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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
37TH AEROSPACE RESCUE AND RECOVERY SQUADRON (MAC)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96337



REPLY TO
ATTN UP.

370

14 MAY 1968

SUBJECT: Mission Narrative Report (1-3-51, 12 May 68) (U)

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SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
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TO:

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JSARS

IN TURN

1. (U) This report is submitted in accordance with ARRS 55-2/3 ARRGp Sup 1, dated 15 Jun 1967.

2. (C) At 0955Z on 12 May 68, JG 28 (Low) and JG 21 (High) scrambled from strip alert at DaNang for Swift 5-1 (GH-46) reported down at 310/11/77. The reported position changed twice with JG 28 making a low level search before both JGs were given the correct position (323/12/77) by Scarface 6-8 (UH-1). During the search both JGs witnessed artillery ground bursts in the area, and DaNang was under rocket attack, which prohibited use of Spads which were hit by shrapnel. Voice contact was established with Quizmaster on the ground with the survivors at Swift 5-1s crash site, but an immediate approach was impossible due to a defensive smoke screen and thick clouds over the position. While awaiting better conditions, Quizmaster reported 25 WIA, 5 GH-46 crash survivors, and 16 KIA at the site; also that an approach to the crash site (an LZ on a steep slope) required a 200 foot vertical descent and climbout, to clear the trees, with a departure turn of 180 degrees. Slope angle, felled trees, numerous high stumps, and the Swift 5-1 wreckage prevented landing on the LZ. Quizmaster reported receiving last hostile ground fire at 0100Z. When weather improved, JG 28 jettisoned external aux tanks, dumped fuel and approached up a ravine to the LZ located about midway up a 4000 foot steep mountain ridge. At the LZ, JG 28 descended vertically 200 feet between the trees into a low (10-20 foot) hover with the rotor disc under the overhanging trees and little blade tip clearance at sides. A PJ was lowered on the hoist, 4 survivors hoisted up on the tree penetrator, and then the PJ was hoisted back up. JG 28 backed out from under the trees, climbed 200 feet vertically, and made a 180 degree turning departure for NSA hospital. JGs 25 and 10 arrived on scene about that time (dusk), having come from a FOL via DaNang where they had left their external aux tanks. Basketball 812 was on scene dropping parachute flares for illumination of the area. JG 25, with minimum fuel, located the LZ by using aircraft flood and landing lights, hoisted four survivors aboard with the use of the tree penetrator at 1130Z, from a high OGE hover above the 150 foot trees, and then backed up, turned around, and returned to DaNang to offload the survivors and refuel. After refueling, JG 25 returned to the scene. JG 21 orbited as JG 25 made the above mentioned pick ups. JG 21 then jettisoned external fuel tanks, dumped fuel and slowly approached the LZ due to darkness and haze. JG 21 saw a strobe light at the LZ and utilizing the aircraft search and floodlights for hover reference, established an OGE hover at

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treetop level (approx 150 feet). Six WIA were hoisted with the tree penetrator, and then JG 21 climbed straight up and executed a climbing right turn out over a cloud layer. JG 21 offloaded the 6 WIA at NSA hospital, then refueled at DaNang prior to returning to the scene. After JG 21s pick up, the survivors' flares and strobe light aided JG 10 in locating the site. JG 10 dumped fuel, made a slow approach to the LZ, established a high OGE hover over the trees, hoisted 4 survivors with the tree penetrator, and departed for DaNang to refuel. JG 28 was back on scene with litters and an extra PJ, as JG 10 departed. The LZ became completely overcast with smoke and clouds. JG 28 slowly flew under the clouds to the LZ, and using all exterior lights, duplicated the first approach with a (10 - 20 foot) low hover. A PJ and 5 litters were lowered; 5 littered survivors and the PJ were then hoisted aboard. The same exit as the first was repeated except that this departure was IFR. At DaNang, JG 28 transferred the 5 survivors, in litters to JG 10. JG 28 refueled and departed for the LZ. JG 10, after reloading, flew 11 survivors to NSA and returned to DaNang. After JG 28 departed the scene with the litter survivors, JG 21 executed an approach to a high OGE hover at tree top level. JG 21 hoisted 6 survivors aboard, using the tree penetrator, while hovering in mist (smoke and clouds) which made visual reference difficult even with the utilization of all aircraft exterior lights. JG 21s departure was the same as his first except that an IFR climb to 4500 feet was required this time. JG 25 departed the scene shortly after JG 21 due to increased cloudiness over the LZ. JG 21 flew the 6 survivors to NSA. Queen terminated the rescue operation at 1316Z. Six or eight survivors remained at the LZ. On radio, JG 28 briefed Quizmaster of the RTB and briefed a USMC control agency on the situation. Queen advised that the Marines planned a first light recovery of the remaining survivors at the LZ. JG 28, 21, 25, and 10 RTB'd at DaNang.

