

Osanites save stranded sailors

OSAN AB—Two helicopter crews from Detachment 13, 41st Air Rescue and Recovery Wing here rescued nine Korean fishermen from their sinking ship in the Yellow Sea Wednesday morning.

The rescue culminated joint efforts by U.S. Air Force and Republic of Korea (ROK) Air Force people to save the nine seamen.

Two base helicopters, a C-130 from the 33rd Air Rescue Squadron at Kadena AB, Okinawa, and a C-46 from the ROK Air Force participated in the search and rescue mission.

The "Five Chin Yang Ho," a 40-ton vessel, first advised ROK authorities

early Tuesday evening that it was sinking and that it had minimal survival gear on board. The ship's position was reported as approximately 180 miles WSW of Kwang Ju.

Detachment 13's Air Rescue Center was notified of the sinking ship and sent two helicopters to the area. Additionally the C-130 was dispatched from Kadena to aid in the rescue efforts.

The C-130 crew spotted the distressed fishermen shortly after midnight and reported that a C-46 aircraft from the ROK Air Force was on-scene and dropping flares.

At approximately 5 a.m., the C-130 escorted the helicopters to the site of the sinking ship. Two hours and thirty minutes later, the

helicopter flown by 1st Lt. Edward L. Fleming safely hoisted the fishermen aboard.

"Our first problem up on arriving at the scene," said Lieutenant Fleming, "was getting close enough to the raft without blowing it away with our rudders."

According to Lieutenant Fleming, the pararescue men (PJs) had a difficult time job hoisting the seamen into the helicopter. "The sailors didn't want to trade the raft for a cable hoist leading to the copter. We had to send one of our rescue men down to the raft and practically force them to grab the line.

Lieutenant Fleming praised the efforts of the C-130 crew and a Korean Radar man stationed at one

of the sites around Kwang Ju. He said, "Without the help of the radar man, we would have had to spend additional time plotting courses and all, but he (radar man) took care of that phase and directed us right to our destination."

Other members of Lieutenant Fleming's crew were: 1st Lt. Larry G. Brooks, co-pilot; SSgt. Dennis W.

Hales, flight mechanic; and SSgt. Clegie Chambers Jr. and Sgt. Robert L. LaPointe, rescue specialists.

Crew members of the second helicopter were: Capt. Charles W. Hinkle, aircraft commander; 2nd Lt. William W. Naumann III, co-pilot; TSgt. Teddy W. Carter, flight mechanic and SSgt. David W. Young, rescue specialist.