



HELICOPTER COMBAT SUPPORT SQUADRON ONE

NAAS REAM FIELD
IMPERIAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92032

1966
HEL SUPPRON 1/5750
Ser 012/ 989

18 MAY 1967

OPNAVREPORT 5750-1

From: Commanding Officer, Helicopter Combat Support Squadron 1
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05A5G)

Subj: Command History

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

Encl: (1) Chronology of Events
(2) Basic Narrative
(3) Lessons learned, Conclusions, and Recommendations
(4) Documentary annexes

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following is submitted:

a. Commanding Officer:

CDR David A. WENTE, USN - 26 Feb 1965 to 25 Feb 1966

CDR William F. QUARG, USN - 25 Feb 1966 to 20 Jan 1967

b. Location:

NAAS Ream Field, Imperial Beach, California 92032

c. Mission and Function:

Primary - Search and Rescue

Secondary - Vertical Replenishment

River Patrol Boat Support, "Game Warden"

Ice Reconnaissance

Mine Sweeping

Logistic Support

Gun Fire Support

Geographic Survey Support

Medical Evacuation

Cargo and Mail Delivery

Guided Missile Recovery

VIP Transportation

Changes of mission and function includes the addition of River Patrol Boat Support in South Vietnam. The Geographic Survey Support mission was concluded in March 1966.

d. Composition of Command:

Officers - 212

Enlisted men - 943

Flight personnel - 170

Aircraft - UH-2 A/B 51

UH-46 A/D 10

RH-3 0

CH-19 3

UH-13 2

UH-1B 8

The above listed figures of officers, enlisted men, flight personnel and aircraft include those personnel and aircraft assigned to the "Game Warden" detachments which have been permanently assigned overseas, also permanently assigned overseas, the personnel of HC-1 detachment ATSUGI are included. During the year 1966, the squadron had assigned 5 UH-34 helicopters which were transferred before the year's end. Also assigned but now transferred were additional members of CH-19 and UH-13 model helicopters.

e. Activation, Deactivation and Redesignation:

All activation, deactivations and redesignations pertain to small detachments of the squadron.

(1) Activation - Additional Combat Search and Rescue detachments for DLG's and Cruisers.

- Additional Vertical Replenishment detachments.
- A Detachment at NAS Cubi Pt., P.I.
- "Game Warden" detachments

(2) Deactivation - Geographic Survey Support detachments

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(3) Redesignation - HC-1 Detachment 1 to HC-1 Detachment ATSUGI by
CNO ltr ser 764P30 of 26 May 1966.



R. N. KERSCH

Copy to: (complete)
CNO (OP-09B9)
CINCPACFLT

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

JAN 10 - Lost a UH-2A, crashed at sea
13 - Det "E" returned from deployment
29 - Det 5 departed for deployment

FEB 25 - Change of Command
28 - Det 41 returned

MAR 3 - Det 25 returned
15 - Det 21 returned

APR 15 - Lost a UH-2B, crashed at sea

MAY 7 - Det 9 returned
11 - Det 19 departed
12 - Det "D" departed
13 - Det "B" returned
16 - Det 23 departed
26 - Det "G" departed

JUN 6 - UH-2A crashed in Mexico
13 - Det "C" returned
18 - Det 5 returned
21 - Det "M" returned

JUL 1 - Det 29 departed
3 - Det 17 departed
5 - Det 51 departed
12 - Det 49 returned
17 - Det 27 departed
29 - Det "A" departed
29 - Det 25 departed

AUG 1 - Det "L" returned
25 - Det "F" returned

SEP 16 - Lost a UH-2B, crashed at sea
16 - British ore carrier "August Moon" ran aground, Det "G" rescued
all 44 personnel.
19 - Det 15 returned
22 - Det 11 departed

OCT 5 - Det 53 departed
7 - Det 19 returned
14 - Det "E" departed
14 - Det 5 departed
14 - Det 55 departed
17 - UH-2B crashed at NAAS Ream Field
19 - Det 51 returned

26 - Oriskany Fire, five (5) Officers from Det "G" perished, 2
helicopters burned.

29 - Det 23 returned

NOV 2 - Lost a UH-1B, crashed at sea

5 - Det "C" departed

16 - Det "G" returned

19 - Det "M" departed

28 - Det 21 departed

28 - Det 49 departed

DEC 3 - Det "D" returned

3 - Det 3 departed

12 - Det 17 returned

12 - Lost a UH-46A, crashed at sea.

