

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

2/14

FROM: 37(0)

26 March 1969

SUBJECT: MISSION NARRATIVE REPORT (1-3-35-24 Mar 69)

Classified by 213 aeebp
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO
YEAR INTERVALS.
DECLASSIFIED ON 21 Dec 75

TO: 37C

3rd ARRGp (JSARC)

IN TURN

1. (U) This report is submitted IAW ARRSR 55-2/3 ARRGp Sup 1 dated 15 June 1968.

2. (C) Jolly Greens 31 (low) and 28 (high) were scrambled at 0605Z, 24 March 69, from DaNang AB in response to Queen directions. Bilk 23, an O-1 aircraft (FAC) of 20 TASS was reported down at 280 radial/50 NM/Channel 77. Both alert aircraft were airborne at 0615Z and proceeded to climb to 3000 MSL over DaNang AB, thence to 7500 MSL enroute to the reported position. Spads 11 and 12, on alert at DaNang, scrambled concurrently with the Jolly Greens and escorted both 31 and 28 to approximately 40 NM on the 275 radial, channel 77, where the rescue aircraft were placed on orbit pending an evaluation of the situation by the Spads. Army helicopters (1-LOH, 2 Hueys & 1-H47) presently in the immediate area of the crash, were drawing no ground fire, and had supposedly located the distressed pilot who had incurred injuries in the crash. Voice contact had been established. Bilk 25 (sister O-1 to downed aircraft) assumed On Scene Commander (OSC) until Spad 11 assumed OSC at 0637Z. Spad 11 cleared the Army aircraft from the area, established WHF SAR forces frequency, and proceeded to reconnoiter. After several passes, observation of the remains of a previous smoke signal, and observation of no ground fire, Spad 11 cleared Jolly Green 31 for an approach at 0650Z. Jolly Green 31 briefed the SAR forces on his tactics and requested screening smoke on the south western ridge line to cover his approach. The survivor's location was opened to be on the west slope of the eastern ridge at approximately 2500 foot MSL level, of a "V" shaped box canyon with the open end facing north. The surrounding ridge line was approximately 3200 MSL necessitating a steep approach from the south to the north. Spads 11 and 12 delivered the smoke precisely where requested and continued to fly a left orbit into the south western ridge, expending ordnance on each pass. Jolly Green 31 descended rapidly to the southern ridges, performed 180 degree tactical turn and approached what was reported to be the survivors location. (At this point and until some 40 minutes later the aerial observers continued to report Bilk 23 location in the immediate vicinity of the crash site). Dense vegetation prevented the Jolly Green 31 crew from establishing visual contact with Bilk 23. Since the aerial observefs and Bilk 23 thought the rescue aircraft was in the survivors immediate vicinity, Jolly Green 31 elected to lower the forest penetrator in an attempt to assist Bilk 23 to orient himself. (It should be noted that Bilk 23 was in moderate shock, incoherent at times, and discontinued contact with Jolly Green 31). While lowering the penetrator, Jolly Green 31 received ground from his left rear, which resulted in four holes in the aircraft and severing of the penetrator cable. Jolly Green 31 departed the area at 0658Z climbing to the north and northeast for damage assessment which was negligible except for the penetrator

Arch 5

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Downgraded at 3 year
interval, declassified
after 10 years

