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REPLY TO

ATTN OF: OPS/3446

4 December 1967

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative, 11 November 1967; Msn # 2-3-87

TO: 3ARRGp (C)

1. (U) The following report is submitted in accordance with ARRSM 55-2/3ARRGp Sup 1, dated 15 June 67.

2. (S)(GP-4) This narrative is a composite document based on data submitted by five Rescue Crew Commanders. In view of its length and the complexity of the mission, a chronological listing of events precedes the narrative.

|         | <u>T/O TIME</u> | <u>ARRIVED SCENE</u> | <u>DEPARTED SCENE</u> | <u>LANDED CH 89</u> |
|---------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| JG-27   | 10/2350Z        | 0050Z                | 0145Z                 | 0307Z               |
| JG-52   | 10/2350Z        | 0055Z                | 0250Z                 | 0340Z               |
| JG-15   | 10/0205Z        | 0258Z                | 1012Z **              | 1105Z               |
| JG-53   | 10/0205Z        | 0258Z                | 0625Z                 | 0730Z               |
| JG-27 * | 10/0635Z        | 0730Z                | 1012Z **              | 1110Z               |

\* Denotes change in crew assigned to aircraft

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IAW AFR 205-2

\*\* Final departure

(Date)

The Det 1, 37ARRSq Duty Officer was notified of the mission to recover AWOL 1, an F-4C crew, at 0632L, 11 November 1967. Alert crews were notified at 0635L. After a short briefing by the Duty Officer, JG-27 (Low) and 52 (High) took off at 0650L. Weather at home base was clear, visibility 15 miles. Enroute a revised position of 048/47 from Channel 77 (17°12'N, 106°11'E) was received from Sandy lead. No weather was encountered until approximately 30 minutes from the pickup area and then scattered to broken conditions were observed from 4500 - 6500 feet. Upon arrival at the pickup area at 0750L the JGs were advised to orbit north of the Nam Ta Le River and east of the area awaiting sterilization. Weather in the area at this time was deteriorating to 4500 feet broken, visibility 5 miles. There were some large holes in the cloud cover which was lowering to the east. After approximately three minutes in orbit Sandy 7 advised JG-27 (JG-52 was still inbound) that Sandy 8 had been hit by possible 37mm antiaircraft fire and was going in. The flight engineer and copilot on JG-27 actually saw the aircraft hit, go out of control and the pilot eject. The primary pickup was now diverted from AWOL 1 to Sandy 8 as his position was

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GROUP 4

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DECLASSIFY AFTER 12 YEARS

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SYSTEM H-3old  
SYSTEM H-3

This is a real dog!



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pinpointed and the parachute was sighted by Sandy 7. He requested that JG-27 come in immediately and make the pickup. Small arms and automatic weapons ground fire was observed by the high aircraft flight engineer during orbit near the road west of the pickup area. At this time JG-27 lost radio contact with the Sandys and all radio calls were relayed through Crown. Radio contact was re-established with Sandy 6 on VHF after approximately four minutes and JG-27 was then escorted to the area. Enroute the flight engineer and copilot observed approximately 20-25 bursts of flak coming toward the helicopter and directed the pilot behind some nearby terrain. The crash site was on the crest of a rolling hill approximately four miles southeast of the village of Ban San. Arriving on scene, difficulty was encountered by JG-27 in finding the survivor due to the fact that numerous flare chutes were in the area. He was finally sighted about two miles southwest of the crash site in trees estimated to be 100-125 feet tall. After coming to a hover over the survivor the pararescue man was sent down the hoist to free the survivor who had become entangled in the trees and vines. Only sporadic ground fire was heard during the pickup. After the pickup was made JG-27, escorted by Sandy 7, returned to a safe area where he orbited until 0830L when "bingo" fuel was reached and Crown 1 directed him to return to Channel 89. Radio discipline was good although UHF Guard was utilized constantly in an attempt to locate AWOL 1's exact position. At approximately 0935L Sandy lead asked JG-52 to come in for a possible pickup and to assist in a low altitude electronic search although the exact position of the survivor was not known. He was advised to enter from the east to lessen the possibility of ground fire. Descending through a hole in the 9/10th cloud cover Sandy lead and the high aircraft went into the pickup area. JG-52 coming to a hover 30-40 feet above the trees. While in the pickup area beeper and voice reception from the downed pilot varied from fair to extremely poor. The pilot of the high aircraft pleaded with the survivor at least ten times on Guard to turn on beeper and/or give voice directions to his exact position. Three times the JG was vectored by broken voice transmissions and ARA-25 to an overgrown slash and burn area on the northwest slope of a large hill. However, the survivor could not be located. The high aircraft flight engineer had noted two small arms hits in the aft section of the aircraft section at this time. After approximately sixteen minutes of low altitude search with negative results, the Sandy lead aircraft requested JG-52 to proceed at low altitude in a west-northwest direction for approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile around a small hill and renew the search. While proceeding to the new search area at 30KIAS and fifty feet above the trees, JG-52 was hit by a barrage of small arms and automatic weapons fire from the three o'clock position. About 25 to 30 of the enemy were observed by the flight engineer on the ground under a partially camouflaged area at the four o'clock position. M-16 or M-60 counterfire was not utilized due to the element of surprise. Full power was applied and JG-52 proceeded to a relatively safe area over a ridge to the north-northwest.

