

22 March 1971

F-4D '67-0655' 13 TFS, 432 TRW, USAF, Udorn
Maj R D Priest (survived)
Maj R L Cubberly (survived)

A flight of Phantoms was flying an escort mission for a reconnaissance aircraft over the southern provinces of North Vietnam when one of the aircraft was lost. The formation was about 10 miles southwest of Dong Hoi when a SAM was launched at the aircraft. Maj Priest's aircraft, a Falcon fast FAC Phantom, was hit by the missile and burst into flames. The crew ejected immediately and evaded capture until they could be rescued by a USAF SAR helicopter. This was the first US aircraft to be lost to an SA-2 since October 1968. The serial quoted for this aircraft is incorrect, as 67-0655 is the serial of a Minuteman ICBM.

The last mission in March took Jolly Greens 72 and 70 into North Vietnam to recover two crewmembers of Falcon 84. Although the mission started on 22 March, it was not completed until first light on 23 March. Jolly Green 72, flown by Major Donald L. Jensen, recovered both pilots in good condition. No resistance was present in the pickup area but Jolly Green 70 flown by Captain Edward D. Harrow (high bird) took heavy 37mm and 23mm fire near Bat Lake NVN. The Sandy flight did a great job on this mission.

SAR Progress - 22 March 1971

- 0800 - Falcon 84 down at 312/52/103 (17°20' N 106° 31' E)
- 0806 - JG 72/65 Airborne.
- 0830 - Sandy 11/12 Airborne. King 27 Airborne.
- 0835 - JG 62/55 Launched. Escorted by Sandy 1/2 into India Orbit.
- 0838 - Dipper 3 has contact with 84 Alpha. None with 84 Bravo.
- 0911 - Chippy 403 & Stormy 01/02 will join hands and go into area.
- 0919 - Stormy 01 On Scene Commander.
- 0925 - Weather is D-S. Stormy 01 has made 3 passes over area. No visual contact with survivors. Has drawn no fire.
- 0932 - Sandy 09/10 in area. Alpha & Bravo contact with each other.
- 0955 - Sandy 09 - bad UHF. Sandy 10 has gone in to try and locate survivors.
- 0958 - Survivors have 2 radios, 4 batteries, and smoke.
- 1025 - Sandy 09 has good contact with 84 Alpha - trying to pinpoint location, 84 Alpha reports rain in area.
- 1045 - Sandy 11 is briefing, survivors to switch to on guard. start 2000L. Every two hours - radio check, until 0600,
- 1046 - Sandy 11 On Scene Commander.
- 1050 - JG 72/65 Air Refueling.

SAR PROGRESS - FALCON 84 ALPHA AND BRAVO (23 March 1971)

- 0530H - "OWL FAC talked to 84 Alpha, who reports Westher 5000 broken. (??)
- 0615H - "SPUD" reports cloud bases 2000 -4000 feet.
- 0615H - Queen says laungh SANDY 1 & 2 to Join Jolly Greens at India Orbit.
- 0625H - Queen says launch Bravo Jollies.
- 0630H - Jolly Green 72 airborne.
- 0631H - Jolly Green 70 airborne.
- 0633H - Jolly Green 67 airborne.
- 0634H - Jolly Green 65 airborne.
- 0646H - sounded like SANDYS taking off.
- 0720H - Jollies going out 268/25/103, then North to 350/20.
Bravo Jollies holding 360/40/103.
- 0750H - Phase Alpha complete. JG 70 taking heavy AA near Bat Lake - pulling out.
- 0751H - Phase Bravo in progress on Falcoln 84 Alpha.
- 0756H - Phase Bravo completed on Falcoln 84 Alpha.
- 0757H - Phase Brove in progress on Falcoln 84 Bravo.
- 0800H - JG 72 has tally-ho on Falcoln 84 Bravo.
- 0801H - JG 70 to the South of the Fence.
- 0804H - Phase Bravo complete on Falcoln 84 Bravo.
- 0806H - JG 72, SANDY 1 & 2 egressing. Beaucoup ground fire around Bat Lake.
- 0808H - Cobra 4 flight going to escort SAR forces out of area.
- 0810H - King 23 est India Orbit at 0855H.

0811H - JG 70 intercepting JG 72 to procede out together.
0814H - STORMY flight has tally-ho on SAR forces and will escort.
0823H - AR not required.
0825H - All SAR forces over the fence.
0826H - Both survivors OK. 84 Bravo has burns on hand and small piece of
shrapnel in thumb.
0828H - Neither Jolly took hits.
0908H - JG 72 & 70 on the deck @ 77.
0909H - JG 67 & 65 on the deck @ 77.