3. (C) Additional Remarks: This mission required the maximum performance of all crews and aircraft. All JG's performed hoists over an LZ which had a steep slope variously estimated between 30 to 60 degrees. All JG's were required to hoist and maneuver with minimum fuel due to OGE requirements. The area was thought to be hostile because observed artillery came from no known friendly source and Quizmaster received hostile small arms fire that morning; plus the JG morning preflight intelligence briefing disclosed a friendly seek and destroy operation in progress in that area. Throughout the mission JG 21 provided excellent communications relay and coordination. The smoke and cloud cover over the LZ was a sporadic condition that existed for all JG's throughout the mission, and could in some ways be partially attributed to the parachute flares being dropped. Basketball 812 did a fine job of illuminating the area with the flares. The parachute flares provided good illumination but created a flight hazard also, because the JG's were continually forced to perform swift avoidance maneuvers for safe separation from the parachutes. All JG's accomplished the hostile area penetration checklist except that aircraft floodlights, landing lights etc. were required for the night hoists. Outstanding crew initiative and coordination made this mission a success, and led to the rescue of 29 survivors.

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4. (U) The names of the individuals rescued are unknown.
5. (U) Crew members were:

JOLLY GREEN 28

Lt Jack C. Rittichier USCG
Capt Robert E. Hicks Jr.
SSgt John Enriquez
Sgt Robert D. Baker
Sgt Steve M. Northern

RCC
RCCP
FE
RS
RS

JOLLY GREEN 21

Major Arthur J. Anderson
Capt Harry W. Hagen Jr.
Sgt Herbert H. Honer
Sgt Charles P. Vogeley

JOLLY GREEN 25

Major Billy J. Wingfield
Capt Jon E. Hannan
Sgt William L. Carroll
Sgt Peter J. Ganun
Sgt Roger A. Klenovich
Sgt Paul E. Hagerty

RCC
RCCP
FE
RS
RS
AP

JOLLY GREEN 10

Major Vernon A. Dander
Capt Richard C. Yeend
SSgt Samuel C. Adams
Sgt Martin E. Roepstorff



JACK-C. RITTICHER, Lt, USCG
Rescue Crew Commander

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exit the area. They were escorted to a forward landing zone and landed. Names of individuals recovered by Jolly Green 22 are unknown.

(11)(U) 1-3-48, 5 May 68. Jolly Green 23 and 10 were returning to DaNang from orbit when they were diverted to a position 15 miles northwest of DaNang where an C-2 had made a forced landing on a road northwest of DaNang. His position was located and JG 23 landed, helped secure the C-2, and picked up the two crewmembers returning them to DaNang. The survivors were Capt Ronald J. Langlois, USAF, and Sgt Bobby J. Rickey, USAF.

(12)(U) 1-3-50, 10 May 68. Jolly Green 23 and 21 were scrambled out of DaNang to a position 82 miles south of DaNang to recover an F-105 pilot down in the vicinity. Before the arrival of JG 23 and 21 in the area, the pilot was picked up successfully and flown to Dak To Airfield. JG 23 was directed to Dak To to medivac the survivor to DaNang. The mission was terminated when the survivor, Major David B. Coons, USAF was off-loaded at NSA Hospital, DaNang.

(13)(U) 1-3-51, 12 May 68. Jolly Green 28 and 21 were scrambled from DaNang to a position 11 miles northwest of DaNang for a CH-46 reported down with 25WIA, 5 CH-46 crew survivors and 16 KIA at the site. JG 28 approached the LZ AND HAD TO descend vertically

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200 feet between trees to the survivors. The rescue specialist was lowered on the hoist and four survivors hoisted up and carried to NSA Hospital, DaNang. JG 25 and 10 arrived on the scene and under parachute flares and with the aid of aircraft flood lights and ground strobe lights, rescued 8 more survivors and took them to NSA Hospital. Jolly Greens 10, 21, 25, and 28 alternated recoveries until all but 3 of the survivors had been transported to NSA Hospital. Weather prevented recovery of the eight until the next morning. The names of the individuals rescued are unknown.