(JAN) On 10 Jan 1966 HC-1 detachment "L" on the USS HANCOCK (CVA 19) lost one of their UH-2A helicopters (BUNO 149751) at sea due to engine failure. The pilot, LCDR STENNETT and the crew were rescued. The accident report was serial - HC-1 DET "L" AAR 1-66A of 10 Jan 1966. Also on this date, HC-1 started the first class through its new Hand to Hand Combat school conducted at NAAS Ream Field. It is believed this is the first formal course of this type in any Navy aviation unit. The first class consisted of the two officers and 10 enlisted men of a Combat Search and Rescue detachment, HC-1 Det 5. The two instructors, ADRI Duane D. JONES and ADRI Charles T. HARTNESS are Judo and Karate players. They received instructor type training from the Marine Hand to Hand instructors at Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego, California. The HC-1 instructors have improved the basic course from the original 10 hours in a one week period to a complete body conditioning and Hand to Hand Combat course of thirty (30) hours, which takes two weeks of half days to complete. The course's curriculum has been submitted to BUPERS for formal recognition as an approved school.

Detachment "E" on the USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA 31) returned from a nine (9) month deployment in the Southeast Asian waters on 13 Jan 1966. On 29 Jan 1966, Detachment 5, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment departed for deployment.

Detachment 5 deployed with the first completely equipped Combat UH-2 helicopter. Included was the armor plating, "Gold Stripe" engine, protective oil lines and camouflage paint.

(FEB) On 25 Feb, HC-1 held Change of Command ceremonies at their spaces on NAAS Ream Field. CDR William F. QUARG, USN relieved CDR David A. WENTE, USN who reported to the USS VALLEY FORGE (LPH 8) as operations officer. CDR QUARG was Executive Officer of HC-1 before assuming command. (Annexes A and B of Enclosure (4) are brief summary biographies of CDR's WENTE and QUARG). CDR Roger N. KERSCH, USN assumed the duties as Executive Officer (Annex C of Enclosure (4) is a biography of CDR KERSCH).

Detachment 41 on the USS BURTON ISLAND (AGB 1) returned 28 Feb 1966 from a five month deployment in the Antarctic waters. The detachment consisted of 3 officers, 8 enlisted men, one UH-13P and one CH-19E helicopters. During the cruise, LT BASSETT using the UH-13P equipped with floatation gear, landed in the open sea to rescue a man who had fallen overboard on 20 Oct 1965. Squadron records indicate this was the first open sea rescue for this type helicopter. The detachments mission was logistic support and ice reconnaissance.

(MAR) On 3 Mar 1966, Detachment 25 returned having completed their assistance to the support of the Southwestern Pacific survey (AF 60-13 Phase four). This detachment was continuously relieved on station by new crews every six months during this operation. Based on the USNS SGT. SHOUP (T-AG 175) and using a UH-34 helicopter, they transported survey teams and equipment to numerous ground stations on atolls and islands in the Southwestern Pacific.

On 15 Mar 1966, Detachment 21, the other detachment supporting this geographic survey in the Southwestern Pacific, returned. They were based on the USNS HARRIS COUNTY (LST 822). During the last crew compliment of Detachment 21, they transferred 743,860 lbs. of equipment and supplies in connection with installing, servicing and evacuating 12 ground stations. They also made one medical evacuation of a ship's company personnel.

(APR) On 15 Apr 1966, HC-1 detachment "C" on the USS KITTY HAWK (CVA 63) lost one of their UH-2B helicopters (BUNO 150162). The pilot, LT ZERBE, was lost but the remainder of the crew was rescued. The accident report was serial - HC-1 DET "C" AAR 1-66A of 15 Apr 1966.

(MAY) On 7 May 1966, Detachment 9 returned from a five (5) month deployment in the Gulf of Tonkin as a Combat Search and Rescue detachment serving on various DLG's. They deployed on 28 Nov 1965 as the first such detachment formed and trained at HC-1 for this particular mission. They deployed with the first UH-2A helicopter with armor plating and a "Gold Stripe" engine. The "Gold Stripe" engine gets its name for the yellow stripe that circles the engine can to designate it as a special T-58 engine. It has finer tolerances and adjustments to the fuel control, thus producing a minimum of 100 HP., increase. Detachment 9 rescued 15 personnel. On 9 Feb 1966, they rescued a pilot who had ejected from his crippled plane, hit by hostile fire over North Vietnam. The pick-up was made in the Gulf of Tonkin. On 11 Feb, they rescued 14 survivors of two separate ditchings of SH-3A's that were transferring the passengers between ships. Detachment 9's crew on 16 Feb, made two penetrations into North Vietnam in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue a pilot shot down by hostile fire. The pilot was captured. During the penetrations the helicopter received several hits but no injuries were incurred.