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FROM: 1 SOS (CC)

9 Mar 71

SUBJECT: SARCO Report for Cobra A & B

TO: DO

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1. A successful rescue was conducted on 26 Feb 71 for two crew members of Cobra 23. The aircraft, an F4D out of Phu Cat AB, RVN, went down at approximately 1415L 25 Feb 71, on the 260° radial for 43NM of Channel 103. This report covers those activities relating to the Sandys during the rescue effort. All times are Thailand local.

2. At 1430L, 25 Feb 1971, A SAR was declared for Cobra 23. (Atch 1) The aircraft was downed by enemy ground fire in the vicinity of D-12, two parachutes had been observed and radio contact had been made with both survivors. The area was extremely hostile with active firefights and continuous airstrikes being put in. Hammer FACs were controlling all activity in the area. (Atch 2)

3. At the time the SAR was declared Jack scrambled Sandy's 09/10 from Da Nang, 05/06 from NKP and directed that Sandy's 03/04 were to remain on ground alert at NKP. 05/06 were to be escorts for Jolly Greens 66/72 which were scrambled from Da Nang. Sandy's 07/08 launched from Bien Hoa on their normal redeploy and were diverted to the SAR along with Hobo's 32/33 who were RTB with ordnance due to deteriorating weather in their target area. These were the forces participating in the first day effort. (Atch 3)

4. Sandy 09/10 arrived on scene at approximately 1600L and after being briefed by Hammer 40, 09 assumed on-scene command. (Atch 4) The weather in the objective area was marginal with heavy rain showers and intermittent low ceilings. Several attempts were made to penetrate the weather in an effort to pinpoint the survivors. Heavy ground fire was observed on all attempts and about the time the general area of the survivors was determined, Sandy 10 was hit by groundfire and exited the area to check damage. The inclement weather prevented full utilization of fast mover strikes however, Hammer 62 put in any he could. Sandy 10 had determined the damage was restricted to his external tanks, which he jettisoned, so he returned to the scene. At approximately 1620L, King ordered all SAR forces out of the area due to a TPQ alert called on guard. At 1635 Sandy 10 had to RTB due to low fuel so Sandy 06 was directed to the scene as low wing. (Atch 5) The effort to pinpoint the survivors continued and as they were located Sandy 09 took several hits in the underside of his aircraft and was streaming fuel from both external tanks. He jettisoned his load and RTB'd Channel 77 at approximately 1730. Later inspection revealed in excess of 10 entry holes in the aircraft with one the size of a football in the right elevator. Sandy 06 assumed on-scene command and 05 was called down to join him. Hobo's 32 and 33 had arrived after being released from their original mission and were assigned to escort the Jollies. (Atch 6) At this time there was approval

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ately 20 minutes of light remaining so the remaining time was used to positively pinpoint the survivors and identify areas of enemy gunfire in preparation for the first light effort that was to come. Sandy 06 gave the bed-down instructions to both survivors telling them Hammer FAC's would be overhead all night and they, the survivors, should stay off their radios unless they had something important to say. Regular 1/2 or one hour check-ins would only place a needless strain on the radio batteries as well as increase the possibility of enemy capture. Sandys 06/05 remained overhead until the first night FAC, Hammer 79, arrived at which time they RTB'd channel 89.

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5. Upon debriefing the Sandys it was decided that the prime fast mover ordnance for sanitizing the area would be napalm. Enemy ground troops and armor were too close to the survivors for other types. A request was made to Blue Chip for "a wall-to-wall" nape for the first light effort. Was later informed we probably wouldn't get it as it "hadn't been fragged." Also requested fast mover smoke on alert to augment our own, as Sandy 09 said it would take a lot. Also had to justify to Blue Chip our request for release from next days frag in order to support first light effort. We were directed to maintain the 4 Smokes and generate all other available A-1's as Sandys. The weather forecast for first light was 4000' broken 9000' overcast 5NM GFH. Patchy GF dissipating by 1000 local. All in all much more favorable than the first day. The briefing was coordinated through Jack for 0300 local. King 21 would land at NKP to attend. Four Jolly Greens were to be launched out of Da Nang and four Sandys from NKP. The smoke aircraft were to remain on Ground Alert.

6. The first light briefing was held at 0300 with the Ops team of King 21 present. The first 6 Sandys, 4 Smokes and NKP alert Jollys also attended. King was requested to keep all forces other than Sandy low on 127.7 VHF and 38.8 FM to eliminate the congestion encountered on the first day. In addition 38.9 FM had been very noisy with many Gomers transmitting. Also requested King and Queen talk to each other on HF rather than VHF. Intelligence and weather was presented after which the leads completed their individual briefings.

