

## PARARESCUE MISSION REPORT:

1. Notified by phone 18 April 1975 at 1615L from the Elmendorf RCC to prepare for a possible mountain rescue mission in Merrill Pass, Ak.

2. Team reported to section 0700L, 19 April to prepare equipment. The following equipment was packed:

- Akio 1ea
- Rope, 300ft Goldline 2ea
- Rope, 165ft Perlon 2ea
- Snow Flukes 10ea
- Carabiners, locking D's 20ea
- Ice Screws 4ea
- Ice Pitons 4ea
- Shovel, snow 1ea

Each team member also packed his personal field gear.

3. At 0900L, 19 April, the team reported to the 5040th Helicopter Sqd. to brief for the flight to the incident site. The situation as told to us at this time was as follows:

- A PA-18 had been located at the base of a cliff in Merrill pass approximately 7 days earlier. Bad weather had prohibited getting into the site until now. It was believed that the occupants of the plane were deceased but there was no way of being certain till the crash was examined. There were two adult male persons on board the aircraft. The crash had been located by the Civil Air Patrol search aircraft and there were no signs of life from the air.

4. Take-off was at 1030L in an HH-3E. Approximately 1 1/2 hours was spent enroute. The crash was located without difficulty. After a high and low reconnaissance, it was decided to climb up to the crash site rather than rappel down. The aircraft landed approximately 3/4 of a mile from the crash. We proceeded on foot to the incident site. The route consisted of a climb of approximately 800 vertical feet up a snowfield of approximately 40 degree slope. The local time at the beginning of the climb was 1300. We arrived at the crash site at 1340. The aircraft had burned on impact but was relatively intact. Both the pilot and passenger were burned beyond recognition and were deceased. The aircraft was at the base of an 80 foot cliff of ice. Just to the right was large snowfield of approximately 45 degree which had recently avalanched. Two members of the team ascended to the top of the ice cliff to watch this slope for any further avalanche activity. The other members of the team placed the bodies in body bags and placed them on the akio. After the bodies were secured to the akio the two avalanche guards descended to the crash site and assisted in belaying the akio down. Snow flukes and ice axes were used as anchors. Two team members went down with the akio while the other two team members ran the belay system.

5. Two ice axes used were metal axes which were personal property of the individuals using them. Two other axes were wooden shafted axes.

At one point of the climb a team member was pushing a spike of the axe into the snow to test snow depth and consistency when the shaft broke. No sporadic or excessive pressure was being exercised during this test.