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The pararescue technician was wounded in the left hip during the barrage, was still conscious, but unable to perform his aircrew duties. Transmission oil pressure and temperature were fluctuating rapidly and a burning odor was noted coming from beneath the forward cabin floor. A climbout was initiated and JG-52 proceeded to Channel 89 at 0950L. JG-52 landed at home base at 1040L. Meanwhile, JG-15 (Low) and JG-53 (High) had been ordered to scramble at 0855L. Both aircraft were airborne at 0905L. Enroute to the scene JG-15 and Sandy 6 were ordered to escort JG-52 to Channel 89. Join-up of Sandy 6, JG-52 and JG-15 was accomplished at 1008L, approximately fifteen miles from the point where JG-52 had taken hits. Radio communication with JG-52 was initially non-existent, but on join-up signs of a profuse oil loss was evident over the entire rear half of JG-52's fuselage. Once clear of the heavy antiaircraft area, JG-15 suggested that JG-52 descend from 7500 feet to 3000 feet so that a quicker landing could be accomplished, should transmission failure become imminent. JG-52 crossed the fence inbound to Channel 89 at 1036L with all appearance of making a safe landing and JG-15 turned back to proceed to the scene again. When JG-15 had departed to escort JG-52, JG-52 was asked by JG-15 to assume low aircraft responsibility since he would be more abreast of the local situation and to assist inbound Firefly aircraft in locating the scene. JG-53 proceeded to the orbit area while JG-15 escorted JG-52 to Channel 89. JG-53 rendezvoused with Fireflies 13 and 14 who commenced an electronic search of the area. At approximately 1030L broken contact was made with the survivor. At this time JG-53 asked if he might assist in the search. Firefly 13 agreed that the slower speed of the helicopter might allow a more detailed search. JG-53 helped search for approximately 15 - 20 minutes; no contact was made. At approximately 1100L, Firefly flight reached "bingo" fuel and JG-53 returned to orbit to rendezvous with JG-15 who had returned from escorting JG-52. At this time Sandys 1 and 2, replacing Fireflies 13 and 14, commenced a new electronic search. After 30 minutes with both JGs in orbit, Compress initiated a discussion of "bingo" times and directed Crown 1 to refuel one JG at a time. Since JG-15 had less fuel than JG-53 he rendezvoused with Crown 1 first. Refueling took place on the 045° radial of Channel 77 at 0-20 miles. JG-15 departed the orbit at 1245L and was off the tanker only minutes from initial visual sighting. Forty-three hundred pounds of fuel was taken. The short time between visual contact and the completion of the refueling is a tribute to the competence and proficiency of the Crown 2 crew which provided two outstanding aerial refueling operations in the afternoon. Approximately 10 - 20 minutes after JG-15 departed for the refueling tanker, Sandy 1 asked that a JG be brought into the area immediately for an attempted pickup. Sandy 1's high performance resources could not remain in the area any longer because of fuel. JG-53 escorted by Sandy 2 and 2 Navy Electrons entered the general area of the survivor's suspected position and had very broken radio contact with him. At this time one of JG-53's engines flamed out. After nearly 5 minutes Capt Walker was able to restart it and proceed with the mission. He then asked Sandy 1, who could understand the voice, to direct his movements. JG-53 hovered around the suspected area for approximately 5 minutes before the