7. Sandy 03/04 launched at 0438 as the initial lows and Sandy 05/06 were off at 0447 to escort the Da Nang JG's. Sandy 03/04 arrived on scene at approximately 0545, 10 minutes prior to first light. (Atch 7) They received a briefing from Hammer 40 and assumed on-scene command at first light. The weather was marginal with Alpha's position completely obscured. Bravo's position had no sooner been located than it too was obscured by a low overcast. Repeated attempts were made to find a way under the clouds but were futile. During this period Hammer 40 requested ordnance to suppress some HMG fire that had been observed. Hammer 48 directed strikes against these positions. Around 0645 the weather improved enough for Sandy 03 to go down and locate the survivors. (600' overcast) Alpha was located and contacted. During several passes over his position Alpha reported artillery fire each time. Sandy 03/04 remained in the area until approximately 0830 when they RTB'd due fuel. Sandys 05/06 arrived from the JG orbit and 05 assumed on-scene command after being briefed by 03. (Atch 8) The

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weather continued to improve and after pinpointing the survivors positions 05/06 determined what areas gunfire was coming from. Sandys 07/08 arrived approximately 0900 and 07 assumed command after briefing by 05. 05/06 then expended their ordnance in the areas of known gunfire and RTB'd. (Atch 9)

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8. Sandy 07/08 continued the process of trolling for gunfire and through coordination with the survivors was able to identify areas that needed sanitizing. Working with Hammer 54, 07 would locate and mark, and 54 would FAC in fast movers with napalm. All ordnance was directly on target and the area immediately around the survivors was clear. Sandy 07 began his planning for a pickup, estimating this would be possible within an hour. An ingress-egress route was picked and trolled. Rocket or mortar fire was sighted along this route and once again Hammer 54 was utilized to direct strikes of Snake and Nape in the area. The delivery was outstanding and "the whole area was in flames." At this time 07 requested 4 Smoke aircraft to screen off a ridgeline that was thought to conceal a 23mm emplacement. Shortly thereafter King notified 07 that 4 fast mover Smokes were on the way. Sandy 09 was brought down from the JG orbit and briefed on the plan. Sandy 09 then trolled the route from the holding point and when he received no ground fire, returned to the JG's and briefed them. At this time Sandy 10 had to RTB due to a center-line fuel tank that would not feed. He was replaced by Sandy 11 from NKP. The survivors were then briefed on the plan by Sandy 07 and told to have their smoke flares ready to fire. Hammer 54 was briefed where to lay the smoke. Everything was ready. All forces were brought up on survival channel D and the Smoke birds executed. Sandy 07 and 08 marked the IP and too far points and 07 directed 09 and 11 to bring the Jolly down the chute. Alpha was directed to pop his smoke which the Jolly saw immediately. The JG moved into the hover while Sandys 08 and 09 and 11 ran a daisy chain around him suppressing any possible gunfire. Sandy 07 held high over the pickup point directing the operations. Alpha was picked up and the JG directed towards Bravo. Bravo was told to pop his smoke and again the Jolly saw it immediately. The Jolly moved right in and Bravo was picked up in minimum time. The entire force then exited the area with the Sandys laying down ordnance. The JG departed out over friendlies and RTB'd channel 77. Sandy 07 was very low on fuel at this time and had to divert to channel 103. All other Sandys RTB'd channel 89. (Atch 10)

9. Forces generated for the first light effort were Sandys 03 through 12 and Smoke 41 through 44. Sandys 01/02 were scrambled from Ubon but did not reach the scene in time to be utilized. (Atch 11).

10. Some problems experienced on other SAR's repeated themselves here. Sandy lows must be firm in insisting that King hold all assets on frequencies other than those Sandy Low is using. Also King is going to have to stop the practice of communicating with Queen/Jack on VHF. Radio clutter from these two causes were major problems for the Sandys on the first day. When King attends the first light briefing, there isn't any problem.

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In addition Sandy Low must get the survivor up on a different channel other than guard as soon as possible. The interference from area towers, fast-mover flights using it as common for joining-up, MIG warnings, ARC lights, etc. severely hamper communications.

11. On the second day of the SAR, Queen was asked by Jack on several occasions to update the Bingo times of the on-scene Sandys. Due to limited assets and reaction time this is vital. Queen/Jack/King must respond to this request because the fuel time for Sandys can vary from 3-5 1/2 hours depending on type of activity. This oversight caused Sandy 03 and 07 to be dangerously low on fuel when recovering at NKP and Quang Tri. In addition the practice of launching maximum assets for a first light effort is not realistic. The on-scene Sandys also recommend that the fast-mover variety of Smoke be used as a last resort only. It was described as looking like that used by skywriters and wholly inadequate for the type of screen needed.

12. The name of the game from here on out is MANAGEMENT of resources. We have gone from 70 odd A-1's on station to an average of 24. Downed American aircrews no longer have 1st priority on airframes as is evidenced in this S.R. The remaining aircraft must be judiciously scheduled until such time as the OSC decides an attempt is feasible. Then, and only then, should maximum forces be committed. The Sandy Low OSC is the only one that is qualified to make this decision, not TEEPEE/JACK/QUEEN/KING/JOKER. Premature utilization of our limited resources could be fatal for the survivors.

