

DATE: 2 Jun 71

8 Jun 71

MISSION NUMBER: B-3-013

AIRCRAFT DESIGNATION: King 22

DISTRESSED AIRCRAFT: PFL

LOCATION: 028/45/108

SAVES: 2 Combat

(S) On 2 Jun 71 I had been airborne from Udon for 5 minutes on King 22 when King 21 relayed that Cricket (ABCCC) had a message about a "MAYDAY". Cricket consequently passed the information at 0615Z that "Hunter", a ground station/team, had observed an Air America C-46, call sign PFL, crash northwest of Lima Site 32. Cricket advised me that Laredo 12, a FAC, was flying in the vicinity and would contact me on 282.8. As soon as I spoke with Laredo 12, he offered to proceed to the crash scene and reconnoiter the area. At approximately 0625Z Laredo was over the crash site and gave it's position as 9NM northwest of LS 32 (028/45/108 or UG165973). He reported that the wreckage was burning and the weather was moving in on the area. Shortly thereafter he had to leave the scene to go to tanker (0640Z). At 0630Z, Charlie Romeo, an Air America Helicopter came up on 123.1 and volunteered to proceed to the scene, estimating the LS 32 area at 0645Z. I requested that Sandys 3/4 be launched from CH 89 to provide RESCORT. Also, I requested a Mail FAC be launched from CH 89. Raven 21, another FAC, offered his assistance at 0700Z and I told him to fly to the LS 32 area. Charlie Romeo was over the site at 0650Z and I made him On Scene Commander, replacing Laredo 12. As Charlie Romeo only has VHF, it was not determined whether the survivors were using their radios. MIOCAP and border clearance were requested at 0705Z and I asked Jack to check with Air America regarding survival gear on board "PFL". Raven 21 informed me at 0700Z that "Kingpin" reported ground teams were in the area of the site and he would attempt to contact them. At 0710Z Laredo 12 checked in again and remained over the scene monitoring guard. Sandys 3/4 were airborne at this time. At 0707Z "Hotel Bravo", an Air America B-34, was inbound from L-30A to LS 32 to assist. Charlie Romeo spotted the crash site at 0713Z and gave the UTM coordinates as UG1498. Weather was 5500 foot ceiling with fair visibility. Throughout the mission, Cricket advised us of several bombing drops 8-15NM south of LS 32. Charlie Romeo found one parachute at 0719Z but this later was determined to be an old flare chute (40 yards from the wreckage). Jack then advised us that five SOB's were on the aircraft with five parachutes and one beeper (0722Z). Mail 45 arrived on scene at 0735Z and Raven 21 was estimating the area at 0745Z. At 0730Z Hotel 73, another Air America helicopter, checked in on 123.1. At 0735Z, JG 57/60 were requested to be launched from CH 89 and proceed to Pakane area. No SAR objective had been determined yet. Mail 45 was appointed OSC at 0737Z.. All aircraft on scene were searching the area for parachutes or signs of survivors.