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survivor, relaying through Sandy 1, directed him to stop. At this time JG-53 started receiving automatic weapons fire and was hit from directly under the aircraft. Immediate departure was made to evaluate the damage. At first only superficial damage was suspected but on climb out complete loss of tail rotor control was discovered. At this time JG-53 received permission to RTB and proceed to Channel 89 with approximately 10 - 15° of right bank and in a 20° crab to the left. Landing was accomplished by applying and retarding power for directional control. A successful landing was accomplished at 1430L. After JG-53 regained sufficient control and it became apparent that he could make it to Channel 89 unassisted, JG-15, accompanied by Sandys 3 and 4, resumed orbit to await JG-27, launched from Channel 89 at 1345L. Shortly after JG-27 arrived, Sandy 1 and two Navy Electrons were reaching low fuel states and preparation for an on-scene command change was made. Sandy 3 left orbit to locate the survivor's position with assistance from the Electrons and Sandy 1. At 1435L JG-15 was directed to attempt recovery. Tip tanks were jet-tisoned on the belief that the scene was in close proximity to the orbit point. However, it took 10 minutes for JG-15 to get to the immediate area. A south to north approach was commenced once in the area and, as speed was reduced to be ready for a hover when the site was identified, Electron 502 requested a hard left turn. With the site still not clearly identified and considering the severe maneuvering required to follow Electron's directions, JG-15 elected to exit and re-enter the small valley. As JG-15 was accelerating in a left turn around some karst, ground fire was seen underneath and to the right of the aircraft. Several explosions were felt at a point under the aircraft but not from armament contact since they left no holes. Rather, the explosions are believed to have been air burst fused short of or behind the helicopter. Jinking was initiated with a general turn to the left. As JG-15 assumed a position to the intended hover point the sound of gun fire was again detected from the opposite face of the ridge where the intended pickup point was located. A decided contact was noted in the rear of the aircraft, torque readings momentarily fluctuated and the aircraft yawed to the left. The heading indicator began to oscillate and functioned in a continually erratic fashion for the remainder of the flight in either the MAG or DG position. This caused erroneous AFSC yaw channel inputs and the yaw channel had to be permanently disengaged. JG-15 then requested further sanitization prior to another attempt and pulled up to orbit with JG-27. The Jolly Green aircraft discussed fuel states and it was decided that JG-15 would refuel first while JG-27 maintained orbit. As JG-15 returned, JG-27 would cycle on the tanker (Crown 2). JG-15 departed orbit at 1510L, rendezvoused with Crown 2 at 1535L and completed refueling at 1545L after receiving 2000 pounds of fuel. As JG-15 was inbound from the tanker JG-27 was called in to make a try. The voice on Guard frequency said JG-27 was right over him. He then requested "turn into the sun". As JG-27 turned into the sun ground fire opened up and several hits were taken from directly below the helicopter. JG-27 immediately pulled out. The area was again sanitized but the fire was coming from within 100 feet of the location given for the downed pilot and Sandy 1 could not use jets or large weapons because of the close proximity of the survivor. JG-27 then made another attempt. When in a

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hover over a position claimed by the voice on Guard frequency to be his location hits were again received from directly below. The engine oil pressure on number two engine fell to zero. After pull out the flight engineer changed gages and determined the cause was instrument failure. The flight engineer and pararescue specialist returned fire with the M-60 machine guns each time the aircraft pulled out but could not see the exact location of ground fire since it was below the aircraft. The M-60s malfunctioned each time they were used after approximately fifty rounds of fire. JG-27 proceeded out of the area to rendezvous with Crown 2 while JG-15 maintained orbit. Further sanitization was conducted in areas well clear of the alledged survivor's position using high performance aircraft. The effect of strike efforts was questioned by Sandy because armament was needed too close to the survivor's position and all high performance aircraft were sent home by the on-scene commander. Compress advised at this point the decision to continue rescue efforts would be strictly at the discretion of the mission commander on scene. Firefly 16 assumed command as Sandy 1 returned to his home station. Meanwhile JG-27 rendezvoused with Crown 2. Again Crown 2 did an outstanding job of positioning, join-up and refueling. As JG-27 arrived back in the area JG-15 was sent in for a final recovery attempt. This time the voice on Guard gave his position in a different ravine than any given before ( $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of other attempts). Approach to the new site was made from North to South in a left turn with a fast approach and quick stop over the marked ravine position. During the approach some ground fire was noted. Hover began at 1630L. At this point, approximately 15 minutes of vague, confusing and often ambiguous instructions were received from the ground. Transmissions ranged from unreadable to extremely clear. He indicated at varying times that he was 20 yards, 20 feet, and 200 meters in differing sequences although the helicopter position had not changed. On several occasions he seemed to be leading the helicopter up the ravine into a natural amphitheatre area. When JG-15 tried to confirm this movement because the area had previously been very active in ground fire, the voice came back with entirely opposite directions, silence or instructions to hold the present position. During the last 20 minutes of hover the penetrator was lowered to the ground while the man on the ground claimed to be enroute to the helicopter. He requested this action by asking that the "hook" be put down. As the hoist was lowered initially the voice stated he was just 20 feet away. This is not considered possible since all the crew of JG-15 were able to see down to the floor of the jungle which was fairly clear under the trees. Also the penetrator was resting in a small clearing which was 25-30 yards in diameter. In the stable hover with the penetrator down, long periods of time went by with no voice contact. When he did come back up on Guard his distances from the helicopter varied greatly. The distance never consistently diminished. Toward the end of the hover period he was asked to relate his present position by JG-15 and he replied "in (or near; this was not clear) a shack near or next to the river." This was a very suspicious statement to the helicopter crews for several reasons. The creek over which JG-15