WILLIAM J. HAGAN, Lt Colonel, USAF
RCO

- Atch 1 SARCO Log
2 Hammer Statement
3 Flying Schedule
4 Statement for Sandy 09/10
5 Statement for Sandy 05/06
6 Statement for Hammer 32/33
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COBRA 23 - 25 Feb 71

HAMMER 54
Capt Peter J. Ruppert
064-32-5323R

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At approximately 1530 I was working a strike just south of Delta 38 when I heard a mayday call on guard saying that Cobra 23 had been hit and was jumping out. The call also included a Hqs and Radial which was the 260/40 02 01 105. I at the time was on the 275/40 of 103.

I finished the airstrike and proceeded to the 260/40 to see if I could be of assistance. Upon arrival I saw many airplanes in the area so I climbed to 10,500 feet to stay out of the way. There were five additional OV 10's all Hammer Facs, at least I presumed, them to be, about 20 choppers or so and I do not know how many fast movers. Hammer 229 was working a TIC at the time as well as the SAR and I asked if I could be of help. He told me yes since he was out of rockets. I went down and took over for him. I saw both survivors chutes and plotted their position. Hammer 04 was made on-scene commander by King and I continued working the TIC. Hammer 04 RTB due to low fuel and H-40 relieved him. I was relieved by H-223. After landing, H-04 and myself went back out to the scene at 6:15 and H-62 along with Sandy 05 and 06 were talking to the survivor. H-62 did not know the exact location so H-04 and myself went into the area and showed Sandy's location. We were then informed by Hillsboro to clear the area to the east since they had heavy artillery going in and could not shut it off. The Sandys and we then held east for approximately 10-15 minutes. By the time we were cleared back in, it was 1900 hours. The Sandys and us made repeated passes over survivors position* but took heavy AAA which came from a tank that sat approximately 300 meters west of the survivors on top of the hill. Both survivors were talking and informed us of a lot of ground fire everytime a Sandy made a pass. The survivors called for CHOP and TWIGGY but Sandy lead told them that it was getting too late and that they should hide themselves, not to worry, that there would be a Fac over them all night, to conserve their radios and use it only if absolutely necessary and that we (Sandys) would be back at first light to pick them up. Cobra 23A's reply was that "we would not be here in the morning". The Sandys RTB'd and H-04 and myself stayed on station until H-79 (the first night Fac) came out and we showed him both survivors' positions and also where the tank was that was shooting at us. H-79 then took over on scene and we (04 & 54) RTB'd. *To Show Sandy's Position Of Survivors.

26 Feb

The first Hammer Fac to launch was H-40 and he arrived on station at 0600. He informed us that the weather was bad and that he had not made contact with the survivors. At approximately 0800 H-40 informed us that they had reestablished contact with both A & B but the weather was still too bad to work the SAR. At 0900 H-40 called us and told us to launch the next Fac for the SAR. I, H-54, launched and arrived on station at approximately 1000am. H-40 RTB'd and Sandy 05 & 06 were on station.

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note: Times are Vietnam Times

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Sandy 07 & 08 relieved 05 & 06 and 07 became on-scene commander. The weather began to clear up quite rapidly and we had about a 8-10,000' overcast. Sandys 07 & 08 proceeded to talk to the survivor and made repeated passes over their approximate position. I asked Sandy 07 if he knew where both survivors were and he said that he knew where Alpha was but not quite sure where Bravo was. I then pointed Bravo's chute out to 07 which he had not seen before. (Oh yes, Alpha had pulled his chute in about half an hour after he ejected on the 25th and it could not be seen anymore.) When the Sandys made the passes the survivors informed them that they were taking ground fire and the approximate position where it came from. The Sandys then began to sterilize the area by making repeated passes. Sandy 07 then showed me where he wanted some airstrikes put and for the next 2½ hours I put airstrikes in around the survivors while the Sandys were working in close proximity of the survivors with their own ordnance. At approximately 1230 Sandy 09 & 10 checked in with the choppers and at approximately 1315 it was decided to go ahead with the pickup. Sandy 07 told me where to lay down the smoke and I then worked Ringneck 957 flight and laid the smoke down. The Sandys (4 of them) then really worked the immediate area over and the chopper (65) was then brought in from the IP. Two other Sandys were laying down CBU on both sides of the choppers route and Cobra 23A was picked up first. After Bravo was picked up the chopper exited the area by means of the same route that he entered. The whole pickup took about 15 minutes. It was a well planned and well executed mission.