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

loss. Spad 11 re-evaluated the situation and cleared Jolly Green 28 for approach at 0704Z after laying ordnance in the position of suspected ground fire, after determining that suppression fire was effective. (Note: Army helicopters continued to operate in the immediate area for support after the suppression fire and received no ground fire). Jolly Green 28 descended and approached in the same manner as Jolly Green 31 but was informed that the survivor location had been passed. Jolly Green 28 performed a 360 degree turn coming to a hover at the assumed location at 0710Z. This position proved to be erroneous and two more 360 degree patterns were accomplished. Jolly Green 28 could maintain contact with Bilk 23 except when in his immediate area where the aircraft UHF radio reception was blocked due to UHF antenna location. During the third hover search, the number 1 engine fire warning light illuminated and remained on; a check of performance instruments and a visual sighting of the engine indicated no malfunction, therefore Jolly Green 28 elected to continue the hover search. This proved rather difficult as the slope where the survivor was located inclined at approximately 35 degrees, consequently the search had to be conducted from the higher to the lower levels. At approximately 0725Z small arms fire was observed from the left rear. Jolly Green 28 departed the area until Spads 11 and 12 made ordnance deliveries into the suspected area. Driver, (on Army LOH) whom reportedly was cognizant of the exact location of the survivor offered to hover, the area and mark such with a smoke grenade. Since the Spads had sanitized the area Jolly Green 28 elected to circle and approach to the smoke. The LOH placed his smoke immediately north of the crash site and Jolly Green 28 hover searched this area to no avail. Jolly Green 31, whom had been vectoring and providing close in observation, reported that Bilk 23 had placed white panels in his immediate vicinity but was unable to move about due to painful leg injuries. Jolly Greens 31 and 28 decided that a GCA type of approach to the best & most probable location would be the most logical action therefore Jolly Green 28 again departed, circled and commenced a slow, steep, angled approach from just over the south ridge line toward the canyon floor. Through the expertise of Jolly Green 31, Jolly Green 28 was vectored directly over the survivor ~~but~~ until approximately 25 feet behind the rescue aircraft. The Flight Engineer maintained the exact location where the panels had been sighted and directed backward flight into position at approximately 0740Z. The Flight Engineer immediately lowered the penetrator which could only be placed approximately 10 feet from the survivor due to the slope and vegetation. The survivor immediately moved to the penetrator with great difficulty and strapped himself on, and gave an up signal. The survivor became entangled in vines, bamboo and tree limbs several times during the hoisting, to the extent that almost 100 linear feet of vegetation was brought up with him. During the hoist operation small arms fire was observed by the RCCP which appeared to be originating at the 9 o'clock position, ahead of the nose but dropping short. The hoist operation was continued and the survivor was brought aboard at 0749Z. Because of the extra weight of the vegetation, plus the down wash on this "garbage", it required both the Flight Engineer and the Pararescue Specialist to swing the survivor inside the helicopter. Jolly Green 28 departed down

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

2

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification
indefinitely

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED

the slope to increase airspeed, thence turned easterly in a right climbing turn at the north end of the ridge. Note: Shortly after departure the Flight Engineer reported that vegetation was trailing well beyond the tail rotor and suggested a slow right turn away from the trailing vines. Spads 11 and 12 escorted Jolly Greens 28, 31 and 21 (which had been launched and was in the area and holding as back-up east of the pick-up point) to within 3 miles of DaNang. Jolly Green 28 proceeded to NSA Hospital Heli-pad at Marble Mountain, discharging the survivor at that point at 0820Z and returned to DaNang at 0830Z, 24 Mar 69. Jolly Greens 31 and 21 landed at DaNang at approximately 0820Z.

3. (U) Survivor was, Capt Kerry G. Heron, 20 TASS (DaNang), on duty at LZ Sally.

4. (U) Crews involved:

JOLLY GREEN 31

RCC	Maj	Charles E. Wicker
RCCP	Capt	Edwin L. Shobert Jr.
FE	SSgt	James E. Smith
PJ	ALC	Sammie Thompson

JOLLY GREEN 28

RCC	LtCol	Henry E. Simpson
RCCP	Capt	Robert E. Nash
PJ	SSgt	Eugene L. Nardi
FE	ALC	James A. Thibodeau

JOLLY GREEN 21

RCC	Capt	Bill M. Campbell
RCCP	Capt	Laurens C. Davis
FE	SSgt	Billy R. Bloomer
PJ	SSgt	James D. Miller

5. Comments:

a. (U) Enroute briefing by Queen was superior even though reported data was not exact.

b. (C) Vectoring by PANAMA was highly effective and accurate to the orbit point (this was necessary due to non-reliability of the TACAN at the altitudes and distances involved; also relates to position reporting of survivor).

c. (U) Enroute radio traffic was held to a minimum which is unusual.

d. (U) Spad 11 and 12 performed in an absolutely superior manner. OSC (Spad 11) placed the Jolly Greens in a safe orbit; contacted the acting OSC; informed Bilk 25 (OSC) that he was inbound, and assumed OSC upon his arrival. He assumed complete charge of the effort, clearing excess aircraft from the area yet placing them on stand-by, and proceeded to prepare the environment for a rescue attempt. During the entire period Jolly Greens 31 and 28 were in extremely vulnerable positions, both Spads provided absolute protection in a highly professional manner.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED

3

GROUP 4
 Downgraded at 8 year
 interval, 3-classified
 after 12 years