On 11 May 1966, Detachment 19, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment, deployed. They took the second completely equipped combat UH-2 helicopter, transported to NAS Cubi Pt., P.I. on board the USS ST. PAUL (CA 73). All other Combat Search and Rescue helicopters were equipped and converted at NAS Cubi Pt., P.I.

Detachment "D" deployed on the USS CONSTELLATION (CVA 64) on 12 May.

Detachment "B" returned on 13 May from a seven (7) month deployment in Southeast Asian waters, while on board the USS TICONDEROGA (CVA 14). During their deployment, they made 3 rescues two of which were at night and 3 medical evacuations. One of the rescues was accomplished during 1966, a night rescue. Detachment "B" was the first of HC-1's detachments to deploy using the complete Standard Navy Material Maintenance Management system.

Detachment 23, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment departed on 16 May via airlift. Succeeding Combat Search and Rescue detachments have been airlifted to NAS Cubi Pt., P.I. as the helicopters and equipment are located there, and make the relief and turn-over at HC-1's detachment Cubi.

Detachment "G" deployed on the USS ORISKANY (CVA 34) on 26 May 1966.

(JUN) On 6 Jun, HC-1 had a UH2A crash in the mountains in Baja California, Mexico while on a search and rescue mission. The pilot, LT SPEIGHT, and the crew were not injured but the helicopter sustained overhaul damage.

Detachment "C" returned from a nine (9) month deployment on the USS KITTY HAWK (CVA 63). During this time, they rescued 15 personnel, 2 of which were at night.

Detachment 5 returned from a five (5) month deployment on 18 Jun. Of recent detachments, this one is the most decorated. The detachment was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon. It was presented to 6 members of the detachment still present at HC-1 on 20 Jan 1967. Other medals received by the detachment's flight crews are 2 Silver Stars, 3 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 1 Navy Commendation Medal with the Combat "V" and 23 Air Medals or gold stars. While preparing for their first period on duty in the Gulf of Tonkin, the helicopter crew rescued four Navy men from their disabled boat. The four were spotted drifting out of Subic Bay P.I., into the open sea. On 14 Mar, under heavy fire from the North Vietnamese coast, they rescued an Air Force crew member of a HU-16. On 20 March, they rescued a Navy pilot less than a mile from the coast of North Vietnam. They were fired upon by both shore batteries and enemy junks in the area. Annexes D and E of Enclosure (4) are the rescue reports. A total of five combat rescues were made by this detachment, the above listed two rescues, two on 2 May, and the last on 23 May. On 5 May, the crew made a 19 mile penetration into North Vietnam in an attempt to rescue another downed pilot. The helicopter came under heavy and accurate fire and received several hits, but no one was injured. Annex F of Enclosure (4) is the report of this incident.

Detachment "M" from the USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN 65) returned from a nine (9) month deployment on 21 Jun. This detachment departed via airlift to the East Coast and combined with pilots and crew from HC-2 to comprise the detachment. They proceeded on the ENTERPRISE to the West Coast and then on to Vietnam waters. Detachment "M" made two rescues during their deployment; one on 14 Jan 1966 and the other on 23 May 1966. A highlight for the detachment was the transporting of President Chiang Kai Shek from Tai Pei, Taiwan to the ENTERPRISE on 16 March.

(JUL) Detachment 29, the first "Game Warden" detachment deployed on 1 July.

Detachment 17, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment deployed on 3 July.

Detachment 51 departed on 5 July on the USS BURTON ISLAND (AGB 1).