PETER J. RUPPERT, Capt, USAF
HAMMER 54

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FLYING SCHEDULE

25 Feb 71

<u>PILOT</u>	<u>CALL SIGN</u>	<u>T/D</u>	<u>ATE</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
	SANDY			
CAPT MADDEN	01		GA	UBON
MAJ DE FELICE	02		GA	UBON
1LT WILSON	03		GA	NKP - Held By Jack
LT/COL BRUSHE	04		GA	NKP - Held By Jack
LT/COL ADAMS	05	1500	3.8	
1LT TARRANT	06	1500	3.8	On-Scene-Commander
CAPT SMITH	07	1430	5.0	FROM BIEN HOA
1LT ROUSSEL	08	1430	5.1	FROM BIEN HOA
CAPT KEETER	09	1430	3.8	On-Scene-Commander
1LT CARMICHAEL	10	1450	2.7	
	HOB0			
CAPT LORENZEN	32	1405	5.5	
MAJ DONALDSON				
COL WALSH	33	1405	5.5	
	SMOKE			
LT/COL STONE	41		GA	
1LT LYON	42		GA	
MAJ WOLCOTT	43		GA	
MAJ ROBERTS, J.	44		GA	

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SAR FOR COBRA 23A & B

STATEMENT OF SANDY 09/KEETER

25 FEB 1971

Sandy 09 & 10 were scrambled at 1455 local from Da Nang to proceed to the 268/33/ 103 where we would hold with Jolly's 66 and 72. We were told enroute that an F4 was down at 260/43 103 and there were two survivors on the ground in good shape. Hammer 40 was on-scene commander and was working fast movers around the survivors when we arrived at the orbit point at 1555. After holding with the Jolly's for 10 minutes we were instructed by King to proceed to the 260/43 for a briefing from Hammer 40 who was running low on fuel, and we arrived on scene at 1600.

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The weather in the target area had become steadily worse and was totally obscured by a rain squall when we arrived. We made several attempts at penetrating the valley where they were located and finally spotted the general vicinity of the survivors. Sandy 10 was hit in the centerline drop tank on one of these passes and proceeded out of the area under the escort of Nail 62. Nail 40 and I continued to make passes over the area while taking with the survivors in an attempt at pinpointing their locations. We were drawing heavy AAA fire on all passes from ZPU, 12.5, 23mm, 37mm and AK 47 Hand-held weapons. Due to the heavy fire it was impossible to remain very long in the immediate area, and a definite pinpoint on their location was not made. We were unable, due to the weather, to work fast-mover aircraft around the survivors.

I was given on-scene command at 1615 and had Hammer 62 with me to act as FAC for any fast-mover support we were able to use and because he was familiar with the area of the survivors. The weather began to improve about 1715 and I again went back into the area to determine the location of the ground fire and to see if it would be possible to plan a pickup before darkness that evening. I had Sandy 06 as my wingman on this pass as Sandy 10 RTB'd for Bingo fuel at 1645 due to the loss of his centerline tank. As I was pointing out the survivors location to Sandy 06 I felt three sharp thumps under the airplane and observed an airburst directly in front of the aircraft. I then requested Sandy 06 to look me over as we exited the area toward the friendlyes. He noticed fuel streaming from the centerline and stub tanks, and I was forced to punch them off, leaving me bingo fuel. I advised King of this and turned on-scene command to Sandy 06. I recovered at DaNang, arriving there around 1840.

JACK E. KEETER, Captain, USAF
Sandy 09

Atch 4

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SAR FOR COBRA 23 A & B

STATEMENT OF SANDY 05/06/ADAMS/TATEISHI

25 Feb 71

At 1430 L on the 25 Feb 71, Sandy 5 & 6 were preparing to launch on their normal J-orbit when they received a call from King that an aircraft had gone down. They were instructed to rendezvous at 265/32/103. The Sandy's tookoff and were given further information to cross the route structure where the least possible chance of ground fire existed. Despite thunderstorms enroute they managed to rendezvous with the Jolly Green helicopters and provided escort for them. Sandy 9 & 10 were on scene and on one pass Sandy 10 took ground fire and was going to return to base. King advised Sandy 6 to take over for Sandy 10 and continue the search.

Sandy 6 arrived on scene and replaced Sandy 10. The weather over the survivors made it virtually impossible for a search to start so Sandy 9 & 6 orbited south of the survivors approximate position. During this time, several probes of the survivors area were attempted when it seemed as though the weather was breaking. Air bursts were sighted periodically and ground fire was evident from the hits Sandy 10 took and the tracers coming up from the West of the survivors.

The weather broke with ceiling of 4000' msl and Sandy 9 was about to show Sandy 6 the approximate positions of the survivors when Sandy 9 reported taking ground fire. He withdrew to the South and Sandy 6 looked him over. Sandy 9 was streaming fuel from his stub tank from 2 places and from his centerline fuel tank from 3 spots. He also had holes in the wing and Sandy 6 advised Sandy 9 of his aircraft status. Sandy 9 reported to King and told King that he was going to return to base.