The primary SAR frequency was changed from 123.1 to 282.8. Hotel Bravo arrived on scene at 0743Z. Sandy 3 requested SLU-52 and smoke be uploaded and this was passed to Jack. I asked Raven 21 for information on ground teams in the area and he started investigating this. Also "97K", another helicopter, was on scene but did not check in with me. JG 57/60 were airborne from CH 89 at 0750Z and proceeded direct to CH 108. At 0755Z Hotel Bravo tried to lower a man onto the crash site but his hoist cable did not extend far enough. At 0756Z I recommended a photo reconnaissance aircraft be sent to the scene (this was later cancelled). At 0800Z Charlie Romeo RTB'd to LS 272. At 0809Z Raven 21 reported that "Kingpin" said there was a 20 man friendly ground team in the area. At 0800Z Joker advised us of 3 57MM AAA guns in the SAR area. All of the aircraft on scene, including Sandys, believed this information to be incorrect. At 0803Z Sandys 1/2 air aborted into CH 89 with hydraulic problems. Sandys 7/8 were requested at 0810Z. H-85, another Air America helicopter arrived on scene at this time. Sandys 3/4 arrived on scene at 0815Z and Joker recommended not launching Sandy 7/8 without a SAR objective. I concurred. Nail 45 observed personnel north of the river (the wreckage was south) and this was assumed to be the friendly ground team. Sandy 3 was made OSC at 0820Z after he had the wreckage in sight. At 0825Z Raven 21 discovered a parachute southeast of the site at UG206929 (this was one of the survivor's chutes, as we later discovered). Cricket relayed that "Goldmine" had reported spotting parachutes coming from the aircraft before it crashed. At 0828Z Sandy 3 found two chutes at the Raven's sighting. At 0830Z, Hotel Bravo reported that at least one parachute was still inside the wreckage. JG 57/60 arrived at the CH 108 area at 0848Z. I-23 was requested to be launched at 0850Z. At 0851Z upon my request, Air America operations reported personnel parachutes were the only chutes on board. At 0854Z Hotel Alpha, another helicopter offered his assistance but remained at CH 108 until needed. At 0855Z Sandy 4 spotted two survivors and Hotel Bravo went in to pick them up. At this point the mission became a SAR and Sandys 7/8 were launched from CH 89. At 0859Z Hotel Bravo had two survivors on board. At 0902Z Hotel Bravo reported that his survivors said the C-46 took heavy small arms fire around LS 32 while dropping rice and three people bailed out before it crashed. At 0904Z Sandy 3 asked to use 123.1 as primary and all forces checked in. Hotel Bravo departed the scene at 0908Z for LS-50 to refuel, and to drop off the survivors who, it was later determined, were "kickars" for the rice bags dropped from PFL. Upon further debriefing, it was learned that the third man had bailed out approximately 2 minutes before the two rescued survivors and this was later confirmed by "Goldmine" who reported seeing a parachute come down in an area about one mile NW of LS 32. The aircraft on scene investigated this area and reported a village at UG2587 which was known to have unfriendly troops nearby. No parachute nor survivor was spotted, however. Meanwhile, Snake 40/41 was airborne from CH 89 at 0925Z and estimated the area 30 minutes after Sandy 3/4 would barge. This flight also air aborted into CH 89 with a propeller malfunction. K-23 was airborne at 0925Z and proceeded to the CH 108 area to refuel JG 57/60. At 0950Z, H-73 reported that he had lowered a man on his hoist onto the wreckage and had extracted the body of the indigenous co-pilot. This left one American pilot and one of the "kickars" unaccounted for. At 1000Z, all aircraft on scene reported at or near bingo fuel and then were cleared from the area.

Sandys 7/8 finally became airborne at this time and were instructed to RTB. JG 57/60 and K-23 were cleared to RTB as the weather at CH 89 and CH 70 was deteriorating.

King 22 Crewmembers

Aa/Ams	Capt Nash
CP	1Lt May
N	Maj Good
IRO	Tsgt Mattz
EO	Sgt Chrisen
FE	Tsgt Cronier
FE	Sgt Hudson
LM	Tsgt Jones

Forces Utilized

Laredo 12
Charlie Rameo (Air America Porter)
Eaven 21
Sandy 3/4
Hotel Bravo (Air America H-34 Helicopter)
Hotel 73 " "
Hotel 85 " "
Nail 45
JG 57/60
K-23
Sandy 1/2
Sandy 7/8
Smoke 40/41
Papa Flight

220 TO JG 60 BACK IN COMMISSION - JACK AND
BUFF OPS NOTIFIED - ALSO TEEPEE

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210 TO RADIOS ON - OPS NML / JACK / SGT DAIVISON ON DUTY.

220 APP MSGT Payne on duty

235 APP RADIOS OFF - OPS NORMAL - Shop closed -

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205 APP RADIOS ON - OPS NML - MSGT PAYNE ON DUTY.

