

STATEMENT OF PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JERRY A. ENSIGN 2100520 USMC
Concerning Accident involving CH-46A Bureau Numbers 151930 &
151936 on 15 July 1966

I flew as Aerial Gunner on YT-18 on the 15th of July 1966, in support of Operation Hastings. Other members of the crew were; Pilot - Capt W. J. SELLERS: Co-Pilot-1stLt C. D. BROWN; Crew Chief- Cpl H. E. BEECHAM. We launched from DONG HA at approximately 0800 with a load of about 14 troops. The approach to the zone seemed normal until we were approximately 15-20 feet off the ground, when our aft rotor blade started hitting cane and we pulled away and landed. We were on the ground approximately 3-4 seconds when there was a loud noise and the aircraft started violent gyrations. I then looked back and saw the upper aft section of the aircraft break down on the ramp and heard Capt SELLERS on the ICS say "Get out of here". We then dropped the side hatch and got all of the troops out before going out ourselves. We then went back into the Aircraft and took the guns and ammo out. I heard Capt SELLERS yell its on fire and he grabbed the fire extinguisher and ran out of the aircraft and started to fight the fire and then the Crew Chief climbed up on the top of the aircraft to have better access at the fire. I was told to get the fire extinguisher from the other downed aircraft. About halfway between the two aircraft we started receiving sniper fire in the zone and had to get down. After a few seconds I went on to the other aircraft and upon reaching it found that it was impossible to get at their fire extinguisher. When I got back to our aircraft the fire was out. I then ran approximately 60 yards to a HMM-265 aircraft with Capt SELLERS. Upon looking around and not seeing the rest of our people he got up and ran back to the downed aircraft looking for them and I followed him. We didn't see any of them so we ran back to the HMM-265 aircraft and 4 out of the 8 crewmembers on their downed aircraft were there and we made 6. The other two came out on another aircraft. At no time in the zone was there any panic among the crewmembers. Although under sniper fire, I think that most of this can be attributed to Capt SELLERS leadership.

Jerry A. Ensign

JERRY A. ENSIGN