



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
TO
STAFF SERGEANT ROBERT W. BEAN

Staff Sergeant Robert W. Bean distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a combat Pararescueman and team leader onboard an MH-53J during the rescue of Hammer 34, and F-16CJ pilot downed near Belgrade, Serbia, on 2 May 1999. On that date, Sergeant Bean displayed exemplary skill and dedication under repeated direct enemy fire and performed several critical actions that directly saved his crew and led to mission success. As the ground rescue team leader, he orchestrated detailed infiltration, survivor link-up, and recovery procedures which would expedite the survivor's pickup and minimize the entire formation's exposure while it loitered just miles from Belgrade. Just prior to launch, Sergeant Bean identified and resolved a discrepancy with the recovery codes, preventing life-threatening delays in the hostile objective area. Crossing into Serbia, Sergeant Bean's flight was targeted and directly engaged first by two SA-6 missiles and then by a SA-9 missile, which the aircrews narrowly defeated through evasive maneuvers. Sergeant Bean was first to discover a potentially crippling hydraulic fluid leak, enabling the crew to take corrective action and avert disaster. While scanning from the aircraft ramp, he identified a stream of tracer fire rising through the fog. His immediate and precise call for an aggressive maneuver kept the aircraft from being struck and allowed the mission to continue. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Bean reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

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