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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20310

15 SEP 1983

MEMORANDUM THRU ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (RDA)

FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident with Fatalities

Noted
JAS

Reference ODCSPER memorandum enroute to you through CSA, copy attached as Enclosure 1. Having looked at the South Fox Island CH-47 accident, some additional related information might be useful to you. The aircraft was assigned to Task Force (TF) 160, a Fort Campbell unit under the operational control of BG Lutz at Fort Bragg to support Special Operation Force activities. The 160th, as you recall, also owned the CH-47 which crashed off Norfolk conducting precisely the same mission. Materiel failure was the cause in Norfolk, human error at Fox Island. [These are, therefore, ^{independent} mutually exclusive events.] The 160th, from the start of FY 83 to date, has had four Class A accidents with 14 fatalities, and two Class B's with two non-fatal injuries. The 160th also owned the Blackhawk which recently crashed during a maintenance test flight at Campbell and in which three died.

The 160th, in large part due to its recent accident rate, has been the focus of much attention. Certain positive steps have been taken to reduce accidents, as one would expect. A new O6 Commander (replacing an O5) has been designated, who I understand is one of the finest officer-aviators in the Army today. He brings a great deal of combat experience tempered by a wealth of common sense. Consideration is being given to placing the 160th under BG Parker at Campbell instead of BG(P) Lutz. Finally, and of most importance, BG(P) Molinelli has taken the most prudent course of action and terminated the 160th's activities pending review of the unit's missions and operations by ODCSOPS.

For informational purposes, I would suggest your accepting the ODCSPER offer and having Bob Molinelli brief you on his initiatives with respect to this matter. Clearly, the missions the 160th conducts for the most part constitute operations of substantial use to Army aviation and special ops tacticians and developers, as you will probably agree. In the case of the CH-47, I would submit there is some room for question. I expect, however, ODCSOPS will resolve this in the near term.

Amoretta M. Hoeber
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Research, Development and Acquisition)

Enclosure

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