

PARARESCUE MISSION REPORT

PART ONE: OPERATIONAL

1. ORGANIZATION/LOCATION 71ARRS Elmendorf AFB, AK		2. MISSION NO. AAC-243		3. AIRCRAFT HH-3	
4. NOTIFICATION		5. RESPONSE	DATE	TIME	6. MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT
TIME	1555	DEPARTURE	8SEP	0800	PATIENT/SURVIVOR CONTACT
DATE	7 Sep 77	ARRIVAL AT SCENE	"	1045	EXTRACTION OF PATIENT/SURVIVOR
METHOD	RCC	DEPLOYMENT	"	1050	DELIVERY OF PT. TO DEFINITIVE CARE
					8SEP 1300
					NONE
					NONE

7. SPECIAL ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO DEPLOYMENT

Technical snow and ice equipment was assembled to support a five man team. Short re-briefs were given by SSgt LaPointe on the hazards of this operation and the necessary precautions.

8. DEPLOYMENT	9. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN DEPLOYMENT	10. EQUIPMENT	Avail	Used		Avail	Used
☒ ACFT LANDING	Deep snow and white out conditions upon landing.	RADIO	X	X	MOUNTAIN	X	X
☐ PARACHUTE		STROBE/FLARE	X		HOUSEKEEPING	X	
☐ HOIST		JUMP KIT			LITTER(TYPE)	X	
☐ OTHER:		BACKUP KIT	X		OTHER:		
		OXYGEN	X		mtn rescue technical	X	X
		MA-1					

11. SUMMARY OF POST DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

See attachment #1

12. SUMMARY OF MEANS OF EVACUATION

NONE

13. REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

See attachment #2 on radios

PART TWO: MEDICAL (Attach separate ARRS Form 2, Part 2, for each individual patient)

14. TEAM			15. MEDICAL SITUATION ORIGINALLY REPORTED
NAME	RANK	DUTY TITLE	Wreckage spotted on mountainside. No status on survivors.
Robert LaPointe	SSgt	NCOIC SUPPLY	
Rick Terry	"	" Combat Tactics	
William Eby	Sgt	" Medical Section	
Thomas Crouch	"	" Mission Equip	
Tom Clements	Civ	Alaska State Troopers	

16. MEDICAL HISTORY

NONE

17. PHYSICAL EXAM FINDINGS

T_____

BP_____

P_____

R_____

NONE

18. PROGRESS NOTES

DAY/TIME

T

BP

P

R

CONDITION OF PATIENT/TREATMENT PERFORMED

19. MEDICAL SUPPLIES UTILIZED

POUCH/KIT

ITEMS

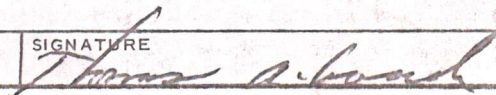
NONE

20. REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

NONE

NAME
THOMAS A. CROUCHRANK
Sgt

SIGNATURE



Attachment #1

The aircraft wreckage was at about the 7,200 foot level on the mountain. Doing a hoist or landing at the crash sight was not possible. The H-3 landed on a glacial snowfield in a col at approximately the 7,800 foot level on the Illiamna Massiff, among multiple crevasses and a very broken ice field.

Sgt Crouch was put out the door on a belay to probe around the helicopter and immediate area for crevasses. Upon establishing a marked out work area SSgt LaPointe moved to the edge of an ice cliff, which dropped off down an 80' verticle ice wall into a deep crevass.

A three point equalizing anchor with a two point equalizing back up was used to secure a fixed rappel line down the ice wall and across the crevass on a snow bridge and up a short 30 foot snow wall onto the main snowfield that led down to the plane wreckage. Sgt Eby went behind SSgt LaPointe with SSgt Terry and Sgt Crouch following as the second team. Trooper Tom Clements, the representative for the state, elected to stay at the top due to the severity of the climbing involved.

The top of the snowfield was a 65 to 70 degree angle and sloped down to about a 40degree angle at the bottom 200 yards away. A 350 foot fixed line was put in here. SSgt LaPointe's team descended this line and then proceeded roped together using alternate belaying of each to the first accessible piece of wreckage located on the lowest edge of the snowfield. This piece was identified as the larger part of the left wing with the engine attached. The snowfield ended at the bergschund with a 60' ice wall descending into another deep crevass. On the other side of the crevass was a 25 yard square bowl where the majority of identifiable wreckage was located. Beyond the bowl was a 1000' drop onto the main glacier below. An impact point was noted on the bergschund ice wall about 20' below the edge of the snowfield. Part of the right engine and prop were implemented into the ice wall at the impact point. Most of the disintegrated pieces of wreckage were located in the crevass at the base of the bergschund ice wall. Due to the possibility of avalanche into the crevass SSgt LaPointe decided to traverse to the right (north) about 100 yards to a point where the snowfield sloped down into the crevass, thus making our access to the bowl area easier and safer. Pictures were taken at the top edge of the ice wall by Sgt Crouch. At this time positive identification of the wreckage was made by verifying the serial number given us by the RCC with the serial number located on tail empanage of the aircraft.

Both teams traversed across to a point of 5 yards from the wing and engine. SSgt LaPointe and Sgt Eby then put a second fixed line while Sgt Crouch and SSgt Terry setup safety belays using their ice axes for anchors. During the traverse the air temperature increased from 38°F to about 60°F in twenty minutes. SSgt LaPointe spent about ten minutes in and around the wreckage site and determined there were no survivors. Numerous body parts were discovered. Mostly consisting of limbs and apendages. At this time snow conditions became extremely unstable and a decision was made to ascend as quickly as was safe to do so. Movement up the mountain was accomplished in reverse team order with all of our equipment retrieved successfully.

After our retreat from the SAR site an anvalanche descended down across a portion of the route we had just departed.

During our 3 hour stay on the mountain the weather changes were very, very sudden and drastic. The visibility would change in five minutes from a ceiling of 10,000 feet scattered to less than 100 feet visibility in a cloud bank.

Immediately upon our return to Elmendorf a briefing was given at the RCC to all involved authorities. Their questions centered mainly on the feasibility of a body recovery. Our recommendations were that such an operation would take from 7 to 10 days. To put a team up there for an extended period of time would be extremely dangerous due to the subjective hazards of unstable temperature, a nightly increase to the snow base of about 6 to 10 inches, and the impending avalanche hazards. Based upon this information the authorities concluded not to send a recovery team back onto Mt. Illiamna.

Attachment #2

This mission required that excellent ground-to-ground radio communications be available. This unit did not have any radio which would fill this need. Arrangements were made with the Anchorage Rescue Council to loan us their mountain rescue radios. These radios were of the type used by this units pararescue team during their mountain training and rescue mission on Mt. McKinley this summer (see ARRS Form 2 from AAC mission number 092). Without these radios this mission would have been much more hazardous and difficult. Recommend that radios of this type be authorized for pararescue ground operations.