



ON JUNE 25TH, 1968, AIRCRAFT MADE LANDING AT COBRA PAD AND TROOPS WERE LOADED ABOARD. A RADIO CALL WAS MONITORED IN WHICH BLACKJACK SIX, 12TH GROUP COMMANDER ASKED THE STATUS OF THE OPERATION, ADVISED THE COMMAND AND CONTROL (C&C) HELICOPTER THAT THE WEATHER WAS MARGINAL OVER THE AREA OF OPERATIONS AND SUGGESTED A DELAY IF POSSIBLE. THE C&C AIRCRAFT DEPARTED COBRA PAD FOR A WEATHER CHECK AND DETERMINED THAT ALTHOUGH THE WEATHER WAS MARGINAL IN ALL QUADRANTS, THE WEATHER OVER THE INTENDED LANDING ZONE (LZ) WAS BROKEN AND CALLED THE LEAD AIRCRAFT (BLUE 1) TO BRING THE FLIGHT OUT TO THE AREA OF OPERATION.

DURING THE TAKE OFF, CLIMB OUT AND ENROUTE TO THE AREA OF OPERATIONS, THE FLIGHT ENCOUNTERED FOG, CLOUDS AND HAZE THAT RESTRICTED VISIBILITY. THE FLIGHT OF TEN HELICOPTERS PROCEEDED NORTHWEST FROM BEARCAT AT AN ALTITUDE OF 1000 FEET IN A STAGGERED RIGHT

FORMATION UNTIL OVER THE AREA OF OPERATIONS. THE FLIGHT LEADER (BLUE 1) HAD VISUAL CONTACT WITH THE CEC AIRCRAFT AND GUNSHIPS BUT THE CEC AIRCRAFT DID NOT HAVE THE FLIGHT IN SIGHT.

AFTER PROCEEDING NORTHWEST OF THE AREA OF OPERATIONS, THE FLIGHT LEADER INFORMED THE CEC AIRCRAFT OF HIS LOCATION AND THAT HE WAS ENCOUNTERING CLOUDS AT 1000 FEET. HE DID NOT HAVE VISUAL CONTACT WITH THE GROUND OR THE CEC AIRCRAFT AT THAT TIME. HE INFORMED THE CEC AIRCRAFT THAT HE WAS GOING TO ESTABLISH A LEFT HAND ORBIT AS HE WAS PASSING THE AREA OF OPERATIONS. THE CEC AIRCRAFT ACKNOWLEDGED THE LEFT ORBIT AND SUGGESTED THE FLIGHT GO TO ~~9000~~ 900 FEET AS THE WEATHER WAS BETTER AT THAT ALTITUDE.

THE FLIGHT LEADER ESTABLISHED A STANDARD TURN TO THE LEFT AND DESCENDED TO 900 FEET. AFTER TURNING FROM NORTHWEST THROUGH SOUTH AND EAST TO A HEADING OF 060 DEGREES, HE ENTERED

A CLOUD. IMMEDIATELY UPON EMERGING FROM THE CLOUD, THE FLIGHT LEADER SAW AN UNIDENTIFIED HELICOPTER APPROACHING AT HIS IMMEDIATE RIGHT FRONT AT THE SAME FLIGHT LEVEL. THE FLIGHT LEADER TOOK IMMEDIATE EVASIVE ACTION BY BREAKING DOWN AND LEFT. HE OBSERVED THAT THE UNIDENTIFIED HELICOPTER, LATER DETERMINED TO BE THE C&C SHIP, ATTEMPTED TO PULL UP AND LEFT.

THE ROTOR BLADES OF THE SECOND AIRCRAFT IN THE FORMATION (BLUE 2) STRUCK THE TAIL ROTOR SECTION OF THE UNIDENTIFIED AIRCRAFT, SEVERING IT FROM THE FUSELAGE. THE MAIN ROTOR AND TRANSMISSION WERE OBSERVED SEPERATING FROM BLUE 2 AND THE MAIN FUSELAGE CRASHED INVERTED INTO A SWAMPY AREA. THE C&C SHIP EXPLODED UPON IMPACT IN THE AIR.

THE OTHER AIRCRAFT OF THE FLIGHT TOOK EVASIVE ACTION AND WERE ABLE TO AVOID THE FIRE BALL AND FALLING DEBRIS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF BLUE 4, THE AIRCRAFT DIRECTLY BEHIND BLUE 2. BLUE

4.

4 FLEW INTO THE EXPLOSION AND DEBRIS. THE ROTOR SYSTEM AND TAIL BOOM WERE TORN FROM THE AIRCRAFT AND IT CRASHED AND EXPLODED UPON IMPACT. BOTH THE C & C AIRCRAFT AND BLUE 4 CONTINUED TO BURN ON THE GROUND UNTIL THE FIRE WAS EXTINGUISHED WITH THE HELP OF AIR FORCE FIRE EQUIPMENT LOCATED AT BIEN HOA AIR BASE. DEBRIS WERE SCATTERED OVER A WIDE AREA AND THERE WERE NO SURVIVORS AMONG THE TWENTY-NINE PERSONS ABOARD THE THREE AIRCRAFT.

UH-1H - 6616601 - 4 KIA
UH-1H - 6616206 - 12 KIA
UH-1H - 6616592 - 13 KIA
TOTAL = 29 KIA

240 AHC 214 CAB

BEAR CAT SUN.