(14)(U) 1-3-52, 16 May 68. On this mission, Jolly Green 28 and 24 were scrambled from DaNang strip alert to rescue three survivors of the Kham Duc Airfield. The rescue forces joined up over the rescue area and strikes were called in to sterilize the area around the survivors. JG 28 was led to a hover over two of the survivors and successfully hoisted them aboard despite heavy automatic weapons ground fire. The third survivor was spotted and JG 24 entered a hover over the spot where the survivor was last seen. After approximately 5 minutes of searching while in a hover, the survivor was spotted and hoisted aboard. The names of the survivors were Sgt (E-5) Edward Sassenberger, E-4 Wilbert Foreman, and PFC John C. Colonna, all U

(15)(U) 1-3-44, 21 May 68. Jolly Greens 25 and 29 were

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picked up the pilot injured in his ejection and landing and more recently by bomb fragments from Rescap working close to him. Altogether the mission required 189 sorties. Unfortunately Sandy 7 was never heard from again.⁹

The most successful mission of the quarter, in terms of numbers rescue, was the pickup of 29 personnel on 12-13 May 1968. On the twelfth a medevac chopper struck trees when egressing from a landing zone northwest of Da Nang. After a twilight and night effort all crew members of the helos and all wounded passengers were evacuated: 29 credited to ARRS and 8 to the U.S. Marines who assisted later in the SAR effort.¹⁰

Another successful mission was the recovery of the pilot of Master 01, and the two pilots of Hudson 02, downed during the attempt to rescue Master 01. This was another mission that was spread over two days, 8-9 June. Fortunately Master 01 was able to evade capture during the night and in the morning of the ninth made voice contact with the Misty F-100 FAC working in the area above Master just north of the DMZ. The SARTAF was organized and activated. About three hours later Hudson 02

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10. Mission Narrative (Medevac Swift 5-1) (S) Page 8c

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Mission Narrative 123-51

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At approximately 0930Z on 12 May 1968 Queen notified Crown 4 that an aircraft was suspected down at 323/11 from Ch 77 TACAN. They were unable to establish if there was a definite emergency and requested that Crown 4 contact Phu Bai DASC on 258.8 MCS. Phu Bai had several helicopters in the area working on a medical evacuation mission: Swift 5-2 and Swift 5-7 were contacted for further information on the downed aircraft. It was determined that the downed aircraft was a CH-46 call sign Swift 5-1 which had crashed during a medical evac mission, having struck trees while egressing the landing zone. Personnel were reported to be in no immediate danger from enemy action and all had survived the drash. Swift 5-2 reported the area blanketed with smoke at an elevation of 3000ft in a box canyon near the top of 4000 ft ridge. He further suggested that the effort be terminated due to the approach of nightfall. At 0943Z Dust Off 503 transiting the area reported that the smoke was clearing up and pick up might be possible. Crown 4 requested that the Jolly Greens be launched from Ch 77 and proceeded to the area. The RESCAP A-1s were unable to launch because Ch 77 had simultaneously come under mortar and rocket attack. This posed no immediate difficulty because no hostile fire was reported in the area during many previous landings by the Army helicopters. Upon arrival at the scene Jolly Green 21 and 28 found that a cloud layer had begun to form at the ridge top obscuring the landing zone. The situation appeared unworkable, however the Jolly Greens elected to remain in the area hoping that the cloud condition was temporary. While holding Swift 5-7 was obtained from Phu Bai to assist in pinpointing the location of the LZ. At this time the weather began to improve and Jolly Green 28 directed to the exact position by Swift 5-7. Due to the high altitude, rugged terrain and inaccessibility of

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of the area a maximum of 4 appeared to be the best load that could be extracted on each mission. Based on the reported 30 WIA at the site it was now obvious that nightfall would stop further operations, therefore a flareship was requested from Queen. Crown 4 began immediate preparation for flare drop until the Flareship could arrive at the scene. At 1135Z, the flareship "Basketball" 812 arrived before any flares were dropped by Crown 4, however Crown 4 dropped 4 flares to mark the site for the flareship, who immediately began very effective illumination patterns, Crown 4 then proceeded back to orbit altitude and served as relay between the Helicopters in correcting the flares pattern. Some difficulty was encountered in communicating as the helos could not hear the Flareship UHF radio and the Flareship could not hear the Helo VHF, while FM was being reserved for communication with the survivors. Crown 4 now had a computed bingo of 1 hour and 30 minutes and requested that Crown 7 be put on alert. Queen directed that Crown 7 be launched immediately to replace Crown 4. Refueling at Ch 77 being considered unwise due to mortar and rocket attacks. At this time Jolly Greens 21 and 10 were returning to Ch 77 from alert position at Ch 103 and were pressed into the lift. No significant difficulty was encountered on any of the sorties once the LZ was located, the operation under the light of flares appeared to be highly effective. At 1230Z the weather began to worsen and Jolly Green 28 had considerable difficulty finding the LZ on his second pickup. Crown 4 recommended holding all forces at Ch 77 to await improvement in the weather. Jolly Green 25 attempted one more pick up but could not find the LZ due to weather. 2 crew members, 7 WIA and 16 KIA remained to be removed. Crown 4 was RTB at 1237Z and replaced by Crown 7. A total of 23 personnel had been removed, neg ground fire encountered. Crown 4 expended 4 flares and logged 15 hours and 15 minutes total flying time.

Landing time at Ch 83 1325Z.

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