Sandy 6 was placed on scene commander and asked for Sandy 5 to join him. When Sandy 5 arrived on scene a FAC who knew where the survivors were attempted to show Sandy 5 & 6 where they were. On the initial pass intensive ground fire was seen and because the location of the survivors were unknown, no ordnance was expended. A scheduled arc lite was about to commence and King advised the Sandy and FAC pilots to head East.

After the strike was over Sandy's 5&6 returned to the area and took intensive ground fire from small arms, automatic weapons, AAA and a tank, West of the survivors. The Sandy's then determined that it was getting too dark for a pickup attempt and ground fire made it unfeasible. Sandy 6 then proceeded to 'bed down' the survivors and instructed them to hide well and conserve their batteries.

Sandy 6 instructed King to have the FAC'S who were on scene to be there at first light and also have some type of aircraft to be over head of the survivors if they wanted to talk.

Sandy 5&6 then returned to base through thunderstorms and landed at NKP. Upon aircraft post flight Sandy 6 had received a small arms hole in the right flap.

CHRIS M. TATEISHI, 1st Lt, USAF
Sandy 06

Atch 5

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SAR FOR COBRA 23

Callsigns - Hobo 32, Hobo 33

Crewmembers - Capt Lorenzen/Maj Donaldson, Col Walsh

Date - 25 Feb 71

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On 25 Feb 71, I was scheduled for a mid-tour instrument refresher with Major Donaldson in my right seat and Col Walsh. Our mission was fragged and briefed for the Barrel Roll. About 25 minutes after takeoff, when we were checking in with ABCCC, we were advised that the weather was unworkable in the Barrel and to return to NKP with ordnance. As we approached NKP, we were advised to divert to support the SAR in progress. King 26 gave us a route to a holding point (265/32/103). We had a good view of the "beach" around Delta 45 as we flew King's briefed route to the holding point. As we approached the SAR area, we were assigned to escort Jolly Green 65 and 67 in the vicinity of Quang Tri. We escorted the Jolly Greens until our bingo time at 1800L. At about the same time, the SAR effort was postponed for the evening for darkness. We recovered at NKP, logging 5.5 apiece.

EDWARD V. LORENZEN JR, Capt USAF
HOB0 32

Atch 6

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SAR FOR COBRA 23

STATEMENT OF SANDY--STONE

I departed NKP at 0440 with Sandy 04 to proceed to the position of Cobra 23A and 23B. When I arrived on scene Hammer 40 was working Candle 21 just North of the survivor's position. After first light, I assumed on scene command from Hammer 40. He took me into the area and gave a very comprehensive briefing of the area. The weather over Alpha was right on the ground. Bravo was in the clear. After Bravo's position was located the weather then moved over him and both survivors were under a low overcast. Several attempts were made to get under the weather, but they were all futile. A ridge line North and a ridge line East of the survivors was open and Hammer 40 stated that 51 Caliber fire had been coming from these areas. Nape and high drags were requested and Hammer 48 directed strikes along these ridge lines. Just South of the survivors were two camps of ARVN tanks. The other ARVN units were west of the survivors. About 6:45 the weather over Alpha started to lift so I went South and flew up the road and reached his position. At this time the weather was 600 feet above the road, but the hills on each side of it were obscured by clouds. Cobra 23A reported artillery fire as I would pass over his position. It was probably a mortar or a rocket that was fired at me. The general position of Alpha was determined and I made 5 or 6 passes under the clouds over him and each time reported ground fire. I stayed on scene as long as possible waiting for Sandy 07, but due to low fuel I had to RTB. Sandy 05 who was escorting the Jolly Greens came up and I let Hammer 40 brief him while I returned to base. Sandy 03 and 05 landed at NKP at 0910.