Detachment 49 returned on 12 July from a 9¹/₂ month deployment of Vertical Replenishment on the USS SACRAMENTO (AOE 1) during which they established many firsts in cargo transfer. The final and all time high for total tonnage transferred by helicopter in a 24 hour period, is 327 tons of supplies to the USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN 65) and USS BAINBRIDGE (DLG(N)25) from the SACRAMENTO, on Feb 1966. Also the detachment made the first night Vertical Replenishment on 8 Nov 1965. The total number of ships serviced by helicopter was 221 of the 898 ships supplied by the SACRAMENTO, transferring over 5,000 tons of ammunitions/provisions/freight and mail to these ships. The detachment also

transferred 1,020 personnel. They rescued two personnel on 20 Dec 1965. These two were crewmen of the Panamanian ship "Impala" which ran aground and broke-up at Cape Varela, South Vietnam. During the entire deployment, detachment 49 maintained 100% availability for all operational commitments. The detachment consisted of 4 officers, 18 enlisted men and 2 UH-46A helicopters.

On 17 July, detachment 27, the second "Game Warden" detachment, deployed.

Detachment "A" departed for deployment on the USS CORAL SEA (CVA 43) on 29 July.

Also on 29 July, detachment 25 the third "Game Warden" detachment deployed.

(AUG) Detachment "L" returned on 1 Aug 1966 from a nine (9) month deployment on the USS HANCOCK (CVA 19). During this time, they rescued 9 personnel, 4 at night. They lost one of their helicopters at sea during this deployment on 10 Jan 1966 due to engine failure, the crew was rescued.

On 25 August, Detachment "F" returned from a eight (8) month deployment on the USS RANGER (CVA 61). During this time, they made 4 rescues, 2 of which were at night.

(SEP) On 15 September, the British ship "August Moon" went aground on a reef, during a heavy storm. They put out a call for help as the ship was breaking up. The USS ORISKANY (CVA 34) proceeded to the area and its helicopters of HC-1 detachment "G" began rescuing the crew. During the rescue operation, one of the helicopters was lost as a 65ft. wave engulfed it. The pilot LCDR BARCK and his crew were rescued. Refueling from the ORISKANY, the remaining two helicopters rescued the entire crew of the "August Moon". The forty four (44) crew men were taken from their crippled ship to nearby Platas Island. For this, two of the copilots received the Navy Commendation Medal. Annex G of Enclosure (4) is a copy of the citation. The accident report was serial - HC-1 DET "G" AAR 1-66A of 16 Sep 1966.

On 19 September, Detachment 15 returned on the USS MT. McKINLEY (AGC 7). Their mission was logistic support to the embarked staff. The detachment was the smallest of the squadrons, consisting of 1 officer and 3 enlisted men and one UH-13 helicopter.

Detachment 11, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment deployed on 22 Sep 1966.

(OCT) Detachment 53 departed on 5 October on the USCGC STATEN ISLAND (WAGB 278).

On 8 October, Detachment 19 returned from a 5 month deployment. Their mission was Combat Search and Rescue in the Gulf of Tonkin. No rescues were made by this detachment.

On 14 October, three detachments deployed. Detachment "E" on the USS TICONDEROGA (CVA 14); Detachment 5 a Combat Search and Rescue detachment to base out of HC-1 detachment CUBI at NAS Cubi Pt., P.I.; Detachment 55 departed on the USCGC GLACIER (AGB 4).

A UH-2B helicopter of HC-1 crashed at NAAS Ream Field during a night training flight. LT BANFORD and his crew were not injured but the helicopter suffered overhaul damage. The accident report was serial - HC-1 AAR 2-66 of 17 Oct 1966.

Detachment 51 returned from a 3 month deployment to the Arctic area on board the ice breaker, USS BURTON ISLAND (AGB 1). The detachment consisted of 3 officers, 8 enlisted men, one UH-13 and one CH-19E helicopters. Their mission was ice reconnaissance and logistic support.

On 26 October 1966, HC-1 detachment "G" lost 5 officers in the fire on board the USS ORISKANY (CVA 34). They were: LT HAMMOND, LT BLAKELY, LTJG's SEIBE and WELSH, and ENS KERN. Also lost in the fire were 2 UH-2A/B helicopters that were on the hangar deck close to the fire. The detachment Officer-in-Charge and his copilot were launched during the fire and rescued 2 men who either fell or jumped overboard. All Detachment records were lost in the fire.

Detachment 23, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment returned after a 6 month deployment 29 Oct 1966. During this time, they rescued 6 personnel in the Gulf of Tonkin. Two Air Force pilots were rescued at night on 12 August and one Navy airman each on 6, 8, and 22 Oct 1966.