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was hovering would not normally be referred to by an American as a "river" due to its size. Furthermore, the creek bank had been thoroughly scanned by JG-15 crewmembers and no shack was evident. Secondly, evasion training for crew members emphatically suggests remaining clear of rivers and structures to avoid capture. During the latter phases of JG-15's hover, JG-27 flew cover just below the clouds at 600 feet AGL. He flew a low pass on JG-15's east side and could see nothing and drew no ground fire until well clear of JG-15. JG-27 came back on the west side and again saw nothing and drew no ground fire in the immediate hover area. When JG-27 made a climbing turn out west, however, the aircraft received ground fire from ZPU (14.7mm) weapons. Until this time no known ground fire had been taken from this position and all day nothing more than small arms (no tracers) had been observed. The flight engineer on JG-27 fired the M-60 machine gun directly into the firing site and no more rounds came by the helicopter as it turned away from the site. No hits were taken from this weapon. A discussion between JG-15 (still in the hover) and JG-27 followed this occurrence. Both crews agreed that the effort looked more and more like a trap and darkness was approaching. Weather was becoming a factor as broken conditions became more overcast (3300 feet MSL, 1000 feet AGL). Without assurance of a real objective the exposure to all aircraft seemed unwarranted as ample opportunity had been afforded to any real or uncaptured survivor. In addition, the presence of ZPU indicated that bigger weapons were being brought in. JG-15 called that he was departing the area. The individual on Guard offered no objection. To avoid ground fire areas and confuse the enemy gun positions JG-15 climbed out of the hover in a right spiraling hover to an altitude of 3000 feet. JG-27 noted ground fire (tracer or ZPU) at JG-15 as he attempted to depart but none was felt or observed by the crew of JG-15. The remainder of the mission was uneventful as SAR forces returned to base.

3. (U) The name(s) of the survivor(s) are unknown.

4. (U) Crews on the Jolly Green aircraft were:

JG-27: James H. Platt, 1st Lt, RCC  
Edward J. Sichterman, 1st Lt, RCCP  
Benny D. Negrette, SSgt, FE  
Roy A. Taylor, Sgt, RS

JG-52: Frederick C. Faust, Maj, RCC  
Dean H. Williams, Jr., Maj, RCCP  
Carl L. Warmack, SSgt, FE  
Clarence R. Boles, MSgt, RS

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JG-15: Edward B. Russell, Maj, RCC  
Louis D. Yuhas, Maj, RCCP  
Albert P. Parker, SSgt, FE  
J. T. Lombard, Sgt, RS

JG-53: Harry W. Walker, Capt, RCC  
Edward W. Hutchinson, 1st Lt, RCCP  
Hairl D. Thacker, SSgt, FE  
Patrick F. Allaire, Sgt, RS

\* JG-27: Gerald C. Haynes, Maj, RCC  
James B. Barton, 1st Lt, RCCP  
Floyd W. Watson, SSgt, FE  
Randy S. McComb, Sgt, RS

*Richard E. Adams*  
RICHARD E. ADAMS, Maj, USAF  
Operations Officer

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SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO  
YEAR INTERVALS. 7 FEB 1977  
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