RTAFB, Thailand.
- c. Duty assignment - LBR Commander.
- d. Type of Aircraft - HH-43B (2).
- e. Significant problem areas encountered:

(1) Facilities were the biggest headache for the LBR. Until the end of Jan 67, the LBR was one flight of four (the other three being HH-3E's) in Det 5, 38 ARRSq. Facilities were shared with the Jolly Greens until the LBR moved into its own facilities in Apr 67. The new facilities were completely revamped, inside and out, by a self-help project. A new concrete pad for both helicopters was constructed. No hangar facilities were available and three hootches were used for maintenance and supply storage. Our problems encountered with inadequate facilities were, I presume, no more than any other detachment in SEA. However, they seemed mighty big at the time! Close liaison with base officials, a lot of hard work and a couple of good scroungers proved invaluable.

(2) The only operational problem encountered was the lack of defining the area of responsibility for in-country (Thailand) SAR mission for the HH-43B's and HH-3E's co-located at Udorn. On one occasion, an HH-3 scrambled on a F-105 bail-out 15 miles from base while the HH-43 was already airborne for the same emergency. The Udorn RCC had scrambled the HH-3. Another time, an HH-3 was scrambled on a bail-out while it was performing a FCF in the local area and the HH-43 was enroute to the bail-out area. Coordination with the Jolly Green operations and the Udorn RCC resulted in a temporary understanding, however nothing in writing ever came out of this. This lack of definitive guide lines caused a lot of misunderstanding and hard feelings. Established areas of SAR responsibility would have alleviated this situation.

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RETURN TO:

Director
Aerospace Studies Inst
ATTN: Archives Branch
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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PACIFIC AEROSPACE RESCUE & RECOVERY UNITS - (Southeast Asia)

UNIT	LOCATION	AIRCRAFT ASSIGNED		
		Number	Type	
3 AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY GROUP (ARRGp)	Tan Son Nhut, RVN	None	None	SAR Advisor to 7thAF. Deputy Commander for PARRC in SEA.
1, 3 ARRGp	Danang, RVN	None	None	Rescue Coordination Center (RCC)
2, 3 ARRGp	Udorn, Thailand	None	None	RCC
37 ARRSq	Danang, RVN	5	HU-16B	
DET 1, 37 ARRSq	Udorn, Thailand	0	HC-130H	
		4	HC-130H	
		1	HC-130P	
38 AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY SQUADRON (ARRSq)	Tan Son Nhut, RVN	3	HH-43B	
DET 1, 38 ARRSq	Phan Rang, RVN	2	HH-43B	
DET 2, 38 ARRSq	Takhli, Thailand	3	HH-43B	
DET 3, 38 ARRSq	Ubon, Thailand	3	HH-43B	
DET 4, 38 ARRSq	Korat, Thailand	2	HH-43B	
DET 5, 38 ARRSq	Udorn, Thailand	6	HH-3E	
		2	HH-43B	1/43B asgd to Det 7, APRFE
DET 6, 38 ARRSq	Bien Hoa, RVN	3	HH-43F	
DET 7, 38 ARRSq	Danang, RVN	4	HH-3E	1/43B asgd to Det 4, APRFE
		2	HH-43F	
DET 8, 38 ARRSq	Cam Ranh Bay, RVN	2	HH-43B	
DET 9, 38 ARRSq	Pleiku, RVN	1	HH-43F	
DET 10, 38 ARRSq	Binh Thuy, RVN	2	HH-43F	
DET 11, 38 ARRSq	Tuy Hoa, RVN	1	HH-43B	
DET 12, 38 ARRSq	Nha Trang, RVN	2	HH-43E	

DOAR 31 Dec 66

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