(NOV) On 2 November, Detachment 29, a "Game Warden" detachment lost a UH-1B helicopter due to collision at sea. The pilot, LT KOCH, and his crew were rescued. The accident was serial - HC-1 DET 29 AAR 1-66A of 2 Nov 1966.

Detachment "C" on the USS KITTY HAWK (CVA 63) deployed 5 Nov 1966.

Detachment "G" off the USS ORISKANY (CVA 34) returned on 16 Nov 1966. During their deployment, Detachment "G" rescued 53 personnel, lost 5 officers in ORISKANY fire, lost one helicopter during the rescue of the "August Moon" personnel on 16 September and lost two helicopters in the ORISKANY fire. They transported 750 personnel and 61,586 lbs. of mail/cargo in support of operations in Southeast Asia.

Detachment 49 on the USS SACRAMENTO (AOE 1) deployed 21 Nov 1966.

(DEC) Detachment "D" returned on 3 December from a 7 month deployment on the USS CONSTELLATION (CVA 64). During this time, detachment "D" rescued one man who fell overboard and a pilot of an A-4 that crashed at sea, transported 968 personnel and 54,385 lbs. of mail/cargo.

Detachment 3, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment deployed on 3 Dec 1966.

On 12 December, Detachment 17, a Combat Search and Rescue detachment, returned from a 5 month deployment during which they rescued two personnel. The first rescue was during the daytime on 13 September. The second, a night rescue was on 11 November and under fire from the shores of North Vietnam.

On 12 Dec 1966, HC-1 lost a UH-46A which crashed at sea during a logistic support mission, carrying COMPHIBRON NINE and four officers of his staff. All passengers and crew were killed in this accident. Those lost from HC-1 were LCDR VAN GUNDY, LCDR HAYWARD, LTJG BEAM, CPO POWELL and PO1 McGARRH. The accident report was serial - HC-1 AAR 3-66A of 12 Dec 1966.

The HC-1 detachments assigned to the Pacific Fleet attack carriers have an average compliment of 8 officers, 27 enlisted men and 3 UH-2A/B helicopters. The officer-in-charge of these detachments is a LCDR. His assistant is a LT. The senior enlisted man is a chief petty officer. Their mission is plane guard/search and rescue, logistic support including mail/cargo delivery, passenger transfers and medical evacuations.

The Combat Search and Rescue detachments average compliment consists of 2 officers, 8 enlisted men and one armored UH-2A/B helicopter. The officer-in-charge is either a LCDR or senior LT with his assistant/copilot a LTJG or ENS. The senior enlisted man is a chief petty officer or a first class petty officer. Their mission is search and rescue under combat conditions in the Gulf of Tonkin off of North Vietnam or penetration for rescue into North Vietnam while serving on DLG's or Cruisers in the Gulf of Tonkin. They stage out of HC-1 detachment CUBI at NAS Cubi Pt., P.I.

The "Game Warden" detachments consist of 8 officers, 8 enlisted men/crewmen and 2 UH-1B Army helicopters which are armed and armored. The Army units in South Vietnam provide maintenance assistance. The mission of the "Game Warden" detachment is armed patrol of the Me Kong Delta region of South Vietnam and gun fire support to the River Patrol Boats (PBR) operating in the delta area.

The "Vert Rep" detachments consist of 5 officers, 20 enlisted men/crewmen and 2 UH-46A/D helicopters. The officer-in-charge is either a LCDR or senior LT. The senior enlisted man is a chief petty officer. The primary mission is underway and ashore vertical replenishment of all types of stores, except fuel. The secondary mission is search and rescue, gun fire support medical evacuation, and VIP transportation. The detachments operate from specially built support ships (AOE, AFS) which are capable of operating 2 or 3 UH-46 type aircraft.

Lessons Learned, Conclusions, or Recommendations:

Lesson learned:

With the sudden requirement placed upon the squadron to provide combat search and rescue helicopters, it became apparent that preplanning in this area had been at a minimum. Armor plating, self sealing fuel cells, aircraft armament and personnel armor were among the many facets which had to be developed on a "crash" basis for application to the UH-2 helicopter.

Recommendation:

Although the United States may be in a "peacetime" situation, it is recommended that combat hardware be provided to cover the "wartime" contingencies. Detailed plans for rapid combat conversion should be included in procurement contracts for any future helicopters which may possibly be subject to combat use, and squadrons must maintain a tactical ready posture for such eventualities.