210 APP SGT DAIVISON ON DUTY / OPS NML

329 0292Z APP JACK ADVISED A C-46 down in Banel Well Region &
to stand by for possible launch -

2322Z APP ALL JOLLY GREEN CREWS ALERTED -

250 TO SAR POSITION / JACK / 028 / 45 / 108

300 TO TEEPEE NOTIFIED US FOR LAUNCH

431 TO NOTIFIED CREWS OF SAR SCRAMBLE. / BUFF / JACK

50 TO JG 57 / 60 - ABN. CH 89 / BUFF

655 TO HAVE SPOTTED TWO SURVIVORS IN SAR AREA BY H-B
AND MADE PICK-UP

50 TO RADIOS OFF / OPS NML & JACK & E

RECEIVED MESSAGE TO B / ~~HEAVY~~ STORM / 120 2012A (R) 0600

55 TO RADIOS ON / OPS NML / JACK / SGT DAIVISON ON DUTY

645 TO JG 63 & CH 89 / JACK / Mx / TENNANT

200 APP - MSGT Payne on duty -

55 APP JACK ADVISES WE ARE NOW PRIMARY GROUND ALERT
AS JOLLYS ON NOVEMBER ORBIT ARE RTB DUE
MT.

7610 APP RADIOS ON - OPS NML - ~~HEAVY~~ HF/B - MSGT Payne on duty.

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Jul - Sept 70
K-WG-56-HI

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STATEMENT

FROM: 1SOS (Lt Col Dunwoody/2754)

SUBJECT: Foxtrot Lima SAR (3 Jun 71)

TO: SARCO

On June 3 at 1415L Lt Colonel Dunwoody (Sandy 03) Flight 1, and Capt Witte (Sandy 04) Wingman, were launched on a Search and Rescue (SAR) Mission for a downed C-46 (Foxtrot Lima) with 5 survivors on board. The aircraft had been shot down and crashed just north of Lima Site 32 in an extremely hostile area. At time of launch King passed to Sandy 03 that there was no beeper or sign of any life and that two Air America helicopters were on-scene and had located the crash. Sandy 03 requested that King contact Air America Operations to determine what survival and signal devices that the crewmembers might have had, and also requested that fast mover smoke and strike birds along with BLU-52 be loaded and put on alert. Sandy 03 arrived on-scene and took command at 1530L. King ordered assets requested and confirmed that survivors had parachutes only. Nail 45, Raven 26 and three Air America helicopters were now in the area, and OSC Nail 45 pinpointed the crash site to Sandy 03 and 04. Sandy 03 determined that although no sign of life was present, that he should put down a chopper immediately to rescue possible injured. Sandy 03 and 04 then made numerous low level intimidation passes to draw possible enemy fire. When Sandy 03 determined the area was not opposed he executed Hotel Bravo helicopter. Sandy 03 and 04 remained in a daisy chain until the helicopter came back out and reported no sign of survivors. Sandy 03 and 04 then proceeded south along the probable route of the downed aircraft in search of parachutes. Raven 26 then transmitted he had spotted two possible chutes 5 kilometers south of the crash site. Sandy 03 went to the scene of the crash site. Sandy 03 went to the scene of the parachutes and had all assets hold high while he again trolled for enemy ground fire and possible threats. Nail 45 said he thought he spotted small fire coming from the scene. Sandy 03 and 04 made many passes until satisfied that the area was now sterile for a pickup attempt. Hotel Bravo went down to the area while Sandy 03 and 04 performed a tight daisy chain. Again no ordnance could be expended due to the unknown position of the friendlies. Sandy 03 and 04 were forced to intimidate by low treetop passes around the helicopter. Hotel Bravo could not locate either survivor in the general area and came back out. Sandy 03 then organized a search pattern using all available SAR forces. Some time later Sandy 03 spotted a small smoke fire and what he thought was a survivor nearby. Again Hotel Bravo went down while Sandy 03 and 04 flew tight cover. This attempt was successful with two survivors rescued. Sandy 03 instructed the helicopter to take the survivors to a safe base while he and Sandy 04 continued the search. A friendly ground controller indicated he had spotted a total of 3 parachutes coming out of the stricken aircraft. The third parachute landed about 1 kilometer south of the rescued crewmembers. Unfortunately the ground controller thought the crewmember was immediately captured and his parachute hidden. SAR forces continued the search but to no avail. Hotel 73 another Air America helicopter asked Sandy 03 and 04 to fly cover while he put down a ground team in the area of the crash. Again low level intimidation passes were made until the team was picked up.

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They had found one body, the copilot, and indicated a strong possibility that the remaining missing survivor, the pilot, was also in the wreckage, but was impossible to determine due to the severe damage and burning of the pilot's body. Sandy 03 and 04 continued search in any event. Sandy 03 was approaching Bingo fuel but King indicated that replacements were now not available for another hour. Sandy 03 and 04 continued search, and had to RTB in 30 minutes due to minimum fuel of Sandy 03. Sandy 03 then suggested to King that the effort be terminated as the objective was completed. Sandy 03 recovered at homebase uneventfully under minimum fuel conditions.

