

AC-119K 53-7826 18 SOS, 56 SOW, USAF, Nakhon Phanom  
Capt Terrance Francis Courtney (KIA)  
Lt Jim Barkalow (survived)  
Capt David Roddy Slagle (KIA)  
Lt Col Tashioglou (survived)  
Lt Larry Barbee (survived)  
SSgt Bare (survived)  
SSgt Kenneth R Brown (KIA)  
SSgt Dale Iman (survived)  
SSgt Ski Sledzinski (survived)  
A1C Craig Corbett (survived)

The first, and indeed only, AC-119 lost to enemy action by the USAF during the war was shot down during a daylight mission on 2 May. Six AC-119s were deployed to Bien Hoa on 15 April to assist in the defence of An Loc. It was rare for the slow and vulnerable AC-119s to fly during daylight hours but a C-130 had dropped ammunition to the defenders of An Loc and the load had fallen into enemy-held territory and had to be destroyed before the NVA found it. The AC-119, call sign Stinger 41, orbited over An Loc, which was still under intense siege, and waited to

take its turn on the target. The AC-119 and an accompanying FAC were fired on by a 37mm anti-aircraft gun, which immediately became their new target. As the aircraft circled at 4,700 feet it was hit in the starboard wing by 37mm flak and limped away with the wing on fire. The piston engine on the starboard wing failed, the jet engine was blown off and the undercarriage leg swung down causing extra drag that the pilot was unable to counter. Seven of the crew bailed out as Capt Courtney fought to maintain control of the aircraft, but he and two other men were killed when the aircraft crashed about five miles from An Loc. The FAC was monitoring the bail out and the survivors were rescued over the next four hours by two HH-53s and a US Army UH-1 with the assistance of much suppressive fire from AC-130s, strike fighters and helicopter gunships. Stinger daylight missions were terminated following this incident.