HERBERT H. STONE, Lt Colonel, USAF
SANDY

Atch 7

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COBRA 23 Alpha & Bravo

STATEMENT OF SANDY 07/08 RENTZ/PHILLIPS

26 Feb 1971

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Sandy 07 & 08 were scrambled to replace Sandy 03 & 04 as the low and high Sandy respectively. However, by the time we arrived over the survivors position, Sandy 03 & 04 had RTB'd to channel 89 because of low fuel and King had turned the on scene command over to Sandy 05 & 06 (Roberts P./Lyon). Sandy 05 gave me a detailed briefing on the positions of the survivors in the general area, the areas where he had received ground fire, and then the position of the two survivors. Sandy 05 turned over on scene command to me at about 0900 or 0915 NKP time. King informed me that Hammer 54, a Fac, was holding in the area and was available for use at anytime. Sandy 09 & 10 arrived to orbit with the Jollies. I had learned from my briefing that both the survivors were in good condition and had all the standard survival equipment. My first task, to expend Sandy 05 & 06 in the area of known ground fire around Alpha's position. My second task was to try and pinpoint both Alpha's & Bravo's position. Already knowing their approximate positions I started with Alpha. I made several low passes around and finally directly over his position. Even though I was having difficulty reading Alpha's transmission my wingman and I were able to communicate with him and mark his position by using prominent terrain features. When I made every low pass over Alpha I asked him to listen for any ground fire that may come up. On almost every pass especially when I passed over him and flew to the northwest of his position he told me he could hear what he thought to be small arms or automatic type fire. And on one of my pull-offs over the top of the ridge to the Northwest I saw flashes from what appeared to me to be a 12.7. I told Alpha to stand-by and keep his head down and that I was going to mark the ground fire with a WP rocket and if he could see the smoke to tell me if that was the area from which the ground fire was coming. Alpha's view was blocked by a small rise of ground and he could not see the smoke but he had heard the rocket hit and said it was in the right area. This area was about 75 to 150 meters Northwest of Alpha. The 12.7 was on top of the ridge that overlooked Alpha's position 300 meters away. I knew now that the whole top of the ridge above Alpha & Bravo's position would have to be sterilized. But first I wanted to pinpoint Bravo's position and check out the area in his immediate vicinity. I repeated the trolling process over Bravo who was located about 150-200 meters North Northeast of Alpha. Alpha was about $\frac{1}{4}$ way up the hill and Bravo about $\frac{1}{2}$ way up. Bravo reported negative ground fire near his location at least nothing within hearing distance. Let me say now that I saw Bravo's parachute hanging in a tree on one of my low passes and used that to help keep myself oriented to Bravo's position which was about 75 to 100 meters South of his chute down the hill.

I asked King what was available in the form of strike aircraft and King said there were two flights (Cobra?) of F-4 on station with wall to wall Napalm. I made contact with Hammer 54 who was orbiting overhead and had been watching me and asked him to direct the fast movers to expend their napalm along the top of the ridge. I put down three WP rockets to mark the area I wanted hit. Hammer 54 had a tally on Bravo's chute.

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—15 hours on ground—

Rescue crews pluck 2 from North

DA NANG — After 15 hours on the ground in North Vietnam, two F-1 Phantom pilots were picked up by rescue crews of the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron and returned safely to the Republic.

Majors Robert D. Priest and Robert L. Cubberly were forced to eject from their Phantom when it was hit by an enemy surface to air missile near Dong Hoi, north of the Demilitarized Zone.

The two men had successfully evaded an earlier SAM missile during their escort mission for reconnaissance aircraft, but a second SAM exploded near them causing many of their aircraft's systems to malfunction. Shortly thereafter the plane burst into flames.

"Everything happened so fast it was hard to tell exactly what was going on," recalled Major Priest. "We felt the concussion from the SAM blast

and the warning lights came on all over the instrument panel. The aircraft jerked up and we ejected."

"I landed in a tall tree and got hung up there," said Major Cubberly. "I could hear enemy troops on the ground below me. One of them was blowing a shrill whistle and the troops rejoined him down the hill and came back up again in two columns."

All this time the weight of the parachute was causing tree branches to crack. "I thought the cracking noise might alert the troops below me, but they apparently didn't even notice me," the major continued.

As poor weather and darkness crept over the area, the pilots prepared to spend the night where they were.

"I cut down some palm leaves and made a shelter to hide in and protect me from the rain, which was pouring down by this time," related Major Priest. "But I still got soaked that night."

"Things really started happening fast the next morning. As soon as it got light, we could see A-1 Skyraiders in the area."

"About 45 minutes later we saw the Jolly Green coming in," recalled Major Priest. "Before long they had picked me up and I was in the bird."

The rescue helicopter then went in and, within five minutes, had Major Cubberly picked up.

Maj. Donald L. Jensen, Jolly Green pilot, and Capt. Glen W. Walder, co-pilot, agreed that "this was a classic SAR mission."

A PHANTOM PILOT PICKED UP
612 END 013

23 MARCH 1971

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A F-4'S LIGHTER F-4'S SAVED

612 and 613

23 MARCH 1971

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So we agreed to restrict the run-in heading from the Northwest to Southwest which paralleled the top of the ridge line. While Hammer 54 briefed the fast movers, ~~and~~ my wingman and I made two passes delivering rockets and CBU-25 in the area 75 to 100 meters Northwest of Alpha. Then we held to the South while the fast movers delivered their ordnance. All of their ordnance was directly on target and the whole top of the ridge line was in flame. After the smoke cleared I made many passes along the ridge but received no ground fire and couldn't find any sign of the enemy. I also made several more passes over Alpha and he reported no ground fire.

At this time I realized that we would be ready for a pickup possibly within an hour so I began formulating a plan. There were friendly forces in the area in the form of tanks, trucks and personnel massed in three areas about 2 to 3 miles West and Southwest of the survivors. When the time came for the pickup I decided I would hold the high Jolly (J667) over the friendlies and use this as an IP for the low Jolly. I planned to pickup Alpha first and then go directly to Bravo and pick him up and exit on a reverse of the entry route. I then flew back and forth along the route and had both survivors and my wingman listening and looking for ground fire. It was at this time that my wingman called that either B-40 rockets or some type of mortar fire was fired at me from along a road about 300 meters Southeast of Alpha's position.