SAR PROBLEM AREA:

The most significant factors that made the SAR difficult were the following:

- (1) None of the survivors carried any form of survival gear, radios or signaling devices.
- (2) Although the area was hostile and small arms fire was observed the Sandys were not permitted to expend ordnance due to the proximity of possible friendly troops. This problem forced the Sandys to fly intimidation passes in the face of ground fire and yet could not return.

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STATEMENT

FROM: 1st SOS (Lt/Col Murray - 2116)

SUBJECT: Report for Foxtrot Lima

TO: DO

1. A successful rescue was conducted on 2 June 1971 for two crewmembers of Air America aircraft "Foxtrot Lima". The aircraft, C-46 Comandante, went down at approximately 1330 2 June 1971 approximately seven miles north of Lima Site 32 in Barrel Roll East. This report covers those activities relating to the Sandys during the rescue effort. All times are Thailand local.
2. Foxtrot Lima was shot down by enemy ground fire from the area surrounding a friendly position while para-dropping supplies. The crewmen on board totalled 5 (one American, four indigenous). Reconstructing of this incident reveals that three indigenous kickers (para-drop handlers) did bailout of the aircraft. One was promptly captured by enemy forces and the pilot and copilot were killed in the ensuing crash of the aircraft. The Forward Air Guide stationed at the Lima Site stated that AK-47 and possibly 57mm (probably recoilless rifle) fire downed the aircraft. A Durax helicopter spotted the wreckage, and sighted one parachute on the ground but did not sight any survivors. An ASAP launch of Sandys 03/04 was ordered.
3. Sandys 03/04 were airborne at 1405 and proceeded north to the crash scene. Sandy 01/02 was airborne at 1455 but air-aborted due to a hydraulic leak on 02. Sandys 03/04 were airborne at 1450 and proceeded north to the initial drop point at Paknam, later to CH 105. Sandy 03 arrived on-scene at 1520 and assumed on-scene command at 1530. Hotel Bravo, an Air America helicopter, was cleared by Sandy 03 to reconnoiter the crash scene for survivors. None were detected. Raven 26 spotted two parachutes on the ground and again Hotel Bravo searched for survivors at this location. None were found. Sandy 03 then directed a wide search pattern and soon he located two survivors using a very small fire to generate smoke. Hotel Bravo promptly picked both up. At this time two more Air America helicopters (H-34's) arrived on-scene and requested air cover by the Sandys while they searched the crash site for the as yet unaccounted for pilot and copilot. The co-pilot's body was recovered from the wreckage but the pilot's body was not recovered and assumed to be still in the wreckage. Two Smoke A-1 aircraft were airborne at 1653 but they air-aborted due to prop regulator problems with one aircraft.
4. The area of this SAP is rugged hill country infested with hostile NVA and Pathet Lao troops, concentrated about the Lima Sites. Known enemy weapons up to 12.7mm AAA and concentrated AC-47 (7.62) were common in the areas adjacent to the Lima Site. The crash scene was far enough from the Lima Site to allow helicopter operations. One crewmember bailed out and unfortunately landed a scant distance from enemy troop concentrations. (FAG Report) Weather at this time was overcast at 2000' AGL but workable.

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5. Search assistance was furnished by the on-scene FACs. Nail 45, Raven 26, and the Air America helicopters.
6. The Jolly Greens were not utilized on this SAR and RTD'd to CH 70 at 1800.
7. No survivor possessed any survival equipment. A definite hindrance to rescue forces.
8. Four Sandys, two Smoke aircraft and two Jolly Greens were launched in support of this SAR.

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FLYING SCHEDULE
SAR "FOXTROT LIMA"

SANDY

01 Smith

02 Bowden

03 Dunwoody

04 W

Air Abort - Hyd Leak

On-Scene Commander

On-Scene Wingman

SMOKE

40 Madden

41 Rentz/Lackey

Air Abort - Prop Reg.

JOLLY GREEN

57 Strayen

60 Carman

Low J.G.

High J.G.