I wanted to conserve the Sandies ordnance to protect the helicopter during the pickup so I again contacted Hammer 54 to have him work fast movers in the area. Since my wingman had seen the area I had him mark the position for the Fac. At this point a slight delay was experienced. My wingman thinking he had WP rockets in his LAU 59's tried to mark with them. After making two unsuccessful attempts to mark with rockets I had him drop a WP bomb. We found out later that the aircraft had been loaded incorrectly with heap rockets in his LAU 59's. (Now with the target marked the Fac went to work. This time snake and Napalm was used by A-4's (?) that did an outstanding job. The whole area was in flames).

+h4+

My wingman and I thought, since some 23mm which had come up the day before may be waiting to get shot at the Jolly we would smoke off that area during the pickup. At this time I ordered four smoke birds. King, a few minutes later informed me that 4 fast movers smoke were on the way. I asked him what kind of smoke they carried and King replied that it was what I needed. I also planned to run a smoke screen Northeast and Northwest above Bravo's position to mark off the top of the ridge. The wind direction was such that neither of these screens would obscure the survivors.

I then brought Sandy 09, the escort Sandy, down to the area and left Sandy 10 with the helicopter. I pointed out the friendly position and told Sandy 09 I planned to hold the high Jolly at about 8500 MSL over them and also use a point just East of the friendlies as an IP for the low Jolly that I would mark just before the pickup started. I then showed him the position of both survivors and the areas that we had been receiving ground fire. Then with him in loose trail I flew along the proposed entry route of the helicopter to Alpha's position then to Bravo's position.

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I told him that the exit route would be the reverse of the entry. Then I sent Sandy 09 to the area of the friendlies and told him to troll for ground fire that may come up on the Jolly that was to hold there and then if no fire was received to go back to the Jollies holding point 265/25/103 and brief the Jollies on the proposed plan. At this time Sandy 10 RTB'd because of low fuel. His center-line wouldn't feed. I also realized that I may run out of fuel before a pickup could be made so I ordered two more Sandies. I told my wingman to figure out a pressure altitude and temperature and give that information to King and have them pass it on to the Jollies. And next I started to brief Hammer 54 where I wanted the smoke Southeast of Alpha. I planned to use my CBU-22 to mark off the ridge line to the North. (Sandy 11 arrived to take Sandy 10's place).

Then I told Sandy 09 & 11 to bring the Jolly to the forward holding point over the friendlies. I contacted the survivors and told them to get out a flare and get ready to ignite it when told to and to be sure and use the safety loop on the jungle penetrator. Both crewmen acknowledged. I then told Alpha that I was going to put a dud WP bomb near his position. I used this as a too far smoke for Alpha and also as the turning point to get to Bravo. I also put another dud WP bomb down as a too far point for Bravo. This bomb broke up and spread smoke making a perfect screen to protect the JG from any bad guys on the ridge that may have survived. So I did not use my CBU-22 to mark off the ridge.

Everything was ready. All the briefings had been done on VHF. Everyone was brought over the 2828 channel D. Guard channel had been too cluttered with the other aircraft. I told Hammer 54 to send in the fast mover smoke (?) on the prebrief starting point and heading. The smoke was layed. I told my wingman to get in trail with me and we layed CBU-25 along the entry route of the Jolly. I put in two WP rockets in the last position of ground fire around Alpha and told Sandy 08 to hammer that area. I climbed up over the scene, the smoke to the Southeast was blocking any big gun fire from that direction. I told Sandy 09 & 11 to bring in the Jolly and lay down ordnance continuously around him. The Jolly started his run. I told Alpha to pop his smoke. The Jolly had no trouble seeing it and moved right into the hover. Sandy 08 joined 09 & 11 in a daisy change around the JG delivering ordnance at random making sure to stay away from Bravo's position. I held high directing traffic. With the Alpha man on board I directed JG to the direction of Bravo. The JG also had the smoke I had put down to aim for. I had Bravo man pop his smoke and directed JG to his position. The Jolly moved right into the hover and picked up Bravo. The Sandies continued delivering ordnance on the exit. I directed the JG out the exit route and instructed him to climb in a left climbing turn that positioned him over the friendlies. I was extremely low on fuel because of having to use high power setting most of the time. I turned command over to Sandy 08 and immediately headed for Cn 103 with Hammer 54 leading the way. (There are several suggestions I have in order to make the SAR force and procedures more efficient. First, since for the next 3 to 4 months we are going to have to use E & G models for SARs, I recommend that 2 more WP bombs be added to the present E model Sandy load.

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